RESILIENCE OF TEACHING JUVENILES: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF

TEACHERS IN JUVENILE CORRECTIONS FACILITIES

by

Jessica Denise Bradshaw

Liberty University

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

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Abstract

The purpose of this hermeneutic phenomenological study was to interpret the experience of resilience in teachers in juvenile corrections facilities. The theory guiding this study is the self-determination theory, which Richard Ryan and Edward Deci developed. Self-determination theory is a means to understand human motivation. The methodology to be used is a hermeneutic phenomenological approach using interviews, exhibit scenarios, and a journal reflection prompt from 13 voluntary participants of teachers and former teachers with experience in long-term juvenile corrections facilities from around the United States. Although the education field has challenges in any setting, the challenges specific to working in a long-term secure corrections facility housing teenage youth were the primary focus of this study. All data were analyzed using the hermeneutic circle in which the whole was interpreted through the individual parts, and the individual parts were interpreted through the whole, allowing for the preunderstandings of the researcher to be used to build a horizon between the past and the present. The participants revealed many unique challenges to their environment, including educational gaps, the need for safety, and the importance of building relationships with their students. The participants revealed their ability to build resilience by reflecting on their calling for their job, belief in a higher power, strong desire to help their students, and practicing self-care. The interpretations of the data collected showed that teachers had to build resilience continuously to avoid burnout, they held a passion for helping their students over their passion for teaching, and they thrived on the extra challenges of the juvenile correction facility.

Keywords: teacher challenges, incarcerated youth, corrections facility, recidivism, resiliency

Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to my loving husband who has always stood beside me and encouraged me to continue. Also, to my son and daughter who encouraged me with cuddles and cartoons. You both came into this world during this process and inspired me to continue working even when I didn't want to.

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I would also like to acknowledge the educational staff of the Giddings State School that work so hard, so diligently, and so thanklessly every day for the students that are sent to them. Despite staffing shortages, constant staff turnover, and the everyday risk of walking into the facility, the educational staff continuously shows up and tries everything to reach some of the most difficult students to be found.

And thank you to those that have helped in this process: my family, Pam Burns, Jamie Walker, Lora and Stan Petty, the entire TLC Daycare center, and every friend that checked in on me and helped me keep my sanity!

Lastly, thank you to Dr. Jerry Woodbridge, the Merry Band of Scholars, and JASA. This process is quite lonely and all of you stepped into my home, spoke to me, lifted me up, and helped me feel less isolated despite the many miles between us all.

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Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP)

Self-Determination Theory (SDT)

Texas Juvenile Justice Department (TJJD)

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Overview

The educational field is always taking steps to reach students to provide a better and brighter future (Xu & Luo, 2020). One population that does not receive as much attention is those who are incarcerated during their juvenile years (Kearley et al., 2021). To support this population of youth, quality teachers are necessary who have lasting careers within juvenile corrections facilities (Jäggi & Kliewer, 2020). This chapter contains the background, problem, and purpose statements, the significance of the study, and then gives an overview of the research questions that will guide this study. A chronological history of teaching within juvenile facilities and how the education of incarcerated youth has affected society is in the background section. The problem and purpose statements have information concerning the necessity of completing the research. The significance of this study is explained to assist with building a stronger teacher workforce within the juvenile justice system. The research questions guiding this study are also contained in this chapter with the summary.

Background

This section will include a historical background of education with the juvenile justice system within the United States with a focus on the educational system within long-term secure juvenile facilities. This information is difficult to procure as each state maintains different records for different amounts of time. The historical background will emphasize the history of providing an education to incarcerated youth and the ability to recruit and retain educators. The history of teacher resilience and persistence will also be investigated in all environments. Furthermore, the social perspective of this topic will be identified. The theoretical perspective will show the framework of self-determination theory. The views of educating incarcerated

youth in order to return to society successfully and reduce the chances of continuing a life of crime will be addressed.

Historical Context

In 1980, the Civil Rights of Institutionalized Persons Act (CRIPA) was passed. This act was an attempt to bring educational rights to youth in corrections facilities but only allowed for the investigation of neglect and treatment issues, such as the availability of schooling regardless of where a youth was housed (CRIPA, 1980; Special Litigation Section, 2021). With the passing of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in 1990, education in juvenile corrections facilities took a larger role (Deitch, 2020; Petuchowski, 2022). Through the 1990s, many changes caused a dramatic increase in the number of incarcerated youths (Lambie & Randell, 2013). According to the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), the early 2000s showed that over half of the incarcerated youth were at least one grade level below in their education than their peers, and 60% of youth had been suspended or expelled from school within a year before being sent to a facility (Umpierre, 2020). With the education of incarcerated youth sorely lacking, it was even more crucial for there to be quality teachers within the juvenile justice system (Gagnon et al., 2012).

It has only been in the last couple of decades that increasing the level of professionalism within juvenile facilities has been considered (Clark, 2020). Deitch (2020) explains how increasing the professional development of the staff can assist the youth with discipline, structure, benefit treatment plans, educational participation, and other services. However, professional development focused on teachers within such an environment is lacking or unfocused to the teachers' environment (Pytash & Kosko, 2020; Someki & Allen, 2021). Teachers with secondary certifications have taken training courses, observations, and often

taught all in traditional school settings (Patrie, 2017). Those environments and methods are not as applicable within a juvenile facility, which has a higher rate of students with learning disabilities (Dirkzwager et al., 2021; Farmer & Brooks, 2020), increased chances of violence (Lane et al., 2019), and lacking in formal education that far exceeds that of their peers (Flores & Barahona-Lopez, 2020).

Social Context

Adolescents who commit crimes and are found out by the justice system are removed from their homes and families and placed in secure facilities (Desai, 2020). Nearly all youth will be released and returned to society, and it is the job of the juvenile justice system to prepare youth for that eventuality (Seigle et al., 2014). For educators, the challenge faced is assisting these youth with their education so that they can return to school or have enough education to be successful in the workforce. There are many negative connotations not only for the students leaving the juvenile system but also for the teachers who work with such a population of youth (Michals & Kessler, 2015). Anytime teachers are unable to provide an education to the youth who are incarcerated, society fails as the risk of recidivism also rises (Docherty et al., 2022; Steurer & Smith, 2003). Youth who cannot obtain a high school level education place a greater strain on the economy as resources are typically funneled more to the uneducated and statistically have a higher rate of crime (Case & Hazel, 2020).

If the retention issues of teachers of incarcerated youth are not resolved, there will be fewer qualified teachers to educate this demographic (Petuchowski, 2022). Hiring qualified personnel will also become an issue causing standards to be lowered to fill positions within the schools. Without qualified professionals educating incarcerated youth, the students will face even greater challenges once released from the correction facility, whether returning to a school,

pursuing alternative diplomas, or entering directly into the workforce (Mathur et al., 2023). This can have a greater impact on society as recidivism rates will most likely increase with youth remaining in the judicial system causing a financial burden on society and the judicial system (Puzzanchera et al., 2022; Steurer & Smith, 2003).

Theoretical Context

One of the primary seminal works on this topic is the work of David Houchins (2004, 2010, 2017). Houchins has completed research on the retention of juvenile justice teachers, the satisfaction of teachers of incarcerated youth, and investigated why teachers choose to work in juvenile correction facilities just to name a few of his studies. He is one of the leading experts concerning teachers in this environment of the juvenile judicial system. While Houchins has not researched the specific topic of resilience of teachers of incarcerated youth, his work helps to understand the environment in which those teachers are working. His work also builds a foundation of the mindset of teachers within juvenile correction facilities. All this information helps with understanding how teachers either built resilience or had resilience when starting a career in the juvenile judicial system. With the assistance of his research and others, this study will build upon some of his ideas to learn more about the resilience of teachers of incarcerated youth which has been an unexplored topic.

There is also substantial work concerning the resilience of teachers without a focus on teachers of incarcerated youth or even the resilience of any teachers within the judicial system. Angela Lee Duckworth, the author of *Grit: The Power of Passion and Persistence*, is one of the leading experts on people understanding grit and persistence as well as how a person can build those qualities (Hanford, 2023). Duckworth partnered with Claire Robertson-Kraft to research the grit levels and persistence of novice teachers (Robertson-Kraft & Duckworth, 2014). Other

works have investigated the resilience of teachers within mainstream or traditional settings (see, for example, Fernandes et al., 2019; Gu, 2014; Shields & Mullen, 2020). Using their understanding of resilience in context to teachers, this study will focus on the resilience of teachers of incarcerated youth.

Problem Statement

The problem is that juvenile correction facilities have retention issues among educators for a population of vulnerable and troubled youth (Washburn & Menart, 2019; Weiland, 2021). Although the United States is seeing increases in the teacher shortage (Buttner, 2021; Geiger & Pivovaraova, 2018), retention in the educational systems for juvenile corrections facilities is also in crisis (Sawyer, 2019). Incarcerated juveniles are a crucial population who need quality education to improve their chances of leaving the judicial system, reducing recidivism, and being productive members of society. Education dramatically reduces recidivism chances (Ahmed et al., 2019; Jäggi & Kliewer, 2020; Mathur et al., 2023). Therefore, ensuring each juvenile receives a quality education is paramount.

Unfortunately, there is minimal training for teachers who decide to enter the juvenile corrections setting available, whether in preparation for the career or professional development as a continuing education option (Someki & Allen, 2021). For those teachers who last and make long-term careers within juvenile corrections, more information needs to be known and then used to assist with proper professional development, education of teachers before entering juvenile corrections, and potentially build a teaching profession strictly around this environment like how teachers choose to be elementary or secondary teachers. Juvenile correction facilities are significantly more difficult to teach at due to the issues of security, safety, lack of resources, consistent student rotation, and poor academic history of the students (Development Services

Group, Inc., 2019b, March; Flores & Barahona-Lopez, 2020). Teachers are often needed to focus on life skills besides their assigned subject (Benner et al., 2017). In a situation that goes beyond simply teaching the mandated curriculum, teachers need further training concerning the environment and ways to build longevity to provide the best educational experience possible for incarcerated youth so that they may have a chance at a better future.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this hermeneutic phenomenological study was to interpret the experience of resilience in teachers in juvenile corrections facilities in the United States. At this stage in the research, resilience will be generally defined as having a minimum of one year of experience teaching within a long-term juvenile corrections facility. Long-term is also defined as working at a facility in which students typically remain for at least six months but can be sentenced to several years for youth who have committed serious or violent crimes or for youth who are considered chronic offenders (Development Services Group, Inc., 2019b, March). Unlike a traditional classroom, whether in a public or charter school, a corrections facility is a unique place. Through the understanding of how teachers have or build resilience to continue working in this environment, retention can be decreased by sharing that information with others and assisting in the hiring process.

Significance of the Study

The significance of this study is to identify the resiliency tactics of teachers in relation to the self-determination theory while enhancing other studies done in relation to the teachers of incarcerated youth and creating a better future for those youth. The following section will look at the theoretical, empirical, and practical perspectives this study contributes to the knowledge base

of resiliency among teachers and the professional development of teachers of incarcerated youth within long-term correction facilities.

Theoretical Significance

Self-determination theory (SDT), created by Richard Ryan and Edward Deci (2000), focuses on the motivation a person has for all aspects of their life. There are three components: autonomy, relatedness, and competence. Ryan and Deci (2000) have an entire part of their study focused on the classroom; however, their research focuses on the traditional, mainstream classroom which makes up nearly all public schools (see, for example, Ryan & Deci, 2000, ch. 14: Schools as Contexts for Learning and Social Development). This study will build on this theory to recognize how SDT relates to classrooms within the juvenile justice system. Not only will the motivation of teachers to work in a challenging environment of juvenile correction facilities be studied, but also a brief look and understanding of how youth within these facilities obtain self-determination. This study will also build a better perception of how teachers of incarcerated youth build autonomy, relatedness, and competence concerning resilience to overcome many challenges.

Empirical Significance

This study will advance the work of Houchins (2004, 2010, 2017) to focus not only on how to build professional development that will aid in teachers remaining in the juvenile judicial system but will also assist with the hiring process of looking for specific qualities in a teacher. Decreasing turnover and ensuring that the right qualified professional is hired is important to ensuring the longevity of teachers of incarcerated youth. While Houchins has looked at teachers within this environment, his focus has been on retention, job satisfaction, and the reasons teachers chose to take on a career in the juvenile judicial system. This study will focus on the

resilience of successful teachers to determine if those qualities are inherent or can be developed to ensure teacher longevity. Teachers who create lasting careers in the juvenile justice system have many benefits to the children within their classrooms and assist with ensuring the academic success of a marginalized population (Case & Hazel, 2020).

Practical Significance

The largest impact this study can have is on the lives of incarcerated youth. Quality teachers who can thrive in the juvenile justice system setting and reach incarcerated youth can be incalculably valuable. Teachers who have the care and desire to assist youth who are arguably at their lowest have only one direction to grow and thrive (Farmer & Brooks, 2020). Education has a positive impact on the rate of recidivism and therefore is a strong focus in juvenile correction facilities (Mathur et al., 2023). By assisting teachers of incarcerated youth, teachers are more likely to stay and fight for their students. Increased retention is better for the students and the juvenile correction facilities. By changing the mindsets of youth away from a life of crime and wrongdoing, society can only be positively impacted (Deitch, 2020). Increased desire to obtain an education can assist all incarcerated youth to find better paths and become productive members of society. This study can assist in building training programs, conferences with other similar career path educators, and preparation for this path even at the collegiate level as students are working on their teacher certification. As an afterthought career path, teaching exclusively in juvenile corrections facilities is not promoted in the same manner as public schools or even charter schools.

<div align="center">

Research Questions

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The following research questions are a guide for this study to better understand the resilience of teachers within juvenile correction facilities. Research has been done on the

resilience necessary for teachers in all regards, but there is a blind spot in relation to the teachers within juvenile correction facilities. The understanding of resilience necessary for teachers has brought professional development for teachers to assist in overcoming challenging situations, but these trainings do not always apply to the environment of teachers of incarcerated youth. Currently, there is limited research concerning the retention of teachers within corrections facilities and even less research identifying how teachers build the resilience to remain in a difficult environment.

Central Research Question

How do teachers in juvenile correction facilities demonstrate resilience through the struggles of incarcerated juveniles and the environment?

Sub-Question One

How do teachers in juvenile corrections facilities foster personal persistence and resilience through their work with incarcerated youth?

Sub-Question Two

How do the experiences of resilient teachers in juvenile corrections facilities assist others desiring a career to work with incarcerated youth?

Sub-Question Three

What strategies do experienced teachers implement with incarcerated youth that improve resiliency in their career?

<div style="text-align:center">Definitions</div>

1. *Juvenile Corrections Facilities* – secure, long-term detention facilities for youth who have been judged delinquent for an offense. Youth are typically confined to these facilities between a few months and several years (Clark, 2020, p. 4).

2. *Juvenile Detention* Center – a place in which juveniles that have been accused of a crime necessary to be dealt with by the court system and requires a restricted environment to be housed safely while awaiting legal action while also protecting the community from any additional harm that could be caused by the juvenile (Clark, 2020, p. 2).

3. *Recidivism* – when a youth has contact with the justice system by means of additional delinquent or criminal behavior (Development Services Group, Inc., 2015).

4. *Resilience* – the ability to experience difficult circumstances and 'bounce back' (Gu, 2014, p. 509).

5. *Teacher Resilience* – "the capacity to manage the everyday challenges of the realities of teaching. It is driven by teachers' educational purposes and moral values and is thus closely associated with their vocational commitment to serve the learning and achievement of the children" (Gu, 2014, p. 521).

Summary

Educators who choose a career to assist with the education of youth within corrections facilities deserve additional resources and support. The problem is that juvenile corrections facilities have retention issues among their educators for a population of vulnerable and troubled youth (Murphy, 2018; Washburn & Menart, 2019; Weiland, 2021). The purpose of this hermeneutic phenomenological study will be to interpret the experience of resilience in teachers in juvenile corrections facilities. Traditional classrooms in which youth have typically progressed from one grade to the next with minimal interference have a substantial amount of assistance and teachers' ability to find support with issues. The educational environment within a secure facility is rarely discussed and little to no training or preparedness is given to educators (Flores & Barahona-Lopez, 2020). Without the ability to teach educators how to adapt and overcome the

issues within these facilities, teachers will continue to leave the profession causing additional issues for youth locked behind the system's walls (Farmer & Brooks, 2020). Through this study, a substantial understanding of how teachers of incarcerated youth persevere is gained, which can assist with helping other educators and with the preparation of teachers desiring a career in juvenile corrections.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

A review of the literature concerning the resilience of teachers who work in juvenile corrections facilities was conducted to investigate the challenges that teachers have faced within their environment that may be different from the challenges that teachers face in a traditional classroom setting (see, for example, Flores & Barahona-Lopez, 2020; Houchins et al., 2017). This chapter presents current literature that relates to this topic of study. The theoretical framework of this study and self-determination theory is covered in the first section. The next section synthesizes recent literature concerning an overview of juvenile correction facilities and incarcerated youth including their challenges and experiences within the judicial system (Case & Hazel, 2020; Farmer & Brooks, 2020; Flores & Barahona-Lopez, 2020). This section is broken down into the experiences of education in secure correctional facilities for students (Ahmed et al., 2019; Bozick et al., 2018; Davis et al., 2013), the importance of Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Feist & Feist, 2008), difficulties students with Individual Education Plans (IEP) face (Benedick et al., 2023), and the development of self-regulation skills (Virgin et al., 2021). The next section shows the challenges teachers face instructing within a corrections facility (Davey, 2017; Flores & Barahona-Lopez, 2020; Michals & Kessler, 2015), and the gap in the literature from retention of teachers in traditional classrooms in comparison to teachers in corrections facilities (Kamrath & Gregg, 2018). Lastly, the explanation and importance of resilience will be discussed, leading to the need for this study (Ainsworth & Oldfield, 2019; Argon & Kaya, 2018; Robertson-Kraft & Duckworth, 2014).

Theoretical Framework

In this study concerning the ability of teachers to remain in juvenile corrections facilities, there are several theories to assist in understanding how these teachers face the challenges of the job and persevere. The primary theory of this research study is the self-determination theory. In this theory, extrinsic and intrinsic motivation can also assist with understanding how teachers have developed the resilience and persistence to remain teaching in juvenile corrections facilities. This information can then be used to assist in the hiring process of teachers as well as in building professional development and pedagogy for teachers already in the profession.

Self-Determination Theory

Self-determination theory (SDT) was developed by Richard Ryan and Edward Deci (2000) and this theory is a means to understand human motivation (Vinney, 2019). The three basic needs expressed by this theory are competence, relatedness, and autonomy (Ryan & Deci, 2000). For teachers, the job can practically force autonomy as a teacher stands before a class alone and decides how to teach alone. However, autonomy can diminish as teachers face greater and greater challenges. If their competence and relatedness with others are weak, the ability to build their motivation is difficult.

SDT with Incarcerated Youth

The self-determination theory would be a huge step in understanding how juveniles perceive obtaining an education. In this theory, the environment surrounding a person is considered a part of how a person has intrinsic motivation and autonomy (Jeno et al., 2019; Vinney, 2019). Motivation and autonomy are internal characteristics of a person that lead to self-determination. SDT deals with the self-motivation of people and which factors are necessary for people to succeed. SDT also requires a balance for each of the three needs and external support.

With balance and support, an individual can be more successful in their well-being and also in social development (Jeno et al., 2019; Ryan & Deci, 2017; Vinney, 2019). Self-determination theory could be a baseline to understand how incarcerated youth think about obtaining an education. When obtaining an education, there is more than intrinsic motivation and for youth, extrinsic motivation is also a factor. The extrinsic motivation leading to the support of intrinsic motivation can help youth build on positive thoughts and actions instead of following negative influences (Erofeeva et al., 2019).

By building the autonomy of an incarcerated youth, the ability of that student to succeed could be astonishing compared to the youth without autonomy. Having autonomy for an incarcerated youth is crucial because there must be an internal motivator to continue to improve and learn. Youths need the ability to want to be successful on the right path instead of on the wrong one (Kearley et al., 2021; Pace, 2018). Youths need the ability to overcome challenges without giving in to the criminal behavior they are familiar with (Borschmann et al., 2020; Lockwood et al., 2012). These challenges would also assist them with the regular challenges people face. By supporting an internal compass that points towards positive and legal actions, incarcerated youth have a better chance of being successful, furthering their education, obtaining careers, building families, and other positive aspirations. The autonomy built would assist the youth while in the juvenile justice system and can also help carry them through the rest of their lives (Bozick et al., 2018; Brendtro et al., 2019).

While autonomy is shown as a key factor, it is also important for the youth to build competence in themselves and their abilities, as well as their relatedness to others. Having competence in their own abilities is difficult for many youths due to their background which leads to them seeking acceptance from others outside of their family (Desai, 2020). The

relatedness aspect needs to be with others on a positive path rather than on a negative one. This

factor can be difficult as their peers are other incarcerated youth.

SDT with Teachers of Incarcerated Youth

Teachers within juvenile corrections facilities are also struggling with fulfilling the

requirements of the self-determination theory (Flores & Barahona-Lopez, 2020). It is possible to

understand that teachers with competence, autonomy, and relatedness are those who have the

persistence and resilience to have a lasting career in juvenile corrections. Saks et al. (2021) found

connections between teacher burnout, continued motivation, and self-determination theory.

Burnout is defined as becoming exhausted emotionally, losing a sense of identity, and lacking

personal accomplishment (Belcastro et al., 1982; Shen et al., 2015). Burnout is another factor

that has led to teacher retention issues (Geiger & Pivovarova, 2018). Bardach et al. (2021)

describe burnout as a development of chronic stress at work through a three-part process of

exhaustion, depersonalization, and decreased personal accomplishment. One of the most

significant causes of teacher burnout is student misbehavior (Bardach et al., 2021; Houchins et

al., 2004; Saks et al., 2021). As youth struggle with having their needs met by the standards of

Maslow's hierarchy of needs (to be discussed later) and building their self-determination,

teachers are aiding each student as well as building their competence, autonomy, and relatedness

(Michals & Kessler, 2015; Murphy, 2018). Teachers who show resilience have found methods to

avoid burnout and build self-determination.

For teachers to build resilience, it can be argued that they are in pursuit of eudaimonia or

complete wellness. Coined by Aristotle (ca. 350 B.C.E./1999), eudaimonia is more than

happiness (a resulting emotion) but is the achievement of human excellence and morality.

Eudaimonia can only be achieved if an employee's basic psychological needs such as safety and

security are met. According to Basic Psychological Needs Theory (BPNT), these extrinsic motivators (like Maslow's hierarchy of needs) must be fulfilled to facilitate the intrinsic motivators of self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2017). When BPNTs are of little concern, an employee's risk of burnout is significantly decreased (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Therefore, a teacher's risk of burnout is decreased when the extrinsic motivation concerning safety and school climate are fulfilled and allows the teacher to build their intrinsic motivation.

Farmer and Brooks (2020) explain how passion, persistence, and fortitude are all ideal qualities for a teacher before being hired to work within a juvenile corrections facility. Each of these intrinsic qualities is crucial to building the motivations necessary to be successful (Michals & Kessler, 2015). Extrinsic motivations for the job may be difficult to obtain such as positive affirmations from a superior as these will be mostly outside of the control of the teacher. Therefore, building resilience, intrinsic motivation, and self-determination are all important skills to ensure teacher retention.

SDT theory is connected to resilience by the intrinsic motivators necessary to be successful at both. Teachers must build their competence and relatedness to the level of their autonomy to face challenges that could potentially force the teacher to give up in their profession. Without these components, the ability to have resilience when faced with such a challenge will make the experience increasingly difficult.

Related Literature

The first section will focus on the aspects of the education system within corrections facilities, particularly for juveniles. As these youth have already entered the justice system, each student is immediately under the title of at-risk (Brendtro et al., 2019). These youth face even more battles of completing school and entering adulthood while also navigating the complex

legal system. The student and teacher perceptions are each important to understanding the full scope of this study. The next section will show the challenges of teaching and then compare and compound them to the challenges of teaching within a juvenile corrections facility. An understanding of resilience and how it is a necessary quality for a teacher will also be studied and explained in the last section.

Juvenile Correction Facilities

Facilities for juveniles vary greatly across the United States, with a mix of privately and publicly operated facilities (Puzzanchera et al., 2022). Some facilities resemble that of an adult prison, while others are designed to give a more home-like feeling (Development Services Group, Inc., 2019b, March; Moeser, 2020). While there are many types of facilities used by the juvenile judicial system, the focus of this study will be on long-term secure facilities that require youth to be housed within the facility and be provided all their rights by the facility. Some of the features that long-term secure facilities have that may resemble an adult prison are the use of security features to include but not limited to locking youth in a sleeping room at any time of day or night, the use of locked doors or gates, and the use of razor wire (Development Services Group, Inc., 2019b, March; Moeser, 2020; Puzzanchera et al., 2022).

Long-term secure facilities typically house youth who have committed serious or violent crimes, have a history of chronic offenses, and may or may not have additional needs such as psychological, intellectual, or behavioral issues (Development Services Group, Inc., 2019b, March). As a long-term facility, the classroom settings will typically have more consistency than short-term or detention center settings. Due to these needs, these youth have an increased risk of recidivism, being moved into the adult judicial system, and risks beyond the judicial system, such as homelessness, health issues, difficulty in obtaining a job, and academic failure

(Development Services Group, Inc., 2019b, March). Long-term facilities also must be prepared and trained to deal with the additional needs of the youth.

Upon entering a long-term secure facility, youth are screened for educational needs, history of substance abuse, mental health issues, and their risk for suicide much of the time (Clark, 2020; Puzzanchera et al., 2022). Academic records are acquired, if possible, to understand the amount of formal education the youth has received (Puzzanchera et al., 2022). Recognizing the importance of education, 95% of youth attend school within or outside of the facility (Development Services Group, Inc., 2019b, March; Puzzanchera et al., 2022). Other services are provided at most long-term secure facilities including mental health services, drug and alcohol abuse programs, and programs that deal specifically with the crime that was committed (Development Services Group, Inc., 2019b, March; Moeser, 2020).

Incarcerated Youth Experiences

The experiences of incarcerated youth vary from that of the experiences of youth who do not enter the judicial system. Barnert et al. (2015) conducted a study with a focus on youth perspectives surrounding the route to incarceration to include their feelings about being in jail. Some youth found the experience painful due to being removed from their families and having their freedom restricted while others found that jail was a safe and secure place and provided an escape from the chaos of their lives. Youth even mentioned the ability to feel parental love within a jail and having all their needs met such as food, shower, etc. Incarcerated youth also face the labeling of at-risk (Brendtro et al., 2019), facing the complexities of the judicial system (Seigle et al., 2014), attending school while incarcerated (Benedick et al., 2023), and preparing for a future that may or may not be in the judicial system (Berko, 2021).

Labeled At-Risk

Many factors can increase the chances of a student dropping out of school or failing academically. For years, research concerning these factors has been conducted to help schools know what signs to look for in a student (Development Services Group, Inc., 2019a, January). These factors include being economically disadvantaged, single-parent home, physical or mental abuse, engaging in sexual behavior, engaging in illegal activities, and many other factors (Ameen & Lee, 2012; Brendtro et al., 2019; Clemens et al., 2017; Dirkzwager et al., 2021; Erwin, 2020; Farmer & Brooks, 2020; Roberts et al., 2018). Each of these factors increases the likelihood that the student will not graduate from high school.

Roberts et al. (2018) explain how changes in the ability to learn can be permanent due to stressful events during childhood. These changes in abilities do not necessarily mean the student cannot learn but place a larger burden on the student and the teacher. J. Sanders et al. (2016) also showed how negative or stressful childhood experiences can be a cause of disengagement in school and even increase as the child goes into adulthood. When faced with extreme adversity, receiving a good grade, or completing an assignment is not seen with the same necessity as a child who is not facing such adversity. Therefore, youth who have been incarcerated are immediately labeled as at-risk and are faced with the expectation of failing at school (Leone & Weinberg, 2010).

There is a substantial amount of research and literature to explain at-risk youth and their behavior in a regular school setting which aids in understanding how the youth within a corrections facility behaves and learns (Brendtro et al., 2019; Donat et al., 2017; Kearley et al., 2021). Berko (2021) explains how trauma, abuse, and neglect are common among juveniles who end up in the juvenile justice system. A different mindset that is focused on simply surviving is adopted (Berko, 2021; Desai, 2020), which forces youth into a reality that is different from their

peers outside of the judicial system. Desai (2020) explains that other challenges, such as poverty, discrimination, and the desire to support his or her family, are also a part of the different reality that these youth have faced before, during, and after being placed in the judicial system. The experiences of these adolescents are a huge factor in their perspectives of education regardless of their environment (Roberts et al., 2018; J. Sanders et al., 2016). For some youth, education is seen as unnecessary, while others believe it is their chance to change their life towards a positive path (Jäggi & Kliewer, 2020).

As the research is wide-reaching for students labeled as at-risk and techniques teachers use when these students are placed in their classroom, there is less research on how teachers handle having an entire roster of students who are no longer sitting in a traditional classroom and are facing months to years within the judicial system (Case & Hazel, 2020). Professional development courses also have little to no assistance for teachers in this situation. The teacher is challenged with motivating students who have fewer reasons to succeed academically than a student in a traditional classroom. Therefore, teachers of incarcerated youth attempt to reach the students by other means.

Judicial System

A child who has been sentenced to a corrections facility has become a part of the judicial system, and there are more factors to consider. Upon arrest, the youth is faced with a myriad of experiences. The youth may face jail, being placed in a detention center, court proceedings, expulsion from school, probation, alternative schools, long-term facility placements, and mandatory classes or programs, just to name a few (Development Services Group, Inc., 2019b, March). During this time, the youth may or may not have familial support (Development Services Group, Inc., 2018). In the judicial system, youth move around frequently to different

facilities and different placements, and there is the possibility of being moved into the adult judicial system (Farmer & Brooks, 2020; Lambie & Randell, 2013). The complex judicial system can be confusing not only for the youth but also for the family, and the process has gone through many changes over the years to facilitate a better process for the youth (Development Services Group, Inc., 2019b, March).

Education in a Corrections Facility

The educational systems within corrections facilities vary across the United States and even the world (Benedick et al., 2023). Resources, technology, and quality teachers are perhaps even more necessary within the correction facilities as every single youth in that system is most likely to fail academically (Blomberg et al., 2011; Kang & Burton, 2014; Lambie & Randell, 2013). Academic failure increases the likelihood of a continued life within the judicial system and the student not becoming a productive member of society (Mathur et al., 2023; Pace, 2018; Washburn & Menart, 2019). This system is paramount in assisting youth with turning their lives around.

Education within juvenile corrections facilities is complex (Bozick et al., 2018; Lockwood et al., 2012; Seigle et al., 2014). To fulfill the requirements of a high school diploma or equivalent diploma, schools must follow the standards of their state. This requirement makes it even more difficult for teachers as they are also working to fill in the educational gaps that many of the students have (Benner et al., 2017; Flores & Barahona-Lopez, 2020). The educational standard within correction facilities needs to require sufficient standards for students to obtain an equivalent education; however, additional curriculum or teachers need to be considered for the youth who have not had the educational experience to lead them into high school classes (Benner et al., 2017; Pace, 2018). To reduce the chances of recidivism for

incarcerated youth, success in education is one of the primary tactics (Benner et al., 2017; Donat et al., 2017; Houchins et al., 2017; Jäggi & Kliewer, 2020).

Reduction of the recidivism rate is an important aspect of juvenile corrections (Farmer & Brooks, 2020). Unfortunately, there is no national tracking of juvenile recidivism rates. The information is calculated by individual states and is published at various times per state. The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention organization develops an annual report with all states represented that published their information on recidivism, the number of juveniles, and many other statistics, but the information is based solely on the state. For example, recidivism in some states is if a juvenile is rearrested, while others do not count the youth unless the juvenile is placed back into a facility (Puzzanchera et al., 2022). Also, states differ on how long the information is tracked, ranging from one year to five years. For example, Texas published its rates from 2013 to 2015 in January of 2019, showing a 74% recidivism rate for juveniles who had been sentenced to the Texas Juvenile Justice Department (Legislative Budget Board Staff – Texas, 2019). This is an unacceptable number of youths who are faced with a future of being in prison, particularly minorities (Houchins et al., 2017; Kang & Burton, 2014).

As juveniles are sentenced to long-term facilities, they are taken away from their previous school system, and could be one of many schools for them to attend while in the judicial system (Erwin, 2020). It falls to the responsibility of the judicial system to educate the students at the same level as their peers in the free world (Farmer & Brooks, 2020; Leone & Weinberg, 2010). Unfortunately, this educational system is not mainstream or focused on to the extent of other schools (Bozick et al., 2018). Pace (2018) expressed the difficulties of obtaining quality educators and, even more crucial, keeping those educators. Education within corrections facilities also emphasizes life skills, coping skills, and future planning more than the common

curriculum (Farmer & Brooks, 2020; Pytash & Kosko, 2020). The reasoning is that there is such a large educational gap and such a short time in which students are going to be with teachers or correctional staff who prioritize life skills to help the student when they are sent back home has more importance than basic classroom skills (Green et al., 2018; Murphy, 2018; Steele et al., 2016).

A youth punished after only one offense is rare, and there is typically a pattern of criminal behavior or inability to be successful on probation (Pace, 2018; Puzzanchera et al., 2022; Pyle et al., 2016). Therefore, it is likely that every student within the judicial system has shown a pattern of deviant and criminal behavior not only in the community but also in school (Erwin, 2020). The experiences of the judicial system can shape a child's belief in a just world which is not only viewed towards the judicial system or police officers but against teachers and the school system as well (Kearley et al., 2021). Poor or weak beliefs in a world that treats them fairly cause students to become disillusioned with school and, therefore, will have little to no motivation to try and succeed with their educators (Donat et al., 2017; Pyle et al., 2016). If there is a major disparity in wanting to obtain an education, teachers are facing an even greater challenge than the overall environment of the facility as youth may refuse to participate in the classroom, on tests, or any other mandatory task required by the school or state (Donat et al., 2017; Flores & Barahona-Lopez, 2020; Pyle et al., 2016).

Donat et al. (2017) explain how a child's poor belief in a just world will decrease their desire to be motivated by those within the judicial system. Others with the judicial system may be facing the same challenges of continued negative behavior or taking large strides toward a better life. The only other motivators and influences within the system are their fellow incarcerated peers. These motivations have a high likelihood of being negative and promote

further actions to decrease the desire to participate in the school system and succeed academically (Green et al., 2018).

Despite these circumstances, quality education must be the primary focus of the teachers within juvenile corrections facilities. Benner et al. (2017) found that in short-term juvenile detention facilities, issues such as a lack of curriculum, failure to provide educational services, and a lack of services for students with special educational needs were prevalent. These issues can increase the educational gap of these students and can then lead to a lack of motivation for the students when they reach the next step of their judicial placement. These issues do not seem to be the result of teacher negligence but of the lack of resources, training, and expectations put forth by the agency of the facility (Development Services Group, Inc., 2019b, March).

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. Abraham Maslow created the hierarchy of needs in which a pyramid type of schematic shows that the lowest level of needs must be fulfilled before a person's motivation can be increased to more advanced needs as the person climbs up the pyramid model. Feist and Feist (2008) explain the multiple levels of Maslow's theory. The lowest level of needs includes physiological, safety, and feelings of love and belonging. The highest two levels are esteem and self-actualization. Maslow explained how the absence or deprivation of these needs could have negative results such as being unhealthy whether malnourished or having a loss of energy, and becoming defensive or aggressive (Feist & Feist, 2008). The goal of the pyramid is to reach self-actualization, which is a desire to become the best version of oneself. However, each level must be met to reach this goal. Maslow (1967) believed that the inability to reach self-actualization created a metapathology which he defined as "the

absence of values, the lack of fulfillment, and the loss of meaning of life" (as cited in Feist & Feist, 2008).

For incarcerated youth, the bottom two levels are not assured. Pyle et al. (2016) explain how most incarcerated youth come from economically disadvantaged homes where food, water, and shelter are not always guaranteed. Oved (2017) shows that the lack of assurance for the lowest level of Maslow's hierarchy of needs can create disinterest and a lack of motivation in school. When children are more concerned with finding food or dealing with hunger pains, reading books and completing math problems is of little interest. Food in a correctional facility may not be an issue, but safety could be. Assaults and fighting among students are common within juvenile corrections facilities (Borschmann et al., 2020; Steele et al., 2016). This constant threat to the students deprives them of a feeling of motivation, especially in a classroom.

For teachers, having students missing or struggling with the lowest level of needs based on Maslow's theory creates a difficult challenge. Teachers have students who are dealing with having their food stolen, not sleeping because the lights were not allowed to be turned off at night, corrections officers bothering them, an upcoming court date, and their classmates threatening to harm them (Flores & Barahona-Lopez, 2020; Puzzanchera et al., 2022). The metapathology becomes an issue as fatigue, defensiveness, and aggressiveness become strong characteristics of the juveniles. Teachers are then faced with trying to teach a student who does not have the motivation to read or learn. Teachers might be hindered in providing the necessary resources for physiological or safety needs, but providing feelings of love and belonging becomes a major priority if the student has any chance of advancing to a higher level on the pyramid.

Juvenile corrections facilities must complete each of Maslow's hierarchy of needs to assist students with advancing up the pyramid. Oved (2017) discusses the reorder of needs, especially for children such as those who have been in the judicial system. His ideas focus on how feeling loved, and belonging is more important than safety level. He also explains that for those who have not felt loved since birth, it is a more crucial need than the feeling of safety. This applies to incarcerated youth in a major way as they are of the demographic with a higher probability of single-parent or foster homes (Barnert et al., 2015; Erwin, 2020). Love and belonging may be a need for these youth but that is more important than the feeling of safety for themselves, family, health, and property.

This theory is crucial to understanding the needs of incarcerated youth as the needs that Maslow has put forth could explain the lack of motivation for incarcerated youth when it comes to obtaining an education and create a picture of the environment teachers are experiencing within these facilities. Understanding Maslow's hierarchy of needs also assists teachers with understanding the struggles their students are facing and why classwork may not be completed. By helping with the lower level of the pyramid, teachers may be able to assist students with moving up to the point of self-actualization.

Individual Education Plan. An Individual Education Plan (IEP) is mandatory for all youth, ages three to twenty-one, who have a disability based on the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) (Petuchowski, 2022). IDEA requires that all youth with a disability be identified, and a committee creates the IEP necessary for the student to be successful in school with additional services, accommodations, and even modifications to their schoolwork to be provided by the teacher (Leone & Weinberg, 2010). Research has also shown that youth who found school challenging were at a higher risk of having disciplinary issues. Benedick et al.

(2023) explain that the juvenile justice system has four times as many students with a learning disability or emotional disturbance as the regular school system. Discipline issues would often lead to expulsions from school or other negative consequences that would lead to the student dropping out of school. Unfortunately, dropping out of school is one of the leading causes for youth to begin criminal activity and be placed in a juvenile corrections facility (Development Services Group, Inc., 2019a, January; Petuchowski, 2022).

For students with disabilities who are now within a juvenile corrections facility, obtaining all of the services necessary for their educational success is crucial (Benedick et al., 2023). Some studies have shown that between 30-60% of youth in a corrections facility have a disability (Salinas & Mathur, 2022; S. Sanders et al., 2021). However, a lot of factors make this difficult for the school and teachers. While these factors differ from facility to facility and state to state, there can be a lack of resources, miscommunication from the student's previous school, or completely inaccessible records, and the most unfortunate is the negligence of the school to provide the services through insufficient accountability (Petuchowski, 2022). Some students have frequent movement between schools and alternative programs combined with other factors that create hindrances to having good educational reports sent to the juvenile corrections facility (Leone & Weinberg, 2010).

For a student with an IEP, it can be a chance to finally receive the assistance necessary to be academically successful. Extra support through accommodation or the implementation of modifications allows the student to be just as successful as his or her peers. As there is a direct link between educational level and crime rate (Salinas & Mathur, 2022), educating the students who struggle the most in the classroom is imperative. A student with an IEP not only struggles with their disability but also struggles with obtaining the needs and support they require. The

teacher must be the strongest advocate for that student to receive all necessary components of the IEP as well as any other assistance the teacher can identify. Only through the partnership of the student and the teacher will the student be successful and build his or her desire to be successful in school.

        Development of Self-Regulation Skills. Self-regulation skills are a necessity for all people to have (Docherty et al., 2022). These traits begin to develop as a child, strengthen through the teenage years and are hopefully able to withstand any situation as an adult (Lambie & Randell, 2013). Virgin et al. (2021) give many definitions that culminate in the understanding that self-regulation or emotional regulation is the ability to manage one's own emotions and decide how to react to a situation or express those emotions. Docherty et al. (2022) also explain that self-regulation skills build the ability to achieve the personal goals of the youth. As a youth is placed into a juvenile corrections facility, the emotions felt are even more complex than for a peer who has not been sent into the justice system (Docherty et al., 2022). Virgin et al. (2021) report that an estimated 90% of the youth in the justice system have experienced trauma of some type which can heighten emotions and make the processing of those emotions even more difficult. Emotions such as anger, depression, anxiety, bitterness, and isolation are difficult emotions for any teenager to handle but are made even more difficult when a child has been taken away from everything they have ever known (Virgin et al., 2021).

        One of the challenges and responsibilities of the adults in the juvenile justice facility, whether a teacher, corrections officer, case manager, or other employee working with the youth, is teaching those self-regulation skills. Docherty et al. (2022) found that monitoring internal and external triggers was the most beneficial course of action for assisting youth with regulating their responsive emotions. Being able to self-regulate is a crucial component for the success of the

youth not only in the juvenile corrections facility but also once they are released which decreases the risk of recidivism (Unruh et al., 2021). Building self-regulation skills has also been shown to decrease recidivism (Docherty et al., 2022).

Incarcerated Youth Perspectives

The perspective of education from the views of incarcerated youth is typically negative due to unsuccessful school experiences and academic struggles (Pytash & Kosko, 2020). This leads to a lack of engagement with the curriculum and a higher chance of academic failure. For incarcerated youth, their perspectives of education must take a higher priority than for the students in a traditional school system. One of the primary reasons is that few educators and administrators have experienced being incarcerated as juveniles while they most likely have extensive experience sitting in a traditional classroom (Ahmed et al., 2019). The voice of the youth within corrections facilities is often ignored or spoken over making it even more difficult to understand the student perspective (Washburn & Menart, 2019). With the lack of firsthand perspective, a new approach must be taken when designing the classroom and curriculum.

Students in the judicial system realize that they have an unheard voice (Ahmed et al., 2019). Reform in a corrections facility is crucial to assisting youth with being more successful not only with their education but also in their ability to reenter the world and be a productive member of society (Rafedzi & Abrizah, 2016). Additional resources, and changes in the classroom and libraries need to be available and completed to assist in the success of these students (Bouchard & Kunze, 2003; Pytash & Kosko, 2020). Ahmed et al. (2019) explain how these children are often forgotten due to the crimes that were committed without recognizing that many crimes and unfortunate circumstances have been committed against these youth.

Continuing this pattern in the corrections facility can ensure that these youth continue a life of crime and may face a lifetime in the prison system (Bozick et al., 2018).

Ahmed et al. (2019) and Rafedzi and Abrizah (2016) show that youth are wanting to gain information and knowledge. Although the typical curriculum of math, science, history, and English may not be the desire for each youth to learn, information concerning their surroundings, their people, and other relevant material is strongly desired by those within the juvenile judicial systems (Bouchard & Kunze, 2003; Pytash & Kosko, 2020). Creating stronger pedagogy within the juvenile facility classrooms can assist with building interest in the youth to support the success of obtaining a diploma (Jäggi & Kliewer, 2020). With stronger and more relevant pedagogy to the juveniles within the classroom, there is a better chance of building the desire for students to complete work even if it is not for the goal of obtaining a credit or diploma.

Motivation of Juvenile Delinquents

In a regular school system, students are potentially motivated by many factors. Parents, teachers, coaches, sports, arts, extracurricular activities, clubs, and many other school-sanctioned activities require passing grades and participation in classes. For juvenile delinquents, the number of external motivators is incredibly limited (Houchins et al., 2010). Rarely are sports opportunities available, clubs, or any other activity that requires a passing grade (Ameen & Lee, 2012). Parents, if they are interested in their child, have an inadequate ability to motivate (Seigle et al., 2014). Teachers and coaches are still present, but they can even find it difficult to help students find a bigger picture to work successfully toward (Flores & Barahona-Lopez, 2020).

Motivation must be found by those within the facility with the juvenile or internally. Some of these motivations can be quite negative from the other juveniles who have been sentenced to the corrections facility (Erofeeva et al., 2019). In fact, being successful

academically can cause a student to feel negative peer pressure or even be alienated from his or her peer group (Ameen & Lee, 2012). Without positive enforcers and hope for a brighter future, juvenile delinquents can quickly fall into a hole of negative thinking with little to no effort toward academic success. Therefore, motivations from the adults and intrinsic motivation are crucial (Jeno et al., 2019). As a part of Maslow's hierarchy of needs and the self-determination theory, internal and external motivations are necessary to be successful (Feist & Feist, 2008; Jeno et al., 2019).

Another understanding of how motivation is understood for incarcerated youth is the past trauma that students have faced. Berko (2021) explains how the mentalization necessary for motivation is hindered by the high level of stress that incarcerated youth are experiencing. Not only the trauma that the students most likely faced before being detained (Erwin, 2020) but also the trauma of the crime that placed the student within a secure facility. When more important issues are faced by the youth, education or classwork is given less attention as the youth does not possess the motivation to work in the classroom.

The self-determination theory is crucial in understanding and breaking down the motivations of juvenile delinquents (Jeno et al., 2019). Building the internal motivation and autonomy of youth also has the added benefit of teaching an adolescent the necessary skills of internal motivation to take them into adulthood when challenges are even greater (Farmer & Brooks, 2020). Teaching incarcerated youth is not only about the necessary curriculum but also about building positive attributes that will help the youth be successful once returned to society (Benner et al., 2017; Flores & Barahona-Lopez, 2020). Building autonomy in incarcerated youth can also aid in their desire to work towards an education and the benefits of having a diploma (Ameen & Lee, 2012; Jeno et al., 2019). Unfortunately, not all youth believe that they can have a

successful future after being sent to a facility (Ahmed et al., 2019). Teachers must show the benefits of having a diploma for the long-term goals of students so that they can begin building their internal motivators to reach those goals. Otherwise, external motivations will only get them through the lowest levels of Maslow's hierarchy of needs, and self-actualization can never be obtained.

Teacher Challenges

Every profession faces challenges that are unique to their job. Issues with coworkers, bosses, and logistics can be found in the workforce. In the educational field, not only do teachers face the challenges of their day-to-day job with numerous demands, but also have a challenging clientele of children. A classroom full of children with each student encompassed by a different personality, learning style, family dynamic, relationship to education, and even traumas that could be beyond the scope of preparation for the teacher (Ainsworth & Oldfield, 2019; Fernandes et al., 2019). Yet, each student is expected to learn specific material, and it is the teacher's job to find a way for each student to retain that information. In juvenile correction facilities, there can potentially be even more challenges (Belcastro et al., 1982; Farmer & Brooks, 2020; Flores & Barahona-Lopez, 2020). These challenges are changing the known traditional classroom approaches, the feeling of isolation, the difference in safety and security within a corrections facility, the educational gap of incarcerated students, and attempting to reduce recidivism rates.

Non-Traditional Classroom Approaches

Pytash and Kosko (2020) describe education within juvenile correction facilities as being ineffective when using traditional instructional approaches, which is the primary method taught to teachers. When learning pedagogy, teachers are exposed to many experts. Teachers learn

methods of curriculum and lesson planning. However, the pedagogy is focused on the traditional classroom setting in a typical school. In a basic search on Google Scholar, the term "pedagogy in the classroom" gives over 2.5 million results. The term "pedagogy of incarcerated youth" yields only 30,900 results. Flores (2012) explains that the research surrounding the teaching practices for correctional educators is extremely limited without the means to develop a pedagogy for juvenile correction facilities.

Although curriculum, tests, lesson plans, and grades may have a stronger focus in a public school, schools within prisons or juvenile correction facilities focus on different aspects such as length of stay within the system, the possibility of being transferred to an adult prison, and ability to earn credits (Farmer & Brooks, 2020). Ahmed et al. (2019) relate how incarcerated people feel that those who work in the corrections system must do more than the requirements of their job to have a positive impact on the life of an inmate. Going beyond the requirements of the job showed the incarcerated youth that the employee was there for more than the bare minimum (Michals & Kessler, 2015; Murphy, 2018). Flores and Barahona-Lopez (2020) agree that teachers in any form of corrections facility must be willing to find methods to reach the student beyond simply providing the curriculum.

Education for incarcerated youth has challenges to include educational gaps (Flores & Barahona-Lopez, 2020), poor motivation (Erofeeva et al., 2019), preparation for the future (Pace, 2018), and additional risk factors (Pyle et al., 2016; Pytash & Kosko, 2020; Roberts et al., 2018). Classrooms are frequently interrupted by staff, case workers, psychologists, health personnel, and others (Houchins et al., 2004; Flores & Barahona-Lopez, 2020). Resources are also limited to providing some of the necessities of a classroom (S. Sanders et al., 2021). Another challenge is the frequent movement of students in and out of the classroom (S. Sanders et al., 2021). While

a traditional classroom setting has changes to its roster throughout the year, typically, the majority of students who start with the teacher at the beginning of the school year are the same students by the end of the school year. In juvenile facilities, youth are placed on the roster once arriving at the facility, and the student remains until the youth has completed the class regardless of the time of year or is transferred out of the facility (Davey, 2017).

Isolation

Another challenge that teachers face in juvenile correction facilities is a feeling of isolation. A feeling of isolation from coworkers and other teachers (Kamrath et al., 2018; Pytash & Kosko, 2020). McCray et al. (2018) explain how teachers within juvenile corrections facilities often feel isolated from other teachers within and outside of the facility. The isolation is even felt by other staff within the facility (Belcastro et al., 1982). Teachers are often unsupervised leading to poor or ineffective classroom practices. The feeling of isolation can also contribute to a teacher becoming burned out in their profession (Belcastro et al., 1982).

The feeling of isolation can also be amplified by the lack of resources for teachers of incarcerated youth. Professional development courses are not always focused on the type of classroom these teachers face; therefore, the teacher feels even more isolated in what they are facing (Gagnon et al., 2012). With this isolation, the lack of relatedness is broken, affecting a teacher's self-determination. The isolation is compounded when a teacher is faced with an issue and is uncertain how to overcome it. When the teacher reaches out to other teachers, pedagogy or classroom management experts, or other educational resources and cannot find an answer to their predicament, the isolation builds even more as the teachers believe they are left on their own.

Safety and Security

For teachers in the juvenile corrections setting, some challenges are unique to the location and are not as prevalent in a traditional school setting (Flores & Barahona-Lopez, 2020). McCray et al. (2018) describe juvenile corrections facilities as prioritizing safety and security over educational objectives with unqualified and insufficient personnel (S. Sanders et al., 2021). Safety and security are a huge concern in a corrections facility but amplified by the school setting and the necessity for quality corrections officers (Farmer & Brooks, 2020; Houchins et al., 2004). The issue of safety is not only felt by the teachers but also by the students, which hinders the flow of Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Lane et al. (2019) explain how incarcerated youth frequently do not feel safe from the staff of the facility or other incarcerated youth. Other youth are frequently involved in issues dealing with racial friction and gang tension. Therefore, a sense of survival is felt, which means that classroom activities are of little importance.

There is also a difference in how a juvenile corrections facility is run compared to a traditional setting. A juvenile facility has an increase in policies, procedures, and expectations due to the nature of the students who are housed solely within the facility. Everything from moving between classes to going to the bathroom is highly structured and monitored. Houchins et al. (2010) explain how teachers can struggle with providing quality curriculum when the setting is security-driven. Teachers face safety and security challenges while still striving to provide necessary lessons for their students to ensure their academic success.

Educational Gap

Another challenge teachers of incarcerated youth face is the low level of formal education the students generally have (Farmer & Brooks, 2020; Green et al., 2018). Most of the incarcerated youth dropped out of school before being incarcerated and have created an

educational gap between the grade in which they stopped attending school and the grade in which they are placed within the corrections facility (Benner et al., 2017; Flores & Barahona-Lopez, 2020). Incarcerated youth also have a history of moving schools frequently and having little to no academic success (Erwin, 2020; Steele et al., 2016). There is limited information on how students react to their educational gap of dropping out in their elementary school years and then being placed into a high school setting once incarcerated. This gap creates a huge issue for teachers without any resources or assistance to close this gap while also teaching the required curriculum (Flores, 2012). An example of this could be a student who had dropped out of school in the third grade, and being placed into a ninth-grade class which is a six-year educational gap (Flores, 2012).

Murphy (2018) showed how teachers struggled with assisting a student and filling the educational gap, just to have the student leave before any real progress could be made. Flores (2012) explains that one method was to group students based on ability and have each student or group of students work specifically on the work that reaches their level. For instance, one group in a math class may be working on basic addition skills while another group is working on Algebra skills. Unlike in a traditional classroom in which all students are working on the same assignment or skill, incarcerated youth are typically taught to their needs, whether specific curriculum or life skills (Davey, 2017). Without the time or ongoing support, the student has not made true progress in their education to affect their recidivism chances. Criminal behavior continues which leads to the student returning to a corrections facility and a teacher must start all over again with the student.

Recidivism

Another factor that teachers in the juvenile judicial system are facing is trying to reduce

the recidivism rate. Recidivism rates, or the rates at which a youth is released from a corrections

facility and reoffends, are close to 55% (Ameen & Lee, 2012; Development Services Group,

Inc., 2020). Desai (2020) and Mathur et al. (2023) show that up to 80% of released juveniles are

rearrested within three years. It is important to note that recidivism rates are calculated

differently based on the state (Puzzanchera et al., 2022). Recidivism can be attributed to many

factors. The type of facility the juvenile was released from, whether therapy-based (lower

recidivism) or other methods, influences the rates (Berko, 2021; Desai, 2020). Focusing on

emotional regulation has also shown lower recidivism rates (Docherty et al., 2022). Factors that

are difficult or impossible to control from within a juvenile correction facility include the

environment in which the youth will return, as well as the family dynamic in which the youth

will be returned (Docherty et al., 2022; Mathur et al., 2023). Programs that focus on helping

youth to reintegrate by preparing them for a job, education, or other opportunities have also been

shown to reduce recidivism (Mathur et al., 2023).

Many studies show the correlation between education and recidivism rates (Ahmed et al.,

2019; Flores & Barahona-Lopez, 2020; Mathur et al., 2023). The more education that can be

obtained and the closing of the educational gap for incarcerated youth can increase the likelihood

of juvenile delinquents finding a life outside of the judicial system (Mathur et al., 2023; Steele et

al., 2016). This is also crucial, as incarceration can be detrimental to a youth's development

(Docherty et al., 2022). The teacher then faces the challenge of knowing one key way in which

the youth can better their life but potentially having the youth be resistant to change. The goal of

any adult choosing to work with children is to want success and happiness for that child

(Weiland, 2021). Being able to have a life outside of crime and outside of prison leads to being a successful member of society (Ameen & Lee, 2012). Although this may not ensure success and happiness, it is certainly a major step in the right direction.

Teacher Retention

The United Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) believes that 69 million teachers will need to be hired to reach the educational goals of 2030. However, 80% of teachers are currently considering stopping teaching (Falecki & Mann, 2020; Sikma, 2021). The highest rate of losing teachers is among new teachers in which statistics show between a third and one-half quit teaching or change schools within the first five years (Sikma, 2021). Some states, like Virginia, show that nearly a quarter (22%) of teachers do not return after their first year, and up to half quit by their fourth year (Shields & Mullen, 2020). These numbers are even greater in low-income schools or schools that have been rated as low-performing. Teacher turnover is an issue in educational policy as maintaining a productive workforce has become increasingly difficult (James & Wyckoff, 2020).

In the realm of education, retention is typically defined as maintaining good, professional teachers, while attrition is when a qualified teacher who has not reached retirement age leaves the profession (Saks et al., 2021). Therefore, high attrition means that not only are there not enough teachers necessary, but quality teachers are leaving the profession, leaving room for more unqualified and possibly ineffective teachers. In other words, losing quality teachers for quantity teachers. Teachers leaving the classroom have been attributed to many issues including school climate, difficulties in classroom management, excessive workloads, unsafe work environments, feelings of isolation, lack of recognition, and inadequate professional development (Fontaine et al., 2012; Saks et al., 2021). All these factors can be improved by the

administration of the school. Also, these issues have a chance of affecting many teachers at one time over only one or two teachers. Therefore, a school perpetrating these characteristics of a poor school climate that can encompass many other issues has the likelihood of losing many teachers at one time.

While studies show the benefits of education to incarcerated persons, retaining teachers has not been successful. Correction facilities struggle with retaining teachers as they are typically underpaid and undertrained (Kamrath & Gregg, 2018). Surprisingly, multiple studies show that teachers within juvenile corrections facilities are satisfied with their jobs (Flores, 2012; Gagnon et al., 2012; Houchins et al., 2004). Therefore, other challenges cause retention issues within juvenile correction facilities. While satisfaction with the job is a step in the right direction for achieving self-determination, if the other aspects are too large of a hindrance, teachers will eventually move elsewhere. Based on the above factors, juvenile facilities also have issues with pedagogy, isolation, safety, students' large educational gap, and attempting to reduce the recidivism rate.

Resilience

Resilience is not simply a characteristic of a person but a dynamic process of reaction under stress (Fernandes et al., 2019). Fernandes et al. (2019) describe resilience as the changing connection between a teacher's internal and external perspectives. As SDT states, it is a balance of internal and external motivators that are necessary to be fulfilled. Fernandes et al. (2019) continue describing resilience as the capacity to overcome and successfully adapt to challenges. Adaptation could be in the form of professional development or continued education, remembering the commitment and enthusiasm originally brought to the job, and finally the fulfillment and security the job brings (Argon & Kaya, 2018). With a lot of focus being on the

retention and attrition of teachers, more studies need to explore the resilience of those teachers who stay in the classroom and build valuable experience (Shields & Mullen, 2020). The lessons learned from the teachers who remain could be a significant piece of professional development for new teachers.

A teacher's desire and calling to work with children gives them some resilience and persistence to overcome challenges. However, the challenges of the classroom, schools, administration, students, and parents can influence their resilience. Professional development through continued education, workshops, pedagogy seminars, and even mentorships by veteran teachers can assist teachers with building resilience and facing the challenges of their school and classroom. While new teachers are the most likely to leave the classroom as they struggle with building self-efficacy, Shields & Mullen (2020) show that if teachers persevere for at least ten years, they are less likely to leave the profession. Self-efficacy is the belief that a person can accomplish a desired task or goal based on their actions and behaviors.

Research has established that those teachers, in any setting, possess grit and even that the more grit a teacher has, the more successful the teacher is (Argon & Kaya, 2018; Robertson-Kraft & Duckworth, 2014). Duckworth (2016) is one of the leading experts on grit, and she describes it as a blend of passion and persistence. While passion may be a familiar quality for teachers, persistence is the focus to ensure that teachers remain in their profession. She has completed extensive research and writing concerning how teachers possess grit. While this is an admirable and necessary quality for teachers, resilience is also crucial. Resilience, on the other hand, is when a setback, a failure, or other faltering experience takes place, the person can bounce back or recover from the experience.

For teachers in juvenile corrections facilities, professional goals can be more complicated as the environment has additional constraints than the traditional educational setting (Murphy, 2018). Many teachers with juvenile corrections began their teaching careers in traditional classrooms as this is the pipeline from the educational preparations in college (Davey, 2017; Murphy, 2018). Navarro et al. (2020) also found that when the challenge of the classroom becomes more than their resiliency can handle, teachers move to other areas within education but are not directly linked to kids. For teachers within the corrections facilities, these types of moves might be more limited. Paolettie et al. (2023) explain the importance of building groups of teachers or communities to share experiences, reduce isolation, and assist all teachers with their jobs, which assists with building the resilience of teachers.

Resilience is important to self-determination theory as self-determination is not achieved and then simply kept. When challenges and adversity arise, the person's resilience allows them to overcome the obstacle and build their self-determination once again (Paolettie et al., 2023). For teachers of incarcerated youth, the challenges are many and complex, as shown. Therefore, building or having resilience is a necessary quality for success not only for themselves but also for the incarcerated youth they teach.

Summary

Understanding the challenges that these teachers face is important to create a full picture of the situation of how teachers in juvenile corrections facilities build resilience. The self-determination theory is also a crucial aspect of this study as understanding the motivation of successful teachers of incarcerated youth will aid in professional development and the hiring process. The self-determination theory describes the components of motivation a successful teacher of incarcerated youth must build or intrinsically hold before taking the position.

Educating incarcerated youth holds a set of challenges that is not prevalent in mainstream, traditional classrooms. For students across the United States sentenced to corrections facilities, both long and short-term, education plays a major role in their plans for current and future success. Many students are sentenced to some form of detention facility, having already dropped out of school on average around fifth grade, and are then placed in a grade equivalent to their age over their educational ability (Pace, 2018). Therefore, there is a large educational gap for these youth between where they ended their formal education and their age. These youth are also more likely to have additional learning or cognitive disabilities and behavioral issues such as emotional or anger disorders (Farmer & Brooks, 2020). As youth refuse to continue their education, the recidivism rate will only increase (Ahmed et al., 2019). Teachers are faced with the challenge of trying to close the educational gap, teach the material necessary for their grade and age as well as prepare these troubled youth for their futures as much as possible. Teachers are also challenged by the limited resources of pedagogy, isolation from others, safety of the students within the facility, and attempting to reduce the amount of recidivism. This is on top of dealing with an environment that includes guards, gates, and limited resources (Lambie & Randall, 2013).

Teachers are strained by the challenges of the expectations placed upon them by the administration and the expectations teachers place upon themselves. These challenges are compounded when the students typically refuse to participate in schooling. For those teachers who have built the resiliency and persistence to overcome and battle these challenges mentioned above, much can be learned. Not only can the characteristics of successful teachers be identified, but they can also be a basis for hiring new teachers. Teachers who have had lasting careers within juvenile corrections facilities have information that needs to be used to train others and

help the administration on what to look for when hiring new teachers. Professional development

for teachers, whether those still obtaining their certifications or for anyone considering a move to

the correction facilities, could be used to assist with preparing teachers for a very different

environment.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODS

Overview

The purpose of this hermeneutic phenomenological study was to interpret the experience of resilience in teachers in juvenile corrections facilities. This chapter will introduce the research methodology for this qualitative hermeneutic phenomenological study regarding how teachers within juvenile corrections facilities located in the United States persevere through the challenges of their environments. By using a qualitative approach, a deeper understanding of how teachers resiliently continue careers within juvenile corrections can assist in the hiring process as well as assist teachers currently employed in juvenile correction facilities to understand what others also experience. The chapter begins with the research design and research questions with an explanation of the setting and participants. Next is the researcher's positionality, which gives further information about the interpretive framework, philosophical assumptions, and the researcher's role. The research plan, methodology, study participants, procedures, data collection plan, data analysis methods, and any ethical concerns will be presented in this chapter with a summary at the very end.

Research Design

This study used a qualitative research method. This approach is the preferred method to understand the personal experiences of teachers within juvenile corrections facilities. A quantitative approach would not be able to explain the methods that teachers use to persevere through difficult times or help to build an understanding of what qualities are necessary for teachers before beginning a career in the juvenile justice system. David Houchins (2004, 2010, 2017) has several studies concerning teachers of incarcerated youth using qualitative work because that is the proper process to understand how the teachers work as well as understand the

experience of the teachers in a challenging and different environment. A qualitative study approach was appropriate when the ideal goal was to understand a phenomenon by speaking to an individual or a group of individuals about an experience and building an explanation of his or her perception. Creswell and Poth (2018) explain that a qualitative approach seeks to transform the experience of a person or a group of people from a collection of data to the issuance of a voice from those participants. By taking a qualitative approach, this study allowed for the voices of the participants to be heard and an understanding of their shared experience within juvenile correction facilities was established.

A phenomenological methodology was used for this qualitative study. Phenomenology seeks to give a full description of a phenomenon that keeps it alive (Moustakas, 1994). The earliest finding of the word phenomenology was in 1765 in the writings of Immanuel Kant (Kockelmans, 1967). However, it was Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel who developed a technical meaning of the word in which phenomenology was the knowledge of consciousness (Kockelmans, 1967). With this foundation, Edmund Husserl developed his ideas and use of phenomenology. Husserl (1931) explains how a phenomenon is the beginning of any investigation of any perceptions.

The research design is hermeneutical phenomenology. Hermeneutic phenomenology began with Martin Heidegger (Laverty, 2003). Heidegger was a student of Husserl but placed more emphasis on the connection of human experience with the world of that person. Heidegger believed that there was no separation between the world and a person's consciousness. Hans-Georg Gadamer was influenced by both Husserl and Heidegger, but he also believed in having a shared view or horizon of the work that would be interpreted. Gadamer (1976) also believed that extending a perspective will positively impact the search for meaning (Laverty, 2003).

While Husserl believed in bracketing out the researcher and the researcher's experiences, Gadamer (1976) believed that hermeneutics starts "from the position that a person seeking to understand something has a bond to the subject matter that comes into language through the traditionary text and has, or acquires, a connection with the tradition from which it speaks" (p. 295). I have a connection and bond with this subject matter from my time working with incarcerated youth and had a shared bond with the participants of the study. For this study, building the clearest understanding of the experiences of the teachers within juvenile corrections facilities was paramount to the study.

Research Questions

The following research questions were the guidance for this study to better understand the resilience of teachers within juvenile corrections facilities. Research has been done on persistence being necessary for teachers in all regards, but there is a blind spot in relation to the teachers within juvenile corrections facilities. Currently, there is limited research concerning the retention of teachers within corrections facilities and even less research identifying how teachers build the persistence to remain in a difficult environment.

Central Research Question

How do teachers in juvenile correction facilities demonstrate resilience through the struggles of incarcerated juveniles and the environment?

Sub-Question One

How do teachers in juvenile corrections facilities foster personal persistence and resilience through their work with incarcerated youth?

Sub-Question Two

How do the experiences of resilient teachers in juvenile corrections facilities assist others desiring a career to work with incarcerated youth?

Sub-Question Three

What strategies do experienced teachers implement with incarcerated youth that improve resiliency in their career?

Setting and Participants

The setting of the phenomenon of this study was any secure juvenile corrections facility within the United States. The participants were teachers who have taught in a long-term, secure juvenile corrections facility within the United States. Each teacher also had experience teaching in a traditional school setting. Incarcerated youth can be placed in a variety of settings, but this study focuses on secure facilities in which the daily or weekly changing of youth is not a predominant issue. The first section will focus on the specifics of the setting applicable to this study. The second section will focus on the participants and the criteria necessary for them to participate.

Setting

The setting of this study was the confines of long-term, secure juvenile corrections facilities spread across the United States. These facilities house youth below the age of nineteen who have committed serious and violent felonies but are not old enough to be sent into the adult prison system (Puzzanchera et al., 2022). While all juvenile facilities across the United States may have some organizational differences, many will be like that of the Texas Juvenile Justice Department (TJJD). At each facility in TJJD, there is a school run like most public schools with teachers, guidance counselors, SPED department, office clerks, and principals. However, the principal works under, and with, the superintendent of the facility while also answering to the

Education Director who is located at the Central Office and oversees all educational departments within TJJD.

No specific juvenile facility was chosen to remove an individual site from playing a role in teacher resilience specific to their exact location and administration, therefore, no site permissions are needed. Instead, teachers were recruited from Facebook groups and other social media sites. Some of the Facebook groups are "For Teachers by Teachers" and "Teachers Teaching Teachers". Private groups have a series of questions to be answered before being allowed in the group. I examined all guidelines before requesting to join the group. Some of the Private groups I joined are "High School English Teachers", "Teachers Ask Teachers", and "#TeacherProblems."

This setting criterion was based on differentiating between short-term and long-term juvenile facilities. Short-term facilities face a different set of challenges when providing education to students who are in a classroom for an average of seven to ten days (Benner et al., 2017). Long-term facilities can have students for an average amount of time comparable to a traditional classroom in which building relationships, introducing new curriculum, earning credits, and even diplomas if possible (Washburn & Menart, 2019). The latest Annual Report given by OJJDP states that there are 164 long-term secure juvenile facilities in the United States (Puzzanchera et al., 2022).

Based on the definition given by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), a long-term secure facility has means in which strict confinement by use of guards, gates, razor wire, locked doors, and fences or walls are used to maintain strict movement within the facility (Development Services Group, Inc, 2019b, March). Long-term secure juvenile facilities are also referred to as training schools in some states, but all structures of the facility

are the same (Puzzanchera et al., 2022).

Participants

Participants in this study have at least a year of teaching experience within a juvenile correction facility, are currently working for a juvenile corrections facility within the United States, or have retired within the last ten years with a minimum of five years of teaching experience at a long-term juvenile corrections facility. Each participant also had some experience teaching outside of a juvenile correction facility to compare the two environments. Participants volunteered to be a part of the study. Thirteen participants were identified and chosen for this study.

<div align="center">

Researcher Positionality

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The researcher has an interpretive framework of social constructivism. This section also reveals the philosophical assumptions of the researcher to include ontological, epistemological, and axiological assumptions. For six years I taught for the Texas Juvenile Justice Department (TJJD). Without any other experience of teaching anywhere else, I was hired with a probationary teaching certificate and room 3-2 was my first ever classroom. I was the only English II teacher, and my classroom was filled with students who had committed serious and violent felony crimes. I started by searching for the students' crimes. The long lists of family code violations, misdemeanors, and felonies left me confused and shocked. I only checked a few students and then stopped altogether. I rarely looked up the crime of a student after those first few days. I quickly realized that the student's crime did not decide who the student would be in my classroom. The drug dealer, the car thief, the rapist, and the murderer would all be returning to society at some point, and I took on the responsibility of doing what I could to prepare them for that eventuality. I began to research how to help these students, but the research was very

specific on how to help at-risk youth before entering the judicial system. Research gave me outstanding tips, advice, and resources for a traditional classroom. While some of this information could be adapted to be implemented in my classroom, most of the information I could not change or adapt to my environment. I started lost and relied heavily on the other veteran teachers to assist me. They did not fail me, but most other teaching resources did.

Even when the Texas Education Agency region we were a part of came to visit, they frowned on my teaching style in which each student had their own, individual lesson plan and goals. There were little to no classroom discussions. There were no lectures given to the class. Each student was on a different activity. The student who had been arrested right before going into his sophomore year did not need to be held back because his classmate beside him had quit attending school in third grade and was reading around a first-grade level. This study can assist in building professional development courses and even assist in finding the right person to hire in the first place. This study can also bring light to educators within the juvenile judicial system. With additional training and resources, these educators will not have to feel alone and can bring as much care and attention to their classrooms within a corrections facility as those teachers in a traditional classroom.

Unfortunately, my time in the juvenile corrections facility ended not because of my students or the school, but the changes in how the facility was run (i.e., teachers working as correction officers on weekends) which was unsustainable for myself and my family. Some of my coworkers had been teaching in TJJD for twenty or more years; however, during my short six-year span, I watched over a dozen teachers get hired, trained, placed in the classroom and quit sometimes after only one day.

Interpretive Framework

The interpretive framework of a qualitative study is the beliefs and theories a researcher brings to the study. This researcher brought a social constructivism approach. Creswell and Poth (2018) explain that in social constructivism, "individuals seek understanding of the world in which they live and work" (p. 24). This meaning is developed through the discussions of those who are living in an experience and the interaction those people have with others. Therefore, the survey and interviews were developed with broad questions so that the participants created meaning out of their situation. Then that meaning was interpreted and shared with others to create a better understanding of the juvenile corrections environment. I did not expect a particular outcome from this research study and allowed for the participant's information to gain meaning in how teachers have persistence teaching in juvenile corrections facilities.

Philosophical Assumptions

The philosophical assumptions of the researcher that are addressed are ontological, epistemological, and axiological. The ontological assumption focuses on the perception of reality. The epistemological assumption focuses on how knowledge is obtained. The axiological assumption focuses on the values and biases that I have towards this study. Each of these assumptions is the opinion and beliefs of the researcher and emphasizes how this research was approached.

Ontological Assumption

The ontological assumption requires the idea of multiple realities but can also be understood as the same reality being viewed from multiple perspectives. For example, in the reality of our loving God, a child who has never known love and has not had a parent at home to care for him, reality is skewed. The idea that reality is different based on the experiences of the person was critical to this study as teachers within juvenile corrections facilities have different

experiences to teachers in traditional school settings (Pace, 2018). Teachers of incarcerated youth must also have the understanding that the reality of the students may differ from the reality of those not incarcerated. I believe that everyone shares the same reality, but it is viewed from the perspective of their personal experiences. I also believe that people can have the wrong interpretation of reality. Students within the judicial system may have the wrong interpretation and it is the job of the adults around them to assist them with developing a more accurate perspective.

Epistemological Assumption

With the epistemological assumption, it is understood that knowledge is gained through the experience of people (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Knowledge is not strictly information gained from formal instruction. Knowledge can be built through trial and error of experience. Teachers in juvenile correction facilities have little to no professional education in teaching within that environment and lacking in professional development courses once they begin a career in this environment (Davey, 2017). Therefore, the knowledge that is gained by these teachers is strictly through their experience and the experience of others who have worked in the juvenile justice system. This information is crucial to assisting other teachers in choosing a career in juvenile corrections. I spent six years teaching in a long-term juvenile corrections facility and have built some knowledge based on this experience. I did not receive any professional development specific to teaching incarcerated youth and was given materials that are resources for traditional classrooms. These materials were discussed among coworkers to build practices relevant to incarcerated youth and the challenging environment. While I can relate to some extent with the participants, the goal is to create knowledge beyond the one facility in which I worked and hopefully form more universal practices and methods to be distributed to any teachers of

incarcerated youth on how to build resilience in a challenging environment.

Axiological Assumption

The axiological assumption is the values and biases brought to the study by the researcher. This researcher has strong Christian values, which will be present in this study. Also, this researcher spent six years teaching for the Texas Juvenile Justice Department at the Giddings State School. My students were ages 14 – 18 years old, male, and all had been incarcerated for major felonies, including aggravated assault and murder. Some of my students were facing up to forty years in prison and would be transferred to an adult prison before they turned nineteen. My decision to leave the facility and begin teaching in a public school may play a role in this study but steps will be taken not to allow this reasoning to persuade or change any of the information gathered. I chose to leave the facility due to staffing shortages on the correctional officer's side which led to education personnel being required to work weekends in the role of a correctional officer. Childcare restrictions made it impossible for me to fulfill these duties, and I sought employment elsewhere.

I also hold the belief that teaching incarcerated youth is a crucial and necessary job. Teachers need to be provided with training as a part of their certifications and additional professional development for teachers in juvenile correction facilities. Incarcerated youth face much greater challenges than the majority of their peers in traditional school settings. I also believe that teaching incarcerated youth is a rewarding and fulfilling job despite the challenges. The education incarcerated youth receive in the correction facility could be the difference to a successful future or continued involvement in the judicial system. I strongly believe that the crimes of the students should not prevent them from a successful future within society.

Researcher's Role

I worked at a facility within the Texas Juvenile Justice Department from December 2015 to August 2021. During this time, I worked as an English I and English II teacher, assisted with mandated testing, and aided students with obtaining their GED. There were occasions when I worked in the dorms where the students lived. I no longer have a professional attachment to anyone or anything within the Texas Juvenile Justice Department. I have no authority over any of the participants in the study. As a specific site will not be used, the researcher's past involvement with a facility of the Texas Juvenile Justice Department is also a non-issue. All participants will be made aware of my experience with the understanding that while I have a viewpoint of commonality, there is no form of authority that I have.

Procedures

This section will focus on the steps and procedures that took place to conduct this study. The first step was obtaining approval from the Liberty University Institutional Review Board (IRB) to conduct this research (Appendix A). Next, the researcher acquired the necessary participants by recruitment, vetting, and obtaining consent forms. Then the researcher collected the data in three different methods, aggregated the data, and conducted an analysis. The analysis was completed manually as the researcher reviewed the data multiple times. Each of these steps allowed for the study to be completed to the greatest extent possible. Finally, the essence of the phenomenon was explained. The description explains the phenomenon of teachers with a career in juvenile correction facilities. Creswell and Poth (2018) explain that "there are numerous 'ways' for communicating phenomenological research including by systematic exploration, meaning the phenomenon is placed in the context of existential . . . or by organizing the account reflective of an ever-deepening understanding of the phenomenon experienced" (p. 80).

Permissions

Permission was first gained through the IRB at Liberty University. The IRB approval letter is in Appendix A. All participants were required to sign or verbally agree to a consent form which is in Appendix E. All participants retained the ability to withdraw from the study at any time.

Recruitment Plan

Participants were recruited through social media and a survey website. As social media is a strong platform for gathering a large variety and quantity of people, there are benefits of reaching out to these networks to gather participants (Gelinas et al., 2017). Many recruitment methods can be expensive, and difficult to reach a large population. However, social media is predominantly free and has been proven effective by the recruitment of many large studies (Flood-Grady et al., 2021). All Facebook groups used the recruitment letter via Facebook, available in Appendix C. A survey link was also posted on SurveyCircle.com which is a free website in which surveys can be posted for anyone to take. A project was also created through userinterviews.com.

The primary recruitment was through Facebook groups that are aimed at teachers. Each group was either a Public or Private group. In a Public group, anyone is allowed to join and then post if the group guidelines are followed. Some of the groups are "For Teachers by Teachers" and "Teachers Teaching Teachers". Private groups have a series of questions to be answered before being allowed in the group. I examined all guidelines before requesting to join the group. Some of the Private groups I joined are "High School English Teachers", "Teachers Ask Teachers", and "#TeacherProblems". Each group has an administrator who can deny posting. For Public groups, the recruitment flyer is allowed based on their guidelines, but administrators can remove the post at any time. For all Private groups, the recruitment flyer was sent to the

administrator first and only posted if approved. Based on the guidelines of all groups joined, recruiting voluntary participants is allowed. One Facebook group is specific to finding participants. This group is titled "Dissertation Survey Exchange – Share Your Research Study, Find Participants." This group is used to assist researchers in finding specific participants and no site permissions are required. Each person who responded was vetted on the criteria before beginning the interview process. Another recruitment method was through a former coworker within the Texas Juvenile Justice Department to assist with finding participants. To keep the research non-specific to one department, no more than three participants will be allowed from the same juvenile correction facility. The criteria screening questions for vetting all participants are in Appendix D.

Brinkmann and Kvale (2015) address the necessary number of participants in a qualitative study. Each sample size is attempting to reach saturation, in which no additional participant will bring any new information. This number can be as low as one participant based on a biographical interview or more than a thousand. The most common size is between five and twenty (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015; Creswell & Poth, 2018). The sample size was 10 - 15 participants, with the expectation that saturation was reached. For the type of sampling, the maximum variation method was used, as well as the snowballing method. The variations included the number of years teaching in a non-juvenile correctional setting, the number of years teaching in a juvenile correction facility, the state in which the participant works, the outlook of continuing a career in juvenile corrections, and reasons why participants left juvenile corrections if they have. For all participants who volunteered to be a part of the study, a consent form was required and is in Appendix E.

Data Collection Plan

This study used an interviewing method. The interviews were recorded electronically. The interview began with generic questions, found in Appendix F, concerning their experience in education, then the interview moved into an open-ended question interview about the challenges the teacher has faced and methods of perseverance and resilience. After the interview, all participants were asked to answer the three separate exhibit scenarios and given time to answer each during the same audio-video recording. After the exhibit scenarios, the participants were asked to respond to a series of journal reflection questions during the audio-video recording.

Due to geographical restraints, interviews were held on Microsoft Teams Meeting video conference or Google Meets. Except for one interview that was done in person and recorded using audio-visual software. All interviews were recorded with dual devices to ensure the collection of data. Following Moustakas' (1994) lead, the primary focus will be on the experience of teaching in a juvenile correction facility and how that experience affected the participant. The interviews were transcribed by Microsoft Teams or descript.com, which is a professional website that transcribes audio files. All participants were allowed to verify the transcription for accuracy and clarity.

Individual Interviews

The experiences of participants were the focus of a phenomenological study and were learned through interviews (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The participants chosen allowed the researcher to engage in maximum variation sampling (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Interviews were used to create and understand the essence of being a teacher in a juvenile corrections facility. According to Brinkmann and Kvale (2015), an interview "attempts to understand the world from the subjects' point of view, to unfold the meaning of their experience, to uncover their lived

world" (p. 3). The interview process allowed for an understanding of the perseverance that teachers have felt to continue their work with incarcerated youth.

All communication was held through the Microsoft Teams Meeting video conference or Google Meets and one interview was completed in person. All interviews were recorded, transcribed, and stored electronically. I attempted to build a rapport with the participants before beginning the interview questions and shared my experience as a teacher with the juvenile justice system before teaching in a public school.

Individual Interview Questions

Background Information

1. Can you tell me why you decided to become a teacher?

2. Please describe your background in teaching.

3. What led you to teach incarcerated youth?

4. What was your experience in a traditional school setting?

5. How long have you worked in a juvenile corrections facility?

6. Describe some of the challenges that are unique to teaching incarcerated youth. CRQ

7. Explain some of the techniques you used to continue teaching in a juvenile corrections facility. CRQ

8. If you have ever considered quitting teaching incarcerated youth, can you explain how you have built the resilience to continue? SQ3

9. How would you describe your ability to persevere in your current work environment? CRQ

10. Describe how your ability to persevere has increased or decreased since you started teaching in a juvenile correction facility. SQ1

11. Describe a time in which a senior coworker has assisted you in building techniques of resilience to continue long-term in a juvenile correction facility. SQ1

12. What advice would you give to anyone thinking about teaching incarcerated youth? SQ2

13. What information or training did you receive before you began teaching in a juvenile corrections facility? SQ1

14. What kind of information or training did you wish you had received before you began teaching in a juvenile correction facility? SQ2

15. What type of teaching resources should be created for teachers of incarcerated youth? SQ2

After the interview questions, the researcher explained how the participants' responses would be used in the study, particularly concerning the primary purpose of the study. It was also described to each participant that they would receive a transcript of the entire audio-video call to be reviewed.

Questions one through five assisted with building a foundation of understanding the participant and the setting of their phenomenon. These questions were important in understanding how the teacher came to work in a juvenile facility as well as what resilience the teacher may have had from previous experiences. These questions also helped build a rapport between the participant and the researcher. Question six allowed the participant to explain the challenges of their environment which led to questions seven and eight on how the participant handled those challenges. Questions nine and ten focused on the perseverance of the participant. Question 11 allowed the participant to describe any instance in which others assisted them. Questions 12, 13, and 14 allowed the participant to explain what professional development they have received, desired to have or should be provided to new hire teachers. Question 15 allowed

the participant to explain what type of resources would be beneficial to have as a teacher of incarcerated youth.

Individual Interview Data Analysis Plan

The coding of the transcripts was completed after the interviews were finished. Coding was used to aid me in understanding the perceptions of each participant and analyzing the collective experiences. Codes were created during the initial reading of transcriptions by highlighting relevant themes and then searched for in each transcription. A clear description of the phenomenon was built based on the information provided and then experiences were coded. Following the recommendations of Creswell and Poth (2018), significant statements were noted and created a description of the "what" and "how" the participants experienced. Based on the work of van Manen (2014), the researcher grasped the essential meaning of the experience concerning how teachers of incarcerated youth have created or shown resiliency. The hermeneutic circle was used as the guide for analyzing data.

Exhibit Scenarios

Due to the population with which the participants work, the researcher avoided any issues of identifying youth, specific situations, or specific facilities. Through exhibit questions, all participants had the same scenario with what is likely to have happened to them or a coworker or have a high likelihood of happening to them in the future if the participant is still working at a juvenile facility. With exhibit questions, participants were asked each exhibit scenario one at a time and given ample time to respond. The researcher refrained from commenting besides asking for clarification. For the exhibit questions of this study, the following scenarios were given.

Exhibit Scenarios

1. Here is a scenario written by a coworker. A new teacher has been recently hired with little experience in handling the diverse and challenging group of students found in your school. Please explain what steps you would take to assist the new teacher.

   "The new teacher is really struggling. She said that she was threatened twice yesterday and then a fight broke out in her room. She says she tried to talk to a correctional officer about the threats, but the officer just shrugged it off. The students are not listening to her or doing any work. I'm not sure how long she is going to last here." CRQ

2. Here are two scenarios in which one is what you have witnessed and the second is your own personal experience. Please explain what steps you would take.

   a. Scenario 1 – One of the senior and most experienced teachers seems to be struggling. They are frustrated with the students and even some adults that you work with on a regular basis. This teacher has been a huge part of your school and helps all teachers whether those teachers are new or experienced. The senior teacher seems to be upset with the behavior of their students and the lack of progress the students are making in his or her class. SQ2

   b. Scenario 2 – You have completed a challenging week at work. A week of many issues that might have resembled the following: there have been multiple fights in your room, several staff members (case workers, supervisors, etc.) have approached you concerning the grades of many students all of whom have been refusing to work, several students threatened you with bodily harm, one of your favorite students was transferred to an adult prison, you have missed a deadline due to the extra paperwork involved in the above situations, and student behavior

has been terrible to include destroying items in your classroom, berating you and

others, and refusing to complete any work. This week seemed to have gotten

progressively worse each day. As you leave work on Friday, you look back and

decide that it has been the worst week of your entire career. SQ3

Exhibit Scenarios Data Analysis Plan

The responses to these exhibit questions assisted with understanding real-life scenarios

that the participants may or may not have already faced (Stake, 2010). With these scenarios, the

researcher gained a better understanding of how teachers reacted to situations that may not be a

personal decision to persevere but whether the participant was hoping for others to show

resilience and overcome the hardships. Two scenarios also had an unknown person to keep the

participant from building responses that were more emotional than logical (Brinkmann & Kvale,

2015). The last scenario was given from the point of view of the participant to create an

understanding of how the participant would react to a challenging situation whether in the form

of resilience or escape.

Corbin and Strauss (2015) explain how to analyze through constant comparisons in which

the similarities and differences of data are identified. Each scenario was broken down into pieces

to allow for constant comparisons (Corbin & Strauss, 2015). Themes were created based on the

comparisons and then created a core theme which was supported by the other themes. Each

theme was compared to each form of data collection to ensure the theme stood for the

participants and the experience as a whole. This process continued until an understanding of the

shared phenomenon was created.

Journal Reflection Prompts

Each participant was asked a journal reflection prompt with four questions. Journals are a productive way to keep track of thoughts and feelings close to an actual event or encounter (Silverman, 2000). The journal was a means by which the researcher was able to gain information about a specific challenge and how the participant reacted.

The questions that each participant answered are below.

1. What is a challenge you vividly remember? CRQ

2. How did you react to that challenge? CRQ

3. Did this challenge affect you for longer than the moment in which it occurred? SQ1

4. How did you persevere through that challenge? SQ3

Journal Reflection Prompts Data Analysis Plan

Each journal reflection was recorded. The same guidelines for the data analysis plan as the interview questions were taken to build a greater understanding of the phenomenon, the challenges these teachers have faced, and the essence of their situation. Themes and sub-themes were developed based on responses and used in the data synthesis stage (van Manen, 2014). A comprehensive description of their experiences was created while keeping the anonymity of anyone involved.

Questions one and two allowed the participant to explain the situation to questions three and four. Questions three and four allowed the participants to explain more about their resilience, which is the primary focus of this study. Each journal entry followed the same analytic procedures as the exhibit scenarios by using the constant comparisons method identified by Corbin and Strauss (2015). The similarities and differences were developed into themes to understand how teachers of incarcerated youth demonstrate resilience.

Data Synthesis

The primary form of synthesis between the interviews, exhibit questions, and journal reflection was through the construction of themes and building descriptions from the essence of the shared experiences (Stake, 2010; van Manen, 2014). Themes were discovered through the shared explanation of an experience and perception of events. In the exhibit questions, the reactions allowed for more specific themes to be created as well as with the journal reflection. Each participant focused on their ability to persevere in a challenging environment. Next, descriptions of the phenomenon of teachers showing resilience while teaching in juvenile correction facilities were created using all the information.

The method of synthesis for the data followed the way Moustakas (1994) breaks the methods into seven steps beginning with creating a list of every relevant expression used concerning the experience during the interview data collection. These themes were then compared to the themes that were built from the journal reflection and exhibit questions. Next, the themes were used to create Individual Textural Descriptions (Moustakas, 1994), and verbatim responses from the interview were used to build descriptions (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The next two steps were building the essence of the experience first from an individual stance and then a description of the essence from the group. The textural and structural descriptions allowed for an explanation of what the participants experienced. Lastly, the researcher described their own experience which is a step added by Moustakas (1994).

Trustworthiness

To begin this section on trustworthiness, the researcher recognizes the moral virtue people have undertaken to not only become teachers but also to step into juvenile correction facilities and face students who have committed serious crimes or possibly may have been involved with additional illegal activities. As such, the participants deserve to also have a high

moral virtue shown to them for their career choice, as well as their willingness to be a part of this study that is striving to help others. The study conducted took measures to establish validity and trust in all participants and the reader. A clear and extensive audit trail was maintained (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The trail shows how all data was obtained, stored, transcribed, and analyzed. The development of themes and descriptions will be transparent and explained. The aspects of trustworthiness that were broken down are credibility, dependability, transferability, and confirmability.

Credibility

I spent considerable time developing the information with a creditable transcription service and transparent data analysis. It was in my best interest to be as accurate as possible in assisting teachers within juvenile corrections facilities. The transcripts were also made available to the participant after the interview with the ability to correct or verify any of the information, which is member checking (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015). There was a multistep process of analyzing the data to ensure few to no mistakes were made. Assistance from other doctoral students and editors also ensured that credibility was maintained through peer debriefing.

Transferability

Although this research is specific to teachers in long-term juvenile corrections facilities, the information has potential transferability to short-term juvenile corrections facilities, adult corrections facilities, and even for teachers in traditional school settings. Further understanding of building resilience or having resilience as an innate personal quality can potentially benefit any individual facing a challenging experience or career. The sampling method that was used, maximum variation, makes this information important to deciding the participants but not as important for the study.

Dependability

Dependability is the process in which the researcher takes the data, interprets the data, and reaches a conclusion. This process is best completed through the means of an audit trail "document that allows a researcher to retrace the process by which the researcher arrived at their final findings" (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 323). An external audit was conducted to ensure that all findings were backed by the data collected. The external audit was completed by a third party with no connection to the researcher, participants, or the study.

Confirmability

Being able to confirm the findings of a study is important. Stake (2010) explains how triangulation of the evidence helps with confirmability by checking the information multiple times. Triangulation is the process of checking the evidence over and over again across all participants and all processes of data collection. He also explains that "if the additional checking confirms that we have seen it right, we win. If the additional checking does not confirm, it may mean that there are more meanings to unpack, another way of winning" (p. 124). Multiple steps were taken along with clear notetaking of each process within this research study. Accurate data collection and analysis records were kept, as well as peer debriefing. All transcripts and interpretations were reviewed by the participant to ensure accurate recording and understanding. Audit trails were also utilized with a clear explanation of the creation of themes and conclusions.

Ethical Considerations

The primary ethical consideration is the confidentiality of the participants and the facilities in which they work. The facilities and locations where the teachers taught were not given as part of the study and all participants were identified through a pseudonym. All steps were taken to ensure full confidentiality for the participants. All aspects of the Liberty University

IRB board were met, and approval was gained before any aspect of the research or participant-seeking began. Consent was obtained from each participant. All participants have the right to withdraw and have their information withdrawn from the study at any time. Any data collected from a withdrawn participant will be destroyed if the situation arises.

The students in which the participants teach are considered a double-protected class. It was requested that all participants refrain from using the names of any of their students and not disclose any other personal information about the student, such as their previous home or crime. This study is specific to teachers of incarcerated youth, but the youth are not directly related to this study. Teachers will be able to explain particular challenges of incarcerated youth compared to students in a traditional school setting without any specific, identifying information. For any stories or data specific to a student, the researcher asked for a generic and random name to be given and all identifying information to be left out.

The completed findings and study were made available to each participant as well as any information concerning future publication. Participants were kept informed of the process of the study and the conclusion of the study. All information was maintained on a password-protected external hard drive. All information and data collected will be destroyed after three years if the information is not necessary for future study.

Summary

The purpose of this hermeneutic phenomenological study is to interpret the experience of resilience in teachers in juvenile correction facilities. The research method is a qualitative phenomenological inquiry. A discussion of the procedures, participants, setting, data collection, and interview questions was outlined in this chapter specific to this study. This study is critical in assisting future teachers in their career decision to begin teaching in a juvenile correction facility

and assist current teachers of incarcerated youth to build resilience for long-term careers. This chapter has also shown the considerations placed in the ethical and trustworthiness aspects, and the utmost care will be taken with the study and the participants.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

Overview

The purpose of this hermeneutic phenomenological study was to interpret the experience of resilience in teachers in juvenile corrections facilities in the United States. This chapter includes a list of the participants with details of their involvement within juvenile correction facilities in Table 1, and the participant's experiences will be given in narrative themes (Moustakas, 1994). The data collected presented three themes, which are the calling for their job, the challenges of working with incarcerated youth, and resilience techniques. With the theme of "the calling" for their job, the sub-themes included a faith-based calling and a desire to help students. The second theme provided data on the challenges of working with incarcerated youth; the sub-themes are educational gaps, building relationships, and safety. The last theme concerning resilience techniques is the support system, inner strength, and self-care. The responses to the research questions of this study are also present in this chapter.

Participants

The 13 participants chosen for this study are professional and credentialed teachers from various states who have all taught within a juvenile correction facility for a minimum of two years and the longest time teaching in a juvenile facility among the participants was 40 years. The sample of participants has spent time teaching either in a public school setting or other teaching roles in addition to teaching within a juvenile corrections facility that houses youth during their teenage years for serious crimes. The participants consisted of seven females and six males between the ages of 35-76. The participants came from California, Colorado, Kentucky, Missouri, New York, Ohio, and Texas. Table 1 shows a basic demographic table of all the participants.

Table 1

Participant Demographics

Teacher Participant	State	# of Years in Facility	Short- or Long-Term Facility	Reason for leaving or still teaching in facility
Ramona	CO	4	Long	Facility Closed
Linsey	CA	5	Both	Burn Out
Ethan	OH	5	Long	Still teaching in facility
Miranda	MO	14	Long	Still teaching in facility
Carley	OH	5	Long	Still teaching in facility
Trent	TX	28	Long	Retired / Upset with New Programs
Willard	TX	40	Long	Retired / Thinking of Returning
Hunter	TX	8	Short	Still teaching in facility
Gale	CO	2	Short	Burn Out
Freddie	NY	6	Both	Still teaching in facility
Bruce	TX	4	Long	Still teaching in facility
Jean	TX	14	Long	Still teaching in facility
Nell	KY	17	Both	Moved / Family Obligation

Ramona

Ramona began her teaching career in a long-term facility for females in Colorado teaching history. She was one of the few participants who had female students. After teaching there for four years, the facility closed, so she went to a charter school and then a mainstream school as an interventionist. She equates her ability at her current job to her time in the juvenile facility where she learned patience, classroom management, building relationships with students, and adapting to challenges. Even though she is no longer teaching in a juvenile justice environment, Ramona conveyed the importance of this type of teacher, the importance of reaching incarcerated youth, and the resilience necessary.

Linsey

Linsey was one of two participants who experienced burnout from her job in the juvenile system and chose to move to a regular school system. Linsey was also the most open about not being able to persevere through her environment with good reason. Linsey taught for five years in the juvenile system in California and was the only participant to have been moved to more than one facility, which gave her experience at both long and short-term facilities. Linsey taught both male and female students, at different times, and it was due to her lack of feeling safe that led her to quitting the juvenile corrections facility. However, Linsey was also the most passionate about giving students a second chance.

Ethan

Ethan was a former pastor who decided to try teaching and found it to be even more rewarding. After teaching many subjects in both a charter school and a public school, Ethan found an opening in the juvenile judicial system and found it to be intriguing. Since he began teaching five years ago in Ohio at the juvenile facility, Ethan has not even considered quitting and finds the benefits far exceed the challenges. Ethan showed how he was determined to help his students in whatever they needed, especially those that were lacking in their formal education.

Miranda

Miranda has taught for 14 years in juvenile corrections in Missouri and previously taught in a program for pregnant and mothering teenagers. When that program closed, Miranda went into a regular school for a couple of years and then began teaching incarcerated youth. When asked if she had ever considered quitting, Miranda made it very clear that she would only leave when it was time for her to retire and even then, she would most likely take on a tutoring role at

her school. Miranda showed extreme resilience when she remained stoic explaining the challenges of her school and her ability to persevere.

Carley

Carley, a passionate teacher from Ohio, has taught in a juvenile correction facility for five years and plans on continuing. Carley also showed the importance of self-care not only by describing how she takes care of herself after the challenges she has with the students but after one teaching position was leading to burnout, Carley advocated for herself and moved to a different teaching position within her school that has led to greater fulfillment. Carley, perhaps more than any other participant, showed her love for the job and students and her desire to help her students.

Trent

Trent, one of the participants from Texas, worked in the juvenile system for the second longest time. For 28 years, Trent taught in a maximum-security juvenile facility teaching carpentry after leaving the Navy. While much of his time was spent teaching males, his most challenging class, as he recalls, was a group of females that nearly led him to quit. His resilience, his calling to the job, and his pure stubbornness kept him going and it seemed to be one of his most memorable experiences and greatest accomplishments.

Willard

Willard showed the most resilience as he taught at a maximum-security juvenile facility in Texas for 40 years. Right after graduating from college, Willard began teaching and coaching at the facility. He took a short break at one point to coach at his high school alma mater, but it only reassured him that his place was in the juvenile system. He taught physical education and health classes. Willard also coached football, basketball, and track and took his incarcerated

youth around the state of Texas to play other schools. His accomplishments can be found in many record books and awards not only in Texas but also in the United States and through groups such as Sports Illustrated, which named him Coach of the Year. His humble demeanor belied his accomplishments that he related all back to his students.

Hunter

Hunter was another teacher in Texas who worked at a short-term juvenile facility. Hunter was allowed in the study because his facility does not have students transitioning in and out on a daily. Instead, many of the youth stay for several months. Hunter felt one of the strongest religious callings to his job. He truly believes that he was called to teach incarcerated youth by God and until God calls him somewhere else, he does not even question his ability to overcome any obstacle or challenge thrown at him.

Gale

Gale taught in a Colorado juvenile facility for only two years and spent time with incarcerated youth the shortest amount of time than any of the other participants. While Gale did not explain the exact reason she left, her comments allowed me to presume that the job became too much for her. Gale also worked in a facility that had students for a shorter amount of time than the other participants but only because her facility was an in-processing facility for youth who had committed serious felonies and were being sent to long-term facilities. While Gale certainly demonstrated resilience, it is possible she struggled with the endurance to keep bouncing back over and over again.

Freddie

Freddie has spent his teaching career in different correctional centers. He chose to teach incarcerated youth due to a situation with his brother and he feels this is his best way to

contribute to society. Freddie deals with a lot of physically aggressive students, perhaps the most of any of the participants. Yet, he only sees it as another obstacle to overcome because he truly cares for his students.

Bruce

Bruce has been teaching at a maximum-security juvenile facility for over four years in Texas. After a career in the Army, Bruce felt called to teaching but found that his age was a bit of a detriment. Many public high schools were searching for history teachers who were also coaches, according to Bruce. His current facility did not see his age as an issue and hired him. Bruce says he quickly felt that God had called him to the school and quickly learned to adapt to the environment.

Jean

Jean had one of the more interesting resumes in connection with her experience with the juvenile justice system. She began teaching at a facility that later closed and sent her to work for the Texas Juvenile Justice Department's central office assisting with training all new hire teachers and other duties within the education department. She even spent time in Washington DC, working for the Department of Justice. Then, she returned to Texas to be an English teacher at one of the long-term facilities. Jean had a true passion for her job and her students.

Nell

Nell was another participant with a long history of teaching incarcerated youth. If it were not for a family obligation that required her to leave Kentucky, she would still be teaching incarcerated youth. Nell not only had the passion to teach in juvenile correction facilities but strived under the challenges. She focused on the benefits of not being in a traditional classroom, had a strong desire to help her students, and wanted to see them succeed.

Results

Three primary themes became apparent from the data collected. Each theme had subsequent sub-themes. Through the coding of the raw data collected through interviews, exhibit scenario responses, and a journal reflection response, the themes and sub-themes became apparent. Quotes from the participants are noted to display the essence of each theme and sub-theme. Table 2 shows the breakdown of the themes and subthemes.

Table 2

Themes, Subthemes, and Research Questions

Themes	Subthemes	Related Research Question
Calling for their Job		CRQ, SQ1, SQ2, SQ3
	Faith-Based Calling	CRQ, SQ1
	Desire to Help Students	CRQ, SQ1
Challenges of Working with Incarcerated Youth		CRQ, SQ1, SQ2, SQ3
	Educational Gap	CRQ, SQ3
	Safety	CRQ, SQ3
	Building Relationships	CRQ, SQ1, SQ3
Resilience Techniques		CRQ, SQ1, SQ2, SQ3
	Using the Support System	CRQ, SQ1, SQ3
	Inner Strength	CRQ, SQ1, SQ3
	Self-Care	CRQ, SQ1, SQ3

Theme One: Calling for Their Job

Each participant was asked why they decided to teach incarcerated youth, and why they chose to walk through metal detectors, frisk searches, limited school resources, and purposefully stand in a classroom in which each student had committed a serious felony crime. Every participant talked about why they taught incarcerated youth with a passion beyond a simple

desire to teach. Even the participants who only taught for a few years or decided the job was not

for them, their passion was still present. The participants talked about a calling to be with the

incarcerated youth. Table 3 shows the number of times Theme One and each Subtheme was

coded and the number of participants in which the code was found.

Table 3

Theme One Data

Theme	Subtheme	Number of Times Coded	Number of Participants
Calling for Their Job		70	13
	Faith-Based Calling	21	6
	Desire to Help Students	45	13

Each participant shared some of the reasons they felt called to work with incarcerated

youth. When asked why she continues to teach in a juvenile correction facility, Jean says:

> I love my job. And I don't get tired of it. It's new and different every day, but I choose to
>
> see it as new and different every day, and I choose to go into it with a positive attitude.
>
> And I like the kids. Enjoying what you do and appreciating the students is probably what
>
> helps my high level of resilience more than anything else, because they make everything
>
> better.

Love for the job and the kids took precedence over the love of teaching. As will be shown in the

other themes, there are additional challenges to teaching in a juvenile correction facility. Because

of those challenges, there must be an additional reason for teaching in this environment. Linsey

explains:

> You really have to like teaching… and do it because you have a passion to teach and
>
> because you believe in second chances. Because if you just like teaching, but you don't

believe in second chances, it's going to be really hard to just go in there with a passion of

teaching.

Each of the kids deserves another chance as they are kids, 18 years old and younger, who made a

mistake and are therefore deserving of a second chance. Willard, the participant who taught at a

long-term, maximum-security juvenile facility for 40 years, said, "I guess being in the right

place, that was where I was supposed to work and supposed to spend my life." For Willard, he

does not talk about his passion for teaching or coaching but his love and care for the kids.

This theme became apparent because each participant discussed their desire to help the

youth within the corrections facilities. In the interview stage, in the exhibit scenarios, and the

journal reflection, the data showed how each participant had a calling to help these troubled

youth.

Faith-Based Calling

Religion and faith in a higher power were found to be a theme in nearly half of the

participants. With six of the thirteen participants, their religion was a reason for feeling the

calling to teach incarcerated youth. These six participants attributed their calling and resilience to

God or a higher power. Four of the participants went into detail about how they prayed for their

jobs concerning whether it was the place for them to work and turned to God frequently. When

asked how he persevered in the challenging work setting, Bruce explained:

> God got my back. You know, everybody says they got a higher power in that, and you
>
> know, mine is my faith and my relationship with God. You know, I can go say my
>
> prayers, talk to him, and know that, "Hey, you put me here."

Having a relationship with God gave several of these participants the guidance and desire to

continue working even when things became very hard. Each of these six participants attributed

their desire to keep pushing through and continue to show up to work to the fact that God or a

higher power placed them in this career field. When asked if he had ever considered quitting in

his 28 years as a teacher in a long-term, maximum-security juvenile facility, Trent explained how

he went and spoke with his pastor:

> He told me basically, what he told me was to quit whining about where I was put and
>
> start doing my job. The good Lord told, you know, He told me to do, this is where He
>
> placed me. This is where I needed to be . . . I quit looking for another job and so yeah, I
>
> mean, my pastor was really a good, a good source for me too. He put everything in
>
> perspective for me.

Willard also attributed his 40 years because it was where God had placed him to be. Miranda

stated that her ability to persevere was due to a higher power. Hunter explained how he would

often walk the campus, sometimes with coworkers, to pray over the school, coworkers, students,

and staff. Hunter explained that his job was what God wanted him to do and would stay in his

position until God called him somewhere else.

Desire to Help Students

The next sub-theme to the calling these participants had to their job was their desire to

help students. For all thirteen participants, wanting to help students and teach students was

identified. While this may be an obvious theme for teachers, a job that is almost solely focused

on helping students, these participants saw their jobs as being more than helping a student

complete an assignment or pass a test. Ramona described it best as she explained the different

roles teachers of incarcerated youth hold:

> I was by no means their counselor, but I would let them, you know, kind of air their
>
> grievances or issues they had going on and just kind of. Yes, the education part was

important, but for them to actually feel valued and like that, I was listening to them. I

think helped make them want to actually participate in the class more, because they could

have cared less about the history class I was teaching, but because I was interested in

what's going on in their life, then they kind of, I felt, more like they could like be who

they were.

The participants spoke frequently about building relationships with the students with the

curriculum being almost a secondary goal within the classroom. By building those relationships,

they were able to help the students more than trying to force a student to complete work. Like

Ramona said, listening to them was the key and might lead the student to participate in the work.

Jean reinforced Ramona's words by stating:

Listen to them. Understand that they are individuals. That they are people. That they're

students. They are not their crimes. They are not what they did. They are not the choices

that they made that got them where they are. You have to see them for who they are, not

what they did.

The crimes of the youth were rarely discussed in the interviews. Some of the teachers would

mention that their students had committed serious crimes such as murder, but what the students

had done was nothing compared to who the student was. The teachers discussed the desire to

help even their most difficult students.

For many of the students, they lacked formal education as will be seen in a later theme of

an educational gap. When faced with this educational gap, the desire to help students came into

play full force. Teachers are typically accredited in two fields, either elementary education,

which is fifth grade and below, or secondary education, which is 6-12 grades (in most states).

Therefore, the teachers of incarcerated youth hold secondary education licenses but have

students with learning abilities as low as first grade. Nell described her experience, which was similar to nearly everyone's:

> You're teaching to read on so many levels. Like I had juveniles that were 16-17 years old that were reading on a first and second-grade level. And I had materials that were so juvenile when I needed something that would fit their needs better, that would be high interest for them.

Nell is describing the frustration of needing materials that had the readability level of a six-year-old but the interest level of a kid 10 years older. This frustration of having to teach students elementary-level tasks to teenage students was felt by nearly every participant but only increased the participant's desire to help their students.

The participants also talked about how their students were just kids and would one day grow up. Willard gave examples of previous students who have grown up to have families and successful careers despite the crimes and hardships of their youth. Carley explained this desire:

> If I just reach one of them and they change their life and they become a father who raises their child to come up and have a better life who betters themselves, meets every goal that they want in life, then I've done something. Because I would do anything before I pass away to see one of these kids out in the streets with their family, just living life. That's what I want.

Theme Two: Challenges of Working with Incarcerated Youth

One of the prevailing themes and points of discussion was the challenges of teaching incarcerated youth. While all classrooms in any teaching environment are faced with challenges, some situations are strictly unique to teaching within a juvenile correction facility. Many of the teachers explained the lack of formal education, issues with safety, the risk of burnout, and the

need to build relationships with their students. Table 4 shows the number of times Theme Two and each Subtheme was coded and the number of participants in which the code was found.

Table 4

Theme Two Data

Theme	Subtheme	Number of Times Coded	Number of Participants
Challenges of Working with Incarcerated Youth		108	13
	Educational Gap	28	9
	Safety	32	9
	Building Relationships	43	13

Another unique challenge is the court system or judicial system which the student has had to navigate. At any time, a student can be called from class to go before a judge or other personnel who handles their case. Miranda explains this challenge:

They're called out of class to go to court. Ok. So then to me, once they're done with the court, they should go into like some kind of room or unit, especially if they're really upset. Because then they come back, they come back with an attitude that don't want to do anything or you might get the reverse. He is going to get released. Maybe as soon as they do his paperwork, then he wants to high-five everyone, and it's all disruptions.

While students who are not incarcerated may face a similar situation, it is rarer that they would be immediately returned to the classroom for the teacher to handle the emotional fallout of the student whether it is a good or bad outcome. The disruptions are frequent as students are pulled from class for medical, counseling, investigations, and other reasons.

Another challenge is the upbringing of many of the students. Incarcerated youth typically have a different upbringing than their law-abiding peers. Willard explained how his students had not had a normal life and told a story in which only one student in his class had a father who

lived in the same home as him. Hunter also stated, "The only difference is these kids have a little bit of a, some may have a little bit of a different background." The problems the students were facing were also more severe than typical teenage drama. Several participants explained how the students were dealing with serious issues that were often compounded by the fact that the students were away from their family and friends.

Incarcerated youth committed serious crimes, and many have faced violence in their lives. Ethan explained how he had students who had been stabbed before. Ethan and Bruce each explained how they had had students battling the balance of medicine, while several other participants mentioned the same challenge. Ethan stated, "I've had a couple of residents in the past who had actual, like, visible hallucinations like fairly frequently." While it is also possible to have a student in a regular system facing this issue, students in the facility do not have the luxury of staying home while adapting to new medications or injuries. Incarcerated youth still attend regular activities unless severely incapacitated or dangerous.

Educational Gap

Incarcerated youth typically have a difficult relationship with the education system. Dropout rates are very high in elementary years, behavior issues frequently prevent sound teaching, and the judicial system has the students moving frequently. Therefore, nearly every participant spoke about how the students had a gap in their education which caused it to be difficult to teach them the required curriculum of the class. For example, Trent, who spent most of his 28 years teaching carpentry, stated, "I had kids that were 18 and 19 and couldn't add 2+2 or couldn't read a tape measure . . . our kids seem to have no foundation, no beginning to where they could like pick up and start school." Miranda explained it very well:

You have students that have not been in school for several years. You know, schools not

a priority, the streets are. So they don't really have a foundation of the knowledge.

They're missing the beginning steps, so it's hard to just jump in. You're doing a lot of

repeat teaching. Some basic skills by this age, they should have mastered, but they

haven't because of the circumstances.

Many of the participants explained the lack of reading and writing skills, which translated into all

courses such as history, math, chemistry, etc. Without a foundation of education, teaching classes

at a high school level is nearly impossible. Therefore, the participants talked about different ways

in which they reached their students through differentiation, peer modeling, a few had access to

computer resources, and ultimately, meeting the student where they were and helping that

student individually with what the student needed.

The educational gap also created the challenge of trying to teach a classroom of students

who are all at varying levels. Ethan went into detail about a student who tested on a Pre-K level

and needed to learn the alphabet with other students in his classroom who had not attended

school past the 3rd grade, and varying other students were all in one classroom. Ethan, with a

secondary teaching certificate, felt unprepared to teach students at such low levels. However, he

worked hard to find additional resources and learn what his students needed and how to give it to

them. Ethan explains his passion for helping his students:

How can I get this kid on track? So, I would come home and try to research, and I was

trying new things. And I told him, hey, this is probably going to be really frustrating for

you, but we got to hone in and see, not only what works for you, because you haven't

been in school, but we need to see how you learn the best. The student himself, he's a

little bit younger, he is around 15 . . . but he also has a child. So I was like, do you want

to raise your son not being able to read? Do you want your son to be able to read?

Ethan had built the relationship with his student to not only know what the student needed but

also to help him understand that his actions while incarcerated could be incredibly beneficial to

him once he left and took on the role of father.

Safety

Like adults, youth can be incarcerated for many felonies. However, violent crimes have a

higher likelihood of the youth being placed in a long-term facility which the majority of the

participants worked at. Therefore, the participants had students who have a history of being

violent with the possibility of gang involvement and anger issues. Safety was a concern not only

for the students towards the teacher but also toward one another. Bruce nonchalantly stated,

"You're gonna get elbowed. You're gonna get, you know, tossed to the ground. You're gonna

have your room just torn apart."

Six of the participants specifically mentioned how gang activity was an issue. As no

research showed the separation of youth based on their gang affiliation, youth would be put into

a classroom regardless of their gang and expected to get along. Nell described the issue as

follows:

We have a large gang population and I have members of several different gangs within

the same classroom and a lot of days it's really hard to make sure that everybody's not

going to kill everybody which you don't have in a normal classroom.

Violence in the classroom and around the facility seems to be a frequent issue that each of the

teachers had to deal with and safety was always a concern. Some students even proved to be a

larger risk than others. When faced with such a student, Gale explained, "I had to consciously be

aware of him at all times, regardless of where I was at in the room." Being on high alert at all times creates a unique challenge of splitting the teacher's focus between safety, curriculum, and the remainder of the students in the classroom.

For Linsey, the constant feeling of not being safe led to her leaving the juvenile correction facility. She explains that at one time, there was a button on the wall in which she could push for help to come rushing into her room. When she moved facilities, she no longer had the button; students were throwing pencils and causing other disruptions, and she stated, "I didn't feel safe, and I was getting tired of yelling." The lack of feeling safe in her job caused Linsey to burn out quickly and move to a regular teaching job after four years of working with incarcerated youth.

Due to the nature of the facilities, the question of guards came into play also. Participants reported varying levels of guard involvement. From Nell, who stated the guards did not assist teachers with the youth, to Miranda, who explained that the students were partnered with youth leaders, so there were multiple adults in the classroom to help her at any time. Many of the participants related to what Gale said:

> It was difficult some days getting up, you know, especially if there was a fight in the classroom and I was part of the one that had to break it up because we didn't have guards in my classroom, they stood outside the door. Sometimes they were like down in the hall or maybe not up there at all.

Gale and several of the other participants explained that guards were not present in the classroom, but were supposed to be close by, such as in the hallway. These guards were not always available, causing the teachers to break up fights and other violent outbursts. Every participant explained that they had received training in ways to restrain youth and self-defense

techniques as a part of their onboarding, new hire training. This is practically unheard of in regular school systems.

The participants even had to endure being physically assaulted by the youth. Willard told one such story in which a youth punched him square in the face. Despite what Willard described as an overreaction to the situation, he learned from the incident and focused more on how the youth was having issues with dealing with his emotions. Freddie was also physically assaulted and chose to see another side to the situation. Freddie explained his dilemma of being assaulted and persevering to remain at his job:

> I actually got, like, assaulted by one of, one of the youths . . . I was so bent at quitting. I felt like there was nothing, there's no point in doing this kind of thing. So, I felt like quitting. And then my, my senior actually gave me some tips and, you know, gave me some advice on how to go about it.

Freddie even talked about how, despite being physically assaulted by a student, he returned to work trying to build a relationship with the student. From their first day on their respective campuses, each participant seemed to have some understanding of what they were stepping into. While all people deserve to feel safe at their place of work, these participants understood the risks, understood the challenges of their students, and chose to stand before them to hopefully assist them with having a better future.

Building Relationships

Building relationships is critically important for teachers of incarcerated youth. The youth have been taken from their homes, away from their family and friends, and everything they have ever known to be locked up in a facility with strangers. While this would be difficult for an adult, it is even more difficult for a teenager. These youth are facing a complicated judicial system and

are trying to regulate their emotions in a strange and challenging place. On top of all of that, they are required to go to school. Gaining an education is most likely the last thing on some of the youth's minds but as teachers, the participants knew that preparing them for the outside world is paramount.

Every participant discussed how important it was to build a rapport with their students. When asked about the first exhibit scenario concerning a new teacher who is struggling, all of the participants had responses concerning the relationships and respect that must be built with the students. Ramona stated:

> Before you can even start teaching, you need to spend some time building those relationships and earning their respect. Because that's, they cannot just automatically respect you because you're the adult in the room. So establishing that relationship so that you can start to get respect.

Building relationships with the students seems to help not only with the respect between the student and the teacher but also with helping the student's anger issues and desire to participate in the classroom. Jean explained how it works with some of her students:

> They are people and if you treat them like that and respect them and help them, then they're going to bend over backwards and do anything they can to be successful just because they know that you care and it's reciprocated.

With respect and care, the students are more likely to want to make the teacher happy and follow the directions of the teacher. Gale, who only taught for two years in a juvenile facility, also explained how important it is to help the students:

> You have to remember they're kids, and they're kids that have fallen off a path that has the whole entire world against them in their minds. And you got to be a little ray and if

you can be that little ray, you can make some pretty good relationships and see some

pretty successful things.

Despite her short tenure with incarcerated youth, Gale passionately spoke about connecting with

the students to help them and even attributed her current ability to connect to students to her time

within the facility.

Bruce talked about one of his most challenging students, a young student who had

assaulted and threatened Bruce multiple times. This student had been sent to Bruce's facility at

the age of 12 and was practically raised in juvenile facilities. Bruce prayed for the student and

spoke to him to try and build a relationship. Bruce told this student:

You know what, Buddy, you got your demons . . . But I'm still here for you. And I just

kept telling that kid that every day, every day I saw him. You may hate me. You may

want to assault me in that, but I'm here for you and I'm praying for you.

Unfortunately, Bruce's student ended up committing suicide after being sent to an adult prison.

Bruce explained how this student was his most challenging and called on a lot of his ability to

persevere, but his faith assisted him as he tried to build a relationship with his student. Bruce's

efforts were not in vain as this youth had at least one person showing him love and care despite

his anger, depression, and behavior.

Theme Three: Resilience Techniques

All participants discussed the techniques they used to be resilient and last more than a

year within a juvenile correction system. Despite the challenges of teaching incarcerated youth,

each participant found ways to enter through the gates and attempted to teach each workday. For

many of the participants, it was a strong mindset that allowed them to put away the hardships and

continue to work despite setbacks and challenges. Table 5 shows the number of times Theme

Three and each Subtheme was coded and the number of participants in which the code was found.

Table 5

Theme Three Data

Theme	Subtheme	Number of Times Coded	Number of Participants
Resilience Techniques		171	13
	Using the Support System	107	13
	Inner Strength	65	12
	Self-Care	18	8

Many of the participants commented on how each day is a new day. Despite what they may have gone through, many participants had the mentality that the event was in the past and it was time to move on. Therefore, despite what may have happened the day prior, the participants would return to work with the mentality of having a clean slate. When given the last exhibit scenario in which I tried to create a worst-case scenario of a possible week within the facility, several participants were not even phased. Like Jean, when asked how she would return to work after a challenging week, she stated, "Excited, because I've already had the worst week I've ever had. So the next week is gonna be great. You know if it's already hit rock bottom." Her excitement came from the idea that if she had already survived the worst challenges, then she would not be dealing with as great a number of hardships as she was the week prior. Ramona agreed with Jean when she stated, "Just making sure that I treated it as a new day, a new experience, and with a positive attitude." Hunter was another participant who showed his resilience when he explained, "My mindset is always every day is a new day."

Another strong resilience technique used by the participants was the feeling of responsibility for their job and for their students. When faced with overwhelming challenges, the participants felt that they had taken on the responsibility to work and help their students despite the hardships. Freddie was one participant who felt strongly that he took the job to better the community. When faced with whether to continue working in the juvenile facility, Freddie stated:

> During the years, I felt like I had to build more confidence and more of that perseverance along the journey because it was not much of an easy task for me, but I felt like I had to do it. Sometimes, I felt like giving up, or I understand that it's a service to the community and it's for the growth and development of the community.

Several participants discussed their desire for the students to be successful upon being released, which is all a service to the community. Freddie spoke repeatedly about his calling to the job being about his desire to serve his community. For other participants, it was also their responsibility to complete the job they had signed up for. During the journal reflection, after asking how she persevered through a challenge she vividly remembered, Ramona explained:

> I went home and said that I'm not ever doing that again. And then I got over it and realized that I had to do it again because it was part of my job. But that, like just making sure that I go in with a positive attitude about it and not choosing to be in a bad, like a bad mindset because they'll pick up on that and if they know I'm in a bad mood, they're going to be in a bad mood.

Taking on challenges is certainly a part of the job within juvenile correction facilities and Ramona might have thought about quitting but concluded that it was a part of her job and would

continue. Gale simply stated, "You chose this job and that's why I tell myself. I chose this job. I chose, I chose to do this."

Another strong resilience technique that was used was the desire to help the students. While some felt their calling to the job was the desire to help students, it was also a way for some participants to keep pushing and persevering through difficult times. Nell, who worked with incarcerated youth for 17 years and had to move away from the career due to family obligations, passionately explained:

> I always look at it that if I give up on them, they're going to give up on themselves. And I refuse to be the reason that somebody gives up. Like I will persevere through anything to make sure that I am not the reason that you are giving up.

Many participants shared this feeling that quitting the job would be quitting the students and therefore, they persevered through the challenges. The students within the facilities are also facing the consequences of the actions they committed as young kids. Being placed in the judicial system, the youth faced even more hardships than others have not faced. Because of this Linsey explained:

> It was very challenging, but to be there that long, something made me go in there and want to do it because it wasn't the pay really. I would say, like, 80% of those students are willing to learn and they just need, they need guidance. And telling them what to do. So it is, it is very challenging, but it's also very rewarding.

Linsey, who worked in a juvenile facility for five years before reaching burnout due to no longer feeling safe, found the job to be very rewarding because so many of the students need help and she wanted to provide that guidance. Like Nell and Linsey, Ethan also showed resilience due to

the desire to help his students. Ethan, when explaining how he handled having multiple

educational levels in his classroom at one time, said:

> It was physically exhausting at the end of it, and I didn't think it was going to be that
>
> physically exhausting, but it was, it was really draining mentally as well. The way that I
>
> did it is, I just knew that he was going to get it eventually and to just keep trying. And I
>
> counseled myself like, well, if he's willing to keep trying, I'm going to keep trying.

Despite the exhaustion, Ethan was determined to keep working because his student was still

trying to accomplish his educational goals. The desire to help students is not only a part of the

calling to start a career with the juvenile judicial system but is also a technique used by current

employees to have the resilience to keep returning to the classroom. Even when the students are

"being difficult", the participants used their desire to help their students to motivate them to

return and keep trying.

Using the Support System

One of the techniques that was found predominantly among the participants was the use

of a support system, building guidelines for the classroom, and following the procedures of the

facility. A part of being resilient was creating an environment in which to be successful. Nearly

every participant talked about creating structures and procedures within the classroom to

minimize issues with the students. This was seen as being paramount to being able to be

successful at the job and having a lasting career. Jean explained how "having structure in the

classroom" was very important. When given the first exhibit scenario concerning a new teacher

who was struggling, Jean recommended:

Set up structure and do the same thing every day and write them up when they're doing

something. Write the 225s, contact case managers, when they find out that you don't

play, that's when they'll start respecting you more . . . they like the structure.

A 225 is her facility's documentation for any incident that breaks the rules and procedures of the

facility. This documentation can affect a student's privileges and is an important tool for

discipline. Jean was adamant that having structure in the classroom is the key to success for the

students as well as the teacher.

After the classroom procedures, the participants strongly enforced the procedures in place

within the facility. Ethan strongly stood behind the processes in place at his facility and talked

about the stigma behind them that might keep a new teacher from using them. Ethan stated:

It took me a while because I was like, oh, if I call for them, they're going to think that,

like, hey, I'm not capable of doing this or whatever. And it's not that way whatsoever.

You're protected. So I would say that we have a team, not only just in teachers here, but

the facility staff is also your team as well, and you need to utilize them . . . and also to not

be scared to use those processes and resources because they're there for a reason. And no

one looks down on you if you have to do that because we've all had to do it at some point

in time.

Based on participant responses, each facility has a guideline for what to do if certain situations,

such as fighting, take place in the classroom. Some teachers talked about writing referrals,

notifying other staff members such as psychologists or case managers, or even sending the

student to another area. Each of these procedures is a resilience technique because the teacher is

displaying the strength of not becoming overwhelmed by a situation beyond the procedures of

their classroom but instead working the steps to bring the student back in line.

Miranda, Trent, and Jean recommended speaking up concerning issues. Each of these participants talked about once other systems failed, bringing the issue to a person of authority (each facility had different terms from a principal to a superintendent to a warden), and receiving assistance from a higher level. This shows another level of strength and resilience as the participants were willing to own up to the issues they were experiencing and asked for guidance and assistance with the issue.

Inner Strength

For some participants, it was their inner strength, the power to persevere, that kept them returning. Willard spoke strongly about how he would not give up until someone walked him out of the gates. A few male participants stood on their masculinity of being able to handle aggression and not backing down from the challenge. Jean joked about her stubbornness to not being able to quit. Every participant displayed characteristics of strength, self-efficacy, a positive outlook, and a refusal to give up.

Willard and Trent discussed how their own childhoods led to the perseverance to work with these types of students. Willard, now an elderly man who helped hold the researcher's infant daughter, explained how he was a troubled youth who fought, got kicked out of school, and even spent time in prison. Willard explained that being able to relate to what some of the youth had dealt with gave him the strength to put up with the challenges of the facility for 40 years. Trent attributed his work ethic and strength to persevere to his mom and the way he grew up:

> I guess I would say I get it from my mom. The ability, just to see the things she had gone
>
> through that I saw when I was a kid. We were poor, and my dad worked for the railroad,
>
> and he had, I think, a third-grade education. My mom graduated high school, but she

worked hard, and she had to do all the reading, all the finances . . . so over the years, how

much she struggled but kept on and kept pushing, and every time I would get to the point

of where I was like, man, I just can't do this anymore, I think about Mom.

For these two men, having students who had faced many challenges already, they were able to

relate and find the strength to continue pushing forward. Trent saw the strength his mom

displayed to keep moving forward and it encouraged him to do the same. For other participants,

like Gale, it took the mental fortitude to continue working each and every day. Gale shared her

thought process:

Sometimes I was, I was really gung ho. I'm going to do this. And there's other times it

was like, I was sitting in the parking lot going, I think I should call it, you know, but I

think it [perseverance] increased more so as the time went on because I knew it was

something I could do.

Like Gale, several participants talked about how their ability to persevere was a bit like a roller

coaster, stronger at some times than others, but they held on to the bounce-back factor, the ability

to get back up after being knocked down. Miranda, who has spent 14 years teaching in a juvenile

facility and plans on retiring from there, stated:

Sometimes you get disappointed or frustrated, but then maybe in a short period of time or

the next day, something positive will happen with one of the youth or something that's

encouraging. So, I think the pathway is even, maybe because you go down some, you win

some, you lose some.

Miranda explains that while there are bad days, there are still good days, and it creates a bit of a

balance. Her resilience comes from the idea that you do not hold onto the hardships, because

there are going to be better and easier days also.

Self-Care

The last resilience technique that was portrayed by the participants was the need for self-care. From taking time off to working on something else, the participants had different perspectives on taking care of the physical, mental, and emotional needs they may have. However, eight of the thirteen participants discussed ways in which practicing self-care was a necessary component of having a career with incarcerated youth.

Willard keeps a box of mementos from previous students that helps remind him of the good work he does. After facing a particularly challenging time or week, Willard explained the following:

> I still got that little box. I still got those cards, those Father's Day cards, and all that stuff. I take those and read them. But you know what? May not feel like it this week, but I am making a difference . . . and I'd start looking at it. I thought, you know what, this is okay, I'm going to make it.

Having these artifacts allowed Willard to reflect on the good times during the challenging times. Nell, after the second scenario in which a senior teacher is struggling, stated:

> He needs to do some self-care. And as teachers, we're not real good at doing self-care a lot of the time. I know that I would go, and I would talk to him, and I would say, "I know you're struggling. I think maybe you need to do a little self-care." I would tell him, I mean, I would even mention to him, you know, you can go talk to somebody.

Nell was a proponent of seeking out therapy or at least someone to talk to about the emotional and mental challenges her line of work consisted of, even if it wasn't consistent. Bruce agreed as he explained his frequency of speaking to other coworkers, particularly those who had more

years within the environment. He found this to be a great way of helping him deal with the

challenges he faces.

Carley, after telling a difficult story of being verbally assaulted by a youth without the

support of her principal, took a day off and explained a little about what she did. Carley

explained her method of self-care:

> I've always been the person that if I walk outside and I think it's just maybe I grew up in
>
> the country. I always ran around barefooted, and if I am upset, if I am mad, I can walk
>
> outside and just put my feet in the grass, and it relaxes me. I don't know how to explain it
>
> . . . So, I did that. I did something that I knew that would help me calm down.

Carley reconnected with nature by walking barefoot in the grass. She needed a little time away

from the classroom, away from her students, away from the struggles. But then she returned after

the weekend with the focus that one student would not ruin her purpose to help all of her other

students.

Freddie, Linsey, Carley, and Trent recommended taking a break or a short vacation when

the challenges become overwhelming. It is important to note that, unlike regular schools, which

have summers off or year-round style schools that typically have a two-week break multiple

times a year, juvenile correction facilities are year-round with far fewer breaks. Several

participants mentioned only holiday breaks and short summer breaks consisting of nothing

longer than two weeks. These participants recommended time to decompress and escape for a

short time to get the physical, emotional, and mental break that is sometimes necessary to

continue the job without burnout. Trent, after the scenario in which a senior teacher was

struggling, stated:

I would tell him to take a vacation. He needs to step out for a while because, I think,

that's the biggest thing we spend too much time or stay too long, and we just get

overwhelmed. I would advise him to take some time off . . . or talk to your principal and

to maybe do something different for a little bit. Take on some different duties and maybe

stay out of the classroom for a week or so.

Trent recommends that taking the time for self-care can help the teacher have a lasting and

successful career in the classroom if the teacher does not burn out by trying to continually push

through without a break.

<div align="center">**Research Question Responses**</div>

This section offers the answers to the research questions based on the responses given by

the participants and relates to the themes given above. All quotes come from the data collected

through the interview, exhibit scenarios, and journal reflections.

Central Research Question

How do teachers in juvenile correction facilities demonstrate resilience through the

struggles of incarcerated juveniles and the environment? Out of the thirteen participants who

have worked in juvenile corrections, two participants retired after more than two decades, three

more have taught for over a decade, with two of those teachers planning on retiring without

moving professions, and five more participants are still working in a juvenile facility. Only three

participants have moved to a regular school setting after five or fewer years. While all

participants showed their resilience to teach in a difficult environment, ten of the participants

showed the lasting ability to have a career teaching incarcerated youth.

The techniques they used consisted of relying on a support system, having inner strength,

and practicing self-care. Additional resilience techniques were facing each day as a new day,

fulfilling the responsibility to their job and students, and lastly, the desire to help their students. With a support system, the teachers were able to rely on their coworkers and the procedures of the facility to assist them when challenges in their classroom went beyond the structure they had in place. Having others to support them allowed the teacher to keep from feeling isolated and unsafe when issues arose. Inner strength was a predominant characteristic of the teachers, as they were not willing to back down when times became tough. Instead, they found the inner fortitude to keep pushing forward and to stand back up after being knocked down. Lastly, practicing self-care through personal methods or taking time off was a means to reset and avoid possible burnout from the job.

Willard, when asked how he would overcome a challenging week and have the resilience to continue, stated:

Somebody is going to be affected in a positive way. Somebody is going to come out of this and get their engineering degree. Somebody is going to be a physical therapist . . . somebody is going to be okay out there. I'm coming back Monday for them. Because I needed that. I needed somebody to invest in me and help me. So it doesn't matter how many bumps you go through, and there's going to be bad weeks. Especially working in a place like that, because of it's a hotbed of problems.

Willard had a focus and strength that was making a difference in the lives of his students, and despite the challenges of the workplace, he knew that his students could have a successful future. He also relates to the students because he had a difficult childhood and needed someone to help him also.

Trent was another participant with a long career in a juvenile facility and he found his strength in the fact that he was supposed to work there; so therefore, that was what he was going to do:

> As soon as I decide, made up my mind that this is what I needed, you know, this is where I needed to be, I got serious . . . focus on the kids, what can I do to help these kids? How can I get better? I had to figure out another approach to these kids and reach them . . . My perseverance grew once I quit thinking about myself instead of what I was supposed to be doing.

Trent's perseverance came from the decision and belief that he was exactly in the place he was meant to be. Therefore, he did not question if or how he was going to continue working there but focused more on how to reach the kids. Having the focus on the kids is what kept Nell teaching in a facility for 17 years. She said, "If I give up on them, they're going to give up on themselves." Like Trent, Nell focused on the students. And like Willard, Nell wanted her students to be successful in their lives.

Sub-Question One

How do teachers in juvenile corrections facilities foster personal persistence and resilience through their work with incarcerated youth? Fostering personal persistence and resilience came in many forms but the two biggest ones were building inner strength with a focus on why the teacher was working in such an environment and developing self-care habits. Jean, who is tasked with teaching English for all grade levels within the same class period, finds her resilience in the success of her students. She talks about a special education student who has been showing tremendous progression in her class:

That's the kind of stuff that makes my, I guess, ability to maintain and keep going. That

makes it all worthwhile, and that brings me back another day, and it gets me excited. And

I love what I do, I really love what I do.

Jean builds her ability to persevere through the help of her student's success. Hunter also focused

on his students and helping them to be successful. Hunter explained:

My mindset is always every day is a new day. So, I'm not taking what happened at the

end of the workday, I'm not even taking that home . . . pick up the next day, the next

workday, and learn from it. I will think about how can I improve the things that have

happened? Is there anything that I can do to improve those things? . . . Hold my head up,

walk into the classroom with all the confidence that I had at the beginning of the year.

So whatever challenges Hunter had experienced, he was going to leave it in the classroom, and

upon returning, he was going to seek ways to improve and hold his head high. He builds his

resilience through the desire to make his classroom even better.

Sub-Question Two

How do the experiences of resilient teachers in juvenile corrections facilities assist others

desiring a career to work with incarcerated youth? Every participant was asked what advice they

would give to anyone thinking about a career in teaching incarcerated youth. Freddie, who has

been teaching for six years and plans to continue teaching incarcerated youth, stated:

If you want to do it, do it. It's a very good thing. You are actually doing something good

for the community, and I feel like you're actually transforming lives, changing people's

life, and making impact in your life. You don't have to look at the pain that comes with

it. You have to just persevere, and along the journey, through your experience, you build

more confidence, you build more perseverance, you build more strength to continue.

Freddie finds the job to be very rewarding and that over time, a new teacher will build the skills necessary to continue in the career. When asked the same question, Hunter focused more on the students:

> Kids are kids regardless of where they're at, so the foundation is going to be the same. The only difference is these kids have a little bit of a, some may have a little bit of a different background . . . they all have come challenges in their life.

Hunter even, somewhat jokingly, stated that the students in the judicial system are just like the kids in public schools but they are the kids who got caught. His emphasis is that despite the challenges or history of the students, they are still just kids.

Other pieces of advice were simple such as Bruce stating new teachers need patience, Nell stating that a new teacher needs thick skin and to not take comments personally, and Carley saying to be prepared for the rollercoaster. One of the big revelations was that of all the participants, none of them felt truly prepared for the job until they were really in it.

Many participants talked about the classwork they had taken to receive a teacher licensure, and the situations that were given were always in a more perfect classroom environment, and the juvenile corrections facilities are far from that atmosphere. So, the teachers gave advice that would also apply to the onboarding routine. Several suggested that new hire teachers should be given more training on real scenarios that could take place in their classroom, such as fighting, verbal assaults, destroying of property, and other such situations, to better prepare the new teacher.

Sub-Question Three

What strategies do experienced teachers implement with incarcerated youth that improve resiliency in their career? There were two predominant strategies that the experienced

participants implemented with their students to improve their resiliency. The first strategy was building relationships with the students and the second was to create clear guidelines in the classroom. When given the scenario of the struggling new teacher, Nell stated:

> I will tell her the first way that she's going to get better control of her classroom is through building relationships with her students. Prove to them that you care about them and you're not just there for a paycheck and that is your first step to stopping having fights in your classroom, to maintaining control, to gaining respect. That's how you start the whole process.

Nell and other participants placed a strong emphasis on building relationships. Bruce talked about extra programs he is a part of, such as the student council and a church revival program, to help build relationships among the students. Carley gave several examples of showing the students respect even when faced with threats and insults because respect got her much further than aggression or anything else. Building relationships with the students was seen as more important than the curriculum for nearly every participant.

The next strategy used was the building of guidelines and procedures in the classroom. While no teacher went into detail about what their guidelines were in their classroom, several participants, Ramona, Nell, Miranda, Trent, Linsey, Jean, Ethan, and Bruce, made mention of having procedures in place and not being scared to use the procedures of the facility also. Jean discussed the procedures the most:

> When in my classroom, the way I cope with and deal with that is that have, you know, these are my expectations. And if you choose not to meet my expectations, these are the consequences. So you know the consequences ahead of time and I don't have any

> problems in my classroom because they know that I'm not playing . . . I, I'm not going to

> change my mind.

The expectations or structure of the classroom gives the students clear boundaries. The

researcher also found, during her time within a facility, that having a structure in the classroom

that very rarely changed led to fewer behavior issues, more participation, and the ability to build

stronger relationships with the students because they did not have to worry about what was

expected of them or how to do basic procedures in the classroom. This is an incredibly strong

classroom management tool.

Summary

The themes identified in the data analysis matched perfectly with the research questions.

The three primary themes were the calling participants had for their jobs, the challenges of

working with incarcerated youth, and the resilience techniques used. The first theme had sub-

themes, which consisted of a faith-based calling and a desire to help students. The second theme

had sub-themes that identified an educational gap among the students, stressing the importance

of building relationships and having a sense of safety. The last sub-themes dealt with different

resilience techniques of building a support system, having inner strength, and practicing self-

care. Each of these themes was used in answering the research questions in the second part of

this chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

Overview

The purpose of this hermeneutic phenomenological study was to interpret the experience of resilience in teachers in juvenile corrections facilities in the United States. In this last chapter, I will discuss the different interpretations of findings, which include teachers who have a passion for the students over teaching, teachers who thrive on the extra challenges, and who were able to build resilience in this challenging environment. This chapter also describes the implications of policy and practice, the theoretical and empirical implications, limitations, and delimitations. This chapter concludes with recommendations for future research and a summary.

Discussion

This section discusses the findings of this study. Patton (2015) explains, "phenomenological analysis seeks to grasp and elucidate the meaning, structure, and essence of the lived experience of a phenomenon for a person or group of people" (p.573). Through the use of the hermeneutic circle in which the whole relates to the parts and the parts relate to the whole (Schwandt, 2001), the culmination of data analysis from this study reveals three strong interpretations of the experience of how teachers of incarcerated youth demonstrate resilience. It is important to note that there is no clear and set formula or method to interpret qualitative data (van Manen, 2014). Therefore, it is a flowing process and a never-ending circle of interpretations to build as deep of an understanding of the phenomenon as possible (Moustakas, 1994; van Manen, 2014). The data revealed how the participants may have started with some techniques of resilience, but through the challenges of the juvenile correction facility, they either built the resilience to continue or burned out. The ability to be resilient also must be cultivated in all teachers of incarcerated youth.

Interpretation of Findings

This section was derived from the data collected through interviews, exhibit scenarios, and journal reflections of 13 participants who have experienced a shared phenomenon. Along with the themes and subthemes that have already been provided, I will elaborate on how the overall description of the phenomenon in which each participant was a part can be brought together into three strong interpretations concerning how teachers of incarcerated youth build resilience to have a lasting career in juvenile correction facilities. These interpretations were a direct consequence of using the hermeneutic circle to develop an understanding of the phenomenon (Patton, 2015).

Summary of Thematic Findings

This section will explain the three interpretations created from the data analysis. The themes and subthemes were the 'parts' of the hermeneutic circle. The entirety of the data collected was the 'whole.' Using the hermeneutic circle, the 'parts' were interpreted into the 'whole' and vice versa to create interpretations of the phenomenon that all the participants and the researcher have experienced (Patton, 2015). The three interpretations are the passion for students over teaching, teachers thriving on extra challenges, and resilience being built within the challenging environment. Each interpretation was created from the understanding of the data analysis in which the participants gave honest explanations of their lived experiences.

Passion for Students Over Teaching. The first interpretation to be discussed is how the participants showed their passion for their students over their passion for teaching. Robertson-Kraft and Duckworth (2014) found that new teachers who had a passion for achieving their long-term goals had a higher level of grit or perseverance. This study was conducted on new-hire teachers within their first and second years of teaching. The participants of their study also had a

passion or goal that dealt primarily with the teaching profession. In this study, the participants were much more focused on the students and the lives of their incarcerated youth than on the curriculum or requirements of teaching. The only participants who discussed their passion for teaching taught for five or fewer years, while the participants who had lasted over a decade focused on their passion for the students. Building relationships with the students was brought up many times within the interviews and exhibit scenarios and was found to be one of the most important steps that each teacher had to take within the classroom. Unruh et al. (2021) explained how important building relationships with the students was for the students themselves. Incarcerated youth are in such an environment in which they do not receive typical interaction with others, especially peers; therefore, relationships with the adults within the juvenile facility hold a greater importance than in a typical school setting (Unruh et al., 2021). Several participants even stated that the curriculum was second after building relationships and earning the respect of their students.

When the curriculum was discussed, not a single participant showed excitement for what or how they taught but for how the lesson was going to reach a particular student. For instance, Ethan did not show a passion for teaching a student how to read but showed a passion for how the student would one day be able to help his son read. Ethan spoke with passion about being able to change his students' lives and how he built a relationship with the students that would motivate them to keep trying. Shields and Mullen (2020) describe one of the primary reasons veteran teachers have resilience is by watching their students succeed at the lesson. While Jean briefly discussed this, no other participant did. Instead, success was viewed more as whether the student was learning a skill that helped them return to the free world or achieve a larger goal.

Jean was another participant who discussed a current project with her students, which included poetry. While she was excited about the creativity she had put forth in the lesson, she was much more passionate about how a particular student was proving others wrong and far exceeding expectations. She talked about several students participating more than ever and how one student was peer-teaching another. Jean became incredibly excited as she explained how a student she had had for at least a year stood up and began teaching a part of the lesson. Jean's passion was not in the curriculum or teaching, but her passion was in the ability to help her students succeed, understand, and even thrive in their work.

Teachers Thrived on Extra Challenges. Each participant is a licensed teacher. Therefore, they could work in a regular school just as easily as they could at a juvenile correction facility. However, the participants who were still working or had retired from a juvenile facility displayed a sense of willingness to tackle the extra challenges that not only they face but also their students face. Flores and Barahona-Lopez (2020) studied how research dealing with incarcerated youth has focused primarily on the challenges of the youth while ignoring the challenges of the teachers. When those challenges are observed, it is a complex situation without clear guidance besides having resilient teachers. The educational gap among the students who were mentioned by many of the participants is a challenge not found in a regular school (Flore & Barahona-Lopez, 2020). The teachers discussed methods of approach and research of resources to help their students overcome their lack of education. The participants would nonchalantly mention being threatened, being verbally assaulted, having their classroom destroyed because those challenges are often and not seen as big of a challenge as they are within a regular school.

Frequently, the participants would explain a challenge and then discuss their thought process and ways in which they had to overcome that challenge to continue their job. They were

not overcome by challenges but instead faced each challenge as a hurdle to be overcome. While the challenges within this particular environment will often force teachers to leave (Shields & Mullen, 2020), these participants saw the challenges not as stopping measures but simply as obstacles to conquer. Few of the participants showed defeat by the issues they faced. Linsey was one participant who was defeated by her obstacles. Her responses did not have the passion to overcome what was thrown at her, which might explain why she moved to a different teaching position after five years. Other participants, such as Willard, Trent, Miranda, Carrie, and Jean, were almost excited by the challenges that they had overcome and discussed the problems they had faced.

Resilience Was Built. The teachers who showed a lasting career or a promise of a lasting career displayed the ability to build their level of resilience. Each participant showed some level of resilience simply by willingly stepping into a juvenile correction facility and attempting to teach incarcerated youth. However, some participants displayed a higher level of resilience even from the beginning. Nell described herself as a tough cookie. Trent and Bruce had previous experience in the military. Willard had a difficult childhood. While not every participant shared their background, the teachers who are still persevering in their facilities and those with over a decade of experience showed their ability to bounce back from adverse situations.

One of the interview questions asked each participant if they had ever considered quitting and what steps they took to continue working (for those no longer working in the facilities, it was asked in the sense of before they left their facility). Bruce showed his pure determination not to be beaten and to focus on "the light at the end of the tunnel." Trent explained how his first five or six years were incredibly difficult, and he questioned remaining in his position, but once he

realized that God had placed him in that role, he no longer questioned and fought to persevere.

Ramona explained how a lot of the situations were due to a student having a bad day:

> It was just one day in their life, and they were mad, and I had to accept that and learn how
>
> to not take it personally because they weren't personally attacking me; they were just
>
> mad in that moment.

For Ramona, she took her challenges one day at a time and built the resilience to face each day with a blank slate.

With the journal prompt, each participant was asked to reflect on an adverse event that they vividly remember and then how they overcame that challenge. Each participant showed situations in which they faced a challenge and took the necessary steps to overcome it. Only two of the 13 participants chose to quit, while the other 11 built the resilience to find a way for the challenge to be conquered. When asked if their resilience increased or decreased during their time within a juvenile facility, only one participant, Linsey, stated that their ability to persevere decreased, which could explain her reason for reaching burnout after five years. While many of the participants shared how difficult their job was in the beginning, nearly every participant demonstrated that they were determined to adapt to adverse situations and continue to overcome whatever was thrown at them, both literally and figuratively.

Implications for Policy and Practice

This study had only one implication for policy but several implications for practice. With the implication for policy, educational degrees within higher education institutions should consider offering a course focused on teaching incarcerated youth. Implications for practice are strongly offered to the administrations within juvenile correction facilities to aid their teachers in building resiliency by supporting the facility procedures, assisting teachers with creating

classroom guidelines and building resiliency with a reminder of the teachers calling to the job and practicing self-care.

Implications for Policy

Clark (2020) explains that criminal justice and social science degrees do not require courses in juvenile justice. Therefore, students obtaining their bachelor's degree who are interested in correctional work may not even know or consider working in juvenile correction facilities. The same is true for degrees in education. There are no courses or teaching concerning the education of incarcerated youth. Within the education degree programs, there should be a class focused on the education of incarcerated youth. There are classes for special education students, gifted students, at-risk students, and many others. But there is no curriculum for the students who get locked away and are fighting for the same education as their peers. Educational degrees should implement a course that explains the diversity and struggles of teaching incarcerated youth as well as what it takes to be a successful teacher within this challenging environment. This not only helps education students to understand this population better but could also motivate some of those students to take on careers within juvenile correction facilities.

When asked how they began teaching incarcerated youth, no participant started teaching because these were the children they wanted to reach. Instead, for most of the participants, it was a job opening that they happened to see and were hired for. However, some teachers started out wanting to teach special education students, for example. Shining a light on this particular career path could bring the right type of person into the facilities, which would assist with retention, be better for the students, and even for the teacher to be placed in a rewarding environment.

Implications for Practice

Several implications for practice were identified with this study. Within each facility, the administration should take steps to ensure their teachers are building their resiliency to have lasting careers with incarcerated youth (Houchins et al., 2004). The administration is responsible for supporting their teachers within the classrooms, ensuring there is a sense of safety, and creating means by which teachers can build their resiliency to avoid burnout (Shields & Mullen, 2020).

The first thing that an administration can do is help the teachers feel safe in their classrooms (Collier et al., 2019). Safety comes from two predominant aspects based on the information given by the participants. The first factor is to establish clear procedures within the facility concerning dangerous situations or any situation that is disrupting the classroom. While almost every participant noted that there were procedures, the issue that caused a feeling of not being safe was due to the lack of follow-through with the procedures. Teachers mentioned that guards, correctional officers, or some other adult authority figures were not available when situations arose. Secondly, teachers must feel supported in using these procedures without the fear of repercussions or ridicule (Collier et al., 2019).

Some administrators, and even other teachers, may argue that classroom behavior needs to be taken care of within the classroom (Sprick et al., 2021). Many situations of disruptive behavior should certainly be handled by the teacher as this also helps them maintain control and a level of authority (Sprick et al., 2021). However, when classroom consequences require the removal of a student or contact outside of the classroom, the teacher must be supported. This also reinforces to the students that actions have consequences and that they are not allowed to disrupt the educational process for other students (Gagnon et al., 2012).

Another powerful implication to ensure the longevity of teachers of incarcerated youth is helping new or struggling teachers by creating classroom guidelines (Flores, 2012; Patrie, 2017). The majority of the participants talked about having structure within their classroom as an important factor in their ability to last within the school. Administration should assist all new teachers with creating classroom guidelines with clear structure, procedures, and consequences. The new teacher should feel supported, and it could also help if a mentor or senior teacher could assist in the process with frequent check-ins. Many participants explained how they were completely unprepared for the job when they were hired, even if they had prior teaching experience. Bruce, for example, talked about his willingness to speak with other teachers who had over a decade of experience learning their tools for success.

Another important step that the administration can take is to help teachers build their resilience and avoid burnout by providing time for collaboration, meetings in which teachers are reminded why they were called to the job, and encouraging means of self-care (Patrie, 2017). Collaboration among the teachers helps share knowledge, especially from those who are having success with methods and students (Houchins et al., 2010). For many participants, they were encouraged to continue through difficult times and overwhelming challenges by remembering the reason they were called to the job. The passion that brought them to a juvenile correction facility can be forgotten in the face of adversity, but by providing the time to reflect on their calling, the administration can assist with building resiliency in their staff. Administrators could facilitate this through professional development times in which the staff can come together and talk. The emphasis here is that the teachers can talk and not simply be spoken to. Having the chance to speak up about a particular challenge and allow other teachers to recommend solutions

would be a huge benefit to the teachers and assist with their avoidance of burnout, build their

resilience, and motivate them to keep trying.

Self-care is paramount to avoiding burnout (Hwang et al., 2017). Physical, emotional,

and mental struggles can reach a point in which a teacher feels as if they have no other option but

to quit and walk away (Weiland, 2021). Therefore, allowing teachers time for self-care, either

through taking time off, taking time out of the classroom, or possibly having access to a

therapist, could ensure the longevity of teachers. When faced with allowing a teacher to step

away for a week or having that teacher quit completely and find another teacher, the

administration should see the benefits of a short-term loss for a long-term goal. Therapy is also

one component that several participants mentioned for various reasons. When given the scenario

of the senior teacher who was struggling, several participants explained that the teacher needed

someone to talk to. Teachers of incarcerated youth are not facing the average teenage student.

Their students have committed serious felony crimes such as murder and assault. While also

dealing with violence within a juvenile facility, being able to talk about the emotional and mental

struggles of the environment is incredibly important. Having access to a therapist would be a

strong contributor for teachers to build their resilience.

Theoretical and Empirical Implications

This section will discuss the theoretical and empirical implications of this study. The

theoretical implications were viewed through the lens of the self-determination theory. These

implications were identified through the analysis of thematic findings, the synthesis of all data

collected, and the comparison to the theoretical and empirical information provided in earlier

chapters. The empirical implications are drawn from the experiences of resilient teachers who

served in juvenile correction facilities.

Theoretical Implications

The theory that guided this research was the self-determination theory developed by Richard Ryan and Edward Deci (2000). SDT is also a means by which to understand human motivation (Vinney, 2019). With SDT, three basic needs are expressed: competence, relatedness, and autonomy (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Teachers of incarcerated youth must build their motivation through the components of SDT to be successful and have the resilience to continue working in a juvenile correction facility. In a study conducted by Saks et al. (2021), there is also a correlation between teacher burnout, continued motivation, and the self-determination theory. Each of these factors was crucial to a teacher having longevity in their careers.

This study showed that teachers who could not find continual motivation and were missing a component of SDT led to burnout. Two of the participants reached the point of burnout and decided to teach in a regular school instead. Linsey was unable to find continued motivation when she began to feel unsafe in her environment, did not have a support system to gain strength, and was unable to create a sense of relatedness with her students. While only two of the participants experienced burnout, the other 11 participants avoided burnout by building their resilience, finding motivation despite challenges, and fulfilling the three components of SDT.

The first part of SDT, competence, was discussed the least within this study. However, each participant has a high level of competence due to their ability to earn and maintain teaching licensure based on the requirements of their state. For the areas in which the teachers struggled, for instance, having a secondary education certificate but needing to teach lower grade levels, the participants took the necessary steps to gain the competence necessary. For example, Ethan had a student who was on a kindergarten reading and letter identification level. While he was trained

and certified to teach sixth grade and up, he took the time to learn, research, and find resources to assist his students and build the competence necessary to be successful in the classroom.

Relatedness was the second part of SDT (Ryan & Deci, 2000). This component means that the teachers need to feel a sense of belonging and connection to those around them. The teachers who lasted in this environment found relatedness in two ways: with the students and with their coworkers. Building relationships with the students was one of the primary themes of this study. The teachers did not have to have a connection only with adults but built their sense of relatedness by building relationships with their students and caring for the wellbeing of those students. Every participant talked about how important it was to create relationships with their students not only for the sake of the student, but this study shows that it also had a strong impact on the teacher as well and helped build their ability to persevere. The subtheme of using the support system was also a predominant factor in building resilience. The participants strongly supported reaching out to other teachers and administrators when facing challenges, having a support system to bounce ideas from, and avoiding any feeling of loneliness.

The last part of SDT was autonomy. Autonomy is the ability to make decisions and choices based on the personal values of a person (Ryan & Deci, 2000). In a classroom, autonomy is also being able to teach and have classroom management that aligns with the goals and values of the teacher. The participants showed that for autonomy to be achievable, strong classroom guidelines must be in place. Jean was one participant who spoke strongly of those guidelines and how the students had to know that she would not waver from them.

By having each component of SDT, 11 of the participants were able to build their level of resilience to face challenges within juvenile correction facilities. While the process is not always easy and does not reach a point of extreme resilience in which the participant is no longer phased

by the situation, the participants showed that they might be really strong in one or two of the

components and, therefore, only had to work continuously on the other. For example, Willard

had strong autonomy and relatedness but admitted to occasionally struggling with competence.

This was not a deterrent and his resilience kept him teaching incarcerated youth for 40 years.

Empirical Implications

While there have been some studies conducted about teachers of incarcerated youth

(Houchins 2004, 2010, 2017) and studies concerning resilience with teachers (Duckworth, 2016;

Fernandes et al., 2019; Gu, 2014; Robertson-Kraft & Duckworth, 2014; Shields & Mullen,

2020), this is the only study focused on the resilience of teachers of incarcerated youth. This

study is unique in that while Houchins (2004, 2010, 2017) has done great work in showing the

experience of teachers within juvenile corrections facilities, this is one aspect that he has not

explored and could have a significant impact on the retention levels of these teachers. Also, the

studies that deal with the resilience of teachers in mainstream classrooms can only be relatable to

teachers of incarcerated youth to a certain point until the differing challenges make the studies

unable to be transferred to different environments.

By using this study and the studies of others, professional development courses could be

created to help teachers of incarcerated youth. The teaching licensure requires a certain number

of professional development hours to remain certified. Professional development courses specific

to teachers of incarcerated youth would be a tremendous assistance to the field (Flores, 2012;

Gagnon et al., 2012). Nearly every participant expressed that they would love resources specific

to their work environment. Additional resources, such as books or online articles, could be

created to support these teachers. Pedagogy books exist for teachers of mainstream classrooms,

but many of those techniques and ideas are not transferable to the classroom within a juvenile

correction facility (Gagnon et al., 2012). When asked about training for this particular environment, only one participant stated that he had received training in teaching incarcerated youth. The rest of the participants explained that they were thrown into the classroom and had to figure it out and rely on their coworkers for assistance.

Limitations and Delimitations

The limitations and delimitations of this study will be discussed below. The limitations show faults or possible weaknesses of the study that could influence the conclusion (Ross & Zaidi, 2019). Limitations are often not in the control of the researcher. Delimitations are decisions made by the researcher to limit the study in some, manner such as region of study or demographics of the participants (Ross & Zaidi, 2019). The delimitations are in the control of the researcher and are chosen consciously.

Limitations

One of the limitations of the study was the amount of information given by the participants. While most participants took at least an hour or more to complete the interview, exhibit scenarios, and journal reflection, a few only spoke between 20 – 40 minutes. According to Brinkmann and Kvale (2015), an interview must fulfill six criteria to be considered a quality interview. One criterion is "the longest subjects' answers possible" (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015, p. 192). When the interviewee answers with only a few words, especially after further prompting, the quality of the interview is diminished. While the researcher tried to prompt longer responses in the interview phase and asked follow-up questions to garner more information, the exhibit scenarios and journal reflection were not created as a conversation and did not push for additional information. The researcher attempted to gain further information by asking for additional input at the end of the session, but several participants did not have anything further to

say. These shorter sessions caused the study to have less information to be gained and made it more difficult to synthesize the information of the participant with the rest of the data collected. The shorter sessions allowed for information to be gathered, and their contributions were still a necessary component of the study, but there was a substantial difference between the two different groups of participants.

Another limitation was the type of participants found for the study. The original goal was to find participants within long-term facilities with a minimum of five years. As it became increasingly difficult to recruit within these confines, the parameters adapted to teachers with at least a year of teaching experience within a juvenile correction facility and teachers who were in short-term facilities as well but were not classified as holding centers in which youth are kept for only a few days (Puzzanchera et al., 2022). While only two participants identified as working in a short-term facility, three additional teachers taught at facilities that either dealt with long- and short-term students or had moved between long-term and short-term facilities during their career within the juvenile justice system.

Delimitations

One delimitation was seeking out participants only within the United States. According to research, the United States incarcerates juveniles at a much higher rate than almost every other country, though the exact number within other countries can be difficult to ascertain (Silva, 2010). Also, the judicial systems for juveniles in other countries can have major differences (Silva, 2010). Due to these contrasts, the study focused only on the United States to understand the resilience techniques of teachers within this one type of environment of a juvenile correction facility in the United States as opposed to just any teacher in the world that deals with incarcerated youth or a juvenile judicial system.

The other delimitation was that of the demographics of the participants. Participants were chosen out of approximately 150 submissions solely on meeting the criteria of being a teacher with a juvenile correction facility for more than one year. Thirteen participants were identified based solely on those criteria and were also the only submissions that fit the criteria. The diversity of the group in aspects of race, age, gender, and ethnicity was not considered. Therefore, the sampling was homogeneous and could be seen as lacking in maximum variation (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Coincidentally, the study was evenly split with seven females and six males. While their race was not documented, there was a mixture of white, black, Hispanic, and Asian participants. The sampling of states could have also been more diverse, as Ohio, California, and Texas were represented more than once.

Recommendations for Future Research

One recommendation for future research would be to conduct a study in which the reasons for teachers to quit teaching in a juvenile corrections facility are learned (exit interviews) and then compared to those teachers who have had lasting careers, particularly those who have reached the point of retirement. There is much to learn from those who were not successful in teaching incarcerated youth by seeing what policies might need to be changed or possibly understanding the type of person who should not be hired (Murphy, 2018). If the hiring group of a juvenile correction facility understood the qualities it takes for a person to have a lasting career, those qualities could be searched for in their pool of applicants. It could be incredibly useful to be a part of exit surveys for any teacher choosing to terminate their employment with a juvenile correction facility to learn firsthand what factors or situations led to the teacher quitting. There may also be an opportunity to create a new hire curriculum that shows the reasons some teachers were unsuccessful and gives strategies for the teachers who have shown longevity. This could

then be related to how the teacher was or was not successful in building resilience to continue their employment.

Another recommendation would be to focus on teachers of incarcerated youth who work with students in short-term facilities (Benner et al., 2017). While two of the participants stated they had worked in short-term facilities, their facilities often kept youth for several months. Most juvenile detention centers keep their youth for a maximum of a few weeks, and this creates a new dynamic of working with incarcerated youth. Juvenile detention centers deal with a lot more youth than the longer correction facilities and face the dynamics of students entering and leaving with greater frequency. The ability to gain educational records is also a challenge that they face which means the teachers may not be focused on a curriculum at all. These teachers face a different challenge as their students are newly brought into their facility, just left their homes, family, and friends, and are now facing the entirety of the juvenile justice system. Students in long-term facilities have potentially had the time to come to terms with their situation, which could be one less challenge for those teachers to face.

Another recommendation would be a study that compares the resilience techniques of teachers of incarcerated youth to teachers in regular school settings. There is a strong possibility of overlap, but understanding why a teacher would choose a lifelong career within a juvenile correction facility over a regular school system could help new teachers determine if a juvenile facility is the right place for them. Also, with substantial resources already available for public school teachers concerning their resilience, those resources could then be adapted to teachers of incarcerated youth. Houchins et al. (2017) ask why teachers entered the profession within a juvenile correction facility but do not focus on the resiliency of those teachers. This information could also be shared in educational courses at the bachelor or licensure level. Students taking

those courses could use the information to determine which area they could be successful in. This could aid not only in the retention issue of juvenile correction facilities but the public school sector as well. As this study shows, being in a career in which the person has a calling or passion is a strong factor in whether the person will have the resilience to last.

Conclusion

The purpose of this hermeneutic phenomenological study was to interpret the experience of resilience in teachers in juvenile correction facilities. This study posed a central research question to understand these experiences: How do teachers in juvenile correction facilities demonstrate resilience through the struggles of incarcerated juveniles and the environment? To understand the experiences of the 13 participants who volunteered for the study, three additional sub-questions were added. Each of these questions guided the layout of this study. The literature review showed that research has been conducted on teachers of incarcerated youth and research has been conducted on the resilience of teachers, but no study was specific to the resilience of teachers of incarcerated youth. Data was collected through the means of an interview, exhibit scenarios, and a journal reflection. All data collected was analyzed, triangulated, and synthesized with a result of three primary themes and numerous sub-themes. With the themes and sub-themes, each of the research questions was answered. The interpretations of the experience were given along with the implications that this study gives towards the future of juvenile correction facilities and the teachers within them. As a result of this research, it is clear that resilience can be built for teachers of incarcerated youth within juvenile correction facilities. This process is not only a personal ability to create and strengthen but also the responsibility of the administration to assist teachers in the process. With teachers who have strong resilience, the challenges of the

environment will not overtake them, retention will improve, and the lives of incarcerated youth

can be bettered.

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Appendix A

IRB Approval Letter

October 26, 2023

Jessica Bradshaw
Jerry Woodbridge

Re: IRB Exemption - IRB-FY23-24-471 Resilience of Teaching Juveniles: A Phenomenological Study of Teachers in Juvenile Corrections Facilities

Dear Jessica Bradshaw, Jerry Woodbridge,

The Liberty University Institutional Review Board (IRB) has reviewed your application in accordance with the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations and finds your study to be exempt from further IRB review. This means you may begin your research with the data safeguarding methods mentioned in your approved application, and no further IRB oversight is required.

Your study falls under the following exemption category, which identifies specific situations in which human participants research is exempt from the policy set forth in 45 CFR 46:104(d):

Category 2.(iii). Research that only includes interactions involving educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior (including visual or auditory recording) if at least one of the following criteria is met:
The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects can readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects, and an IRB conducts a limited IRB review to make the determination required by §46.111(a)(7).

For a PDF of your exemption letter, click on your study number in the My Studies card on your Cayuse dashboard. Next, click the Submissions bar beside the Study Details bar on the Study details page. Finally, click Initial under Submission Type and choose the Letters tab toward the bottom of the Submission Details page. Your information sheet and final versions of your study documents can also be found on the same page under the Attachments tab.

Please note that this exemption only applies to your current research application, and any modifications to your protocol must be reported to the Liberty University IRB for verification

of continued exemption status. You may report these changes by completing a modification submission through your Cayuse IRB account.

If you have any questions about this exemption or need assistance in determining whether possible modifications to your protocol would change your exemption status, please email us at irb@liberty.edu.

Sincerely,
G. Michele Baker, PhD, CIP
Administrative Chair
Research Ethics Office

Appendix B

Site Permission Explanation

Site permissions will not be necessary for the recruitment of participants through social media. Facebook will be the primary means of recruitment with public and private groups. In a Public group, anyone is allowed to join and then post if the group guidelines are followed. Some of the groups are "For Teachers by Teachers" and "Teachers Teaching Teachers". Private groups have a series of questions to be answered before being allowed in the group. I examined all guidelines before requesting to join the group. Some of the Private groups I joined are "High School English Teachers", "Teachers Ask Teachers", and "#TeacherProblems". Each group has an administrator who can deny posting. For Public groups, the recruitment flyer is allowed based on their guidelines, but administrators can remove the post at any time. For all Private groups, the recruitment flyer is sent to the administrator first and only posted if approved. Based on the guidelines of all groups joined, recruiting voluntary participants is allowed.

The following is an example set of group rules found on each of the groups being used. Some groups have additional rules but none against the posting for research recruitment:

1. No Promotions or Spam – Give more than you take to this group. Self-promotion, spam and irrelevant links aren't allowed.
2. Be Kind and Courteous – We're all in this together to create a welcoming environment. Let's treat everyone with respect. Healthy debates are natural, but kindness is required.
3. No Hate Speech or Bullying – Make sure everyone feels safe. Bullying of any kind isn't allowed, and degrading comments about things like race, religion, culture, sexual orientation, gender or identity will not be tolerated.
4. Respect Everyone's Privacy – Being part of this group requires mutual trust. Authentic, expressive discussions make groups great, but may also be sensitive and private. What's shared in the group should stay in the group.

Appendix C

Recruitment Facebook Post

ATTENTION FACEBOOK FRIENDS: I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership degree at Liberty University. The purpose of my research is to better understand how teachers of incarcerated youth facilitate resilience in challenging environments. To participate, you must be a certified teacher based on the requirements of your state. Participants must also be currently teaching at a long-term secure juvenile corrections facility with at least 5 years of experience or have retired within the last five years with a minimum of five years of teaching experience at a long-term juvenile corrections facility. Lastly, the participant must have previously taught in a mainstream or public school setting. Participants will be asked to take part in an audio- and video-recorded interview, which should take about one hour to complete. Participants will be asked to review their interview transcripts for accuracy. Participants will also be asked to respond to three scenario-based questions and maintain a short journal for 2 weeks. The scenario-based questions should take approximately one hour to complete. The journal should take approximately a half hour of time every other day for a 2-week period. If you would like to participate and meet the study criteria, please click here. A consent document will be emailed to you if you meet the study criteria one week before the interview.

Appendix D

Criteria & Screening Survey

Link to survey: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeavNyxZI4Kz_FM-b6pJSN0oO6M1ATXMZhlfhA8CF6wXLnO4g/viewform?usp=sf_link

1. Name

2. Email Address

3. Are you a certified teacher based on the requirements of your state?

   Yes

   No

4. Which state do you currently teach in?

5. Do you currently teach at a long-term juvenile correction facility or have you retired within the last five years?

   Yes

   No

6. Do you have at least five years of teaching experience within a long-term juvenile correction facility?

   Yes

   No

7. How many years have you worked in the juvenile judicial system?

   0-2

   3-4

   5-7

   8 or more

8. Please describe the juvenile correction facility you currently work at. Is this a long-term or short-term facility? Are there security features to ensure confinement? Please be as detailed as possible.

9. Have you worked in a mainstream or public-school setting? (Any schooling besides the juvenile judicial system.)

   Yes

   No

   Other

10. Any additional comments you would like to share.

Appendix E

Consent Form

Title of the Project: Resilience of Teaching Juveniles: A Phenomenological Study of Teachers in Juvenile Corrections Facilities
Principal Investigator: Jessica Bradshaw, Doctoral Candidate, School of Education, Liberty University

Invitation to be Part of a Research Study

You are invited to participate in a research study. To participate, you must be a certified teacher based on the requirements of your state. Participants must also be currently teaching at a long-term secure juvenile corrections facility with at least 5 years of experience, or have retired within the last five years with a minimum of five years of teaching experience at a long-term juvenile corrections facility. Lastly, the participant must have previously taught in a mainstream or public school setting. Taking part in this research project is voluntary.

Please take time to read this entire form and ask questions before deciding whether to take part in this research.

What is the study about and why is it being done?

The purpose of the study is to interpret the experience of resilience in teachers in juvenile corrections facilities.

What will happen if you take part in this study?

If you agree to be in this study, I will ask you to do the following:
1. Participants will be asked to take part in an audio- and video-recorded interview, exhibit scenario responses, and a journal reflection. It should take approximately one hour to complete the interview.
2. Participants will be asked to review the transcription of the audio-recorded interview, exhibit scenarios, and journal reflection for clarity and accuracy. It should take approximately one hour to complete.

How could you or others benefit from this study?

Participants will receive a $50 gift card for taking part in this study.

Benefits to society include creating a better understanding of how teachers of incarcerated youth can be successful in their careers, the creation of professional development to relay this information, and assisting in the hiring process of teachers in juvenile correctional settings in order to ensure quality personnel are chosen.

What risks might you experience from being in this study?

The expected risks from participating in this study are minimal, which means they are equal to the risks you would encounter in everyday life.

I am a mandatory reporter. During this study, if I receive information about child abuse, child neglect, elder abuse, or intent to harm self or others, I will be required to report it to the appropriate authorities.

How will personal information be protected?

The records of this study will be kept private. Published reports will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records.

- Participant responses will be kept confidential by replacing names with pseudonyms.
- Interviews will be conducted in a location where others will not easily overhear the conversation.
- Electronic data will be stored on a password-locked computer and password-locked external hard drive and physical data will be stored in a locked file box. After three years, all electronic records will be deleted, and all physical data will be shredded.
- Recordings will be stored on a password-locked computer and password-locked external hard drive for three years and then deleted. The researcher will have access to these recordings.

Is study participation voluntary?

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

What should you do if you decide to withdraw from the study?

If you choose to withdraw from the study, please contact the researcher at the email address/phone number included in the next paragraph. Should you choose to withdraw, data collected from you will be destroyed immediately and will not be included in this study.

Whom do you contact if you have questions or concerns about the study?

The researcher conducting this study is Jessica Bradshaw. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact her at ***-***-**** or ******@liberty.edu. You may also contact the researcher's faculty sponsor, Dr. Woodbridge, at ******@liberty.edu.

Whom do you contact if you have questions about your rights as a research participant?

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, **you are encouraged** to contact the IRB. Our physical address is Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 2845, Lynchburg, VA, 24515; our phone number is 434-592-5530, and our email address is irb@liberty.edu.

Disclaimer: The Institutional Review Board (IRB) is tasked with ensuring that human subjects research will be conducted in an ethical manner as defined and required by federal regulations. The topics covered and viewpoints expressed or alluded to by student and faculty researchers are those of the researchers and do not necessarily reflect the official policies or positions of Liberty University.

Your Consent

By signing this document, you are agreeing to be in this study. Make sure you understand what the study is about before you sign. You will be given a copy of this document for your records. The researcher will keep a copy with the study records. If you have any questions about the study after you sign this document, you can contact the study team using the information provided above.

I have read and understood the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

☐ The researcher has my permission to audio-record and video-record me as part of my participation in this study.

_____
Printed Subject Name

_____
Signature & Date

Appendix F

Individual Interview Questions

1. Can you tell me why you decided to become a teacher?

2. Please describe your background in teaching.

3. What led you to teach incarcerated youth?

4. What was your experience in a traditional school setting?

5. How long have you worked in a juvenile corrections facility?

6. Describe some of the challenges that are unique to teaching incarcerated youth. CRQ

7. Explain some of the techniques you used to continue teaching in a juvenile corrections facility. CRQ

8. If you have ever considered quitting teaching incarcerated youth, can you explain how you have built the resilience to continue? SQ3

9. How would you describe your ability to persevere in your current work environment? CRQ

10. Describe how your ability to persevere has increased or decreased since you started teaching in a juvenile correction facility. SQ1

11. Describe a time in which a senior coworker has assisted you in building techniques of resilience to continue long-term in a juvenile correction facility. SQ1

12. What advice would you give to anyone thinking about teaching incarcerated youth? SQ2

13. What information or training did you receive before you began teaching in a juvenile corrections facility? SQ1

14. What kind of information or training did you wish you had received before you began teaching in a juvenile correction facility? SQ2

15. What type of teaching resources should be created for teachers of incarcerated youth?

SQ2

Appendix G

Exhibit Scenarios

1. Here is a scenario written by a coworker. A new teacher has been recently hired with little experience in handling the diverse and challenging group of students found in your school. Please explain what steps you would take to assist the new teacher.

   "The new teacher is really struggling. She said that she was threatened twice yesterday and then a fight broke out in her room. She says she tried to talk to a correctional officer about the threats, but the officer just shrugged it off. The students are not listening to her or doing any work. I'm not sure how long she is going to last here." CRQ

2. Here are 2 scenarios in which one is what you have witnessed and the second is your own personal experience. Please explain what steps you would take.

   a. Scenario 1 – One of the senior and most experienced teachers seems to be struggling. They are frustrated with the students and even some adults that you work with on a regular basis. This teacher has been a huge part of your school and helps all teachers whether those teachers are new or experienced. The senior teacher seems to be upset with the behavior of their students and the lack of progress the students are making in his class. SQ1

   b. Scenario 2 – You have completed a challenging week at work. A week of many issues that might have resembled the following: there have been multiple fights in your room, several staff members (case workers, supervisors, etc.) have approached you concerning the grades of many students all of whom have been refusing to work, several students threatened you with bodily harm, one of your favorite students was transferred to an adult prison, you have missed a deadline

due to the extra paperwork involved in the above situations, and student behavior has been terrible to include destroying items in your classroom, berating you and others, and refusing to complete any work. This week seemed to have gotten progressively worse each day. As you leave work on Friday, you look back and decide that it has been the worst week of your entire career. CRQ

Appendix H

Journal Reflection Prompts

1. What is a challenge you vividly remember? CRQ

2. How did you react to that challenge? CRQ

3. Did this challenge affect you for longer than the moment in which it occurred? SQ1

4. How did you persevere through that challenge? SQ3