Tracing the Trajectory and Development of Language Teachers' Resilience

Stories from the Saudi context

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Abstract

Across the world, teachers in general and language teachers in particular, are experiencing significant levels of stress and burnout, leading to their exodus from the profession. The construct of resilience gained considerable interest in education, and studies on resilience have been rapidly growing as it provides a comprehensive framework on how resilient teachers maintain their motivation and commitment to the profession. Although teacher resilience has been widely research in Western contexts, to date no research has examined language teacher resilience in the Saudi context. Accordingly, three qualitative studies have been conducted in sequence to examine the development and trajectories of Saudi language teachers' resilience throughout their career span.

The first of these was an exploratory study that aimed to examine the teaching challenges that teachers experienced throughout the years and how they coped. Data from 11 teachers revealed universal and specific teaching challenges to the Saudi context, and use of faith as one of their coping strategies. Significantly, the data suggested four resilience archetypes that were called 1) A smooth resilience 2) roller-coaster resilience, 3) maladaptive resilience, and 4) a reluctant resilience.

To further investigate these findings, a second study was conducted with the 4 teachers representing the archetypes. The results revealed that teachers' resilience developed gradually and emerged from the dynamic interaction between teachers' inner systems, which included many components (e.g., learning experience, and self-efficacy) and the different contextual factors in the teaching context over time. Furthermore, the study showed the complex change and development of coping strategies influenced by the reciprocal interaction between teachers and their contexts.

The final study used focus groups interviews (N=13) to examine the relevance of the resilience archetypes and continuing professional development programmes as tool to develop and maintain teacher resilience. Findings suggest that the rollercoaster archetype was most experienced by teachers (N=6), followed in order by smooth archetype (N=4), reluctant archetype (N=2) and maladaptive archetype (N=1). Furthermore, study revealed limited access to formal CPD opportunities and teachers' engagement with self-directed CPD to overcome teaching challenges. The research conclusion suggests future research and include teacher's recommendations for CPD that help promote their resilience .

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Chapter One: Introduction

1.1. Research background.

Although the teaching profession has been celebrated as self-satisfying and rewarding, it is also described as an emotionally demanding profession with low recognition, heavy workload and often financially unrewarding (Carroll et al., 2022; Kyriacou, 2015b; Oberle & Schonert-Reichl, 2016). Many consider teaching as one of the most stressful professions, with accumulating research reporting the increase of teachers' stress and burnout throughout the years, especially during the pandemic (Kyriacou, 2001; MacIntyre et al., 2020; Oberle & Schonert-Reichl, 2016). Empirical evidence has revealed an international crisis in teachers' recruitment and retention (Ainsworth & Oldfield, 2019; Ávalos & Valenzuela, 2016; Gorard et al., 2022). Recent surveys in the UK and the United States reported an alarming number of teachers leaving or planning to leave the profession within the first years (Ainsworth & Oldfield, 2019; Oberle & Schonert-Reichl, 2016). For instance, several reports revealed that burnout is one of the factors leading around 40-50% of new American teachers to drop out of the profession in the first three years (Oberle & Schonert-Reichl, 2016; Steinhardt et al., 2011).

Furthermore, early career exit among UK teachers is leading to a significant shortage of teachers in different fields, such as math and language (Gorard et al., 2022). Besides the difficulties many countries face with retaining teachers past their first years, many experienced teachers have been leaving the profession before their retirement time in several countries such as Germany, UK, and Saudi (Alshaer & Kaviani, 2019; Kieschke & Schaarschmidt, 2008; Van Droogenbroeck & Spruyt, 2016).The reported difficulties and attrition trend extend to language teachers who also, have specific subject challenges such as language anxiety, working in different cultural contexts, teaching students with different proficiency levels and working with

unstable contracts (Gregersen et al., 2021; Horwitz, 1996; MacIntyre et al., 2020). Thus, language teaching been described as a "profession in crisis." (Hiver & Dörnyei, 2015b, p. 6).

The alarming numbers have prompted considerable research to examine the factors contributing to teacher attrition, focusing on pre-service teacher and early career teachers (Johnson et al., 2016; Mansfield et al., 2016; Mansfield et al., 2014; Weatherby-Fell et al., 2020). The first years of the teaching profession were described as a "sink or swim experience" (Varah et al., 1986, p. 30). Several studies have shown that during their first years in the profession, novice teachers encounter many challenges such as uncooperative students, heavy workload, institutional reforms, and lack of resources which often faced without guidance and support from the school (Farrell, 2016; Hagger et al., 2011; Peters & Pearce, 2012). Based on research many novice teachers were inadequately trained to manage the teaching challenges and thus leading them to leave the profession (Correa et al., 2015; Mansfield & Gu, 2019). Nevertheless, many teachers remained in the profession showing commitment and motivation; some even managed to thrive despite the difficulties (Brunetti, 2006; Gu & Day, 2007, 2013). Thus, a new research approach emerged to examine teachers' attrition focusing on the qualities and behaviors of committed teachers and the factors that help them overcome challenges and sustain their commitment (Mansfield et al., 2016;Mansfield et al., 2012).

The construct of resilience gained considerable interest in the education field, and studies on resilience have been rapidly growing since it provides a way to understand how resilient teachers' maintain their motivation and commitment to the profession (Mansfield et al., 2016; Mansfield et al., 2012). However, most of the research exclusively focused on novice teachers and teacher education programmes to build pre-service teachers' resilience, such as Building Resilience in Teacher Education (BRiTE) (Beltman, 2020; Mansfield et al., 2016; Mansfield et al., 2014). Research on teacher resilience at mid and late-career stages in general

and language teaching in particular is limited, with exception of few studies that investigated their wellbeing and resilience (Day & Gu, 2007, 2009; Gu & Day, 2007; Sulis et al., 2023). Several researchers have called for further research, especially since teachers' level of experience, challenges they encounter and the resources that promote and sustain their resilience might vary across their career span (Day, 2017; Meister & Ahrens, 2011; Sulis et al., 2023).

1.2. Significance of the Saudi context

As established above, teacher attrition is a global phenomenon. Recent research in Saudi Arabia reported burnout and attrition among novice language teachers as a well as early retirement (Alhamad, 2018b; Alshaer & Kaviani, 2019). The educational system in Saudi Arabia strictly adheres to the Islamic and cultural traditions; however, it has considerably changed and developed throughout the years, particularly English language teaching (Alnasser, 2018; Elyas & Picard, 2019). Although the new "Vision 2030" initiative, promises a remarkable transformation and development for education, the issue of teacher's challenges, stress, burnout, and attrition seemed overlooked. Limited studies have been conducted to explore the experience and challenges of English novice teachers in Saudi Arabia, which stressed the gap between teacher training programs and the reality of teaching as well as novice teacher's inadequate knowledge on both the language level and professional level (Al-Hazmi, 2003; Al-Seghayer, 2014a; Oudah, 2018). A plethora of research has been conducted on teacher resilience and its significance to teacher success in the profession. However, most of the studies have been conducted in developed countries, such as England, Canada, and Australia (e.g.Ainsworth & Oldfield, 2019; Kutsyuruba, Stroud Stasel, et al., 2019; Mansfield & Gu, 2019).

Furthermore, as mentioned above, limited research have explored mid stage and late-stage career teachers' resilience (Sulis et al., 2023).To the best of my knowledge, the concept of teacher's resilience is yet to be recognized and no study on language teacher resilience has been carried out in the Saudi context. This study may be the first to trace the development and changes of language teacher resilience over the years, thus, providing a significant contribution to the Saudi context and contribute to research on mid and late careers teacher resilience. To achieve this aim, three studies have been conducted to examine the development and trajectory of language teachers' resilience throughout the years.

1.3. Thesis organization

This thesis is organised into nine Chapters. Chapter one present the introduction, which provides a brief background on study's focus, significance, and aim. Chapter two provides an overview on the Saudi context and discuss the history and development of English teaching and learning. Chapter three reviews concepts that relevant to resilience, including hardiness and coping. Chapter four provides a historical overview on resilience research and review literature on teacher resilience. Chapter five explains the methodological approach used to examine the trajectory and development of teacher resilience, including study designs, procedures, and data analysis, as well as [1]providing a summary on the pilot study findings. Chapter six presents and discuss the findings of narrative study. Chapter seven presents and discusses the findings of the focused group study. Chapter eight discusses and connects the overall findings to existing literature. Chapter nine presents the study's conclusion, implications, and limitations.

[1] The pilot study is preparation for publication.

Chapter Two: Background to the Saudi context

2.1. Introduction to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

English is the main foreign language taught in Saudi Arabia. This is because of its global status and role in the educational, professional and social domains in Saudi (Alqahtani, 2019). Saudi Arabia is considered the birthplace of Islam and has two of the holiest cities in the Islamic world, Makkah and Madinah (Elyas & Picard, 2019; Mitchell & Alfuraih, 2017). Modern KSA was established in 1932 by King Abdul-Aziz, and it is divided into 13 provinces (Alrashidi & Phan, 2015). Arabic is the official language in Saudi, and Islam is the main religion and the source of the country's constitution (Alrashidi & Phan, 2015; Elyas & Picard, 2019). The Saudi society is a tribal society with strong tribal traditions, affiliations and family ties (Alrahaili, 2019). Economically, Saudi is the largest producer of oil and accounts for 75% of the country's revenues, which recently prompted the Saudi government to diversify the economy (Al-Shehri, 2020; Picard, 2019). However, oil is still the main driving force for the Saudi economy (Al-Shehri, 2020). The Saudi government owns the Arabian American Oil Company (Aramco); however, it is run by many foreign workers (Mahboob & Elyas, 2014). As a result, learning English was deemed a priority for communication purposes (see 2.2.2) and has become a requirement to meet the market demands (Al Taweel, 2020; Elyas & Picard, 2019; Mahboob & Elyas, 2014).

In short, the Saudi identity is shaped by the Islamic beliefs, Arabic traditions, tribal affiliations, and economic development, which significantly affected English learning. To understand the role and significance of English teaching and learning, it is important to provide information on how it is influenced by the unique contextual factors. Furthermore, it will help the reader to better understand the research findings and discussion. However, it is important to note that the following sections will not provide extensive information on all factors because

it is beyond the word limit. Thus, the following sections are limited to a brief overview on the impact of religion on education followed by historical timeline of English education in Saudi providing an overview on the development and controversy. The next section focuses on continuing professional development programs in the Saudi context, specifically the current CPD for language teachers. The concluding section discusses the challenges that Saudi language teachers encounter, which are particular to the context.

2.1.1. Religion and education in Saudi Arabia

Religion is an integral part in the lives of many individuals and communities around the world (Merrill et al., 2009; Szcześniak et al., 2020). According to Scott et al. (2016), religion "affects human behaviour in terms of moral standards, beliefs, judgments, attitudes, and ultimately actions." (p. 147). In a country like Saudi Arabia, where Islam was revealed to the massager of God, Prophet Muhammad, Islam has been an integral part of every life aspect, such as education (Elyas & Picard, 2019; Kadi, 2006). Islamic teachings start at home. The parent's role is to instil Islamic values and teachings in their children, which is also reinforced by schools and the community (Halstead, 2007). According to Halstead (2007), "although in practice the development of moral values in any society may be a complex matter linked to custom, family tradition, community leadership, literature and individual judgment, many Muslims find it difficult to talk about morality outside the context of religion (p. 284). Islamic values are generally acknowledged as a list of responsibilities and rules which originates from the holy Quran and the hadith (i.e., Prophet Muhammad sayings and traditions)(Fantazy & Athmay, 2014; Halstead, 2007). In other words, every Muslim believe that the Holy Quran is the ultimate guide for their daily life, and they seek to follow Prophet Muhammad's teachings and morals daily as he exemplifies the perfect Islamic morals (Abu-Raiya et al., 2019; Elyas & Picard, 2010b). Every action, "whether a commercial transaction, eating or reading a book, has

a moral significance in Islam."(Bennett, 2001, p. 104). Therefore, Islam is embedded in every life aspect including teaching as profession and coping with adversity (Abu-Raiya et al., 2019).

The influence of Islam and Arabic culture extends to classrooms dictating teachers and student roles (Mahboob & Elyas, 2014). To elaborate, the first form of teaching was in the Islamic schools and mosques, which was based on the oral transmission and memorization of the Holy Quran and Prophet Mohammed Hadith's (Hamdan, 2005; Mitchell & Alfuraih, 2017). According to Elyas and Picard (2010b, p. 138), this type of teaching is described as "ceremonial order" in which the imam sits at the front surrounded by attentive students, and there is no interaction between the imam and his students during the reciting session unless it is after and in private. Thus, students role is only to receive knowledge (Al-Seghayer, 2015; Elyas & Picard, 2010b).The respect of teachers role as the centre of knowledge is emphasised and inculcated in the Arabic culture as suggested by the famous Arabic proverb (Elyas & Picard, 2010b, p. 138).

من علمني حرفا صرت له عبدا

He who taught me a letter become my master.

Therefore, teachers have the power of knowledge which gives them the central role within classrooms, while students are expected to respect, listen and obey the teacher (Al-Seghayer, 2015; Elyas & Picard, 2010b). The influence of Islam also, extends to teachers' identity, but it is unclear how it is intertwined with language teachers' professional identity, especially since it has been the bedrock of the Saudi education and it's a priority (Almayez, 2022). In a recent work, Wong (2018) discussed the influence of faith and spirituality on language teachers identity and pedagogy, stating that it has been "a neglected domain" in teacher identity research (p. 15). This neglect is caused by the negative association of ELT and Christian missionary work, which triggered debates about religion resulting in "general expectation in TESOL that

the religious faiths of teachers are irrelevant and should be left out of classrooms" (Ding & De Costa, 2018, p. 533). Hence, the limited research on language teacher's faith, identity, and practise (Almayez, 2022; Baurain, 2016; Vandrick, 2018). Nevertheless, there are few studies that examined faith and language teachers' identity. For instance, Baurain (2016), conducted a multiple case study on 11 overseas Christian language teachers examining how their faith influenced their professional identities. Based on the reported findings, the influence of faith manifested in three ways: 1) professionalism, which is centred on how the participants perceived their role as professional through their faith, 2) relationality, which is centered on how teacher's relationship with their students was undergirded by their religion and 3) witness which is focused on how teachers shared their faith with students through their roles (Baurain, 2016).

Similarly, Ding and De Costa (2018), explored the faith-based emotional experiences of a language teacher. Specifically, the study was focused on May a veteran Buddhist English lecture. The results showed that May's faith significantly influenced her emotional experiences and the formation and development of her professional identity. According to Ding and De Costa (2018), May's faith "helped transform her professional identity from an English instructor who cared only about language points, to an English teacher who emphasized the meaning of using language and who cultivated and educated students" (p. 542). As for studies exploring the Islamic faith and language teacher identity, a recent study by Almayez (2022) was conducted in Saudi Arabia, which as described above the birthplace of Islam. Two English teachers working at a public university were recruited to investigate how Islam effected their professional identity construction. Again, Almayez (2022) findings highlights the influence of teacher's faith on their professional identity and practice. In this case, teacher's faith 1) supported their wellbeing, that is, their religion seems to act as buffer against burnout 2) shaped their relationship with students, that is, how teachers interact and communicate and 3) provided

them with a strong sense of duty to protect and care for students' Islamic morals and values. Specifically, the teachers avoided impropriate teaching contents that might affect Islamic values (Almayez, 2022). This might be unsurprising because language teachers, like all teachers are expected to preserve the Islamic moral, and cultural values of their students (Elyas & Picard, 2010b, 2019).

In short, the reported studies illustrated the influence of religion on language teachers' identity and practice (for further reading see, Boraie et al., 2018; Vandrick, 2018; Wong & Canagarajah, 2009). Furthermore, the need for further research was emphasised, especially investigating other religions, such as Islam (Almayez, 2022; Mahboob & Courtney, 2018). Significantly, there has been calls for expanding the contents of teacher education programs to include and nurture this aspect of teacher identity, that is, to provide teachers with opportunity to "critically examine and reflect on the complex and dynamic interactions among their religious faiths and their pedagogical practices"(Almayez, 2022, p. 12; Ding & De Costa, 2018). To sum up, the whole educational process weather it is teachers' role, identity or the curriculum is strictly connected to the Islamic faith, and it's reinforced by the Ministry of education (MoE) polices (see 2.2) (Alrahaili, 2019; Elyas & Picard, 2019). Although the existing research have shown the influence of teacher's faith on their identity and practices, still faith remains neglected in language research. Particularly, the influence of faith on teacher's coping with difficulties and resilience.

2.2. Historical overview of English Education.

"*English in Saudi Arabia is not a neutral language. It is loaded with political, religious, social, and economic overtones and is a topic of heated debate*."(Mahboob & Elyas, 2014, p. 128)..

Initially, education in Saudi Arabia was limited to the memorization of the Holy Quran and teaching the Islamic rituals (i.e., prophet Mohammed Hadith and Sunna) in mosques or small Islamic schools (Hamdan, 2005; Mitchell & Alfuraih, 2017). However, after the discovery of oil in the 1930s, the Saudis witnessed significant changes, including the establishment of public education and the introduction of the English language in high schools (Mitchell & Alfuraih, 2017). However, there are some debates about the first introduction of English, with some scholars speculating that it was introduced in 1924 in few schools (Elyas & Picard, 2019). While others suggested that it was officially introduced in 1928, after the establishment of Directorate of Education in 1926 (Al-Seghayer, 2014b; Elyas & Picard, 2019). Nevertheless, many trace the early stages of English instruction to the discovery of oil and unification period in 1930s, which was marked by the opening of schools, particularly, the Scholarship Preparation School (SPS) in 1936 (Alrashidi & Phan, 2015; Elyas & Picard, 2019).

The school was aimed to prepare Saudis before going abroad and was only offered for boys taught by Egyptian and Lebanese teachers recruited to lay foundation of education due to the lack of Saudi teachers and financial resources (Mahboob & Elyas, 2014; Mitchell & Alfuraih, 2017). Significantly, the recruited teachers played a valuable role in teaching English for the first time using the Egyptian curriculum for most secular subjects (Elyas & Picard, 2019; Mahboob & Elyas, 2014). However, Islamic values and doctrine was (still to this day) entrenched in education and Islamic studies was controlled by the Ministry of Education (Elyas & Picard, 2019). After the establishment of SPS school, English was introduced to public schools in 1942, specifically to middle and high schools, but it was not mandatory until

1958 (Elyas & Picard, 2019; Mahboob & Elyas, 2014). This period from 1920s-1950s is mostly recognised as the unification period and the start of modern Saudi Arabia.

2.2.1. English education progress and debates from 1954-1900s

Although the 1950s was marked by the development of Saudi education, still it only served Saudi males (Hamdan, 2005; Mitchell & Alfuraih, 2017). Females, on the other hand, had a restricted and limited education at the local mosques, [2]Kuttabs or home tutorials until they reached puberty age (Al-Sadan, 2000; Hamdan, 2005). The opposition and restriction were because most Saudis believed that the man is the only breadwinner; thus, education was necessary to help him attain a job to support the family. The Saudis also believed that the appropriate role for women, which suits their 'nature', is to be mothers and housewives; therefore, they do not need education (Alrashidi & Phan, 2015; Hamdan, 2005). Nevertheless, in 1956 king Faial persuaded the Saudi tribes and founded the first school for females, followed by the General Presidency of Girls (GPGE) in 1959 (Commins, 2006; El-Sanabary, 1994; Mitchell & Alfuraih, 2017).

The sex segregation and religious curriculum convinced more tribes to send their girls to school knowing that their education will be in line with the Islamic values and Saudi traditions (Al-Rawaf & Simmons, 1991; Alrabai, 2019b). Only 15 girls attended school in the first year of female education; however, the number increased to 246,559 by 1970 and continued to increase throughout the years (Hamdan, 2005). Female education continued to be under GPGD jurisdiction until 2002, when it merged with the Ministry of Education (MoE) to include both male and female education (Hamdan, 2005). Notably, in 1954 the Ministry of

[2] Generally used to describe elementary school where students learn to read and write, but it was mostly focused on memorizing the Holy Quran. Many in English call it Quranic schools. Ayyad, E. (2022). How were young Muslim minds shaped? A critical study of the kuttāb in Medieval Islam. *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, *32*(1), 141-185. https://doi.org/10.1017/S135618632100002X

Education (MoE) was founded and thus replacing the Directorate of Education and controlling to this day all educational sectors (Alrashidi & Phan, 2015).

By 1970 the Saudi education was rapidly developing, which was illustrated by the growing number of students enrollment and their ability to speak basic English (Alrashidi & Phan, 2015; Elyas & Picard, 2019). Furthermore, this period witnessed the first release of English teaching policy by the MoE for secondary education and the launch of the English training program for teachers (see 2.3) (Alqahtani, 2019; Mahboob & Elyas, 2014; Mitchell & Alfuraih, 2017). English was taught four times a week for 45 minutes per class at every grade level (i.e., middle and high school levels) and the new English curriculum was designed to conform with the Islamic values and the Saudi cultural traditions (Abdullah Al-Awaid, 2018; Alrashidi & Phan, 2015; Mahboob & Elyas, 2014).That it is, emphasizing on family ties and social values (Al-Hariri, 1987; Alrashidi & Phan, 2015). For instance, the Saudi values were inculcated by promoting the domestic role of women and portraying men in different roles and professions (e.g., doctor or pilot), while "girls' schools aim to produce wives and mothers instead of competent and ambitious independent members of the workforce." (Hamdan, 2012, p. 201).

At the same time, the aims of teaching English were to develop students language proficiency (i.e., writing, reading, listening and speaking), critical thinking and interest toward language learning and its' economic and social importance (Alqahtani, 2019; Mitchell & Alfuraih, 2017). The same curriculum was taught in private schools, but the only difference is that it was taught from the first grade and onward (Mahboob & Elyas, 2014). Notably, several scholars criticized the curriculum, claiming that familiarise students with Western culture and values (Aljohani, 2016; Alqahtani, 2019). In other words, English was seen an " imperialistic tool" and it conveys the Western values which are incompatible with the Saudi core values (Mahboob & Elyas, 2014, p. 131). Furthermore, teaching English was opposed by many Saudis

claiming that it will affect the Arabic language supremacy and may deviate students from their Islamic and social values (Mahboob & Elyas, 2014; Mitchell & Alfuraih, 2017).Therefore, it might not be surprising that the learning outcomes were disappointing; at best, they were described as rudimentary (Al-Seghayer, 2014b; Elyas & Picard, 2019). Research has found several contributing factors such as low student motivation, poorly trained teachers and the use of inappropriate teaching methods (i.e., grammar-translation and audio-lingual) (see00) (Abdullah Al-Awaid, 2018; Al-Sadan, 2000; Alqahtani, 2019). In short, despite the progress that was made by MoE, English was still not accepted by all Saudis and was greatly influenced by Islamic and cultural values.

2.2.2. Reforms 2000s post 9/11

In 2000, the MoE introduced a revised curriculum to all grade levels (i.e.,7-12) and focused on improving teachers skills and language assessment (Mitchell & Alfuraih, 2017). Soon after the new curriculum implementation, the 9/11 attacks happened, and the Saudi education system was blamed as well as the Islamic world (Barnawi & Le Ha, 2014; Elyas & Picard, 2019; Mitchell & Alfuraih, 2017). Saudi Arabia was put under pressure by the United States government and other Western countries to change the English curriculum to teach tolerance and acceptance to the west as well as teaching it in primary schools (Elyas & Picard, 2019; Mahboob & Elyas, 2014; Mitchell & Alfuraih, 2017). Notably, the Saudi Ministry was also pressured by the Saudis to improve the general and English language curriculum (Elyas, 2008). Many in the educational sector have requested a change in the allocated time for English classes and the teaching methodology (Elyas, 2008). Additionally, several companies emphasized on the required language skills, particularly communication skills for their workers, which the Saudi graduates lacked at that time, and thus, emphasising the need for English language teaching development (Elyas, 2008; Elyas & Picard, 2010b).This period was marked by a major shift in the English language curriculum. Unlike the older versions which

was centred on the Saudi cultures and did not include any Western cultural habits (e.g., co-education or dating), the revised curriculum referenced Western cultures pointing to the dereferences in the social practices and carefully avoiding any clash between the Saudi and other cultures (Elyas, 2008; Elyas & Picard, 2019; Mahboob & Elyas, 2014).

Since then, the MoE has developed an educational reform program known as Tatweer (Allmnakrah & Evers, 2020; Mitchell & Alfuraih, 2017; Tayan, 2017). The five-year program launched in 2007 and aimed to improve the Saudi education to contribute the social and economic development with a total budget of 9 billion SR (3.1 billion $) (Allmnakrah & Evers, 2020; Mitchell & Alfuraih, 2017). Briefly, Tatweer objectives is to improve the quality of teaching and learning through: (1) enhancing teachers' skills (see 4.2.1.) (2) improving curricula (3) developing school activities, and (4) improving school facilities and infrastructure (Allmnakrah & Evers, 2020, p. 27). It is noteworthy, Tatweer initiative continue to this day, but operate as private company collaborating with MoE (Tayan, 2017). A year after Tatweer program, the Saudi National Commission for Academic Accreditation and Assessment (NCAAA) was launched (Alrwele, 2018). The NCAAA is an extension of the reforms, and it operates as independent government body to ensure that public and private universities are following the required education quality and standards (Alotaibi, 2019)**.** The reported reforms included English teaching by sending many teachers to study abroad and take part in professional development programs focused on communitive teaching approaches (see 2.3.2) (Moskovsky, 2019). Furthermore, English was introduced to 4th grad elementary students, and the frequency of classes increased in intermediate and high school levels to 10 classes per week (Elyas & Picard, 2010b, 2019). The reforms also included some university programs in which English has become the medium of instruction (e.g., science and technology) which sparked a debate about using English as a medium of instruction in several university courses and in high schools (Elyas & Picard, 2010b, 2019).

Although some might consider these reforms as relatively small, it still provoked some Saudis who warned that the overemphasis of teaching English, which familiarise the Western cultural belfies and values, threaten students' Islamic and national identities as well as the Arabic language learning (Elyas & Picard, 2019). Several studies have examined this phenomenon and found that many Saudis believe that learning English will undermine the learning and supremacy of Arabic, particularly, elementary students who might be most affected by the early exposure of English, which not only threatens their Arabic language learning but also, their national and Islamic identity (Al-Seghayer, 2014b; Alrabai, 2019a; Mahboob & Elyas, 2014).Undeniably, the Saudi society is still to this day described as collective with strong tribal alliances, tribal traditions and Islamic values which as maintained "made the Saudi culture resistant to changing or adopting new ways of life including English despite the increasing need for Saudi individuals to learn this language"(Alrabai, 2019b, p. 102). Consequently, the pattern of poor language learning outcomes is repeated to some extent with low motivation as of one of the documented reasons arguing that students do not see the value of language learning since they rarely use it inside and outside of classrooms (Al-Seghayer, 2011; Alqahtani, 2019; Elyas & Picard, 2010b).

Nowadays, English enjoys a higher status in Saudi as it is required in most jobs and business and generally accepted by the Saudis (Alnasser, 2018; Mitchell & Alfuraih, 2017; Picard, 2019).The new English curriculum is now standardized and more comprehensive, but still adheres to the Saudi cultural values (Alqahtani, 2019; Mitchell & Alfuraih, 2017). Furthermore, the use of English as the medium of instruction has increased in most universities and programs such as engineering, business, and allied health (Al-Seghayer, 2014a; Alrashidi & Phan, 2015). Significantly, in order to enrol in graduate programs, students have to take a language placement test, and afterwards, they will be registered to a compulsory English course as part of their studies regardless of discipline (Al-Seghayer, 2014a). As promised by the vision

‘2030’, general education, including English, will further improve and develop in terms of teaching and learning outcomes (Elyas & Picard, 2019). However, these reforms are still debated, especialty for language teachers as will be later discussed (Allmnakrah & Evers, 2020).

2.3. Language teacher training and professional development

2.3.1. Pre-service training

Teacher education programs are aimed to produced highly qualified teachers who can experience satisfaction and maintain their motivation and commitment (Mansfield et al., 2016).The first teacher training program was launched in 1970 by the MoE to Saudis wishing to become English teachers (Al-Seghayer, 2014a; Alqahtani, 2019). The programme was divided into two phases. First, high school graduates were required to study English for one year and afterwards take an assessment test. Once they pass the test, teachers candidates move to the second phase which provide them with the opportunity to obtain their qualification studying at British universities for two years approximately (Al-Seghayer, 2014a). The second training program started in early 1980s and continue to this day (Al-Hazmi, 2003; Al-Seghayer, 2014a; Alqahtani, 2019). English students enrolled at colleges of arts and colleges of education are offered a teacher training course as part of four years graduate programme, which usually take place at the final year (Al-Hazmi, 2003; Al-Seghayer, 2014b). Although students at college of arts and college of education are awarded a Bachelor of Arts in English upon graduation, they are offered a slightly different English programmes (Alqahtani, 2019). Students at colleges of education are expected to take several courses which includes 1) linguistics 2) teaching methodology 3) English literature and 4) education (Al-Seghayer, 2014b; Alqahtani, 2019). On the other hand, students enrolled in colleges of arts programs are not offered any courses on teaching methodology even though they are required to take an

intensive teacher training program similar to students in colleges of education (Alqahtani, 2019).

To elaborate, the preparation courses which are part of the first year of the program can take one or two semesters depending on the university requirement; the program consists of 1) basic education courses which are essential to fulfil the university requirements 2) English department prescribed courses such as general linguistics courses, and English literature courses; and 3) elective courses in which students get to choose from other departments (Al-Seghayer, 2013, 2014b; Alqahtani, 2019, p. 21). Upon completion, students matriculate to the prescribed academic courses in the English program these include linguistics, syntax, morphology, English literature, teaching methods (i.e., only in colleges of education), translation, and additional education courses (Al-Hazmi, 2003; Al-Seghayer, 2014b). However, each university has its own program and list of requirements, thus, they differ in terms of the total number of courses and the number of courses under some of programme categories (Al-Seghayer, 2014a).For instance, the teaching methods consist of three courses which include an introduction course, a primary teaching methods course and practicum course at the final year of the program (Al-Seghayer, 2014a).

Specifically, students are assigned to teach for a term in either intermediate or secondary school under the supervision of a college supervisor (Al-Seghayer, 2014a, 2014b; Hamad, 2021). However, theses courses, including the training period represents only 10% of the total number of the English programme (Al-Seghayer, 2014a; Alqahtani, 2019; Hamad, 2021). Consequently, the training dose not provide students with sufficient teaching experience, guidance, supervision and effective assessment (Hamad, 2021). Furthermore, the training programmes tend be more theoretical and thus students' teachers are not exposed to real-classroom experiences and equipped with teaching skills (Al-Seghayer, 2014a; Hamad, 2021). Hamad (2021) draw attention to another shortcomings of the training programmes,

stating that they do not include courses on self-confidence, communication, perseverance, cooperation and enthusiasm (Hamad, 2021).

Given these points, several researchers have criticized English programs in both colleges of arts and colleges of education for their emphasis on English literature and translation instead of teaching methodologies and sufficient per-service teaching experience (Alqahtani, 2019). Graduates from these collages are generally haired to teach students from primary level to college level, who have different leaning requirements and characteristics (Alqahtani, 2019; Hamad, 2021). Furthermore, most of the graduates are trained on curriculum used in intermediate schools or high schools, which considerably different from teaching college curriculum (Hamad, 2021).Therefore, they are described as " often ill-equipped pedagogically and methodologically for teaching English." (Alqahtani, 2019, p. 133). Some educators go further and describe the teaching preparation programs as "non-systematic" and "inadequate" since research shows that a significate number of English teachers are incompetent on a professional level and linguistic level (Al-Hazmi, 2003, p. 341; Oudah, 2018).

Several studies have found that novice English teachers have inadequate knowledge about teaching methodologies, material designs and theoretical background on the factors that influence second language learning, such as motivation and language aptitude (Al-Seghayer, 2014b; Oudah, 2018). In a recent study, Alhamad (2018b) examined the challenges that face novice language teachers and concluded that teachers received insufficient training, and thus they had limited skills to deal with teaching reality and it's challenges. Teacher education research is a well established filed and numerous researchers and educators called for improvements in the quality and standards of teacher training programs (Al-Seghayer, 2014a; Alotaibi, 2017; Alrwele, 2018; Mansfield et al., 2016). As shown above, the Saudi government have launched many initiatives to develop education including pre-service and in-service

teacher training as in Tatweer project (Allmnakrah & Evers, 2020; Alrwele, 2018; Tayan, 2017). Unfortunately, it seems that teacher preparation programs were not part of these development reforms, as Al-Hazmi (2003) maintained "it is ironic that the MoE, which has done so much to improve and update English language curricula since 1991, has lagged behind in doing the same for EFL teacher education programs"(p. 342). A possible reason for this, is that teacher preparation programmes are usually part of universities English programmes, unlike the in-service training which is mostly controlled by MoE (see 2.3.2) (Alrashidi & Phan, 2015; Alshaikhi, 2020).

Furthermore, teacher preparation programmes, as discussed above, differ across universities, which leaves no chance for "having a common thread of philosophy and developing national standards and guidelines that govern and direct the major issues equated with the process of preparing and training Saudi future English teachers" (Al-Seghayer, 2014a, p. 145). Thus, the described educational reforms seemed to target in-service teachers, and many researchers have voiced their criticism of the preparation programs, which prompted their focus on teacher professional development (Alshaikhi, 2020; Alzahrani & Nor, 2021; Oudah, 2018). The focus on teacher professional development programs was further emphasised by the "disturbing observation" that several veteran teachers had not received any type of in-service training (Al-Seghayer, 2014b, p. 146).

2.3.2. In service training: continuing professional development (CPD).

It is generally agreed that continuing professional development (CPD) is important for teachers' success and student learning and achievement (Cirocki & Farrell, 2019; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). The literature shows a growing interest in language teacher CPD to promote their knowledge and experience in their filed (Cirocki & Farrell, 2019; Opfer & Pedder, 2011b). There are many definitions for the concept of CPD, which reflect different conceptualisation

and lack of agreement on the construct (Cirocki & Farrell, 2019). For instance, terminologies like professional development (PD), in-service training and CPD are all used interchangeably to they refer to the same concept (Craft, 2000). Defining PD might be challenging given the various definitions and disagreements around its meaning, purpose and implementation (Cirocki & Farrell, 2019). Briefly, some scholars distinguish between teacher development and learning, with the former referring to top-down approach implemented based on policies and led and delivered by experts.

On the other hand, learning is bottom-up approach that starts a school and include teacher's engagement and participation in the learning process (Easton, 2008**).** Mann (2005), pointed to another difference in understanding teacher development from the American perspective and European perspective. The American view, understand teacher development as "usually conducted by a teacher educator and presented to teachers" (Mann, 2005, p. 104). In contrast, the European perspective include both personal and professional growth, that is initiated and led by teachers (Mann, 2005). There many differences and controversies surrounding the construct: however, the focus in this chapter is limited to CPD in the Saudi context. According to Kelchtermans (2005), CPD is defined as ''a learning process resulting from meaningful interaction with the context (both in time and space) and eventually leading to changes in teachers' professional practice (actions) and in their thinking about that practice'' (p. 220). This definition draws attention to Opfer and Pedder (2011a) complexity perspective of teacher learning and development, which include many systems, and subsystems interacting in different and unpredictable ways, and thus is difficult to predict an exact outcome. Opfer and Pedder (2011a), criticised the conceptualisations of TPD, describing them as process-product approaches that focuses on most effective forms of TPD that often results in the desired outcomes of educational changes. Such approaches, view teacher learning and development "through a serial additive lens", and tend to neglect the complexity of the process, especially

the contexts under which teacher's learning and development are shaped and influenced (Opfer & Pedder, 2011a, p. 378). Their perceptive is shifting the focus from "a cause and-effect approach to a focus on causal explanation so that we understand under what conditions, why, and how teachers learn" (Opfer & Pedder, 2011a, p. 378). Overall, CPD is a complex long-term process that's involves "all the activities in which teachers engage during the course of a career which are designed to enhance their work" (Day & Sachs, 2005, p. 3).

There are two main forms of CPD, formal and informal (Alshaikhi, 2020; Cirocki & Farrell, 2019). Formal CPD approach is described as a top-down approach that includes training courses, workshops, and conferences (Cirocki & Farrell, 2019)**.** The formal approach is usually led by experts on a specific topic, such as teaching strategies or introducing new educational technologies (Avalos, 2011; Cirocki & Farrell, 2019)**.** The formal approach has several positive factors, such developing teachers' skills, promoting collaboration, implementing educational polices and cost effective (Cirocki & Farrell, 2019; Farooq, 2016; Hayes & Chang, 2012). However, despite the reported benefits, formal CPD has been criticised for its theoretical approach with little or no opportunity for active practice, lack of follow up and support, and short-term courses (Alshaikhi, 2020; Opfer & Pedder, 2011b). Such programmes have been described as "one size fits all" solutions for teacher development and many researchers have called for different approaches (Opfer & Pedder, 2011b; Tang & Choi, 2009, p. 2). Furthermore, several studies suggested that teachers are less likely to engage in top-down CPD workshops as they consider them meaningless or a waste of time because they often focus on policies without involving teachers or understanding their teaching context (Cirocki & Farrell, 2019; Diaz-Maggioli, 2004; Opfer & Pedder, 2011b).

On the other hand, informal CPD is referred to as self-directed or self-initiated by teachers to improve by selecting the appropriate activities to help them achieve their goals (Alshaikhi, 2020; Cirocki & Farrell, 2019). In contrast to the formal CPD approach, the self-directed is a bottom-up approach, in which teachers are taking responsibility of their own development through reflection on their practise or knowledge, self-monitoring and peer coaching or peer observation (Alshaikhi, 2020; Cirocki & Farrell, 2019; Mann, 2005; Richards & Farrell, 2005). Teachers can engage in self-directed CPD activities, such as collaborate learning, peer observation with or without institutional resources and support (Alshaikhi, 2020; Hayes & Chang, 2012). Cirocki and Farrell (2019), suggested that CPD should include both formal and informal activities providing teachers with various learning opportunities and engaging them in collaboration and peer coaching overtime (Hayes & Chang, 2012).

Furthermore, the authors claimed that CPD programmes should be regularly evaluated to understand their benefits and effect through feedback, observation on teacher's use of skill or knowledge and students learning outcomes (Cirocki & Farrell, 2019; Guskey, 2002). The rapid growth of Saudi education has prompted an interest in CPD programmes to keep up with new regulations and developments (Allmnakrah & Evers, 2020; Oudah, 2018; Sywelem & Witte, 2013). As previously discussed, teaching English has gone through several stages and reforms, including curriculum, and instruction reforms that were implemented and managed by the MoE (Allmnakrah & Evers, 2020; Alsalahi, 2015). While pre-service training is run by universities, MoE is the main provider of CPD programs for teachers (Aljohani, 2016; Alqahtani & Albidewi, 2022; Alshaikhi, 2020). Research on CPD for teachers in general and language teachers in particular, is limited, which might be related to the insufficient CPD opportunities for teachers (Al-Seghayer, 2014b; Althobaiti, 2017; Hamad, 2021; Wedell & Alshumaimeri, 2014). Several researchers described the available CPD programs as "one size fits all" top-down training programs, which are considered by many as ineffective (Al-Hazmi,

2003; Al-Seghayer, 2011; Alshaikhi, 2020; Liton, 2012)**.** In addition, these programs tend to be centralised and traditional, providing little opportunity for teacher engagement (Al-Seghayer, 2014a; Alammari, 2019; Alshaikhi, 2020). There are several studies that described some of the programmes that falls under formal CPD for language teachers, these include, CPD programs implemented as part of educational reforms, and school based CPD programs (Ahmad & Shah, 2022; Al-Harbi & Ahmad, 2022; Allmnakrah & Evers, 2020; Alshaikhi, 2020; Male, 2015).

2.3.2.1. Educational reforms CPD.

As indicated in the literature, MoE is the main provider for CPD programs, determining types of programmes based on teacher's needs, which includes workshops and training events (Alammari, 2019; Alshaikhi, 2020). Based on the literature there three types of formal CPD these are; workshops that were implemented by MoE as part of new educational policies, such as Tatweer project and the new Saudi vision 2030 and 2) supervision sessions and 3) university CPD programs (Allmnakrah & Evers, 2020; Mitchell & Alfuraih, 2017; Shah & Al Harthi, 2014; Tayan, 2017). As shown above (see 2.2.2), one of the main goals of Tatweer project was to improve the quality of teaching through developing teachers' skills (Allmnakrah & Evers, 2020; Tayan, 2017). Tatweer initiatives focused on information communication technology (ICT) and started with the establishment of [3]50 smart school, which considered as new revolutionary teaching approach to "meet the needs of global knowledge economy." (Alyami, 2014; Tayan, 2017, p. 67). These reforms included providing classrooms with different technologies, such as whiteboards, internet and personal computer for each teacher and student (Allmnakrah & Evers, 2020; Alyami, 2014; Tayan, 2017). Accordingly, a large scale training program was launched that included, workshops and online resources provided by MoE that

[3] Some schools were moved to new buildings, while other were improved by adding technology, such as smart board and internet connection.

was the result of collaboration with the Center for British Teachers (Picard, 2019, p. 167; Tayan, 2017). Elyas and Al-Ghamdi (2018), suggested that before the launch of Tatweer program, a 15-day training program was provided for 1,700 teachers and administrators who were part of the smart schools.

Furthermore, Allmnakrah and Evers (2020), reported some of the claimed initiatives by the former education Minister Abdullah Al-Obaid who stated that teachers will receive an intensive training to help them adapt to the reforms and developments. According to Al-Obaid "seven training programs for more than 400,000 teachers, focusing on their specialization, school management, educational supervision, computer science, self-development and improvement of skills'' will be provided by Tatweer project (Allmnakrah & Evers, 2020, p. 28). In 2012, Tatweer launched another CPD program called "new teacher" which aimed to train 13, 000 novice teachers working in public schools (Allmnakrah & Evers, 2020, p. 28). However, theses initiatives have been criticized because it did not fulfill their aims and there is little evidence of improvement after 5 years of implementation (Allmnakrah & Evers, 2020; Picard, 2019). Notably, several studies reported that Tatweer seemed to fail in its goals, because many teachers did not have access to training programs, or they were unable to effectively implement their training (Allmnakrah & Evers, 2020; Picard, 2019).

Furthermore, other studies showed that many teachers were unable to connect online resources to their curriculum fixed language classes, or had a limited access to IT systems in several provinces and schools (Picard, 2019). The literature also, reveled that some veteran teachers resisted using teaching technologies in their classrooms and preferred using the "tried and teased" teacher center approach (Picard, 2019, p. 168). According to critics, the initiatives neglected teachers and school administrators voices before the implementation of such reforms and development programs, which is one of the factors the contributed to the limited success of Tatweer project (Allmnakrah & Evers, 2020; Alshaikhi, 2020; Tayan, 2017). Undoubtably,

teachers are not viewed as active agents in their development or any educational reforms; that is their input about the content, time and type of CPDs is excluded by MoE (Alammari, 2019; Allmnakrah & Evers, 2020; Alsalahi, 2015; Alshaikhi, 2020).

It is noteworthy, that the content of provided CPD programs are not described in the literature nor the exact number of teachers who had access to these programs. Overall, it can be concluded that Tatweer project neglect of teacher's needs, input and reality of their teaching context was among the factors for its failure to accomplish the desired outcomes (Allmnakrah & Evers, 2020; Tayan, 2017). As described, teachers were "merely empty and passive vessels" instructed to just follow the reforms (Allmnakrah & Evers, 2020, p. 30). The recent educational reforms Saudi vision 2030, aims to improve teacher training and development, promising to provide an effective training to "approximately 35,000" language teachers across the country's regions (Allmnakrah & Evers, 2020; Alqahtani, 2019, p. 124)**.** Several local and international CPD programs were launched in collaboration with British council, Cambridge Assessment and Pearson (Al-Harbi & Ahmad, 2022; Althobaiti, 2017).

The purpose of the initiatives is to train teachers and supervisors on new language teaching methodologies and change the dominant teacher-cantered practice to student-cantered approach (Al-Harbi & Ahmad, 2022; Althobaiti, 2017). According to Althobaiti (2017), MoE has sent several language supervisor to the UK to train on the recent language teaching developments. Unfortunately, little is known about these programs and their outcomes, that is, if they were effective in meeting their aims of improving and changing language teaching. The current literature suggests that teachers are still not viewed as participants in the educational reforms, and they do not have the opportunity to choose the CPD programs that suits their needs and contexts (Allmnakrah & Evers, 2020; Sywelem & Witte, 2013; Tayan, 2017). Accordingly, many teachers did not change their teaching practices or apply their new skills and knowledge into their classrooms (Al-Harbi & Ahmad, 2022; Alshaikhi, 2020).

There are several internal and external contributing factors; internal factors include teachers background, which is greatly influenced by the teacher-cantered and grammar-translation approaches. Consequently, teachers are reluctant to implement new teaching methodologies (Al-Harbi & Ahmad, 2022; Al-Seghayer, 2014b; Alqahtani, 2019). Furthermore, teachers are restricted by the institutional policies to implement what they learned in CPD programs, especially public-schools language teachers who are controlled by MoE fixed curriculum plans, and school administration approval to attend CPD programs (Al-Harbi & Ahmad, 2022; Al-Seghayer, 2014b). External factors are mostly connected to the content of CPD programs which as argued, difficult to translate to the Saudi context because they were designed to fit the western education (Al-Harbi & Ahmad, 2022; Burke, 2019 ; Elyas & Picard, 2010b). Given these points, it can be argued that teachers should be included in educational reforms and CPD programs should be tailored according to their needs, knowledge and contexts (Allmnakrah & Evers, 2020; Tayan, 2017). Furthermore, there is a need for more research on CPD programs, describing their content, target teachers, and their outcomes, which is echoed by several researchers (Al-Seghayer, 2015; Alshaikhi, 2018; Picard, 2019).

2.3.2.2. Supervision at school level

Supervision is considered one of the CPD forms that is provided for language teachers (Almudarra, 2017; Male, 2015; Shah & Al Harthi, 2014). To improve teachers' performance, MoE assigns supervisors who are in charge of observing, evaluating and continuously helping teachers improve (Alghamdi & AlZahrani, 2016 ; Almudarra, 2017). According to Lasagabaster and Sierra (2011), classroom observation can take three forms; 1) for professional development 2) for reward and 3) for promotion (p. 450). Generally, observation for professional development is the most effective form of class observation because it provide insights to classroom realities and teachers with feedback on their teaching and ways to improve (Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2011; Montgomery, 2002; Shah & Al Harthi, 2014).

Furthermore, it can be one of the ways that help teachers engage in reflection on their practices (Farrell, 2011).

Classroom observation can be a top-down procedure as the ones implemented by MoE with certain guidelines or a bottom-up procedure, such as peer observation which is usually controlled and designed by the teachers (Alghamdi & AlZahrani, 2016 ; Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2011; Shah & Al Harthi, 2014). As previously indicated, supervisors act as mentors for teachers and have a key role in the education process as they are considered the link between schools and MoE (Alghamdi & AlZahrani, 2016 ; Aljohani, 2016). Since the establishment of formal education, supervisors were to be part of the system and their role have evolved throughout the years (Alghamdi & AlZahrani, 2016 ; Almudarra, 2017). According to the Almudarra (2017) the earliest record of educational supervisors roles was in 1957 after the ministry established the Inspection department. In the early stages, the supervisor role were focused on both administrative and instructional inspection of schools and enforcing MoE regulations, which was carried out though random visits, three time a year (Alghamdi & AlZahrani, 2016 ; Almudarra, 2017). The supervisor's visits included observing and evaluating teachers' performance, which as reported focused on "looking for their errors" as the main goal of supervision (Alghamdi & AlZahrani, 2016 p. 71). The teachers at this stage did not have a collaborative relationship with their supervisors who were only assessing their performance through a "box-ticking exercise" which prevented their collaboration and created a negative culture (Alghamdi & AlZahrani, 2016 ; Almudarra, 2017; Shah & Al Harthi, 2014, p. 1594). Generally, many teachers do not feel comfortable with such visits that provoke stress and question their performance, hence, it may be one of the factors that hinders their devolvement (Alghamdi & AlZahrani, 2016 ; Borich, 2008; Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2011; Shah & Al Harthi, 2014).

Accordingly, several researchers focused on building trust and collaborative relationship with teachers to facilitate their development and engagement in the observation process (Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2011). In an attempt to improve the supervision process, in 1964 MoE founded the instructional inspection department with clear guidelines that differentiates between administrative and instructional inspection (Almudarra, 2017). This stage seemed to be a step towards improving the supervision process that lacked clear definitions of the process that was focused on identifying teachers and school defects (Alghamdi & AlZahrani, 2016 ; Almudarra, 2017). Since then, supervisors' roles evolved and has been described by MoE as "an artistic, democratic, humanistic, and inclusive, leadership process that aims to evaluate and improve the educational processes in all its aspects" (Alghamdi & AlZahrani, 2016 p. 72). Based on this definition, supervision included building a cooperative relationship with teachers involving them in their evaluation, identifying their obstacles, and helping to overcome them and facilitating their development (Alghamdi & AlZahrani, 2016 ; Almudarra, 2017). However, whether these practices are followed by supervisors is questionable as will be shown later.

Usually, MoE assign supervisors based on their filed and each supervisor is in charge of approximately 70 school teachers (Alghamdi & AlZahrani, 2016 ; Wedell & Alshumaimeri, 2014). For example, language teachers are assigned to a supervisor from the same filed and they are usually supervised throughout the years of their employment (Alghamdi & AlZahrani, 2016). Each teacher receives two visits in the academic year, which might increase based on the supervisor's evaluation of the teacher performance and for a novice teacher (Alghamdi & AlZahrani, 2016 ; Shoaib, 2004). According to Aljohani (2016), supervisors are tasked with training teachers on preparing and manging the curriculum schedule, which takes place only twice a year for thirty minutes. Unfortunately, further information on the reported training

sessions or other existing sessions are scarce. However, there are few studies that shed some light on the supervision process for public school teachers.

For instance, Alsalahi (2015), reported his experience and three language teachers with CPD. Particularly, Alsalahi (2015), reflected on his experience with supervision, which consisted of two visits. According to Alsalahi (2015), after the first observational visit, the supervisor discussed his teaching performance, and introduced several teaching methods which were viewed to be more suitable for the observed lesson. Furthermore, the supervisor suggested reading three books that focused on teaching English. The supervisor's visit ended with discussing his observation with headmaster and writing a report about the visit. Several weeks after the supervisor's visit, Alsalahi (2015) reported receiving a list of training workshops and lectures from the headmaster. After attending some of the mandatory training workshops, Alsalahi (2015) found that they resembled what he studied during his undergraduate study, and they did not provide a practical application to the teaching methods. Notably, the researcher did not describe how the training programs resembled his undergraduate courses or describe the second supervisor visit.

The second part of Alsalahi (2015), article reported the findings of a small-scale study that was conducted to investigate the CPD challenges and how it contributes to teacher's disengagement. The teachers in the study reported several factors that had negative effect on their professionalism; these are the top-down policy, supervisors, headmasters and the teacher education culture. The teachers put emphasis on the top-down policy to CPD, which often neglect their needs and does not involve them in the planning of CPD programs. Furthermore, the teachers believed that CPD programs are important for improving their teaching. However, the study suggested that teachers have a narrow view of CPD programs, which seemed to be centred on attending workshops and conferences, obtaining a higher degree, and using the internet as a resource. These finding has been reported in two studies that showed teachers'

agreement on the value of CPD and their limited understanding of the different types CPD activities (Mazin, 2019; Oudah, 2018). According to Alsalahi (2015), there are many forms of CPD, such as peer observation that teachers need to learn about and practice. As suggested, the provided CPD programs should inform teachers about the variety of CPD activities and different types, especially self-directed CPD. In short, Alsalahi (2015) study, provided an overview of the supervision process and supported the reports of limited CPD programs.

The supervision process has been criticised by some researchers arguing that supervisors face several challenges that prevent them from performing their role effectively (Alghamdi & AlZahrani, 2016 ; Almudarra, 2017). One of the main of obstacles is the number of teachers (i.e., around 70) allocated to each supervisor, who require several visits, which many supervisors often cannot observe or even properly observe. This because teachers are spread across different schools which sometimes have a long traveling distance, and thus some teachers do not receive any visits from their supervisors.(Alghamdi & AlZahrani, 2016 ; Alshaikhi, 2018). Another main obstacle, is the number of administrative duties that supervisors have to carry out, which increases their workload (Albabteen, 2000 as cited in Alghamdi & AlZahrani, 2016). Therefore, instead of focusing on helping and developing teachers, supervisors spend much of their time on administrative duties (Almudarra, 2017). Some researchers called for reducing both the number of allocated teachers and administrative duties for each supervisor to help them perform their role effectivity (Alghamdi & AlZahrani, 2016 ; Almudarra, 2017).

In 2013, a new regulation was issued to reduce 25% of the administrative duties for supervisors (Alghamdi & AlZahrani, 2016). However, it is unclear how or if the new regulation helped supervisors perform their role more effectively. That is, helping and improving teachers. Almudarra (2017), pointed to another set of challenges, particularly, supervisor's lack of training and adequate knowledge about the supervision process. Thus,

many supervisors tend to perform their role based on their personal experience, abilities and level of motivation to carry out the work (Almudarra, 2017). In one study, Alkrdem (2011) collected data from 305 secondary school teachers, headmasters and educational officers to examine their perceptions on effective supervision. The study included a survey response from 272 teachers (i.e., teachers of all subjects) and interviews with 18 teachers, 10 headmaster and 5 education officials at Aseer district. The study revealed that many supervisors lacked training and skills to help improve the teachers and the schools they were assigned to. Furthermore, the study indicated that some supervisor did not take their role seriously. Some of their supervisory practices were described as biased, inconsistent, and intimidating. Accordingly, teachers did not trust the supervisors, value their input or take them seriously, which contributed to their disengagement with CPD (Alkrdem, 2011).

Research on supervision is scarce and what can be drawn from the available literature is that supervisors need more training, especially since they are responsible for improving teachers. Specifically, the teachers who either have limited access or no access to CPD programs (Althobaiti, 2017). Furthermore, despite the reported changes in the supervision process and the provided training for some supervisors, it seems that current practices do not foster a collaborative and lifelong learning culture for teachers. Two infrequent observational visits in the academic year are often not enough to improve teachers or encourage their development. This has been echoed by some scholars urging MoE to widen and accelerate their recent initiatives that includes providing CPD programs for both teachers and supervisors (Althobaiti, 2017).

2.3.2.3. Supervision and CPD at university level

The supervision process extends to higher education; however, it differs from the practices that are followed in public education. While MoE controls the implementation of CPD programs, the literature revealed that universities have some flexibility when it comes to the implementation of CPD programs among other things. For instance, the supervision process is controlled by the university's administration and their process seemed to differ from MoE process. As classroom observers, Al-Harbi and Ahmad (2022) provided a brief overview of their supervision process, that is conducted at King Abdulaziz university's English language institute (ELI). According to Al-Harbi and Ahmad (2022), the ELI implemented a structured observation scheme that is divided into three stages; diagnostic observation, formal observation and a follow-up announced observational visit (p. 599). Usually, each teacher receives a diagnostic visit at the beginning of semester to determine areas that needs improvement in the teacher's performance, which is discussed after the visit.

Teachers are expected to improve by the time of the formal observational visit, which is intended to "see a cross-section of teachers' classroom practices" such as their classroom management and teaching methods. After the visit, the teacher receives feedback on his performance which includes positive comments and what needs to improve. The final follow-up visit is aimed to see if the teacher can maintain the same performance level as in the formal visit. Al-Harbi and Ahmad (2022) suggested that because of the institutional constraints, teachers do not maintain their best performance throughout the year. However, they are generally able to maintain a good teaching performance. Although Al-Harbi and Ahmad (2022) shed some light on the observation process, it did not provide information on how the supervision scheme helped teachers improve. That is, if there were specific CPD programs that were provided for teachers to help them improve before the formal observation and after to

maintain their performance level. Additionally, it is unclear whether the diagnostic visit was used to design CPD programs based on teachers need.

Nevertheless, a recent study by Mazin (2019), explored teacher's experience with CPD programs at the ELI and their perception of their professional identity. Four teachers with more than 6 years of experience participated in this study. The results showed that teachers believed in the importance of CPD, and they engaged in several activities, such as obtaining a higher degree, attending conferences, and workshops provided by the ELI. However, Mazin (2019) claimed that teachers understanding of CPD was restricted to the few reported activities. Furthermore, the participants reported their dissatisfaction with that the top-down and mandatory approach to CPD, which neglect their needs. Only one teacher agreed with mandatory approach to CPD because otherwise teachers would not engage in CPD activities. However, the study indicated that some teachers were willing to attend conferences, but they often could not because it required a time off work, which sometimes was not approved by the administration. Mandatory attendance of CPD workshops does not necessarily guarantee teachers engagement or improvement, especially when the contents of these programs are designed and structured without teachers' involvement. The teachers also reported that the administration did not view or treat them as professionals, despite their high qualifications and years of experience (Mazin, 2019).

In a different context, Farooq (2016), conducted a study to examine the effectiveness of Al-Taif university CPD program three years after its implementation. In 2012 the university implemented a bi-annual theme-based CPD programs for language teachers. The aim of the program was to improve the quality of language teaching and learning. Based on Loucks-Horsley et al. (2010) five principles a questionnaire was developed and distributed to 100 teachers (50 male and 50 female). The principles are: 1) build on foundation of skills, knowledge and expertise 2) engage participants as learners 3) provide practice, feedback, and

follow 4) measure changes in teacher knowledge and skills and 5) measure changes in student performance (Farooq, 2016, p. 277). The results suggested that implemented CPD programs were to some extent successful because it was based on teachers need and improved their teaching and students leaning outcomes. Teachers in the study believed that the overall environment supported and encouraged their development, which had a positive impact on their classroom practices. However, the findings showed that teachers did not have regular or equal CPD opportunities and follow-up sessions as well as the chance to experiment with new teaching methods. Farooq (2016), made several recommendations to improve the quality of CPD programs, which includes asking for teachers input even if the programs were based on their needs. Furthermore, implementing a systematic supervision to monitor teachers' improvement when they are involved in CPD and regularly assessing the provided CPD programs. These recommendations have been emphasised in the literature calling for improvements in the provided CPD programs for all education levels (Allmnakrah & Evers, 2020; Althobaiti, 2017; Oudah, 2018).

King Saud university also have a different approach to CPD. According to Alshahrani (2017), the university implemented a variety of CPD activities for language teachers, these include a mandatory induction CPD week, CPD workshops during the semesters, and several unannounced observational visit for teachers throughout the year. Furthermore, teachers are required to attend conferences once or twice a year, which is chosen by the administration (Alshahrani, 2017). Notably, all the CPD programmes are chosen for teachers, that is, teachers do not have the power to choose what workshop to attend. They are required to attend a week of selected CPD workshops, other than the induction week. Interestingly, Alshahrani (2017) described an observation scheme that is similar to the ELI observation policy (see above), but with different outcomes. As reported, teachers, especially novice teachers' performance is graded on Likert scale, but they do not receive feedback from the observer to help them with

CPD. Receiving a negative assessment could result in disciplinary action, such as changing the teacher's contract or lowering his or her salary (Alshahrani, 2017).

Accordingly, Alshahrani (2017), investigated the CPD programs that teacher engaged with or did not, and what are challenges that effects their engagement. Twenty-three native and non-native teachers with different teaching experience (i.e., 1-26 years) were interviewed. The study reported similar findings to the previous research (see above), which confirmed teachers view of CPD as an important part for their improvement. Furthermore, the neglect of teachers' voice and needs in the planning of CPD is a recurrent theme in the literature and the study showed how it affected teacher's motivation and engagement with CPD. Alshahrani (2017), identified several factors for teachers' disengagement with CPD such as unsupportive environment, excessive workload, limited access to relevant CPD activities and the top-down policy. The negative effect of the top-down policy is consistent across the discussed studies, which as reported resulted in lack of autonomy and devaluing teachers as professionals (Alshahrani, 2017).

Based on the above, it seems that the reliance on top-down policy created a negative culture that is based on "oppressive and exclusionary practices" producing a passive curriculum and policy implementing teachers (Alshaikhi, 2018, p. 13). Although universities believe that CPD is essential for teachers, there polices and CPD programs are mostly designed with little or no consideration to teachers needs and voices. Furthermore, the described CPD policies failed to include or encourage bottom-up CPD approaches for teachers individually or as group, such as peer observation, self-reflection or monitoring, and action research (Alshaikhi, 2020). The devaluing of self-directed CPD and of lack institutional support seems to effect teachers' motivation to engage in this form of CPD activities (Al-Seghayer, 2014a; Alshaikhi, 2020).

To some extent, it seems that language teachers working in higher education have more opportunities and access to CPD programs, than public-school teachers. However, as shown above, each university has its own CPD policy, and thus it seems that the quality and access of CPD programs depends on the context (Alshahrani, 2017). To sum up, research on CPD for language teachers is relatively limited and the findings of the available studies are "not very encouraging" (Moskovsky, 2019, p. 8). The educational policies still follows the same pattern of teacher exclusion and limited training (Allmnakrah & Evers, 2020). Thus, failing to address teachers needs and help them deal with challenges they might encounter.

2.4. Language teacher challenges

Research shows that there are several universal challenges that language teachers face, such as language anxiety, heavy workload, lack of support and resources (Al-Seghayer, 2014b; Alhamad, 2018a; Alnefaie, 2016). However, there some challenges that are particular to the Saudi context such as students' low proficiency level and low motivation, teacher-centred culture and the hierarchal educational system (Alqahtani, 2019; Elyas & Picard, 2010b; Mahboob & Elyas, 2014). As the mentioned above, the history of the English language was full of debates and negatives attitudes about language learning which might be of the reasons why Saudi students lack the motivation to learn English since it is rarely used in their daily lives and the society still emphasises on the supremacy of Arabic (Elyas & Picard, 2019). Even in English classrooms, Arabic is excessively used as the medium of instruction (Abdullah Al-Awaid, 2018; Al-Seghayer, 2015). For instance, Alnofaie (2010) study results showed that the preference for using Arabic as the medium of instruction was very high among English teachers and students, with 80% for the former and 70% for the latter. Similar findings were reported by Machaal (2012), who maintained that 77% of the teachers' in his study preferred using Arabic in their classrooms.

Several studies have further examined this phenomenon and attributed the Saudi students' language deficiencies to the excessive use of Arabic in explaining grammar and vocabulary as well as checking students' understanding (Al-Seghayer, 2015; Alshammari, 2011). Other researchers explored teachers' perception about their use of Arabic and found that teachers rely more on Arabic because of students' low proficiency level, limited class times, number of students (i.e., 30 or 40 per class) and their belief that grammar is the most important aspect of the language; thus, it is convenient to use Arabic. (Alshammari, 2011; Mansory, 2019; Shah & Al Harthi, 2014). According to Al-Seghayer (2015) the dominance of Arabic in English classrooms remains unchanged. Research shows that English classrooms in Saudi Arabia follow the ceremonial order in which teachers dominate most of the classroom interactions with little or no student involvement in the learning process (see0) (Al-Seghayer, 2015; Alqahtani, 2019; Elyas & Picard, 2010b). Besides the cultural norm which imposed teachers and students roles, there are other contributing factors that solidified the teacher-centred approach (Al-Seghayer, 2015). First, the hierarchal educational system, which dictates teachers roles within schools and classrooms (Al-Seghayer, 2015; Mahboob & Elyas, 2014).

For instance, English teachers are provided with an identical curriculum to each level with deadlines and guidelines on 'what to teach' and 'how to teach it' which they are expected to follow (Al-Seghayer, 2015, p. 91; Elyas & Picard, 2019).Furthermore, teachers are expected to promote the Saudi culture and Islamic values and improve student learning outcomes (Abdullah Al-Awaid, 2018; Elyas & Picard, 2010b). Thus, English teachers role is restricted to a knowledge transmitter and language assessor (Al-Seghayer, 2015; Alqahtani, 2019).Another contributing factor is the inadequate teacher training which, as previously discussed, produced teachers with low language proficiency and insufficient teaching knowledge (Al-Seghayer, 2014a, 2015). Research shows that novice English teachers are expected to assume the responsibilities of experienced teachers, which include improving

students language learning and outcomes, implementing a communicative language approach, managing the classroom and following the MoE rules (Al-Seghayer, 2015; Alqahtani & Albidewi, 2022). According to Alqahtani (2019), although the MoE introduced new pedagogical approaches to teaching English, particularly, communicative language teaching (CLT), teachers failed to implement the approach in classrooms. This is because teachers did not receive any type of training from either the pre-service training programs or in-school training on how to implement and adopt the CLT approach into their practice (Al-Seghayer, 2015; Alqahtani, 2019). Indeed, teachers are already inadequately trained to deal with everyday teaching challenges such as preparing materials, explaining language concepts, and managing classrooms with 30 or 40 students (Al-Seghayer, 2014b, 2015; Alqahtani, 2019). Furthermore, English teachers (i.e., novice and experienced) have different viewpoints about the benefits of CLT (Alqahtani, 2019). For instance, some teachers believed that the CLT is only focussed on developing the speaking skill, while others criticized the insufficient grammar teaching (Al-Asmari, 2015; Alqahtani, 2019). Even if some teachers have positive attitudes about the CLT approach and the ability to use it, there are many obstacles that prevent the implementation, such as lack of visual resources, students low proficiency, class number, and time constraints (Abdulkader, 2016). Therefore, Saudi teachers reject the approach and continue to use the traditional approach(Alqahtani, 2019).

Finally, the heavy workload and the classroom environment leads teachers to adapt traditional teaching methods (Al-Seghayer, 2015). English teachers are required to follow the school prescribed timetable, which includes academic and administrative duties(Al-Seghayer, 2011). According to Al-Seghayer (2015), teachers are expected to teach 24 periods per week (i.e., 5 classes per day) with a time limit of 3 or 4 hours, and on average, they teach 180-200 students (i.e., 30-40 per class). As a result, teachers struggle with implementing communicative activities, which becomes more difficult when the classroom size is often small and

overcrowded, preventing the teacher from giving equal time for students to use the language. Furthermore, teachers find it difficult to engage students with the class activities, cater to students language needs, manage students behaviour and maintain class discipline (Al-Seghayer, 2011, 2015). As a result, teachers experience a high level of stress trying to cover all the required lessons and materials and comply with the MoE curriculum deadline (Al-Seghayer, 2015; Alqahtani & Albidewi, 2022).

In addition to preparing daily lesson plans, teachers are required to follow the MoE guidelines when preparing and correcting exams which pressure English teachers to strictly prepare students for the exams to avoid the accountability of students failure from both the administrators and headmasters (Al-Seghayer, 2015). Given these overwhelming requirements, teachers are found to opt for a teacher-centred approach relying on grammar-translation and audio-lingual teaching methods (Al-Seghayer, 2015; Alqahtani, 2019). Overall, English teachers encounter many challenges, which might be categorized as internal factors represented in the insufficient language proficiency and knowledge about teaching methodologies. On the other hand, external factors include inadequate teacher training, lack of professional development programs, teacher-centred approach, heavy workload, and hierarchical educational systems.

2.5. Conclusion

This chapter discussed the introduction and development of English, which as shown cannot be separated from the religious, cultural, and economical factors in Saudi. Based on the literature it might be concluded that teacher training and CPD programmes in the Saudi context are limited, under researched and lack unity. The findings of the reported studies not only confirmed the limited CPD opportunities for language teachers, but also showed the need for new approach of CPD that is tailored to teachers needs and context as well as the importance

of viewing teachers as partners in their own development. Such improvements will help language teachers in dealing with the challenges they may encounter in throughout their career span.

Chapter 3 Literature Review

3.1. Introduction

First, a brief overview of the concepts of teacher stress and burnout will be provided, followed by a summary of constructs that have been researched and considered as a defence mechanism to teaching stressors, namely, grit, and coping. Second, the background of resilience research will be discussed, presenting some of the arguments leading to the development of resilience research. The third section will focus on teacher resilience research, followed by the models of resilience research which examine the contexts that challenge and promote teacher resilience.

3.2. Teacher stress and burnout

Occupational stress has been investigated and defined using theoretical models of stress, which generally describe stress as being caused by an the imbalance between the perceived job requirements and the individual's perceived abilities to fulfil or meet such requirements (Hakanen et al., 2006; Kyriacou & Coulthard, 2000). Influenced by these stress models, Kyriacou (2015a) defined teacher stress as "the teacher's experience of negative emotions such anxiety, frustration, tension, anger and depression, in response to the demands and pressures they face in their work as a teacher"(p. 72). Several studies in mainstream education have been conducted to explore the factors that contribute to teachers' stress (Ball, 2003; Bullough, 2005; Burić et al., 2019; DeLongis & Preece, 2000). Their findings revealed many potential stressors, such as heavy workload, teaching disengaged students, managing undisciplined classrooms, being monitored and evaluated, dealing with educational reforms and the vague demands of institutions as well as coping with unfavourable working conditions (Kyriacou, 2001; Shirazizadeh & Karimpour, 2019).

Teachers' prolonged exposure to such job stressors can eventually lead to burnout (Burić et al., 2019). Burnout, is known as a psychological syndrome which results from prolonged exposure to work stressors (Maslach, 2003). Based on Maslach and Jackson (1986) definition of burnout as "a syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation, and reduced personal accomplishment that can occur among individuals who do 'people work' of some kind" (p. 20), the burnout measurement inventory, that is Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) was developed (Burić et al., 2019). However, for appropriate measurement of burnout, the MBI was later modified to include three core dimensions: exhaustion, cynicism and professional efficacy (Schaufeli et al., 1996). To further elaborate, the first component, Exhaustion, refers to teachers' extreme feelings of chronic fatigue resulting from an emotional and physical overinvestment in the work environment. As for Cynicism, it is defined as teachers' negative attitude displayed in a hostile or distanced response toward the work environment (e.g., students and co-workers) and the work itself. Given the callous and detached nature of cynicism, it is often referred to as depersonalisation. Finally, inefficacy describes teachers' feelings of incompetence, and dissatisfaction of achievement, and level of productivity in their work (Maslach & Leiter, 2008; Van Droogenbroeck et al., 2014). Thus, the existence of one or all these components is detrimental to teachers' commitment to the profession leading many teachers to burnout and eventually leaving the profession.

3.2. Constructs of persistence

Since the 1790s the field of psychology has been focused on individuals' adaptation processes and psychological well-being, which generated considerable research on various psychological constructs (Dörnyei, 2020; Feder Adriana et al., 2010; Frydenberg, 2014; Hiver & Dörnyei, 2015a; Somerfield & McCrae, 2000a). According to Dörnyei (2020), there is a considerable number of studies that investigate different personality traits which help individuals persevere in the face of adversity and setbacks, or the " the natural tendency to quit." (Peterson & Seligman, 2004, p. 234). As a result, persistence constructs such as resilience, grit, hardiness, coping, self-efficacy, conscientiousness, self-control, perseverance, buoyancy, and optimism seemed to overlap (Dörnyei, 2020; Fong & Kim, 2019; Goodman et al., 2017). For instance, grit which seems to be the current star in educational research (introduced in section 3.2.1), has been found to greatly overlap with two particular constructs; self-control and conscientiousness (Dörnyei, 2020; Duckworth & Gross, 2014; Muenks et al., 2017).

Although it is theoretically based on personality and goal commitment research, some proponents differentiate between grit and self-control, suggesting that self-control is merely focused on avoiding distractions to accomplish short-term goals (Duckworth, 2016; Duckworth & Gross, 2014; O'Neal et al., 2019). In comparison, grit refers to the relentless effort to achieve a long-term goal (e.g., obtaining a college degree) despite setbacks and initial failures (Duckworth & Gross, 2014; Duckworth et al., 2007; Teimouri et al., 2020; Vazsonyi et al., 2019). Nevertheless, self-control and grit appear to be one and the same, as Dörnyei (2020) described " the determined gritty pursuit of a long-term goal would be expected to subsume self-control over one's everyday temptations and, similarly, resisting temptation in the present is often best energised by one's determination to pursue future goals." (p. 155).

As one of the Big Five aspects, conscientiousness has also been found to highly correlate with grit (Credé et al., 2017; Muenks et al., 2017; O'Neal et al., 2019; Rimfeld et al., 2016). Conscientious individuals are described as hardworking, self-disciplined, achievement-oriented, and thorough, which all overlap with grit (Credé et al., 2017; Duckworth et al., 2007; Howard & Crayne, 2019).However, the distinction lies in the emphasis on individuals' stamina and ability to sustain their passion toward a long-term- goal; in other words, the "emphasis on long-term stamina rather than short-term intensity" (Datu et al., 2015; Duckworth et al., 2007, p. 1089; Teimouri et al., 2020). Another example of the overlap is between resilience and academic buoyancy (Chmitorz et al., 2018; Dörnyei, 2020; Yun et al., 2018). Resilience has been defined by many researchers, in this case, academic resilience is defined as "students' ability to successfully deal with chronic and acute academic adversities in their school settings" (Chmitorz et al., 2018; Fong & Kim, 2019, p. 3).

Academic buoyancy, for its part, is focused on students' ability to bounce back from daily or mild academic challenges (Fong & Kim, 2019; Martin & Marsh, 2006, 2008). In a sense, the difference between the two constructs is in the nature or the degree of adversities which might also apply to other persistence-constructs (Howard & Crayne, 2019; Yun et al., 2018). Overall, these persistence-related constructs have been conceptualised as a personality trait that predicts individuals' success and growth despite hardships (Howard & Crayne, 2019). However, the differences between the constructs, as Dörnyei (2020) described, "largely lie in how broadly or narrowly they are defined, what timescale they occupy, which facet of adversity they are concerned with and how they are assumed to navigate the difficulty in question." (p. 156). In the end, it should be noted that there are other examples on the overlap between persistence constructs; however, the scope of this chapter is limited to two constructs; namely grit which is currently the focus of research and coping the most relevant to resilience.

3.2.1. Grit

Since it was introduced by Duckworth and her colleagues (Duckworth et al., 2007; Duckworth & Quinn, 2009), the concept of grit has generated a substantial body of research across several domains such education, psychology and business (Cormier et al., 2019; Credé et al., 2017; Dörnyei, 2020; Schmidt et al., 2019). Influenced by Galton (1892) and Cox (1926) observations on high achievers persistence or " their capacity for hard labour" (Galton, 1892, p. 33) which distinguished them from their counterparts with similar talent and ability (Duckworth, 2016; Vazsonyi et al., 2019; Von Culin et al., 2014). Duckworth interviewed a wide range of professionals from different fields, investigating the necessary qualities for success and high achievement (Duckworth, 2016; Teimouri et al., 2020). Perceived as an essential personality trait, grit is defined as "perseverance and passion for long-term goals" which is based on two lower-order constructs; perseverance of effort and consistency of interest (Duckworth & Gross, 2014; Duckworth et al., 2007; Duckworth & Quinn, 2009).

Perseverance of effort refers to the relentless pursuit to achieve a long-term goal despite failures and setbacks, whereas consistency of interest refers to maintaining passion and commitment to goal achievement over a long period of time (Cormier et al., 2019; Duckworth & Gross, 2014; O'Neal et al., 2019; Sudina, Vernon, et al., 2020). Grit is perceived as a malleable trait that seems to grow and develop with age; that is, with maturation and experience individuals develop the capacity of passion and perseverance for a long-term goal in which they "approach achievement as a marathon; his or her advantage is stamina." (Duckworth, 2016; Duckworth et al., 2007, p. 1088).To measure the constructs (i.e., perseverance and passion), Duckworth et al. (2007) developed and validated a self-report grit scale which originally consisted of 12-items (i.e. Grit-O) (Duckworth & Quinn, 2009). However, the grit scale was later reduced to included 8-items known as the Short Grit Scale (Grit-S), which since has been predominantly used in research (Akos & Kretchmar, 2017; Duckworth & Quinn,

2009; Jachimowicz et al., 2018; Robertson-Kraft & Duckworth, 2014; Sudina, Brown, et al., 2020). Conducting a series of six studies, Duckworth et al. (2007) found that grit predicted achievement across several domains. For instance, in the first 3 studies, Duckworth et al. (2007) reported that grittier individuals seemed to achieve high levels of education and made fewer career changes. Additionally, although they had a lower SAT score, gritty undergraduates were found to attain a higher GPA than their peers.

In their subsequent studies (4 and 5) Duckworth et al. (2007)suggested that grit predicted cadets' success and completion of the arduous military training at West Point Academy (Duckworth et al., 2007; Duckworth & Quinn, 2009; Kelly et al., 2014). In the final study (6), which was a longitudinal study, Duckworth et al. (2007) indicated that using deliberate practice, grittier students at the National Spelling Bee competition outperformed other competitors, concluding that talent and effort lead to achievement (Duckworth, 2016; Duckworth & Quinn, 2009). Therefore, what distinguished individuals and predicated their exceptional achievement was their use of deliberate practice and self-regulated learning strategies to overcome failures while maintaining interest throughout a process which can take months or years (i.e., grit)(Duckworth, 2016; Duckworth & Quinn, 2009; Perkins-Gough & Duckworth, 2013). The popularity of the concept has expanded from studying grit as domain-general (i.e. using both Grit-O and Grit-S scales) to developing and adapting the girt scales to investigate specific contexts and populations (Clark & Malecki, 2019; Peña & Duckworth, 2018; Sudina, Vernon, et al., 2020). For instance, focusing on sport, Cormier et al. (2019) examined student-athletes measuring their grit in three aspects; sports, academic studies and life in general using the Grit-O scale. The findings suggested that the student-athletes had a high level of grit in sports compared to academic studies and life in general, which indicated that the grit level seemed to differ according to individuals' situational contexts. Indeed, Cormier et al. (2019) concluding remarks which encouraged further investigation of grit in

domain-specific achievement, are in line with Duckworth and Quinn (2009) suggestion on the importance to " explore the domain-specific versus domain-general aspects of grit."(p. 173).

In the educational field, grit has been enthusiastically embraced by academics and policymakers with a considerable amount of research examining and promoting grit interventions in several educational settings (Akos & Kretchmar, 2017; Clark & Malecki, 2019; Datu et al., 2015). One of the most important goals for educators is to facilitate students' achievement; thus, many have focused on examining attributes and skills other than standardized tests that could potentially predict students' success and retention (Bowman et al., 2015; Datu et al., 2015; Fosnacht et al., 2018; Sudina, Vernon, et al., 2020). Grit or academic buoyancy which refers to students' capacity to overcome regular academic difficulties and pressures while maintaining a high level of achievement and performance; has been extensively researched, particularly on college students achievement and retention (Clark & Malecki, 2019; Credé et al., 2017; Strayhorn, 2013).

For example, Bowman et al. (2015) examined the relationship between grit and undergraduates outcomes. The results showed that gritty students had a high GPA and displayed signs of academic adjustments, satisfaction, and a high sense of belonging. Furthermore, gritty students were found to be more engaged in activities and interaction with faculty members and other students. In another population, Clark and Malecki (2019) developed the Academic Grit Scale (AGS) to appropriately measure adolescents academic grit in grades 6-8. Their findings revealed a positive correlation between academic grit and GPA, academic satisfaction, and life satisfaction. Significantly, the results provided further support for the importance of domain-specific grit research (Clark & Malecki, 2019; Sudina, Brown, et al., 2020). Although it has been recently investigated in the language learning field, several studies have explored the relationship between grit and second language (L2) mastery and achievement (Sudina, Brown, et al., 2020; Wei et al., 2019). Using the Grit-S scale, Wei et al.

(2019) conducted a study on middle-school Chinese student to measure the influence of grit on their L2 performance. Based on their reports, grit was found to have a more positive effect on students L2 enjoyment and a moderate effect on their L2 performance (Wei et al., 2019). Significantly, several studies have developed a specific grit scale for L2 contexts (Ebadi et al., 2018; Giordano, 2019; Sudina, Brown, et al., 2020). In a recent study, Teimouri et al. (2020) developed an L2 grit scale investigating its relationship with language achievement and motivational behaviours on 191 Iranian students. According to the results, grit was positively correlated with students L2 motivation and achievement; that is, gritty students were found to be persistent and passionate about their L2 learning as well as experiencing joy and less anxiety in the classroom (Teimouri et al., 2020).

Sudina, Vernon, et al. (2020) designed an L2-Teacher Grit Scale (L2TGS) to measure the occupational-grit in a sample that included both ESL and EFL teachers. Although their results were in line with Robertson-Kraft and Duckworth (2014) findings which postulated that gritty teachers were more likely to sustain their commitment to the profession, Sudina, Vernon, et al. (2020) argued that the L2TGS was significantly better at predicting teachers retention than Grit-S scale (i.e., domain-general). The authors also reported that female participants seemed to have a higher occupational-grit than male participants, which as suggested warrants further investigation, particularly, when considering grit interventions in teacher education and training (Argon & Kaya, 2018; Sudina, Vernon, et al., 2020). Indeed, research suggests that gritty teachers are more committed and effective in their teaching which in return has a positive effect on students learning and achievement (Argon & Kaya, 2018; Banse & Palacios, 2018; Robertson-Kraft & Duckworth, 2014). Since it has been described as a malleable trait, the enthusiasm for grit has expanded to policymakers such as the United States Department of Education promoting grit interventions in schools to facilitate students' success in higher education and beyond (Fosnacht et al., 2018; Martin et al., 2016; Stokas, 2015). As an integral

part of the intervention, teachers are presumed to have an important role in promoting students grit, which, as previously mentioned, help students persevere to achieve academic success (Banse & Palacios, 2018; Huéscar Hernández et al., 2020). For example, in a partnership between Duckworth and a team of researchers with the Knowledge Is Power Program (KIPP), schools were chartered to develop a Character Growth Card (GGC) for students (Kirchgasler, 2018; Martin et al., 2016; Stokas, 2015). The GGC aims to monitor the development of student's non-cognitive qualities such as grit, curiosity, and self-control (i.e., in schoolwork and interpersonal)(Kirchgasler, 2018; Stokas, 2015).

Teachers and students reported their observations and reflections on the student's progress which, was measured using Likert scale in each item such as to what extent student " finished whatever he/she began" or " tried very hard even after experiencing failure."(Kirchgasler, 2018, p. 707). Based on their score, teachers and students discussed how to support and promote his/her growth over time (Kirchgasler, 2018). Despite the widespread enthusiasm, grit has been scrutinized by several researchers (Credé et al., 2017; Fosnacht et al., 2018; Jachimowicz et al., 2018; Stokas, 2015). As previously mentioned, grit has been found to overlap with the Big Five conscientiousness dimension and self-control, which sparked a debate about the concept (Credé et al., 2017; Fosnacht et al., 2018). For instance, while many researchers considered grit as a unique construct, others have described it as "an old, but repackaged concept" (Credé et al., 2017; Fosnacht et al., 2018, p. 806). Furthermore, several have argued that although the definition of grit is centred on the perseverance of effort and passion for long term goals, research appears to measure grit by emphasising the perseverance components and neglecting the passion dimensions (Dörnyei, 2020; Fosnacht et al., 2018; Jachimowicz et al., 2018). Therefore, questioning if the grit scale actually captures the passion component.

Finally, grit has been criticized for promoting inequality in society and education (i.e., poor students or students of colour) by a "fundamental attribution error" which, refers to "the tendency to overvalue personality-based explanations for observed behaviours and undervalue situational explanations." (Ris, 2015; Socol, 2014; Stokas, 2015, p. 515). For example, a student may be blamed for his/her lack of achievement because he/she is perceived to be not gritty enough without acknowledging the influence of their social environment (Ris, 2015; Stokas, 2015). In effect, it has been suggested that the emphasis on the personal-character might affect the teaching resources that are needed to help disadvantage students overcome their adversity and succeed academically and professionally (Ris, 2015). As Stokas (2015) maintained about grit " it does not simply legitimate hardship, it celebrates it"(p. 2). Despite the criticism, still, grit remains to be a popular concept in the educational field (Fosnacht et al., 2018).

3.2.2. Coping

Known as techniques to counteract or manage stressors, coping has been researched and categorised in several ways (Hiver, 2016; Somerfield & McCrae, 2000a). Early research on coping was influenced by psychopathology which viewed coping as a personality or an individual trait. This means that the weakness or the strength of a personality determines the defensive coping strategy (Frydenberg, 2014; Hong et al., 2018). However, this approach was criticized and challenged by Lazarus and Folkman (1984) transactional theory of coping, which understands coping as "constantly changing cognitive and behavioural efforts to manage specific external and/or internal demands that appraised as taxing or exceeding the resources of the person" (Hong et al., 2018, p. 141; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Lazarus, 1993). In other words, coping is now understood as a dynamic process in which individuals' efforts or ability to handle stressful events depends on their subjective judgment of the challenges, internal resources and context circumstances (Frydenberg, 2014; Hong et al., 2018). It is "a transaction

between the person and environment" influenced by individual's appraisals, which determines an individual's control over stressors and the degree of stress experienced (Frydenberg, 2014, p. 83; Griffith et al., 1999). Appraisal are classified as a primary and secondary appraisal; in primary appraisal the situation is evaluated whether it is stressful and controllable or not. As for the secondary appraisal, the resources are assessed before choosing a suitable action to manage the situation (Davies & Underwood, 2000; Frydenberg, 2014). Both primary and secondary appraisals tend to occur unconsciously and at an automatic level, thus, individuals are rarely aware of these processes (DeLongis & Preece, 2000; Lazarus, 1993).

Based on the transactional theory, coping techniques are classified into emotion-focused coping and problem-focused coping. Emotion-focused coping strategies are not targeted to deal with the source of stress, but rather they are aimed at reducing feelings of stress through several ways. For instance, seeking emotional support, expressing negative emotions, finding ways to escape problems (e.g., avoidance, and denial) and physical activities to reduce stress (e.g., deep breathing or exercising)(Carver & Connor-Smith, 2010; Frydenberg, 2014; Kyriacou, 2015b). It has been suggested that on their own emotion-focused coping tends to be maladaptive; that is, they might lead to unfavourable psychological outcomes, such as low resilience (Alonso-Tapia et al., 2019; Kato, 2015; Rark & Esposito, 2011). However, when they are used with other coping strategies, they can help individuals engage in adaptive coping strategies, thus, leading to more favourable outcomes (Folkman & Moskowitz, 2004; Rark & Esposito, 2011).Notably, Folkman and Moskowitz (2004), cautioned against the "risk of masking important differences within categories" (p. 752), by providing an example that shows how coping strategies grouped under the same category can lead to different outcomes.

To illustrate, distancing and avoiding stressors are among emotion-focused coping strategies. However, distancing is often related to positive coping when individuals cannot change a situation, such as awaiting test results. In contrast, avoiding problems or stressors is

often connected to maladaptive coping, such as drinking when dealing with the same situation (i.e., waiting for test result) (Folkman & Moskowitz, 2004). Problem focused coping, on the other hand, refers to the actions that individuals take to remedy or eliminate the source of stress, such as developing new skills, knowledge and working practices, as well as seeking help and support (Carver & Connor-Smith, 2010; Kyriacou, 2001, 2015a). Several studies reported that problem-focused coping is more likely to lead to a better and long-lasting psychological outcome, than emotion focused coping (Alonso-Tapia et al., 2019; Rark & Esposito, 2011). Nevertheless, emotion-focused and problem-focused coping are interrelated and facilitate one another, as explained by Carver and Connor-Smith (2010) "effective emotion-focused coping diminishes negative distress, making it possible to consider the problem more calmly, perhaps yielding better problem-focused coping"(p. 685).

Individuals have variety of emotion-focused and problem-focused coping strategies at their disposal, which they can use based on their needs and context (Riley & Park, 2014). Several inventories have been developed to assess coping such as the Ways of Coping scale (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984), the Coping Strategies Inventory (Tobin et al., 1989) and the Coping Orientation to Problems Experienced (COPE) scale (Carver et al., 1989). The COPE scale was developed in response to the simplistic distinction between problem-focused and emotion- focused coping strategies (Carver & Scheier, 1998; Carver et al., 1989).The first version of the COPE scale included 60 items, which was described as long and redundant, hence, left uncompleted by participants (Carver, 1997; MacIntyre et al., 2020). Consequently, the brief-COPE was developed consisting of 28 items reducing the redundancy and completion time, became widely used in research (Carver, 1997; MacIntyre et al., 2020). The concept of coping has been investigated in many populations, including teachers in general and language teachers in particular (Gregersen et al., 2021; MacIntyre et al., 2020; Temiz, 2022). Several studies have investigated how teachers cope with stress and indicated that teachers have

different coping strategies such as seeking support, controlling negative feelings, and having self-esteem (Benmansour, 1998; Griffith et al., 1999; Kyriacou, 2015a). In a recent study, MacIntyre et al. (2020), examined language teachers' stress and coping strategies during COVID-19 pandemic. The researchers used several measurements tools in their investigation, including the brief COPE, and stress index scale developed specifically for the study. The study findings revealed that teachers experienced a high level of stress that was caused by various reasons, such as workload, irregular hours, and online teaching. Furthermore, the study showed that teachers used approach coping (e.g., acceptance, positive reframing and seeking help) more than avoidant strategies (e.g., denial, disengagement and venting) (MacIntyre et al., 2020, p. 3).

As reported, approach coping was associated positive outcomes, whereas avoidant coping contributed to negative outcomes, such as anger and anxiety, which effected teachers' well-being. Notably, the authors found that planning ahead (i.e., approach coping) was associated with increased anxiety and stress because of the uncertainty caused by the pandemic. In other words, teachers who relied on planning ahead coping experienced stress and anxiety because of unpredictable and uncontrollable situation (MacIntyre et al., 2020). To sum up, through their coping efforts, some teachers are able to successfully manage the teaching stressors, which contributes to their survival and commitment to the profession. (Hiver, 2017). Finally, the literature suggests that there are other distinctions of coping strategies, such as proactive coping, dyadic coping, meaning-making coping and religious coping (Carver & Connor-Smith, 2010; Frydenberg, 2014; Pargament et al., 1998).However, the focus will be on the most relevant to the study, meaning-making coping, and religious coping strategies.

3.2.2.1. Meaning-making coping

The meaning-making coping model emerged to address "the limited usefulness" of the transactional coping model in studying adjustment to significant adversity or loss (Park, 2005c, p. 708). It has been argued that some traumatic events, such chronic illness or bereavement cannot not be amended by problem-focused coping, instead they require individuals to make mental adjustments to their goals and beliefs system (Park, 2005c; Riley & Park, 2014). The meaning-making model was first introduced by Park and Folkman (1997), and was further developed by Park (2010). The model consists of two levels of meaning: global meaning and situational meaning. Global meaning refers to individuals' goals, beliefs, and their existential meaning of the world (Park, 2010; Park & Folkman, 1997; Riley & Park, 2014). Situational meaning refers to the apprised meaning of a specific stressful event and its significance to the global meaning (Park, 2010, 2013).

After their initial appraisal, individuals determine whether their initial meaning is compatible with their beliefs, goals and view of themselves and the world (Park, 2016). If the assigned meaning violates individuals' global meaning, their cognitive and emotional processes (i.e., meaning making process) are initiated to readjust their meaning system (Park, 2016; Rark & Esposito, 2011). Thus, meaning making can be defined as "the process in which people engage to reduce this discrepancy which involves changing either the meaning they assigned to the situation or to some aspects of their global meaning" (Rark & Esposito, 2011, p. 154). Based on the meaning-making model, the discrepancy between the apprised event and the global meaning is disruptive and include a loss of control and comprehensibility of the world, which might lead to negative psychological outcomes (Park, 2005c; Park et al., 2016). Thus, the degree of the discrepancy determines the stress level and initiates the coping efforts to reduce the discrepancy (Rark & Esposito, 2011). The meaning-making process includes both intentional efforts and unconscious process (e.g., intrusive thoughts) to either change the apprised meaning or global meaning to recover from adversity (Park, 2010; Rark & Esposito,

2011). Several coping strategies were identified by researchers to help reduce the discrepancy, such as positive reinterpretation, emotional processing, religious coping, finding meaning and acceptance (Park, 2010; Park & Folkman, 1997). Therefore, reducing and restoring the global meaning results in adjustment to stress, and improved well-being (Park, 2010; Park & Baumeister, 2017)..

A substantial body of research has investigated the meaning-making model, resulting in countless studies that reported the positive outcomes of the model in helping individuals with chronic illness change their understanding of their illness, cultivate positive emotions and growth (Leung et al., 2010; Park, 2013; Sumalla et al., 2009). Furthermore, the study of the model has been extended to other contexts, such as, natural disasters (Park, 2016) coping with bereavement (Holland et al., 2006; Neimeyer et al., 2010) and college students dealing with loss and trauma (Park et al., 2012; Rark & Esposito, 2011). Despite the countless research, Park (2010), examined empirical studies and argued that the results of these studies are inconsistent and have failed to fully examine the meaning making process (Park, 2010; Park et al., 2016). According to Park, there are many definitions for the construct which challenges any attempt to summarise the literature and seem to "fall short of capturing the depth and breadth of the constructs and processes themselves" (Park, 2010, p. 262).

Furthermore, many of existing research has a limited timeframe, and research designs. That is, most studies failed to test the full dimensions of the model focusing mostly on global beliefs without examining what they were before adversity or failed to assess the meanings made after adjustment (Park, 2010). As for the timeframe, most studies did not capture the dynamic nature of the meaning-making process, instead they seemed to focus on certain time periods using cross-sectional designs (Fitzke et al., 2021; Park, 2010). Significantly, several researchers criticized the meaning making model, claiming that individuals who did not engage in meaning making process are "better off" than those who did (Park, 2010, p. 261). Additionally, some

researchers have argued that meaning-making coping is unproductive and causes distress, instead of recovery and adjustment (Bonanno et al., 2005; Park, 2010).

Nevertheless, empirical research on the meaning-making model continues to expand and develops. For example, Fitzke et al. (2021), conducted a longitudinal study on large national sample of midlife adults to test the effectiveness of the meaning making model in coping with traumatic events. Specifically, the researcher focused on measuring the positive effect of positive reappraisal (i.e., type of meaning-making strategy) on the meaning of life dimensions (coherence, purpose, and significance). Their results support the effectiveness of the meaning making model in sustaining well-being for years after experiencing traumatic events. Overall, research on meaning-making coping is thriving, with countless studies incorporating a variety of measuring tools and coping strategies, particularly religious coping influence on the meaning making processes and adjustment.

3.2.2.2. Religion and coping

Religion and meaning concepts are closely connected and their relationship is described as "intimate and complex" (Park, 2005a). For many people, religion is their source of motivation, morals, and life goals as well as their guide to achieving those goals (Mansour, 2011; Park, 2005a). In other words, religion is central to individuals meaning systems, as it can help them understand the world and influence their global beliefs and goals (Park, 2005c). In difficult times, religion can be a source of comfort and support for many people (Pargament et al., 2011; Riegel & Unser, 2021). According to Abu-Raiya and Pargament (2015), religious coping is derived from religious practices, beliefs, emotions, and relationships. Thus, religious coping is defined as ''the use of religious beliefs or behaviours to facilitate problem-solving to prevent or alleviate the negative emotional consequences of stressful life circumstances." (Koenig et al., 1998, p. 513). Many religious practices and teachings are considered as resource to cope

with adversity, such as prayers, which might provide a sense of tranquillity (Abu-Raiya et al., 2019; Al-Hadethe et al., 2016; Riegel & Unser, 2021).

Significantly, religion can change the meaning of adversity by helping individuals find positive outcomes and a grater meaning for their adversity, such as part of God's plan and sign of his love or an opportunity for spiritual growth (Aflakseir & Coleman, 2011; Ahmadi et al., 2019; DeAngelis & Ellison, 2017; Park, 2005c). Several researchers claimed that religion is one of the main factors that facilitate meaning-making coping (Ahmadi et al., 2019; Riegel & Unser, 2021). Their argument has been supported by countless studies reporting the role of religion in the positive reinterpretation of stressful events, thus, showing the power of religion in transforming meaning (Ano & Vasconcelles, 2005; DeAngelis & Ellison, 2017; Park, 2005c). As Pargament (1997) described "when the sacred is seen working its will in life's events, what first seems random, nonsensical and tragic is changed into something else—an opportunity to appreciate life more fully, a chance to be with God, a challenge to help others grow, or a loving act meant to prevent something worse from taking place" (p. 223).

3.2.2.2.1. Religion theory and research

Research on religion and coping has been advanced by the pioneering work of Kenneth Pargament and his colleagues (Aflakseir & Coleman, 2011; DeAngelis & Ellison, 2017). According to Pargament et al. (1988) theory of religious coping, there are three ways in which religious coping is used: self-directing, deferring and collaborative (Aflakseir & Coleman, 2011; Pargament et al., 1988). The self-directing style refers to individuals' responsibility and efforts to problem solve, which might not be considered as religious coping style. However, it has been argued that individuals are given the freedom and resources to cope (Pargament et al., 1988). The deferring coping style refers to individuals passive role and deferring their responsibility of problem solving to God (Pargament et al., 1988). Finally, the most common

style is the collaborative coping, in which the individual and God work together in the process of problem solving (Aflakseir & Coleman, 2011; Pargament et al., 1988).

Furthermore, Pargament's coping framework highlighted several functions of religious coping including: (1) religious coping entails a search for meaning, intimacy with others, identity, control, anxiety-reduction, transformation, as well as the search for the sacred or spirituality itself. (2) religious coping is multi-modal: it involves behaviours, emotions, relationships, and cognitions. (3) Religious coping is a dynamic process that changes over time, context, and circumstances. (4) Religious coping is multivalent: it is a process that can lead to a positive or harmful outcomes, and thus, indicating that research on religious coping acknowledges both the positive and negative of religious life. (Pargament et al., 2011, p. 53). To sum up, Pargament's religious coping framework changed how religious coping was conceptualised and measured (Al-Hadethe et al., 2016).

There is substantial research evidence suggesting that there is a significate relationship between religion and coping with adversities, maintaining self-control, finding balance after stressful events and finding meaning in life (Ahmadi et al., 2019; Pargament et al., 2000; Sasaki & Kim, 2011; Szcześniak et al., 2020). However, religious coping can lead to maladaptive adjustment, which has been neglected in research (Abu-Raiya & Pargament, 2015; Abu-Raiya et al., 2019; Szcześniak et al., 2020). Early research measured religious coping using two approaches (Pargament et al., 2011; Pargament et al., 2000). In the first approach, religious coping was assessed based on the frequency of prayers or attending congregation in difficult times (Mohammadzadeh & Najafi, 2016; Pargament et al., 2000). However, this approach was criticised by Pargament et al. (2000), claiming that it is centred on the "religious channels" used during stressful events without providing clear information on how these channels are used to understand and cope with stress (Pargament et al., 2011, p. 53; Pargament et al., 2000).

Thus, it failed to provide important information about the role of religion in the coping process (Mohammadzadeh & Najafi, 2016; Pargament et al., 2011; Pargament et al., 2000).

In the second approach, religious coping items were embedded in general copping measurement scales, such as Lazarus and Folkman (1984) Ways of Coping Scale and the COPE scale by Carver et al. (1989). However, at best, this approach includes few religious coping strategies (Abu-Raiya & Pargament, 2015; Pargament et al., 2000). For instance, in the ways of coping scale, religious coping (e.g., I found new faith and I prayed) was grouped under the positive reappraisal category, which, as argued, often obscured the distinctive role of religion in the coping process (Abu-Raiya & Pargament, 2015; Folkman et al., 1986, p. 996; Pargament et al., 2011). In response to the limitations of these measurement tools, and the focus on the positive outcomes of religious coping, Pargament et al. (2000), developed the ROCPE scale to provide a comprehensive measurement of religious coping (Pargament et al., 2011; Pargament et al., 2000; Riegel & Unser, 2021).

The ROCPE scale was developed to 1) address the different functions of religion in the coping process, 2) represent how religious coping is cognitively, emotionally and behaviourally employed 3) reflect both the positive and negative religious coping strategies and 4) represent both problem-focused and emotion-focused coping strategies (Pargament et al., 2011, p. 54). Although the validity of the RCOPE scale has been established, it was scarcely used (Pargament et al., 2011). This is because the RCOPE scale was long and extensive containing 105 items, hence limiting its use in research (Pargament et al., 2011; Riegel & Unser, 2021). Accordingly, the brief RCOPE was developed containing 14 items, which focus on two categories; positive and negative religious coping (Abu-Raiya & Pargament, 2015; Pargament et al., 2011; Riegel & Unser, 2021). However, the modified categories, no longer represent the distinction of problem-focused and emotion-focused coping (Riegel & Unser, 2021). Based on their distinction, positive religious coping refers to a secure relationship with

God, a belief in a great meaning of life and a sense of spiritual connectedness with others (Abu-Raiya & Pargament, 2015, p. 25; Pargament et al., 2011). On the other hand, negative religious coping refers to spiritual conflicts, struggles to find meaning and a sense of doubt and guilt, which manifest as negative appraisals of God's power (e.g., feeling abandoned by God) (Pargament et al., 2011, p. 58). However, it is important to note that it is not necessarily for positive coping to result in adaptive outcomes and for negative religious coping to always manifest in maladaptive outcomes (Pargament et al., 2011; Riegel & Unser, 2021). Based on the religious coping framework, there are many factors that determine the effectiveness of a coping strategy these include the interplay between personal, situational and social factors and the measurement of well-being (Pargament et al., 2011). As indicated by Pargament et al. (2011), a " positive religious coping method that might be helpful in one situation or context might very well be more problematic in another" (p. 54). This has been illustrated in Lord and Gramling (2014) study which showed that some of the bereaved participants did not perceive negative religious coping as negative. As reported, over 15% of the participants considered the negative religious coping as the most helpful strategies when dealing with their loss (Lord & Gramling, 2014). Thus, it appears that negative religious coping might lead to a long term psychological adjustment and well-being (Pargament et al., 2011).

The brief RCOPE became widely used in studies investigating different populations including patients with chronic illness, wartime refugees and students (Abu-Raiya et al., 2019; Ai et al., 2003; Merrill et al., 2009; Sohail, 2020). Empirical studies suggested that positive religious coping is significantly connected to positive adjustment, optimism, resilience, and life satisfaction (Abu-Raiya et al., 2019; Ano & Vasconcelles, 2005; McIntire & Duncan, 2013). One the other hand, negative religious coping is linked to undesirable psychological adjustment (Abu-Raiya et al., 2019; Bockrath et al., 2021; Pargament et al., 2011). For instance, in order to investigate the relationship between religious coping and resiliency, McIntire and Duncan

(2013), conducted a study on college students experiencing daily stressors. The researchers used several measurement tools including the brief RCOPE scale, Connor-Davidson resilience scale (CD-RISC), and the brief college student hassles scale (BCSHS). Their result showed that negative religious coping was connected to psychological distress and low resilience level among the students who used negative religious coping. In contrast, the students who used positive religious coping to deal with daily stressors showed high levels of resilience. Although their results demonstrated the influence of positive religious coping on students' resilience, it also, indicated that it was not the only predictor of resilience.

Nevertheless, the researchers reported that religious coping appears to have an important role in the development of resilience (McIntire & Duncan, 2013). Notably, the authors draw attention to the context of the study; rural Western Kentucky, which emphasise religion. Hence, the participant tendency to use religious coping, especially positive religious coping (McIntire & Duncan, 2013). This reveals that using religious coping strategies depends on the extent to which religion is part of individuals lives and coping system. As argued by Park (2005c), "religion is far more likely to be used in the coping of those for whom religion is a highly salient aspect of their understanding of self and world than in the coping of those who are less devout." (p. 711).

3.2.2.2.2. Religious struggle

Recently, many researchers shifted their interest focusing on negative religious coping or as commonly known religious struggle (R/S) (Abu-Raiya et al., 2016; Bockrath et al., 2021; Pargament et al., 2011). Religious struggle has been defined as "tension, strain, and conflict about sacred matters" (Hart et al., 2020, p. 2). Religious struggle can take three forms: supernatural, which refers to struggles with supernatural forces (e.g., the deity or the demonic), interpersonal struggle, which is centred on conflicts with other people about religious issues

and intrapersonal struggle which refers to tensions with oneself about morals, doubts about religion and ultimate life meaning (Abu-Raiya et al., 2016, p. 1265; Bockrath et al., 2021). According to Bockrath et al. (2021), religious struggle can be the primary cause of negative psychological outcomes and disrupting adaptive adjustment. However, Pargament and Lomax (2013) suggest that there are two types of r/s; primary religious struggle, which leads to psychological distress and secondary religious struggle which is triggered by traumatic events, such as, the diagnosis of serious illness (Pargament & Lomax, 2013, p. 28).

Numerous studies reported negative psychological outcomes of r/s including depression (Abu-Raiya et al., 2016; Ano & Vasconcelles, 2005), anxiety (McConnell et al., 2006) low quality of life (Reynolds et al., 2016) and suicidal thoughts (Exline et al., 2000; Rosmarin et al., 2013). However, as illustrated earlier, several studies have also suggested that r/s might elicit positive psychological outcomes, such as growth (Hart et al., 2020; Lord & Gramling, 2014). For instance, Hart et al. (2020) argued for alternative outcomes for r/s (i.e., growth) other than psychological distress. They maintained that many religious texts described growth as part of religious struggle, which all the great religious figures went through in their "hero's journey" (Exline et al., 2017; Hart et al., 2020, p. 2). Furthermore, the authors argued that several theorists described struggle including religious struggle as an important asset to growth. Particularly, referring to Erikson (1998) theory of development, which suggests that every stage of life consist of struggles and developmental tasks that shape individuals personality and behaviour (Hart et al., 2020). There are several studies that reported growth as a result of religious struggle in different populations, such as college students and survivors of natural disasters (Desai & Pargament, 2015; Huang et al., 2011; Zeligman et al., 2020). Nevertheless, the literature indicates that studies on religious struggle connection to growth have yielded mixed results, whereas many studies consistently reported the negative psychological outcomes of religious struggle (Bockrath et al., 2021; Exline et al., 2017; Hart et al., 2020).

3.2.2.2.3. Religious coping in diverse cultures

In the last decade research on religious coping has been growing. However, most of the studies focused on Christian population, neglecting other religions, particularly, Islam (Abu-Raiya et al., 2019; Aflakseir & Coleman, 2011; Al-Hadethe et al., 2016). The neglect and the scarcity of research had been criticised, given that Islam is one of the largest religions in the world (Abu-Raiya & Pargament, 2011; Sohail, 2020). It has been argued that the insufficient research was caused to some extent by the lack of reliable and valid measurement for mental health research (Abu-Raiya & Hill, 2014). Nevertheless, research on Islamic coping has gained interest, with more studies investigating the implications of Islamic coping on well-being and developing new measurements that reflect the faith (Abu-Raiya & Hill, 2014; Abu-Raiya et al., 2019). Research on Islamic coping have been conducted through several approaches (Abu-Raiya & Hill, 2014; Abu-Raiya & Pargament, 2011).

The first approach was called "the birds-eye perspective" describing the studies that used single-item index to measure religiousness in Muslim populations (e.g., what is the level of religiosity in general? or how religious are you?) (Abu-Raiya & Pargament, 2011, p. 94). Studies using this approach reported the positive association between religiousness and life satisfaction, happiness, optimism, and high level of well-being. In addition, their results suggested that religiousness was negatively associated with depression and anxiety (Abdel-Khalek, 2009; Abu-Raiya & Hill, 2014; Abu-Raiya & Pargament, 2011). In general, the results of this type of studies seemed to be consistent in reporting the positive outcomes of religiousness, which highlights the key role of Islam on its followers (Abu-Raiya & Hill, 2014). Although the single-item approach might be efficient and feasible for large population studies, it is not free of limitations (Abdel-Khalek, 2007; Abu-Raiya & Hill, 2014).

Abu-Raiya and Pargament (2011) described the outcomes of the approach as providing a "birds-eye view" of the religion traditions and leading to incomplete and unclear view of Islam and religion in general. Furthermore, the authors maintained that studies using single-item approach did not answer several important questions, such as " what aspects of Islam are people responding to when they assess their own religiousness, and are individuals responding to the same dimensions of Islam when they engage in these self-ratings?" (Abu-Raiya & Pargament, 2011, p. 95). There are other questions proposed by the researchers, but the key point of their argument highlight the limitations of the single-item approach, despite the rich findings (Abu-Raiya & Hill, 2014; Abu-Raiya & Pargament, 2011). Given these points, a multi-item approach is needed to assess the complex relationship between different dimensions of Islam and psychological well-being, which potentially might provide a clear understanding of the phenomena (Abu-Raiya & Hill, 2014).

The second approach was termed the "derivative approach" by Abu-Raiya and Pargament (2011) describing the studies that used pre-existing scales. That is, several measurement tools that had been validated and used on Christian populations were modified to measure religiousness in Muslim populations (Abu-Raiya & Hill, 2014; Abu-Raiya & Pargament, 2011; Al-Hadethe et al., 2016). This strand of research, mostly used a modified versions of the religious orientation scale by Allport and Ross (1967) and Pargament et al. (2000) RCOPE scale. The research reported similar findings to the previous studies mentioned above, particularly, individuals relying more on positive religious coping, which contributed to well-being (Abu-Raiya & Hill, 2014; Aflakseir & Coleman, 2011). In contrast, using negative religious coping leads to psychological distress (Abu-Raiya & Pargament, 2011; Aflakseir & Coleman, 2011). Most of these studies focused on positive religious coping strategies and their correlation to favourable psychological outcomes. (Abu-Raiya & Pargament, 2011). Consequently, neglecting research on the use and outcomes of negative religious coping, with

exception of few studies (Abu-Raiya & Pargament, 2011; Abu Raiya et al., 2008; Aflakseir & Coleman, 2009; Khan & Watson, 2006).

The derivative approach showed that scales developed for Christian population can be used for measuring Muslim religiousness, and revealed to some extent "the intersection of psychology and Islam" (Abu-Raiya & Hill, 2014, p. 23). However, it has been argued that the measurement tools represent the Christian faith and western culture definition of the faith. (Abu-Raiya & Hill, 2014; Abu-Raiya & Pargament, 2011; Al-Hadethe et al., 2016). Thus, several salient factors of Islam have been ignored, such as pilgrimage and certain ethics (Abu-Raiya & Hill, 2014). Furthermore, in their study on Muslim Pakistani, Khan and Watson (2004), revealed that items in the extrinsic-social orientation scale were offensive to their participants. Given these points, the approach was described as biased, insensitive to Islamic cultures and failed to capture that uniqueness of the religion (Abu-Raiya & Hill, 2014; Abu-Raiya & Pargament, 2011). This also highlights the need for measurements that represent the Islamic faith and cultures.

The final approach was termed the "Islamic-based perspective" by Abu-Raiya and Pargament (2011, p. 98), in which they examined several measurement tools that were developed based on Islamic teaching and beliefs. Abu-Raiya and Hill (2014) identified 16 Islamic measures, such as the Religiosity of Islam Scale (RoIS), and The Psychological Measure of Islamic Religiousness (PMIR) (Abu Raiya et al., 2008; Jana-Masri & Priester, 2007). The scales were examined based on their validity, reliability, theoretical clarity, sample representation and generalizability (Abu-Raiya & Hill, 2014; Hill, 2013). After a thorough evaluation of the assessment tools, the authors concluded that some of the measurements were created on a sound theoretical basis, but they were not operationalised on a clear Islamic concepts (Abu-Raiya & Hill, 2014). Furthermore, all the developed scales showed adequate reliability, however, the authors questioned some of the high reported reliability, attributing

the high values to items redundancy (Abu-Raiya & Hill, 2014; Abu-Raiya & Pargament, 2011). Finally, despite the validity reported in some scales, many measurement scales have yet to show strong and inconsistent validity scores (Abu-Raiya & Hill, 2014; Abu-Raiya & Pargament, 2011). This because many of the scales have been tested in samples other than the initial validation sample and the instruments were mostly used on convenient samples (Abu-Raiya & Hill, 2014; Abu-Raiya & Pargament, 2011). Specifically, most of the sample were recruited from one location (e.g., Iran, U.S and Algeria) and most are following a specific sect of Islam (e.g., Shiite) or represent specific sample (e.g., college students) (Abu-Raiya & Hill, 2014; Abu-Raiya & Pargament, 2011). The authors evaluation highlighted an important issue (i.e., location and sect of Islam), which draw attention to the fact that Islam is practiced and viewed differently across cultures, geographical location, political climate and history (Abu-Raiya et al., 2019). Although all the reviewed scales seemed to be lacking in some respects, the PMIR scales was positively perceived.

The PIMR is a multi-item scale that measures different dimensions of Islam, which was developed through three stages to provide a reliable and valid measurement of Islamic religiousness and mental health (Abu-Raiya & Hill, 2014; Abu-Raiya & Pargament, 2011; Abu Raiya et al., 2008). The first stage was focused on identifying Islamic dimensions that could be relevant to Muslims physical and mental health. This was accomplished through a review of the Islamic literature and the psychology of religion in general, and 25 in-depth interviews to Muslims from the U.S and Israel (Abu-Raiya & Pargament, 2011; Abu Raiya et al., 2008). The outcomes of the first stage were used to develop the PIMR scale and conduct a pilot study on 64 Muslims from Israel and the U.S (Abu-Raiya & Pargament, 2011; Abu Raiya et al., 2008). In the final stage was focused on testing the psychometric properties of the PIMR on a large sample of international Muslims (Abu-Raiya & Hill, 2014; Abu Raiya et al., 2008).

The PIMR consists of three coping subscales: Islamic positive coping (IPRC) which includes 7 items (e.g., when I face a problem in life, I read the Holy Qur'an to find consolation), a 6-item scale that represents Islamic religious struggle (IRS, e.g., I find some aspects of Islam to be unfair), and a 3 items subscale for Punishing Allah reappraisal (PAR, e.g., believe I am being punished by Allah for bad actions I did) (Abu-Raiya & Pargament, 2015, p. 26; Abu Raiya et al., 2008). Unlike other Islamic measurements, the PIMR have been used in several studies (Abu-Raiya & Hill, 2014; Abu-Raiya & Pargament, 2015). For instance, Khan et al. (2012), found that IPRC was connected to positive psychological outcomes, which seemed to be consistent with literature on positive religious coping (Abu-Raiya & Pargament, 2015; Abu-Raiya et al., 2019). Overall, research on Islamic religiousness is lacking, prompting several researchers to call for further research in different contexts and exploring the implications of negative coping among Muslims (Abu-Raiya & Pargament, 2011; Sohail, 2020)

3.4. Conclusion

This chapter started with an overview defining concepts of teacher stress and burnout. Following this was an examination of the emerging research psychology during and after 1970s, which introduced several overlapping constructs. I then introduced and summarised key research findings related to two commonly explored constructs of persistence: grit, and coping. In the following chapter, I introduce the construct of resilience, and provide my rationale as to why resilience as construct provides a comprehensive view of how teachers in general and language teachers in particular survive and thrive in the profession.

Chapter 4 Resilience Theory and Research

4.1. Introduction

According to Hazel (2018) " resilience is a highly malleable, and increasingly ubiquitous, idea that has tended to be shaped by its applications to a wide variety of contexts and disciplines. It has also undergone, and continues to undergo, phases of theoretical and empirical refinement form." (p. 224). Certainly, since it was introduced, resilience has undergone significant waves of research development, which have resulted in various definitions of resilience and emphasis on either resilience as a personal trait or by understanding it as function of the person x environment (Gu, 2018; Leroux, 2018; Masten, 2011, 2018; Pangallo et al., 2015; Rutter, 2012; Ungar, 2011). In addition, the development seemed to expand to the shift from the sole focus on positive adaptation to the possibility of maladaptation (Hiver & Dörnyei, 2015a; Kostoulas & Lammerer, 2020; Richardson, 2002; Rutter, 2012). In the following I begin with an overview on resilience theory and research. I then present and discuss research on teachers' resilience in general and language teachers in particular. Finally, I end this chapter with a conclusion that highlight my understanding of resilience.

4.2. An overview of resilience research

> *"Resilience does not come from rare or special qualities, but from the operations of an ordinary human." (Masten et al., 2009, p. 129)*

Resilience is perhaps the most comprehensive construct that shows the psychological qualities that help individuals to effectively function and survive despite extreme circumstances (Hiver, 2016). Over the past two decades, research on resilience has mainly focused on children and victims of trauma (G. J. Brunetti, 2006; Day, 2014; Gu & Li, 2013). The concept of resilience was based on two dimensions, the experience of significant adversity and positive

adaptation (Luthar et al., 2000). The first studies investigated the children who appeared to have the capacity to thrive in hardship environments, particularly focusing on the characteristics which distinguished those "resilient" children from their counterparts who failed to thrive (Ainsworth & Oldfield, 2019; Howard et al., 1999). Within these developmental studies, resilience was perceived as a combination of several personal attributes, such as self-esteem, self-efficacy, resourcefulness and motivation, that enabled individuals to survive and bounce back from difficult circumstances (Aronson, 2001; Day, 2007; Masten et al., 1990; Richardson, 2002). Consequently, the first wave of resilience research was criticized for its person-focused methods, which, as described, limit our understanding and offer to some extent, wrong assumptions about the phenomena; that is implying that there is something special about resilient children by describing them as "*invulnerable,* or *invincible"*(Masten, 2001, p. 227; Ungar, 2012). Herein lies the deficits of these studies, which failed to acknowledge the available resources to children at risk and the social environment in which development takes place (Schoon, 2012).

The second wave of research was influenced by the ground-breaking work of Rutter (1987), who postulate that shaping children's environment reduces risk factors, prevents the negative outcomes of risk factors, develops adequate self-esteem, and offers opportunities for development (Ungar, 2012). From this perspective, resilience was conceptualised as a process influenced by internal and external factors for successful adaptation to risks (Hiver, 2016). Thus, resilience was viewed as a dynamic protective process to positive adaption rather than an individual trait that predicts coping with adversity (Ungar, 2011, 2012). Researchers began to use variable-focused methods to examine several elements in children's environment (e.g., relationships, school, poverty and parents with mental illness) that foster or inhibit resilience (Hiver, 2016; Masten, 2001; Ungar, 2011, 2012). Within these developmental studies, the main objective was to identify factors that foster resilience; however, researchers were also interested

in finding why and how some children are able to achieve positive outcomes despite difficult events (Masten et al., 1990).

Through their focus on the underlying resilient processes, researchers started to study how to implement explicit or implicit intervention and prevention strategies to increase resources and assets in children's environment, which in return counterbalance the effect of risk factors over protective factors, thus helping children overcome adversity and achieve resilience over time (Luthar et al., 2000; Masten, 2001). In this phase, resilience research has considerably developed in several aspects, particularly in recognising the interactions between individuals and their environment and the use of variable-focused designs, which, as suggested, proposed multiple pathways to resilience and the possibility of negative outcomes or maladaptation (Masten, 2011; Ungar, 2011). Despite the notable progress, some have argued that although research has acknowledged that assets, risk, and protective factors may influence each other, it was rarely investigated how exactly they influence each other on different levels and how they may affect the bi-directional nature of resilience trajectory (Masten, 2001; Masten, 2011; Richardson, 2002).

Surprisingly, although many have emphasised the interaction between the environment and the individual in the adaptational process, the bulk of resilience research was still centred on the individual rather than the individual x environment (Ungar et al., 2013).Since then, the construct of resilience has generated considerable research interest, which has shifted the focus from the description of resilience as personal quality to the complex process of resilience that is ''a dynamic within a social system of interrelationships influenced by the interaction between the individual and the environment'' (Castro et al., 2010; Day, 2007; Gu & Day, 2013, p. 290; Gu & Li, 2013). From this perspective, resilience is recognised as a multidimensional process that includes several protective factors which help individuals overcome adversity, originating

from either personal traits or environmental resources such as support from friends or community (Castro et al., 2010; Gu & Day, 2007; C. F. Mansfield et al., 2012).

Therefore, resilience is no longer assumed as a quality that is reserved for the "extraordinary few"; instead, it is acknowledged as a quality that can be learned and developed by the "ordinary many" (Neenan, 2018, p. 7). According to Neenan (2018), resilience or "routine resilience", as the author defines it from a cognitive behaviour perspective, is a combination of cognitive, emotional and behavioural responses to the changeability of daily life. Furthermore, Neenan (2018) suggests that resilient individuals can pursue their goals and what they perceive as important, "however slowly or falteringly" through an "active process of self-righting and growth." (Higgins, 1994, p. 1). Research on resilience continued to expand into different fields other than psychology, hence, becoming a multidisciplinary construct with a growing body of research in educational contexts (Day, 2014; Esquivel et al., 2011; van Der Werff et al., 2013).

4.3. Teacher resilience

Although research on teacher resilience might be considered at infancy compared to research on children and adolescent resilience, there is growing research that investigates teacher resilience across different disciplines and contexts (Gu, 2018). Emerging evidence confirms that resilience in adults is similar to that in children and is not only associated with personality traits (Gu & Day, 2013; Luthar & Brown, 2007). Rather, it is "a social construction" (Ungar, 2004, p. 342) that is influenced by multidimensional factors in different contexts (Ungar, 2004; Ungar, 2011). Unanimously, scholars agree on some of the key aspects of resilience, which indicates that resilience presupposes the presence of significate adversity threatening the status quo and is thus a positive response to such conditions (Day & Gu, 2014; Gu & Day, 2007). However, several studies have argued that while adversity is central to

resilience adaptation, there is no need for such conditions to be catastrophic (Kostoulas & Lammerer, 2020).

Empirical studies have indicated that persistent low-level stressors, such as the ones that teachers encounter in their everyday professional lives, contribute to the development of resilient qualities (Davis et al., 2009; Gu & Day, 2007; Kostoulas & Lammerer, 2020). In this regard, different theoretical perspective has been used to understand the nature of teacher resilience emerging with several resilience models and definitions (Castro et al., 2010; Gu & Day, 2013). For instance, some approaches focused on certain teacher qualities and skills which contribute to the development of resilience, such as self-efficacy (Day, 2008; Hong, 2012; Mansfield et al., 2016), strong intrinsic motivation (C. F. Mansfield et al., 2012; Sinclair, 2008) perseverance (Yost, 2006) and the ability to solve problems and seek assistance (Castro et al., 2010). From a social-ecological approach, researchers examined the environments that teachers work and live in and their effect on their capacity to be resilient (Gu, 2018). Others have conceptualised resilience as an outcome of successful adaptation to adversity which manifests through well-being, commitment, professional growth and satisfaction (Beltman, 2015; Zautra et al., 2009).

Overall, resilience research is continuously developing, with more studies examining teacher resilience at different career stages, primarily focusing on pre-service education to promote resilience skills and strategies (C. Mansfield et al., 2014; Mansfield & Gu, 2019). Furthermore, as indicated by Wosnitza (2018), the next wave of research will focus on the professional learning experiences that promote teacher resilience. Indeed, such advancement can enhance our understanding of teacher resilience, especially language teachers. This is because language teachers have their unique stressors that are particular to their subject, such as language anxiety (Horwitz, 1996), short-term and unstable contracts, working in foreign countries with different cultural backgrounds and unfavourable working conditions (Gregersen

et al., 2021; MacIntyre et al., 2019a). In other words, language teaching can lead to several challenges which, compared to teaching other subjects, might be considered as severe (Macintyre et al., 2019b); hence, the need for resilient qualities.

4.3.1. Qualities of teachers' resilience

Research indicates that there are three distinctive characteristics of teacher resilience (Day & Gu, 2014; Gu, 2018). First, resilience is one of the qualities that is associated with being a teacher, which is not only shaped by the "more proximal individual school or classroom context" but also by "the broader professional work context"; hence, resilience is a *context-specific* (Beltman et al., 2011, p. 190). Certainly, the literature consistently emphasises the central role of the teaching context, which can either promote or hinder teachers' capacity to be resilient, committed and effective (Beltman, 2015; Bruce Johnson et al., 2016; Day & Hong, 2016; Gu & Day, 2013). In fact, it has been suggested that "schools context shape *why* and *how* many teachers continue to commit their time, energy and passion to a profession which can make them feel a sense of invisibility and powerlessness." (Gu, 2018, p. 19). This is illustrated in the abundance of studies exploring these questions, which we may classify into two sections 1) studies that examine contexts that promote and sustain teachers' resilience and 2) studies that examine contexts that challenge teachers' resilience These points will be further discussed in the following sections to avoid overlap and repetition (4.4.1.1, 4.4.1.2).

Second, resilience is also *role specific* in the sense that it is connected to teachers' strongly-held beliefs and vocational commitment to the profession (Day & Gu, 2014). In his work with inner-city high school teachers, G. J. Brunetti (2006) defines teacher resilience as "a quality that enables teachers to maintain their commitment to teaching and teaching practices despite challenging conditions and recurring setbacks" (p. 813). Indeed, teachers' ethical beliefs and moral purposes are found to enable them to maintain their resilience throughout their career by

providing them with important emotional, spiritual and intellectual strengths (Day, 2004; Gu & Day, 2013; Palmer, 2000). In other words, teaching is more than just a job; it is an *inner calling* for many teachers to find their motivation and strength to achieve personal significance (Hansen, 1995). Several studies have shown that teacher motivation and self-efficacy are the most important personal factors that influence teachers' resilient qualities (Gu, 2018; Mansfield et al., 2016).

4.3.1.1. Teacher motivation and resilience

Before I begin the discussion of the relationship between teachers' resilience and motivation, it is important to note that the focus will be only on the motivational theories that are most referred to in resilience research. That is, a brief overview will be given of the named motivational theories to inform the discussion and its connection to teacher's resilience.

The current literature describes teacher motivation as a complex process given that teachers perform multiple and diverse tasks that impact their psychological functioning (Fernet et al., 2008). Among the different frameworks that have been used to understand teacher motivation both in mainstream educational psychology and with the field of SLA are self-determination theory and the intrinsic vs extrinsic motivational paradigm (Ryan & Deci, 2000b). The distinction of motivated behaviour as intrinsic vs extrinsic is well-known in motivation theories (Dörnyei, 2011). Intrinsic motivation is "choice behaviour, which is exhibited for no apparent external reward." (Shapira, 1976, p. 253). In this case, teachers' intrinsic motivation is exhibited in altruism, intellectual stimulation, the desire to help children and professional and personal development (Sinclair, 2008). In contrast, extrinsic motivation refers to "behaviour directed toward some external reward such as money." (Shapira, 1976, p. 253).

The intrinsic vs extrinsic motivational paradigm was further developed and elaborated by Deci and Ryan in 1985, which they named self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1992). The theory suggests that individuals are active agents in their social environment; they have integrative tendencies toward development and challenge mastery (Ryan & Deci, 2000b). Based on these theory, the quality of motivation is determined by the satisfaction of three fundamental psychological needs1) autonomy refers to the need to experience and express the authentic self as the source and regulator of action, 2) competence, which describes the need to be effective in one's social environment and 3) relatedness, which refers to the need to feel a sense of connectedness and value with a community or group (Ryan, 1995; Ryan & Deci, 2000a; Ryan & Deci, 2002).

In a sense, individuals' performance and persistence are determined by the extent to which these three needs are satisfied; in other words, as long as the psychological needs are supported and fulfilled, individuals' " natural tendencies toward growth will emerge, leading to enduring intrinsic engagement, vitality, and wellness"(Koole et al., 2019, p. 18). Ryan and Deci (2000a) emphasised the role of the social environment, indicating that the interaction between individuals and the different environmental elements can either sustain or thwart his or her intrinsic motivation. With regards to resilience, several studies have reported close association between resilience and the type of motivation for choosing teaching as a profession (Flores, 2006; Gu & Day, 2007). In their 4-year study of 300 teachers, Gu and Day (2007) discussed their findings of 3 resilient teachers in different careers stages (e.g., early, mid and late) and maintained that teachers' "inner motivation to serve called them into teaching." (Gu & Day, 2007, p. 1310). More importantly, they claimed that teachers' internal motivation and values, that is, intrinsic motivation "fuelled their capacities to exercise emotional strengths and professional competence and subsequently provided them with the resilience which enabled them to meet the challenges of the changing environments in which they worked." (Gu & Day,

2007, p. 1311). Investigating the development of teachers and their professional identity during their first two years in the profession, Flores (2006) found that the amount and diversity of the tasks overwhelmed all teachers who were forced into "learning while doing" because they lacked guidance and support (Flores, 2006, p. 2047). However, based on the study reports, two teachers seemed to maintain their enthusiasm and optimism regardless of their negative views on the school culture and management. According to Flores (2006), these two teachers had a strong intrinsic motivation which was displayed in their choice of the profession and willingness to help children. Given these points, it seems that despite all the difficulties and challenges in the school environment, some teachers were able sustain their motivation and commitment to the profession, which as reported highlights the significance of intrinsic motivation as a personal component to teachers' resilience.

4.3.1.2. Teacher self-efficacy and resilience

Self-efficacy is a theoretical framework grounded in social cognitive theory (Li et al., 2019). The concept was introduced by Albert Bandura emphasising individuals beliefs in their abilities to perform at a certain level of attainment (Bandura, 1997). Efficacy beliefs determine how individuals perceive environmental opportunities and obstacles which affect their choice of activity, expended effort, and their perseverance when confronting obstacles (Bandura, 1997). According to the theory, difficult tasks are either perceived as a personal threat for individuals with (low self-efficacy) which is often accompanied with negative emotions or as an opportunity to improve for high achievement (high self-efficacy) and thus accompanied with positive emotions (Bandura, 1997). In fact, it has been suggested that individuals with high self-efficacy are able to choose challenging tasks and set high goals for themselves (Sexton & Tuckman, 1991; Zimmerman & Bandura, 1994). In the educational context, research has shown that self-efficacy has an important effect on teachers' commitment, motivation, ability to cope with job stress and recover from setbacks (Bandura, 1997; Klassen & Chiu, 2010;

Morgan, 2011; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). In other words, teachers with low self-efficacy tend to struggle with ineffective teaching practices and classroom management, which may cause negative emotions such as stress and burnout; eventually causing them to leave the profession (Jepson & Forrest, 2006). Contrastingly, teachers with high self-efficacy tend have more confidence and a stronger belief in their abilities (Li et al., 2019; Stipek, 2002). Such teachers are able to work through difficulties, employ different teaching strategies, and exert considerable effort to help struggling students and face challenges (Bandura, 2000; Ross et al., 1996; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001).

On a similar note, research has found a close relationship between teachers' self-efficacy and resilience (Benard, 2004 ; Fernandes et al., 2019; Francisco Peixoto et al., 2018) Several studies suggested that high levels of professional and personal efficacy influence teachers' well-being, resilience and commitment to the profession (Fernandes et al., 2019; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). To sum up, it can be argued that strong intrinsic motivation and high levels of self-efficacy impact teachers' resilience empowering them to overcome teaching challenges and stressful work conditions (Fernandes et al., 2019; Li et al., 2019; Morgan, 2011). According to Day and Gu (2014), resilient teachers are not only survivors because they "do more than merely get through difficult emotional experiences, hanging on to inner equilibrium by a thread"(p. 38), but also, they appeared to have the capacity for growth and fulfilment in their pursuit of meaningful goals (i.e., personal and professional) (Gu & Li, 2013; Higgins, 1994)

Lastly, according to Day and Gu (2014), for teachers', resilience is more than the capacity to quickly and efficiently *bounce back* from challenging events. In addition to the uncertainties and pressures of their daily lives, which requires 'everyday resilience', teachers' encounter many challenges throughout their profession(Day & Gu, 2014). Gu and Li (2013), for example, provided empirical evidence in their study, which was conducted on 568 primary and

secondary school teachers in Beijing. The study findings showed that although teachers' accounts of the challenges that they faced throughout their personal and professional lives might be different in nature, they, in fact, might have experienced the same intensity of the emotional, intellectual and physical efforts required to manage such difficulties (Gu & Li, 2013). Thus, being a resilient teacher is not only associated with the ability to bounce back or quickly recover from extremely difficult experiences but also, the "the capacity to maintain equilibrium and a sense of commitment and agency in the everyday worlds in which teachers teach" (Gu and Day, 2013, p. 26).

4.4. Models of resilience research

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, research on resilience have been expanding and emerging with several models to understand the process and development of resilience. The models that will be introduced are the social-ecological model, the relational resilience model, and the complexity-informed model in L2 context. These models will be discussed in a way that it explores the nature of teacher resilience, thus referring in some parts to studies and concept that have been connected to teacher resilience. All studies are rooted in the context of mainstream education- where studies are specific to SLA it will be explicitly highlighted.

4.4.1. The social-ecological view of resilience

The current approaches that investigate teachers' resilience have been developed and grouped based on their interest in the whole person or certain variables (Masten, 2011). A person-focused approach to studying resilience is mainly concerned with identifying the characteristics of resilient individuals or groups and comparing them to non-resilient individuals who failed to adapt in a similar high-risk environment (Masten, 2001). On the other hand, a variable-focused approach often relies on multivariate statistical analysis to examine and identify the links between several variables of interest and the influence they may have on

protective functioning (Masten, 2001; Masten, 2011). Despite their limitations (see 4.2), both approaches have their strength and validity in resilience research leading several researchers to employ both (Masten, 2001; Masten, 2011).

In the educational context, resilience has been conceptualized and studied from different theoretical viewpoints, therefore employing different approaches to investigation (Beltman Susan & Mansfield, 2018). For instance, some researchers' priorities the role of the individual such as (Pretsch et al., 2012, p. 323) study which was focused on teachers "resilient personality" and "resilience as a personal resource". In comparison, it seems that most studies tend to use an ecological or contextual lens to examine teacher resilience (Beltman Susan & Mansfield, 2018). As an advocate of the interactionist perspective, Ungar (2012) developed and expanded the approach drawing on Bronfenbrenner (1979) ecological theory which he termed as "social-ecological". In essence, Bronfenbrenner's theory explains the interaction and the influence of different environmental systems on human development throughout their life span (Gu, 2018; Ungar, 2011). Briefly, the theory describes the four-level systems as:

1- Microsystems: includes individuals' interactions and activities in the immediate environment (e.g. family, friends and teachers) (Ungar et al., 2013).

2- Mesosystem: includes the interactions between the multiple microsystems such as the coordination between parents and schoolteachers', which as argued: determine the possibility and the quality of supportive resources that significantly affect individuals' development (Ungar, 2011; Wang et al., 2014).

3- Exosystems: includes the interactions of microsystems (e.g. parents) with institutions and policies which indirectly affect the individual (Ettekal & Mahoney, 2017).

4- Macrosystem: includes religion, laws and cultural belfies and practices which influence the interactions and development within and between all systems as well as providing

individuals with opportunities for positive adaptation to adversity (Ettekal & Mahoney, 2017; Ungar, 2011; Ungar et al., 2013).

Another important level that was put forward by Bronfenbrenner (1986) in his later work is the chrono-system level. The time aspect involves the physiological changes that occur to individuals throughout their life span such as ageing, as well as the changes in the external environment that signify transition or developmental change (e.g., school entry, retirement)(Schoon, 2012; Ungar et al., 2013). Applying Bronfenbrenner's theory to children resilience research Ungar et al. (2008) define resilience as "both the capacity of individuals to navigate their way to the psychological, social, cultural, and physical resources that sustain their well being, and their capacity individually and collectively to negotiate for these resources to be provided and experienced in culturally meaningful ways." (p. 225). According to Ungar (2012), the process of resilience involves two central components; navigation and negotiation. Navigation refers to individuals' agency to navigate the available resources in their environment, such as education or experiences that bring positive outcomes (e.g., self-esteem). However, these resources must be provided and accessible by the community (e.g., family, school, and government).

The process of negotiation is required by the individual and groups to ensure that resources are provided and available in meaningful and supportive ways (Ungar et al., 2013; Ungar et al., 2008). In other words, resilience is a developmental and socially facilitated process which is reflected in the interaction between the individual and environment with more emphasis on the environment rather than the individual factors to promote recovery and well-being in the face of adversity (Gu, 2018; Ungar, 2012). From this perspective, Ungar (2012) maintains that " to understand resilience we must explore the context in which the individual experiences adversity, making resilience first a quality of the broader social and physical ecology and second a quality of the individual" (p. 27). In the educational context, the social-ecological

framework has been endorsed by many researchers arguing that it is required to better understand the complex world of teaching "in which teachers' both influence and are influenced by their professional worlds", its, therefore, enables researchers to examine how teachers' sustain their capacity for resilience and commitment to the profession (Beltman Susan & Mansfield, 2018, p. 5; Gu, 2018).

Following Gu (2018) interpretation of the social-ecological approach to teacher resilience, particularly, using the three characterises of teacher resilience (see 4.3.1) which seems congruent with social-ecological perspective (i.e., person x environment) (Beutel et al., 2019; Entesari et al., 2020). Teacher resilience is both context-specific and role-specific; it is therefore immensely affected by the school context including relationships, policies, practices, and school culture (Day & Gu, 2014; Gu, 2018; Johnson & Down, 2013). The current literature indicates that most of teachers' resilience studies have been conducted on teacher education programs and novice teachers (Mansfield et al., 2016).

This was motivated to counterbalance the effect of teachers burnout, and attrition as well as understanding why some teachers' thrived and sustained their commitment to teaching (Collie & Perry, 2019; Gu & Day, 2013; Hong, 2012; Leroux & Théorêt, 2014b). Accordingly, many researchers and administrators diligently investigated how to improve teacher education and school contexts to promote resilience and quality retention (C. Mansfield et al., 2012; Mansfield et al., 2016; Morettini et al., 2019; Morgan, 2011). Research has identified personal and contextual challenges that teachers including pre-service and novice teachers' encounter in their training and first years of teaching; these include; heavy workload, classroom management, lack of support and resources, isolation, school context and role conflicts (Fantilli & McDougall, 2009; Hong, 2012; C. Mansfield et al., 2012; Mansfield et al., 2016; R Richards et al., 2018; Yuan, 2016).

4.4.1.1. Challenges to teacher resilience

4.4.1.1.1. The contexts of pre-service and in-service teachers'

Teacher education has gained considerable attention in the literature because it is believed to be the first stage in the development of committed, motived and resilient teachers (Doney, 2017; Mansfield et al., 2016; Papatraianou et al., 2018). Indeed, many scholars have emphasized on teacher education to be " relevant, rigorous and responsive", to address the context related challenges and develop teachers' resilience skills and strategies (C. F. Mansfield et al., 2012). According to Mansfield et al. (2016), the main goal of teacher education is to develop high quality teachers' who are able to experience job satisfaction, maintain their motivation, and commitment to the profession throughout the years. Although this outcome might be true for some teachers', several studies have shown that one of the reasons why many teachers leave the profession is because they were inadequately prepared to confront the teaching reality (Demetriou et al., 2009; Mansfield et al., 2016).

The gap between teacher education programs and professional teaching experience has been widely documented (Correa et al., 2015). However, several studies suggested that there are also gaps and conflicts between teacher education courses and training contexts (Goldstein, 2005; Mansfield et al., 2016). This has been attributed to the pedagogical beliefs that student teachers acquired from their previous learning experience and education programs (Bruner, 1996; Goldstein, 2005). For instance, Legard Larson and Kalmbach Phillips (2005) discussed the ideological conflict between the teacher education program and the training school context for a pre-service literacy teacher. The study revealed that the school's authoritative discourse of scripted reading programs collided and interfered with the comprehensive reading

instruction of the university, not to mention that it also contradicted pre-service teacher understanding of reading instruction and emerging identity.

In another study, Smagorinsky et al. (2004) found that the traditional school context, where a student teacher trained, conflicted with the university constructivist program. They claimed that the mimetic approach (i.e., learning to teach by imitating teachers' methods) adopted by the mentoring teacher was restrictive, providing little room for the student teacher to apply her constructive knowledge and improve her teaching. Furthermore, during their training period, pre-service teachers are expected to develop relationships with their mentors and students, adapt to classroom routines and cope with unique teaching demands (Beutel et al., 2019). Consequently, students teachers experience a range of negative emotions such as stress, frustration and disillusionment because of the "contrast between idealised images and realities of the profession" (Goldstein, 2005, p. 7). This, as reported, might affect their decision to stay in the profession (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007).

In the transitional period from student-teacher to an in-service teacher, substantial evidence has described the teaching challenges and emphasised on the reality shock that novice teachers confront as they assume the responsibilities of their role (Cook, 2009; Fantilli & McDougall, 2009; Farrell, 2003; Hong et al., 2018; Johnson & Down, 2013). As a shared experience between student teachers and novice teachers, reality shock is defined as "the collapse of the missionary ideals formed during training as a result of the confrontation with the harsh and rude reality of everyday classroom life" (Veenman, 1984, p. 143). Although both student teachers and novice teachers experience the reality shock of teaching, it seems that in-service teachers experience is much profound. This is because most novice teachers assume that all that they need is to apply what they have learned in education programs with "spark-plug go-getters" attitude (Kaufman & Ring, 2011, p. 52). However, as soon as they begin, novice teachers are expected to carry out all the responsibilities of an experienced teacher, despite

their insufficient knowledge and limited teaching experience (Farrell, 2016; Leroux, 2018; R Richards et al., 2018).

A considerable amount of research reported that novice teachers are bombarded with many teaching challenges which often they have to deal with without support and guidance from mentors, experienced colleagues and headmasters (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2011; Bruce Johnson et al., 2016; Farrell, 2012; Peters & Pearce, 2011; Pillen et al., 2013). At the classroom level, novice teachers may encounter several difficulties such teaching students with diverse needs, managing uncooperative students and dealing with complex and unpredictable teaching assignments (Demetriou et al., 2009; Fantilli & McDougall, 2009; Hong, 2012; C. Mansfield et al., 2014). At the school level, it has been suggested that lack of support, limited resources, heavy workload, educational policies and relocation to a high-need or remote schools are among the reported challenges encountered by novice teachers (Flores, 2006; C. Mansfield et al., 2014). Therefore, between surviving the unpredictable teaching context, improving their teaching skills, and dealing with policy demands, new teachers are found to experience a range of negative emotions affecting their commitment such as disappointment, frustration, isolation and incompetence (Alsup, 2006; Borg, 1990; C. Mansfield et al., 2014; Pillen et al., 2013).

In fact, several scholars have repeatedly cautioned that such challenging contexts and teaching pressures can stifle novice and veteran teachers vocational zeal's, particularly when they discover that they cannot achieve their mission of helping students and practice their role according to their values and efficacy-beliefs (Gu, 2018; Gu & Day, 2013; Johnson & Down, 2013; Smith & Ulvik, 2017; Valieva, 2016). According to Dunford (2016), "expecting teachers to work hard is not, in itself, a problem."(p. 129), instead, it is when teachers struggle to find the meaning and the capacity to make a difference in their work. A considerable amount of research has focused on student teachers and novice teachers teaching difficulties because they are in a critical stage of the profession (i.e., leave or stay) and seem to be most affected by the

contextual challenges. However, it is important to note that the discussed teaching difficulties are not limited to novice teachers', in fact, they also, apply to some veteran teachers and language teachers (Gu & Day, 2013; Sharplin et al., 2011).

4.4.1.2. Developing and sustaining teachers' resilience

While school contexts often provide challenges for teachers, it can also provide support to develop and sustain their resilience (Gu, 2014b; Gu & Li, 2013; C. Mansfield et al., 2012; Mansfield et al., 2016). Researchers investigating resilience offered several recommendations that promote teachers resilience at different career stages (pre-service, in-service and experienced) that includes developing mentoring programs, improving reflective practice, promoting resilience strategies and building supportive relationships (Day, 2014; Leroux & Théorêt, 2014b; Li et al., 2019; Mansfield & Gu, 2019; Morettini et al., 2019; Papatraianou et al., 2018). The current literature highlights the significant efforts to reduce the discrepancy between teacher education programs and teaching practice by preparing newly qualified teachers to cope with the emotional, intellectual and physical demands of classrooms (i.e. reality shock) (Gu, 2014b; Mansfield & Gu, 2019). Several studies focused on teacher mentoring and reflective practice to develop and nurture teachers' resilience (Bowles & Arnup, 2016; Kutsyuruba, Walker, et al., 2019; Leroux & Théorêt, 2014b; Mansfield et al., 2016).

4.4.1.2.1. Mentoring programs and teacher resilience

Mentoring or induction as interchangeably used refers to "personal guidance provided, usually by seasoned veterans, to beginning teachers in schools"(Smith & Ingersoll, 2004, p. 683). Over the past two decades, mentoring programs have gained considerable research interest focusing on their content and effect (Papatraianou & Cornu, 2014; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). Several studies have reported the variety of mentoring programs; for example, there is a variation in the intensity and duration of mentoring which can either involve frequent

meetings and activities scheduled over several years or simply one meeting held at the beginning of the academic year (Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). Furthermore, mentoring programs can differ in terms of their purpose and candidates; that is, some provide mentoring to experienced teachers who are new to a particular school, while others focus only on novice teachers. As for the purpose, they seem to be classified based on their design which can be either developing teachers skills or assessing their suitability for the job (Morettini et al., 2019; Papatraianou & Cornu, 2014; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). Finally, some mentoring programs differ on mentors duties and salaries and whether or not they should be assigned to a mentee with the same subject (e.g., ESL/EFL) (Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). These variations are determined by school resources, national or local policies and the social beliefs on teachers professional development (Shanks, 2017).

The effectiveness of mentoring programs is continuously evaluated by examining their outcomes on teachers perception (i.e., efficacy, satisfaction and commitment) and retention (Morettini et al., 2019). In this sense, effective mentoring is based on having a mentor from the same filed and different support processes (Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). For example, mentors can explain the school policies and culture to help his/her mentee adapt and integrate within the school community (Stanulis & Floden, 2009). In addition, mentors can advise mentee on lesson planning, classroom management and evaluating students learning outcomes (Morettini et al., 2019; Papatraianou & Cornu, 2014). More importantly, mentors can provide opportunities for novice teachers to reflect on their practice and broaden their teaching experience (Castro et al., 2010; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). Therefore, teachers who participate in such mentoring programs are assumed to gain confidence in their teaching abilities and develop their problem-solving and communication skills, as well as displaying signs of motivation, commitment and resilience (C. Mansfield et al., 2012; Mansfield et al., 2016; Papatraianou & Cornu, 2014).

For instance, Morettini et al. (2019) conducted a study on 14 novice teachers assign to a rural school to investigate the influence of mentoring on developing teachers resilience. Their findings showed that mentoring helped teachers to feel accepted and part of the school community, which, to some extent, helped them overcome their lack of experience and unpreparedness. Significantly, the authors suggested that when teachers experienced school acceptance (i.e., colleagues, headmaster, students, and parents), they began to develop resilience. Indeed, Morettini et al. (2019) findings and others (Mansfield & Gu, 2019; Mansfield et al., 2016; Papatraianou & Cornu, 2014; Papatraianou et al., 2018) highlight the importance of school contexts, particularly, the importance of building supportive relationships within the school community to promote resilience. In fact, several studies have emphasized on the pivotal role of school headmasters in building a supportive environment which determines to a large extent the success of in-school mentoring and developing relational resilience (see 4.4.3)(Gu, 2018; Mansfield & Beltman, 2019; Peters & Pearce, 2011).

Overall, mentoring novice teachers can be challenging, and it requires great knowledge, skill and confidence to provide the maximum support and learning opportunities for novice teachers (Walkington, 2005). It is why many researchers' are consistently evaluating mentoring outcomes and suggesting improvements to provide novice teachers with effective mentors who support their professional learning and development, thus, reducing turnover and retaining talented and committed teachers (Howard & Johnson, 2004; Morettini et al., 2019; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004).

4.4.1.2.2. Reflection

As a part of mentoring programs, reflective practice or critical reflection has been defined by several researchers indicating to the lack of consensus in terms of the theoretical and methodological aspects (Leroux & Théorêt, 2014b). Briefly, some authors such as Dewey

(1933) conceptualize reflection as a thinking process associated with problem-solving or as an investigation in a moment of doubt about particular belief or situation. From a psychological point of view, Wilson (2004) and others believe that reflection is a way to examine our own preconceptions, identity and beliefs(Lewis, 2000). In the same way, advocates of the social theory describe reflection as the way we assess and position ourselves in the social environment (Foucault, 2018). In the educational literature, there are several definitions and models of reflection; however, educators generally agree on the benefits of reflection and encourage teachers to engage in reflective practice to improve their teaching and agency (Farrell, 2015a; Tonna et al., 2017). According to Farrell (2015b), reflective practice is " a cognitive process accompanied by a set of attitudes in which teachers systematically collect data about their practice, and, while engaging in dialogue with others, use the data to make informed decisions about their practice both inside and outside of the classroom." (p. 123).

Research describes teacher reflection as a learning cycle and several models have been conceptualised to demonstrate the reflection process; however, the discussion will be limited to Korthagen and colleagues model, because as argued by Leroux and Théorêt (2014b) it was developed to improve teacher reflection and rely on decades of empirical research (Korthagen & Vasalos, 2005; Korthagen & Kessels, 1999). The ALACT model (see Figure 1) describe teachers reflection in five stages 1) Action 2) Looking back at the action 3) Awareness of the essential aspects of the situation or problem 4) Creating alternative methods and solutions and 5) Trail of solutions which induce the return to the first stage of the cycle (Korthagen & Vasalos, 2005; Korthagen & Kessels, 1999; Leroux & Théorêt, 2014b). According to Korthagen and Vasalos (2005), mentoring teachers or colleagues are necessary to help guide teachers on their reflation process; for instance, mentors can ask questions that help novice teachers to look back (i.e. step 2) at certain incidents such as how did you feel ? or what were you thinking? (Korthagen & Vasalos, 2005, p. 50) . Mentors can go even further and ask more

specifically about an incident and thus, helping novice teachers find systematic solutions to address their problems (i.e. step 3); in this way, teachers learn how to reflect (Korthagen & Vasalos, 2005).

The ALACT model was further elaborated using Korthagen (2004) levels of change model (see Figure 2). The proposed modal, show the different levels of teachers reflection, which are interrelated and influence each other from the inside levels to the outside levels or the other way around from the outside levels to the inside levels (Korthagen & Vasalos, 2005; Korthagen, 2004). The external levels represent different elements in the environment (e.g., students, colleagues and resources) and individuals behavior which seems to be the focus of student teachers and novice teachers' attention since they represent the classroom challenges and their attempts to deal with those challenges (Korthagen & Vasalos, 2005; Korthagen, 2004). The second level refers to competencies which include teachers knowledge about their subject and skills, followed by beliefs which as described effect teachers competencies (Korthagen & Vasalos, 2005). For example, if a teacher believes that showing emotions or acknowledging students emotions as "soft" or unnecessary, he/she is most likely will not develop the emotional competency to empathies with the students (Korthagen, 2004). Finally, the last two levels or "the transpersonal level" refer to teachers professional identity and mission, which are highly personalized levels; they represent what inspire individuals and what gives meaning to their work or lives (e.g. teaching as calling)(Korthagen & Vasalos, 2005; Korthagen, 2004).

As previously mentioned, the role of the mentoring teacher is to develop novice teachers reflective practice and guide them through the process which positively influenced their sense of agency, self-knowledge, confidence, and resilience (Le Cornu, 2009; Leroux & Théorêt, 2014b; Sutherland et al., 2010). Several studies have pointed to the connection between teachers' reflective practice and resilience (Kutsyuruba, Walker, et al., 2019; Leroux &

Théorêt, 2014b). For instance, Kutsyuruba, Walker, et al. (2019) findings suggested that novice teachers who either engaged in self-reflection or in a reflection process with their monsters enhanced their resilience and wellbeing. Others have emphasized on the importance of developing teachers reflective skills as part of the mentoring program to promote teachers problem-solving strategies which are important to help them overcome the teaching challenges and build their resilience (Castro et al., 2010; Le Cornu, 2009; Sharplin et al., 2011). Indeed, Huisman et al. (2010) stated that "Problem-solving through reflection is crucial to building resiliency and leading to success. As novice teachers persist in trying new strategies and are successful, they feel positive about their teaching." (p. 490).

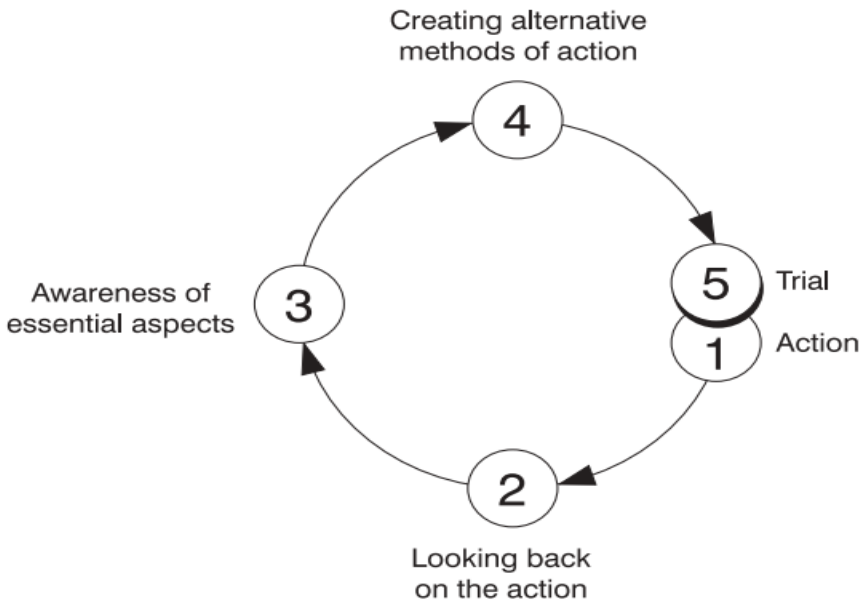


Figure 1: ALACT model adopted from (Korthagen & Vasalos, 2005)

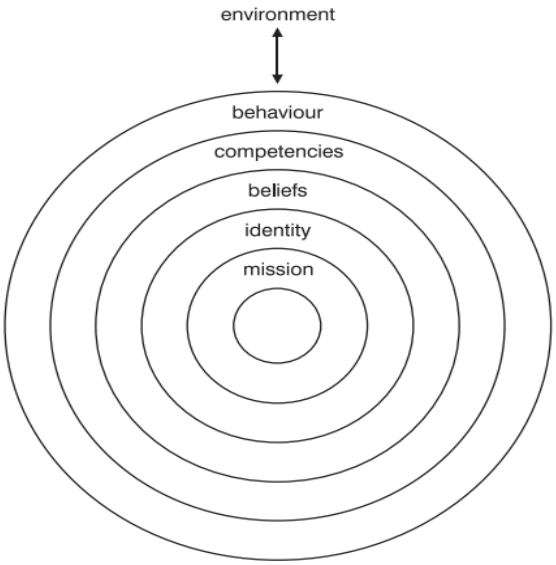


Figure 2: The onion: mode levels of change adopted from (Korthagen, 2004)

4.4.2. Relational resilience

Drawing on Miller (1976) ground-breaking relational cultural theory (RCT), which postulate that relationships are the key to psychological growth, Jordan (2006)developed the model of relational resilience maintaining that " resilience should be seen as a relational dynamic."(Jordan, 1992, p. 1). Like many researchers, Jordan (2006) has challenged the traditional definition and models of resilience (see section 4.2), criticizing the psychological studies on resilience which tend to slowly move from the "separate self" model of human development, that continues to view resilience as an individual trait (Jordan, 2008; Luthar & Brown, 2007). Relationships are considered as an external "given" asset or a protective factor, which has a significant influence on individuals development of self-efficacy, well-being and resilience (Gu, 2014b; Luthar, 2006). The quality and the benefit of the relationship is dependent on the individual requirements of support, which as stated narrows the investigation to "a one-directional way from the point of the view of the individual looking for support from another individual or group." (Jordan,1992, p.2).

The main deficit of this approach is that it failed to fully recognise the agency and the capacity of individuals to maintain connections or reconnect with others in trusting and enduring relationships (Day, 2014; Gu, 2014b). A contextual approach, on the other hand, "might reconsider the concept of internal sense of control, examining a person's engagement in mutually empathic and responsive relationships as the more likely source of resilience." (Jordan, 2006) The model of relational resilience posits that resilience is developed through growth-fostering relationships which are categorized by mutuality, empowerment, and the development of courage (Jordan, 2006). Thus, resilience "resides not in the individual but the capacity for connection."(Jordan, 2006, p. 74).

In the educational context, the model of relational resilience has been championed by pioneering researchers such as Day (2014), claiming that using the model allows us to examine the professional world of teachers which is built on a web of relationships with students, colleagues, parents and principals (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Gu, 2018; Lee et al., 2011). Teachers, professional relationships are central in developing and sustaining resilience over time (Gu, 2018). In fact, each relationship has a role in the resilience-building process (Jordan, 2006; Jordan, 2008). Developing a trusting relationship with students is fundamental to teachers vocational commitment; their relational trust is based on believing that each party is reliable, honest, competent, and worthy of respect (Gu, 2018).

For instance, G. Brunetti (2006), findings suggested that the inner-city teachers (i.e., teaching poor and minority students), respected the students' ability to overcome challenging circumstances and reported their responsibility and commitment to supporting them. Equally, research has shown that students are more willing to take risks and learn from their mistakes in a safe and trusting environment(Bryk & Schneider, 2002). Therefore, relational trust between teachers and students as well as parents support and positive feedback contributes to teachers' fulfilment and resilient capacity (Gu, 2018; Li et al., 2019). Supportive relationships

with colleagues and mentors are necessary for teachers on both intellectual and emotional level to have a collaborative and collective professional development (Gu, 2018). A collegial relationship that is based on reciprocity with a shard sense of moral and vocational values provides hope, inspiration and sense of empowerment for teachers; helping them to cope with teaching challenges, overcome difficult circumstances and maintain their commitment and capacity for resilience (Gu, 2018; Le Cornu, 2009; Li et al., 2019; Papatraianou & Cornu, 2014).

Research has repeatedly emphasised on the importance of establishing positive and supportive relationships between teachers and their influence on teachers, self-efficacy, commitment, and resilience (Day, 2014; Gu, 2018; Papatraianou & Cornu, 2014). For instance, Li et al. (2019) investigated the influence of relational and organizational conditions on teachers capacity to develop and sustain resilience. The study was conducted on 455 primary and secondary school teachers in Beijing. The results showed that relational trust in schools could predict teachers' resilience. In a sense, building a trusting and supportive relationship with colleagues increase teachers' resilient qualities manifesting in a strong vocational commitment, high levels of self-efficacy, motivation and job fulfilment in the face of teaching difficulties (Gu, 2014b; Gu & Day, 2013; Papatraianou et al., 2018)

Principals have a central role in developing a trusting, open and collaborative school culture (Flores & Day, 2006; Peters & Pearce, 2011; Wood, 2005). According to Wood (2005, p. 39), principals are integral for a successful mentoring process they act as 1) culture builder 2) instructional leader 3) coordinator/facilitator of mentors 4) novice teacher recruiter and 5) novice teacher advocate/retainer. Although they do not act as mentors, research has shown that principles guidance and emotional support to novice teachers reduce their uncertainties helping them to feel secure and accepted as well as enhancing their professional learning and ability to cope with teaching pressures; ultimately, promoting their resilience (Papatraianou & Cornu,

2014; Peters & Pearce, 2011; Shaoan et al., 2019). Principals role also extends to cultivating a trusting and supportive relationship with experienced teachers encouraging their collaboration and professional development (Gu, 2018). Fullan (2003), for instance, suggested that trusting relationships "reduces the sense of vulnerability when staff take on new tasks and creates a moral resource for school improvement" (p. 42), influencing teachers motivation and commitment.

Indeed, building resilient and supportive school culture requires good leadership in which principals actively reach out to teachers and take the lead to build and foster relational trust (Fullan, 2003). Therefore, 'resilient leadership' establish a supportive, trusting and belonging school environment, which not only increases teachers effectiveness, motivation and confidence to cope with teaching challenges, but also, influences students learning and achievement (Gu, 2014b, 2018). To sum up, teachers work in a complex world with multi-layered relationships that contribute to their survival and growth in the face of adversity when they are built on trust and a shared sense of moral and professional values (Gu, 2018).

4.4.3. The complexity-informed model of teacher resilience (L2 context)

"*Models that focus on a single aspect of 'outcome' or one dimension of the criterion for good adaptation will not capture the overall pattern of resilience in a person's life, which is multifaceted and configural." (Masten et al., 2009, p. 123)*

The complexity model of resilience was conceptualized by Kostoulas Achilleas and Lammerer (2018) which initially described language teachers resilience as an emergent phenomenon from the reciprocal interaction between the resilience system clusters (Kostoulas & Lammerer, 2020). The model is based on three dimensions 1) inner strength which encompasses teachers personality traits (e.g., self-efficacy) 2) external support which refers to the available contextual support (e.g., mentoring program or supportive leadership) and 3) the learned strategies that are available to teachers to help them cope with difficulties such as

seeking help or downplaying stressors (Kostoulas & Lammerer, 2020). For example, a teacher might seek help from his/her mentor if they perceive the mentoring program as supportive and helpful; thus, effective mentoring could promote teachers help-seeking strategy and develop their self-efficacy (Kostoulas & Lammerer, 2020). It should be noted that the contextual support is among the necessary conditions for teachers resilience; however, they must be perceived as available and helpful to produce resilience (Kostoulas & Lammerer, 2020; Mansfield et al., 2016; Papatraianou et al., 2018).

From its description, the resilience system might be considered as stable; however, Kostoulas and Lammerer (2020) stated that teachers resilience systems are in "constant flux, as their configuration constantly changes in response to the stressors that perturb the system." (p. 95). For instance, the resilience system can reach a "dynamical stability" when there is a balance between the teaching stressors and the available resources, thus allowing a gradual perturbation effect and change in the system (Kostoulas & Lammerer, 2020, p. 95). On the other hand, a significant perturbation such as increased accountability measures or professional evaluations might result in a radical change in the system (Hiver & Dörnyei, 2015a; Kostoulas & Lammerer, 2020). Similarly, the persistent low-level stressors that accumulate with time could disturb the system leading to a radical restruction (Gu & Day, 2007; Kostoulas & Lammerer, 2018). In a sense, resilient adjustment is reached through both gradual and radical change (Kostoulas & Lammerer, 2020).

The complexity model was further developed by drawing on Hiver and Dörnyei (2015a) immunity model to describe the possible outcomes of the resilience system; adaptive adjustment and maladaptive adjustment (see Figure 3) (Kostoulas & Lammerer, 2020). Briefly, in parallel to the biological immunity outcomes, Hiver and Dörnyei (2015a) conceptualized language teachers immunity as armor emerging in response to the teaching stressors (Hiver, 2017; Hiver & Dörnyei, 2015a). According to Hiver (2017), the immunity model is based on

three aspects 1) teacher immunity can only emerge through self-organization 2) teacher immunity is dual-natured either protective (i.e. safeguarding against professional threats) or maladaptive (i.e., affecting teacher development) and 3) identity narratives is a part of the teacher immunity development which as described "effectively give coherence to the teachers' struggles for existence and, therefore, integrate teacher immunity into the more global scheme of professional identity formation"(Hiver, 2016, p. 272; Hiver, 2017; Hiver & Dörnyei, 2015a).

Based on the model, the manifestation of teachers immunity is categorized as 1) productive immunity 2) maladaptively immunity (i.e. teachers resist change and display signs of apathy and cynicism) 3) immunocompromised (i.e. teachers do not develop any form immunity) 4) and partial immunity (i.e., teachers develop some features of immunity)(Hiver, 2017; Kostoulas & Lammerer, 2020). In a similar way, Kostoulas and Lammerer (2020) define teacher maladaptive adjustment as " reconfiguration that is unhelpful in coping with demands of teaching" (p. 95), in other words, teachers display apathetic attitudes toward teaching and rely on avoidance coping strategies (Hiver, 2017; Hiver & Dörnyei, 2015a). In contrast, adaptive adjustment refers to teachers' ability to overcome teaching stressors and thrive enacting their role more effectively (Kostoulas & Lammerer, 2020; Mansfield et al., 2016).

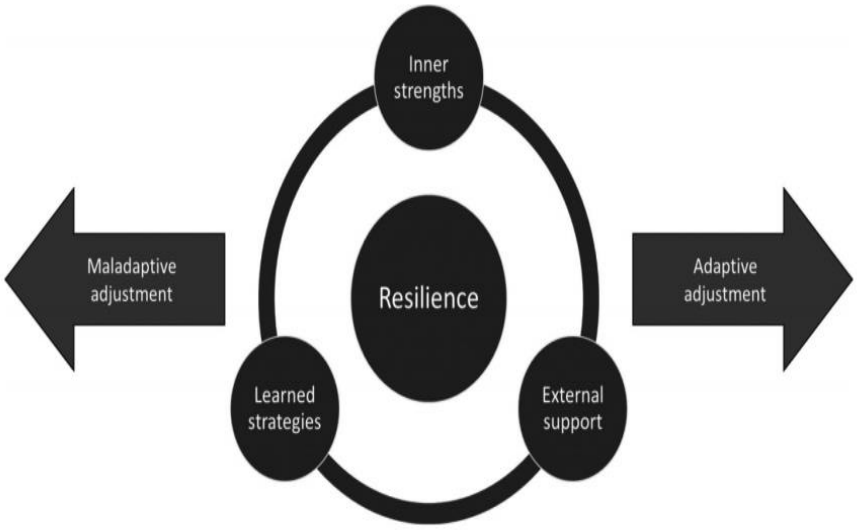


Figure 3: Resilience system (Complexity model) adopted from (Kostoulas & Lammerer, 2020)

To better understand the process of teachers resilience, Kostoulas and Lammerer (2020) conducted a study on a cohort of pre-service L2 teachers during their training programme. The study was divided into two phases. The first stage aimed to measure the participants' (i.e., 94) resilience baseline before they start the training programme adapting Connor and Davidson (2003) CD-RISC inventory. Based on their calculated resilience score, the teachers were assigned to one of three categories; low, average or high resilience (Kostoulas & Lammerer, 2020). The second stage was conducted at the end of the programme, using semi-structured interviews to examine the training experience of 7 teachers. Teachers resilience scores were spread on the three categories; however, the authors reported their findings on the two typical resilience adjustment; adaptive and maladaptive adjustment (Kostoulas & Lammerer, 2020). The results showed the contrast between the two teachers (i.e., John vs Peter) system reconfigurations and resilience scores. For instance, in terms of the inner strengths, Peter had a strong sense of identity displaying signs of high self-efficacy and confidence in his ability to teach and deal with the teaching stressors. Furthermore, personality traits such as cheerful and clam were perceived as pedagogically helpful, particularly in classroom management

(Kostoulas & Lammerer, 2020). Supportive relationships seemed to have a positive impact on the participant, increasing his self-confidence and helping him to overcome teaching difficulties. Significantly, the participant seemed to draw on his past experience with adversity to cope with stressors using several strategies such as prioritising, controlling stress level and maintaining equilibrium (Kostoulas & Lammerer, 2020). In contrast, John seemed to lack confidence in his teaching ability and showed signs of apathy manifesting in his unpreparedness and avoidance of mentoring sessions. Although the participant had external support resources, he did not seek any form of help, nor did he provide any support to his colleagues. In other words, the participant valued privacy and autonomy over nurturing relationships (Kostoulas & Lammerer, 2020).

The negative attitude extended to the participants coping strategies which consisted of stress denial and avoidance of stress management (Kostoulas & Lammerer, 2020). Overall, the study highlighted the dynamic reconfiguration of teachers resilience system in response to stressors (Kostoulas & Lammerer, 2020). In addition, the study indicated that every teacher has a specific resilience system consisting of their own inner strengths, different environmental resources at their disposal and repertoire of coping strategies which may change over time (Kostoulas & Lammerer, 2020). Therefore, given the unpredictable nature of the teaching profession, it can be argued that teachers capacity for resilience may change with the context as Day and Gu (2014) described, teachers in different phases of their professional lives are likely to face distinctively different influences, tensions, professional and personal concerns. Although the ways in which they build and sustain their vocation, commitment and resilience are complex and continuous, their capacity to do so may also fluctuate depending upon the effects of a combination of workplace-based and personal influences and also their cognitive and emotional capacities to manage these influences" (p. 45).

4.5. Conclusion

To establish a theoretical framework, in this chapter I began with an overview of resilience research, presenting the introduction of the concept and the shift of resilience research from a person-focused methods of investigation to variable-focused methods. I then focused on providing a comprehensive view on teacher resilience research, which provides insights into the development of teacher resilience research.

The current literature suggests a widespread agreement on conceptualizing teachers resilience from a social-ecological lens; that is as a complex dynamic process which involves " many systems within the individual as well as many systems outside the individual", which continually interact (i.e., person x environment) (Gu, 2018; Leroux, 2018; Mansfield et al., 2016; Masten, 2014 p. 170; Papatraianou & Cornu, 2014). In other words, teacher's personal traits which include, self-efficacy, coping, and motivation continuously interact with many elements in their social environment such as school leadership, students, available resources and educational policies (Gu, 2018; Kostoulas & Lammerer, 2020; Mansfiled. et al., 2018). Therefore, resilience emerges from this reciprocal interaction (Gu, 2018; Kostoulas & Lammerer, 2020; Papatraianou et al., 2018; Ungar, 2012). In this way, resilience is not solely dependent on teachers personal attributes, or the available resources rather it is teachers ability to actively recognize and harness their personal and available contextual resources (Mansfield et al., 2014; Mansfield et al., 2016; Papatraianou et al., 2018; Ungar, 2012).

In comparison to the other persistence constructs, I believe that resilience captures the complex world of teaching, providing a comprehensive understanding on teachers response to teaching challenges and their ability to harness their resources to survive and thrive in the profession (Hiver & Dörnyei, 2015a; Mansfield et al., 2016).Current literature emphasised the significate role of school contexts by examining the contexts that both challenge and promote

teachers' resilience, particularly focusing on pre-service and novice teachers. However, to date limited research have been conducted on mid and late career stages teachers' resilience.

Chapter 5: Methodology

5.1. Introduction

In this chapter, I will present the research design used to investigate language teachers' resilience in the Saudi context. The overreaching aim was to trance the changes and development of teacher resilience throughout their career span. My objective is to report teachers lived experiences and their interpretation of these experiences. Thus, I chose qualitative approach, as it "study things in their natural settings attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p. 2). This was accomplished through using several instruments, namely, semi-structured interviews, focus group interviews, and line drawings. Three qualitative studies were conducted and designed in sequence to investigate teachers' journey to resilience. In the following, I present details of the research process, starting with exploratory study, which preliminary findings formed the subsequent studies, in terms of design and participants criteria. This is followed by a description of the two subsequent studies' participants, instruments, procedure, and data analysis process. Finally, I conclude this chapter with ethical consideration and reflection on my role as a researcher. It is important to note that the reporting of the studies is different; that is, the reporting of the exploratory study is intended to present the major preliminary findings that informed the design of the following studies.

5.2. Exploratory study

According to Kim (2011), “through piloting, qualitative researchers can focus on, expand, or narrow their proposed research topics and can also gain a clear conceptualization of the focus of the topic”(p. 193). This study was aimed explore the development of teacher resilience system focusing on Saudi language teachers. The concept of teacher resilience as shown in **Chapter 3**, is a “quality that enables teachers to maintain their commitment to teaching and teaching practices despite challenging conditions and recurring setbacks.”(Brunetti, 2006, p. 813). Accordingly, I started with two broad questions to investigate language teachers’ difficulties and how they coped to maintain their commitment to the profession: 1) Is teaching more difficult now than before? 2) How do you cope? Or what are the extra measures you take to stay afloat?

5.2.1. Participants

The target participants for the study had three criteria 1) English language teachers, 2) teaching in different educational sectors (i.e., schools and universities), and 3) have a minimum of 5 years of teaching experience. This is because teachers passed the threshold of first years of teaching, which are known for their difficulties and “sink or swim experience”(Varah et al., 1986, p. 30). Furthermore, research investigating mid and late career language teacher resilience is scarce with exception of few studies (e.g.Day & Gu, 2007, 2009).Therefore, I decided to recruit teachers who passed the threshold of five years of teaching because they are presumed to have more experience coping with difficulties, which might be reflected in their resilience trajectory. Finally, my objective of recruiting language teachers from different educational sectors, was to explore the different contextual factors in each sector and how they may affect teachers coping and resilience. The total number of participants in this study is 11 teachers teaching in different educational sectors of those (n=3) were male teachers, and the rest (n=8) were female teachers as shown **Table 1**.

Table 1: Pilot study participants information

Participant	Gender	Education	Years of experience	Teaching context
Hanan	Female	MA	7	University
Wjdan	Female	MA	8	High school
Noor	Female	MA	16	High school
Bader	Male	BA	9	High school
Majed	Male	BA	16	Middle school
Waleed	Male (Egyptian)	BA	20	Private elementary school
Hessa	Female	BA	7	Middle school
Huda	Female	BA	20	High school
Manal	Female	BA	8	Elementary school
Hanaa	Female	BA	24	High school
Zynab	Female	PhD	15	University

5.2.2. Instrument

The exploratory data was collected from 11 participants using semi-structed interviews. Adopting semi-structured interview allowed me to generate guiding questions and use prompts and follow-up questions to encourage participants to elaborate on their teaching experience, thus obtaining rich data (Dörnyei, 2007; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). The interview guide was developed to start with a warm-up outlining the study aim and explaining the interview process, followed by the main questions mentioned above. Given the exploratory nature of the study, several questions were scripted during the interviews (e.g., *What is the difference between your coping strategies now and in the past ? Did the university provide training before and after the transition to online teaching?*).

5.3.3. Procedure

5.3.3.1. Participants recruitment

Initially, I contacted some friends who are language teachers to help with participants recruitment. However, I could only recruit 2 participants; one of them is a friend. Through this friend, I was introduced to a nationwide group for English teachers in Telegram with approximately 13,811 members. After the admins' permission, I posted a summary of my research, participants' requirement and contact information in Arabic. Many teachers showed their interest and willingness to participate. However, after explaining the goal and the interview process, many declined for two reasons. First, most participants preferred survey research; some even suggested that I change it to a survey format to encourage their participation and other teachers. Second, a significant number of participants (i.e.,6) did not meet an important requirement: a minimum of 5 years of teaching experience.

5.3.3.2. Interviews process

Before conducting the interviews, each participant was informed that the interview would be recorded, and their recording data will be confidential and used for research purposes. Furthermore, the participants were informed that participating in the study is completely voluntary, and they have the right to withdraw if they feel uncomfortable. After obtaining their consent, the interview sessions were conducted online (i.e., Skype and facetime) and in Arabic to give the participants freedom to describe their experience clearly. One participant withdrew her data an hour after the interview, because she felt uncomfortable sharing her personal experience. Although I'm an Arabic speaker, I did not understand some of the participant's dialect. Hence, during the interview, I had to ask the participants to repeat several times or clarify their meaning. The final step was transcribing and translating the interviews verbatim. Approximately 4 interviews were first transcribed in Arabic, which was time consuming. Thus, after discussing the issue with my supervisors, Professor Dornyei suggested transcribing the data to English right away. All the transcriptions were sent to a friend for checks, with exception of one interview that was first sent to another colleague from the southern region to check the accuracy of transcript based on the recording. It is important to note that the participant gave her permission to share the interview recording and transcript.

5.3.4. Data analysis

The data analysis process was conducted using Braun and Clarke (2006) 6 steps guide to thematic analysis, which includes 1) becoming familiar with data 2) generating initial codes 3) searching for themes 4) reviewing themes 5) defining themes and 6) producing a report (p. 87). The first step of the analysis began during the transcribing phase, in which I was able to make notes about the data and generate initial codes for every interview, which helped in the following stages. In the second stage, I generated codes for every interview, which to some extent, were different. For example, most teachers linked past teaching challenges, particularly,

inadequate language and teaching skills to insufficient training. However, teacher's accounts of their training and learning experience were different; that is some teachers gave an elaborate description more than others. Furthermore, at this stage, I was able to find patterns for the resilience archetypes. For example, Hanan's reports revealed her emotional conflicts and struggle to adapt to her role, which she reluctantly accepted.

The searching for themes stage was cantered on the research questions, that is the difference between teaching difficulties in past vs now and coping strategies. The initial themes related to the role of technology, teaching skills, general coping, and factors in the teaching environment, such as students' language level. In the following stage, I decided to disregard some of themes, such as training and categorise others as sub-themes, such as students' language level. The aim was to present data that answers research questions (Finlay, 2021). The final stage of the analysis was naming and defining themes, I decided to have three major themes; 1) language teaching challenges: past vs present 2) bouncing from adversity and 3) teacher change and development. Each theme incorporated, sub-themes and subcategories. For example, for the sub-theme role of technology and online teaching, I used subcategories, such as teaching and learning resources and technical issues to represent teachers positive and negative experiences. As for bouncing back from adversities theme, it included two subthemes general coping: effective and infective, and religious coping. The last theme focused on highlighting some of changes and development of teachers' response to challenges. The last stage was writing up the findings.

5.3.5. Summary of the findings

The findings revealed that many of the experienced difficulties were universal, including language anxiety, loss of control of classroom environment, and workload (Carroll et al., 2022; MacIntyre et al., 2020). However, several difficulties were specific to the Saudi context, such

as the top-down educational system and supremacy of Arabic (Elyas & Picard, 2019). Furthermore, teachers used a variety of coping strategies, some were effective, and helped teachers overcome difficulties, such as seeking help and emotional support. While coping strategies such as venting, avoidance and self-isolation, increased teachers stress and negatively affected their motivation, and well-being (Alonso-Tapia et al., 2019). Significantly, teachers' accounts showed the effect of Islamic values and environment on their beliefs and coping strategies, which appeared to change and develop throughout the years. The change of teachers coping behaviour in response to challenges suggested 4 resilience archetypes. Arguably these are the major findings, which warranted further investigation and informed the design of the second study.

5.4 Study two

As discussed above, the exploratory study revealed 4 resilience archetypes and faith as coping strategy which contributed to teacher resilience. Accordingly, I designed this study and aimed to further investigate the development and the trajectory of teacher's resilience throughout the years by exploring the following questions:

1) What are the personal and contextual factors that promotes teachers' resilience?

2) What are the personal and contextual factors that hinders teachers' resilience?

3) What coping strategies do teachers draw on that promote or hinder their capacity for resilience?

4) What are the developmental stages that teachers go through before developing adaptive or maladaptive resilience state?

5.4.1. Participants.

According to Merriam and Grenier (2019), "since qualitative inquiry seeks to understand the meaning of a phenomenon from the perspectives of the participants, it is important to select a sample from which the most can be learned"(p. 13). Four participants were purposively selected as archetypes representing the trajectory and the development of resilience overtime**.** The participants were selected based on the exploratory study results, which was aimed to investigate how Saudi language teachers cope with difficulties (see 5.2.1). The participants were asked to compare their past and present difficulties and describe how they coped. Through the analysis, I was able to identify stages to the development of the teacher's resilience and some of the personal and contextual factors that influenced their resilience throughout the years. After selecting the archetypes, the participants were contacted and asked if they were willing to participate in the study. All the participants showed interest and were willing to discuss their teaching experience in-depth. The selected teachers (i.e., pseudonyms) are:

Manal (maladaptive archetype)

Manal has been teaching English for eight years at different schools. She has taught different age groups at several schools. For the last five years, Manal has been teaching English and other subjects to elementary students. Her teaching journey represents a maladaptive state of resilience.

Huda (smooth resilience archetype)

Huda is currently the vice principal at a high school. She had taught English for twenty years at different high schools. Her teaching journey mostly represents an adaptive resilience state, and she is dedicating herself to helping English improve and cope with teaching difficulties.

Hanan (reluctant archetype)

Hanan obtained MA in TESOL from the United States of America and has been teaching English for seven years at different universities. Hanan teaching journey highlights the gradual change of the resilience system from a maladaptive state to an adaptive state. Her journey highlights the influence of personal and contextual factors at different stages of the profession.

Noor (roller-coaster archetype)

Noor has taught English to different age groups in various schools for 16 years. Throughout the years, Noor obtained an MA in TESOL and worked as a supervisor for a year. Noor is currently teaching at a high school. Her teaching journey represents the fluctuation of the resilience system throughout the years.

5.4.2. Instrument

Since the participants were selected because their experiences highlighted instances on the development of their resilience, an interview guide was developed for each participant (see Appendix 1). This is because teachers' resilience was influenced by a unique mix of personal and contextual factors. The interview questions were designed to be focused and thorough to elicit in-depth information about the teachers' experience. According to Rubin and Rubin (2012), "Sometimes thoroughness means digging back in time to tell a story from the beginning or looking for missing parts of narratives"(p. 7). Thus, the questions were organised to examine teachers experience in chronological order, starting with the training period, followed by the first years of the profession and finally, the following years to the present. The interview guide consisted of several main questions and follow up questions to obtain more information about the participants teaching difficulties and coping strategies throughout the years. The final step of the interview was dedicated to a drawing activity.

Line drawing

Line drawing or visual mode have been used in qualitative research as source to elicit non-linguistic data and findings (Orland, 2000; Reavey, 2011). Thus, my intention is to make teachers reflect on their resilience experience and draw the highs and lows they experienced throughout their career span. In other words, it is intended to capture their resilience trajectory and story as a" series of experiences, events, choices and actions over time" (Kelchtermans, 2008, p. 27).

5.4.3. Procedure

An interview guide was sent to each participant consisting of the topics that I intended to focus on in the interview. This is to give the participants the opportunity to adjust or withdraw if they feel uncomfortable discussing some parts of their experience. Furthermore, since the interview aimed to examine the participants teaching journey, the guide was intended to help them remember situations that might be relevant to the study. All participants were given the freedom to select the time and media for the interview (i.e., Skype and Google Duo), and before conducting the interview, the consent forms and the study guide were sent to each participant. Furthermore, at the beginning of each interview, I briefly explained the study aims and the interview process for the participants, and I took special care to make them feel comfortable and relaxed to talk about their experiences. The interviews were audio-recorded using a recording application on a separate phone device, and the duration of the interviews varied from an hour and thirty minutes to two hours. The interviews were conducted in Arabic, the participants' native language, to make them comfortable to describe their experiences in reach details. However, the participants were encouraged to code-switch between their L1 and L2 whenever they felt necessary. In the final part of the interview the participants were asked to draw their resilience trajectory over their career span.

After listening to the recordings several times to familiarise myself with the data and generate initial codes, I started with the translation transcription process. However, I transcribed Manal's data first to Arabic before translating it to English. This is because the participant has a different dialect, which I'm not familiar with, and in some instances, it was difficult for me to understand the participant. Thus, after transcribing the data and receiving consent, I sent the recording and the first draft of the transcription to the same colleague from exploratory study to assess the accuracy of the transcription (see 5.33**).** As for the remaining data, I was familiar with participants dialects, and I started with the translation and transcription right away. The first draft of the transcriptions included false starts, hesitations, laughs and unclear speech. All drafts were sent to the same friend as the exploratory study, who has a background in translation for checks. Several adjustments were made to the data, which included, deleting unnecessary parts (e.g., unclear speech) and modifying the translation of some idioms and payers, which were originally either written in Arabic or inaccurately translated. After, the data was ready for the analysis process. Transcribing the data helped me become familiar with my data and generate initial codes as will be shown in the following.

5.4.4. Data analysis

Connelly and Clandinin (1990) introduced the concept of narrative inquiry in education research, and they conceptualise narrative inquiry as both phenomenon and a method of research (Clandinin et al., 2007).Polkinghorne (1995), made a distinction between the ‘analysis of narratives’ and ‘narrative analysis. Analysis of narratives refers to the standard procedures of thematic analysis, which is the most used approach in qualitative research. In contrast, narrative analysis refers to “research in which storytelling is used as a means of analysing non-narrative data”(Benson, 2014, p. 154). In the field of language teaching and learning, narrative research is focused on the teachers and learner stories (Barkhuizen, 2014). The former is focused on presenting stories of teachers' professional development and their practice, while

the latter is focused on telling learners experience of learning and using the language (Barkhuizen, 2014). According to Caine et al. (2013), narrative, inquirers begin with an interest in experience (p. 3). My interest in learning about teachers' resilience experience evolved from the exploratory study, which revealed 4 resilience archetypes (see 5.35.). In this study, the use of narrative approach depicted teachers experience highlighting the significant influence of the personal and contextual factors on the development of their resilience. Furthermore, using the narrative approach illuminated the temporal transition of events leading to the development of the resilience system (Clandinin et al., 2007). In other words, it allowed me to understand and present a holistic representation of the teachers' experience with "it's all complexity and richness." (Duff & Bell, 2002, p. 209).

The data analysis process was conducted through several stages, and I took inspiration from Consoli (2021) and Shoaib (2004) analysis procedures, keeping notes and using memos throughout. The first step of the analysis was during the transcription process. Since I was familiar with participants stories, I began to highlight some initial codes and write several notes in research journal during the transcription process. For example, to differentiate between the participants religious/general coping strategies, I coded each type of coping with a different colour. This helped me trace the development and change of the participants coping behaviour throughout their teaching journey.

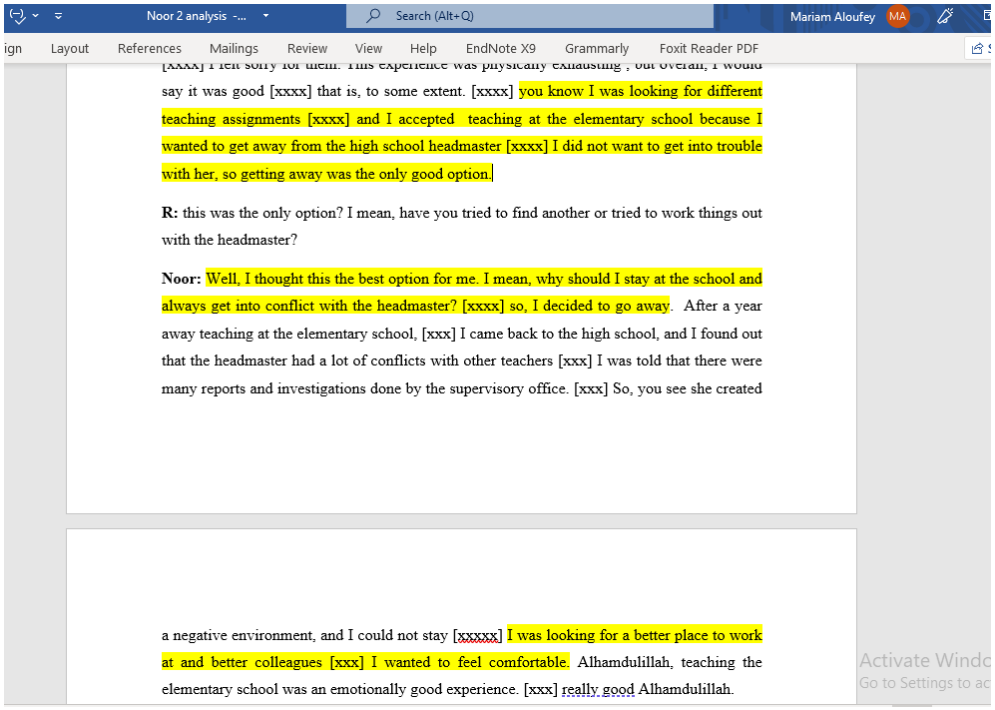


Figure 4: Example of coding general coping

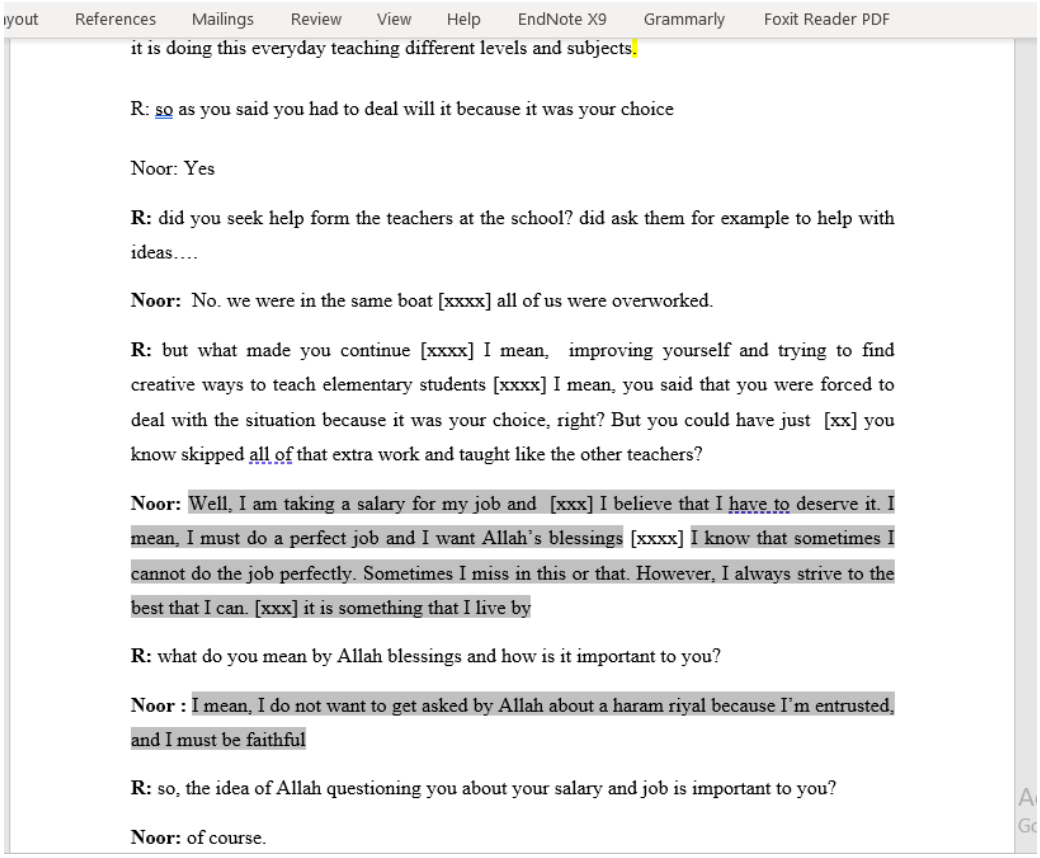


Figure 5: Example of coding religious coping.

Figure 4 shows that Noor used general coping strategies in the first years of teaching. However, after her MA study and years of experience, Noor's coping repertoire developed and incorporated religious and general coping strategies, as shown in Figure 5. Furthermore, I was able to highlight a few inconsistencies and some complementary information for the participants' stories, which was useful in the following stages. For example, in the exploratory interview, Huda mentioned that she bought an audio translator in her first years of teaching to help with pronunciation. However, the second interview showed that she acquired the translator in the training period and began to use it regularly in the second year of teaching. This provisional analysis helped me through the following stages of the analysis, particularly in constructing the participants' stories and comparing the first and second interviews.

After transcribing, I read the data several times through a social-ecological lens, which conceptualised resilience as a complex dynamic interaction between the person and the environment (Gu, 2018; Kostoulas & Lammerer, 2020). Through reading the raw data, I was able to 1) examine the personal and contextual factors that shaped and influenced teachers' resilience, 2) trace the development of teacher's resilience over time, and 3) examine the changes in teachers' coping behaviours throughout their teaching journey. Through this process, I was able to recognize discrepancies between Manal's narrative and her drawing, which warranted further investigation in following steps. Furthermore, I was also able to write some provisional codes for the participants' stories. For example, while I was reading Hanan's data, I noticed that her leaning experience, which caused an internal struggle had a significant role in her inability to adjust to the teaching context and hindered her resilience. This process was manageable because the interview guide was developed to investigate the participant's teaching journey in chronological order. I was, therefore, able to follow the teacher's experience over time and in different teaching contexts.

In the next stage of the analysis, I went back to my notes during the transcription process and reading phase, which included several questions about few inconsistencies in the participant's data. In this stage, I went back to the participants' exploratory interview to check the contradictions and the repeated events that I presumed to have a key role in the development of their resilience. Therefore, I was able to form fragments of the participants' stories, which would help in the coding process and writing the stories. For instance, when I compared data from Manal's exploratory interview and second interview, I found that her learning experience had a significant effect in shaping her high expectations of the teaching context, inability to reconcile with the reality of teaching, and the formation of her apathetic attitude toward teaching. This procedure was not only helpful in highlighting and elaborating the repeated events in data sources but was also helpful in writing initial codes and themes for the most influential personal and environmental factors that shaped and reshaped the participants' resilience trajectory. Thus, I was able to produce a resilience graph which might be a better representation of Manal's resilience. As can be seen in Figure 6, and 7, there is a noticeable difference between my understating of Manal's narrative and her view of her resilience trajectory. Manal's drawing (see Figure 7), which after further investigation was drawn and graded based on her evaluation of her maturity, students, school administration, colleagues, and teaching skills. In other words, the factors that influenced her resilience. However, as the analysis of her story progressed, Manal's drawing still, seemed inconsistent with her narrative. It is important to note that stage was specific to Manal's data, that is, I did not produce drawing for the other participants because I believe that their narrative was reflected in their drawing.

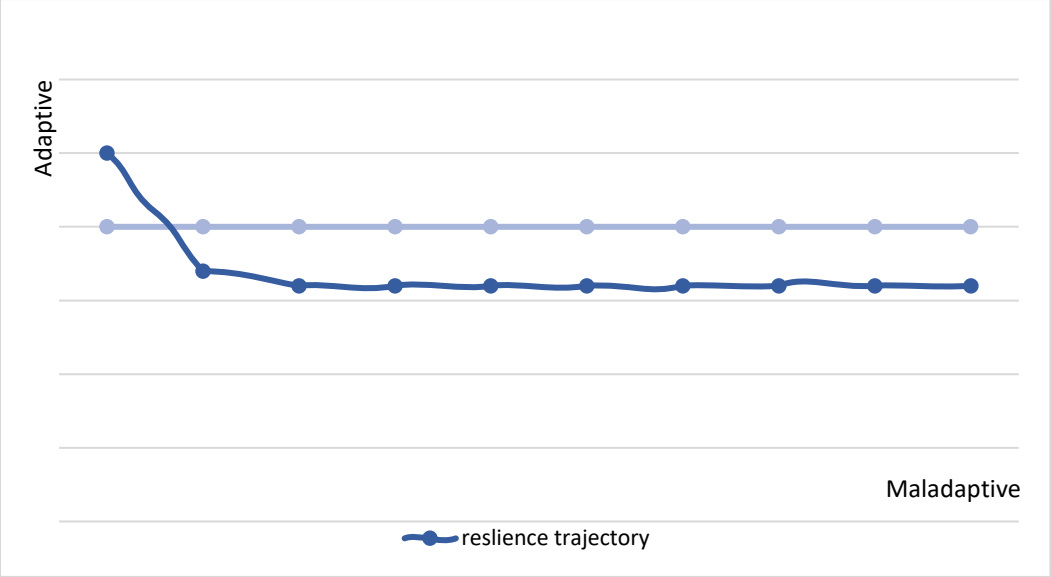


Figure 6:Resilince graph developed based on data interpretation.

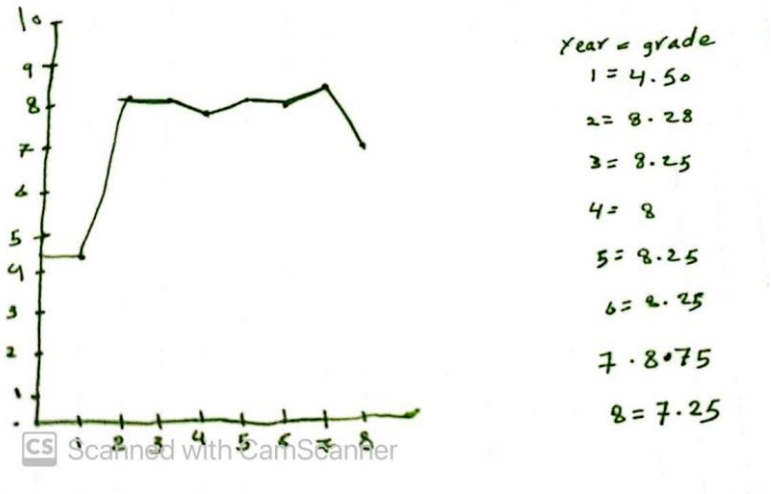


Figure 7:Manal's drawing of her resilience level.

The initial codes were further developed and refined using NVivo 12 software for the data analysis. After generating free nodes and memos for each participant data, I went back to my notes, provisional codes/themes and research on teacher resilience to reflect on the participants teaching experience. In the sconed stage of re-coding, I was able to organize the nodes into categories and sub-categories, highlighting the contextual and personal factors at different stages of the teaching journey and the participants coping behaviours over time. At this stage, I used memos to document my interpretation of the data as exemplified in Figure 8 This process revealed that teachers' resilience emerged from the complex and dynamic interaction between teacher's inner strengths and the different environmental resources at their disposal and repertoire of coping strategies, which changed over time (Kostoulas & Lammerer, 2020; Sulis et al., 2021).

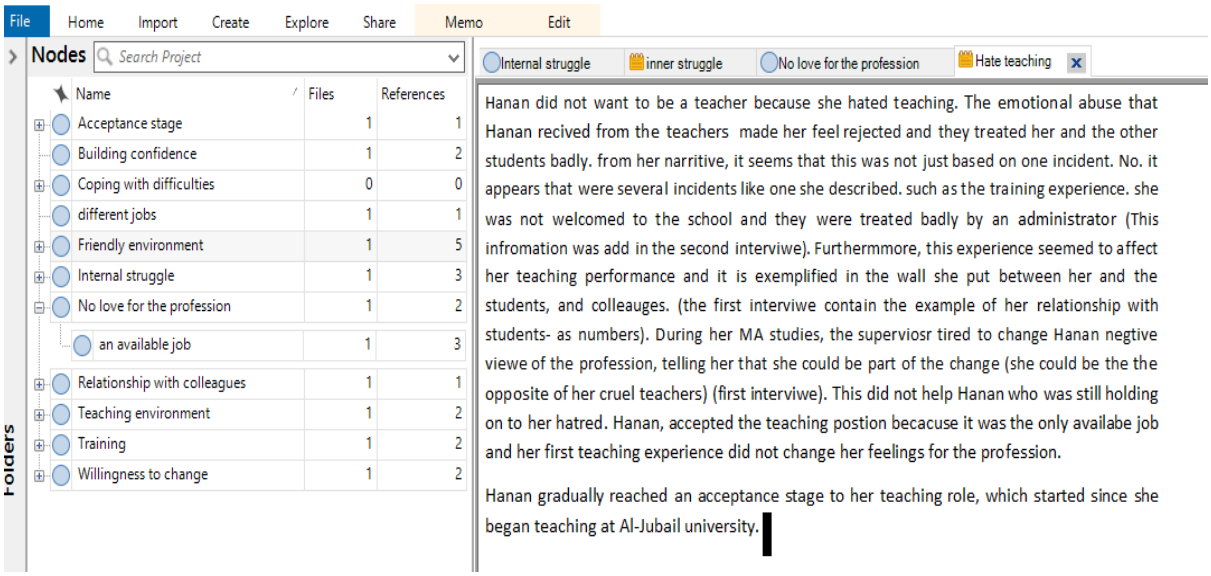


Figure 8: A sample of memo during the re-coding stage

This stage was repeated several times for each participant; however, the coding and re-coding of Noor's data took a significant time to generate her resilience story. This is because she worked at different schools, teaching both elementary and high school students. In addition, she obtained her MA degree while teaching and worked as a supervisor for a year before going back to teaching (see Figure 9). The final stage consisted of constructing the participants stories using the first and second interviews into thematically structured paragraphs to show the gradual development and change of their resilience and coping throughout the years.

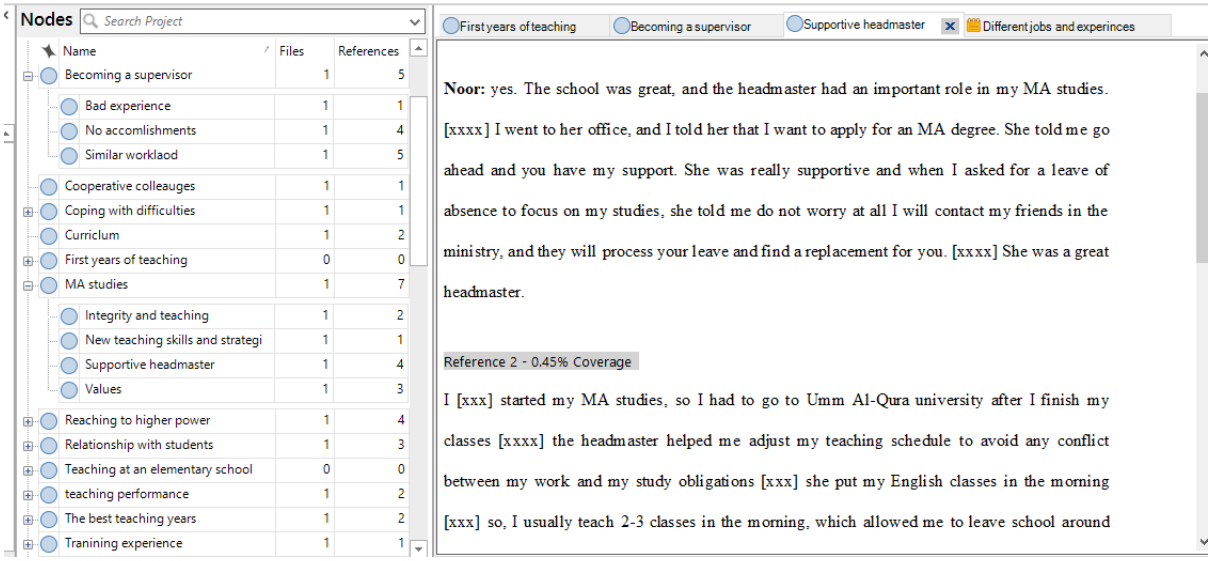


Figure 9:A sample of the re-coding process

5.5 Study 3

This study was aimed to expand on the previous results, namely, the relevance of the 4 resilience archetypes and how to effectively support Saudi language teachers in developing their resilience to survive and thrive. The study was guided by several questions: 1) to what extent are the resilience archetypes recognised and experienced by language teachers, 2) what are the most effective coping strategies that help promote teachers' resilience, and 3) what are the CPD programmes that promote teachers' resilience? To achieve this aim, I decided to use focus-group interviews because it would gave access to supplementary and diverse data

(Knodel, 1993). In the following I provide a description of the participants, study design, procedure and data analysis.

5.5.1 Participants

The same criteria were applied for the focused-group participants, specifically, years of experience (i.e., 5 and above) and teaching at different educational contexts. My goal was to have equal number of teachers representing high education and public education sectors. Initially, I planned to have four focus groups, each consisting of 4-5 teachers making my target participants around 20 language teachers. However, this was not feasible as I went through the designing process (see 5.5.3). The new recruitment plan was influenced by several factors, including access to participants, study timeframe, gaining in-depth information about teachers' experiences and research objectives (Hennink et al., 2019; Knodel, 1993). Thus, I aimed to have 3-4 teachers in each group, making my target around 16 language teachers. Thirteen teachers participated in this study working at different educational contexts. The following **Table2** provide a full description of the participants. Recruiting teachers for focus group discussion was as predicted more challenging than interviews because focus group interview is unfamiliar for many teachers, especially schoolteachers who are less exposed to research than university teachers. This because university teachers usually hold a master or a PhD degree, hence their knowledge and experience with research.

Table 2: Focus group participants information

Participants	Years of experience	Educational context
Mai	11	High school teacher
Amal	8	University
Nawal	18	*High school teacher 2+
Rahaf	6	Middle school teacher
Lama	5	Middle school teacher
Hadeel	14	School +university
Sara	12	University
Shahad	10	University 2+
Hala	7	High school teacher
Abrar	7	University (2)
Basma	8	School+university
Lana	9	University
Arwa	9	University (2)

*****Changed context multiple times

5.5.2. Instrument

According to Knodel (1993, p. 2), "designing a focus group study requires careful thought and reflection" **.**The planning and designing of the focus group interview went through several stages. The first stage consisted of generating few mind maps to help design the focus group. After reading and reflecting on the results of the previous study, I was able to write the aims of the study and several questions to explore as shown in Figure 10. Thus, the purpose was to examine the relevance of the resilience archetypes among language teachers and if there is a different resilience archetype, obtain in-depth information on teachers coping and how to promote their resilience through CPD activities.

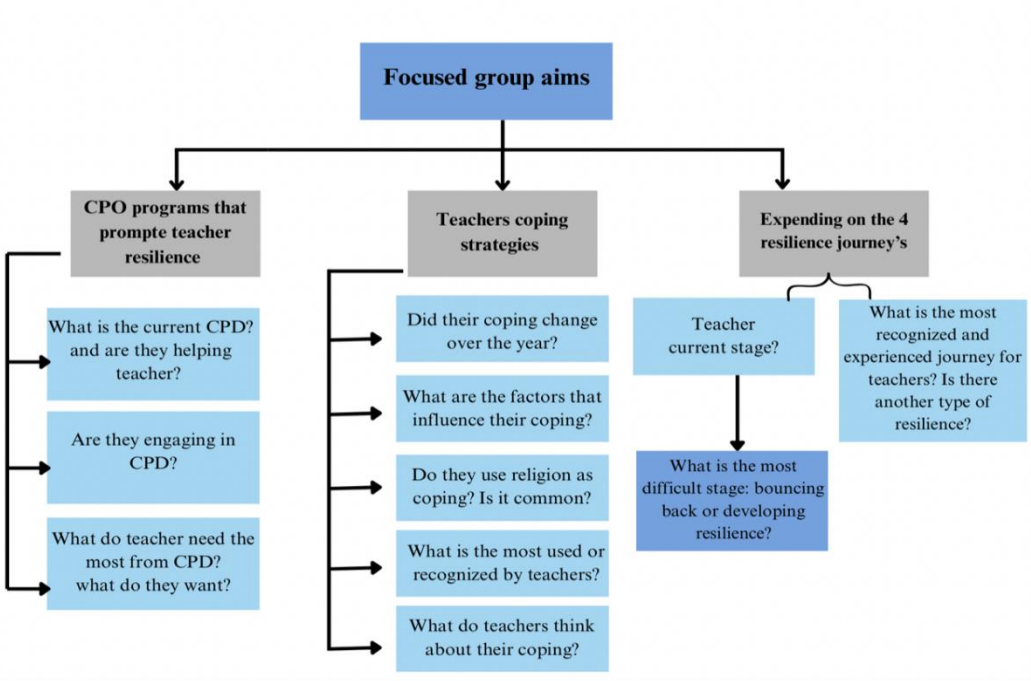


Figure 10: Example of mind map

The second stage consisted of developing an initial study guide and planning the focus interviews as shown in Figure 11. During the process of planning and revising the study guide, I realised that my recruitment plan was impractical in terms of participants recruitment, and timeframe for conducting the interviews and time to cover all the research objectives in each focus interview. Thus, after reflecting on the study aims, I revised the recruitment plan by reducing the number from 20 to 16 teachers. Furthermore, a final interview guide was developed, and was organised into four main sections as shown in Figure 11.

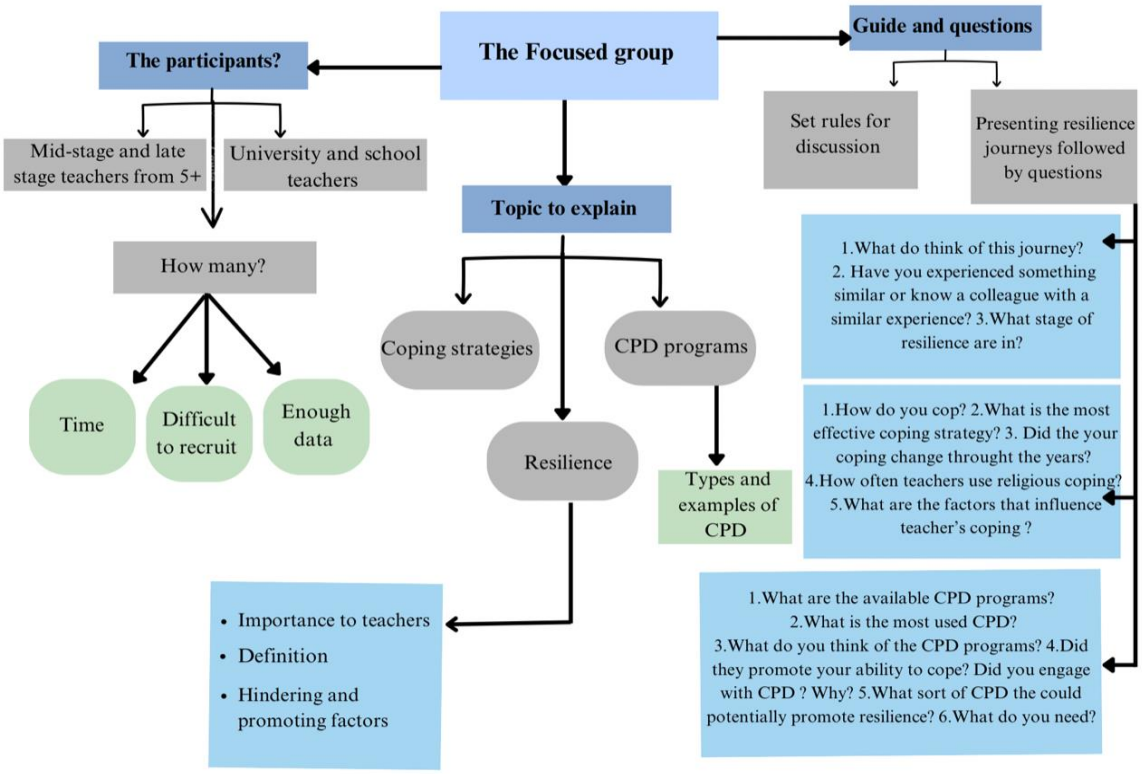


Figure 11: A sample of planning the interview guide.

1) **Defining resilience**

2) **Presenting the resilience archetypes**.

- What do you think of this journey?
- Have experienced something similar or know a teacher who has?

3) **Defining coping with examples on different coping strategies,**

- How do you cope?
- Did your coping change over years?

4) **Introducing CPD with its different forms.**

- What are the available CPD in your context?
- Describe your experience with CPD?
- If you have a chance to design a CPD program what would include and why?

5) **Drawing activity.**

Figure 12: A sample of the interview guide

Additionally, the interview guide included discussion rules and schedule that was specifically developed for participants. My objective was to provide teachers with equal opportunity to share their experience, cover the research aims and probe teachers with follow up questions.

5.5.3. Procedure

As explained in section (5.2.1), the target number was 16 participants, initially, I was able to recruit 15 teachers and thus, I had 5 groups consisting of 3 groups of university teachers, and 2 groups of schoolteachers. However, as I started conducting the interviews two participants withdrew, and thus, the number of participants reduced, and the groups composition changed as will be further explained. According to Dörnyei (2007), focus groups works better, when participants are similar, but different. That is, although teachers were grouped based on their teaching context, they have different years of experience, and some changed context several times. Before every interview, the goal and process of the study was thoroughly explained, and the interviews were scheduled to accommodate the participant's time. Furthermore, together with consent forms, the focus group schedule and discussion rules were sent to every participant. (see Appendix ,2).

All interviews were conducted in Arabic and online, which increased participants anonymity and thus allowed for detailed and rich data (Roller & Lavrakas, 2015)**.**The group discussions were different, in terms of duration, and number of participants in each group. (see **Table 3).** However, every interview started with summary of the research aims, schedule, and ensuring data protection and anonymity. Furthermore, as warm up, every teacher was encouraged to interduce herself to the group, which was then followed, by asking teachers a starter question about the concept of resilience. This was an important stage to engage participants interest and help them feel comfortable and relaxed (Mann, 2016) As shown in **Table 3**, group 2 and 4 had different number of participants, this was because two participants withdrew before the interview.

Originally group 2 consisted of 3 teachers, but an hour before the interview one of teachers cancelled. However, because of the time constraints and conflicting schedule of the other teachers at the group, I decide to conduct the interview knowing that it may not produce rich data. As for group 4, it was initially scheduled with 3 schoolteachers, but the allocated time for the interview (i.e., approximately 2 hours), conflicted with one of the teachers. Several attempts were made to reschedule the group interview, but it was not practical for teachers. Thus, I decided to join the remining teachers with the other group to form one group consisting of 5 schoolteachers. This decision expanded the interview time and required careful moderating to ask follow up questions and prevent "groupthink" by giving every teacher the opportunity to share her experience and express her opinion (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 145). All participants were respectful and followed the discussion rules; however, some teachers needed encouragement to shar their experience and join the discussion. Every interview followed the pre-designed schedule (see Figur**e** 12), and they were voice recorded as requested by the participants, who declined video discussion and recording. At the end of every interview, the participants were given several minutes to reflect on their experience and draw their resilience trajectory. However, this was not feasible for interview 4 because of time constraints, instead the participants were asked to finish the activity as soon as possible and send their drawing.

One of the drawbacks of focus interviews is that it is time consuming to organize, conduct, and transcribe (Dörnyei, 2007; Mann, 2016). However, I believe that every step of the process was informative, especially the transcription process. This because it helped me understand teachers experience and generate initial codes. After transcribing the data and producing a clear version (i.e., without unclear speech), the transcripts were sent to participants to check for inaccuracy and make revisions. Three teachers accepted from group1 and 3 and gave their approval of the final version. It is worth mentioning that one of the teachers showed

interest in research findings, which was a helpful way to get a "member checks" of the preliminary findings (Merriam & Grenier, 2019, p. 26).

Table 3: Summary of focus group composition

Group 1 **University teachers** **Duration: 3 hr**	**Group 2** **University teachers** **An hour**	**Group 3** **University teachers** **2hrs and 15min**	**Group 4** **Schoolteachers** **3hrs and 30 min**
Lana	Basam	Sara	Nawal
Shahad	Arawa	Abrar	Mai
Hadeel		Amal	Hala
			Rahaf
			Lama

5.5.4. Data analysis.

According to Braun and Clarke (2019), "qualitative researchers are always thinking, reflecting, learning and evolving"(p. 592). I followed Braun and Clarke (2006) 6 steps to thematic analysis, and through past experience with data analysis, I became aware of potential analysis pitfalls, such as free coding, and how to address them. Furthermore, I decided to keep an organised record of each step, including assumptions, challenges, initial themes, and revisions. Keeping analysis journal helped me return to each stage and reflect on my data before writing study findings. It is as Finlay (2021), suggested a necessary part of the analysis procedure, especially when dealing with complex data. In the following, I report on the process of each step and my reflections though emergent analysis process.

Step 1: *Becoming with familiar with data.*

This stage initially started by repeatedly listening to recordings of the focused interviews before the transcription process. My aim was to familiarize myself with teacher's voices, especially with overlaps instances, and listen to understand teacher's experiences. During this process, I wrote several notes, which then I compared with notes written during and after each focus group. Through this process, I was able to resolve some of the inconsistencies in teachers reports and differentiate between the teachers who changed contexts from the teachers who did not. For instance, Lana was among the teachers which I assumed changed universities. However, after listening to her reports, it was clear that she did not, and what she described was the change in the administration team. In the following phase, I read the data several times, and revisited the notes made throughout. In this stage, I found that Hala, did not identify with a particular archetype during group discussions. Her narrative revealed that she related to three archetypes, the reluctant, roller-coaster, and maladaptive archetypes. However, after checking her drawing, it appeared that her experience was a variation of the maladaptive archetype.

Step 2: *generating initial codes.*

In this stage, I opted for manual coding for each focus interview and coded each segment based on research questions**.** That is, the first part of coding was focused on teachers' response to the archetype and if they had similar experience. My goal was to get a deep understanding of the data, especially some of the nuanced experiences that seemed to influence teachers' resilience. In this stage, I coded the data with research questions in mind, and through social ecological lenes as previously done in the narrative study. Thus, this was a theoretical thematic analysis. For instance, I had several codes that revealed the influence of the Saudi culture and school environment on teachers coping behaviour, particularly, avoidance. Figures

13 initial codes on how teacher's assumptions and context influenced their response to challenges.

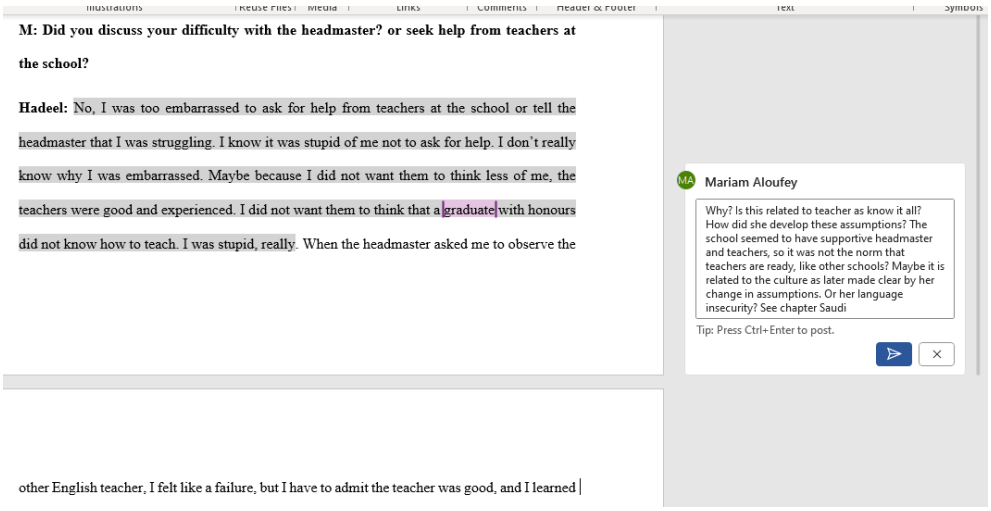


Figure 13:Example 1 of initial coding stage

After indentfiying the initial codes, I had several qeustions, such as, why teachers reacted negativly to the roller-coster archetype? Why some of teachers who identify with roller-coster archeytpe criticized the resilience trjectroy? Does teachers drawings match their narrative? To what extent did the online communities affected teachers resilience, coping and CPD engagement? With this in mind, I started reading the data again, comparing between interviwe codes, and examined teachers drawings, especially the drwaings that contained inforamtion. This was a helpful step for searching and organzing data into provsional themes.

Step 3: *searching for themes.*

In this stage, I used NVivo 12 to search for themes that combines data from interviews. Since I had a list of initial codes and comments on the data, I started generating provisional themes right way. This was a straightforward process, as I was able to generate codes and organise data under board themes that corresponds to research questions, such as relevance of the resilience archetypes and CPD experience. During this process, I had several codes that

related to both positive and negative contextual and personal factors that influence teachers' resilience. These included teaching skills, students' disengagement, and teacher personality. Furthermore, some of these codes were associated with other themes, particularly coping. At this point, I realised that I had several overlapping codes, that needed sorting to present a clear narrative of data. Thus, I referred to the literature, specifically, definition of resilience as multilayered consisting of personal and contextual systems that continuously interact (Masten, 2014a). This guided the next stage of the analysis. As mentioned earlier, I documented, comments and questions throughout the analysis process, as shown in Figure 13

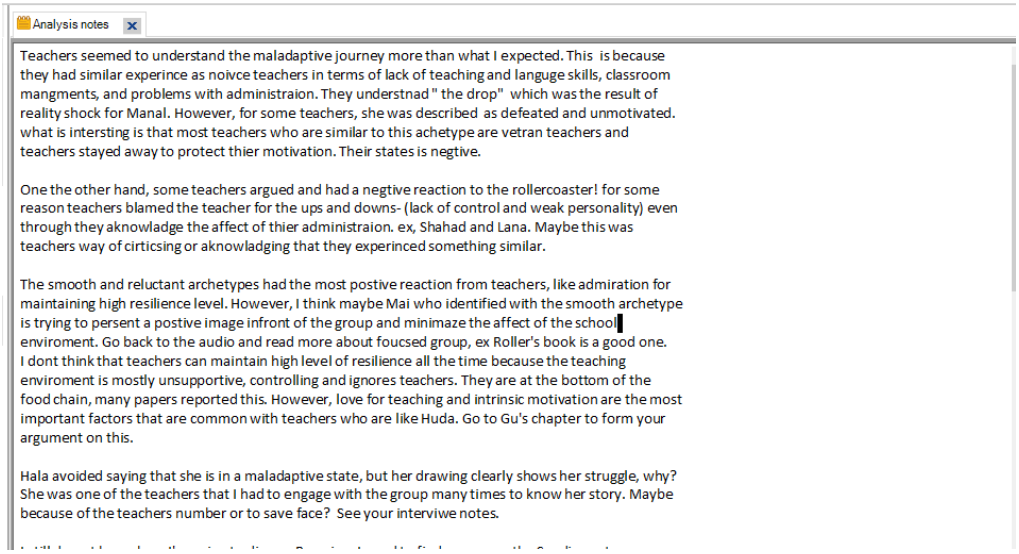


Figure 14: Memo used for analysis notes.

Step 4: *reviewing themes.*

This stage was mostly focused on modifying and organising that data into themes and subthemes. Guided by resilience definition, I developed a graph to visualise teacher resilience as multilayered as shown in **Figure 15.** Thus, themes were organised to reflect each system with its subsystems. I read the themes and sub-themes several times to examine if they were supported by the data and if they reflect "accurate representation" of data set (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 91).

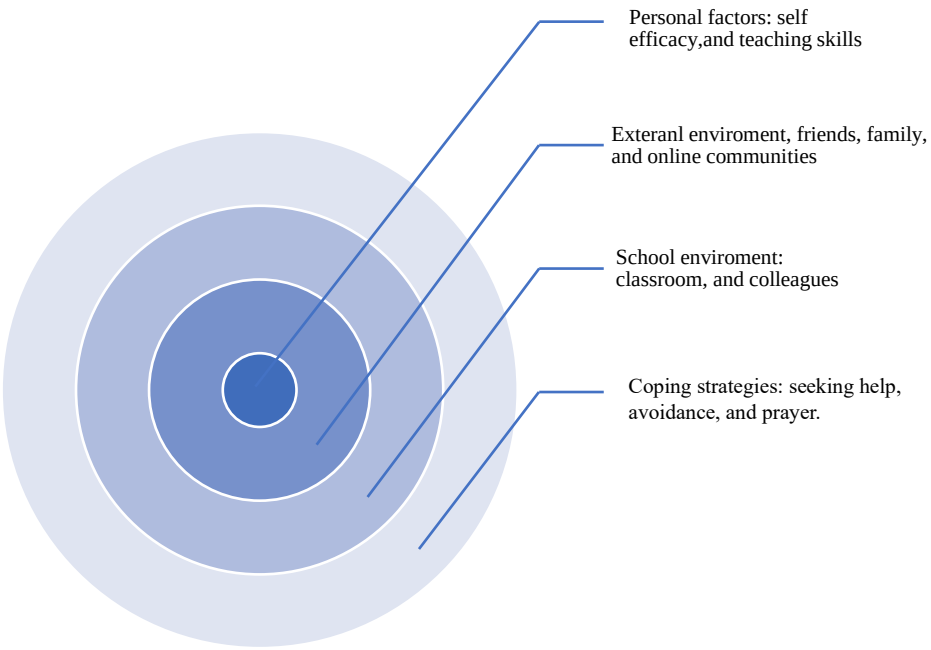


Figure 15: The multilayers of teachers' resilience system

Step 5: *defining themes.*

The last stage was dedicated to refining and naming themes, which aims to identify the "essence' of what each theme is about as well as the themes overall" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 92). Again, I read the data of every theme and whole themes to determine if they represent a coherent narrative of the data.

Step 6: *writing up.*

At this stage, I developed an outline to report and discuss the findings and support every theme with teacher's accounts as well as their drawings, which I replicated and translated. This because some participants provide some information in their drawing, some were written in Arabic. For the original drawings (see Appendix 4)

5.6. Ethical consideration

Ethical approval was granted for all studies from the University of Nottingham Ethics board. Before conducting the interviews, the forms were sent to all participants to obtain their consent. The research aims, and interview process were thoroughly explained to participants. Furthermore, I took special care to explain to the participants how their data would be used in all stages of the study, starting from the recording and transcription process to the final stage of the analysis. The participants were ensured that their identity and recordings would be protected and that they had the right to withdraw from the study without any harm or consequences.

5.7 Role of researcher

In qualitative research, "the researcher is the primary instrument for data collection and data analysis", (Merriam & Grenier, 2019, p. 5). This requires the identification of the researcher's assumptions, biases and values at the beginning of the research process (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). From the outset, I was aware of my motivation about the research topic, experience as an insider, and assumptions. Coming from a family of teachers, has certainly influenced and shaped my understanding of the profession, with its perks and challenges. I witnessed at firsthand how the teaching conditions and challenges lead to early retirement and change in the profession. Furthermore, my experience as student and teacher trainee in both university level and [4]private sector influenced my perception of language teaching and learning in the Saudi context. I believe that my experience gave me a better understanding on the conditions that influence teachers' skills, practice, and motivation. Thus, I was careful to monitor the impact of my biases and personal experiences from the study (Berger, 2015). Despite my efforts, I must acknowledge that they may have influenced my research decision's

[4] I worked and trained at language institute for three months.

view and interpretation of the data. Particularly, during the reflection process on handwritten notes, that included, my experience, assumptions and notes during interviews and analysis. For example, in the planning phase of the exploratory study, I written some of the challenges that I might encounter in the recruiting process, which was influenced by experience during MA studies and as member of the Saudi culture. Specifically, from the onset my target participants were mainly female teachers because I assumed that male teachers would avoid participating in this type of research, which required building rapport with participants to gain rich data. That is, education in Saudi is segregated and usually male and female have limited interactions, thus, this type of research is unfamiliar and appears uncomfortable for male participants. To some extent, my assumptions were true as few male teachers (i.e., 3) showed interest and participated in the study. As the research progressed, it became clear that focusing on female participants was appropriate. However, I was aware of the limitations in terms of the data the male teachers might provide.

As a researcher it was important for me to build rapport with participants and my knowledge about some of the challenges in Saudi education helped. Particularly, when it was clear that I shared similar experience with some participants. I believe that this created a connection with the participants and enhanced my knowledge and sensitivity of their struggles. Furthermore, it encouraged participants to provide detailed description their of experiences and their emotional struggles as teachers. This has certainly influenced my interpretation of their data, but I would argue that I was able to find balance and achieve my aim of presenting teachers' resilience experience.

5.8 Conclusion

In this chapter I presented the methods used to conduct the three studies that were sequentially designed to form this thesis. First, I started with a brief overview on qualitative research. Followed by describing the participants, instruments, procedures, and data analysis for 1) exploratory study, 2) narrative study and 3) focus group study. I then ended, with a reflection on my role in the research process.

Chapter 6 Stories of four English teachers

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter I present the sorties of four Saudi language teachers, highlighting the trajectory and development of their resilience throughout the years. As explained in **Chapter 5**, the four teachers were selected based on the pilot study data. Their pilot data highlighted several instances of their resilience that warranted further investigation to understand the factors that influenced resilience. Therefore, I first present the findings by examining the development of teacher's resilience using their repots from the two interviews and an adaption of their drawings to present a holistic story. This is followed by a discussion of the findings. It is important to note that each story is different, and thus, the reporting and focus of the resilience experience is different. The sorties presented in order are:

1) A smooth journey to resilience.
2) The maladaptive resilience.
3) A roller coaster resilience journey
4) A reluctant journey to resilience

6.2 A smooth journey to resilience: Huda's story

Huda taught English to high school students for 20 years. During her teaching years, Huda changed schools, encountered many difficulties, and built strong relationships with her colleagues and students. Huda's journey to resilience was influenced by several personal and contextual factors that gradually revealed a resilient teacher. As represented in the graph, Huda's journey reveals an armoured teacher who seemed to maintain her passion, commitment, and resilience throughout her teaching years. The major themes in Huda's story focus on the hindering effects of her learning and training experience and the significance of school environment in promoting her resilience.

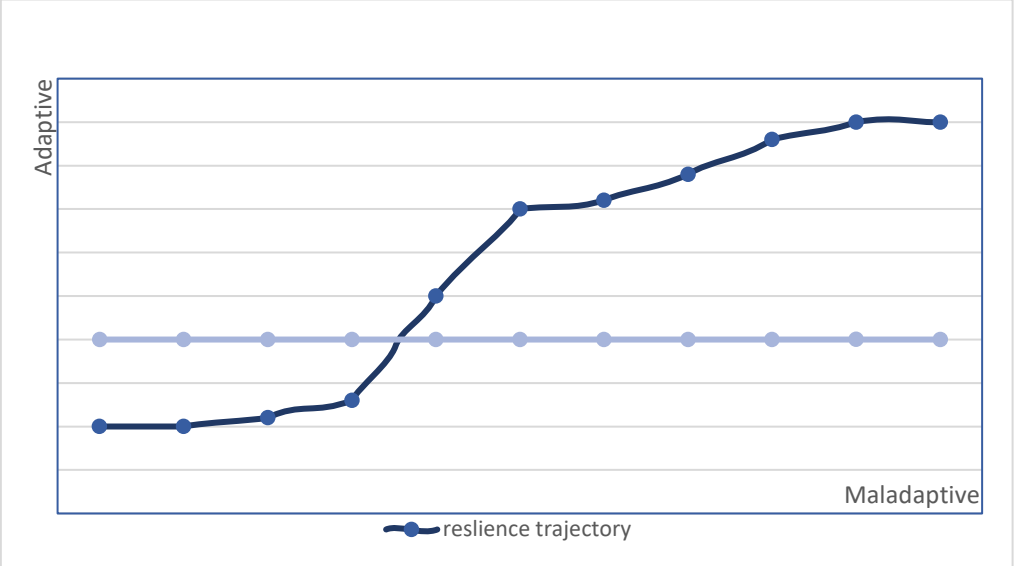


Figure 16: Huda's resilience trajectory

6.2.1. Rough start: Language proficiency and training

Generally, the aim of teacher training programmes is to prepare future English teachers providing them with the opportunity to apply what they learned in a real teaching context. However, Huda's narrative revealed that the whole English program, and training, were extremely insufficient. This is because it did not develop Huda's language competencies, prepare her for the reality of teaching, build their teaching skills and ability to deal with teaching difficulties. Huda claimed that in the four years of undergraduate studies, she did have the chance to practise speaking the language. This is not surprising because as shown in **Chapter 2** the teacher-centre approach was and is still the norm in Saudi classrooms.

> *Throughout the 4 years of my study in college. My friends and I were never given a chance to speak in class. We never had the opportunity to speak in front of the whole class. The professors used to come in, lecture the whole class time and leave. They never allowed us to speak in class, that is, practice speaking, and correct us if we made a mistake.* ***(Interview2)***

Furthermore, Arabic was and is still the dominant language inside and outside classrooms. Thus, Huda had limited language exposure and use. These factors resulted in Huda's speaking difficulties, particularly her unawareness about the existence of silent letters and inability to pronounce words with "ph" letters.

> *At that time, I did not know that there are silent letters in English, such as "c" in words like scent. I did not know that ph are pronounced as 'F'.* ***(Interview1).***

Besides the limited language use, the English program was mostly focused on teaching English literature. *"What I learned was mostly about things like Shakespeare*" **(Interview2**). Therefore, in addition to gaps in her language knowledge Huda had limited knowledge about teaching it, especially grammar and vocabulary, which was one of the challenges she would

come to realise in her training and had to overcome in her first years of teaching. In the final semester of her undergraduate study, Huda started her the practicum course, which was split between two days of training at a high school and attending classes, including a teaching method course the rest of week. *At that time, we spent two days at the school and the rest in college*. (Interview 2). Since she was aware of her inadequate language level, especially her speaking skills, Huda bought an audio dictionary to help improve her pronunciation during her training. However, she did not use it until she started teaching (see,6.2.4).

Huda reported her shack from the significant gap between the English programme and the high school curriculum. *"I remember that I did not study some of the grammar in college"* (Interview2). Furthermore, the teaching methods course which is supposed to educate trainees about teaching strategies and improve their skills, seemed unrealistic and inapplicable to the teaching context. This was because the professors were from different countries, and they were unaware of the reality of the teaching context, which had many challenges, such as students language level, and inappropriate curriculum (Al-Seghayer, 2014b; Alrashidi & Phan, 2015).

> *The professors taught us from an ivory tower. They were from the States, India, and Pakistan, so English was their first language. They knew nothing about students' language level. They assumed that students know and understand the language. However, the reality was totally different, and we faced a lot of difficulty because of this. The courses did not prepare us for this reality. (Interview2).*

Despite its limitation, Huda believed that her training gave her and fellow trainees the opportunity to learn few things from the supervising teacher, including tips on how teach their assigned lessons and act during the supervisor evaluation visit. Mor importantly, it showed Huda a glimpse of the real world of teaching.

> *I think that experience showed us the difficulties of teaching, and I think we knew that the next stage of teaching was going to be a lot harder. We knew that we would teach more than one class and would be responsible for students learning outcomes. (Interview2).*

Overall, the whole English program, including the practicum course, was insufficient because Huda seemed professionally and linguistically incompetent, struggling in her first years of teaching.

6.2.2. The struggles of novice teacher

Huda was assigned to teach senior high school students, which was a difficult task on many levels. Huda started teaching with an inadequate language level and teaching skills, which contributed to her lack of confidence and self-efficacy. Although she was aware of the discrepancy between what she studied and the curriculum, Huda was still shocked by the curriculum and her inability to teach simple grammar rules and vocabulary. Thus, she skipped teaching some vocabulary items and grammar rule.

> *I used to skip the words that I did not know how to pronounce in class. I used to skip grammar too. I only taught what I knew at that time. I remember that I did not study some of the grammar in college. What I studied was totally different from what I had to teach in reality. Although it was simple grammar, still I did not know how to teach it. It was very hard for me. I skipped many vocabularies and grammar.* ***(Interview1)***

At a school level, it seems that the school lacked the necessary resources to teach the language, especially teaching the listening skill. Huda assumed that schools have language laboratories to teach listening. However, besides lacking language laboratory, sometimes the school failed to provide teachers with a cassette player to play the listening audio for students or enough listening CDs for teachers. Therefore, Huda had to either read the listening parts for students, which was difficult given her language proficiency or make an "unclear" copy of the

listening CD. Since she struggled with words pronunciation, it seems that Huda's approach to teaching listening was ineffective, which might be one of the contributing factors to her student's failure.

> *We did not have a language laboratory to teach listening. We used to read the listening part for students. We did not have laboratories, Mariam! Maybe now some schools have them. I don't know, but back then, we did not have laboratories or even laptops to play the listening CD. Sometimes, we used a cassette to play the listening audio, which sometimes didn't work properly. The recording was not clear for students. (Interview2)*

At the classroom level, Huda reported that most of the senior students had a low language level, which was significantly below the required level to understand the curriculum.

> *I was assigned to senior students who did not even know the English letters! Mariam, can you imagine that after finishing three years in middle school, students still do not know a single letter! (Interview2)*

This might be because English was only taught in middle and high schools for times per week and it was not until the 2000s that it was changed (Elyas & Picard, 2010b, 2019). Therefore, Huda had to spend 2-3 classes explaining one lesson to students, which left her behind in the curriculum schedule and was later questioned by the school administration. Eventually, Huda was able to follow the schedule, but was shocked when several students (15/40) failed the first-semester exam. Students' failure might not be surprising because of their language level, Huda's limited language and teaching skills and the administration focus on the quantity rather the quality (i.e., curriculum schedule).

> *I taught students the whole curriculum, and I thought that they understood everything. So, naturally, I wrote the exam based on what they learned. However, it turned out that the students did not understand at all (Interview2)*

Huda believed that students failed because of the hard curriculum and their language level. *"The problem was in the curriculum and the fact that students graduated middle school knowing almost nothing*" **(**Interviwe2). She seemed unaware of her role in the teaching and learning process, especially when she skipped teaching several grammar rules and vocabulary items. Notably, Huda seemed to draw on her learning experience by comparing her memorization abilities with students. *"When I was a student, I had no problem memorizing the whole book and I wondered why students do not do the same"* (Interview2). Huda was the product of the memorisation learning strategy, which cantered on memorising everything such as grammar rules with superficial or no understanding (Alrashidi & Phan, 2015). This learning strategy was and is still to some extent, the norm for many Saudi learners which is reinforced by the testing system targeting students declarative knowledge (Alrabai, 2019a). Hence, Huda's assumption that memorizing leads to language learning and achievement. Later, Huda realised that students have different abilities, and they cannot fulfil her expectations.

> *I found out that it is all about different abilities. Students are different, they have different environments and different mentalities. After, I realized that this is the reality, which is not just about me. (Interview2).*

Explaining students' failure to the supervisor and administration was difficult task for Huda because she was not prepared to be accountable for students learning and achievement as well as following the curriculum schedule. The following illustrates, Huda's frustration and her struggle to accept this reality.

> *When I told the supervisor that senior students do not know the English letters, she said, this is your responsibility. I told her why it is my responsibility? Why is it not middle school teachers' responsibility? Or freshman and sophomore years teachers' responsibility? She said it is a teacher responsibility to teach. It is your role as a teacher. (Interview2).*

The supervisor knew that the curriculum was above students' level and witnessed Huda's struggle with pronunciation and teaching grammar. Thus, she instructed Huda to "*control the curriculum*", to teach students based on their level and leave out the difficult parts. Furthermore, Huda asked the headmaster to move the exam date to help students remember the class revision and pass the exam as the following illustrate. Throughout her teaching career, Huda would implement this solution and persuade many headmasters to make this change.

6.2.3. Coping to survive: Light at the end of the tunnel.

Huda had several supporting factors in the teaching environment, but it seemed to have a trivial effect on her in the first year of teaching. This was because of her negative coping patterns, which was mainly avoidance, that is avoiding teaching grammar and vocabulary, and avoided going to school because of language and teaching anxiety. (see 6.6.2). Furthermore, Huda did not to take full advantage of the available resources. For instance, Huda was not the only novice teacher at the school. She started teaching with three English teachers, who encountered similar difficulties. She befriended one of the teachers, which to an extent, helped her survive. Building a supportive relationship with colleagues is important for teachers on an intellectual and emotional level to have collaborative and collective professional development (Gu, 2018). Since both had language and teaching difficulties, Huda and her colleague were committed to helping each other improve and overcome some of their teaching difficulties.

> *There was one teacher who was my friend, and we used to teach the same class level. So, before we went to class, we used to discuss our lesson plan and compare notes. For example, she would ask how do you pronounce this word? And I would ask her how would you explain this grammar lesson? We used to help each other improve. (interview2)*

Although Huda had a collaborative relationship with her colleague, she did not report seeking emotional help from her when she did not show up to school because of her anxiety. This might indicate that she did not fully build a trusting relationship with her colleague, like the one she built with her supervisor (see 6.2.3.1**).** Additionally, Huda did not report seeking help from the other novice teachers or forming a relationship with any teachers at the school. Maybe if Huda attempted to seek help and support from other teachers, she would have been able to cope better.

The supervisor witnessed Huda's struggles and offered support to her and the other teachers, but it seemed to have delayed benefits. This was because of the limited supervisor visits to the school, which was usually two visits in the academic year. Thus, Huda had limited interaction with the supervisor. Furthermore, the supervisor provided Huda with tips and materials to improve her language and teaching, which required time and effort. Specifically, improving her language level and learning how teach difficult grammar rules and vocabularies. Notably, Huda had audio dictionary, which she could have used when she started teaching, but she did not. Therefore, between adjusting to the reality of teaching, dealing with teaching difficulties and improving her language and teaching skills, Huda suffered from anxiety and frustration, employing an avoidance coping strategy that promoted her maladaptive state.

> *You know, sometimes I did not go to school because either the lesson was hard for me to explain, or I was stressed about my ability to explain it. Skipping classes was my way of dealing with difficulties. (interview2)*

Furthermore, Huda showed signs of apathy toward weak students, manifesting in disinterest to help them improve. She called the students' parents and reported their weak language level. Huda, believed that it was their role to deal with it and thus, absolving herself from the responsibility.

> *At that time, I was inexperienced, so I used to call the student's mothers and explain that their daughters do not know English and let them deal with it. (interview1).*

Huda followed this pattern of coping for a year and a half without seeking help from the administration because she believed that it was inappropriate to discuss her emotional struggle and teaching difficulty with them. She believed that difficulties are part of the job description, and they should be dealt with without involving the administration. Furthermore, Huda believed that in comparison to the other teachers, her struggles were insignificant to discuss with the headmaster. This might be contradicting because her language and teaching difficulties were sometimes severe, preventing her from teaching and attending classes. Furthermore, as she reported, many teachers at the school seemed to share their difficulties with the headmaster, which indicates that the headmaster was able to create a safe and supportive culture. Certainly, the headmaster roles include cultivating a supportive environment and providing guidance and emotional support for teacher, which help can them deal with difficulties (Papatraianou & Le Cornu, 2014; Peters & Pearce, 2012). This is clearly demonstrated when the headmaster helped Huda by changing the exam date and supporting her in other stations, as will be shown in following section.

> *You see, Mariam, you must understand that if you become a teacher, then you must deal with the responsibilities. I could not go to the headmaster or to the school supervisor and tell them that I can't teach the curriculum because I have difficulty pronouncing some words. Never. I could not. Also, I could not tell them that I missed classes because I was emotionally struggling. No, because they considered all of this as part of the job. It is normal to struggle. All teachers, such as math, Arabic, and religion study teachers, were always at the headmaster's office talking about their difficulties. So, as an English teacher, I felt that my difficulties were not as bad. Yes, it made me miss classes at least once a month, but I think I was much better than the other teachers. (Interview2).*

Interestingly, Huda felt comfortable discussing her struggles with the supervisor and their effect on her teaching, but not with the headmaster**.** Huda's inability to discuss her challenges might be because she was new to the teaching context and had not established a supportive relationship with the headmaster or anyone at the school yet, except for one teacher. Furthermore, it seemed that the culture of teacher accountability and curriculum policy was dominant at the school (see 6.2.2), which might have prevented Huda from disclosing her difficulties. Nonetheless, the cycle of negative coping would come to an end at the last semester of her sconed year of teaching.

6.2.3.1. A guide to resilience: The champion supervisor

Although she had limited interaction with Huda, the supervisor was able to form a trusting and supportive relationship with her initiating the development of resilient qualities and positive coping strategies. The supervisor visits were aimed to evaluate teachers' performance, students' comprehension and the use of teaching aids, which are usually conducted twice in the academic year (Shah & Al Harthi, 2014; Shoaib, 2004). In the first evaluation visit, the supervisor noticed Huda's low proficiency and limited teaching skills. However, she did not give her any discouraging comments. It seemed that the supervisor was aware of Huda's and the other English teachers educational background and the challenges in the teaching context, such as students' language level. Thus, it appears that she chose to create a trusting and supportive relationship with teachers, helping them feel secure. The supervisor gave Huda motivating comments about her teaching and advice on how to teach certain lessons, which encouraged Huda to work hard.

> *The supervisor. *[5]Faten, I remember that every time she attended my class or the other teachers, she used to encourage us. I used to tell her about my difficulties with pronunciation and grammar, how hard it was for me, but she would always*

[5] A pseudonym

say, you are good Huda, and you can do it. Her positive comments motivated me to work hard. (interview2)

After the high number of failed students in her class, the supervisor listened to Huda's struggle and provided with a solution. She advised Huda to *"control the curriculum*" that is, skip teaching the difficult parts for the students until they improve their language. Furthermore, she gave Huda two grammar books to help improve her language and teaching skills. "*I remember that she gave two grammar books, which were really good and helpful*. **(interview 2).** After observing Huda and other English teachers, the supervisor documented their teaching mistakes and included an explanation of the correct practice, handing them a copy to help them improve. Having a trusting and supportive relationship encouraged Huda to discuss her emotional struggle and absence with the supervisor, who reportedly made her feel better. As a result of the support and encouragement, Huda started to gradually change, improving her language, harnessing her motivation, turning to a higher power, and changing her teaching practises (see 6.2.4). The supervisor witnessed this change and continued to motivate Huda throughout the 3 years of supervision.

She kept a record of all her class visits, writing the most common mistakes we made as teachers and the teaching difficulties we faced. For example, we had a problem pronouncing the word take. We used to pronounce the E at the end, so the supervisor wrote the word and its correct pronunciation. She also wrote an explanation for why we should not pronounce certain letters and things like that. Her journal was helpful for us, and we used it for many years. ***(Interview2)***

6.2.4. Assembling the armour: Positive coping and building resilience

Reflection is viewed as an essential element that guides teacher professional development (Hofer, 2017). After a year and a half of teaching, Huda engaged in self-reflection and recognised the importance of change. Huda's reflection process included a critical examination of the teaching context, her teaching practises, and her relationship with a deity. Huda's reflection revealed the stagnant Since she started teaching, Huda noticed that nothing had changed. The students' language did not improve, and the school still had limited resources. Furthermore, Huda was not happy with her teaching performance, despite the positive feedback from the students and the school administration.

> *The administration did not believe that I was not happy with my performance that I was not… This was because they saw students results and their positive feedback about my teaching. However, I was not happy with my performance" (interview2).*

Although none of the students failed after the first-semester exam in first year, Huda was not satisfied with students learning outcomes and her teaching. The dissatisfaction seemed to originate from Huda's language struggle and the poor English instruction that students received throughout the years, prior to joining her class, leading to their low proficiency (see6.2.2). Huda was aware of the importance of the English language and how it was valuable for students' future. In a sense, her students' language level was still rudimentary. In addition, Huda was aware of the teaching responsibility and the importance of integrity in her job and with deity, which was a motivating factor to change. Therefore, Huda decided to make a change, starting by working hard to improve her language, giving remedial classes to students, and dealing with difficulties.

> *Since that second semester, I completely stopped missing my classes, and I accepted the reality of teaching and decided to deal with difficulties. I knew that I was responsible and the importance of integrity, so I was completely committed. (interview2)*

Huda used all the available resources to improve her language and teaching, including the received grammar books, the supervisor's journal, and the audio dictionary. "*At the beginning of the second year of teaching, I began to use it regularly*" (interview2). With time and constant effort, Huda started to significantly improve. Particularly, she stopped struggling with pronunciation, which increased her confidence. At the same time, Huda decided to give students remedial classes dedicating her free time to help weak students. Huda was motivated to help students because she understood their struggle and fear of their academic future. At that time, the final exams were written by the Ministry of Education, and they were known for their difficulty and determining university admission (Khoshaim, 2017). Thus, Huda used the break time to teach students the language basics to help them understand the main lessons.

> *Well, in the second semester, I started to give remedial classes. A lot of classes. For example, when I have only two classes a day, I spend the rest of the day giving remedial classes. It is like I taught 6 classes a day. It was really exhausting for me. My feet and back hurt a lot, Mariam. (Interview2)*

Despite her efforts, Huda faced resistance. Many students did not want to join the remedial classes, and their parents complained to the school administration about the pressure caused by the classes. Furthermore, using the recess time to give extra classes created a problem for the teachers responsible for organising and monitoring students during break time. It meant that teachers had to spend more time and effort to organize students.

> *I had a lot of conflicts with the administration and some teachers. You see, some students did not want to take remedial classes, and some teachers and*

> *headmasters did not like that I gave some students remedial classes because this means that not all students will go down for recess. Thus, teachers will spend more time monitoring and organizing students after or during break time. It was not easy. (interview2)*

However, this did not discourage Huda from helping the students who wanted to learn and improve, so she used the free class periods to help students. After a while, students language started to improve, which encouraged many more students to join the remedial classes. Huda's efforts were recognised by the headmaster and students' parents, who showed their appreciation in many ways. The headmaster encouraged Huda and rewarded her efforts many times. For instance, one time, the headmaster awarded Huda by calling her *"the best English teacher at the school*" in front the whole of the school. As for the parents, some sent gifts and other sent thank you notes with written prayers for Huda. To this day, Huda still receives gifts and prayers from some of her students and their parents because she cared when no one did and dedicated herself to teaching students.

> *After a while, the resisting students began to join the classes. They changed their mind after seeing their classmates' interest and engagement in the remedial classes. This motivated me, Mariam and seeing the headmaster's and supervisor's appreciation was…You know Mariam, every one of us wanted to be appreciated for our efforts. (Interview2)*

Seeing the results of her efforts and feeling appreciated increased Huda's motivation and commitment to helping students. Since then, Huda had not stopped giving remedial classes and managed to convince the headmaster and many others. These efforts would eventually make Huda get noticed on the city schools' level and awarding her as "*the best teacher in Al-Taif city"* by the city's educational department. Huda was able to experience self-satisfaction many times after witnessing students' improvement and success in the MoE exam. Huda's efforts went beyond teaching remedial classes; she always tried to motivate students, either by encouraging comments or spending her own money to give to excellent students' valuable

rewards, such as "*gold rings or necklaces*". Overall, Huda's difficulties began to decrease, and she was committed to offering students remedial classes and motivating them throughout the years. In a way, it became a part of her teaching practice.

> *I reached a stage of self-satisfaction when I saw students results at the end of each semester, when teachers prepare students transcripts and write their grades. Like this student is excellent; she got 99 in math, 98 in chemistry, and 100 in English. In moments like these, I reached a self-satisfaction stage and what proved the great effort was that the test questions were from the ministry. I did not have anything to do with them, which means that who taught the students, taught them well. (interview2)*

6.2.5.1. Effective coping; Reaching to a higher power.

Huda's faith seemed to play an integral part in coping with difficulties and her maintaining resilience throughout years. Her motivation and actions were guided by her morals and relationship with a deity, particularly fear of punishment and seeking rewards. "*I knew that I was responsible, and I understood the importance of integrity, so I was completely committed" (interview2).* Based on the Islamic faith, every action and saying will be accounted for in the Hereafter, good deeds will be rewarded, and bad actions would be a source of punishment from God (Halstead, 2007). Furthermore, morals and the Islamic faith are considered one and the same; that is, faith results in moral behaviour (Halstead, 2007). Thus, Huda knew that as a teacher, she was accountable professionally and spiritually for her actions. However, being spiritually accountable was more important to Huda because of its direct effect on her life and the Hereafter. In other words, if she was not "*truthful in front of Allah*", she would lose his blessing in every aspect of her life, including the teaching salary, and she would be questioned for her actions in the Hereafter.

Integrity (Amanah) as in fear of Allah. I mean I know that this job is how I make my living, and I will be questioned about it. (Interview2).

It was for moral reasons. It was about self-integrity and wanting to be truthful in front of Allah" (interview2).

Furthermore, Huda turned to a higher power to help teach students and overcome difficulties. She emphasised reciting a specific prayer and a chapter in the Holy Quran, which she believed influenced her teaching and student motivation. Huda reported that several teachers compared students' engagement in her classes and theirs, which she believed was because of reciting "*[6]*Surat Al-Zalalah*". Huda shared her spiritual methods with her students and teachers, which might be because she wanted to help teachers and make students feel motivated by her prayer. Overall, Huda asked "*Allah's*" help and sought his blessings while actively improving her teaching skills and dealing with difficulties. Thus, it seemed that the combination of religious coping and behavioural coping strategies, such as actively improving her teaching, helped Huda overcome difficulties, had a positive effect on her teaching performance and promoted and maintained her resilience.

I swear to you Mariam when I finish preparing the lesson at home, finish preparing the side notes and pasting them on the lesson. I say I entrusted my students and my lesson to Allah. Inshallah, it will be easy. I have always prayed to Allah. Moreover, whenever, I enter the classroom, I used to tell students that when I was in the car and on my way to school, I prayed, "O teacher of Ibrahim, teach them. O you who made Suliman understand, make them understand." I don't enter the class unless I'm praying. (interview2).

6.2.5. The armoured teacher

After the first three years, Huda had taught in different schools and encountered several difficulties. Huda did not report the number of schools that she taught at; however, she was

[6] A chapter in the Holy Quran that directly translate to earthquake.

able to maintain her commitment and resilience, employing different coping strategies. For instance, Huda continued to teach high school students with low proficiency levels. In some cases, she asked the school headmaster to assign the same English teacher for all high school levels, which helped her avoid dealing with weak students. In a sense, "*If the teacher did a good job from the start, she wouldn't struggle in the next grade level. In a way, it was like you reap what you sow."* (interview2). However, this solution lasted for two years only because several teachers either had to go on maternity leave or transfer to a different school. Furthermore, with experience, Huda changed her mindset about difficulties. She started to use positive reinterpretation to downplay the stressors and draw on her past experience to deal with difficulties, particularly being behind in the curriculum schedule.

> *I swear that, no matter how great the difficulty is, I viewed as a minor thing, and I think this is what helped overcome any difficulty. I used to say what is the problem, the students do not know the letters and numbers, so what. It is okay. The curriculum does not need to be completed. So, I spent a week teaching students' letters and after, I started teaching the main lesson. If I completed the curriculum by the end of the semester, then that's okay; if not, I only need to teach the most important parts of the remaining lessons (interview2)*

The last six years of teaching presented a new challenge for Huda. Huda's school moved to a new building that is equipped with language laboratories, personal computers for teachers and smartboard technology, which was challenging to use. Huda was stressed and frustrated about her inability to use the smart board correctly. She felt angry when she made a mistake in front of her students, and she did not want them to laugh at her. However, she and other teachers were determined to learn and improve. The school headmaster was cooperative and hired a professional to help the teachers learn how to use the smart board. Huda and her colleagues spent the after-work hours at the school attending classes with the technology trainer. After two weeks of attending classes and constantly practising at home, Huda learned

how to use the smart board and felt comfortable making mistakes in front of students and asking them for help. This was because of the headmaster who understood the teachers struggle with technology and the importance of their image in front of their students, so she stepped in to help the teachers.

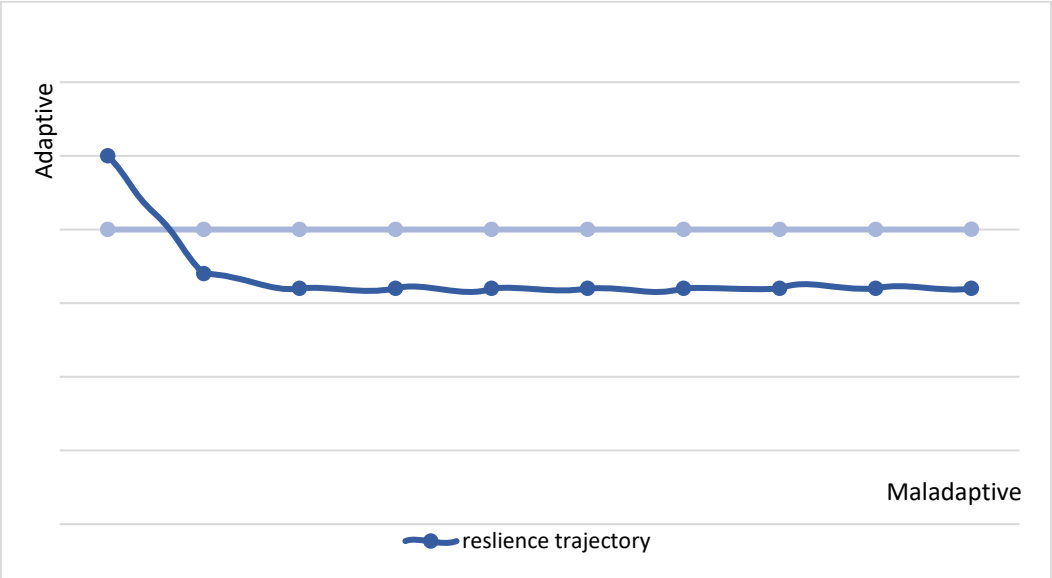
> *In a very gentle way, the headmaster told the students, we are old, and we are not used to technology like them, so if they see us struggling with the board, they should provide help. It worked. We were rigid before, but after, we regarded it as a fun activity with students. We were comfortable and happy to overcome that pressure (interview1).*

Throughout the 20 years of her teaching experience, Huda seemed able to maintain her resilience and her commitment to the profession. This was accomplished by employing different religious and behavioural coping strategies, utilising contextual resources, having a cooperative work environment, and feeling appreciated. After 20 years, Huda is now working as a vice-principal at a high school, occasionally teaching remedial classes and committing herself to helping English teachers at the school. Overall, Huda teaching highlights the gradual development of the resilience system and the interaction between the personal and contextual factors in the process (Day & Gu, 2014; Gu, 2018).

6.3. Maladaptive resilience: Manal's story

Manal is a mid-career teacher. She has been teaching English for the last 8 years at different school settings and to different grade levels. Manal's resilience journey is unique and different from the other teachers Manal's resilience was influenced and shaped by both her learning experience and the first year of teaching and appears to stay at the same a negative state throughout the years. Manal story begins from her home and school environments. Many of her belfies about teaching and learning originated from these environments, which became

one of the hindering factors to resilience. The major themes for Manal's story as might be expected represents, illusions about the teaching world, experiencing realty shock, coping to survive, and becoming a defeated teacher. As explained, in **Chapter 5**, Manal drawing graph is different from what her narrative represents, my understating and interpretation of her narrative, suggest that she is a maladaptive state. As the story unfolds in following, it will reveal Manal's perceptions about the reality of teaching, which seemed to align with maladaptive resilience.



6.3.1. Teaching and learning illusions.

Learning experience

Manal's teacher identity was shaped and influenced by both her home environment and learning experience. Manal was born and raised in a small village in Al-Qassim province. She came from a family that appreciates education so much so that there was a competition on who graduates with first-class honours "*there was always a competition on who gets first honours" **(Interview1)***. Furthermore, Manal and many of her family members studied at the same school, which she described as the best school in the district.

I was raised in a family that loves education. Education is very important to us, and I graduated from the best school in Al-Qassim. It was a well-known school in the city, and me and many of my family members studied at the school. ***(Interview1)***

As Manal reports, the school environment was motivating and cared about students' learning and achievements. Manal described herself as an excellent student and seemed to view her memorisation ability as an important skill. Her pride and emphasis on memorisation skill could be linked to her ability to pass the MoE examination. A decade ago, the MoE oversaw senior high school students' examinations, forming committee that consisted of several members, including some high school teachers selected from all the Saudi provinces (Khoshaim, 2017). Teachers had no power or role in the exam writing process, which were known for their difficulty. Hence, students' dependency on memorisation to pass with high GPA, which solely determined admission to universities.

You know, I memorise things very quickly [aha] I was either the first or the second on the class cohort. I was an excellent student, and I thought that everyone was the same. ***(Interview2)***

Overall, Manal whole view of education was mostly shaped at this stage of her life. She imagined that every school was like her high school, with excellent teachers and students. Like her, Manal thought that every student cared about learning and achievement. Furthermore, Manal assumed that every student was surrounded by a motivating family, which values education. This learning experience was the foundation of Manal teaching journey leading to a series of misfortunate events, which later revealed a defeated English teacher.

<u>Inadequate teacher training</u>

Manal's reports revealed that training course lasted for a year and was divided between two different middle schools. In the first semester, Manal and several trainees were assigned to a middle school under the supervision of a Tunisian university professor. Manal was worried

because her supervisor was new to the Saudi context, had high evaluation standards and a reputation of failing students in her classes. Thus, Manal started her training with fear and doubt.

> *The training supervisor was problem. Her problem was that she was very strict and had high standards. Many students failed in her classes. I even thought that she was going to fail me in the training course. I thought I would be the first one to fail in it. (Interview2)*

At the school level, Manal described the school administration as weak, uncooperative, and viewed her and the other trainees as students. "*Some schools regarded trainees as students"* (interview2). It appears that Manal was expecting a different treatment from the school staff; that is, to be treated as teacher with authority to deal with middle school students. Students-teachers are usually viewed as guests by the school administration and faculty, and thus, they are not provided with real responsibilities such as writing and testing students (Shoaib, 2004). In other words, they do not have any authority nor are they regarded as an authority figure by students Therefore, classroom management might be a problem for trainees (Shoaib, 2004), as was the case with Manal and her colleagues.

> *I did not have any authority. I do not have marks; do you know what I mean? [aha] the power that students recognize. (Interview2)*

Manal believed that student's problematic behaviour was because they were "*teenagers"* who only respond to authority and intimidation, which the school administration lacked.

> *When dealing with teenagers, you need to have power from the school administration, something to control and intimidate them with. Really there wasn't any way to deal with such students except to have a strict school administration. If the administration is weak, then there is no way to deal or work with such students. (Interview2)*

Since she believed that authority is the answer to her problem, Manal asked the class English teacher to give her power over student's marks. However, as the following illustrates, the teacher was uncooperative, thwarting Manal's coping attempts.

> *There was this teacher who said to us, this is your responsibility, and you need to figure it out on your own, this is not my problem. I told her can you give me at least some marks to control? But she said no. She told me to discuss it with my supervisor and try to deal with it. (Interview2)*

Manal and her fellow trainees needed help and support from both English teachers and the administration to develop their teaching skills and cope with classroom challenges. However, as described, they showed little interest to help them, which seemed to push Manal from learning how to teach and manage students to focusing on course evaluation. Manal discuss the classroom management difficulty and the course evaluation with the supervisor. As the following illustrates, it seems that her goal was to convince the supervisor to be more lenient in her evaluation, than finding a solution to her difficulty.

> *I was the one who went to her office. I discussed the school environment and her evaluation standards. That we do not have anything we could do to deal with the problem. How the students treated us, and that if I were a student, I would probably behave the same way toward a trainee who was acting as my teacher. Do you know what I mean? [aha] I think, after I explained the whole situation to her, she was a bit lenient with us.* ***(Interview2)***

Manal spent the rest of the training semester believing that there is no way to overcome class management difficulty, except survive and wait for a divine intervention to help with the strict supervisor and the uncooperative students.

> *There weren't any solutions or something that we could do except just to wait for Allah's help and that she understands [the supervisor] the school environment. There was not any way to deal with it except, you know, move on with the class.* ***(Interview2****).*

In the second semester of training, Manal was assigned to a different middle school and university supervisor. This time around, things started to get better for Manal. As reported, she was assigned to an "*exemplary*" school under supervision of a good professor. Manal provided limited description on the second part of her training. As reported, the school administration was cooperative with the trainees and had a strict management policy with students and thus, Manal did not encounter class management difficulty. Overall, Manal finished the last stage of her training without any trouble and passed with a good evaluation.

> *In the second semester, I trained at another school. It was an exemplary school, and the supervisor was good. My evaluation was good. Even the administration, they were cooperative.* ***(Interview2)***

6.3.2. A forgotten experience

What is interesting about Manal's training, is that during the yearlong course, she did not mention developing her teaching skills, learning about students' language abilities, or leaning to overcome teaching challenges. "*We were given only 3-4 classes to apply what we learned, but it did not help" (**interview2).*** Her attempt to deal with students' disruptive behaviour was thwarted by the English teacher and overall school environment. Even the second part of training did not improve her skills or prepare her for the reality of teaching, despite the positive factors. This explains Manal's view of training as "*useless, except for giving you credentials or qualifications" **(Interviwe2).*** However, what is notable in Manal's narrative, is her focus on reporting the negative factors, which as the data revealed was the pattern in her resilience journey. Furthermore, Manal seemed disengaged in the second semester of training, that is, she did not take advantage of the promoting factors, such as cooperative school environment.

It seems that Manal emerged from her teacher training course with inadequate teaching skills, and more importantly, she did not develop the skills to navigate environmental resources or reflect on her experience. Thus, the training was a forgotten experience because it did not change the vision of the teaching world, which Manal had already formed from her learning experience.

> *It had no value. Nothing. Not even 1%. I do not think that it matters if you have training or not because, in the end, it does not make a difference. (Interview2)*

6.3.3. Manal vs the teaching reality

Unexpected job

A year after graduation, Manal was encouraged by her family to apply for a teaching position because she passed the English ministry exam with an excellent grade (i.e., 97/100). *"My family encouraged me to apply for a teaching job. They said you passed English with high score. You should teach it" (Interview2).* Manal did not want to be a teacher, but she followed her family's advice, and submitted her application to the national Saudi platform "[7]Jadarat". According to Manal, she put little effort in her application, which included choosing the order of cites or districts in which the applicant preferred to be employed from a pre-existing list containing all Saudi districts. To her surprise, Manal was hired as an English teacher at a high school in a different province away from home. Manal accepted the teaching position because is the only profession that aligned with her family's values.

Starting with high expectations

As previously revealed, Manal's learning experience shaped her great expectations and what she aspired to be as a teacher. She internalized her teachers' learning approach, which she strongly believed as the most appropriate teaching method. Furthermore, Manal assumed that

[7] Part of the Unified National Employment Platform for job seekers. Apply for Government Jobs (Jadarat) (my.gov.sa)

her teaching school, would resemble her high school, motiving, and focused on students' learning and achievements. Manal knew that she was going to teach the same English curriculum she studied, which she felt would be easy to teach. However, the reality was far from what she imagined.

> *I had many great expectations. I did not know the reality of teaching, so I thought that as a teacher, I'm going to do this and that. I thought that I was going to make a change. I always thought that I would have a supportive administration and work environment. I did not think for a second that some teachers might bother me. I thought that people were just like me. They wanted to learn English, and I thought that the school administration wanted everything to run smoothly. It was very difficult when I learned that some people do not care about education. I was shocked. It was the most shocking thing I learned. (interview1).*

Manal was shocked by the reality of teaching, as she was bombarded by the teaching difficulties. At the classroom level, the students had a poor language level, and many were not interested in learning or improving their language even though they were senior high school students. Some students did not make any effort to engage in class or study for the final exam. Either because the student was more concerned about "*getting married*" or simply because the student seemed not interested in learning. Again, Manal seemed to draw on her learning experience and compared students to herself **(See6.3.1).** Her attempts to understand students' attitudes seemed to stop at a geographical difference, without considering other factors, such as learning abilities and individual differences.

> *They did not care about anything, and I was shocked. Like them, I'm from a small village. I studied in a school village, but there were different. I don't know why. Maybe it was because I'm from Al-Qassim and they are from the South. You know, because of the geographical difference, I don't know, maybe.* ***(Interview2)***

Several students failed in their final exam. However, the administration and the new educational policy had a different approach to dealing with students' failure than Manal. Manal discussed students' language level and their failure with both the headmaster and supervisor. Manal was asked to follow the ministry's policy and pass the students. This was echoed by the school supervisor, advising Manal to summarise the curriculum in five pages. As a result, Manal was in a tug of war between her values and following the policy of passing undeserving students.

> *I talked with the administration, but their response was that there is nothing that we can do, and the only important thing is that you pass these students. This is because there is this failing policy; that is, if a lot of students fail, it will cost the government. So, the new policy states that students should not be failed. The teacher must try anything to pass students. Failing is not an option. We discussed it, but there wasn't any solution.* ***(interview2)***

In the second semester of teaching, the curriculum changed to an advanced version promoting writing and speaking skills, which Manal believed to be difficult for both her and students. The new curriculum was another blow to Manal's shattering expectations; she was not equipped to teach such a curriculum on many levels. First, she seemed to lack the necessary teaching skills and sufficient language level to teach such a curriculum, which required the skills of an experienced language teacher. It seems that the new curriculum was designed to promote a communicative language teaching (CLT) approach, which many novice teachers, including Manal had not been trained to implement in their classrooms (Al-Seghayer, 2015; Alqahtani, 2019).

> *I remember that in the second semester, the headmaster came to me and said we are going to change the curriculum to a new one. It was very difficult. it was hard for me to teach it. The old curriculum was easy, but the new curriculum promoted advanced conversation and writing skills, and I didn't have the experience to teach it. It was for expert English teachers. (Interview1)*

Second, Manal was already facing difficulties with students' language level and disengagement in the classroom. Furthermore, the large student's number (between 30-40), and the limited class time (i.e., 45 minutes) did not give her the opportunity to make students practise their speaking or implement class activities. Manal believed that speaking was an important skill, and it should be practised in classroom. *"I think the best way to teach is by letting students speak and have discussions in class*" (interview2). However, she seemed to contradict herself by choosing to focus on following the curriculum schedule and teaching grammar and vocabulary. The following extract justify Manal's action.

> *It was difficult because if I wanted to explain the grammar and vocabulary, it would take the whole class time, all of 45 minutes. So, there was no time to practise speaking and do class activities. If I wanted students to practise speaking in class, it means that I would be behind in the schedule. I mean because the next class would be just practising what students learned. So, either I choose to continue with the curriculum schedule and just leave practising the language as homework, or do the activities and be late (interview1)*

Manal seemed unaware of any other options that would help target different language skills, despite her reported efforts. This might be an indicator of her inadequate training, and ineffective coping strategies as will be later discussed. Manal did not elaborate on her claimed efforts, except that she prepared for lessons and worked hard to teach students. Unfortunately, no one seemed to appreciate Manal's efforts, which intensified her shock and contributed to building a negative view of teaching world "*I was really working hard, and I tried to do my best teaching English, but no one cared" (interview1).*

At the school level, Manal believed that the administration did not care about students learning and achievements, especially, the headmaster. Manal felt that the headmaster was more concerned about organising school events and activities than on improving the quality of teaching and learning. This was because several times the headmaster asked Manal and the

other teachers to organize different school activities without any regard for their busy teaching schedules, which included conducting exams and helping weak students. As a result, Manal argued with the headmaster.

> *The headmaster, for example, loves school activities and because we were a group of expat teachers, she always wanted us to do different school activities. I do not know why she went through all that trouble. She spent time and money organizing the activities for the educational supervisors and no one came to see her efforts. They were useless. All what she cared about was making sure that everything was perfect and taking pictures of the work. That was not important, and I did not care about the activities. We had a lot of students and …. Well, I argued with her about this, and I told we are behind in the curriculum schedule and there are many students who do not understand, we need to focus on them. I told her we have tests that we did not do, yet. You are wasting our time. You are wasting class time on unnecessary activities. (Interview2)*

This was not the only conflict that Manal had with the administration; she had another argument with an administrator at the school who had the "*audacity*" to instruct Manal on what she should or should not teach. Manal felt that the "*secretary*" had no right to question her knowledge or her practise.

> *There was this administrator, a secretary who had the audacity to tell me that I need to explain where I'm at in the new curriculum and what I need to teach and leave out! She had no right. I'm the English teacher and I knew how hard the new curriculum was. She does not even know English to tell me what to do. She was just a secretary! It was horrible. (Interview2)*

Manal had several conflicts with the administration, which she believed was the reason for her low evaluation score. *"Can you imagine that the headmaster gave me 93%? It was because I used to argue with the school administrators" (*interview2). Manal did not elaborate on the other conflicts she had with the administration. However, she used words like "*immature, impulsive, stubborn* and *outspoken*" to described herself in the first year of teaching, because

she was still focused on her imagined reality. *"Everything had to be as I wanted or imagined"* (interview2).

As for her relationship with colleagues, Manal's reports were limited. Manal was not the only novice teacher, she started with two English teachers, who like her struggled. However, she did not report forming a collaborative relationship to help each other cope or improve their teaching skills. It seems that knowing that she was not the only one struggling was enough to comfort her "*I was not the only one who was shocked. There were two language teachers like me. I think this helped. knowing I'm not the only one"* (interview1). Furthermore, Manal seemed to follow the same pattern with veteran teachers. This might be because Manal and other novice teachers negatively viewed veteran teachers because they had different vocational values form their own.

> *We viewed veteran teachers as having an uncaring attitude, and they seemed to lack professional integrity" (interview2).*

This further illustrated in Manal's reports revealing her shock from teachers' attitude toward teaching and their advice. Their advice seemed to have a profound effect on Manal who was struggling to adapt, especially with passing students' policy, which created internal struggle as mentioned above.

> *They told me that after a couple of years, you would become lenient. Now you have high expectations, and you want to do a lot of things, but you will not have the time and the administration, or the ministry will not help you. There are many things that will be on your way, so just do the requirement during work hours and leave the rest. (Interview2)*

6.3.4. Coping to survive: the path to maladaptive resilience.

What is interesting about Manal's description of her coping efforts, is that they were limited and were influenced by personal and contextual factors. To begin, Manal seemed to follow the

same pattern of focusing negative factors as she did with her training experience **(see 6.3.1).** This might explain why she struggled to cope with challenges. Manal mentioned few positive factors, such as her novice colleagues who shared her struggle, expectation, and values. This indicates that she did not properly navigate and harnessed available resources. For instance, her relationship with other novice teachers was based on venting, instead of helping each other improve. *"I did. I talked with my colleagues at school, just at the school. I separate work from home*" (interview2). Furthermore, Manal's efforts to overcome teaching difficulties were limited, they as described were restricted to preparing lessons and trying hard to teach. However, Manal tried to ignore the veteran teacher's advice and distance herself from its negative effect *"Yes, it had a negative effect*." This might explain why Manal did not seek help and support from them.

Second, the passing policy jeopardized Manal's morals because it was against her beliefs and the values that she was raised to. Manal believed that some students should have failed because they deserve it, and they should have been an example for the other students. "*Some students should have failed, and they should have been an example for the other students to work hard and study*" (interview2). Manal accepted the reality and passed the students. This might explain Manal's description of the teachers as lacking professional integrity because they did not seem to struggle with their morals, as she did. This incident seemed to promote Manal apathetic attitude deciding to only care about motivated students.

> "*If the school did not want anyone to fail, it was fine with me. I motivated the students who wanted to learn, and I did not care about the others. If they did not want to learn, it was their choice"* (*Interview1).*

Manal was in an internal struggle because she "*fears Allah*" and believed that her actions would be judged in the hereafter. Manal's beliefs were very important to her; they guided and

affected her actions. She constantly thought about the consequences of her actions and the loss of "*Allah*" blessing in her life. Manal faith seemed to play an integral part of her life and profession, even though it might be connected to a negative copping behaviour.

> *I cared because I fear Allah, but if it were anything else, I might be okay. I mean, this is how it was, the administration, the policies and the student's level. So, there was nothing that I could do except the requirement. What motivated and still motives me is what if get asked on judgment day or if I lose Allah's blessing on my salary. (Interview2)*

In other words, the educational policy and school environment seemed to discourage Manal's efforts and promote a state of maladaptive resilience. Manal's coping strategies used ineffective, venting, avoidance and focusing on fear of punishment.

6.3.5. The formation of a defeated teacher

After a year of teaching at high school, Manal was transferred to a middle school at a different district. Manal was responsible for teaching middle students, who were "*reserved*" and did not give her any trouble. At the classroom level, Manal did not encounter difficulties with teaching and students, and she enjoyed teaching the new curriculum, even though the students did not engage with her in class.

> *The curriculum was designed to start from the specific to general. Leaning and connecting different vocabularies to form a sentence. Yes, that the students did not engage in class, but it was easy for me to teach. As for high school students, well they were supposed to at least have an average language level after graduating from middle school, but they did not. I guess it was because of the two different curriculums they had back then. At first, they were taught the old English curriculum, but it was changed after a while. It was a mess, and the new curriculum was difficult for them. (Interview2)*

This seemed to continue even when she had to teach middle and high school students as well as some of the newly transferred students who had difficulty adjusting to the school curriculum.

This was because the English curriculum was not generalised to all the Saudi provinces, so some districts had a different English curriculum. Manal apathetic attitude was where evident because did not help students adjust. "*Nothing, I gave the students the book and a paper summary of all the points that we covered, and that's it"* (interview1).

At school level Manal did not like the school community and started to isolate herself.

> *The middle school had few students, sometimes there were only 2 or 3 students in the class. As for the administration, well, they were not that strict, but the school community was not good. Well, I do not know, but I think it depends on the teacher personality. I think…. Well, in the second year of teaching, I isolated myself, so I did not face the same problems as before. (Interview2)*

Ironically, Manal did not get along with the novice teachers because they were like her; they had high expectations and impulsive. At this point, Manal stopped having high expectations and became relaxed and agreeable. Before she started teaching, Manal was advised to be more agreeable, which she decided to become after her first-year experience**.** Manal also, seemed to internalise the veteran teacher's advice by accepting the reality and doing the requirement.

> *people want you to be amenable, give compliments and look the other way. I was told before I started teaching that I should be agreeable and learn to look the other way. In the second year of teaching, I transferred to a middle school, and I became agreeable and learned to look the other way with administration and the students. However, I did not get along with my colleague. I don't know why, but I could not get along with the novice teachers. they were like me when I started teaching, impulsive and so sure of themselves. Do you know what I mean? (Interview2)*

Although Manal isolated herself from her colleagues, she started to have conflicts with some of them who opposed her for leaving school early.

> *They did not want me to leave the school early. They wanted me to stay and leave the same time they did. But why I would do that? We were different. My*

> *father used to drive me to school, which was close to where I lived. However, they had to come to school by a traveling bus and they live far away from school. So, why would I stay if I finished my work, and it is time for me to leave? The conflict was about this, and it was one of the reasons why I kept to myself. Furthermore, there were some teachers who used tell on their colleagues. (Interview2)*

Manal avoidance might be justifiable given the teacher's uncooperative behaviour. However, her attitude toward novice teachers might not because their fault was reminding her of the first year of teaching. This might suggest a profound realty shock, which Manal had not recovered from, yet. By the end of the third year, Manal fully accepted the reality of teaching, lost her motivation, and became like the veteran teachers. This might be surprising because based on her reports, Manal did not encounter a significant difficulty, in terms of students and teaching. The only stressor was some of her colleagues, and she manged to avoid them. Manal seemed focused on avoiding burning out than on taking advantage of the positive elements in the new environment and bouncing back from the reality shock.

> *After three years, I believe this change happens after exactly three years of teaching. you become the same. I'm not saying that I lost my integrity, no, but I have become more lenient. You must, or you will burnout. Yes, there is a pressure, but you must be careful not to burnout, or you will be affected. (Interview2).*

Furthermore, since she was not informed or prepared to face the teaching reality, Manal developed a new mission to inform novice teachers about the reality of teaching. The first-person that Manal informed was her sister. Since they grew up in the same environment and studied at the same school, they had similar expectations. Manal's sister experienced the same shock facing difficulties with the school environment and students. Manal's attempt seemed ineffective because her sister developed the same apathetic teaching. That is focusing only on the requirement and nothing more to avoid burnout.

I told her that she was going to be shocked by the reality. Her first teaching job was at Al-Hafer, and she was shocked. She described exactly what I told her. I believe that our upbringing and environment had an effect. She did not like it there, the unprofessional management, the whole situation. After a while, she was transferred to a school at Al-Dawadmi. The school was like the school we graduated from, it had a professional administration and good students. However, after moving and settling in this school, she became like me, she does only the requirement and focus on the important. You see, this way she will not burnout. She still has many years in the profession. (Interview2)

6.3.6. The sell-out teacher

Another shock?

After two years of teaching at the middle school, Manal applied for a transfer to an elementary school because she wanted to be close to where her family lived. At first, Manal seemed happy with her transfer because of the location and the false image of effortless teaching and extra break time.

I transferred to Al-Qassim, to teach at a school in a remote village, which is closer to the village I grew up and live at. It takes approximately 20 minutes to reach the school. All of us, the school faculty, are from the same village, the administrators, headmaster, and teachers. We all go by the same bus to school, so if the bus driver does not show up, all the school will be absent. (Interview2)

Although Manal knew that she was going to teach English with other subjects, she was shocked by the reality, which was not fully explained to her. Manal repeated the same mistake by developing false image of teaching based on some misleading facts. Manal did not specify where she got her misleading information from, and she seemed to accept the reports without inquiring on the whole situation.

It was just an imagination. I imagined that I would have many vacation days and have easy subjects to teach. However, no one tells you that students' parents do not help them with their homework or that some students have parents who

> *do not know how to read or write. Moreover, they do not tell you that teaching them is exhausting and you will not see the results you hoped for. No one tells you this, but they say there are many vacation days, and the curriculum is easy to teach. (Interview2)*

Furthermore, she did not know that she would not be able to accomplish her teaching goals or see the results of her efforts. This meant that she would be "*a sell-out teacher",* forced to sacrifice her morals. Manal beliefs were challenged before, and she had not fully recovered from the previous incident; that is, passing undeserving students. (see 6.3.3). However, after realising the full picture, Manal knew she could only do "*the bare minimum*" in all subjects, which made her cry. This is because she cannot teach 14 subjects thoroughly. Some classes would be missed, and activities and revisions would be left out for most lessons. In the end, this was not real teaching, and she was and is still afraid of judgement in the hereafter.

> *Because the student will not benefit from it. The students will read, but it will not be real reading in Quran or even in the other subjects. She will learn nothing in English class because she will forget. There are no activities or anything to reinforce the information. It is like trying to write on water. There is no real benefit. I mean, in judgment day, the students may say to Allah she did not teach me well. (Interview2).*

Repeated pattern: barely surviving.

The first year of teaching at the elementary school was the hardest. Unfortunately, Manal was already in state of maladaptive resilience, she relied on ineffective coping strategies and displayed sings of apathy toward teaching. This time, Manal seemed to experience an intensified maladaptive state because again she had to deal with the loss of her morals, manage the workload, and adjust to teaching elementary students. Manal realised that teaching elementary students was the hardest compared to the other grade levels (i.e., middle, and high school students). Unlike students in other grades who can take responsibility for their learning,

elementary students could not. Instead, they relied on Manal. In the beginning Manal struggled with having the sole responsibility of student's learning, especially after learning that some students did not have supportive home environment.

> *This is because middle and high school students were responsible. I mean, I did my part, but the rest was up to them. They were responsible for their own learning. However, elementary students I 'm responsible for them and I must control my temper. (Interview2)*

Furthermore, Manal had to learn how to be patient and control her temper, which was difficult because she does not like teaching. Manal's narrative shows some inconsistencies in several parts. Previously, Manal seemed to enjoy teaching at the middle school and as will be shown later, she reports enjoying teaching elementary students. Manal and her colleagues tried to help each other, dividing the work equally, but all of them were and are still struggling from the excessive workload. This because the total number of teachers at the school is only 4 teachers and there seemed to a shortage problem that remines unresolved.

> *We are only 4 teachers**,** and there are 6 grades in school. so, what can she do? However, we all collaborate. We divided the subjects between us we do not have a choice but to accept the 14… There are no teachers**;** that is, there is a shortage, so we have to make do. All of us have either 14 or 12 subjects, and we divide the classes not the subjects. For example, we try to reduce the total number of classes for 30 to 24. (Interview2)*

Again, Manal did not seek emotional support from her family because she seemed to follow her rule of separating work from home and, thus she did not use any strategy to overcome her burnout or alleviate some of the teaching stress. Thus, it appears that first year teaching at the elementary school could be described as sinking year, because it was mentally, emotionally, and physically exhausting, which Manal could not cope with. Manal accepted her current reality and the loss of her morals again because it was out of her control. Manal's faith remined an integral part of role, she constantly thinks of hereafter, which seemed to cause conflicting

emotions, one is fear, and the other is motivation. Manal fears comes from wondering if she fulfilled her responsibility to the students or not. Here she seemed to fear judgment in the Hereafter. *"I mean, in judgment day, the students may say to Allah she did not teach me well" (interview2).* On the other hand, the concept of the Hereafter seemed to motivate Manal to maintain blessings in her life and avoid consequences in afterlife. "*What motivated and still motives me is what if get asked on judgment day or if I lose Allah's blessing on my salary*. (interview2).

It seems that Manal's faith helped her stay afloat, but it did not trigger any positive behaviours to help her survive and thrive. Notably, Manal reported that she worked as a substitute teacher at three elementary schools. However, she provided a limited descriptions on her experiences. The first description was limited to comparing students' level and reporting several positive factors at one of the schools. One of these schools had motivated students, enough teachers and good administration that cared about students learning and achievements. The other school was described as having motivated students with low language level. Based on her reports, Manal seemed to enjoy her teaching experiences at these schools.

> *As for the primary students, I taught at three different schools, and I think it is enjoyable to teach elementary students, especially if there were a lot of students because they get excited and engage in the class. For example, at one of the schools, there were many students and many teachers, so I didn't teach a lot of subjects. I think I had to teach three or two subjects besides English. Also, the students were good, and they were motivated to learn. However, the other school was different. The students were motivated to learn English, but their language level was very poor. They didn't have a strong language base. (Interview1)*

Although one of the schools had several positive factors and it seemed to resemble the school that Manal graduated from, it did change Manal attitude toward teaching or promote a change in her resilience state. Notably, Manal was adamant that teaching at the school did not change

her view and even if she has another chance of teaching at a similar school, she will follow her rule of doing the requirement and nothing more. Manal seemed unwilling to accept a different version of teaching than the one she formed after her first years of teaching (see6.3.3), even if it provided her with several positive factors, such self-satisfaction or supportive environment. She is mostly focused on avoiding burnout and seemed unable to imagine other outcome of a minimum effort.

> *I will just do the requirement whether it is a good school or not. I do not think that I will do something more to burnout. Never. I will not give more than the requirement, even if it means that I will see the outcome of my effort or if the school is good. No. In everything in my life. No, I will not give anything more than the requirement. (Interview2)*

As for her teaching experience at the third school, Manal focused on describing and comparing the attitude of two teachers, particularly between an English teacher and a computer science teacher. The following extract illustrate the difference:

> *The difference, I think, was in the teacher's personalities, that is, how they perceived things. I mean, wanting everything to be perfect. The computer science teacher was just like me. She wanted the school to be perfect like the school she graduated from. She wanted everything to be perfect and wanted excellent students. She had this perfect image or high expectations, but the other teacher did not. I think it is because she is realistic and has a calm personality. She did not view the school as that bad. I think the English teacher was realistic, which made her accept the school as it is. So, I think it depends on the teacher's personality and how she views teaching. (Interview1).*

Manal stopped working as a substitute teacher and she is still working at the same elementary school she started at. Manal is still struggling and "*burning out*" from the teaching workload, and the MoE's constant change and release of "*confusing and suffocating*" policies. Furthermore, Manal is struggling from feelings of guilt, despite her attempts to help students learn the language. According to her, if she is only teaching English, she might feel less guilt.

Notably, Manal applied for a transfer several times to both middle school and high school; however, her application was rejected each time. Overall, Manal continued to follow the same negative coping strategies avoiding dealing with her stress and unresolved shock.

> *It is very difficult because I'm not 100% dedicated to teaching English. I guess if I'm only teaching English, I would feel less guilt. I mean**,** like I have done enough. However, teaching English with other subject makes me burnout because I want it to easy like the other subjects. I'm beating myself up trying to make it easier for students, which is impossible because the other subjects are in Arabic. It is easier for students to understand subjects in Arabic. (Interview2).*

6.3.7.A pessimistic or a realistic teacher?

After 8 years of teaching, Manal's view and attitude toward teaching have changed. First, she strongly believes that every teacher should only focus on the requirement and nothing more. If she or any teacher crossed this line, they would burnout and suffer (**see 6.3.5).** Second, Manal believe that some students are not meant to learn the language no matter how hard the teacher tries, either because they do not like the language or they are weak, and their social environment will not improve. Therefore, there is no point in trying.

> There are some students who do not like the language and won't learn it. No matter what you do for them**,** they will always be weak, and their social environment will not improve. Thus, they will not improve at school. So, you have to stop at some point because nothing will change. (Interview2).

Furthermore, she believes that teachers should submit her work as latter as possible to avoid extra work and choose the right moment "*to shine, but not always."* In addition, Manal believes that some difficulties should not be discussed with anyone or resolved, which she learned gradually. Manal did not provide an example of such difficulties; however, from her narrative it can be assumed that her experience with different school administrations left her with this impression.

Well, they used to say if you don't like anything or have a problem with something discuss it with the headmaster. However, I learned that not everything should be discussed. More importantly everything should not be done right away. It took me quite a while to lean this. (Interview2).

Finally, Manal is still dedicated to helping novice teachers by informing them about the reality of teaching, the importance of lower expectations, and focusing on the requirements to avoid burnout. In other, words her goal is to help teachers be emotionally stable and avoid the gradual and arduous journey she had to take to reach this stage. This might be contradicting because despite her climes of reaching emotional stability, Manal is struggling with guilt, burnout, and morals conflicts.

Now that I have experience, when I see a new teacher, I wish that I had someone like me to tell me relax, do not care that much, and don't work that hard. I wish that someone like me now, told me to lower my expectations. No one told me this before, so now I say this to new teachers, and I ask Allah to make it helpful. I have seen the effect of this on a teacher. When she started teaching, she had high expectations, but after telling her about the reality she became emotionally stable. I wish that I had someone to tell me what I know now. Like her. (Interview2).

This is the reality of teaching from Manal perspective, and she is staying in the profession because it is like "a marriage of convenience" (interview1), providing her with the social status and financial stability. Every stage of Manal teaching journey seemed to either promote or reinforce negative coping, leading to a state of maladaptive adjustment. According to Manal she is a realistic person, but her following report might pose several questions, is she a realistic or a pessimistic teacher? Dose her drawing really reflect resilience.

I think it is not specific for teaching, but life in general. I mean, you must have balance…We think that if we are very giving, people will love us… I do not know, but the idea of being giving is futile. I get really upset when people say be positive and more giving. No, I do not want to be positive.

No, I just want to be normal because if I give a little bit more, I will burnout. With everyone, family, friends, and work. You must have balance because if you don't, you will burnout. So, do not give more. (Interview2)

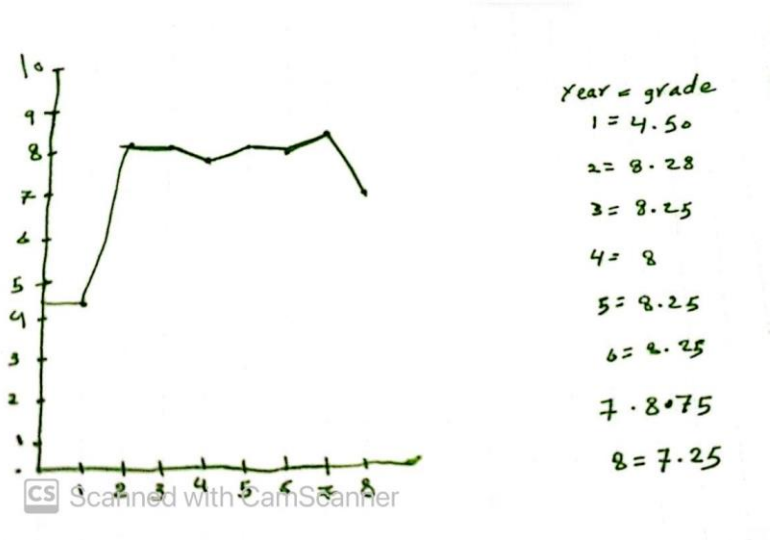


Figure 7: Manal's drawing of her resilience level

6.4. A reluctant journey to resilience: Hanan' story

Hanan is a language lecturer and a coordinator for the English programme at university. Hanan teaching journey started with hate, lack of confidence and anger. Hanan's hate for the profession was one of the significant factors that hindered her resilience and acceptance of her role. As the shown in the graph. Hanan's story reveals the gradual change and development of resilience, which took several years and two teaching contexts. The major themes for Hanan's story are cantered on personal and emotional struggles as well as the positive effect of trusting environment and relationships.

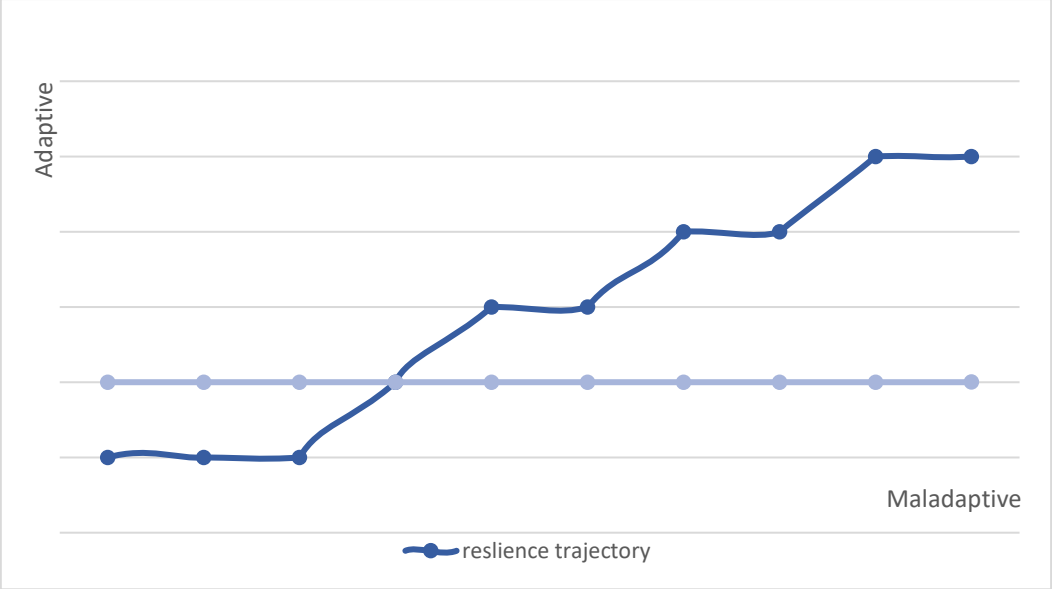


Figure 17:Hana's resilience trajectory

6.4.1. Traumatic learning and training experience

6.4.1.1. Learning to hate teaching.

Teacher-student relationship is central to students learning experience, and they are linked to their emotional, cognitive, and behavioural outcomes (Gehlbach et al., 2012; Nearchou, 2018). Teacher's emotional abuse might be debilitating to students leading to negative socio-emotional outcomes (Skalická et al., 2015). As student Hanan reported receiving a verbal and non-verbal emotional abuse from some teachers, which made hate the teaching.

> *Well, the reason why I hated teaching was because I have been through some difficulties when I was a child, such as teachers' treatment and the curriculum. For example, we had a teacher who made us feel rejected, do you know what I mean? I mean, she always looked at us with condescension and used to say that our generation is not good. She was cruel, and this made me hate teaching very much. (Interview2)*

Hanan's emphasis on teacher's treatment, which she described as "*the most terrible experience I have ever had*" (interview1), revealed its significant effect, and her inability to resolve her emotional struggle "*it is still affecting me*" (interview1). This experience was one of the contributing factors for her low confidence and inability to adjust to the teaching context, as well as forming relationships with her students and colleagues.

6.4.1.2. Adding salt to injury

Hanan's teacher training lasted for a year and seemed to reinforce her hate for the teaching profession. The first semester of training was part of a course, so Hanan and her colleagues were assigned to train at school several days of the week. The training experience is believed to be the first stage in the development of committed, motivated and resilient teachers (Doney, 2017; Mansfield et al., 2016). However, Hanan described the first training experience as "*terrible*" and "*trauma*" because no one at the school seemed to care about the trainees to welcome them and explain their duties. The following extract revealed how the trainees were treated and Hanan's reaction.

> *It was a terrible experience. I can't forget how bad it was. No one at the school welcomed us, and we had zero knowledge about teaching. We were nervous the first time we entered the school. I remember this terrible situation we were in the first... Can you imagine that when we got to the school, no one welcomed us and told us what to do? So, we missed the morning assembly. We were told to go inside this room, which had nothing. No chairs, the room was empty, and the trainees were sitting on the floor! So, after the morning assembly, one of the administrative staff came and oh my God, I still remember what she said and how she said it. She said Mashallah, where were you? You are trainees, and you are supposed to help, and I find you sitting here? Why are you here if not to help? It was like a slap in the face. She did not say Salam or made us feel welcome. Nothing.it was like a trauma for me. (Interview2)*

Hanan and her fellow trainees were not properly informed about the course plan or their teaching assignments either by the university supervisor or the school administration. "*I do not remember that we had a clear plan of our duties*" (interview2). It seems that there was a little coordination between the university supervisor and the school administration about the trainees, which offered a limited and unstructured teaching experience. The following, summaries Hanan's first semester of training.

> *It was a bad experience. As for teaching, well, it was a series of hilarious situations. I did not have any knowledge about teaching, and I remember the first class I was asked to monitor the students in their free period and nothing else. (Interview2)*

In contrast, the second semester was fully dedicated to training and had some positive factors. This time, Hanan and her colleagues were welcomed by the school headmaster and were assigned to several teachers who managed and organized their training schedule.

> *However, the second field training was a lot better. The headmaster welcomed us to the school, and even had a farewell party for us at the end of the training. (Interview 2)*

Hanan did not elaborate on teaching her duties, except that they were limited and mostly of training was dedicated to monitoring students "*almost every day*".

> *It was once a week. The teacher would choose a lesson for me to teach, and I would have some time to prepare a lesson plan and then teach it for the class. that's it (interview2).*

Overall, it seems that the practicum course was inadequate because it did not provide Hanan with the necessary teaching skills and material designs, which would be among the difficulties she had to overcome as a novice teacher. Furthermore, the training experience did not change Hanan's negative feelings toward teaching, which might be unsurprising since she regarded the whole experience as "my *training was useless. I learned nothing from it*". This might be

contradicting because in the second semester of training, Hanan reported that she learned a few things, which she did not specify.

> *As for the teaching experience, well, I would say that I learned a few things, but to be honest, it did not motivate me at all. (interview2)*

6.4.2. Undesirable job opportunity

Hanan journey of becoming a teacher might be described as coincidence because she was among the first waves of Saudis who were offered an unconditional scholarship when the King Abdullah scholarship programme was launched. Hanan went to study abroad without having a clear plan of what to study. After obtaining her master's degree, Hanan did not have clear plan for her future. Her MA supervisor suggested teaching, which Hanan absolutely hated because of her negative learning experience. The supervisor tried to change Hanan's negative view of teaching, suggesting that she becomes part of the change "*She told me since you suffered, then this is your goal, change it, be part of the change"* (interview1). However, Hanan was not convinced, and she hoped to work at a company as she did before her masters.

> *I remember when I got my MA, I talked to my supervisor, and I was crying because I did not want to go back. I did not know what to do. I was so desperate. She told me that she knew a lot of Saudis who wanted to become lecturers and asked why I hated the idea. I kept telling her no, no, I do not want to be a teacher (interview1)*

Hired for her status.

Hanan accepted a teaching position at a university because "*it was the only available job*". Hanan was aware that she was hired as part of the Saudization law, which requires all sectors to hire Saudi nationals to meet the target quota (Ahmed, 2016; Robert, 2004). *"Well, I was hired because I'm a Saudi. So, it was like we do not expect you to do anything" (interview2).* At that time, the university was newly opened, and most of the faculty members

and managers were foreigners from New Zealand, Canada, and England. There were few Saudi teachers, but they did not stay for long because they considered this position as temporary unital they found a better job opportunity. Similarly, Hanan viewed her position as temporary and her attempts to leave teaching would be unsuccessful. Thus, Hanan was stuck in a job that she hated with inadequate skills and a sense of alienation. This affected her teaching performance, relationship with students and colleagues and ability to cope with difficulties.

> *I was the only Saudi who remained at the university. There were several Saudi teachers, but they stayed for a few months and then quit. For them, this job was temporary until they found a position at another university. To be honest, we all had the same plan. I remember several teachers leaving after finding a teaching job at a university. No one wanted to continue at this job. (interview2)*

6.4.2.1. Learning how to teach

As shown above, Hanan had inadequate teaching skills and the university supervisors put her under scrutiny, observing and evaluating her teaching regularly. Despite their criticism and pressure, the supervisors seemed to have a positive effect on Hanan, who works well under pressure. Hanan learned how to write a lesson plan with clear objectives, manage the classroom and implement different class activities. However, the process of learning how to teach was difficult for Hanan, and she encountered several challenges along the way. Overall, she was unhappy in her role and struggled with lack of confidence, fear, and anger management issues, which affected her relationship with students and colleagues**.**

> *I learned about teaching at this university. You see, I work well under pressure, and the supervisors did a lot of class observation, like formal observation and *buzz observation. They put you under pressure, so there is no way for you but to work hard. However, that does not mean that I was happy. No, but I have to admit that they helped learn. For example, lesson planning, which I'm still not that good at, but they helped me learn how to write the lesson objectives and*

such. Moreover, they helped me improve my class management skills. (Interview2).

6.4.2.2 Struggling with students.

Hanan was responsible for teaching freshmen students, who were described as demotivated with low GPA and only interested in obtaining a diploma. However, Hanan did not care about her students to motivate them and ensure their learning, even when she had the resources. She viewed the students as numbers, not bothering to learn their names. Interestingly, this was normal for Hanan, and she did not realize the problem until she started teaching at a different university.

I do not feel that I had a connection with students. They were like numbers to me. I did not know their names. It was like there was a wall between us. I think that I work hard on explaining grammar to students, but I did not do anything more to you know, like oh, I want to make sure that they understood. No, I did not. (Interview1)

Hanan described herself as a "*typical lecturer*" whose job was only to lecture and take attendance. Hanan admitted that she had an "*angry attitude*" toward students, and everything seemed to set her off. According to Hanan, her behaviour was the result of internal struggle and lack of teaching experience. Emotions are central to teachers role, and negtive emotions, such as fear and resistance may effect teacher's abillity to enngage in self-reflection (Cowie, 2011; Stanley, 1999). As the following illustrates, Hanan did not reflect on or mange her negtive emtions, which seemed to instensify by students demotivation and pressure from the administration.

I was struggling with myself, and I think I projected this to people. I think this was the problem and part of it was anger and fear, which I think I may have projected to students one way or another. (Intervwe2)

In a other words, Hanan's behaviour was the outcome of the reciprocal interaction between her emotional struggle and the different contextual factors (Kostoulas & Lammerer, 2020). Significantly, Hanan had her own classroom, which was filled with many teaching aids and resources, but she did not take advantage of the available resources. This might be unsurprising because Hanan was consumed with negative emotions for the profession and spent some of the class time applying for different jobs or checking the status of her applications. Thus, she did not perceive the available resources as a way to help improve her performance, overcome her teaching difficulties and motivate students (Kostoulas & Lammerer, 2020).

> *You would not believe how desperate I was. I used to apply for jobs and check on my job applications during class. I kept checking my computer every two minutes because all I was thinking of was no, I do not want this place. So, when I look back, there were many positive things. (Interview1).*

6.4.2.3. Struggling with the administration and colleagues

The administration and colleagues had a significant role in intensifying Hanan's negative emotions toward teaching and her inability to adjust. At some point, Hanan was the only Saudi teacher at the university, and most of her colleagues had different cultures and personalities, which made her feel isolated. Only one of Hanan's colleagues showed interest in the Saudi culture, while most of the faculty members and managers, including the Dean, did not. This annoyed Hanan and prevented her from building any relationships.

> *The only one who showed interest was from the States, and she did stay that long. I remember her telling me, Hanan, I want to learn your language. She really wanted to learn. Moreover, we had several cleaning ladies from Saudi, and I remember seeing her sitting on the floor and talking with them. She was really nice and showed respect to our culture. However, the rest it was like they were blocking any contact with our culture. I think maybe this is why I did not have an interest in building a relationship. (Interview2)*

Teacher's world is built around a web of relationships with students, colleagues, and principals, which are central in developing and sustaining resilience over time (Gu, 2018). Each relationship has a role in the building process of resilience, such as having a supportive relationship with colleagues that is based on reciprocity with a shared sense of moral and vocational values (Gu, 2014a; Li et al., 2019). However, it seems that there was no conmen interest or a shared sense of vocational values between Hanan and her colleagues, which made her struggle and feel isolated. After a while, Hanan managed to form a "*shallow*" relationship with some of her colleagues, and it appears that it was founded because of the pressure they received from the administration. As reported, the received low evaluation score from the [8]Qiyas centre, which was the result of poor management style, and unclear vision and action plan.

> *The University had poor management. For example, we had a lot of pressure from the national Qiyas centre, and they gave the university a bad evaluation when they visited. So, the administration put a lot of pressure on us. I mean, everything was a mess. The administration did have a clear action plan, which affected us. All I can remember is the mess and the unclear plan. (Interview2)*

Besides the work pressure, the administration had strict rules, which undermined teacher's authority. As exemplified in following extract, it seems that the administration did not give teachers the trust or the autonomy to manage their classrooms, which created a "*suffocating*" work condition.

> *I remember one time, two students asked permission to go to the ladies' room. I said, okay, you can go. Immediately the supervisor came to me and said, why did you let them leave? You are not allowed to let two students leave at the same time. What? They are adults. I was shocked. It was like a prison. It was really suffocating. (Interview1).*

[8] Qiyas is national educational assessment centre with many roles, one of them is to assess the Academic institutions' performance in terms of quality practices and academic outcomes. https://www.etec.gov.sa/en/qiyas

The university's administration has a critical role in creating a relational and organisational trust, which can be accomplished through many actions, such as communication, sharing the vision, support, and explaining values and beliefs (Gu, 2018, p. 27). However, it appears that the administration did not have any of these policies with teachers, which is assumed one of the reasons why Hanan and her colleagues did not develop a collaborative or supportive relationship (Gu, 2014a). Instead, their relationship was built on complaining and venting about the teaching pressures. *"As colleagues, we did not give each other advice on what to do. Not at all. We only complained about teaching"* (Interview2).

In addition, it seems that the administration did not show trust in Hanan's abilities because they did not give her any responsibilities, except for teaching "*It was like we do not expect you to do anything*". Notably, Hanan reports might offer an explanation to both sides the administration behaviour and her beliefs about the situation. Hanan believed that the administration only hired her to fulfil the Saudization policy. Thus, they did not expect much from her, which she did not mind because she hated her job. "*They did not give or offer any responsibilities to me. I felt like I was there for show. Do you know what I mean? and I was okay with it*" (Interview1).

Furthermore, Hanan failed to acknowledge her inexperience and her negative behaviour, which might explain the administration attitude. She did not discuss the lack of responsibility with administration or showed interest to engage in anything as indicated in her reports.

> *Unfortunately, I was ignorant**.** well, besides my ignorance I lacked confidence, and you know that it impossible for people who lack confidence to be initiative. Absolutely impossible. I was in my comfort zone, and I never thought that I could become a coordinator. The university had this contest, like who wants to be a coordinator and so on. I never thought that I deserved it. Never. I was always siting behind. Always and whatever they ask I would do no questions*

asked or anything. This is because I never thought that I would ever be in charge of anything. (Interview2)

As reported, all faculty members had experience, and thus, the administration might have assigned responsibilities based on experience. "*They had more experience than I did at that time"* (Interview1). However, the administration reluctantly assigned few responsibilities to Hanan, which affected her confidence.

When they gave me duties, there was this resistance. It felt like they did not trust my ability to do the job. Do you know what I mean? [aha] They did not give me much to do honestly, unlike my current job. It is different (Interview1)

It appears that the administration did not have faith in Hanan's ability and did not show interest in helping her improve or build her confidence. This is further indicated, by their inaction to Hanan's accumulating absence. This had a significate effect on Hanan's confidence level and seemed to reinforce her beliefs that she was hired for "*show".*

The administration did not care when I did not show up for work. I was absent a lot. Whenever I said I'm coming to work, the administration reply was okay, that's fine. You know, I was the only one who got permission to take a leave of absence. I think this might be because I'm Saudi. (Interview2)

6.4.2.4 Barely surviving.

Teaching is an emotionally demanding profession, and during the first years of teaching, teachers experience a range of negative emotions, such as self-doubt, frustration, isolation, and incompetence (Pillen et al., 2013). Specifically for teachers like Hanan who started teaching with inadequate teaching skills and negative emotions, which intensified by her focus on the negative factors at the university. *I was desperate. I focused on the management mistakes and all of the negative things which made it worse*" (interview1). This prevented Hanan from navigating and using contextual resources. Hanan initial response was to isolate herself from students and colleagues. She as shown above, did not try to form a

relationship with students, and colleagues. However, after some time, she was able to form a "*shallow*" relationship with some colleagues that was based on complaining about difficulties. Interestingly, Hanan understanding of coping with stress was restricted on venting, which she regularly used with colleagues, friends, and family. "*I used to think that complaining is the only way that I could manage my stress*" (nterview1). Coping strategies are believed to alleviate or counteract stress (Somerfield & McCrae, 2000b). However, Hanan's coping strategies, which consisted of venting, avoidance, and isolation did not help manage her stress. In fact, it appears one of the factors that increased her apathy toward teaching, making her attempt to leave the profession.

> *When I leave work, I forget about everything, and I do not even think about you know, correcting or improving anything. Never*" (interview2).

As shown above, the university had several positive factors, such as experienced colleagues, supervisors, and teaching aids. However, Hanan acknowledged that she failed to use this resource because of apathetic attitude toward teaching.

> *Can you imagine that I had my own classroom! Many teachers dream of that. I could have used that and post motivational things for students and be creative. Moreover, there was a cabinet full of things which I could have use whenever I needed such as pens, materials for visual aids, papers for printing and everything, everything. (Interview1)*

Perhaps if Hanan used these resources and sought help from experienced colleagues, she might have been able to connect with students, change her attitude toward teaching and effectively manage her stress level. Unfortunately, Hanan did not show the willingness to change or improve because she was controlled by her negative emotions. As mentioned above **(see6.4.4),** Hanan wanted to leave teaching and was looking for other jobs.

However, as the following indicated, she stayed in the profession for financial independence.

> *It was not a logical decision. Because I was living and working in Riyadh, and it is different from my hometown, there was nothing there. No places to go. Also, the money if I quit, I will have nothing, and I was not ready to live like that. Honestly, this was what made me stay. (Interview1)*

Overall, Hanan's coping practices involved self-isolation and avoidance, manifesting in the unwillingness to improve her teaching and adapt to the teaching context. In a way, Hanan's resilience system seemed to settle in an overall negative state (Kostoulas & Lammerer, 2020).

6.4.3. Second opportunity

6.4.3.1.A welcoming environment

Hanan was surprised by the people and her colleague's warmth and welcoming attitudes. Specifically, she was moved by a small gesture that most of the faculty practised; that is, shaking hands.

> *There are these small details, which really impressed me like they really care about shaking hands. In the previous university, they did not, and they barely said good morning. I felt this sense of warmth here. I mean, when they say salaam or good morning, they shake hands! I was really surprised at first. (Interview2)*

Furthermore, people were not "*judgmental*" and "*rigid*", as she presumed, instead, they, as described *"I consider them the best of the best. This made the whole experience so good"* (interview2). Significantly, most of the faculty members were Saudis, sharing the same culture, age, and experience of studying abroad. This seemed to help Hanan change her negative impression and gradually start to form relationships with her colleagues. "*This change, I think took around two weeks because I have heard them talking about things, I'm interested in. I felt like this is a friendly environment*" (interview2). This had a significate effect on Hanan, who experience a sense of "*belonging*" for the first time, which initiated a stage of change and self-reflection on her emotional and teaching struggles. Hanan managed to build a supportive,

collaborative and trusting relationship with her colleagues, which contributed to her coping with teaching challenges, overcoming difficult circumstances and fostering her commitment and capacity for resilience (Gu, 2018; Papatraianou & Cornu, 2014). **(see 6.4.3.2).** Since she started working at the second university, Hanan reported that the supervisors were satisfied with her experience level and trusted her with many responsibilities. Their trust in Hanan's competency had a critical role in building her self-confidence, resilience, and sense of belonging. According to Hanan, she was given "*challenging task*s", which made her realise that she lacked confidence in her abilities and put her under pressure. However, at the same time, Hanan felt trusted, empowered, and being improved.

> *Yes, it was a lot and sometimes very stressful, but I liked it. I liked the fact I'm learning that I'm doing something you know that I'm acknowledged, it was like we trust you to do this. It's a great feeling (interview1)*

Furthermore, the administration seemed to have a policy that encouraged Saudi teachers' development and collaboration as they "*insist*" on their development. This seemed important for Hanan, who compared her current environment with the previous university management **(see 6. 4.2.3),** which increased her emotional struggle and made her feel incompetent.

> *They empower the Saudi employees, and it is not just giving them responsibilities. No, they insist that they develop. I mean, they make you feel like you must be good at your job. (Interview2)*

Significantly, Hanan referred to the chairperson as one of the positive factors that helped her improve and described her as supportive, and respectful. As previously shown (see 6.4.2), emotions seemed to have a significant role in Hanan's interactions with the teaching context, and it was a part of the process of her maladaptive adjustment. However, since she started teaching at the second university, Hanan experienced a range of positive emotions, such as kindness, a sense of belonging and empowerment, which seemed to provide her with the necessary skills to overcome classroom challenges (Mercer et al., 2016). Overall, the teaching

environment has many factors that contributed to Hanan's gradual adjustment; however, it also presented several challenges, such as some insubordinate colleagues, inappropriate curriculum, and lack of resources.

6.4.3.2. A gradual change: Building confidence

Besides her teaching duties, Hanan was working as a coordinator in the English department. Working as a coordinator was not easy for Hanan, who lacked confidence in her abilities and was emotionally struggling. Some of Hanan colleagues caused her stress, which prompted her to seek counselling. Hanan faced difficulties from the expat and veteran teachers at the university on several levels. First, as reported, Hanan colleagues were more experienced than her, so they doubted her abilities for the job. According to Hanan, this manifested in their behaviour at faculty meetings, which included interrupting her speech and displaying negative body language.

> *In the faculty meetings, they disrespected me. They interrupted me when I spoke. They asked questions like why this or that before I even finished my point, which frustrated me. (Interview2)*

Furthermore, Hanan colleagues scrutinised her performance and exaggerated her mistakes. *"Everyone can make a mistake, but they exaggerated everything I did. Even if it was a small thing a small error, they would make a big deal of it."* (interview2) After a while, Hanan became the program coordinator and started to make some changes and improvements to the English courses. Hanan's changes was targeting the grading system and the curriculum, which was incompatible with the Saudi culture. However, both the veteran and non-Saudi teachers complained and disagreed with the new changes. "*They made me go insane. They made me doubt my abilities" (interview2).*

Hanan discussed the teachers' attitude with the chairperson, and it seems that she was hoping for a solution to deal with the difficulties. However, chairperson comforting words did not help Hanan deal with her colleagues.

> "*She tried to comfort me, told me to be patient, and this is who they are, just mean people. That did not help me, and to be honest, I don't blame the chairperson because she can't do anything" (interview2).*

Hanan was not the only coordinator who struggled with the teachers' attitude and resistance., which to some extent, helped her. Based on Hanan description, it seems that there was an implicit alliance between the veteran teachers and non-Saudi teachers to be insubordinate, which might have encouraged some negative behaviours, such as disrespect and lack of appreciation.

> *Unfortunately, even some Saudi teachers, well, me and some Saudi teachers did a drastic change in the writing portfolio, and it was something that I'm so proud of. No one of the non-Saudi teachers praised our work. However, they sent a private email to us thanking us for the change and admitted that it was much better than the old one. They did not dare to say a word in front of the seniors because they can be offensive, so they were afraid of them. (Interview2)*

Hanan was able to cope with the teachers' attitude for a while because she was able to find comfort and support from her Saudi colleagues and a friend who encouraged to seek counselling. Hanan also tried other solutions deal with uncooperative colleagues as exemplified in the following.

> *I used google to search, for example, how to deal with teachers who constantly resist change. I remember something like that. I wanted to learn if there are steps. I wanted to understand because it is part of leadership. (Interview2)*

Given these points, it seems that Hanan started to develop new coping strategies, which might be exemplified in the change from avoidance and self-isolation to actively seeking help and

support (Frydenberg, 2014; Hong et al., 2018). The change in Hanan's coping behaviours highlights the significance of the teaching context, which had many factors that promoted her coping and resilient capacities (Leroux & Théorêt, 2014a; Li et al., 2019).

Seeking counselling

Colleagues' insubordination effected Hanan's emotions, which were mostly negative and contributed to her maladaptive adjustment**.** Hanan was emotionally exhausted, and her efforts to alleviate the stress had a limited effect. Thus, she decided to go to counselling sessions to resolve her emotional struggle and deal with her colleagues.

> *I swear to God that the emotional impact that I suffered when I started. Even when I had these nice breaks with the Saudi teachers who tried to encourage me, which made me happy. However, I doubted my performance a lot, which made me go to counselling. I went to an American counsellor, and I used to talk to her about the difficulties. I asked her what should I do? I'm emotionally exhausted. She explained to me that they might feel threatened, and they want to prove their value in any way. Moreover, she told me that I was allowing them to disrespect me, which affected me severely. (Interview2)*

As suggested in the extract, the counsellor helped Hanan reflect on her enabling behaviour, which seems to be one of reasons for her colleague's insubordination. Furthermore, the counsellor helped Hanan understand the teachers' actions, which might be the result of job insecurity.

> *She made me realise that they are an expat, and they are afraid to lose their job. I think most expats have this fear. It is very hard for someone to live without job security, so they can be aggressive because they are afraid. (Interview2)*

Hanan started to empathise with her colleagues, but she also manged to deal with their disrespect by explicitly stating the rules before the meetings. Furthermore, followed advice

from her colleague and bother on effective communication, which assertive. "*It was hard for me to give an order*" (interview2).

> *I remember one teacher told me to ignore them and Cc the chairperson in the email. Moreover, she told me to include this statement, which was this will affect your evaluation. I do not like this approach, but she told me, Hanan, that's it. This is the only way for them to learn. She used to advise me on many things, and even if I did not follow the exact advice, still, to some extent, it had a positive effect. (Interview2)*

Willingness to change: Connecting with students.

The counselling seemed to help Hanan reflect on her actions and decide to make a change. As the above-mentioned, Hanan gradually started to be more assertive and demanded respect from her colleagues. While she was improving and building her confidence with colleagues, Hanan was still struggling with her teaching performance and her inability to connect with students. As a result, Hanan engaged in self-criticism, which increased her struggle.

> *If the students did not participate in class, I would keep thinking, oh, they are very bored. I should not have criticised myself so much. I mean, students get bored in class, it is okay, and I should not have hated myself for it. I could have changed something or done something different in class, but not hate myself. In the beginning, this has affected me greatly. (Interview2)*

Gradually, Hanan started to communicate with students during class and noticed their engagement, which to some extent changed her teaching performance. This change was motivated by Hanan's colleagues and her willingness to change. Significantly, Hanan did not mention that she discussed her inability to connect with students with her colleagues, which

might indicate that she still did not see it as a problem because it took her two years to finally connect. Thus, she gradually realised the problem, as exemplified in the following.

> *I think that I was influenced by everyone around me. For example, there are two teachers who were hired after me, and they have changed me for the better. I mean, I felt emotionally better, and we became friends. For example, one of them used to come after her class and say things like, oh, I talked about this or that with students or the students told me this. I said to her mashallah, everyone likes you. I was a little bit jealous. I think this might be one of the reasons that made me engage with students. I guess she influenced me somehow. She made me feel that it is okay to talk with students because she used to tell them about her life, kids, and her study abroad. I did not look at her in a disapproving way because of this. No, I thought, wow. I was surprised. I think this helped me be more open with students. (Interview2)*

As suggested in the extract, Hanan's colleagues seemed to implicitly influence her teaching practice. Hanan started to change, and this was evident when she described her efforts to help students learn the language and engage them in class. Furthermore, Hanan started to draw on her learning experience and empathised with her student's learning difficulties and personal struggles (i.e., anxiety and society's judgement). She created a safe space for her students to express themselves, which is something they were not used to from the other teachers. Thus, it seems that Hanan started to develop an ethic of care for her students by trying to make them feel safe and accepted.

> *Teachers can be replaced with anything such as YouTube. But can they get that caring? There are some things that students can learn from caring, like how to overcome anxiety. You know I still remember the words that teachers told me, both the positive and negative. I will never forget (I see). So, in a way, I believe that my goal is to change students' lives. I hope, I hope I could.* (*Interview1)*

Hanan claimed that connecting with students helped her feel emotionally better and improved her teaching performance. "*I felt that the more I let go with students, the better I felt emotionally. Even teaching became a lot easier*". (Interview2)

6.4.5. Acceptance and adjustment

As previously discussed, Hanan started teaching at the second university with an apathetic attitude toward the profession, unresolved emotional struggle, and misconception about the people. However, Hanan was surprised by the environment and experienced a sense of belonging and empowerment. During the first two years at university, Hanan experienced both conflict and support from her colleagues "*The weird thing was that there was a conflict, and at the same time, there was this friendliness*". (Interview2).

As shown above, at times, there seemed to be a balance between the conflict and support, which helped Hanan cope for a while. However, Hanan was still struggling with a lack of confidence and self-doubt, which shifted the balance making Hanan feel emotionally exhausted**.** Counselling helped Hanan reflect and change her actions, and it seems that it initiated a self-improvement stage. *Honestly, I was willing to change. I mean, it was like, this is enough. This has to stop" (interview2).* Hanan started to experience an emotional adjustment and improvement in her teaching after gradually connecting with students. However, Hanan knew that she still had unresolved emotional issues, such as fear and self-confidence, so she started her journey of self-improvement, which summarised in the following:

> *I attended a workshop about self-confidence. I read a lot, and I listen to podcasts. It is a collection of many things because you know I had the intention to change. I wanted to change because I was tired of myself. (Interview2)*

Significantly, Hanan reported that if she ever needs help, she seeks certain friends who can provide her with solutions to overcome obstacles. On the other hand, whenever she needs emotional support, she has a group of people who could help. In other words, Hanan built a

web of people who could help her overcome difficulties. Overall, Hanan developed new and effective coping strategies, which helped to gradually nudge her resilience system toward an adaptive state. The following extract might be a good summary of the gradual self-journey the Hanan went through to reach an adaptive state.

> *last two years, which is a blessing from Allah, Alhamdulillah, I have become aware. I felt like this is unacceptable and had to stop like things I hated or affected my work. After I confronted myself and I admitted that I have a problem with fear and self-confidence, I asked myself why? Why I compare myself with…. You see, it is very hard to confront yourself and admit that you feel threatened. For example, there are several employees who are younger than I am, like five years younger, and I see how good they are, which affects me. So, you can imagine how my mind works. I compared myself a lot, which affected me. After I reconciled with myself, and I started to improve myself in every aspect, I started to focus on my work like what are the things that I need to improve, even if there was something I did not improve, I'm okay with it. I accepted it with open heart. I noticed that I'm improving without that much of an effort, not like before. (Interview2).*

6.4.6. The resilient teacher

During the last year, the world has been affected by the outbreak of COVID-19, which forced many countries to take drastic measures to contain the spread of the virus, such as enforcing stay at home policy and suspending in-person teaching at educational institutions (Alshehri et al., 2020; Oraif & Elyas, 2021). The sudden shift from regular teaching to online teaching has presented a new set of challenges for both teachers and students (Badia, 2020). Many teachers had to change or modify their teaching practices and adapt to a new form of teaching that depends on using different learning platforms (e.g., Blackboard) and applications (e.g., Zoom) to teach and post-course materials. (Alshehri et al., 2020). Similarly, Hanan faced

several difficulties during this period, which were mostly centred on using technology and managing the workload between teaching and working as a program coordinator.

As reported, Hanan had limited experience with technology, and the university seemed to adopt a traditional approach to teaching. "The *university promotes traditional teaching".* (interview1). Although the university had digital technologies, it failed to successfully implement these technologies in many ways, such as providing training programs for teachers to help them integrate technology in their classrooms. Based on Hanan's reports, the university did not provide a rigorous training programme to build teachers' knowledge and skills about technology, but instead, it provided what might be described as general or superficial training. *"It was very limited. In certain topics like how to create a test, and it was not a comprehensive course. When the pandemic started, suddenly, there was a wave of courses*." (interview1) Although she struggled at first to use technology, Hanan decided to learn and improve, so she can always stay connected to her students. *I do not want to be in my comfort zone, I want to learn, and I'm trying to improve* "(interview1). As reported, Hanan improved, and she became good at using the blackboard in her virtual classrooms.

As a teacher and a programme coordinator in a challenging transitional period, Hanan had to find a balance between learning how to use technology for teaching and managing her responsibility as a coordinator. However, as the above-mentioned, Hanan was able to improve and create a group for the teachers to support them and help them share their experiences. Furthermore, Hanan decided to make some changes to the English course to help students and teachers survive during the transition period, that is, by reducing the number of writing assignments. This way, teachers would be able to give extensive feedback to each student, which and return will help students improve. In other words, ensuring quality over quantity.

> *To ensure quality, we decided to conduct a lot of workshops and meetings to share our experience and discuss our difficulties. Because I know that most*

teachers are just adapting to technology, so I'm trying to show them easy ways to use technology by sharing teachers' experience. (Interview1)

Overall, the combination of these environmental factors helped Hanan embrace her role as a teacher, build her confidence and ability to overcome difficulties. As a result, she was able to take on the role of being the English programme coordinator, and successfully cope during the transition period and be more productive. Notably, Hanan's feelings changed from hate to acceptance, which was the result of several years and two teaching contexts. Hanan's attempts to leave the profession have stopped because it seemed that it helped her find a goal. That is, Hanan seemed to enjoy working as coordinator because she wants to work in the education filed as administrator.

This is what I'm trying to say I'm not hating it anymore. If you remember the last time, I told you that I hate teaching, but this time, I am okay with it. I don't hate it, but at the same time, I do not love it. Like I am not saying, oh I miss teaching, I miss the students, no. It's fine with me. However, I have the ambition to be in an administrative position like working with students or something like this. (Interview2)

6.5. The roller-coaster resilience Noor's story

Noor started her teaching journey 16 years ago and has since taught at different high and elementary schools. Since then, Noor has encountered many difficulties affecting her resilience and wellbeing. Noor's journey shows the development and fluctuations of resilience over the years. Each stage of resilience was influenced by personal and contextual factors. The major themes in Noor's journey examine different school environments, specifically the role of school administration and how it affected Noor's development, relationship with colleagues' resilience and coping with difficulties.

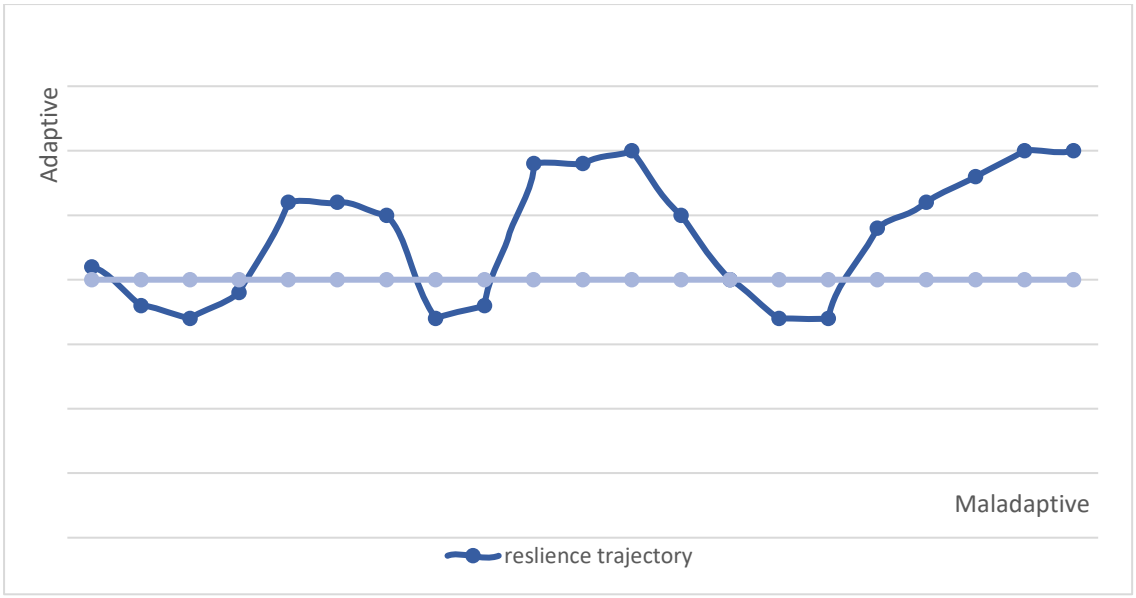


Figure 18: Noor's resilience trajectory

6.5.1. First years of teaching

6.5.1.1 Teaching skills

The first years of teaching are known to be challenging for novice teachers as they confront the reality of teaching with limited skills and experience (Mansfield et al., 2016). However, according to Noor she did not encounter teaching difficulties, and appeared confident in her teaching skills. This, as Noor claimed was because she had a "*great*" supervisor who helped her and other trainees improve their lesson planning, develop their teaching strategies and class engagement skills. Although Noor's reports about her training experience were limited, they revealed that she managed to have a positive class experience as a novice teacher displaying singes of confidence in her teaching abilities and commitment to the profession, as will be shown later. The following extract shed light on Noor's experience.

We were beginners, and we did not know how to explain to the class. In other words, we did not have clear lesson goals. That teacher told us you need to have a goal. When you go into class, you need to have a purpose in mind. Otherwise, you will not accomplish anything. I still follow her advice to this day she taught me something that I needed back then, and I was not the only one. Mashallah we were a large group of trainees, and the teacher had several teaching strategies to engage students. One of them, if you remember I talked about it last time with you. That is, to use Yes or No questions instead of complicated or hard questions. (Interview2)

6.5.1.2. Hindering context:

Noor vs the headmaster

Noor first teaching assignment was in a small village teaching high school students. As a novice teacher, Noor described herself as "*confrontational*" and did not accept injustice in the work environment. The school headmaster has a central role in creating a trusting and collaborative school environment (Peters & Pearce, 2011). Furthermore, the headmaster's role extends to guiding, supporting, and promoting novice teachers' professional development and ability to cope with difficulties (Papatraianou & Cornu, 2014; Shaoan et al., 2019). However, Noor described several incidents revealing the detrimental effect of the headmaster on the whole school environment. As reported, Noor was insulted, challenged, and put under scrutiny by the headmaster, which ultimately made her get away from the school. Three incidents stand out representing the headmaster's effect. Namely, first meeting, unfair treatment and abusing students. The first encounter between Noor and the headmaster initiated the mistrust and conflicts. Noor started teaching while pregnant, which triggered a native reaction from the headmaster. Noor justified the headmaster's attitude, claiming that it might be because headmasters are pressured to find a replacement for teachers going on maternity leave.

I remember the first day I went to school, and I was in my third trimester of pregnancy. When the headmaster saw me for the first time, she said right to my face; I hate pregnant women. I was just at the door, Mariam, and she asked, are you the new teacher? I said yes. I'm the English teacher, and she said I hate pregnant women. I think what she meant was that if the new teacher is pregnant, then she will have a problem. Because when that teacher goes on maternity leave, she has to make calls and try to find someone to cover for that teacher. It was stupid of her to say it that way. (Interview 2)

After their encounter, Noor reported that she unknowingly joined the headmaster's "*backlist*" by entering the room of her rivals. *"I did not know that I entered the room of her enemies, so I simultaneously became on her blacklist*" (Interview2). The headmaster created a division within the school faculty favouring a group of teachers over the others. It seems that the headmaster expected every teacher to agree with her management methods, even if it was unprofessional or if they disagreed.

In villages, the headmasters had this rule, you are either with me or against me. You see, the teachers who speak up if they see something wrong are considered against the headmaster. On the other hand, there are the teachers who always take the headmaster's side, even if they see something wrong. They do not speak or question anything. I was among the first group, so I was on the headmaster's blacklist. (Interview2)

However, since she was "*outspoken*", and did not agree with the headmaster on many levels, Noor engaged in several conflicts. For instance, Noor refused the unfair work assignments for her and the other blacklisted teachers and defended them when they were punished for no reason.

I used to defend my colleagues, especially when I witnessed the unfair treatment they got. I mean, the distribution of the extra work was unfair. For example, the free period schedule was always sent to our office and not the to the other teacher's office. (Interview2)

Conflicts with colleagues

The division between the teachers and favouritism created a toxic culture among the teachers. Noor reported that she had several incidents with one of her colleagues, which, as claimed, were for no obvious reasons. As reported, most of these encounters involved a dismissive attitude to Noor's struggle "*Whenever I said something, she would say, oh, you are being dramatic and laughs***"** (Interview2). However, Noor described an incident that resulted in a health problem and making her isolate herself at the school. Noor's colleague filed a complaint to the headmaster blaming Noor her for unpreparedness because she did not follow her instruction. "*She said that I gave you my notebook to put inside my bag, but you did not, which is why I did not prepare my lesson plan." (Interview2)*

Noor was shocked by the teacher's accusation, especially since she followed her instruction and "*put the notebook on the desk*". The argument escalated between Noor and her colleague resulting in an exchange of insults "*I said some insulting words to her, which made her cry*" (Interview2). Unfortunately, it seemed that the headmaster did not resolve the argument before it escalated or do anything after to defuse the tension. "*The headmaster was laughing and said, what is wrong with you two*?" (Interview2). Noor reported suffering from health problems and decided to limit her interaction with teachers. That is, to have a professional relationship and nothing more. It is unclear if the health deterioration was the result of the unfair accusation, the overall environment or other underlying condition. Either way, it seems that overall result was a long-term isolation and feelings of distrust toward colleagues.

> *I was shocked for a whole week, and I felt sick and tried. I felt this pressure, which was not normal. Later, I felt like my health was crashing, and I went to the doctor. I found out that my thyroid stopped working. The doctor was shocked. My neck got swollen in 5 days, and I told the doctor that this had never happened to me. He told me that it was impossible to be like this. This has been 5 years in the making to stop working. I swear, I did not suffer from anything. (Interview2)*

Protecting students

Noor described her students as "*nice*" and "*good*". Furthermore, they were from another village, and they had to take a "*rural mountain road*" for an hour to reach the school, which was a difficult trip for them and their parents. However, they were "*most affected"* by headmaster's unfair treatment. The headmaster is required to create a motivating school climate to foster students learning and achievement (Ahmed & Al-Dhuwaihi, 2020). However, Noor's reports showed the headmaster's cruel approach to discipline students. It is a known fact that Saudi is characterized by extreme heat temperature, and exposure to such heat can cause several health problems such as fatigue and heat stroke (Abdelmohimen & Algarni, 2018; Rother et al., 2020). The headmaster punished several students letting them stand under the scorching sun for an hour, and it seemed without any regard to the consequences.

> *One time she made a whole class of students stay outside in the sun as a punishment. I don't know why she punished them. You know how hot the sun is in our country and we were in a mountain area it was very hot, and she let the students stand an hour in the sun! In that heat! Why? (Interview2)*

Noor felt sorry for the students, and she decided to separate the conflict's affect from her teaching performance. In other words, Noor's care and empathy for students made her committed to providing them with the best teaching service. Noor enjoyed teaching and her classroom was source of happiness for her, despite the negative environment and limited

resources. Noor used her classroom experience as buffer against stressful conflict, which would help her survive for a while.

> *I enjoyed teaching them, and even though we did not have technology back then, I was able to make do with the limited resources that I had. I enjoyed teaching, and I felt so happy when students understood the lesson. It made me go home happy, despite what happened at school. I was happy with myself. (Interview2)*

Most of the conflicts that Noor had with the headmaster were because the headmaster "*abused her power*" in many ways with the students and teachers. Noor justified the headmaster behaviour as lack of experience, and professional training, which seemed to be the case at that time. *"I believe she was inexperienced and had insufficient management skills"* (Interview2). Specifically, before the launch of Al-Tatweer policy, the selection of school principals was unsystematic and without a unified criteria (Khalil & Karim, 2016). School principals were usually assigned based on recommendations or teaching experience. Any teacher could apply and be assigned to a principal position without any training or administrative experience (Vogel & Alhudithi, 2021).Besides the lack of experience and training, Noor believed that the headmaster was surrounded by some enabling teachers, who supported her poor management. Noor needed the headmaster's guidance and support. However, the headmaster was unable to provide guidance and emotional support for Noor to enhance her professional development and promote her ability to cope with teaching difficulties (Peters & Pearce, 2011; Shaoan et al., 2019).

> *I had never said anything to disrespect her. I was a novice teacher back then, and as a headmaster, she was supposed to guide me through and know the difference between dealing with an experienced teacher vs a novice teacher. (Interview2)*

6.5.1.3 Coping to survive running away.

As previously discussed, Noor seemed to exercise an "everyday emotional resilience" by separating the environment negative effect from her classroom and focusing on feelings of enjoyment and care for students (Day & Hong, 2016, p. 116). Furthermore, after the conflict with her colleague, Noor decided to isolate herself by setting relationship boundaries with colleagues to avoid potential conflicts. Noor spent most of the break time preparing lessons, which made her prefer the company of several teachers who focused on their work and did not socialise most of the time.

> *I went to the school without talking with anyone. There was a group of Egyptian teachers, and I used to sit with them. I used to sit with Saudi teachers, and I was shocked by some of them. They spent all the break time talking and drinking coffee. What about their work? You know, like grading assignments and preparing lessons. I think they did not care. The Egyptians were like me. They used to bring their sandwiches and drinks. We ate together, and sometimes we exchanged a few words before leaving to do our job. I did not want to get close to anyone. I just focused on my work. (Interview2)*

Noor claimed that she was not affected by the headmaster's unfair treatment because she defended herself, which might be true to some extent. This because she employed several coping strategies to mitigate the negative effect of the environment, specifically, distancing herself from stress and focusing on positive classroom experience. However, after two years Noor could not cope with the negative environment and decided to take a temporary teaching position at an elementary school.

> *You know I was looking for different teaching assignments, and I accepted teaching at the elementary school because I wanted to get away from the headmaster. I did not want to get into trouble with her, so getting away was the only good option. (Interview2)*

Teaching at an elementary school

Noor believed that the best and only option to deal with the negative environment and its effect was to physically distance herself from the school. Thus, she accepted a temporary teaching position at an elementary school, and it seems without sufficient knowledge about the workload or the remote village location. *"I was looking for a better place to work at and better colleagues. I wanted to feel comfortable*" (interview2). Fortunately for Noor, everyone at the school was as she hoped. This was because the headmaster was able to create a collaborative and trusting school environment by supporting the teachers with the workload and promoting students learning.

> *It was wonderful. I swear that everyone the doorman, cleaning ladies, students, teachers, and the headmaster were wonderful. They were great, and words cannot describe how amazing they were. (Interview2)*

As reported, there were only few teachers at the school, which increased the workload. For instance, Noor was required to teach English and other subjects, such as Arabic, home economics and science, to all grade levels. At that time (i.e., 2000s) English was only taught to the sixth-grade students receiving two classes per week (Alrashidi & Phan, 2015).Thus, it was "*impossible*" to just teach two classes per week with a limited number of teachers at the school. Furthermore, the educational policy dictates that elementary English teachers are expected to teach other subjects.

> *I was asked to sign on a paper, which basically tells you that you are obligated to teach other subjects. I think, this paper was drawn because many English teachers had a problem with teaching other subjects. I think that's why the Ministry enforced this paper. (Interview 2)*

Therefore, Noor had to teach other subjects, and she was responsible for teaching "*11 subjects*". The excessive workload and being evaluated by different supervisors were unbearable for Noor, especially since her teaching performance was evaluated in other fields. Additionally,

the school was in a very remote area that could only be reached through a "*rough mountain road*", which was difficult for Noor to travel five days a week. Consequently, she missed many workdays, and it affected her evaluation.

> *There was an excessive amount of work, and so I was given several subjects to teach, such as science, math, drawing art, and home economics. The problem was that I had many subject supervisors evaluating me. For example, in one week, I would have the English supervisor attending my class and the week after, I would have the math supervisor and so on. Why? I don't know on what grounds they evaluated my performance at teaching math or home economics. (interview2)*

Although she was physically exhausted from the workload and the trip to school, the school environment was "*like heaven*" and helped Noor endure the difficulties, to some extent. The student's unfavourable conditions, such as coming from impoverished families and suffering from *"leishmaniasis*", seemed to reinforce Noor's ethics of care and commitment to the students. This might be concluded from Noor's description of the teaching experience as *"an emotionally good experience*" and her ability to endure the workload.

> *As for the students well, they were very poor, and they lived in this area. A valley and it a very hot area. The students were burned from the sun heat. They also, suffered from leishmaniasis, we could see its effect on their skins and noses. (Interview2)*

Although she did not elaborate on her relationship with colleagues, Noor described the teachers as cooperative and "*wonderful*". All teachers at the school were struggling with workload, and it seemed that they had a mutual sense of support for each another as exemplified in the following.

> *I remember this teacher who was pregnant at that time, and she was afraid for her health, so she took a leave of absence for two months. I was supposed to cover for her. I was already teaching 11subjects and I could not take more. I refused. I talked with the headmaster and the teacher, and I asked if they could request a replacement to cover for the teacher before she goes on a leave. both agreed and followed my suggestion. We got a new teacher. (Interview2)*

Overall, everyone at the school seemed to have a contributing role to the positive environment, and perhaps the headmaster had a significant part in facilitating such an environment. This because it helped Noor cope with difficulties and recover from the emotional struggle that she faced at previous school.

> *It was physically exhausting, but the minute I got into the school, it felt like heaven. You know the feeling when you take a long and hard road to reach a wonderful place? (yes). It was like that for me. Everyone was great, the teachers, the headmaster, the students, and their parents. It was an amazing school. (Interview2).*

Noor's assignment ended after a year, and she had to go back to her previous high school. Despite the rewarding experience at the school, the excessive workload and arduous journey were unbearable for Noor, who decided to "*never repeat the experience*".

6.5.1.4. Returning to a new leadership

Fortunately, when Noor returned to the high school, the headmaster had only a few weeks left at the school. On her final day at the school, the headmaster apologized to Noor and asked her forgiveness. "*I remember that on her last day at the school, she came to me and asked me to forgive her*" (interview2). From her experience with the headmaster, (see, 6.5.1.2). Noor decided to never engage in conflict with headmasters, which she managed to do to some extent. The new headmaster took over a negative school environment, which was divided and

based on favouritism. Although the new headmaster was good and fair with the teachers, she faced many challenges from several teacher. Particularly, the teachers who were used to special treatment by the previous headmaster; that is, flexible schedules and no extra work.

> *The new headmaster was great. We got along very well, but the other teachers; that is, the previous headmaster's group did not like the new headmaster. So, the table was turned this time. They caused many problems and disrespected the headmaster. They did not do their job. I mean, me and the other teachers, we did not act like this. No, we did our jobs and the all the extra work that the previous headmaster assigned to us. At that time, the other teachers were happy because we were given the extra work. Their only job was to teach their classes and that's it. However, when the new headmaster gave them extra work, they lashed out. (Interview2)*

Overall, it seems that the school environment did not change for the better, despite the presence of a good headmaster. Noor continued teaching at the high school for two years, and during that time, she applied for a transfer to a city school. To sum up, in her first 5 years of teaching, Noor faced several difficulties, which highlighted the significant role of different contextual factors on teachers' capacity for resilience.

Noor's coping practices could be described as relatively effective because they helped her survive the first teaching context to some extent and served as a shield protecting her self-efficacy, motivation, and commitment to the profession. In other words, it seems that Noor was partially immunized and based on her drawing, she was moving toward an adaptive resilience state.

6.5.2. A new stage: growing as a mid-stage teacher.

6.5.2.1. Supportive environment

After five years of teaching at school villages, Noor started teaching at a city high school. The high school resembled the previous elementary school in many ways, including

the headmaster and colleagues (see 6.51.3). The headmaster created a supportive, and collaborative, school culture, which facilitated teachers' development, and promoted their motivation, commitment and resilient capacities (Li et al., 2019). This was exemplified helping Noor obtain her master's degree, while teaching.

> *The headmaster had an important role in my MA studies. I went to her office, and I told her that I want to apply for an MA degree. She told me go ahead, and you have my support. She was supportive. (Interview2)*

Being part of a collaborative culture improved Noor teaching skills and performance. As reported, many of the schoolteachers were experienced and used technology and different teaching strategies in their classrooms. Consequently, initiating Noor's professional development.

> *Every teacher had her own laptop and projector. You see, all teachers were experienced at using technology and they were amazing at their job, so there was no way but to great. (Interview2)*

From her reports, it seems that Noor still had boundaries in her relationship with colleagues; that is, she only formed a professional relationship, which was based on collaboration and a shared sense of vocational values. This indicates that Noor was to some extent, still affected by her negative experience with her previous colleague (see 6.5.1) However, her relationship with her colleagues was among the contributing factors that fostered her resilience and promoted her professional development. Although she did not elaborate on her relationship with students, Noor considered them part of the "*great*" school. Significantly, Noor has a strict rule about relationships with students, which is restricted to the classroom boundaries, and she explicitly discuss the rule with students every year. As reported, this is to avoid any conflict or

misunderstanding with students, who she described as "*unreliable*" and tend to share information about teachers.

> *I like boundaries because I don't know how a student might react to something. I mean, they are teenagers. If you get too friendly with them, you might be surprised by some of their actions toward you, or they might misunderstand something you said. So, you see, it is better to have strict boundaries (right) I have seen many situations with other teachers. For example, I have seen a student asking a teacher to talk to her outside the class and then spraying her with a snow spry in the face in front of us! It was not good. I mean, why I would let a student rebel against me? (Interview2)*

This might justify Noor limited description of her relationship with students, which only focused on providing them with the best teaching service and fulfilling her responsibilities in front of deity.

> *I have boundaries, and I the only thing that matters to me is feeling happy about myself; that is, that I fulfilled what Allah has given me, that I fulfilled the responsibilities, which I chose to seek Allah's rewards* (Interview2).

This type of commitment and religious values was reinforced during her MA studies, which would be central in her teaching practice and coping with difficulties.

6.5.2.2.MA course and the new teacher.

After two years of teaching at the new high school, Noor decided to further her education and obtain a master's degree in TESOL. Noor's MA studies lasted for three years. The first two years of the programme were focused on different theoretical courses. The last year was dedicated to writing the dissertation. Noor did not elaborate on the program courses; however, she reported some of the knowledge and skills that she acquired, such as using games and concept maps, in her classrooms.

I remember that time the concept of mind maps was just introduced, and I learned how to incorporate it into my lessons. Furthermore, I learned how to use the iPad and teaching games in class. (Interview2)

Furthermore, Noor was surrounded by many teachers from different disciplines who shared their knowledge and experiences and informed Noor about the educational policies, which would help her later in dealing with headmasters. "*I learned all about the ministry of education policies during my MA studies with the help of the teachers"* (interview2). Studying was stressful and physically exhausting for Noor, but as she claimed, it did not affect her teaching performance, instead, it was an opportunity to apply what she learned. Significantly, MA course reinforced her vocational values, commitment to students and beliefs. The concept of integrity became profound for Noor, and she seemed to have a different understanding of integrity. *"I think it became more important to me, and it has a different meaning"* (interview2).

Noor's religious beliefs are part of her teacher identity and practice; they are one of the sources for her motivation and coping with difficulties**.** Before her MA studies, the concept of integrity included both work ethics and values, which might be explained using Wong's (2018) distinction of the two perspectives. For instance, ethics refers to the "external" rules of conduct that is based on the professional standards of a specific context. On the other hand, values refer to "internal, individual principles and habits which are usually consistent until one's beliefs change." (Wong, 2018, p. 17). Noor practice involved both, that is, her teaching responsibilities and personal beliefs**.** However, after her MA studies, Noor had a new set of values and goals, which incorporated her religious beliefs, vocational values, and commitment to students.

After my MA study, I fully realized the importance of integrity. I saw education from a different angle. From a higher ground. I mean, it is like the student is your customer, and if you were not able to reach or connect with her, then you did not do your job. This became a deep-seated idea. I was convinced about

educational values and had a list of goals and values that I want to live by. (Interview2)

This experience and modified concept of integrity will influence Noor coping strategies, particularly, using religious coping. Overall, the MA journey improved Noor's knowledge and practice and gave her the opportunity to interact and learn from "*exceptional teachers",* who seemed to have a role in promoting her sense of integrity.

6.5.2.3. Dealing with difficulties

During her first two years of MA studies, Noor faced a few difficulties with students and a colleague. As mentioned above, Noor started to apply her new knowledge in the classroom and shared some of her religious values with students incorporating them into lessons. However, Noor's religious goals caused a misunderstanding and conflict between her and a colleague. The incident started when some students deliberately tried to disrespect Noor, which she was able to deal with as shown in the followings.

I had two students who were trying to bully me in class, and I'm not the type of a teacher who would stop her class because of some students who were acting out. No. (Interview2)

I targeted the students with questions. Every morning when I got to class, and after greeting students, I called the first student and asked her a question about the previous lesson, and then I did the same thing with the other student. They did not want to be put on the spot first thing in the morning. So, they stopped trying to annoy me. Unfortunately, I later found out that a teacher asked them to do this in my class. It is really a sad thing to do. (Interview2)

As the extract suggest, one of Noor's colleagues was behind students' misbehaviour. Noor did not confront her colleague because she learned to avoid conflicts from previous experience (See 6.5.1.2). However, Noor's colleague confronted her accusing her of rallying the students against her. As the following illustrates, the teacher's claims were based on Noor religious advice to students, which was aimed to nurture their relationship with the deity.

> *You know, sometimes you have a religious point that you want to make in class. For instance, I said to the students when you are in a relationship with anyone, you must put Allah first in everything you do, in your relationship with your mother, sister, friend, and teachers. No matter who that the person is, put Allah first. I really do not know how that teacher thought that I meant her when I said this to students. I mean, she asked why I said it and what do I mean. I told her I did not say her name or any other teacher, and I did not mean anything. I was just speaking in general with my students, and if you act like that with your student, I don't. (Interview2).*

This incident can explain Noor's description of students as "*unreliable*" because of how they might interpret things differently or share class information. Although Noor did not specify her classroom rules, it can be assumed that she expected students to not share her classroom practises. Overall, Noor managed to maintain balance between studying and teaching, which resulted in thriving in succeeding the exams and improving her teaching performance. *"Alhamdulillah, I did great in the finals*" (interview2). Furthermore, she was able to deal with classroom difficulties and avoid conflict with colleagues. Thus, it can be assumed that Noor emerged from studying /teaching years with a high level of self-efficacy, commitment to the profession and personal values (Day & Gu, 2007; Shin et al., 2021). The headmaster continued supporting Noor in her final year of MA, helping her apply for a leave of absence and finding replacements for her, so she could write her dissertation. With this, Noor's teaching journey ended at the high school, and she would go back on her oath to teach at an elementary school, which would challenge her resilience**.**

6.5.3. Repeating a challenging experience

6.5.3.1. Dealing with workload

After year of absence, Noor was ready to go back to teaching, even though she still had not finished writing her dissertation. "*I was able to finish 75% of my dissertation."*

Unfortunately, Noor could not go back to teaching at the high school because she was replaced by two English teachers. Noor willingly chose to teach at an elementary school, despite her previous oath (see 6.5.1.3). Noor was given the freedom to choose any school; however, she chose an elementary school assuming that it would be as good as the middle school at the same compound. It is unclear why Noor seemed to forget about the excessive workload, which would make her experience the worst years in the profession.

> *When I went back to teaching, the teacher services department told me, you cannot go back to your old school. However, you can choose the school you want. I swear to you, Mariam, the employee opened a file with all of the available schools with teachers' numbers and their discipline. She told me, choose the one you want. I told her I want to teach at an elementary school, and she said, then pick the one you want. At that time, I remember that I heard good things about the middle school, and I saw that it also had an elementary level. I thought to myself maybe it is as good as the middle school level. (Interview2)*

As expected, the school was good and managed by the middle school headmaster. However, Noor was shocked by the excessive and unbearable workload, which might be surprising given her past experience. (see 6.5.1.3). Noor explained how the workload seemed to differ between schools, in terms of access to teaching resource, implemented teaching strategies and her new set of goals and values that she wanted to live by.

> *Well, the first elementary school had limited resources. I remember that the school storage room had a few teaching aids, such as a world map and a poster that explains the moon cycle. I used to go to the storge room and choose from the limited posters what I needed in class. However, in the second school, there were new teaching strategies. For example, when I'm teaching social sciences, like history or geography. Let's say I'm teaching geography, and the lesson is about mountains. I need to prepare for the lesson, use pictures and videos to explain the lesson to students. After this, I have a math class, and I need to download and prepare the answer sheets. Then after this class, I have to teach Fqih and then English. So, you see, I'm not only preparing for one subject. No,*

> *I'm preparing for 5 or 8 subjects depending on the day. Sometimes, I have 5 subjects to teach in a day. I have to prepare for the lessons and not mention preparing for the exams. (Interview2)*

Additionally, English was officially introduced to the fourth grade by the MoE in 2011, which increased the workload on Noor (Malihi, 2015). Furthermore, the MoE implemented a new exam policy that included fourth-grade elementary students which increased the workload (Malihi, 2015). The new teaching experience at the elementary school was different from the previous experience on many levels. First, Noor struggled to connect with students, which seemed to happen at the new school. Noor realized that teaching elementary students is different from teaching other grade levels, and it requires certain skills that she did not possess.

> *Teaching elementary students is hard. It was like no matter how hard you try to reach their level, you can't because you are not experienced to teach their level. (Interview2)*

However, after engaging in self-reflection on her difficulty and how it could be resolved, Noor decided to change her teaching practice to engage students. Interestingly, Noor did not report this struggle in her previous teaching experience, which might be because she was a novice teacher, or it might be the effect of years of experience and MA studies. Overall, based on her reports, Noor made a great effort in connecting and engaging students in every subject, using crafts and games in classes.

> *I said to myself, if you cannot, or it is difficult to connect with students as Noor, there are other ways to reach and connect. That is, a simple and fun way. For example, I used videos, pictures, and sometimes I let them draw. (Interview)*

Noor described herself as "*drained*" by the excessive work, so she refused to take any other tasks. Furthermore, it seems that Noor was aware of the cost of the workload on her coping abilities, so she applied for a transfer. Noor had high hopes that she would be transferred to a

high school and everyone around her seemed to boost her hopes, which prompted her to pack her personal resources " *I remember that most of the teachers told me do not worry, you will be transferred in a blink of an eye*" (interview2).Unfortunately, Noor request was declined, and she accepted the consequences of her choice and decided to be patient. "*I was forced to be patient. It was the only choice."* (interview2).

> *I remember when I applied for a transfer in the first year, I thought that I would get it. You see, I had a huge bag full of games and teaching resources, I remember on the last day of school. I carried the bag with me down the stairs because I believed that my name would be among the list of transferred teachers. However, my name did not appear on the list, so at the beginning of the second year, I came to school and dragged my bag to the second floor. It was really a big and heavy bag. (Interview2)*

As previously discussed, Noor seemed to develop resilient qualities manifesting in high levels of self-efficacy, commitment, motivation, and ability to cope with difficulties (see 6.5.2.3). Since she started teaching at this second elementary school, Noor was able to find a solution for her teaching struggle and the headmaster's great leadership mitigated to some extent the workload pressure by creating a " *safe environment*" (Gu, 2018; Peters & Pearce, 2011). However, in the second year, the middle school was separated from the elementary level, and a new headmaster was assigned, creating a negative environment. Thus, intensifying the challenge and challenging Noor resilience.

6.5.3.2. Resilience challenged: teacher's burnout.

The new headmaster had an "*unkind personality*" and was "*rude*" to everyone at the school. Noor reported that the headmaster's rude and negative comments; "*frustrated and crushed the teacher's self-confidence.",* which made everyone avoid her including Noor.

> *Why would I let someone like her ruin my day? Especially when I come to school in a good mood, and I have great plans for my class. I swear that I*

avoided her the whole year. (Interview2)

Several incidents reinforced Noor's avoidance, such as making Noor substitute for every teacher going on leave, which increased the workload. As the following extract suggest, Noor could not object because of the educational policy.

> *There was no way for me to protest because before I started teaching at the elementary school, I was asked to sign on a paper, which basically tells you that you are obligated to teach other subjects. I think this paper was drawn because many English teachers had a problem with teaching other subjects. I think that's why the ministry enforced this paper. (Interview2)*

However, Noor refused the headmaster's request to teach the Holy Quran. This was because of the headmaster request and the existing teaching workload were more than Noor could endure. Furthermore, as discussed previously (see 6.5.2.2), Noor's integrity and beliefs became central in her teaching practice. Noor knew that teaching the Holy Quran requires an expert teacher, and she understood the responsibility of teaching "*Allah's words*" was more than her capability.

> *When you teach Hadith or Tuheed, you are not teaching Allah's literal words, right? However, when you teach the holy Quran, you are reading Allah's words literally, and you know how every symbol matter and how it changes the pronunciation of the word. So, let's say if a student made a mistake while reading the Quran in one of these symbols and I did not correct her. No. (Interview2)*

As the extract suggests, like many Muslims, Noor regards the Holy Quran as a sacred text because it is " *Allah's word*" and believes that every action and saying will be accounted for in the Hereafter, good deeds will be rewarded, and bad actions will be a source of punishment (Halstead, 2007). Thus, she refused to teach the Holy Quran because she feared punishment. "*I told the headmaster I could not teach it. What if I made a mistake? I will be*

asked about it on judgment day." (interview1). In addition, Noor refused to teach math again. This was because Noor could not make one of her students understand the lesson, which made her break into tears in class. In other words, Noor could not cope with the pressures from workload and her own values, which, as described, focused on reaching connecting to each student.

> *I remember that I cried in math class because one student did not understand the math, and I wanted her to understand so bad. She did not, so I broke into tears in class. (Interview1).*

Noor managed to survive and thrive during this challenging experience, particularly in first year teaching at the new school. This is because she used several coping strategies that helped her overcome the difficulties, and she worked in a safe environment created by a great headmaster. As shown above, Noor engaged in self-reflection, and she changed her teaching practice to align with both her responsibility as a teacher and her values. Furthermore, it seemed that Noor attempted to protect her wellbeing and resilience by applying for transfer. Unfortunately, her first attempt failed, and decided to be patient or survive, which arguably promoted her burnout. The second year of teaching at the school was detrimental to Noor's resilience, despite her attempts to avoid the headmaster and harness her values and the power of her faith. In the end, Noor experienced burnout.

> *Well, I am taking a salary for my job, and I believe that I have to deserve it. I mean, I must do a perfect job, and I want Allah's blessings. I know that sometimes I cannot do the job perfectly. Sometimes I miss in this or that. However, I always strive to be the best that I can. it is something that I live by. (Interview2)*

6.5.4. Bouncing back

Fortunately for Noor, the second transfer request was accepted, and she was assigned to teach at a high school. Noor did not elaborate on her teaching experience because it lasted

for a year and after she became an educational supervisor. However, from her reports about the teaching experience, Noor was shocked by the new English curriculum, which was hard for her and the students and was unsuitable for the Saudi culture.

> *It was unorganized and the reading part, well, some of the reading topics were not suitable for our society. Furthermore, as I said before, there were a lot of contradictions between the activity book and the main book. (Interview2)*

Although she had not fully recovered from her previous, Noor was able to gradually deal with challenging curriculum by seeking help from her friends and joining different teacher's groups on social media. After a month of learning and adapting to the new curriculum, Noor claims that she started to feel emotionally better. "*I learned a lot from different websites and from many veteran teachers at the group. Alhamdulillah, everything went well after" (interview2).* As for the school environment, Noor only reported that there was tension between the teachers; thus, she isolated herself to avoid conflicts. Noor preferred to spend her break time improving and preparing lessons instead of socializing with teachers. In other words, Noor still followed her rule of restricting her relationship with colleagues to a professional level. Noor's rule seemed to help protect her resilience because she did not engage in any conflict with colleagues after her first-year experience (see 6.5.1.2). Overall, it seems that Noor managed to overcome the teaching difficulties, which might indicate that she was moving to a relatively adaptive state.

> *I think it is better to keep a professional relationship. This way you focus on yourself and your work. I mean, try to finish all your work at school. (Interview2).*

6.5.5. Becoming a supervisor

After a year of teaching, Noor's friend convinced her to become a supervisor. Noor believed that as a supervisor, she would help English teachers and gain experience.

> *One of my friends talked me into it. She is a supervisor, and I remember her saying Noor, you have experience, and this job will help you gain more experience. (Interview2)*

However, the reality was completely different from what she imagined, which is why she quit after a year at the job. Specifically, Noor described the workload and what she perceived to be unfair treatment. Based on the job description, Noor's duties include evaluating English teachers performance and students learning outcomes, among other administrational duties (Almudarra, 2017). Because she was working at a village branch, Noor was assigned to 79 teachers, which is above the usual number of teachers (i.e., 60).

> *Can you imagine that I was assigned to 79 teachers? Usually, the supervisor is assigned to 60 teachers, and she must attend two classes for each teacher. (Interview2)*

Noor was always on the move to evaluate teachers at different schools, which was exhausting because she was the only available English supervisor. This affected Noor's ability to keep up with paperwork which sometimes she felt was unnecessary. Noor discussed the unfair treatment and the sought help from the manager, but she did not help Noor with the workload" You *know I told the manager that I'm overworked, and she agreed. So, I told her then stop giving me more work to do"* (interview2). By the end of her first year working as a supervisor, Noor resigned because she was given many duties outside of her job description. Particularly, she was tasked to teach in a very remote area in the last 3 weeks of the semester, which made submit her resignation. Overall, Noor could not cope with the workload or her disappointment, and she did not report using any coping strategy to help her overcome or alleviate the pressure.

I'm not adding anything. I wanted to help teachers find new strategies and improve. I wanted to make a change. If I could not add anything or help teachers in any way, then there is no use for me. (Interview2)

6.5.6. Finally, a teacher

Noor went back to teaching at her current high school. "*I went back to teaching. I went back to doing what I love"* (interview1). Noor described the last four years of her teaching as "great", including the transition to the online teaching period. "*I thank Allah for the last 4 years; everything has been great.".* Based on Noor's reports, this was for several reasons. First, as the above extract shows, Noor enjoys teaching, and her teaching journey suggests that her strong values, motivation, and commitment to the profession were a source of her strength during challenging times**.** Second, the school seemed to have many positive factors, such as resources, a great headmaster, colleagues, and students. The school incorporated technology in classrooms before the outbreak of Covid-19, which made teaching easier than before for Noor. Finally, most of the teachers at the school are veterans, and they have created a friendly environment that is based on a supportive and trusting relationship, which made Noor break her rule of professional boundaries.

Mashallah, most of them are veteran teachers, and they are like sisters. They visit each other regularly. They created this friendly group, and I hope that does not change by Allah's graces (Mashallah). I broke all the boundaries. I said to myself why I'm putting boundaries with people like this. They are great people. (Interview2)

Overall, it seems that the last four years helped Noor recover from her past experience (see, 6.5.5). This suggests that the process of bouncing back involves practising everyday resilience, which Noor seemed to practice after her challenging experience, particularly, by seeking help and improving. Throughout her teaching journey, Noor has changed schools, gained experience, and developed her coping strategies to overcome the difficulties. Her coping

strategies can be described as a combination between general coping strategies and religious coping strategies. Significantly, Noor sometimes relied more on her religious coping strategies. They helped her overcome difficulties and motivated her to work hard and improve**.**

> *I swear both help cope with pressure and self-satisfaction. I mean, self-satisfaction is also equal to fear of Allah and seeking his rewards. You see, for me it is when you feel Allah's presence and seek his rewards. when you do something more and think of Allah's reward. Moreover, when I go home, I feel happy. To me they are all the same. (Interview2)*

6.6. Discussion

The analysis of teachers stories revealed the complex and dynamic process of resilience, which involves " many systems within the individual as well as many systems outside the individual" (Masten, 2014 p. 170) that continually interact overtime. The discussion of teachers resilience journey will follow the data analysis pattern and attempt to highlight the significant personal and contextual factors that influenced and shaped teachers' resilience.

6.6.1. Training and learning experience.

The first stage of developing resilient, motivated, and committed teachers, is teacher training programmes (Doney, 2017; Mansfield et al., 2016). Data from three teachers confirms literature findings that described Saudi training programmes as "non-systematic" and "inadequate" (Al-Hazmi, 2003, p. 341). This explained the teaching struggles for Hanan, Manal and Huda, which contributed to their maladaptive adjustment. The data also, revealed the gap between the teaching context and the university English programme, which contributed to Huda's reality shock and language anxiety. As discussed in **Chapter 2,** Huda's English programme was similar to most university programs that have criticised in the literature for

focus on English literature and translation (Al-Seghayer, 2014a; Alqahtani, 2019; Alsowat, 2021).

Notably, the teacher's reported a few positive factors in their training. For instance, Noor considered herself "lucky" because the in schoolteacher provided her with several teaching techniques to engage students, which proved to help Noor throughout the years. Despite their few positive reports, non-of the participants (Huda, Manal and Hanan) received useful teaching techniques to alleviate their struggles in the first years of the profession. Instead, they had to learn teaching by "trail-and-error" like many novice teachers (Alhamad, 2018a, p. 51). Besides the limited teaching skills, the training programmes failed to provide courses or training on self-confidence, communication, perseverance, and cooperation to the teachers (Alsowat, 2021). This could be one of the important factors that contributed to teacher's struggle in their first years in the profession and inability to cope. Many researchers have called for a "relevant, rigorous and responsive" teacher education to address the context challenges and develop teachers' resilience skills and strategies (Mansfield et al., 2012). However, the data showed that the described training programs failed in this regard and produced ill-equipped teachers for teaching and dealing with context challenges.

6.6.2. Resilience in first years of teaching: personal and contextual factors

6.6.2.1. Personal factors

The resilience system is specific for each teacher and it consist of personal factors, external factors and coping repertoire (Kostoulas & Lammerer, 2020). Every teacher in this study started teaching with a set of personal traits and beliefs. Some factors were common among the teachers. For instance, Huda and Hanan lacked confidence in their language and teaching abilities, which was among the factors that contributed to their maladaptive adjustments. Significantly, Huda's lack of confidence originated from her language and teaching incompetency. As the data revealed, Huda's stress and language anxiety seemed to

influence her coping ability, the quality of teaching (i.e., excluding several grammar rules and vocabulary) and students' learning outcomes in negative way (i.e., students failure) (Benesch, 2018).

Noor and Manal shared similar personality traits. For example, they were confrontational, and they used different words to describe their personality, such as stubborn, outspoken, and impulsive, especially in their first years of teaching. These characteristics seemed to hinder their ability to form relationships in some of the teaching contexts, cope with difficulties and fully adjust. Hanan was the only participant that reported intense negative feelings toward teaching. As the data analysis showed (see 6.4.2), Hanan's negative emotions were problematic, effecting her teaching practices, and ability to form relationships with colleagues, and adjust to the teach teaching context. Hanan's data is consistent with several studies that reported the impact of language teachers' emotions on their relationships with colleagues, motivation, and commitment to the profession (Barcelos & Aragão, 2018; Ruohotie-Lyhty et al., 2018). Overall, teacher's personal factors influenced and was influenced by the teaching contexts, which data showed changed their coping behaviour and lead to either an adaptive or maladaptive state.

6.6.2.2. Contexts that hindered teachers' resilience

The inadequate training experience was common among three participants, which played a key role in their adjustment. For example, Manal, Hanan and Huda started teaching with inadequate skills, and they were bombarded by the responsibilities of their role, curriculum, and students' language level. For instance, Manal, Hanan, and Huda's struggle with students' language level and disengagement is consistent with the literature reports about Saudi students rudimentary language level and lack of motivation (Al-Seghayer, 2014b; Alqahtani, 2019; Elyas & Picard, 2010a; Mahboob & Elyas, 2014). It has been suggested that

students achievements could be predicted by their engagement in classroom (Dincer et al., 2019). The presented data indicates that Manal, Huda and Hanan were struggling to engage students in their classrooms. For instance, Manal's and Huda's students failed in their first-semester exam and it can be argued that student's disengagement was one of leading factors for this outcome.

Interestingly, Huda and Manal seemed oblivious of their role in students' disengagement, and they justified students' failure as consequence of their poor language level, demotivation, and inappropriate curriculum. Their data is another evidence to the inadequate training programmes, especially, the lack of teaching methods courses (Al-Seghayer, 2014a; Alqahtani, 2019; Alsowat, 2021). On the other hand, Hanan's narrative revealed her awareness of her inaction toward students' engagement and achievements, especially, since she had all the teaching resources to create a motivating environment and improve her teaching. Hanan's apathetic attitude prevented her from connecting with students and caring about their learning and achievements. Furthermore, Hanan's personal experience and emotions contributed to her inability to form relationships with her colleagues for some time. Relationships are one of the important factors that promote and sustain teachers resilience over time (Gu, 2018). Unfortunately, Hanan could not build relationships that are based on trust, support, and a shared sense of vocational values. This because she was consumed by her emotional struggles and attempts to find way out of the profession.

Unlike the other teachers in this study, Noor did not report any teaching difficulties, and she seemed to have confidence in her teaching ability. The role of Noor's training mentor is evident and is in line with research findings that highlights the role of mentoring in promoting teachers' confidence in their teaching abilities, motivation, commitment and resilience (Mansfield et al., 2016; Papatraianou & Cornu, 2014). Noor used the mentoring teacher's advice in her classrooms, which proved to be effective

because her reports show her commitment to students, enjoyment, and use of all the available teaching resource. Noor's enjoyment and confidence in her teaching abilities, would help her to some extent cope with toxic work environment. Several researchers have highlighted the critical role of headmasters in creating a positive environment, that is based on trust, collaboration, and support (Flores & Day, 2006; Peters & Pearce, 2011; Wood, 2005). Noor's experience showed the opposite, and her data revealed the headmaster's role in hindering her ability to cope and build her resilience. As novice teachers, the participants in this study faced several challenges, which they were not adequately trained to deal with. It can be argued that the participants personal systems which is represented in, lack of confidence, anger, anxiety, and confrontational personalities, interacted with the challenges in their teaching context. Consequently, promoted their negative coping and maladaptive resilience.

6.6.3. Coping to survive and reaching maladaptive state.

According to Frydenberg (2014), coping is "a transaction between the person and environment" that is influenced by individual's appraisals, determining their control over stressors and the degree of the stress experience (p. 83).The teachers in this study used several coping strategies, such as avoidance, isolation, distancing, and venting. Their coping strategies are characterized in the literature as negative and they contributed to teacher's maladaptive state (Frydenberg, 2014; Kato, 2015; MacIntyre et al., 2020). As previously discussed, teachers faced several difficulties, without guidance, help and support from experienced teachers and headmasters/supervisors in the teaching context. However, Huda seemed to be an exception because she received help and support from her educational supervisor (see 6.2.3.1). However**,** it can be argued that Huda's inability to effectively navigate and use available resources prolonged her maladaptive state. This further reinforced by her belief that her struggles were insignificant to discuss with the headmaster, even though they prevented her from teaching and

attending classes. Huda choose to isolate herself from the headmaster and colleagues, despite knowing that many teachers discussed their difficulties with the headmaster. This can be attributed to Huda's belief that struggling is part of the profession and it her responsibility to deal with it alone.

Similarly, Manal was not the only novice teacher facing difficulties and suffering from a reality shock. This seemed to provide a sense of comfort for Manal and helped her vent with novice colleagues. Manal's reality shock experience is consistent with the research findings (Fantilli & McDougall, 2009; Hong et al., 2018; Pillen et al., 2013).The presented data, shows the loss of Manal's idealised vision of teaching and moral struggle with the passing failing students' policy. Manal's data revealed her attempts to practice her role according to her values and beliefs. That is, she tried to do her best teaching, despite her limited skills. Furthermore, she tried to ignore the veteran teacher's advice of accepting her current teaching reality. Unfortunately, Manal's efforts were unsuccessful promoting her venting, isolation and avoidance coping, religious struggle and apathetic toward teaching. Manal's experience seemed to confirm the role of challenging context in stifling teacher's vocational zeal and hindering the development of their resilience (Gu, 2018; Gu & Day, 2013; Johnson & Down, 2013; Smith & Ulvik, 2017; Valieva, 2016).Noor's data also showed her attempts to deal with difficulties, which included, isolation and focusing positive class experience. Research emphasised on creating supporting environment and building relation trust with novice teachers to help them overcome teaching challenges and promote their resilience (Morettini et al., 2019; Papatraianou & Cornu, 2014). However, as previously discussed, the main reason for Noor's inability to cope and build resilience was the headmaster and the toxic environment. From Noor's data, it can be argued that she had the foundation of resilient qualities, such as self-efficacy, commitment to students, and focusing on positive class experience. Hiver and Dörnyei (2015b), immunity model, particularly, the state of partial immunity, might provide

an accurate description of Noor's experience. If Noor had a resilience fostering environment, she might have been able to thrive. This was evident in several environments the nurtured Noor's capacity to be resilient, expanding her coping repertoire, improving her teaching skills, and enhancing her commitment.

In contrast to other teachers, Hanan did not attempt to seek help or support from anyone in the teaching context. As shown in her narrative, Hanan was unable to cope with the teaching difficulties or adapt to the teaching environment, and thus used avoidance, venting and isolation to cope. Resilience has been described as process of "navigation and negotiation" which is developmental and socially facilitated, manifesting in the interaction between the individual and environment (Gu, 2018, p. 22; Ungar, 2012). The data revealed that Hanan's negative emotions and apathetic attitudes toward teaching, prevented her from engaging with teaching context. The university had several resources and positive factors, but Hanan as reported was "*blind*" because she was driven by her hate and the need to leave the profession. Throughout the interview, Hanna repeatedly referred to her internal struggle and acknowledged it as one of the factors that influenced her ability to adapt to teaching contexts. To sum up, the data results is consistent with previously discussed literature in **Chapter 3** stressing the role of teaching environments in fostering teachers' resilience (Gu, 2018; Pillen et al., 2013). Furthermore, the result showed the reciprocal interaction between the personal and contextual factors leading to teacher's maladaptive resilience and negative coping behaviour.

6.6.4. Different teaching context and years of experience

All teachers in this study changed the teaching environment and had to interact with different contextual factors. Again, the analysis is consistent with the literature revealing the significant role of the teaching context, particularly the quality of the school leadership and the

existence of a supportive relationship with colleagues. Noor, Huda, and Hanan teaching journey's highlight the critical role of school leadership in promoting teacher commitment and capacity for resilience (Gu, 2018; Le Cornu, 2009; Li et al., 2019; Papatraianou & Cornu, 2014). For instance, Huda's headmaster support and appreciation for her teaching efforts seemed to motivate her to improve and commit herself to helping weak students**.** Noor's Headmaster had a role in creating a collaborative and supportive environment, which helped Noor form a collaborative relationship with her colleagues and obtain an MA degree.

Overtime, Noor was able to develop resilient qualities, which helped her survive and thrive a challenging experience; that is, teaching at an elementary school**.** The effect of having a supportive and trusting relationship with colleagues was more evident in Hanan's resilience journey (see 6.4.3.1). Hanan was emotionally struggling when she started teaching, and as shown above, it affected her teaching performance, ability to connect with students and cope with difficulties**.** However, working at her current university made Hanan feel empowered, supported, trusted, and being improved. This gradually helped her develop resilient qualities. Hanan was greatly influenced by her colleagues in many ways, such as connecting with students and changing her coping strategies (see 6.4.3.2)

6.6.5. Changes and development of coping strategies.

Over the years, the participants in this study have used and developed a range of coping strategies that facilitated both an adaptive and maladaptive adjustment. The participants in this study used a combination of general coping strategies, and religious coping strategies to overcome difficulties. For instance, Huda and Noor used a combination of religious coping such as prayers and general coping strategies, such as problem solving to overcome difficulties. Significantly, the combination of the two coping strategies seemed to help the participants reach an adaptive state of resilience (Abu-Raiya et al., 2019; Ano & Vasconcelles, 2005). For example, Huda reported, reciting a specific prayer before going to class and improving her

teaching skills. Huda's data revealed the effect of religious coping providing her with sense of tranquillity and promoting her resilience, which in line with the literature investigating religious coping (Abu-Raiya et al., 2019; Al-Hadethe et al., 2016).

Notably, Huda's narrative did not indicate what prompted her use of religious coping, especially since she did not report using any during her first two years of teaching. A possible explanation for this change could be attributed to the overall Saudi culture which is significantly influenced by religion (see**.** 2.1.1). Furthermore, it seems that religious coping was also a source of motivation for the participants to improve. Noor's data shows the effect of her religious belfies, and use of religious coping motived her to do her best. Noor's religious coping seemed to be promoted by her colleges during her MA studies and her friends who as reported encouraged her be patient and seek "Allah's" reward. Noor's and Huda's narrative indicate that their faith is a salient aspect in their teacher identity and coping system (Boraie et al., 2018). According to Park (2005c), " religion is far more likely to be used in the coping of those for whom religion is a highly salient aspect of their understanding of self and world than in the coping of those who are less devout." (p., 711).

On the other hand, Manal also used a combination of religious and general coping strategies, but she reached a maladaptive state of resilience. This might be because she used and relied on negative coping strategies such as avoidance and isolation in combination with fear of punishment. Consequently, it seemed to only help her survive and maintain a relatively a maladaptive state. Manal's narrative revealed that some teaching contexts, had several hindering factors, such colleagues**,** which seemed to reinforce her negative view of the profession and reliance on negative coping strategies. However, the analysis also, revealed that Manal had the opportunity to work in positive teaching environment or "*good*" schools as she described. For example, her first experience as a substitute teacher was at a school the resemble the school she graduated from and had a significant impact on vision of teaching and

learning (see 6.3.1). From her description the school seemed to have many of the necessary contextual factors that promote resilience, such as cooperative and supportive environment. However, it did not promote a change or development in her coping behaviours like the other participants or nudge her resilience system from its maladaptive state. This might be explained by the strong influence of personal factors. That is, Manal's apparent fear and avoidance of burnout and negative attitude toward the profession.

Hanan narrative also, revealed a positive and gradual change in both her attitude toward teaching and coping behaviour. Instead of isolation, avoidance, and venting, Hanan's started to seek help and support from her colleagues, friends, and family. The overall environment seemed to change Hanan's coping strategies and resilience system towards an adaptive state. It can be argued that Hanan's resilience capacity started to unfold through relational trust. This seemed to confirm literature on both relational resilience and resilience as an outcome from the reciprocal interaction between the teacher and environment (Day, 2014; Gu, 2014a, 2018; Lee et al., 2011; Papatraianou & Cornu, 2014). In other words, Hanan started to actively deal with the challenges and use all of the available resources to help her in the resilience building process. To sum up, the data from Huda, Hanan and Noor revealed the gradual change and development of their coping strategies, which was influenced by the reciprocal interaction between the individuals and their teaching context over time.

6.6.6. The development and changes of teacher's resilience

The analysis of this study revealed the reciprocal interaction between the participants and the environment, which gradually helped the participants reach an adaptive state of resilience and, in Manal's case, it hindered the development of resilient qualities. Throughout the interviews (i.e., first and second), Manal seemed consist in displaying her apathetic attitude toward teaching and on avoiding burnout (see 6.3.7). Notably, Manal's stated that, she is

committed to helping novice teachers adjust to the reality of teaching, advising them to lower their expectations, and stop care and working hard. It can be argued that Manal's profound reality shock was one of the factors that hindered her adjustment. This is because she seemed unable to recover from her first years of teaching experience and engage in the resilience process, which as Ungar et al. (2013) described as a "equality of both individuals and their environments" (p. 361). Like, Hanan, Manal did not choose teaching as profession, she was encouraged to pursue a teaching career by her family, which she did not expect when she was hired**.** This might also be another contributing factor for Manal's unwillingness to harness both personal and contextual factors to experience satisfaction, motivation, commitment, and resilience. Thus, Manal seemed to maintain a relatively maladaptive resilience state.

Hanan's and Huda's teaching journey show the gradual change and development of resilience. Furthermore, their resilience journey highlights the importance of teaching context, particularly, relationships with colleagues, and headmasters. In other words, it can be argued that their resilience was developed through growth-fostering relationships, which were based on support, trust, empowerment, common vocational values and the development of courage (Gu, 2018; Jordan, 2006; Papatraianou & Cornu, 2014). Notably, Huda seemed able to maintain her resilience in a relatively adaptive state throughout the years. Her experience seemed consistent with several studies that investigated a group of positive veteran teachers, who as suggested maintained their passion and commitment to teaching throughout the years (Day & Gu, 2007, 2009; Meister & Ahrens, 2011).

Noor's journey, on the other hand, seemed to show the fluctuation of resilience overtime. This might be observed in the gradual development for a partial immunity state to as a resilient state which can be exemplified in Noor's first years of teaching to studying/teaching experience (see 6.5.2) and finally in teaching at the second elementary school (see 6.5.3). However, after surviving and thriving the challenges, Noor was emotionally and physically

exhausted, which might have put her again in a partial immunity state, in which she was able to overcome the curriculum difficulty after some time (see 6.5.4). In other words, she was in a stage of repairing her resilience armour. Maybe if Noor remained at the high school, she might have been able to fully recover to reach an adaptive state. However, her work as a supervisor challenged her coping abilities, resulting in burnout and maladaptive state. Fortunately, Noor was hired at a great school that included several resilience promoting factors, such as colleagues, which helped her recover and reach a relatively adaptive state of resilience. Based on their data, Noor and Huda displayed a love for the profession, which manifested in their ability to harness their inner strength, including their beliefs, vocational values, and the available contextual resources to improve their performance and overcome difficulties (Kostoulas & Lammerer, 2020; Papatraianou et al., 2018).

6.7 Conclusion

In this chapter, I presented findings from teachers' narratives and drawings, which highlighted the individuality of teacher's resilience experience. Furthermore, the analysis of the data revealed and confirmed that resilience is an outcome from the complex and continuous interaction between teacher's personal and contextual factors that developed and changed overtime. In the following chapter, I expand on these findings by discussing the focus group study results.

Chapter 7 Teacher development and resilience

7.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results of the focused group study, which was aimed at exploring the relevance of the 4 resilience archetypes among Saudi language teachers, 2) investigating teachers coping strategies and 3) the continuing professional development programmes that promote teacher resilience. The data was collected through focused group interviews and line drawings that represent the participant's resilience journey. As explained in **Chapter 5,** the participants were shown the graphs that represent each archetype and were first asked about their reaction to each journey and after, they were asked if they experienced something similar. The data from the focused interviews revealed interesting and unexpected results. The data will be presented through 4 major themes and sub-themes. The first theme, different paths to resilience, provides an overview of the most relevant resilience archetypes to the participants. Followed by the unexpected and complex reality of teaching and coping with teaching challenge's themes. The final theme presents teacher's experience with continuing professional development.

7.2. Different paths to resilience

Humans are complex beings, and we have many features in common; yet, each of us is a wonderfully created and unique person, held in community with others (Mackinlay, 2022, p. 4).

To begin with, participant's reactions and experiences varied. Some graphs elicited negative views about the teacher's journey and their resilience capacity, while other graphs seemed to elicit participants' empathy**.** As shown in **Table 4,** the rollercoaster archetype was the most relevant to teachers, in contrast to the least relevant, the maladaptive archetype**.** Although participants' resilience experience might fall under the same archetype, every teacher in this study has her own resilience story. This was clear from the participants' reports and drawings, which highlight the continuous reciprocal interaction of personal and contextual factors (Masten, 2014b). Thus, the change and development of their resilience.

Table 4:The relevance of the resilience archetypes

Resilience archetype	Number of teachers with similar experience	Example
roller-coaster archetype	**6**	Hadeel: I think this teacher is the most relatable so far; nothing stays the same. I mean, some days you are doing great and others you are just doing the minimum.
Smooth archetype	**4**	Amal: It's me. Her experience reminded me of my own
A reluctant archetype	**2**	Lama: I have been through something like this, and I agree with what the teachers said. That it takes time to adjust to teaching and everything that comes with it
maladaptive archetype	**1**	Hala: I have seen teachers who were barely getting by. They did not have that energy and it is something I can relate to**.**

7.2.1. Roller-coaster archetype: the ups and downs of the teaching world

As shown in **Table 4,** the roller-coaster archetype was the most experienced and recognized resilience journey. However, it elicited mixed reactions from participants. When asked about their reaction to the resilience graph, several participants including the ones who related to the archetype (i.e., Lana, and Shahad) were critical of the teacher and her resilience trajectory. For instance, Lana and Shahad attributed the resilience fluctuation to the teacher's emotional personality, and lack of commitment to profession.

> **Shahad:** *The fluctuations. I think it is because of her hesitation whether she wants to continue in this job or not*.

Mai and Abrar were the most critical of this journey with similar impressions. That is, lack of self-control and sensitive personality. Mai for instance was "*surprised*" by the resilience journey and described it as "*unpleasant change*". Mai and Abrar believed that it is teacher responsibility to maintain her resilience level, especially after developing resilience. Mai explained this is accomplished through self-control, self-monitoring and set of values.

> ***Mai:*** *Honesty, I'm surprised by this journey or graph. Yes, life is ups and downs, and it changes. However, here we are talking about one aspect of life. We are talking about work! I have seen teachers like this. I think that there are some people who are very sensitive to everything that happens around them. There are some teachers who change when the environment changes. I mean, their strength, performance and behaviour are easily affected by their environment or dependent on the environment. Don't get me wrong, yes, our environment affects us, but some of us get more affected in a negative way. This is because they allow everyone around to affect them. If someone has self-monitoring and high values or something to work for. For example, a goal to accomplish or self-satisfaction he or she get from accomplishing their goals as teachers. Usually,*

they would not change that much, like this unpleasant change. ***(Smooth archetype)***

As illustrated, Mai seemed to minimise the effect of the environment and emphasise on teacher personal qualities to promote and maintain resilience. Even after providing some examples to explain the roller-coaster journey, and group discussions, Mai still believed that it is the teacher responsibility to maintain her resilience. In contrast, Abrar remarks illustrated her understanding of the journey after learning some of the difficulties.

Abrar: *I'm glad that you mentioned it because now we can understand why sometimes her resilience was low and why she did not do her best. Certainly, if a person faced discrimination, what should we expect that person to do? Of course, his/her resilience is going to be affected. So, I understand her journey. Maybe I would have the same reactions as this teacher. I don't know.* ***(Smooth archetype)***

The teacher's discussion posed an important question; is it a teacher's responsibility to maintain an adaptive resilience level? Or is it a shared responsibility between the teacher and administration? Based on the focus group discussions, it seemed that teachers unanimously agree that it should be a shard effort. However, it was noted that some of the teachers seemed to doubt the administration cooperation, because they foreground the teacher's role in developing and maintaining his/her resilience. This might be explained by tensions and lack of support they experienced with administration over the years, leading some of them to avoid seeking help and support (see 7.4). Hence, their doubt and focus on teacher's role.

Hadeel, Shahad, Lana, Sara, Arwa and Nawal identified with the roller coaster archetype. Their narrative and drawings are variations of the archetype. The teachers faced several difficulties throughout the years and as they explained affected their resilience. Through experience, the teachers developed their coping repertoire, which was indicated in

their reports of overcoming difficulties **(see 7.4).** Specifically, acceptance, teacher's narratives show their acceptance of their maladaptive state and loss of motivation. They accept it as temporary part of teaching journey, that is followed by actively working to bounce back and reach an adaptive state.

> ***Nawal:*** *I mean, teaching means that you need to be patient and motivated. There are many things that do not go your way, and many things can go wrong. So what? Are you just going to give up? Listen, Mariam, yes, sometimes I feel frustrated and even angry. I'm human, there were times when I lost my motivation, but the most important thing is that you learn how to bounce back.* ***(Roller-coaster archetype)***

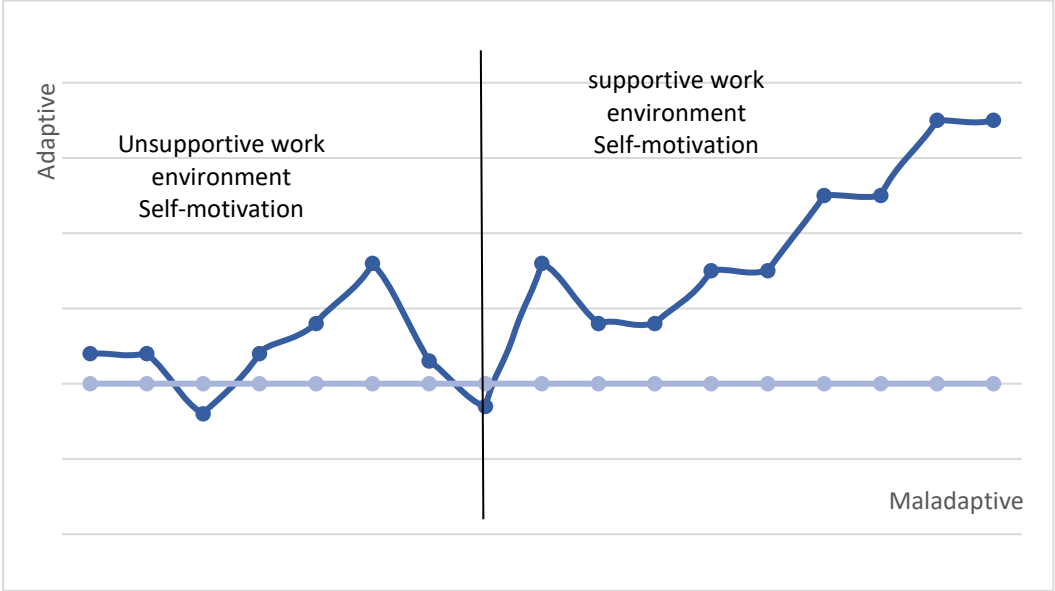


Figure 19: Lana's resilience trajectory

7.2.2. Smooth journey to resilience: The role of supportive environment and love for the profession.

This archetype was the second most relevant to four teachers, Rahaf, Amal, Mai, and Abrar. Generally, all teachers had a positive reaction to this archetype with some teachers admiring the teacher's (i.e., Huda) ability to develop and maintain this level of resilience and wishing to have the same ability.

> ***Hadeel:*** *Well, I can't say that I have met or known a teacher with similar experience, but I think it is something to be admired. I mean to sustain this level of resilience throughout the years. I wish I had this strong ability.* ***(Roller-coaster archetype).***

One of the common factors for all teachers is the being surrounded by supportive environment and relationships. Abrar and Amal were lucky to have many positive factors in the teaching environment that promoted their resilience, such as access to variety CPD and supportive administration. Although she transferred to a different university, Abrar reported that her current environment is similar to her previous university. That is, supportive and offer different CPD programs to develop teachers.

> ***Abrar:*** *Now I teach at Y university, and they provide different CPD programmes, which are great. Mashallah. All I can say is Alhamdulillah that I had and still have the opportunity to attend these programs, which are designed to help us improve.*

Mai and Rahaf provided limited information on their teaching environment, and they mostly focused on the help and support they received from family and friends (**see 7.3.4)** as well as expressing their love for the profession.

Mai: *To me, teaching is one of the greatest professions. I believe that a teacher can turn anything into a positive thing.*

Rahaf: *when I was a child, we used to play madrasa. I loved playing teacher. I love teaching.*

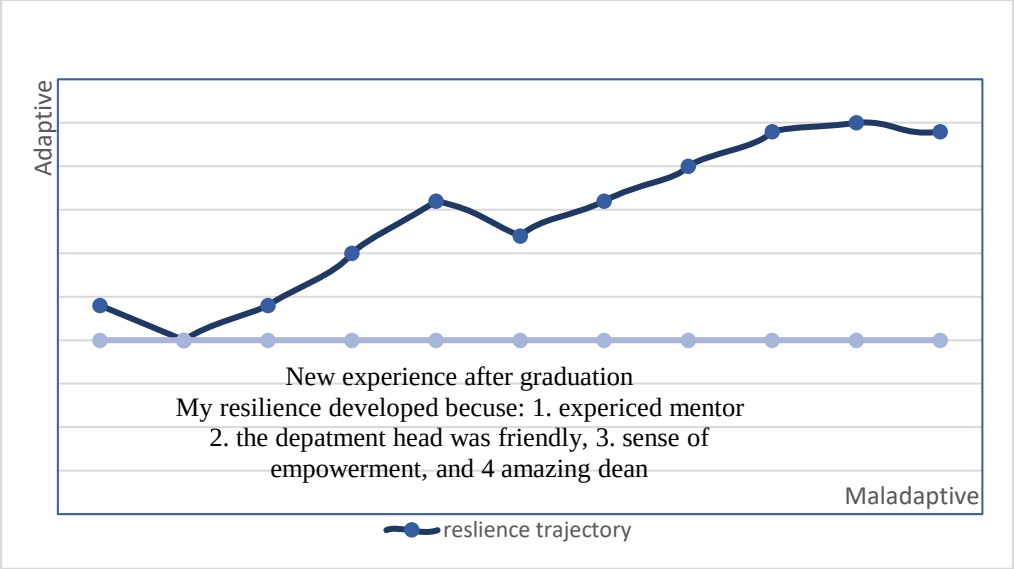


Figure 20: Amal's drawing highlights the role of the context in promoting resilience.

7.2.3. Reluctant journey to resilience.

Basma and Lama are the only teachers from the focused groups who reported similar experience to this archetype. Generally, all participants agreed that their resilience developed gradually throughout the years. Furthermore, they reported witnessing the gradual development of several colleagues. Significantly, three teachers stated their admiration for the teacher (i.e., Hanan) for her commitment to developing resilience and improving herself.

Rahaf: *I think her journey shows her commitment and patience to improve. It is like she never lost hope of herself. Yes, it was slow, but she was able to develop resilience* ***(Smooth archetype)***

The data from Basma's and Lama's narratives and drawings suggests their commitment to overcoming the challenges and improving their skills. Hence, the gradual resilience development.

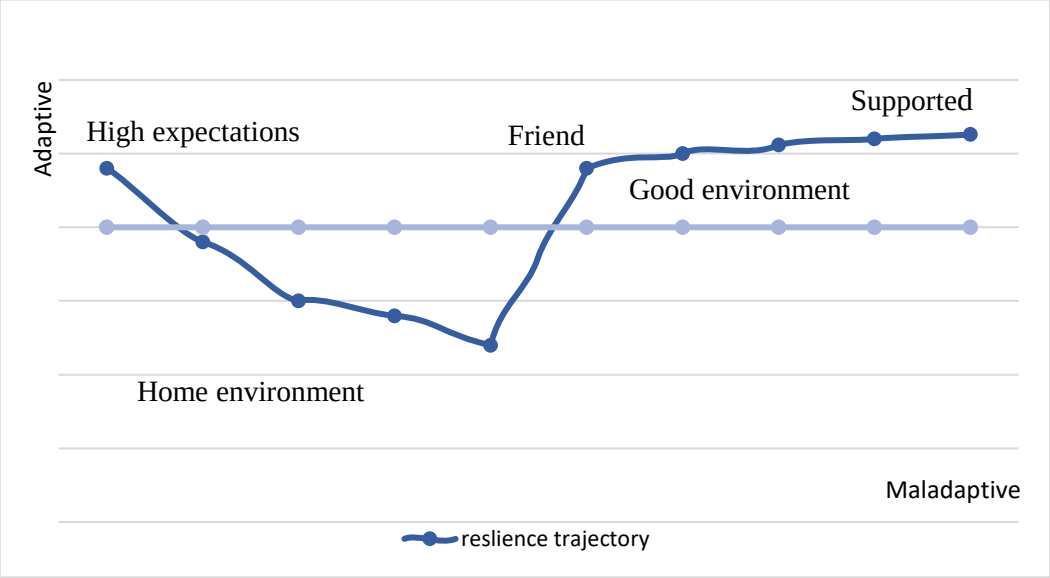


Figure 21: Basma's drawing shows the gradual development of her resilience.

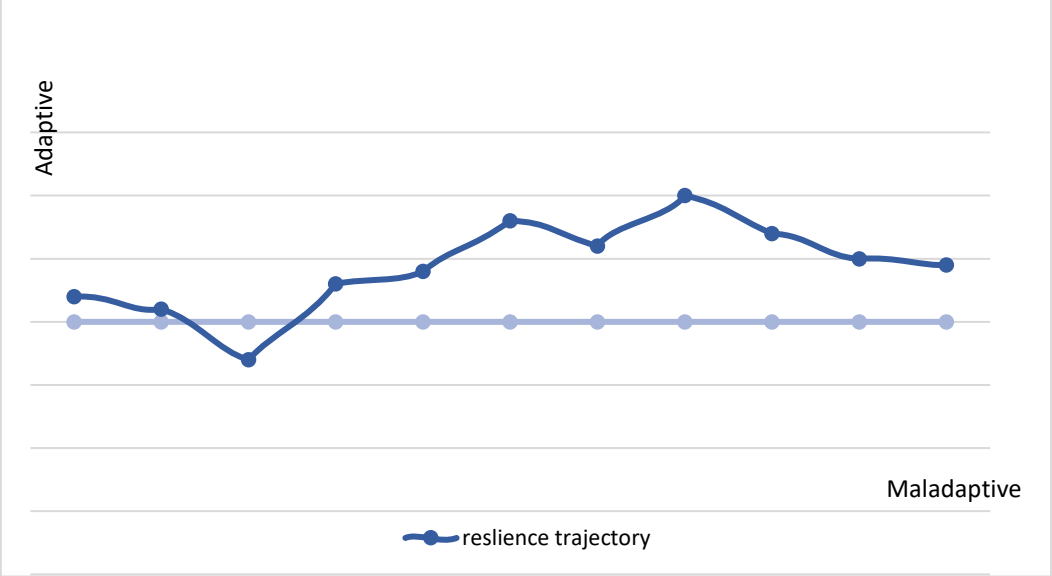


Figure 22: Lama's drawing

7.2.4. Maladaptive resilience: teacher burnout

As shown in Table 4, this archetype was the least experienced and recognised by teachers. However, all teachers seemed to relate to the decline of resilience as a result of reality shock, mismatch exceptions, lack of support and workload. Furthermore, several teachers in this study provided some examples of teachers who reached a relatively stable maladaptive state; many as reported were veteran teachers.

> ***Nawal:*** *I have seen teachers like this. Some of them were beginners, and many were experienced teachers. They have been teaching for 15-20 years, which is a long time. They were similar to this teacher, and I think they faced many difficulties and disappointments until they reached this stage.* ***(Roller-coaster archetype)***

Hala was the only teacher in this study whose experience might be considered a variation for the maladaptive archetype. Like the other teachers, Hala faced similar teaching challenges, which hindered her resilience (see 7.3). Hala's reports and drawing revealed that at some point she was able to develop and maintain resilience for a while (see Figure 23). This as will be further discussed was the result of actively harnessing personal and contextual resources. However, her resilience started to gradually decline during the COVID-19 pandemic.

> ***Hala:*** *Yes, I think I have seen many teachers like this. I mean, for example, sometimes you see a teacher very motivated and working hard and other times you see her not doing well. Waiting for the day to end. I have seen teachers who were barely getting by. They did not have that energy and it is something I can relate to.*

Adjusting to the sudden change was challenging for Hala, but to some extent she was able to overcome the challenges. However, as reported, returning to in person teaching was more challenging because of the discrepancy in students language level and new policies. Thus, justifying her current maladaptive state.

Hala: *I think the pandemic was difficult for everyone around the world. Imagine trying to adjust to what was happening, the death and fear for loved ones, and do your job. Teaching is not easy and during COVID-19 it was ten times harder because of what was happening and the mess of education policies. We were not ready or prepared for online teaching. Even now it is hard, we are still adjusting to the outcomes of pandemic as I said earlier.*

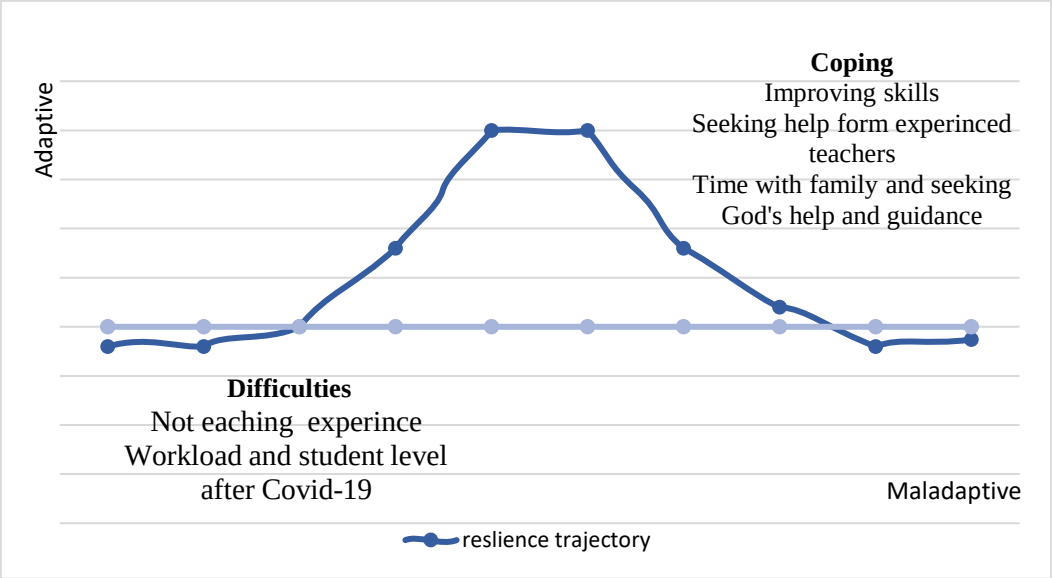


Figure 23:Hala's drawing

7.3. The unpredictable and complex reality of teaching.

All participants in this study agreed on the unpredictable and complex nature of teaching, which was evident from their discussion. It is unsurprising, that all participants have been though several challenges and changes throughout the years, which affected their resilience. Generally, the participants faced similar personal and contextual challenges, these include, learning to teach, managing students, lack of resources and negative environments. In the following I present the sub-themes that highlights the multilayered personal and contextual systems, as reflected in Figure 15 that includes challenges and resources. However, before

introducing and discussing the sub-themes, it is important to note that reporting the participant's experience is varied. That is, it depends on teacher's description of their experiences and study focus. For example, Amal experience is focused on the resources that helped develop her resilience and thus she provided limited description on the few challenges that she encountered throughout the years. Furthermore, each phase of teacher's career is marked by challenges and resources. However, sometimes teachers encounter similar challenges, either with students or work environment. The difference as the data showed is in teacher's response to the challenges and ability to harness available personal and contextual resources (Beltman, 2020). On a finale note, the next sections will report the challenges and resources starting with teachers' personal systems, followed by school and external environments. The final sections focused on teachers coping and their experience with CPD programmes.

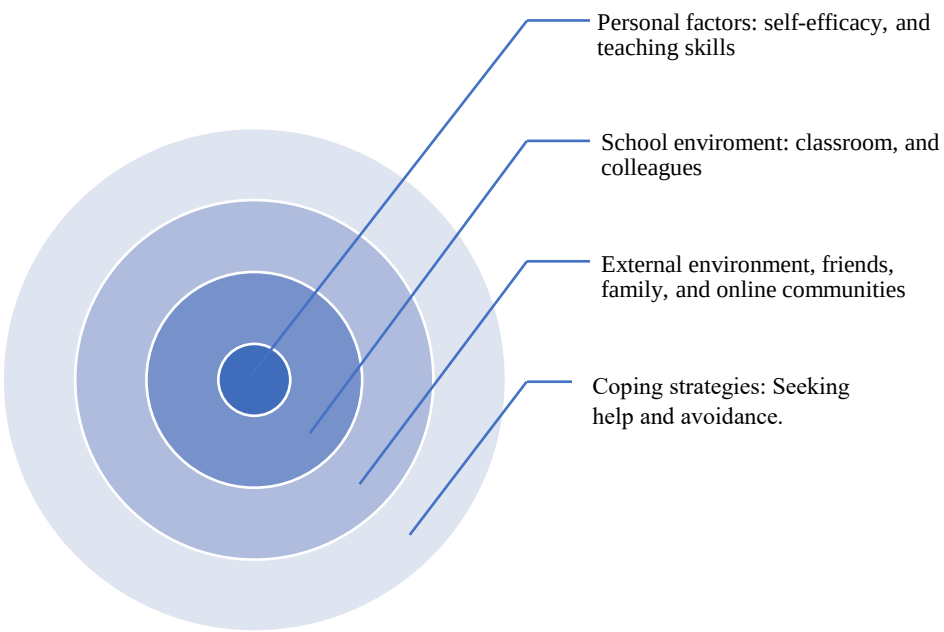


Figure 15: The multilayer of teacher's resilience systems

7.3.1. Personal factors:

7.3.1.1. lack of teaching skills and reality shock

The first years/months of teaching was harder than all teachers expected, especially since some of them had either limited or no teaching skills. Consequently, they experienced range of negative emotions while learning how to teach and adjusting to their role and context. For example, Hadeel, Hala and Rahaf claimed that they had no teaching skills. Before becoming a university lecturer, Hadeel started teaching at a private school without teaching skills, which affected both her and students learning. Based on Hadeel's reports, students were keen to learn English and they were not satisfied with her teaching because they complained to the administration.

> ***Hadeel:*** *I started teaching with no skills, and I was not prepared. I remember how hard it was to learn how to teach. I tried, and I remember the frustration I felt when I saw the look on students' faces. They did not understand anything and did not pay attention in class.* ***(Roller-coaster archetype).***

Hala and Rahaf started teaching after years of unemployment, which was significant gap without practicing the language. Their limited use of English can be justified by the dominance of Arabic in the Saudi culture, leaving limited opportunity to speak English outside of educational settings (Elyas & Picard, 2019). Thus, besides their perceived non- existing teaching skills, Hala and Rahaf lost their language proficiency intensifying their stress**.**

> ***Rahaf:*** *I was unemployed for 2 years, and during that time, I did not practice the language, and you know that it is important to practice the language if you want to be fluent. The second thing, I did not know how to teach at all. The curriculum was difficult, too, it took me a while to learn how to teach* ***it. (Smooth archetype).***
>
> ***Hala:*** *I was unemployed for 5 years, and when I started, I was unprepared. I did not even have the time to at least prepare for my first class. [..] I remember*

receiving a call on Thursday from the headmaster, telling me to come to school Sunday morning. When I went to school, I met the headmaster, and she told me that I needed to go to class immediately. I was shocked, she gave me the English book and told me to go to teach my class, just like that. I thought it was a job interview ***(Maladaptive archetype).***

As shown above, Hala assumed that was going for job interview, and did not imagine that she would be asked to start teaching right away. The headmaster neglected to inform Hala that she was hired and was expected to cover for a language teacher. Thus, Hala was shocked by her unexpected responsibilities. Unlike Hala who did not have the opportunity to prepare, Rahaf knew that she going to teach middle school students, and thus she had time to prepare for her role. However, Rahaf explained that she was excited for having her dream job and did not think about her role and its challenges. It is worth mentioning, that Rahaf's narrative revealed that she was oblivious to her low proficiency and lack of teaching skills, which contributed to her reality shock.

Rahaf: *I was really happy when I was hired and couldn't wait for school to start. I think I was so focused on finally having my dream job than on curriculum and what teaching is really like. Do you know what I mean?* ***(Smooth archetype)***

7.3.1.2. Language proficiency and anxiety

In addition to the limited teaching skills, the participants struggled with language anxiety. Language anxiety is one of the challenges that many teachers encounter in their first years of teaching (Horwitz, 1996). Teachers' language anxiety seemed to be triggered and intensified by different circumstances that includes personal and contextual factors. For example, having students with native like language, triggered Shahad language anxiety, making her question her competence. This manifested into experiencing fear and trying to overcompensate for her perceived low proficiency level and lack of experience.

> **Shahad** *In the first semester, I remember that it was very exhausting to prepare for lessons. Not because I did not understand the materials. No, but because I had to read from different resources. From different books and why? Because I was afraid. It was a new experience, and many students Mashallah studied in the States until high school So, they were like natives, and I was not.* ***(Rollercoaster archetype)***

Shahad further explained how she "*suffered*" because of her status as supply teacher, which intensified her language anxiety and stress. The administration has the power to either make teachers feel supported, and valued or isolated, stressed, and insecure. As reported, the university administration and students viewed supply teachers as lacking in both language and teaching skills. Accordingly, Shahad felt pressured, and overwhelmed with the need to prove herself.

> **Shahad:** *I have seen a lot of negative impressions. We were always regarded as less, as unprofessional. Our proficiency level seemed to be less than their standard. This feeling that we are less.* ***(Rollercoaster archetype).***

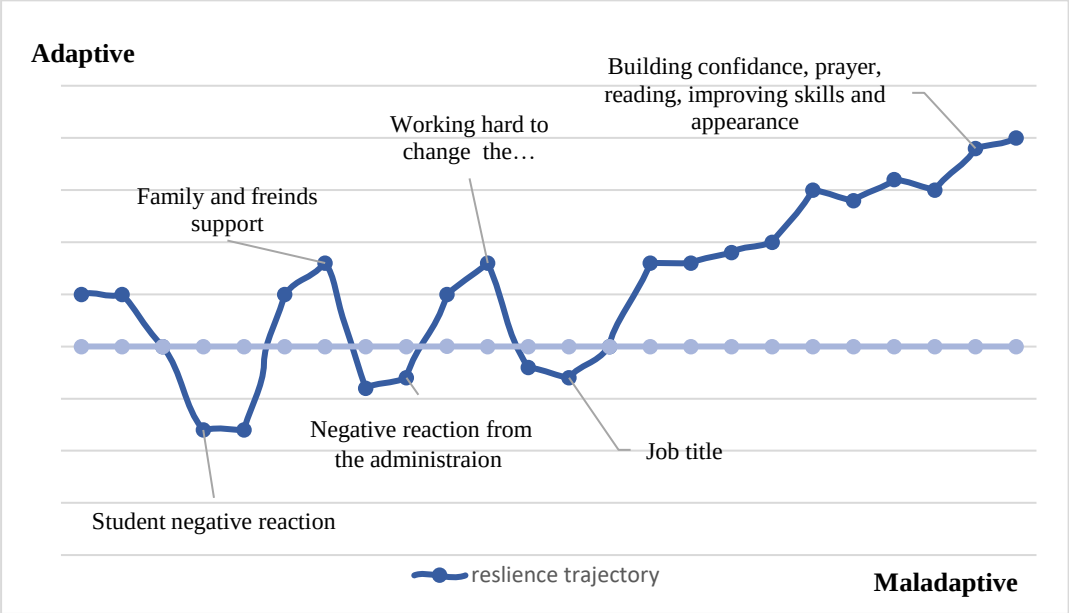


Figure 24: Shahad's drawing shows some of the factors the impacted her resilience and coping.

Sara's and Nawal's anxiety originated from the awareness of their low proficiency, lack of teaching skills and content knowledge. This feeling of inadequacy can be attributed to the insufficient teacher training, which has been described as theoretical with limited real-classroom experiences producing linguistically and professionally ill-equipped teachers (Al-Seghayer, 2014a; Hamad, 2021).

> ***Sara:*** *I mean, as a new teacher, I struggled with teaching. I did not have the skills and the language proficiency that I have now. It was difficult to stand in front of 60 students and feel unsure of myself. The self-doubt. I was always thinking am I pronouncing the words correctly because I had what we call a Saudi accent, [laughs] you know, we mixed up between p and b.* ***(Rollercoaster archetype)***
>
> ***Nawal:*** *I was new, and I was not prepared to teach the curriculum. We were never taught how teach grammar or listening. Suddenly I found myself responsible for teaching things I was not sure about! Some of the vocabularies were new to me. I had to learn them first. Moreover, I did not know how to plan my lessons, like lesson goals or what is appropriate to students' level. How? It was like learning the language again.* ***(Roller-coaster archetype)***

From the illustrated description, it seems that both the pre-service training and the English program had significant gap from classroom realities. English programs generally focus on teaching literature and translation (Alqahtani, 2019). Thus, providing pre-service teachers with limited authentic classroom experience and knowledge about teaching methodologies (Alqahtani, 2019). Nawal, provide another good example on the consequences of the inadequacy:

> ***Nawal:*** *To be honest, what shocked me the most was my inability to teach. I found out that learning English and teaching English are quite different. You can be good in English, but that does not mean you know how to teach it. [...]I had to learn how to teach. It was hard because I felt like I don't know anything and so, what was the point of my degree?* ***(Roller-coaster archetype)***

7.3.1.3. Teacher personality: strength and weaknesses

Personal traits are one of the factors that can either hinder or promote resilience. Amal and Abrar provided an example of how some personality strength and weakness can influence resilience. Amal explained that her ability to regulate her emotions and positive disposition helped in developing her resilience.

> ***Amal:*** *What I want to add is that it is not just about having support, but also about when you are talking with yourself. I mean, what is going on in your mind? Your personality and how you view the situations you go through with students or co-workers. Do you get very sensitive and take things personally, or are you able to see things differently? I mean, can you see the positive things, or are you just focusing on the negative? Because I think this is one of the things that helped this teacher and me specifically develop my resilience. I mean, being flexible, or maybe a better way to describe it would be being able to regulate your emotions in class.* ***(Smooth archetype)***

In contrast, Abrar revealed how her "*fragile"* personality made her struggle and unable to overcome difficulties.

> ***Abrar:*** *when I started teaching, I was soft. I was fragile, and the hard experiences broke me. However, alhamdulillah, they passed and gradually, my resilience started to develop.* ***(Smooth archetype).***

Abrar was referring to the excessive workload caused by teaching and studying at the same time. Particularly, teaching 90 repeating students who were described as difficult and "*unwilling to learn*".

> ***Abrar:*** *In the second semester, I was assigned to teach 90 students' repeaters, and it was a difficult experience. I remember that I was teaching and doing my master's at the same time. It was difficult, and honestly, I thought that I would never make it. Some days I felt like I'm going to break down. I was at my lowest.*

It came to the point that it was either quitting my graduate studies or my job. I could not deal with because it was difficult. ***(Smooth archetype)***

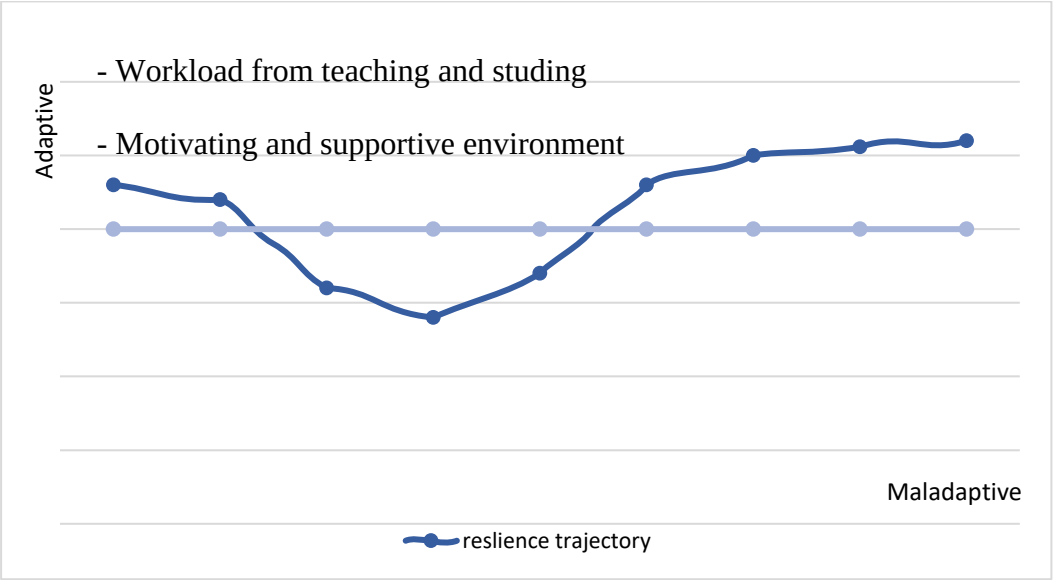


Figure 25: Abrar's drawing

7.3.2. Challenging environment

7.3.2.1. Role of administration

The teaching environment is one of the important factors that can either promote or hinder teachers' resilience (Gu & Day, 2013). Teachers require support and guidance from school/university leaders to help them deal with difficulties (Peters & Pearce, 2012). However, 10 teachers in the study reported their struggle with administration and experience of negative emotions, including, isolation, frustration, stress and feeling unappreciated. Starting to teach with limited experience was challenging for all teachers, and it was significantly stressful for Lana, because she felt "*controlled by stress*" whenever she had to deal with the administration. Lana described the administration as "*unfair*" and "*uncooperative*", which made her avoid communicating about her difficulties, unless she had to.

> ***Lana:*** *sometimes I had to deal with the administration and stress. I tried to avoid them because I did not want to be controlled by stress. Always thinking about how difficult it is going to be, and I did not want it to interfere with my job. With teaching. However, every now and then, I tried to communicate with the administration to raise an issue. Although there were unfair, I tried to make them aware of this unfair treatment.* ***(Rollercoaster archetype).***

Although Lana did not elaborate on the challenges she faced with the administration, it can be argued that it hindered the development of her resilience and shaped her attitude about communicating with administration and asking their support. This exemplified in Lana's drawing in which she differentiated by between her resilience trajectory working with supportive and unsupportive administration. Lana claimed that the dealing with administration was more difficult than dealing with teaching challenges in first years of teaching.

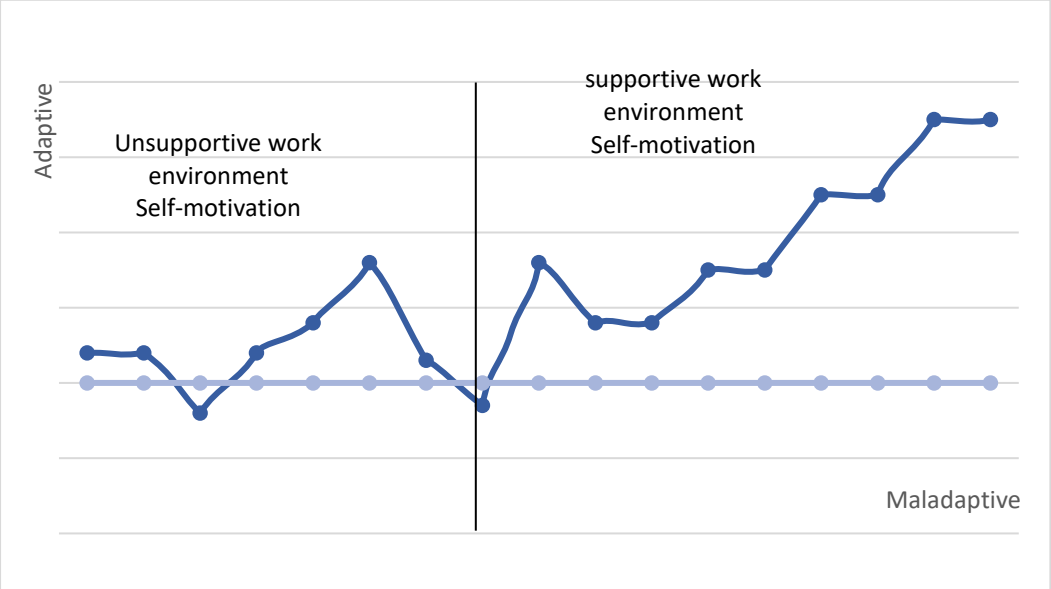


Figure 19 Lana's resilience trajectory.

As shown above, Shahad was hired as a supply teacher, which created many obstacles for her at the school and classroom levels. Shahad's narratives suggests that supply teachers were working in poor conditions, created by the administration. At the school level, Shahad reported that she did not receive help or support from the administration, which might be unsurprising

since she and other supply teachers were viewed as "*less*" by some of the university's administrators. As a result of these conditions, several supply teachers could not cope and quit teaching early on and some changed profession. Shahad was also struggling and was barely coping **(see 7.4.1),** but her love for the profession made her stay.

> ***Shahad:*** *I was not the only substitute teacher; there were many teachers with me, but some could not finish their contract; they barely made it in the first semester and after they gave up and left. They said we cannot continue. Some even left teaching and chose a job at a company. However, I did not. I was struggling. I was crying on the inside, but I did not show it because I wanted to be a teacher. I love teaching**. (Roller-coaster archetype).***

7.3.2.2. Managing students

As revealed in the literature, trusting and respectful relationship with students is fundamental for teachers commitment and affects their resilience capacity (Gu, 2018; Li et al., 2019). Shahad claimed, she and the other supply teachers were not viewed as real language teachers because students used to question their knowledge.

> **Shahad:** *You see, it was the students' attitude; they looked down on us. Not just our knowledge but also our language level, like pronunciation. It was like, why would the university hire you? A supply teacher to teach us English? There was this reputation that we had poor language skills. So, you cannot imagine what I have been through.* ***[..]****I read a lot about my field because students used to argue and ask many questions. Can you imagine? They were challenging me and testing me. This would last for 3-4 weeks. When they see that you have the knowledge and you can make it, they will stop this challenge.* ***(Roller-coaster archetype).***

Teaching middle school students was and is still to some extent a challenging experience for Rahaf, and Lama. As new teachers Rahaf and Lama did not have class management skills, which was one of the major factors that hindered their resilience. For instance, Rahaf described how students' disrespect and low proficiency shocked her and made her question her

commitment to the profession. Particularly, when her efforts to deal with disruptive students failed as will be further discussed.

> ***Rahaf:*** *The shocks and the disappointments continued. I found out that students' language was weak, and they were hard to control. They did not respect me at all, Mariam. I remember when I was a student, the minute the teacher opened the classroom door, we were all quiet and in our seats. It was a difficult time.* ***(Smooth archetype)***

Lama also, reported difficulty with students' disrespect and disengagement. However, students' disengagement had more effect on Lama's resilience because like Rahaf, she tried many things to resolve the problem but failed.

> ***Lama:*** *The problem I had that time, was that many students did not engage in class, some of them literally did not do their homework or study for the quiz. I mean, deliberately, I asked many times why? You know what their answer was? We forgot or we did not know that we had homework. This happened many times. Furthermore, students used to talk or draw during lessons. Sometimes, students would deliberately forget their books because they wanted to avoid participating in class activities. This was frustrating and exhausting. I did not know what to do with them. Nothing seemed to work [..] I tried many things to engage students, but they did not work. I think failing made me second-guess my abilities. I kept thinking why it is not working.* ***(Reluctant archetype)***

After years of teaching, Lama mentioned that she sometimes struggles with students' disengagement, and demotivation, especially after Covid-19. Lama and Hala mentioned that students are not engaging in the learning process, claiming that students learning outcomes have significantly dropped after Covid-19. The teachers seemed sceptical of students learning gains because they could not monitor students during classes or exams. Hala and Lama noticed that many students had low language level and difficulty understanding the new lessons.

Lama: *Things are different after Covid. Sometimes I feel like I'm back to square one with students. [..]After Covid, some students are not the same. Maybe the teachers can relate to this, I have several weak students who do not want to learn. They do not pay attention and do not want to participate. They just sit there. I think online teaching was not good for some students because they did not have someone to monitor their learning. So, they did not attend most classes. Only the exams and I have to be honest, I'm not even sure that they are the ones who answered the exam questions. Many students got high marks during covid exams and now I think many teachers are shocked and struggling with discrepancies in student's language levels.* ***(Reluctant archetype)***

Hala: *I agree with Lama. Teaching feels different after Covid. I do not know how to explain it, but I'm struggling with students. It is unreasonable that many students who passed the exams are now barely able to understand. I mean, where they even learning that time. I understand that it was a difficult time for many students. I know that some did not have access to internet or computers, but what about the rest? The problem I think that sometimes we could not tell if the student was actually attending classes because we can see that they are longed in, but are they learning?* ***(Maladaptive archetype)***

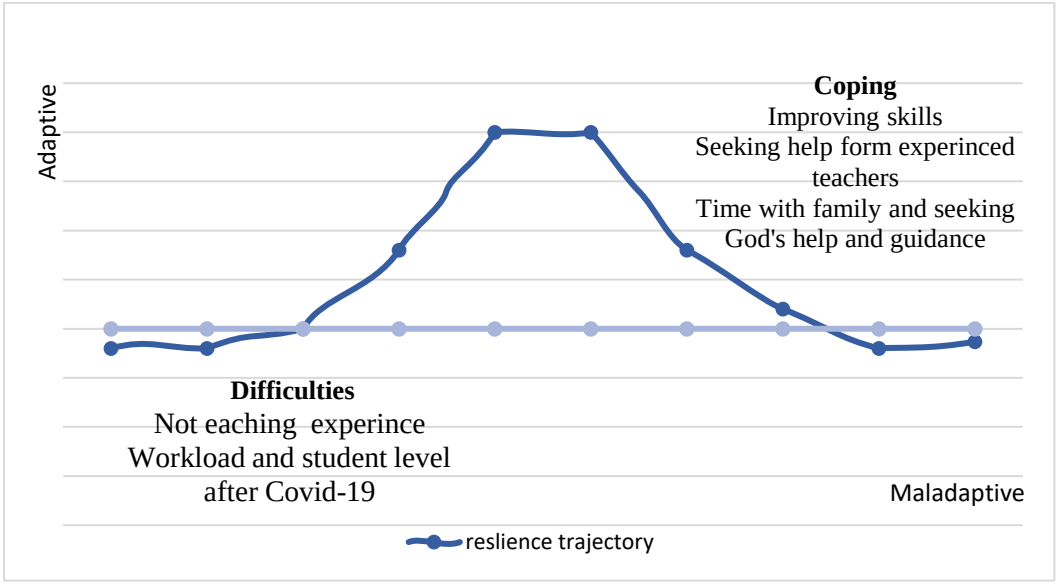


Figure 23: Hala's resilience trajectory

Before becoming a language lecturer, Basma started teaching at private high school. Basma described her shock by students' low proficiency and their complaints to the headmaster about her teaching. Specifically, using English the entire class. Based on Basma's narrative, it seemed that students were used to teachers using Arabic to explain lessons. This might be unsurprising given that several studies revealed that many teachers and students prefer using Arabic as the medium of instruction (Abdullah Al-Awaid, 2018; Alnofaie, 2010).

> ***Basma:*** *My first teaching job was at a private high school, and I remember that I was very excited. I thought that students' language would be good because they study at a private school. Unfortunately, their language was weak, which I did not expect, and I was shocked. I remember trying to explain everything in English just to make them familiar with the language. One day I was called to the headmaster's office, and she told me that students complained about my use of English and that I should try using Arabic instead. I refused and I told her that I believe I should continue with my teaching method because it would help students improve their language.* ***(Reluctant archetype)***

Fortunately, the headmaster decided to give Basma time to continue with her teaching method. Basma reported that she tried to simplify the language and use body language to help students. Although she was allowed to continue with her teaching method, Basma was still under pressure because of student's attitude and her limited experience.

> ***Basma:*** *I did not have enough experience. I did not have the confidence and the knowledge that I have today. I had anxiety before classes because students were used to teachers using Arabic in class, and my way of teaching was not working for the students.* ***(Reluctant archetype)***

Eventually, Basma started to notice some improvement in students' language. Basma did not continue working at the school, after a year she accepted a teaching position at a university. It is worth noting that during this time, Basma mentioned that she started to have difficulties in her personal life, which impact her resilience and ability to adjust to her new teaching context. Thus, as shown her drawing Basma was in maladaptive state.

> ***Basma:*** *After a while, I noticed that some students were learning and improving. I would not say that it was a drastic change, but it was something noticeable.* ***(Reluctant archetype)***

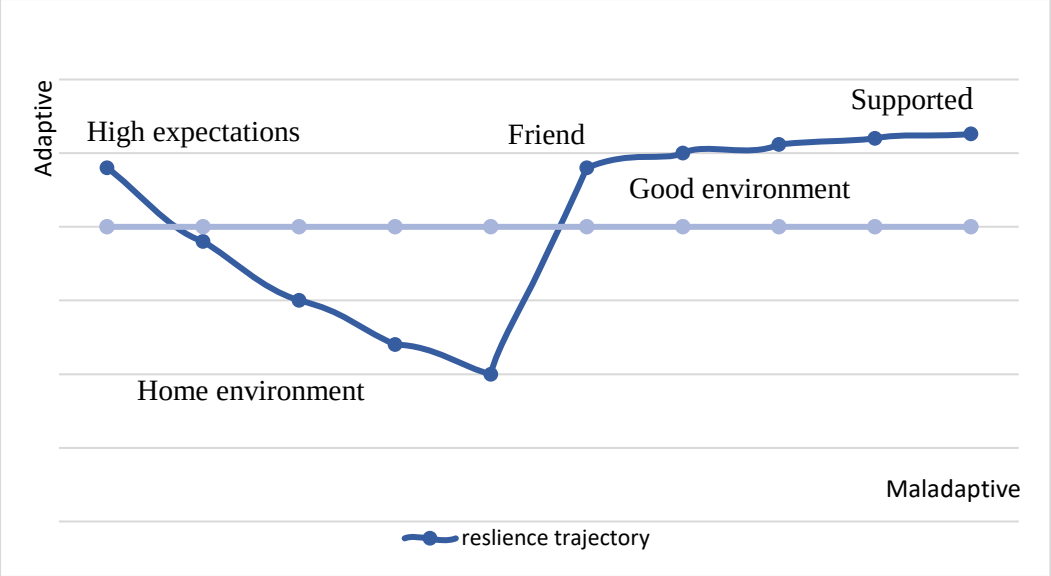


Figure 21: Basma's drawing shows the gradual development of her resilience.

7.3.2.3. Relationship with colleagues

Positive and supportive relationships with colleagues are necessary factors that promote teachers' resilience, self-efficacy and ability to cope with challenges (Gu, 2018). Such relationships are sometimes affected by administration poor management, which create unsafe environment for teachers in general and novice teachers in particular. Arwa describe the

administration as "*terrible*" and "*dismissive*" because they seemed to assign administrative duties to unfit professors, who created toxic environment.

> ***Arwa:*** *Sometimes, the administration authorises some professors, without keeping an eye on them. This creates a division and disagreement between faculty members. The whole environment becomes very toxic.* ***(Roller-coaster archetype)***

One of Arwa's colleague was assigned as the head of the exam committee and she was described as having "*a controlling personality, and she does not like anyone to contradict her".* Based on her narrative, Arwa seemed to have a strong personality, because she refused to have her work scrutinised by her colleague. Thus, Arwa engaged in several conflict with her colleague, which affected her emotionally.

> ***Arwa:*** *I fought back. I defended myself, but I have to admit that it affected me emotionally. Imagine having someone who is scrutinizing your every move and plotting behind your back. It is terrible. However, I did not back down. I never stopped defending myself and confronting her.* ***(Roller-coaster archetype)***

Standing up seemed to cause more problems for Arwa because her colleague interpreted her behaviour as undermining her authority. Several teachers were affected by the head of committee's treatment and decided to discuss their difficulty with the administration. However, the administration was dismissive and did not take any action to help the teachers. As a result, Arwa decided to quit her position in the exam committee.

> ***Arwa:*** *I think when I stood up to her, she took it personally. She thought I was trying to undermine her, while I was just doing my job. I did not have any intention to undermine her or be disrespectful at all.* ***(Roller-coaster archetype)***
>
> ***Arwa:*** *I and a group of teachers talked with the administration, but nothing changed. Everything stayed the same.* ***(Roller-coaster archetype)***

Another example on the negative effect of toxic environment on collegial relationships was provided by Basma. Basma revealed how her colleague's misleading information caused her to be questioned by the department head.

> ***Basma:*** *When I started teaching at the university, one of the faculty told me to work with her and gave me a teaching schedule saying this is yours, and you do not need to teach other levels. I was happy because the teaching schedule was great for me. However, later I found out that it was wrong. I was supposed to have certain hours that cover all the required levels.* ***(Reluctant archetype)***

Basma explained that she was unaware about the conflicts and division between faculty members, and she did not ask about her teaching responsibilities. This as reported was a shocking experience for Basma who still have not developed the ability to navigate the teaching environment or ability to overcome difficulties. In other words, she was still in relatively maladaptive state from her previous teaching experience (see,7.3.2.2) Significantly, after this incident with her colleague, Basma decided that it is "*better to stay away*" from her colleagues and join any group to avoid conflicts.

> ***Basma:*** *I admit that it was partly my fault because I did not question anything or try to understand my duties. I was new at that time. Back to your question, she was a teacher and held an administrative role, so she was responsible for arranging the teaching schedules. I think she wanted me to be in her team, that's why. There are teams. If you are in their team, they will help you get things done. Push papers for you and things like that. You get special treatment. However, if you are on the other team, then things will be difficult for you. Do you know what I mean?* ***(Reluctant archetype)***

7.3.3. The influence of personal life on teaching

All teachers acknowledged the influence of their personal life on teaching and resilience. However, they emphasised their efforts to put boundaries between their personal life and teaching. This seemed motivated by their commitment to provide students with their best and to fulfil their moral obligation to deity. This was exemplified in Hadeel's and Basma's reports who claimed that they were driven by their morals to fulfil their applications to both their deity and students.

> ***Basma:*** *I was trying, and I was really pushing myself to work hard. Despite what I was going through, I was trying because of fear of Allah, and I wanted to deserve every penny, and fulfil the requirements.* ***(Reluctant archetype)***
>
> ***Hadeel:*** *Even if I'm personally struggling, I try to do my best for my students. They deserve good teaching. It is their right and it is why I'm hired. Yes, my performance might be affected, but I try to teach them as best as can. I try to leave everything personal outside of my classroom.* ***(Roller-coaster archetype)***

Arwa and Basma briefly described the effect of their personal life on their resilience. For instance, Arwa mentioned the negative impact of her personal life on her resilience and ability to cope in her first year of teaching. Arwa's first teaching position was at different city, forcing her to live away from her family. Thus, affecting her emotions and ability to cope**.**

> ***Arwa:*** *I started working in a different city. It was away from my family and going back and forth to work had an emotional impact.* ***(Roller-coaster archetype)***

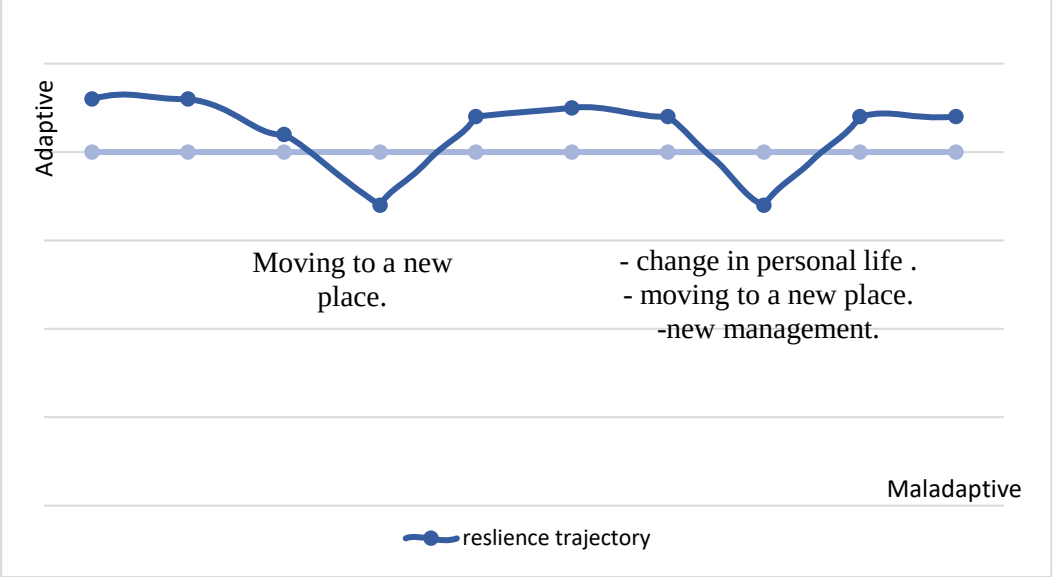


Figure 26: Arwa's drawing

Similarly, Basma described how difficulties in her personal life affected her teaching and attendance. Basma did not justify her absence to the administration or asked for leave of absence to deal with problems in her personal life. Perhaps if she asked for personal time, she could have alleviated some of the pressure. Instead, she seemed to amplify her struggles because of her moral obligations as shown above.

> ***Basma:*** *I had some problems in my personal life. Private things and I was absent from work for days. They did not know the real reasons for my absences. [..] At that time I could not deal with anything at work, students, or colleagues. I could not even focus on teaching. I did not have the strength to deal with anything or do my job. It was too much for me at that time, but alhamdulillah, things got better.* ***(Reluctant archetype)***

7.3.4. Supportive environment

The data from the focused interviews revealed several factors in the teaching environment that supported teachers, helped them overcome the difficulties and developed their resilience. Amal and Abrar work at the same university for some time and they described a supportive, and empowering environment that developed their resilience. For instance, when she started teaching, Amal claimed that she relatively struggled with her teaching and language skills, but fortunately the university had implemented a mentorship scheme to help teachers improve.

> ***Amal:*** *I just remembered the CPD programme I had when I started teaching. It was a mentorship program. I was assigned to an experienced teacher. We observed each other's classes. She had a great impact on my teaching, especially her feedback. I mean, you know how the observation feedback can be. It was not just focused on the negative points, but included positive things, which was motivating. It motivated me to work hard and improve****. (Smooth archetype).***

Furthermore, Amal explained how department head kindness and empowerment motivated her to improve. This can be exemplified in her reports and drawing which clearly state the positive factors in teaching environment.

> ***Amal:*** *The head of the department was an Egyptian, and she always called me dear Amal. Her kind words and the way she treated me were great. I'm telling you this supportive environment and the kind words motivated me to work hard. Also, giving me responsibilities, like being a member of the exam committee or a manager of the department events. When they supported me and gave me responsibilities, I found out that I'm capable and I can accomplish many things.* ***(Smooth archetype).***

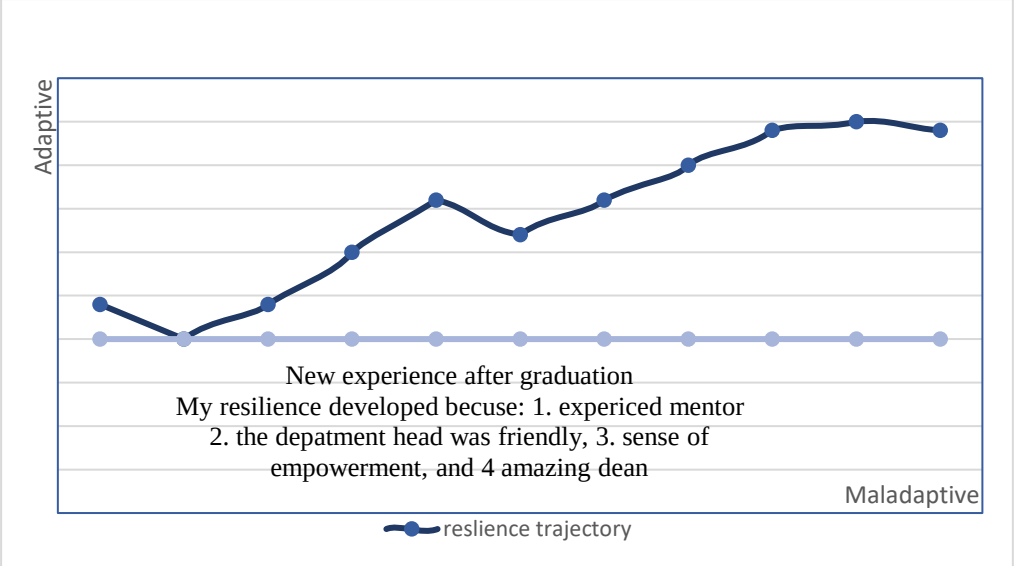


Figure 27: Amal's drawing highlights the role of the context in promoting resilience.

Abrar supported Amal's report and remarked how the overall environment was dedicated to improving and supporting teachers by providing a variety of CPD programs**.**

> ***Abrar:*** *I used to work with Amal at the same university, and I 100% agree with what she said. The CPD workshops were great.* ***(Smooth archetype).***

It is worth mentioning that some teachers in this study changed schools and others did not. However, all of them at some point, experienced support from the administration. Although some teachers did not elaborate on the administration support, their drawings and comments during group discussions revealed the administration role in the development of their resilience. This can be exemplified in Lana's drawing and reports:

> ***Lana:*** *After, when the administration changed, alhamdulillah, I noticed the difference. Although they have high expectations and we have a lot of responsibilities, I feel better than before. I can survive and deal with difficulties.* ***(Roller coaster archetype)***

7.3.4.1. Relation support

Although teachers did not elaborate on the positive factors in their environment, their reports suggested that they were surrounded by experienced and supportive colleagues and headmasters at different stages in their career. Nawal narrative shows that support she received at different phases in her teaching. For example, as a novice teacher, Nawal mentioned that her colleagues were willing to provide her with emotional support and help, which would gradually help her overcome difficulty.

> ***Nawal:*** *There were several teachers who were really helpful. I think, it was obvious to the them that I was struggling, and they did not hesitate to help me and make me feel better****. (Roller-coaster archetype)***

Hadeel provided limited information about her colleagues, mainly referencing her first years of teaching. Hadeel described her colleagues as "*experienced and nice*" and she especially focused on the other English novice teacher. Unlike her, the other English teacher was "*better"* and "*good*" because Hadeel was asked to observe her class by the headmaster. This happened after students' complaint about Hadeel's performance. At first Hadeel, "*felt like a failure*" and her confidence was affected, but after observing and receiving help from her colleague, Hadeel gradually improved.

> ***Hadeel:*** *When the headmaster asked me to observe the other English teacher, I felt like a failure, but I have to admit the teacher was good, and I learned a lot from her. I think, in a way, the headmaster helped me ask for help and improve. The teacher also, helped me a lot. She helped me with lesson plans and activities. I owe her. In the two years that spent at the school we worked together and that helped when I started working at X university.* ***(Roller-coaster archetype)***

Basma reports also exemplify the effect of colleagues on teacher resilience and motivation. Working with her friend for a while promoted Basma's resilience and motivation. This seemed to be a significant period for Basma who learned from a previous incident with her colleague to "*stay neutral*" (see 7.3.2.3). That is, Basma did not build a collaborative and supportive relationship with her colleagues to avoid conflicts. Hence, the gradual development of her resilience and boost of its trajectory while working with her friend.

> ***Basma:*** *I feel like some people in the work environment help in developing teacher resilience. For example, in one of the semesters, I remember one of my friends worked as a substitute at my university. I remember that it was the best semester for me. I was so happy that we worked together. Nothing changed in terms of the work but having her there with me was motivating. I have known her since college, so everything was better with her.* ***(Reluctant archetype).***

7.4. Coping with difficulties

The above highlighted some of the common contextual and personal factors that influenced teachers, either positively or negatively. Similarly, teacher's ability to cope is influenced by their subjective judgment of the challenges, personal resources and context circumstances (Hong et al., 2018). Given the range of difficulties and negative emotions (e.g., stress, and lack of confidence) that teachers experienced, they were asked about the strategies they used. The data revealed that participants used a variety of coping strategies, some increased their level of stress and emotional struggle, predicting their maladaptive resilience. While other strategies helped alleviate their stress contributing to their growth and resilience (MacIntyre et al., 2020).

7.4.1. Ineffective coping

7.4.1.1. Avoidance, isolation, denial, and self-distraction

The data revealed that teachers used similar strategies throughout their career span, these are avoidance, denial, self-distraction, venting, self-isolation, self-criticism and focusing on the negatives. Avoidance, self-isolation, and self-distraction were used on many occasions to deal with stress caused by the administration or colleagues. For example, Lana claimed that she avoided dealing with administration as much as possible because she did not want to be "*controlled by stress*". Furthermore, she tried to distract herself by focusing on teaching. Although focusing on teaching and students had some comforting effect on Lana, it did not help develop her resilience or alleviate the stress.

> ***Lana**: I focused on teaching to distract myself from everything, the administration, and the work environment. [...]* ***I** felt comfortable, and I felt more like myself with them. I mean, there was something comforting which made me forget about the terrible administration for a while*. ***(Roller-coaster archetype)***

Furthermore, Lana revealed that denial is usually her first response to stressful events and teaching challenges. Lana remarked that sometimes she is unaware of her denial, indicating that it has become part of her coping repertoire throughout the years.

> ***Lana:** The most negative coping is denial. So much denial [laughs]. It is my go-to strategy. Sometimes I'm unaware that I'm in denial.* ***(Roller-coaster archetype)***

Similarly, Hala used a range of ineffective strategies, including self-isolation, venting and avoidance to deal with her emotional struggle. Hala's self-isolation resulted from her misconception that she was not part of the group, even though she described her colleague as "*nice*". This prevented her from asking help and receiving help or advice from her colleagues. Thus, effecting her ability to develop resilience in the first years of teaching. Furthermore, Hala

revealed that she used venting to alleviate her frustration, but it seemed that it did not help resolve her emotional struggled or stop her from thinking about quitting.

> ***Hala:*** *I did not feel like I'm part of the group yet. I felt like I do not belong to the community they have built. Do you what I mean? [yes]. They have known each other for years and I was new. So, I stayed away. Even during break, I stayed at my desk traying to catch up on the missed lessons.* ***(Maladaptive archetype)***

> ***Hala:*** *Venting. Venting to both my mother and husband. […] Well, my husband was supportive of whatever I wanted. He told me do whatever makes you feel happy. My mother told me to be patient, and everything would be better with Allah's permission.*

Although at some point in her career span Hala developed resilient qualities, she is currently in maladaptive state and using avoidance as coping mechanism. Her reports and drawings show her disengagement and apathy (see Figure 23). In other words, burnout**.**

> ***Hala:*** *Honestly, I'm exhausted. I'm tired of the new policies. I still do not understand some of the new regulations. I'm tired of the new students who do not want to make an effort to learn. Everything changed and I just want this year to end.* ***(Maladaptive archetype)***

Hadeel's narrative reveals her denial and avoidance to seek help from her colleagues Initially, Hadeel tried to overcome her inexperience by remembering her leaning experience and visiting teaching website. However, her attempts were unsuccessful because she did not reflect on her performance, despite students' reaction. Hadeel explained that her focus on learning how to teach hindered her ability to reflect on performance.

> ***Hadeel:*** *I used different websites, and I tried to remember what my teachers did to make us pay attention in class. My class was, I think, boring for students. I could see it on their faces. They did not understand a word of what I was saying. I remember that it was difficult for me to explain the present perfect grammar. I thought that I had started to improve, but in fact I was not.*

> ***Hadeel:*** *Yes, I learned a few things, but it was not suitable for student's level. I was so focused on learning how to teach and applying what I learned to the class without thinking if it was good or not.* ***(Roller-coaster archetype)***

Although she had nice and experienced colleagues, Hadeel's embarrassment and false assumption prevented her from seeking help and support.

> ***Hadeel:*** *I was embarrassed to ask for help from teachers at the school or tell the headmaster that I was struggling. I know it was silly of me not to ask for help. I really don't know why I was embarrassed. Maybe because I did not want them to think less of me, the teachers were good and experienced. I did not want them to think that a graduate with honours did not know how to teach.* ***(Roller-coaster archetype)***

Notably, several teachers shared similar attitudes about seeking help either from colleagues or administration. Teachers avoided seeking help because they did not feel part of the group (e.g., Hala), assumed that it was solely a teacher's responsibility to overcome difficulties, (e.g., Nawal, Lama, and Sara) or avoiding conflicts (Lana, Basma, Arwa)

> ***Lama:*** *I do not know if the teachers in this group would agree with me or not. I noticed that there is a general consensus that if it is your responsibility, then you need to figure it out on your own. Maybe this is just in my school, but this is my experience.* ***(Reluctant archetype)***

It is unclear how this culture and belief among teachers developed, especially when they started teaching. This could be explained through administration practises and education culture. The literature emphasised headmasters role in cultivating supportive and cooperative school culture, that can be created by actively building relationship with teachers (Fullan, 2003; Gu, 2018). Teachers reports highlighted the impact of school culture on their adjustments and willingness to have relationship with administration or colleagues. The following is an example on the importance of building a cooperative and supportive culture.

> ***Lama:*** *I did not because I was new, and I did not have any relationship with the headmaster. I mean, we did not interact that much, so I did not know how to approach her with anything. Our interactions were limited to greetings and a few meetings. As for your question, if asked my colleagues. I did, but it took me a while.* ***(Reluctant archetype)***

For some teachers, like Hadeel and Sara their fear of showing vulnerability prevented them from seeking help. This might be the traced back to the foundation of Saudi education, which as shown in **Chapter 2** was influenced by Arabic traditions. That is, perceiving teachers as all knowing. This is exemplified in following:

> ***Sara:*** *I didn't have any teaching skills and as I said I did not ask for help from my colleagues because I thought that I should know how to teach. I was embarrassed to ask.*
>
> ***Sara:*** *I think teachers do not want to be embarrassed in front of their students. I always had this impression that teachers know everything, which is wrong, and many students feel this way. This might be hard for some teachers to admit that there are some things that they do not know about. Honestly, I was like this. I thought that as a teacher, I should know everything and be correct all the time in class. It is very stressful and not to mention an ignorant thing.* ***(Roller-coaster archetype).***

Sometimes it is the school culture that reinforce this stereotype. Shahad experience as supply teacher can be used as an example (see 7.3.2.2,). Supply teachers were not viewed as real teachers who assumingly all knowing, which is why students were challenging and testing Shahad's knowledge. As a novice teacher Shahad was focused on proving her language and knowledge competency to both students and administration. This as shown, increased her stress. However, Shahad reports revealed the change in her attitude and acceptance of vulnerability.

7.4.1.2. Self-criticism and focusing on the negative

Engaging in criticism was common among five teachers. Some teachers like, Sara repeatedly engages in self-criticism.

> ***Sara:*** *I blamed myself when students did not understand or engage in class. I was always thinking why I did not know this information. Or why I don't have enough skills. I also, remember criticising myself when I had trouble pronouncing some words, especially when I'm nervous. I still do. I mean criticise myself.* ***(Roller- coaster archetype)***

As for Hala, she explained how engaging in self-criticism influenced her ability to acknowledge her improvement and make further progress for a while. Namely, in the first years of teaching.

> ***Hala****: I was negative and very critical. I mean, I focused on my shortcomings and for a while it made me forget that I was improving, and I was making progress with students. It was frustrating. If you are moving 5 steps ahead, your negative thought makes you go two steps back, or stop progressing. Do you know what I mean?* ***(Maladaptive archetype)***

Nawal's narrative provide an example of the excessive self-criticism, which can be argued was the result of her inaction to seek help from their colleagues. As shown above, (See7.3.4.1). Nawal had experienced colleagues who seemed willing to help. However, Nawal did not seek help at first, because she assumed that it is the teacher's responsibility to deal with difficulty alone.

> ***Nawal:*** *I used to criticise everything, my performance, my voice, my planning and even my penmanship. I used to panic if something did not go as I planned or expected. I know that it might sound crazy, but this who I was when I started. This because I was not sure about anything. There was no map about the dos and don'ts. I did not know.* ***(Roller coaster archetype)***

Furthermore, Nawal revealed that her criticism was also directed at her current school. After her positive experience at her previous school, Nawal could not adjust to her new school because she compared between the two schools. The previous school was viewed at temporary until the approval of her transfer, and thus Nawal mentioned that she was expecting to love the school.

> ***Nawal:*** *I was not counting on loving the school and building great friendships. It did not cross my mind, so it was difficult for me to leave a place where I thrived. I learned a lot and I improved tremendously at this school. I never had a school like it. I stayed for 3 years, and they were amazing.*

Nawal criticised several things in her current school, such as students, management, and colleagues. Nawal admits that she was unfair in her comparison because they were "*normal*", and the other school had some challenges. This hindered her ability to adjust to school and affected her resilience level as shown her drawing.

> ***Nawal:*** *It was a hard adjustment because I was comparing everything with that school, and I did not fully accept the new school for a while. Which is the one I'm at, but eventually I did. I was able to adjust. […] I compared the headmasters management style, the student's level and even my colleagues. I tried to find faults in everything [laughs]. I was unfair because it normal to have weak students and it is normal for headmasters to have different management style.* ***(Roller-coaster archetype).***

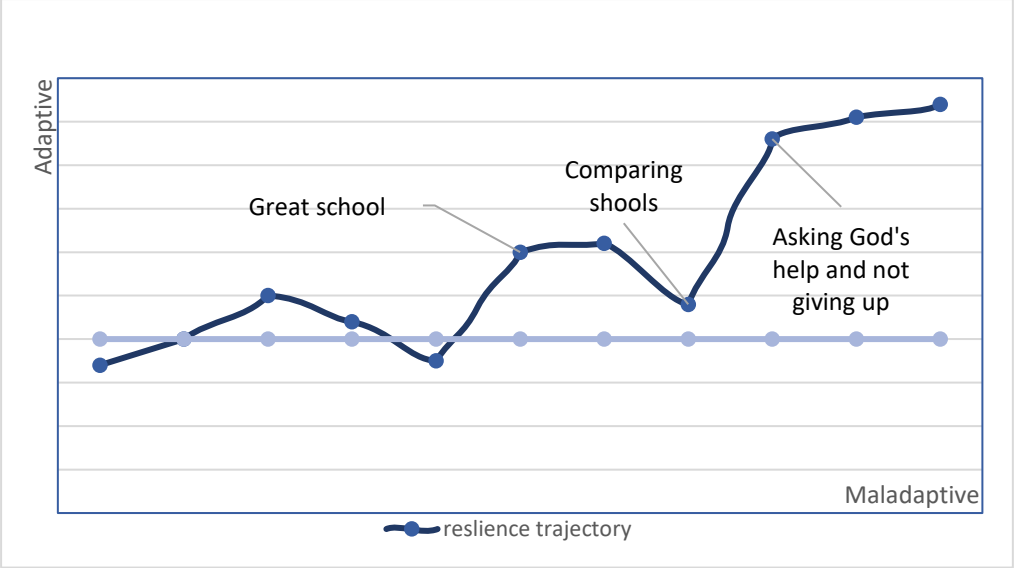


Figure 28: Nawal's drawing

7.4.2. Strategies that alleviate stress.

During interviews, teachers mentioned several effective coping strategies that helped alleviate stress and contributed to their resilience. These include, improving skills, seeking help and emotional support, acceptance, and faith.

7.4.2.1. Seeking help

Generally, all teachers sought help from colleagues and experienced teachers in online communities. As shown above, some teachers were struggling, but did not seek help because of their misconceptions (see7.4.1.1). However, they were encouraged by their environment to seek help and support. For instance, Hadeel mentioned how the headmaster's request to observe her colleague's teaching change her attitude about seeking help *"I think, in a way, the headmaster helped me ask for help and improve."*. Although Sara claimed that she did not seek help in her first year of teaching, her narrative shows contradiction. Sara asked one colleague to share her teaching materials and resources, but they seemed ineffective. Sara explained that although she asked for teaching resources, she did not seek guidance on using them. This as

explained in section (see 7.4.1.1) was because of Sara's embarrassment and misconception about seeking help.

> ***Sara:*** *Yes, but I did not ask for advice or learn from her experience. I did not ask her how she used the materials. I think if I did, it would have helped a lot. I would have saved time, and energy. My way of learning and improving was a mess. Sometimes you need someone with experience to guide through the process. It is like working smarter not harder. Do you know what I mean?* ***(Roller-coaster archetype).***

All teachers in this study are part of online communities for language teachers and many sought helps from teachers on the group. The teachers did not mention how or when they joined online communities, except for Rahaf who joined because of her aunt who is a member in one group.

> ***Lama:*** *I'm a member in a group for language teachers in my region. We help each other with resources, and many things. There is always someone to help you and guide you.* ***(Reluctant archetype).***
>
> ***Hala:*** *I'm too part of a group called creative English teachers. It is nationwide and there are many amazing teachers. In fact, it was one of the teachers who helped me, and my students enter Jeddah's school contest. We worked together and students enjoyed it a lot. Yes, we did not win, but it was the best time for me and my students.* ***(Maladaptive archetype).***

As illustrated the group had a positive effect on Hala, it contributed to boosting and maintaining her resilience. When she entered the contest with her students, Hala seemed to high level of motivation, self-efficacy, and resilience. This was accomplished through actively improving her language and teaching skills (see 7.4.2.2). Significantly, several teachers seemed to prefer seeking help from teachers' online communities. This might be connected to the teaching environment. Rahaf experience with seeking help from the headmaster affected her negatively and made decide to avoid seeking help from headmasters. One of the major difficulties that

Rahaf faced in her first years of teaching was student's disrespect. Rahaf sought help from the headmaster twice. The first time, the headmaster did not provide a practical solution to manage students. Instead, she advised Rahaf to be patient and justified students' disruptive behaviour. Significantly, the headmaster told Rahaf it was her responsibility to control students. Rahaf continued to struggle with students and again sought help from the headmaster.

> ***Rahaf:*** *Mariam, it is good and important to have the administration's support and help. I'm not against that at all. However, sometimes, they make things worse for you as a teacher. I went to her twice complaining about students' misbehaviour. The first time she told me that was okay, it was only because I was a new teacher that students acted this way, and I needed to be patient with them. That it was my responsibility to control them. Okay, I agree that students are my responsibility, but she did not give any tips to help me deal with students. Be patient is not helpful in this situation.* ***(Smooth archetype)***

The second time the headmaster intervened, but it seemed to have a limited affect. This because teachers at the school were struggling with students' behaviour. Which might explain why Rahaf did not seek help from them. The teacher's way of dealing with students was to remove them from class, which was not viewed as an effective solution.

> **Rahaf:** *The second time, one of the students was really disrespectful to me in front of the whole class, and I must admit that I was about to cry. I cried when I went home. So, I went to the headmaster again asking for help, and she told me to send the student to her office, and she would talk to her. Okay, that was good for a while, but I was not going to send every student to her office. To be honest, after that incident, I did not bother going to her, but I was known among the teachers and the vice principal for having control issues.*
>
> *What made it worse was how she, in front of the whole school, addressed my problem. Can you imagine? In the morning assembly, she stood with the microphone in her hand and said teacher Rahaf came to my office many times complaining about you. She told me that she could not control you and that you*

had affected her emotionally. At that moment, I wished that ground would swallow me up. No one would do what she did. The funny thing is that I was not the only teacher that had issues with the students, many did, but they did not go to her. You know Mariam, the headmaster, could have come to my class and talked with students instead of humiliating me in front of the school. Unfortunately, she did not. To be fair, I do not think that she meant to humiliate me or anything. I think it was a bad judgment. [..] I think she used me as an example to make a point, and I think because I was the only teacher that complained to her. However, Alhamdulillah, that was in the past, and I learned my lesson.

Rahaf's experience is another example might explain teacher's avoidance to seek help when they are struggling. From her experience, Rahaf learned to "*not share everything with the administration"*. She like several teachers learned to be careful with the administration and even colleagues. They built their own web of support, which includes teachers, friends, and family members. In other words, when is it work related, they seek help and support from colleagues and online communities. As explained in following:

Hadeel: *I mean if I'm feeling depressed and it is affecting my work. I cannot talk about it with my colleagues. At work, you have to keep appearances, especially if you are a professor. You have to always keep this mask of professionalism. Like nothing can affect you. You have to keep your emotions in check in class and outside. As Lana said, the news would spread if I talked or showed anything in class or outside. However, that does not mean that I don't ask for help from my colleagues. No. I do, but it is always work-related, like help with class schedules or resources. My relationship with my colleagues is strictly professional.* ***(Roller-coaster archetype)***

Luckly for Rahaf, her aunt is a language teacher supported her and helped her overcome difficulties.

Rahaf: *I had help from my aunt, who is also a language teacher. She is teaching at a different school. She teaches high school students. Alhamdulillah, I have her. She helped me a lot, Mariam. you cannot believe how much she helped me. After Allah's help, she was the reason I was able to overcome the difficulties.*

Rahaf: *She helped me improve my language, and teaching skills. I remember calling her whenever I was struggling with a lesson, and she would help me understand it and write a lesson plan. She made me join the teachers group. I'm a member like Hala. You know even during family gatherings, sometimes we spend the night just talking about my progress and how I was doing. We support and motivate each other.*

7.4.2.2. Improving skills

All the teachers actively engaged in several activities to improve their knowledge, language, and teaching skills. They were intrinsically and externally motivated to improve their skills. As shown above, (see 7.3.1.1) Hala started teaching with no teaching skills and limited language skills. Hala's reports show her commitment to overcome her challenges. She explained that joined a language institute to improve her language skills, which progressed to improving her teachings skills by observing her teacher's performance and asking help with difficult lessons. After noticing Hala's improvement, the headmaster encouraged her to continue and helped her attend few CPD programs.

Hala: *I enrolled in a language institute for a month because I wanted to improve my language. I wasn't happy with my performance. I believed and I still believe that student deserve a good education. So, I started to observe the teacher during classes, how she explained different lessons and her use of speaking activities. Sometimes I would take my English book and ask her how to explain certain grammar rules. Like how to simplify it for students' level and things like that.*

Hala: *The headmaster noticed our improvement. I mean, me and my students. In fact, she told me if I need time off to attend workshops, she will make it*

happen. She did it twice. She helped me change my teaching schedule and give me three days off. ***(Maladaptive archetype).***

Other teachers, including Hadeel, Nawal, and Lama, reported visiting different websites and reading about their filed to improve their skills. For instance, Hadeel reported how she tries to read and visits different websites to stay updated with new teaching methodologies and research.

Hadeel: *last semester, I was teaching listening and speaking to new English students, and it was the first time for me to teach it. So, I watched YouTube videos and read several blogs and articles.* ***(Roller-coaster archetype)***

Nawal: *I always try to find new ideas to engage students. I try to look for videos or workshops about different topics, like using games, or performing diagnostic exam to learn about students' levels. For example, I learned about the word of the day from a YouTube video. It is a great way to engage students and help them learn.* ***(Roller-coaster archetype).***

Lama: *I try to attend online workshops and the group is great with advertising different workshops. I also, use YouTube for new ideas to explain lessons.* ***(Reluctant archetype)***

Besides reading and visiting websites, Lana, and Sara use students' feedback to adjust and improve their performance. The two teachers used a slightly different way for student's feedback. For instance, Lana used anonymous surveys at three different point in the semester. The first survey is used to learn about students' level and learning style, the second survey aim to get students feedback on their progress and the teaching approach. The final survey is feedback on the module and suggestions.

Lana: *Now, I do this three times during the semester. At the beginning of the semester, I ask students to anonymously complete the survey to know about their preferred learning style and get a sense on their language level. The second survey is usually just after midterms, and it is for learning what students think*

about their progress and if there is anything I can do to help them. If I need to change my teaching to help them. The last, I think is more general feedback on the module and their suggestions. I would say that is more emotional [laugh] I get a lot of positive comments. ***(Roller-coaster archetype).***

Sara provided limited description, but her method of receiving feedback seemed to work for her. She explained that ask students for their feedback in any form they like, either in person during office hours or through the class leader.

Sara: *it is one of the things that I encourage my students to do. I always tell my students to come to my office and talk to me about the class. I mean if they do not understand anything or want me to adjust my performance. Like what can I do to help. If they feel uncomfortable, I tell them send you notes to the class leader, and she then can send them to me anonymously and we can discuss them class.* ***(Roller-coaster archetype)***

7.4.2.3. Acceptance and focusing on the positive

This type of coping was reported by several teachers who seemed to develop this type of coping throughout the years. This because teachers reported it in connection of gaining experience throughout the years. This is exemplified Lana's report.

Lana: *Now, I feel that I'm more motivated when I think about the positive aspects. What I want to achieve, and I forget the fear or the things that make me afraid. Sometimes, it is something internal that usually, I'm not aware of. The other thing that I don't know if is right, but I think you can help me remember if it is a hadith or a proverb. It is a person has times when he or she determination to move forward and other times they turn way from the path ahead. This is for obedience and worship, but for me, it is a lifestyle. Sometimes you find yourself very excited, just do your best. The maximum. When you are depressed or down, do the minimum. This helped me a lot. When I feel depressed or feel like I don't have enough energy. I tell myself that it is okay, just do what*

you have to. Like I'm calming myself. This time will pass, and I things will get better. ***(Roller-coaster archetype).***

However, Mai seemed to an exception because of her passion for teaching and faith, which seemed to influence her actions and coping with difficulties as exemplified in her report and drawing. In other words, it seemed that she used this type of coping mechanism from the beginning.

Mai: *I mean, as Muslims, we are not supposed to exaggerate anything. It is about finding balance in everything, and this is the goal. As for my experience with positive coping, the most thing that helped every time is that I see teaching through a positive lens. To me, teaching is one of the greatest professions. I believe that a teacher can turn anything into a positive thing, like their subjects. I mean, turn how it is perceived into a positive view, especially for us language teachers. Students can improve their language if we guide them and put them on the right path. We help them. I see myself as helping students accomplish the lesson's goals and even their dreams. I help them. When I see their accomplishments and how they improved, it makes me feel happy, and I want to do more and keep going.* ***(Smooth archetype)***

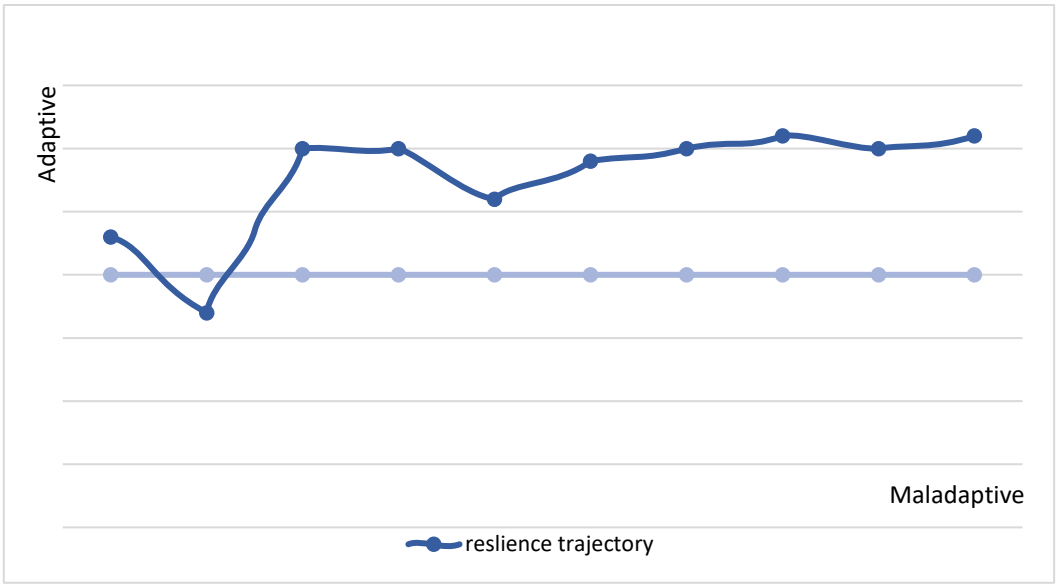


Figure 29: Mai's drawing

7.4.2.4. Religious coping

Eight teachers explicitly stated using prayers and reciting verses from the holy Quran, which as reported made them feel clam and gave them courage to face difficulties.

> ***Amal:*** *I mean, reciting Allah's name makes your heat at peace. Also, reading Quran and praying. Subhan Allah, you feel calm and at peace and feel this sense that you can face anything. No matter what.* ***(Smooth archetype)***
>
> ***Shahad:*** *My mother told me, with all the hardworking you are doing, do not ever forget the morning payers because it will bless your day. Everything will go smoothly. My mother said that Allah would help me with students and the administration because I'm under Allah's mercy and protection. Truly, I remember not only reciting the short morning and evening prayers. Not just surah Al falaq and the short version of prayers. No. The longer ones. All the prayers. It was one of the factors that made me feel calm and balanced through the difficult days. The long hour.* ***(Roller-coaster archetype)***

The use of faith as a coping can be interpreted from two different angles. The first is as established in **Chapter 2**, religion in Saudi Arabia is embedded in every life aspect and it cannot be separated from major things like education (Almayez, 2022). Thus, it seemed part of teacher identity and manifest in their coping and view of teaching. The second, is connected to environment. That is, the influence of friends and family members, which promoted using religion to cope with difficulty as illustrated in Shahad's report.

7.5. Different experience with CPD

This section addresses the final objective of the study, which is focused on CPD programs that help promote resilience. The first part of this section report teachers' experience with formal CPD programs, followed by the CPD program that teachers engaged with to improve. The final part present teachers needs and suggestions for effective CPD.

7.5.1. Formal CPD: limitations and opportunities

Unfortunately, the teachers described limited formal CPD opportunities, with exception of Amal, Abrar and Shahad. Amal reported several of CPD opportunities that was offered by the department at some point. Amal and Abrar shared the same context, and they reported similar experiences. Significantly, Amal mentioned that the administration included them the selection of CPD. That is, the CPD program was design and implemented to suit teacher's needs.

> ***Amal**: we had an amazing dean who worked very hard, and his words were motivating to all of us. All the faculty. You cannot imagine the incredible transformation he has done. Why? Because he made us feel included. Everyone felt this way. He worked very hard and told us that I could not do everything without your help. Can you imagine that in just three years, the university's reputation changed for the better? He listened to our suggestions for CPD. **(Smooth archetype)***

However, Amal and Abrar had an issue with quantity of the CPD activities and the mandatory policy. As reported, they were bombarded by the number of the CPD courses, which often took place after classes, making it an exhausting experience.

> ***Abrar:** I 100% agree with what she said. The CPD workshops were great, but sometimes they were exhausting or overwhelming. Exhausting for the trainer because she, had to prepare several materials, and give the workshop. It was*

*also, exhausting for the teachers too because we had to attend the workshop after our classes. It was exhausting and I did not like that it was mandatory to attend. (**Smooth archetype).***

Abrar and Amal did not elaborate on the content of the CPD courses, expect what Amal mentioned about the observation scheme, which helped her survive and thrive in the first year (see7.3.4) and the collaboration with Cambridge University press. As exemplified in the following extract.

Amal:** in the second semester 2017, the cooperation with Cambridge university press started. So, we had a new coursebook to teach, and thus we had to finish online training courses which took a long time. (**Smooth archetype).

It important to note that the quality and density of CPD programs fluctuated depending on the administration. This has been implied in all teacher's narrative and explicitly stated in some instances as illustrated in Amal's reports and as will be evident in Shahad's following experience with CPD. Shahad, reported a variety of CPD activities, which she experienced at different universities. To clarify, Shahad worked as a part-time supply teacher for 4 years at different universities. The first university she worked at, was the focus of her narrative in many ways, such as facing difficulties, adjustment and effective CPD programs**.** After her first year, she simultaneously worked as supply teacher at other universities. Thus, she was exposed to different CPD polices, and stated that "*CPD is different in every university*.". The following extract described her experience with pervious universities and her current university.

Shahad:** I worked as a substitute teacher at other universities and there was nothing. Zero. Nothing. Also, there are some universities that are average, like the one I'm currently working at. They provide a limited CPD programs, and they need to develop. It is more like paperwork. Just a routine. **(Roller-coaster archetype)

Shahad reported several CPD activities that helped improve her teaching skills, such as continuous observation scheme, which seemed to last for 4 years, research methods courses and self-improvement workshops. These programs were provided in her first university and the following report shows some of the provided CPD programs as well as the university's policy and dedication.

> ***Shahad:*** *From my experience, I have to say that university [9]Y has many CPD programs that improved me a lot. There were many courses on research methods. For example, how to use corpus in research and using endnote and Mendeley. All of these were available at different times, so the teachers who were not able to attend the course will be able to attend the next one and so on. Additionally, they provided courses focused on self-improvement, such as building confidence and self-management. They were dedicated to providing good CPD and I think it was effectively implemented to serve the faculty.* ***(Roller coaster archetype)***

Furthermore, Shahad elaborated on her experience with observation, which initially was a stressing experience, but after a while, she started to recognize its value in developing her skills. The positive affect of class observation in its different forms was evident in Hadeel's experience with peer observation and Shahad's, and Amal's formal evaluations. Their reports are an indication on the important role of supervision on developing teachers' skills, promoting reflection, self-confidence, commitment, and resilience (Mansfield et al., 2016; Papatraianou & Le Cornu, 2014).

> ***Shahad:*** *I remember in their evaluations, they said Mashallah Shahad you look like you have been teaching for a long time, but you have a weakness in this area, and you need to improve it. In the beginning, it affected me in a bad way. I cannot tell you how much it did, but later I found that their feedback, helped*

1 Pseudonym used for teachers' workplaces.

me improve. Yes, I was good in some areas, but I had gaps in others. These gaps needed more experience, and I can say maybe creativity. I feel like they helped me fill in the gaps in my performance based on their experience. So, every year my evaluation would get better until it reached 100% in the last year. ***(roller-coaster archetype)***

Significantly, Shahad did not report any positive factors about the university during group discussions, she mostly focused on difficulties she faced from the both the university's administration and students (see7.3.2). Additionally, Shahad did not mention any positive elements in the different teaching environments that contributed to her resilience except for the CPD programs. Based on her narrative and drawings, the factors that contributed to her resilience involved external support from family and personal strength such as building self-confidence, passion for teaching and motivation to improve**.** "*I was eager to learn and develop for any workshop.".* Generally, Shahad seemed to be the only teacher who experienced both effective and limited CPD programs. Her experience is similar to the other remining teachers who reported limited or no access to CPD programs.

For instance, Arwa claimed that her first teaching job offered several CPD workshops that incudes attending language conferences and other courses that covered several topics such as research. Based on Arwa's reports, the administration promoted different CPD programs and facilitated teachers' attendance. Unfortunately for Arwa her current university does not provide any CPD programs, which might be one of the factors that hindered the development of her resilience as a novice teacher. Although Arwa had access to a variety of CPD programs, she reported attending one conference and nothing else. This might because of the limited time that Arwa spent at her first teaching job (i.e., 1 year) and her emotional state as mentioned above (see7.3.3), which seemed to influence her ability to use available resources.

Arwa: *There were these weekly announcements about courses and workshops. Some of them were in different cities and even different countries. You just need*

to choose the workshop and sign your name, and you will get it. They were really keen on letting us go to workshops and conferences. I went to a conference, and I think if I wanted to attend more, they would've let me. The application runs smoothly, so it was easy to go where you want. However, after a year, I moved to university X, I think that was 7 or 8 years ago. I have never seen an announcement about workshops, courses, or conferences for us to attend. Never. Usually, there are given to the professors who can travel and attend them, but never to us lectures. ***(Roller-coaster archetype).***

For many teachers attending CPD courses can be difficult because of the lack of CPD opportunities and institutional support, particularly, finding replacement to cover their classes (Alshaikhi, 2018). Several teachers in study reported this as one of the obstacles to their engagement with formal CPD, especially public-school teachers. For example, Nawal, Lama and Rahaf expressed their frustration from the policy constraint which prevented them from considering and attending CPD workshops. Their reports shed some light on teachers struggle.

Nawal: *It is a difficult process. I remember that I had to apply two weeks in advance to attend a workshop on TPK and I was not sure if I was going to attend. Alhaduliallah I was able to go the workshop, but honestly, it was a stressful experience because most of the time they refuse. I was refused before and speaking about my experience, it can be discouraging. Like why should I bother if they are going to refuse? Do you know what I mean? [yes].* ***(Roller-coaster archetype)***

Lama: *I have been teaching for almost 6 years, and I had the opportunity to attend only one workshop! Either because there is not a workshop in my filed or because of curriculum schedule. [..] I mean, the headmaster's priority is to follow the schedule. Even the supervisor. If I miss classes, then I'm behind in the schedule. Unfortunately, sometimes that's their reason.* ***(Reluctant archetype)***

Besides the lack of institutional support, the top-down policy and quality of CPD programs are among the factors that contributed to teachers' disengagement and reliance on self-directed CPD. Several teachers described the available CPD programs as repetitive, ineffective, and limited. which has been echoed by several studies that examined CPD in Saudi (Alsalahi, 2015; Alshaikhi, 2020).

> ***Hadeel:*** *CPD is just a formality, and it is limited. They offer the same courses almost every year, so there is nothing new. Sometimes they add new courses, but I don't think they are useful. At least this is my experience because it feels like I'm at a lecture, not a workshop. Do you know what I mean? [yes] I have been to different workshops and part of the course is participation. For example, group discussions or they gave some material to work on individually and then you can discuss it with the group or something like that. You get to participate and do some work.* ***(Roller coaster archetype)***

> ***Mai:*** *I think the CPD programs are lacking in terms of quality and quantity. I feel like many of the CPD workshops that I attended were useless. I don't know how to describe it, but I left the workshops feeling like they did not represent the reality of teaching, and it was not something I can benefit from in class* ***(Smooth archetype)***

During the discussion, teachers voiced their criticism of the current CPD programs and top-down policies, which as reported above by Mai seemed far from the classroom realties and their needs. All the CPD courses are chosen and implemented without consulting teachers or examining their context and needs. This was evident in the above excerpts and many others, especially when the teachers were asked if they requested specific CPD course to help them improve or participated in the design of CPD. In fact, some teachers were surprised by the question and others voiced their doubts about their inclusion in the design of future CPD programs. Significantly, most teachers never thought of discussing their CPD needs with

administration or expressed their willingness to engage such discussion, which can be argued is the result of the top-down educational system and teacher marginalizing practices.

> ***Basma:*** *What? To be honest, I have not asked for anything like this because I'm just a teacher.* ***(Reluctant archetype).***

> ***Hadeel:*** *No. You mean I asked if they could provide for example a workshop on exam writing or classroom management? [Yes]. No, it never crossed my mind before and even if I did, I do not think that it matters because everything comes from above. So, everything is already decided. As I said before, we have a predetermined CPD schedule.* ***(Roller-coaster archetype)***

> ***Sara:*** *I would not because I guess I'm used to depending on the self-directed CPD. To be honest, I do not have high hopes that they would listen or change.* ***(Roller-coaster archetype)***

As shown above, it seemed that the administration failed to make teachers feel included in relevant or any educational policies, which can explain teachers' reaction. For example, Arwa mentioned that as a lecturer, she was never invited to department meetings to discuss policies or take part in their implementation. She is expected to teach and fulfil some administrative responsibilities.

> **Arwa**: *language teachers and lecturers do not attend the university meetings. I do not know about other universities, but this is how it is done in ours. We do not attend the department meetings, so we do not know about the new policies and how they will be implemented or any plans for improvement. We only do our job, which is teaching, and taking part of a committee, if there is one. We are not involved in the development or have a say in the new policies.* ***(Roller-coaster archetype).***

Although teachers' narratives are consistent with the literature reports on the neglect of teachers 'needs and voices, the study findings provide an example of teachers' inclusion and empowerment (Allmnakrah & Evers, 2020; Alshaikhi, 2020). Again, Amal, and Abrar 's narratives provide another example on the administration essential role in creating a supportive and cooperative environment. This because both teachers felt that their professional development needs were addressed by the administration. For instance, Amal's university have a specific committee that is dedicated to evaluating teachers' performance and needs. Furthermore, the committee include a CPD advisor who was described as "*flexible*" and a "*friend*". Thus, Amal stated that she would reach out to the advisor if needed help with CPD.

> ***Amal:*** *We have this committee that would go into the field and see teachers in action and what they need. Also, we have a professional development advisor who is flexible. Teachers can go to her. She is one of my friends. So, I don't think that it is hard to ask for or suggest a CPD course in a certain area.* ***(Smooth archetype).***

Similarly, Abrar reports revealed that her professional growth is supported by the administration, and she believed that they would listen to her needs. Thus, unlike the other teachers who doubted the administration's cooperation, Amal and Abrar response showed their trust and willingness to discuss their needs with administration.

> ***Abrar****: To be honest, I have not thought of this before, maybe because I did not feel the need to. As I said, I'm lucky to work at a university that provides amazing CPD programmes. I think, maybe if I went to the administration, they would listen.* ***(Smooth archetype).***

Despite the criticism on the quality and policies of CPD programs, several teachers acknowledge some of the CPD improvements. For example, Mai, Nawal and Hala, reported that the quality of some CPD programs have improved, especially the courses that focused on language teaching. However, the limited access to CPD programs was a recurring problem for

teachers. Particularly, the number of provided CPD courses and again teacher replacement policy.

> ***Mai:*** *To be fair, there is some improvement. They are better than before. There are some good CPD workshops, but we still need more. [..]Every now and then, the training commission provides a list of CPD programs, and you can register for any one of them. However, the courses must be related to your field, or they won't let you register. For example, you can take courses on critical thinking or building confidence, and there are courses for language teaching, but they are very limited. I rarely find a useful course.* ***(Smooth archetype)***

> ***Hala****: Some of the CPD courses were useful because they were interactive and applicable. However, they are few and if you are lucky to get a place, you still need permission from the headmaster. As I said, before, my headmaster helped attend 2 workshops, one of them was on motivating students and it was useful. We need more CPD programs and facilitating policies, otherwise how would they expect us to improve if we do not get help?* ***(Maladaptive archetype)***

To sum up, the analysis revealed the CPD limitations that many teachers encountered which hindered their engagement. Twelve teachers at the study reported several hindering factors, including, the quantity and quality of the CPD programs, which as reported were incompatible with classroom reality and teacher's needs. The top-down policies and lack of institutional support were common obstacles for teachers, who expressed their frustration and doubt of improvements. Thus, many teachers in the study depended on self-directed CPD to improve and adapt to the complex and changing world of teaching.

7.5.2. Self-directed CPD: A necessary option?

Many teachers reported their reliance on self-directed CPD because of their dissatisfaction from the limited access and quality of formal CPD as shown above. For many teachers in this study, self-directed is more effective because it is based on their needs and accessible.

Lana: *I believe that self-directed CPD is better because sometimes we cannot guarantee the formal CPD. So, self-directed is much better.* ***(Roller-coaster archetype).***

Sara: *I mostly use self-directed CPD, and I think it is more effective. It is much better than what we have at the university. [..] because I know what I need, and it is not a waste of time like the university's workshops. I can use what I learn in the courses I choose. Sometimes, it is not a workshop or an online course. It is just a YouTube video that helps you learn new things or implement new ideas.* ***(Roller- coaster archetype).***

The teachers described several self-directed CPD, some were mentioned above, such as using different websites and reading to improve their skills and update their knowledge about new teaching methodologies. Hala's narrative is a good example on how engaging in self-directed CPD gradually helped her in overcoming challenges and promote her resilience. As mentioned above (see, 7.4.2.2), Hala enrolled in a language school to improve her language and teaching skills.

Hala: *I enrolled in a language institute for a month because I wanted to improve my language. I wasn't happy with my performance. I believed and I still believe that student deserve a good education.* ***(Maladaptive archetype)***

It can be argued that Hala's engagement with self-directed CPD was influenced by her motivation to improve, limited access to formal CPD and lack of support. Hala's and other teacher's reports revealed their anger and disappointment because self-directed CPD was their only way to improve and overcome challenges. It seems that they had no choice other than to rely on self-directed CPD.

Lama: *Honestly, I don't think that we have choice, but to rely on self-directed CPD. Otherwise how would we improve?* ***(Reluctant archetype)***

Hala: *They knew that I had no experience at all! It was there in my file. So, you would expect that they would train me or monitor my performance, but no. The*

headmaster rarely checked on me when I started and even the supervisor did not recommend ay workshops for me. Yes, I prepared before her visit, but honestly, I think it was obvious that I was struggling. I was left alone and there was nothing, so I had to find a way. ***(Maladaptive archetype)***

Despite the many benefits of self-directed CPD, teachers faced several challenges, which sometimes affected their ability to engage with this type of CPD. These include, motivational, financial, and time constraints. Many teachers reported that they engage in self-directed CPD after work, which sometimes proved to be a difficult task, especially after challenging workdays. Several teachers (6/13) reported that their difficulty balancing between work and responsibilities in their personal lives. For instance, Hala described the difficulties she faced trying to balance between teaching, improving her language and responsibility as a parent.

Hala: *I remember when I enrolled in the language school, I was so busy that I sometimes did not spend enough time with my kids and my husband. I did not even visit my parents during the week! I had to be at school by 7 in morning and come back home at 3pm. I had two hours to rest, eat and check on my kids before going to language school. I spent 3 hours there and when I'm finally home, I had to revise what I learned and prepare for next day's lessons. It was exhausting. I was exhausted and I felt guilty because missed a lot of important moments with my kids. There was no balance at all.* ***(Maladaptive archetype)***

Nawal and Rahaf mentioned some interesting points which other teachers at the same group agreed with. Teachers acknowledged that ongoing learning is an essential part of the profession, but their workload and sometimes the isolating nature of the self-directed CPD can be demotivating.

Nawal: *listen Mariam, I'm all for using self-direct CPD to improve, but realistically we cannot always stay committed to it. For many reasons, like time,*

and emotional state. Sometimes you just do not have the motivation to attend an online course or read anything that relates to teaching, especially after a day or week of heavy workload ***(Roller-coaster archetype)***

Rahaf: *I agree with Nawal, I think as teachers we want to be good at our jobs. So, learning about new things and improving is a must, but we or I cannot always look for or attend online courses. I do not know about teachers in this group, but sometimes I'm bored with YouTube videos and websites. I want something in-person. I want see teachers in action, like attending a model lesson or a course where you can interact with other teachers. Do you know what I mean? (****Smooth archetype)***

The isolating issue was mentioned in other groups during the discussion of their needs and recommendations of CPD. Teacher's narratives suggest their need for tangible context where they can observe, participate, and discuss, which as illustrated above, is a missing element in formal CPD as well as the self-directed CPD that teacher engaged with. This sense of isolation might be explained by the type of self-directed CPD courses that teachers engage with, which include reading, watching online videos and sometimes attending online courses. Furthermore, self-directed might be connected to feelings of neglect from the educational system that failed to support teachers throughout their career span, especially in the first years of teaching. Teachers need to feel that they are part of system, and that their professional needs are supported. This is evident in several teachers (7/13) reports who explicitly stated their preference for formal CPD at this stage of their career.

Shahad: *I choose formal because I believe it makes teachers feel like they matter. When I feel supported by the administration, it makes me motivated. It is motiving. I feel like I matter. That my work and efforts matter. I don't know how to describe it, but you feel like you are part of the organization, especially when they know that you are facing difficulties, you feel like you are not alone.* ***(rollercoaster archetype).***

> ***Hala:*** *I prefer formal CPD because I believe it will make me feel seen. I mean, the new policies are supposed to improve education, right? So, if I'm part of the system, then I need to feel like I'm part of this improvements. You can't improve education without improving and supporting teachers. (**Maladaptive archetype**)*

Unlike schoolteachers, university teachers at the study had a flexible teaching schedule, which gave them the opportunity to sometimes attend workshops at different cities. However, they also, reported time and financial constrains as hindering factors to self-directed CPD. Significantly, university teachers engaged in different forms of CPD to build their professional profile, which can lead to promotion.

> ***Sara:*** *I was lucky one semester because I had to work three days a week, and so, I had time to attend different courses and read research about different areas in our filed. I had the chance to go to a workshop in a different city, which was a bit far from where a live by car. However, that doesn't happen all the time. Many times, I could not do something like that because of my teaching schedule and other responsibilities.* ***(Roller-coaster archetype)***
>
> ***Hadeel:*** *I think sometimes money can be an issue, especially if you have financial obligations. I try to register in courses that provides certificate to both improve my CV and teaching skills. Some of the courses can be a bit expensive, especially if they last for weeks and from a well-known university.* ***(Roller-coaster archetype).***

7.5.3. Teachers CPD needs and recommendations.

Although many teachers at the study (11/13) rely on self-directed CPD, and some prefer it, they called for formal CPD programmes. The teachers' expressed their dissatisfaction with the current CPD programmes, and they emphasised the need for new CPD approach that targets their needs. Their suggestions show three types of CPD activists that targets their teaching skills, administrative skills, and soft skills (See 9.4). Significantly, the teachers emphasised on

the quality of these programs, that is, it must be interactive and provide a practical implementation to their classrooms. The following extract exemplify teachers approach to implanting CPD programs that address their needs and contribute personal and professional growth.

> ***Hadeel:*** *I would examine the context. I think there are two parts to this. I think the first is asking teachers what they need. What are the CPD courses that would be most helpful to them? because you want teachers to engage with them. The second would be an observation scheme, in which teachers are observed and evaluated by experienced teachers. I think this way we can provide courses that target teachers' needs in terms of professional aspects such as teaching skills and language skills, or personal aspects such as building confidence, critical thinking and problem-solving. CPD must include both professional and personal courses. One important thing, we need to let teachers give their feedback on CPD, so we can improve and adjust instead of just repeating the courses.* ***(Roller-coaster archetype)***

7.6. Discussion

7.6.1. Different paths to resilience: Gradual change and development.

The findings revealed that teachers faced several challenges and changes in their personal and contextual systems. However, the difference was in teachers' response to these challenges and their use of the available personal and contextual resources. Hence, their different resilience trajectories. As shown in **Table** 4 the roller coaster archetype was the most relevant to six teachers, this might because it reflects the unpredictable and complex nature of teaching, which have been described in the literature as "increasingly complex and diverse" (Gu, 2018, p. 13). Thus, influencing teachers' adjustment and coping. Indeed, five teachers described this archetype as more realistic because it represents the ups and downs of life, even though two of them identified with different archetypes.

Interestingly, four of the teachers who identified with the rollercoaster archetype, are veteran teachers with teaching experience ranging from 10-18 years. Although most of available research is focused on pre-service and novice teachers' resilience, there are several studies that examined veteran teachers' commitment and motivation. Lowe et al. (2019b) suggested that many of the existing studies described this stage as a stage of demotivation and exhaustion, which eventually facilitate retirement. However, there are few studies that presented cases of motivated, and committed teachers who were able to overcome setbacks (See Day & Gu, 2009; Lowe et al., 2019a; Meister & Ahrens, 2011). In line with these findings, the four teachers displayed sings of resilience, professional growth, and commitment to teaching. As showed in their drawings, (e.g., Figure 24) they were able to bounce back from multiple setbacks, that included uncooperative administration, unstable contracts, tensions between work and personal lives.

Another factor that might explain the relevance of this archetype is the multiple changes in the teaching contexts. Three teachers changed schools several times throughout the years and with every change, they had to navigate their new context and cope with its challenges. Hence, the change in their resilience trajectory, which as Gu and Day (2007) described "manifest itself as a result of a dynamic process within a given context" (p. 1305). However, the remaining teachers (7/13) in this study did not change school/university, but the change in their resilience trajectory was influenced by the change in the administration. Lana's experience and drawing clearly illustrates the effect the administration had on her resilience and coping abilities as she differentiated her trajectory with unsupportive and supportive environment. (see Figure 19).

The second most relevant archetype was smooth resilience. The analysis of the four teachers data is consistent with the literature revealing the significant role of the teaching context, particularly the quality of the school leadership and the existence of a supportive relationship with headmaster and colleagues (Gu, 2018; Le Cornu, 2009; Li et al., 2019; Papatraianou & Cornu, 2014). This was clearly exemplified in Amal's experience who seemed to be the only teacher who did not really experience a maladaptive state. Her drawing and reports indicated that the difficulties she encountered in the first year of teaching were relatively less intense in terms of duration. This is because unlike the other teachers Amal was supported and guided by mentors in her first year of teaching, which promoted her resilience. Additionally, Amal seemed to draw on her personal strengths and faith to deal with everyday teaching challenges. Overall, the four teachers displayed a strong sense of motivation and commitment, which can be argued was fuelled by what Nias (1999) described as " missionary zeal" and "moral values" (p. 255).

That reluctant resilience and maladaptive archetypes were the least relevant archetypes. Two teachers identified with the reluctant archetype, namely, Basma and Lama. The data revealed that both teachers struggled with their students and attempted to individually deal with their challenges. That is, they did not report seeking help from their colleagues or the administration, despite the existence of supportive factors (i.e., experienced, and nice colleagues). According to to Ungar (2012), the process of **r**esilience involves two central components; navigation and negotiation. Navigation refers to individuals' ability to navigate the available resources in their environment, such as experienced colleagues or CPD programs (Ungar, 2012). Teachers reports suggested that did not take advantage of their resources and thus, hindered their resilience.

Significantly, although teachers experience might fall under the same archetype, their coping with difficulties took different approaches. Lama's hesitance to seek help from her colleagues and administration seemed to be influenced by both her false assumption that she has the sole responsibility of dealing with teaching challenges and the headmaster's neglect to build a trusting relationship with her. Substantial research has emphasised the pivotal role of headmasters in building trusting and supportive relationships with teachers and creating a collaborative school culture, which ultimately promote resilience (Papatraianou & Cornu, 2014; Peters & Pearce, 2011; Shaoan et al., 2019). Thus, it can be argued that if the headmaster built a relationship with Lama, it might have encouraged her to seek help and promoted the development of her resilience. Gradually, Lama started to seek help and support from her colleagues at the school and teachers in online communities.

On the other hand, Basma seemed to prolong her maladaptive state because of her avoidance to seek support from the administration, especially when challenges in her personal life affected her teaching. Instead, she chose to use her faith and values to deal with her infective performance. However, this seemed to have limited effect on her teaching as revealed in her narrative. It can be argued that it only helped Basma alleviate religious and morals conflict. Hala was the only teacher that seemed to resemble the maladaptive archetype. Although in her narrative, Hala did not identify with the maladaptive archetype, her drawing clearly show that she is currently in a maladaptive state. This might be explained by her attempt to present different reality to other group members, especially since all of them identified with archetypes that appear to reach an adaptive resilience as presented the in their drawings. It can be noted from Hala's drawing that she gradually reached a maladaptive state, that is, it was through an accumulation of persistent stressors overtime (Gu & Day, 2007; Kostoulas Achilleas & Lammerer, 2018). Particularly, Hala reported facing several difficulties during pandemic, which required teachers to change or modify their teaching to new form of teaching that

depends on using different learning platforms and applications (Alshehri et al., 2020). The data revealed that to some extent, Hala was able to cope with the challenges. However, the shock she experienced from students' language level and the rapid implementation of new educational policies by MoE (see7.2.4) pushed her resilience to edge.

It is important to note that at some in her career span, Hala displayed signs of resilience and motivation as she actively harnessed personal and contextual resources to overcome challenges (Gu, 2018; Mansfield et al., 2016). Thus, it can be argued that through an "active process of self-righting and growth", Hala might be able to bounce back to an adaptive state (Higgins, 1994).

7.6.2. Coping with difficulties

With regards to coping, the data revealed that over the years teachers used and developed a range of coping strategies that facilitated both an adaptive and maladaptive adjustment, As shown above, (see, 7.4.1.1), avoidance approach coping was commonly used to deal with stress, which as suggested in several studies lead to maladaptive adjustment, such as self-isolation and denial (Alonso-Tapia et al., 2019; Kato, 2015; Rark & Esposito, 2011). This was mostly evident in their first years of teaching. However, the data also, revealed, that gradually teachers started to use a combination of general coping strategies, and religious coping strategies to overcome difficulties. For instance, the teachers, such as Shahad used a combination of religious coping such as prayers and improving her skill. Significantly, the combination of the two coping strategies seemed to help the teachers reach an adaptive state of resilience and tranquilly (Abu-Raiya et al., 2019; Ano & Vasconcelles, 2005).

7.6.3. CPD limitations

During the interviews there was a prevailing sense that teachers were not viewed as partners by their institutions and overall educational polices, which is consistent with available literature (Alammari, 2019; Allmnakrah & Evers, 2020; Alsalahi, 2015; Alshaikhi, 2020). Amal's and Abrar's experience are the only exception, which might be because they work at one of top universities in Saudi. However, it important to note Amal's data suggests that the design, quality, and implementation of CPD programs is dependent on the administration. Thus, sometimes teachers might not have access to CPD or have limited access to unsuitable programmes (Althobaiti, 2017; Mazin, 2019). That is, top down and one size fits all programs, which teachers such as Lana, Sara and Hadeel criticised and attended as a formality (Alshaikhi, 2020; Liton, 2012). The data from schoolteachers confirmed the literature findings, which describe the limited CPD opportunity for teachers (Alsalahi, 2015). The data from Nawal, Lama, Mai show the few CPD programs that were recommended by their supervisors, which in some cases were far from the classroom reality.

Particularly, the workshop on implementing communicative language approach, which as reported in the literature difficult to implement into classroom because of students number and time constraints (Abdulkader, 2016; Alqahtani, 2019). Contradictory to the findings that suggests teacher's limited understating of different types of CPD activities (Alsalahi, 2015; Mazin, 2019; Oudah, 2018), teachers narrative suggest their understanding of the different types of CPD. The teachers actively engaged in different self-directed CPD activities, that includes, attending online workshops based on their needs, which promoted their reflection on their performance (Alshaikhi, 2020; Cirocki & Farrell, 2019). Teachers' knowledge about the different types of CPD can be explained by their participation in different online teaching communities, which as shown above helped teachers improve. It can be argued that these teaching communities are one of the factors that promoted teachers' engagement in self-

directed teaching, especially schoolteachers. These findings are line with Alshaikhi (2020) and Mazin (2019) results confirming teacher view on the impotence of CPD for their development.

7.7. Conclusion

In this chapter I reported the findings of the focus group interviews. The analysis of teacher's narratives and drawings suggested that the most experienced resilience archetypes were the roller-coaster and the smooth archetypes. In contrast, the reluctant and maladaptive archetypes were the least experienced by teachers. Furthermore, in this chapter I presented the personal and contextual factors that influenced teachers' resilience and their coping strategies. Additionally, the analysis and discussion of teachers experience with CPD programs, revealed their reliance and engagement with self-directed CPD activities, which were among the factors that helped teachers overcome challenges and facilitated their resilience. The need for rigorous and accessible CPD programmes have been emphasised by teachers in this study who also provided their recommendations, which potentially could inform policy makers. In the following chapter, I will discuss and highlight major findings that formed this study.

Chapter 8 Discussion of Major Findings

8.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I discuss the major findings of the studies that formed this thesis by highlighting and linking the significant findings to the relevant literature presented in **Chapters 2** and **3**. My aim in this chapter is to situate my findings in the broader theoretical framework of teacher resilience research. I start in the following by providing a summary on the thesis overreaching aim and process. This is followed by presenting and discussing the major findings. It is worth mentioning that the individuality of teacher's resilience experience was evident in their narrative, and there are many nuanced experiences in the data. However, my focus in the following is to discuss the common challenges, resources, and coping strategies to understand the change and development of teacher's resilience throughout their career span. Furthermore, the discussion of each section might be different, depending on the teacher's narrative, and categories under each section. Finally, it is important to reiterate the differences among teachers in terms of the teaching context 1) universities vs schools 2) differences across universities, and 3) changing context over the years. This explains the individuality of the resilience experience and its fluctuations. I will highlight some of these differences which influenced teachers' resilience when relevant; the focus is on issues that broadly relevant across all participants.

8.2 Resilience trajectories throughout the years

The aim of this thesis was to trace the change and development of language teachers' resilience throughout the years. I started by designing an exploratory study to examine how teachers coped with past and present challenges. As illustrated in Figure 30**,** the preliminary results revealed 4 resilience archetypes, which were the foundation for the subsequent major studies.

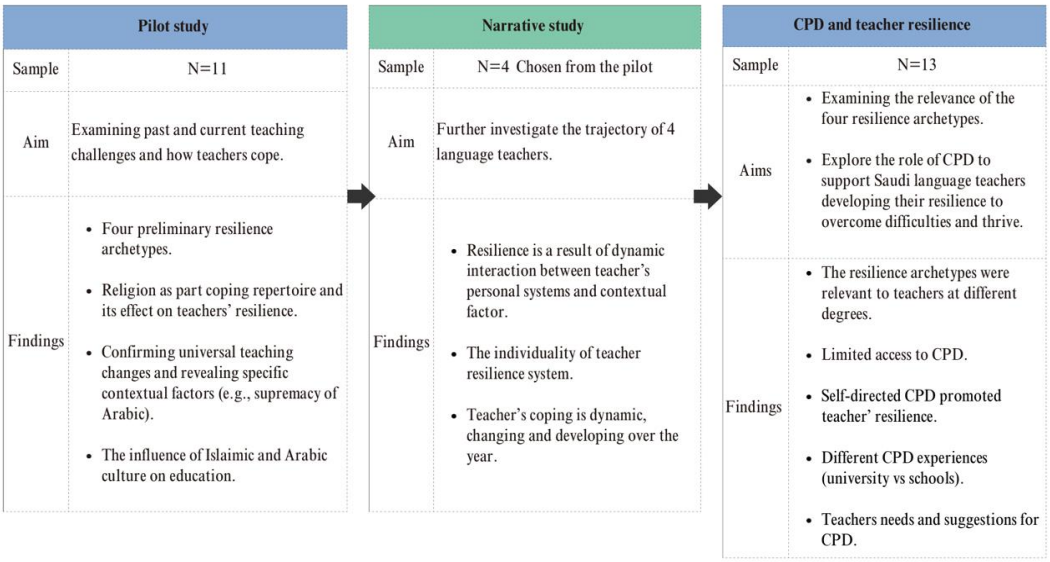


Figure 30: Summary of the key findings.

The findings of these studies confirmed the literature definition and my understating of teachers resilience process is an ongoing complex and dynamic interaction of the many personal and contextual systems (Masten, 2014a). Furthermore, the data revealed that language teachers faced distinctive challenges throughout their career span and used different resources, which shaped their resilience trajectory in those stages. As argued in Chapters **6** and **7,** every teacher has a specific multilayered resilience system, which "offers a more nuanced and powerful conceptual lens to understand why many teachers are able to sustain their commitment, resilience and effectiveness" (Gu, 2018, p. 20). Although teachers in this study

have different personal traits and work in different contexts, they to some extent, experienced similar challenges and shared some personal qualities (e.g., self-confidence and teaching skills). In the following sections, I focus on the major personal and contextual challenges that appeared consistent through different career stages and highlight the change and development of teacher's coping and resources. The recurring and interrelated themes are 1) knowledge and competence, 2) teaching context, and top-down policies, and 3) coping and resilience as dynamic response to challenges.

8.3 Personal factors

8.3.1. Teaching knowledge and competence

As novice teachers, participants experienced, though at different levels, insecurities about their language knowledge and teaching competence. In their recent study on language teachers wellbeing, Sulis and her colleagues suggested that teachers knowledge about teaching start to accumulate in their schooling experience (Sulis et al., 2023). During the interviews and focus groups several teachers stated that they emulated their teachers. Furthermore, some of their beliefs about their role as teachers and classroom expectations were shaped by their learning experience, which was influenced by the Arabic culture and Islamic values discussed in **Chapter 2.** It can be noted that the belief that teachers are the centre of knowledge was one of the early facets of teacher's identity, which is still reinforced in the teaching contexts as noted in the literature (Elyas & Picard, 2019).

This phenomenon was reported by six teachers who struggled to reconcile with their knowledge limitations and the cultural beliefs, which hindered to some extent their adjustment and coping abilities. It is important to note that, though it was not explicitly stated, the narrative of some teachers implied that they shared similar beliefs as novice teachers. However, teacher's reports reveal the gradual change in their beliefs, which influenced their teaching practise and

coping abilities. As for the expectations, during the interviews and focus groups discussions, it was evident that many teachers assumed that their students and classroom experience would resemble their schooling experience. However, they quicky realised the mismatch between their idealised expectations and the teaching reality. Hence, their experience of reality shock. The experience of reality shock among novice teachers have been extensively researched in connection to inadequate training, which fails to prepare teachers to deal with classroom realities (Demetriou et al., 2009; Mansfield et al., 2016).While many reforms in teacher education have been reported in Western contexts (e.g.Mansfield, 2020; Mansfield et al., 2016), studies that have been conducted in the Saudi context have repeatedly discussed the inadequacy of both English programs and pre-service training (Al-Seghayer, 2014a; Alqahtani, 2019).

Most of the teacher's reports are consistent with the literature that criticised teacher training programmes in Saudi universities, arguing that it produced linguistically and professionally incompetent language teachers (Al-Hazmi, 2003; Alotaibi, 2017). In addition to confirming deficiencies in the training programme, the findings verified the gap between the English programs and the English curriculum taught in schools as was the case with Huda. Several teachers voiced their criticism of their English programs reporting gaps in their knowledge of the 4 language skills because their program focused on teaching English literature. Thus, it unsurprising that many teachers experienced language and teaching anxiety and struggled to adapt with four teachers reporting thoughts of leaving the profession.

As I pointed earlier in this section, the degree of language knowledge and teaching competency varied among teachers. This can be explained by two factors, difference of English programs and access to in-service training. Teachers reports are in line with Al-Seghayer (2014a) and Alqahtani (2019) observations about the differences between the English programs in colleges of Arts and colleges of Education, in terms of the program content and the duration of per-service training. Thus, teachers' anxiety levels varied depending on their exposure to

the teaching context during training and the focus of their English program as discussed in **Chapter 2.** This issue has been raised by several language researchers, who criticised the MoE reforms which failed to include or address deficiencies in English education programmes in their developmental plans (Al-Hazmi, 2003; Al-Seghayer, 2014a).

Similarly access to in-service training varied depending on the teaching context, that is, between university and schools and across universities as discussed in **Chapter 7**. Data from interviews and focus groups indicated that most teachers had limited or no access to CPD as novice teachers. For instance, some of the schoolteachers' reports suggest that they did not receive effective supervision sessions, which appeared to resemble what Shah and Al Harthi (2014) described as a "box-ticking exercise" as was the case with Hala (p. 1549). This means that teachers did not receive feedback on their performance, and guidance to improve. Furthermore, schoolteachers' access to CPD programmes was dependant on headmaster's approval, which based on teachers' narratives was difficult to receive**.**

As for university teachers, their reports were insufficient and different depending on their context, but what could be drawn from them is that the available CPD were limited and did not cater to their needs. These conditions, among other factors, explain teachers' response to teaching challenges, which commonly were avoidance, self-isolation, and denial; ultimately leading to their maladaptive state. Nevertheless, five teachers had access to in-service training, such as mentors and CPD courses tailored to their needs, as was the case with Amal and Abrar. The effect of mentorship was evident in teachers' narrative and drawings, revealing the gradual development of self-efficacy, commitment, and resilience. These findings are in line with countless studies that demonstrated the positive influence of mentoring on teachers' ability to overcome challenges and resilience (Mansfield et al., 2012; Mansfield et al., 2016; Papatraianou & Cornu, 2014).

However, as data shown, access to mentors or CPD programs does not guarantee teachers' commitment and resilience, as was the case with Hanan. According to Ungar et al. (2008), the resilience process include " the capacity of individuals to navigate their way to the psychological, social, cultural, and physical resources that sustain their well being" (p. 225). This provides further evidence about the individuality and complexity of a teacher's resilience. These challenges continued as teachers moved to mid and late career stages, but again at different levels. Studies on mid-career stage language teachers are limited (Sulis et al., 2023). The available literature has described the mid-career phase as a maturing stage because teachers display signs of confidence in their performance, and adjustment to teaching demands (Hargreaves, 2005; Shin et al., 2021).

The narratives of seven reflect these research findings, revealing their confidence in their performance and ongoing engagement with CPD to update their knowledge and improve their teaching skills. Furthermore, the data showed their awareness of the changing nature of their role and their responsibility to adapt and improve. This in many cases appears to be the result of teachers taking charge of developing their knowledge and learning from trial and error. However, the level of confidence, resilience, and motivation in pursuit of professional growth seemed to differ among teachers. As established in **Chapter 7,** many teachers were driven by the lack of support to take charge of their development, and though it had positive effect on them, teachers are still calling for institutional support with CPD. It can be argued that the continuous neglect of teacher's professional growth created their hyper independence on self-directed CPD, which potentially might lead to teachers' exhaustion and disengagement. This seemed to the case for three teachers who experienced increased difficulties and professional stagnation caused by limited support, and CPD opportunities (see also Day & Gu, 2010). Three teachers displayed sings of professional stagnation, and demotivation with two reaching maladaptive resilience as was the case with Hala and Manal. The third teacher Lama, though

she is in relatively adaptive state, her drawing and narrative imply that she is heading toward maladaptive resilience. This is a critical stage and teachers need institutional support with CPD, otherwise they may remain in a relatively maladaptive state, characterised by an apathetic attitude toward teaching or, as indicated in the literature, they may leave the profession (Huberman, 1995; Shin et al., 2021). It can be argued that if these conditions persist, even the teachers who showed resilience and commitment to improve, may enter the late-career stage and start to lose motivation and commitment.

Studies on late career teachers have described them as exhausted, demotivated and ready to leave the profession (Sulis et al., 2023). However, few studies have reported on the existence of resilient, motivated, and committed veteran teachers (Day & Gu, 2007, 2009). In line with these findings, participant's narrative revealed their ongoing interest to updating their knowledge and improving their skills. After experiencing many teaching challenges and learning to overcome them, teachers developed what Hiver and Dörnyei (2015b, p. 405) describe as "protective armour". There is an important observation worthy of discussion, which is five of the late career teachers identified with the rollercoaster archetype. They have been through several ups and downs as novice and mid-stage teachers, their knowledge and teaching competence were among the factors leading to their maladaptive state and in some instances, this was one of the factors that maintained their resilience. Hence, their a strong resilience armour.

As noted in their narrative, this helped them deal with the complex and changing nature of teaching, especially with the integration of technology and sudden shift to online teaching. Significantly, four teachers admitted that initially they felt insecure and struggled to adapt to these changes. They particularly referenced the sudden dependence on technology during the pandemic, which challenged their perceived technological knowledge and competency. This might because technology was not effectively implemented before the pandemic, that is,

teachers either had limited or no access to a language laboratory, and internet access. Furthermore, although the MoE had implemented distance learning years ago in several universities and schools, the initiatives were not fully endorsed by some policy makers because they were still questioning its effectiveness to accomplish the desired educational outcomes (Rajab, 2018). Thus, teachers had limited opportunity to experience the full potential of technology in their classrooms and this negatively impacted their ability to adapt to new teaching platforms.

As indicated in several studies, (Graham et al., 2022; Hakim, 2020; MacIntyre et al., 2020), online teaching was stressful for teachers at different stages because it presented a new set of challenges, such as using different platforms to deliver lessons and losing control over their classrooms, which threatened their sense of knowledge and competence. Despite these challenges, participants were able to adapt and improve their teaching, some even, as the case with Noor and Nawal saw it as opportunity for professional growth. Particularly, the teachers were referencing their engagement with self-directed CPD during and after the pandemic. However, it is important to note that all late career teachers called for CPD to support their professional growth, which is further evidence on the importance of implementing CPD programs that targets teachers needs at different career stages.

8.4 Teaching context and top-down policy

As discussed in **Chapter 2,** the Saudi educational system is centralised and controlled by MoE. Thus, my discussion of contextual factors which to some extent revolve around the headmaster or administration role in the development of teacher resilience, is governed by the top-down policies that undermine teachers' resilience as exemplified in **Figure 31.** This because headmasters and department heads which despite the flexibility in their context, are

policy implementers. The difference I believe is how they implement these polices in their context (i.e., their leadership style).

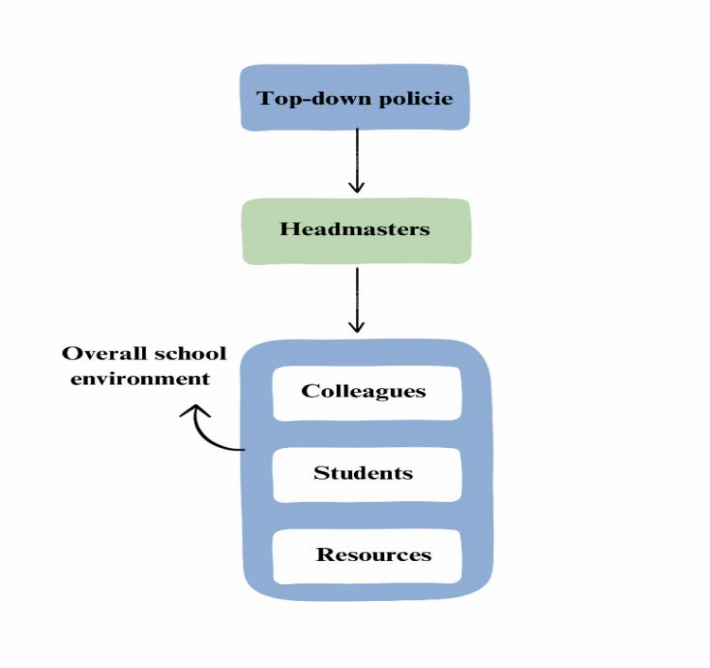


Figure 31: Top-down policy context

8.4.1. Headmaster's role

Research on teacher resilience has repeatedly emphasised the pivotal role of headmasters in both promoting and hindering resilience, especially novice teachers who require support and guidance to survive the "sink or swim" experience .(Mansfield et al., 2014; Shaoan et al., 2019; Varah et al., 1986, p. 30). Based on the relational resilience model, resilience is developed through growth-fostering relationships that is based on trust, mutuality, and empowerment (Jordan, 2006). Unfortunately, as novice teachers most participants (13/17), described many negative incidents with some headmasters and university administration staff, such as unfair treatment, disrespect, lack of appreciation and creating a toxic work environment. Other headmasters did not show interest in building supportive relationship with teachers or helping struggling teachers, as was the case with Lama and Hala.

One of the important observations in the data was the feeling of abandonment that was experienced by four teachers who actively expressed their concerns about students' level and misbehaviour, or who tried to explain their lack of experience, as was the case with Hala. Although these incidents had a direct impact on teachers' resilience, I argue that it had a profound effect on their ability to trust and build relationship with their administration and their subsequent coping behaviours. Especially, when some teachers faced similar conditions in mid and late career stages, in terms of supporting and facilitating their access to CPD. The statements from 14 teachers showed their reluctance to seek help and support from their administration, even after years of experience, changing schools and experiencing of some positive relationship.

A headmaster's failure to create a supportive environment might be explained by the lack of leadership training. As reported in literature, before the establishment of the MoE, there were no specific requirements in this respect and thus headmasters were appointed without administrative experience or training (Vogel & Alhudithi, 2021). Furthermore, Khalil and Karim (2016) have suggested that many of the hired headmasters did not have a degree or sufficient education to qualify them for the job. Thus, it is unsurprising that some headmasters were unable to create a supportive work environment and engaged in conflicts with teachers, punishing them to maladaptive resilience and challenging their coping ability, as was the case with Noor. Furthermore, data revealed that participants tendency to avoid seeking administrative support was because they felt excluded by their administration and educational policies that impacted them**.** Three teachers stated that as lectures, they are not invited to department meetings; they are expected to just fulfil their teaching and administrative duties.

This explains teachers' surprise when asked if they tried or will attempt to discuss their struggles and CPD needs with their administration. A similar reaction was displayed by a schoolteacher participant, explaining that gaining access to CPD is a lengthy and stressful process that requires headmaster approval as discussed in **Chapter 7**. Indeed, the overall educational climate, as described in the literature, tends to neglect teachers' needs, offer limited support and view them as curriculum and policy implementers (Al-Harbi & Ahmad, 2022; Al-Seghayer, 2014b; Allmnakrah & Evers, 2020). Given these factors, it is unsurprising that many teachers avoided seeking help and isolated themselves because they did not feel supported or part of the school community. Significantly, this also explains why many teachers are still reluctant to seek help and support from administration even after years of experience and teaching in different contexts. Some teachers continued to isolate themselves as a way of protection from the toxic environment, as was the case with Basma.

The educational improvements brought several changes, including changing the job requirements and providing training for headmasters as shown in **Chapter 2.** Despite the criticism by several researchers, these changes seemed to have had a positive effect on the overall school environment (for further reading see e.g. Ahmed & Al-Dhuwaihi, 2020; Khalil & Karim, 2016). Participant's narratives and drawings showed that at different points in their career trajectories, they were supported by their administration facilitating access to CPD and promoting their resilience, as was the case with Hala. The experiences of Huda, Amal, and Abara, provide strong evidence of the role of administration in developing and shaping teacher resilience. Although they had to some extent different experiences, and taught in different contexts, their administration created the necessary conditions for them to thrive. Accordingly, the teachers were able to develop and relatively maintain an adaptive resilience state (i.e., the smooth resilience archetype) or what Kostoulas and Lammerer (2020) have described as a state of " dynamic stability"(p. 95).

8.4.2. Relationship with colleagues

As reported in the literature, positive relationships with colleagues promote self-efficacy, resilience and commitment (Gu, 2018; Li et al., 2019). Participants reported specific positive and negative incidents, which influenced their resilience and motivation. Generally, most participants seemed to have a positive and professional relationship with their colleagues. However, only four teachers described how relationships with colleagues motivated them and promoted their resilience and adjustment. The collected data from Noor and Hanan provides evidence on the important role of cultivating relationships that are based on mutuality, collaboration and trust (Gu, 2018). These relationships which were described as "friends" and "family", gradually helped the teachers break the barriers and hatred developed over the years; ultimately, promoting and maintaining their resilience.

Interestingly, although the remining teachers described their colleagues as "*nice*" and "*experienced*", their reports suggest that they rarely sought their help. Instead, the data shows their reliance on the virtual relationships built in different language teacher communities. Surprisingly, the teachers were more vocal about how these relationships helped them overcome difficulties and motivated them to improve. The teachers' tendency to build and rely on virtual communities might be explained by the emotional, professional, and intellectual conflicts teachers (8/17) experienced throughout the years. Thus, these communities seemed to provide them with a safe space with shared vocational values, support, and collaboration. Furthermore, as reported by several teachers, these communities are a hub of teaching resources, which facilitate collaboration with teachers who are at similar or different career stages. Another explanation for the value of online communities was provided by one teacher

at a focus group explaining that sometimes university lecturers have different teaching schedules, which limit their interaction and collaboration. Either way, whether they were virtual or in person, the data is consistent with literature suggesting that supportive relationships promote teachers' resilience, commitment, and self-efficacy (Gu, 2014b; Gu & Day, 2013; Papatraianou et al., 2018).

Nevertheless, relationships with colleagues can also negatively impact teachers' resilience, adjustment, and motivation. Five teachers reported engaging in several conflicts with their colleagues, causing them stress and pushing them to self-isolation. Some teachers claimed that the administration's favouritism, and poor management promoted conflicts, division, and prevented teacher collaboration. This view was shared by other participants, blaming their administration for the toxic environment, especially university teachers. As explained by three teachers, some of their colleagues abused their administrative positions and were left unchecked by the department head. Hence, teachers' preference to "*stay away*" and keep to strictly professional relationships to avoid conflicts. Other participants reported that conflicts with their colleagues were triggered by differences in their personalities and teaching values, as was the case with Hanan. There are two important observations in the data. First, teachers' descriptions of some colleagues is line with what the literature reports on veteran teachers as demotivated, with an apathetic attitude toward teaching (Sulis et al., 2023)**.** During focus groups, they identified with the maladaptive archetype, and notably, most participants reported actively avoiding teachers in such a state to maintain their motivation and wellbeing. Second, most of the incidents happened in the first years of teaching, and thus several teachers did have the opportunity to learn from experienced teachers and build collaborative relationships. This, in my opinion, justifies research emphasis on novice teachers and as my data revealed, highlight the influence of headmaster and context culture on teacher's approach to collegial relationships.

Manal's story is an example of the detrimental influence of negative relationships on resilience. As discussed in **Chapter 6,** she accepted her colleagues' "*uncaring*" attitude as the reality of teaching, which I believe was the norm in some of the schools she taught at. It is important to note that as they moved to different career stages, some participants reported tensions with colleagues. However, several participants seemed unaffected as they successfully coped with their influence and protected their motivation and resilience, as was the case with Basma. To sum up, although these negative incidents were stressful and self-isolating, I argue that it promoted teachers' resilience and awareness about the role of relationships. That is, it pushed teachers to join online communities, which helped them engage in different CPD, and learn to put boundaries on their relationships with colleagues instead of relying on self-isolation. Hence, protecting their well-being.

8.4.3. Relationship with students.

Participant's narratives provide examples on how students both promoted and hindered their resilience. However, evidently students for most teachers acted as buffer for stress caused by external factors, such as headmasters, as was the case with Lana. Most of the reported challenges included students' language level, disengagement, and disruptive behaviour. Many of the studies that have been conducted in the Saudi context concluded that generally students have low proficiency level, caused by several factors, such as negative attitude toward English, and supremacy of the Arabic, therefore leading student's demotivation, and disengagement in the classroom (Abdullah Al-Awaid, 2018; Al-Seghayer, 2015; Elyas & Picard, 2019). Participant's narratives are in line with the aforementioned research, but there are few observations that worthy of discussion.

All teachers acknowledged their struggles with students' language level; however, the data revealed its prevalence for schoolteachers. This is because university teachers usually teach English major students with high proficiency levels compared to school students. Schoolteachers and some of the lectures who started teaching at schools confirmed that some students had a rudimentary language level, which did not match their grade level. This mismatch and students' demotivation shocked teachers and challenged their perceived self-efficacy. Participant's shock is justified by their lack of experience as novice teachers and through projecting their own learning experiences to their students, as was the case with Manal. Such conditions revealed an internal struggle between teacher's expectations, student's level, and their inadequate skills. Specifically, after realising the need to reduce the gap while following the imposed curriculum schedule without support from school. Hence, teachers' apathetic attitude toward students and the maladaptive state exhibited by many participants. Taking this a step further, the collected data from Huda, and Manal, discussed in **Chapter 6** revealed the influence of religion and its dual outcomes on teacher motivation and resilience. Specifically, when teacher's beliefs conflicted with the MoE policies' disregard of ethical conduct.

The few studies that investigate the effect of language teacher's faith on their professional identity and practice, suggests a positive influence (Almayez, 2022; Baurain, 2016; Vandrick, 2018). For instance, Ding and De Costa (2018), reported how faith changed their participant professional identity by finding meaning and purpose in educating students. The same could be applied to Huda and several other teachers who used their faith as motive to improve, care and educate students as best as they could. In contrast, Manal's narrative revealed how the struggle between her religious beliefs and imposed policies, promoted her apathetic attitude toward teaching, which she perceives as the reality. Although Manal's use of faith appears positive inspiring her to fulfil the job requirements, a closer look at the data

suggests it's restriction regarding positive adaptation. That is, by her focus on fear of punishment, in contrast to other teachers who used fear and hope of a deity's reward as motivation.

A similar challenge was reported by two teachers in a focus group, and though their responses varied, they to some extent, follow the same pattern to maladaptive resilience. As discussed above (see 8.3.1), Lama and Hala appeared to be in a period of professional stagnation, and though they have years of teaching experience, both teachers are struggling to bridge the gap between students' level and curriculum. Their reports implied disappointments and doubts in their teaching abilities, especially since they have been teaching the same cohort during Covid and after returning to in person teaching. This means that teachers require constant support and access to CPD programs to help them overcome unpredictable teaching challenges and revive their resilience, especially in Hala's case.

According to Earl et al. (2017), student disengagement is one of the significant challenges for teachers. This seemed to be the case with several teachers in expressing their frustration, and, engaging in self-criticism, as was the case with Sara. Data have shown that teacher's motivation and self-efficacy fluctuated in response to both students' engagement and language level. At their lowest, several teachers described their performance as the bare minimum. However, the capacity to bounce back was evident in the narrative of eight teachers suggesting that they constantly strived to help their students learn. This was exemplified in teachers listening to students' needs, and active engagement with reflection, and CPD programs to improve their performance. This resonates with Sammons et al. (2007) statement that teacher resilience encompasses "a strong sense of vocation, self-efficacy and motivation to teach"(p. 694). Taking this a step further, five teachers expressed their love for teaching, which might also explain their ability to repeatedly bounce back as displayed in their roller-coaster journey, or to maintain a relatively adaptive state of resilience. However, it is important to note that

though other teachers did not express their love for teaching, their drawings and narrative revealed their commitment to their students as they gradually were able to overcome challenges and develop resilience.

8.5 Coping and resilience: a dynamic response to challenges

As established in literature, resilience emerges from the reciprocal interaction between the many personal and contextual systems (Gu, 2018; Masten, 2014 ; Ungar, 2012). As discussed above, participants faced several personal and contextual challenges and their responses displayed individual nuance. According to Pargament (1997), "coping is a process, one that evolves and changes over time" (p. 89), which is influenced by personal and contextual factors (Frydenberg, 2014). Earlier, I highlighted teacher's response to challenges, and revealed the gradual change and development of their coping throughout the years. As data showed teachers used avoidance and self-isolation, which have been described as ineffective as it is usually associated with negative emotions such as anxiety and ultimately lead to maladaptive adjustment (Frydenberg, 2014; MacIntyre et al., 2020). Findings suggest that participant's choice was influenced by their language and teaching insecurities, as was the case with Hadeel who avoided seeking help to save face. Furthermore, the Saudi culture and school environment seemed to promote this type of coping. As further discussed in **Chapter 7,** teachers avoided seeking help from experienced colleagues and administration because they assumed that dealing with challenges is part of their responsibilities. It seems that there is a prevailing culture that teachers are all knowing, and ready to assume the responsibilities attached to their role. This, in my opinion, might explain why some headmasters did not effectively help the teachers who sought their help, as was the case with Rahaf. Furthermore, it might explain why many schools and universities do not provide a mentoring programme for novice teachers or at the very least a peer observation scheme to help them adjust.

The individuality of teachers' experience was evident in the data, that is, some teachers were supported by their administration by providing the resources, and access to CPD, hence, facilitating teachers' gradual improvement and resilience. As the data revealed, five teachers had positive factors in their environment, such as experienced colleagues and access to mentors. However, as discussed in **Chapter 6** and **7,** teachers' language and teaching insecurities, as well as context unfamiliarity, prevented them from using available resources. Thus, it can be argued that some teachers prolonged their stress, which hindered their ability to develop resilience, as was the case with Hanan. The process of resilience includes teachers' ability to navigate and use personal and contextual resources (Ungar, 2012). As the data showed, teachers gradually started to navigate and harness their personal and contextual resources. Personal factors included passion for teaching, motivation to improve and spiritual beliefs, which manifested in fulfilling obligations to a deity and students.

While ten teachers explicitly referenced religion as motivator and a way to cope, reports from other teachers implied their use of religion to overcome hardship. However, it is important to note that teacher's reliance on or use of religious coping was varied. That is, it depends on the extent to which religion is part of teachers coping system. As Park (2005b) suggests, " religion is far more likely to be used in the coping of those for whom religion is a highly salient aspect of their understanding of self and world than in the coping of those who are less devout." (p. 711). Furthermore, as illustrated in the data, it also depends on teacher's environment. Four teachers were advised either by family members, or friends to turn to a deity to overcome difficulties. Accordingly, this shaped teachers' coping behaviours and served to build their repertoire. Unfortunately, research, as Wong (2018) stated, has neglected religion as part of language teacher identity and wellbeing, with exception of few studies that examined teachers' faith and their identity (e.g. Almayez, 2022; Baurain, 2016; Ding & De Costa, 2018). As shown

in **Chapter 2,** religion is intertwined in every aspect in the Saudi society, and thus, it is difficult to untangle the extent to which faith contribute to teacher resilience and coping behaviour.

As for the environment, teachers were influenced by several factors, including experienced colleagues, headmasters' support to improve and limited access to CPD. As the data revealed, teachers sought help from colleagues and used different resources to improve their knowledge and teaching skills. Teachers joined and built online supportive networks, which they seemed to draw on regularly. The interaction with online communities helped teachers overcome teaching challenges and encouraged them to engage in self-directed CPD, such as reflection. Engaging in reflection was one of the skills that teachers developed over years, with four teachers reporting their reflection process, which helped them improve their teaching to suit student's needs and monitor their performance**.** Although it is difficult to pinpoint factors leading teacher's engagement with reflection, the results appear to confirm research reports on the role of reflection in promoting teachers problem-solving skills, and resilience (Castro et al., 2010; Le Cornu, 2009; Sharplin et al., 2011). Thus, some of participants' coping behaviour changed from avoidance and self-isolation to actively harnessing both personal and contextual resources, gradually improving and developing resilience. However, teacher resilience is not static, it is as Kostoulas and Lammerer (2020, p. 95) argued in "constant flux", fluctuating in response to the context's stressors. While teachers might appear to be in a relatively adaptive or maladaptive state, the unpredictable nature of teaching and changes in both personal and contextual resources is likely to perturb their resilience state. In my opinion, the roller-coaster archetype reflects literature's conceptualisation of resilience. Participants narratives and drawings provided evidence on the process as it suggests both their acceptance of their maladaptive state and capacity to gradually bounce back.

Chapter 9 Conclusion

This chapter summaries the major findings and discusses the implication and limitations of research. This is followed by summary of teachers CPD needs and suggestions, which could potentially inform future polices.

9.1. Summary of findings

Three qualitative studies were designed in sequence to examine the development and changes of language teachers' resilience throughout their career span. The most significant findings of the exploratory study, which arguably formed the research investigation were the 4 resilience archetypes and religion as an integral part of teachers coping mechanism. In addition to these findings, the study revealed that most of the teaching challenges that Saudi language teachers encountered are universal, such as workload, and lack of support and resources (Al-Seghayer, 2014b; Carroll et al., 2022). However, the data suggested specific teaching challenges in Saudi context, such as the top-down educational system, and supremacy of Arabic, which influenced students' engagement and motivation to learn English (Al-Seghayer, 2015; Elyas & Picard, 2019).

These preliminary findings guided the second study, which aimed to further investigate the 4 resilience archetypes, named smooth resilience archetype, maladaptive archetype, roller-coaster archetype, and reluctant archetype. The collected data from teachers' stories and drawings, highlighted the individuality of teacher's resilience experience. Further interpretation of the findings confirmed the complexity and dynamic of teachers' resilience, which was influenced by personal and contextual factors (Masten, 2014b). Data showed the influence of teachers learning experience, which formed and guided teachers practice in the first years of teaching. This, as demonstrated was linked to the inadequate training which failed to prepare teachers for the role and reality of teaching. The gap between their English programs and the English curriculum was one of the issues that teachers criticised claiming that it had a

direct effect on their language proficiency and inability to teach some of the language skills. The consequence as illustrated in the data was teachers stress, and students' failure and lack of achievement. Furthermore, findings confirmed the crucial role of the teaching context in promoting and hindering resilience (Papatraianou & Le Cornu, 2014). Teachers accounts provided evidence on both, highlighting the role of headmasters, colleagues, and resources. Significantly, my data showed, that the process of resilience requires teachers' ability to navigate and use personal and contextual resources (Ungar, 2012). As findings suggest, this process is gradual, complex, and dynamic. The change and development of teacher's resilience was reflected in their drawings, which can be described as adaptive or maladaptive, and in some cases remained relatively stable (Kostoulas & Lammerer, 2020).Similarly, the findings showed the complex change and development of teachers coping behaviour. The data illustrated that avoidant coping strategies, such as isolation and venting promoted maladaptive resilience (Alonso-Tapia et al., 2019). In contrast, strategies, such as seeking help and improving skills facilitated teachers' improvement and adaptive resilience. Further interpretation of the data revealed that teachers coping repertoire gradually developed to incorporate religious coping, which appears to promote teachers' tranquillity and resilience (McIntire & Duncan, 2013).

The third study was conducted to expand on these results, specifically the relevance of the resilience archetypes, teachers coping behaviour and CPD programmes that promotes resilience. The findings as discussed in **Chapter 7** revealed that the roller-coaster archetype, was the most experienced by teachers, followed by the smooth archetype, to the least experience the reluctant and maladaptive archetypes. Teacher's experience and response to the roller-coaster archetype reflect the unpredictable and complex reality of teaching, which as teacher accounts suggested, elicited different coping response that evolved over their career span (Gregersen et al., 2021). The smooth resilience archetype was the second experienced by

teachers, and their accounts highlighted the role of headmasters in building trusting and supportive with teachers as well as creating a an environment that fostered teacher professional growth (Papatraianou & Le Cornu, 2014). Furthermore, the role of teacher's personal qualities, such as passion for teaching, motivation and positive personality was evident in facilitating their resilience capacity.

Similarly, the accounts from teachers who related to the reluctant and maladaptive archetypes, highlight the complex and continuous interaction between teacher's personal systems and contextual factors. As discussed in **Chapter 7**, their drawings, and accounts revealed the individuality of teacher's resilience experience. Data from reluctant archetype, revealed that "however slowly or falteringly", teachers were able to develop resilience by actively harnessing personal and contextual resources (Higgins, 1994). Although the maladaptive archetype appears to be the least experienced, what teachers accounts and drawings clearly illustrate, was that at some point in their career span teacher reached an adaptive state. Furthermore, based on the unpredictable nature of teaching and reality of the Saudi context as discussed in **Chapter 2,** their relatively adaptive state might be challenged and change. With regards to coping, this study supported previous findings, and revealed that teacher's coping was influenced by their insecurities, cultural background, and school environment. This was illustrated in teachers' self-isolation and choice to teach by trial and error, which prolonged their maladaptive state.

Furthermore, data revealed the influence of teacher's family values and relationship in shaping and promoting specific coping practices, namely, religious coping. Although religion as I argued is embedded in teacher's identity, it was not part of their initial coping strategies. The data suggested that in several cases it was promoted by family and friends. Hence, expanding teachers coping repertoire. Significantly, my data shed some light of on the influence of teacher's faith, which is rarely discussed in relation to their resilience. With regards to CPD,

the data revealed teachers' commitment mostly engaging with self-directed CPD activities, which contributed to their improvement, and facilitated the development of their resilience. Although MoE seemed to acknowledge the importance of CPD programmes for teachers, the policies as teacher's reports revealed seemed to fall short in supporting their professional growth. Generally, teachers either had limited access or no access to CPD programmes.

As findings suggested, teachers seemed forced to take the full responsibility of their professional growth. This contradicted with teachers understanding of CPD as a shared responsibility between them and policy makers/ school administration. Teachers' willingness to engage with CPD programme was not an issue, many teachers actively engaged with self-directed CPD, and formal CPD programmes when available. The problem as data suggested, is the hindering polices, especially for schoolteachers whose professional growth is most neglected in terms of access and quality of CPD programmes. Such practices reinforce teacher's isolation and as I argued might lead to teachers' disengagement with CPD and apathetic attitudes towards the profession. As for university teachers, the data revealed the differences between universities, in terms of the CPD policies and overall environment. Generally, most teachers in this study criticised the quantity and quality of CPD programmes, which are imposed and do not address their needs. Teachers' criticism revealed that CPD programmes are rarely evaluated and updated by the administration. This, as some of the teacher's accounts illustrated their doubts about future development, that values their input and cater to their needs. In contrast, the accounts of few teachers presented a positive example of institutional support, which as the findings suggested promoted teachers' development and resilience. What interesting about teacher's accounts, is that it showed their trust in their administration and belief that their voices and needs are address to some extent. That is, depending on the assigned administration team. Although these examples are restricted to two universities, it might be an example to follow by other universities to promote teachers'

professional growth and resilience. Overall, what is consistent in study findings, is the hierarchy of the Saudi educational system, which despite the reported development, still marginalise teacher's voice, and limit their autonomy, imposing policies and accountability (Allmnakrah & Evers, 2020).

9.2. Limitations

My research provided some valuable insight on the development and change of Saudi language teachers' resilience over their career span. However, the research has several limitations. First, the sample for the two main studies was limited to female teachers. This was because of cultural reasons, and unfamiliarity with research interviews which affected the recruitment and participation of all teachers. Specifically, male teachers. As shown in the methodology chapter three male teachers participated in the pilot study, two were Saudis who showed interest and were cooperative. Male teachers experience is valuable, and it would be interesting to explore if they recognise the resilience archetypes or if their resilience experience has different patterns. Furthermore, as the research findings revealed, dealing with difficulties is assumed to be a teacher responsibility, which hindered teachers' resilience. Thus, examining how male teachers cope with difficulties might provide insight on their coping, that is, if gender plays a factor in coping behaviour. Using questionnaires or collaborating with male research might provide insight and a holistic understanding of Saudi teachers' resilience.

Second, the simple size for the focus group as shown in Chapter 5 does not fall under the general rule of focus number (i.e., 5-8). However, the time constrains, recruitment obstacles and unexpected withdrawal effected group numbers and composition, especially schoolteachers. I would argue that I was able to achieve the study aims; however, future research examining resilience archetypes should take into consideration factors that might impact recruitment for focus group interviews. Finally, teachers' narrative went through several

reconstructions in the analysis and writing up process. That is, as explained, several nuanced in teachers' narratives were not incorporated; they remain part of the untold stories with plausible interpretations.

9.3. Implications and recommendations

Although my findings are preliminary, it revealed 4 different resilience archetypes, which illustrated the complexity and individuality of teachers' resilience. This was achieved through using a combination of interviews and line drawing which reflected the development and change of teacher's resilience over their career span. Future research, with more participants representing teachers at different career stage (i.e., novice, mid and late career stage) could incorporate other methods, such as observation and reflective journals to expand and validate current findings in different international teaching contexts. Such research could expand our understanding of teacher resilience and how to promote it to deal with teachers attrition and burnout. Although this study examined teachers' resilience at different contexts (i.e., schools vs universities) and showed some differences in terms of environment, and CPD support, further research is needed to expand on these results and closely examine how differences in these contexts influence teacher resilience.

The current findings shed light on the role of teacher's faith on their coping behaviour, motivation, and resilience. As discussed in my review of the literature, religion as significant dimension in teacher identity have been overlooked, which arguably limit our understanding of teacher identity, which incorporate knowledge and skills that is influenced by teacher's beliefs (Wong, 2018). Therefore, future research should be directed towards gaining a deep understanding on how language teachers religion manifest in their practice. The research findings might be describe as step forward pushing language teacher research to investigate other faiths beyond Christianity, which has " the lion's share of research on religious or spiritual

identity in ELT has focused on educators who identify with a Christian belief system" (Vaccino-Salvadore, 2021, p. 2). This study among few (e.g Almayez, 2022), provided evidence on Islam as worth examining faith, especially, in contexts such as Saudi in which it's an integral part of every life aspect. Taking this a step further, the research findings encourage teacher education programs to expand and change their focus on pedagogical and content knowledge (Richards, 2008), that is, to incorporate religious dimensions (Wong, 2018). Finally, the research findings highlighted the differences between CPD programs in higher education and mainstream education and its impact on teachers' professional development and resilience. These findings could potentially help policy makers design and implement a unified CPD programs for schoolteachers and university teachers.

9.4. Teacher recommendations for CPD

Teachers in focus groups echoed research findings that criticised the quality and quantity of CPD programs in Saudi context. They provided several recommendations that targets their needs in terms of teaching, administrative and soft skills. Some of which are specific to university teachers. Their recommendations could inform policy makers on teachers needs and guide their implementation of CPD as well as development of per-service training.

CPD for teaching skills

1. Mentorship programme,
2. Peer observation scheme.
3. Classroom engagement workshops
4. Classroom management.
5. Different CPD for teaching the four language skills.
6. Exam writing and implanting class activities targeting students' levels.
7. Developing research skills, such using corpus for research (university teachers)

CPD for administrative skills:

1. Regular workshops explaining the implementation of new policies and teachers' rights and responsibilities, especially for novice teachers.

2. Workshops exampling the university’s paperwork process.
3. Worksop on organising events, such conferences (for university teachers)

CPD for soft skills and other:

1. Self-confidence.
2. Time management
3. Communication in the work environment.
4. Introducing resilience and how to cope with difficulties.

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Appendix 1: A sample of interview guide and questions

Interview guide for Hanan

The goal of this interview is to focus on coping strategies. Particularly examining how you dealt with difficulties throughout your teaching experience. In this interview, I will focus on:

1) Your negative experience with teachers and training experience, if possible. I am interested in learning how these experiences affected your view of the teaching profession (why you hated it).
2) Learn more about your first teaching experience at the Technical College, particularly your relationship with colleagues and supervisors.
3) Discuss in detail your experience at Al-Dammam university, particularly your relationship with colleagues and students (e.g., how it started). Furthermore, how were you able to overcome the teaching difficulties and improve your teaching performance. (e.g., the factors that helped you).

Interview questions

1) Before you said that you had a terrible experience with your teachers which made you hate teaching, can you describe this experience and how it affected you?
2) Can you describe your teacher training period?
3) How did your teacher training affect your view of the teaching profession?

4) In the previous interview, you said that your Master supervisor suggested that you become a teacher. Is that why you accepted the job at the Technical College? Or was it the only job available at that time?
5) When you started teaching at the Technical College, you said that you did not show interest to form a relationship with your colleagues, but eventually, you did. My question is, what prevented you from forming a relationship right away?
6) What made you decide to have a relationship with your colleagues? Or what helped you to form a relationship with them?
7) In the previous interview, you described your relationship as shallow, and it was mostly venting about the teaching difficulties. My question is, why did you describe it as shallow? And when you talked about your teaching difficulties, did they give you any advice on how to overcome these difficulties?
8) One of the difficulties you faced is your inability to connect with your students. My question is, did you ask your colleagues or supervisors for help on how to connect with students?
9) Did you ask your supervisors or colleagues for help or support when you faced difficulties with lesson planning and class activities?
10) You describe the work environment as suffocating because of the strict rules. My question is, is that why you moved to AL-Dammam university? Was it one of the jobs that you applied for in your class time?
11) In the previous interview, you said that you had a bad experience with some Saudi girls while studying in the U.S, and you decided to never be friends with Saudi girls. My question is, what happened to make you feel this way?
12) In the previous job, it took you a while to form a relationship with your colleagues. Was it the same with your colleagues at AL-Dammam university?

13) How did your relationship with your colleagues help you improve your teaching performance?
14) You couldn't connect with your students right away as you said in the previous interview. My question is, what made you change and start to connect with your students?
15) Did you ask your colleagues for help on how to connect with students before that?
16) When did you start to reflect on your previous teaching experience?
17) What are the factors that helped you gain confidence?
18) What are the factors that helped you overcome difficulties?
19) How would you describe your coping strategies throughout the years?
20) What is the most effective coping strategy that helped you distress and was productive?

Appendix 2: Focus Interview schedule and guide

Interview schedule:

1. **Introducing teacher resilience**

   Definition and examples

2. **Teachers journey to resilience.**

   Presenting graphs, questions, and discussion

3. **Coping strategies**

   Examples and discussion

4. **CPD programs**

   Examples and discussions

Discussion rules

1. Only one per weeks at a time
2. you don't have to speak in a particular order.
3. There is no right or wrong answer and don't have to agree with anyone's view.
4. please have a pen and paper ready for some activities.

Appendix 3: Consent form

Purpose:

The purpose of this focus group interview is to further investigate the trajectory of language teachers' resilience by examining the resilience profile of several language teachers.

Process:

As a participant in this study, you will join a group discussion with several English teachers. As a member in the group will be asked several questions about your teaching experience and if relevant compare it with several teachers' profile presented at the being of the group discussion. Furthermore, you will be asked to discuss with the group the most effective coping strategies and CPD activities that might be helpful for teachers. The group discussion will be recoded using an audio recorder to ensure data accuracy. Please remember that your participation in the study is completely voluntary and you are free to leave at any time and without any consequences. Moreover, as participant your data will be securely stored, and your identity will be protected. Your data will only be referred to anonymously in research dissemination**.**

Please read the following statements and provide your answer

☐ **Yes**	☐ **No**	I confirm that the purpose of the study has been explained and that I have understood it
☐ **Yes**	☐ **No**	I have had the opportunity to ask questions and they have been successfully answered
☐ **Yes**	☐ **No**	I understand that my participation in this study is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time, without giving a reason and without consequence
☐ **Yes**	☐ **No**	I understand that all data are anonymous and that there will not be any connection between the personal information provided and the data
☐ **Yes**	☐ **No**	I understand that there are no known risks or hazards associated with participating in this study
☑ **Yes**	☐ **No**	I consent to my data being transcribed and wish to be referred to anonymously in written forms of dissemination
☐ **Yes**	☐ **No**	I consent to an audio file of my participation to be used, but would like identifying factors (e.g. my name to be removed) from any presentation of my data including research dissemination [and knowledge exchange activities with non-academic partners]
☐ **Yes**	☐ **No**	I confirm that I have read and understood the above information and that I agree to participate in this study
☐ **Yes**	☐ **No**	I confirm that I am over 16 years of age

Researcher's name: Researcher's signature:

Participant's name: Participant's signature:

Please if you have any question feel free to ask though the contact information provided.

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Appendix 4: A sample of teacher's drawings

