A higher education association as pathway to teacher resilience in high risk rural schools

Maria Margaretha Edwards

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A higher education association as pathway to teacher resilience in high risk rural schools

by

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A special thank you to:

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DECLARATION OF LANGUAGE EDITOR

I, Wilna Swart, hereby declare that I language-edited the PhD thesis of Ms Maria Margaretha Edwards entitled A HIGHER EDUCATION ASSOCIATION AS PATHWAY TO TEACHER RESILIENCE IN HIGH-RISK RURAL SCHOOLS, in July and August 2016.

I did not have the opportunity to proofread the final draft of the thesis, therefore I cannot say whether Ms Edwards had complied with my editorial recommendations and/or the comprehensive editorial comments that had been furnished.

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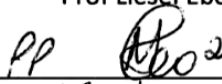| CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE	CLEARANCE NUMBER:	EP 07/02/04
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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to contribute to knowledge on teacher resilience in terms of protective resources and risk factors in rural schools by exploring the significance of higher education institutions (HEI) with rural school teachers. In the comparative case study, following a constructivist meta-theory and Participatory Reflection and Action (PRA) methodology, I used Place-based Social Mobility System theory as lens to compare teacher experiences of purposively sampled teachers (n = 6) in conveniently sampled rural schools (n = 2) *with* a long-term university-association to those of teachers (n = 12, male = 5, female = 7) in rural schools (n = 4) in the same school-district *without* a long-term university-association. Data sources included PRA-interview data and face to face semi-structured teacher-interviews as well as observation data of the rural school context.

Following inductive in-case and cross-case thematic analysis, informed by a constructivist grounded theory, it was apparent that, irrespective of a university-association, teachers shared similar experiences of protective resources and risk factors when teaching in a rural context. Feedback from the HEI members rather than parental and student feedback was valued and a lack of knowledge regarding obtaining sponsors and funds to sustain a HE intervention was identified as a constraint. A finding which merits further investigation is that the expectation from teachers in schools *without a HEI* association to potentially gain from a future association serves as protective resource of hope to promote teacher resilience.

In contrast to other studies I found that using instructional resources available in a resource-constrained school setting, a lower student-teacher ratio, low community crime, financial compensation and informal teacher development activities as conducive to teacher resilience. Teachers were silent on the role that teacher illness and personal difficulties play in the development of teacher resilience; how teachers utilise student relationships as a protective resource; the role of hobbies and extracurricular activities in teacher resilience; and, lastly, how the effect of the unstable education system and policy demands on rural education advances/not teacher resilience.

Keywords: resilience, teacher resilience, high need high risk schools, rural, rural schools, associations, HEI associations, proximity capital, proximal capital, social capital

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1.1   Introduction

In this study I will investigate teacher perspectives of an association between rural schools and a higher education institution (HEI) as a possible pathway to promote teacher resilience. In a context of limited resources as well as chronic and cumulative adversity, I aim to compare how rural teachers express both protective resources and risk factors as it relates to teacher resilience in the presence or absence of a HEI association. The focus of this study will be on gaining a perspective of teachers (from rural schools with and without an association with a HEI) for a deeper understanding of dynamic processes and relationships (in terms of promoting teacher resilience) in a long-term community engagement association (school-based teacher intervention) between a HEI and rural schools.

Resilience has been researched extensively across disciplines, from the biological, personality and developmental psychology perspectives as well as at personal and community levels (Reich, Zautra & Hall, 2010, Masten & Reed, 2005; Nolen, Taket & Stagnitti, 2014). As advocated in mainstream research, adverse circumstances and recurrent barriers are a prerequisite for resilience (Tait, 2008). Resilience has a profound impact on individuals' learning, growth and development.

Robinson (2003) states that understanding teachers' experience of a reform policy may contribute to knowledge and strategies to support teachers in times of rapid change. To this end the purpose will be (systematically) to document insider-knowledge bases of a school-based teacher intervention association.

One of the greatest challenges facing South Africa today is providing quality education to all who require education. A postcolonial history is evident in inequitable allocation of resources for education. Many South African schools, and consequently teachers, are ill-equipped to meet this challenge (Milner & Khoza, 2008). The importance of teachers' working conditions has long been emphasized by many qualitative researchers concerning a range of policy-relevant outcomes (Ladd, 2011). In the context of a socio-politically transforming country and emerging economy, such as South Africa, working conditions of teachers are characterised by poverty and inadequate and unreliable service delivery (Subotzky, 1997; Ebersöhn, 2014). Furthermore, teachers experience stress as a result of policy reform, management styles of principals, the expectations of governing bodies of schools, the high crime rate in South Africa as well as ongoing political change and corruption in state

departments (Robinson, 2003). The transitional emerging economy of South Africa is burdened by many challenges, and teacher education policy is faced with a myriad of difficult tasks. Teacher education policy aims to improve teacher education within a social reconstructionism agenda, an environment characterised by social and educational instability (Robinson, 2003). South Africa's ecology can be characterised by poor financial and human resources (Robinson, 2003), consequently schools do not have the necessary resources to address the challenges to learning that many students from minority groups encounter on a daily basis in rural schools (Bryan, 2005). The daily lives of teachers are further complicated by poverty, crime, health problems and a continuously changing education system (Ebersöhn, 2014) as well as the difficulties their students face in their daily lives, which distract students from their focusing on education (Darling-Hammond, 2007; Public Education Network, 2011). South African schools in remote rural residential areas contain many risk factors that could potentially form barriers to learning. Children and teachers in a rural school are exposed to numerous risk factors such as socioeconomic deprivation, limited access to basic services, unemployment, crime, inaccessible and unsafe residential environments, lack of parental involvement, poor human resource development in schools, language and communication barriers and child-headed households as a result of HIV/AIDS and other health issues (Department of Education, 1995; Mampane & Bouwer, 2006). South African teachers can expect to be faced with students who experience a sequence of concurrent and multiple stressors on a daily basis as poverty extends beyond the school boundaries and into the personal lives of the teachers and the students they teach (Ebersöhn, 2014). Challenges such as time constraints, the long distances teachers have to travel for professional development, quality of workshops available and financial resources for quality teacher development are listed, amongst others, in literature contributing to teacher stress (Harmon, Gordanier, Henry & George, 2007). The working conditions of South African rural teachers can be considered as cumulative and chronic stressors (Ebersöhn, 2014). The question arises then: How do South African teachers cope or adapt despite various difficulties characteristic of an emerging economy? To answer this question I quote Gu and Day (2013:22): "To teach, and to teach at one's best over time, has always required resilience." Teacher resilience can be operationally defined as, "the capacity to adjust to adverse conditions to increase one's competence, achieve school goals, and remain committed to teaching" (Thieman, Henry & Kitchel, 2012:83).

HEIs worldwide are increasingly compelled to contribute to national economic development by being held accountable for the effectiveness and relevance of their activities (Castle & Osman, 2003). The White Paper on Higher Education Transformation (RSA DoE, 1997) and the Higher Education Act (RSA, 1997) advocate a higher education system that not

only promotes scholarship and research, but also aims to address the developmental needs unique to the South African context. The South African government in 1994 introduced a higher education transformation plan which brought to the forefront the connection between service, academic work and research. This transformation plan had the primary focus to change the racially divided institutions of higher education to non-racial, amalgamated entities and to redress the inequalities of the apartheid legacy (Thomson, Smith-Tolken, Naidoo & Bringle, 2011:221). In South Africa, the government insists that universities address local and national developmental needs by engaging in associations with role-players that can contribute to alleviating the social problems of poverty, unemployment, disease and crime (Castle & Osman, 2003:105). HEIs can serve as powerful collaborators in economic, educational and civic renewal efforts as universities are resource-rich. One way to marshal these potential resources is through establishing HEI associations. In so doing one pathway to fulfil and balance the university's mission of teaching, service and research is established (Harkavy & Hartley, 2009; Castle & Osman, 2003; Fourie, 2003). When universities partner with communities and their schools an enormous amount of intellectual, economic, social and human capital is made available (Harkavy & Hartley, 2009). Mitchell and Rautenbach (2005) found that service learning and associations may be essential to the future of South Africa when considering the vast extent of the need in many South African communities, such as increasing unemployment and poverty levels, the concomitant upward spiral in crime and violence as well as the HIV/AIDS pandemic and its devastation of families and communities. An important role of HEIs is sustaining and enhancing community development by developing and initiating associations between universities, communities and other service providers (Fourie, 2003). Associations are implemented in such a way that limited resources are extended and each respective partner's strengths and contributions are acknowledged (Castle & Osman, 2003). Positive community processes and outcomes are the result of associations with HEIs (Strier, 2011). An example of this is the mobilization of community members' voices and concerns, documentation of their experiences, developing collective strengths and participation in the recovery process (Bolin & Stanford, 1998). In addition, associations can help communities to leverage their relationship in order to achieve social justice (Mulroy, 2004, Strier, 2011). When considering the vast scope of the need in South Africa, the necessity of different types of expertise becomes evident and the exigency for associations and alliances imperative (Gibbons, 1998). Establishing university-community associations can be a key component in voicing silenced social problems, prioritizing denied social issues (e.g. marginalisation and segregation through inequality) and to construct shared meanings (Strier, 2011).

1.2 Aim and research questions

1.2.1 Aim

The aim of this study is to explore the role of associations between HEIs and rural schools as a pathway to teacher resilience by comparing teacher perspectives and expressions on protective resources and risk factors of teachers in rural schools with an association with a HEI and rural schools without an association with a HEI.

Explorative research aims to gain insight and understanding by getting perspectives of targeted group of people (in this study rural teachers with or without a HEI association) on a specific issue of interest (pathways to teacher resilience). The value of explorative research lies with the dynamic flexible nature of such research and that it often leads to unexpected and new findings and ideas (Dacre & Qualter, 2012; Wang, Hsieh & Huan, 2000). Explorative research is also beneficial in guiding future research, as it helps to hone subsequent research questions and therefore advance the effectiveness of these findings (Dacre & Qualter, 2012; Keaveney, 1995). A limitation pertaining to explorative research involves the non-representativeness of the sample as it is usually not chosen on a probability basis. In explorative research, cases are often chosen that is either a very good or a very bad example of the phenomena under study and thus does not represent an average situation (Dacre & Qualter, 2012). To compromise for this limitation I employed a comparative case study design to compare the differences and similarities of cases where there is a HEI association and where there is not a HEI association with rural schools. I adopted a reflexive stance and carefully considered possible influences and perspectives on my study (see Appendix H for my researcher diary). I further attempted to document the research process and related decisions in my field notes (see Appendix H) to provide an audit trail to enhance the transferability of my study. The focus of my study was however not to draw definite conclusions but rather provide insight and understanding on pathways to teacher resilience. An advantage relates to the accumulation of possible reasons for the phenomena under study that can be used to verify in future research studies which possibilities is more likely an influencing factor in the particular phenomena (Dacre & Qualter, 2012; Keaveney, 1995).

The comparative element in this study enhanced understanding and provided rich data (Zartman, 2012) on protective resources and risk factors and how it relates to teacher resilience by means of a HEI association. The act of comparing like and unlike phenomena is an insightful and multiplicative perceptual process (Azarian, 2011:115). The aim of comparison in this study was to contrast two or more cases (Case A1; A2 and B – refer to Chapter 3 section 3.4.1 for further detail) to explore parallels and differences (Azarian, 2011). Explorative research combined with comparative research yields answers to the questions what, why and

how and improves research knowledge on a specific topic (Azarian, 2011; Neergaard, Oleson, Andersen & Sondergaard, 2009; Zartman, 2012). The transferability and generalisability of this study is limited and only applicable to similar contexts as described in this study (see section 1.4). The aim of this study was however to understand and describe the phenomena in much detail to enable the applicability of results to other similar contexts (Creswell & Miller, 2000). See Chapter 3, section 3.2 for further elaboration on the research design and the inherent advantages and limitations.

1.2.2   Primary research question

The following primary research question will be explored in this study:

> *How can insight into expressions on protective resources and risk factors by teachers in rural schools, in the presence or absence of HEI associations, inform knowledge on teacher resilience?*

1.2.3   Secondary research questions

In an attempt to understand the above-mentioned question, the following sub-questions will be explored:

1. How do the experiences of protective resources and risk factors by teachers in rural schools compare in the presence or absence of a HEI association?
2. What are the protective resources and risk factor expressions of teachers in rural schools who participated in a HEI association?
3. How do HEI associations promote/not teacher resilience in terms of protective resources and risk factors in rural schools?
4. What are the teacher resilience expressions in terms of protective resources and risk factors of teachers in rural schools who did not participate in a HEI association?

1.3   Rationale

Kyriacou (2001) stated that teaching in the 21st century is rated as one of the most stressful professions. Teachers teach in societies that are marked by high rates of change in expectations, norms and behaviours (Gu & Day, 2007). The social and political organisation of the school plays a fundamental role in teachers' experiences (Castro, Kelly & Shih, 2010). Teacher resilience is an important skill in the constantly changing and dynamic world of the contemporary education system as teachers work in a stressful environment, apart from having unmanageable workloads (consider intensive bureaucratic demands such as paperwork, meetings, non-instructional activities); lack of resources (such as a lack of books, poorly maintained facilities), unmet personal needs, lack of professional development opportunities,

uncompetitive salaries, classroom management (of large classes), and poor curriculum delivery, lack of parent involvement and communication and community support systems (Castro, Kelly & Shih, 2010: 624; Ebersöhn, 2014; Ebersöhn & Ferreira, 2012; Thieman, Henry & Kitchel, 2012). In addition teachers in rural schools are often faced with "high levels of illiteracy, unemployment, poorly developed infrastructure, limited access to services (health, social and welfare), HIV and AIDS-related loss and grief, caretaking responsibilities and additional financial strain" (Ebersöhn & Ferreira, 2012:31). Furthermore, shifting the focus to teacher resilience instead of teacher stress and burnout provides a potentially promising perspective that may assist with comprehending the way that teachers manage, remain motivated and committed in times of change (Gu & Day, 2007). Promoting resilience in teachers in times of change remains largely overlooked. The work and lives of teachers who continue to do their best despite challenging and changed circumstances, their beliefs about their core purpose intact are neglected in research literature (Gu & Day, 2007).

Workplace conditions that are supportive of sustained teacher presence are essential to understanding teacher resilience (Gu & Day, 2013). According to Gu and Day (2013:22) little research regarding ways in which teachers' capacity to be resilient may be nurtured, sustained or diminished is evident. Multiple disciplines have studied resilience, although research on teacher resilience remains limited. Researchers and practitioners lack a comprehensive understanding of teacher resilience, a complex and multi-faceted phenomenon (Thieman, Henry & Kitchel, 2012). Components of teacher resilience include exposure to stress, unique types of stressors, coping mechanisms, assets/resources and risk factors (Thieman, Henry & Kitchel, 2012:89). Less resilient teachers seem to be exposed to an increased number of risk factors, such as a lack of support and the absence of help-seeking behaviour. This in turn can lead to burnout (Thieman, Henry & Kitchel, 2012).

Furthermore, where students are taught by teachers with teacher resilience, together with teacher knowledge, skills and qualities, there seems to be a positive impact on students' educational outcomes and performance (Bobek, 2002; Ebersöhn, 2014). Balfour, Mitchell and Moletsane (2008) highlight the importance of rural communities (teachers) being involved in identifying and recognising the specific problems and struggles that they are experiencing. When considering that the emerging economy in South Africa is characterised by a severe lack of resources and numerous educational challenges it becomes evident that teachers and teachers partnering with HEIs are a vital resource that is available to ensure that effective learning takes place (Ebersöhn, 2014).

Teacher resilience has emerged as an important field of research in the last decade, especially in countries where high rates of attrition are experienced in the teaching profession

(Scheopner, 2010). Teacher resilience has been thoroughly studied by researchers in multiple disciplines in various countries. Studies have been conducted in the United States of America (Brunetti, 2006; Bobek, 2002; Burton & Johnson, 2010; Burton, Brown & Johnson, 2013), China (Beijing) (Gu & Li, 2013) Australia (Howard & Johnson, 2004; Mansfield, Beltman, Price & McConney, 2012; Peters & Pearce, 2012; Nolan, Tacket & Stagnetti, 2014; Johnson, Down, Le Cornu, Peters, Sullivan, Pearce & Hunter, 2014), Canada (Toronto) (Tait, 2008) and South Africa (Ebersöhn, 2012; Ebersöhn & Fereirra, 2011). Studies on teacher resilience are predominantly qualitative studies (Bobek, 2002; Howard & Johnson, 2004; Brunetti, 2006; Castro, Kelly & Shih, 2010; Taylor, 2013; Nolan, Tacket & Stagnetti, 2014), making use of surveys (Ingersoll, 2001; Brunetti, 2006), questionnaires (Tait, 2008), interviews (Bobek, 2002; Howard & Johnson, 2004; Brunetti, 2006; Castro, Kelly & Shih, 2010; Nolan, Tacket & Stagnetti, 2014) and the systemic review of recent empirical studies (Beltman, Mansfield & Price, 2011). Reviewing the literature on teacher resilience revealed the following trends: individual and contextual protective resources and risk factors contribute to teacher resilience (Bobek, 2002; Tait, 2008; Beltman, Mansfield & Price, 2011; Gu & Day, 2007; Castro, Kelly & Shih, 2010; Mansfield, Beltman, Price & McConney, 2012; Price, Mansfield & McConney, 2012; Ingersoll, 2001; Gu & Day, 2013; Gu & Li, 2013); coping strategies and characteristics of resilient teachers (Bobek, 2002; Brunetti, 2006; Taylor, 2013; Castro, Kelly & Shih, 2010; Thieman, Henry & Kitchel, 2012; Gu & Day, 2007) are that teacher resilience is relationship-based (Masten, 2001; Bobek, 2002; Gu & Li, 2013; Le Cornu, 2013; Mansfield, Beltman, Price & McConney, 2012; Caspersen & Raaen, 2014; Ebersöhn, 2012); that teacher resilience is viewed as a dynamic process (Luthar, Cicchetti & Becker, 2000; Gu & Day, 2007; Castro, Kelly & Shih, 2010; Johnson, Down, Le Cornu, Peters, Sullivan, Pearce & Hunter, 2014) and that teacher resilience is developmental in nature (Bobek, 2002; Rutter, 2007; Gu & Day, 2007; Tait, 2008; Polidore, Edmondson & Slate, 2010; Thieman, Henry & Kitchel, 2012; Gu & Li, 2013; Gu & Day, 2013; Mansfield, Beltman & Price, 2014).

It appears that knowledge on the subtleties of teacher resilience in hard-to-staff urban and rural schools and in the field of special education is limited (Castro, Kelly & Shih, 2010:623). Therefore, exploring the kind of working conditions and support that teachers need to perform optimally is needed in different settings (urban and/or rural) (Brunetti, 2006). Additionally, Castro, Kelly and Shih (2010) suggested further comparative research between successful and unsuccessful teachers in the same context with the aim of identifying ways that teachers cope or don't cope with adversity. Thus, investigating how teacher resilience is manifested in different individuals in their local context is of importance (Mansfield, Beltman, Price & McConney, 2012). Gu and Day (2013) illustrated the urgent need to investigate how personal,

relational and organisational conditions mediate between the socio-cultural, policy demands and challenges that teachers face. Furthermore, literature is lacking an in-depth understanding of the interplay between personal and contextual factors to further inform the development of teacher resilience in different career phases of teachers (Johnson, Down, Le Cornu, Peters, Sullivan, Pearce & Hunter, 2014).

William Rainey Harper, the first president of the University of Chicago (1892-1906), conceived communities, schools and universities as inextricably linked. This vision holds true in South Africa today: "Through the school system every family .... is brought into touch with the university; for from it proceeds the teachers or the teachers' teachers." (Harkavy & Hartley, 2009:11). HEIs are encouraged to develop collaborative intervention models as a way to address South Africa's educational crisis. HEI associations is one way in which meaningfully to engage with the developmental challenges facing South African communities in an endeavour to bring about social justice (Ndlovu, 2011:1399). Schools are also considered an important avenue to investigate. Education can, on the one hand, contribute positively to economic, social and political development and on the other it can perpetuate inequality. Inequality can result in negative attitudes and fail to produce an efficient modern model of organisation (Harber & Mncube, 2011). President Obama's statements made during his State of the Union Adress in 2011 illustrate the important role of teachers: "We know that from the moment students enter a school, the most important factor in their success is not the colour of their skin or the income of their parents, it is the teacher standing at the front of the classroom"; and, "If you want to make a difference in the life of our nation, if you want to make a difference in the life of a child, become a teacher. Your country needs you." The following quote by an elementary school teacher with seven years' teaching experience illustrates the importance of teacher resilience: "Resilience is a key factor in how a teacher will hold up and perform ..." The following quotation by Draper (1997) illustrates the importance of teachers' influence on future generations and thus education in general:

> A child, unlike any other, yet identical to all those who have preceded and those who will follow, sits in a classroom today, hopeful, enthusiastic, curious. In that child sleeps the vision and the wisdom of the ages. The touch of a teacher will make the difference (Sharon M. Draper, National Board Certified Teacher and National Teacher of the Year, 1997 Teaching From the Heart).

The development of meaningful associations between HEIs and communities has become a common interest, as associations with communities (teachers) are vital resources for teaching, research and practice (Strier, 2011). Furthermore, associations with teachers create the

opportunity for them to voice their concerns, document their experiences and develop strengths necessary to address their specific needs (Bolin & Standford, 1998). Acknowledging teachers' experiences and facilitating processes that aim to develop the strengths to overcome and deal with daily challenges may contribute to the development of teacher resilience. Teachers who are willing to engage in different forms of collaboration that are aimed at solving problems, who articulate their own practices and experiences and provide support and encouragement to colleagues are essential (Caspersen & Raaen, 2014). Harmon and Schafft (2009) advocate a collaborative and meaningful school-community development that regards the academic success of students and the social and economic vitality of the rural community as not mutually exclusive, but intrinsically connected. Collaborations can then be described as a positive strategy to initiate school improvement (Warren & Peel, 2005). It is therefore important to form collaborations that are mutually beneficial for both the community and the school as well as the HEI. The following extract illustrates the importance of all stakeholders in the education sphere:

> Staffing our schools with high-quality teachers requires everyone who has a stake in education to become a strong link in the chain. Guaranteeing the quality of teachers just entering the profession ought to be a shared responsibility among states, teacher training institutions, and school districts. A coordinated system of teacher recruitment, quality teacher preparation, clinical practice, induction, mentorship, and continuing professional development, with accountability built in at each stage, is essential for ensuring high quality teaching for all students (NCTAF, 2003:33).

As argued earlier, teacher resilience is an important factor that positively impacts on students' educational outcomes and performance (Milner & Khoza, 2008; Ebersöhn, 2014). Gu and Day (2007:1305) state that teacher resilience can be understood as occurring within "social systems of interrelationships". Therefore, resilience strategies, such as appealing for resources, seeking allies and buffers, forming teacher peer groups and creating new resources where none previously existed (Castro, Kelly & Shih, 2010:628), are congruent with the fundamental characteristics of associations. HEI associations are in part characterised by people working together to change their communities and society for the better based on mutuality, reciprocity and respect (Harkavy & Hartley, 2009; Strier, 2011). Additionally, HEI associations promote egalitarian relationships, mutual cooperation, changing stereotypes and providing a rich platform for social learning (Strier, 2011). Rural schools, similar to urban schools, implement resilience-promoting practices such as prioritizing their needs and using resources through HEI associations (Ebersöhn & Ferreira, 2012). Support plans implemented by teachers in rural

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schools involve linking existing resources to identified needs. Therefore, instrumental to teacher resilience is that HEI associations across school community systems comprise the initiation, provision and sustainability of support services aimed at responding to needs (Ebersöhn & Ferreira, 2012:35). Networking with different partners to implement innovation is a method used by teachers confronted with chronic and cumulative adversity (Ebersöhn, 2014). Due to public demand for better classroom instruction and higher student achievement in schools, educators, civic leaders and policy-makers have turned beyond the field of education for new governance and maintenance models with the aim to improve organisational capacity (Wohlstetter, Malloy, Smith & Hentschke, 2004). Many schools are characterised by a lack of capacity to resolve, and work effectively to address, challenges on their own. As a mechanism to secure facilities, financial resources and expertise for schools, outside partners are approached to establish associations. Thus, in this study I argue that teachers may be able to provide insight into whether or not much lobbied-for HEI associations could promote teacher resilience in resource-constrained school settings.

1.4   Contextualising the Study: A HEI partnership with rural schools

1.4.1   Flourishing Learning Youth (FLY) project

The Centre for the Study of Resilience (CSR) at the University of Pretoria generates knowledge on resilience in the context of global South Africa. This study forms part of one project within the CSR, a long-term, ongoing partnership, namely Flourishing Learning Youth (FLY). FLY was established between one rural secondary school in Mpumalanga and the CSR, commencing in 2005. The partnership was extended to include two primary schools in 2008. The purpose of the FLY partnership is twofold: (1) to generate knowledge on pathways to resilience in rural schools and rural communities where resources are constrained; (2) and to provide a platform for academic service learning for students from the UP who are doing their Masters in Educational Psychology, who provide services to Grade 9 clients annually. Past research foci have included determining psychological risk factors and protective factors for rural youth. Studies conducted focus on various subject areas of teacher development and teaching instruction, namely: Informing Educational Psychology student training in community engagement experience (Ebersöhn, Malekane & Bender, 2010); resilience, poverty and education (Ebersöhn, 2014; Ebersöhn & Ferreira, 2012, Mohangi, 2008; Loots, 2011); teacher resilience (Ebersöhn, 2014 Coetzee, 2014; De Jong, 2014); teachers promoting resilience (Loots, 2011; Mbongwe, 2012; Mnguni, 2007; Olivier, 2010); educational psychology services in rural schools (Malan, 2011; Van der Walt, 2013); students' perceptions of academic service

learning (Malekane, 2010, Cherrington, 2015); learning support as educational pathway to resilience by teaching literacy (Du Plessis, 2013), and research methodology for diversity.

In the current FLY[1] phase the experiences of various community engagement beneficiaries (learners, teachers, parents/caregivers, researchers and academic service learning students) of a long-term partnership are investigated retrospectively. My study is nested within this three-year study with the purpose to compare how teachers' involvement in a rural HEI association broadens knowledge on teacher resilience. To this end I compare the experiences of teachers in the rural schools that formed part of the rural HEI association, with that of the experiences of teachers from schools in the same area that did not form part of a rural HEI association. My comparative case study is conducted with purposively selected teachers from six conveniently selected schools (two secondary schools and four primary schools) in the Gert Sibande District in rural Mpumalanga. Of these schools, two (one secondary, one primary) have participated with a HEI association and four (one secondary and three primary) did not. Refer to Chapter 3, section 3.4, for detailed information on the selection of schools and participants. Relevant demographic information and characteristics of the participants are elaborated on in Chapter 3, section 3.4.2.1.

Figure 1.1 depicts how this study, employing a Participatory Reflection and Action (PRA) paradigm, fit within the spheres of community engagement, teaching, service learning and research. Civic engagement is viewed as a way of undertaking teaching, research and service in and with the community (Thomson, Smith-Tolken, Naidoo & Bringle, 2011).
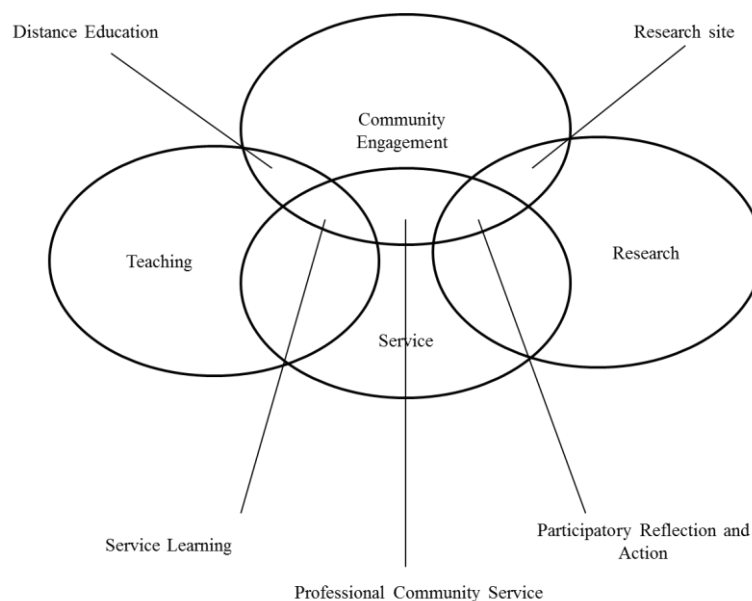
Figure 1.1: Spheres of community engagement, teaching, service learning and research (adapted from Thomson, Smith-Tolken, Naidoo & Bringle, 2011:220)

[1] NRF-funded: Grant 82620 CEC12091412827

1.4.2   Contextualising the study in South Africa

Post-colonialism, the transformative South African society and poverty, especially in rural schools with constrained resources, are of importance to my study. In the next section I will highlight statistical data and contextual facts relevant to my study. The total population of South Africa amounts to 54 002 000, with 80,3% of the population consisting of Africans, who are most affected by poverty (Statistics South Africa, 2011). A strong relationship is found between population group and poverty levels, with more than half (54,0%) of Africans living in poverty (Statistics South Africa, 2014). Economic efficiency and job creation is undermined by a range of legacy issues from the apartheid regime that still prevail (The World Bank, 2014; Soudien & Baxen, 1997). It is noticeable that little has changed since the 1994 elections, especially in rural areas (Human Sciences Research Council [HSRC]-EPC, 2005; Balfour, Mitchell & Moletsane, 2008). However, drawing on the positives, there has been a significant decline in the poverty rate since the late 1990s, deep poverty remains prevalent specifically among the black population, who constitute 80% of the overall population and account for 90% of people living in poverty (The World Bank, 2014). The social outcome of the health and educational sectors, which receive 30% of government expenditure, is persistent indigence (The World Bank, 2014). Table 1.1 illustrates the poverty headcounts in South Africa in 2006, 2009 and 2011.

Table 1.1:   Poverty headcounts in South Africa in 2006, 2009 and 2011 (Statistics South Africa, 2014)

Aspect	2006	2009	2011
Poor population	57,2%	56,8%	45,5%
Poor persons	27,1 million	27,8 million	23,0 million
Population living in extreme poverty	26,6%	32,4%	20,2%
Extremely poor persons	12,6 million	15,8 million	10,2 million

Although increases are seen in 2009 as regards poverty, the pro-poor approach adopted by South Africa is seen in the improvement in the severity of poverty (Statistics South Africa, 2014). A reduction in poverty and inequality is evident, where 3,6 million people were lifted out of poverty in 2010/2011, reducing the poverty rate to 39% from 46,2% (SAPA, 2014). Despite fiscal policies implemented in South Africa, inequality remains high, indicating the need for additional means to address the problem of inequality (SAPA, 2014; Statistics South Africa, 2014). An important tool in the fight against poverty in South Africa remains education. This is illustrated by statistics, which indicate that 5,5% of adults who received a

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post-matric qualification are found to be poor in comparison to 66% of adults with no formal education (Statistics South Africa, 2014).

Levels of poverty are found to be twice as high in rural areas (68,8%) compared to their urban counterparts (30,9%). It should further be noted that the majority of poor people live in rural areas (58,3%). In 2011, approximately six out of ten poor people (58,3%) lived in rural areas. Across settlement types the experience and severity of poverty differs, as poverty was found to be much deeper in rural areas than in urban areas (Statistics South Africa, 2014). The context of the schools as cases is further elaborated on in Chapter 3, section 3.3.

The schools in this study are faced with adversities that are synonymous with rural schools in the resource-constrained context (Ebersöhn & Ferreira, 2012) such as loss, grief and bereavement and caretaking responsibilities related to HIV/AIDS, poverty, high levels of illiteracy, unemployment, learning problems, lack of career vision, difficulties with or lack of transport, lack of electricity and adequate sanitary facilities, limited access to water, vandalism, derelict buildings, insufficient classrooms, broken windows, restricted access to resources such as libraries and books, information technology and specialized science laboratory equipment (Ebersöhn, 2012; Ebersöhn & Ferreira, 2012; Ebersöhn, 2014). The schools that formed part of this comparative case study design are located in rural areas that are characterised as high risk and high need, with constrained resources. Resilience is therefore essential (Gu & Day, 2013) for teachers functioning in high-risk, high-need school settings. Teachers from six rural schools in the Gert Sibande District, Mpumalanga, formed part of this comparative case study (refer to Chapter 3, section 3.4, for a discussion on the sampling of schools as cases and teacher participants). These cases (schools) are information-rich to inform my topic, namely the manner in which associations between a HEI and rural schools can create a pathway to teacher resilience in high-risk high-need rural schools (See Chapter 3, section 3.3, for further elaboration on the context of the study).

Literature indicates that the need for teacher retention intensifies in high-need schools, where up to 50% of teachers leave the teaching profession within the first five years (Gregorian, 2001; Ingersoll, 2001). According to Feller (2003) rural districts decree that improving student achievement and building teacher capacity are two sides of the same coin. Rural schools are prime sites for further exploring issues related to teacher recruitment and retention (Burton & Johnson, 2010). Rural schools, compared to their urban or suburban counterparts, are held to the same standards, expectations and goals although rural schools do not have the quality or quantity of support from resources available from the local community or a school's central organisation (Huysman, 2008). Williams (2003:74) observed that "many teachers are affected by the same conditions that contribute to their colleagues' leaving the

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profession but choose to stay", making a case for resilience as these teachers exhibit qualities of resilience (Castro, Kelly & Shih, 2010).

1.5   Clarification of key concepts

1.5.1   Pathways to resilience

Luthar, Cicchetti and Becker (2000) advance that teacher resilience is a dynamic process that is influenced by interactions between the environment and the individual. This dynamic interaction between the environment and individual happens within a social system of interrelationships and is seen as a pathway to adaption. Zimmer-Gembeck (2011) concurs and acknowledges that adaptive coping is an interactional process between the individual and the environment, developing over time. Various adaptive pathways have been identified. Indigenous pathways to resilience include resource congruence (Kuo, 2011), hierarchical consultation, collective participatory coping, opportunities for development, engaging in hedonistic pleasures to name but a few (Malan-Van Rooyen, 2015; De Gouveia, 2015). Theron and Theron (2010:7) indicate that resilience should be conceptualised as "a complex, transactional phenomenon nurtured dynamically by a protective gestalt of young people's personal strengths, their supportive relationships, cultural values and practices and community resources". South African researchers concur that interpersonal protective resources found in families, communities and cultures as well as intrapersonal strengths promote resilience (Dass-Brailsford, 2005; Ebersöhn, 2007). A considerable body of knowledge regarding resilience has been established in literature, conceptualising resilience as a complex, multifaceted, multidimensional development construct as opposed to an innate quality or trait (Luthar, Cicchetti & Becker, 2000; Nolen, Taket & Stagnitti, 2014). In mainstream research findings suggest that a precondition for resilience is adverse conditions and recurrent setbacks (Tait, 2008). Resilience is defined as an individual's ability to recover and return to equilibrium after exposure to challenging and/or adverse circumstances (Oswald, Johnson & Howard, 2003; Tait, 2008; Price, Mansfield & McConney, 2012). The definition of resilience inspired the commonly used phrase to "bounce back" (Price, Mansfield & McConney, 2012). Resilience is conceptualised as a state of wellbeing achieved by an at-risk individual. Resilience also refers to the characteristics and mechanisms by which the wellbeing of an individual is realised (Ungar, 2004).

1.5.2   Teacher resilience

I align my understanding of teacher resilience with findings on studies done in a similar context than this study. Thus I will view my findings against the background of educational settings with scarce resources and accumulative risk (Ebersöhn, 2013; 2014; Loots, Ebersöhn,

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Ferreira and Eloff, 2011). To this end, my view of teacher resilience is influenced by Ebersöhn's (2014:568) conceptualisation of teacher resilience in poverty contexts: "Teacher resilience in poverty contexts means that teachers ceaselessly adapt in a sequence of linked incidents to a procession of risks" as well as her view that positive adaption is fostered when individuals use relationships to access and mobilise resources (Ebersöhn, 2014:29). My view of teacher resilience is also influenced by Masten's (2001) definition of resilience, which states that: "Resilience does not come from rare and special qualities, but from the everyday magic of ordinary, normative human resources in the minds, brains, and bodies of [people/teachers] ..." (Masten, 2001:235). This study accepts the following definition of teacher resilience, which highlights the complex nature of teacher resilience. Resilience is defined as managing the unavoidable uncertainties inherent in the realities of teaching, driven by their educational purposes and moral values, influenced by their biographies and the conditions of their lives and work (Gu & Day, 2013:39). Thus, teacher resilience is the capacity to "bounce back" or recover and maintain equilibrium, a sense of commitment and agency despite the adversity or challenges experienced in the teaching world (Gu & Day, 2013). Furthermore, the resilience process among teachers involves the complex relations between multiple levels of internal and external factors (Gu & Day, 2013) embedded in the individual, relational and organisational conditions of teachers' world of work (Gu & Day, 2007; Gu & Day, 2013).

1.5.3   Protective resources and risk factors as a pathway to teacher resilience

My conceptualisation of teacher resilience in this study views resilience of teachers as both a process and an outcome. Teacher resilience as process and an outcome refers concurrently to the perspective that individuals actively interact with the adverse conditions in their environment that result in a positive outcome or adaptation (McCubben, 2001; Rutter, 2012; Stümpher, 2013). Teacher resilience is then considered as a construct that moderates the relationship between protective resources and risk factors to achieve positive outcomes (McCubben, 2001). I align my understanding of protective resources with the conceptualisation of Masten and Reed (2005) and Masten (2007) as individual, group, situational or institutional charactersistics that can predict positive outcomes. Protective resources include social and human resources utilised to adapt to challenging circumstances. My understanding of risk factors is informed by the view that resilience is a cluster of risk factors which gives meaning to the human response of enduring and recovering from adversity (McCubben, 2001:5). Taking into account the context of my study, my conceptualisation of risk factors is further informed by Milners' (2013) explaination of out-of-school and in-school risk factors (see section 1.7 for a detailed discussion). The mere presence of protective resources does not constitute resilience

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process or outcome. I agree then with Skinner and Zimmer-Gembeck (2009) that the effective use of protective resources contributes to optimal human functioning. The effective use of protective resources entails then the navigation, use and negotiation of resources (Ebersöhn, 2014; Ungar, 2008) to mediate risk. Thus, teacher resilience in this study is conceptualised as the utilisation of protective resources (internal and external) embedded in the education setting to continually adapt to challenging circumstances (risk factors).

1.5.4.1 Associations

Associations relate to various fields of study, such as archaeology, astronomy (Robitaille, Tollerud, Greenfield, Droettboom, Bray, Aldcroft, Davis, Ginsburg, Price-Whelan, Kerzendorf & Conley, 2013), chemistry (Wong & Fraser, 1996), ecology, genetics (Turner & Hamvas, 1999), object-orientated programming (Koide, Aasman, & Haflich, 2005), psychology (Rothermund & Wentura, 2004), statistics and security to name but a few. In *archaeology* (Robitaille et al., 2013), association refers to the relationship between objects found together; in *astronomy* to a combined or co-added group of astronomical exposures; in *object-orientated programming* (Koide, Aasman, & Haflich, 2005) to a grouping of object-orientated programs, while in the field of *psychology* (Rothermund & Wentura, 2004) association signifies a connection between two or more concepts in the mind or imagination. Human beings have an inherent need for belongingness and this is one of the reasons that human beings prefer to socialise in groups. Individuals seek out interpersonal relationships to develop social bonds and a certain level of relatedness (Farouqui, 2013). Thus, an enduring association between two persons comprise a relationship (Reis, 2001).

In *sociology* association refer to small, autonomous and voluntary groups and includes conceptualisations of group processes (Moreland, Levine & Wingert, 2013). Social influence, social perception and social interaction on individual and group behaviour are studied by social psychologists (APA, 2016). A variety of forms of social interaction and cooperation is made available by the interpersonal trust created by memberships in associations. Membership in association can make social capital (norms and networks that enable people to act collectively) (Woolcock & Narayan, 2000) available to the members, although in varying degrees (Stolle & Rochon, 1998). According to Hays (2014) individuals develop associations (as relationships) for a variety of purposes. Furthermore, associations are shown in literature to be developed in various contexts (Hays, 2014). A review of literature reveals that partnerships (associations) are often formed in the areas of business (Bamford, Ernst & Fubini, 2004), politics (governments to achieve national interests), knowledge (in education spheres) and among individuals (such as in private interpersonal relationships) (Oseland, Catchlove & Miller 2012).

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For the purpose of my study, I will focus on associations as a relationship established between people and/or institutions to achieve a mutual purpose and goal specifically between a HEI (researchers) and rural schools (teachers). Associations refer to related concepts, such as acquaintances, collaborations, partnerships, networks and alliances. In literature, an association is often referred to as collaboration between two or more people or an institution with the aim to realise shared goals by means of working together (Marinez-Moyano, 2006).

In U.S. education the term "partnerships" refers to a wide range of engagements between researchers and practitioners (teachers) with the intention of improving education. Partnerships can include arrangements such as agreements for consultation, testing university-developed interventions in schools or districts as well as creating sites for teacher-training and internships (Coburn & Penuel, 2016:49). According to Oseland, Catchlove and Miller (2012) a true collaboration is the co-creation of something new that was not a possibility for an individual collaborator. Colleagues often choose to collaborate and work together with the intention to extend and share their knowledge (Oseland, Catchlove & Miller 2012). In similar vein a partnership refers to an arrangement where partners advance a mutual interest by working together. Individuals, businesses, organisations, schools and governments can be partners in partnership work. An association refers to a group of individuals with a common interest who form part of an organization. An association also refers to a connection or relationship between things or people (Mondel, 2015).

I drew my conceptualisation of associations from the core features of collaborations, such as "sharing, mutual respect, complementarity and interdependent roles" (Bruner, Waite & Davey, 2011). In this study, an association (relationship) is established between teachers from rural schools and members of a HEI. In this study association is therefore indicative of a vehicle for building trust, sharing knowledge, mutual benefits, reciprocity and linking, bonding and bridging capital. This association is established with a common general interest and purpose in mind, namely to improve rural education. In this study an association involves partners working closely together towards a common goal for a period of time. It involves sharing resources, responsibilities and problems to create an institutional structure that will permit change and improvement to occur at both levels (Catelli, Costello & Padovano, 2000).

1.5.4.2   Associations and resilience

Associations refer to relationships, alliances, networks or ties between individuals with a mutual goal and/or interest. Associations offer social support to individuals that are reported in literature as a resource that facilitates coping reactions, thus referring to resilience (Brackett & Katulak, 2006). Regular exchange of resources, such as information sharing, among

individuals, groups or organizations are referred to as a social network (Haythornthwaite, 1996). In resilience research sources of support in relationships with friends, siblings, teachers etc. is argued to be a possible arena to promote resilience and especially so in the education sphere (Crosnoe, 2004). Rutter (1999) noted in his study the importance of social interactions inside and outside of the family to the development of resilience. In their study, Carmeli, Bueller and Dutton (2009) shed light on the importance of quality workplace relationships to the development of resilience. In literature it is clear that people's patterns of interpersonal relationships influence the development of resilience (Rutter, 1999).

In several fields of research (studies on the deformation of materials, the resilience of ecological systems through to the resilience of children and vulnerable community groups) (McManus, Seville, Brunsdon & Vargo, 2007:1), vulnerability, adaptation and resilience are concepts of current concern (Vogel, Moser, Kasperson & Dabelko, 2007). Good interpersonal relationships allow members to exchange more variable information and ideas and further enable the co-creation and sharing of solutions to problems. Feelings of belonging, feeling valued and connected is fostered by interpersonal relationships and assist overcoming uncertainty when dealing with problems. Positive relationships (associations) in the work place have relational value that enables individuals to feel safe and pursue further learning (Carmeli, Bueller & Dutton, 2009) and enables the development of resilience. As argued earlier I view an association as an interpersonal relationship and/or alliance and/or tie with other individuals with the purpose to share resources (networking), thus creating a social network between individuals. With regard to this, associations between individuals can be seen as a protective resource. Thus, when an individual is at risk or experience difficulties, associations (relationship/alliance) can enable resilience as it provides support to individuals. This notion concurs with Jordan's (2006) relational-cultural theory that posits that all psychological growth occurs in relationships. As an association is viewed as a relationship between individuals, I postulate that resilience can develop as a result.

1.5.4.3 Associations and teacher resilience

In section 2.5.1 I argued how teachers are uniquely positioned to establish various associations to improve rural education and as a result also improve their own teacher resilience. In rural schools it is often expected of teachers to facilitate resources to help the school community (Castle & Osman, 2003). In literature it is evident that rural teachers establish associations between schools, families, communities, community-based organisations (local businesses, religious organisations, libraries and mental and social service agencies) as well as HEI's

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(Bryan & Henry, 2012; Bryan, 2005) to gain access to support, resources, skills and networks to support their teaching.

As discussed in the previous section, I view an association as a relationships/alliance/tie between teachers and other stakeholders (such as peer teachers, teachers in other schools, parents, community members, community-based organisations etc.). I posit that teachers' relationships/alliances/networks/associations established for either professional or personal reasons are important sources of social capital (protective resources) that enables teacher resilience. Thus, in this study, I view that the association or relationship between the rural teachers and the HEI members provide access to social and human capital that consequently enables teacher resilience.

1.5.5   Resource-constrained educational setting

1.5.5.1   High-risk, high-need schools

Defined in the NCLB (No Child Left Behind), high-needs schools are schools that are: a) within the top quartile of a state's schools as ranked by the number of unfilled teaching positions; or b) located within urban or rural areas in which more than 30% of the student population comes from families with income levels below the poverty line; or c) located within urban or rural areas with relatively high percentages of teacher turnover rates, out-of-field teachers or teachers who are not certified or licensed (Public Education Network, 2011). Overwhelmingly low-income, minority and low-achieving are descriptions that typify high-need schools (Levine, 2014). Environmental or community characteristics and individual characteristics (such as crime, unemployment, dense and dilapidated housing, inadequate and inaccessible health care, unreliable and limited public transportation, low levels of education, poverty) comprise at-risk conditions (Smrekar, 2014). Thus, high-risk schools will have some or all of the aforementioned community and individual characteristics.

1.5.5.2   Rural environments and rural schools

Scholars in rural research find it difficult to conceptualise and define "rural" in South Africa (HSRC-EPC. 2005). Incredulously, no single definition of "rural" is illustrated in global literature on research into rural education. Possible definitions of "rural" included easily measured considerations such as population size, population density, proximity to an urbanised area, type of economic activity, income and educational attainment levels and commuting patterns (Coladarci, 2007:2). "Rural" can refer to isolated areas which are characterized by low socioeconomic status, high unemployment rates, low population density and limited resources/facilities (Ballantyne & Mylonas, 2001; Ebersöhn & Ferreira, 2012). The National Centre for Educational Statistics (2006) identifies three areas of definition for rural areas.

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Firstly, *fringe rural* is "census-defined rural territory that is less than or equal to 5 miles from an urbanised area" [including] "rural territory that is less than or equal to 2,5 miles from an urban cluster". Secondly, *distant rural* is "census-defined rural territory that is more than 5 miles, but less than or equal to 25 miles from an urbanised area, [including] rural territory that is more than 2,5 miles but less than or equal to 10 miles from an urban cluster". Thirdly, *remote rural* is "census-defined rural territory that is more than 25 miles from an urbanized area and is also more than 10 miles from an urban cluster". A population fewer than 2 500 seems to be the purest definition of rural (Coladarci, 2007).

In this study a resource-constrained rural educational setting, where the risk and need are high, will refer to schools with limited resources and limited access to any resources due to being geographically remote from an urban area.

1.6   Paradigmatic assumptions

1.6.1   Theoretical framework

Place-based Social Mobility System (Johnson, 2012) advocates that the ability to support social mobility is contextually defined. The capital of association is therefore endogenous. Individual capital depends on the social class of associates that associate with each other. Capital of associations is coined "proximity capital". When proximity capital is accessed by less advantaged individuals they form relationships that enable mobility (Johnson, 2012). In this study such a relationship is the HEI association relationship. Figure 1.2 illustrates the Place-Based Social Mobility System.
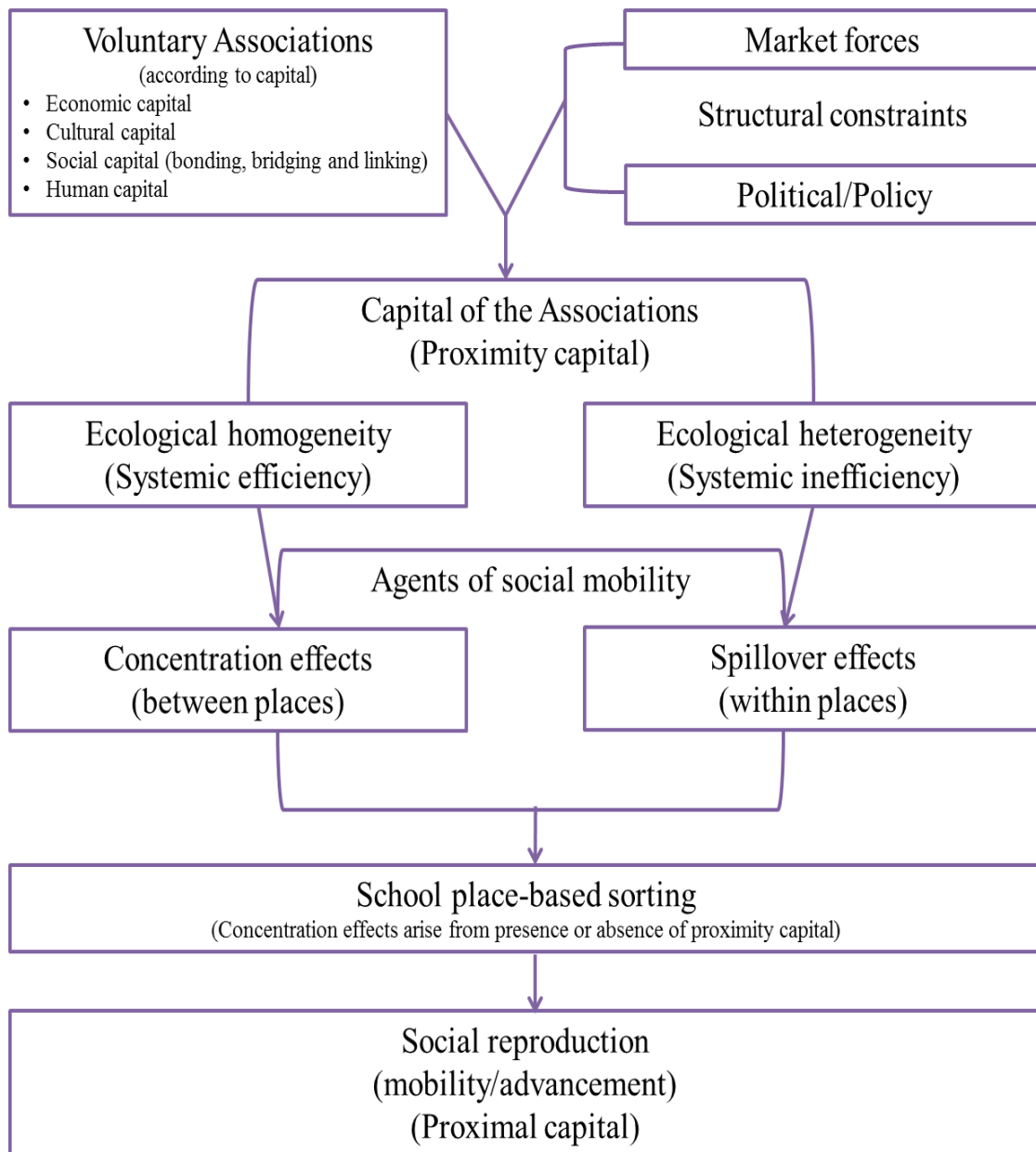
Figure 1.2:   Place-based Social Mobility System (adapted Johnson, 2012:38)

1.6.1.1   Capital of associations: Endogenous capital and Ecology (Proximity capital)

Associations are ecological and, where established, structures arise in accordance with capital succeeded by social processes where individual dispositions and behaviour follow. The voluntary associations according to capital involve the satisfaction that the association brings. Capitals that are known to the associates to provide social advancement include economic capital, cultural capital, social capital and human capital. Building potentially beneficial associations is inspired by these types of capital. However, associates do not necessarily enter into the relationship with a full understanding of the social returns or consequences (Johnson, 2012). Table 1.2 below depicts different types of capital.

Table 1.2:   Types of capital

Economic capital	Socioeconomic status. Refers to income and wealth (Bourdieu, 1985; Coleman, 2000)
Cultural capital	Binds relationships between individuals who share cultural tastes (Bourdieu, 1985; Coleman, 2000)
Social capital	Link between individuals who together enable transfer of opportunity/resources necessary for the creation of human capital (Bourdieu, 1985; Coleman, 2000)
	Includes attributes of social capital such as bonding, bridging and linking (Healy, Ayres & Hampshire, 2003)
Human capital	The investment in cultivation of skill at educational level.
	Joining efforts to collaborate on a mutual-interest task; being mentored or taught is imperative when human capital is established (Johnson, 2012)

1.6.1.2   Structural constraints: Market forces and political/policy

Figure 1.2 accounts for influences of the market forces and the constructing of public policy. Market forces refer to the notion that although people are motivated by the benefit of capital, capital also constrains their ability to access elite, affluent and worthwhile associations. A purely economic standard for sorting is provided by market forces as these consist of the unambiguous consideration of the quality of associations. Associational opportunity is discerned by the implementation of discriminatory policies where mainly white, male Anglo-Saxon Protestants were privileged (Johnson, 2012). The aforementioned history of associational interest has resulted in economic segregation between and within racial groups at the urban level as the distribution of associations is unequal primarily because people bring different amounts of capital into the relationship (Johnson, 2012:39).

1.6.1.3   Social mobility under assumptions of ecological homogeneity and heterogeneity

The distributive structures that group individuals according to social class are rendered inexact by the actuality of social class heterogeneity within associations. Both homogeneous and heterogeneous ecologies are conditions that are associated with the imperfections involved in sorting of social class. Homogeneous ecologies denote a more efficient process of associational allocation, whereas heterogeneous ecologies denote the less efficient processes of associational allocation by market forces and political decisions (Johnson, 2012).

The primary enabler of social mobility entails "concentration effects" within homogeneous settings. Concentration effects are a macro-level system of social mobility that operates *between* places. This stratification leads to values varying across places, therefore inspiring the speculation that the lack of proximity capital leads to immobility in low-income places. A second system of mobility and corresponding externality is elevated by the

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imperfections of stratification in the heterogeneous areas. The "spillover effect" is more of a micro-level system of social mobility *within* places where heterogeneity of social class is noticed. Thus, the associations within this ecological condition are more economically diverse. Individuals who are situated low socioeconomically, but who have access to proximity capital may have the benefit of subsequent social advancement, which is coined "proximal capital". A systematic hindrance to proximal capital originates in the functioning of schools by the differentiation of learners according to ability and achievement. Moreover, learners are already situated in the stratified ecological structure within environments, concentrated in either affluence or poverty or in between them in heterogeneous environments. Achievement consequently identifies the effectiveness and efficiency of ecological differentiation within schools (Johnson, 2012:40-42). School place-based sorting therefore occurs, resulting in social reproduction.

1.6.2   Epistemological paradigm: Constructivism

I chose constructivism as epistemological paradigm as constructivism, a qualitative perspective, views the researcher as part of the reality and states that research cannot be entirely objective and value-free. Constructivism maintains that multiple realities exist that rely essentially on the individual's personal reality and a group's shared reality (Struwig & Stead, 2001). Interpretation occurs against the backdrop of shared understandings, practices and language, and not in isolation (Schwandt, 2000). Interaction between individuals and their contexts results in meaningful multiple realities that are subjective and socially constructed (Goduka, 2012). Participants' interactions of knowledge, understanding and meaning are constantly presented and interpreted and constructed into new experiences with one another (Babbie & Mouton, 2002). Knowledge can therefore vary according to contextual, political and cultural factors (Guba & Lincoln, 2005). The participants' perspective and description of events, beliefs and behaviours are emphasised (Struwig & Stead, 2001). The constructivism paradigm is relevant to this study as it draws on participants' everyday experiences of the partnership as a way to understand their perceptions and the meanings they attach to the rural Higher Education association (Strier, 2011). A comparative case study is relevant as an interest in the personal views and circumstances of the participants is of importance.

Constructivists view perspectives of reality as pluralistic, interpretive, open-ended and contextualized, namely sensitive to place and situation (Creswell & Miller, 2000:125). The latter is relevant to my study as it correlates with a comparative case study design that is explored in its natural context (Thomas, 2011). A constructivism perspective enables a deeper understanding of complex social situations such as a rural HEI association by considering the

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multiple perspectives of the various participants (Strier, 2011). A rural HEI association is a complex social situation that is influenced by structural forces, organizational cultures and local contexts (Strier, 2011:85).

As constructivism is subjective in nature, with a co-construction of shared meanings and interactions with each other, this can pose a possible limitation. Thus the research process is informed and influenced by my previous knowledge, intuition, values and beliefs, as well as those of the participants. To account for this limitation I reflected in a researcher diary (reflexivity) (see Appendix H) and made every effort to disclose any assumptions, beliefs or bias that might influence the results of my study (Creswell & Miller, 2000; Nieuwenhuis, 2010a). Furthermore, generalisability of findings is a limitation, as the aim of a constructivism paradigm is to understand and to describe the phenomenon in as much richness and depth as possible with regard to transferability. I attempted to provide rich data and detail regarding the cases of this study to enable other researchers to apply the results to similar contexts, settings or studies (Creswell & Miller, 2000).

1.6.3 Methodological paradigm: Participatory Reflection and Action

1.6.3.1 Development of PRA

I chose Participatory Reflection and Action (PRA) as methodological paradigm. Participatory methodologies in the developmental practice have evolved rapidly since the mid-1970's (Chambers, 2007). PRA is an outgrowth of formative program evaluation and action research models. Often PRA is seen as an extention of the 'participant-observer' research strategy, prevalent in sociology and social psychology (Rogers & Palmer-Erbs, 1994). PRA is often regarded as a later demonstration of Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA), Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) and Participatory Learning and Action (PLA) (Chambers 1992; 1994; 2007). These approaches, methods, behaviours and relationships were developed to find out about local context and life (Chambers, 2007) by a multidisciplinary team that also comprise of community members that facilitates an alternative learning experience (Chambers 1992; 1994). PRA originated in the 1980's to the 1990's in India and East Africa originally in the field of Argiculture (Chambers 1992; 1994). PRA was developed as a need arised in psychology to re-direct its energy from a 'fact-gathering' approach to a more formative approach in an attempt to solve social problems (Rogers & Palmer-Erbs, 1994). Empowerment of local people and maximising human resources is the main purpose for the development of PRA as it can promote mobilisation and development at local level (Chambers 1992; 1994). PRA is increasingly used in rural and urban situations to emancipate and empower disempowered people (Baum, MacDougall & Smith, 2006).

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1.6.3.2 Core principles underlying PRA

PRA supports the purpose of my study. I maintain that knowledge on teacher resilience in relation to an association between a rural school and a HEI has to come from teachers teaching in such rural schools rather than me as an outsider, albeit observer/researcher. PRA enables participating communities to share agency and power in the community engagement process, voice their participant narratives and provide insight into their experiences, in this case of a HEI association (Abedi & Badragheh, 2011; Chambers, 2006). A core principle of PRA is that the process is participatory in nature where the knowledge, skills and understanding of local people and related interpretive categories is examined (Kemmis & Wilkinson, 1998). Thus, insider-driven knowledge is generated in a collaborative and inductive analytical manner and encouraged by participatory methodologies (Ebersöhn, 2012:4). Sharing during PRA activities involves sharing knowledge and experience amongst participants, and reciprocal sharing knowledge and experience between local people and researchers (Chambers, 1994). PRA allowed me to access teachers in remote rural schools whose voices were not being heard (Chambers, 2007).

In addition, participatory methodologies are seen as interactive, where participants are both sources of information as well as active participants in positive change with regard to their situation (Bennett & Roberts, 2004). Principles of participatory methodologies include local collaborative sharing of knowledge, facilitation of analysis by local people and practicing critical self-awareness and responsibility (Chambers, 1994:1437). PRA enables participants confidently and capably to express their own knowledge, perspectives and experiences as the researcher's attitude and behaviour are characterized by listening to and learning from local people (Chambers, 1994). Thus, PRA is practical and collaborative as it provides local people the opportunity to engage in examining their actions and link this with others in social interaction (Kemmis & Wilkinson, 1998). Making use of a PRA allowed me accesse to valuable expressions on protective resources and risk factors by rural teachers in resource constraint settings. Furthermore, PRA is a critical and reflexive collaborative social process with the aim to reduce the subject-object disparity found in traditional research methods (Chambers, 1992; Chambers, 1994). Thus a bottom-up approach is followed by emphasising the capabilities of local people and empowers their decision making processes (Binns, Hill & Nel, 1997). By adhering to PRA principles I ascribed to the belief that I am not the expert and as such I needed to be unassuming as a researcher, regarding the participants' perspectives as valuable and showing a willingness to learn from others. This attitude allowed me to learn from and about the participants as I regarded them as the experts of local knowledge.

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Another core principle of PRA refers to its emancipatory nature where the aim is to help local people to recover and unshackle the self by exploring how their practices are shaped and constrained by the wider social structure (cultural, political and economical). A way to work within and around constraints local people experience is explored if constraints cannot be released (Kemmis & Wilkinson, 1998).

1.6.3.3 Choice of PRA

Strengths of participatory methodologies include generation of in-depth, rich and pragmatic information and analysis (Chambers, 1994). PRA often involves visual presentations, which enables local people, literate as well as non-literate, to share their knowledge, experiences and perceptions regarding the rural Higher Education association (Chambers, 1994).

PRA is suitable for the current study as sharing and analysis is open-ended, visual, creative and flexible, enabling participants to express themselves in a different way when verbal communication is limited or hampered by language barriers (Chambers, 2004). Furthermore, PRA can be done in groups to further enable comparisons (Chambers, 1992). Collaboration in PRA involves local people being creatively and capably part of their own investigation, analysis and planning (Chambers, 1994). Collaboration (between researchers and participants) therefore extends across each stage of research, which involves shared control and mutual education to gain understanding of one another's situations and contributions (Lingard, Albert & Levinson, 2008:461). The collaborative nature of the research process, its egalitarian approach to power and education, and the importance of taking action on a specific issue are seen as essential features of PRA (Lingard, Albert & Levinson, 2008:461). Consequently, collaboration and shared control can be a possible limitation in this particular study because of distance (frequent face-to-face meetings are limited and this negatively influences the collaborative nature and progress of the association), different cultural backgrounds (lack of understanding of institutional realities of both partners) and difficulty in establishing close trust relationships (infrequent meetings and different cultural backgrounds) between researchers and participants (Lingard, Albert & Levinson, 2008).

Furthermore, PRA is frequently (as in this case) initiated by the researchers, who by virtue of their social position and expertise may find it difficult to operate from a bottom-up approach, as is proposed by PRA, to empower marginalised groups. A critical awareness of the politically fraught nature of the research, entering the community/schools in a respectful way and showing my eagerness to learn and impart knowledge are strategies to disseminate results that are equally accessible to the partners of the rural HEI association, community members and academic peers (Bhana, 2006:441).

PRA involves continuous reflection, followed by action and again by reflection. This poses a possible challenge as the researcher adapts to the research process and makes changes in decisions regarding the research process that can alter the interpretation and analysis of the results (Fouche & Schurink, 2011; Nieuwenhuis, 2010b). I provided an audit trail (researcher diary) of the research process, decision-making and analysis processes and subsequent changes to further enhance rigour in my study (Creswell & Miller, 2000). My choice of PRA will be further elaborated upon in Chapter 3 section 3.5.

1.6.3.4 Reflecting on the application of PRA principles

In this section I summarise the practical guidelines I adhered to in undertaking my study that reflect the basic principles of PRA (Chambers, 2003; 2004; 2007; Choudhury, 1995; Heaver, 1992; Leurs, 1996; Mukherjee, 1994; PRIA, 2000):

- Prior to undertaking my study, I read up on PRA and had several discussions with my supervisor (see Appendix H),

- My supervisor and I planned the PRA-directed activities and selected data collection methods that are visual and produced tangible products that participants could relate to and feel comfortable (see section 3.5 for further elaboration).

- Before commencing with the PRA-directed activities the research process was thoroughly explained by the researchers and opportunity for further questions was provided. Taking this stance during the introduction of the PRA-directed activities set the participants at ease and created an atmosphere of sharing. The researchers took special care to highlight the potential benefits for partaking in this process.

- As establishing rapport is an important factor to the successful implementation of PRA (Chambers, 1992; 1994; Mukherjee, 1994; Heaver, 1992), my co-researcher and I firstly personally met with the principals of the different schools to invite them to the PRA-directed activities session at a regional conference facility. Secondly, we arranged participant accommodation and refreshments and shared meals together before and during the PRA-directed activities. This provided ample opportunity for the researchers and participants to get to know each other and contributed to the establishment of rapport.

- The PRA-directed activities were conducted at a regional conference facility to create a safe environment where the participants could feel safe and share sensitive information.

- The researchers conducted the PRA-directed activities in an informal and flexible manner, adjusting the process as needed to allow all participants to share their perspectives. The researchers also moved between participants to encourage openness

and sharing (Choudhury, 1995; Leurs, 1996). In addition, the researchers did not rush the process but rather focussed on creating a relaxed atmosphere by listening to participants without lecturing and probing without indifferently speeding up the process (Chambers, 1992).

- The researchers also ensured that participants' perceptions and interpretations were validated by relevant discussion of their ideas after each brainstorming session. We respected the participants' perceptions and remained sensitive to their needs and ideas.

- The researchers based their actions on the core beliefs that we are not experts and thus respected participants' perceptions and showed a willingness to learn from them. We as researchers also believed that local problems require local solutions and therefore respected different points of views of participants and regarded them as knowledgable of their local situation (Chambers 1992; 1994; 2007).

1.7   Conceptual framework and working assumptions

In this section I concurrently highlight the working assumptions and the conceptual framework in this comparative case study. Working assumptions is a necessary element to the development of the conceptual framework that guided this study. The conceptual framework in this study serves the purpose of describing what relational concepts may be present based on logic, theory and/or experience (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2003). The conceptual framework was referred to during data interpretation and continued to develop systematically as the study progressed and the relation between the proposed constructs emerged during data analysis. Reverting back to my working assumptions helped me to gain confidence in the findings as the assumptions and opposing assumptions are explained, rejected or accepted in an iterative process (Yin, 2003). My final amended evidence-based conceptual framework (see section 7.4) included all the themes that emerged from the data analysis. A potential limitation of a conceptual framework is that it might limit the inductive process of data analysis. To prevent my analysis to become too deductive, I reflected in my researcher journal (see Appendix H) on my thoughts and decisions and continuously discussed my analysis with the main research to prevent that my thinking and interpretations become to driven by the conceptual framework (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Yin, 2003).

Figure 1.2 illustrates the conceptual framework that brings together key concepts to consider when exploring instances of teacher resilience in a rural HEI association. The conceptual framework is informed by the literature review. This framework incorporates the framework of relationships, conditions and social artefacts working together systematically to sort individuals into ecological structures (Johnson, 2012), integrating attributes of social

capital (Healy, Ayres & Hampshire, 2003, Paxton, 2002, Putnam, 2000) and out-of-school factors and in-school factors that affect learners and teachers in rural schools. Jordan's (2006) model of relational resilience and the Relationship-Resourced Resilience (RRR) theory by Ebersöhn (2012) are integrated in the conceptual framework to enrich my understanding of how relationships promote teacher resilience in associations with HEIs. The Place-Based Social Mobility System (Johnson, 2012) is discussed in detail in the theoretical framework. Figure 1.3 graphically represents the conceptual framework for this study. The key concepts of the Place-based Social Mobility System, included in my conceptual framework, are indicated in black.
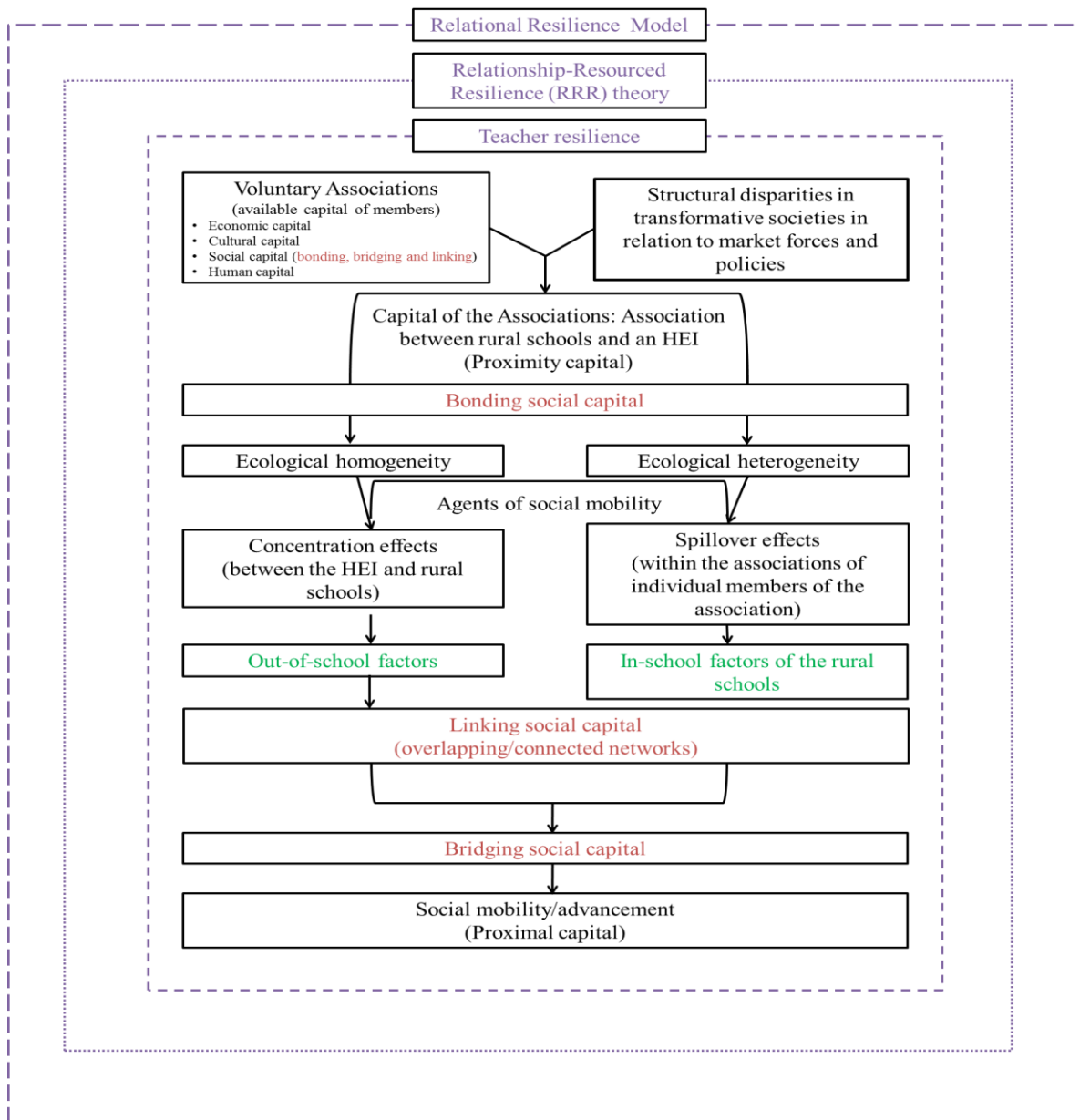
Figure 1.3: **Teacher resilience through the lens of Place-based Social Mobility System** (adapted from Milner, 2013, Johnson, 2012:38; Ebersöhn, 2012; Johnson, 2006 & Healy, Ayers & Hampshire, 2003)

The working assumptions in this study were based on the complex, dynamic nature of teacher resilience. I approached this study with certain working assumptions simultaneously arising from my literature review and my conceptual framework (Milner, 2013, Johnson, 2012:38; Ebersöhn, 2012; 2013; Johnson, 2006 & Healy, Ayers & Hampshire, 2003). Teacher resilience is indicated by purple in the graphical representation of the conceptual framework. I assumed that teacher resilience in rural schools implies multiple adversities that require adaptation (Mansfield, Beltman & Price, 2014; Ebersöhn, 2012; Price, Mansfield & McConney, 2012; Castro, Kelly & Shih, 2010). I further postulate that a HEI association is a relationship (Thomson, Smith-Tolken, Naidoo & Bringle, 2011) that provides an additional protective resource that supports resilience development or adaptation and can buoy teacher resilience in rural schools. To further inform the aforementioned assumption I incorporated Jordan's (2006) model of relational resilience and Ebersöhn's (2012) Relationship-Resourced Resilience (RRR) theory.

Jordan's (2006) model has its theoretical underpinnings in the relational-cultural theory (RCT). The RCT was developed by a group of four women, Jean Baker Miller, Irene Stiver, Judith Jordan and Janet Surrey, who often discussed the ways in wich the psychology of women continued to misinterpret woman's experiences. In 1995 these four women founded The Jean Baker Miller Training Institution where the RCT emerged from their relational work (Jordan, 2008; West, 2005). A core belief of RCT is that all psychological growth occurs in relationships. According to the RCT, resilience occurs in the individual's capacity for connection. Jordan (2006) advocates that growth-fostering connections are characterised by mutuality, empowerment and the development of courage. The movement towards mutuality, such as in this study through an association between rural schools and a HEI, is argued to be the core of relational resilience as these relationships provide an opportunity to participate in a relationship that is mutually growth-fostering (Jordan, 2006:88). Empowerment is advocated as one of the building blocks of growth-fostering connections as these connections enable participants to experience energy, creativity and flexibility. Another feature of growth-fostering connections is courage, which is defined by Jordan (2006) as the capacity to move into situations even when feeling fear or hesitation (Le Cornu, 2013). As regards the aspect of courage, I assume that members of the association from all institutions (rural schools and the HEI) feel some hesitation and uncertainty about engaging in the association. As such the concept of courage in growth-fostering connections relates to the notion that associates do not enter into the association relationship with a comprehensive understanding of the consequential social returns of such an engagement (Johnson, 2012; Jordan, 2006). According to an ecological approach the concept of internal sense of control can be reconsidered to examine an

individual's engagement in mutually empathic and responsive relationships as the more likely source of resilience as opposed to the view of traditional models that internal locus of control is an individual characteristic. Jordan (2006) further argued that issues of power and control are decontextualized (Le Cornu, 2013). Furthermore, the social justice movement is complemented by the RCT in two ways: firstly by identifying how contextual and sociocultural challenges inhibit individuals' capacity to create, sustain and participate in growth-fostering relationships and secondly the complexities of human development is illuminated by exploring how relational competencies develop over the life span (Comstock, Hammer, Strentzsch, Cannon, Parsons, & Salazar; 2008:279). In summary, the process of psychological growth and relational development included the following ideas: 1) troughout the lifespan, people grow through and toward relationship, 2) mature functioning is characterised by a movement toward mutuality rather than sepration, 3) psychological growth is characterised by the ability to partake in increasingly complex and expanded relational networks, 4) real engagement in growth-fostering relationships necessitate authenticity, 5) mutual empowerment and empathy are at the core of growth-fostering relationships, 6) participation in the development of growth-fostering relationships result in personal growth and an awareness of relational competence over the life span (Comstock, Hammer, Strentzsch, Cannon, Parsons, & Salazar; 2008; Jordan; 2000).

The Relationship-Resourced Resilience (RRR) theory was developed by Ebersöhn (2012) as a generative theory emerging from a longitudinal intervention case study research data named the STAR (Supportive Teachers, Assets and Resilience) study which was co-directed by Liesel Ebersöhn and Ronel Ferreira and various postgraduate students who acted as co-researchers (Ebersöhn, 2013; Ferreira & Ebersöhn, 2012). Ebersöhn (2012) proposed the RRR theory based on eight years of longitudinal case study data that were generated using the Participatory Reflection and Action approach with partnership schools (primary and secondary schools in rural and urban areas) and teachers in South Africa.

Ebersöhn (2012), in her explanation of her RRR theory, emphasizes the value of using resources and relationships to sustain school reform (specifically in adverse educational settings). RRR reflects the notion that actions, reactions and transactions (associations) between schools and a community can lead to positive adaption. She advocates that resilience in poverty contexts results from a sequence of adaptations that progress over time.

In the RRR theory, Ebersöhn (2013) found that teachers teaching in an adverse context make use of relationships as a way to balance the challenges and risks they encounter on a daily basis. Relationships are viewed as a valuable source to acquire much needed resouces in a resource-scarce setting. In Ebersöhn's (2013) study the teachers facilitated resilience by

identifying relationships that could grant them access to much needed resources. Resilience is the result of a collective effort, enabling individuals to link their ability to use what they have to survive in adverse settings. Thus, when individuals make use of relationships to support and strengthen systems, positive adaptation is made possible (Ebersöhn; 2013:98).

Social advancement is encouraged by types of capital known to the associates as economic capital, cultural capital, social capital and human capital. Building potentially beneficial associations is inspired by types of capital (Johnson, 2012) such as those provided by HEI associations. The ability to support social mobility is contextually defined and thus the capital of association is endogenous (Johnson, 2012). I performed this study on the assumption that HEI associations can promote the development of social and human capital (Putnam, 2001). Furthermore, I postulated that increasing social and human capital promotes teacher resilience. Thus teachers engaging in a HEI association increase their social capital via this network of relationships and as such teacher resilience is enhanced. I further entered the research setting on the assumption that a HEI association enables teachers to access proximity capital (comprising of the capital of associations; in other words both teachers from the rural schools and the members of the HEI bring certain capitals with them to the association). Thus, teachers teaching in rural resource-constrained schools with access to proximity capital experience subsequent social advancement (proximal capital) and thus they develop teacher resilience (Johnson, 2012).

In addition to Johnson's (2012) explanation of capital of associations, I incorporated the findings of Healy, Ayres and Hampshire (2003) with regard to the attributes of social capital, namely bonding, bridging and linking (illustrated in red in the graphic illustration). Bonding represents the relationship between the stakeholders based on similarity of beliefs and values, and the familiarity associated with close relationships. Thus, bonding represents the strength of the relationships between stakeholders. I therefore assume that accessing proximity capital leads to bonding of social capital. Bridging involves the relationship of stakeholders based on shared interests and can occur within and across communities. Thus, bridging of social capital in the conceptual framework is indicated between places, called "concentration effects", the association between the rural school and a HEI), and within places, called "spillover effects", effects as a result of the association with a HEI and therefore the development of social capital within the community and schools in the same geographical location is encouraged. The associations that are formed among communities, individuals and groups to gain access to resources needed for social and economic development constitute linking. Paxton's (2002) differentiation of isolated and connected networks is related to the aforementioned concept of linking. Connected networks encourage bridging of social capital by means of the multiple

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associations of the members of the current association. Members of the HEI association from both institutions (rural schools and the HEI) may also have other associations that can further develop the social capital of the current association as well as the social capital of the members of the other associations of individual members.

Healy, Ayres and Hampshire (2003) state that the fundamental forms of social capital are strong personal connections and community networks which enhance individuals' access to emotional, social and economic resources. Putnam (2001) advocates the multiple dimensions of social capital. Some forms of social capital are formal and some informal, but both constitute networks in which reciprocity and the possibility of gains for all stakeholders can easily develop. There is a positive relationship between social capital and educational performance, consequently the welfare of children is better where social capital is higher (Putnam, 2001). I believe this can also be applied to teachers within the educational context on the assumption that the wellbeing of teachers is enhanced by the presence of social capital. In addition, Putnam (2001) points out that economic inequality and civic inequality are lower in places with higher social capital. The following statement reflects the relevance of human and social capital in this study:

> The fact that community levels of human and social capital appear to increase happiness, while the reverse is true for income, suggests to me that returns from human and social capital are far broader than whatever positive effects they may have on material standards of living (Putnam, 2001:13).

To gain a better understanding of the challenges teachers experience within a rural educational context the interconnected space of learning, instructional practices and poverty should be considered. Evidence suggests that teachers can make a difference in the classroom with the necessary support and preparation to develop and enact curriculum and instructional opportunities by meeting the diverse needs of learners living in poverty (Milner, 2013:43). Research on poverty and education can be signified through three spheres, namely study, theory and analysis. Firstly, research focused on out-of-school factors, secondly on in-school factors (indicated in green in the graphic illustration of the conceptual framework) and thirdly on the effects of out-of-school factors on outcomes and experiences in school (Milner, 2013). For my study I incorporate these aspects in my conceptual framework, as they are all equally important in empowering teachers teaching in poverty-stricken ecologies and schools as they reflect the socioecological perspective. Table 1.3 below summarises the elements of both out-of-school and in-school factors that affect teachers on their journey to teach in a rural school where the need and risk are high:

Table 1.3:   Out-of-school and in-school factors (adapted from Milner, 2013)

Out-of-school factors	In-school factors
• Unemployment • Income of family • Parental styles • Education level of parents • Geography • Resources available within the home (books, media, etc.) • Physical, psychological and emotional abuse • Addictions (drug abuse, gambling or alcoholism) • Health and nutrition problems • Absenteeism • Late arrivals • Difficulty concentrating • Homelessness • Policy and school funding	• Instructional practices • Resources and the lack thereof in school • Administrative practices • School culture • Nature of relationships (teachers vs. learners and teachers vs. parents) • Language and literature • Curriculum as policy • Class size

I therefore posit that certain out-of-school and in-school factors can either provide protective resources and/or risk factors that contribute to or hamper teacher resilience. Finally I assume that when proximal capital is accessed by teachers teaching in rural resource-constrained settings, social capital is bridged and therefore teacher resilience is enabled.

1.8   Research design and methodology

1.8.1   Overview of methodological choices that directed this study

A comparative case study design was used to gather data for this study. A comparative case study design permitted the identification and interpretation of differences and similarities across settings (Thomas, 2011). An interactive participatory environment was fostered by the use of PRA group-directed activities (Chambers, 2013) in which participants were able to generate data on HEI associations as one pathway to foster teacher resilience by mobilising protective resources to address challenges in the education setting. Additionally, to deepen and triangulate data, face-to-face semi-structured interviews were conducted with 11 participants from the two cases (see section 3.4.2.3 for selection of participants from cases). Data sources included audiovisual recordings (verbatim transcriptions) and visual data (photographs) of PRA-directed group activities and verbatim transcriptions of face-to-face semi-structured interviews. Observation as context of interaction was documented in the field notes of the researcher diary. In line with principles of inductive thematic analysis, data sources were analysed using in-case and cross-case methods (Schwandt, 2001; Merriam, 1998). Methodological decisions will be discussed in detail in Chapter 3.

1.8.2 Data generation: Strategies, documentation and analysis

Data were gathered over a period of two years, from 2013 to 2014 (Phase 1: PRA-directed group activities in June 2013; Phase 2: member checking and semi-structured interviews in May 2014 and member checking and additional interviews in September 2014 and April 2015) with participants, using different methods, at the Oshoek research site. Data collection consisted of PRA-directed group activities, face-to-face semi-structured interviews, informal observations (observation as context of interaction) (Angrosino & Mays de Perez, 2000) documented as field notes in the researcher diary and visual representations (photos of PRA-directed group activities and the context) as methods of investigation (Chambers, 1994). Both PRA-directed group activities and face-to-face semi-structured interviews allowed participants to reflect on and construct their experiences of the association between rural schools and a HEI (Pope, Ziebland & Mays, 2000). Narrative and visual data were generated during the PRA colloquia to address objectives related to participating and non-participating teachers' experiences of HEI association with rural schools (Ebersöhn, 2012). PRA-directed group activities and face-to-face semi-structured interviews took place, which were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim (see Appendices E and F).

Thematic inductive analysis informed by a constructivist grounded theory approach was applied when analysing and interpreting the data sources, PRA-directed group activities, face-to-face semi-structured interviews, visual data and field notes. A constructivist grounded theory approach endorsed analysis and interpretation of data in a comparative, iterative and interactive manner, allowing me to continually interact with the data and ideas that emerged from data, making it comparative in nature (Charmaz, 2003). Inductive thematic analysis was done to analyse and interpret the data of this study (Schwandt, 2001). In-case analysis was done to gain in-depth understanding of teacher expressions of protective resources and risk factors by teachers in rural schools that: 1) participated in an association with a HEI (Case A1); 2) teachers in rural schools that did not participate in the association between their rural school and a HEI (Case A2); and 3) teachers in rural schools without a HEI association (Case B). Cross-case analysis allowed comparison of the cases (Cases A1, A2 and B) to provide richer descriptions of protective resources and risk factors expressions by teachers in rural schools with or without an association with a HEI. Refer to Chapter 3, section 3.6, for a detailed discussion on the data analysis and interpretation of this study.

This section reviews the research process and gives an overview of the site visits from April 2013 to April 2015. During the first visit the goal was to observe the research settings to enrich my data. During the second visit, the PRA-directed group activities were conducted (described in Chapter 3, section 3.5.1.2). The PRA-directed group activities yielded data on

teacher resilience as it relates to engagement in an association between rural schools and a HEI. At the third visit a session was conducted with the teachers who participated in the PRA-directed group activities with the aim to establish a vision and mission for the association between the rural schools and the HEI, as the teachers suggested this during the PRA-directed activities. The fourth visit entailed a member checking session related to the PRA-directed group activities as well as initial face-to-face semi-structured interviews with purposively selected teachers (see Chapter 3, section 3.4.2.3, for a detailed description of the selection of teachers for face-to-face semi-structured interviews). During the fifth visit additional face-to-face semi-structured interviews were conducted to reach data saturation (refer to Chapter 3, section 3.4.2.3, for discussion on data saturation) as well as member checking sessions of interviews conducted in May 2014 (fourth visit). The last visit was conducted with the purpose of member checking of interviews conducted in September 2014. PRA-directed group activities and face-to-face semi-structured interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim and observations were documented visually and textually (Appendices E to I contain examples of each data source) in the researcher diary and field notes (See Appendix H). Refer to Appendix L for a summary of the dates when the schools were visited, time spent at the site and the research goal of each visit.

1.8.3   Ethical considerations

As my study employed PRA it was necessary to orientate myself with regard to the ethical principles specific to PRA studies as well educational and psychological research. The current study was conducted in an ethical manner by adhering to basic ethical guidelines such as voluntary and informed consent, privacy and confidentiality and protection from harm. In order to advance my research beyond general ethical guidelines I incorporated the following guidelines for ethical research in my research: social and scientific value, scientific validity, participants and the nature of their involvement, informed consent and favourable risk-benefit ratio (Emanual, Wendler & Grady, 2000). An in-depth discussion on the ethical guidelines adhered to in this study is presented in Chapter 3, section 3.8.

1.8.4   Quality criteria

To ensure the quality of the study, strategies such as credibility, transferability, dependability and authenticity were employed. Rich description of the context, triangulation of data sources, researchers and theory (Kelly, 2006), prolonged engagement in the research setting, member checking and peer debriefing sessions ensured the quality of this study (Houghton, Casey, Shaw & Murphy, 2013; Creswell & Miller, 2000). Fundamental to this process was reflexivity

and providing an audit trail, which I achieved through my researcher journal (see Appendix H). In Chapter 3, section 3.7, I present a detailed discussion of the quality criteria which guided the research decisions in this study.

1.8.5   Limitations and delimitations of the study

In this section I summarise the limitations of the research design, the research methodology, the sampling methods as well as the data analysis and interpretation (refer to Chapter 3 for detailed discussions on how I compensated for limitations and delimitations). Using a comparative case study design posed several limitations such as generalizability and transferability (Abrams, 2009; Creswell, 2000) (refer to section 3.2.2). I compensated for limitations inherent in the research methodology, such as being a novice researcher (Choudhury, 1995), differences in language, background and culture of the researcher and the participants as well as observer bias (Angrosino-De Perez, 2000) (refer to sections 3.5.1.1 and 3.5.3.1). With regard to sampling strategies, convenience sampling was used for selecting the cases and enabled access to difficult-to-reach contexts, while purposive sampling enabled the selection of information-rich participants. Inherent delimitations with regard to these sampling strategies refer to generalizability (Maree, 2007; Cohen et. al., 2000), researcher bias (Mouton, 2011; Ponteretto, 2013), the exclusion of other teachers in rural schools in the same area and a need to sample in order to achieve saturation (Struwig & Stead, 2001; Seargent, 2012) (refer to sections 3.4.2.2 to 3.2.2.3). To compensate for limitations during the analysis of data, I continuously reflected on and checked my findings with the main researcher. To ensure that I reached data saturation, I concurrently analysed data during data collection and was mindful of the possibility of making assumptions. To control the findings I compared the findings with relevant literature to ensure a true representation of findings. Meaning, coherence and significance of findings were accentuated by the literature control (Marshall & Rossman, 2010).

1.9   Conclusion

Early in this chapter, I argued for associations between rural schools and HEIs as one pathway to teacher resilience. I stated the purpose of the study and listed the research questions that would illuminate the value of HEI associations to promote teacher resilience in rural schools with constrained resources. I provided clarification of key concepts as well as the theoretical and conceptual frameworks and working assumptions that guided my approach to this study. I stated constructivism as epistemological paradigm and participatory reflection in action as methodological paradigm. I then provided an overview of the methodological choices, ethical

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guidelines and quality criteria that guided this study. In Chapter 2 I conduct a comprehensive review of existing literature on teacher resilience, associations and how these two bodies of knowledge intersect with specific reference to associations with HEIs.

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2.1   Introduction

In this chapter I explore relevant literature on (i) teacher resilience, (ii) associations, and higher education institution (HEI) associations as it relates to teacher resilience. Figure 2.1 below illustrates the focus of the literature review and how the different bodies of literature intersect. I venture to identify knowledge contributions and gaps that may deepen my understanding of how the current study contributes to knowledge on associations with HEIs and teacher resilience. The focus of the discussion is led by my primary research question: "How insight into expressions on protective resources and risk factors by teachers in rural schools, in the presence or absence of an association with a HEI, inform knowledge on teacher resilience?"

I begin chapter 2 by exploring high-risk, high-need schools in transforming societies. I further situate these schools in rural ecologies. I then proceed to discuss trends in teacher resilience and teacher working conditions, narrowing down my discussion to 1) teaching in high-risk, high-need schools; and 2) teaching in rural South Africa. Next I explore literature on associations per se, followed by literature on education associations, and then I relate it to teacher resilience. In my discussion I include aspects such as the role of HEIs, and the type and nature of HEIs as well as factors contributing to the success of associations with HEIs, and challenges relating to forming associations. I conclude my discussion on the functions of associations with HEIs.
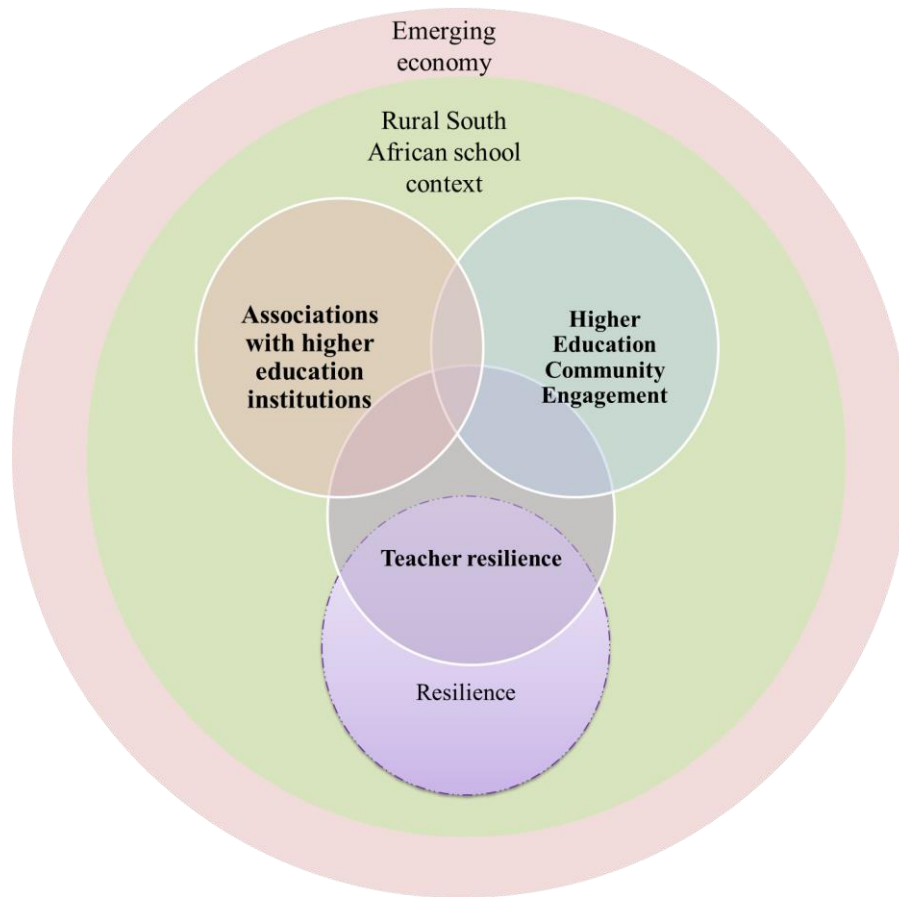
Figure 2.1:   **Intersection of different bodies of knowledge relevant to the study**

2.2   Situating the study: Education in rural South Africa

The purpose of section 2.2 is to situate the study within the context of a transforming rural South Africa by reviewing relevant literature on high-need, high-risk schools in: 1) transforming societies; 2) a rural ecology; and, lastly, within rural South Africa.

2.2.1   High-need, high-risk schools in transformative societies

Rooted in health and medical literature, the interaction between environmental and individual characteristics that may lead to a heightened risk of negative outcomes, is researched by studies on social policy, social stratification and inequality in education (Smrekar, 2014). High-quality education should be available to all students. According to Mascarenhas, Parsons and Burrowbridge (2010) inequality with regard to the quality of education that students receive in affluent schools versus the quality of education students receive in high-needs schools still exists today. See concept clarification in Chapter 1 for a definition of high-need and high-risk schools.

Incentives to attract and retain teachers to teach in high-needs schools are currently lacking. High-needs schools are very difficult to staff as these schools serve communities that experience high levels of poverty, where classrooms are inescapably influenced by students'

difficulties, such as family, social or economic problems, factors that distract students from their focus on education (Darling-Hammond, 2007; Public Education Network, 2011; TEACH Make a Difference, n.d.). The demands of teaching in high-needs schools include overcrowding, higher frequencies of crime and limited resources (TEACH Make a Difference, n.d.). According to recent studies teachers without adequate credentials in their subject fields (particularly in maths and science) are found in high-needs schools. Furthermore, these teachers are often poorly prepared for classroom management (Levine, 2014; Almy & Thoekas, 2010). Resilience studies aim to understand how individuals or groups overcome adversity and succeed despite high-risk conditions (Smrekar, 2014).

Amrein-Beardsley (2012:17) found in her study on expert teachers that the "quality of the principal, salary bonuses, benefits and resource considerations, and the degree" of collaboration with expert teachers who work in multiple roles for the advancement of student learning are factors for consideration when recruiting and retaining expert teachers.

McREL (2005) conducted a multi-state (Minnesota and Texas) quantitative comparative study in response to the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001, which required that all students should demonstrate proficiency in reading and mathematics by 2014 as it was found that schools nationwide were unable to meet this goal. McREL(2005) aimed to identify high-needs schools that were having success with improved student achievement and compare them with comparable poorly performing, high-needs schools. Data were collected via surveys. The researchers concluded that there is no difference between the organization of high- and low-performing schools, but that there was found to be a major difference between the teachers' perceptions of each of the individual components relevant to high-performing and low-performing schools. Components included instruction, school environment, professional community and leadership. Leadership was found to be essential in shaping and supporting professional community among teachers (McREL, 2005).This study is valuable to my study as teacher perceptions have been found to be valuable for enabling the effectiveness of schools. I infer that these teachers probably showed characteristics of teacher resilience.

Berry, Daughtrey and Wieder (2009) found in their study, drawing on the findings of surveys and interviews with urban teachers in high-needs schools, that teachers are more likely to teach effectively and remain in high-needs schools when time and skills are provided for collaboration with their peers. This collaboration with their peers creates the opportunity for sharing effective teaching practices, improving student outcomes and furthermore retaining accomplished teachers in high-needs schools. Thus, opportunities for collaboration strengthen the skills of new and struggling teachers and can improve the skills of already accomplished teachers (Berry, Daughtrey & Wieder, 2009).

2.2.2 High-need, high-risk schools in rural ecology

Educational opportunities and the life experiences of students who attend rural schools are impacted by teacher challenges. Consequently, equity issues ensue and the future of rural communities as a whole is also negatively impacted (Burton, Brown & Johnson, 2013). Most recently Burton and Johnson (2013) noted that issues regarding equity in rural ecology have rarely been researched despite the social and political imperative to investigate rural ecology in a similar fashion as other place-defined school phenomena. Preparing, recruiting and retaining of teachers in rural communities are essential as schools in rural communities are often under-resourced and characterised as high-need, high-risk schools. Consequently, the least qualified and most poorly prepared teachers are often teaching in rural schools (Darling-Hammond, 2003; Huysman, 2008).

Despite many studies on preparing, recruiting and retaining teachers in rural communities, literature still falls short in providing an understanding of teachers who enter the field of education with the intention to teach in rural communities (Burton & Johnson, 2010) and stay in the teaching profession. Understanding of rural teachers has been intertwined with the conception of rural schools and since a large percentage of children are enrolled in a rural school district, understanding the teachers/individuals who teach in these districts is justified (Burton, Brown & Johnson, 2013:2). Teacher education programmes need to prepare prospective teachers for the unique needs of the rural school's context (Burton, Brown & Johnson, 2013) to provide fair and just educational experiences to all children in their various geographic locations (Burton & Johnson, 2010; Burton, Brown & Johnson, 2013). Furthermore, the experiences of resilient teachers can play an essential role in teaching children that problems of poverty and social inequality are not created by individuals, but are systemically embedded (Polidore, Edmonson & Slate, 2010).

The broader issues relating to the intersection of rural education and equitable access to high-quality education highlight the importance of further research both within and beyond the rural education community. Articles published in general education journals are lacking, resulting in many education researchers being unaware of issues related to rural education and research in this particular field (Burton, Brown & Johnson, 2013:8). Investigations need to focus on the exploration of the complexities and layers of issues relating to rural teachers and their practices as literature portrays rural teachers as either the problem within the rural context or as people working to address the problem of the rural context (Burton, Brown & Johnson, 2013:8).

Arguments relating to adequacy included that either a student or group of students was receiving an inadequate education and/or that inadequacy was rooted in a lack of access to

educational resources. One aspect of educational resources refers to the availability of "highly qualified" teachers. A "highly qualified" teacher is a teacher who has both a teaching license and certification in his/her particular subject area, which has been found in literature to relate positively to student learning. Tuerk (2005) concludes that schools in high-poverty areas as well as rural areas have unequal access to qualified teachers and that as the poverty of the population increases the number of highly qualified teachers in classrooms decreases. The Grade Eight census that was undertaken in 2002 revealed that on average 20% of classes are taught by unqualified teachers and 40% of students failed the writing test in high-poverty schools (Tuerk, 2005:423). Almy and Theokas (2010) furthermore found that high-poverty schools and low-poverty schools had unequal access to qualified teachers.

Tuerk (2005) suggests that recruiting and staffing schools with highly qualified teachers will not ameliorate the effects of low-income schools. Furthermore, Sanders and Horn (1998) concur that teacher effects on student achievement is cumulative and little evidence supports the notion that qualified and effective teachers would counter the effects of less skilled teachers.

The importance of a continued search for indicators to monitor the degree of equitable access to adequately qualified teachers is highlighted by Almy and Theokas (2010:3) as minority and low-income students are currently not receiving adequate teaching from competent and qualified teachers.

2.2.3   Setting the stage: Education in rural South Africa

Inequality is a marker of the South African society, but primarily in education (Fleish & Christie, 2004). Apartheid in South Africa resulted in imbalances and inequalities in a diverse nation. In an effort to promote a new racially and ethnically neutral South Africa, post-apartheid social reform was specifically aimed at deconstructing the established social order (Woodrooffe, 2011). The government system and the region have undergone major constitutional and institutional redesign and transformation (The World Bank, 2014).

South Africa's economy is characterised as sociopolitical, transformative and emerging (Ebersöhn, 2014), and is further typified as a context of diversity, continued segregation, with marked inequality (Rohleder, Swartz, Carolissen, Bozalek & Leibowitz, 2008:253). South Africa has a specific set of contextual and developmental factors that sets it apart from other countries, including increased unemployment, poverty, crime and violence, HIV/AIDS, tangible infrastructure issues, for example lack of electricity, water, toilets, etc. that are an indication that the majority of the population are struggling with subsistence needs (Mitchel & Rautenbach, 2005:103). Social immobility and reinforcement of the existing marginalisation

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have become worse owing to conventional schooling, implicating that a society cannot become socially simply by assuming that everyone is being treated equally (Ndlovu, 2011). The legacy of apartheid involve great inequalities within the South African context (Mitchell & Rautenbach, 2005).

South African education can be utilized as a platform to establish a foundation upon which efforts for the advancement of social cohesion, such as creating a society with a common bond, teaching tolerance, reaching consensus with regard to social contracts and moulding desired behaviour, can be accomplished (Heyneman, 2003). Societies in transition, such as South Africa's, have a distinct set of issues that need to be understood. The complex impact of wider societal changes should be considered to improve school effectiveness, and to this end there is a focus on teacher resilience (Fleisch & Christie, 2004).

Following the 1994 elections an educational policy known as "People's Education", was implemented. The education policy fundamentally reflects that education has an essential and unique political role to play in the transformation of South African society. The aim of education is "to enable a democratic, free, equal, just and peaceful society to take root and prosper ... on the basis that all South Africans without exception share the same inalienable rights, equal citizenship and common destiny, and that all forms of bias (especially racial, ethnic and gender) are dehumanising" (Department of Education, 1995:22). Emerging professionals and established professionals in South Africa need to engage with a society in which there are urgent, pressing needs, but insufficient resources (Rohleder, Swartz, Carolissen, Bozalek & Leibowitz, 2008). Schools are viewed as the key strategic subsystem of modern society as it exerts the greatest influence on society as a whole (Harkavy & Hartley, 2009:10).

After the elections in 1994, the post-apartheid government was faced with a number of schools, more specifically black secondary schools in urban areas, which were dysfunctional. Research on dysfunctional schools in one of South Africa's provinces (Gauteng) in 1994-1995 concluded that dysfunctional schools had organisational problems (as regards leadership and administration), poor communication and discipline procedures, poor community relationships and poor physical and social facilities (Christie, 1998). A large number of these schools continued to struggle with these problems and some seemed to function despite these overwhelmingly adverse circumstances. Further research into these apparently resilient schools revealed that these schools have flexible and purposive leadership, good organisational functioning, a sense of agency and responsibility, learning and teaching as central activities, good disciplinary processes, and that they have cultivated a culture of concern in the school (Christie, 2001; Fleish & Christie, 2004).

Despite notable accomplishments, South Africa remains the country with the highest inequality rates in the world. An advanced, modern urban economy co-exists in sharp contrast with the socioeconomic poverty of disadvantaged townships, informal settlements and rural areas (The World Bank, 2014:2). Governments attempted to address the complexities of rurality and rural education to improve the lives of individuals, however, rural development and education have lingered on the sidelines of research on local education (Nkambule, Balfour, Pillay & Moletsane, 2011). Balfour, Mitchell and Moletsane (2008) suggest that rural research should be informed by sociological and post-colonial accounts of identity and environment.

The Rural Teacher Education Project in South Africa established that rurality is generative and transformative in nature and can both inform and delineate rural interventions aimed at education, health care, job creation and poverty alleviation (Balfour, Mitchell & Moletsane, 2008). Literature indicates that rural contexts are often associated with agri-capital or mineral wealth or as a source of cheap labour (Nkambule, Balfour, Pillay & Moletsane, 2011). Factors such as poverty, distance from political and other centres and reliance on assistance from government and NGOs are attributed to rural life in South Africa, clearly illustrating the need for further research on rural education and rurality (Nkambule, Balfour, Pillay & Moletsane, 2011).

Previous research focused on rurality as a lived experience (how rurality influences rural issues) and the development of resources within the rural context (Nkambule, Balfour, Pillay & Moletsane, 2011). Ebersöhn and Ferreira (2012) established that implementing support strategies in rural schools proved to be extremely challenging, especially with regard to sustainability. Factors such as space, isolation, community, poverty, disease, neglect, backwardness, marginalisation, depopulation, deprivation, conservatism, racism, resettlement, corruption, entropy and exclusion are associated with rurality (Balfour, Mitchell & Moletsane, 2008:97; Ebersöhn & Ferreira, 2012; Nkambule, Balfour, Pillay & Moletsane, 2011). In literature, rurality is often associated with poverty, injustice and sustained under-development (Nkambule, Balfour, Pillay & Moletsane, 2011). Rural settings are often portrayed as an obstacle to overcome. Burton, Brown and Johnson (2013) advocate that the unique features of rural schools should be celebrated as they could provide valuable information that might inform similar communities.

Literature on rural life in South Africa focuses extensive attention on inequality and marginalised groups (Balfour, Mitchell & Moletsane, 2008). In the past two decades teacher education curricula have focused on the urban middle class, endorsing outcomes-based education (OBE) and other participatory pedagogies, and as a result it has become clear that

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problems within a rural school ecology were not considered in policy, theoretic and pragmatic initiatives (Chisholm, 2004). Balfour, Mitchell and Moletsane (2008:98) established, based on research that was undertaken into urban-based teachers in rural areas, rural learners and campus-based student-teachers, that rurality research is grounded in the contextual assumptions of deficit and disadvantage.

2.3   Situating the study in teacher resilience research

This section locates the study within teacher resilience research over the past few decades. Figure 2.2 presents an overview of trends in teacher resilience in the order followed by my discussion. I start my discussion by reviewing literature on conceptualisations of teacher resilience, followed by a discussion on how individual and contextual protective resources and risk factors contribute to teacher resilience, after which I deal with coping strategies and the characteristics of teacher resilience. I further elaborate on how teacher resilience is relationship-based, which includes a discussion on the role of social support in mediating teacher resilience and teacher resilience being a dynamic process that is also developmental in nature. I conclude this section by highlighting literature illustrating the importance of teacher resilience in a rural ecology. See Appendix A for a summary of the views of some of the leading scholars in teacher resilience, focusing on their contributions, the methodologies used and gaps in literature on teacher resilience.

Teacher resilience has emerged as an important field of research in the last decade, especially in countries where high rates of attrition are experienced in the teaching profession (Scheopner, 2010). Teacher resilience has been well studied by researchers in multiple disciplines in various countries. Studies have been conducted in the United States (Brunetti, 2006; Bobek, 2002; Burton & Johnson, 2010; Burton, Brown & Johnson, 2013); the United Kingdom (Day & Gu, 2010; Day & Gu, 2007, Sammons, Day, Kington, Gu, Stobart & Smees, 2007); China (Beijing) (Gu & Li, 2013); Australia (Howard & Johnson, 2004; Mansfield, Beltman, Price & McConney, 2012; Peters & Pearce, 2012; Nolan, Tacket & Stagnetti, 2014; Johnson, Down, Le Cornu, Peters, Sullivan, Pearce & Hunter, 2014); Canada (Toronto) (Tait, 2008); and South Africa (Ebersöhn, 2012; Ebersöhn & Fereirra, 2011). Studies on teacher resilience are predominantly qualitative studies (Bobek, 2002; Howard & Johnson, 2004; Brunetti, 2006; Castro, Kelly & Shih, 2010; Taylor, 2013; Nolan, Tacket & Stagnetti, 2014), making use of surveys (Ingersoll, 2001; Brunetti, 2006), questionnaires (Tait, 2008), interviews (Bobek, 2002; Howard & Johnson, 2004; Brunetti, 2006; Castro, Kelly & Shih, 2010; Nolan, Tacket & Stagnetti, 2014) and the systemic review of recent empirical studies (Beltman, Mansfield & Price, 2011). The following gaps in knowledge, based on the literature review, are

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evident: understanding of teacher resilience, a complex and multi-faceted phenomenon (Thieman, Henry & Kitchel, 2012); ways in which teachers' capacity to be resilient may be nurtured, sustained or diminished (Gu & Day, 2013); organisational sources of low teacher retention (Ingersoll, 2001); examining of key factors of teacher resilience and the interaction thereof in rural settings (Beltman, Mansfield & Price, 2011); how teacher resilience is manifested by individuals in their particular context (Mansfield, Beltman, Price & McConney, 2012); different settings to explore the kind of working conditions and support needed for teachers to perform at their best (Brunetti, 2006); the role of life experiences, especially for first-career and second-career teachers (Castro, Kelly & Shih, 2010); understanding of the work and lives of teachers who continue to do their best with their beliefs about their core purposes intact, despite challenging and changed circumstances (Gu & Day, 2007); and understanding of the interplay between personal and contextual factors relating to teachers' experiences (Johnson, Down, Le Cornu, Peters, Sullivan, Pearce & Hunter, 2014).
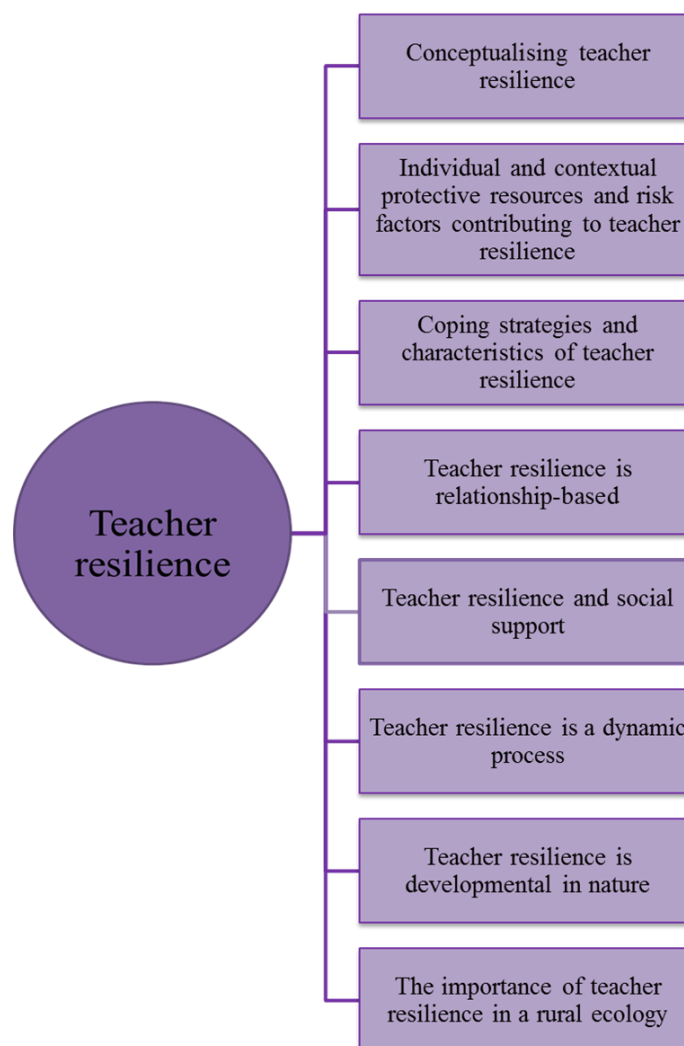
Figure 2.2:   Overview of teacher resilience trends

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2.3.1   Conceptualisations of teacher resilience

The way in which the emerging construct of teacher resilience can be understood is highlighted in literature on teacher resilience. Researchers have previously focused on understanding teacher burnout (Thieman, Henry & Kitchel, 2012; Price, Mansfield & McConney, 2012), which subsequently led to the notion on the importance of teacher attrition and what sustains the majority of teachers who remain in the profession (Clandinin, 2010) despite challenging working circumstances (Gu & Day, 2013). Conceptualisations of resilience provide a useful lens for exploring what factors (internal or external to teachers' worlds and the interplay thereof) influence teachers' capacity to sustain their passion, enthusiasm and strong sense of fulfilment (Gu & Li, 2013:289).

Masten (2001) states that: "Resilience does not come from rare and special qualities, but from the everyday magic of ordinary, normative human resources in the minds, brains, and bodies of [people/teachers] ..." (Masten, 2001:235) Literature abounds with accounts of how beginning or early teachers cope and adapt despite challenging working conditions. Literature confirms that resilience is a relative, multi-dimensional and developmental construct influenced by individual circumstances, situations and environments (Luthar, Cicchetti & Becker, 2000). Resilience can be regarded as a human capacity that can be developed and strengthened in all people, including teachers (Masten, 2001; Nolen, Taket & Stagnitti, 2014) and that steps can be taken to develop and sustain resilience in individuals (Theron & Theron, 2010). Promoting resilience is viewed as an important pathway to prevention of and intervention in the undesirable outcomes of adversity (Von Eye & Schuster, 2000:563) for both students and teachers. As indicated in literature, resilience can be strengthened and developed in children and I agree with this finding, as do other researchers (Johnson, Down, Le Cornu, Peters, Sullivan, Pearce & Hunter, 2014; Mansfield, Beltman & Price, 2014; Gu & Day, 2013; Luthar, Cicchetti & Becker, 2000), in that resilience in teachers can be developed and fostered in a similar effort to alleviate the attrition rates of teachers, which inevitably influence the success of students and teachers alike (Thieman, Henry & Kitchel, 2012). A qualitative study by Nolan, Taket and Stagnitti (2014), utilizing interviews with 35 teachers, highlighted the importance of teachers' being mindful of using enabling strategies to work purposively with the school environment and to build relationships. They further elaborated on the practical strategies and approaches that promote and protect resilience in children.

A broader definition of teacher resilience is proposed by Gu and Day (2013:39) in reaction to their argument that the widely used definition of resilience as the capacity to "bounce back" in adverse circumstances is inadequate. They argue that this definition fails to account for the uncertain and unpredictable circumstances relevant to teachers' everyday

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working life. They conducted a longitudinal study over a period of three years on teachers' perceptions of the variation in their work and lives, and their effectiveness. They made use of two-yearly semi-structured interviews and supplemented their data at various stages with document analysis and additional interviews with school leaders and groups of students. Gu and Day (2013) further argue that teachers who strive to teach at their best (Gu & Li, 2013) experience constant mental and emotional challenges, therefore resilience is a necessity for being able to manage their working conditions. Hence, teacher resilience is defined as managing the unavoidable uncertainties inherent in the realities of teaching, driven by their educational purposes and moral values, influenced by their biographies and the conditions of their lives and work (Gu & Day, 2013:39).

Gu and Day (2013) further argue that teacher resilience is the capacity to "bounce back" or recover and maintain equilibrium, a sense of commitment and agency despite the adversity or challenges experienced in the world of teaching. They furthermore conclude that the resilience process among teachers involves the complex relations between multiple levels of internal and external factors (Gu & Day, 2013) embedded in the individual, relational and organisational conditions in teachers' world of work (Gu & Day, 2007; Gu & Day, 2013). See Appendix A, Table 1, for a summary of the views of some of the leading scholars in teacher resilience, focusing on their contributions, the methodologies used and gaps in literature concerning conceptualisations of teacher resilience.

2.3.2   Individual and contextual protective resources and risk factors contributing to teacher resilience

Teacher resilience, similar to research on youth resilience, provides indicators of individual and contextual protective resources and risk factors (Price, Mansfield & McConney, 2012). Price, Mansfield and McConney (2012) aimed to shed light on the construct of teacher resilience from the perspectives of critical discourse and the labour process, in so doing placing the construct of resilience in the broad political landscape of teachers' work and the labour process of teaching within a, globalised, neoliberal economic paradigm. The researchers suggest further research on the construct of teacher resilience and how related constructs such as high rates of early career attrition could be used to shape and potentially control teacher identity and the nature of teachers' work (Price, Mansfield & McConney, 2012:81). Beltman, Mansfield and Price (2011) have done a systemic review of recent empirical studies on teacher resilience. The researchers focused on reviewing what methodologies have been used to examine teacher resilience, how teacher resilience is conceptualised, what the key risk and protective factors for teacher resilience are and how these risk and protective factors relate to one another. Lastly,

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they examined the implications for pre-service teacher education programmes, schools and employers. The researchers found that most studies on teacher resilience relied on participants' self-reports in the form of in-depth interviews to explore teachers' experiences, while others made use of developed surveys or established measures of related constructs, such as self-efficacy or burnout (Beltman, Mansfield & Price, 2011:29). The researchers found a limited number of studies directly examining teacher resilience. However, the review highlighted many risk and protective factors relating to teacher resilience. Key individual protective factors included efficacy and intrinsic motivation, and contextual protective factors included formal mentorship programmes and collegial support in the workplace. The aforementioned individual and contextual protective factors positively contributed to teacher resilience. The researchers also found that the relationship between risk and protective factors is complex and dynamic as well as unique to individuals. Therefore, further research is necessary to examine key factors, their interaction in different settings and interventions to determine the impact of and how to enhance key factors relating to teacher resilience (Beltman, Mansfield & Price, 2011).

A study by Tait (2008) explored the possible impact of the relationships among resilience, personal efficacy and emotional competence on first-year students' sense of success, confidence and commitment to the profession. Tait (2008) conducted the study in Toronto with 22 teachers, using a questionnaire to elicit first-year teaching experiences. She then selected four teachers who took part in three additional research tasks, namely a quiz about stress, a guided interview and a personal metaphor of teaching. The researcher identified several categories that represented the capacity of novice teachers, namely demonstrating social competence, taking advantage of opportunities to develop personal efficacy, using problem-solving strategies, having the ability to rebound after a difficult experience, learning from experience and setting goals for the future, taking care of oneself, and maintaining a sense of optimism (Tait, 2008:63).

Summarizing literature on individual protective resources include characteristics such as altruism, self-efficacy, confidence (Tait, 2008; Gu & Day, 2007) and an enduring sense of optimism (Gu & Li, 2013); coping strategies, stress management and problem-solving skills (Castro, Kelly & Shih, 2010; Mansfield, Beltman & Price, 2014); flexibility; a sense of professional identity and vocational commitment (Gu & Day, 2013; Gu & Li, 2013); self-reflection skills (Mansfield, Beltman, Price & McConney, 2012; Johnson, Down, Le Cornu, Peters, Sullivan, Pearce & Hunter, 2014); ethical and positive values (Price, Mansfield & McConney, 2012); a sense of agency (Castro, Kelly & Shih, 2010) and moral purpose or calling (Gu & Day, 2013; Gu & Day, 2007; Tait, 2008). Furthermore, various researchers have

identified collegiality as a factor that contributes to teacher resilience (Bobek, 2002; Brunetti, 2006).

Individual/personal risk factors involve low levels of self-efficacy (Castro, Kelly & Shih, 2010; Gu & Li, 2013), concerns about content knowledge, beliefs about preferred or actual teaching practices (Caspersen & Raaen, 2014) and reluctance to seek help (Castro, Kelly & Shih, 2010).

Contextual risk factors/challenges may emerge from the school context, in terms of culture and classroom management (Price, Mansfield & McConney, 2012, Johnson, Down, Le Cornu, Peters, Sullivan, Pearce & Hunter, 2014; Ingersoll, 2001); school administration and organisation, namely heavy workload, problems with time management and lack of administrative support (Gu & Li, 2013; Price, Mansfield & McConney, 2012; Ingersoll, 2001); limited resources and equipment (Ingersoll, 2001); inadequate support or relationships with students and staff (Le Cornu, 2013; Gu & Li, 2013; Masten, 2001; Ingersoll, 2001) and performativity, as related to a focus on accountability and quality of teaching (Gu & Li, 2013; Castro, Kelly & Shih, 2010; Brunetti, 2006). Ingersoll (2001) conducted a study utilising the longitudinal survey data of 6 733 teachers from elementary and secondary schools. A significant finding was that staffing problems at schools was not solely due to teacher shortages, but also due to excess demand placed on teachers owing to qualified teachers leaving the profession for reasons other than retirement. Reasons for leaving the profession, other than retirement, included job dissatisfaction and the pursuit of a different career. Ingersoll (2001) in addition suggested that if teacher staffing problems are to be addressed further research into the organisational sources of low teacher retention should be conducted.

2.3.3   Coping strategies and characteristics of teacher resilience

According to Cooper, Dewe and O'Driscoll (2001) higher levels of well-being and workplace engagement is fostered by effective coping strategies. Coping strategies is viewed as central in protecting teachers from the negative effects of the demanding teacher working conditions. Sharplin, O'Neill and Chapman (2011) stated that within-school support structures can be improved by fostering an understanding of the coping strategies used by teachers. Sharplin et al. (2011) conducted a longitudinal, multiple site, collective case study design examining the perspectives of 29 teachers commencing employment at 17 rural DET schools in Western Australia by means of an initial questionnaire, ongoing telephone interviews, site visits and email contact for up to 15 months. They (Sharplin et al., 2011) found that teachers displayed a diversity of direct-action (focuss on stress source elimination), palliative (reduction of stress by means of modifying emotional reactions) and avoidant (withdrawal, emotional

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exhaustion, depersonalisation) coping strategies (Chan & Hui, 1995; Kyriacou, 2001). According to Bobek (2002) resilience is a necessary condition for teacher retention as a resilient teacher is able to determine coping strategies in addition to finding solutions in adverse conditions. Bobek (2002) conducted a qualitative study and interviewed 13 young adults from rural and urban areas who had experienced adversity but managed to attend college. Bobek (2002) also interviewed the former high school teachers of these young adults and reviewed the documents on their activities and progress. Themes and patterns relating to the development of resilience emerged. The resources identified by Bobek (2002) for the development of resilience in teachers resonate with the factors identified in recent literature and comprise of establishing significant adult relationships, having a sense of personal responsibility, acquiring social as well as problem-solving skills, a sense of competence, setting expectations and goals, having confidence and a sense of humour as well as a sense of accomplishment. In addition, Taylor (2013:2) found eight themes of resilience in her qualitative study, as identified in Polidore's Theory of Adult Resilience in Education model. The researcher used the narrative inquiry technique with four retired female African American teachers who had taught in the same rural school district. The resilience themes included religion, a flexible locus of control, an optimistic bias, autonomy, commitment, enjoying change, building positive relationships, and viewing of education as important. An additional resilience theme, namely efficacy, also emerged. Literature on education suggests consistently that positive influences that are key to teachers' motivation and resilience relate to in-school management support for teachers' learning and development, leadership trust and positive feedback from parents and students (Castro, Kelly & Shih, 2010; Brunetti, 2006; Gu & Day, 2013). Brunetti (2006) illustrated in his study how teachers' resilience helped them to overcome difficulties and recurring setbacks while they persisted in their work as teachers. Teacher coping then implies that teachers have some sort of stressor that needed to be overcome and teacher coping can be seen as adaptation under relatively difficult situations. Brunetti (2006) conducted a qualitative study using a survey and extended interviews with nine teachers, when he identified three broad factors that motivated these teachers to remain teaching in inner city classrooms for 12 years. These factors include: 1) devotion to their students; 2) professional and personal satisfaction; and 3) support from administrators, colleagues and the organisation of the school. Further research is suggested in different settings, urban and rural, to explore the kind of working conditions and support that teachers need to perform at their best (Brunetti, 2006).

Literature on teacher resilience portrays that it is important for teachers to persevere through adversity, overcome the stress experienced daily and to experience success in their

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work (Thieman, Henry & Kitchel, 2012). Literature abounds with citations of characteristics/strategies employed by teachers in their classrooms that help them to persevere despite challenging working conditions. Strategies that teachers employed resulted in a more positive work-life balance and included a sense of occupational agency and competence, help-seeking behaviour and establishing a strong support system, relationship skills, problem-solving skills, effective time management, being flexible and adaptive (Castro, Kelly & Shih, 2010; Brunetti, 2007; Gu & Day, 2007). Positive coping strategies involved help seeking behaviour, positive appraisal and planful problem-solving (Sharplin et al., 2011). Thieman, Henry and Kitchel (2012) conducted a research synthesis aiming to introduce the concept of resilience in agricultural education, limiting the contribution of the phenomenon of resilience to the study of agricultural educator stress and burnout. The researchers suggested a conceptual framework that portrays the relationship between teacher resilience and agricultural educator stress and burnout. Howard and Johnson (2004) indicated a sense of agency, strong support groups, pride in achievements and competence in areas of personal importance as indicators of teacher resilience. They conducted a qualitative study using semi-structured interviews with 10 teachers to investigate strategies used by resilient teachers to cope with stress related to day-to-day teaching in disadvantaged Australian schools.

A qualitative study by Castro, Kelly and Shih (2010) illustrated that teachers use a variety of strategies, including help-seeking, problem-solving, managing difficult relationships, and seeking renewal to build additional resources and support. Interviews were conducted with 15 first-year teachers in various high-needs areas, urban, rural and special education. Further research to investigate the difference between successful and unsuccessful teachers in the same context is therefore justified for identifying the ways they cope or do not cope with adversity. Furthermore, additional studies can explore the role of life experiences, especially for first-career and second-career teachers (Castro, Kelly & Shih, 2010). See Appendix A, Table 3, for a summary of the views of some of the leading scholars in teacher resilience, focusing on their contributions, the methodologies used and gaps in literature concerning coping strategies and the characteristics of teacher resilience.

2.3.4   Teacher resilience is relationship-based

Gu and Li (2013:298) argued that the world of teachers consists of multi-layered relationships, indicating the importance of building relationships (Le Cornu, 2013) to shape teacher resilience. Other researchers (Masten, 2001; Kent & Davis, 2010; Ebersöhn, 2012; Pearce & Peters, 2012; Le Cornu, 2013; Mansfield, Beltman & Price, 2014) concur with this finding that relationships are critical to building resilience in teachers and that the quality of these

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relationships can either hamper or encourage the resilience-building process (Mansfield, Beltman & Price, 2014; Le Cornu, 2013). Recently Le Cornu (2013) highlighted that positive relationships, specifically with colleagues, is vital for early-career teachers as it fosters a sense of belonging and social connectedness. Le Cornu (2013:1) based her findings on a collaborative qualitative research project funded by the Australian Research Council. The project aimed to investigate the dynamic and complex interplay among individual, relational and contextual conditions that operate over time to promote resilience in early-career teachers. The researcher conducted 60 interviews with beginning teachers and their principals. Mansfield, Beltman & Price (2014:15) elaborated on this finding in their qualitative study by conducting semi-structured interviews with 13 Australian early-career teachers. The resources available to manage challenges were investigated. It was found that multiple, varied and ongoing challenges are experienced by beginning teachers and the importance of personal and contextual resources are highlighted. They further elaborate on the importance of relationship in the resilience process and argue that relationships are important at the following three levels: Firstly, the *classroom level* (with students), secondly at the *school level* (with colleagues, staff, administration and parents) and, thirdly, the *out-of- the-school context* (friends and family relationships). Ebersöhn (2012), in her exposition of her Relationship-Resourced Resilience (RRR) theory, shows that she is in agreement about the value of using resources and relationships to sustain school reform, specifically in adverse education settings., RRR reflects the notion that actions, reactions and transactions between school and community can lead to positive adaptation. Ebersöhn (2012) proposed the RRR theory based on eight years' of longitudinal case study data that were generated using the Participatory Reflection and Action (PRA) approach with a HEI association, schools (primary and secondary schools in rural and urban areas) and teachers in South Africa. Furthermore, Pearce and Peters (2012) found that the support of principals and their leadership skills contribute to limiting of teacher attrition and building capacity for resilience.

Caspersen and Raaen (2014) did a quantitative survey and a qualitative study (based on observations combined with semi-structured interviews), comparing the way that novice teachers and experienced teachers cope with their work and how this ability is affected by the level of collegial and superior support and collaboration. Caspersen & Raaen (2014) found few differences regarding novice and experienced teachers' coping levels, although they concluded that there were differences in terms of levels of collegial and superior support as well as collaboration. The researchers concluded that support from colleagues, collaboration with colleagues and professional and relational support from superiors contribute to resilience in teachers and their ability to cope in their working environment (Caspersen & Raaen, 2014). See

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Appendix A, Table 4, for a summary of the views of some of the leading scholars in teacher resilience, focusing on their contributions, the methodologies used and gaps in literature with regard to viewing teacher resilience as relationship-based.

2.3.5 Teacher resilience and social support mediating teacher work stress

An important component of fostering teacher resilience and teacher commitment intersects with the body of knowledge on social support, including workplace social support. The study of psychosocial resources in the examination of wellbeing has increased in the field of psychology (Hobfoll, 2002). Jo (2014) conducted a qualitative study utilising questionnaires with teachers across six metropolitan cities and six provinces of the 17 higher administrative districts in South Korea. The aim was to provide greater insight into the connections between teachers' relationships with people inside and outside of schools and teacher commitment. Jo (2014) found that certain adaptation behaviours are displayed by teachers in their various relationships towards students, principals, colleagues and local educational authorities. This finding implicates that favourable relationships enabling teacher resilience is the collective responsibility of all stakeholders involved within the education sector, highlighting the importance of collaboration and the obligation of stakeholders (including local educational authorities) both inside and outside the school sector to improve teacher resilience with a view to mediating teacher commitment and retention. Furthermore, the nature of the teaching profession is multifaceted and teachers fulfil various roles, such as being educators to students, subordinates of principals, and professional colleagues as well as employees of local educational authorities (Jo, 2014).

Work social support involves social support provided within the working context and in this study it involves social support available to teachers in their workplace. Social support acts as a protective resource as social support has been identified in literature as a resource that enables individuals to cope with stress (Brackett & Katulak, 2006). Chan (2002) concurs with this finding as a lack of social support in the workplace is frequently reported as a factor contributing to teacher burnout. Ju, Lan, Li, Feng and You (2015) found in their qualitative study (based on questionnaires and surveys) with 307 middle-school teachers from 14 public schools in five major cities in mainland China that when there is a high level of perceived social support, teacher burnout is decreased. To increase social support amongst teachers, Ju, Lan, Li, Feng and You (2015:65) suggest providing teachers with different kinds of social support, such as attachment, social integration, guidance, opportunities for nurturance, reassurance of self-worth and reliable alliances. Forming reliable alliances is of importance to my study as many studies have indicated that positive relationships and associations with

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various role-players in the educational sector can greatly improve the wellbeing of teachers. In addition, Ju, Lan, Li, Feng and You (2015) found that teachers with high emotional intelligence are better able to form supportive relationships with others (such as colleagues, principals, teachers, etc.), which subsequently leads to an increased perception of social support within the school environment, while this in turn strengthens job satisfaction and results in the retention of teachers. Wei, Shujuan and Qiboca (2011) concur that social support greatly influences the degree of stress and the source of the stress by mobilizing and offsetting teachers' work stress effectively. They further conclude that both resilience and social support plays an important role on work stress and that support, especially from colleagues and superiors, can promote the growth of professional ability.

2.3.6   Teacher resilience viewed as a dynamic process

A considerable body of research indicates that resilience is a relative, multidimensional and developmental construct as opposed to an intrinsic and absolute quality or characteristic (Luthar, Cicchetti & Becker, 2000). Similarly, Gu and Day (2007) found that resilience is multidimensional, socially constructed, relative, dynamic and developmental in nature. Gu and Day (2007) also examined the role of resilience in teacher effectiveness and located the concept of resilience in the discourse of teaching as an emotional practice. The researchers presented a portrayal of three categories of resilient teacher; those in their early, mid and late careers, drawing upon findings from a four-year research project which explored career-long variations in teachers' commitment and effectiveness. Luthar, Cicchetti and Becker (2000) furthermore argue that resilience can be seen as a dynamic process, influenced by interactions between the individual and the environment within a social system of interrelationships. Luthar, Cicchetti and Becker (2000) conducted a critical appraisal of resilience. These researchers concluded that research into the process of resilience has the potential to enhance the understanding of processes affecting at-risk individuals. Teacher resilience is therefore viewed as a process in which teachers employ various strategies to overcome challenges in their professional work as teachers (Castro, Kelly & Shih, 2010). Resilience strategies include "advocating for resources, seeking allies and buffers and forming teacher peer groups, and creating new resources where none previously existed" (Castro, Kelly & Shih, 2010:628). Transactional and ecological perspectives on teacher resilience contextualise teachers' experiences within the broader social, cultural, relational and political arenas. Consequently, this focus enables researchers to identify more spaces in which to support teachers than just their local workplaces (Johnson, Down, Le Cornu, Peters, Sullivan, Pearce & Hunter, 2014; Pearce, 2011).

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Research indicates that teachers planning on leaving the profession experienced both personal and contextual challenges/risk factors, indicating the dynamic interplay/interaction between personal and contextual challenges and resources/protective factors that contribute to resilience (Mansfield, Beltman & Price, 2014:15). A study conducted by Gu and Li (2013), drawing upon findings of a questionnaire survey of 568 primary and secondary schoolteachers in Beijing and additional in-depth semi-structured interviews with a subsample of six teachers, reaffirm the findings of observations from earlier studies that the interaction of individual qualities and contextual factors influence the nature and sustainability of teacher resilience in the context in which teachers work and live. To achieve sustainability in teacher resilience, resilient capacities need to be nurtured over time by the social and intellectual environments of teachers' professional and personal lives (Gu & Li, 2013). Johnson, Down, Le Cornu, Peters, Sullivan, Pearce and Hunter (2014:10) concluded in their study that four conditions contribute to the resilience of early-career teachers, namely acknowledging the complex, intense and unpredictable nature of teachers' work, developing teachers' curriculum and pedagogical knowledge and strategies and providing support to create engaging learning environments and ensure access to appropriate ongoing support, resources and learning opportunities. They drew their findings from interviews with 60 graduates who were beginning their teaching careers in schools in Western and Southern Australia. See Appendix A, Table 5, for a summary of the views of some of the leading scholars in teacher resilience, focusing on their contributions, the methodologies used and gaps in literature with regard to teacher resilience as a dynamic process.

2.3.7   Teacher resilience is developmental in nature

Gu and Li (2013) and Beltman, Mansfield and Price (2011) propose that resilience is context- and role-specific. Regarding the notion of resilience being context-specific they argue that qualities in teachers are not only fostered in the context of teaching (e.g. individual school or classroom context), but also in the broader context of "professional work" (Beltman, Mansfield & Price, 2011:190). Role-specific factors contributing to teacher resilience comprise self-efficacy beliefs that enable teachers' believing that they are adequately able to help children to learn and achieve (Brunetti, 2006) as well as impart intellectual, emotional and spiritual strengths, based on ethical values and moral purpose (Gu & Day, 2013; Bobek, 2002). Teachers' sense of efficacy is strengthened by sustained effort and perseverance in the face of everyday challenges, which results in a stronger sense of commitment and resilience (Gu & Li, 2013).

A study by Mansfield, Beltman, Price and McConney (2012) explored how graduating and early-career teachers perceive resilient teachers. The researchers' results were informed by data obtained from a survey with 200 newly graduating and early-career teachers. The results indicated that graduating and early-career teachers perceive that resilience in teachers comprises characteristics that are multidimensional and overlapping, and that views of resilience can develop according to a teacher's career stage. Further research is needed with regard to the notions that teacher resilience may change with career stage and the process of teacher resilience in action. Furthermore, light needs to be shed on how teacher resilience is manifested by individuals in their particular context (Mansfield, Beltman, Price & McConney, 2012). Currently lacking in literature is an in-depth understanding of the interplay between personal and contextual factors, especially as relating to the experiences of early-career teachers (Johnson, Down, Le Cornu, Peters, Sullivan, Pearce & Hunter, 2014:3),which could further inform the way that teacher resilience can be promoted throughout the different career phases of teachers.

In addition, Rutter (2007:205) indicated that a life span perspective is necessary to overcoming stress or adversity. These findings postulate that resilience is developmental in nature, therefore concurring with Day & Gu's (2007) finding that teachers use personal and contextual resources or challenges differently in different career phases. The changing and dynamic nature of resilience is further illustrated by Luthar, Cicchetti and Becker's (2000:551) argument that resilience in individuals is not static and over time shows fluctuations within particular adjustment domains. Gu & Li (2013:300) concur with this finding as they argue that resilience can differ and vary as a result of a combination of factors relating to teachers' workplace, what influences them personally and their ability to deal with these influences. Gu and Li (2013) drew their findings from a questionnaire survey of 568 primary and secondary schoolteachers in Beijing, and in-depth semi-structured interviews with a subsample of six teachers with different years' experience. In addition, it is noted in literature that teachers' professional and personal needs vary in terms of their different life phases (Thieman, Henry & Kitchel, 2012). Furthermore, Polidore, Edmonson and Slate (2010) propose an adult resilience framework comprising a developmental perspective and an ecological perspective. The developmental perspective postulates that adults develop resilience through establishing relationships throughout their lifetime. The ecological perspective involves the way adults adapt to external processes, such as their environment and the social values of their time (Polidore, Edmonson & Slate, 2010:570). Polidore, Edmonson and Slate (2010) identified seven resilience themes in the development of adult resilience, namely religion, flexible locus

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of control, bias for optimism, autonomy, commitment, embracing change and fostering positive relationships.

Sustaining resilience in the teaching profession calls for an in-depth understanding of the way in which workplace conditions enable teachers to manage the interaction of work and life in different contexts as well as throughout their career's life span (Gu & Day, 2013:24). Schools' needs and, thus, teachers' needs can fluctuate in response to changes in policy, workplace and personal circumstances (Gu & Li, 2013). Thieman, Henry & Kitchel (2012) indicated the importance of further investigation of the retention of effective and successful teachers. This focus can also provide insights regarding the variations in the "quality retention" of teachers (Gu & Day, 2013; Gu & Li, 2013). Furthermore, studies regarding teacher resilience (teachers' steadfastness and the resilience in their nature that contribute to their longevity in the educational profession) contribute to the growing body of knowledge on teacher resilience in early/beginning teachers, which can be invaluable in teacher induction programmes (Tait, 2008), preventing burnout and achieving the retention of more experienced teachers (Polidore, Edmonson & Slate, 2010). See Appendix A, Table 6, for a summary of the views of some of the leading scholars in teacher resilience, focusing on their contributions, the methodologies used and gaps in literature concerning the developmental nature of teacher resilience.

2.3.8   The importance of teacher resilience in a rural ecology

Researchers assume that one possible way to address the problem of high attrition rates is to develop resilience among early-career teachers, more experienced and (Price, Mansfield & McConney, 2012) rural teachers alike. The resilient teacher will not merely accept his or her current circumstances, but will seek support from others to assist in altering their current working conditions, portraying teachers as potential resource-builders (Castro, Kelly & Shih, 2010). Teachers have to meet the ever changing needs of our society, which can be attributed to keeping up with technology and a transient society, as well as deal with the social and academic needs of diverse students, inevitably impacting a vast part of our society. Teachers' role in our society cannot be disregarded as they nurture and prepare students entering society and are in a unique position to foster and develop resilience in their students (Polidore, Edmonson & Slate, 2010). However, teachers themselves need to display characteristics of resilience to be able to teach and develop these characteristics in advocating the fostering of teacher resilience (Ebersöhn, 2014; Loots, Ebersöhn, Ferreira & Eloff, 2012). Schools are viewed as the key strategic subsystem of modern society as they exert the greatest influence on society as a whole (Harkavy & Hartley, 2009:10). Therefore, teachers can be viewed as the

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backbone of our schools (Polidore, Edmonson & Slate, 2010). School communities can provide protective resources that help to sustain beginning teachers in the profession (Mansfield, Beltman & Price, 2014) as well as teachers in general.

In recent literature, the importance of forming positive relationships with students is highlighted. It is worth noting that often the challenges and significance of forming positive relationships with other adults, peers, family and colleagues, are overlooked (Pearce & Peters, 2012). Howard and Johnson (2004) highlight the value of strong personal support, secure and caring personal and professional relationships that result in a positive effect on teachers' self-confidence, personal agency and consequently their resilience (Le Cornu, 2013). Le Cornu (2013:13) further notes the intense and complex nature of teaching, especially for beginning teachers, and concludes that teachers often feel overwhelmed by the deeply emotional and relational dimensions of teaching. (Le Cornu; 2013:13 notes that "teaching is first and foremost about relationships", reflecting findings reported in literature about the significance of supportive relationships for the profession and teacher resilience (Gu & Day, 2007).

Literature on rural education portrays a picture of teachers trying to overcome the obstacles of isolated, rural life (Burton, Brown & Johnson, 2010), indicating teacher resilience. Burton, Brown and Johnson (2013), who researched published research on rural teachers between 1970 and 2010, using the narrative analysis approach (United States), found that 1) rural teachers are professionally isolated; 2) rural teachers are different from urban and/or suburban teachers; 3) rural teachers are often lacking in professional knowledge/teaching credentials; and 4) rural teachers are particularly resistant to change. The local community is experienced as a source of support and the isolation extends to life beyond the community, such as a lack of resources, student progress and district management (Burton, Brown & Johnson, 2013). Burton and Johnson (2010) highlight the significance of relationships and found in their study, a narrative portraiture with two novice teachers in rural south-eastern United States, that identity and relationships are crucial for teaching in general and particularly in rural communities, indicating the untapped resource represented by being part of a rural community. Teachers who engage with the rural community in which they teach can provide valuable insight into the needs and complexities of the everyday life of rural teachers. A key element in preparing, recruiting and retaining teachers in any community is the synergy of relationships and identity (Burton & Johnson, 2010).

The valuable role teachers can play in promoting resilience in children is comprehensively covered by research. In their study, Ebersöhn and Ferreira (2011) explain that despite adversities and the prevalence of HIV/AIDS, teachers are in a unique position to promote resilience. They drew their findings from Participatory Reflection and Action (PRA)

data that were gathered from a longitudinal study with 57 teachers from six schools in three South African provinces. Three themes are highlighted in their findings, namely that teachers utilise resources to support resilience in schools, teachers establish HEI associations and networks to promote resilience in schools, and vulnerable individuals use the school-based support team.

The urgent need to further investigate the way that sociocultural and policy demands and challenges of teachers are mediated by the personal, relational and organisational conditions of teachers' work is illustrated in literature as resilience is viewed as much more than merely the capacity to survive and thrive in adversity (Gu & Day, 2013). It is, however, portrayed as a "dynamic process encompassing positive adaptation within the context of significant adversity" (Luthar, Cicchiettu & Becker, 2000:543). Resilience is therefore viewed as a dynamic multi-dimensional process which occurs over time, and not merely a set of traits possessed by an individual (Polidore, Edmonson & Slate, 2010). Polidore, Edmonson and Slate (2010) reported in their study on the experiences, perceptions, thoughts and feelings of three female African American educators relating to their teaching experiences before, during and after desegregation in the rural south of the United States of America. Themes that emerged from their study led to the emergence of a model of adult resilience in teaching. The themes were: 1) deeply committed; 2) enjoys change; 3) bias for optimism; 4) flexible locus of control; 5) ability to control events; 6) moral and spiritual support; 7) positive relationships; and 8) education viewed as important (Polidore, Edmonson & Slate, 2010:591). Further research on expanding the research concerning each theme and subcategory as it pertains to education and adults will be valuable. See Appendix A, Table 7, for a summary of some of the views of leading scholars in teacher resilience, focusing on their contributions, the methodologies used and gaps in literature concerning the importance of teacher resilience in a rural ecology.

2.4   Teacher working conditions necessitate the need for teacher resilience

In further illustrating the importance of teacher resilience, I will now discuss the working conditions of teachers, narrowing my discussion down to teaching in a rural ecology, teaching specifically in South Africa, concluding with a discussion on teaching in rural South Africa. Figure 2.3 shows the flow of discussion followed in section 2.3.

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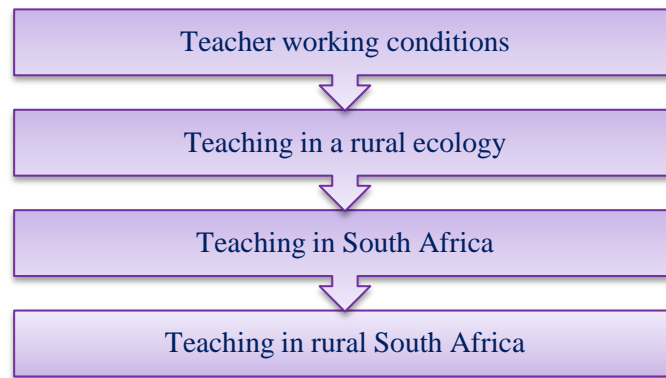
Figure 2.3:   Content of section 2.4

2.4.1   Teacher working conditions

Structures of workplaces have changed considerably due to a focus on fast production, distributed systems, flexible working arrangements and reliance on information technologies. As a result boundaries between work and home life have become increasingly blurred (Price, Mansfield & McConney, 2012). To compete in today's global, technology-driven economic environment and education, developing a sophisticated workforce is crucial (Milner & Khoza, 2008:155). "Recent educational research reminds us that teaching is not merely a cognitive or technical procedure, but a complex personal, social, often elusive set of embedded processes and practices that concern the whole person" (Olsen, 2008:5).

Given the current economic, social and political context surrounding the teaching profession, research on teacher resilience is of significant importance (Le Cornu, 2013). Teachers and teachers' working conditions are influenced by a "shifting social landscape" influenced by globalization, refugee populations, immigration, demographics, economic disparities and environmental changes (Clandini, 2009, Clandini, 2010). Teachers have many responsibilities associated with their occupation. Brunetti (2006) indicates the need to further investigate the working conditions and support needed for teachers to perform at their optimum. High attrition rates are a result of complex socioeconomic factors such as "the deskilling and intensification of teachers' work and increasing levels characteristic of the dominant economic structures" (Price, Mansfield & McConney, 2012:92). Johnson, Down, Le Cornu, Peters, Sullivan, Pearce and Hunter (2014) support the notion that teachers' work is being reshaped by a broader set of economic, political and cultural circumstances. Teachers' work represents a complex range of practices, knowledge, relationships and ethical considerations that can compromise their role as teacher (Johnson, Down, Le Cornu, Peters, Sullivan, Pearce & Hunter, 2014:9).

The successful implementation of the education policy and the educational growth of students are significantly impacted by the challenges that teachers experience (Burton, Brown

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& Johnson, 2013). Literature abounds with studies on early-career teachers' experiences and the challenges they experience in trying to cope with the duties, responsibilities and multitude of tasks in their new role as a professional (Caspersen & Raaen, 2014; Johnson, Down, Le Cornu, Peters, Sullivan, Pearce & Hunter; 2014). Caspersen and Raaen (2014) indicate that the working world of a teacher differs greatly from their experiences in professional education as they are expected to be fully responsible for their job performance and, unlike their more experienced colleagues, do not have the necessary experience to draw on. Novice teachers lack the necessary coping skills to fulfil their teaching roles and often feel an inability to control and act upon their situation (Caspersen & Raaen, 2014). Additionally, early career teachers are characterised as vulnerable and their working conditions are dependent on the helpfulness and discretion of colleagues and the school leadership (Pearce & Peters, 2012). Teachers (experienced or novice) in many countries, experience multiple challenges in the workplace that often lead to stress and burnout. Long working hours, discipline issues, heavy workload and paperwork are cited in literature as factors contributing to teacher stress and burnout (Price, Mansfield & McConney, 2012). Teachers' work is cited in literature as being highly complex and skilled, and has a history of poor conditions, low status and low salaries (Price, Mansfield & McConney, 2012). Due to high attrition rates and teacher shortages, unqualified teachers are increasingly being employed, paid low salaries and being subjected to inadequate working conditions (Price, Mansfield & McConney, 2012; Burton, Brown & Johnson, 2013, Ingersoll, 2001). Furthermore, literature abounds with reasons why teachers, new and experienced, leave the profession, such as seeking better salaries and benefits, including more personal and family time); pursuing a different career; for purposes of childbearing; authority problems attributed to school management and feeling generally dissatisfied with teaching (Ingersoll, 2001:501).

2.4.2   Teaching in a rural ecology

For my study I will focus on teachers as a significant group involved in achieving educational equity in the rural context (Burton, Brown & Johnson, 2013). The rural context of schooling is diverse and broad generalizations and conclusions are avoided (Coladarci, 2007; Balfour, Mitchell & Moletsane, 2008). Barley (2009) indicates that rural and economic conditions vary across settings and can make a major difference from one rural community to the next. "Rurality" is often stereotyped as narrow-minded, poor, isolated, simple-minded and lacking resources (Burton, Brown & Johnson, 2013:6). Although literature portrays rurality as a problem to overcome it should rather be viewed as a setting that needs to be understood (Burton, Brown & Johnson, 2013). The uniqueness of rural settings is highlighted in literature,

describing an agrarian lifestyle and economy, geographic isolation, caring and supportive communities, similar cultures and fewer social complexities (Burton, Brown & Johnson, 2013). Research on preparing, recruiting and retaining teachers (Burton, Brown & Johnson, 2013; Burton & Johnson, 2010; Barley, 2009; Johnson, Down, Le Cornu, Peters, Sullivan, Pearce & Hunter, 2014; Price, Mansfield & McConney, 2012; Caspersen & Raaen, 2014) presented me with a background for framing my inquiry into rural teachers' experiences of a HEI association.

Research has focused much attention on the unique needs of rural teachers during the 20th and 21st centuries. However, within the body of education research, research regarding rural school ecology remains relatively marginal (Burton, Brown & Johnson, 2013). Rural schools internationally have faced grave challenges in the 20th and 21st centuries as regards recruitment and retention, professional and geographic isolation and professional teacher credentialling (Burton, Brown & Johnson, 2013; Burton & Johnson, 2010; Malloy & Allen, 2007). Rural teachers often teach in low-income and culturally diverse communities that are difficult to staff (Castro, Kelly & Shih, 2010). Rural teachers experience challenges such as geographic isolation, lack of professional development and resistance to change (Burton, Brown & Johnson, 2013). Furthermore, rural teachers experience a lack of professional support, trouble negotiating relationships with colleagues and parents, a lack of material resources and the need to travel long distances to cities to purchase essential supplies (Burton & Johnson, 2010; Castro, Kelly & Shih, 2010). Huysman (2008:35) attributes conditions such as isolation, limited services, low socioeconomic status of students and limited resources to rural schools. Huysman (2008) also indicates that these conditions are seen as trade-offs in comparison to teachers' perceived advantages of living in a rural area. In his study Huysman (2008) reveals that teacher participants maintained that the responsibilities of their daily work, interaction with students and creative challenges were factors that contributed to job satisfaction. Positive factors attributed to rural schools included religiosity, proximity and emotional closeness shared by teachers and students (Burton, Brown & Johnson, 2013; Huysman, 2008). Small classes and close relationships with parents are noted as positive aspects of teaching, whereas community isolation, distance from family and friends and the cost of travel are noted as reasons for rural teacher attrition (Barley, 2009; Ingersoll, 2001). Furthermore, rural teachers are often portrayed as inflexible, which may be attributed to their rural setting, often perceived as old-fashioned, unmodern and outdated (Lewis, Ketter & Fabos, 2001:318). Familiarity with the community is often a contributing factor to teacher retention as teachers are unaware of the diversity of possible experiences that exist outside of the rural community (Burton & Johnson, 2010; Burton, Brown & Johnson, 2013).

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The attrition of teachers, especially in rural settings, is of global concern. Due to high attrition rates, especially among early-career teachers, research is taking place with regard to strategies, within the pre-service education programmes, with the aim of helping teachers to cope in spite of challenging working circumstances. Teachers show commitment and enthusiasm towards their work and its concomitant responsibilities when they feel satisfied with their job. Unprepared teachers are more likely to blame low achievement on students, which consequently leads to frustration and low job satisfaction (Darling-Hammond, 2003; Huysman, 2008). A shortage of rural teachers is attributed to a smaller pool of applicants, fewer benefits and lower salaries (Harmon, Gordanier, Henry & George, 2007). Teachers in rural areas leave the profession as a result of low salaries and social isolation, given the geographic seclusion of rural areas (Amrein-Beardsley, 2012). Furthermore, factors such as poor community demographics, inadequate housing and teacher overload (rural teachers are often required to teach multiple subjects and grade levels) can cause teachers to leave the profession (Dessoff, 2010; Berry & Ferriter, 2006). Barley (2009) concluded in her study that teachers recruited to teach in rural schools would need to find rural life appealing, as community factors (such as relationships), played a major role in teacher job satisfaction.

Rural teachers seem to remain in a rural school when there is a tighter sense of community (Darling-Hammond, 2003). A solution to teacher shortages and retention in rural areas is offered by the "grow-your-own" initiative (Darling-Hammond, 2003; Burton & Johnson, 2010), where home-grown teachers (e.g. teachers from rural communities) are recruited as they already have a connection with the school, an existing place in the community and a basic awareness of the rural community's values and idiosyncrasies (Huysman, 2008:32). Challenges relating to home-grown teachers involve role confusion as they struggle to separate their professional and personal responsibilities (Huysman, 2008).

2.4.3   Teaching in South Africa

Changes within the South African education environment and society contribute to stress experienced by teachers (Robinson, 2003; Mesthrie, 1999). Amongst other issues, changes include population increases, greater diversity in school populations, increases in cost of living, the effects of crime on students, poor service delivery, difficulties with adhering to new the rules and regulations of current educational policies, many curriculum changes, complicated performance appraisal systems and union demands (Mesthrie, 1999). At a broader level, teachers are expected to be involved in social projects to build health-promoting schools while addressing the impact of poverty on learners. Professionally new and disputed quality assurance initiatives, such as whole-school evaluation and development appraisal, are a reality

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for South African teachers. On a curriculum level, teachers need to become acquainted with the principles and practices associated with a new curriculum, based on outcomes-based education and the integration of traditional school subjects. In addition, after mastering the conceptual framework of the policy and designing their curriculum within its parameters, teachers are expected to use this knowledge to induct others into teaching (Robinson, 2003:21). Furthermore, teachers continue to teach student teachers who struggle with academic reading and writing, who lack confidence, have limited subject knowledge and have mainly been exposed to chalk-and-talk teaching methods (Robinson, 2003).

According to Buthelezi (2002), one aspect that can contribute to teacher stress and burnout is a shortage of classrooms, which results in trauma for children, teachers and parents alike. Since the educational reform, demographics of schools have changed considerably in South Africa. This is due to a large number of learners migrating from township schools to schools in the suburbs to access equal education. Teachers are faced in schools with learners who represent a diversity of cultures, languages and varying experiences. School reform efforts contribute to the responsibilities of teachers, and that could lead to stress and result in burnout (Mestry, Hendricks & Bisschoff, 2009).

In South Africa a variety of factors interact to impact on the quality of the education system. Teachers in South Africa are often unqualified and have poor subject matter knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge. Teacher quality has been identified as an area requiring urgent attention. South Africa's schooling system currently demands more qualified and highly trained teachers. Estimations indicate that between 12 000 and 16 000 new teachers are required annually. South Africa produced fewer than 6 000 new teachers in 2008, indicating the severity of teacher shortages. Consequently, in certain areas of schooling, such as subject areas and geographic locations, the need is even more pronounced. Accessing and receiving support, resources and continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities are rendered difficult due to a lack of such opportunities locally. Teachers in rural areas are consequently profoundly affected by this lack of opportunities, contributing to the already unequal distribution of education resources (The Departments of Basic Education and Higher Education and Training, 2011).

2.4.4   Teaching in rural South Africa

Robinson (2003) found in her study on teachers' perspectives on their understanding, support for and implementation of new policy that teachers experienced a lack of support with regard to financial resources, accessing funding, transport, shortages of staff and problems with the organisation of support structures. Research attributes the shortage of teacher graduates to the

poor status and negative public image of teachers and a lack of funding for training prospective students. "The schooling system needs both more teachers and better teachers, teachers who are both qualified and competent enough to teach specific subjects or learning areas, in specific phases, in specific languages, in all schools, including special schools, in Early Childhood Development (ECD) centres, and in rural and remote schools" (The Departments of Basic Education and Higher Education and Training, 2011:15).

The living conditions of learners directly affect teachers' working conditions, and can contribute to additional stress, as many children regularly go to school hungry, 43% have no electricity, 27% have no running water, 80% have no library available and 78% have no computers (Spreen & Vally, 2006:354-357) necessary for learning in today's technologically progressive era. Teachers teach in and need to cope with a multilingual society where entrepreneurial initiatives are of great importance due to the high unemployment rate. In addition, they need to adhere to shared international learning needs, such as the ability to evaluate and manage information in a time of information overload (Robinson, 2003:21).

A study on rural schools in South Africa illustrates how poverty prevents both access to education and success within it (Nelson Mandela Foundation, 2005). Rurality can be characterised as intense as support services and infrastructure are often inaccessible in rural areas due to distance, lack of transportation and neglect (Balfour, Mitchell & Moletsane, 2008), and this can challenge teachers' endeavours to enhance resilience (Ebersöhn & Ferreira, 2012). Furthermore, Ebersöhn and Ferreira, (2012:34) identified the needs of rural teachers as not relating exclusively to poverty, but that they included needs related to health (hunger, malnutrition, HIV/AIDS), family circumstances (child headed households, taking care of ill family members), emotions (bereavement, anxiety, fear of the HIV/AIDS stigma, boredom), learning support (numeracy and literacy challenges, lack of homework support, a language barrier) and a lack of information and training (parental illiteracy, lack of policy information, rights and services related to welfare and health services). Rural schools have to deal with issues unique to their rural settings. Principals of rural schools have limited resources and few options available (Warren & Peel, 2005).

The HIV/AIDS pandemic has a profound impact on schools and teachers due to staff illness and loss, trauma amongst learners and loss of morale as a result of the economic and emotional demands of the pandemic (HSRC, 2005:4). Loots, Ebersöhn and Eloff (2012) found in their study that teachers need to deal daily with the growing prevalence of HIV/AIDS and the increased number of AIDS orphans in their school and community. Additionally, teachers have taken the initiative to educate learners and teachers on HIV/AIDS, and have provided

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material, emotional and spiritual support to children, parents and community members infected or affected by HIV/AIDS (Loots, Ebersöhn & Eloff, 2012).

It is not uncommon, especially in rural black families, to have a case where both parents work outside of the home and as a result parents do not spend the necessary time with learners to ensure academic success (Polidore, Edmonson & Slate, 2010). Parents are often illiterate or have only had a primary school education, are unemployed or depend on disability grants or pensions (Robinson, 2003). I argue that the sum of these demands places an intolerable responsibility on South African teachers today, illustrating the significant need for fostering teacher resilience.

2.5 Situating the study in association literature

In this section I report on associations and discuss how associations relate to teacher resilience. In section 1.5.3.2 I elaborated on related concepts of associations such as partnerships, collaborations, networks, alliances and interpersonal relationships. I now briefly discuss reasons for establishing associations, the interpersonal and relational aspect of associations, voluntary associations and access to social capital. I then argue teachers' unique position to establish various associations, how associations with HEI's relate to teacher resilience, the role of HEI associations and types of associations in the education context. I then discuss the role of power and empowerment in associations, the nature of successful associations and challenges to forming HEI associations. Lastly I elaborate on the function of associations with HEIs.

2.5.1 Reasons to form associations

In recent years there has been a rapid expansion in the forging of partnerships as partnerships have started to cross industries, countries and provincial boundaries. Partnerships with non-commercial, social or educational organisations are often established to achieve organisational objectives (Novokreshchenova & Novokreshchenova, 2013). The concept of collaborative partnerships refers to an agreement by consenting institutions to share resources, such as finances, knowledge and people, to accomplish a mutual goal. Mutual benefit to all parties is of importance in a collaborative partnership. According to Madigan and Schroth-Cavatalo (2011) collaborative partnerships are frequently established between organisations in different fields to supplement expertise. Vangen and Huxham (2003) stated that in recent times solving societal problems are often a motivating factor for forming a partnership. Individuals are attracted to a new network/alliance/association when it shows a potential for joint benefits. In addition, to be able to attract new members to the association, previous relationships between allies and potential allies become important (Gomes-Casseres, 1994). It was in the case in this study,

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where teachers in rural schools who already formed part of a HEI association connected the researchers with other potential teachers to join the association in the same area.

Smith and Shen (2002:93) hypothesised that associations occur owing to various factors. They stated the occurrence of associations as a result of societal background, aspects of basic societal structure and societal mobilisation factors. Societal background refers to factors such as a greater population size and more favourable historical, cultural and environmental boundary; basic social structure that enables more liberal political control; greater modernisation; more developed non-associational organisations and greater ethno-religious heterogeneity. Finally, societal mobilisation factors refer to collective resource mobilisation for associations and to achieve collective social cohesion.

2.5.2   The interpersonal and relational aspect of associations

As argued earlier (see section 1.5.3.2) an association is inherently a relationship between individuals with the purpose to attain a mutual goal. To highlight the importance of relationships to resilience I concur with Buckwalter (2011) that to build personal resilience, meaningful interpersonal relationships is of importance to build resilience effectively. He argues that emotional and cognitive opportunities are provided to enable the development of strength (the capacity to overcome daily life and difficult circumstances), meaning (sense of purpose and meaningful contribution to the world) and pleasure (do what you find enjoyable), the key core psychological attributes of resilience (Buckwalter, 2011:1). Buckwalter's (2011) understanding of resilience relates well to associations and the relational aspect thereof. Having a trusting relationship is strongly connected with instrumental and emotional support (Buckwalter, 2011). To this end, associations are based on mutual trust and cooperation and can be seen as a trusting interpersonal relationship that provides reciprocal support to the individuals. Pierce (2015) also supports the value of supportive relationships in the development of resilience. She argues that relationships provide opportunity for networking, and practicing social skills which can increase feelings of connection and community.

Social interactions are fostered by associations, in literature on both association and organisational dynamics (Small, Jacobs & Massengill, 2008). Associations are social capital assets when dedicated times and spaces are provided for people with a common interest to engage with one another (Bryce, 2006). Relationships (associations) between individuals are developed for a variety of purposes as well as in a variety of contexts. These relationships (associations) are often established to pursue individual goals. Explaining these established relationships (associations) in terms of social capital has proved to be valuable, even where the financial and human capital that these individuals possess is excluded from the equation (Hays,

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2014). Hays (2014) suggests that further research should be undertaken into the overlap of various associations of social capital, and urges researchers not to assume that these associations flow together, as suggested by Putnam (2000). A study done by Olsson, Folke and Berkes (2004) found that local groups self-organise, learn and adapt by means of social networks to connect institutions for the facilitation of information sharing. Thus, I posit that rural teachers in this study can possibly use the association with the HEI as a social network to acquire much needed resources. These exchanges of resources (information sharing) between members of the associations comprise a social network (Haythornthwaite, 1996).

2.5.3   Associations providing access to social capital

I now discuss voluntary associations, and postulate that teachers engaging in a HEI association do so on a voluntary basis. Voluntary associations often bring together different social groups, for example men and women, the rich and the poor, the highly educated and the less educated (Baggetta, 2016; Van Ingen & Van der Meer, 2011). Important social spaces to form and maintain interpersonal ties are created by voluntary associations that bring people together. Voluntary associations such as civic clubs, chambers of commerce, charities and networking groups, religious associations, country clubs and fraternal ethnic organisations all constitute some examples of associations (Popielarz, 1999; Davis, Renzulli & Aldrich, 2006, Putnam, 2000). Research in urban settings indicates that there are many associational types, such as neighbourhood associations, homeowners associations, parent-teacher organisations, etc. (Baggetta, 2016). Researchers agree that voluntary associations influence their members' social networks (Davis, Renzullli & Aldrich, 2006:43).

Associations can serve as intermediary institutions by providing links between members and the political system (Wollebaek & Selle, 2002). Associations can contribute to social capital, although mainly as institutions in which norms and resources are embedded (Wollebaek & Selle, 2002:57). The value and wisdom of collaborative efforts are reflected in the multitude of voluntary associations evident in literature as associations facilitate ties to social networks, foster trust amongst members and, lastly, encourage civic engagement (Wollebaek & Selle, 2002).

Individuals who form networks of relationships that would enable them to meet their needs and achieve their goals represent the main element of social capital (Coleman, 2000). According to Putnam (1995:665) social capital is defined as, "features of social life, networks, norms and trust that enable participants to act together more effectively to pursue shared objectives". Briggs (2004) postulates that for social capital to be effective, the network of relationships should connect the members to other individuals and/or institutions that have

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useful knowledge and resources. These networks should also be accompanied by attitudes of trust and reciprocity by the members in order to function appropriately (Hayes, 2014).

Baggetta (2016:90) found that a wider array of associations is needed to determine what kinds of associations bring people together across space. Trust across society is encouraged by the networks that are created by associations. Moreover, civic engagement is a result of associations that enable their members to influence public affairs by being "schools of democracy" (Wollebeak & Selle, 2002). Trust is put forward by Wollebeak and Selle (2002) as an essential precondition for cooperation so that collaborative action can occur and as such is a prerequisite for the development of social capital. Teckchandani (2014:84) found in his exploratory analysis of communities in the United States from 1999 to 2008, in focusing on facilitating entrepreneurial activity, that association type may be less relevant than whether the association is socio-demographically diverse or whether its members are members of other associations.

Hager (2014) concluded from his study based on the membership surveys of three engineering associations and two health care associations that public incentives show more evidence of motivating engagement than private incentives. Wollebeak and Selle (2002) explained that social networks are mobilised as individual resources to fulfil a particular goal. The goal can either be motivated by personal or societal impetuses.

Paxton (2007) differentiates between "connected" and "isolated" associations. Connected associations refer to the increase of its members' range of social networks as they are connected to additional associations through the multiple associations of their members. Isolated association refers to the opposite, where members of a particular association have few or no links with other associations. Networks of ties between associations (resulting from multiple memberships of members) therefore play a valuable role in obtaining information and resources (Teckchandani, 2014). Members' social networks are increased by means of connected associations. The social networks of member are consequently supplemented by the individual ties of their members, the ties of those with ties to other associations (Small, Jacobs & Massengill, 2008).

Paxton (2007) suggests that an indirect method for bridging social capital occurs in associations where people from different demographic contexts form an association, such as in this study between rural schools and a HEI. The direct tie between these two groups therefore bridges across demographic lines, as illustrated in the figure that follows. Persons A and C are part of a mixed demographic association and a bridge (illustrated by the blue line) is created between their demographic groups by means of the association.

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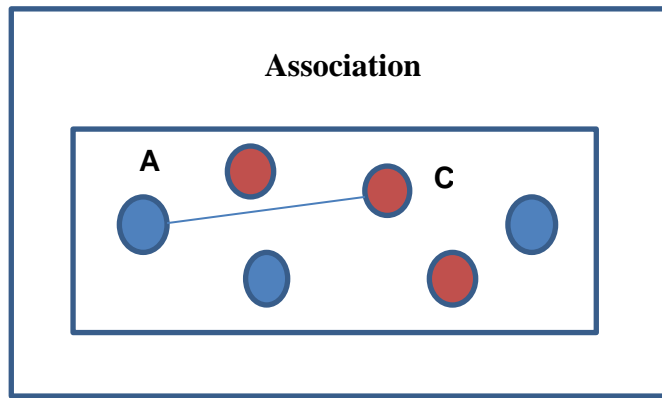
Figure 2.4:   Direct bridging model (adapted form Paxton, 2002, 2007; Bagetta, 2016)

Acquaintances and knowledge of acquaintances are created by the overlapping associations of the members of an association. Praxton (2002, 2007) suggests a multiple affiliation model (see figure 2.5), where a member of an association (person B) forms an indirect tie (illustrated by the dotted lines) between members of other associations (persons A and C) by, for example, "vouching" for C. "Vouching" entails individuals who form part of one associational context declaring the trustworthiness of individuals in other associations.
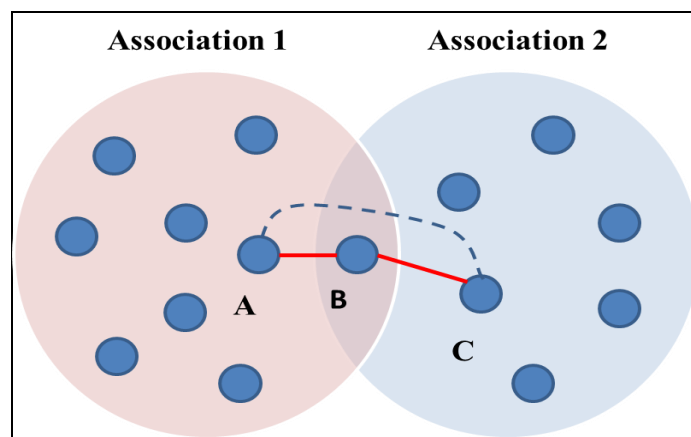
Figure 2.5:   Multiple Affiliation Model (adapted from Paxton, 2002, 2007; Bagetta, 2016)

Some scholars in the field of associational work states that associations foster bridging social ties (Coffe & Geys, 2007; Paxton, 2007). Baggeta (2009) states that structured contexts of interaction are provided for by associations. In associations "bridges" can be formed between individuals from socially different dimensions (Bagetta, 2016). Individuals in associations from different social dimensions are, however, a prerequisite for meaningful associations to occur (Bagetta, 2016). Social capital in the form of bonding relies on strong ties that can counter the weaker ties, when bridging across racial lines is accomplished (Weisinger & Salipante, 2005). Weisinger and Salipante (2005) found in their study, utilising a grounded theory process with a focus on the racial composition of a troop of Girl Scouts and volunteers

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that bridging of social capital is not always possible, even if adequate opportunity and motivation exist amongst members of the association.

Scholars have differentiated between different types of social capital as a result of the admission that not all social capital is beneficial (Coffe & Geys, 2007:122). Putnam (2000) and Paxton (2002) differentiate between *bonding* and *bridging* social capital. Bonding capital entails closed networks (homogenous), where members are mainly from the same background, and bridging is represented by overlapping networks (heterogeneous), where members are brought into contact with individuals from a cross section of society. There is therefore differentiation between bonding and bridging social capital according to the type of socialising that it evokes. According to Putnam (2002) trust and reciprocity are fostered in closed networks (bonding social capital) and helps to contribute to the process of getting by on a daily basis, whereas overlapping networks (bridging social capital) in contract facilitates getting ahead in life. It is argued that members with overlapping memberships of associations transfer their sense of identification and trust to other contexts and possibly even to society as a whole (Wollebaek & Selle, 2002:37). Coffe and Geys (2007) concluded from their study, utilising Flemish survey data on voluntary association membership, that bridging networks are more likely to generate positive effects. Bridging associations therefore create connections between major social categories.

Associations are seen as a relationship and can be represented both at the micro- and macro-level. Associations at the micro-level refer to the development of trust and confidence among individuals and at the macro-level it refers to the positive consequences that have a reach beyond the individual members. Membership in voluntary association is found to increase social capital (Van Deth, 2010). Furthermore, Wollebaek and Selle (2002) state that social capital at the micro-level is related to internal effects. The aforementioned researchers argue that associations have an educational effect on their members, as they encourage skills and knowledge relevant to democracy. The knowledge aspect of associations may involve knowledge with regard to political issues, functioning of political institutions, management of an organisation and the way to discuss issues of concern in a civilised manner (Wollebeak & Selle, 2002). It is argued by Van Ingen and Van der Meer (2011) that although a lack of individual resources such as financial means, cognitive abilities or social skill, at the micro-level constrains participation in associations, resources can be redistributed at the macro-level. As in this study, resources are mutually distributed between rural schools with constrained resources and a HEI.

According to Putnam (2000) individuals are encouraged to engage in collaborative action to address community needs by means of their engagement in informal ties with neighbours,

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friends and co-workers, as these informal associations help to move their focus away from their own private and personal concerns. According to Wollebaek and Selle (2002) associations with tertiary institutions rely heavily on volunteers and these volunteers are often passive members of the association. The structure of tertiary associations is inherently democratically structured, with passive members who belong to institutions that have a vast amount of social capital. In U.S education, partnerships are used to include a broad sense of arrangements between practitioners and researchers, including the use of schools and districts as a testing site for university innovations, consulting as well as spaces for teacher training and internships (Coburn & Penuel, 2016).

Cross-sectoral alliances have recently been used by educators as a management strategy. Cross-sectoral alliances are used in many policy domains and refer to groups of organisations (from different economic sectors) voluntarily working together to solve issues of mutual concern. Wohlstetter, Malloy, Smith and Hentschke (2004) conducted an exploratory study of cross-sectoral alliances in charter schools to investigate both practical and policy challenges when assessing the different dimensions of cross-sectoral alliances in education. The potential benefit of alliances in education as well as the policy conditions that support or hinder such alliances is highlighted by the study of these researchers. In conclusion, they found that alliances/associations in education serve as an instrument through which schools can leverage resources and improve organisational capacity (Wohlstetter, Malloy, Smith & Hentschke, 2004:325). In the next section I discuss how teachers are uniquely positioned to establish various associations to improve rural education.

2.5.4   Teachers are uniquely positioned to establish various associations to improve rural education

Socioeconomic, physical and natural infrastructure are needed by local communities. Viable and sustainable infrastructure can be provided by collaborations between local communities, the third sector (community-based, faith-based and non-profit organisations, local citizens and citizen groups) and HEIs (De Beer, 2014). Teachers in rural schools are often expected to find ways to make schools a resource for the surrounding community. This includes making facilities and resources available and accessible to the adults in communities by, for example, making available libraries and gardens to support the community. Teachers are also expected to share their expert knowledge with parents by, for example, raising awareness of HIV/AIDS and advocating adult literacy so that they can support their children. This places various demands on teachers and the reality is that governments have not provided additional resources to enable teachers as educators to fulfil these specialised roles (Castle & Osman, 2003). As a

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result associations and collaborations with community members and parents become an important avenue for supporting rural education. Associations such as school-family-community partnerships can create an environment, experiences and relationships that could build social capital in communities with scarce resources in order to support rural education. Teachers' relationships with members of their communities are important sources of social capital that can benefit both individual teachers and the school as a whole. Furthermore, teachers' relationships outside of their schools, established either for personal or professional reasons, give them access to social capital (Bridwell-Mitchell & Cooc, 2016). These associations have the potential to accrue much needed support, resources, skills and networks in communities where the need and risk are high. Teachers are uniquely positioned to establish various types of associations and alliances between schools, families, communities and community-based organisations, for example, HEIs, businesses, religious organisations, libraries, mental health and social services agencies (Bryan & Henry, 2012; Bryan & Henry, 2008; Bryan, 2005). Students and, indirectly, teachers are faced with overwhelming academic, social, economic and personal difficulties. Associations provide the platform to develop and implement creative ideas and programme to improve education and challenges that schools are faced with (Bryan & Holcomb-McCoy, 2010). Various associations with teachers are evident in literature, but for purposes of this study I will narrow my focus down to associations with HEIs as a pathway to promoting teacher resilience. As previously stated in Chapter 1 (see section 4.3) I will use the term "associations" at the same time to refer to partnerships, collaborations, social networks, alliances and relationships in my discussion of the literature on associations per se and associations in the context of education as it relates to teacher resilience.

2.5.5   Associations with HEIs and teacher resilience

Research has focused extensively on teacher resilience and associations with HEIs separately, but there is a dearth of literature concerning the intersection of these two domains. As established in previous sections, the retention and further development of highly qualified teachers remain a critical need, especially in rural schools, where the need and risk are high. Gilles, Wilson and Elias (2010) found in their study that the collaborative nature of the action research process increased teacher interaction, trust and sharing, especially networking with colleagues. As illustrated by Gilles, Wilson and Elias (2010) in their study, I believe that associations with HEIs, anchored in participatory action research, such as in the case of this study, can influence teachers' ability to network, trust and share. This will enable teachers to cope with the challenges that they experience in everyday teaching through gaining support

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and understanding from others, facilitating self-efficacy and developing coping strategies that relate to aspects of teacher resilience. I concur with Feiman-Nemser (2001:1037) that no single institution has the expertise, authority or financial resources to create all the much needed structures and learning opportunities that exist. Schools, universities, teacher unions and the state all have important roles to play. This is where associations with HEIs and collaborations become an important avenue. Universities need the help of schools to prepare and induct beginning teachers, and on the flipside of the argument, schools need to coordinate their initial preparation throughout the early years of teaching with academic institutions. School-university associations can create opportunities for teachers to increase their professional interactions (networking) with colleagues (Sandholtz, 2002:817). When associations with HEIs demonstrate the principle of social justice, the creation of social capital for schools, families and community partners is also encouraged. Therefore, interventions are created by the partners that result in increased information and resource-rich relationships or networks of trust for teachers, families and children (Bryan & Henry, 2012).

Teachers' professional collaborations support teachers as they manage the myriad of challenges and complexities of teaching. This is evident in countries such as Korea, Singapore and Finland (Darling-Hammond, 2010). Associations with HEIs relate to teachers' working lives and their roles in reform, and therefore they have international relevance (Bartholomew & Sandholtz, 2009). There is a growing interest in research focusing on mechanisms to improve educational practices, putting forward resources for teachers with a strong focus on encouraging research and collaboration between researchers and teachers. Coburn and Peneul (2016) investigated Research-Practice Partnerships (RPP), a long-term collaboration that involves different types of associations focusing on a variety of practical problems. In education, research on the impact of associations (RPP's) is limited, providing limited understanding of how association designs and strategies could address the myriad of challenges faced by associations, as is evident from literature. Further research on the outcomes and dynamics of established associations is therefore necessary to inform the way that different types of associations can be effective in supporting and sustaining the improvement of educational systems (Coburn & Penuel, 2016).

Governments and communities view teacher attrition a pivotal concern. Therefore, in an effort to understand this trend a great deal of research has been conducted from the attrition perspective in order to ascertain how resilience can be developed in teachers (Mansfield, Price, McConney, Beltman, Pelliccione & Wosnitza, 2012). Since the 1980s there has been a growing interest worldwide interest in the development of associations with HEIs and schools (Edwards, Daniels, Gallagher, Leadbetter & Warmington, 2009; Tsui & Wong, 2006). The

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number of associations with HEIs have grown significantly in the educational strategy of Independent School Districts (ISDs) and university teacher-training programmes since their introduction in the 1980s (Callahan & Martin, 2007).

The promotion of associations with HEIs for inclusive education has become a global trend in education. McIntyre (2009) reviewed associations with HEIs in Western countries and argued that these associations between schools and universities are crucial for the development of teachers and inclusive education. Associations with HEIs where there is collaboration with teachers in schools, can bridge the theory-practice gap, which could result in innovating, inclusive pedagogies. Teachers' professional development, and therefore in effect student learning, can be significantly enhanced by an associations between HEIs and schools. As a result, associations between HEIs and schools have been continuously promoted by school reform efforts. However, various challenges relating to logistical issues and institutional differences, including institutional responses to reform policies have been encountered in associations between HEIs and schools (Bartholomew & Sandholtz, 2009:155). Waitoller and Kozleski (2013b:25) concur that, "partnerships for inclusive education have the potential to be conductive vehicles since they can simultaneously connect theory to practice, implement and innovate inclusive pedagogies, and develop teacher capacity". Waitoller and Kozleski (2013a) suggest that opportunities are created by associations between schools, HEIs, non-governmental organisations, and other professionals to apprentice teachers in practices that can dismantle complex barriers to learning. As a result, teacher development then becomes part of the Higher Education agenda that focuses on student learning (Waitoller & Kozleski, 2013a:36).

In teacher education, models of associations with HEIs are both commonplace and often questioned. Attention has been given to issues such as the roles and responsibilities of the various partners, which includes the assessment and mentoring of student teachers, the transfer of resources to schools and the selection of designated training schools. There has been less focus on associations with HEIs during the induction period and beyond, and how associations between HEIs and schools could be strengthened and sustained (Moran, Abbott & Clarke, 2009).

Trent and Lim (2010) reports on a qualitative case study that explored the experiences of two groups of secondary school English-language teachers as they participated in school-university partnerships (SUPs) in Hong Kong. Trent and Lim (2010) drew upon theories of identity construction and made use of in-depth interviews. They highlighted in their findings how attention to teacher identity construction can deepen our understanding of SUPs in other similar educational settings. Furthermore, comprehensive understanding of how the goals of

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associations with HEIs (HEIs and schools substantively working together to set and meet educational goals) could be achieved is necessary. They suggest further research in different educational settings to add to the existing understanding of how SUPs and teacher identity interact. The voices of all stakeholders (teachers, HEI members, consultants, school authorities) who play a crucial role within both the establishment and implementation of an SUP should be explored (Trent & Lim, 2010). Associations with HEIs can provide teachers with much needed support and the resources to manage the countless challenges related to teachers' working conditions. See section 2.4 for further elaboration on teachers' working conditions.

During the review of literature I continuously reflect on how literature on associations influenced this study and the way it relates to teacher resilience. I started my discussion by reviewing literature on associations per se, and then associations with HEIs in the education context with a focus on how teachers are uniquely positioned to establish various associations and how associations relate to teacher resilience. I then elaborate on the role of HEIs when forming associations with schools and specifically the role of South Africa HEIs in associations with high-risk, high-need schools. I further elaborate on trends such as types of associations with HEIs, the role of power and empowerment in associations with HEIs and the nature of and factors contributing to successful associations with HEIs[2]. I conclude my discussion by elaborating on the functions of associations with HEIs. See Appendix B for a summary of some of the research by leading scholars on associations with HEIs (partnership research), focusing on their contributions, the methodologies used and gaps in literature. The following knowledge gaps, based on the literature review, are apparent: research on strengthening and sustaining associations with HEIs during the induction phase and beyond (Moran, Abbott & Clarke, 2009); comprehensively understanding how associations with HEIs (universities and schools substantively working together to set and meet educational goals). Further research on the voices of all stakeholders (teachers, universities, consultants, school authorities) who play a crucial role within both the establishment and implementation of an SUP (school-university partnership) is needed (Trent & Lim, 2010). Further research is necessary to comprehend the role that the lack of infrastructure (i.e. nearby institutions of higher education, stable economic base, human resources) plays in developing associations with HEIs in rural communities (Minner & Hiles, 2005), the kind of tensions, learning issues, and identities that develop when two professional communities such as aschool and a university in an association engage in partnership work (Waitrolle & Kozleski, 2013a).

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[2] In my discussion I specifically refer to these aspects in relation to HEI associations as this is the focus of my study. It should be noted that the discussion of sections 2.5.6 to 2.5.9 could also be related to associations in other contexts, although I have not differentiated this as such.

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Comparative studies are necessary to determine how research-practice partnerships (see section 2.4.4.4.7 for further discussion) of various designs interact with various contexts (Coburn & Penuel, 2016). Moreover, studies on the specific strategies used in associations is necessary as it appears that there is little insight into the specific tools, orientations and strategies that are used by participants to address these challenges. Furthermore, a specific focus on building trust, co-constructing a shared language and collaborative work practices across multiple levels of educational systems is necessary (Coburn & Penuel, 2016:52). My study aims to contribute to the body of knowledge on teacher resilience and associations between HEIs and rural schools by comparing trends in the teacher resilience of teachers in rural schools with an association with a HEI and trends of teacher resilience of teachers in rural schools without an association with a HEI association. My study furthermore aims to contribute to the marginalised knowledge base relating to the unique position of HEIs to form associations with schools, especially rural schools (Gilles, Wilson & Elias, 2010). During my literature review I searched the literature for "partnerships"; "school-university partnerships"; "collaborations"; "associations"; "higher education community engagement"; "research partnerships"; "professional learning communities"; "professional development schools"; "networks"; "social networks"; "alliances" and "community of practice". Figure 2.6 shows an overview of how the literature reviewed relate to associations with HEIs. In my discussion I continuously reflect on how the literature on associations relate to teacher resilience.
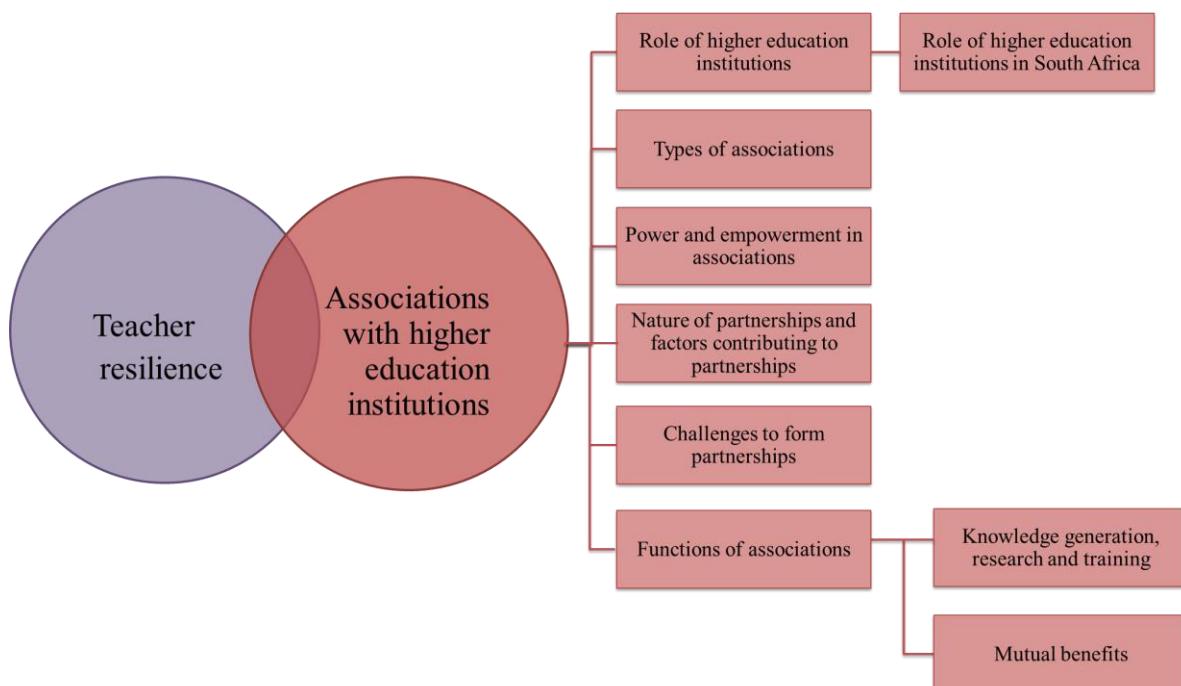
Figure 2.6:   Overview of literature on associations with HEIs

2.5.6   Associations with HEIs and the role of HEIs

Associations with HEIs as a strategy for educational reform have assumed increased national importance. The development of grant programmes that focus on leveraging resources through associations with HEIs to improve education has been undertaken by various federal agencies in response to the NCLB legislation (Minner & Hiles, 2005:81). HEIs often undertake associations with underperforming and challenging schools, where the needs are great and diverse. Therefore, translating research into practice may only be one part of a more systemic change effort that has the potential to introduce multiple collaborative structures and indicate points of entry to further teachers' professional development and meet their identity needs (Mariage & Garmon, 2003:215). It is, however, noted that the infrastructure (i.e. nearby institutions of higher education, a stable economic base, human resources) to develop associations with a HEI in rural communities is often lacking (Minner & Hiles, 2005).

Gibbons (1998) suggested the importance of alliances and associations with HEI as a way to involve the different types of expertise that are needed for understanding complex problems in the schools of developing countries. In literature associations between a HEI and schools are not new as schools and HEIs have been working collaboratively for many years to improve staff development and pre-service teacher education (Kirschner, Dickinson & Blosser, 1996). The National Council on Teaching and America's Future (NCTAF) put forward a key strategy for improving schools that includes the recruitment, preparation and retention of good teachers (NCTAF, 2003). Teacher professional development has become of increased importance as the recognition that teachers make a significant difference in learners' achievements is growing. Consequently, collaborative arrangements between HEIs and schools are put forward as one way to achieve improvement in schools (Bartholomew & Sandholtz, 2009).

Feiman-Nemser (2001:1013-1014) reminds us that, "if we want schools to produce more powerful learning on the part of students, we have to offer more powerful learning opportunities to teachers". In general teacher education, there are ample models of collaboration between universities (or teacher training institutions) and schools, although it seems that these associations with HEIs are less well documented within the field of special education (Vogel & Avissar, 2009). Little is known about the kinds of tensions, learning, and identities that develop when two professional communities, such as a school and a HEI, form an association. There has been a significant movement towards clinically-based experiences in teacher training and towards shared responsibility, for the sake of teachers' and students' learning, between universities and districts (Waitrolle & Kozleski, 2013:43).

2.5.7 Associations with a HEI's and the role of the HEI's in South Africa

Developing interventions to improve conditions of rural life in South Africa is imperative, as research on rurality and rural education informs us (Nkambule, Balfour, Pillay & Moletsane, 2011). Numerous programmes are implemented by various schools, HEIs and states internationally to develop and retain quality teachers and further inform educational practices (Gilles, Wilson & Elias, 2010). HEIs are uniquely positioned to contribute to this marginalised knowledge base. Vaillancourt (2007) highlights the essential role of HEIs in innovation for democratizing knowledge. A demonstration of social responsibility and a commitment to the common good by means of contributing expertise and infrastructure to community service programmes are encouraged by the White Paper on Education (Thomson, Smith-Tolken, Naidoo & Bringle, 2011:221). The South African government mandated that HEIs should be more responsive to the socioeconomic issues of the country (Fourie, 2003), although no material means to achieve this was provided by the Department of Education (Department of Education, 2004), nor was financial support provided by the government. The pivotal role of HEIs in the broader transformation agenda of the state and HEIs' opportunity to become a knowledge-based instrument in social equity has therefore been indicated (Thomson, Smith-Tolken, Naidoo & Bringle, 2011:221). Social responsiveness of HEIs to the needs of a transforming society such as South Africa, which means accepting social responsibility and introducing strategies aimed at proactively managing the myriad of challenges that are experienced in community engagement, is of eminent importance (Ebersöhn, Loots, Eloff & Ferreira, 2015). Fourie (2003) argued that HEIs are positioned uniquely as generators, transmitters and appliers of knowledge, especially in this current era of globalization and in the present knowledge society. National policy goals, which aim at achieving social reconstruction and development, can be actualised through service learning. Opportunities for the integration of teaching, research and outreach are provided for by service learning, while the social purpose of higher education is strengthened at the same time (Castle & Osman, 2003). HEIs interact with vulnerable communities through avenues of teaching, research and community engagement (including service learning). To foster a relationship that is mutually satisfactory it is important that HEIs have knowledge of and understand vulnerable groups in society with whom they form associations. Such a relationship requires cooperation, participation and strengthening of existing relationships with various sectors such as the private sector, civil society in general and non-profit organisations (Van Rooyen & Ellis, 2014).

Public participation in civic and community affairs can be nurtured by schools (thus teachers) as schools often function as centres of community activities. Schools are most often the principal source of local employment in rural areas, where human capital is increased by

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educating young people and providing them with the social skills and knowledge to become economically productive adults. The social integration of communities and neighbourhoods can be improved by well-functioning schools in strengthening local identity and a sense of commonly held purpose (Harmon & Shafft, 2009:5). Rural communities and their schools, which will build community and strengthen positive outcomes for all students, utilizing social capital in the community, need to accept a shared responsibility and engage in collaborative actions (Harmon & Schafft, 2009). Teachers are seen as important role-players as they are uniquely positioned to facilitate further community involvement. See Appendix B, Table 3 for a summary of some of views of leading scholars in association research, focusing on their contributions, the methodologies used and gaps in literature concerning associations between HEIs and the role on HEIs in South Africa.

2.5.8   Types of associations related to the education context

There are various different forms of associations between HEIs and schools (Day, 1998). From literature it is evident that most of these HEI associations incorporate some type of professional development (Callahan & Martin, 2007:137). Furthermore, it is evident that some types of HEI associations are considered to be highly successful by the stakeholders, whereas others appear to have diminished substance (Callahan & Martin, 2007).

Teitel (1999) noted, in making a deduction from leading research on educational associations with HEIs, the existence of an amalgamation of four goals that illustrate the rationale for different types of associations with HEIs, namely: a focus on improving student learning, preparation of teachers, professional development of teachers and research regarding the improvement of practice. Clarke (1999) concurs with these findings and discusses the purposes of associations between HEIs and schools as pursuing school renewal, pre-service education, professional development and inquiry processes (Callahan & Martin, 2007).

Wagner (1997:14-16) emphasised the importance of being clear on what kinds of co-operation and collaboration would drive and determine the relationships in an association with a HEI. He identifies three different forms of co-operation that comprise the different roles of the researchers and partners. These include: 1) data extraction, where the researcher has the technical expertise; 2) clinical associations with HEIs, where all partners can contribute to knowledge about educational research by working together, although the participant partners are viewed as the object of inquiry; and, 3) co-learning agreements, where all partners are viewed as agents and objects of inquiry.

McIntyre (2006) indicates that a broad range of collaborative configurations are put forward by associations between schools and HEIs, namely collaborative arrangements that

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involve placement of student teachers and the development of professional development schools. In the following section I elaborate on a few associations that are evident in literature.

2.5.8.1   Complementary and collaborative/integrative model

The Modes of Teacher Education (MOTE) project undertook studying the development of associations with HEIs in England and Wales after 1992. The results indicated that associations with HEIs in initial teacher education during the 1990s incorporated epistemological, pedagogical and organisational dimensions. Three types of associations with HEIs are highlighted by the Modes of Teacher Education (MOTE) project, namely the complementary type, the collaborative or integrative model and the HEI-led partnership. A complementary association involved the separate and complementary responsibilities of the school and HEI, but there was a lack of systematic effort to bring these two dimensions into dialogue. The collaborative association involved the development of an educational programme where the students were exposed to different forms of educational knowledge. Within this type of association, teachers were seen as equally legitimate, but contributed to a different body of professional knowledge as opposed to those in higher education. The HEI-led associations were primarily led by the HEI, with a small number of teachers acting as consultants (Furlong, Campbell, Howson, Lewis & McNamara, 2006:33).

2.5.8.2   Ideological associations, generating knowledge about education associations and capacity-building for change associations

Day (1998) identified three kinds of associations with HEIs in his research into an independent evaluation of an innovative cluster of seven projects involving associations with HEIs that had been established between teachers, schools and researchers and teacher educators in a HEI in Sweden. These are ideological associations, generating research knowledge about education associations and capacity-building for change in associations. *Ideological associations with HEIs* involve the search for like-minded partners whose values overlapped or corresponded. *Associations with HEIs for generating knowledge about education* are characterised by higher education partners viewing participants as "subjects" and maintaining their expertise on research knowledge in this way. Lastly, *associations with HEIs for capacity-building for change* involved project leaders providing their expertise towards achieving previously agreed purposes. The participants are recognised for their complementary expertise in this kind of association with a HEI (Day, 1998).

2.5.8.3 Community of practice/professional practice

Pre-service teachers need to develop professional knowledge, which can be gained through establishing associations between HEIs and schools. This creates opportunities for pre-service teachers to be involved with the day-to-day activities of professional practice. The stimulus and opportunity for the development and implementation of legitimate peripheral participation activities (partial participation in legitimate activities of a community of practice) are provided by the formation of associations between HEIs and schools. These legitimate peripheral participation activities provided a bridge between the students' academic studies and their future work as professionals (Sutherland, Scanlon & Sperring, 2005).

2.5.8.4 Professional learning communities (PLC)

There is a considerable amount of literature in the educational sphere that uses key words such as teacher community, professional community, and teacher learning community or professional learning community (Horn & Little, 2010) to describe a collaborative approach among teachers that is often guided by researchers or coaches. The goal of such a collaboration is to improve understanding of learning and teaching (Schneider & Kipp, 2015). Chester and Beaudin (1996) argue that collaboration with colleagues can promote positive change in the self-efficacy beliefs of teachers, consequently promoting teacher resilience. Schneider and Kipp (2015) surveyed (through questionnaires) 310 teachers participating in a collaboration pilot project between kindergartens and elementary schools to scrutinize the impact of reflective dialogue in a cross-institutional context. They concur in their findings that the teachers experienced personal growth due to their collaboration. Furthermore, they found that utilising the reflective dialogue in the collaboration led to an increased understanding of different professions and therefore promotes mutual trust and respect (Schneider & Kipp, 2015).

Rigelman and Ruben (2012) studied the impact of multiple layers of professional collaboration intentionally integrated into a one-year pre-service teacher education programme that was run in two elementary schools. The findings from an analysis of the written reflections, focus group interviews and classroom observations of 23 teacher candidates indicated that, supported by collaborative colleagues, the skill and commitment to teach each student for understanding was developed. Their research confirmed that using a nested, collaborative professional learning community (PLC) within a teacher education programme led to learning for the members of the association between a HEI and a school and further refined the meaning of being a teacher (Rigelman & Ruben, 2012).

2.5.8.5 Transformational versus transactional associations

Butcher, Bezzina and Moran (2011:29) developed the concept of transformational associations, which they published in their article. They argue that transformational associations are different in purpose, nature and strategy from transactional associations. Transformational associations are based on genuine engagement and a focus on common goals and mutual benefits, whereas in transactional associations each stakeholder pursues their own goals, without further consideration for shared purpose or mutual goals. Their study was conducted within the context of community engagement. Butcher, Bezzina and Moran (2011) addressed the question of what can be learned about the development, sustainability and benefits of an association by applying the notion of transformational association to a case study on ways in which a HEI, in this case an Australia HEI, engaged with the Australian school system. They drew from the narratives of their own experiences as participants in the association a long time ago, therefore identifying the study as ex post facto research. An important contribution that resulted from their study involves illustrating how HEIs could work and conceptualise differently with other stakeholders to achieve mutual benefits (Butcher Bezzina & Moran, 2011).

2.5.8.6 Professional development school (PDS) partnerships

For more than two decades the professional development school (PDS) model has been a vital component of teacher education (Darling-Hammond, 2003, Breault, 2013). In the United States educational researchers and thinkers have started using the term PDS to describe collaboration efforts between teacher preparation programmes in academic institutions and schools (Metcalf-Turner, 1999). The concept of a professional development school partnership originated in John Dewey's notion of progressive education (Teitel, 1999). A professional development school (PDS) partnership is a collaborative relationship between a HEI and/or a district or school that set up new structures, resources, and roles to build and support stronger learning communities. The focus is to concurrently renew and restructure schools and teacher education programmes (Teitel, 1999, Teitel, Wiseman & Knight, 2003) and to support learning by both prospective and experienced teachers (Darling-Hammond, 2003).

Breault (2013) uses organizational theory to analyse data from a 10-year qualitative meta-synthesis of PDS partnership research. Four recommendations resulted from her study, namely: 1) PDS partnership should sustain strong trajectories of research regarding their work; 2) adequate support for faculty and staff members need to be provided by the PDS partnership stakeholders; 3) enabling bureaucratic structures should be used as a foundation for PDS partnerships; and, 4) opportunities to engage with PDS partners in positive, normative spaces

need to be created. Breault (2013) states that researching the very nature of HEI associations is necessary. The researcher suggests that unless research is done into the implications of the structure and culture of each institution and the higher education association between them, it would not be possible to address depth, sustainability, spread and ownership by the stakeholders (Breault, 2013). Based on Breault's (2013) analysis of work by prominent scholars in PDS literature, she identified four key themes regarding the nature of PDS initiatives, namely: 1) the structure and culture of PDS initiatives; 2) tensions between institutional missions and operational behaviours within universities; 3) the intensification of the professoriate; and, 4) the clashing cultures between K-12 and university stakeholders. As indicated by the very nature of PDS initiatives, it should focus on collegiality and innovation (Breault, 2013).

In literature, four major goals have been identified for PDS models, namely that PDS models provide: 1) clinical settings for pre-service teachers; 2) continuous professional development of practicing teachers; 3) an opportunity to advance knowledge by promoting and conducting inquiry; and, 4) exemplary education for learners (Metcalf-Turner, 1999; Teitel, 1999). Vogel and Avissar (2009:136) emphasise that the gap between theory and practice can be bridged through collaboration and the sharing of knowledge. This could in turn promote processes of renewal in both schools and academic institutions.

2.5.9 Evidence-based findings on HEI's and associations

A gap in literature exists on how well community-based teams execute implementing evidence-based interventions (EBIs) over many years (Spoth, Guyll, Redmond, Greenberg & Feinberg, 2011). Spoth, Guyll, Lillehoj and Redmond (2007) examined a community-partnership (association) model, PROSPER (PROmoting School-community-university Partnerships to Enhance Resilience) for sustained, high-quality implementation of evidence-based interventions. An exploratory analysis of factors influencing the implementation quality was conducted. The researchers (Spoth et al., 2007:981) found high rates of both implementation adherence and of other indicators (such as team and instructor charatcterstics) of implementation quality. The aforementioned study was preceded by findings of a previous study by Spoth, Guyl, Trudeau and Goldberg-Lillehoj (2002) that highlighted the benefits of community-university partnerships in achieving high levels of intervention adherence. Spoth et al. (2007:996) concluded that the support and resources necessary to implement preventative interventions in multiple communities, was generated and retained by the PROSPER partnship model. In addition, high quality interventions were produced that were mostly resistant to potential threats to implementation quality. Spoth et al. (2011) further evaluated the PROSPER

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model in the context of a rendomised-control trial of 28 communities by examining the sustainability of implementation quality of community teams for both school-based and family-focused IEBs. Adherence ratings for both types of EBIs approached 90% across six implementation cohorts. The positive sustained implementation quality of PROSPER is related to its provision of continuous, proactive technical support. Consequently, the researchers (Spoth et al., 2011:412) found that communities are capable of implementing sustained EBIs on a larger scale. An important recommendation for future research relates to conducting additional contextually defined evaluations of the sustainability of implementation quality (Spoth et al., 2011).

The attributes of effective community-university partnerships (assocations) for research is well substantiated by literature. However, what is not known is empirical research on what the relation is between the attributes of associations and their outcomes. McNall, Reed, Brown and Allen (2009) explored the relationship between association attributes and outcomes. Their analysis revealed that increased research on a community issue/problem/need is associated with effective association (partnership) management and the co-creation of knowledge improves service outcomes for clients. Further research into the processes of associations that yield benefits for the stakeholders involved is advocated for as well as the development of measures to evaluate the association outcomes (McNall et al., 2009).

Hart and Northmore (2011:34) focused their research on the need for auditing and evaluating university-community partnerships as the development of effective audit and evaluation tools are still in the formative stage. The researchers (Hart & Northmore, 2011) conducted case study research of the University of Brighton's experience of evaluating partnerships. Lessons learned during their study are iterated upon to inform future researchers on activities meriting evaluation and key questions to ask when determining which measuring tools is appropriate. Hart and Northmore (2011:54-55) learned in their investigation, amongst other lessons, that the aim should be to measure impact and change and not just the activity, community perspectives in audit and benchmarking is mostly silent and the inclusion of economic dimensions in audit, benchmarking and evaluation as well as the impact on community well-being are dimensions that merit further investigation.

The increasingly studied but little understood process of collaboration or associations is of common interest to researchers and practitioners in the public and non-profit sectors. Thomson, Perry and Miller (2008) suggests that in order to comprehend the nature of associations, antecedants to, the process and outcomes of assocations should be further explored. The researchers (Thomson et al., 2008) aimed to demonstrate how a multidimensional model of associations can be used as one way to study association outcomes.

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Their findings suggest that a linear cause-effect relationship cannot be assumed when examining the process-outcome relationship in associations (Huxham & Vangen, 2005; Thomson et al., 2008). The process-outcome relationship is multifaceted and permits a 'contineous learning' prespective that will allow more reliant generalisations on how association processes yield certain outcomes and under which conditions (Thomson et al., 2008:116).

2.5.10   The role of power and empowerment in associations with HEIs

The correct approach to community engagement is not easily achieved as it requires a shift from the traditional paradigm that is often rooted in and resistant to higher education systems. This shift in paradigm and practice that is required results in disrupted and redefined power relations. Consequently, knowledge creation processes and the knowledge that is created are transformed. A context of engagement is encouraged by factors such as mutuality and reciprocity, transparency, trust and respect. A major barrier to community engagement can result from non-alignment of institutional context with a context of engagement (Kearny, 2015:33). According to Waitroller and Kozleski (2013a:43) the dynamics of power, assumptions about privilege, and what kind of knowledge is valued strains relationships between schools and HEIs. Cardini (2006:412) makes a valuable observation regarding power in associations with HEIs, "… to challenge current social organisation by promoting more progressive relationships, the theoretical definition of associations with HEI's has to recognise the issue of power and establish working relationships in which struggle and dissent are discussible and transformable issues".

Parry, Harreveld and Danaher (2011:6) addresses the following research question in their study: "Which forms of [associations] add value to and are valued by Australian schools and faculties of teacher education?" They found that valuing associations with HEIs depends on explicit and sustained efforts to value the contribution of individual partners. Therefore, the associations should be interpreted as being the sum of all parts, rather than regarded as largely being to the advantage of the host institution. Conflicts and tensions are created when HEIs and schools engage in associations as they challenge each other's expertise, practices, policies and social arrangements. At the heart of these tensions are power struggles about whose agendas, artifacts and motives are valued (Waitroller & Kozleski; 2013b).

Democratic collaboration (partners share decision-making, ownership and responsibility for the association's vision, goals and outcomes) takes place where all members of the association are viewed as equal and valuable experts, thereby empowering all the partners. Partners are empowered when they have an equal voice, but also participate in planning,

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making decisions and implementing solutions (Bryan & Henry, 2012). The complex roles of the partners in an association take time to develop, including learning new skills and assimilating unfamiliar norms and beliefs. The effects of collaboration may not be immediately visible (Ross, Rolheiser & Hogaboam-Gray, 1999). Waitroller and Kozleski (2013a:35) conceptualize associations with HEIs as, "fertile ground for learning and identity development as professional work across institutional boundaries face tensions and contradictions created by the overlap of different practices, policies and mediating tools of communities." See Appendix B, Table 4, for a summary of some of the views of leading scholars in association research, focusing on their contributions, the methodologies used and gaps in literature concerning associations with HEIs, power and empowerment.

2.5.11   Contributing factors and the nature of successful associations between HEIs

A commitment to long-term collaboration in goal-setting and sharing of perspectives, capacities, and resources is integral to a HEI community or HEI school association designed to make a difference (Dhillon, 2009; Butcher & Egan, 2008). Rice (2002) states that HEIs and schools differ with regard to purpose, structure and ethos, which could either be viewed as a challenge or a strength.

Butcher, Bezzina and Moran (2011) identified a set of five guiding principles that they believe promote the emergence of a transformational form of engagement and enhance sustainability. These principles are that partners: 1) work out of shared purpose; 2) lead collaboratively; 3) relate on a basis of trust; 4) ensure appropriate and adequate resources; and, 4) remain open to learning and change. Butcher, Bezzina and Moran (2011:39) concluded their article with the following:

> When purposes are aligned, when relationships are nurtured through time-rich communications, and when partners acknowledge the strengths of each other and are open to change, then sustainable, transformational [associations] and initiatives can develop. The outcome is a mutual capacity development, the creation of knowledge, the forging of deep, long-term connections, and the transformation of relationships to ones of genuine engagement so as to address the educational goals of quality and equity.

McIntyre (2006) put forward four essential ingredients for effective and sustainable associations based on his work in Oxford and earlier experiences of Initial Training Education (ITE) in Scotland. Firstly, he emphasised the importance of academic teacher educators showing respect for practising teachers' expertise by and showing that an attitude of learning is important; secondly, he said that teachers needed to be more open with regard to new learning,

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as this would facilitate the use of their expertise to help beginning teachers. Thirdly, he emphasised the need effectively to resource the association with HEIs and, finally, he suggested that the ITE curricula be relocated from the HEI to the schools (McIntyre, 2006:13).

Moran, Abbott and Clarke (2009), in their research explored student and beginning teachers' experiences of teacher education in Northern Ireland. Their study specifically focused on the views of key induction providers of the effectiveness of the arrangements that associations have with HEIs. Moran, Abbott and Clarke (2009) made use of a qualitative approach, a purposive sample and face-to-face semi-structured interviews. They highlighted three characteristics, namely consistency, continuity and community as key features of a reconceptualised partnership (association) model. *Consistency* entails the reality of the existence of multiple associations with HEIs, which could be a cause of tension. With regard to *continuity*, the researchers suggest that learning of beginning teachers needs to be placed at the heart of the association. And, lastly, with regard to *community*, it was stated that the learning of beginner teachers takes place within complex, scattered networks of expertise or professional communities of practice (Moran, Abott & Clarke, 2009).

Kearny (2015:37) identified four needs for collaborative associations, namely that a vision and goals need to be defined, shared and endorsed by both the community and the university; a methodology with values such as mutuality and reciprocity, transparency, and trust and respect nurtures a context of engagement; a set of goals that is both mutually beneficial and can be achieved and, finally, the three Rs framework, or relationships, recognition and reflection, as a strategy for sustainability.

Prilleltensky (2001) made a valuable observation when he mentioned that infrastructure, skilled university staff and processes where the voices and involvement of local residents are included needs to be deliberately created to ensure the success and sustainability of community-based endeavours, such as associations between HEIs and schools. Associations with HEIs are collaborative in nature and must be informed by a shared vision, enable reciprocity, attain mutual goals and benefits, allow for collaborative decision-making and roles and expectations should be clarified and clearly communicated to be successful (Thomson, Smith-Tolken, Naidoo & Bringle, 2011). The critical role that the notion of insiders and outsiders play in the acceptance of new ideas and values should also be considered (Burton, Brown & Johnson, 2013) when associations between HEIs and schools are formed. Therefore, efforts to establish trust and commitment are crucial.

Kirschner, Dickinson and Blosser (1996) contributed to the knowledge base on challenges involved in negotiating collaborative relationships through their long-term cooperative associations between school-based teachers and HEI-based educators at the Ohio

State University. They found that in order to build a community of learners, time, careful nurturing and constant support from all stakeholders are important. In addition, they found that collaborative action research provided the support for sustained conversations and the integration of multiple ideas and perspectives that helped to overcome the challenge of working collaboratively (Kirschner, Dickinson & Blosser, 1996).

Akdere and Egan (2005) found in their survey-based research that exploring an association between a HEI and a community from the perspective of human resource development, that the essential ingredients for successful association formation includes supportive institutional structure, commitment by organization leaders and the commitment of resources. The commitment of all stakeholders is also of importance in the formation of associations between HEIs and communities (Akdere & Egan, 2005).

Bridging the gap between higher education and society is a focus in research agendas globally (Ebersöhn, Loots, Eloff & Ferreira, 2015). Ebersöhn, Loots, Eloff and Ferreira, (2015) recommended, in their long-term research with teacher partners in a rural ecology, that associations with HEIs should be well conceptualised, expectations clearly communicated during the informed consent phase and that a flexible research schedule should be adapted as a means to evade possible barriers. Thomson, Smith-Tolken, Naidoo and Bringle (2011) found that significant differences in historical, political, economic and social conditions shape the relationships in associations between HEIs and communities and can be negated by expounding the values of reciprocity, mutual benefit, democratic processes and the communities' voice.

In unequal and rural ecologies, barriers can be expected in establishing a committed, long-term association between rural teachers and university researchers (Ebersöhn, Loots, Eloff & Ferreira, 2015). Poverty can be used as a motivating factor for collaboration in Higher Education community engagement associations (Ebersöhn, Loots, Eloff & Ferreira, 2015). As associations with HEIs and communities in rural ecologies take longer to progress, and an awareness of the contextual, personal and professional difficulties that community partners may have to discuss might circumvent possible obstacles and encourage the proactive management of these obstacles. Teachers in rural South Africa seem to navigate barriers to association as they are motivated to engage in the association with a HEI because aspects of inequality are recognized and indifferent attitudes towards continued post-colonial inequalities are challenged (Ebersöhn, Loots, Eloff & Ferreira, 2015). It is further noted by Ebersöhn, Loots, Eloff & Ferreira (2015) that although partnering with teachers in rural ecologies can have mutual benefits for all the partners involved, it is important to take into account and show respect for teachers' work-related responsibilities and concomitant time constraints.

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Strier (2011:81) conducted a qualitative study that examined the lived experiences of participants in an innovative association between a HEI and a community in Israel. He found several important factors relating to the process of association management that included: role perspectives, group affiliation, institutional context, power relations, the organizational culture of the association with a HEI, and the societal perceptions of social problems that the association aimed to address. Strier (2011:94) further illustrated that the process of association-building is affected by variables such as lack of symmetry between partners, different perceptions of association with a HEI, role conflicts, organizational cultures, institutional context, professional views and unequal access to decision-making processes. It is evident from Strier's (2011) findings that an association with a HEIs unique ability to combine multiple views, agendas and perspectives could be a source of strength as well as a source of tension and conflict. He found in his study that the association is understood from the perspective of four conceptions, namely the educational, professional, instrumental and political that exist side by side within the realm of the association with a HEI. Associations may be a platform to negotiate critical social tensions as well as a source of social commonality to facilitate to a critical and egalitarian dialogue between different stakeholders. The success of associations depend on the leaders' ability to provide a learning and reflexive organizational culture and a participative organizational structure that would enable the integration of the supplementing, competing and conflicting agendas that form part of an association with HEIs (Strier, 2011). Minner and Hiles (2005) found in their study that associations with HEIs make a significant difference to rural schools and districts, but much remains to be revealed as regards identifying the critical elements that contribute to success. Further research is needed to determine the commonalities among the different types of association that operate in substantially different rural contexts.

Sandholtz (2002:815) explored the range of professional development opportunities for teachers in four secondary schools affiliated with the same school-HEI association. Data were collected via surveys, 24 in-depth interviews, structured tasks and informal observation. Sandholtz (2002) employed adult workplace learning as framework. In her study, Sandholtz (2002) found that the school-HEI association: 1) offers multiple and varied opportunities to teachers for professional development; 2) helps to provide structure for activities based on teacher collaboration; and, 3) offers the opportunity to increase the professional development options of teachers. The researcher confirmed that teachers appreciated opportunities to explore, reflect, collaborate with peers, work on authentic learning tasks, and engage in hands-on active learning (Sanholtz, 2002:828).

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Effective associations with HEIs are a process that engages the stakeholders in mutual and respectful collaboration and shared responsibility. Mutual goals and outcomes are accomplished by a reciprocal relationship. Furthermore, Bryan and Henry (2012:409) mention that "rich and effective [associations] are built on a foundation of shared principles or values that enable a healthy collaboration process among partners and lead to improved success and access for students and their families, especially those who are from less advantaged schools". See Appendix B, Table 5, for a summary of the views of some of the leading scholars in association research, focusing on their contributions, the methodologies used and gaps in literature concerning factors contributing to successful associations with HEIs.

2.5.12   Challenges to forming associations between HEIs and schools

Bartholomew and Sandholtz (2009) conducted a case study with 22 schools in the state of California in the U.S.A. to examine how different views on the teacher's role in school reform affected the work of an association between a HEI and a school. Data were collected over a period of four years, drawn from three sources: documents, interviews and observations. Three main conclusions that were derived from this study highlight the complex issues embedded in the association between a HEI and a school. Firstly, they found that as the association progressed, contradictory goals might come to light that could negatively affect the work of the association. They found that initially the school and HEI partners seemed to share common or complementary goals. The second conclusion relates to the role of the teacher, where the school and the HEI partners might have opposing perspectives. Thirdly, a reform context is created by high-stakes testing and accountability measures, where the policy environment is merged with instructional practice (Bartholomew & Sandholtz, 2009).

Wang and Zhang (2014) conducted a collaborative action research project with a group of HEI researchers and a group of senior secondary school English teachers in an attempt to promote teacher autonomy in the Chinese context. They collected data from questionnaires, interviews, reflective journals, project meeting discussions and research reports. Their study resulted in the identification of several issues relating to associations between HEIs and schools. Issues included time constraints and the lack of energy to engage in research on the part of the student teachers, mutual respect and reasonable expectations, effectiveness of the school organisation, pressure from and motivation by HEI researchers, issue of authorship of articles for publication and, lastly, the appropriate forms of teacher research (Wang & Zhang, 2014).

Kearney (2015:26) presented a case study based on a long-term association between a HEI and a school, with data comprising of observations and field notes, individual interviews,

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group discussions, and participant reflections. The focus of the study involved resettlement issues in Australia. The establishment of the association aimed to enhance education opportunities for a Samoan-heritage community. In her exploratory paper, Kearney (2015) identified three challenges for community engagement in the Australian context, namely: 1) *institutional perceptions* within the higher education sector (relating to engaged approaches being misunderstood or undervalued); 2) *community perceptions* based on mistrust; and, 3) a *lack of support structures* for sustaining engagement. Kearny responded to the three identified association challenges in the following way: With regard to the first challenge, she considered conditions in the HEIs that support mutual engagement, resulting in suggestions that academics should develop into engaged scholars. The researcher emphasised that the association needed to be perceived as legitimate, worthwhile and having the imprimatur of leaders on both sides (Kearny, 2015:31). For the second challenge the need for a methodology that builds relationships among all members of the association was advocated. (Kearny, 2015:31) emphasised that aspects such as mutuality and reciprocity, transparency, trust and respect should be valued in the association between higher education associations and schools. Furthermore, it was important that the association should be viewed as mutually beneficial for both the academic institution and the members of the school. Relating to the third challenge she identified conditions that sustain community engagement practices. These include the importance of quality relationships with members of the association, recognition of achievements and the importance of reflection and a commitment to lifelong-learning (Kearny, 2015).

Parry, Harreveld and Danaher (2011) found in their study that when collaboration is viewed by one or more partners as counterproductive, and even inauspicious to particular members, this can cause tensions and put strain on the association which could possibly contribute to associations being devalued. To ensure successful collaboration the development of mutual understanding and reasonable expectations is of importance (Wang & Zhang, 2014). The professional development of teachers, and the creation of educational opportunities for their learners, could be enhanced by collaborative efforts between schools and HEIs. As a result associations between HEIs and schools are a prevalent component of efforts to achieve school reform. Logistical issues, institutional differences and institutional responses to reform are all challenges that can be encountered in associations between HEIs and schools (Bartholomew & Sandholtz, 2009).

2.5.13   Functions of associations with HEIs

2.5.13.1 Knowledge generation, research, education and training

A means to improve the quality of teachers' teaching and the quality of learners' learning is teacher-learning. In the past 20 years teacher-learning has varied from initial education learning to induction learning to in-service learning (Feiman-Nemser, 2001). Timperly, Wilson, Barrar and Fung (2007) highlight the importance of career-long learning activities, such as updating knowledge and skills, reflecting on teaching experiences and collaborating with colleagues. Timperley (2008) further suggests in The Education Practice Series -18, that collegial interaction and knowledgeable expertise external to the group (could be researchers or a principal) is some ways of improving teacher learning, improving learner outcomes that might in return improve teacher resilience. These two suggestions correlate well with the function of associations with HEIs, as is investigated in this study in an association between a HEI and rural schools.

In teacher education associations are ''restructuring teaching knowledge, the form and content of teacher education, and the nature and governance of teaching'' (Darling-Hammond, 1994:3). Associations between HEIs and schools show that there is the potential to foster professional learning communities where teachers can analyse their practices in collaboration with others, which can result in building on existing knowledge (Darling-Hammond, 2003).

According to Bickel and Hattrup (1995) associations with HEIs have the potential to foster professional learning communities for teachers, creating the opportunity to analyse their practices and construct new knowledge in collaboration with others. Furthermore, associations with HEIs have the potential for collaborative research and development (Lieberman, 1986). Butcher, Egan and Ralph (2008) recognised that an engaged approach can bring about positive transformation for both the community and the HEI.

2.5.13.2 Mutual benefits to partners

Lieberman (1986) identified the potential of associations between HEIs and schools to create avenues for collaborative research and development, which in return contribute to teachers' professional development. Associations between HEIs and schools create avenues by which relationships or networks of trust can be established among stakeholders. When relationships between schools and HEIs are strong, social capital is high and both institutions benefit. Effective associations affirm members and stakeholders by focusing on constructive ways to produce collaborative change that benefits all stakeholders. The creation of collaborative transformative learning environments that are mutually beneficial can be fostered by associations between HEIs and schools. Social capital is viewed as the heart of these

associations, including the attributes of bonding, bridging and linking. It is found that as bridging capital increases, the members of the association form relationships based on mutuality. Both stakeholders, the HEI and the school, benefit and have the potential for mutual transformation (Calabrese, 2006).

Fox and Wilson (2015) conducted a study based on qualitative case studies from three secondary schools' trainees during a full-time, year-long programme in England. Their study reports potentially different outcomes with regard to the development of beginning teachers' professional practice, which is dependent on how they network and thereafter build social capital. They found that building social capital is important for both recruitment and retention of beginning teachers as developed social capital would not only enable them to overcome the demands and stresses of initial training education, but also foster self-efficacy and the resilience to develop as professionals once they are employed (Fox & Wilson, 2015:105).

In Ebersöhn and Ferreira's (2010) research (a South African perspective) on how teachers function as resources in sustaining resilience in the face of HIV/AIDS-compounded adversity, they found teachers formed associations with children and families, community volunteers and community organizations, businesses and government to promote resilience in schools. They concluded that the establishment of networks with service providers that function eco-systemically and are relationship-driven can enable teachers to promote resilience in schools.

Butcher, Egan and Howard (2009:1), in their study, focused from the Australian perspective, on the benefits of transformational education and stated that "education is a major force for bringing positive transformation". They put forward that education provides knowledge, skills, intellectual stimulation, social interaction and entertainment and that an underlying benefit of education is increased hope. Their findings suggest that when mutually beneficial associations based on transformational education is fostered an increase in hope is likely to occur. The researchers state that, "to become more hopeful is to become more empowered, and to become more empowered is to become better able to escape the cycles of disadvantage" (Butcher, Egan & Howard, 2009:8). A potential benefit of an association between HEIs and schools, established with the Hope Theory as a basis, could therefore lead to increased hope, which would empower people and communities who have experienced disadvantage. Furthermore, broader increases in hope throughout one's entire life are encouraged by enhanced hope in the educational sphere (Butcher, Egan & Howard, 2009).

Strier (2011) poses the question whether associations between HEIs and communities are suited to solving problems or whether are unceasing exercises in relationship-building. The researcher concluded that associations between HEIs and communities may be one way of

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influencing participants' perceptions of social problems, which in return may have the ripple effect of encouraging teacher resilience. See Appendix B, Table 6, for a summary of the views of some of the leading scholars in association research, focusing on their contributions, the methodologies used and gaps in literature concerning the functions of associations.

2.6   Conclusion

I determined the following gaps in existing literature related to my study, namely, i) identifying key factors of teacher resilience (Beltman, Mansfield & Price, 2011) and ii) the interaction thereof in rural settings (Mansfield, Beltman, Price & McConney, 2012), iii) exploring how a HEI association brings people together across space (Bagetta, 2016), iv) how a HEI association can nurture, sustain and/or diminish teachers' resilience (Gu & Day, 2013) and lastly the implementation of a HEI association in a rural setting exploring strategies and orientations used by teachers to address challenges due to a lack of infrastructure (Coburn & Penuel, 2016; Minner & Hiles, 2005). The reviewed literature revealed numerous trends in teacher resilience as well as research on associations as identified in research. The relevance of associations between HEIs and schools as a pathway to promote teacher resilience was argued and included discussions on teachers' working conditions in general and more specifically in the South African context. In summary, the literature review of teacher resilience revealed trends such as conceptualisations of teacher resilience, individual and contextual protective resources and risk factors that contribute to teacher resilience, coping strategies and characteristics of teacher resilience, with teacher resilience viewed as a relationship, a dynamic process that is also developmental in nature. I also discussed the importance of teacher resilience in a rural ecology and the way that social support contributes to the development of teacher resilience. In the literature on associations, I firstly discussed associations per se and then I situate associations in the context of education context and how it relates to teacher resilience. I discussed the role of associations between HEIs and schools, types of associations, how power and empowerment relate to associations, the nature of and factors contributing to the development of associations and, finally, the different functions of associations between HEIs and schools, which included knowledge generation, research and training, mutual benefits for the stakeholders involved and the challenges involved in forming associations between HEIs and schools. In this study I endeavour to expand on knowledge regarding teacher resilience in terms of protective resources and risk factors and the unique contributions to teacher resilience by associations between HEIs and schools in the South African context. In Chapter 3 I discuss the way that this study was approached.

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3.1   Introduction

In this chapter the methodological choices and decisions regarding the study is presented and justified in terms of research questions and the purpose of the study. This study was conducted from a constructivist epistemological paradigm, while participatory reflection and action formed the methodological paradigm. After explaining the research design (comparative case study), data collection and documenting strategies, sampling strategies as well as the data analysis process and interpretation are described. The chapter is concluded with a discussion of ethical considerations I adhered to and quality criteria employed in this study to ensure rigour and trustworthiness of the study.

As discussed in chapter 1, a comparative case study design (Patton, 2002) was employed in this longer-term (2013-2015) Flourishing Learning Youth (FLY) study of schools as cases with and without association with a HEI. My study is nested within the three-year study to investigate the experiences of various community engagement beneficiaries (learners, teachers, parents/caregivers, researchers and academic service learning students) retrospectively. The purpose of my study is to compare how teachers' involvement in an association between a HEI and rural schools broadens knowledge of teacher resilience.

Convenience sampling (Durrheim & Painter, 2006) was used to select representative schools (rural schools with an association with a HEI and rural schools without an association with a HEI). Purposive sampling (Abrams, 2010) was used to select representative participants (six teachers from two schools participating in an association with a HEI and twelve teachers from four schools without an association with a HEI) from schools located in the high-risk, high-need rural context. Refer to this chapter for elaboration on data collection strategies, ethical considerations and the quality criteria I adhered to. Figure 3.1 provides an overview of the key aspects of the methodology employed in this study.

METHODOLOGY

Epistemological paradigm	Constructivism
Methodological paradigm	Participatory Reflection and Action
Research design	Comparative case study: Convenience sampling of cases of schools with (n=2) and without (n=4) HEI associations
Participants	Purposive selection of participants for PRA directed group activities: a) Teachers (n = 6; 1 x male and 5 x female) from two schools with a HEI association b) Teachers (n = 12; 6 x male and 6 x female) from two schools without a HEI association Purposive selection of participants for face-to-face semi-structure individual interviews: a) Teachers (n = 4; 2 x male and 2 x female) from two schools with HEI association b) Teachers (n = 7; 3 x male and 4 x female) from two schools without an HEI association **Selection criteria:** - Teachers (n = 4) from schools with a HEI association who is engaged in the association - Teachers (n = 2) from schools with a HEI association who is not engaged in the association - Teachers (n = 12) from schools without a HEI association
Data collection strategies	a) PRA directed group activities (June 2013) with 18 teachers from each case respectively. Activities audio-visual recorded and transcribed verbatim. b) Observation by two researchers of school contexts over time as well as processes of PRA-directed group activities documented in researcher diaries (April 2013 to April 2015) in field notes and photographs. c) Face-to-face semi-structured interviews with 11 teachers purposefully selected from both categories of schools (May 2014 and September 2014).
Data analysis	In case and cross case thematic analysis of PRA directed group activities (audio-visual recorded and transcribd verbatim), observations (field notes and photographs), and face to face semi-structured interviews (audio recorded and transcribed verbatim):
Member checking	a) Member checking of PRA-directed group activities with teachers (n = 2) in May 2014. b) Member checking of face-to-face semi-structured interviews with teachers (n = 9) in September 2014 and April 2015.
Ethical considerations	• Social or scientific value, scientific validity • Participants and the nature of their involvement • Informed consent, privacy and favourable risk-benefit ratio
Quality Criteria	• Credibility (Rich description of context, triangulation, member checking, prolonged engagement, peer debriefing • Transferability and Dependability • Audit trail and reflexivity • Authenticity (Audit trail, reflexivity)

Figure 3.1: Overview of methodological choice

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3.2 Research design: Comparative case study

3.2.1 Choice of comparative case study design

The comparative case study design (Taylor, 2013) spanned three years (2013-2015). The PRA-directed group activities data were generated in 2013 and member checking was done in 2014, face-to-face semi-structured interviews were conducted in May 2014 and September 2014 respectively (additional interviews to reach data saturation – see section 3.4.2) and member checking of the interviews were conducted in September 2014 and April 2015 respectively (see Appendix L for research schedule).

The research question is predominantly a "comparative" question (Mouton, 2001: 54) namely: How can a comparison of teacher experiences in schools with and without HEI associations inform knowledge on teacher resilience? Therefore, how do experiences on teacher resilience, in terms of protective resources and risk factors, compare as a result of being part of a HEI association as opposed to teachers who are not part of a HEI association? To answer this question I decided on a comparative case study as research design. Using a comparative case study design allows for identifying differences and similarities across settings and then accounting for these differences or similarities (Taylor, 2013). Similar to this study, comparative case studies is often used in social science research (Thomas, 2011). In-depth information on a series of interesting real-world cases within their naturally occurring environments was obtained by utilising a comparative case study design (Kaarbo & Beasley, 1999). A comparative case study involves identifying a phenomenon (in this study, expressions of teacher resilience based on HEI association or not), gathering occurrences and disconfirming occurrences of the phenomenon and then determining what characteristics those occurrences have in common (Dion, 2003). A comparative case study design allows for an in-depth exploration of a HEI association in its natural context and to find what is both common and what is particular in these cases (schools with a HEI association versus a school without a HEI association) (Schwandt, 2001, Thomas, 2011). Thus, the comparison of the cases involves a comparison of nested elements in one case (Case A:1 and A:2 – see section 3.4 for further elaboration) referring to in-case analysis (Schwandt, 2001), and then comparing this analysis with a parallel case (Case B), concurrently (Thomas, 2011) referring to cross-case analysis (Schwandt, 2001). The purpose of this comparative case study was to inform teacher resilience by comparing instances, where there is involvement (Case A1) and not involvement (Case A2) in the HEI association as opposed to teacher resilience in rural schools in the same area who did not form part of a HEI association (Case B) (see Table 3.9 in section 3.4.2.3 for detailed information of participants). Consequently, it was imperative that the cases was chosen

carefully as to allow the researcher to predict similar results across cases, or predict contrasting results based on a theory (Yin, 2009).

Pertinent to the constructivist epistemological paradigm, case studies involve a process of accurate description and subjective, systematic interpretation, a respect for culturally different perceptions of phenomena and empathetic representations of the local context/setting (Schwandt, 2000:444). Patton (2002) concurs as in-depth information on a series of interesting real-life cases within their local environment is obtained. This enabled the researcher to systematically and holistically compare data while being sensitive to the context in which the data was generated. Taylor (2013) concurs that comparative case studies allows for the exploration of complexity through triangulation, are situated in real-life settings and therefore contextual, providing rich thick descriptions that enable others to judge the relevance of findings in similar contexts. Furthermore, choosing a comparative case study design allows for the use of multiple cases (schools with a HEI association and schools without a HEI association) that results in a more convincing and accurate case study, highlighting both confirming and disconfirming themes in the selected cases (Taylor, 2013). Comparing teachers representative of schools who formed part of established FLY-relationships during 2005 to 2012 (Case A1) and who *were involved* in the ongoing higher education association, and teachers representative of schools who formed part of established FLY relationships during 2005 to 2012 (Case A2) and who *were not involved* in the ongoing HEI association (in-case analysis) with teachers representative of schools who did not form part of established FLY-relationships during 2005-2013 (Case B) deepened my understanding of teacher resilience and how it could be informed by a HEI association. Furthermore, comparing the findings of the cases allowed me to identify similarities and differences between the cases, resulting in enriched data and reliable findings (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007).

A comparative case study was valuable as it holds the potential to explain (Mouton 2001) how HEI association may advance/promote knowledge on teacher resilience. I describe the cases in sufficient detail in section 3.3.1 to enable readers to draw comparisons in similar cases (Schwandt, 2000). Furthermore, drawing inferences about causation in any area of study as an investigation of cause and effect are by nature comparative. A comparative case study was valuable as it provided a space within which I was able to consider the voices of several rural teachers and their interactions (Patton, 2002). Thus, I compared expressions of teacher resilience of teachers in schools with HEI associations and expressions of teacher resilience of teachers in schools without HEI associations to elaborate on differences and similarities within these parameters. Comparative case study research is context-specific, situated in a real-life setting and suited to researching phenomena that are complex in nature (Taylor, 2013:4). In

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order to avoid common pitfalls of case study designs such as attempting to answer a question that is too broad or has too many objectives for one study, I needed to ensure that my study remained in reasonable scope by binding my cases (Yin, 2003). This comparative case study takes place in the context in which that phenomenon usually occurs (rural schools setting in the Mpumalanga province) and the case is thus bound by time (2013-2015), place (rural schools forming part of the HEI association and rural schools that do not form part of the HEI association in the Gert Sibande District) and individuals (teachers from the participating and non-participating rural schools), which sets limits to what is included in the study and what not (Sangster-Gormley, 2013; Yin, 2009).

Comparative case study research allows for the exploration of complexity by accessing multiple data sources (Taylor, 2013); in this case the field notes of multiple researchers (see Appendixes H & I), transcriptions of PRA-directed group activities (see Appendix E) and semi-structured interviews (see Appendix F) and visual representations of context (see Appendix G) and PRA-directed group activities (see Appendix G). This design therefore lends the opportunity to use different sources of data through triangulation (McGloin, 2008). In the present study it was important to understand how teacher expressions compared in the presence or absence of HEI associations as it is a complex phenomenon (Thomas, 2011). The complexity of the cases is acknowledged by the comparative case study design and further enables the exploration of the various variables (Yin, 2009).

Once I determined the cases and enforced boundaries on the cases as stated above it was important for me to consider additional components required for designing and implementing a rigorous case study (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Yin, 2003). I considered the application of a conceptual framework, developed working assumptions (see Chapter 1 section 1.7) and developed my research questions (see Chapter 1 section 1.2).

A comparative case study affords the researcher the opportunity to identify the indicators that best describe the theoretical concepts that is explored (in this study the protective resources and risk factors as it relate to teacher resilience as a result of a HEI association). Utilsing a comparative case study design I was aware of the trade-offs of achieving a higher level of construct validity and establishing a high level of external validity but doing so at the cost of generating generalisation only over a small number of cases that are similar to this study (Bennet, 2004:34).

3.2.2   Limitations of comparative case study research designs

I recognise that a comparative study has potential limitations. Firstly it is practically impossible to isolate the impact of a single variable (Mouton, 2001) – i.e. the presence or absence of HEI

association with a rural school. Thus I acknowledge that teacher resilience can be influenced by other factors such as involvement in previous or other HEI associations, social, cultural and personal support and structural support in the education setting (Gu & Day, 2013; Castro, Kelly & Shih, 2010). A comparative case study design is enriched by a familiarity with the context (in terms of the language, social, political and economic environment) being studied (Carmel, 1999:148). I spent an ample amount of time (see Appendix L for the research schedule) in the research settings, observing the context of the schools to broaden my understanding and descriptions of features and developments of the school settings over time (2013-2015). I documented these observations in my researcher diary as photographs and field notes (see Appendix H).

Secondly, generalisability is a limitation as qualitative research is mostly concerned with understanding and describing a phenomenon. These conceptualisations are deeply embedded in the context from which they arose. Generalisation is consequently limited due to the sample size and unique context of the cases (Abrams, 2010; Carmel, 1999; Willig, 2008). However, the aim of comparative case studies is not to generalise the results (Creswell, 2000) but rather to gain a deeper understanding of specific cases (Case A and B) within a particular context (comparing expressions of teachers in rural schools with a HEI association and expressions of teachers in rural schools without a HEI association) (Patton, 2002). Inversely, transferability of data is enhanced as contextual data is studied in-depth and thick, rich descriptions are provided that enables others to determine applicability and the relevance of findings in similar settings (Creswell & Miller, 2000; Sangster-Gormley, 2013; Taylor, 2013). Although I was able to explore instances of teacher resilience (in terms of protective resources and risk factors) expressed by teachers in schools with HEI association in different schools (comparative cases – see section 3.3 for case selections), I could not assume that the same would be true in other HEI associations. Convenience sampling of cases was appropriate for this study as it allowed access to research settings that are difficult to reach. Purposive sampling of participants from cases allowed the selection of information-rich representatives for an in-depth study, denoting the logic and power of purposeful sampling (Patton, 2002). As with selecting information-rich cases the focus is not generalisation, but rather gaining valuable insight and an in-depth understanding that will illuminate the questions under study. Thus, I needed to continuously reflect in my researcher diary (see Appendix H for my researcher diary) about bias on my part that might possibly influence the research outcome.

Thirdly, the role of the researcher is highly interactive, resulting in researcher bias (Mouton, 2011; Ponterotto, 2013). Staying true to my epistemological paradigm, constructivism, I embraced subjectivity as a pathway to greater understanding of the human

dimensions of the world in general and more specifically the phenomenon, namely how teacher resilience is expressed by comparing instances of expression of teacher resilience where there is involvement in a rural HEI association (Case A:1 and A:2) as opposed to expressions of teacher resilience in rural schools in the same area that did not form part of a rural HEI association (Case B), that I am studying (Patton, 2002). I therefore informed my findings on praxis and reflexivity, where I paid particular attention to insights on how my own experiences and background may affect the way that I interpret the inquiry and results (Patton, 2002) (see Appendix H for my researcher diary). Furthermore, I conducted member checking of PRA-directed group activities (May 2014) and face-to-face semi-structured interviews (September 2014 and April 2015).

3.3   Context of the schools as cases

This study is integrated into a long-term and ongoing collaborative partnership, Flourishing Learning Youth (FLY), established between the Centre for the Study of Resilience (University of Pretoria) and rural schools in deep rural Mpumalanga. FLY commenced in 2005 as a partnership with one secondary school to study risk and resilience in the rural school context where resources are constrained. The project was extended in 2008 to include an additional two primary schools. In 2013 the project was further extended to include three additional primary schools and a secondary school. The schools participating in this study are all located in rural Mpumalanga far from most services. Rural geographical isolation implies removal from already scarce services and thus be regarded as schools with high-need and high-risk (Ryan-Nicholis, 2004). The maps below illustrate the location of the research site. The following photographs[3] are of the schools participating in this study.

Photograph 3.1:
Map of Mpumalanga in South Africa

Photograph 3.2:
View of a school in Mpumalanga

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[3] A photograph of school B was not available.

Photograph 3.3:
School A

Photograph 3.4:
School C

Photograph 3.5:
School D

Photograph 3.6:
School E

Photograph 3.7:
School F

The following extract from my researcher diary and photographs taken on my drive to the research sites illustrates my experiences of the context of the study:

> *Although I am familiar with the schools, I was struck by the peacefulness of the area. I again realised how isolated the school communities are as it is quite a drive to reach the different schools. During my drive to the schools I observed quite a few people walking in the direction of the town and I realised that although it might be a lovely environment with beautiful mountains and nature, resources are few and located far away.*   Research diary, April 2013

Photograph 3.8:
Rural context

Photograph 3.9:
Rural context

The schools are situated in the Gert Sibande District Municipality of Mpumalanga in the Albert Luthuli Local Municipality. Albert Luthuli is ranked 55th regarding population size and totals 186,010 members of the South African population. In Table 3.1 I summarize some key statistics relating to the Albert Luthuli area to elaborate on the context of my study.

Table 3.1:   Key statistics on the Albert Luthuli area (Statistics South Africa, 2011)

Aspect	Percentage
Children 0 – 14 years of age	**36,5%**
Population of working age	**58,2%**
Elderly (65 years +)	**5,3%**
Unemployment rate	**35,4%**
Youth unemployment rate	**45,1%**
Uneducated population (20 years +)	**19,9%**
HEI (20 years +)	**6,3%**
Matric level education (20 years +)	**27%**

Table 3.2:   Access to resources in the Albert Luthuli Municipality in the Gert Sibande District (adapted from Census, 2011)

Description	Specification	2001	2011
Distribution of age groups:	Young (0-14)	40,6%	36,5%
	Working Age (15-64)	58,2%	58,2%
	Elderly (65+)	4,8%	5,3%
Employment distribution:	General unemployment rate	52,2%	35,4%
	Youth unemployment rate	61,5%	45,1%
Educational level 20 years of	No schooling	37,2%	19,9%

Description	Specification	2001	2011
age and older	Matric	14,3%	27%
	Higher education	4,6%	6,3%

Table 3.2 suggests that the total population as well as the number of young children under the age 14 years decreased slightly between 2001 and 2011. The working-age population showed no difference. An increase of 0,5% is noted in the population of the elderly. It is reported that both general unemployment and youth unemployment have decreased since the Census in 2001. Since the Census in 2001 the number of residents above the age of 20 years without any schooling decreased, residents who matriculated increased by 12,7% and residents attending a HEI increased by 1,7%.

Table 3.3:   Statistics related to household in the Albert Luthuli area

Description	2001	2011
Number of households	39,652	47,705
Average household size	4,5	3,8
Female-headed households	51,6%	49,3%
Formal dwellings	58,4%	76,5%
Housing owned/being paid off	62,9%	56,3%
Flush toilet connected to sewerage	13,8%	18,9%
Weekly refuse removal	12,6%	19,3%
Electricity for lighting	50,9%	87,5%

Within the Albert Luthuli municipality there are 47,705 households and 19,113 agricultural households. An average household is 3,8 in size, where 49,3% are headed by females. Formal dwellings comes to 76,5% increasing from 2001, and 56,3% of housing is owned or being paid off. Of these, 47,705 households, or 18,9%, have flush toilets connected to sewerage compared to 13,8% in 2001; 19,3% receive weekly refuse removal services compared to 12,6% in 2001. Electricity supply increased to 87,5% from 50,9% in 2001 (Statistics South Africa, 2011).

Table 3.4:   Statistic on basic resources within households

Description	Specification	1996	2011
Percentage of households using electricity for:	Cooking	31,2%	50,8%
	Heating	33,2%	38,4%
	Lighting	44,6%	87,5%

Description	Specification	1996	2011
Percentage of households with access to piped water:	Piped water inside dwelling	8,9%	22,6%
	Piped water on a communal stand	31,2%	49,4%
	No access to piped water	33,2%	62,9%

Table 3.4 suggests that there is an increase in households using electricity, with a significant increase in the use of electricity for cooking and lighting. It seems that residents report an increase in access to piped water inside their dwelling and at a communal stand. It seems, however, that the percentage of residences with no access to piped water has increased by 29,7%. The aforementioned is probably due to access to water by means of boreholes, springs, rainwater tanks, dams/pools/stagnant water, river/streams, water vendors or water tankers.

Table 3.5:   Access to resources in households in the Albert Luthuli area

Description	Specification	2001	2011
Percentage of households with access to:	Cell phone	29,3%	89,3%
	Computer	5,1%	9,1%
	Television	48,3%	71,8%
	Satellite television	-	19%
	Radio	75,8%	70,3%
	Landline/telephone	16,1%	2,7%
	Motorcar	-	20,6%
	Refrigerator	42,9%	65,2%
	Electric/gas stove		66,8%
Access to internet:	From home	-	2,3%
	From cell phone	-	16,3%
	From work	-	1,7%
	From elsewhere	-	3,5%
	No access	-	76,2%

Table 3.5 indicates a significant increase in the use of cell phones, which might be hypothesised that there would also have been an increase in access to the internet via cell phones. However, a lack of access to the internet remains significantly high in the areas in which the participants of this study reside.

Tables 3.7 and 3.8 provide a summary of the number of participants who participated in data-gathering (PRA-directed group activities and face-to-face semi-structured interviews) and demographic characteristics of the teachers according to cases.

3.4 Selection of schools and teacher participants

3.4.1 Convenient selection of cases: schools with or without an existing association with a HEI

Schools (n = 6) were conveniently selected as cases of schools in the same rural district either a) with HEI association (n = 2: one secondary school and one primary school) or b) without HEI association (n = 4: one secondary school and three primary schools). Convenience sampling is often employed in comparative case study designs (Durrheim & Painter, 2006; Schwandt, 2001). One of the strengths of employing convenience sampling relates to cases being easily and conveniently available, and therefore quick and inexpensive (Maree, 2007). An association with a HEI was indicated by a school's involvement in an established association with a HEI (as discussed in Chapter 1), relying on participants (teachers) who were readily available for participation and accessible (teachers teaching at schools in the vicinity) (Abrams, 2010; Patton, 2002). The main researcher, who established the association with a HEI with teachers in schools in Mpumulanga district in 2005, made the cases available to the researcher. Teachers in schools with an association with a HEI association were approached to nominate other rural schools in the Mpumalanga district. These schools were required not to have an association with a HEI.

A possible delimitation regarding convenience sampling relates to the variability and bias of appraisals that cannot be measured or controlled, implicating that the data cannot be generalised beyond the cases selected (Maree, 2007, Struwig & Stead, 2001). However, the purpose of the study was not to generalise findings. Although I was able to explore expressions of teacher resilience in six rural schools, I could not assume that these expressions of teacher resilience were true for other teachers in rural resource-constrained schools. To compensate for this limitation of convenience sampling, I attempted to provide rich, thick descriptions of the research setting, denoting the transferability of the results to other similar contexts (see section 3.7.3 for further discussion of transferability of results).

Convenience sampling can pose a delimitation to this study, as including participants based on convenience does not provide justification for inclusion of certain participants or events (Denscombe, 2010). To counter this delimitation the researchers chose schools that were convenient, but were also able to address the questions posed in this study. The selection of

cases is summarised in Table 3.6 below. The selection of participants from these cases is discussed in section 3.4.

Table 3.6:   Selection of schools per case

Case	Schools	Type of school	Number of schools	Geographical location	Socioeconomic status[4]	Physical conditions
Cases A1 and A2: Schools *with* an association with a HEI	School A	Secondary School	Two	All schools are situated in the Gert Sibande District in Mpumalanga	Indicated in Table 3.2 the general unemployment rate amounts to 35.4% and youth unemployment rate to 45.1 % in 2011. 19.9% of residents over 20 years of age have no schooling, 27% have obtained matric and 6.3% have attented a HEI.	As indicated in Table 3.3 only 18.9% of households have access to flush toilets connected to sewerage.22.6% of households have access to piped water inside their dwelling, 49.4% to piped water on a communal stand and 62.9% have no access to piped water. Refer to Table 3.5 for a description of access to resources in households.
	School B	Primary School				
Case B: Schools *without* an association with a HEI	School C	Secondary School	Four			
	School D	Primary School				
	School E	Primary School				
	School F	Primary School				

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[4] Demographic data on the teacher participants is presented in Table 3.7 and 3.8.

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3.4.2 Selection of participants (teachers) from cases

In this section I will first discuss some key demographics of the participants in this study to further illustrate the context of the study. I then elaborate on the purposive selection of participants for the PRA-directed group activities and the face-to-face semi-structured interviews. Table 3.7 provides an overview of the number of teachers per case, PRA-directed group activities and face-to-face semi-structured interviews.

3.4.2.1 Characteristics of participants (teachers)

During the data-gathering sessions a demographic questionnaire was completed by participants, which yielded important information on the characteristics of the teacher participants (See Appendix D for an example of the demographic questionnaire). The following two tables, Tables 3.7 and 3.8, indicate the demographic characteristics of the participants of this study. Analyses of the demographics show that there are more females (67%) than males (33%) among the 18 participants of the PRA-directed group activities. Among these participants 38% of females and 33% of males were willing and available to participate in face-to-face semi-structured interviews. To illustrate the differences and similarities I discuss the demographic characteristics according to each case, thus 1) teachers in schools with an association with a HEI and 2) teachers in schools without with an association with a HEI. In Case A, 67% of teachers are single as opposed to Case B, where 25% of teachers are single. In both cases 33% of teachers are married, no teachers in Case A live together or are divorced as opposed to Case B, where living together and being divorced are reported to be 25% and 17% respectively. In both cases teachers speak mainly Siswati, while and in Case A, 50% of teachers are Zulu-speaking. In Case A one teacher speaks English and Afrikaans and in Case B there is a Xitsonga-speaking teacher, a Shona-speaking teacher and a Xhosa-speaking teacher.

In Case A 33% of teachers are approaching retirement age compared to 17% in Case B. It appears that in Cases A and B teachers are reported to be within the 41-50-year age group. Teachers in Case A mostly (83%) have post-school qualification diplomas compared to 58% of teachers in Case B. Only 17% of Case A teachers as opposed to 42% of teachers from Case B have post-school qualification degrees. In both cases it seems that teachers have been at their current schools for a period between 1 to 5 years.

With regard to access to basic resources it is reported by the teachers that 83% of teachers in Case A have access to running water and electricity compared to 67% and 92% respectively in Case B. All teachers in Case A have access to transport and health services compared to 50% and 75% respectively in Case B.

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The main source of transport noted in Case A is a DBE (Department of Basic Education) bus service, with one teacher who has independent transportation and one teacher who walks to school. In Case B 58% of teachers have their own transport, 25% walk to school and two teachers use the DBE bus and a taxi respectively for transportation.

In summary, participation in the PRA-directed group activities was unrepresented by males, as only 33% of the participants were male as opposed to 67% who were females. Additionally, during the PRA-directed group activities, only 6 teacher participants from Case A were available and willing (Durrheim & Painter, 2006) to participate as opposed to the 12 teacher participants who formed part of Case B. See section 3.4.2.2 for further elaboration on the selection of participants for PRA-directed activities. During the face-to-face semi-structured interviews, gender was taken into account and 6 female participants and 5 male participants were interviewed. Participants allocated to Case A2 were underrepresented in the face-to-face semi-structured interviews due to unavailability. However, I was able to conclude one interview with a teacher participant from Case A2, thus providing information to further enrich my study and illuminate comparative data. Refer to Table 3.9 for further elaboration on participants' availability and accessibility, coherence with the purpose of the study, diversity in terms of different schools, responsibility and gender.

Table 3.7: Number of teachers per case

	Number of teachers							
	Case A:1		Case A:2		Case B			
	Schools participating in an association with a HEI		Schools not participating in an association with a HEI		Schools with no association with a HEI			
	School A	School B	School A	School B	School C	School D	School E	School F
PRA-directed group activities	2	2	1	1	3	3	3	3
Male	0	0	1	0	2	1	0	2
Female	2	2	0	1	1	2	3	1
Total per case	**4 (22%)**		**2 (11%)**		**12 (66%)**			
Face-to-face semi-structured interviews	2	1	1	0	1	2	2	2
Male	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	2
Female	1	1	0	0	1	1	2	0
Total per case	**3 (16%)**		**1 (5%)**		**7 (38%)**			

Table 3.8: Characteristics of cases

Demographic characteristics per case					
	Case A:1	Case A:2	Total Case A:1 and A:2	Case B	Total
	Participating in HEI association	Not participating in HEI association	HEI association	No HEI association	
Marital status					
Married	1 (25%)	1 (50%)	2 (33%)	4 (33%)	**6 (33%)**
Living together	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3 (25%)	**3 (16%)**
Single	3 (75%)	1 (50%)	4 (67%)	3 (25%)	**7 (38%)**
Divorced/separated/partner died	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (17%)	**2 (11%)**

Demographic characteristics per case					
	Case A:1	**Case A:2**	**Total Case A:1 and A:2**	**Case B**	**Total**
	Participating in HEI association	**Not participating in HEI association**	**HEI association**	**No HEI association**	
Languages able to speak, read or write					
English	1 (25%)	0 (0%)	1 (17%)	0 (0%)	**1 (5%)**
Afrikaans	1 (25%)	0 (0%)	1 (17%)	0 (0%)	**1 (5%)**
Siswati	3 (75%)	1 (50%)	4 (67%)	9 (75%)	**13 (72%)**
IsiZulu	2 (50%)	1 (50%)	3 (50%)	2 (17%)	**5 (27%)**
IsiXhosa	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (8%)	**1 (5%)**
Shona	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (8%)	**1 (5%)**
Xitsonga	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (8%)	**1 (5%)**
Age in years					
Below 30	0 (0%)	1 (50%)	1 (17%)	0 (0%)	**1 (5%)**
30 – 40	1 (25%)	0 (0%)	1 (17%)	3 (25%)	**3 (16%)**
41 – 50	1 (25%)	1 (50%)	2 (33%)	7 (58%)	**9 (50%)**
51 – 60	2 (50%)	0 (0%)	2 (33%)	2 (17%)	**4 (22%)**
Educational attainment					
Post school qualification diploma	4 (100%)	1 (50%)	5 (83%)	7 (58%)	**12 (66%)**
Post school qualification degree	0 (0%)	1 (50%)	1 (17%)	5 (42%)	**6 (33%)**
Duration at the school in years					
Between 1 and 5	1 (25%)	2 (100%)	3 (50%)	5 (42%)	**8 (44%)**
5 – 10	1 (25%)	0 (0%)	1 (17%)	2 (17%)	**3 (16%)**
11- 15	1 (25%)	0 (0%)	1 (17%)	0 (0%)	**1 (5%)**
16 -20	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (17%)	**2 (11%)**
More than 20	1 (25%)	0 (0%)	1 (17%)	3 (25%)	**4 (22%)**

Demographic characteristics per case					
	Case A:1	**Case A:2**	**Total Case A:1 and A:2**	**Case B**	**Total**
	Participating in HEI association	**Not participating in HEI association**	**HEI association**	**No HEI association**	
Access to basic services					
Running water	4 (100%)	1 (50%)	5 (83%)	8 (67%)	**13 (72%)**
Electricity	4 (100%)	1 (50%)	5 (83%)	11 (92%)	**16 (88%)**
Health services	4 (100%)	2 (100%)	6 (100%)	9 (75%)	**15 (83%)**
Transport	4 (100%)	2 (100%)	6 (100%)	6 (50%)	**12 (66%)**
Distance travelling to school					
Less than 10 km	2 (50%)	0 (0%)	2 (33%)	8 (67%)	**10 (55%)**
Between 10 km and 30 km	0 (0%)	1 (50%)	1 (17%)	2 (17%)	**3 (16%)**
Between 30 km and 60 km	2 (50%)	1 (50%)	3 (50%)	1 (8%)	**4 (22%)**
More than 60 km	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (8%)	**1 (5%)**
Means of transport					
DBE Bus	2 (50%)	2 (100%)	4 (67%)	1 (8%)	**5 (27%)**
Own transport	1 (25%)	0 (0%)	1 (17%)	7 (58%)	**8 (44%)**
Taxi	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (8%)	**1 (5%)**
Bicycle	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	**0 (0%)**
Walking	1 (25%)	0 (0%)	1 (17%)	3 (25%)	**4 (22%)**

3.4.2.2 Selection of participants (teachers) for PRA-directed group activities

Participants for this study were selected through purposive sampling. Purposive sampling was used to select representative participants in order to generate rich information that is relevant to the research question (Abrams, 2010). Data was collected through PRA-directed activities that formed part of the larger research study (FLY). The cases included four teachers representative of schools who formed part of established FLY relationships during 2005 to 2012 (Case A1) and who *were involved* in the ongoing association with a HEI; two teachers representative of schools that formed part of established FLY relationships during 2005 to 2012 (Case A2) and that *were not involved* in the ongoing association with a HEI and twelve teachers representative of schools who did not form part of established FLY relationships during 2005 to- 2013 (Case B). See Figure 3.2 below.
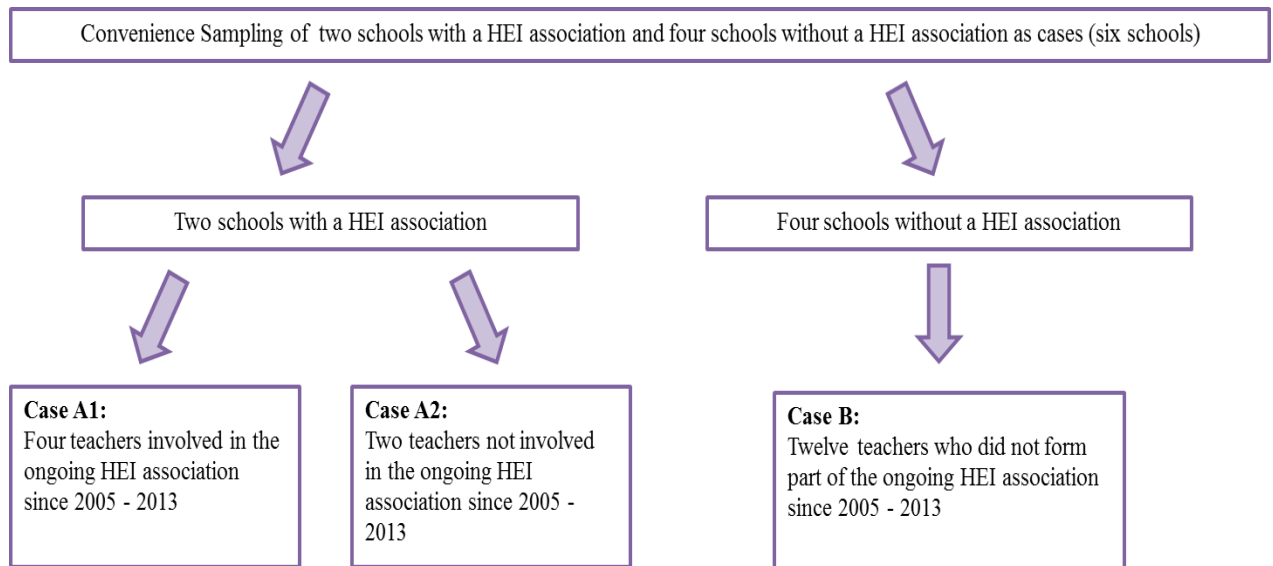
Figure 3.2: Sampling of schools and number of teachers per case

The purpose of the study was to explore how an association between a HEI and rural schools informs knowledge on teacher resilience. Researcher judgement drove the selection of participants to ensure that the participants were considered optimal to observe, investigate and to provide key insight into and understanding of how an association between a HEI and rural schools can inform knowledge on teacher resilience (Abrams, 2010:545; Maree, 2007; Sangster-Gormley, 2013). Purposive sampling is concerned about providing a sample that is information-rich, therefore the participants show certain characteristics such as availability and accessibility, coherence with the purpose of the study, diversity in terms of different schools, responsibility and gender (outlined in Table 3.9), all the qualities in which the researcher is interested (Struwig & Stead, 2001). Purposive sampling often uses the judgment of community

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representatives (in this case teacher participants already involved in the ongoing research association with a HEI) to select typical locations and/or informants according to predefined characteristics (outlined in Table 3.9). This type of sampling resulted in other schools in the Mpumalanga area not being included in the study. The researchers relied on teacher participants already involved in an association between a HEI and rural schools, and used their discretion to nominate schools in the Mpumalanga area to join the HEI association. Therefore, the sampling depended on the availability and willingness of participants to participate in the ongoing HEI association (Durrheim & Painter, 2006). Therefore, in this study teachers were intentionally selected in terms of the following selection criteria: four teachers representative of schools who formed part of established FLY relationships during 2005 to 2012 (Case A1) and who *were involved* in the ongoing HEI association; two teachers representative of schools who formed part of established FLY relationships during 2005 to 2012 (Case A2) and who *were not involved* in the ongoing HEI association; and twelve teachers representative of schools who did not form part of established FLY relationships during 2005 to 2013 (Case B). Furthermore, teachers for this study were intentionally selected based on certain characteristics such as availability and accessibility, coherence with the purpose of the study (teachers teaching in a rural, resource-constraint school either engaged or not engaged in a HEI association), diversity in terms of different schools, teacher responsibility and gender. Refer to section 3.4 for selection criteria of teacher participants for PRA activities and face-to-face semi-structured interviews.

Purposive sampling acknowledges opportunities for intensive studies and provides opportunity for in-depth knowledge gained from relevant knowledgeable participants about the phenomenon under study (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007; Schwandt, 2000). Purposive sampling offers the opportunity not only to select participants who are available and willing to participate, but also offers the opportunity to select participants who show certain characteristics relevant to the study. Refer to section 3.4 and Table 3.9 for further information. Purposive sampling then provides the opportunity to select participants because they will provide information-rich insights that are illuminative, that is, they offer useful manifestations of the phenomenon of interest (Patton, 2002:40; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). As some participants were part of the ongoing association with a HEI and some were not, this provided an information-rich comparison, enabling the researcher to see whether an association with a HEI contributes to conceptualisations of teacher resilience.

Using purposive sampling implicates that generalisation is biased, resulting in non-representativeness of the sampled participants due to the subjectivity of participants (Maree, 2007). To counter the non-representativeness of the sampled participants I continuously

reflected on initial data analysis after each new set of data was gathered (see Appendix H for research diary and field notes). This process allowed me to assess whether new sets of sampling is required and that no new information is obtained from additional sampling i.e. until the new information becomes redundant (Struwig & Stead, 2001).

Furthermore, I acknowledged that the case selected cannot be separated from the context in which it occurs and place the study in the real-life context (Yin, 2009) of the purposively selected rural schools. The selection was made in this manner to ensure that the phenomenon of interest (contribution of an association between a HEI and rural schools to teacher resilience) was observable (Schwandt, 2000).

Another delimitation of purposive sampling relevant to this study is that the total selection of participants could not be determined in advance (Struwig & Stead, 2001). I initially selected four participants representative of the cases as outlined in Table 3.9. Additional participants were then selected for the face-to-face semi-structured interviews after the data from the PRA-directed group activities and initial four interviews were analysed as more rich information was needed.

Barbour (2003:1021) criticises the process of participant selection to be based on convenience rather than purposive sampling. He argues that participants are often selected based on previously established networks (as in this study, the existing HEI association with two schools) or that the participants replied positively to a research request (the existing partners approached schools in the district that adhered to the selection criteria for cases). This delimitation was compensated for by acknowledging the intent of the study to generalise findings qualitatively (Diefenbach, 2009). The researcher took care in selecting appropriate cases and participants in consultation with the main researcher to ensure the appropriateness and suitability of cases and participants. Suitability is argued and substantiated by the selection criteria (Diefenbach, 2009).

3.4.2.3   Selection of participants for face-to-face semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews are commonly used to corroborate data emerging from other data sources, as in this study, where data was obtained from PRA-directed group activities. The use of semi-structured interviews with PRA methods serves the purpose of filling gaps and eliciting the participants' personal viewpoints and perceptions regarding the key features of the study (Mukherjee & Chambers, 2004). Depending on the participant the semi-structured interview can take the format of partly structured and mostly unstructured. Semi-structured interviews are conducted in an informal manner in a relaxed setting (in this study interviews were conducted in offices/classrooms at the different schools). Queries and prompts emerge as

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a response to answers and viewpoints offered by participants (Mukherjee & Chambers, 2004). See section 3.5.2.3 for the development of guiding questions. The face-to-face semi-structured interviews required the participants to answer a set of predetermined questions (See Appendix J for guiding questions). The interview schedule was only used as a line of inquiry and the researcher needed to be attentive to the responses of the participants. This attentiveness enabled the researcher to identify new lines of inquiry that were directly related to the purpose of the study, by further probing and exploring these lines of inquiry (Maree, 2007). Semi-structured interviews enable the researcher to obtain multiple responses to set questions and allow for detailed responses (Struwig & Stead, 2001). Figure 3.3 below summarises the selection of the teachers for face-to-face semi-structured interviews.
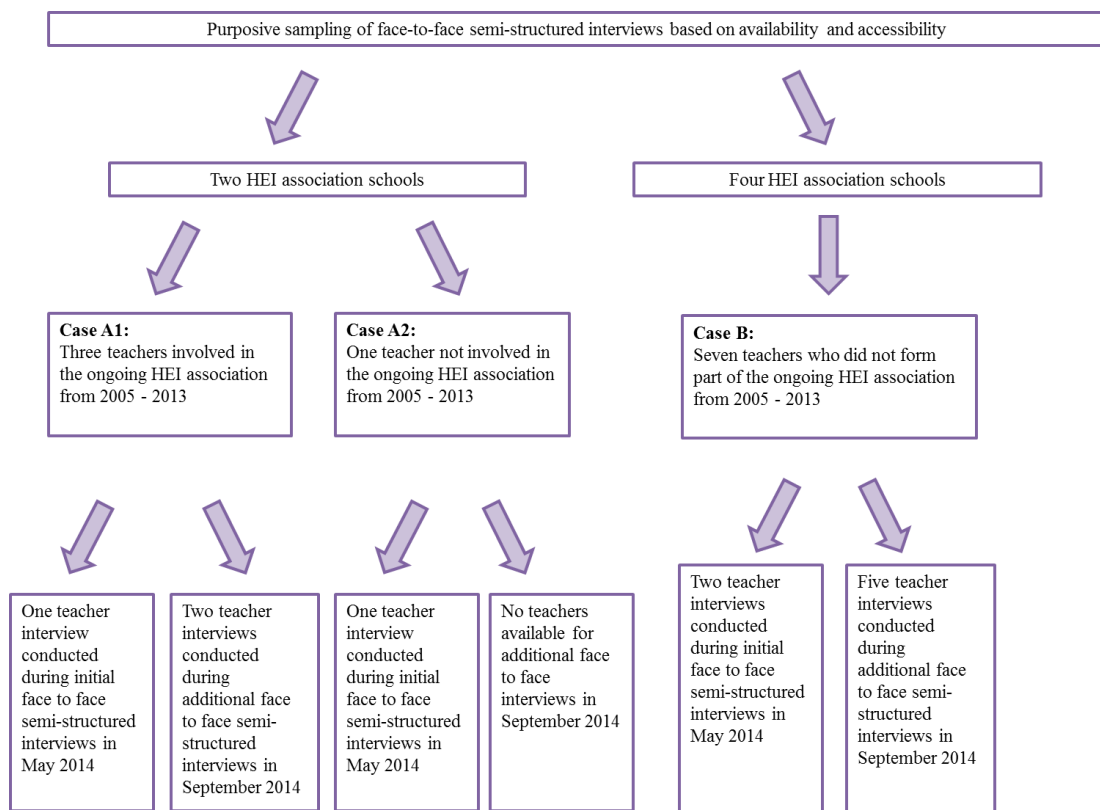
Figure 3.3: Selection of teachers for face-to-face semi-structured interviews per case

The selection of participants for the semi-structured interviews was guided by Morse's (1991) suggestions on qualities of a "good informant". I therefore I based my selections of participants on the following: 1) if the participant is knowledgeable (involved in the HEI association or not and could display instances of teacher resilience as a result thereof); 2) the participant is willing to engage in conversation; and 3) the participant is able to reflect and provide detailed information about the HEI association and how this could further inform knowledge on teacher resilience.

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For semi-structured interviews I initially purposefully selected two participants from a participatory school, Case A (one teacher that is involved in HEI association: Case A1 and one teacher who is not involved in the HEI association: Case A2) and two participants from a non-participatory school, Case B, based on availability and accessibility (Patton, 2002) in May 2014. Therefore, in this study the teacher participants were selected for face-to-face semi-structured interviews in terms of the following selection criteria: one teacher participant representative of each case based on willingness and availability (Patton, 2002). See Table 3.9, the second-last column, for selection criteria. The selection of participants was guided by sampling for saturation. Saturation of data will be achieved when no new data emerges from data sources (Houghton, Casey, Shaw & Murphy, 2013). To determine data saturation, analysis occurred concurrently with data collection in an iterative cycle (Sargeant, 2012:1). This also adhered to criteria of purposive sampling in which , as additional information is required additional participants are sought, thus the sample is not finalised before the study commences, but can change as the study progresses (Struwig & Stead, 2001). Seven additional semi-structured interviews were done in September 2014 to achieve saturation of data. I purposefully selected two additional participants from a participatory school - Case A (two teachers who are involved in the HEI association) and five additional participants from non-participating schools - Case B - based on availability and accessibility (Patton, 2002). Thus, the data were further enriched by conducting some interviews, performing preliminary analyses, and then selecting more participants to inform emerging data (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). Mason (2010) states that the greater the number of interviews that are done, the more defensible the research is. Thus, a total of eleven face-to-face semi-structured interviews were conducted to achieve data saturation.

Participants were selected carefully based on the purpose of the study in anticipation that each participant will provide valuable, unique and rich information relevant to the study. A disadvantage is that the sample size is determined by data saturation and not by statistical power analysis. Therefore, the researcher cannot predetermine the exact sample size and needed to continuously reflect on initial data analysis to ensure that no new themes or perspectives arise from data (Sargeant, 2012). Additionally, as the research site is located far away, the researcher had limited time to engage with participants and was dependent on the availability of participants during scheduled visits. Consequently, the researcher did not always have the luxury of continuing the open-ended type of research that saturation requires (Mason, 2010). To compensate for this factor the researcher scheduled additional visits to ensure saturation of data. Strengths and limitations employing face-to-face semi-structured interviews are discussed in section 3.5.2.

Table 3.9:   Selection of teacher participants per case

Teacher participants cases	Based on availability and accessibility	Based on coherence with the purpose of the study	Based on diversity in terms of different schools	Based on responsibility	Based on gender	Face to face semi-structured interviews	Additional face-to-face semi-structured interviews	Total face-to-face semi-structured interviews
A1	Ongoing research HEI association	Rural school Resource constraint Engaged in a rural HEI association	4 x participants: 3 x School A 1 x School B	1 x Principal 1 x Head of Department 2 x Teachers	3 x female 1 x male	1x female (School B)	1x male ([5]School A) 1x female (School A)	3 x participants: 1 x male (School A) 2 x female (Schools A and B)
A2	Ongoing research HEI association	Rural school Resource constraint Not engaged in a rural HEI association	2 x participants: 1 x School A 1 x School B	2 x Teachers	1 x male 1 x female	1x male (School A)	None available	1 x participants: 1 x male (School A)
B	Nominated by schools part of ongoing research HEI association based on willingness and availability	Rural school Resource constraint Not engaged in a rural HEI association	12 x participants: 3 x School C 3 x School D 3 x School E 3 x School F	3 x Principals 2 x Deputy Principal 7 x Teachers	6 x male 6 x female	1x male (School D) 1x male (School F)	4 x female (1x School C, 1x School D, 2 x School E) 1 x male (1 x School F)	7 x participants: 3 x male (1 x school D and 2 x school F) 4 x female (1 x school C, 1 x school D and 2 x school E)

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[5] Participant was previously a teacher at School A and involved in the ongoing longitudinal HEI association (2005-2012).

3.5 Data generation and documentation

Figure 3.4 provides an overview of the data-gathering and documentation process.

Convenience Sampling of two rural schools with a HEI association and four rural schools without a HEI association as Cases (six schools)

Purposive sampling of Case A: Six teachers (1 x male and 5 x female) from two schools with a HEI association (1 x Primary School and 1 x Secondary School) (2005-2013)

Purposive sampling of Case B: twelve teachers (6 x male and 6 x female) from four schools without a HEI association (3 x Primary Schools and 1 x Secondary School) (2013-2015)

Visits to purposive selected schools (April and May 2013) - observation of context and informal conversations with teachers documented in:
•Field notes (x2 researchers)
•Researcher diary (x2 researchers)
•Photographs

1) PRA-directed group activities June 2013 at Regional Conference Facility
Activities/questions:
• What do you know about the ongoing partnership/collaboration?
• Why do you think teachers and schools partner with a university?
• What are the benefits of (worked in) a school-university partnership?
• What are the challenges of a school-university partnership?
• How can a future school-university partnership grow?

2) Documentation of PRA-directed group activities:
•Audiovisual recordings and verbatim transcriptions of PRA activities
•Photographs
•Researcher observations (x2 researchers) in field notes

1) Initial thematic analysis of verbatim transcriptions
2) Member checking (May 2014) with participating teachers of PRA-directed group activities
   documented in:
• Field notes (x2 researhers)
• Researcher diary (x2 researchers)
• Photographs

1) Face-to-face semi-structured interviews (May 2014 and September 2014) with purposively selected teachers (see Chapter 3, section 3.4.2.3) at their different schools documented in:
• Audiorecordings
• Verbatim transcriptions of face-to-face semi-structured interviews
• Field notes
• Researcher diary

2) Member checking (Septempber 2014) with teachers who particpated in face-to-face semi-structured
   interviews in May 2014

3) Additional face-to-face semi-structured interviews to reach saturation of data (September 2014)

4) Member checking (April 2015) with teachers who participated in face to face semi-structured inteviews in
   September 2014

Thematic analysis of all data sources:
• Audiovisual recordings
• Verbatim transcriptions of PRA directed
  group activities and face-to-face semi-structured interviews
• Field notes (x2 researchers)
• Researcher diaries (x2 researchers)

Figure 3.4: Data-gathering and documentation process

3.5.1 PRA-directed group activities[6]

PRA-directed group activities were conducted with purposively selected teachers at a regional conference facility. See Photograph 3.10[7] of the teachers and researchers posing for a photograph after completion of the PRA-directed group activities.

Photograph 3.10:
Teachers and researchers

PRA activities were used to explore teachers' lives, environments, experiences and perceptions in relation to a HEI association (Chambers, 1995; Chambers, 2006). Opportunities for learning were created by doing, as PRA activities encourage sharing of ideas, information and analysis of local knowledge to plan and take action towards improvement (Choudhury, 1995; Binns, Hill & Nel, 1997, Versfeld, 1995). PRA was viewed as the method of choice for the current study as PRA enables methods for learning about rural life and conditions from, with and by rural people (Chambers, 1994:953). Furthermore, the contributions of all stakeholders, researchers and participants alike, were equally valued, denoting the implicit notion that PRA and HEI associations are both reciprocal and relational in nature (Babbie, 2002; Torres & Schaffer, 2000).

The PRA process was facilitated by researchers who led the discussion to an open-ended, specific or finite conceptual goal (Choudhury, 1995). The main researcher, a co-researcher (doctoral student) and I were involved in the facilitation of the PRA-directed group activities. The intention of the PRA activities was to create new ways of thinking that could ultimately lead to change in perception, understanding and behaviour on the part of both the researchers and participants (Chambers, 1994; Choudhury, 1995). New ways of thinking was encouraged by making use of group brainstorming and presentation thereof to other groups. Participants

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[6] In the FLY project PRA-directed group activities are used by research cohorts in related studies.
[7] The participants indicated their desire to be known and identified as part of this study. However, I remained sensitive to the issues of confidentiality and privacy as discussed in section 3.8.3.

had the freedom of choice in presenting their ideas. PRA activities allowed each participant to express him/herself freely without fear of failure as each participant's views are valued (Choudhury, 1995). Mukherjee and Chambers (2004) states that if attributes such as respect for the participants, patience and skills of listening are not reflected by the researchers that it can hamper the process and negatively influence the quality of data generated. The researchers were aware of this possible negative influence and listened respectfully to each participant's views and maintained an attitude of respect and of willingness to learn from each participant. Additionally, the process was thoroughly explained by the researchers and opportunity for further questions was provided to set participants at ease and create an atmosphere of sharing. Furthermore, the participants were allowed to brainstorm and discuss the activities in their language of choice during the group discussions, which further encouraged freedom of expression. The PRA-directed group activities were well planned by the researchers before commencement, having prepared materials, questions for activities, recording equipment and seeing to participant accommodation and refreshments.

A strength of PRA activities is that sharing and analysis is open-ended and visual and facilitated in a group (Chambers, 1994). Mukharjee and Chambers (2004) mentions that visual presentations make ideas simple to understand and provide a tangible base for discussion. A tangible product (in this study A3 posters – see photograph 3.11) was created, which served as a visual reminder of the activity, discussion and outcome reached during the PRA-directed group activities (Chambers, 1994; Choudury, 1995). Furthermore, PRA activities were informal and flexible and the large group was divided into smaller groups to create equal opportunity for all participants to share their perspectives and views. As the researchers/facilitators were part of the process, they moved between participants to encourage openness and sharing (Choudhury, 1995; Leurs, 1996). Care was taken by researchers to ensure that participants' perceptions and interpretations were validated by relevant discussion of their perceptions after the creation of a visual product (Mukharjee, 1993).
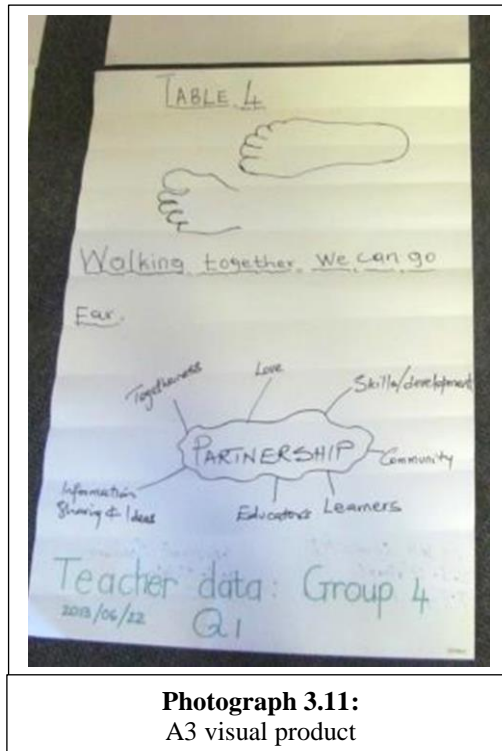
Photograph 3.11:
A3 visual product

Another strength of PRA is that the data generated by this method is accurate. Accuracy of data generated is partly attributed to the notion that participants' knowledge of their situation is seen as expert knowledge. This aspect of PRA was greatly valued by the researchers as the participants' views, perceptions and expressions of teacher resilience in the absence or presence of a HEI association were fundamental to this study. Additionally, the process also allowed participants to discuss and cross-check the knowledge of others in the moment (PRIA, 2000), which further enabled the accuracy of the data generated during PRA-directed group activities.

PRA encourages the participation of participants by creating a relaxed atmosphere and not rushing the process, by listening to participants without lecturing and probing without apathetically speeding up the process (Chambers, 1992). Additionally, PRA methods enable effective communication between participants and researchers. Communication is an instrument to clarify expressions, information and perceptions given by participants. Thus, a strength of PRA in my study was the element of openness, where the researchers were able to act as facilitators to open up participants' discussions and views. This further enabled the researcher involved in the PRA-directed group activities to interact from within in a natural setting (Mukharjee, 1993:149).

Empowering participants is a benefit of PRA. Participants' understanding of their challenges and opportunities is enhanced and therefore change is made possible. PRA can

foster the expectation of change for the betterment of their situation and resources (Chambers, 2006), which can lead to real steps taken by participants to improve their own situation.

PRA encourages learning from local participants (in this study the teachers) rather than from experts (in this study the researchers). Additionally, learning from PRA-directed activities is often rapid and progressive as PRA is a conscious exploration, a flexible use of methods, and is adaptable in the process (PRIA, 2000). The following extract from my field notes illustrates the flexible nature of PRA:

> *The participants naturally combined Activity 2 & 3. This led to the researchers showing flexibility as is expected of PRA, where we adapted and communicated that the two activities were already integrated in their discussions.* Field notes, June 2013

3.5.1.1 Limitations of utilising PRA-directed group activities

A limitation pertained to researchers' level of facilitation skills. The facilitator/researcher should be able to show sensitivity and considerable skill in encouraging silent or less articulate participants and subduing the more aggressive and over-assertive participants to enable involvement of all participants in the collective process towards understanding and shared experiences (Choudhury, 1995:55). The researchers' ability to establish rapport with participants is of the utmost importance to the success of PRA methods. This greatly depends on the behaviour of researchers. The researchers were continuously aware of their behaviour and interacted with the participants in a manner that communicated their willingness to learn from and with participants (Chambers, 2006). Thus, an effort was made to understand the perceptions, priorities and needs of participants. To further attempt to address this limitation the researchers drew on their collective skills as senior lecturer, teacher, educational psychologist and researcher.

Another limitation of PRA activities relates to the role of the researcher as an educator or facilitator rather than an expert. This might be difficult for researchers as traditionally researchers were viewed as the experts in the research process, contrary to which PRA advocates that the participants are the experts in their situation and that both the participants and researchers are to learn from each other, creating a context of learning (Choudhury, 1995; Leurs, 1996). In this study the researchers assumed the roles of committed participants and willing learners in an attempt to relinquish unilateral control over the research process (Binns, Hill & Nel, 1997).

Language, value and cultural differences can pose a possible challenge during PRA activities as researchers and participants come from different backgrounds and have different levels of experience. The experiential and resulting cultural differences can be transcended if

both participants and researchers learn to understand and respect their differences (Leurs, 1996), which was demonstrated by both the researchers and the participants. The participants were allowed to converse and brainstorm activities in their home language as a way to further facilitate overcoming this possible barrier. Additionally, one of the researchers is able to speak an African language, which was an asset in this study. Furthermore, explanations, examples and further clarification were offered by the researchers to address language and experiential barriers.

Time can be seen as a limitation regarding the use of PRA methods. To enable information-rich data to transpire, time is needed to facilitate this process. If building rapport is not done appropriately, the quality of the data can be hindered (Makharjee, 1993). The selected schools (see section 3.4 for selection of participants per case for PRA-directed group activities) were invited to a regional conference facility on a Saturday to ensure that teachers are able to attend. The researchers took care in providing a time frame (See Appendix K for programme) for the activities and adhered as far as possible to the times provided. Additionally, living arrangements for the evening were made before the session was arranged.

3.5.1.2   Description of PRA-directed group activities

During the PRA-directed group activities, the participants were given the opportunity to brainstorm and discuss five questions in group format. Each group planned and visually documented their discussion on the posters provided. Each group presented (verbally and visually) the outcome of their discussion. The activities/questions were the following: (and were the same questions asked in the broader FLY Community Engagement project to parents, learner-clients, researchers and academic service learning students).

Table 3.10: Question asked during the PRA-directed group activities

Number of activity	Question
Activity 1:	What do you know about the ongoing HEI association/collaboration?
Activity 2:	Why do you think teachers and schools partner with a university?
Activity 3:	What are the benefits (worked in) of a HEI association?
Activity 4:	What are the challenges of a HEI association?
Activity 5:	How can a future HEI association grow?

The following photographs serve to illustrate the process in which the PRA-directed activities were presented in order to provide a clear audit trail of the data collected (see Appendix K for Program of PRA-directed activities). The group session commenced by introductions with the

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main purpose to get to know each other and set the participants at ease. The researchers then provided an overview of the research study and the potential benefits. Informed consent was discussed and the appropriate documentation gathered (see Appendix C). The questions, as indicated above, were then presented seperately by researchers (see photographs 3.12; 3.15 and 3.16) and opportunity for further clarification was offered. The participants were then afforded the opportunity to discuss and brainstorm (see photograph 3.13) the questions posed whereafter they concurrently presented their perceptions to the group (see photograph 3.14). Photograph 3.17 shows posters created during PRA-directed group activities.
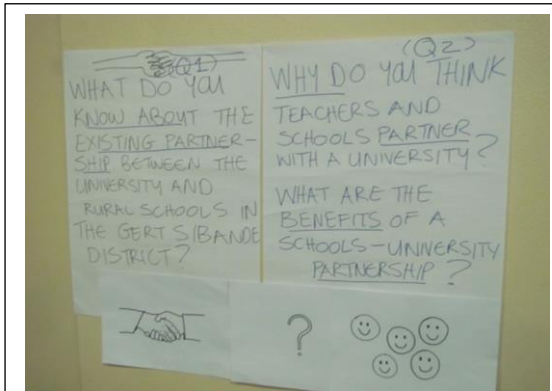
Photograph 3.12:
Activities 1 and 2 of PRA-directed group activities

Photograph 3.13:
Participants brainstorming during group activities

Photograph 3.14:
Participants presenting PRA-directed group activities

Photograph 3.15:
Main researcher presenting activity 2 and 3

Photograph 3.16:
Researcher presenting activity 5
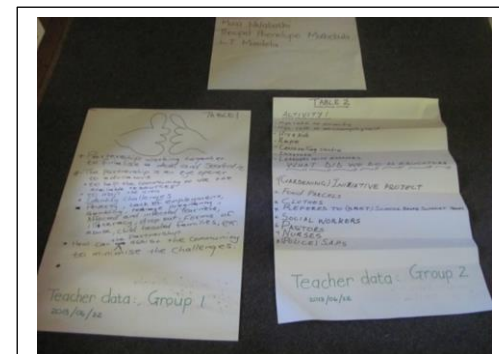
Photograph 3.17:
Posters created during PRA-directed group activities

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3.5.1.3   Documentation of PRA-directed group activities

Processes were documented via audiovisual recordings (verbatim transcriptions), visual data (photographs of products of PRA-directed activities taken directly after each presentation of the questions asked during the PRA-directed group activities) (Greef, 2005; Maree & Van der Westhuizen, 2007) and field notes (Mouton, 2008) of multiple research team members (field notes were documented during and after the PRA-directed activities as was possible - see Appendix H and I). Furthermore, observation as context of interaction (Angrosino & Mays de a Perez, 2000) of the school-communities was documented in field notes (Babbie & Mouton, 2001), visual data (photographs) (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Greef, 2005) and researcher diary (De Vos, 2005; Greef, 2005; Reed & Koliba, 1995). See Appendix L for research schedule that provides an audit trail of what, when and where data was collected.

Documenting PRA-directed group activities via audiovisual recording offers the advantage of one being able to watch the recording to observe subtle non-verbal behaviour that might have been neglected (due to active involvement in the research process) and failed to be recorded in the researcher's diary (observations). In this manner the authenticity of the study is enhanced (Patton, 2002). A possible limitation refers to the researcher being over-reliant on the audiovisual recording and not taking the proper measures to document observations. It was not always possible to document the field notes during the interactions with participants. However, the researcher was aware of this limitation and tried to document field notes as soon as possible after each activity and interview. As with qualitative research, large amounts of textual data are produced in the form of transcripts and observational field notes, which are time-consuming and labour-intensive (Pope, Ziebland & Mayz, 2000). I took special care to systematically and rigorously prepare and document the data further to enhance the rigour and authenticity of the data.

Visual data (photographs) serves the purpose of an additional source of data to corroborate findings (Chambers, 1994). Thus, triangulation is used to enhance the rigour in the study (PRIA, 2000). See section 3.5.3.1 for strengths and limitations of observation as context of interaction.

3.5.2   Face-to-face semi-structured interviews

The purpose of face-to-face semi-structured interviews is to explore meanings and perceptions of participants to gain a better understanding and/or generate hypotheses (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006) of the research phenomenon under study. In this study face to face semi-structured interviews are conducted to further inform how HEI associations can inform knowledge on teacher resilience. Therefore, the participants were encouraged to provide rich

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and detailed descriptions of the phenomena under study by making use of open-ended questions that followed up on the unexpected. Face-to-face semi-structured interviews can reveal and deliver insights that no other method can provide (Diefenbach, 2009:882).

In face-to-face semi-structured interviews a set of predetermined questions is used to elicit a specific response to a phenomenon being studied (Vogl, 2012). According to DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree (2006) key features of semi-structured interviews involve that interviews are scheduled in advance (in this study the proposed visit was communicated by the researcher and the participants were given the opportunity to indicate a suitable time); the location of the interviews is often scheduled outside of everyday events (interviews were mostly scheduled after school, with the few participants who were able to attend interviews in an off period during school time); the interview is often organised around a set of predetermined questions (See Appendix J for interview questions), while other questions often arise from the interview dialogue and, lastly, an interview can last from 30 minutes to several hours.

Hand (2003) advocates a reflexive approach to the interviewing process. During the interviewing process the researcher adhered to Spencer, Ritchie, Lewis and Dillon (2003) suggested components of reflexivity, namely 1) being aware of how bias may occur; 2) being thoughtful about how the researcher impacts the data collection and trying to minimize this (recording thoughts, feelings and perceptions in researcher diary); and 3) attempting to address bias by conducting a systematic and comprehensive analysis of and reflect on the research methods, decisions made and possible limitations to the study.

As part of the preparation for the face-to-face semi-structured interviews, the researcher reviewed and familiarised herself with probing techniques. Prompts are brief verbal and non-verbal interventions to let clients know you are with them and encourage them to talk more (Egan, 2007). The following probing techniques were used during the interviewing process: *Silent probe* (the researcher remained silent to allow the participant to think about the questions, "*Tell me more*" (the researcher requested further explanation or expansion on a particular point or issue), "*Baiting*" (the impression of knowledge regarding certain information is reflected, that in effect might encourage the participant to explain further), *verbal agreement* (interest in the participant's views is encouraged by using phrases such as "uh-huh" or "yes" or "okay", *leading* (a question is asked to encourage the participant to explain his/her reasoning) and *echo* (the researcher repeats or reflects the participant's point or view to encourage further development of the view or point (Russel, 2000). In addition, as the researcher is a trained educational psychologist she drew from her interviewing skills set, making use of further techniques such as rephrasing, summarising and highlighting as well as non-verbal probes such as nodding, using gestures and making eye contact (Egan, 2007).

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Face-to-face semi-structured interviews were held with purposefully selected participants to generate additional rich data. Semi-structured interviews are personal and intimate encounters where verbal questions are asked to illicit responses and perceptions from participants that are relevant to the study (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). Initially four participants were selected for individual interviews based on availability, accessibility and representativeness (Abrams, 2010; Patton, 2002). Thus two teachers from schools participating in ongoing FLY HEI association from 2005 to 2013 (one teacher who *was involved* in the HEI association at school and one teacher who *was not involved* in the HEI association at school) and two teachers from schools that did not participate in ongoing FLY HEI association during 2005 to 2013 were selected for individual semi-structured interviews. As discussed in section 3.5.2 seven additional face-to-face semi-structured interviews were conducted in September 2014 to reach data saturation (Houghton, Casey, Shaw & Murphy, 2013). Therefore, two teachers from schools participating in ongoing FLY HEI association from 2005 to 2013 (two teachers who *were involved* in the HEI association at school) and five teachers from schools that did not participate in ongoing FLY HEI association during the period from 2005 to 2013 were selected for the additional individual semi-structured interviews. A total of eleven face-to-face semi-structured interviews were conducted.

A strength of semi-structured interviews is the use of open-ended questions and posing follow-up questions or probes to further elaborate on specific topics relevant to the study as the way that participants reflect their constructs and experiences does not involve just one answer (Dilley, 2000; Maree, 2007). The semi-structured interview provides the opportunity for the researcher to adopt the participant's role and view the data from the participant's perspective to create the opportunity for further probing, making connections, making comments and pointing out discrepancies for further consideration (Dilley, 2000; Kelly, 2006; Maree, 2007; Struwig & Stead, 2001).

An outstanding strength of face-to-face semi-structured interviews is the access to perceptions and experiences of the participants and the opportunity to further explore meanings related to responses (Vogl, 2012). Interviews provide the opportunity to engage with participants face to face and individually, which is more personal and interactive. Interviews open up participants' voices, outlook, vision and perceptions in comparison to our own (Dilley, 2000). This as a result enabled the researcher to obtain more specific and detailed information from participants.

Questions to use in the face-to-face semi-structured interviews can be prepared before the interviews are conducted. Preparation can guide the researchers and ensure that the questions put are relevant to the purpose of the study. Furthermore, a list of prompt questions can be

prepared beforehand to ensure that the key issues are addressed and the flow of the interview is maintained (Whiting, 2008). See section 3.5.2 for probes employed during the interviewing process. Prompt questions help the researcher to gain more information, especially if the participant does not provide detailed answers or replies. Therefore, preparation of prompt questions and familiarisation with these are crucial to the interview process (Whiting, 2008:37).

Face-to-face semi-structured interviews provide the researcher with the opportunity to engage with a participant personally and conversationally. Showing sensitivity and adhering to everyday conversational norms before commencing the interview is necessary for a successful interview (Bell, Fahmy & Gordon, 2016) as it helps participants to feel at ease. When participants feel at ease they are more likely to answer honestly and openly.

Furthermore, including face-to-face semi-structured interviews in this study supplements data gathered from the PRA-directed group activities and contributes to the validity (triangulation of data sources) of this study. Supplementing the data with face-to-face semi-structured interviews provide far more exhaustive and multi-layered information about the phenomenon under study (Kopinak, 1999).

3.5.2.1 Limitations of face-to-face semi-structured interviews

A possible limitation regarding semi-structured interviews could be a lack of experience in conducting researcher-directed semi-structured interviews (Dilley, 2000; Maree, 2007). To attempt to address this limitation I drew on my interviewing skills as an Educational Psychologist and further familiarised myself with, observed and analysed (Dilley, 2000) senior researchers' interview techniques. Furthermore, I consulted with my supervisor in setting up a guiding interview schedule of specific open-ended questions to illicit experience and perceptions in line with the research questions of this study (Kelly, 2006).

Another limitation involved the nature of the interviews. Definition and instruction of interviews are by nature evasive, with few markers for success. Interviews are rarely precise, objective, repeatable, clear, predictable or measurable (Beer, 1997:114; Dilley, 2000). A strategy to address this potential limitation was to continuously reflect in my researcher diary after each interview to allow learning from my mistakes and to be cognisant of instances where I could have probed more. In so doing I attempted to improve my interview skills as researcher further to contribute to the authenticity and integrity of the research data.

A possible limitation of using face-to-face semi-structured interviews involves the argument that the interviewees' responses may be constrained or influenced by predetermined questions (Struwig & Stead, 2001). In an attempt to counter this limitation, I made use of my

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interviewing skills as an Educational Psychologist to be attentive and sensitive to any feelings of constraint. I gave plenty of opportunity to the participants to add anything else they wanted to share.

According to Creswell (1998) a further limitation is that participants need to be selected who are not hesitant to speak and share ideas. Another consideration is that the setting in which the interview takes place needs to contribute to an atmosphere of sharing. Although I did initially intend to involve more articulate participants for the interviews, it was not always possible and I had to settle for participants who were available and willing to participate in interviews during my scheduled visits (Whiting, 2008). This resulted in some participants being less articulate and more shy, which could result in interview data that are not adequate or information-rich. In an effort to compensate for this limitation I drew on my interviewing skills as an Educational Psychologist, making use of reframing, highlighting and probing to encourage further discussion. Furthermore, I had to rely on the participants to provide a room for the interviews and therefore had no control over these conditions. I did, however, provide clear instructions regarding a room or environment that is private and free of distractions. Most interviews and interview rooms were free of distractions and fairly private. Whiting (2008) suggests that although the setting in which the interviews takes place is an important consideration, communication skills are more crucial to the interviewing process than an appropriate interview setting.

DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree (2006) suggests that initially, at the commencement of the interviewing process elements of uncertainty and discomfort may be displayed. To induce a more relaxed atmosphere the researcher engaged in general conversation before the commencement of the interview. Furthermore, the use of open-ended and broad questions followed by prompts countered the initial discomfort experienced by participants. Additionally, the researcher was involved in the PRA-directed group activities, which lent familiarity. The researcher engaged in informal conversations and rapport building with participants during visits to the schools to compensate for this limitation. Familiarity has the advantage of participants' trusting the researcher, feeling more at ease during the interviewing process and feeling valued for being selected and approached for an interview (Mohorko & Hlebec, 2015).

In addition, a potential limitation regarding the flexible nature of face-to-face semi-structured interviews involves the possibility of the interview morphing into a 'chat', when focus on the research goal is lost. In an attempt to address this limitation, Creswell (1998) suggests that during the interview that the researcher should stick to questions, complete it within the specified time, to be respectful and courteous, and to put few questions and give little advice. The researcher adhered to these guidelines. However, in contrast, an interview

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that allows for conversation can be beneficial for validating data (Schober & Conrad, 1997; Belli, Lee, Stafford & Chou, 2004) as it contributes to participants' feeling at ease, as discussed in the previous paragraph.

Diefenbach (2009) remarks that the interview process may be influenced by unconscious bias on the part of both the participant and researcher when asked 'officially' about certain issues. This limitation refers to deeply embedded cultural scripts and internalised norms in our personalities and attitudes that influence our world-views, reasoning and social actions. As a way to compensate for this personal bias on the researcher's part, continuous reflection in a researcher diary was employed. Additionally, to address the limitation on the part of the particpants (Diefenbach, 2009) suggests that increasing the number of interviews conducted can improve this limitation to an extent. Involving different and more participants in interviews (to identify emerging patterns, provide a broader picture and enable the researcher to cross-check and compare data) can also improve the quality of interview-generated data. Member checking (of PRA group activities and face-to-face semi-structured interviews) and triangulation of data sources (collecting data from different participants at different times and in different places) and methods (data collected during PRA-directed group activities, face-to-face semi-structured interviews and observations) further improve the rigour of this study (Diefenbach, 2009).

3.5.2.2 Documentation of face-to-face semi-structured interviews

The individual interviews were documented via audio recordings, which were transcribed. Observations, impressions and factors that could impact the interview process were documented in the researcher's field notes (Mouton, 2008) and the researcher's diary (De Vos, 2005; Greef, 2005; Reed & Koliba, 1995). Transcribing the interviews verbatim is a time-consuming task and capturing the content accurately can be a challenge. To address this challenge the audio recordings were played back several times and the transcriptions were read and checked to ensure accuracy (Whiting, 2008). See section 3.5.1.1 for elaboration on data documentation.

3.5.2.3 Development of guiding questions

The first step I took in preparing for the individual interviews was to read and research literature with regard to teacher resilience and HEI associations and spent time in the research setting to familiarise myself with the context. Background research determines how deeply or broadly we as researchers probe for information relevant to the topic of interest (Dilley, 2000). The information gathered inspired me with ideas for questions (to elicit information to support

the purpose of my study) and to understand the context (rural setting) of the participants (Dilley, 2000; Struwig & Stead, 2001).

Secondly, the researcher reflected in her researcher diary on aspects that needed to be addressed and discussed before the commencement of each interview. Whiting (2008:37) compiled a checklist of points for explanation before an interview, which the researcher found particularly useful. The following points were covered by the researcher before commencement of the face-to-face semi-structured interviews: the purpose of the interview was discussed, followed by an assurance of confidentiality; it was explained that the participant may seek additional clarification and may decline to answer a specific question; lastly, the participants were each informed about the purpose of the audio recording and verbal permission to continue was obtained (Whiting, 2008; Cakmak, Isci, Uslu, Oztekin, Danisman & Karadag, 2015).

The individual interviews were between 20 and 60 minutes long. The guiding questions were drawn upon to encourage further elaboration on the phenomenon of interest. The guiding questions are based on the relevant literature relating to teacher resilience (Gu & Day, 2013; Castro, Kelly & Shih, 2010, Thieman, Henry & Kitchel, 2012, Ebersöhn & Ferreira, 2012, Ebersöhn, 2014). At first a draft of interview questions was compiled by the researcher, whereafter she met with the main researcher to refine and finalise questions. According to suggestions during this meeting some initial questions were combined and some excluded. See Appendix H for draft interview questions and the process of finalisation. See Appendix J for the guiding questions used during the face-to-face semi-structured interviews. See discussion of theoretical framework in Chapter 1, section 1.7.

3.5.3   Observation as context of interaction

An important way of gathering material about the social world is going into a social situation and observing it (Angrosino & Pérez, 2000). Observations in this study included observations of the school context/settings. This observation allowed for broad understanding and description of features of and developments in the school settings (see Appendix H and I for field notes in this regard and Appendix L for the research schedule) (Mukherjee & Chambers, 2004). The primary purpose of observation in this study was to collect non-verbal information to inform the researcher of how participants experienced the activities they engaged in and what transpired as a result (see for example Appendix H page 2). Important cues with regard to how to interact with participants were obtained from the observation, which enabled the researcher to act respectfully and appropriately towards participants. Observation served the purpose of supplementing other methods (PRA-directed group activities and face-to-face semi-structured interviews) and served the function of reflexivity (See Appendix H for researcher

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diary and field notes). An integral part of data documentation was documenting field notes of what was observed and what emerged during PRA-directed group activities and face-to-face semi-structured interviews.

During PRA activities observation occurred between the researcher and participants, with reference to observation as context of interaction (Chambers, 2008). Observation as context of interaction means that observation is seen as a context in which those involved in the research collaboration can interact (Angrosino & Pérez, 2000). Observation as context of interaction further helped the researcher to form preliminary ideas about the PRA activities and processes (Mukherjee & Chambers, 2004). Naturalistic observation involves observing phenomena in settings that are natural loci to those activities as human actions should always be interpreted in the situational context. An assumption regarding naturalistic observation is that this type of observation does not interfere with the participants or the activities being observed (Angrosino & Pérez, 2000). Photograph s 3.18 and 3.19 show the co-researcher and project leader taking field notes.

Photograph 3.18:
Co-researcher taking field notes

Photograph 3.19:
Co-researcher taking field notes

Observation as context of interaction involves the observers (researchers) to interact with or enter into a dialogic relationship with members of the group being studied (Angrosino & Pérez, 2000). See photograph 3.20 showing the main researcher interacting with participants during PRA-directed group activities.

Photograph 3.20:
Main researcher engaging with participants during brainstorming on PRA-directed group activities

A strength of observation is that it offers the opportunity to read non-verbal cues with regard to certain topics that are being discussed. Angrosino and Pérez (2000) argue that observational interaction is a tentative situational process. This means that it is shaped by existing structures of power and shifts in gender identity. This implies that participants validate the cues generated by others in the group. During the PRA-directed group activities it became clear via observation, and especially in observing the participants' social cues that they fostered certain expectations regarding their involvement in the HEI association. This then encouraged a discussion, which was followed by an explanation by the main researcher with regard to the outcomes and purpose of the HEI association. This happening can be attributed to the power structures at play during this session. Although it was not the intention to confirm power structures, it is worth being cognisant of the fact that the researchers form part of the university (a position of power) and the participants (from a resource-constrained rural area with high needs) possibly expected the mobilisation of resources. Observations made during the interaction enabled the researchers to facilitate further discussion of the participants' expectations. Employing PRA methods, it is important to keep in mind that expectations can be raised and that this needs to be aligned with the purpose of the research and followed by an explanation of what can be expected from all stakeholders (Mukherjee & Chambers, 2004). It is therefore important carefully and repeatedly to clarify the purpose of the particular activity at the beginning of each interaction. The following extract from my field notes illustrate this issue:

Liesel clarify process of FLY to group:
- explain 2013 – 2015
- NRF – government gave money to partner
- now: find out what everyone wants
- Beginning 2015 – all stakeholders sit together – blue print
- how to get more money and how improve schools etc.
NRF – not give money for equipment or books – its about us sharing knowledge and shared capacity (knowledge we can share) not physical resources but social, psychosocial and cultural, spiritual resources and capital – how work now and how work in future:
March 2013 – spoke parents and caregivers
June 2013 – educators
   - principals
   - researchers
(we want to understand how they/you experience)
2014 – educational psychology students
   - researchers
   - learners
360 degree evaluation: ask all role players to get big picture.   Field notes, June 2013

A strength of observation is that it can be used to supplement other data sources. The process of triangulation is an important part of PRA as this improves accuracy (Mukherjee & Chambers, 2004). Observation during PRA-directed group activities and face-to-face interviews) can be used to cross-check information. Furthermore, observation is a method that focuses on differences regarding the concrete, but also constantly focuses on changing the human relationships of particular people to further facilitate their voicing their perceptions (Angrosino & Pérez, 2000). As I had undertaken several visits to the different schools (see Appendix L for research schedule) I was able to observe the research context over a period of time to further enrich my data by means of observing and taking photographs (see Appendix H and G for Field notes) of the context.

3.5.3.1   Limitations of observation as context of interaction

A potential limitation of observation as context of interaction was observer bias, which involved the researcher bringing her own talents, experience, beliefs, bias and limitations to the study as the observer affects the situation that she observes (Angrosino & Pérez, 2000). With regard to observer bias Angrosino & Pérez (2000:643) state that the effects of the observer's presence can never be erased, thus there is no pure, objective, detached observation. In order to compensate for observer bias, I kept a researcher diary and attempted to disclose any assumptions, beliefs and bias of mine that could have influenced the results of the study and might inevitably have influenced the enquiry (Creswell & Miller, 2000). Furthermore, I was aware of and reflected on the possibility that if I were to be too distant (to compensate for

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observer bias) it could negatively impact on the relationship that I needed to establish with the participants to elicit valuable data (Nieuwenhuis, 2010b).

Observation in the context of interaction is interactive in nature and therefore stakeholders shape the inquiry itself (Angrosino & Perez, 2000). As the researcher was part of the process of the PRA-directed activities, documentation of the process may be delayed or neglected, which could result in incomplete observations of data that could influence the overall results of the study (Leurs, 1996). The researcher was involved in the facilitation and documentation of the PRA-directed group activities as she co-presented some of the activities with the main researcher. Furthermore, the researcher and her co-researcher (doctoral student) collaboratively co-ordinated and documented the activities during the workshop, which made proper observation and documentation of process difficult. Refer to Appendix H for planning of PRA-directed group activities. To compensate for this limitation, observations were documented in researcher diaries of both facilitators researcher and a co-researcher (doctoral student) as soon as possible during and after the PRA group activities. Photograph 3.21 illustrates the researcher as part of the process and Photograph 3.22 illustrates the researcher documenting observations as soon as possible after the PRA group activities.
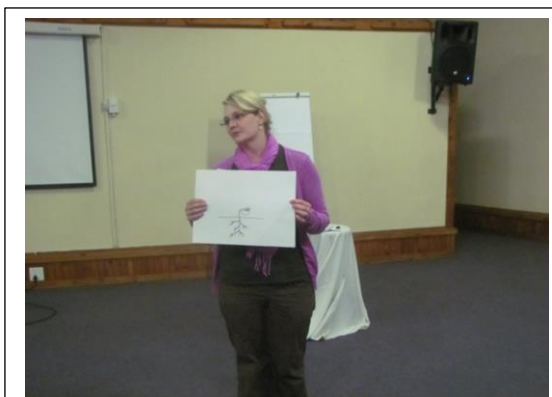
Photograph 3.21:
Researcher part of the research process

Photograph 3.22:
Researcher documenting observations

3.5.3.2   Documentation of observations

I documented my observations in a researcher diary – see Appendix H (Stuwig & Stead, 2001) and field notes – see Appendix H (Leedy & Omrod, 2005) as accurately as possible by firstly describing what I observed (thick descriptions of what actually happened, without value judgements) and secondly I reflected on what I observed (own thoughts and ideas about meanings) (Leedy & Omrod, 2005; Nieuwenhuis; 2010b). This could imply a possible limitation as documenting observations immediately after activities was not always possible due to time constraints and other responsibilities and continuous and internal reflection may

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have altered my initial perceptions (Leedy & Omrod, 2005). I, however, attempted to document observations during visits and further elaborate on my reflections as soon as possible after each visit and/or activity to enable authenticity in my study (Nieuwenhuis, 2010b; De Vos, Delport, Fouché & Strydom, 2011). Furthermore, I utilized a co-doctoral student's field notes and researcher diary as additional data sources to facilitate authenticity and verification of observations. The researchers attempted to continuously reflect and compare their understandings with one another (Creswell & Miller, 2000; Nieuwenhuis, 2010b).

Additionally, member checking with participants was employed to ensure that what I recorded in my observations/field notes was what had actually happened. A few participants indicated new and additional information during the member checking sessions of the face-to-face semi-structured interviews. The additional comments of participants during these member checking sessions were incorporated in the final results (Creswell & Miller, 2000).

3.6   Data analysis and interpretation

Data sources that were analysed included: verbatim transcribed data of PRA-directed group activities and face-to-face semi-structured interviews, observation data of mine, that of a co-doctoral student in the project and of the project leader, documented as field notes and researcher diaries as well as visual data (photographs). The purpose of this comparative case study was to analyse and compare how teachers' involvement in a rural HEI association (Cases A:1 and A:2) inform knowledge on teacher resilience as opposed to teachers from rural schools in the same area who did not form part of a rural HEI association (Case B) (refer to section 3.4 for detailed information of participants).

Data analysis occurred at two levels: in-case analysis (phase 1) and cross-case analysis (phase 2). For the in-case analysis, each case (A1 and A2) was first treated as an ample case in and of itself. Cross-case analysis commenced once analysis of each case was completed (Merriam, 1998:194-195). Figure 3.5 illustrates the process of data analysis in the study.

Data analysis

In-case analysis → **Cross-case analysis**

Case A1 and A2
Six teachers from schools participating in ongoing HEI association (2005-2012):
both involved and not involved in partnership:
1) Familarisation with data and listing key ideas and recurrent themes
2) Inductive coding and categorizing; explore themes of teacher resilience; partnership
3) Literature review
4) Identifying teacher resilience contributed by partnership

Case B
Twelve teachers from schools not participating in ongoing HEI association (during 2005-2013):
1) Familarisation with data and listing key ideas and recurrent themes
2) Inductive coding and categorizing; explore themes of teacher resilience; partnership
3) Literature review
4) Identifying teacher resilience contributed by partnership

Comparing data of participating and non-participating schools in terms of:
1) Identify teacher resilience
2) Identify factors contributing towards teacher resilience
3) Identify contribution of the HEI association towards teacher resilience

Figure 3.5: Data analysis process

My data analysis strategies were informed by a grounded theory approach. I mainly adhered to a constructivist grounded theory approach as my analysis was more fluid when compared to a traditional method of grounded theory. In adhering to a constructivist grounded theory I preserved the useful methodological strategies of grounded theory but placed them on a relativist epistemological foundation (Charmaz, 2003). In constructivist grounded theory data creation and analysis is based on the shared experiences and relationships with participants (Charmaz, 2011). This approach is a comparative, iretative and interactive approach to study empirical processes (Charmaz, 2003). Adhering to principles of constructivist grounded theory enabled me to explore how participants constructed meanings and actions related to their situation. To this end, data analysis is a construct that is located in time (2013-2015), place (rural schools in Mpumalanga) and context (education settings characterised by high-need and high-risk) that influences the emergent results (Charmaz, 2011).

Throughout my study I engaged in continuous analysis as the analytical process started during data collection. The data that were gathered shaped the ongoing data collection as the data was initially analysed (the researcher was in the field collecting the data and started thinking about what was heard and seen). This initial analysis represented the advantage of

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allowing the researcher to refine research questions and pursue emerging avenues of inquiry in further depth (Pope, Ziebland & Mays, 2000:114). This approach is in line with a core tenet of constructivist grounded theory as collection of data and data analysis occurred simultaneously (Charmaz, 2003). The verbatim transcriptions of the PRA-directed group activities were analysed first. I subsequently enriched the data analysis by including analysis of photographs, field notes, researcher diary and the verbatim transcriptions of the face-to-face semi-structured interviews. This enabled me to confirm the analysis and created the opportunity for the identification of additional themes. The strength of grounded theory in terms of its comparative and interactive nature is reflected by my analysis process as I continually interacted with the data and compared resultend patterns and themes to sharpen my emerging analysis (Charmaz, 2006; 2007; 2008; 2009).

Constructivist grounded theory acknowledges the active role the researcher play in the shaping of the research (Bryan & Charmaz, 2007; Charmaz, 2006; 2009). Thus, the validity of the data analysis and interpretation is greatly influenced by the researcher. The researcher takes the first step, working on the transcripts, searching for categories and patterns, grouping of data and coding the data. The data analysis and interpretation are therefore characterised by the ambiguity and subjectivity of the researcher (Diefenbach, 2009). Adopting a constructivist grounded theory approach to analysis enables researcher reflexivity (see Appendix H for researcher diary), argued to be a fundamental strength of constructivist grounded theory (Bryan & Charmaz, 2007; Charmaz, 2006; 2009). Good qualitative analysis as a result relies on the skill, vision and integrity of the researcher doing the analysis (Pope, Ziebland & Mays, 2000). On the other hand, this gives the researcher the freedom of creativity to analyse and interpret the data that are aligned with sound methodological choices made before data collection. To address this limitation, triangulation of researchers (insights from both a co-researcher and the main researcher were gathered) to code and interpret the data. Additionally, insights of leading scholars in the field of teacher resilience were gained and incorporated when reporting the results of the study. Decisions regarding inclusion and exclusion of data, grouping and categories and coding of data and the final results were also recorded in the researcher diary to provide an audit trail. See Appendix H for my researcher diary. The following extract from my researcher diary reflects my ideas and perceptions regarding the analysis and interpretation of the data:

> *During the analysis phase of the study, I realised that no formula exists for the transformation of data into findings and that the process greatly relies on my interpretation of the data and are thus, as Patton (2002) states, "analysis remains inquirer-dependent". As such I needed to revel, as Patton did, in the uncertainties,*

doubts and creativity of qualitative analysis. I especially liked the metaphor of analysis as a metamorphoses mentioned in Patton's (2002) article: "Analysis begins during a larval stage that, if fully developed, metamorphoses from caterpillar-like beginning into the splendour of the mature butterfly". I also viewed the analysis process in the following way: "Findings emerge like an artistic mural created from collage-like pieces that make sense in new ways when seen and understood as part of a greater whole" (Patton, 2002:275). This metaphor is especially reflected in my interpretation of the world by making meaning of happenings viewed against the backdrop of the bigger picture.   Researcher diary, February 2016

3.6.1   Phase 1: In-case analysis

A constructivist grounded theory is an emergent method that builds an inductive understanding of events as it unfolds and as knowledge is accumulated (Charmaz, 2008). During the first phase, in-case analysis data were gathered (Cases A1 and A2 and Case B) and the relevant data analysed separately. In-case analysis focused on analysing the verbatim transcribed data from each case, separately focusing on identifying expressions of teacher resilience in terms of protective resources and risk factors in the presence or absence of HEI associations. Inductive thematic analysis guided the analysis of the generated data.

3.6.1.1   Thematic analysis

The textual data (transcribed PRA-directed group activities and individual semi-structured interviews) were explored using thematic analysis. I first started with the transcribed data of the PRA-directed group activities, whereafter I included the transcribed data of the face-to-face semi-structured interviews and subsequently supplemented the analysis with visual data which were captured in the form of photographs. Thematic analysis involves identifying recurring themes or words that reflect core meanings, thus enabling the researcher to explore the phenomenon of interest (Maree & Van der Westhuizen, 2007; Quinn-Patton, 2002). The textual data and visual data were approached in steps. The data were searched for evidence of expressions of teacher resilience in terms of protective resources and risk factors by teachers in the presence or absence of HEI associations.

3.6.1.1.1 Step 1: Familiarisation of data

During the first stage I familiarised myself with the data by reading and re-reading the data and therefore immersed myself in the raw data, listening to and watching audiovisual data and other data sources in order to list key ideas and recurring themes or patterns that emerged. Qualitative research uses analytical categories to describe and explain social phenomena. These

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categories were obtained gradually from data, thus derived inductively (Pope, Ziebland & Mays, 2000). I created categories by defining what I see in the data and employed a line-by-line analysis to reduce imputing my motives on the data but rather illicit the views and concerns of participants which is in line with a constructivist grounded theory approach (Charmaz, 2003; 2011). I listed initial categories in my researcher diary. The outcome of this stage resulted in a set of categories and a description of the data according to these categories, which served as a basis for the analysis (Meijer, Verloop & Beijaard, 2002). See Appendix H for initial categories.

3.6.1.1.2 Step 2: Generation of initial categories

Constructivist grounded theory postulate that initial coding and open-coding forces the researcher to make systematic inferences about data to enabled focussed analysis by using the frequent initial categories to sort, synthesise and conceptualise the large amount of data gathered (Charmaz, 2011). This process of rigorous active involvement reflects the strength of constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2003). During stage 2 I made use of open coding to identify key issues, concepts, patterns and themes and then I organised the data into manageable chunks and labelled them with a view to further exploration. I generated an initial list of categories from the data that showed a recurring pattern. Subsequently I systematically analysed and further organised data according to identified initial categories. Reformulation or generation of new categories occurred during this stage, which required a coherent and systematic approach (Pope, Ziebland & Mays, 2000). This process of systematic analysis according to the initial categories was continued until no further categories could be formulated. The key aspect that presented itself during this process is that it is inclusive, therefore categories are added to reflect as many of the nuances in the data as possible, rather than reducing the data to a few numerical codes (Pope, Ziebland & Mays, 2000:114). Categories were then comprehensively described and named in a way that best suited the description. This provided comprehensive categories of data answering research questions (Pope, Ziebland & Mays, 2000; Braun & Clarke, 2006; Meijer, Verloop & Beijaard, 2002). Photograph 3.23 shows examples of my process of generating initial categories (see Appendix H for comprehensive analysis process).

Group (Participant who spoke)	Line	Verbatim transcript	Initial analysis
	90	online. So most of the applications went through to	*- applicat. went through - diff. Univ*
	91	different universities in time and we've got a	*no. of*
	92	number of learners now who are at universities and	*- learners @ Univ.*
	93	most of this partnership it also assisted educators on	
	94	how to teach learners on new sounds and also this	*- assist educ. - teach*
	95	partnership here we've benefited eh I mean the	*• sounds*
	96	educators the educators benefited on how to teach	*• write*
	97	the learners on how to write and also on how to	*• read*
	98	read. Because you find that we as the educators you	
	99	find that when we are at eh at our schools you find	*Grade 9 learner*
	100	that a grade 9 learner cannot write, a grade 9 learner	*cannot read – P.s.*
	101	cannot read, so as we sat together with the partner	*assist 2 best assist*
	102	and we've decided that they should also assist us on	*learners.*
	103	how we can best assist our learners on so that they	
	104	would be able to do that they are able to write and	
	105	also to read and also they have also assisted us with	
	106	we also had a counselling centre in our school	*- Counselling centre*
	107	because we saw that as educators there are a lot of	*ᴄ learners want 2*
	108	things that that our learners are facing. Sometimes	*open-up – dnt know*
	109	you find that some of the learners they want to open	*who to*
	110	up but they don't know how to open up and to	
	111	whom they are supposed to open up so we've	*ᴄ one member tak*
	112	decided that we should also have a counselling	*charge of counsel*
	113	centre but it was through them opening our eye so	*centre*
	114	we had also a counselling centre in our school	
	115	where we, we had one of our members eh who was	
	116	eh taking charge of the counselling centre and	
	117	where most of the learners they came to the centre	
	118	where the educator were able to counsel them and	
	119	also through the partnership the our school was able	*- Library:*
	120	to eh have eh library. According to my	*• not building –*
	121	understanding when we are talking about a library	*collect. of books*

(Handwritten margin annotations: "knowl. gener.", "in-sch risk f", "knowl. gener.", "resource mobilis", "out-of sch risk f", "out of sch risk f", "knowl + still share + generat")

Photograph 3.23:
Step 2: Generating initial categories

3.6.1.1.3 Step 3: Searching for themes

During stage 3 I combined categories into overarching themes that accurately depict the data. I began to focus on broader patterns in the data and combining the coded data with proposed themes. At this stage a large number of "fuzzy categories" was created and these categories were further refined and reduced by grouping them together. This process enabled me to identify key themes or categories for further investigation (Pope, Ziebland & Mays, 2000). I described exactly what each theme and category means by providing short text descriptors. The descriptors elaborated what the specific theme or category included or excluded (Pope, Ziebland & Mays, 2000; Braun & Clarke, 2006). Photograph s 3.24 and 3.25 show examples of my process of identifying themes (see Appendix H for comprehensive analysis process).

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Photograph 3.24:
Step 3: Identifying themes

3.6.1.1.4 Step 4: Reviewing themes

During stage 4 I looked at how the themes supported the data and at the overarching theoretical perspective. A constructivist grounded theory approach encourages new ideas about theories. The aim of constructivist grounded theory is not theoretical generalisations but rather to achieve an interpretive understanding of participants' worlds (Charmaz, 2011). This involves an iterative process of testing and retesting of theoretical ideas using the data (Pope, Ziebland & Mays, 2000). Thus, the properties of categories are illuminated by comparing the analysis with literature as a means to position the data (Charmaz, 2011). This phase is where the reworking of initial themes took place. Some existing themes collapsed into each other and other themes needed to be condensed into smaller units. This resulted in coherent recognition of how themes are patterned to tell an accurate story about the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

A possible limitation to the use of a constructivist grounded theory relates to the notion that the data analysis and interpretation should not be informed by the literature review as the researcher is encouraged to use her own ideas. It this study it was however impossible to avoid previous reading and some degree of literature review as a preliminary literature review is necessary for the thesis defense as part of the university process. To this end, I attempted to let

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the review of literature and previous readings on related concepts of this study to "lie fallow " as suggested by Charmaz (2006;166) until the later stages of the research. In addition, I continuously reflected in my researcher diary on my thoughts, ideas and perceptions to provide an audit trail of my thought processes and methodological choices (see Appendix H) and consulted on a regular basis with the main researcher to circumvent and address this limitation. The following extract from my researcher diary illustrates how regular meetings with the main researcher reminded me to conduct my analysis and interpretation based on what is present in the data and not on my own preconceived ideas:

> *I met with my supervisor to discuss the process and to receive some input regarding my process. She suggested that I make sure that I code and include all the nuances and make sure that I don't simplify the data too much as this can result that the themes are not reflecting what is there in the data.*

<div align="right">Researcher diary July 2016, p. 66</div>

Photograph 3.25 shows my process of identifying and reworking of initial themes (see Appendix H for comprehensive analysis process).

Photograph 3.25:
Process of identifying and reworking of initial themes

3.6.1.1.5 Step 5: Defining and naming themes

During this stage I defined each theme, which aspects of data were being captured, and what was interesting about the themes. In this phase, identification of the essence of the themes relates to how each specific theme affects the entire picture of the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). I interpreted the data by defining the concepts and finding associations between themes. This interpretation was influenced by the research objectives and the themes that emerged from the data (Pope, Ziebland & Mays, 2000:116). During this stage interpretations were made explicit, reflecting what happenend in the empirical world of the rural teachers in this study in an attempt to offer an interpretation on why and how data transpired (Charmaz, 2007; 2011). Photographs 3.26 and 3.27 serve as examples to illustrate defining and naming of themes (see Appendix H for comprehensive analysis process).
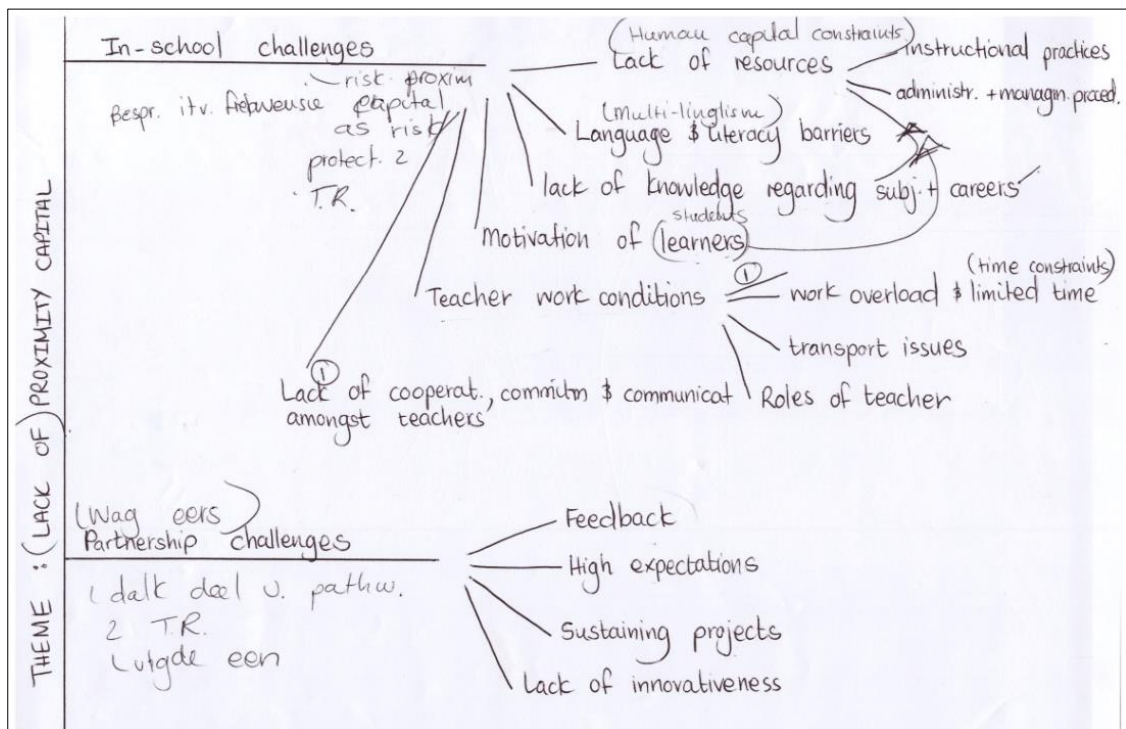
Photograph 3.26:
Defining and naming themes
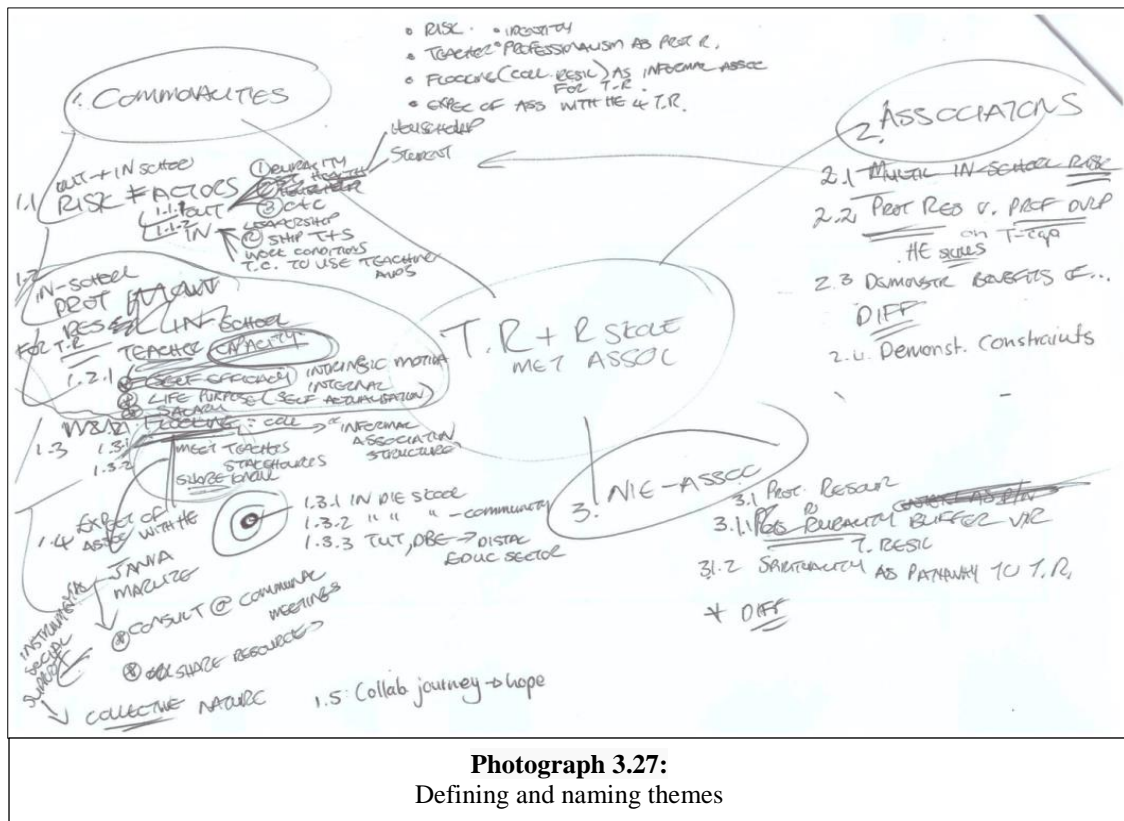
Photograph 3.27:
Defining and naming themes

3.6.1.1.6 Step 6: Reporting

During this stage a decision is made regarding which themes make a meaningful contribution to understanding what is going on within the data. Making use of more than one analyst can improve the consistency or reliability of the analysis, and compensate for researcher bias (Pope, Ziebland & Mays, 2000). Subsequently member checking was conducted with a co-researcher to ensure that the descriptions are an accurate representation.

3.6.2   Phase 2: Cross-case analysis

After completing the in-case analysis, I focused on the cross-case analysis in the same way I approached the in-case analysis (Steps 1 to 6) to address two of the secondary questions of the study: How do the experiences of protective resources and risk factors by teachers in rural schools compare in the presence or absence of a HEI association? How does HEI association promote/not teacher resilience in terms of protective resources and risk factors in rural schools? During cross-case analysis I used data from both cases to address these questions. In this phase I explored the themes and categories that had emerged throughout each case and then compared them to see if these themes and categories were supported in both cases. The key focus was not on the nature and shape of relations per se, but rather on the nature of the similarities and differences between the cases to construe what this might tell us about the dynamics that were significant in these similarities or differences (Thomas, 2011:517).

3.6.3   Inclusion and exclusion criteria

The formulation of inclusion and exclusion criteria was an important component of the analysis and interpretation process (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). I aimed to provide data analysis that was complete and correct (Braun & Clarke, 2006) and ensured that adequate detail of what was included in themes was reflected in the inclusion and exclusion criteria. To this end I used inclusion and exclusion criteria based on instances of teacher resilience shared by participants during the data generation process. See Appendix M for the inclusion and exclusion criteria.

3.7   Rigour of the study

I employed various strategies such as credibility, dependability, transferability and authenticity to ensure the quality and rigour of this study.

3.7.1   Credibility

Credibility refers to the degree to which the research conclusions are viewed as true by the readers. Findings are therefore presented that are convincing and believable (Van der Riet & Durrheim, 2006). In an attempt to adhere to this criterion I often asked myself the following question: "To what extent are the findings truthful?" Asking myself this question led to me continuously considering other and/or all possible factors that might explain the results I anticipate and find. To enhance credibility in my study I employed strategies such as triangulation, member checking, prolonged engagement and peer review or debriefing.

3.7.1.1   Triangulation

To ensure credibility in this study I employed triangulation of data collection methods, data sources, researchers (investigators) and theory (Kelly, 2006). Triangulation of data collection methods was achieved by audio-visual recordings of PRA-directed group activities and face-to-face semi-structured interviews (transcribed verbatim), documenting observations in field notes, reflecting in my researcher diary and collecting visual data (photographs). To achieve triangulation of different data sources teachers from six schools were included in the study (see section 3.4 of this chapter for case and participant selection). Triangulation of researchers was achieved by the involvement of a main researcher, me as the researcher and a co-researcher (doctoral student). Theory triangulation refers to the use of multiple perspectives to interpret data. Theory triangulation was done by undertaking a thorough literature review in which different theories pertaining to teacher resilience and HEI associations were deliberated. Triangulation is a process which enables clarification of meanings, verifying the repeatability of observations or interpretations by using multiple perspectives (Casey & Murphy, 2009; Schwandt, 2000:443). Thus, the process involves verifying data from different sources (data

and researchers) that could shed light on a perspective or theme (Creswell, 1998). Triangulation is a process by which the researcher searches for links among different data sources to structure information according to general themes and/or categories (Creswell & Miller, 2000). This process of triangulation is systematic, with the purpose of sifting and sorting data in order to uncover common themes or categories in all data sources and refining the themes and/or categories by eliminating overlapping themes (Creswell & Miller, 2000). The purpose of triangulation is to confirm data from multiple data sources to ensure that data are investigated in their totality to enhance the credibility of the study's findings (Casey & Murphy, 2009; Houghton, Casey, Shaw & Murphy; 2013). Furthermore, I continuously looked for discrepant evidence in the data as a means to produce a rich and credible account of the research findings (Blanche & Durrheim, 2006). I aimed to portray a comprehensive picture of the phenomenon being studied by obtaining multiple perspectives from various data sources and perceptions to clarify meaning, and verify the repeatability of an observation or interpretation (Houghton, Casey & Schwandt, 2000:443; Shaw & Murphy, 2013). Multiple data sources included transcriptions of PRA-directed group activities (see Appendix E) and interviews (see Appendix F), observation, field notes and researcher diaries (see Appendixes H & I).

3.7.1.2   Member checking

I did member checking with participants (verbatim transcriptions of PRA activities and transcribed data of interviews) as a means to enhance validity and credibility in the study. Member checking is a process by which the researcher confirms the credibility of information by reflecting the data and interpretation in a narrative to the participants (Creswell & Miller, 2000:127) so that the participants can judge the accuracy and credibility of the account (Creswell, 1998). I did member checking sessions in May 2014 (of PRA-directed activities done in June 2013) and in September 2014 (semi-structured individual interviews done in May 2014) and in April 2015 (semi-structured individual interviews done in September 2014). During member checking I reflected the participants' perceptions and allowed participants to read the transcriptions of PRA-directed group activities and interviews to ensure accuracy in recording. I further incorporated the participants' comments during these member checking sessions in the final results (Creswell & Miller, 2000). This process further created the opportunity for participants to reflect on their own accounts of perceptions, as they portrayed them during the PRA-directed group activities and face-to-face semi-structured interviews (See Appendix H for field notes on member checking sessions). The following extract from my

researcher diary reflects some of my thoughts on the member checking session of the PRA-directed group activities:

> *The member checking session was arranged and confirmed although only three teachers showed up for the actual session. This seems to be the joy of doing research with human participants! We did, however, carry on with the member checking session and opportunity was given to the teachers to add to the data, although they were happy that the data was reflected satisfactorily. It might, however, be possible as the data collection occurred almost a year ago, that the participants were unable to recall specific detail from that day. Member checking did, however, give them the opportunity retrospectively to give additional information.*

<div align="right">

Member checking session (Workshop June 2013)

Researcher diary, 28 February 2014

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3.7.1.3   Prolonged engagement

Another validity procedure that I employed in the study was to visit the research site over a period of three years, between 2013 and 2015, thus engaging in the research setting for a prolonged period of time and being personally in contact with the participants and activities regarding the case and continuously reflecting, observing and revising the meaning-making processes (Schwandt, 2000:445). This builds trust and rapport with the participants to enable accessing relevant disclosing information. Furthermore, prolonged engagement enabled me to observe and learn about the culture of the participants (Guba & Lincoln, 2005; Merriam, 1998). In addition continued observation in the research setting enabled me as the researcher to verify and compare data with observational data. Staying true to my epistemological paradigm, constructivism, staying prolonged periods in the field will give opportunity for pluralistic perspectives from participants regarding the phenomenon being studied (Creswell & Miller, 2000:128; Houghton, Casey, Shaw & Murphy, 2013). Saturation of data was achieved when no new data emerged from data sources (Houghton, Casey, Shaw & Murphy, 2013). I visited the research site over a period of three years to gain comprehensive understanding of the phenomena under investigation (see Appendix L for the research schedule).

3.7.1.4   Peer debriefing

In this study I depended on peer debriefing and review. This process involves comments from the main investigator and co-researcher regarding data generation, analysis and interpretation processes. Comments from both the main investigator and the co-researcher enabled me to deepen my understanding as well as served the purpose of analysing the data as representatively as possible. I also had the opportunity to meet with leading scholars in the

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field of teacher resilience who provided additional insights with regard to the data generation, analysis and interpretation processes, and adding additional rigour to the study. The purpose of peer debriefing or reviewing is to verify whether or not an expert agrees with the processes and especially the interpretation of data reported in this study (Houghton, Casey, Shaw & Murphy, 2013). Guba and Lincoln (2005) state that if peers define and/or interpret the data in a similar way, that this strategy can make researchers' interpretation of data more credible. Discussing the data coding and interpretation with peers and/or experts challenged my way of thinking regarding certain inferences and conclusions I had reached that enhanced the truthfulness of my findings (see Appendix H).

3.7.2   Dependability

Dependability involves the trustworthiness of the study. This refers to the degree that the reader can be persuaded that the findings occurred as the researcher reported. Dependability is achieved by providing rich and detailed descriptions of how certain decisions and beliefs developed during contextual interaction (Van der Riet & Durrheim, 2006). Rich descriptions of methodological choices and processes ensure rigour in this study (Taylor, 2013). Trustworthiness is always negotiable and flexible in nature, not being a matter of definitive explanation whereby readers are compelled to accept an account (Seale, 1999:468). Although readers may not share my interpretation of the data, they should, according to Koch (1998) be able to discern the means by which it was reached. Discerning the means can be achieved by an audit trail, reflexivity as well as peer debriefing (see Appendix H).

3.7.2.1   Audit trail

I provided an audit trail to enhance the dependability of the study. An audit trail involves the researcher providing detailed and clear documentation (researcher diary – see Appendix H) of the research process, decisions and data analysis procedures in order to determine the trustworthiness of the study (Creswell & Miller, 2000:128). The audit trail provides rigour in the study by providing a rationale for the methodological and interpretative judgements and decisions made by the researcher (Houghton, Casey, Shaw & Murphy, 2013). An audit trail is also useful in establishing confirmability and is an exercise in reflexivity (Seale, 1999). I aimed to continuously document (process notes) my planning and decisions regarding methodology, data collection and data analysis procedures and progress to further strengthen dependability and confirmability of the study (Babbie & Mouton, 2002, Seale, 1999). I made a consistent effort to record dates when I entered the field and/or met with the main researcher and document who participated in and contributed to certain phases of the study. Additionally, I attempted to record any possible factors that could have positively or negatively impacted on

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the fieldwork and thus the results of the study (Mouton, 2008). See Appendix H for my researcher diary and field notes.

3.7.2.2 Reflexivity

Reflexivity facilitates self-examination, which in turn leads to the researcher acknowledging values, assumptions and prejudice that could influence the research (Hand, 2003; Koch & Harrington, 1998). A reflective diary (recording thoughts about decisions) enables transparency of decisions made during the research process. During the data collection phase, thoughts and ideas documented in a reflective diary can further inform the development and finalising of themes and/or categories (Houghton, Casey, Shaw & Murphy, 2013). Hammersely and Atkinson (2007:15) advocate that reflexivity is a process that brings about spoken and unspoken dialogues and the common sense of bringing the world of the researcher and the research participants to the surface for discussion and analysis. To further ensure validity of the study, I attempted to disclose any assumptions, beliefs and bias I had that could have influenced the results of the study and might have inevitably influenced the inquiry (Creswell & Miller, 2000). As the researcher is part of the research, it was important that decision trails include personal contributions as well as personal responses (Jasper, 2005) as reflexivity acknowledges that my orientation as researcher is shaped by my socio-historical location, which includes my values and interests (Hammersely & Atkinson, 2007:15). See Appendix H for my researcher diary and field notes.

3.7.3 Transferability

Transferability is the extent to which the data and context of the research study can be generalised to other similar settings (Van der Riet & Durrheim, 2006). Transferability of the results of this study was enhanced by providing rich and detailed descriptions of the research setting, the participants, research methods, the themes formulated, and by providing examples of raw data to enable readers to consider interpretations (Houghton, Casey, Shaw & Murphy, 2013; Creswell & Miller, 2000). Rich descriptions pertain to a constructivist perspective, where the research site is clearly contextualised, which further enables the applicability of the findings to other similar settings (Creswell & Miller, 2000:129). I attempted to provide rich and detailed descriptions of the research setting, the participants, research methods and analysis to enable others to see the applicability and relevance of the findings in similar settings (Creswell & Miller, 2000; Sangster-Gormley, 2013; Taylor, 2013). Detailed and rich descriptions further enable transferability as the structures of meaning that develop in this specific context are captured and can then be transferred to new contexts in other studies. This

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provides a framework for interpreting the arrangements of meaning and action in the new contexts (Van der Riet & Durrheim, 2006:92). Additionally, the study occurred in a natural setting that further enhances the applicability of findings to other real-world settings and is therefore generalisable (Van der Riet & Durrheim, 2006). See section 3.4 for the selection and description of cases.

3.7.4 Authenticity

Patton (2002:546) depicts authenticity as being reflexive, conscious of one's own perspective, appreciation for the perspectives of others and accuracy and fairness in the portrayal of participants' constructions in the findings of the study. In qualitative studies authenticity is determined in terms of fairness and includes ontological, educative, catalytic and tactical authenticity (Guba & Lincoln, 2005, Mertens, 1998). Guba and Lincoln (2005) describe fairness as a quality of balance referring to illustrating all participants' views, concerns, perspectives and voices in the results. In an attempt to adhere to authenticity criteria I tried to represent all participants' views and perspectives, thus presenting different realities (fairness). Member checking also further facilitated this process (see Appendix H). Furthermore, as the study progressed, participants' views and perceptions of their lives were enriched, attaining ontological authenticity (reflected in an audit trial - see Appendix H). This contributed to participants' better understanding of how HEI associations can promote teacher resilience. The study further met the criteria of tactical authenticity as the research initiated action, empowered participants and advanced a deeper understanding of the impact of future action (Guba & Lincoln, 2005). With regard to educative authenticity, the study helped the participants to appreciate the viewpoints of people other than themselves (Seale, 1999).

To further enhance the authenticity of the study the analysis and findings were collectively drawn from multiple data sources (transcriptions of PRA-directed group activities and face-to-face semi-structured interviews, observation of researchers documented in field notes and researcher diaries) and ongoing data discussion among researchers (co-researcher and main researcher) (Baines & Cunningham, 2011:76). See Appendix H for researcher diary and field notes.

3.8 Ethical considerations

I agree with Boser (2006:12) that new ways of understanding and addressing ethical considerations such as informed consent and confidentially need to be developed in research employing PRA. Ethical research processes in traditional research are based in a distanced objectivist research stance, where the researcher in PRA "seeks to share power in knowledge generation and potential decision-making based on that knowledge" (Boser, 2006:12).

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Although I do adhere to basic ethical guidelines such as voluntary and informed consent, privacy and confidentiality and protection from harm, I incorporate the ethical guidelines proposed by Emanual, Wendler and Grady (2000) and Green, George, Daniel, Frankish, Herbet, Bowie and O'Neil (1995) when working with human participants. The following guidelines for ethical research, suggested by Emanual, Wendler and Grady (2000) and Green et al. (1995), were incorporated in my research to advance the research beyond general ethical guidelines, namely social or scientific value, scientific validity, participants and the nature of their involvement, informed consent and favourable risk-benefit ratio.

3.8.1 Social and scientific value and validity of PRA

PRA often has entrenched political undertones. Therefore it was important to me to continuously reflect on the social value for the participants as well as the scientific value it presents for my study. PRA aims to improve the wellbeing of participants so I had to be aware of potential unintentional exploitation of the participants (Khanlou & Peter, 2005:2334). It was important to me that the participants benefit from study, and we were open to suggestions from the participants as to how we could communicate this intention. During the PRA-directed group activities, the participants expressed the need collaboratively to create a vision and mission for the association. As a result my co-researcher and I scheduled a date in September 2013 to facilitate this process. The agreed-upon vision and mission was then printed in a pamphlet that was given to each school principal on our next visit. The pamphlet also contained the contact information of members of the participating HEI who are willing to assist the participants. In order to ensure ethical research I used scientific principles, where I continuously reflected on the production of meaningful results so as not to waste precious and sparse resources that could potentially exploit the research participants (Emanual, Wendler & Grady, 2000). An extract from my researcher diary shows the agreed-upon vision and mission co-created by the HEI association partners.

BAMBANANI FOR ALL

MISSION STATEMENT

Enhance holistic development through education of Greater

Ekulideni area through a working partnership. Further develop

learning, all aspects of learners, teachers and community members.

VISION

To see the community in pursuit of poverty alleviation towards

independence and a changed life world for the better.

Researcher diary, 09 September 2013

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3.8.2 Participants and the nature of their involvement

Like Emanual, Wendler and Grady (2000), I viewed the fair selection of participants for my study as important. Fair selection entails that that the goals of the research (what are the teacher resilience expressions in the presence or absence of a HEI association) is the key determining factor and not the participating individuals' (researchers and participants) privilege or vulnerability. Thus, the main researcher, my co-researcher and I ensured by means of continuous reflexivity and conversation with one another that the participants would benefit from this HEI association. Apart from my objective to generate meaningful results, the research held some benefit for the participants, which included aspects such as being part of knowledge generation in a co-operative, engaging, joint process with stakeholders which entails a co-learning aspect, local capacity development and empowering of participants to increase control of their lives, such as is advocated for PRA research (Minkler, 2004). Green et al. (1995) further suggest that ample opportunity should be given to interested members to participate. The main researcher approached teachers in schools with HEI association to suggest other rural schools in the Mpumalanga district that were required not to have HEI association. Teachers from these suggested rural schools were then invited via the school principal to participate in the research. An extract from my co-researcher gives some insight in our process of inviting potential participants:

> *Mrs. Marli Edwards, doctoral student, and I visited seven rural schools in [the*
> *Mpumalanga district]. The purpose of the visit was to invite principals and teachers*
> *to the FLY inception workshop to be held on 22 Junie 2013 at Badplaas, Forever*
> *Resort.* Co-researcher Field notes, 15 May 2013

3.8.3 Voluntary consent, informed consent and favourable risk-benefit ratio

Prior to entering the research setting (selected Secondary and Primary Schools), permission to conduct research from both the Department of Education (Mpumalanga region) and the school principals was obtained (see Appendix K).

Boser (2006:12) argues that PRA presents a set of social relations that is inappropriate for protecting human participants in the current framework of informed consent and confidentiality (see Appendix C). In PRA "the researcher is expected to consider the risk of harm, weigh this against the potential benefits of the research and assure that participants are able to give informed consent and that their confidentiality will be protected." The distanced objectivist position of the researcher is eliminated in PRA, as the researcher is actively involved in the research process. Research activities should be negotiated with participants at each stage of the research cycle. Thus, willingness to participate in PRA-directed group

activities and further face-to-face semi-structured interviews was confirmed. The main researcher and I took the responsibility to provide the necessary information at each stage of the research process to give the participants the opportunity to decide if they wanted to participate in this study or not. The research process and aims were discussed prior to the research process and participants were also given the opportunity to decline or withdraw after the study had commenced (Blanche, Durreheim & Painter, 2006; Creswell, 2009). During initial contact sessions the research colloquia focused on the research nature, process and focus, data-gathering process as well as the anonymity and confidentiality of both participants and the data collected. The researchers also adhered to the principle of honesty and addressed any misconceptions or misunderstanding regarding the benefits and aim of the current research phase, as illustrated in the following extract from my researcher diary:

> *After activity 4 of the PRA-directed group activities we discussed what the participants can expect from the university and clarification of both the participants' and researchers' roles in the current phase of the research. The need to clarify this became clear from the participants' presentations that their expectations were not aligned with the purpose of the study. The morale of the group dropped significantly as they are disappointed about the prospects of the partnership. Prof. Ebersöhn then clearly explained the purpose and focus of the current cycle of the research. The participants seemed to have expected more tangible help i.t.o. books/science equipment. Clarification that we can offer more support with regard to sharing knowledge on management and how to address specific challenges was communicated. Although the participants' expectations were not met, they clearly understood that this partnership and research process is the first step to further facilitate tangible support.* Field notes, 22 June 2013

I aimed to protect the participants from any harm by not exposing them to any physical risks or harm. I agree with Emanual, Wendler and Grady (2000) that the risks to participants should be proportionate to the possible benefits for individual participants as PRA is value-driven while it aims to empower exploited and/or oppressed groups. During PRA activities and semi-structured interviews I showed sensitivity and understanding, following an open approach to ensure that participants were aware of the research process and purpose throughout the study (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Olivier, 2003; Blanche, Durreheim & Painter, 2006). It was important to obtain informed consent during different cycles of the research process to minimise any potential harm to participants as a result of the research process (Mouton, 2001). I aimed not to deceive, mislead or withhold information from participants in any way (Babbie

& Mouton, 2001; Olivier, 2003). As I used PRA methods I could employ flexibility to accommodate the needs of the participants. PRA methods allow for adaptation of activities to serve the local values, needs and concerns of the participants (Rambaldi, Chambers, McCall & Fox, 2006).

I further agree with Boser (2006), who argues that confidentiality in PRA cannot always be assured, as often multiple researchers may have access to data and may not take the necessary care to remove all identifying information before the release of findings. Furthermore, anonymity is often unlikely in PRA as the location (district) of the research is probably mentioned in the results, even when publicly disclosed information is removed (Boser, 2006). During the study the main researcher, co-researcher and I took special care to protect participants' confidentiality and privacy by using objective identifying information when we referred to participants, while we also refrained from indicating the names of the schools involved in this research. Furthermore, as I employed observation as context of interaction, I undertook not to invade the participants' privacy. I made prior arrangements with each participant to conduct data collection at a location and time of their choice (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Blanche, Durreheim & Painter, 2006, Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000). However, I was not able to guarantee anonymity during the PRA activities due to the nature of these activities. PRA activities involve open, dialectic processes, which are often voiced in a public fashion (group context of the PRA-directed group activities) (Boser, 2006). The participants were, however, made aware of the principle of privacy, confidentiality and respect (Chambers, 2006) that applied to these activities (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Blanche, Durreheim & Painter, 2006). However, the participants indicated their desire to be known and identified as part of this research study.

Regarding visual data and audiovisual data the participants indicated that their identities should not be disguised in any manner. As per ethical guidelines regarding *privacy and confidentiality* in working with human participants, the data gathered (researcher journal, observations, audiovisual and visual recordings) will be kept and maintained in a safe and secure environment for the next 15 years (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Blanche, Durreheim & Painter, 2006).

3.9   Conclusion

In this chapter I discussed how the research process developed throughout the duration of the study and what procedures were followed. I continuously reflected on the strengths and limitations of the methodology chosen and reported on how I attempted to compensate for the limitations mentioned. I gave careful consideration to the ethics of participatory reflection and

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action and discussed the quality criteria applicable to this study. In Chapters 4, 5 and 6 the results and findings of the research are presented.

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Theme 1: Protective resources and risk factors in rural schools with or without associations with a higher education institution

4.1   Introduction

In chapters 4, 5 and 6 I discuss the research results. This chapter answers the first secondary research question: How do the experiences of protective resources and risk factors by teachers in rural schools compare in the presence or absence of a HEI association? Figure 4.1 provides an overview of the themes and subthemes of the study. Three themes emerged from the analysis: Theme 1: Protective resources and risk factors in rural schools *with or without* associations with a higher education institution; Theme 2: Protective resources and risk factors when a rural school has an association with a higher education institution; and Theme 3: Expectations to buffer teacher resilience by means of a possible association with higher education institutions.
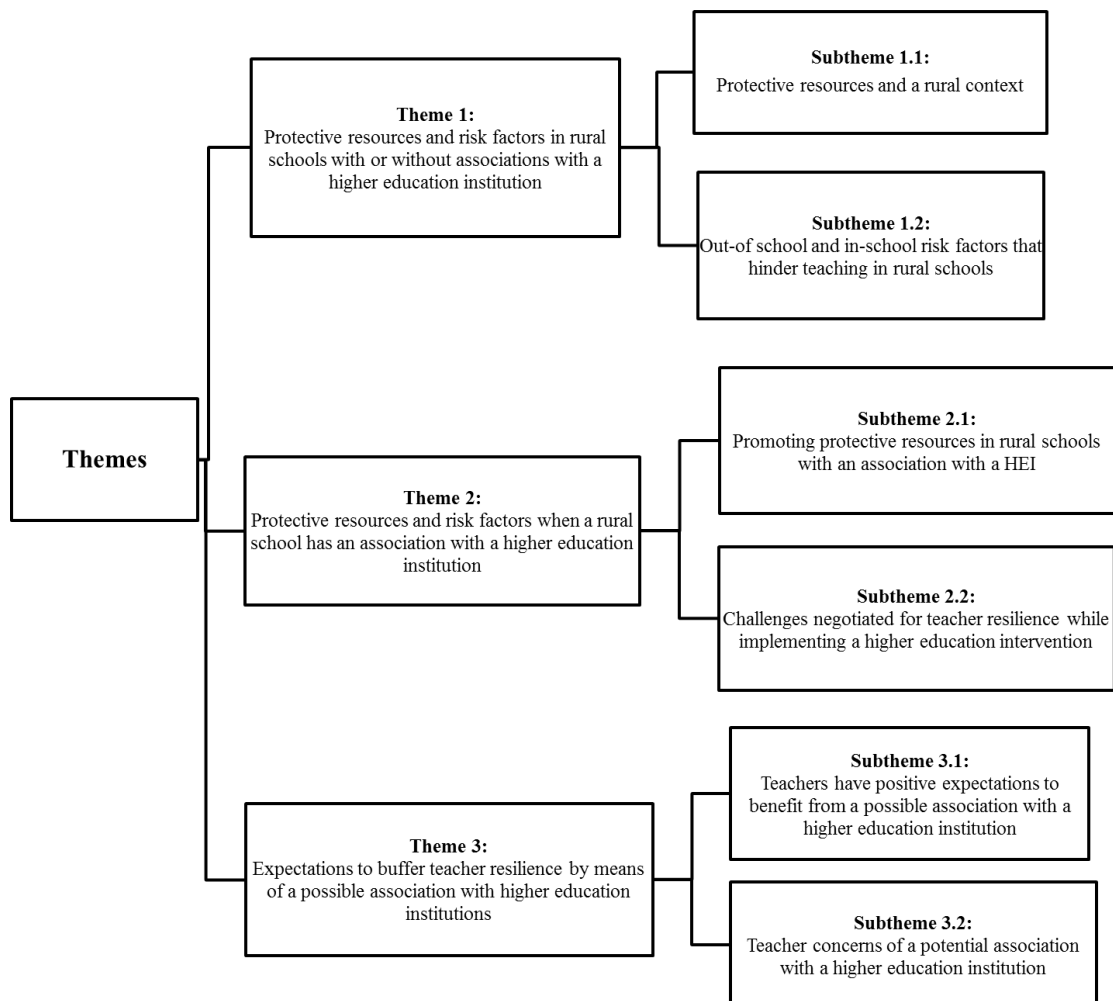
Figure 4.1:   Overview of themes of the current study

Chapter 4 includes a discussion of the first theme, Protective resources and risk factors in rural schools *with or without* associations with a higher education institution (HEI), which emerged from the data shared by teachers in all six schools. Theme 1 comprises two subthemes: 1) Protective resources and a rural context; and 2) Out-of-school and in-school risk factors that hinder teaching in rural schools. Figure 4.2 shows an overview of Theme 1: Protective resources and risk factors in rural schools *with or without* an association with a higher education institution (HEI).
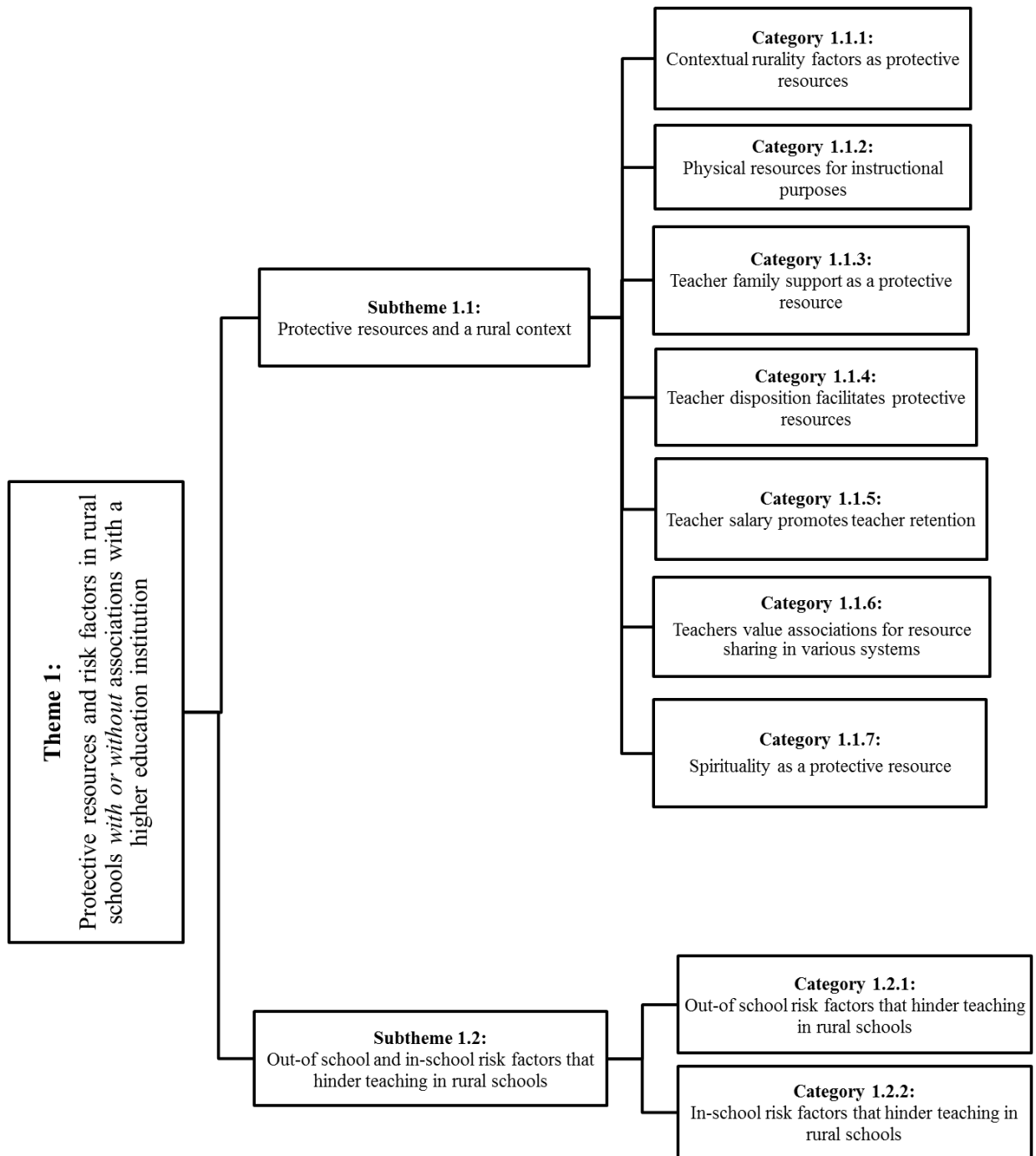
Figure 4.2: **Overview of Theme 1: Protective resources and risk factors in rural schools** ***with or without*** **associations with a higher education institution**

4.1.1 Subtheme 1.1: Protective resources and the rural context

The first subtheme that emerged from the data on Teacher resilience in rural schools *with or without* associations with a higher education institution refers to *Protective resources and the rural context*. In this study I conceptualised teacher resilience as experienced by teachers who negotiate risk factors in the education setting by utilising protective resources to adapt in these adverse circumstances. Protective resources was apparent in data from all four schools in the study irrespective of an association with a HEI or not. A rural context involves inherent challenges that are a necessary condition for resilience to occur as a teachers' resilience is defined by their ability to recover and return to equilibrium after being exposed to challenging circumstances (Price, Mansfield & McConney, 2012; Tait, 2008). Subtheme 1.1: Protective resources and the rural context consists of five categories: 1) Contextual rurality factors as a protective resource; 2) Physical resources for instructional purposes; 3) Teacher family support as a protective resource; 4) Teacher disposition facilitates protective resource; 5) Teacher salary promotes teacher retention; 6) Teachers value associations for resource-sharing in various systems; and, lastly, 7) Spirituality as a protective resource. 4.1 reflects a summary of the inclusion and exclusion criteria for subtheme 1.1.

Table 4.1:   Inclusion and exclusion criteria for subtheme 1.1: Protective resources and the rural context

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
• This subtheme includes reference protective resources expressed by teachers in rural schools regardless of an association with a higher education institution. • This subtheme includes data relating to instances of protective resources due to living in a rural context. • This subtheme includes the categories: Contextual rurality factors as a protective resource; Physical resources for instructional purposes; Teacher family support as a protective resource; Teacher disposition facilitates protective resources; Teacher salary promotes teacher retention; Teachers value associations for resource-sharing in various systems and Spirituality as a protective resource.	• This subtheme excludes data related to instances of protective resources that cannot be attributed to a rural context. • This subtheme excludes data related to protective resources due to teachers' involvement in a HEI association.

4.1.1.1   Category 1.1.1: Contextual rurality factors as a protective resource

Life in a rural community has some inherent protective resources that can facilitate teacher resilience. Contextual rurality factors as protective resources involve instances where teachers

indicate that living in a rural community and teaching in a rural school is seen as a positive attribute. Data for this category mostly emerged from face-to-face semi-structured interviews with participants from both cases (see Chapter 3, section 3.3.2.3, for clarification of cases). Table 4.2 shows the inclusion and exclusion criteria for Category 1.1.1. Teachers from both cases (A and B) expressed that life in a rural community has certain characteristics that appeal to them. Characteristics such as respect among community members, peacefulness of the environment, a low crime rate, few students per class as well as the opportunity to plant a vegetable garden emerged as factors in the context of rurality which assisted teacher resilience (irrespective of an association with a HEI or not).

Table 4.2: **Inclusion and exclusion criteria for Category 1.1.1: Contextual rurality factors as protective resources**

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
• The rurality context provides certain benefits to rural education. In this category I consider the peacefulness associated with living in a rural context, low crime rates and familiarity with school community members. • This category also includes reference by teachers to either living in the same rural community or a different community than the school as a protective resource.	• Excludes instances of contextual factors that are not regarded as a protective resource. • This subtheme excludes instances of teacher resilience as a result of associations with higher education associations or other associations with rural schools.

Teacher participants indicated that living in a rural community is seen as a protective resource as community members and students living in these communities show respect towards one another. A feeling of belonging is characteristic of living in a rural community as people greet each other and spend time together. Teachers also reported staying in a rural community as being peaceful and quiet, as is reflected in the following extracts.

> Participant: *... the learners in such areas; they are still respectful. They've got respect.*
> **Data source: Transcription of SSI, P15, p. 7, Lines 12-14**
>
> > *Ehh, ja, I think what I've discovered about living in a rural community is that people still have respect, a lot of it. The people around there, they still greet a lot, and ....ehh ... the neighbour is really [in] a neighbourhood, you know; you know your neighbours, you try to talk to them; when you wake up in the morning, you'll see the child. You see, it happens like that, you watch soccer together and all those things, so ... ehh... and I believe that living in a rural community ... it's more peaceful.*

> *Ja, that's what I've discovered as compared to when - although this place is now becoming - you see people are flocking in, electricity and all that, but I ... I think even [so] it's peaceful,*

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P15, p. 4, Lines 24-33 and p. 5, Lines 2-4

Participant: *[chuckles] Because the ... the community is very quiet.*

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P10, p. 5, Line 12

Participant: *Ja, but I've been living in a rural community; you have to adjust. Ja, and lower your standards. You know what to expect in your area, but peacefulness ...*

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P15, p. 6, Lines 2-4

Participant: *Uhm ... This place is very quiet.*
Researcher: *Mmm ...*
Participant: *It's very quiet and [slight pause] most of them, they are farmers. [pause] And ...*

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P10, p. 4, Lines 12-17

My own impressions attest to the peacefulness of the research site, as reflected in this extract from my field notes and as can be concluded from the photographs:

Although I am familiar with the schools, I was struck by the peacefulness of the area. I again realised how isolated the school communities are as it is quite a drive to reach the different schools. During my drive to the schools I observed quite a few people walking in the direction of the town and I realised that although it might be a lovely environment with beautiful mountains and nature resources are few and located far away.

Data source: Field notes, April 2013, p. 1

Photograph 4.1:
Illustrating the peacefulness of the rural schools

Photograph 4.2:
Illustrating the peacefulness of the rural schools

Teachers communicated a low crime rate as a protective resource of living in a rural community: *…ehh. Crime rate is very low…* (Data source: Transcription of SSI, P15, p. 4, Line 26). The low crime rate is illustrated in the following quotation by a teacher participant during a face-to-face semi-structured interview:

Participant*:*	*… crime levels are very low. If you hear a gunshot around this area, you think probably it's the police; what is wrong with them. You don't see ... think of a criminal involvement. If there are criminals around such areas, they are known. If you've lost something, they take it and say, if it's not this one, it's this one, you see.*
Researcher:	*Hmm.*
	There are not so many criminals. If there's someone coming from outside… ehh … being suspected of ... maybe sort of depends or maybe they go after the person, because people know each other around here.
Researcher:	*Hmm.*
Data source: Transcription of SSI, P15, p. 6, Lines 4-16	

Teachers who do not live in the same community as the school where they teach indicate that living in a different community provides important resources, as shown in the extract below. Access to services that would improve rural education, such as libraries and computer centres, could be uitilised by teachers living in these communities as resources to teach students in their schools.

Participant:	*Ja, uh … I mean the ... I think e-everything, it's nearer. Yes, if you want to go to computer centres, everything is ... it's nearer. The hospitals are near - everything … shopping complex…Yes, they are nearer …*
Data source: Transcription of SSI, P2, p. 3, Lines 18-25	

Teachers portray living in the same rural community as they teach as a protective resource. Living in the school community provides teachers with the opportunity to be available to students during the afternoon to assist students with their learning as well as arrange additional activities that keep students from engaging in health-risk behaviours.

Participant:	*Being a teacher living in a rural community, sometimes it helps, because the other kids usually come to me during afternoon, ask for help, to help them with homework(s) (sic), assignments. Those who are at [indistinct] … they usually come and I help them and even in the afternoon, sometimes when I have time, we come back to school, and practise with the learner,*

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> *playing netball, others playing soccer, just checking them during afternoons*
> *so that they cannot think of the gambling and other things that the kids are*
> *doing.*

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P3, p. 2, Lines 14-23

Teaching in a rural school community poses certain protective resources as the teacher-student ratio is lower, which enables teachers to know each student personally and therefore provides teachers with the opportunity to assist individual students when necessary. Additionally, staying in the same rural community as the school where they teach provides the opportunity for teacher preparation and lending students assistance with their homework .

Participant:	*But to teach in a rural area, it is - because there are no[t] many kids. The number of kids - its low, so you can - you know each and every child; that this one has this problem and that one has that. Unlike in urban areas, [where] there are many children. You end up not knowing all of them.*
Researcher:	*Hmm. What else is there that helps you or that makes it easier for you?*
Participant:	*That makes me … it easier for me is that I'm living here in the rural area, and sometimes I go back home late. I stay with the kids, help them with their homework(s) (sic), do a lot of work, plan or else, if I need to plan. I can stay in the school and do my preparation for the next day.*

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P3, p. 3, Lines 19-33

One teacher participant indicated that he sees living in a rural community as a protective resource as they are able to cultivate a vegetable garden, which they can use to support the students in their schools, providing them with food, so that they are able to learn properly:

Participant:	*Sometimes here [there are] many things, we can manage to do them by ourselves ...*
	Such as having a garden. We ... we make some - we have some vegetables, like cabbage, spinach. When we don't have something to add ... to eat, we go to the garden, we pick something, we cook, thenwe eat. Unlike you[?] to [indistinct] urban areas [where] they ... we struggle to get things; we have to use money all the time…
	Here we just go to the garden, we pick something, make something for the kids to eat.

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P14, p. 2, Lines 27-33 and p. 3, Lines 1-10

4.1.1.2   Category 1.1.2: Utilising physical resources for instructional purposes

Physical resources for instructional purposes comprise Category 1.1.2. This category refers to teachers making use of the available resouces to complement and supplement their teaching. The ability of teachers to utilise the available physcial resources to improve rural education fosters teacher resilience. Data for utilising physical resources for instuctional purposes emerged from the data source, face-to-face semi-structured interviews, and were representative of both cases in the study. Table 4.3 shows the inclusion and exclusion criteria for Category 1.1.2. Teachers from both cases reported making use of various instructional materials available to support teaching, in so doing assisting teacher resilience.

Table 4.3:   Inclusion and exclusion criteria for Category 1.1.2: Utilising physical resources for instructional puposes

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
• Instances in data where teachers indicate that physical resources available to them support teaching.	• Excludes data that refers to physical resources that support teaching provided as a result of an association with a HEI.

Teachers make use of the available resources to obtain additional information to assist students with learning. Teachers utilise, for example, their laptops to gain access to the internet, they consult various textbooks, use an overhead projector, chalkboards and photocopies to enhance students' learning. Teachers use the available physical resources to improve their teaching, as is reflected in the following extracts:

Participant:	*[clears throat] Uh … now we do have, uh, resources …*
Researcher:	*Hm-hm?*
Participant:	*… and, uh, I'm using a laptop so that I access information. If I encounter some problems, I Google it …*
Researcher:	*Hm-hm?*
Participant:	*… from the laptop.*

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P17, p. 2, Line 31 and p. 3, Lines 1-8

Participant:	*Hm uhm … I - I'm, [I] always go all out. Like, maybe there is information that I need for learners, I – I go all out. I scout for information, which makes my work a little bit easier, because each time when I come to the learners, I know that I have made a research on whatever, maybe … uhm … a task that the learners should do.*
Participant:	*First, I – I equip myself with the task, whatever … uh … resource that is needed, I make sure that I go all out; scout for information, so that when I*

come with the information to the learners, then they are going to be assisted. So it makes my work easier in that way ….

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P2, p. 3, Lines 31-32 , p. 4, Lines 1-13

Participant: *…Using the different textbooks that we have. I do not use one textbook, because (you know) e-each textbook is different from the other one.*

… Then I - I … I use a combination of all the textbooks before I go to class, because you might find that this one … [coughs] … if you look at a chapter, this … this textbook it … it is more simpler (sic) in that chapter than the other one. Then you - you make a comparison, you find which one is at least … uh … giving clarity to that chapter that maybe you are going to be teaching at that time; so the different … the combination of the resources, textbooks, then, it makes my work easier.

… and also, the information from the internet; I also use that one. [pause] … and also e-team[?] teaching; it is also assisting.

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P2, p. 5, Lines 18-33 , p. 6, Lines 1-6

Participant: *But, normally, ah, that's what I use and if I need more information, I normally use my e-mail; you know, the technology that is available. These different ways of communication(s), I use them when there are problems...*

… just to try and find more information from other people to say "how do you do things?" and then I get a response. And you normally buy books, then; and that's another way in which I do things (you know),

I buy books; I read newspapers, every … almost every day, I make sure that I have read something, even on the internet when I connect. I go to various subjects to see "what about this?" – you know? To become a better teacher … you know, to make an example …

…Then they will tell [you] that if you can do one, two, three, you know? These are the different … in which I network …

… so that I have … I have also subscribed to a number of these (you know) …on the internet there is this lady who sends me always motivational quotes every day …

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P12, p. 14, Line 9-33 and p. 15, Lines 1-2

Participant: *[slight pause]… What do we call them? …[vernacular term used]… Overhead projectors …*

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<table>
<tr><td></td><td>... in classes actually ... can help us, because today some of the information(s) (sic), you find them in ... in internet and everything, so it can be easier; unlike downloading it, going [to] it and photocopy it. But if ever it was in a class, we use overhead projectors and everything; maybe it can be easier for us.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Researcher:</td><td>But you don't have an overhead projector?</td></tr>
<tr><td>Participant:</td><td>It ... we have only one, which [slight chuckle] we cannot ... outside out of ... we have cla ... plus or minus 20 classes.</td></tr>
</table>

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P8, p. 4, Lines 22-33 and p. 5, Lines 1-5

<table>
<tr><td>Participant:</td><td>Ehh… you see my - my children, in Pietermaritzburg ...ehh ... they are in multiracial schools, but the programmes that they do in their schools, are ... I am able to take some of them, and implement [them] with these learners, and tell them that this is done by my child at such and such a school ...ehh ...the education there is of a better quality, and I don't want you to miss out (as well) (sic).</td></tr>
</table>

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P15 p. 15, Lines 29-33 and p. 16, Line 1

In the following excerpt a teacher participant reported on how physical resources such apparatus and periodic tables and chemicals support his instruction of mathematics and physical science. He maintains that students learn and memorise better when they are able to do practical exercises in this particular subject.

<table>
<tr><td>Participant:</td><td>Ja, to teach physical science, no, in physics, né, I'll talk about physics. You know in physics there are things that make me to teach; what I make is to become easier for me to teach, like apparatus ...ehh ...chart, periodic tables, chemicals; you know, we do practical all the time in physical science, so you know the thing that you see and learn go straight to long-term memory. So it's not easy for them to forget those things.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Researcher:</td><td>Okay, so physical material.</td></tr>
</table>

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P4, p. 3, Lines 25-32 and p. 4, Lines 1-2

The following photograph illustrates a physcial resource, the jungle gym, available at one of the rural schools, to support rural education:

Photograph 4.3:
Showing a playground to be used for
instructional practices

4.1.1.3   Category 1.1.3: Teacher disposition facilitates protective resources

Teacher disposition refers to teachers' inherent qualities of mind and character, such as teacher temperament, teacher nature and characteristics, beliefs, attitudes, commitments and values. The following photograph captures teachers' disposition towards teaching in one of the rural schools. This sign is displayed in the foyer of one of the rural schools.

*A teacher affects eternity;
she can never tell, where her
influence stops*

Henry Brooks Adams
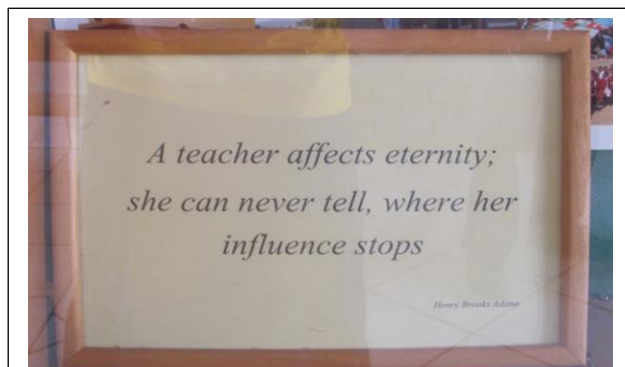
Photograph 4.4:
Illustrates teachers' disposition towards teaching

Data for this category, *Teacher disposition facilitates protective resources*, are representative of both cases and emerged from data sources, face-to-face semi-structured interviews, member checking sessions of face-to-face semi-structured interviews and an instance that I captured in my field notes. Table 4.4 reflects a summary of the inclusion and exclusion criteria for Category 1.1.4. Teachers in this study show certain personal characteristics that support their continued teaching in rural schools. In addition, they reported on teaching being a fulfilling profession, where they undergo life skills development, such as problem-solving and adapting to difficult teaching circumstances. Furthermore, being intrinsically motivated and having a desire to uplift rural students are elaborated upon as reasons for continuing to teach in a rural context, and the result is teacher resilience.

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Table 4.4: **Inclusion and exclusion criteria for Category 1.1.3: Teacher disposition facilitates protective resources**

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
• Informal teacher capacity development includes instances where teachers use their own initiative and engage in activities or access resources to improve their teaching, which relates to teacher disposition (teacher temperament, nature and characteristics, beliefs, attitudes, commitments and values).	• This category excludes instances that do not relate to teacher disposition.

Teachers reported on personal characteristics such as peserverance, being considerate, understanding, loving and honouring their classes tcontributing to teacher resilience, which in turn improves rural education. In the following extracts the love of teachers for children and teaching is reflected:

Participant:	*And also honouring your classes. It makes your work easier. Ja, when you honour your classes, you go to class in time. That one, it also assist you in finishing your schedule in time, and it makes your work easier, because at the end of the day you'll have ample time to go for a revision; because the most important part of our work is to allow learners to get revision on the work that you have done. So you'll be preparing them for the exams that will be coming.*
Researcher:	*Hm. Is there anything from your personal life that makes it easier for you?*
Participant:	*Perseverance.*
	… Hm-hm. The motherly love.
	Yes. Hm. And being considerate; availing yourself when you … where you are needed; understanding, loving - those are the things that help me through.

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P2, p. 7, Lines 22-33 , p. 8, Lines 1-16

OWN LIFE:

Perseverance

Motherly

Understanding + loving

Considerate

Avail yourself whenever

Data source: Field notes, Member checking session of SSI, P2, April 2015, p. 11

Participant:	*… and I love teaching, and I love to help the kids, so that one day they can go around the world, knowing that I've helped them to develop their career and I give them support they need, because most of the children have lost their parents.*

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P3, p. 8, Lines 14-1

Participant:	*I love kids. I love helping learners actually. If-if … if I was a billionaire or a millionaire, I will [indistinct] … it … maybe [I] take some of the learners in my wings, to take them to school, to universities and everything …*

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P8, p. 6, Line 7-11

Participant:	*Ooh, to be friendly with the learners …*
	… love them; caring; play with them …
	… Mm. Not to be rude to the kids.
Researcher:	*I can see that you really love children, hey?*
Participant:	*Oh, I love them …[indistinct – voice fades]*

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P14, p. 2, Lines 4-16

Teaching is described as inspiring and fulfilling by a teacher participant in the following extracts. He indicates that teaching provides the opportunity to develop skills in adapting to challenges and to inspire students to do the best they can: *Ja. As a person, I, uh … I find it a bit fulfilling …* (Data source: Transcription of SSI, P12, p. 4, Line 5) … *And I'm also eager to assist learners, to motivate them so that they take … uh … uh … more advanced careers.* (Data source: Transcription of SSI, P17, p. 4, Line 15-16).

Participant:	*No, firstly, I think … uh … it's … it's … it's inspiring in a way …*
	… because you-you … you meet these communities who are said to be at their lowest level and you motivate them to become better. I think that is, ja, I'm calling it out like that …
	… in a simple way. It's inspiring and it … it makes you to … to-to … to deal with more skills of adapting to-to … to environments of that nature, and also it makes you to develop more skills of how to deal with challenges. Some of these challenges, they are new, because when we are studying, you study different (you know) …
	… very different environment altogether, but practically you come across diverse (you know) situation in a rural area …

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Teachers from both Cases A and B indicated that they are trying their best teaching in a rural school: *Ja, but we are trying.* (Data source: Transcription of SSI, P18, p. 2, Line 12-13) and *I'm trying, man.* (Data source: Transcription of SSI, P4, p. 5, Line 27-32 and p. 6, Line 1). Teacher participants further indicated that they tried to rise above the circumstances that they are confronted with on a daily basis:

> *… you try to adjust :)*
>
> **Data source: Field notes, Member checking session of SSI, P17, 2015-04-22, p.10**
>
> | | |
> |---|---|
> | Participant: | *Ja. But we … we keep strong at times (you know) by trying our level best that …* |
> | Researcher: | *It's difficult.* |
> | Participant: | *One tries to rise above the situation.* |
> | | *… And try to help where necessary.* |
>
> **Data source: Transcription of SSI, P12, p. 7, Line 17-26**
>
> | | |
> |---|---|
> | Participant: | *Ja, to work (you know) as a teacher, but under the circumstances, I must indicate that we are trying. [slight chuckle]* |
> | Researcher: | *Yes.* |
>
> **Data source: Transcription of SSI, P12, p. 10, Line 27-29**

A teacher participant indicated that he experienced satisfaction from teaching students and motivating them to improve their reading and vocabulary skills:

> | | |
> |---|---|
> | Participant: | *… you know? I'm trying as a teacher to say that, because I've motivated these learners to start reading. Ja, so that … well, my work is easier as a learner … motivated them to be reading learners: reading newspapers; reading magazines; reading their textbooks and writing themselves information, notes, (you know) on their own; and also I motivated them to buy a dictionary …* |
> | | *… because that's a key for … for their language and also improving their vocabulary. That's what I've motivated them on, to say that "under the circumstances, but you can rise above the situation …"* |

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> *… ".. if you can buy yourself a dictionary, be a reading somebody, get a newspaper, group yourselves – you know, in your group you decide that you contribute some money so that every week you have something to read and you keep your vocabulary book."*
>
> *… "... and after that you try to use these words that you are finding – you write them down in your vocab book; you use them in sentences, in your communication, and that will help you to improve and that will relieve us of the prejudice that we have when we are teaching you, and that will help you to increase your performance."*

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P12, p. 10, Line 33 and p. 11, Lines 1-30

Teachers' being intrinsically motivated and committed to teaching is reiterated as a protective resource for teachers when teaching in a rural school:

Participant:	*Ja ah, what makes it easier for me to be a teacher is ... I would say it's, it's being intrinsically motiva ... is being motivated.*
	… Ja. And commitment (you know); discipline and knowing what I have to do as a teacher, that when I come here I'm not just here to play – I must be here to change the lives of other people, so that they become better. Because without that (you know), I don't think you'll survive, without being internally motivated …
	… even before somebody can tell you something, it must start in here. So that's what keeps me going. You know? I miss the problems that we have when[?] ... I say this is, I have come to do this, because this is what I want to achieve. The vision that I have, it also tells … takes me on and on ... to say that
	I have to go on. If I see somebody not better, I need to ... this should be a stimulus to say maybe I did not do it, I still have to do more. Then I go back to the drawing board (you know).

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P12, p. 12, Lines 2-25

Teachers further indicated wanting to assist students and the community living in poverty as a motivating factor to continue teaching in a rural school:

Participant:	*Eish, you know, let me tell you the truth, né. Initially, we see when we want to become a teacher, when you want to become a teacher, you must really tell yourself that, no, I want to work. I want to assist the community. Here it is not about money, man.*

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> *… It's about helping these poor, black learners.*
>
> *… Hmm, that is why I'm always sacrificing. I want to see them being[becoming] something out of nothing tomorrow.*
>
> **Data source: Transcription of SSI, P4, p. 7, Line 12-25**
>
> Participant: *Because my aim here is, my coming here is just to educate the learners.*
>
> *… Yes, in the community; to serve the community.*
>
> **Data source: Transcription of SSI, P9, p. 2, Line 26-31**
>
> Researcher: *So, we believe that our school should play that role, to make sure that we not only uplift our learners, but their parents as well, because I believe that … ehh … a learned parent will go - will make sure that the child follows it.*
>
> **Data source: Transcription of SSI, P15, p. 11, Line 28-31**

Understanding students' background was indicated by a teacher participant as a factor assisting him on his teaching journey, as teachers not only educated students with regard to content knowledge, but also life skills:

> Participant: *Myself, you know, the first thing that I do to-to …I make sure that I understand the background. I wanted to understand the background of all these learners, firstly. And I must also understand the learner, as individual; this learner is from this kind of background, and is experiencing one, two, three. So, I mean, as a teacher, and then how am I going to begin teaching these learners. So that's how I normally do [it]. I have to understand the learner first, before I teach this learner.*
>
> *… Ja, we must understand them and come down to the - and ask them what they want, and what they know, and that's where it's going to be simple for you.*
>
> **Data source: Transcription of SSI, P4, p. 2, Line 26-33 and p. 3, Lines 1-16**

Coupled with teachers' being intrinsically motivated is a willingness to go the extra mile by arranging extra classes to make sure that students understand the subject content and succeed in their learning. Teachers arranging extra classes to improve rural education is captured in the following extracts:

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Participant:	*You know what I was doing? Like yesterday, I normally left after school to teach these learners, arrange extra classes. That's the only thing that is helping me currently, because otherwise I cannot cover the - the work schedule within] this time that we are given.*
	… Ja, I want these learners to pass at the end of the day, not just pass, but we have to get the content that is beyond the content. I mean the knowledge.
Researcher:	*To be able to get the knowledge as well.*

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P4, p. 6, Line 6-20

Participant:	*Like, as I'm teaching tourism, you find that there are chapters where they need calculations - then I know that there is an educator who's doing mathematics. Then I go to that educator, maybe then we make an agreement that she or he is going to take that chapter for me. It makes my work easier; and to know your weaknesses and your strength - that one is very, very important.*
Participant:	*Hm. Then you know that … then, if there is a challenge on this chapter, you know that "I will go and ask teacher so-and-so to assist".*

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P2, p. 6, Lines 6-20

Teachers indicated that students rely on them and trust them, which are indicated as a factor that motivates them to continue teaching.

Researcher:	*That's fine. Okay, what are the reasons - why do you keep teaching here? Why don't you move to another place?*
Participant:	*Eish, you know me, né; I'm one guy, né, who has a conscience. Like, if I can leave this place now, at this time around, where are they going to get another teacher for physical science position for Grade 12? It means myself, I have putted somebody's life into a bush, because one way or another, I will be killing these learners.*
Researcher:	*Yes.*
Participant:	*And you can see that they are all trust on me, and they rely on me.*

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P4, p. 13, Line 17-33

Participant:	*I-I-I think i-i-it's my duty. If ever I have to move, who will come to help these particular learners? I … you-you-you can get offers here and there, but for us to-to-to help South Africa you have … to stand up, you have to-to go to-to-to the challenging areas to help these particular kids actually.*

Researcher:	*Yes. Definitely.*
Participant:	*That is what made me also to stay here to see what is happening and everything.*
Data source: Transcription of SSI, P8, p. 6, Line 32-33 and p. 7, Lines 1-6	
Participant:	*So, I find that very challenging. I-I - and interesting - it's the challenge I enjoy. Ehh ...another thing is that teaching such learners, you become some kind of god to them, within [indistinct] you see. You mustn't treat them as they are rural. They - I wasn't born and raised like this. My children are somewhere in a better place, but they become very close to you, you see. They are able to trust you. They trust.*
Data source: Transcription of SSI, P15, p. 7, Line 23-29	

One teacher participant indicated that he particularly enjoyed teaching in a rural school as he liked challenges and finding solutions to these challenges. He further indicated that he initiated various projects in his school community to uplift the members of the school community and that their appreciation made him feel needed and useful.

Participant:	*Hmm, maybe I like challenges [laughs].*
	...I believe in helping, you see. Usually when you are in a place that is already fully developed, sometimes you are not able to see your worth, you see. I believe that ...ehh ...Like ... ehh, like for example, like being in this school for 20 years now ...ehh ... and ... ehh ... the changes that ...ehh ... I've (been)(sic) implemented in the school, you see. I like to leave ... when I leave, I'd like to leave some kind of a legacy; that I've done this. I've started an orchard in this school. I've - the way I've started an orchard is through sponsors and all that. I've made sure that ...ehh ... we paved the school, the programmes that are in the school, the committee, the environmental programme, because we started [an] environmental programme in the school that ended up helping the community, as well as other schools, through [indistinct] project, by Trees for Africa. So, I think - I feel that staying at a rural area, teaching at a rural school, makes me feel useful, and I like the challenges. I-I become very happy when I see people changing because of me. You see, I've produced learners who are at universities now, and they are coming back to me, and telling me that if it wasn't for me, they wouldn't be doing what-what, you

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> *see. Because I also have a drama group. We do presentations for parents, sometimes even when a community has a meeting, we do ask for a slot. If there's something that we should - we think - we should deliver to parents, you see ... so I find that being at a rural community, you always have something to do, you see, and people always notice when you do something, because you always do something that has not been done before, you see.*
>
> *... So I-I find that ... Ehh ... it's what keeps me going, to find that ... Ehh ... whatever I do, people appreciate, you see. I wanted an environment club in the school as giving back to [indistinct] youth environmental centre.*

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P15, p. 14, Line 5-33 and p. 15, Lines 1-10

A teacher participant indicated that it is inspiring to other students when they see a student from the same rural area graduate and have a successful life:

Participant:	*So, I believe we are teaching at a rural community, and it makes me feel useful, and it makes me feel that ... ehh ... I as an individual, can implement changes, you see; so, changes for the better. So you appreciate it when you see ... you see, as a teacher, you don't get some kind of a reward, but when you see someone from such [an] area driving a Mercedes Benz, working at a big company, and telling learners, telling learners that: "This was a learner, my learner, and he completed his education here in this area. He didn't go to better schools and all that", so that he can give these other learners hope that you don't have to move. It's all here, you see. Ja, so those are the things that I enjoy in a rural community.*

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P15, p. 17, Line 14-28

Participant:	*Yeah, it's very interesting to be the teacher.*
Researcher:	*Why is it interesting? Tell me more?*
Participant:	*Interacting with the-the learners, the community as well as educators, it's very interesting.*

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P15, p. 1, Lines 28-33 and p. 2, Lines 1-2

4.1.1.4   Category 1.1.4: Teacher family support as a protective resource

Family support is seen as a protective resource for teachers and thus promotes teacher resilience. Literature highlights the importance of family support to buffer teacher resilience,

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and how strong personal support from teachers' families results in a positive effect on their self-confidence and personal agency (Howard & Johnson, 2004; Le Cornu, 2013; Mansfield, Beltman & Price, 2014). Teacher family support as a protective resource was reported by three teacher participants from Case B during their face-to-face semi-structured interviews. Table 4.5 reflects a summary of the inclusion and exclusion criteria for Category 1.1.3. Teachers expressed family support as an enabling factor in the adversity they experience in rural teaching.

Table 4.5: **Inclusion and exclusion criteria for Category 1.1.4: Teacher family support as a protective resource**

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
• Instances in data where teachers indicate that support from their immediate families is seen as a protective resource.	• Excludes data that refer to teacher support that does not relate to teacher family support.

In the following extracts from three face-to-face semi-structured interviews, teacher participants indicated that support and encouragement from their immediate families encourages them as they can share their difficulties and concerns with family members:

Researcher:	*Any other people or places that helps* [help] *you?*
Participant:	*My family.*

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P14, p. 5, Lines 14-18

Participant:	*Ah. I … it is easier for me because I have support everywhere. My family supports me to be a teacher. For instance, I'm coming from close to 300 km to come here, but because they support me, that is why I'm enjoying my work and everything. Even my kids, they support me in a way that I don't have any problem. I love my job as a teacher.*
Researcher:	*Is your family close by?*
Participant:	*Ja, yes, I have taken them. I stay with them. I only visit some of them on holidays. That is why it make … it is easier for me [indistinct – noises] because I have taken [indistinct] there.*

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P8, p. 5, Lines 19-32

Participant:	*Just - coming to the … ehh … to educate the learners, to give them knowledge.*

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Researcher:	*Okay, in what other ways does your family help you? Do they support you? Uhm, do they encourage you? How do - how do they help you?*
Participant:	*Ah, to - maybe if there's some … ehh … difficulties at home, we'll sort the problem. If there's some problems, we share.*

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P9, p. 10, Lines 17-33

4.1.1.5 Category 1.1.5: Teacher salary promotes teacher retention

This category refers to teachers who continue to teach in rural schools as they need financial compensation to make a living. Teacher participants were mainly silent on teacher salary as a protective resource that promotes teacher retention. One teacher participant from Case A1 reported on this category during her face-to-face semi-structured interview. Table 4.6 reflects a summary of the inclusion and exclusion criteria for Category 1.1.2.

Table 4.6: **Inclusion and exclusion criteria for Category 1.1.5: Teacher salary promotes teacher retention**

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
• Instances in data that relate to financial compensation as a motivating factor for teachers to continue teaching. • Instances where financial compensation is mentioned by teachers for continued teaching in a rural school.	• Excludes data that do not relate to teacher salary as a motivating factor to continue teaching.

One teacher participant indicated during her face-to-face semi-structured interview that she had doubts about coping with teaching in a rural school, but indicated that financial compensation was a motivating factor to continue teaching in these circumstances:

Participant:	*Truly speaking, I didn't like working in the rural area, but it's because of there is no work where I live, in Nelspruit, so …ehh … I have to. When I got the post at [in] the rural area, I looked at the area; I think I cannot cope, but because I need money…*

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P3, p. 8, Lines 9-13

4.1.1.6 Category 1.1.6: Teachers value associations for resource-sharing in various systems

Category 1.1.6 refers to teachers valuing associations for resource-sharing in various systems. This category comprises four subcategories, namely *Flocking promotes hope and expectancy; Flocking at school level as protective resource in rural schools;, Flocking at school community*

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level as a protective resource and *Flocking in the distal education sector as a protective resource.* Table 4.7 shows the inclusion and exclusion criteria for Category 1.1.6. Teachers reported on various kinds of support they receive from fostering relationships in various systems, such as at school level, at community level and the distal education sector. In addition, teachers expressed that a feeling of hope and expectancy is the result when they receive support from others.

Table 4.7:   Inclusion and exclusion criteria for Category 1.1.6: Teachers value associations for resource-sharing in various systems

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
• This category refers to teachers conveying the value of forming relationships and associations with the intention to access, mobilise and sustain resources. • The subcategories flocking at school level, at school community level and the distal education sector are included in this category. • Included in this category are instances of flocking that promote feelings of hope and expectancy for a better future.	• This category excludes instances of flocking as a result of a higher education association.

Teachers realise the importance of collaborating with other stakeholders to support rural education as they know that they cannot always function on their own. Teachers show an awareness that they need to be connected with other stakeholders to improve rural education:

Researcher:	*What else do you think makes it easier for you?*
Participant:	*What makes it easier also is, you know, is working with other ... (you know) is collaborating with other stakeholders (you know) when there are problems, because it is not all the time that I can go on-on my own, you know.*
Data source: Transcription of SSI, P12, p. 12, Lines 30-33 and p. 12, Line 1	
Researcher:	*Okay and, lastly, can you think of a metaphor or symbol, even a picture, just to illustrate the university's partnership with you?*
Participant:	*Symbol? Ja, maybe a symbol could be a chain.*
	... But every piece in the world needs the other for life to go on. [chuckles]
Researcher:	*Hmm, beautiful. That's beautiful.*
Participant:	*Ja. It shows interconnectiveness ...*

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> *... But you can't live in isolation. You need to be surrounded by people's*
> *... with minds, so that you become better.*

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P12, p. 20, Lines 19-33 and p. 21, Lines 1-13

4.1.1.6.1 Subcategory 1.1.6.1: Flocking promotes hope and expectancy

Flocking refers to communal processes to access, mobilise and sustain the use of resources to counter shared environmental challenges. Through the process of flocking, relationships are forged with the intention to share resources. Teachers therefore flock together to use relationships functionally (Ebersöhn, 2012). Feelings of hope and expectancy for a better future and/or outcome are facilitated when teachers establish relationships with the intention to share resources. Data on the subcategory Flocking promotes hope and expectancy emerged in both cases from data sources, PRA-directed activities, face-to-face semi-structured interviews and a member checking session. The summary of inclusion and exclusion criteria for Subcategory 1.1.4.1 is found in Table 4.8. Teachers expressed feelings of hope and happiness due to being engaged in various relationships that offer support by means of resource-sharing.

Table 4.8: **Inclusion and exclusion criteria for Subcategory 1.1.6.1: Flocking promotes hope and expectancy**

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
• This category includes instances where flocking (forming relationships with the intention to share resources) and working together lead to positive and uplifting feelings and the belief that it would lead to a better future. The relationships formed with others could therefore lead to feelings of hope and expectancy for a better future.	• Excludes flocking at the school and community levels and the distal education sector. • Excludes instances of flocking that do not promote feelings of hope and expectancy.

Teachers view participation in associations as hope-giving for students, teachers and school community members, as is illustrated in the following photograph and quotation:

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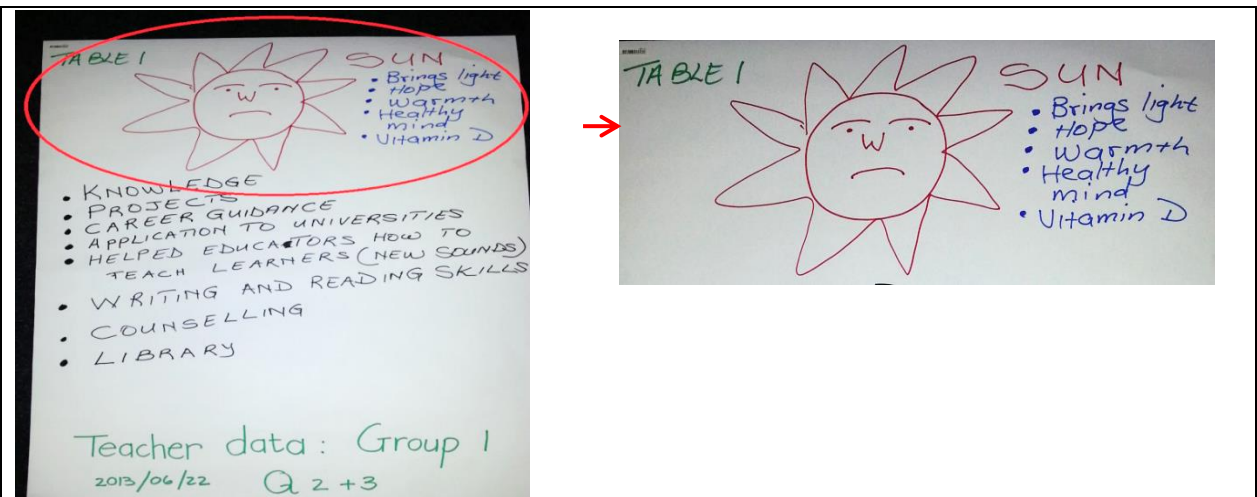
Photograph 4.5:

Data source: Visual data of PRA-directed group activities 2 &3 Group 1

Here we've got a symbol here; we got … uh … the rays of the sun. It means that the sun here, it brings light; it also brings hope, it also brings warmth, and also it heals a healthy mind and we also get the Vitamin D.

So, as you can see, the picture here, the person here is smiling, it means that when there is light, there is going to be a smile, when there is hope, there is going to be a smile and where there is a healthy mind, we are going to see a smile.

Data source: Transcription of PRA-directed group activities 2 & 3, Group 1, p. 2, Lines 5-14

Researcher:	*Alright, [Participant 2], for the last-last thing I want to ask you is: Can you think of a metaphor or a symbol or a picture to illustrate the partnership you're having with the university?*
Participant:	*The sun.*
Researcher:	*The sun? Tell me why the sun?*
Participant:	*It … the sun … the sun brings life, brings hope. [pause] Hm. It's the sun. I think it br … it brings light, it brings hope. That is how I look at the partner.*
	… Even if it's dark, but when the sun is there, then everything comes bright. They give light to the educators and also to the learners, and also the community.

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P2, p. 23, Lines 3-25

Metaphor: gives hope stress & ⎯ challenges

Sun – brings hope + light

Data source: Field notes, Member checking session of SSI, P2, April 2015, p. 12

Teachers communicated that they value assocations and that it evokes feelings of happiness and the feeling that they have conquered the world:
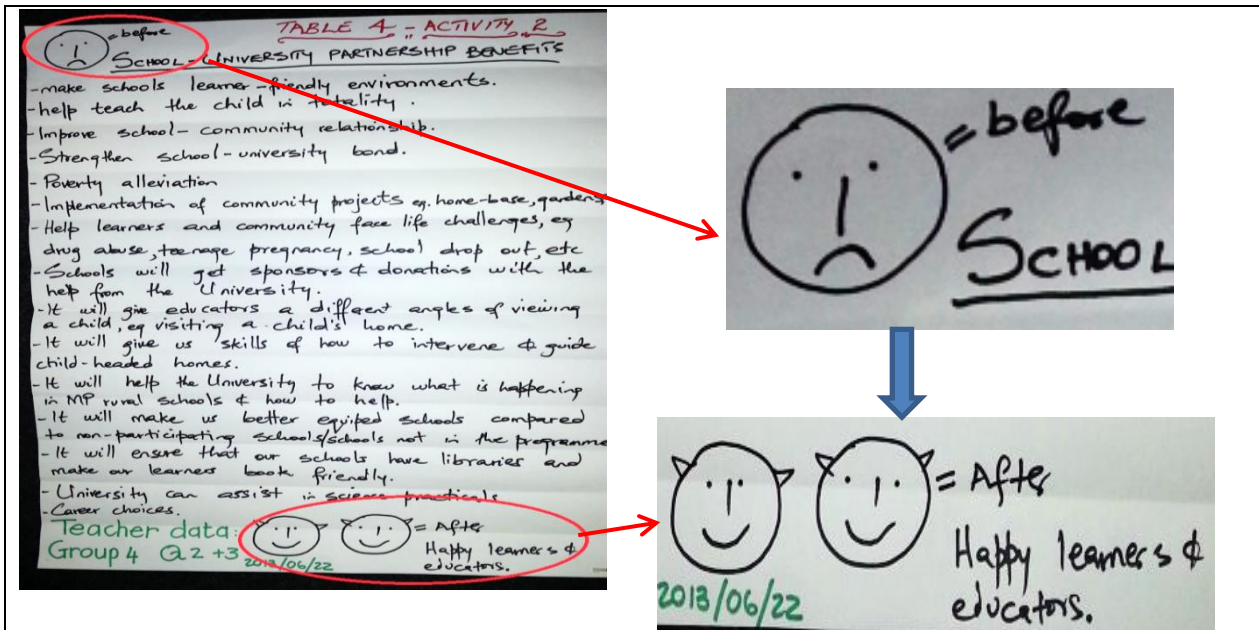
Photograph 4.6:
Data source: Visual data of PRA-directed group activities 2 & 3, Group 4

Then, at the bottom of our page, I've highlighted that on top there is a sad face, but at the bottom, if we engage ourselves in the partnership, everyone will smile. Everyone will be happy. The school will benefit. The community will benefit, even the university will smile at the end of the programme.

Data source: Transcription of PRA-directed group activities 2 & 3, Group 4, p. 6, Lines 143-149

Participant: *[pause] I see it as like we have conquered the world, in such a way that for university, they don't actually come - we only see them in career exhibitions and everything. Sometimes our learners will not go there because of money-wise and everything. Because the money is not enough, they will only take few learners, maybe the Grade 10/5, but for the university to come here, it is like we have conquered the world, because learners will be able to-to … to see everything. We only see maybe [indistinct] S College, FET colleges, but for university to come here - since I was here, I would say it's the first time. To me, it is like we have conquered the world.*

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P8, p. 11, Lines 12-24

Teachers further elaborated on how working together contributes to feelings of hope and expectancy. This is illustrated in the following photographs:
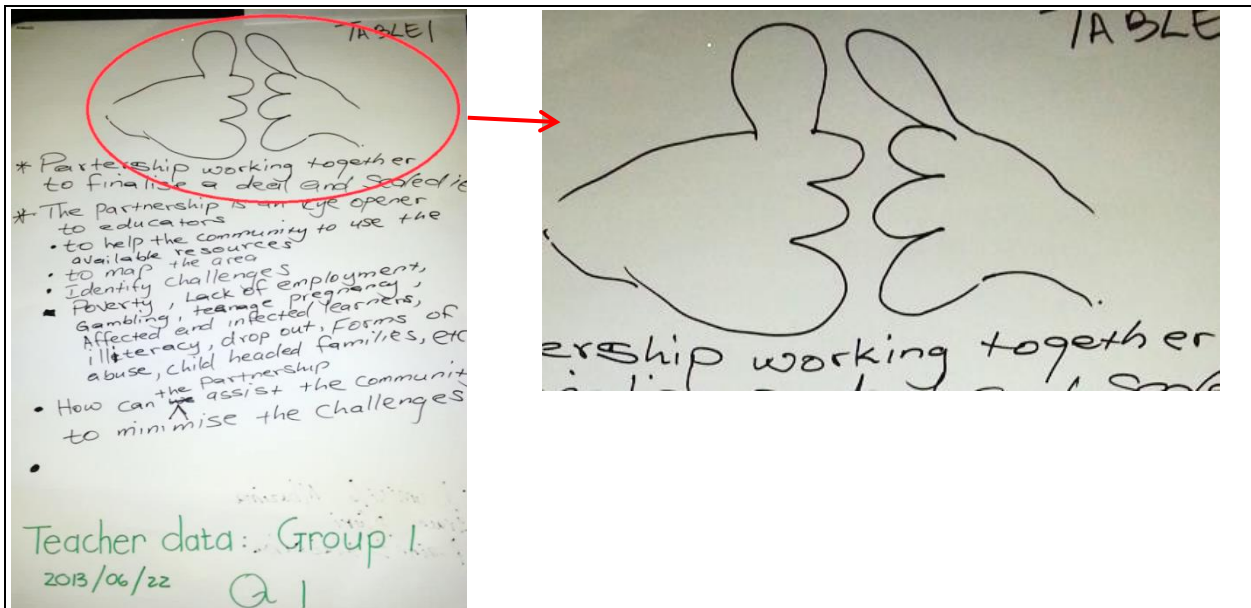
Photograph 4.7:
Data source: Visual data of PRA-directed group activity 1 Group 1: Showing that teachers value collaboration

Okay, our symbols means our partnership working to ... together to finalise the deal and sealed it.

Data source: PRA-directed group activity 1 Group 1, p. 1, lines 4-6
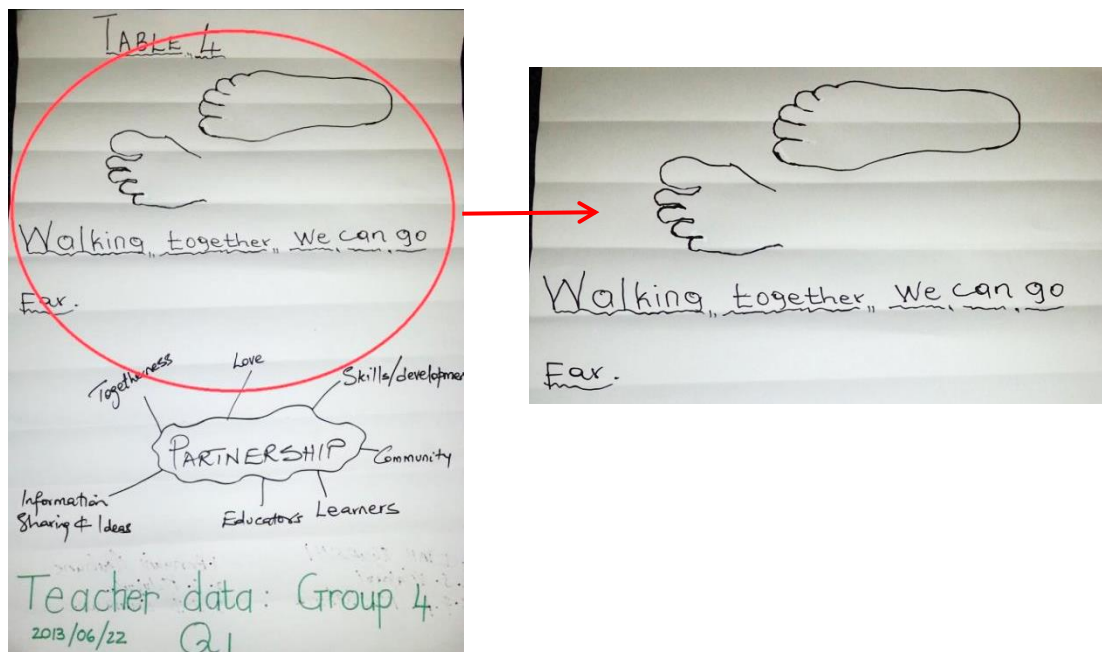
Photograph 4.8:
Data source: Visual data of PRA-directed group activity 1 Group 4: Teachers illustrating that they value working together

4.1.1.6.2 Subcategory 1.1.6.2: Flocking at school level as protective resource in rural schools

This subcategory refers to instances of flocking by teachers within their schools, therefore between colleagues and between teachers and parents, to mobilise resources within their schools and improve rural education. Instances of flocking at school level as a protective resource occurred mainly in data from Case B during face-to-face semi-structured interviews. This subcategory was evident, but less so in the face-to-face semi-structured interviews of teacher participants in Case A. The inclusion and exclusion criteria for Subcategory 1.1.4.2 are shown in Table 4.9. Teachers expressed the value of working together with colleagues, parents and their school principal.

Table 4.9: **Inclusion and exclusion criteria for Subcategory 1.1.6.2: Flocking at school level as protective resource in rural schools**

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
• Flocking at school level refers to the use of associations and relationships with colleagues to mobilise resources. This subcategory includes instances mentioned by teachers where there is support from colleagues that enables teaching. • This subcategory includes the support and help from colleagues (principal and teachers) from teachers' own school. • This subcategory includes networking between teachers with the purpose of sharing knowledge and resources. • This subcategory also includes instances where teachers work together with parents to improve students' learning.	• This category excludes instances of flocking as a result of a higher education association. • Excludes flocking at the community level and distal education sector.

Working together with parents to improve students' learning is reported by teachers to make teaching in a rural school easier. Teachers therefore mobilise parents as a resource to assist them in their endeavours to teach students:

Participant:	*Uh, uhm ... working together with the parents. Ja, if maybe I feel that now there is a need for parents' intervention, then I invite a parent to come. We discuss the problems or challenges, then maybe we assist one another. Then it makes the work easier for me.*

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P2, p. 4, Lines 21-25

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Participant:	*If they have some problems, they come … uh … at [to] me and ask … uh, how do they do this when, uh, they ..[vernacular]… Uuh! … Help the …*
Researcher:	*… address a problem?*
Participant:	*Ehmm, ja.*
Data source: Transcription of SSI, P10, p. 5, Lines 13-25	
Researcher:	*And who does all - who of you meet? Who meets together?*
Participant:	*And the members of the staff … [indistinct – voice fades]*
Researcher:	*And how do they help you, what do they do?*
Participant:	*Uh, let's say, if I got the problem in, uh, teaching, then they help me how to teach … uh. Let's say it's a topic. … Uh, then they solved it and they tell me how to do so that the learners learn … [indistinct – voice fades]*
Data source: Transcription of SSI, P10, p.8, Lines 18-33	

The following vignettes illsutrate how networking with other teachers within the school commuity fosters teacher resilience and provides a platform for sharing knowledge and teachercraft skills:

Participant:	*Uhm, I think sharing ideas with other colleagues from different schools …*
Data source: Transcription of SSI, P17, p.9, Lines 18-20	
Participant:	*… and the other thing is just that we as teachers, we-we sometimes meet to discuss the problem of the learners and then came up with some solutions on how to help them.*
Data source: Transcription of SSI, P17, p.3, Lines 7-10	
Participant:	*So, you know networking is also keeping me afloat. I don't just say because I'm qualified, then I know everything. I network with people, ask. "When you are here, how do you get out of here?" So these are some of the things that keep me afloat and keep me going.*
Researcher:	*Who do you network with?*
Participant:	*You know, in terms of the subjects that I'm teaching, I network with the other teachers from other schools. Ja, and also, normally I use internet more, every day actually. That's where I got more of the networks …*
Data source: Transcription of SSI, P12, p. 13, Lines 15-33	

Researcher:	*Hmm-hmm. So we can say that having colleagues … [intervenes].*
Participant:	*Yes.*
Researcher:	*Is support for you?*
Participant:	*Yes.*
Researcher:	*It helps you to* [be] *a better teacher?*
Participant:	*Yes, even these educators.*
Data source: Transcription of SSI, P9, p. 11, Lines 20-32	

In the following excerpts two teacher participants reported on the support they received from their school principal in their respective schools:

Researcher:	*Okay. Who is [are] the other people who helps* [help] *you?...*
Participant:	*There's the principal.*
Data source: Transcription of SSI, P10, p.8, Lines 11-17	
Participant:	*Uh. We meet with … uh … uh … parents and the principals.*
Researcher:	*Okay.*
Participant:	*Hm … we meet with the principal*
Data source: Transcription of SSI, P10, p. 7, Lines 18-27	
Participant:	*Ja, especially my principal.*
	… She did help me, 'coz my mother was teaching here and she passed away. She make a plans, like say I must come and help somewhere somehow; then I got a chance to get in.
Data source: Transcription of SSI, P14, p. 4, Lines 26-33. p. 5, Lines 1-2	

4.1.1.6.3 Subcategory 1.1.6.3: Flocking at school community level as a protective resource

In this subcategory flocking with school community members is cited by teachers as a valuable resource. Data from this subcategory mainly occurred in data sources of face-to-face semi-structured interviews with teacher participants in Case B. One teacher participant from Case A made reference to this subcategory in her face-to-face semi-structured interview. Table 4.10 reflects a summary of the inclusion and exclusion criteria for Subcategory 1.1.4.2. Teachers in this study elaborated on the value of collaborating with school community members and institutions in their communities that can offer them support. Teachers from other schools in the same area as well as nurses are mentioned as valuable relationship resources (social capital).

Table 4.10: Inclusion and exclusion criteria for Subcategory 1.1.6.3: Flocking at school community level as a protective resource

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
• Flocking at community level refers to the use of available resources in the school community and mobilising relationships with school community members to enable effective teaching. This category includes mobilising relationships with local shop owners, nurses, police and social workers who function within the school community to counter environmental demands. • This category also includes support, guidance and information-sharing by teachers from other schools in their area.	• Excludes flocking at the school level and in the distal education sector. • This category excludes instances of flocking as a result of a higher education association. • This subcategory excludes instances of support, guidance and information-sharing of teachers within the same school.

Data relating to teacher participants in rural schools with and without HEI association revealed that teachers value relationships for resource-sharing with school community members. Teachers indicated that fostering relationships with school community members helps them to solve the problems that they are experiencing in rural education:

Participant:	*Is the community that I-I work in ... we are closer every time. If we have some problem, we meet together and solve that problem.*

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P10, p. 7, Lines 15-17

Participant:	*Uhm ... is ... uh ... communication with ... uh ... the community. ... uhmm ... to help them where and there ... uh ... [pause] They cry [out] to me.*

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P10, p. 5, Lines 17-23

Participant:	*Maybe people around us.* *... We help each other. If I struggle here about something, I go to my neighbour, I ask something; she or he helps me. We co... do communicate.* *... Mmm. Communication is ... it's better than urban areas 'coz sometimes they have big walls, I can't see my neighbour.* *Here I can go to my neighbour, "hey, my neighbour. I've having a problem", then she help me or he helps me.*

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P14, p.3, Lines 8-33 and p. 4, Lines 1-13

Participant:	*I-I do like this rural school, because I would like - I just like the good communication with the community.*

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<table>
<tr><td colspan="2">... Good communication ... [pause]</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Data source: Transcription of SSI, P9, p. 9, Lines 3-8</td></tr>
<tr><td>Participant:</td><td>And the community, they support us.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Data source: Transcription of SSI, P14, p. 5, Lines 2</td></tr>
</table>

Teacher participants indicated that they valued having support from their circuit manager when they experience problems at their school: *If I-I do have some problems at school, I do consult the circuit manager.* (Data source: Transcription of SSI, P9, p. 11, Lines 17-19)

<table>
<tr><td>Researcher:</td><td>Hm-hm. Is there anything else that makes it easier for you?</td></tr>
<tr><td>Participant:</td><td>Hm-hm ... uhm ... Attending workshops, yes. If you attend wo ... workshops, those workshops that are content-based, then they assist you. If maybe, it's like we are now teaching CAPS, which is ...
... a new thing. Then by attending workshops on content-based ... then they ... we are able to deliver in class, because you get assistant [assistance] ...
... from your curriculum implementers. They assist you in whatever way that you need assistance.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Data source: Transcription of SSI, P2, p. 6, Lines 25-31, p. 7, Lines 1-9</td></tr>
</table>

Teacher participants conveyed having associations with institutions in their community as of value because these relationships often result in physical resource-sharing, such as is the case with MTN, as captured in the following vignettes:

<table>
<tr><td>Participant:</td><td>And maybe because you are in town, maybe - maybe have - we may network with maybe some other institutions or companies; maybe we can get, like, old books, things like that.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Data source: Transcription of SSI, P15, p. 10, Lines 30-32</td></tr>
<tr><td>Participant:</td><td>Ah, for now institutions, only those who came ... let me say maybe - MTN came to ... maybe to donate [indistinct – noise] computers, they donated – I forgot with[?] how many.
... but they have donated some - there are [a] few, but it only helps the few [indistinct – noise]; those who are doing maybe Computer as a ... as a subject. But maybe, if you can get more [indistinct] in such a way that all learners will access, at least maybe the Grade ... there is one computer ... can ... computer assigned for [to] them</td></tr>
</table>

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> *in such a way that maybe once a week they will be exposed to that, because some of them, they don't know even what a computer is.*

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P8, p. 9, Lines 11-26

Teacher participants indicated that they did networking with other stakeholders in their community, such as nurses as well as teachers from other schools to help them solve social problems that they are experiencing with their students and in the school community:

Participant:	*Did I say meeting with other-other … other stakeholders, they are from-from different schools, so that we-we … we-we share, ja, wi-with the people from-from the, uh areas that are-are better than us. We-we … we meet with them sometimes and then we share and tell them what our problems are this side, and then they tell us about their programme … problems, and then we… where … we-we come to, uh, solutions that will help the children.*
Researcher:	*Okay, if you talk about stakeholders, are these other schools, or who do you refer to?*
Participant:	*Oh, it's … uhmm … o-other stakeholders, we-we … we are talking about the-the … the nurses … uhm … uh … because we … we usually … uh … bring the police to come in and then the … even the-the … the shop owners … [SOUND OF ALARM][indistinct] … ja, because i-if we do some things without involving those people, they… they would not know what-what we are, what problems do we have as a school, but if they are hands-on, if we have a problem here at school, they'll be … if the children are-are problematic at school, they will also give them problem, because they are going to steal in the shop; and then, you know, they will take the-the medication from the people [who] come from the clinics, and used them as the drugs (you know. So that is why … how we meet with the … uhm … clinic, community, so that when we have meetings with their parents or with … uh … the children, they come and talk about the good and the bad things that will make their future not to be okay.*

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P18, p. 4, Lines 27-34 and p. 5, Lines 1-26

4.1.1.6.4 Subcategory 1.1.6.4: Flocking at the distal education sector as a protective resource

Flocking at the distal education sector involves teachers valuing resource-sharing from institutions at the distal education sector, such as the Department of Education. In this subcategory, Flocking at the distal education sector as a protective resource, there were instances that were representative of both Cases A and B, as found in-face-to face semi-structured interviews and the related member checking sessions and field notes. Table 4.11 reflects a summary of inclusion and exclusion criteria for subcategory 1.1.4.4. Teachers in this study expressed the value of various government-initiated projects as well as resources shared by education institutions and by other institutions at their schools.

Table 4.11: Inclusion and exclusion criteria for Subcategory 1.1.6.4: Flocking at the distal education sector as a protective resource

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
• Flocking at the distal educator sector refers to government-initiated support and/or interventions to counter the environmental demands of rural schools.	• Excludes flocking at the school and community level. • This category excludes instances of flocking as a result of a higher education association.

The government introduced school feeding schemes for students in rural schools as rural scools are often characterised by poverty, as elaborated on in section 4.2 of this chapter. Teacher participants indicated that the feeding scheme is particulary helpful to rural education as students are unable to concentrate and learn adequately when they have not had a proper meal. Students daily receive a meal at school, which is prepared by school community members on the school grounds, as shown in the following photographs:

Photograph 4.9:
A shelter construction for preparation of food for students daily

Photograph 4.10:
A school community member preparing a daily meal

Participant:	*To be in a rural school, things that makes things to be easier, it's the department is now providing food. So children are no more [not] coming to school, they are now coming to school every day. There is no absenteeism in classes. They are coming, because they know that they will eat something at school and if they've eaten, everything goes right. But even the food, it's not enough for the kids, because when they go home, there's nothing at home, so they come back to school to eat.*

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P3, p. 3, Lines 9-17

Participant:	*Yes, the vegetables, they are assisting the feeding programme, the feeding scheme in our school.*
Researcher:	*Hm. And whose [who is] providing the feeding scheme?*
Participant:	*It's the Government.*

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P2, p. 18, Lines 14-19

I observed that the school vegetable garden was moved to a bigger place and it has improved. The vegetables harvested from the garden are used to supplement the feeding scheme at the school.

Data source: Researcher diary of co-researcher, 29 May, p. 7

A teacher participant reported, when asked about associations that assist their school, on various government-initiated programmes and assistance with the aim of improving rural education. Social workers are involved in their school to assist students with grants and finances where there is a need for this. The Department of Education has provided transport for students and teachers together as teachers and students often have to travel long distances to reach their school. This teacher participant further elaborated on the Department of Education providing uniforms to needy students as well as sanitary towels for adolescent girls. In addition, the Department of Education initiated a programme in which they educate young girls on health risk behaviours that could hamper their education.

Researcher:	*Okay, what other partnerships is [are] involved in your school? Or is [are] helping you?*
Participant:	*We are ... no, except for the social workers ...*
	... Yes, they always come to our school. They assist our learners so that they can get their grants, if possible, where there is a need. Hmm, those are the structures, are the people who are always

Participant:	*Ja, we also have that one which is providing sanitary … what?… towels.*
Researcher:	*Sanitary towels.*
Participant:	*Yes, for the girls in our schools.*
Researcher:	*Hm. Who provides that?*
Participant:	*I-I think it's … it's a programme, but under the Department of Education.*
Researcher:	*Okay.*
Participant:	*Ja, they are assisting the learners here. Hm. And there is another one which is also assisting learners with uniform[s].*
	… Hmm, shoes, everything.
Researcher:	*Hm. Also from the Department?*
Participant:	*It's also from the Department.*
Researcher:	*Okay, and do you think having partnerships is valuable?*
Participant:	*It's valuable.*
	… Yes, ja. Like now there is another programme which is new. [coughs] I think it started this week on Wednesday. Ja, it's that one of keeping girls in our … in our school.
	… We identify problematic learners who are struggling [clears throat] Then every Wednesday, during sports period, the learners that have been selected, they were … they are given a class where this someone from the Department of Education is going to assist them.

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P2, p. 18, Lines 20-33 and p. 19, Lines 1-33 and p. 20, Lines 1-33 and p.21, Lines 1-10

Other P.S.

- social workers – get grants

- transport – Dept of Education

- program to assist learners who excel - financial support

- sanitary towels – Dept of Education

- assist uniform & shoes

- Wedn. School for girls

Data source: Field notes, Member checking session of SSI, P2, April 2016, p. 12

- adopt a cop – for safety – searching learner – for safety –

  ↳*drugs + weapons + retrieve it*

  ↳*come unannounced*

- want us to talk with parents & they agreed

  ↳*from Dept*

Data source: Field notes, Member checking session of SSI, P2, April 2016, p. 13

Participant: *Okay, to be a principal I do attend workshop. I attend the workshop for the department, where I gain the knowledge how to run the school.*

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P9, p. 4, Lines 15-17

- Also have Dept. meetings

- Reflection - % obtain – come up challenges – talk how to overcome and timeframe

- Come together – advise how to tackle challenges

- Check schedules & explain if behind & how to push to be on time

- Class visits – subject heads – to dev.

- iqms program – if have challenge - reflect to seniors + peers – assist

Data source: Field notes, Member checking session of SSI, P17, April 2016, p. 10-11

Another teacher participant elaborated on resources shared by associations, for example, the GS College in their area, where they were provided with computer programs to educate their learners in mathematics. However, even though teachers appreciate resources shared by associatons, the need is high in these schools and additional sponsors are required:

Participant: *But, like right now, we've got some kind of agreement with the GS College. They are going to give us programs to use in[for] our computers, that will ensure that learners are able to interact with the computer, on her or his own, follow this program , like [a] maths programme, [and] at the end, you qualify; you get a certificate - all these things. So our disadvantage is normally that we don't have enough computers. There are some of the classes, they have 42 learners; we only have 16. These programs require each and every*

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Data source: Transcription of SSI, P15, p. 12, Lines 27-33 and p. 13, Lines 1-7

In the following quotation from a teacher's face-to-face semi-structured interview, a teacher participant elaborated on various projects that he, as principal of this rural school, had initiated. He showed good networking skills, as he kept contact with previous students from his school to mobilise them as a resource for his school. During a conversation with a former student of his school, he was, for example, able to acquire old computers for his school's computer centre.

Participant:	*Even now, I'm about to begin rating [reaping] some of the fruits that I've planted long ago, because I initiated [of] ... talking to all my former learners that ... ehh ... were lucky to do well in life - they are in big companies - to see that "can't you get somebody in from your company, can't you help us with something". Because even these computers we got them from - actually from the University of Pretoria, Nelspruit branch, through my former learner, who'll phone me and said: "Mr Ngubane, I know if I talk to you, you are going to take this very seriously. Our school, our university, is discarding old computers, and they wish you to write and motivate why you think they should be given to your school." And then we wrote a letter with the school management, and at the end we were able to get the computers. You see, so I'm - I make sure that ... Ehh ... I have contact with all those learners that I thought [they] were my good learners, and now they are doing well outside in the working world, to see - to find out that, can't you do something for the school, no matter how small.*

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P15, p. 16, Lines 15-33 and p. 17, Lines 1-11

When a teacher participant was asked if he could elaborate on instituions that helped their school, he replied with the following:

Participant: *... TUT.*   *... Ja, they gave us computers.*   *Ja, we requested them from ... TUT.*   **Data source: Transcription of SSI, P17, p. 18, Lines 24-32**

Finally, a principal from a rural school elaborated on the value of associations with various stakeholders as he was able to plant trees in his school community as a result of networking with Trees for Africa.

Participant: *You see, which has given the youth outside employment because, after that, they're now being paid, although it is given that they get something. They were sponsored with a ... office material, an office is being rented, it's paid by the department. So it's all my initiatives, you see. So, the RDP is there for trees. When they started - when they were building those houses in the RDPs there were no trees, and through partnerships, which include Trees for Africa, we planted trees in the RDPs and people now, when I move around here, are telling me: "Ngubane, the trees that we planted ten years ago, I'm using that tree now for shade when I'm washing". You see. So all these projects, they make me feel that ... ehh ... I've done something for the community.*   **Data source: Transcription of SSI, P15, p. 15, Lines 14-27**

4.1.1.7   Category 1.1.7: Spirituality as a protective resource

This category refers to instances where teachers indicated that spirituality facilitates teacher resilience as it is viewed as a valuable protective resource. Teacher participants were mostly silent on spirituality as a protective resource and this was referred to by one teacher participant during her face-to-face semi-structured interview. Table 4.12 shows the inclusion and exclusion criteria for Spirituality as a pathway to teacher resilience. One teacher participant expressed the value of spirituality in her teaching career.

Table 4.12: Inclusion and exclusion criteria for Category 1.1.7: Spirituality as a protective resource

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
• Spirituality includes instances where attending church or a relationship with a HEI enables teacher resilience as spirituality is an important protective resource.	• Excludes instances of teacher resilience not related to spirituality.

A teacher participant indicated that attenting church encourages her to be more dedicated in her work, as illustrated in the following extract from her face-to-face semi-structured interview:

Participant:	*Uhm … [pause] … Ja, going to church.*
	… It encourages me to be more dedicated.
Data source: Transcription of SSI, P17, p. 4, Lines 7-11	

4.2 Subtheme 1.2: Out-of-school and in-school risk factors that hinder teaching in rural schools

Students and teachers are both micro-level systems. The micro-level systems are interconnected and interact with each other and have an indirect effect upon each other. Out-of-school risk factors refer to the micro-system of students and the family, which directly influences students and therefore indirectly influences teachers' teaching. In-school risk factors refer to the school as micro-system that directly and indirectly influences both the students and teachers. The inclusion and exclusion criteria for Subtheme 1.2: Out-of-school and in-school risk factors that hinder teaching in rural schools are summarised in Table 4.13.

Table 4.13: Inclusion and exclusion criteria for Subtheme 1.2: Out-of-school and in-school risk factors that hinder teaching in rural schools

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
• This subtheme includes instances of out-of-school and in-school risk factors that hinder rural education.	• This subtheme excludes data related to risk factors that do not relate to in-school and out-of-school risk factors of rural education.

4.2.1 Category 1.2.1: Out-of-school risk factors that hinder teaching in rural schools

Students experience a number of out-of-school risk factors that indirectly influence rural education. Education refers to both teaching by teachers and learning by students. Thus, out-of-school risk factors influence both students' learning and teachers' teaching in the school context. Out-of-school risk factors involve the family system as micro-system that has

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interconnected and related influences on rural education. Table 4.14 reflects a summary of the inclusion and exclusion criteria for Category 1.2.1. Teachers expressed out-of-school risk factors inherent in a rural context, including student health risk behaviours and a lack of cooperation and commitment amongst teachers, parents and school community members as impediments to teacher resilience.

Table 4.14: **Inclusion and exclusion criteria for Category 1.2.1: Out-of-school risk factors that hinder teaching in rural schools**

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
• Out-of-school risk factors relate to instances of parental unemployment, low or no family income, poor parenting practices and styles, low educational level of parents, lack of involvement and support of parents and school community members, lack of parental expectations regarding education, lack of resources available within the home (books, media, internet, etc.), addictions (drug abuse, gambling or alcoholism), health and nutrition problems, teen pregnancy, absenteeism, late arrivals, difficulty of students concentrating, runaways, homelessness, policy and school funding relating to students and their families and the circumstances of school community members.	• Excludes data that relate to in-school risk factors relevant to rural education. • Exclusion of instances of out-of-school risk factors that relate to teachers' personal circumstances.

4.2.1.1 Subcategory 1.2.1.1: The negative impact of rurality risk factors on rural education

Contextual rurality risk factors refer to risk factors prevalent in rural communities, such as child-headed households, a lack of food, the unemployment of parent and school community members, lack of transport, where members often have to travel long distances to reach school and basic services, and a lack of resources for instructional purposes in students' homes.

The following photograph serves to introduce the subcategory: *The negative impact of rurality risk factors on rural education*:

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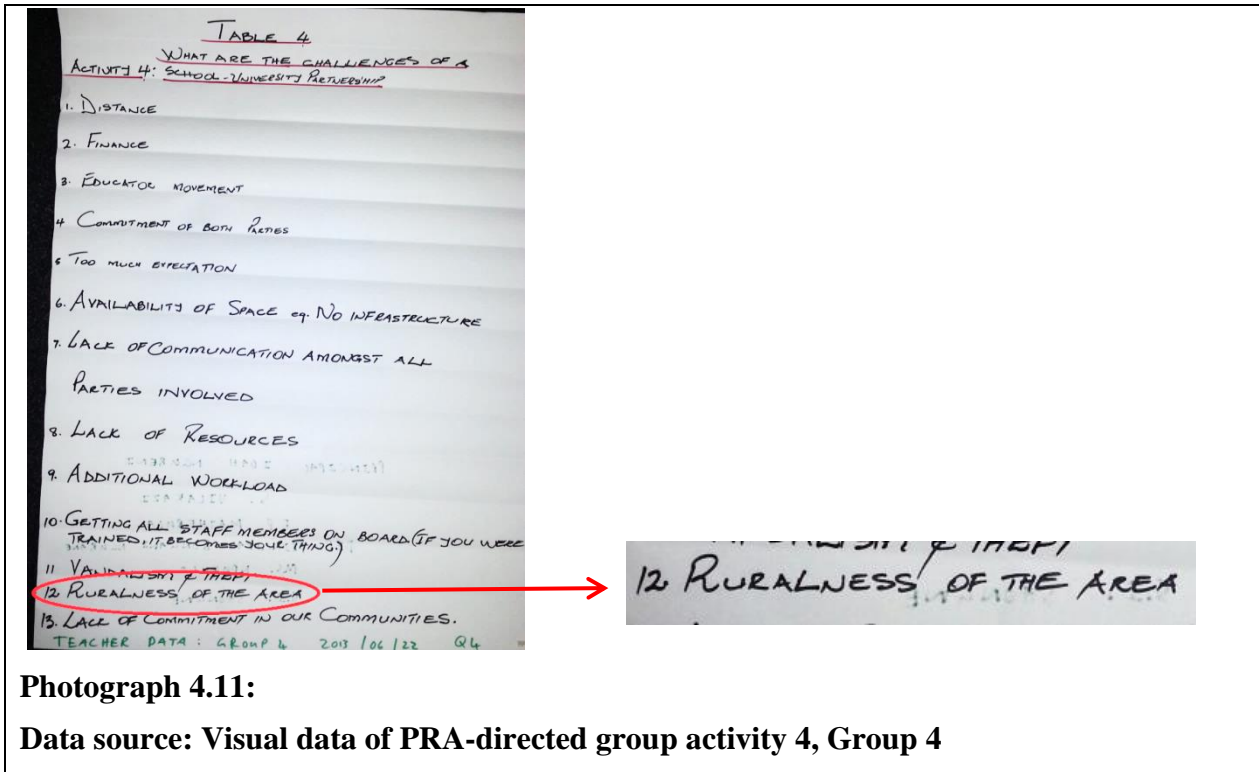
Photograph 4.11:

Data source: Visual data of PRA-directed group activity 4, Group 4

The negative impact of rurality risk factors on rural education is prevalent in all the data that were obtained from the data sources of this study, as indicated by teacher participants in both Cases A and B. The summary of the inclusion and exclusion criteria for Subcategory 1.2.1.1 is reflected in Table 4.15, which follows below. Teachers elaborated on socioeconomic issues, health risk behaviours of students, parental illiteracy and multilingualism among students and teachers as well as a lack of resources (instructional materials and transport) as risk factors attributable to the rural context.

Table 4.15: Inclusion and exclusion criteria for Subcategory 1.2.1.1: The negative impact of rurality risk factors on rural education

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
• Rural schools are impacted by a variety of problems related to poverty, which have been coined rurality risk factors. • Risk factors attributed to rurality, such as instances of parental unemployment, low or no family income, poor parenting practices and styles, low educational level of parents, remote geography, lack of resources available within the home (books, media, etc.), physical, psychological and emotional abuse, HIV/AIDS-infected parents and child-headed households and health and nutrition problems, are included in this subcategory.	• This subcategory excludes data related to the negative impact of factors that do relate to rurality. • This subcategory excludes data in reference to student health risk behaviours. • This subcategory excludes data that refer to the lack of cooperation and commitment between teachers, school community members and parents to improve rural education.

Teacher participants share the difficulties they experience teaching in rural schools with reference to psycho-social problems prevalent in their schools: *.... it is very difficult to teach in rural areas.* (Data source: PRA-directed group activities 2 & 3, Group 4, p. 2, Line 21) and *And ... uhm [cough] ... what is important is that ... uhm ... school[s] are experiencing a number of challenges; more in particular we have focused on more psycho-social ... eh ... problems that schools are experiencing ... uhm ... that ... uh ... the ruralness [rurality] of our places is [make them] prone to problems, social problems. Problems that are attributed to poverty and ... uhm ... problems that are attributed to lack of ... uhm ... eh ... knowledge.* (Data source: PRA-directed group activity 2, Group 3, p. 2-3, Lines 9-16). Difficulties experience by teachers in rural schools is illustrated by the following photograph and vignettes:
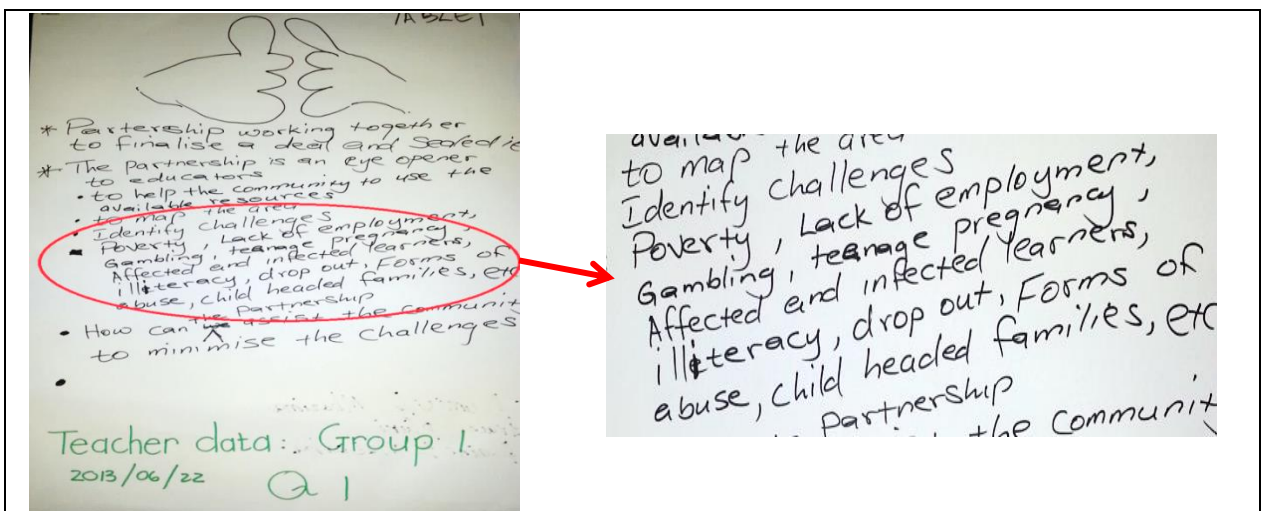
Photograph1 4.12:
Data source: Visual data of PRA-directed group activity 1, Group 1

Participant: *Eish! Uh, the challenges of the community, I experience them, although I'm working, but to see other people suffering and everything, it affect you also. In this particular community [sighs] there are no jobs; in such a way that most of the parents are not working. There are few who are working in mines outside, but most of them, they are not working, and those are the parents of the learners that we have actually.*

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P8, p. 2, Lines 5-10

- Learners from disadvantaged families - like child-headed families

- Not eating

- live grandparents

- Parents sick – child takes care

Data source: Field notes, Member checking session of SSI, P2, 2015-04-22, p.10

- poverty + challenges – increase – more than 60% of time – education =

Parents and school community members are often illiterate, and are therefore unable to assist students in their learning. The following vignettes illustrate that teachers find teaching in rural areas challenging as they cannot rely on parents to supplement students' education:
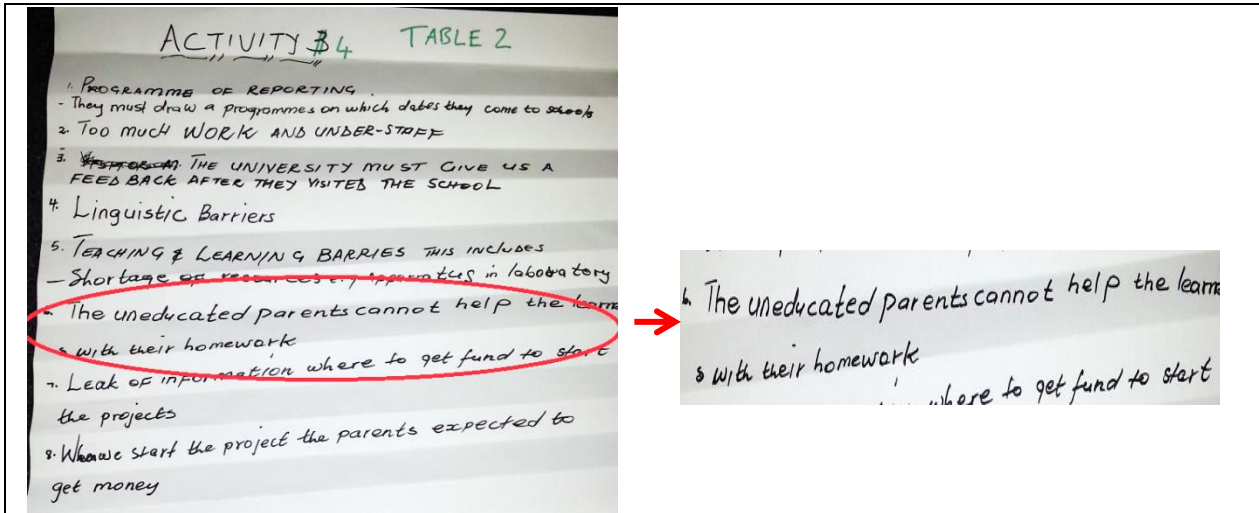
Photograph 4.13:
Data sources: Visual data of PRA-directed group activity 4, Group 2

On the other hand, we know that our community members, they are illiterate; they need everything to be run by the educators.

Data source: PRA-directed group activity 4, Group 1, p. 8-9, Lines 56-59

Participant: *Okay, what maybe I can say being a teacher in a rural area, it's very, very challenging and very stressful at the same time.*
... because most of the time [coughs] in the community that we are working in, the parents, they are illiterate, they do not value education. So, sometimes you find that when you give learners work to do at home, they are not assisted by their parents at home.

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P2, p.1, Lines 5-15

The educated, the uneducated parents cannot help the learners with their homework and cannot motivate them to apply in [to] universities because they have no knowledge about university things.

Data source: PRA-directed group activity 4, Group 2, p. 4-5, Lines 28-32

Participant: *It is difficult in such a way that [clears throat] you don't get support. The more the parent[s] are not knowledgeable, the more you are likely not to have maybe his [their] support to come and*

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	support us and everything. They don't support us actually. Parents don't take part in the … in the learning of their kids actually.
Researcher:	*Hmm, in what other ways is it difficult?*
Participant:	*I-it is difficult in such a way that [clears throat]… how can I put it? These learners are from poor families, in such a way that some of them are taking care [taken care of] by their grannies. Then, at the other end, it is difficult for them to write [do their] homework(s). It is difficult for them to get help. It is difficult for them to-to get so many [little] support from home actually, so it-it affect[s] us here at school.*

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P8, p. 2, Lines 15-33 and p. 3, Lines 1-2

- Learners want to be followed " pushed" with work – get home – have nothing to do
↳*don't want to study – can put much effort as education – no commitment*
- Invite parents – they confirm don't want to study @ home = rely on education – make education responsibility
- Lack of commitment – no proper supervision

Data source: Field notes, Member checking, 22-04-2015 of SSI, P2, p. 10

Teachers indicate that students do not have sufficient resources available in their homes for instructional purposes and that this lack of resources hampers rural education: *If we look at the … eh … the … eh … history of rural schools … eh … there is a huge backlog of … eh … resources that would enable schools to efficiently deal with the … eh … process of teaching and learning.* (Data source: PRA-directed group activity 2, Group 3, p. 3-4, Lines 24-27) *… or they don't have the resources, so these are the things that makes it more difficult for you.* (Data source: Transcription of SSI, P2, p. 9, Lines 17-19) and *I cannot just give them a task, then I expect them to do well in the task, whereas I know that the community that they are living in, it doesn't have sufficient … uh … resources for the-the for the learners.* (Data source: Transcription of SSI, P2, p. 4, Lines 14-17). Students are unable to do homework that requires resources such as television or computers and access to a library to do research.

Participant:	*And [in] most of their homesteads, they do not have a TV set. Like, for an example, let us say, you ask a learner to go and watch a programme, an educational programme, at home; then, the following day, when you want feedback from the learners, you will find that maybe out of the whole class only two learners were able to tune in.*

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... Then, when you enquire from the learners, then you find that some of them they do not have a television at home. So it becomes very, very difficult, because most of the work that comes from the Department of Education; it's common [knowledge] ... they do not say that "because these learners are from a rural area, then we are going to think - we are going to give them work that is maybe to [at] their level". They give them work, then, as an educator, you find that you have a problem. Like, maybe when they're supposed to do research, then it becomes difficult for them to do research because they do not have access to libraries in the community, and ... uhm ... and even... uhm ... computers they do not have, where they can maybe find information. So it becomes ... uh ... a problem. ... They rely only to [on] the educator. You are the one who was [is] supposed to do research for the learners. You bring the research, of which ... that one is not going to assist the learners, because they must explore. They must find information on their own. So it becomes difficult.

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P2, p. 1, Lines 16-33 and p. 2, Lines 1-18

Participant: *Ja, you know at times it's fine, but [it] has got a number of challenges.*

... Yes, it's fine, because as long as you ... we can access some of ... some of the-the ... the basics ...

...You know? But when you need the-the ... the other thing, especially as an educator, (you know) it's so ... it's so frustrating, because you find that the learners cannot access other ... other resources that they need for their studies ...

... and as an educator, for instance, you ... you have to go beyond the classroom ...

... to search for more information for the edu ... for the learners because they can't get it.

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P12, p. 3, Lines 8-33

Participant: *I think it's on the part of learners.*

...They are not exposed to a lot of things like a child in the city.

...So sometimes, when we explain, we have to go deeper. Sometimes when you have to refer them to, maybe towards something on TV, as part of a learning activity, some of them, they don't have access to

> *television(s). You see, like right now I gave them a task where they have [had] to watch a talk show, so some of them couldn't, just because they live far [away]; there's no electricity.*
>
> *…They don't have internet and television access, so I can't ask them to come and sleep [over] around here [indistinct]. So that is a challenge. … ehh … another challenge, I think,*

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P15, p. 1, Lines 3-20

Participant: *Ja, ja. I-I think, another thing, in such places, my experience is that there's no … there are no centres there for children, like a park, like an amusement park, like … there is a library, but it does not cater, for much of what is that [there] - the books there - most of them are outdated. The internet service [is] only [a] computer, so as compared to a child in the City, it's easy to refer them to such … to such centres for enrichment. Here you find it difficult.*

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P15, p. 2, Lines 26-33

Students, teachers and school community members often live far away from the rural schools and are reliant on public transport. Teachers and students using public transport are unable to stay behind at school for extra classes, which would enrich rural education.

Participant: *Two is the public transport. You cannot organise extra classes because of the public … because we are using one, common transport.*

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P4, p. 4, Lines 28-30

And we are [pause for 4 seconds] in the [a] remote area. You know, look at our situation; we are not residing around [make[s] a circle with her right hand] where our school is. To side on maybe at [Secondary School] 90 to 95 educators, 95% of educators are from eLukwatini and [that] is 32 km away. It is difficult after school; maybe we are using one, common transport and cannot remain behind trying to help this, er, community and also help the learners, because of the area that is far away from where we stay [we live in an area that is far away].

Data source: PRA-directed group activity 4, Group 1, p. 9, Lines 59-69

Students often live far from the rural school and due to the long distances that they have to travel to school, they often arrive late and miss important information taught by their teachers.

Participant: *Yes, the kids are not - they don't, like, keep time, keep time in the morning.*

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Researcher:	*Hmm-hmm. Do they arrive late?*
Participant:	*They arrive late, the latecoming … the travelling. They come to school … [intervenes].*
Researcher:	*Because of travelling?*
Participant:	*Yes.*
	…It affects me … coming to … when the educators are in a class, now they [the learners] are late, outside, they lose [out on] some lesson.

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P9, p. 6, Lines 10-33

Participant:	*… some of them live far [away].*
	…So, they travel a lot, when they come to school … ehh …they're not at their best, so as compared to a child who maybe travels about 200 metres to school; this one travels more than four km, although there is motor transport, but it can only cater for children living five km and more away from the school, so those who have - if you've got 4,8 km, you have to travel with [by] foot, so that on its own, the child, by the time they arrive here, they are tired. Another thing, I think … ehh … another challenge is that most of them don't live with their matriarch[al] parents, biological parents, I mean.

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P15, p. 1, Lines 21-33

Participant:	*Uhm … uh … being a teacher here in a … at [in] a rural area … uh … there is a … a problem …*
	… [indistinct] and there … uh … about learners, they came late at school …
	… and … uh … they do not cope well, because of … uh uh … I don't know quite why I s-said … uh … this - uh … because … uh … they stay far away.

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P10, p. 1, Lines 3-23

| Participant: | *And the other thing is that our-our children stay very far from where we are teaching. Uh, some of them had [have] to cross the river … uh … when they come to school and then you-you find that … uh-uh … during teaching time they are tired (you know) because they wake up as early as … uh … 3 o'clock they'll be up so that they get to wash and-and … and-and had [have] their breakfast before coming to school. And then … uhm … in the … but when they are here at school, we … we-we are … they are coping. They* |

Teachers in rural schools who make use of public transport find it difficult to reach mandated workshops on time, as illustrated in the following extract from a face-to-face semi-structured interview:

Participant:	*Okay, firstly here is a rural … here's no transport if you want to go to town. It's difficult. If there are [coughs] workshops, down there at the location, you cannot reach [them] in time. Sometimes we have to left [leave] early in the morning, and the workshop is at maybe 11 o'clock. So, [we] leave the learners alone and then I rush to that [workshop]. Sometimes you don't even reach the … because when you arrive at the workshop, you will find people have long gone, because you are late.*

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P3, p. 4, Lines 11-19

Students in the rural school experience have various socioeconomic problems that hamper the process of learning and teaching. In the following extracts, teachers indicate that child-headed households are prevalent amongst their students. Students often head their own households due to having lost their parents to HIV/AIDS, and this consequently influences rural education negatively:

Participant:	*Ja, and another thing is I think this … ehh … child-headed homes.*
	… We've got a lot here. Some of them because parents are dead, because of HIV/AIDS. You see, in such places where there's no constant parental … parental supervision, you see. Diseases like HIV, is [are] a discrepancy so they - a child - has got no support at home.
	… You see sometimes the boyfriend sleeps in the house, you see, and then the child has to come to school and perform, and after hours, the child is a full-time mother, you see, then it becomes a problem. So, also the impact of diseases like HIV/AIDS, in such areas where the information - although they took that information, but it's not the same as somebody who lives in cities, where information is central.

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P15, p. 3, Lines 1-15

Participant:	*And there are these other learners who … who come from disadvantaged families, if I … the, especially that are child-headed families. We have them in our schools here. So it's … it's very difficult to teach them, because they are … they are parents, they are learners and also parents at the same time.*
	… When you are teaching the learner, in his or her mind, he's thinking: "What am I … how … what is … what am I going to feed the children at home, when I go home in the afternoon?".
	… Then it becomes a-a problem. Yes, and there are those who are living with their grandparents, whose parents maybe died, and you find that when they come to school, they come on an empty stomach. Then, when we are teaching, you find that the child is (now) sleepy.
	… She or he is not following. Then, maybe when you try to find out the problem, you find that the child is staying with the grandmother. When she comes to school, she comes on an empty stomach. Then it becomes difficult for you as an educator.
Researcher:	*Hmm, because she's not able to concentrate.*
Participant:	*She's not able to concentrate. And some of the learners, you know, they are staying with … uh … parents who are sick. Sick, sick, sick, véry, very sick. They have got … They have to take care of them.*
	Ja, they have to take care of the parents, and you see sometimes the child is exposed to these illnesses, HIV and AIDS. The parents is [are] now maybe [suffering from] HIV and AIDS and he or he might be fully blown at that stage now, and you see that the child is always exposed to such things. Then you find that the child is now disturbed. It disturbs the child psychologically, emotionally …
Researcher:	*Hm. Definitely.*
Participant:	*… and even spiritually. [clears throat]*

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P2, p. 11, Lines 5-33 and p. 12, Lines 1-20

Participant:	*I think … uh i-it's just that here in our community, uh … some of the learners are-are … the parents are not here, and they don't get enough time to study at home, because … uh … their-their families are headed by the-the … the learners themselves. So they-they don't have time to-to … to concentrate on their … so that is giving a-a …*

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> *a lot of problem[s] because we-we ... we had [have] to-to force them to do their work and, as you know, (that) corporal punishment is not allowed.*

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P18, p. 1, Lines 28-33 and p. 18, Lines 1-4

Participant: *Ehh, they ... besides this ... ehh ... you usually ... for employment, their parents are far [away], so when you call [a] parents' meeting, they've got the so-called representatives, and those other representatives ... some of them are still children. That's why they can't [make] decisions on behalf of their siblings, and all that, so it becomes tough.*

... So there - this triangle of learner, school, parent relationship that - the triangle is not complete.

... Because the parent is missing. Sometimes we have to check - when you chase the child away, for maybe bad behaviour, or not writing homework, or they have an issue (wherein) you find the parent only comes back [at]month-end, so then by the time the parents comes here, the thing is ... ehh ... old news, you see.

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P15, p. 2, Lines 3-23

With reference to socioeconomic risk factors, students often live in abject poverty at home and they often do not have food to eat as parents are unemployed: *Eish! Uh ... the challenges of the community; I experience them although I'm working, but to see other people suffering and everything; it affect[s] you also. In this particular community [sighs] there are no jobs, in such a way that most of the parents are not working. There are [a] few who are working in mines outside, but most of them, they are not working, and those are the parents of the learners that we have actually.* (Data source: Transcription of SSI, P8, p. 2, Lines 4-10).

Students often arrive at school without having eaten anything and their hunger hampers their learning in school:

Participant: *They ... they come late and if they are hungry ... they do not eat anything*

.. at-at ... at the parent home. If they's [they] come in [to] the class, they sleep. Early in the morning ... uh ... if you talk ... uh ... about "why you sleep?", he ... he or she's saying that: "I am hungry, because I don't [didn't] eat anything at ...' ...

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P10, p. 1, Lines 27-30 and p. 2, Lines 2-5

Participant: *And also coming to school with ... uh uh ... they do [did] not eat anything ..*

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P10, p. 10, Lines 10-11

Participant: *Being a teacher in the rural school is very difficult.*
... Because the children walk a long way from home to school. Sometimes they come to school with an empty stomach. Others don't have uniform[s].
... And most of the kids, they stay with their grannies, not with their mothers. Even if you give them homework, they don't do it, because their grannies don't know anything. The children come to school without anything, so as a teacher you have to provide for them, because they cannot learn with [on] an empty stomach and some - some children - sometimes call [tell] us early in the morning, during assembly, when you ask, "when have you eaten?", he will say, "I've just eaten yesterday during break. At home there was nothing." So it's difficult to be a teacher in a rural area.

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P3, p. 1, Lines 20-32 and p. 2, Lines 1-9

Participant: *Poverty on its own in such areas, it's surprising. Some learners only ... are only guaranteed a meal at school, you see. They are ... even now we are thinking of moving this eating time, because if its half past ten, it's a bit late. If a child doesn't get a meal, or only depends [on a meal] at school ... so it's better to ... maybe if they eat at about half past nine.*
... So that a child would be able to carry on normal[ly], like all the other children, [with] something in his or her stomach. So poverty also ... is a variable. So I think those are the things that I've discovered in teaching in a rural area.

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P15, p. 4, Lines 2-13

Participant: *By being a teacher in a rural school, it's ... it's a little bit challenging ...*
... 'coz some of the families cannot manage to do some things for their kids. They're struggling to buy them school uniforms ...
... they're struggling to give them food. Sometimes they travel a long way to school.

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> *... Yeah. And they get to school, sometimes they were [are] tired, felled (sic) asleep in the morning. So, at the school we have to do something for them - to eat, maybe, in the morning.*
>
> **Data source: Transcription of SSI, P14, p. 1, Lines 4-23**
>
> Participant: *Actually to be a teacher in a rural community is something that ... it is very, very, very ... I don't know how to put it, but it is not good, actually, because most of our learners around here, they come from poor families; in such a way that although today we have that [which] we call the new feeding scheme and everything, but we still experience challenges in such a way that some of the learners come to school without [having had] any food. If ever you'll like me [to] maybe to [I can] give examples. There are many, many learners who are actually coming to school without food, coming to school without shoes, uniform[s], actually, and everything. It is not good, actually.*
>
> **Data source: Transcription of SSI, P8, p. 1, Lines 5-17**

Teacher participants reported that vandalism and theft often occur in rural schools when resources are sponsored by stakeholders:

> *Number eleven is vandalism and theft. You might find that the university, they sponsor you with a computer. Somebody comes and steal[s] it. Er, they build a library; they destroy it. That takes us back all the time. I am sure of this word, maybe [it] is correct, "ruralness" of the area. Being rural is a barrier on its own. So I believe that being in rural area, we are at a disadvantage. So that also becomes a barrier.*
>
> **Data source: PRA-directed group activity 4, Group 4, p. 8, Lines 70-77**

Teachers describe the lack of access to basic health care services as an impediment to rural education in the following extracts:

> Participant: *Now it frustrates, you know, at a particular point and also when you need the other basic needs like doctors, you know, at an advanced level ...*
>
> *... it stresses, because one has to drive longer distances, especially [for] specialists ...*
>
> *... because they are very scarce here and also ... ja, hospitals, they are very far [away], you know.*

> **Data source: Transcription of SSI, P12, p. 4, Lines 24-33 and p. 5, Lines 1-4**
>
> Participant: *... although it wastes money, because the things are far [away], you see. When you need something, you need to travel for about, more than, 30 km just to get to decent shops, unlike a person who has to [can] travel on foot to go to a mall.*
>
>   *... You see. And you don't get everything all the time, you see. Sometimes, I believe things like electricity, ours is weaker. It's easily disrupted. Once there is thunder and all that, then you don't have electricity. If you call somebody in Barberton, they tell you, no, they don't have such problems.*
>
> **Data source: Transcription of SSI, P15, p. 5, Lines 4-7**
>
>
>
> **Photograph 4.14:**
> **Data source: Visual data of PRA-directed group activity 4, Group 4**
>
> Participant: *You see, ja, sometimes it's water, you see, because maybe - sometimes it's because in such areas, people are not keen to pay for services, so the municipality also becomes reluctant to make repairs.*
>
> **Data source: Transcription of SSI, P15, p. 5, Lines 4-21**
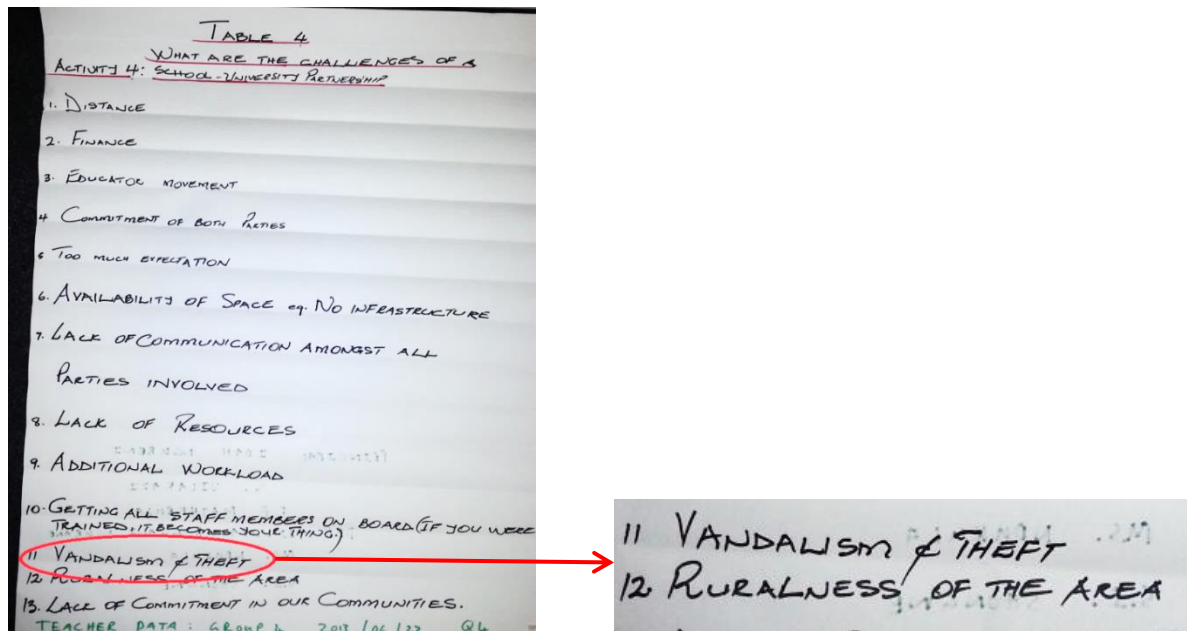
4.2.1.2   Subcategory 1.2.1.2: Student health risk behaviours as an empediment to rural education

This subcategory refers to the health risk behaviours of students in rural schools that hamper rural education. Although data for this subcategory mostly occurred in the conversations with teacher participants from Case B during PRA-directed group activities and face-to-face semi-

structured interviews, instances of student health risk behaviours were also prevalent in conversations with teacher participants from Case A. Table 4.16 reflects a summary of the inclusion and exclusion criteria for Subcategory 1.2.1.2, Student health risk behaviours as an impediment to rural education. Teachers mentioned certain health risk behaviours of students in their schools, such as substance abuse, sexual activity, pregnancy and theft.

Table 4.16: Inclusion and exclusion criteria for Subcategory 1.2.1.2: Student health risk behaviours as an impediment to rural education

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
• Students in rural schools engage in certain health risk behaviours that put them at risk of dropping out of school, which is a barrier to their education. Health risk behaviours such as addictions (drug abuse, gambling or alcoholism), teenage pregnancy, absenteeism, late arrivals, students' having difficulty concentrating, being runaways, and engaging in behaviours that could result in the HIV/AIDS infection are included in this category.	• This subcategory excludes data related to teacher health risk behaviours. • This subcategory excludes data related to the negative impact of rurality. • This subcategory excludes data in reference to the lack of cooperation and commitment between teachers, school community members and parents to improve rural education.

The following extract illustrates the frustration teachers experience teaching in rural schools owing to the lack of facilities and after-school activities being unavailable to students: *Ja, no, for me to teach in a rural school, nè, is not (a) lucky, but, eish, it's a challenge. Definitely, because you know, like here, these learners, they don't have [the] infrastructure to do - or to play - anything that they can do after school. The only thing that they will do after school; they will move onto the street, for no reason.* (Data source: Transcription of SSI, P4, p. 8, Lines 2-6).

Due to the lack of after-school activities, students often engage in health-risk behaviours such as drug abuse, teen pregnancy and dropping out of school, as is reflected in the subsequent citation: *... learners and community face life challenges. Like, we know that some of our learners engage (themselves) in drug abuse. Eh, they also become pregnant ... they won't engage themselves in these activities, drug abuse, they won't ... eh ... be [fall] pregnant. Eh, the, the-the, there'd be, the ... uhm ... the third one ... it's a school drop-out...* (Data source: PRA-directed group activities 2 & 3, Group 4, p. 4, Lines 69-72; 74-77). In the following vignettes, teachers elaborate on student absenteeism and dropping out of school as health risk behaviours that impede rural education:

Participant: *So, another thing ... uhm ... is about ... uh ... absenteeism.*   *... They do not ... uh ... attend very well at school.*   **Data source: Transcription of SSI, P10, p. 2, Lines 28-33**   Participant: *... of our learners ... uh ... because they come late, uh ... they miss some of the subject.*   Researcher: *Okay. Right so they're coming late ...*   Participant: *... and then also when they have to do activities; they don't know how to do it, then they'll say ...*   **Data source: Transcription of SSI, P10, p. 10, Lines 7-15**   *... because, like the colleagues have mentioned, some of the things of, or some of the points, including poverty, drop-out ...*   **Data source: PRA-directed group activities 2 & 3, Group 2, p. 2, Lines 16-18**   Participant: *I'm seeing it ... ehh ... but what I've discovered is that those who think like these teenagers, the teenage boys, when they come to the stage where they change behaviour. They become ... their voices change, they start smoking, and all that ... ja, those ... ehh ...it's easy for them to leave school.*   *... Ja, it's easy to drop out, and ... ehh ... they don't have support, enough support from home to give them a reason why they should go back to school, or why they should take school seriously.*   *... So I find that in such areas, dropping out from [of] school is easier.*   **Data source: Transcription of SSI, P15, p. 7, Lines 29-33 and p. 8, Lines 1-10**

Teacher participants raised their concern that teenage girls engage in behaviour that puts them at risk of falling pregnant. They explain that often these girls fall pregnant as a way to obtain grants, but this only worsens poverty:

Participant: *And most of young girls get children and left [leave] them with the grannies, and sometimes in a class there are children who are - who you find that the child is now is now [indistinct] ... the parents doesn't [don't] help the child.*   **Data source: Transcription of SSI, P3, p. 6, Lines 9-12**   Participant: *What I will like to share with you is that maybe living in the rural areas ... [indistinct] ... area actually, eish, is challenging, in such a way that you'll find that [clears throat] as I told you in the earlier [interview] to say*

> *there's no source of income. Our young girls, actually young girls at ... as young as 11 years, 12 years, they become parents. You know what I mean?*
>
> *...Hmm, do ... there is no source of income, in such a way that to get money, they have to get maybe someone to be a boyfriend or man-friend because they are older than them actually. At the ultimate end, at 16 or 17, they have three or two kids.*
>
> *... Hm. So i-it is challenging, actually. What I will share with you, is that living in a rural area ... area like this, is very difficult. [Slight pause] The source of income, actually, it is like these particular learners or this [these] particular kids are looking at the grant. To get [have] kids in order for them to [receive a] grant, they will get the [R]300 and [R]600 and everything, and not ... n-not, not loo ... looking on [look at] the broader picture.*

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P8, p. 11, Lines 26-33 and p. 12, Lines 1-22

Other health risk behaviours students in rural schools engage in is drug abuse and theft, as illustrated in the following vignette:

Participant:	*Uhm ... I think the community, they [are] involved in ... ehh ... This, what you call drugs, can I mention that?*
Researcher:	*Hmm, in activities that is [are] not good?*
Participant:	*Yes, not good, yes. Ehh ... burglaries. Some of them, they enter the gardens and take the vegetables.*

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P9, p. 5, Lines 25-31

4.2.1.3   Subcategory 1.2.1.3: Lack of cooperation and commitment between teachers, parents and the school community members as a barrier to rural education

Lack of cooperation amongst teachers, parents, school community members and students themselves is reported by teacher participants as a barrier to rural education. Teacher participants from Case A mostly reported on this subcategory during face-to-face semi-structured interviews. Two teacher participants from Case B referred during their face-to-face semi-structured interviews to instances of a lack of cooperation and commitment between stakeholders. Table 4.17 shows the inclusion and exclusion criteria for Subcategory 1.2.1.3. Teachers expressed a lack of commitment and cooperation by peer teachers, students and their parents as hampering rural education, and thus teacher resilience.

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Table 4.17: **Inclusion and exclusion criteria for Subcategory 1.2.1.3: Lack of cooperation and commitment between teachers, parents and school community members as a barrier to rural education**

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
• This subcategory refers to the lack of parental involvement and support to teachers regarding the education of the students. Lack of involvement by and support from the school community members to improve students' education are included in this subcategory. • Lack of cooperation by teachers and students is included in this category.	• This subcategory excludes instances of a lack of cooperation and commitment amongst teachers with regard to a higher education institution association with rural schools. • This subcategory excludes data in reference to student health risk behaviours.

Teacher participants reported in the following vignettes that there is a lack of cooperation and commitment between teacher peers, which hampers rural education:

Participant:	*Ja, it's co-operation.*
	…a … if they don't co-operate, it's very difficult, especially [for] the teachers. If we intended to do something together, and they don't co-operate …
	… it becomes strenuous; and, secondly, learners also, they don't play their roles. When given activities to be done at home, they don't perform.
	… Ja, they don't do them at home, so they wanted the teacher to be always available and assist them.
	… They don't do homework(s). If you give them projects, they want them to be done in class so that they complete them [there]. Ja, that is a challenge.
	… Thirdly, their parents are illiterate, so they w… they are not in a position to assist them.

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P17, p. 5, Lines 4-32

Participant:	*Ja, you know, actually there are a number of factors but … uh … one of the factors maybe would be cooperation at certain levels …*
	… especially at teacher level, because, you know, politics has a … has a … has now come in and …
	… and it has marked education, you know. Education is now upside-down, because people are more into politics; such that it makes it difficult to … to-to … to work [slight chuckle] in the environment as a teacher.

	... And one other thing maybe is the ... is the lack of support, you know, financial support at times, you know, from parents, because parents are ... are not affording [cannot afford it].
Data source: Transcription of SSI, P12, p. 5, Lines 13-33	
Participant:	*Ja, but if I were to extend further ... I've indicated this already, but the cooperation amongst colleagues, you know, the-the ... the influence of politics, it's also making it difficult to work, because now, when you're doing things, you need to be very cautious that you don't, you ... you know ... you don't trample on somebody's foot [step on someone's toes] somewhere.*
	... And also, one other thing's, as I've said, makes it too difficult ... I've said motivation, the other one, maybe it's ... it's the, is the input that educators make at various levels ...
Data source: Transcription of SSI, P12, p. 9, Lines 3-24	

During face-to-face semi-structured interviews, the teacher participants were asked what made teaching in a rural school more difficult. A lack of commitment and cooperation from parents was communicated by teacher participants as another barrier to the process of teaching and learning: *It's difficult to get the parents to also help with their learning.* (Data source: Transcription of SSI, P3, p. 5, Lines 4-7). Parents' lack of cooperation is further captured in the following extracts from face-to-face semi-structured interviews:

Researcher:	*In the beginning you also said, you know, having [getting] the parents to come; it's sometimes difficult ...*
Participant:	*Hm.*
Data source: Transcription of SSI, P2, p. 9, Lines 12-15	
Participant:	*The thing that makes it difficult, it's because the parents don't cooperate. If you give the learners work, they don't help them ...*
Data source: Transcription of SSI, P2, p. 4, Lines 29-31	
Participant:	*The parents.*
	... They are not supportive. Parents are not supportive.
Data source: Transcription of SSI, P18, p. 6, Lines 16-18	
Participant:	*Hmm, the other things that makes [make] it difficult to teach in a rural area, it's the community.*

> *...The community doesn't ... it doesn't cooperate with the school most of the time, because ... [if] they were cooperating with the school, the others who are in high school, they should have helped the learners. The parents don't encourage the learners to help each other.*

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P3, p. 5, Lines 28-33 and p. 6, Lines 1-5

… and the children don't do homework (Data source: Transcription of SSI, P2, p. 4, Lines 31-32) is one example reported by teachers of a factor that hampers rural education. Teachers elaborated on the importance of students' completing homework assignments as this provides an opportunity to evaluate if students understand the subject content. Teachers indicated that if students do not do their homework it hinders the teaching process as teachers often need to re-teach the content to ensure that all the students have attained the outcomes:

Participant:	*As a teacher, when children come back to school without writing their homework, you don't know whether they understood or not. You don't know ... you become another thing, I don't know how I can explain it, because if the child comes back to school without her homework, you want to continue and you can't continue. You have to go back to that lesson and let them write the homework in class, because at home there's nothing, and you have to start afresh, help them.*
	… To come up with the correct answers.

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P3, p. 5, Lines 12-24

4.2.2   Category 1.2.2: In-school risk factors that hinder teaching in rural schools

In-school risk factors involve micro-systems and meso-systems relating to students and teachers within the school environment. Both the micro- and meso-systems in the school environment (students and teachers and accordingly the interaction between these micro-systems) are interconnected and assert influence upon each other. The inclusion and exclusion criteria for Category 1.2.2: In-school risk factors that hinder teaching in rural schools are reflected in Table 4.18. In-school risk factors refer to a lack of resources for instructional purposes, a lack of literacy skills, multilingualism, teachers' working conditions and the lack of skills on the part of teachers to utilise available technology.

Table 4.18: Inclusion and exclusion criteria for Category 1.2.2: In-school risk factors that hinder teaching in rural schools

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
• In-school risk factors include: problems with or the lack of instructional practices and resources in schools as well as language and literacy barriers. • In-school risk factors include challenges due to teachers' working conditions and limited teacher skill to use technology resources.	• Exclusion of out-of-school risk factors relating to parents and school community members.

4.2.2.1 Subcategory 1.2.2.1: Lack of resources in schools to support instructional practices

Lack of resources in schools to support instructional practices refers to limited instructional resources available in the school context, such as books for the library, textbooks, science apparatus and chemicals. Instances related to a lack of resources in schools to support instructional practices were mostly derived from teacher participants from Case B during both PRA-directed group activities and face-to-face semi-structured interviews. Instances relating to Subcategory 1.2.2.1 were also evident in conversations with teacher participants from Case A2, while there was one instance from a teacher participant forming part of Case A1, during his face-to-face semi-structured interview. Table 4.19 reflects a summary of the inclusion and exclusion criteria for Subcategory 1.2.2.1. Teachers conveyed that a lack of instruction materials that are necessary for teaching (science equipment, library books, etc.) as well as a lack of technological skills on the part of students as counterproductive to rural education.

Table 4.19: Inclusion and exclusion criteria for Subcategory 1.2.2.1: Lack of resources in schools to support instructional practices

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
• Lack of resources refers to limited resources available in the school context to support instructional practices. Lack of resources such as library books, textbooks, science apparatus, chemicals, etc., is included in this subcategory.	• Excludes instances with reference to lack of resources that do not relate to instructional practices within the school context. • Excludes instances of lack of instructional resources attributed to out-of-school risk factors. Limited resources for instructional practices within the family are excluded from this category.

Teacher participants elaborated on a lack of instructional resources in the rural schools when asked what it is like to teach in a rural school: *Oeh! To be a teacher in a rural school, i-it's … it's a-a bit challenging … because we-we don't … uh … have resources here in [the] rural school* (Data source: Transcription of SSI, P18, p. 1, Lines 11-12 and 16) and

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We know that there are some hiccups in our schools. There are no resources, so teaching is very difficult. Even the libraries that were mentioned, they are not ... there're ... there're ... are insufficient books. There are [is] no equipment for science. So, to carry out some experiments ... it is, it becomes very difficult (Data source: PRA-directed group activities 2 & 3, Group 4, p. 2-3, Lines 25-30). The following extracts illustrate the instructional resources in rural schools that are lacking, such as library books, science equipment and chemicals for practical experiments and graphs and rulers for mathematics:
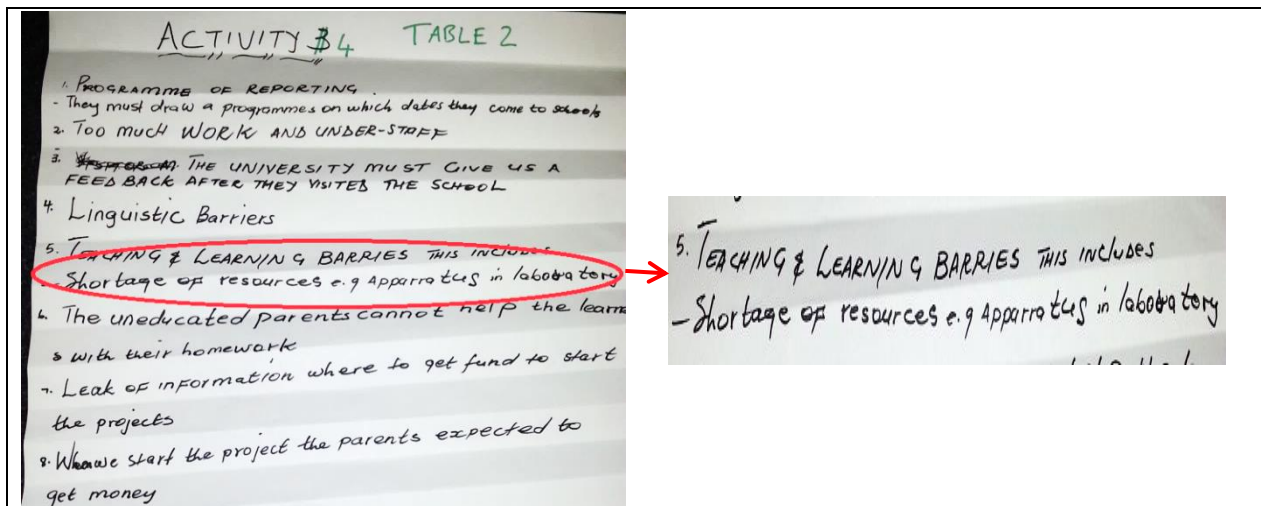
Photograph 4.15:
Data source: Visual data of PRA-directed group activity 4, Group 2

Teaching and learning barriers include [a] shortage of resources, e.g. apparatus in laboratory, chemicals to do science.

Data source: PRA-directed group activity 4, Group 2, p. 4, Lines 26-28

Participant: *Maybe one other thing that makes it difficult is the lack of resources.*

... Ja, as one educator who falls into science, you know, and you find yourself frustrated at times because if you have to get these resources; it's very hard to get them. So that's another one.

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P12, p. 7, Lines 32-33 and p. 8, Lines 2-7

Participant: *Ja, ja, sometimes it's a challenge. I don't want to lie to you. Like here, we don't have ... uhm ... enough apparatus and material to teach these learners, especially mathematics, you know. Those graphs, we need some rulers, we need some apparatus; no, it's not simple in mathematics, but in physics it gets trying. I'm trying in physics.*

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P4, p. 5, Lines 12-18

Participant: *And another thing ... uh ... on the part of the difficulties ...*

... Ja, uh ... we don't have ... uhm ... a laboratory ...

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> *... and ... uh ... the library [slight pause] because this is where we needed to ... to have ... uh ... resourceful [a resource] centre and ... uh ... to carry out the experiments in a laboratory. Presently we don't have it, so it becomes difficult.*

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P17, p. 11, Lines 17-28

Participant: *Ja, the thing that makes us ... uh ... makes us to be difficult is the resources - we don't have ... uh ... libraries, hey. We don't have science ... uh ... centres and we-we only teach them theory, not practical.*
... For science, or even sometimes our-our children [clears throat] cannot access a-a library. We don't even have library, but we-we ... we told them they must go and search for i-information, but w-we don't know where they are going to get the information because we don't even have a-a community library where they can go maybe to find the information.

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P18, p. 5, Lines 31-34 and p. 6, Lines 1-12

In additionally, teachers reported that we lived in a world of technology and that students and school community members lack these important skills. Rural schools do not have enough computers to train and expose all students to computer skills, as illustrated in the following extracts:

Participant: *So, I think these are some of the challenges, and this ... ehh ...moving with technology ... moving with time, you see, people now are using tablets, and all that for information. They Google and all that. You see, children this side, when you talk Google, it's French.*
... They don't understand what people are talking about. Sometimes even the adults, you see, they still take it as luxury; it's something that cannot assist a child in their learning and education. So I think those are some of the things, and poverty.

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P15, p. 3, Lines 21-31

Participant: *Here at school we don't have actually resources. I'll put it like this: Although we have computers, there are [only a] few, in such a way that only learners who are doing computers, a-a-are accessing them. So, in other words, we don't have resources like ... to who ... media, to use ... need ... what do we call them? To-to use in classes, you know, that we only use the-the ... the old ones, with chalk and a*

> *board. Our learners actually a-are not exposed to-to ... to-to ... to technology.*

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P8, p. 3, Lines 12-20

Participant: *And another thing, we ... we have a computer centre ... uh ... with few, I think it's 34 computers.*

    ... So the computer centre accommodates approximately 50 ... 56; I think so. So, we don't have chairs, we don't have ... uhm ... printers for the computers ...

    ... and we are still struggling. We want to assist the community to be computer literate, but ... uh ... we want to [need a] kick-start.

    ... and ... uh ... the documents, we don't have the documents ...

    ... what to teach them and the accreditation; it's also a problem because they are staying far from a [indistinct] ...

    ... they can't access computers. Ja, if they want to go to an [indistinct], they have to spend ... uh... R40 per day, so I think it's too much for them.

    ... So, if the computer centre ... could be useful to them so that they get certification.

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P17, p. 12, Lines 7-33 and p. 13, Lines 1-7

4.2.2.2   Subcategory 1.2.2.2: Students' lack of literacy skills as a barrier to rural education

Literacy skills is an important foundation for learning and when students experience reading and writing skills challenging it negatively affects both teaching of and learning by rural students. Teacher participants from Case A2 iterated on students' lack of literacy skills as a barrier to rural education during their discussion of the PRA-directed group activity 4. During a face-to-face semi-structured interview and the related member checking session with a teacher participant from Case A1, a lack of students' literacy skills was elaborated on as a barrier to rural education. Table 4.20 reflects a summary of the inclusion and exclusion criteria for Subcategory 1.2.2.2. Teachers reported on students' inability to write and read, which hampers teaching.

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Table 4.20: **Inclusion and exclusion criteria for Subcategory 1.2.2.2: Students' lack of literacy skills as a barrier to rural education**

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
• This subcategory refers to students having limited reading and writing skills, which hampers their learning and education.	• Instances in data that do not refer to the lack of student literacy skills.

Teachers indicated that students' lack of literacy skills is an impediment to teaching in rural education: *... barriers ... some of the learners, they cannot write ...* (Data source: PRA-directed group activity 4, Group 2, p. 4, Lines 23-24). One teacher participant further elaborated on how a lack of literacy skills hampers students' learning and the process of teaching:

Participant:	*Ja, and also we also have a challenge here - like as I'm teaching Grade 7 this year, what I've discovered is that these learners; they cannot write; they can ... can't even read. So, you see that you ... when you are teaching, you discover gaps along the way. Then, now, you ... you think of switching over to try to close the gaps, and whereas now there is this challenge of your ... the work schedule. Yes, because the work schedule, the way they have designed it; they have designed it in a sense that they know that the Grade 7 learner now is able to read, is able to write. Then, when you are now trying to implement that in class, you find that the learner cannot read and write. Then you are stucked (sic) in the middle of your lesson .*
	... or with the learner who can't read, who can't even write. It becomes very, very difficult, and when you assess the learner, you find that the learner doesn't even qualify to be in Grade 7.
	... But now that the learner is here, you must do something.

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P2, p. 10, Lines 8-33 and p. 11, Line 1

- Problematic learners + psychologically challenged
↳slow
- Cannot write in grade 7 / read – no time
- Close gaps of learner

Data source: Field notes, Member checking session SSI, P2, p. 10

4.2.2.3 Subcategory 1.2.2.3: Mutlilingualism as an in-school risk factor as a barrier to rural education

Multilingualism refers to the language of education that differs from students' and teachers' home languages. Students who are not taught in their home language can experience education as a challenge that represents a barrier to rural education. Multilingualism was mostly elaborated on by teacher participants during their PRA-directed group activities, which formed part of Case A2. The inclusion and exclusion criteria for Subcategory 1.2.2.3 are shown in Table 4.21.

Table 4.21: **Inclusion and exclusion criteria for Subcategory 1.2.2.3: Mutlilingualism as an in-school risk factor as a barrier to rural education**

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
• This subcategory includes instances where communication about content matter is hampered due to language differences. • This subtheme also included instances where the education language differs from students' home language.	• This subcategory excludes data that do not refer to instances of multilingualism that hampers rural education.

Teacher participants indicated multilingualism as a barrier to rural education in the following vignettes, which were derived from a discussion during PRA-directed group activity 4 and a face-to-face semi-structured interview with a participant: *... they cannot speak English clearly and this cause[s] them not to understand the questions.* (Data source: PRA-directed group activity 4, Group 2, p. 4, Lines 24-25).
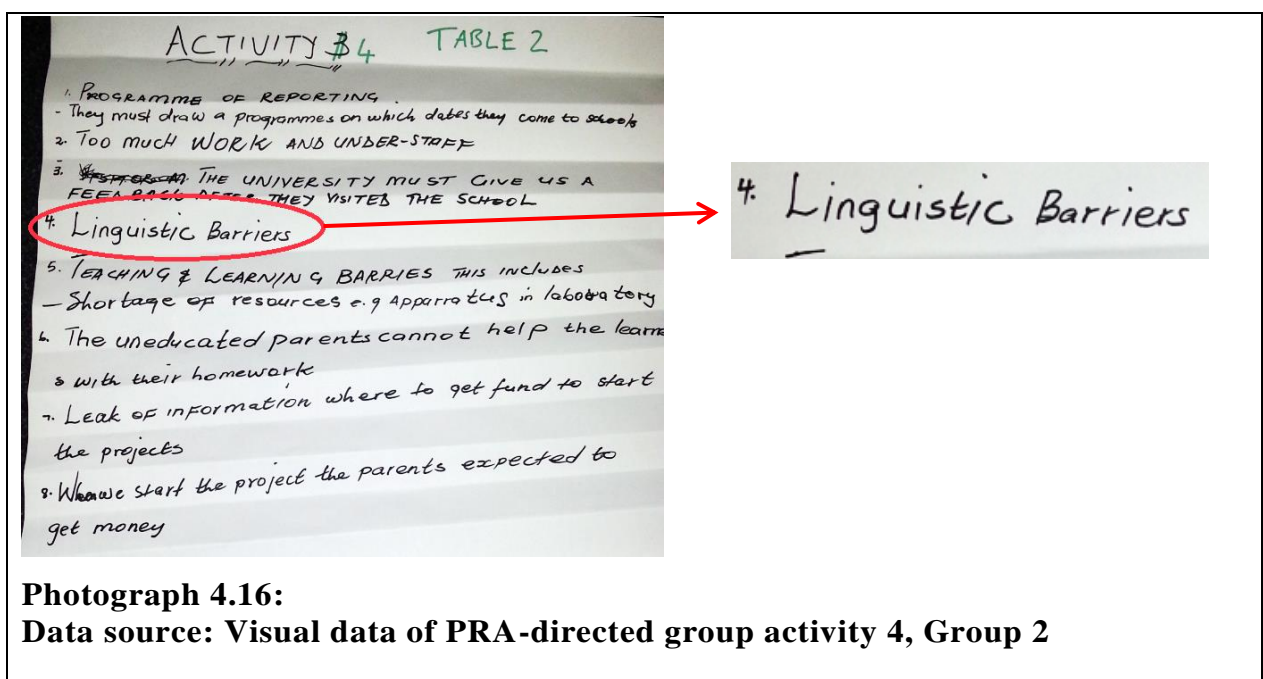
Photograph 4.16:
Data source: Visual data of PRA-directed group activity 4, Group 2

Participant:	*Ja, in improving especially the learners in terms of skills that they need for next levels, because here I am talking as a teacher, not as a … as a … [indistinct – intervenes]* *… Ja. [chuckles] And that makes it too difficult. Yes, it is very difficult to teach [a] learner who has challenges in the language of learning and teaching.* *… Ja, you end up being forced to switch, you know, code- switch, and …* *… code-switching is a problem, because it might happen that the home language that is used here, I'm not used to it …* *… and I'm using a different one and, you know, words have different meanings in different languages …* *… so that those … that's also one challenge.*

Data source: Transcriptionof SSI, P12, p. 9, Lines 28-33 and p. 10, Line 1-23

4.2.2.4 Subcategory 1.2.2.4: Teachers' working conditions as a challenge in rural education

A complex range of practices, knowledge, relationships and ethical considerations consists in the role of a teacher (Johnson, Down, Le Cornu, Peters, Sullivan, Pearce & Hunter, 2014). Teachers experience multiple challenges in the workplace, such as long working hours, discipline issues, heavy workload, paperwork, poor conditions, low status and low salaries, which often lead to stress and burnout (Price, Mansfield & McConney, 2012). Instances of teachers' working conditions as a challenge in rural education mainly occurred in PRA-directed group discussions and face-to-face semi-structured interviews by teacher participants who were part of Case A. Teacher participants from Case B also elaborated on teachers' working conditions as a constraint during their group discussion of PRA activity 4 and one face-to- face semi-structured interview. Table 4.22 reflects a summary of the inclusion and exclusion criteria for Subcategory 1.2.2.4. Teachers elaborated on their working conditions and mentioned issues such as time constraints, a heavy workload, the requirement that they fulfil various roles as a teacher and the theory-practice gap that exists between what was learned during their education and what is needed when teaching in a rural context.

Table 4.22: Inclusion and exclusion criteria for Subcategory 1.2.2.4: Teachers' working conditions as a challenge in rural education

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
• Teachers have many responsibilities associated with their occupation. This subcategory includes instances of difficulties relating to teachers' working conditions that they experience.	• This subcategory excludes data that refer to challenges that dos not relate to teachers' working conditions. • This subcategory excludes data that refer to out-of-school risk factors relating to students, parents and community members that indirectly influence teachers' working conditions.

Teachers proclaimed their frustration with their working conditions relating to work overload coupled with not having enough time to perform their teaching responsibilities: *But, because now, most of the time we are at school and we do not have enough time to do all these ...* (Data source: PRA-directed group activity 4, Group 1, p. 8, Lines 38-40). The teachers further elaborated on having too much paperwork, having to work overtime and teacher shortages as constraints to rural education, as reflected in the following excerpts from discussions on PRA-directed group activities and face-to-face semi-structured interviews:

And another one, we said workload. As educators, you know, we are overloaded. Most of the time, especially for us, we know that maybe we are a secondary school and we are being ... er ... evaluated according to the performance of Grade 12. So, most of the time we do not have time. We are unable to help the community, so it is a big challenge when it comes to that one. We have to stay at school up to four o'clock (16h00) trying to help the learners.

Data source: PRA-directed group activity 4, Group 1, p. 8, Lines 48-56
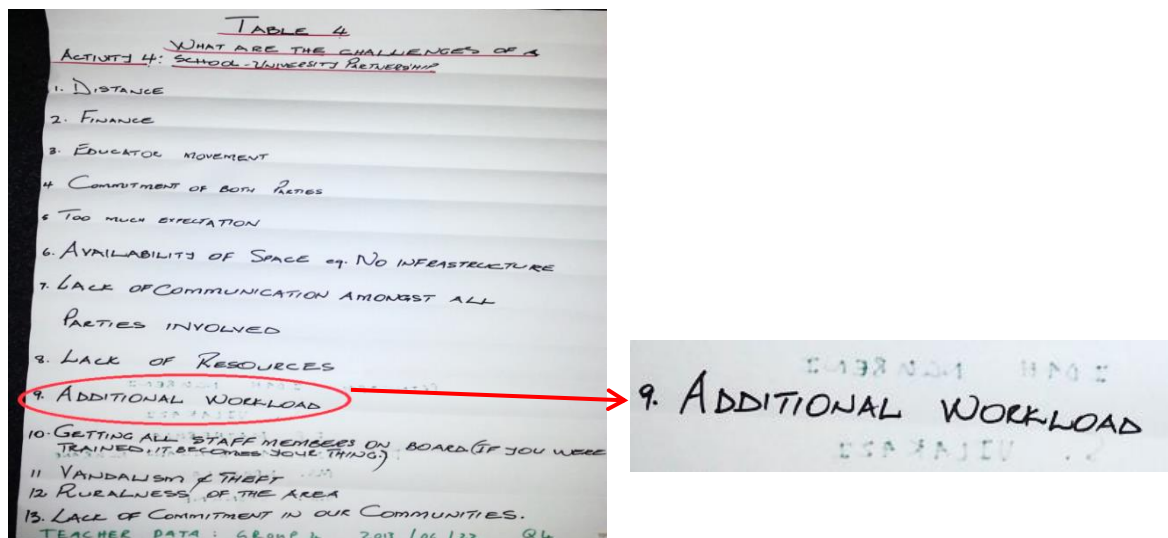
Photograph 4.17:
Data source: Visual data of PRA-directed group activity 4, Group 4
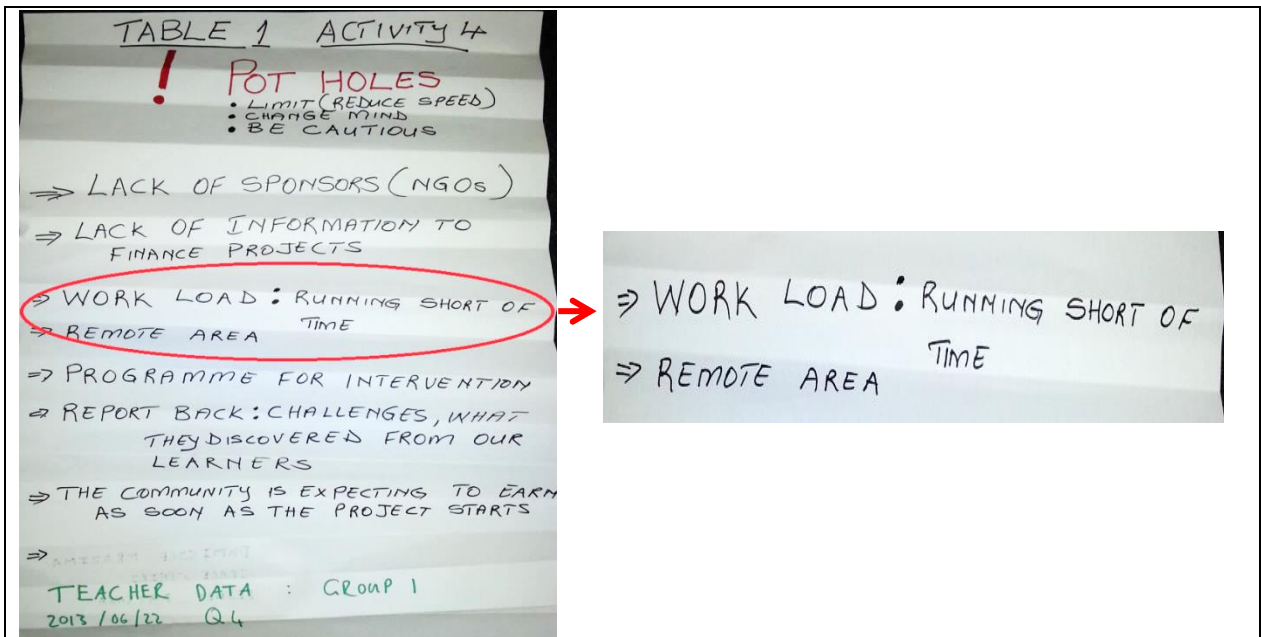
Photograph 4.18:
Data source: Visual data of PRA-directed group activity 4, Group 1
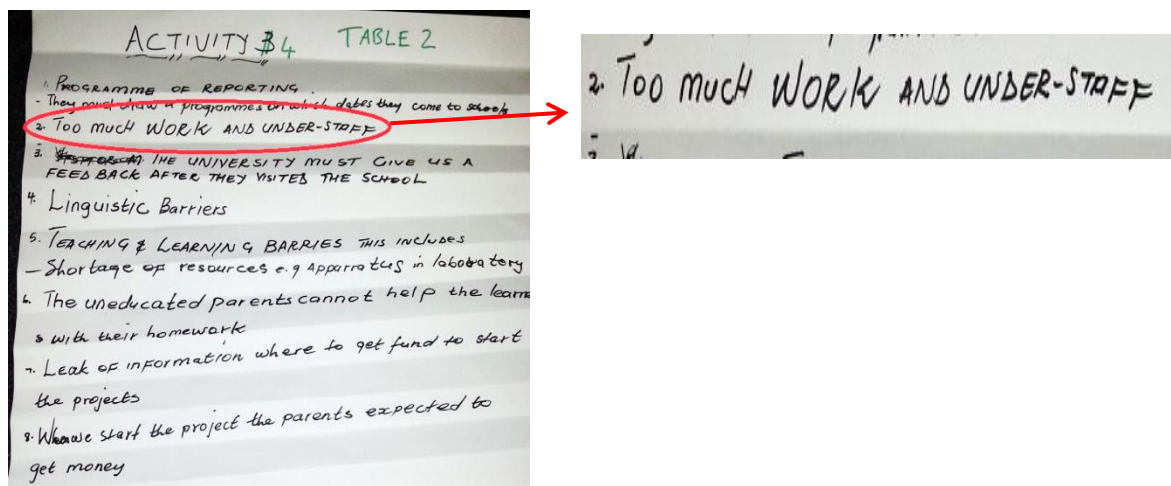
Photograph 4.19:
Data source: Visual data of PRA-directed group activity 4, Group 2

Participant:	*Uhm ... It's the workload ... becomes difficult. Teaching new learning areas, subjects that you are new in, becomes stressful, because you do not understand, but as time goes on, then you sta.. ... you try to adjust.*
	... Okay, alright, let's just elaborate on what else makes it more difficult for you to teach.
Participant:	*[slight pause] Which makes?*
Researcher:	*It more difficult for you. You said workload, and having to learn a content area or subject to teach.*

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P2, p. 8, Lines 21-32, p. 9, Lines 1-8

Participant:	*Too much paperwork. Uh ... we have to do recordings, everything should be done in papers.*
	... The analysis of results.
Researcher:	*Mmm, I hear. So it's a lot of work?*
Participant:	*The turnaround strategies. So, when they come to school they want ...*

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P17, p. 6, Lines 19-32

Point number two. Some of the barriers are too much work at school and [we are] understaffed. In rural schools there is a shortage of teachers [brief pause] ... after school the teachers are already exhausted. Sometimes they want to continue with the [FLY] project after school, but because of the exhausted [exhaustion] and too much work, they cannot. Some of them they live too far [very from the] school, they use public transport, the transport, the transport [repeating] goes [leaves] on time.

Data source: PRA-directed group activity 4, Group 2, p. 4, Lines 9-18

Participant:	*That makes it difficult, because you know, in mathematics and science ...*
	... You'll have to arrange extra classes, like it or not.
	... Ja, j[the] time allocated is too little. For instance, [it] was 1 hour 30 minutes a day for (physical science and maths, 1hour 30, to 2 hours. So this 40/50 minutes is too little. It's too little.

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P4, p. 5, Lines 1-21

Participant:	*Ja. It's ... uh ... overtime.*
	... [sighs] We work throughout the day ... uh ... we work at home, over holidays. Even weekends, we do come to school. We provide ourself [ourselves] with our own ... own food, own transport, everything ... the sacrifice. As I'm staying far, I'm paying a lot of money to come here.
	... So it makes it difficult for us to work very well.

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P17, p. 7, Lines 14-33

- Workload

- Teaching new learning areas + subjects

(you try to adjust) ☺

Data source: Field notes, Member checking session of SSI, P17, April 2016, p. 10

One teacher participant explained their various roles of teachers using a "knobkierie" as methaphor. She explained that a teacher has various roles to fulfill, referring to the big head of the "knobkierie" as a social worker, nurse, mother and teacher. She elaborated on the fact that

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the small hand of the "knobkierie" representing the fact that even though a teacher has various roles to fufill, they can only do so much on their own, which can impede rural education:

Participant:	*Hmm it's like knobkierie. You know knobkierie?*
	... Ja, because [indistinct] rural area, you have to hold many things at the same time. So, a knobkierie has this big head and a small hand. You, a teacher, you are mother, you [are] a nurse, you [are] a social worker, everything at the same [time]. That's why I'm talking about a knobkierie.
Researcher:	*So the big head is you have to do all the roles.*
	... And the smaller hand is you've got only so many things that you could do as one person.
Data source: Transcription of SSI, P3, p. 9, Lines 27-33 and p. 10, Lines 1-13	

Other teacher participant further elaborated on the various roles that teachers need to fufill in rural schools, as has been captured in the following extracts:

Participant:	*As a teacher, you have to be a teacher, a parent and a nurse at the same time.*
Data source: Transcription of SSI, P3, p. 6, Lines 12-14	
Participant:	*Another one is that, (you know, on [of] the seven roles of an educator, you end up fulfilling all of them ...*
Data source: Transcription of SSI, P12, p. 6, Lines 2-3	
Participant:	*You know? Acting as a social worker at times and, you know, it ... it takes a toll ...*
Data source: Transcription of SSI, P12, p. 6, Lines 21-22	
Participant:	*Another one is that, you know, on [of] the seven roles of an educator you end up fulfilling all of them, because it's frustrating to work here; because you come across these kids who ... who are in very serious poverty ...*
	... and that affects you as a teacher when you look at this child and you can see that, aye, there's nothing that I can do and this one maybe did not eat in the morning and all this-this ...
	... do not have clothes and, when you check, you find that there are no parents, you know ...

> *You know? Acting as a social worker at times and, you know, it ... it takes a toll ..*

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P12, p. 6, Lines 2-22

During a face-to-face interview with a participant in a rural school that participated in a HEI association, he indicated that he had found that what he learnt when training as teacher differs greatly from what is expected of him in terms of teaching in a rural school. He elaborated on how, as rural teachers, they need to teach the students in their totality, and not just subject content:

Participant: *Eish, you know, the first thing, né, that I want to tell you is that, né, you know what I've learned from [at] the university is actually different from what I'm experiencing now here at this school, because at university, mostly we were dealing with the theory.*
... And now here I'm dealing with the learner practically, so it's totally different now.

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P4, p. 1, Lines 17-26

Participant: *Here, there's a lot of challenges, like I knew before, here I'm going to come and teach these learners, and only to find that here you are not teaching the content, but you are teaching the learner as a whole, in totality. There's a lot of things that you have to teach these learners. For example, now I said they must clean this lab, and they're busy playing. [laughther]*
... They're not doing what I said to them.

Researcher: *So it's not just that you have to teach the content.*
... Ja, you have to teach the learner in totality, respect, how to wear the uniform, how to talk, you know, even the background sometimes, cultural background. There is a lot of things that you must do as a teacher, not just the content that ... myself, I'm teaching physical science, so that they have to come and teach maths. No, you have to come and teach the learner in totality, everything that makes up the learner so that particular learner will reach the goal one day.

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P4, p. 1, Lines 26-32 and p. 2, Lines 1-21

4.2.2.5   Subcategory 1.2.2.5: Limited teacher skill to use available resources

The Subcategory, *Limited teacher skill to use available resources* refers to instances of teachers not knowing how to use resources such as computers and i-pads with which they have

been provided. This subcategory was mainly elaborated on by one teacher participant, who formed part of Case B, during his face-to-face semi-structured interview. This subcategory was silent in all other data sources. Table 4.23 shows the inclusion and exclusion criteria for Subcategory 1.2.2.5. One teacher expressed his inablity to utilise technology-related resources.

Table 4.23: Inclusion and exclusion criteria for Subcategory 1.2.2.5: Limited teacher skill to use available resources

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
• This subcategory includes instances of teachers' lack of skill to use technological resources available to them.	• This subcategory excludes data related to teacher knowledge and disposition. • This subcategory excludes data of teacher capacity development (knowledge, craft skills and disposition) as a result of a higher education institution.

The following extracts illustrate that teachers have limited skill to use available resources:

Participant:	*Ja, another thing is that … uhm … educators they are … most of them are unable to use … uh … to use computers.*
Data source: Transcription of SSI, P17, p. 14, Lines 30-32	
Participant:	*Because as we … as I'm talking about this point of … uh … computer illiterate, so the Department promised to give principals the i-pads … … but they are unable to use computers presently, so if they give them, it will be a challenge.*
Data source: Transcription of SSI, P17, p. 15, Lines 32-33 and p. 16, Lines 1-6	

Evident from the data sources referred to above, teachers in this study, regardless of their school having an association with a HEI, identified various protective resources that can be used to negotiate the challenges they face on a daily basis. In summary, teachers in this study identified protective resources such as contextual rurality factors, physical resources for instructional purposes, teacher family support, teacher disposition, teacher salary, resource sharing in various systems and spirituality. Out-of-school risk factors such as rurality risk factors, student health risk behaviours and a lack of cooperation and commitment between teachers, parents and community members and in-school risk factors such as lack of resources to support instructional practices, students' lack of literacy skills, multilinguism, teacher working conditions and limited teacher skill to use available resources were also identified by the teachers and presented above. See Figure 4.1 and Figure 4.2 for an overview of theme 1.

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4.3 Literature control

In the next section, I compare the results of Theme 1 to existing literature. I elaborate on similarities and contradictions in existing literature and the results of this study with the aim of considering new insights embedded in the data of this study. Literature control of subtheme 1.1 is assimilated as protective resources of rural teachers, and subtheme 1.2 as risk factors present in the in-school context and out-of- school context (such as the family and community context – micro- and meso-systems of the students taught by teachers).

4.3.1 Similar findings in other studies regarding protective resources experienced by rural teachers

Like others I also found protective resources (Subtheme 1.1) as significant for teacher resilience in rural schools. In particular, the protective resources indicated as significant in this study which is similar to other studies on teacher resilience in rural settings is that of peacefulness, teacher family support, teacher disposition and teachers valuing associations for resource-sharing in various systems.

Similar protective resources experienced by teachers in rural schools locally are reported in global studies in the rural school context (Barley & Beesley, 2007; Castro, Kelly & Shih, 2010; Beltman, Mansfield & Price, 2011; Gu & Day, 2007; Huysman, 2008; Mansfield, Beltman & Price, 2014; Price, Mansfield & McConney, 2012; Tait, 2008). In Australian research the importance of *relationships* for the development of teacher resilience is illustrated, especially relationships with family members and friends (Mansfield, Beltman & Price, 2014; Stanford, 2001). Bobek (2002) stated that resilience in teachers develop by means of establishing significant adult relationships. To this end, United States researchers Brackett and Katulak (2006) reflect social support (such as found in family relationships) (Category 1.1.3) as a resource that enables individuals to cope, which in the context of the rural teacher, enables teacher resilience (Chan, 2002; Ju, Lan, Li, Feng & You, 2015; Shujuan & Qiboca, 2011).

In global literature *collegiality and significant relationships* are presented as a contributing factor to teacher resilience by researchers from the United States of America (Barley & Beesley, 2007; Bobek, 2002; Brunetti, 2006), the United Kingdom (Jarzabkowski, 2004) and Australian researchers (Tytler, Symington & Smith, 2011). As reflected by the work of Australian researchers, Mansfield, Beltman, and Price (2014) as well as Le Cornu (2013), relationships are critical to building resilience in teachers. The quality of these relationships can either hamper or encourage the resilience-building process (Brunetti, 2007; Castro, Kelly & Shih, 2010; Gu & Day, 2007). In this study, teachers identified *associations,* therefore relationships, for resource-sharing (flocking) at various levels as being valuable (Category

1.1.6). Castro, Kelly and Shih (2010) concur as they explain that teachers will not merely accept their circumstances, but will seek support from others. Teachers are consequently portrayed as potential resource-builders (Castro, Kelly & Shih, 2010). Associations (relationships) for resource-sharing at the school and community levels are supported by researchers from Norway (Caspersen & Raaen, 2014), the USA (Bobek, 2002; Masten, 2001; Taylor, 2013), Korea (Jo, 2014) and Australia (Le Cornu, 2013; Mansfield, Beltman & Price, 2014; Pearce & Peters, 2012) as an important source of resilience for teachers in rural schools, and their ability to cope (Kent & Davis, 2010). Sandholtz (2002) reported that teachers appreciate opportunities to explore, reflect, collaborate *with peers*, work on authentic learning tasks and engage in hands-on, active learning. Associations with *individuals at community level* are supported in this study in Australian research (Mansfield, Beltman & Price, 2014) as well as a study from the USA (Sandhotz, 2002) as adaptive behaviour is evident in teacher relationships with local educational authorities to mediate teacher commitment and retention (Brunetti, 2006; Jo, 2014). This finding is also highlighted by USA researchers Polidore, Edmonson and Slate (2010) and Burton and Johnson (2010) as well as Australian researchers (Pearce & Peters, 2012). As is the case in USA studies (Barley & Beesley, 2007; Brunetti, 2006; Castro, Kelly & Shih, 2010) and a study in the UK (Gu & Day, 2013) teachers in this study also indicate *support from principals* as a protective resource. Similar to another study in rural Australia (Tytler, Symington & Smith, 2011), teachers in this study indicated the value of engaging in *professional development activities* provided by the government, as well as resource-sharing initiated by the government.

In South African (SA) literature the importance of *family and collegial relationships* is highlighted as an important protective resource for resource sharing (Ebersöhn, 2012; Fritz & Smith, 2008; Koekemoer & Mostert, 2010) that can foster teacher resilience. Ebersöhn (2012) concurs that there is value in using relationships as resources in rural settings where the need is high. *Teacher family support* (Category 1.1.3) is echoed by SA researchers as a protective resource for rural teachers as it enables teacher resilience (Fritz & Smith, 2008; Koekemoer & Mostert, 2010). In Ebersöhn and Ferreira's (2010) research (a South African perspective) on how teachers function as resources to sustain resilience in the face of HIV/AIDS-compounded adversities, they found that teachers formed *associations with children and families, community volunteers and community organizations, businesses and government* to promote teacher resilience in schools. They concluded that the establishment of networks with service providers that function eco-systemically and are relationship-driven can enable teachers to promote resilience and teacher resilience in schools.

Global studies seem to report similar themes of *teacher disposition* (Category 1.1.4), such as positive teacher attitudes and beliefs about teaching namely trying their best (Choi & Tang, 2009), finding teaching inspiring and fulfilling (Darling-Hammond, 2003; Huysman, 2008), being intrinsically motivated (Beltman, Mansfield & Price, 2011; Brunetti, 2006; Cross & Hong, 2012), having understanding and a willingness to learn (Christie, 2001; Fleish & Christie, 2004; Darling-Hammond, 2003; Gu & Day, 2007; Howard & Johnson, 2004) and *teacher characteristics* namely, being considerate (Barley & Beesley, 2007; Cross & Hong, 2012; Jarzabowski, 2004), persevering (Gu & Li, 2013), loving and understanding, enjoying challenges and problem-solving (Castro, Kelly & Shih, 2010; Mansfield, Beltman & Price, 2014; Tait, 2008) as protective resources for teachers in rural contexts. As in SA studies, teachers in this study indicated that they as teachers are *intrinsically motivated* to keep on teaching in rural schools (Fritz & Smith, 2008). Teachers show certain dispositions (teacher attitude, beliefs and characteristics) (Category 1.1.4) that are seen as protective resources that promotes teacher resilience (Koekemoer & Mostert, 2010).

A sense of *hope and expectancy* (Category 1.1.6) is advocated by teachers in this study, despite their teaching in adverse conditions. Teachers in this study indicate that they value collaboration, and that this fosters hope and consequently teacher resilience. This notion is also supported by SA studies, as illustrated by Coetzee, Ebersöhn, Ferreira and Moen (2015), namely that hope (and teacher resilience) is fostered by teachers despite the chronic adversity that is experienced. Canadian researcher, Tait (2008) and Australian researchers Mansfield, Beltman, Price and McConney (2012) also found that a sense of optimism (hope) is maintained by teachers despite the challenges they experience in the education context.

4.3.2   Contradictions with other studies on protective resources and teacher resilience in rural schools

In Chapter 7 (section 7.2.1) I discuss how contradictory findings below answer the third research question. Although rural teachers in this study expressed both a lack of physical resources for instructional purposes, they also indicated the *availability of physical resources for instructional purposes* (Subcategory 1.2.2.1) as a protective resource. Global and South African literature mainly identifies a lack of resources in schools within rural communities as significant risk factors (Burton, Brown & Johnson, 2013; Burton & Johnson, 2013; Daniels & Strauss, 2010; Ingersoll, 2001; Koekemoer & Mostert, 2010; Sharplin, 2002; Rohleder, Swartz, Carolissen, Bozalek & Leibowitz, 2008; Tuerk, 2005) and do not elaborate on physical resources already available in these rural schools as a protective resource as do teachers in this study.

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The teachers in this study communicated that they only have a few students in their classes, which enables them to get to know individual students, as opposed to the high *student-teacher ratio* (Category 1.1.1) that is often found in rural schools (Olivier & Venter, 2003).

Some rural teachers in this study seemed to experience *family support* (Category 1.1.3) as demotivating to their teaching commitment rather than as a protective resource and a source of continuous support (Olivier & Venter, 2003).

Teachers portrayed the *teachers' salary* (Category 1.1.5) as a motivating factor that promotes teacher retention as opposed to the low teacher salaries portrayed in literature as an attrition-related factor (Amrein-Beardsley, 2012; Burton, Brown & Johnson, 2013; Feng, 2005; Harmon, Gordanier, Henry & George, 2007; Ingersoll, 2001; Ingersol & Smith, 2003; Price, Mansfield & McConney, 2012).

Different to teachers continuing to teach in the rural context as a way of giving back owing to coming from a privileged background (Barley & Beesley, 2007; Brunetti, 2006), teachers in this study indicated teaching in the rural context as a *life purpose* and as having the desire to uplift and support students in the rural context (Category 1.1.4). Teachers in this study indicated that they themselves grew up in rural communities and that staying and teaching in such a community is their way of giving back to rural communities.

Spirituality (Category 1.1.7) was identified by only one teacher in this study as a protective resource, while other teachers in this study remained silent on this aspect, although spirituality is illustrated in literature as an important pathway to resilience for teachers internationally (Bobek, 2002; Fritz & Smith, 2008; Greef & Loubser, 2008; Gu & Day, 2013; Koekemoer & Mostert, 2010).

Rural teachers indicated that they regarded *informal teacher capacity development* (related to teacher disposition, Category 1.1.4) as a form of professional development, which is in contradiction with the views of international teachers who participated in formal development activities such as subject-specialist meetings, conferences and seminars (Tytler, Symington & Smith, 2011). Teachers in this study indicated that they valued associations for resource sharing (flocking) (refer to sections 4.1.1.6 and 4.3.1.1.1) at various levels (Category 1.1.6).

4.3.3   Similar findings in other studies regarding risk factors experienced by rural teachers

Like others I also found risk factors (subtheme 1.2) as significant for teacher resilience in rural schools. In particular, the risk factors indicated as significant in this study which is similar to other studies on teacher resilience in a rural setting is *out-of-school risk factors* relating to the

context of rurality, student health risk behaviours and a lack of cooperation and commitment among parents and school community members. With reference to *in-school risk factors*, teachers identified a lack of student literacy skills, issues with multilingualism, a lack of resources for instructional purposes, teachers' working conditions and a lack of teacher capacity as sources of adversity when teaching in a resource-constrained school setting.

Australian researchers indicated that there is a need for teachers to be prepared for the unique needs of the rural school context (Burton, Brown & Johnson, 2010; Burton, Brown & Johnson, 2013). Rurality research seems to be grounded within contextual assumptions of deficit and disadvantage (Mitchell & Moletsane, 2008). In this study results relate to *rurality risk factors* such as *illiteracy* (Jarzabkowski, 2004), *unemployment* (Brunetti, 2006), a *lack of cooperation and commitment* of parents and teachers (Barley & Beesley, 2007; Beltman et al., 2011; Castrol et al., 2010; Gu & Li, 2013; Hong, 2012; Ingersoll, 2001; Le Cornu, 2013; Masten, 2001; Tait, 2008); *student health risk behaviours* (Jarzabkowski, 2004; Mesthrie, 1999; Mitchel & Rautenbach, 2005) are supported by international studies on teacher resilience (Category 1.2.1).

The risk factors relating to the context of rurality in my study refer to parental and school community members' *unemployment* (Balfour, Mitchell & Moletsane, 2008; Fleisch & Christie, 2004; Mitchel & Rautenbach, 2005; Nkambule, Balfour, Pillay & Moletsane, 2011; Robinson, 2003; Spreen & Vally, 2006; The World Bank, 2014); *illiteracy* (Coetzee, Ebersöhn, Ferreira & Moen, 2015; Robinson, 2003; Warren & Peel, 2005) and *a lack of involvement* (Christie, 1998; Maslach, Schaufeli & Leiter, 2001), which is supported by SA literature on teacher resilience (Category 1.2.1). A lack of employment among parents and school community members results in socioeconomic issues such as families struggling with subsistence needs and tangible infrastructure issues (Ebersöhn & Ferreira, 2012; Mitchel & Rautenbach, 2005; Robinson, 2003; Warren & Peel, 2005).

Global literature reports on various *health risk behaviours* (Subcategory 1.2.1.2) that students engage in, such as involvement in crime, substance abuse, sexual activity and pregnancy, school drop-out as well as delinquency and misbehaviour in the school context (Hawkins, Catalano, Kosterman, Abbott & Hill, 1999; Patton, Bond, Carlin, Thomas, Butler, Glover & Bowes, 2006). The occurrence of health risk behaviours is also echoed in global studies conducted in urban, suburban and rural contexts in the USA (Atav & Spencer, 2002; Beal, Ausiello & Perrin, 2001) and Canada (Langille, Curtis, Hughes & Murphy, 2003). Health risk behaviours (Category 1.2.1) such as pregnancy, student absenteeism, dropout and illness, HIV/AIDS and child-headed households are evident in SA research, as it is in this study

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(Ebersöhn, 2012; HSRC, 2005; Loots, Ebersöhn & Eloff, 2012; Mitchel & Rautenbach, 2005; Warren & Peel, 2005).

A *lack of student literacy skills* (Subcategory 1.2.2.2) is identified by teachers in this study and globally as a risk factor that hampers rural education in the UK (Jarzabkowski, 2004) and the USA (McREL, 2005; Tuerk, 2005). In this regard, researchers in Minnesota and Texas (USA) found in their studies that students nationwide were unable to demonstrate sufficient reading and mathematics skills (McREL, 2005).

Multilingualism (Subcategory 1.2.2.3) in the education system, and especially in rural schools, is evident in a study from Kenya (Bunyi, 1997) as well as in this study. The use of different languages in rural schools is reported as a risk factor that hinders teaching in rural schools. Multilingualism (of students and teachers) (Subcategory 1.2.2.3) is portrayed by teachers in this study as a barrier to rural education (Lin & Martin, 2005). This finding correlates with findings reflected in SA literature, which portrays society as multilingual, especially in rural schools (Mestry, Hendricks & Bisschoff, 2009; Spreen & Valley, 2006; Warren & Peel, 2005). In addition, students' lack of literacy skills is identified by rural teachers as a risk factor to the success of rural education (Robinson, 2003; Warren & Peel, 2005).

A *lack of resources for instructional purposes* (Subcategory 1.2.2.1) in rural schools is prevalent in Australian literature (Burton, Brown & Johnson, 2013; Burton and Johnson, 2013; Sharplin, 2002) as well as USA literature (Ingersoll, 2001; Tuerk, 2005) as an impediment to teacher resilience. Emerging professionals and established professionals in South Africa need to engage with a society in which there are urgent, pressing needs, but not enough resources (Rohleder, Swartz, Carolissen, Bozalek & Leibowitz, 2008). Koekemoer and Mostert (2010) and Daniels and Strauss (2010) indicate *a lack of teaching resources* (Subcategory 1.2.2.1) as adversity experienced by teachers in the rural context, and this is shared by the South African Departments of Education (The Departments of Basic Education and Higher Education and Training, 2011).

As regards *teachers' working conditions* (Subcategory 1.2.2.4) global literature supports the notion that teachers fulfil various roles, such as being educators to students, subordinates to principals, professional colleagues and employees of local educational authorities (Jo, 2014). Teachers and rural teachers alike need to cope with a variety of challenges embedded in their work, such as environmental challenges, economic disparities (Clandini, 2009; 2010), time constraints, long working hours, a heavy workload and transport issues, to name but a few (Amrein-Beardsley, 2012; Beltman, Mansfield & Price, 2011; Brunetti, 2006; Caspersen & Raaen, 2014; Johnson, Down, Le Cornu, Peters, Sullivan, Pearce & Hunter, 2014). Rural

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teachers experience professional and geographic isolation, a lack of resources (access to basic health services and instructional materials), low-income and culturally diverse communities that are difficult to staff (Burton, Brown & Johnson, 2013; Burton & Johnson, 2010; Castro, Kelly & Shih, 2010; Malloy & Allen, 2007).

In rural South Africa studies indicate that *teachers working conditions* is challenging as they need to cope with population increases, greater diversity in school populations, increases in cost of living, the effects of crime on students, lack of service delivery and resources, unemployment and the subsistence needs of students' families, adherence to new rules and regulations of current education policies, curriculum changes and performance appraisal systems (Buthelezi, 2002; Mesthrie, 1999; Mestry, Hendricks & Bisschoff, 2009; Robinson, 2003; Spreen & Valley, 2006; The Departments of Basic Education and Higher Education and Training, 2011) (Subcategory 1.2.2.4).

4.3.4   Contradictions with other studies on risk factors experienced by rural teachers

I now elaborate on contradictions of the findings of this study that relates to low crime rates in the school communities, a lack of teacher skill to use technology and a lack of cooperation amongst school community members, teachers and parents.

Teachers indicated *low crime levels* in the school community and the surrounding community, as opposed to high crime and violence portrayed in literature in rural areas (Howard & Johnson, 2004; Mitchel & Rautenbach, 2005). In this study teachers mentioned familiarity with the community as a reason for low crime levels as the offender would be known to the community members and therefore easily identified. Although teachers in this study identified low crime levels in the school community and surrounding community, vandalism and theft do occur and this was especially indicated by teachers in schools with a HEI association where resources were provided by stakeholders. Vandalism and theft seems to be higher when valuable physical resources are donated to schools, although in general teachers in this study portrayed lower crime levels in their rural communities as opposed to urban areas.

Lack of teacher skill to use technology is identified by teachers in this study rather than teachers not having adequate credentials in their subject fields and lack of content knowledge Almy & Thoekas, 2010; Levine, 2014). Limited access to the internet and teachers' age may possibly have contributed to this finding.

Teacher participants revealed *a lack of cooperation and involvement* from school community members (excluding teachers and parents) in this study, as opposed to school community members offering their support and cooperation due to their personal connection

and relationship with the school community as they themselves are from the community (Barely & Beesley, 2007; Burton, Brown & Johnson, 2013). Lack of involvement and cooperation by school community members are attributed to illiteracy and unemployment as, firstly, they don't have the skills to assist students with their learning and, secondly, involvement in school projects do not result in financial gain.

4.3.5 Silences in this study related to protective resources and risk factors of rural teachers

Some silences were evident in this study. These silences are listed below, and then explained:

- The findings of this study are silent about teacher illness, personal difficulties they experience and the role of life experiences in the development of teacher resilience.
- The findings of this study are silent on how teachers utilise their relationships with students as a protective resource.
- Another silence in the findings of the study refers to rural teachers' identification of hobbies and/or extracurricular activities as a protective resource.
- There was silence in the findings of this study concerning references to the unstable education system and policy demands placed on rural teachers.

Existing research conducted with rural teachers reveal that teachers, especially rural teachers, often suffer from *illness* due to their high-stress working conditions. In addition, teachers experience difficulties in their personal lives that can often lead to illness, and at times stress, anxiety and depression (Chaplain, 2008; Kitching, Morgan & O'Leary, 2009), which result in a higher rate of teacher absenteeism and retention (Castro, Kelly & Shih, 2010; Choi & Tang, 2009; Day & Gu, 2007; Gu & Day, 2013; Rutter, 2007). However, the teachers in this study were silent about such negative experiences of a personal nature. I do not believe that their notable silence about such problems means that they do not have difficulties and/or suffer illness, but rather that the focus of the study was on the context of school-related challenges and positives and as a result teachers in this study did not iterate on personal issues. In addition, I believe that the teachers' silence about individual risk factors can be a result of how the interview unfolded, as it is generally more difficult and personal to link difficulties experienced in the workplace to personal attributes/experiences such as lack of a sense of humor or feeling incompetent for example.

Utilising *positive student relationships* as a protective resource seems to be a common theme in other studies from Korea (Jo, 2014) and Australia (Peters & Pearce, 2012), but in this study teachers remained silent on this resource. Jo (2014) further highlighted the importance of teacher relationships with students (and other relationships) as these relationships could greatly

enhance adaptive behaviours. Australian researchers, Howard and Johnson (2004) also reported on the importance of positive student relationships for the development of resilience. It is possible that teachers actually use their relationships with students as a protective resource on a daily basis, but they did not mention the importance of this relationship explicitly. This might possibly be attributed to the fact that teachers consider a positive relationship with students as a given, seen in association with their desire to help and uplift their students, and therefore was not mentioned explicitly.

In research conducted in rural settings, *hobbies and/or extracurricular activities* of teachers are reported as conducive to the development of teacher resilience (Kyriacou, 2001). Hobbies and/or extracurricular activities can also be related to work life balance where teachers have the right to a fulfilled life inside and outside paid work and that engaging in leisure activities is respected and accepted as mutually beneficial to both the work place, the individual teacher and society at large (Byrne, 2005). Castro et al. (2010) and Sharplin, O'Neill and Chapman (2011) found that managing a work life balance (such as engaging in exercise, meditation, relaxation, hobby and recreational activities) result in lower rates of burn out and thus is conducive to the development of teacher resilience. Although I cannot assume that teachers in this study do not have hobbies or participate in extracurricular activities, it might be possible that they do not have the time, resources or opportunities to pursue such activities.

Changing educational policies and educational reform has been a focus in local and global literature in recent times (Burton, Brown & Johnson, 2013; Castle & Osman, 2003; Gu & Li, 2013; Kyriacou & Chien, 2004; Minner & Hiles, 2005; The Department of Education, 1995; The Departments of Basic Education and Higher Education and Training, 2011). Teachers in this study did not identify or elaborate on the *unstable education system* as a serious cause of stress (Castro, Kelly & Shih, 2010). Teachers may not have elaborated on the unstable education system due to their inclination to take responsibility for their own actions in teaching. This does not, however, mean that teachers in this study do not experience the educational system as a stress factor. The silence with regard to this matter may be caused by the inherent power relations that are embedded in an association with a HEI. Further research in this regard is suggested.

4.3.6   Conclusion

I found that irrespective of an association with a HEI, teachers in rural schools experience risk factors and draw on protective resources for teacher resilience. The findings are similar to other studies indicating teacher family support, teacher disposition and teachers' use of resources at various levels for resource-sharing (flocking) as significant internal and external protective

resources used by teachers in rural schools in SA. In addition, teachers identified risk factors that align with those of international research namely: out-of-school risk factors (rural context as risk, student health risk behaviours and a lack of cooperation between teachers and parents and school community members to address challenges in rural education) and in-school risk factors (lack of resources for instructional purposes, multilingualism, student literacy barriers, teacher working conditions and a lack of teacher skill to use technology).

In contrast to other studies I found that teacher resilience in terms of using instructional resources available in a resource-constrained school setting was identified in four rural South African schools. I also found that teacher resilience is supported by a lower student-teacher ratio found in these four rural South African schools. Low community crime is mentioned as a resilience factor in four rural schools in South Africa. I also found that financial compensation (salary) is a motivating factor to continue teaching in a rural South African school. Teachers in rural schools in a resource-constrained setting in South Africa often engage in informal teacher development activities as a way to adapt to the adverse circumstances that prevail in these schools. I also found that a lack of cooperation and commitment by South African school community members and parents to alleviate poverty in their community was identified.

The data in this study was silent on: the role that teacher illness and personal difficulties play in the development of teacher resilience; how teachers make use of relationships with students as a protective resource; the role that hobbies and extracurricular activities play in the development of teachers' resilience; and, lastly, how the effect of the unstable education system and policy demands on rural education advances or does not advance teacher resilience.

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Chapter 5
Theme 2: Protective resources and risk factors when a rural school has an association with a higher education institution

5.1   Introduction

In chapters 4 and 5 I discuss the research results. In this chapter I discuss the results of Theme 2: Protective resources and risk factors when a rural school has an association with a higher education institution (HEI). This chapter answers the second and third secondary research questions: What are the protective resources and risk factor expressions of teachers in rural schools who participated in a HEI association? and How do HEI associations promote/not teacher resilience in terms of the protective resources and risk factors in rural schools?

Two subthemes emerged, namely Subtheme 2.1: Promoting protective resources in rural schools with an association with a higher education institution (HEI) and Subtheme 2.2: Challenges negotiated to achieve teacher resilience while implementing a higher education intervention. Figure 5.1 provides an overview of the themes, subthemes and categories of Theme 2.
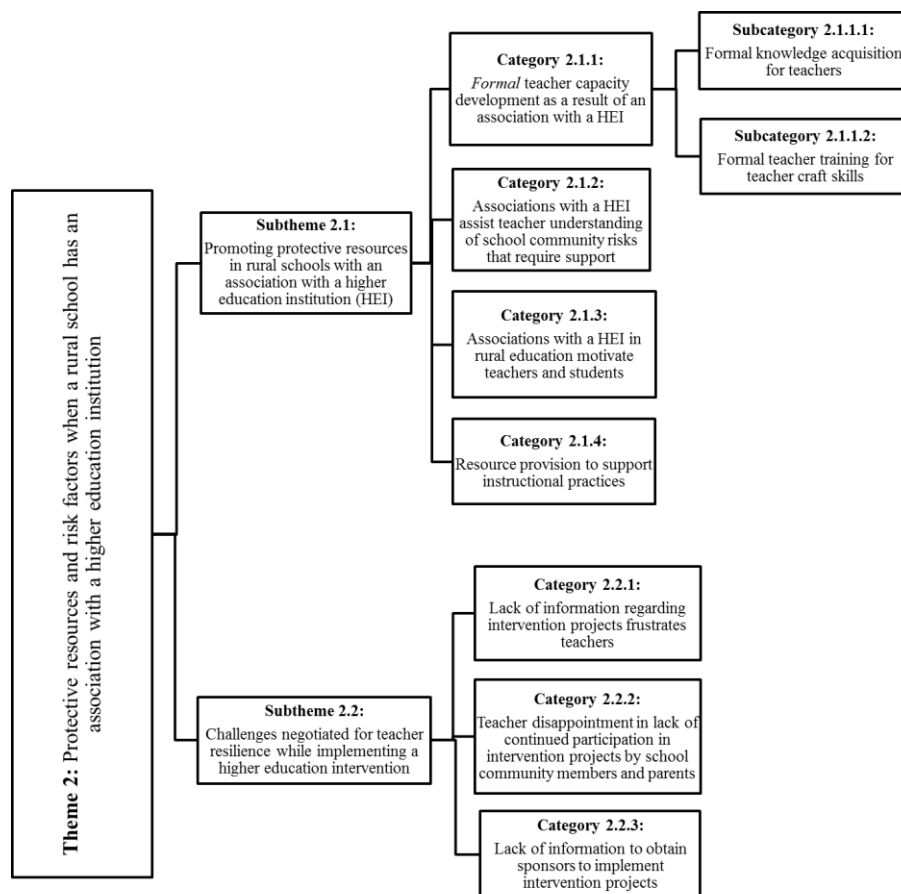
Figure 5.1:   Overview of Theme 2: Protective resources and risk factors when a rural school has an association with a HEI

5.1.1 Theme 2: Protective resources and risk factors when a rural school has an association with a higher education institution (HEI)

Theme 2 focuses on trends of protective resources and challenges (risk factors) that relate specifically to teachers in rural schools that have an association with a HEI. In Subtheme 2.1: Promoting protective resources in rural schools with an association with a HEI, four subcategories emerged, namely Formal teacher capacity development as a result of an association with a HEI; Associations with a HEI assist teachers' understanding of school community risks that require teacher support; Associations with a HEI in rural education motivate teachers and students; and, lastly, Resource provision to support instructional practices.

5.1.2 Subtheme 2.1: Promoting protective resources in rural schools with an association with a HEI

The first subtheme that emerged from the data on protective resources in cases where rural schools have an association with a HEI refers to instances of protective resources conveyed by teachers in these rural schools as a result of their association with a HEI. This subtheme can be related to mutual benefits to stakeholders that is an inherent function of HEI associations (Calabrese, 2006). Instances of Subtheme 2.1: Promoting protective resources in rural schools with an association with a HEI were mostly prevalent in data sources from Case A1 (teachers in rural schools with a HEI association who participated in the association), as they emerged from PRA-directed group activities, face-to-face semi-structured interviews and field notes, and from the PRA-directed group activities in Case A2 (teachers in rural schools with a HEI association that did not participate in the association). Data sources from face-to-face semi-structured interviews relating to Case A2 were silent as regards instances of Subtheme 2.1. This could possibly be ascribed to the fact that only one participant from this group of participants was available for an interview. Table 5.1 contains a summary of the inclusion and exclusion criteria for the subtheme, *Promoting protective resources and challenges in rural schools with an association with a HEI*.

Table 5.1: **Inclusion and exclusion criteria for Subtheme 2.1: Promoting protective resources and challenges in rural schools with an association with a HEI**

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
• Include instances mentioned by teachers of how they and their rural school benefitted (protective resource) from the association between their rural schools and a higher education association which mediates teacher resilience.	• Exclude instances of benefits to teachers and their rural schools as a result of other associations established with rural schools.

5.1.2.1 Category 2.1.1: Formal teacher capacity development as a result of an association with a HEI

"Formal" in this context means formal gatherings to share knowledge and skills. Formal teacher capacity development involves instances where teachers gained knowledge and teaching craft skills as a result of engaging in HEI association activities. Formal development refers to gatherings with associates of a HEI with the intention of sharing knowledge and skills to support teaching. Craft skills (McDiarmid & Clevenger-Bright, 2008) involve skills such as instructional planning and organising, use of instructional material and technology, disciplining of students and collaborating with colleagues, parents, the community and social services agencies. This finding highlights an important function of HEI associations of development of teacher skill and knowledge (Wilson et al., 2007).

The two subcategories of Category 2.1.1: Formal teacher capacity development as a result of an association with a HEI are Subcategory 2.1.1.1: Formal knowledge acquisition for teachers and Subcategory 2.1.1.2: Formal teacher training for teacher craft skills. Table 5.2 reflects a summary of the inclusion and exclusion criteria for Category 2.2.1.

Table 5.2: **Inclusion and exclusion criteria for Category 2.2.1: Formal teacher capacity development as a result of an association of with a higher education institution**

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
• Include formal teacher capacity development that refers to formal instances of development of teachers' knowledge and craft skills as a result of a HEI association.	• This category excludes instances of informal development of teacher capacity with regard to knowledge acquisition and teacher craft skills. • This category excludes instances of teacher disposition such as commitment, motivation and attitudes as a result of an association with a higher education institution.

The following two photographs of PRA-directed group activities illustrate Category 2.2.1: Formal teacher capacity development as a result of an association with a HEI. The photographs

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below show the subcategory, *Formal knowledge acquisition for teachers* as an example of teachers' gaining knowledge with regard to initiating projects, career guidance and university application procedures. Formal teacher training for teacher craft skills was captured in some of the photographs below, reflecting the acquisition of skills with regard to teaching sounds, reading and writing, while teaching students in their totality.
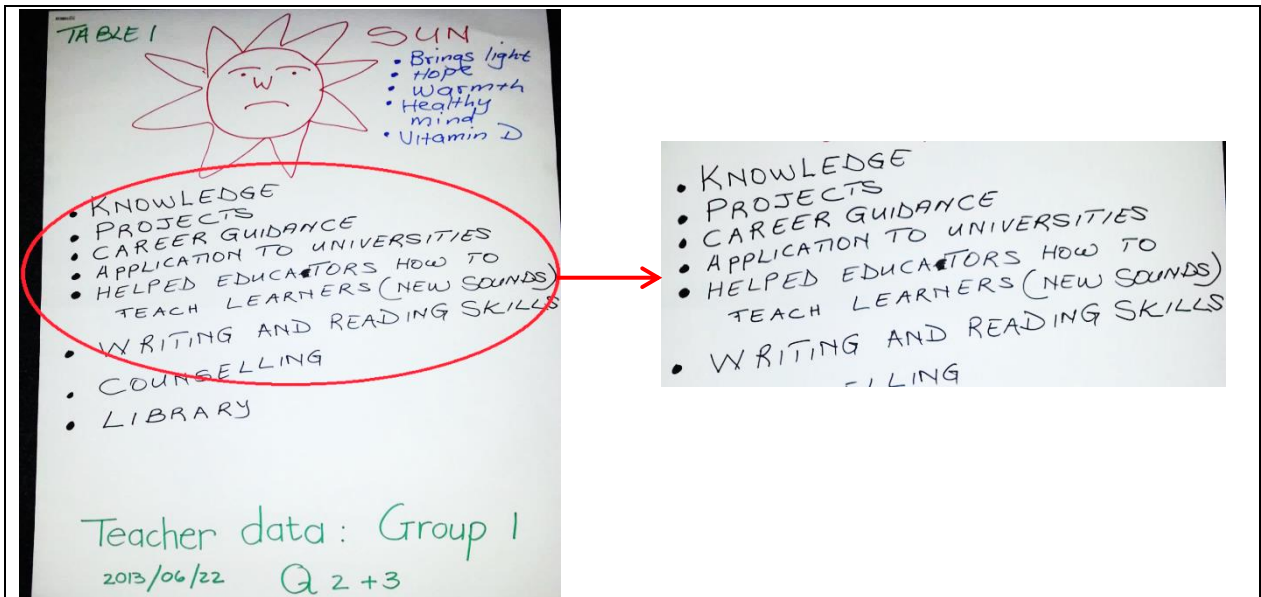
Photograph 5.1:
Data source: Visual data: PRA-directed activities 2 & 3, Group 1
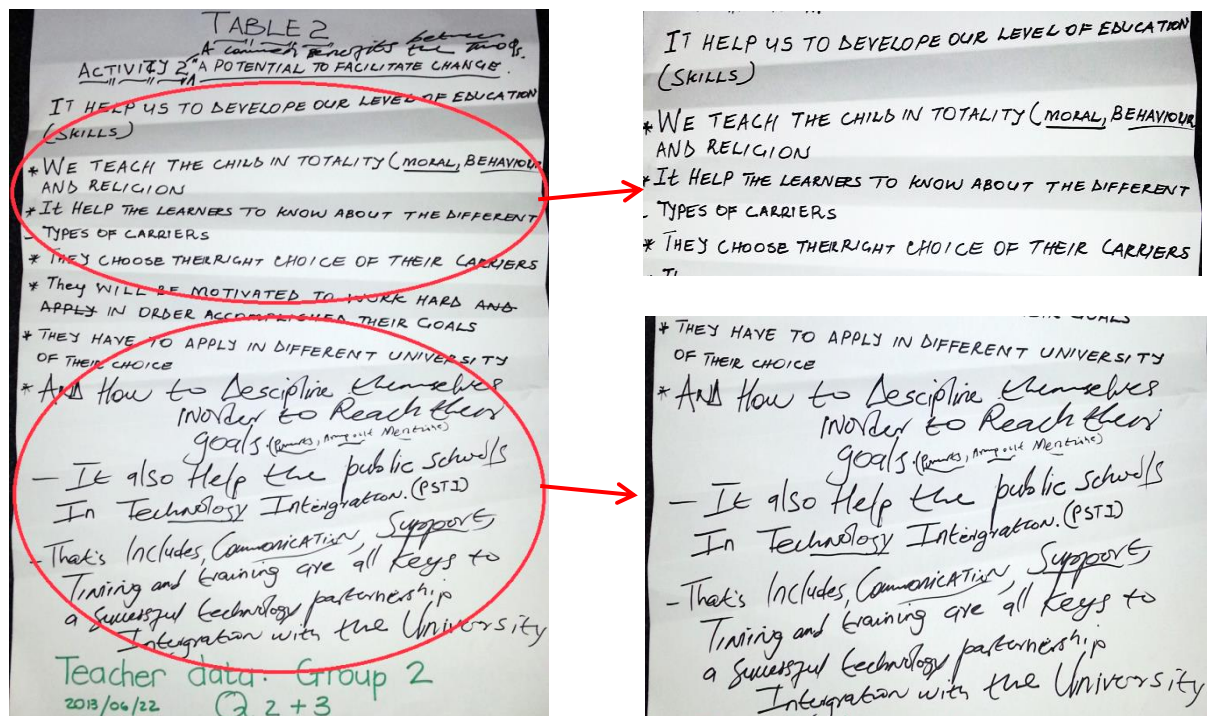
Photograph 5.2:
Data source: Visual data: PRA-directed activities 2 & 3, Group 2

5.1.2.1.1 Subcategory 2.1.1.1: Formal knowledge acquisition by teachers

Knowledge acquisition to develop teacher capacity involves formally gaining knowledge with regard to pedagogical content and subject knowledge, curriculum, pedagogy and educational foundations, knowledge of diverse learners and their associated cultures, child and adolescent development, theories of learning, motivation and assessment (McDiarmid & Clevenger-Bright, 2008:134). Table 5.3 shows a summary of the inclusion and exclusion criteria of Subcategory 2.2.1.1. Teachers conveyed that they acquired knowledge of norm-based behaviour, technology integration, career education and regulating themselves as teachers via the HEI association in a reciprocal and problem-solving way.

Table 5.3: **Inclusion and exclusion criteria for Subcategory 2.2.1.1: Formal knowledge acquisition by teachers**

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
• Knowledge acquisition to develop teacher capacity involves formally gained knowledge with regard to pedagogical content and subject knowledge, curriculum, pedagogy and educational foundations, knowledge of diverse learners and their associated cultures, child and adolescent development, theories of learning, motivation and assessment as a result of the HEI association.	• This subcategory excludes instances of knowledge acquisition by informal means initiated by teachers themselves.

Teachers reported that the association with a HEI resulted in reciprocal knowledge sharing, where both the teachers and associates from the HEI gained knowledge. Reciprocal knowledge-sharing is reflected in the following extracts:

Brought:

- knowledge

- get knowledge from us as to them

- use knowledge and prepare student teachers for real world − utilize knowledge to have competent students.

Data source: Field notes, PRA-directed group activities 2 & 3, Group 1, p. 3

Then here, the benefits we are going to look at here. This partnership has brought … eh, knowledge; Both parties obtained knowledge here, the partnership from the university, they were able to get knowledge from us also, and also, and also we were able to obtain knowledge from them. Like, for example, here the knowledge that they got from us, they are going to use the knowledge when they are teaching the student teachers which [who] are at the universities and they would also [be] preparing them for the real world, like when they [are] coming to

school; when they are through with their education, they come and they will be able to apply the knowledge that they got from the partnership. They are going to utilise it. They are going to be able to produce learners who are competent, and also, as we have said ... uhm ... at ...

Data source: Transcription of PRA-directed group activity 2, Group 1, p. 2-3, Lines 15-31

This teacher participant indicated, with regards to reciprocal knowledge-sharing, the value of knowledge-sharing and problem-solving when asked how the association with a HEI helped her as a teacher. Reciprocal knowledge-sharing and the concomitant problem-solving resulted from the association, as is illustrated in the following extract:

Participant: *The partnership has helped me a lot, because when we come together with other teachers, we share and most of the time we share ideas, we share ideas with the people from the university, ask:"I have got a problem like this, how can I solve it?"*

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P3, p. 6, Lines 23-27

The following quotations from PRA-directed group activity 2 show that teachers gained knowledge and awareness of teaching their students in their totality, teaching them about morals, the consequences of their behaviour and the importance of religion:
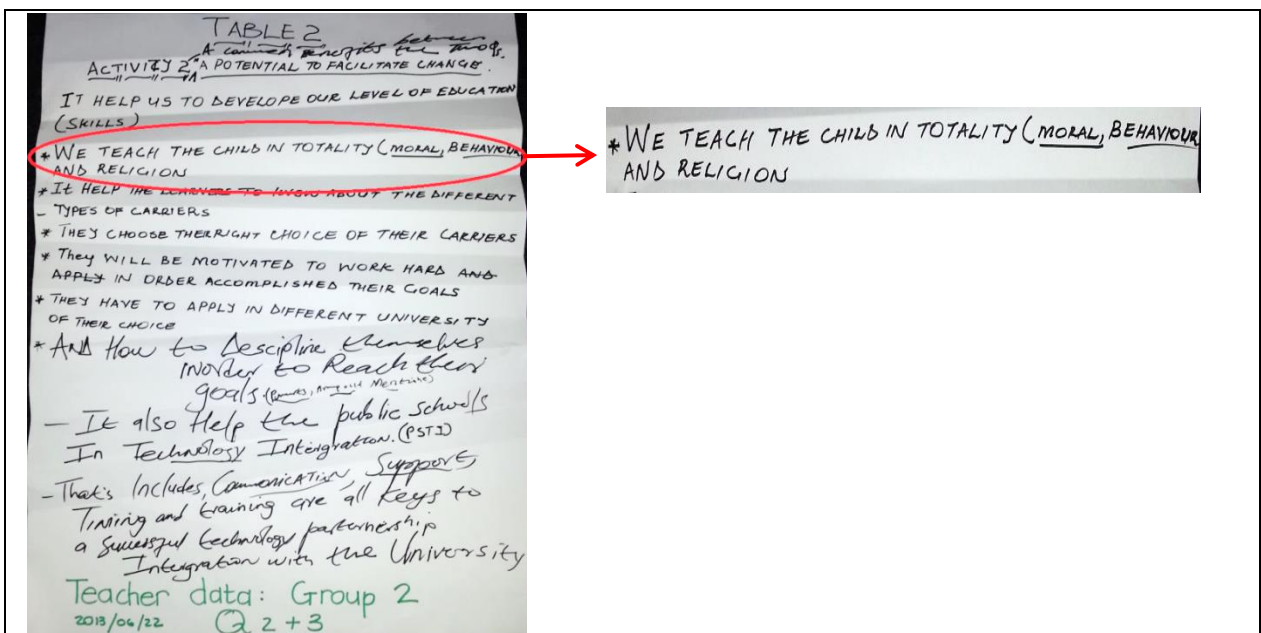
Photograph 5.3:
Data source: Visual data: PRA-directed activities 2 & 3, Group 2: Knowledge acquisition with regard to teaching the child in totality

We have, or we said, it help us to develop our level of education. It helped us to teach the child in totality [and] that include[s] morals, behaviour and religion.

> **Data source: Transcriptions of PRA-directed group activity 2, Group 2, p. 2, Lines 8-11**
>
> *- It helps us to develop our level of education (skills)*
>
> *- We teach the child in totality (morals, behaviour and religion)*
>
> **Data source: Transcription of poster of PRA-directed group activity 2, Group 2, p. 4-5, Lines 19-20**

The teachers reported that the association with a HEI resulted in assistance with the implementation of public schools in technology integration (PSTI) at their school. Teachers were therefore taught the importance of communication, support and training for a PSTI to succeed.

> *- And how to discipline themselves in order to reach their goals*
>
> *- It also help[s] the public schools in technology integration (PSTI)*
>
> *- That's includes communication, support, training ... and training ... are all keys to a ... successful technology partnership*
>
> *- A successful technology partnership integration with the university*
>
> **Data source: Transcription of poster of PRA-directed group activity 2, Group 2, p. 4-5, Lines 26-30**
>
> *...and also their PSTI, I know it's new to my colleagues. We call it public school technology integration. It's PSTI, Publics Schools in Technology Integration. That is communication support, like ...*
>
> *Timing ... training all those kids for a successful technology partnership integration with the university; those things ... eh ... that that ... eh ... collaborate with technology and this PSTI.*
>
> **Data source: Transcription of PRA-directed group activities 2 & 3, Group 2, p. 2-3, Lines 20-24 and 28-31**

Skills relating to and knowledge of career guidance were reported by teachers as benefits of the association with a HEI. This knowledge of skills enabled teachers to offer guidance to students about subject choices, the different types of careers that are available and submitting university applications timeously. The following extracts illustrate instances in which teachers gained information and skills with regard to career guidance:

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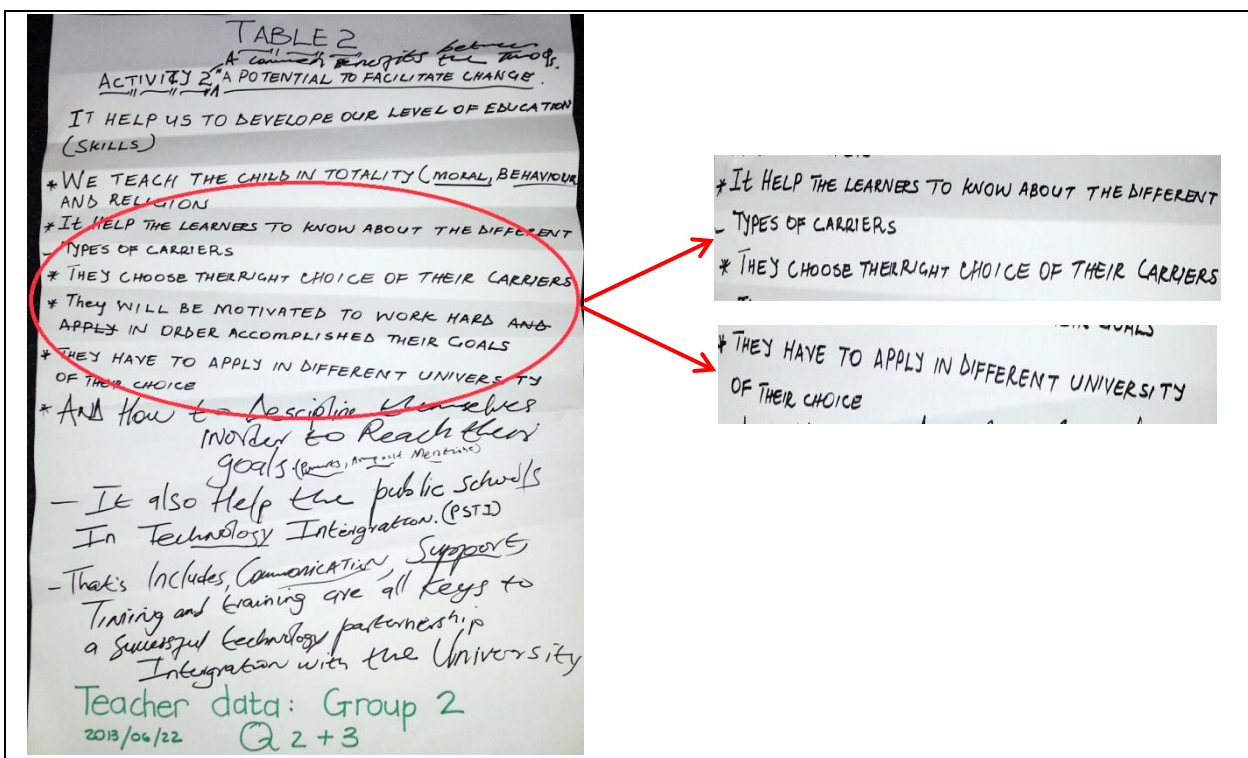
Photograph 5.4:
Data source: Visual data: PRA-directed activities 2 & 3, Group 2: Knowledge acquisition regarding career guidance

It helped the learners to know about the different types of careers, to choose; right choice of their careers ...

Data source: Transcription of PRA-directed group activity 2, Group 2, p. 2, Lines 11-13

- It help[s] the learners to know about the different types of carriers [careers]

- They choose their right choice of their carriers [careers]

Data source: Transcriptios of poster of PRA-directed group activity 2, Group 2, p. 5, Lines 21-23

- Career guidance

- Application to Universities

Data source: Poster transcription of PRA-directed group activities 2 & 3, Group 1, p.2, Lines 25-26

And also it also assisted us in career guidance like, for example, we've got our Grade 9 learners, which we will all know that when they are through with their Grade 9 they will be going to ... e ... det band and you will find that most det band ... yes, you'll find that most of the learners here, they do not know ... eh ... which subjects they are supposed to choose. Let us say the learner wants to be a doctor, you'll find that ... eh eh ... the learner will go for a same way as maybe history and ... eh ... tourism is being taught and on the other hand the learner has in his mind he knows very well that, I wanted to, I want to be a doctor, so the partnership

also assisted us here so that the learners were able to choose the subjects to which the learner will be able to follow his or her career path and also, this partnership, it also assisted us with regards to the application to the universities. Most of our learners, you will find that a learner is doing great Grade 12, but she or he doesn't apply, then you find that January, that when the results comes, the learner has obtained good results and at that time the learner will come to you with that certificate, asking you as an educator how can you assist me. But you find that you cannot assist the learner, because the learner should have applied maybe the ... eh eh ... last year. Then we have got many of our learners who are at the university through our partnership. They were able to give us information. They were able to assist our learners in applying online. So most of the applications went through to different universities in time and we've got a number of learners now who are at universities...

Data source: Transcription of PRA-directed group activity 2, Group 1, p. 4-5, Lines 60-92

Participant: *Yes, ja, and also, they also assist us with the ... in terms of application forms for Grade 12s. They bring [brought] in as much information as they could for the Grade 12s. They also assist them in career guidance, and to choose the right careers.*

Researcher: *Hm. Alright. Anything else that you can think of?*

Participant: *And as they are working with Grade 9 now, that is an exit point for EJ-ET[?]. So they also assist them in choosing the right subjects for their career choices, so that when they get to Grade 10, they know which subjects they are going to take that will pursue their careers of choice.*

... Then it becomes easier for the learners to place themselves in whatever stream that they want, but being determined by the career choice that the learner would like to pursue when he or she finishes school.

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P2, p. 14, Lines 25-33; and p. 15, Lines 1-12

Assist grade 9 learners – career guidance – to know which subjects to choose and assist to choose subjects and follow career path.

- Assisted application to University to apply before results in January – have to apply year before

- give info

- apply online

- a lot of applicants – know learners at university

Data source: Field notes of PRA-directed group activity 2, Group 1, p. 3

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An instance was reported were the association with a HEI resulted in knowledge and skills of how teachers could regulate themselves in the act of teaching:

> *Now you wanted us to talk about how to discipline themself [themselves] ...*
>
> **Data source: Transcription of PRA-directed group activities 2 & 3, Group 2, p. 2, Lines 19-20**

5.1.2.1.2 Subcategory 2.1.1.2: Formal teacher training for teacher craft skills

The development of teacher craft skills involves formally gaining skills such as instructional planning and organising, use of instruction material and technology, disciplining of students, monitoring and evaluating students, collaborating with colleagues, parents, the community and social services agencies (McDiarmid & Clevenger-Bright, 2008:134). Table 5.4 reflects a summary of the inclusion and exclusion criteria of Subcategory 2.2.1.2. Teachers conveyed that they acquired both literacy and instructional skills as a result of the association with a HEI.

Table 5.4:   Inclusion and exclusion criteria for Subcategory 2.2.1.2: Formal teacher training for teacher craft skills

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
• Development of teacher craft skills involves formally gaining skills such as instructional planning and organising, use of instruction material and technology, disciplining of students, monitoring and evaluating students, collaborating with colleagues, parents, community members and social services agencies as a result of the HEI association.	• This subcategory excludes instances of informal development of teacher craft skills initiated by teachers.

Students in rural schools often lack basic reading and writing skills. During the association with a HEI it was discovered that some students in Grade 9 were unable to read and write adequately: *So I think they were very, very helpful, and also, we also told the group that, these learners, they cannot write. So they also came with a programme here, which they left it with the English-language educators, to implement in our classroom. So the, when we looked at some of the handwritings through the partnership, they - it was - they were able to change their handwriting*. (Data source: Transcription of SSI, P2, p. 13, Lines 4-10). Formal training of teacher craft skills were arranged and teachers gained literacy skills such as how to teach sounds, reading, writing and vocabulary to students, as shown in the following citations:

> *... and most of this partnership, it also assisted educators on how to teach learners on new sounds; and also, this partnership here, we've benefitted ... eh ... I mean the educators the educators benefitted on how to teach the learners on how to write and also on how to read. Because you find that we as the educators, you find that when we are at ... eh ... at our schools, you find that a Grade 9 learner cannot write, a Grade 9 learner cannot read, so as we sat together with the partner; and we've decided that they should also assist us on how we can best assist our learners on ... so that they would be able to do that they are able to write and also to read and also they have also assisted ...*
>
> **Data source: Transcription of PRA-directed group activity 2, Group 1, p. 5, Lines 92-105**
>
> *... how they can spell in the correct way, alphabets from the foundation phase, lots of things; the university has helped a lot.*
>
> **Data source: Transcription of SSI, P3, p. 7, Lines 2-5**
>
> *- Helped educators how to teach learners (new sounds)*
> *- Writing and reading skills*
>
> **Data source: Poster transcription of PRA-directed group activities 2 & 3, Group 1, p. 2, Lines 27-28**
>
> Researcher: *Is there anything else that they helped you with to be a better teacher?*
>
> Participant: *Yes, they have helped me a lot. There are times where they've brought them – encourage[d] us how - how can we teach vocabulary ...*
>
> **Data source: Transcription of SSI, P3, p. 7, Lines 21-23**
>
> *... educators benefit – how to read, write – found grade 9 learners could not read or write – assist how to help*
>
> **Data source: Field notes of PRA-directed group activities 2 & 3, Group 1, p. 3**

A teacher participant indicated that the association with the HEI was particulary helpful as he gained instruction skills that he was able to use in his classroom:

> Participant: *And are [am] also improving my skills, you know, a number of skills, and one of them being metricking[?] skills, you know.*
>
> Researcher: *And teaching skills, I presume ... [indistinct – intervenes] earlier?*
>
> Participant: *Ja, teaching skills – a lot of the teaching skills and at a particular point I've learnt how to, you know ... the computer skills, the ... you know, these technology skills ....*
>
> **Data source: Transcription of SSI, P12, p. 18, Lines 2-12**
>
> Participant: *... you get people like .. like [the university] ... has helped me a lot in a number of ways when I was still at School A ...*

> *… because they came with new skills and ideas that I was able to use in my … in my class, because it wasn't only partnership, but I was getting ... I was learning in the process. Ja.*
>
> **Data source: Transcription of SSI, P12, p. 13, Lines 9-18**
>
> Participant: *Ja. I think the-the skills part is very important because it's not only networking skills ...*
>
> **Data source: Transcription of SSI, P12, p. 18, Lines 21-23**

5.1.2.2   Category 2.1.2: Associations with a HEI assist teachers' understanding of school community risks that require support

Increased teacher understanding of school community risks enables teachers to better support students in rural education. This section focuses on examples by teachers in rural schools with a HEI association, where they gained understanding of school community risks that require support. Teachers indicated that the association enabled them to adress difficulties experienced in their school and community: *Yes, and also, we also learn more from the group, because sometimes we come with challenges that we face in the community or in … in our school. Then they come with, maybe, solutions. They show us on how we can overcome most of the challenges that we come across, so …*(Data source: Transcription of SSI, P2, p. 16, Lines 1-6). Table 5.5 reflects a summary of the inclusion and exclusion criteria for Category 2.1.2. As a result of the HEI association, teachers indicated that they gained the knowledge and skills to discover, identify and adress challenges that are prevalent in the rural school community. In addition, teachers gained awareness of the complex nature of teachers' working conditions in the rural context.

Table 5.5:   **Inclusion and exclusion criteria for Category 2.2.2: Associations with a higher education institution assist teachers' understanding of school community risks that require support**

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
• Teachers' understanding of student risks includes instances where teachers gain additional insight with regard to students' emotional wellbeing and their individual family circumstances to enable them as teachers to support students. • This category includes instances of gaining an understanding of school community risks as a result of the association with a HEI.	• This category excludes teachers' understanding of school community risks as a result of their own inquiry and/or investigation into students' circumstances.

Teacher participants reported the identification of school community risks: *poverty, lack of employment, gambling, teenage pregnancy, affected and infected learners, illiteracy, drop-out, forms of abuse, child-headed families, etc.* Data source: Poster transcription of PRA-directed group activity 1, Group 1, p. 1, Lines 3-9 and *High rate of poverty, High rate of unemployment, HIV and AIDS, Rape, Illiterate, Learners with barriers.* Data source: Poster transcription of PRA-directed activity 1, Group 2, p. 4, Lines 1-7. Identification of school community risks is further illustrated by the following photographs:
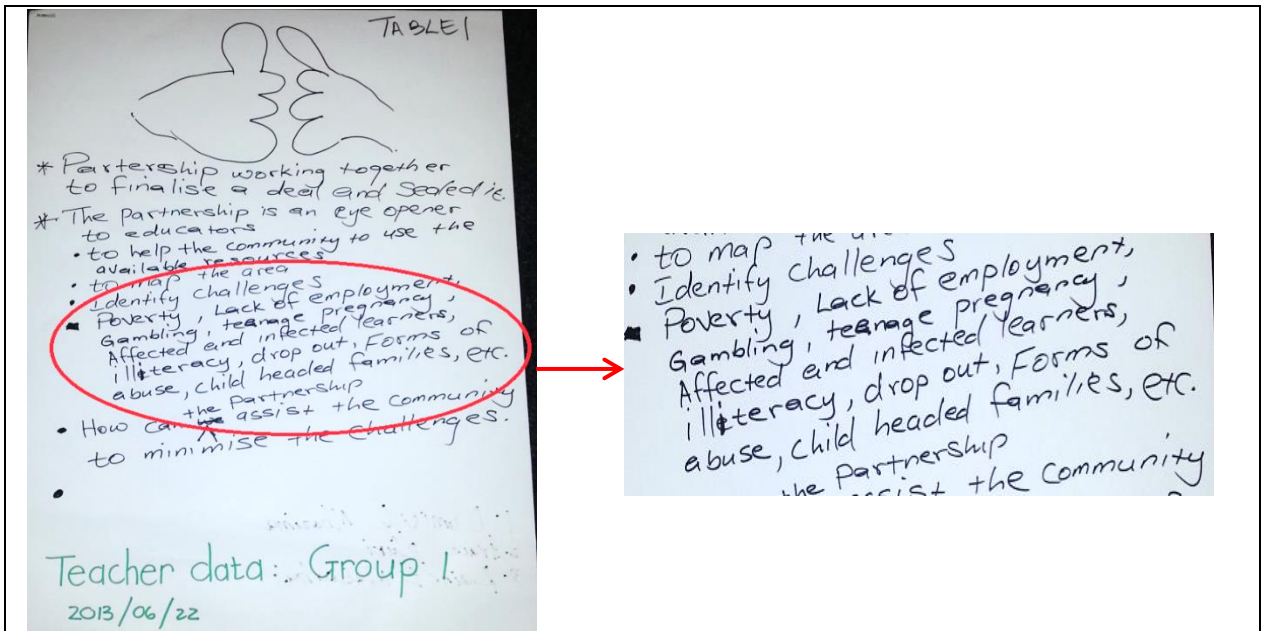
Photograph 5.5:
Data source: Visual data: PRA-directed activity 1, Group 1: Identifying school community risks
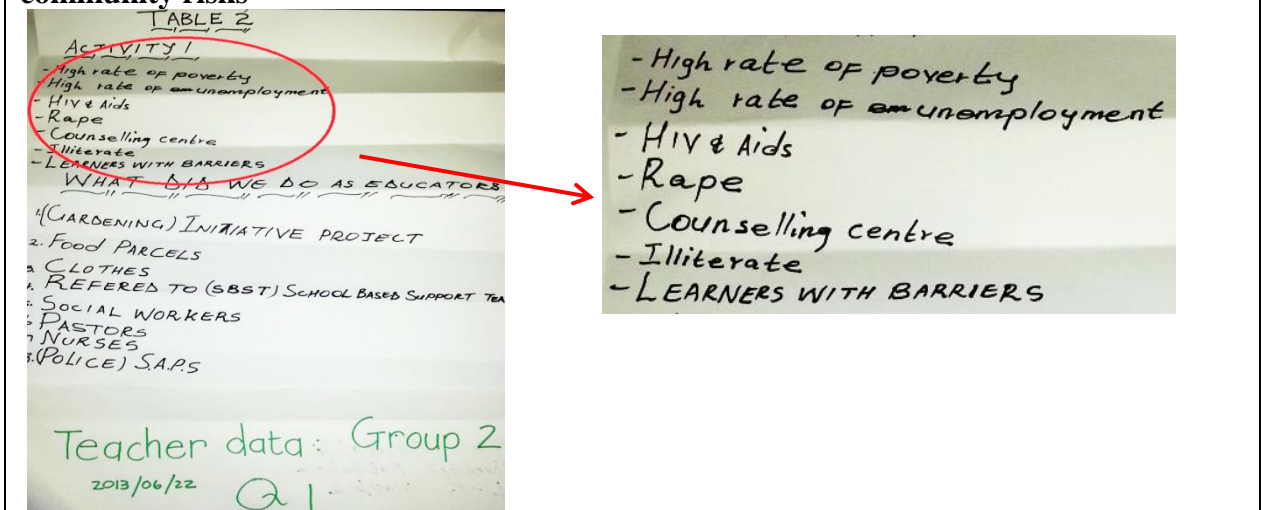
Photograph 5.6:
Data source: Visual data: PRA-directed activity 1, Group 2: Identifying school community risks

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Teachers reported the use and identification of resources that are available in their environment by means of using mapping, a PRA technique, to find ways to alleviate difficulties that the school community is experiencing:

> *The partnership is an eye-opener for the educators to help the community to use the available resources to map the area, as teachers, having a partnership with the university. The university has helped as to open our eyes to see how vulnerable the community is that we are working with, and to know all the resources that are in the area that [where] we are working [pause]. To map the area is to draw, to know the area as it is and the resources that are available, everything that the community can help them to use; and to identify the challenges, challenges like poverty, lack of employment, teenage pregnancy, affected and infected learners, illiteracy, drop-out, form[s] of abuse, child-headed households, and etc. How can the partnership help the community to minimize this [these] challenges is what we have learned from the partnership with the university.*
>
> **Data source: Transcription of PRA-directed group activity 1, Group 1, p. 1, Lines 6-26**
>
> | | |
> |---|---|
> | Participant: | *We've learned about the area, what is there, what can we use, what other things do we have, that can help the community.* |
> | Researcher: | *So identifying resources?* |
> | Participant: | *Yes, identify resources, and even talent.* |
>
> **Data source: Transcription of SSI, P3, p. 7-8, Lines 27-33**
>
> *- to help the community use the available resources*
> *- to map the area*
> *- Identify challenges*
> *- poverty, lack of employment, gambling, teenage pregnancy, affected and infected learners, illiteracy, drop out, forms of abuse, child-headed families etc.*
> *- How can the partnership assist the community to minimise the challenges.*
>
> **Data source: Poster transcription of PRA-directed group activity 1, Group 1, p. 1, Lines 4-9**
>
> *- map and draw community*
> *- minimise challenges – what learned.*
>
> **Data source: Field notes of PRA-directed group activity 1, Group 1, p. 1-2**

Teachers elaborated on how the association with a HEI opened their eyes, enabled them to realise that they as teachers should seek to understand the challenges that their students and school community members are facing. Teachers discovered the high rate of poverty of the school community members and it encouraged them to take the responsibility for

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brainstorming ways to alleviate poverty. Their eye-opening experience is reflected in the following quotations:

> *The partnership is an eye opener to educators:*
> **Data source: Poster transcription of PRA-directed group activity 1, Group 1, p. 1, Line 3**
>
> *… the beginning of the partnership to us as educators, it was an eye opener, because we gathered that we are not only educators that are there for teaching, we must also penetrate through so that we know what are the challenges … eh … our learners are facing and what are the challenges the community is also facing, so [pause] the most of the challenges that we've picked up, for example, we've said that there is a high rate of … eh … poverty in our community, so maybe [what] one can ask oneself, himself or herself, is how can we alleviate … eh … poverty, then by the establishing of … eh … different projects …*
>
> **Data source: Transcription of PRA-directed group activity 2, Group 1, p. 3, Lines 31-42**
>
> *The partnership between the university and the rural schools has had us to discover its high rate of poverty, high rate of unemployment [repeat] of how it relate to high rate of poverty and at least to HIV/AIDS, rape, counselling; you must build counselling centre, this [there] is a high rate of illiteracy in that area. Learners with learning barrier, what did we do as educators?*
>
> **Data source: Transcription of PRA-directed activity 1, Group 2, p.1, Lines 1-8**
>
> *= eye opener for educators*
> *- to use resources in community*
> *- open eyes = how vulnerable and know resources*
>
> **Data source: Field notes of PRA-directed group activity 1, Group 1, p. 1-2**

A teacher participant, when asked how the association helped him as a teacher, indicated that the association with a HEI assisted him in various ways. Teachers indicated that they gained insight with regard to some of the social challenges that the students are experiencing: *… we saw that as educators there are a lot of things that that our learners are facing* (Data source: Transcription of PRA-directed group activity 2, Group 1, p. 5, Lines 107-108). Furthermore, the association with a HEI facilitated self-awareness in teachers so that they could understand the context of teaching in a rural school.

> Participant: *Ja, the partnership has helped me in so many ways. One, it has helped me to alleviate some of the challenges, social challenges that we … that affects the school.*
> *… It has helped me to-to be able to … to say that as a teacher you're not only here to teach, but you're also here to know who you are*

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> *teaching, where they come from and how can you help them if there are challenges.*
>
> *... So that is how actually in general or in specifically the partnership has helped me to say I must understand the context where I find myself.*
>
> *... Ja, the learner, the parent and everything, the environment, it has taught me ... uh ... standing [understanding] of the environment; is important, knowing what is around you and how it can influence your life as a teacher.*

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P12, p. 16, Lines 29-30 and p. 17, Lines 1-19

The association with a HEI assisted teachers to help students who are not coping in school. The interventions by the HEI with the students of the rural school resulted in a deeper understanding of the challenges that students are experiencing, and help was offered by members of the HEI to reduce these challenges.

Participant:	*Okay, like when they come here, the partnership, they assist us, especially with the learners who are ... who can't cope. There is a programme that they used the last year, identifying their potential, and also, they-they also assisted us, because they-they ... they digged [dug] deeper into finding what was the prob ... the learners' problems, and they tried to address(ed) some of those issues.*

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P2, p. 12-13. Lines 27-32; 1-2

The association with a HEI further equipped teachers with the necessary skills and understanding in order to deal with the challenges that the students are facing.

Participant:	*... but it has also helped with skills of ... uh ... of dealing with challenges with my learners, because fortunately with the ... we have been working more with the Psychology Department ...*
	... and they have helped us in understanding our learners more and how to deal with certain challenges

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P12, p. 18, Lines 23-31

5.1.2.3   Category 2.1.3: Associations with a HEI in rural education motivate teachers and students

The association between rural schools and a HEI were reported by teachers to motivate both teachers and students. Motivation involves aspects such as being positively orientated towards

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education (learning and teaching) and being motivated to be a better person, and to achieve success (self-efficacy beliefs and self-determination). Teacher and student motivation involve their attitudes and commitment to education. Table 5.6 shows a summary of the inclusion and exclusion criteria for Category 2.2.3. Teachers conveyed that the HEI association offered them emotional support, and motivated students in terms of goal-achievement, viewing education positively and boosting self-confidence.

Table 5.6: **Inclusion and exclusion criteria for Category 2.2.3: Associations with a higher education institution in rural education motivate teachers and students**

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
• The association between rural schools and a higher education association motivates both learners and students, which advances rural education. • This category includes instances where students are motivated to work hard and achieve their goals, to like school and take part in activities that contribute to their wellbeing. This category also includes instances where teachers feel encouraged and students' self-esteem is boosted as a result of the association between rural schools and a higher education institution.	• This category excludes instances of teacher and student motivation that do not result because of an association with a HEI.

Student motivation is reported by teachers as a benefit of the association with a HEI. Student motivation involved students' working hard to reach their goals, as is reflected in the following photograph and excerpts:
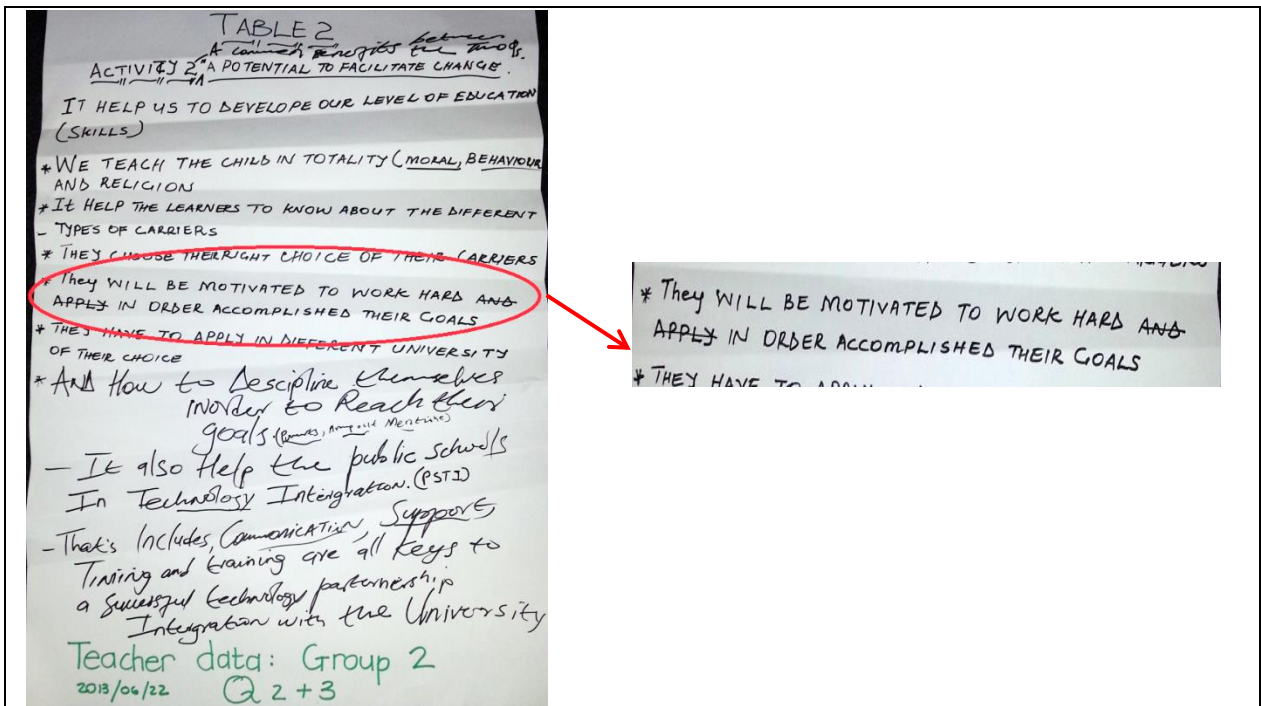
Photograph 5.7:
Data source: Visual data, PRA-directed group activities 2 & 3, Group 2: Teachers indicating that the association with a HEI motivates students

…and they will be motivated to work hard and reach their goals …

Data source: Transcription of PRA-directed group activities 2 & 3, Group 2, p. 2, Lines 13-15

Participant:	*… it has also helped us in learner motivation, while I was that side, because they … they helped us a lot …[voice fades] … you know … … in learner motivation.*

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P12, p. 18, Lines 32-33 and p. 19, Lines 1-5

Teachers indicated that students' self-confidence was improved by their participation in intervention projects initiated as a result of the association between rural schools and a HEI, as shown in the following extract:

Participant:	*Ja. And also their confidence, it has been booste … boosted. The time when the … we started with this partnership, when we said to them, "let us divide you into groups, because you need to go and learn from our visitors" you know, at first they were reluctant.I It's because of they didn't have confidence in speaking in English. … So now when you say the groups are here, they just take their chairs. You see they-they are now used to … they are no longer scared.*

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P2, p. 13, Lines 12-10

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Two teacher participants indicated during their face-to-face semi-structured interviews that they experienced the association with a HEI as providing him and his fellow colleagues with emotional support and encouragement, as is illustrated in the following extract:

Participant:	*… and supporting us in a number of ways. Support, you know, that in a partnership you get a lot of …[indistinct – intervenes]*
Researcher:	*[indistinct] it's emotional support?*
Participant:	*Ja, a lot of support.*
Researcher:	*What other support? Is it … it's emotional support. Is there other support as well?*
Participant:	*[voice soft] How can I put it? [voice louder] Ja, emotional support was there. Uhm … [indistinct]*
Researcher:	*Encouragement?*
Participant:	*Ja, encouragement, ja. Because there … there were motivations, you know …*

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P12, p. 19, Lines 6-24

Participant:	*Ja, no, it's helped me a lot, because you know the first I met you guys, I was so much encouraged to come and teach this poor, black child, because, no, before we are saying we must go and teach. That is our aim. Let us go and teach and produce the best of the best. Let us go and teach so it makes - it motivated me somehow.* *… This partnership.*
Researcher:	*Okay, it motivated you. How else did it improve your teaching? In what ways?*
Participant:	*Hmm - to become a dedicated person.*

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P4, p. 10, Lines 20-33 and p. 11, Line 1
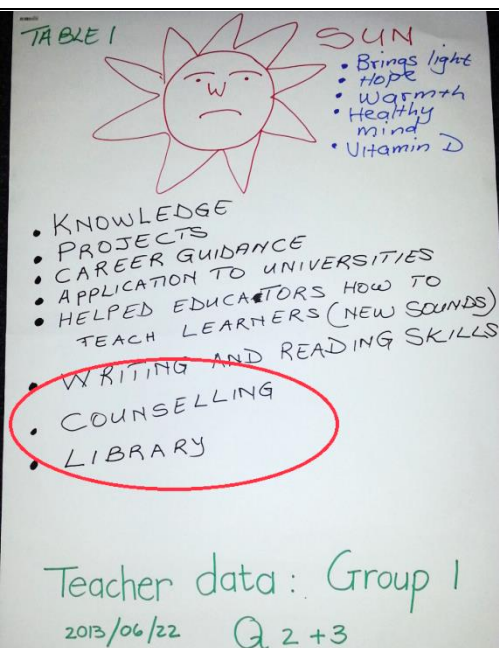
5.1.2.4   Category 2.1.4: Resource provision to support instructional practices

This section covers Category 2.1.4: Resource provision to support instructional practices. This category involves instances where teachers indicate that the association with a HEI enabled the provision of resources to support instructional practices. For example: *And also bringing in of resources that we did not have …* (Data source: Transcription of SSI, P12, p. 19, Lines 5-6). Table 5.7 gives a summary of the inclusion and exclusion criteria for this category. Teachers expressed the provision of instructional resources such as a library and a counselling centre, with the required infrastructure, as a benefit of the association with a HEI.

Table 5.7: **Inclusion and exclusion criteria for Category 2.1.4: Resource provision to support instructional practices**

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
• Provision of resources to support instructional practices includes instances where resources where provided as a result of the association with a higher education institution. Provision of resources such as library books for the library and chemicals for the science laboratory.	• This category excludes provision of resources that support instructional practice provided by other stakeholders.

Teahers indicated the establishment of a counselling centre and a library to support instructional practices, as is illustrated in the following photograph and extract from the researcher's field notes:

Photograph 5.8:
Data source: Visual data: PRA-directed group activities 2 & 3, Group 1: Physical provision of a library and a counselling centre

- counselling centre at school – don't know how to open up – univ helped – member took charge – counselled learners.
- library = collection of books – help to collect books.

Data source: Field notes of PRA-directed group activities 2 & 3, Group 1, p. 3

Furthermore, teachers indicated that the association with a HEI helped them realise that they needed a counselling centre: *…counselling, you must build [a] counselling centre …* (Data source: Transcription of PRA-directed group activity 1, Group 2, p.1, Line 6) to help teachers address the various challenges students are experiencing. Teachers communicated that students

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do not know who they can open up to and that the establishment of a counselling centre enabled such a space:

> *... they have also assisted us with ... we also had a counselling centre in our school, because we saw that, as educators, there are a lot of things that that our learners are facing. Sometimes you find that some of the learners, they want to open up, but they don't know how to open up and to whom they are supposed to open up, so we've decided that we should also have a counselling centre. But it was through them opening our eye, so we had also a counselling centre in our school, where we, we had one of our members ... eh ... who was ... eh ... taking charge of the counselling centre; and where most of the learners, they came to the centre where the educator were [was] able to counsel them ...*
>
> **Data source: Transcription of PRA-directed group activities 2 & 3, Group 1, p. 5-6, Lines 105-112**

Teacher participants from a rural school conveyed the provision of physical resources such as library books as a benefit of their association with a HEI:

> *And sometimes the people of the university come with books, so we help the learners mostly with books ...*
>
> **Data source: Transcription of SSI, P3, p. 7, Lines 1-2**
>
> *... provided us with a lot of information and books.*
>
> **Data source: Transcription of SSI, P12, p. 18, Lines 12-13**
>
> *... they would come up with books, to cut [out] pictures, build words; there's a lot of things that they have done for us ...*
>
> **Data source: Transcription of SSI, P3, p. 7, Lines 23-25**
>
> *... and also, through the partnership, the our school was able to ... eh ... have ... eh ... library. According to my understanding, when we are talking about a library, we are not talking about a building, but a library is a collection of books which are inside the library, so it means that our partnership here, it also assisted us to ... in building ... I mean in ... collecting the books that are there in the library. So we have got a library at our school that [is] just because of the partnership that we've had with the university ...*
>
> **Data source: Transcription of PRA-directed group activities 2 & 3, Group 1, p. 5-6, Lines 112-118**
>
> *I've mentioned about the chemistry, laboratory, library; all those things…*
>
> **Data source: Transcription of PRA-directed group activity 2, Group 2, p. 2, Lines 24-25**

In the following extract from a face-to-face semi-structured interview, it is clear that the teacher reported that the association with a HEI helped the school to establish a library, which provided students with a space for research and study purposes:

Participant:	*Yes, like our library.*
	… Ja, they donated books. We didn't have anything, and even this table, they donated it to our school. When they, learners, now need to do research, they come to library. They sit down in groups. Even if they want to study quietly, they borrow keys from me, then they come to the library. [noise in background]. Then they come to the library, for study purposes and research purposes. So it's all the work of the partnership.
Data source: Transcription of SSI, P2, p. 14, Lines 9-21	

5.2.1 Subtheme 2.2 Challenges negotiated to achieve teacher resilience while implementing a higher education intervention

The second subtheme that emerged from the data on *Promoting teacher resilience in rural schools with an association with a HEI* is Subtheme 2.2: Challenges negotiated to achieve teacher resilience while implementing a higher education intervention. Challenges to teacher resilience in this subtheme involve instances where teachers in rural schools had to address challenges during the implementation of a higher education intervention. The following photograph and extract show teachers' awareness in responding to challenges:

Photograph 5.9:
Data source: Visual data, Discussion of PRA-directed group activity 4, Group 1: Teachers identifying challenges when implementing a HEI association

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Data source: Transcription of PRA-directed group activity 4, Group 1, p. 7, Lines 3-14

This subhteme includes three categories that emerged from the data, namely Category 2.2.1, Lack of information regarding intervention projects frustrates teachers; Category 2.2.2, Teachers' dissapointment with a lack of continued participation in intervention projects by school community members and parents; and Category 2.2.3, Lack of information to enable obtaining funds to implement intervention projects. Instances of Subtheme 2.2 mostly occurred in data sources from Case A1 (teachers in rural schools with a HEI association that participated in the association), which consisted of PRA-directed group activities, face-to-face semi-structured interviews and field notes, and from Case A2 (teachers in rural schools with a HEI association who did not participate in the association), the PRA-directed group activities. In Case A2 instances of Subtheme 2.1 were silent in data sources from face-to-face semi-structured interviews. This could possibly be attributed to the fact that only one participant from this group of participants was available for an interview. Table 5.8 reflects a summary of the overall inclusion and exclusion criteria for Subtheme 2.2:

Table 5.8: Inclusion and exclusion criteria for Subtheme 2.2: Challenges to teacher resilience during the implementation of a higher education intervention

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
• This subtheme includes instances where teachers mention constraints as a result of the association between rural schools and the HEI that impede teacher resilience. • Constraints include lack of information regarding intervention projects, high expectations of parents and school community members to gain from the association between rural schools and a HEI and lack of information to enable obtaining funds to implement intervention projects.	• This subtheme excludes constraints to teacher resilience that do not relate to challenges experienced during the implementation of a HEI association.

In the first place the teachers conveyed that a lack of information regarding intervention projects frustrated them. The second challenge that emerged from the data generated by teacher participants in rural schools with an association with a HEI involved teachers' expressions of

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dissapointment with the lack of continued participation of school community members and parents in intervention projects. The teachers reflected a lack of employment and the concomitant expectation to earn an income as reasons for the lack of continued participation in intervention projects. Thirdly, what emerged from the data related to Subtheme 2.2 was the challenge relating to a lack of information to enable obtaining funds to implement community projects.

5.2.2   Category 2.2.1: Lack of information regarding intervention projects frustrates teachers

This section covers Category 2.2.1: Lack of information regarding intervention projects frustrates teachers, which refers to instances where teachers conveyed the lack of information, such as feedback and follow-up sessions, as frustrating and hampering the implementation of a higher education intervention. Table 5.9 reflects a summary of the inclusion and exclusion criteria for Category 2.2.1:

Table 5.9:   Inclusion and exclusion criteria for Category 2.2.1: Lack of information regarding intervention projects frustrates teachers

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
• This category includes instances of lack of feedback and follow-up sessions regarding intervention projects initiated as a result of the association between rural schools and a HEI. • Lack of information regarding meetings/visits by the higher education institution to the rural schools is included in this category.	• This category excludes data that do not refer to teacher frustration with regard to a lack of information of intervention projects initiated as a result of an association with a HEI.

Lack of information regarding intervention projects involves a lack of feedback and follow-up sessions regarding the intervention projects that were implemented during the HEI association. Furthermore, it involves instances mentioned by teacher participants, where they expected information and communication regarding visits planned by the HEI as they wanted to be prepared and involve all the teachers of the particular school to participate in the HE intervention projects. The lack of information regarding meetings and visits was seen as a challenge to the implementation of the higher education intervention, which as a result hampered teacher resilience.

Teachers reported the importance of sharing what was found during intervention projects with the students to enable the teachers to address the specific challenges that students are experiencing. Feedback was also mentioned as a means to determine if students have improved

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or not. The teacher participants of schools with an association with a HEI reported a lack of feedback and follow-up sessions with regard to intervention projects as a challenge for the successful implementation of an association with a HEI, as is reflected in the following quotations:

I am saying this, because now we have got this partnership with ... university. Most of the time they used to come to the school maybe to help our learners, but the problem is that after they did that they do not come back maybe to find out do you ... er ... [pause] do you have challenges. What is that we can help so that the project can sustain [be sustained]. That is why the next point has [is] intertwined with the upper one [pointing at flip chart], where we said report-back challenges on what they have discovered with our learners. Right, I was thinking this because when they came to the school to help our learners with careers counselling, career guidance you know. After what they have discovered from these learners they never came back to us to say learner so and so has got these challenges. So, if maybe they can report back after that, we are going to be able as a school to make a follow-up so that we can be able to help these learners. The ... when they come back they would find that maybe our learners would have improved.

Data source: Transcription of PRA-directed group activity 4, Group 1, p. 9-10, Lines 74-95

- Programme for intervention
- Report back: Challenges, what they discovered from our learners

Data source: Poster transcription of PRA-directed group activity 4, Group 1, Lines 43-44

During a member checking session with a teacher participant she highlighted the importance of the HEI members reporting back on the intervention session, as this would enable teachers to refer students to the necessary stakeholders, such as social workers:

- mix with learners – digging deeper – find the problem – reporting is important to be able to refer to social workers
- working social worker – able to open up more

Data source: Field notes, Member checking session of SSI, P2, p. 12

Teachers also indicated that feedback would serve an educational purpose, where they would gain an understanding of how the implementation of an association with a HEI works:

Point number three: The university must give us feedback after they visited the school, so that we can know [pause] ... know how the process are [is] working.

Data source: Transcription of PRA-directed group activity 4, Group 2, p. 4, Lines 19-22

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Teacher participants indicated that they would value feedback regarding the intervention projects as this would serve as a valuable source of monitoring their progress and enable teachers to be prepared:

Monitoring progress [reading off the flipchart]. We need the university to monitor our progress, so that they can do follow-ups and give us a year plan. Maybe this year, for the whole year, we are going to do this and that, so that we can always be prepared.

Data source: Transcription of PRA-directed group activity 5, Group 1, p. 11, Lines 13-18
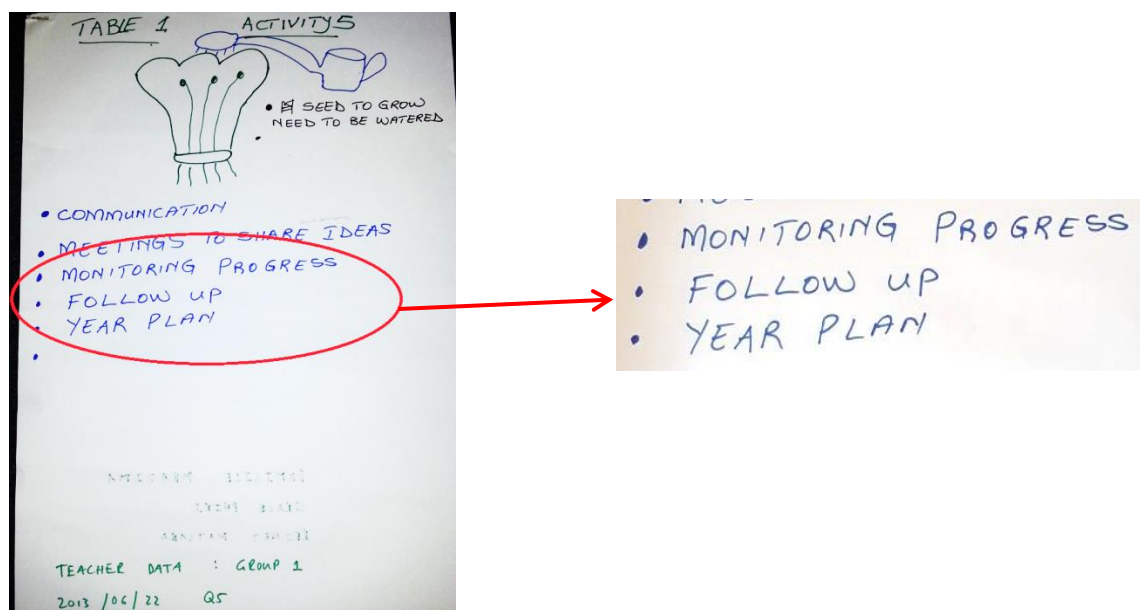
Photograph 5.10:
Data source: Visual data, PRA-directed group activity 4, Group 1
- Programme of reporting

- They must draw a programme on which dates they come to schools

- The university must give us feedback after they visited the school

Data source: Poster transcription of PRA-directed group activity 4, Group 2, Lines 32-33; 35

Teacher participants reported that a lack of information on visits planned by the HEI would hamper the success of the association as they would not be prepared and able to plan their participation in the activities:

In our group, we say, problem of reporting. ...Under the problem of reporting, the university must draw [up] a programme of [that reflects] each date they come [are going to come] to [the] school. So that we can be aware that the university will come on this date.

Data source: Transcription of PRA-directed group activity 4, Group 2, p, 4, Lines 3-8

Number two, there should be follow-ups on the programmes that have been give the school. Er ... follow-up on the project that has been initiated. Number three, the university must give a

school a full year programme. Not just call [demonstrated by using his hand] them on a cell phone and say "next week Monday you are coming on this time". But they must give us a full year programme so that maybe we can put them on a year plan. Inform the other colleagues [non-participating teachers] about the project or the school [and] university partnership er ... so that they can participate, or they must be hands-on.

Data source: Transcription of PRA-directed group activity 5, Group 2, p. 6, Lines 7-20

- Follow up on the programmes that they have given the schools

- Follow up on the project that has been initiated

- The university must give the school a full year programme

- Inform the other colleagues about this projects (school-university partnership)

- So they can participate and be hands-n

Data source: Poster transcription of PRA-directed activity 5, Group 2, Lines 43-48

5.2.3 Category 2.3.2: Teacher disappointment with the lack of continued participation in intervention projects by school community members and parents

Teachers in schools with an association with a HEI reported the lack of continued participation in intervention projects by both school community members and parents as an impediment to the implementation of a HEI association. Table 5.10 provides the inclusion and exclusion criteria for Category 2.3.2.

Table 5.10: Inclusion and exclusion criteria for Category 2.3.2: Teacher disappointment with the lack of continued participation in intervention projects by school community members and parents

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
• Instances where teachers convey disappointment as school community members and parents do not continue to participate in intervention projects due to a lack of delivery on their expectation of financial gain. • This category includes the high expectations of the school community members and parents to gain financially from the association when participating in intervention projects.	• This category excludes instances of a lack of continued participation by school community members and parents in an intervention project that was not initiated as a result of an association with a HEI. • This category excludes instances of lack of support and participation amongst teachers with regard to the implementation of intervention projects.

The following vignettes, derived from verbatim transcriptions of the PRA-directed group activities, provide examples of school community members' lack of continued participation in intervention projects due to their expectation of immediate financial gain from their participation. It is evident from the data that the communities in the areas of the rural schools

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experience high levels of poverty, which indirectly influences the success of implementing an association with a HEI. High levels of poverty are included in the discussion on Rurality context risk factors and Out-of-school risk factors in Chapter 4. In addition, established projects could often not be sustained due to the socioeconomic circumstances of school community members and parents. Lack of financial gain from participation in intervention projects is reflected by teacher participants as a reason for the lack of continued participation by school community members and parents in intervention projects:

... then by the establishing of ... eh ... different projects, like maybe, for example, we once had a project in our school, which was a ... a big work project, which was a project that we thought as educators was going to assist the people who are living around the community, which from the project they were going to benefit; but you find that sometimes in the community, most of the people are not employed and when you ask them to come for the project they have got a lot of expectations. They thought that immediately that they start that they are going to gain a lot of ... eh ... things like, for example, they would be able to ... eh ... the project would be able to generate ... eh ... the money and by that time they would be able to put ... eh ... the food on top of their table.

Data source: Transcription of PRA-directed group activity 1, Group 1, p. 3, Lines 41-56

Then, lastly, the community is expecting to earn as soon as the project start[s]. Another challenge we got is that you know the areas where we are teaching there is a lot of unemployment. So when the project started, they wanted to earn as soon ... you know, when it was started they were expecting to earn money, income at the end of the month, because there are challenges at home. They need to buy food; they need to do these and these and these only to find it was a huge problem to them staying at home, I mean staying at school, for a period of thirty days and after that they receive nothing. Maybe the project is earning an income, little income, after that.

Data source: Transcription of PRA-directed group activity 4, Group 1, p. 10, Lines 96-108

We have this project in our community, but the challenge we have is that these community members do not have the funds; they do not have money.

Data source: Transcription of PRA-directed group activity 4, Group 1, p. 7, Lines 18-21

When you start a project sometimes the parents expected to get money and this give[s] us problems.

Data source: Transcription of PRA-directed group activity 4, Group 2, p. 5, Lines 33-35
- When we start the project the parents expect to get money

Data source: Poster transcription of PRA-directed group activity 4, Group 2, Line 41

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> *... the times when people are [in] partnership, they expect to gain everything.*
>
> **Data source: Transcription of SSI, P12, p. 17, lines 14-15**

One teacher also attributed the fact that community members and parents do not continue to participate in intervention projects to their socioeconomic circumstances as a reason for the projects' not being sustained:

> *Participant:*   *It didn't sustain because, you know, most of the people who are living in these communities, they are not working. So if you tell them that there is a project, they come in large numbers, thinking that they are going to benefit immediately.*
>
> *... Yes, so then if it becomes a long-term thing, then along the way some of them, they drop [out], because they go and look for work in other places.*
>
> *... Then you find that only two people are now left in the project. That is why maybe it didn't sustain.*
>
> **Data source: Transcription of SSI, P2, p. 17, Lines11-21**

5.2.4   Category 2.2.3: Lack of information to enable obtaining funds to implement intervention projects

This category refers to a lack of knowledge on the part of community members and parents of how to obtain funds to implement intervention projects. Table 5.11 provides the inclusion and exclusion criteria for Category 2.2.3. Teachers expressed a lack of knowledge relating to acquiring sponsors and funds, overreliance on teachers to obtain such funds and a lack of delivery on said funds as challenges to rural education.

Table 5.11:   **Inclusion and exclusion criteria for Category 2.2.3: Lack of information to enable obtaining funds to implement intervention projects**

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
• This category includes a lack of information by school community members and parents to enable obtaining funds and sponsors to support community projects to alleviate poverty. • This category includes instances where school community members and parents need assistance and guidance with obtaining funds and/or sponsors for community projects.	• This category excludes instances of a lack of information with regard to sponsors and funds that do not relate to school community members.

Teachers mentioned that community members and parents do not have the necessary knowledge to enable them to obtain funds or sponsors to support intervention projects, as is reflected in the following extracts:

> *And then we said [looking at the flipchart] another challenge is a lack of information to finance this project. As I have mentioned, on top there [pointing at the flipchart], that the information is not accessible to the community members. For example, here ... er ... [pause for 5 seconds] in our school ... we made ... er, er ... [a] move. We went to the [Department of] Social Services, if not mistaken, to find sponsors for these parents or the community.*
>
> **Data source: Transcription of PRA-directed group activity 4, Group 1, p. 8, Lines 29-38**
>
> *- Leak [lack] of information where to ... where to get fund[s] to start the projects*
>
> **Data source: Poster transcription of PRA-directed group activity 4, Group 2, Line 40**

Teacher participants indicated another challenge, one relating to a lack of information to enable obtaining funds, with community members and parents relying on the teachers to obtain such funds. Teachers mentioned their frustration as community members and parents do not play their part in obtaining funds for intervention projects. In addition, teachers communicated another challenge as relating to a lack of delivery of funds when community members or parents presented their intended project to the relevant stakeholders.

> *They need sponsors and most of the time for us it is difficult as educators to help them. They need us to be hands-on and manage to help them to get the sponsors. Even if you can guide them, just go to this door [pointing fingers in different directions] and this door, and this door, they do not go there. But they just need us physically to do it for them.*
>
> **Data source: Transcription of PRA-directed group activity 4, Group 1, p. 7-8, Lines 21-28**
>
> *Even now ... is a big problem and the funds there, they were promised that if they bring their projects, they are going to finance them; these projects. So we saw it as a challenge.*
>
> **Data source: Transcription of PRA-directed group activity 4, Group 1, p. 8. Lines 43-47**

In summary, teachers in this study conveyed instances where their schools' association with a HEI promoted formal teacher capacity development, teacher understanding of school community risks that require suport, student and teacher motivation and resource provision to support instructional practices. Teachers in this study also needed to negotiate challenges while implementing a HE intervention. Challenges that they iterated upon included a lack of information regarding intervention that lead to teacher frustration, teacher disappointment in

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lack of continued participation in intervention projects by school community members and parents and lastly, lack of information to obtain sponsors to implement intervention projects.

5.3 Literature control

In the next section, I compare the results of Theme 2 to existing literature. As with the literature control of Chapter 4, I focus here on similarities, contradictions, silences and new insights arising from comparing both the benefits and challenges embedded in a HEI association, as discussed throughout this chapter, with similar themes in existing literature. Aspects that are conducive to the development of teachers' resilience (utilising protective resources) in HEI associations (Subtheme 2.1), such as formal teacher capacity development, gaining an understanding of school community risks that require support, the motivational aspect of associations and, lastly, resource provision are iterated upon. Teacher resilience is conceptualised as the utilisation of protective resources to address challenges (risk factors) experienced in the education context. Challenges that were negotiated to achieve teacher resilience comprise the frustration attributed to a lack of information regarding intervention projects, a lack of cooperation and commitment by school community members and parents and, finally, a lack of information to enable obtaining funds and sponsors for the implementation of intervention projects.

5.3.1 Similar findings in other studies regarding the demonstrated benefits of association with a HEI

These findings correlates with literature on functions of HEI associations in terms of mutual benefits (Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Wilson et al., 2007). The results in this study however mostly elaborate on benefits to the rural school as expressed by the teachers. Instances of benefit to the HEI were evident in the results and merits further investigation.

Others also found that teachers in rural schools are able to access *social capital* via an association with a HEI. According to Paxton (2007), a researcher from the USA, an indirect method of bridging social capital occurs in associations where people from different demographic contexts form an association, such as the one in this study between rural schools and a HEI. Teachers in this study conveyed *protective resources* (Subtheme 2.1) for achieving teachers' resilience, such as formal teacher capacity development (Category 2.1.1), a comprehensive teacher understanding of school community risks that require teacher support (Category 2.1.2), motivational benefits to students and teachers (Category 2.1.3) as well as the provision of much needed resources to support instructional practices (Category 2.1.4), which accrued from the association between the rural schools and a HEI. Other researchers from the

USA, Bryan (2005) and Bryan and Henry (2012; 2008) support the notion that associations have the potential to accrue much needed *support* (motivation – Category 2.1.3), *resources* (Category 2.1.4), *skills* (Category 2.1.1) and *networks* in communities where the need and risk are high (Madigan & Schroth-Cavatalo, 2011).

With reference to the *development of teacher capacity* (Category 2.1.1), German researchers, Schneider and Kipp (2015) indicated that associations have the potential to foster the personal growth of teachers, which supports my findings relating to the development of teacher capacity. This finding also reflects an important funcition of HEI associations as it relates to knowledge generation, education and training (Butcher et al., 2008; Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Wilsion et al., 2007). In addition, the educational effect of associations entails the development of skills and knowledge for beginning and veteran teachers alike (Berry, Daughtrey & Wieder, 2009; Bryan, 2005; Bryan & Henry, 2008, 2012; Wollebaek & Selle, 2002). Teachers often collaborate and work together with the intention to extend and share their knowledge (Oseland, Catchlove & Miller 2012) and supplement expertise (Madigan and Schroth-Cavatalo, 2011), as is reflected in the current study. Association with a HEI can therefore encourage the professional development of teachers (Lieberman, 1986; Sandholtz, 2002) in that, "restructuring teaching knowledge, the form and content of teacher education, and the nature and governance of teaching" (Darling-Hammond, 1994:3) is achieved. An important component of teacher capacity development in reference to teacher craft skills involves collaboration with colleagues, parents and other stakeholders. Sandholtz (2002), a researcher from the USA concurs, emphasising the importance of such collaborations, and postulates that opportunities to increase teachers' professional interactions (updating knowledge and skills, reflecting on teaching experiences and collaborating with colleagues) are advocated by associations between schools and a HEI (Timperly, Wilson, Barrar & Fung, 2007).

Studies on rural education, done in the USA, elaborates on the overwhelming academic, social, economic and personal difficulties students in rural areas experience and how these students' difficulties also affect the teachers who are teaching these students (Bryan & Holcomb-McCoy, 2010). A study done by researchers from the USA, Rigelman and Ruben (2012) indicates that when teachers collaborate, either for professional or personal reasons (Bridwell-Mitchell & Cooc, 2016), skills and commitment for comprehensively understanding each student are developed. Teachers' vision and the meaning of being a teacher are therefore encouraged by associations (Rigelman & Ruben, 2012). Teachers in this study confirmed that the association between their schools and a HEI encouraged teacher *understanding of school community risks that teacher require support* (Category 2.1.2). This finding correlates with the

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assertion by researchers from the UK, Vangen and Huxham (2003) that associations are often formed as a means to solve societal problems and agrees with the assertion by Gomes-Casseres (1994) that associations are formed when there is a potential for mutual benefits. Strier (2011), a researcher from Israel, stated that associations between rural schools and a HEI can influence members' perceptions of social problems, thus, as teachers reported in this study, teachers' perceptions of social problems in their school community were enlightened. I postulate that teachers in this study experience various types of adversity, as do the communities in which they work, and that the association with a HEI is valued and beneficial.

Associations can contribute to social capital though the *provision of resources* (Category 2.1.4) (Wollebaek & Selle, 2002). In addition, associations in the educational sphere serve as instruments for leveraging resources for schools (Madigan & Schroth-Cavatalo, 2011; Wohlstetter, Malloy, Smith & Hentschke, 2004). The provision of resources can be seen as accessing social capital and as such the association between the HEI and rural schools connect the individual members with other individuals and/or institutions that have useful knowledge and resources (Briggs, 2004; Bryan & Henry, 2012; Teckchandani, 2014).

According to studies done in the USA (Brunetti, 2006; Castro, Kelly & Shih, 2010) and the UK (Gu & Day, 2013) key positive influences on *teachers' motivation* (Category 2.1.3) relate to in-school support such as the support provided by an association between rural schools and a HEI. Other researchers from the USA also iterate on motivation for teachers' ability to overcome adversity in teaching, especially in the rural context (Brunetti, 2006; Cross & Hong, 2012). The findings of this study correlate with the notion that the motivation of teachers is encouraged by association with a HEI as they report receiving various types of support that are conducive to teacher resilience.

Lastly, I want to draw on social capital research and highlight what I found in this study, namely that an association between a HEI and rural schools facilitates the *development of social capital* with regard to bonding (members of the association work together to address challenges in the school and related communities), linking (the individual members' associations with other institutions can provide access to other potential social capital) and bridging (members of the association accessing resources, knowledge and skills via the association) and that all the members benefit from these associations (Calabrese, 2006). This is of importance to my study as this finding correlates with literature that confirms that social capital is important for both teacher retention and, therefore, teacher resilience. The development of social capital enables teachers to overcome the demands and stresses of teaching (Fox & Wilson, 2015). The applicability of social capital development in relation to

teacher resilience and a HEI association will be further discussed in Chapter 6 as it relates to the conceptual framework.

5.3.2 Similar findings in other studies regarding challenges negotiated to achieve teacher resilience while implementing a HEI association

Literature indicates that where members of an association view the association as counterproductive and even unpromising to particular members' interests it may cause tensions and put a strain on the association, which could possibly contribute to associations being devalued (Parry, Harreveld & Danaher; 2011). The findings of this study mostly support existing knowledge regarding association work in the educational sphere as it relates to *challenges that teachers needed to negotiate* (Subtheme 2.2) when engaging in the association with a HEI. I found in this study, as was found in other local and global studies, that teachers experienced frustrations with regard to a lack of information about intervention projects initiated with students as a result of the association with a HEI as well a need to clarify the scope and expectations of members of the HEI association.

The teachers in the current study expressed *frustration with regard to a lack of information on the intervention projects* (Category 2.2.1) that were implemented in their schools as a result of the HEI association. This frustration entails frustration with regard to sufficient feedback and follow-ups (refer to contradictions in this chapter) regarding the interventions with students as well as providing adequate planning for intended visits by the HEI partners. In this regard literature from the USA (Bryce, 2006) indicates that social capital is enhanced for all the partners when dedicated times and spaces are provided during association work. Proper planning and timely communication of proposed visits are important as teachers often have time constraints due to their work-related responsibilities and may as a result lack the energy to engage in the additional activities proposed by the association (Wang & Zhang, 2014). SA researchers (Ebersöhn, Loots, Eloff & Ferreira, 2015) also highlight the importance of maintaining a flexible research schedule and to respect teachers' work-related responsibilities and related time constraints.

5.3.3 Contradictions with other studies on challenges when implementing a HEI association

In the current study teachers identified the *lack of clarity* (Category 2.2.1) relating to the scope of the association between rural schools and the HEI as a barrier. Teachers conveyed their disappointment with the lack of continued cooperation and commitment of school community members and parents to the intervention projects that were being implemented due to high levels of poverty and unemployment in communities. This finding is in contrast with global

literature, which abounds with references to establishing and clarifying the scope of an association to counter the effects of too high expectations on the success of the association, although it does not explicitly indicate *teacher disappointment with the lack of continued participation by parents and school community members* (Category 2.2.2) in intervention projects. The clarification and communication of roles and expectations of each stakeholder are echoed in a SA study (Thomas, Smith-Tolken, Naidoo & Bringle, 2011) and a study from China (Wang & Zhang, 2014) which entails a mutual understanding of the scope of an association. International researchers from the USA, Bartholomew and Sandholtz (2009) as well as Strier (2011), a researcher from Israel, stated that if members' views, goals, perceptions and perspectives in relation to the association differ it can cause serious tensions and hamper the success of association work. The relevance of having clear expectations of the association are also supported by SA researchers (Ebersöhn, Loots, Eloff & Ferreira, 2015). In addition Ebersöhn, Loots, Eloff and Ferreira (2015) further found that poverty could be a motivating factor for engaging in a HEI association, therefore inherently fostering high expectations on the part of the partners who face serious socioeconomic challenges and needs. What is, however, new in this regard is that literature is does not explicitly mention the high expectations of parents and school community members who are indirectly associated with the HEI association or rural teachers' disappointment with the lack of continued cooperation by these partners with intervention projects.

Literature on education from the USA (Brunetti, 2006; Castro, Kelly & Shih, 2010) and the UK (Gu & Day, 2013) consistently suggests that one positive influence on *teachers' motivation* (Category 2.1.3) that is crucial is positive feedback from parents and students. Teachers' valuing feedback from students and parents is both a silence and a contradiction in this study when compared to global literature. In this study, teachers expressed their frustration about feedback from and follow-ups by HEI members regarding intervention projects initiated with students. Consequently, the *lack of feedback and follow-ups* (Category 2.2.1) by HEI members is conveyed as a barrier to the success of the HEI association.

5.3.4 Contributions and silences regarding associations in rural schools and teacher resilience

Although literature (Akdere & Egan, 2005; Kearney, 2015; McIntyre, 2006) indicates the need to *resource associations* with rural schools effectively, it does not provide insights on how to obtain such resources via sponsors and funds. Teachers in rural South African schools, where resources are few, as well as the school community members lack information (where, who and how) that would enable them to obtain sponsors to implement their intended intervention

projects. In this study the lack of knowledge regarding obtaining sponsors hampers teachers' initiatives to alleviate poverty in their community and can as a result hamper the development of teacher resilience.

Stimulating and sustaining *students' motivation* (Category 2.1.3) is a challenge for every teacher, as are finding reliable and valid methods by means of which to motivate students (Keller, 2000). Although literature indicates that an association encourages the development of social capital (Hays, 2014; Paxton, 2007; Wollebaek & Selle, 2002), which can in turn stimulate the motivation of teachers, the findings of the current study indicate that the association with a HEI contributes to students' motivation and is seen as a protective resource that relates to teacher resilience. From literature it is clear that students' educational outcomes are improved by associations, although literature does not explicitly mention students' motivation with regard to boosting self-confidence and maintaining a positive outlook with regard to education. Teachers in this study indicated that the association with the HEI boosted students' self-esteem as well as inspiring their view of education as positive and important. Both local and global literature are silent on the motivational aspect as regards students as a result of association with a HEI. Students' motivation being encouraged by the HEI association is seen in existing literature on associations as a new insight.

Global literature indicates that an attitude of *trust* is important for the success and appropriate functioning of associations (Lieberman, 1986; Hays, 2014). Wollebaek and Selle (2002) concur that associations facilitate the meaningful development of trust relationships amongst the members. Putnam (1995) put forward that trust enables participants to act together more effectively to pursue shared objectives. Baggetta (2016) also indicated that trust is necessary to investigate the way that associations bring people together. In this regard I found that teachers in this study did not explicitly mention trust as a factor conducive to the association's producing an enabling environment. The omission by teachers of trust as an enabling factor may be attributed to the long-standing relationship among the association members, as the association with two of the rural schools participating in this study date back to 2005.

Relating to trust and empowerment in associations, I found in this study that teachers did not convey an expression of *unequal power relations*, described in both local and global research as an impediment to realising the potential of the association between rural schools and a HEI. Relationships between schools and a HEI are often strained due to assumptions about privilege and what kinds of knowledge, motives and agendas are valued in association work (Waitroller & Kozleski, 2013). Association members often challenge one another's expertise, practices, policies and social arrangements, which results in power struggles and

tensions between the members of the association (Waitroller & Kozleski, 2013). However, teachers in this study did not convey that they experienced unequal power relations between them and the members of the HEI. I attribute this to the fact that the association is a democratic collaboration, where the members share decision-making, ownership and responsibility for the association's vision, goals and outcomes and as a result all the members are viewed as equal and valuable experts (Bryan & Henry, 2012). I do not assume that power struggles do not exist within this particular association, but rather that, owing to it being a longstanding relationship, trust has developed over time (Rabaia & Gillham, 2010), and that such issues had been dealt with in the past (Cardini, 2006).

5.3.5   Conclusion

I found that protective resources, as well as challenges negotiated to achieve teacher resilience were present. I argued in this chapter how an association with a HEI could promote teacher resilience via: i) formal teacher capacity development; ii) gaining an understanding of school community risks that require support; iii) the motivation of both teachers and students; and, iv) by providing resources to improve instructional practices. I shared that an association with a HEI posed challenges to the development of teacher resilience with regards to: i) teacher frustration due to a lack of information regarding intervention projects; ii) teacher disappointment due to a lack of continued cooperation and commitment by school community members and parents and iii) a lack of information on obtaining funds and sponsors for the implementation of intervention projects.

Rural teachers in this South African sample identified similar benefits (formal teacher capacity development, gaining an understanding of school community risks that necessitate support and motivation of students) and challenges (lack of information of implemented intervention projects by HEI members and clarification of stakeholders' expectations) as teachers in other studies where associations were present.

In contrast to other studies that teachers in this study valued feedback from the HEI members rather than parental and student feedback. I also found that teachers in two rural schools who formed part of a HEI association identified a lack of knowledge regarding obtaining sponsors and funds to sustain an HE intervention as a constraint, which consequently hampers the process of developing teacher resilience.

Lastly, an association with a HEI was beneficial for teacher-student relationships as student motivation (strengthening self-esteem and a positive orientation towards education) was positively impacted according to teacher reports.

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Chapter 6

Theme 3: Expectations to buffer teacher resilience by means of future association with a higher education institution

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter I discuss the results of Theme 3: Expectations to buffer teacher resilience by means of a future association with a higher education institution (HEI). Two subthemes emerged, namely Subtheme 3.1:27 Teachers have positive expectations to benefit from a possible association with a higher education institution (HEI) and Subtheme 3.2: Teacher concerns about the potential association with a higher education institution (HEI). The data represented in this Chapter include data captured from expressions by the teacher participants of Case B, therefore teachers in rural schools without a HEI association (see Chapter 3, section 3.4, for clarification of the cases). Figure 6.1 furnishes an overview of the themes, subthemes and categories of Theme 3.
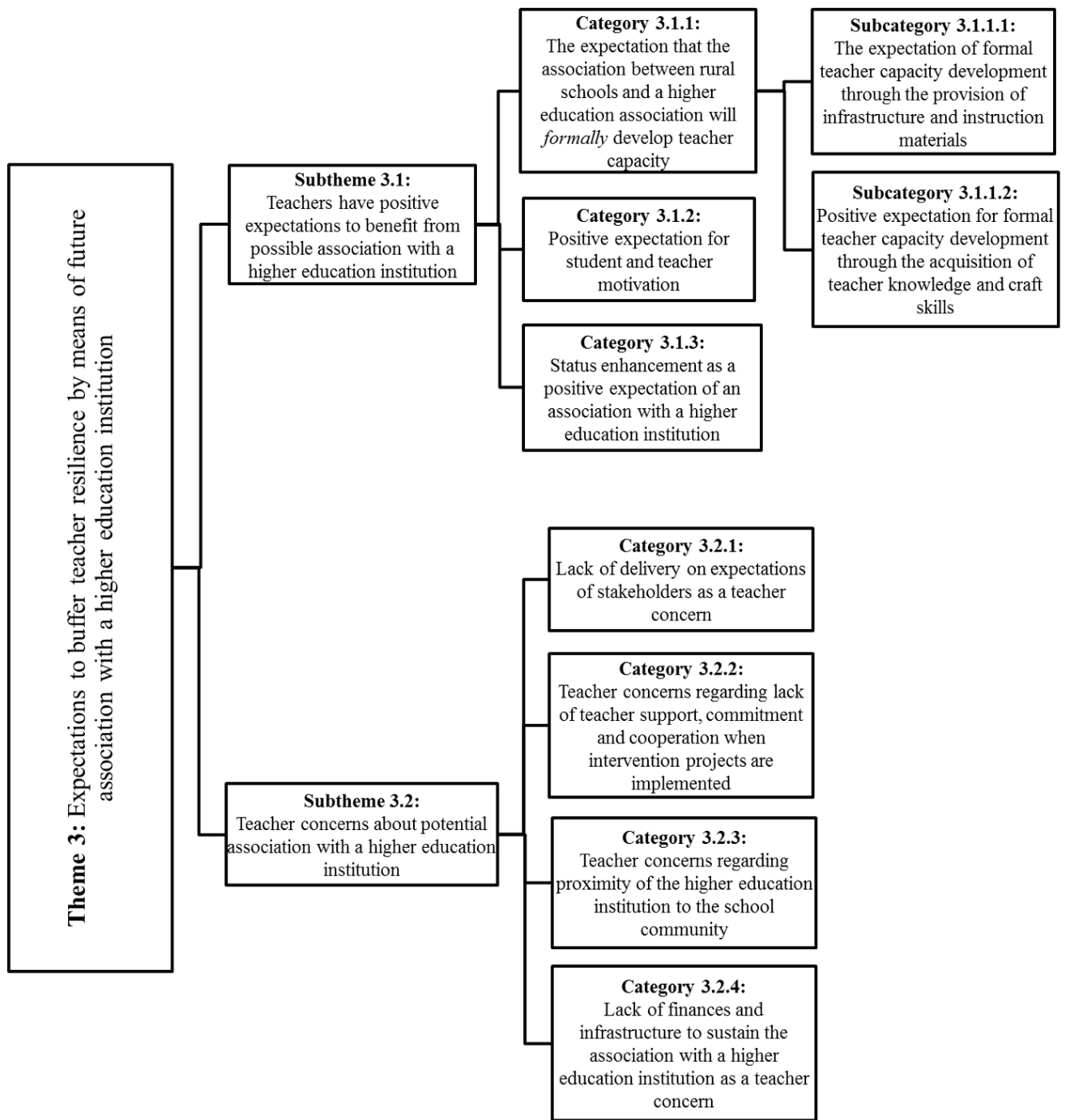
Figure 6.1: Overview of Theme 3: Expectations to buffer teacher resilience by means of future association with a higher education institution

6.1.1 Theme 3: Expectations to buffer teacher resilience by means of future association with a higher education institution

In this section on Theme 3, I elaborate on teachers' expectations to buffer teacher resilience and the related concerns that teachers have with regard to future association with a HEI. Theme 3 consists of subthemes, *Teachers have positive expectations to benefit from possible association with a higher education institution* and *Teacher concerns about potential association with a higher education institution (HEI).*

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6.2 Subtheme 3.1: Teachers have positive expectations to benefit from a possible association with a higher education institution

Teachers' positive expectations to benefit from a possible association with a HEI emerged from the data. Positive expectations trigger optimistic anticipation, excitement as well as encouragement and hope (Linaman, n.d.). Castelfranchi and Tummolini (2003:119) posit that they characterise expectations as having both an element of anticipatory representation (belief) about the future state of matters and a motivational element (goals). The identification of both positive and negative expectations is allowed by the convergence between beliefs and the goals conforming to these beliefs. Implicit in positive expectations are influencing acts aimed at advocating that the expected event would transpire. The following extracts from the researcher's Field notes reflect teachers' positive expectation to benefit from an association with a HEI: *Partnership can help to improve the education system ...* (Data source: Field notes, informal conversation with participant 14. p. 14) and, *The teachers that were not previously part of the partnership indicated their hope and expectations with regards to the partnership and possible help that they will receive.* (Data source: Field notes, 2014-05, p. 39). This subtheme consists of three categories, namely Category 3.1.1: The expectation that the association between rural schools and a higher education association will *formally* develop teacher capacity; 6.2.2 Category 3.1.2: Positive expectation of student and teacher motivation; and Category 3.1.3: Status enhancement as a positive expectation of an association with a higher education institution. This subtheme links with functions of HEI associations in terms of benefits and development of teacher knowledge and skill (Calabrese, 2006; Egan et al., 2008; Feiman-Nemser, 2001). Table 6.1 reflects a summary of the inclusion and exclusion criteria for Subtheme 3.1.

Table 6.1: **Inclusion and exclusion criteria for Subtheme 3.1: Teachers have positive expectations to benefit from a possible association with a higher education institution**

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
• Positive expectation refers to teachers' expectation to benefit from future association with a HEI. • Expected benefits include instances of the provision of physical resources, the co-construction and exchange of knowledge and skills, motivating students and teachers, school identity and teacher capacity development. • Special consideration: Teachers may have the positive expectation to benefit from	• This subtheme excludes demonstrated benefits as a result of association with a HEI.

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
association with a HEI based on experience with other associations, which is included in this subtheme.	

6.2.1 Category 3.1.1: The expectation that the association between rural schools and a higher education institution will *formally* develop teacher capacity

Formal teacher capacity development involves instances where teachers have an expectation to gain knowledge and teacher craft skills by means of a possible association with a HEI. Formal development refers to gatherings with associates of a HEI with the intention of sharing knowledge and skills to support teaching. Teachers' expectation to gain knowledge and skills to improve their teaching is reflected in the following excerpt from my researcher diary: *He especially mentioned that his school needs specific resources like books and workshops to improve their teaching and knowledge.* (Data source: Researcher diary, 2014-05-28, p. 39). The two subcategories, Subcategory 3.1.1.1: The expectation of formal teacher capacity development through the provision of infrastructure and instruction materials and Subcategory 3.1.1.2: Positive expectation for formal teacher capacity development through the acquisition of teacher knowledge and craft skill comprises Category 3.1.1. Table 6.2 gives a summary of the inclusion and exclusion criteria for Category 3.1.1.

Table 6.2: **Inclusion and exclusion criteria for Category 3.1.1: The expectation that the association between rural schools and a higher education institution will *formally* develop teacher capacity**

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
• Formal instances of teacher capacity development involve formally arranged gatherings and/or workshops with the intention to share, and gain, knowledge and skills between researchers and teachers. • This category includes the expectation expressed by teachers to gain formal teacher capacity development in the areas of knowledge acquisition and sharing (with regard to pedagogical content and subject knowledge, curriculum, pedagogy and educational foundations, theories of learning, motivation and assessment) and acquisition of teacher craft skills (instruction planning and organising, use of instruction material and technology and monitoring and evaluating students).	• This category excludes instances of teacher disposition. • This category excludes instances of teacher expectations based on demonstrated benefits of association with a HEI.

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6.2.1.1 Subcategory 3.1.1.1: The expectation of teacher capacity development through the provision of infrastructure and instruction materials

This subcategory involves teachers' expectations to gain formal teacher capacity development by means of the provision of infrastructure and instruction materials to support rural education. Data on this subcategory mostly emerged during group discussions of PRA-directed activities and one face-to-face semi-structured interview. Table 6.3 indicates the inclusion and exclusion criteria for Subcategory 3.1.1.1. Teachers conveyed that they expected teacher capacity development via the provision of infrastructure (for a counselling centre, library, laboratory and networks) as well as instruction materials (such as library books, science equipment and computers).

Table 6.3: Inclusion and exclusion criteria for Subcategory 3.1.1.1: The expectation of formal teacher capacity development through the provision of infrastructure and instruction materials

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
• This aspect of teacher capacity development refers to the expectation of the provision of infrastructure and instruction materials (such as library books, laboratory apparatus, computers and dictionaries). Provision of infrastructure includes mobilisation of the provided resources to establish a library, laboratory and/or counselling centre.	• This subcategory excludes instances of formal and informal teacher capacity development as it relates to the acquisition of knowledge and teacher craft skills.

Teachers expressed their expectation of teacher capacity development through the mobilisation of resources *... that we have also indicated that ... eh ... that the partnership would benefit schools in terms of the mobilization of ... eh ... resources* (Data source: Transcription of PRA-directed group activities 2 & 3, Group 3, p. 3, Lines 21-24). This mobilisation of resources includes the expectation by teachers to be assisted by means of the establishment of a wellness centre where students will be assisted with some of the various challenges that they are experiencing. The expectation of mobilisation of resources also involves the establishment of the necessary networks for referral, such as social workers.

So with the partnership, you know, that we have with the ... eh ... the University of [?] want to believe that ... eh ... there a lot of resources that can be can-can be mobilized. And we are looking at the situation where one day we rural schools will have the ... eh ... wellness centres, wherein learners would be assisted, you know, in a broader sense. Currently ... and most of our rural schools don't have such centres, you know. Those learners that are having problems, you know, they are assisted through the school-based support team, but [it] also does not have

the capacity to handle cases, you know, that are peculiar to the-the ... eh ... the behaviour, you know, of certain learners, because they are not professionals of course. So if we could have such centres ... uhm ... it will assist so the school can benefit through the resource of the mobilization [mobilization of the resource]. I-I ... uhm ... have also heard from the other colleagues mentioning issues of library and ... ehm ... other resources that may assist, you know. So the collaboration goes to a long extent [goes a long way].

Data source: Transcription of PRA-directed group activities 2 & 3, Group 3, p. 4, Lines 33-53

Teachers expressed their need and consequent expectation of the provision of materials to establish a functioning library and a laboratory for science experiments. The expectation to receive instruction materials to support teaching is illustrated in the photograph and extracts that follow below:
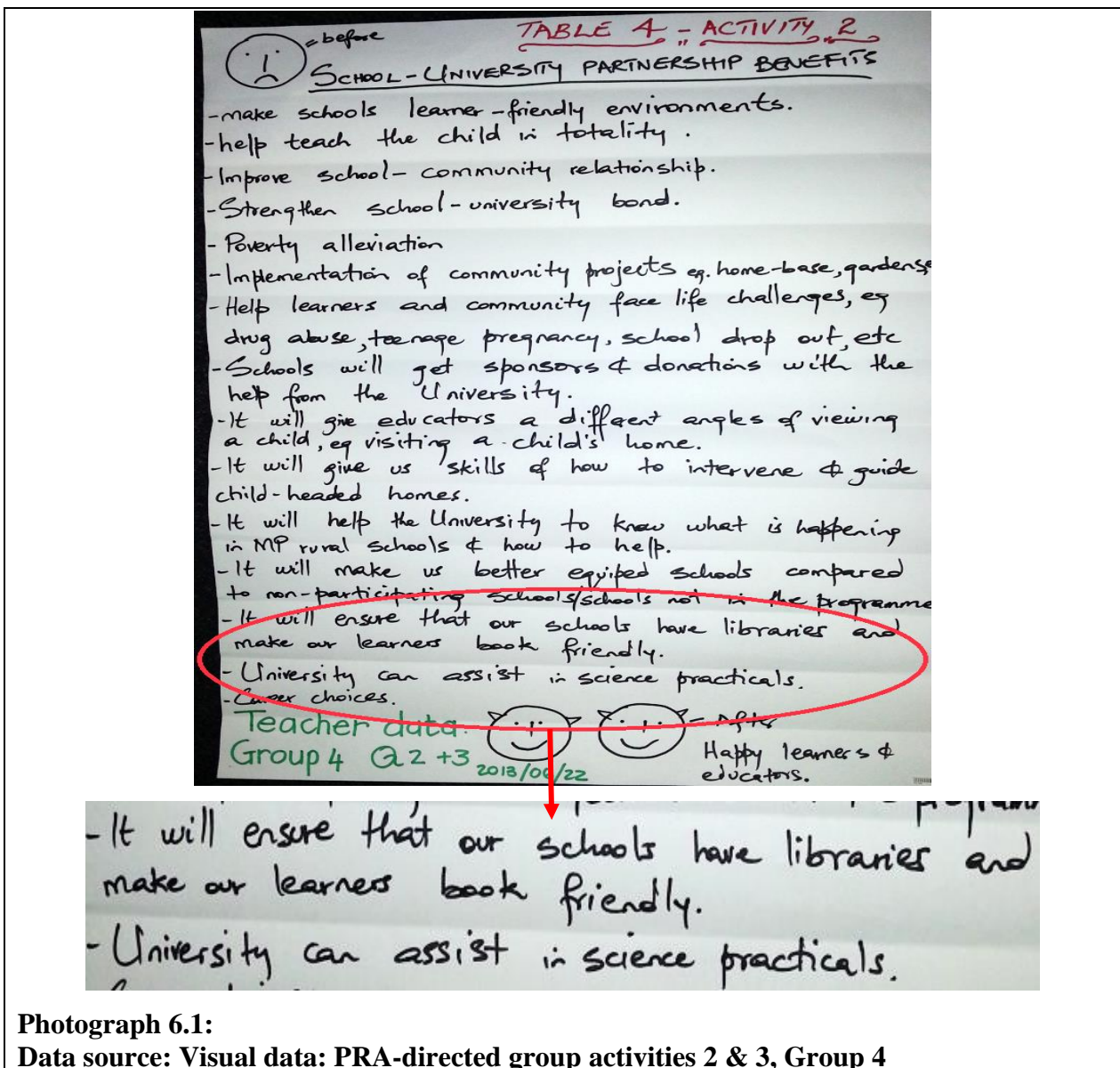
Photograph 6.1:
Data source: Visual data: PRA-directed group activities 2 & 3, Group 4

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Instruction resource provision as a benefit of the association between rural school and HEI

Uhm ... the next one: It will ensure that our schools have libraries and make our learner[s] book friendly. Eh ... this group has highlighted this point: That they were assisted by the university by providing them with books, so that their learners will be able to read and understand what is actually taking place globally. So this is what we-we-we believe. We believe in that in our partnership ... eh ... will make sure that our schools benefit. We believe that the university will also donate books to-to the participating schools. Uhm ... last but one: The university can assist in science practicals. Yeah ... 't's [it is] the last one. OK. Last but one. The university can assist in science practicals. Since we are aware that rural- rural schools, they don't have apparatus to conduct their-their practicals. So it is difficult to teach ... eh ... a practical, theoretical. So partnership also benefit schools, because we believe that ... eh ... the university will conduct some of the difficult science practicals in our schools. It might happen that ... eh ... educators, some of the educators, they are unable, even if the apparatus are [is] there, they are unable to carry out scie... some science practicals. So we believe that the university will also assist in that.

Data source: Transcription of PRA-directed group activities 2 & 3, Group 4, p. 5-6, Lines 117-141

Participant:	*So that is our - our main priority, as well as library books.*
	... Especially reading books. Reading has been identified as the biggest area, in teaching especially black children. They don't like - they don't have books in their homes, you see. Our parents here, they don't value books like that much, instead of buying this - some parents will prefer to buy beer than a book.
	... So I believe, library books, computers, we need those desperately.

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P15, p. 22, Lines 1-23

Teachers communicated their need for computers to further the technology skills of both students and school community members as a way to uplift the whole school community. Teachers mentioned that they were striving to establish a computer centre where they would be able to train both students and school community members in computer skills.

Participant:	*So we believe that partnering with such institutions ... ehh ... you do have computers, as one of the subjects; it might happen at some day when you have to put new stock, maybe [maybe one day when you need to buy new stock] ... we might be able to ... I might be lucky*

enough to get [the] old ones, so that our learners are all accommodated in [with] computers.

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P15, p. 10, Lines 16-20

Participant: *Ja, no, it's ... maybe just additional [indistinct] is that ... ehh ... we are, our area is very remote. We are far from things and ... ehh ... we want to make sure, many people here are [pauses] ... the unemployment rate is very high. When people get employment, they decide to go and settle at their places of employment. So we want to better the lives of people we have here and we believe that the first step is to give them computer technology and ... ehh ... at the moment we need maybe about 20 computers.*

... If maybe you ... because you might find that there are people who want to donate.

... Only to find that ... ehh ... we don't have that information. We are [far] from things ... ehh ... you asked for donations on our behalf that we fill this centre, because it will not only uplift the learners in the school, but the whole community, because we want ... we've already had a meeting with the parents ... ehh ... they showed a lot of interest in the project. They are even willing to pay the ... anyone who would be teaching them the ... these computer skills.

... So for now, this is our most ... our biggest priority, because sometimes we use learners. Some parents, they ... they decide to maybe spend all their money to transport their learners to better schools, so we want to better this one.

... To make sure that they save money, and they see that ... ehh ... whatever happens outside, we can do better; but we cannot do that if you don't have equipment, if you don't have material, so some people, they believe in seeing things first. Oh, they do have this now, maybe they can do this there, you see.

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P15, p. 20, Lines 23-33 and p. 21, Lines 1-26

6.2.1.2 Subcategory 3.1.1.2: Positive expectation of formal teacher capacity development through the acquisition of teacher knowledge and craft skills

Formal development of teacher capacity refers to instances of organised sessions and/or workshops between teachers and researchers with the aim of sharing knowledge and skills. Acquisition of teacher knowledge involves knowledge formally gained with regard to

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pedagogical content and subject knowledge, curriculum, pedagogy and educational foundations and knowledge of diverse learners and their associated cultures. Teacher craft skills that are formally gained comprise instruction planning and organising, use of instruction material and technology, collaborating with colleagues, parents, the community and social services agencies (McDiarmid & Clevenger-Bright, 2008). The following photograph captures teachers' expectation to acquire knowledge and craft skills that could improve rural education:
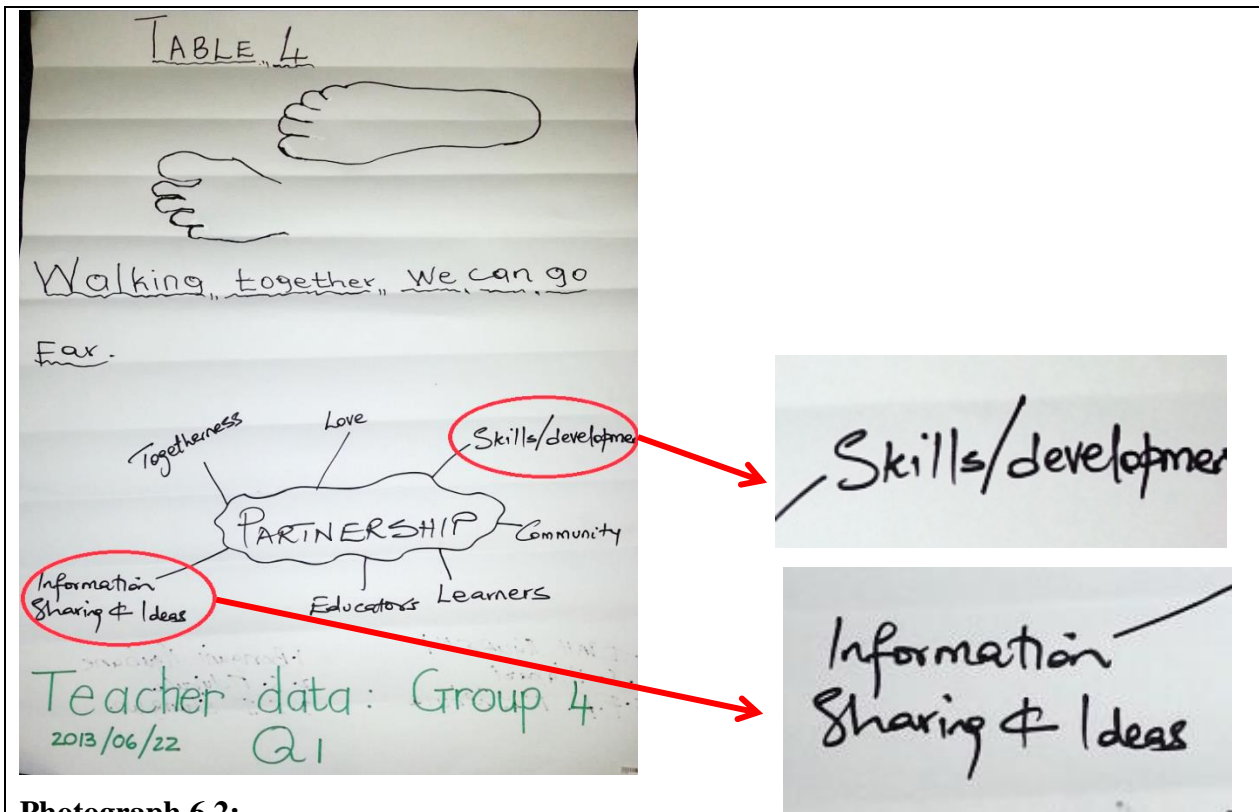
Photograph 6.2:
Data source: Visual data: PRA-directed group activity 1, Group 4

Teacher knowledge acquisition and teacher craft skills development as a benefit of the HEI association that facilitates teacher resilience

- *Because in partnership – have love – develop skills to teach learners and educators and community*
- *Get info sharing and ideas*

Data source: Field notes of PRA-directed group activity 1, Group 4, p. 1

Data for this subcategory emerged from all data sources (PRA-directed group activities, face-to-face semi-structured interviews, field notes and researcher diary) relevant to Case B. Table 6.4 reflects a summary of the inclusion and exclusion criteria for Subcategory 3.1.1.2. Teachers expressed knowledge acquisition and information-sharing with regard to mobilising resources within the school community, on career guidance and education as well as teacher craft skills as relating to improving teachers' instruction practices.

Table 6.4: **Inclusion and exclusion criteria for Subcategory 3.1.1.2: Positive expectation for formal teacher capacity development through the acquisition of teacher knowledge and craft skills**

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
• Gaining and sharing of teacher knowledge and craft skills include instances where members of the association express the expectation both to share and gain teacher knowledge and teaching craft skills as a result of their future association with a HEI.	• This subcategory excludes instances of demonstrated acquisition of teacher knowledge and craft skills as a result of association with a HEI. • This subcategory excludes data that relate to the acquisition of teacher knowledge, craft skills and disposition as a result of teachers' own initiatives.

A positive expectation is shared by teachers in rural schools that both the school and the school community would benefit from a HEI association through the sharing of information about how to mobilize resources: *And … eh … the partnership that the university have, you know, it benefit schools in terms of … eh … providing the information [about] solutions on how to, how [the] school can best mobilize resources.* (Data source: Transcription of PRA-directed group activities 2 & 3, Group 3, p. 4, Lines 28-31) and *What stood out from the interviews is that the partnership provides the opportunity for gaining additional knowledge.* (Data source: Researcher diary, 2014-09-02, p. 40). The following photograph shows teachers' expectation to gain teacher knowledge and craft skills when participating in the association with a HEI:
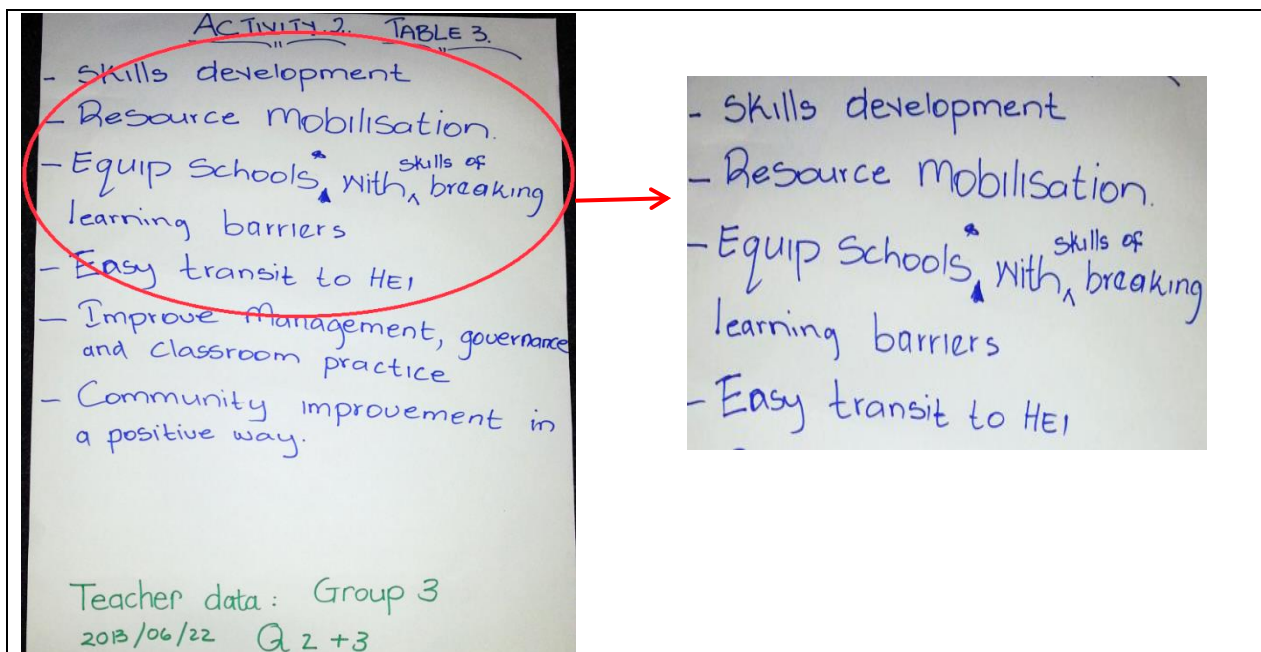
Photograph 6.3:
Data source: Visual data: PRA-directed group activities 2 & 3, Group 3

Illustration of teachers' expectation to benefit in terms of teacher knowledge acquisition and craft skills
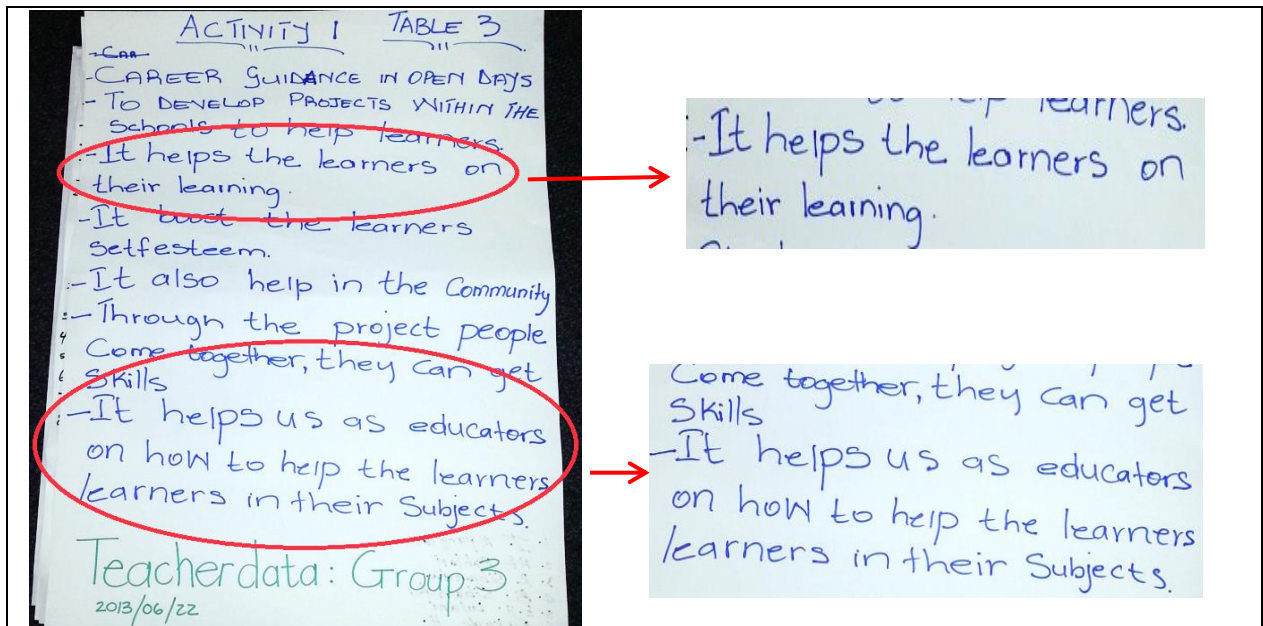
Photograph 6.4:
Data source: Visual data: PRA-directed group activity 1, Group 3
Capturing teachers' expectation to gain teacher craft skills

Sharing of information by means of formal gatherings such as workshops is reported as an expected benefit of a possible association with a HEI:

Participant:	*I think when they can share the information with ... uh ... our educators*
Data source: Transcription of SSI, P17, p. 10, Line 28-29	
Participant:	*Like ... as you do, like coming to us, doing that ... uh ... workshops [indistinct], we do gain knowledge ...*
	... when you come to us and visit us, you gain knowledge. Something that we don't know, sometimes you gave us knowledge with it. [pause]
	... [pause] I'm thinking about the ... the workshops.
Data source: Transcription of SSI, P14, p. 7, Lines 9-25	
Participant:	*The partnership will help or assist us to teach the child in totality. Because teaching in class ... uh [pause] … Maybe [slight pause] it will ... it well help m-me in such a way that I will be able to-to-to ... to help my learners with what I'll get from the University of Pretoria. Maybe [slight pause] ... I will know some of the things that I don't know actually, that can help me in such a way that I will be able to help my learners.*
Data source: Transcription of SSI, P8, p. 10, Lines 8-14	

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Teachers reported on their expectation that knowledge with regard to career guidance will be imparted: *The university will also assist learners to choose their careers. So that they are streamed according to their choices of career.* (Data source: Transcription of PRA-directed group activities 2 & 3, Group 4, p. 6, Lines 141-143).
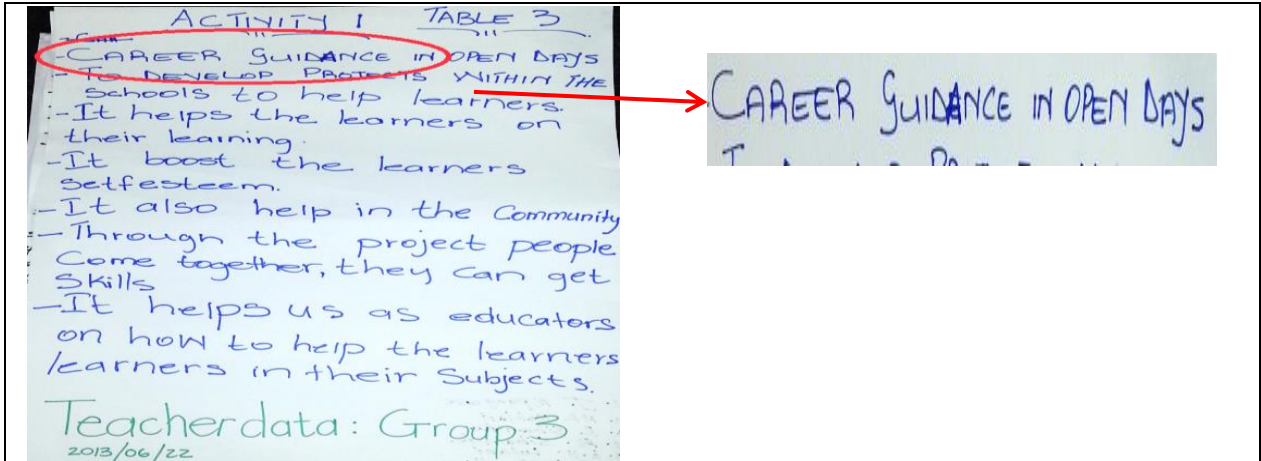
Photograph 6.5:
Data source: Visual data: PRA-directed group activity 1, Group 3
Teachers indicating knowledge with regard to career guidance as an expected benefit of association with a HEI

- help us with Grade 8 & 9 – get vocational work
  ↳takes a long time

Data source: Field notes of Member checking with P8, p. 14

Teachers also foster the hope that the association with a HEI would encourage and equip students with the necessary information on furthering their studies after school, as reflected in the following extracts:

But we believe that the partnership with the university, it will open eyes to those learners so that they understand before they complete matric ... (clears throat) ... they, they will be advised as to what they [are] supposed to do. They must apply for bursaries, apply to the tertiary institution, so that when they complete, they go to further their studies.

Data source: Transcriptions of PRA-directed group activities 2 & 3, Group 4, p. 5, Lines 93- 97

And we also indicated that ... uh ... this collaboration benefit schools in terms of ... eh ... assisting those learners who-who ... eh ... aspire to ... eh ... attend to higher institutions of learning, you know, by providing ... uhm ... an easy transit path ... eh ... to the institutions of higher learning.

Data source: Transcription of PRA-directed group activities 2 & 3, Group 3, p. 5, Lines 73-78

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Participant:	*Ja, another thing I think it's career guidance for these learners ...*
	... Because sometimes they become confused until they reach matric without deciding which career is suitable for them. So if they can be motivated at this age, I think it will assist them a lot.

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P17, p. 11, Lines 5-13

Participant:	*Knowledge actually, ja. More knowledge in order to come with it to my learners actually, and also for those who are going to Grade 10, 11, 12, they will be able maybe to get access, to know [?], how can they qualify to go to universities and everything.*

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P8, p. 10, Lines 18-22

Rural teachers convey a mutual purpose as regards knowledge-sharing as members of the HEI would gain perspective on rural life. This information could be used to teach future students about teaching in a rural school and community, where support is needed:

... the university is from urban areas. They don't know what is happening in rural areas. So, we are going to supply them with information. So that we are in the same par as to what is taking place there.

Data source: Transcription of PRA-directed group activity 1, Group 4, p. 2, Lines 16-20

There is a lot of information that you can share, you know, as schools, with the university's teachers; in particular with the university. So that we are able to ... uhm ... deal with the problems and that relate to the ... uhm ... barriers to ... uhm ... on learning particular ....

Data source: Transcription of PRA-directed group activities 2 & 3, Group 3, p. 5, Lines 69-72

It will give us skills of how to intervene [in] and guide child-headed homes. We believe that as we have already started the partnership with the university ... eh ... they are going to help and assist the schools as to "how can we assist the child-headed homes?" Maybe they are going to provide, provide ... eh ... food parcels so that we assist them. So this is what we think. They are going to assist us in order to sort out this problem of child-headed homes. It will help the university to know what is happening in Mpumalanga rural schools and how to help.

Data source: Transcription of PRA-directed group activities 2 & 3, Group 4, p. 5, Lines 101-111

Knowledge acquisition with regard to background of students may take place through possible association with a HEI, as reflected in the following vignettes:

> *It will give educators ... eh ... different angles of viewing a child. Uhm (clears throat). In a case where there, there are some problems at home. When the school visit the child's home, they understand how do they live. They understand their problems in their homes, and ... eh ... try to solve them.*
>
> **Data source: Transcription of PRA-directed group activities 2 & 3, Group 4, p. 4-5, Lines 85-92**
>
> *... is not enough. But we must understand that learners are facing some challenges in the community. Some of them, they are, they are heading the family. They are heading the family, so they make sure that they provide the family with food and other stuff. So when engaging ourselves with this partnership we believe that the learners will benefit a lot.*
>
> **Data source: Transcription of PRA-directed group activities 2 & 3, Group 4, p. 3, Lines 35-43**

In the following excerpt a teacher participant shares his expectations of a possible association with a HEI. He conveys the hope to gain current information on teaching methods that would not only empower teachers, but also improve rural education. He further conveys the value of having an association with a HEI in that an association could result in imparting knowledge and information to teachers with regard to current teaching methods:

> Participant: *Ja, so we are hoping that the partnership we have will develop our learners, develop the teachers, and develop the community as well. But we are human. We know that development takes time, so it will move gradually, gradually. So that is what we are hoping. It will make us better teachers as well, if there are new measures that have been discovered, we'll be the first people to try, and test them .... ehh ... so we are hoping that we'll be able to get fresh information.*
>
> **Data source: Transcription of SSI, P15, p. 13, Lines 10-16**
>
> Participant: *... - if everything goes well, it will make me a better teacher, because I believe that ... ehh ... in order to be better, you can bring knowledge [in] rather than moving out of that place, to go to better people. So I believe that working with the university, who ... would make me some kind of a champion, you see, so being a champion, it means you are master of most things. So I believe that the level - because the Pretoria University is one of the universities I rate very high, so I-I believe that my school, myself, will - there will be changes.*
> *... I believe that our partnership would at some stage reach a level where we'll be able to be connected through internet, something like*

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that. Whatever if there's something small, that we need to share with the school, it would be just through ... ehh ... this network, and you know you won't have to come here, and they would be able ... if we have problems, because sometimes we do have problems in classes.

... How to deal with learner behaviour and this function, and this function, perhaps we've got departments that cater for such behaviours so it would be easy to contact with the university, through ... because we've got Skype. We've got all those things now, to find out, get professional opinion, how can you help with this child, you see. If maybe you need to ... I need to bring a social worker, you know, maybe to challenge whatever you'd be saying, she'll be able to come to school; we share the information and ... ehh ... I believe that our problems will be solved professionally and ... ehh ... I believe that ... ehh ... in our days, as well even now, things are changing a minute. Minutes after minutes, they are changing, things that were working yesterday are no longer working today. So as we are in rural areas, sometimes we are the last people to feel the change, so if we are partnering with such institutions, I think it would be easy for us to jump the line.

... And whenever you feel there's a ... this is something new that should be taking place in schools, the department is still looking at it ... ehh ... you maybe will find out that one of your professors is part of the departmental team that is working on the project, and you will be able to get first-hand information that this is coming, this ... this will be done like this. Here's a manual, here's a piece, look at this, you see. Because I believe, besides the material things the partnership should give us, [it] should develop us mentally, should develop a relationship that we have with our children, the way we deal with our subject matter, you see. So I believe that ... ehh ... partnering with you guys, we – [it] will make us jump the queue ... ehh ... jump the ... overlook our rural background and ... ehh ... be actual champions, because I believe that in the long run people around this area don't have to pay a lot of money to take their children to better schools, you see. They are taking them to [indistinct] to go and do maths; that will [indistinct] but ... ehh ... it's just a mindset that they believe that because we are rural here.

Participant:	*So they will get better education that side, so if we have such partnership, we might find that at the long run they will realise that ... ehh ... we are actually better here than taking their children out. So I believe that partnering with you guys will make us, me more especially, a champion of my work.*

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P15, p. 18, Line 14-33 and p. 19, Lines 1-33 and p. 20, Lines 1-17

Teachers, during PRA-directed group discussions, voiced that the association with a HEI would serve an evaluative purpose, to help teachers identify weaknesses in programmes and that could facilitate the improvement of rural education:

So those are some of the areas that we ... uh ... have identified. But in addition we would like to indicate ... eh ... that the-the school is also, through collaboration with the university, the school can also do to what we call self-discovery. Because the university is a ... eh ... though we would collaborate to become one at ... a ... it is it is an association that can best evaluate, you know, and identify weaknesses through ... eh ... particular programmes in the particular schools. So then the schools can discover, you know, its weaknesses and be able to sharpen itself so that it performs better.

Data source: Transcription of PRA-directed group activities 2 & 3, Group 3, p. 7, Lines 128-139

Teacher participants concluded that the association with a HEI would provide skills development for teachers in rural schools and the school community: *We've concluded that the partnership provides ... eh ... skills development ... eh ... to the ... eh ... schools and the teachers at large.* (Data source: Transcription of PRA-directed group activities 2 & 3, Group 3, p. 3, Lines 7-9) and *... we are going to get skill and development, we are going to develop skills to go and teach the learners and the educators who can also benefit from this and our community. We are also going to get from this partnership ... eh ... the information-sharing and some ideas ...* Data source: Transcription of PRA-directed group activity 1, Group 4, p. 1, Lines 12-18.

Teachers' expectations to gain formal teacher craft skills to develop teacher capacity are reflected in the following extracts:

... as a result they obtain skills, or share skills, rather. And we are also indicating that is ... it helps educators on how to assist learners to ... when during their study. So that is what we have indicated for now in terms of information we know about the existing partnership between the university and the rural schools ...

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Data source: Transcriptions of PRA-directed group activity 1, Group 3, p. 1-2, Lines 22-28

So if we collaborate with the university there is a number of skills that ... uh ... that ... uh ... the school is to gonna benefit to unlock the ... you ... the problems that ... uh ... that the community is having that in terms of ... eh ... psychology problems and ... eh ... social problems ...

Data source: Transcription of PRA-directed group activities 2 & 3, Group 3, p. 3, Lines 16-21

Participant:	*As a teacher, okay, I think we need some workshops, yes.*
	... Ehh ... workshop on ... ehh ... what is this? The - I can take - let's say some coming - workshop on ... [intervenes].
Researcher:	*Teaching methods?*
Participant:	*Methods of teaching.*
	... Hmm, well the methods of teaching and preparation lesson ... lesson preparation.

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P9, p. 7, Lines 16-33 and p. 8, Lines 1-4

Participant:	*Uhmm ... To be a teacher and having [a] partnership with-with uhm ... to be in partnership with you, we think we .. you-you can equip us with some skills.*
	... Ja, with some skills. What we-we ... we have maybe can be ... uh uh ... uhm ... what we ha.. ...the knowledge, the little knowledge that we have, plus the knowledge that you are going to give us, can make our community, even the school to ... even ourselves to-to-to ... to grow. So that the knowledge that we impart to the children must not be educational only, but it must also help, even if the child is not at school.
	... [coughs] The-the area itself ... uh ... can get ... get some skills through the-the-the ... the children and the teachers that are here, because they can impart the knowledge to the ... to-to their parents at home, so that they also become part of the partnership, because, yes, so that we owned it, all of us. It becomes our thing.

Data source: Transcription of SSI, P18, p. 7, Lines 6-32

Teacher participants reported on their expectations to gain teacher craft skills relating to school management, administrative procedures and classroom practices as benefits of a possible association with a HEI:

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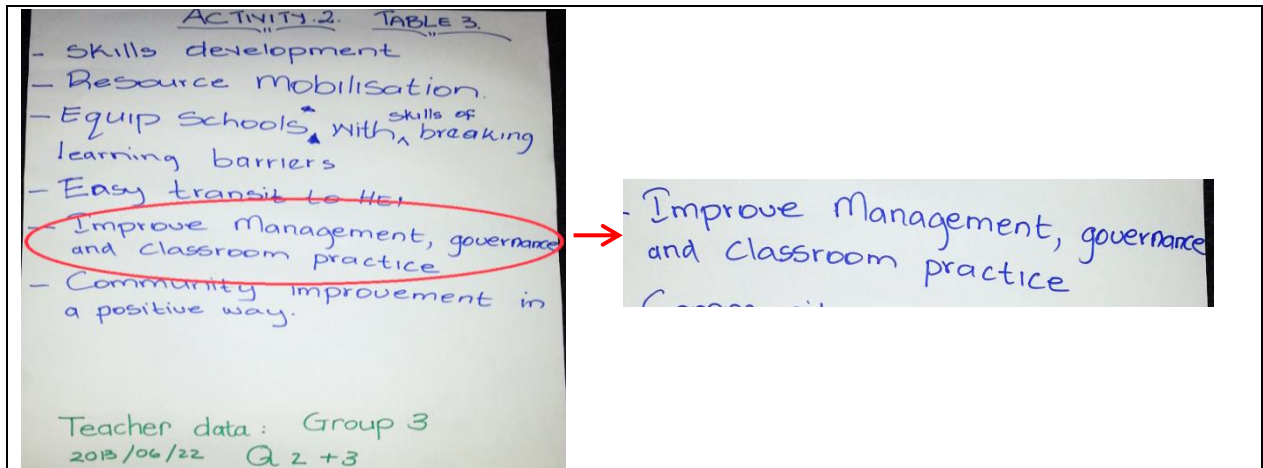
Photograph 6.6:
Data source: Visual data: PRA-directed group activities 2 & 3, Group 3
Improvement of administrative and management procedures and classroom practices

Uh ... we have also looked at the broader school operations; we indicated that ... uh ... the partnership ... uh ... with university assist in terms of ... uh ... improvement on management, governance and classroom practices. You know, because we believe that ... eh ... the practices, you know, at the management level has got some deficiencies. You know, a school cannot perform, cannot produce the required results if there are deficiencies in terms of government. These practices might also hinder the performances, you know, of the school given that ... that deficiencies of ... eh ... what the teachers are doing ... eh ... in the classroom you know. Ehh ... some, maybe teachers are doing something that is not trend; something that is not current; something that is not informed of what is currently prevailing, you know, what is in the system. Then it would also have a negative impact. So collaborating with the university can benefit us in terms of ... uh ... ehm ... be current in terms of having current information on how best we can deal with the issues of ... eh ... effective management, governance and classroom practice by educators.

Data source: Transcription of PRA-directed group activities 2 & 3, Group 3, p. 6, Lines 91-112

Teacher participants conveyed their expectation to gain knowledge and skills with regard to teaching methods:

Participant: *Being partnering with you, maybe we can get ... there's some new methods of teaching, because I believe that such institutions are engaging in [indistinct] or that you know what's new, what ... how to do things, so if we maybe could come up with something, we will be able to benefit from that.*

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6.2.2 Category 3.1.2: Positive expectation of student and teacher motivation

In this category, teachers express a positive expectation of students' and teachers' motivation as a benefit of a possible association with a HEI. Teacher participants recounted their positive expectation of the motivation of students and teachers during PRA-directed group activities and a face-to-face semi-structured interview. Table 6.5 reflects a summary of the inclusion and exclusion criteria for Category 3.1.2. Teachers expressed the positive expectation of student motivation with regard to fostering a positive outlook in general and with regard to education as well as an improvement in students' self-esteem. The positive expectations of teacher motivation aspects such as teachers being motivated to initiate projects to alleviate poverty are discussed.

Table 6.5: Inclusion and exclusion criteria for Category 3.1.2: Positive expectations of student and teacher motivation

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
• Instances where the association between rural schools and a higher education association is perceived as motivating, or expected to motivate, both learners and students. • Motivation involves aspects such as being orientated positively towards education (learning and teaching); being motivated to be better and to achieve success. • This category also includes instances where teachers feel they will be encouraged and students' self-esteem boosted as a result of the association between rural schools and a higher education institution.	• This category excludes instances of teachers and students being motivated as a result of association with a HEI. • This category excludes data that relate to teachers and students being motivated as a result of teacher intervention.

Teacher participants conveyed that they would be motivated to initiate community projects with the aim to alleviate poverty in their school communities:
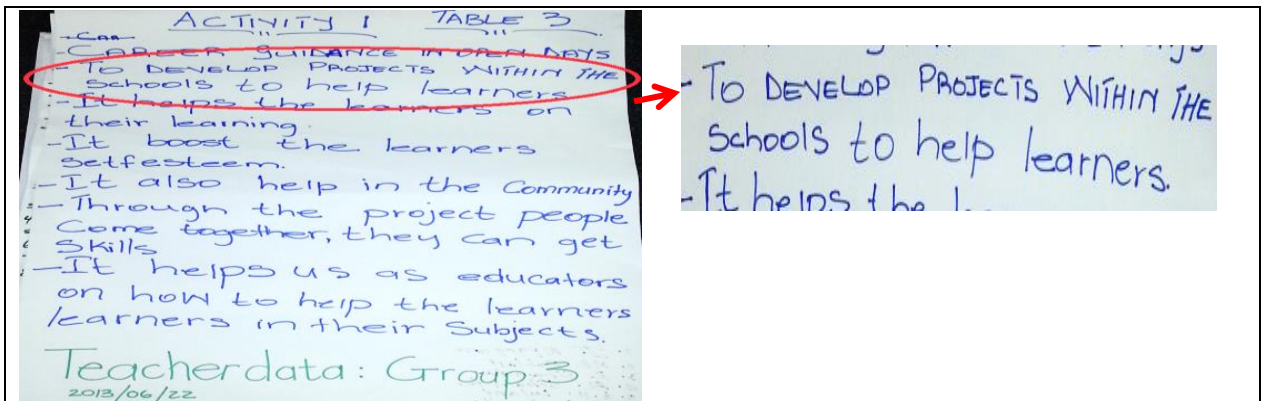
Photograph 6.7:
Data source: Visual data: PRA-directed group activity 1, Group 3

Teachers motivated to initiate projects to alleviate poverty in the school communities

We also believe that … eh … poverty will also be alleviated. Because if we engage in such programmes we-we-we-we start … eh … doing some projects in-in the school that, where the community will benefit. Like gardens. If we start planting gardens, we invite the schools to engage themselves … eh … to be part of the school community where gardens will be plant, planted, and … eh … and … eh … supply the community and maybe learners with … eh … vegetables so they benefit and the poverty will be av… alleviated. Uhm… I've combined the two, the implementation of community project, I've combined them.

Data source: Transcription of PRA-directed group activity 2 & 3, Group 4, p. 3-4, Lines 56-68

A change in school community members' mindset results in a positive outlook that will positively influence the school community members, teachers and students:
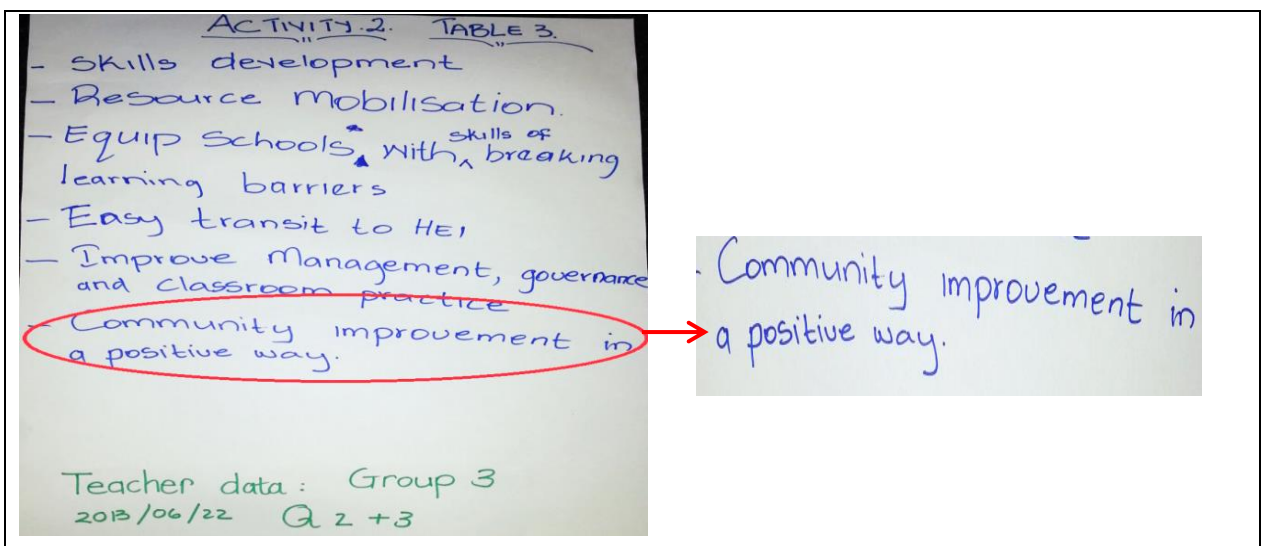
Photograph 6.8:
Data source: Visual data: PRA-directed group activities 2 & 3, Group 3

An expectation that the school community will be influenced positively by a HEI association

Then we ... eh ... also mentioned that the university ... if the university collaborates with the ... eh eh ... schools in ... eh ... we have indicated that schools are an extension of the ... eh ... community their, within the community, and that ... eh eh ... learners and its governing body members, that ... eh ... teachers are all members of the community. So if there is that collaboration, then ... eh ... the-the-the university is able to influence, you know, the community in a positive way. There's a lot of change in terms of the mindset of members of the community regarding ... eh ... the what the community wants and what the community aspire[s] to achieve, you know, in that particular area.

Data source: Transcription of PRA-directed group activities 2 & 3, Group 3, p. 5-6, Lines 115-128

So if the university is reaching out, you know, to the rural communities, then the gap is breached and, you know, the transit is very easy; you know, it is that learners will go to university and then begin to obtaining informat… knowledge, actually, then will come and then-then contribute positively in their communities.

Data source: Transcription of PRA-directed group activities 2 & 3, Group 3, p. 5-6, Lines 86-91

Teachers predict that an association with a HEI will motivate students, as they will view education more positively and as an important aspect of their lives:

Learners will be able to go to school with a smile. They'll like school.
Data source: Transcription of PRA-directed group activities 2 & 3, Group 4, p. 3, Lines 33-34

… and also motivate learners so that they see that education is very important in their lives.
Data source: Transcription of SSI, P17, p. 10, Lines 29-30

During the discussion of PRA-directed group activity 1, teacher participants shared their expectations that students' self-esteem would be boosted by their schools' participation in a HEI association, as illustrated in the following photograph:
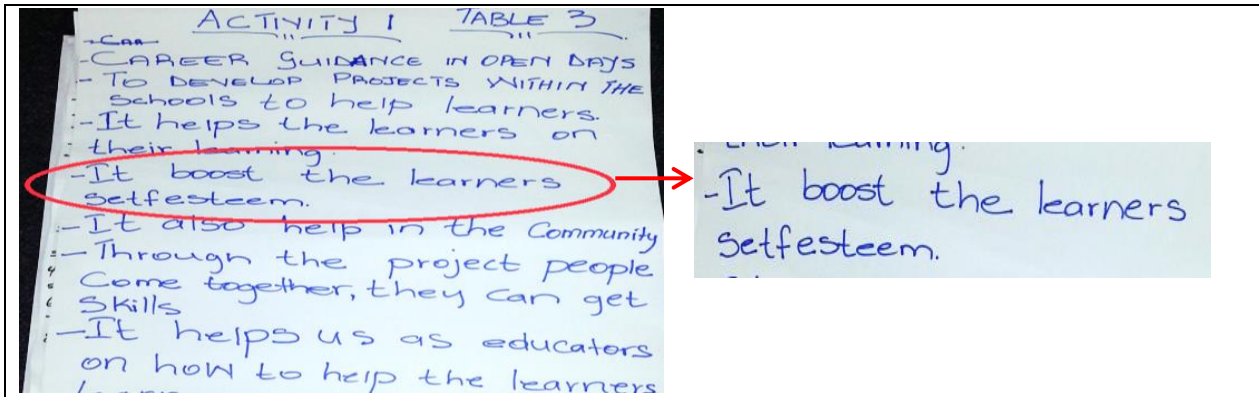
Photograph 6.9:
Data source: Visual data: PRA-directed group activity 1, Group 3
Students' self-esteem is expected to be enhanced by association with a HEI

6.2.3 Category 3.1.3: Status enhancement as a positive expectation of association with a higher education institution

This category includes aspects of the social identity theory, which maintains that social identification involves the perception of one-ness with a group of people and the distinctiveness and prestige of being a member of the group (Ashforth & Meal, 1989). Status enhancement as a positive expectation of association with a HEI was reported by teachers during PRA-directed group activities and captured in my researcher diary. Table 6.6 shows the inclusion and exclusion criteria of Category 3.1.3. Teachers elaborated on how a possible association with a HEI could enhance their schools' status and suggested a strategy to highlight their membership of such an association.

Table 6.6: **Inclusion and exclusion criteria for Category 3.1.3: Status enhancement as a positive expectation of association with a higher education institution**

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
• This category includes instances where the schools' status is improved as a result of the association with a higher education association. • This category includes instances where the teachers of the rural schools want to show their association with the higher education institution by, for example, wearing the T-shirts of the higher education institution. • This category includes instances where the association with a HEI is perceived to enhance the school's status and act as a factor that distinguishes the school from other schools in the same area.	• This category excludes instances of the improvement of schools' status not attributed to the rural schools' association with a HEI.

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Teacher participation in an association between rural schools and a HEI is expected to better equip rural schools, which would enhance the schools' competitiveness with urban schools:

> *... want to see rural school[s] at [an] equal level with ... ehm ... schools in urban areas and it is ... eh ... it is a difficult task to achieve.*
>
> **Data source: Transcription of PRA-directed group activities 2 & 3, Group 3, p. 4, Lines 31-34**
>
> *It will make us better equipped schools compared to non-participating schools or schools not in the programme. Schools that are here will be better equipped than those that are not participating in this programme, in this programme.*
>
> **Data source: Transcription of PRA-directed group activities 2 & 3, Group 4, p. 5, Lines 112-117**

A suggestion was made by teacher participants that wearing T-shirts with the university's logo would be a means to highlight membership of an association with the HEI, as is reflected in the following quotations:

> *Er ...number eight, this one I think is important [he paused for few seconds] ... supply us with T-shirts [loud laughter] bearing the name of the project and the university['s] logo. I think T-shirts are a [the] simplest way of marketing [he touched his own T-shirt]. You see, even when it comes to elections ... you see, with the use of T-shirts, we can go far. People would like to associate themselves with the university; they would like to have a T-shirt. And if they see you wearing a T-shirt, they would like to know more. What about this T-shirt? What is it about? How did you get it? All those things. Then they will be able to get the information about what is happening.*
>
> **Data source: Transcription of PRA-directed group activity 5, Group 4, p. 12, Lines 40-52**
>
> *The teachers were of the opinion that we should use a colour of the university as a way to be associated with the university.*
>
> **Data source: Researcher diary, 2014-05-28, p. 36**

6.3 Subtheme 3.2: Teacher concerns about a potential association with a higher education institution

In this subtheme instances of concerns shared by teachers emerged from the data relating to a possible association with a HEI. Teacher concerns involve, *Lack of delivery on expectations of stakeholders; A lack of teacher support, commitment and cooperation when implementing intervention projects; The proximity of the higher education institution to the school*

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community; and *Lack of finances and infrastructure to sustain the association with a higher education institution*. Table 6.7 gives a summary of the inclusion and exclusion criteria for Subtheme 3.2: Teacher concerns about a potential association with a HEI.

Table 6.7: Inclusion and criteria for Subtheme 3.2: Teacher concerns about a potential association with a higher education institution

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
• This subtheme includes instances of concern expressed by teachers with regard to the establishment of future association with a higher education institution.	• This subtheme excludes demonstrated constraints as a result of association with a HEI.

6.3.1 Category 3.2.1: Lack of delivery on expectations of stakeholders as a teacher concern

Lack of delivery on expectations of stakeholders is expressed by teachers as a possible barrier to the successful implementation of an association between rural schools and a HEI. Data for this category mainly emerged from PRA-directed group activities and my researcher diary as data sources. Table 6.8 reflects a summary of the inclusion and exclusion criteria of Category 3.2.1. Teachers expressed their concern regarding insufficient clarification of a possible association with a HEI, as there might be high expectations by all stakeholders and a consequent lack of delivery on these expectations.

Table 6.8: Inclusion and exclusion criteria for Category 3.2.1: Lack of delivery on expectations of stakeholders as a teacher concern

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
• This category includes high expectations of all stakeholders (teachers, researchers and the school community members) to benefit from the association between rural schools and a higher education association when participating in initiated projects. • This includes instances where stakeholders do not participate in association activities due to a lack of delivery on their expectations.	• This category excludes stakeholders who have high expectations and their lack of delivery thereon based on their association with a HEI.

A lack of clarity on the scope of possible benefits of association with a HEI is captured in the following extracts from verbatim transcriptions and my researcher diary, illustrating that high expectations by all stakeholders could hamper the process of establishing a successful association between rural schools and a HEI:

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There is one this one thing that I thought of and [it] is tied to the barriers. I[t] [i]s the lack of clarity on the scope of work by the university. If benefits are not clarified, you know, people will expect that the Messiah has come [giggle]. The university has landed, every problem is gonna be solve[d]. So is very important that ... er, er ... benefits are clarified so that ... er, er ... the schools will understand the limitations in terms of benefits. So that will be a barrier because it raises a level of expectation, as other colleagues have indicated, and only to find that not everything is given to the school.

Data source: Transcription of PRA-directed group activity 4, Group 3, p. 11, Lines 109-120

Teacher participants voiced their concern regarding a lack of delivery on expectations as a possible barrier to the success of association with a HEI. The following photograph and vignettes illustrate teachers' concern about high expectations by all stakeholders involved in the HEI association:

Photograph 6.10:
Data source: Visual data: PRA-directed group activity 4, Group 3

Lack of delivery on expectations as a possible barrier

The lack of delivery on expectations is the biggest barrier to the partnership. Is on both sides actually, because I think the university has expectations on [of] us. That as we are starting the programme, we are starting together. The programme is actually based in [at] our sites, where we are stationed. The university is high up there, as indicated, the distance is a challenge. They are 300 km [pointing up] away and we are here [pointing down]. And as we are here, is us [it is we] who need to ensure that things happen. And should they not happen, they are expecting them to happen, and we are also expecting something from them in the meantime. And you find that, in that space, maybe nothing happens. I am making an example, because things will be happening. So the lack of delivery on expectations is a challenge.

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Data source: Transcription of PRA-directed group activity 4, Group 3, p. 8-9, Lines 26-41

Er ... too much expectation! It might happen that we are expecting too much from the university. Maybe we are expecting them to build libraries only to find that they only offer books, something like that.

Data source: Transcription of PRA-directed group activity 4, Group 4, p. 8, Lines 28-31

... a lack of commitment. I think colleagues have reiterated on this one. Commitment is er ... actually because ... er ... I will couple this with high expectations because at a particular point they link together. So I think ... er ... from what we have tabled, I think is that ... er ... we have expectations because we want to benefit from the partnership. Now as we have ... er [he paused] ... as we have these expectations ... as we expect a lot from the university, as indicated, high expectations. There is a third one there, which indicates that there will be a lack of delivery on expectations ... is-is a barrier to this partnership.

Data source: Transcription of PRA-directed group activity 4, Group 3, p. 8, Lines 11-23

After activity 4 of the PRA-directed group activities, we discussed what the participants can expect from the university and clarification of both the participants and researchers' role in the current phase of the research. The need to clarify this became clear form the participants' presentations that their expectations were not aligned with the purpose of the study. The morale of the group dropped significantly as they are disappointed about the prospects of the partnership.

Data source: Researcher diary, 2013-06-22, p. 4

6.3.2 Category 3.2.2: Teacher concerns regarding lack of stakeholders' support, commitment and cooperation when intervention projects are implemented

This category reflects instances of teachers' concerns regarding a lack of support, commitment and cooperation by stakeholders when intervention projects are implemented. Instances of this category, *Teacher concerns regarding lack of stakeholders' support, commitment and cooperation when intervention projects are implemented*, emerged from the PRA-directed group activities that were used as data sources. Table 6.9 shows the inclusion and exclusion criteria for this category. Teachers expressed a lack of commitment in terms of cooperation, support and communication by their colleagues as a possible barrier to the implementation of a HEI association. What is related to a lack of teacher commitment is that not all teachers from the rural schools are approached to engage in the activities that would accrue from the association work.

Table 6.9: **Inclusion and exclusion criteria for Category 3.2.2: Teacher concerns regarding lack of teacher support, commitment and cooperation when intervention projects are implemented**

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
• Lack of teacher support, cooperation and commitment includes instances where teachers' colleagues do not support and/ or participate and/or assume their responsibilities with regard to the intervention projects.	• This category excludes instances of lack of teacher support, cooperation and commitment not related to intervention projects initiated as a result of the association with a HEI.

Commitment by all stakeholders is communicated by teacher participants as an important aspect when intervention projects are implemented. Teachers perceive a lack of commitment in terms of support and cooperation by stakeholders as an impediment to the successful implementation of intervention projects:
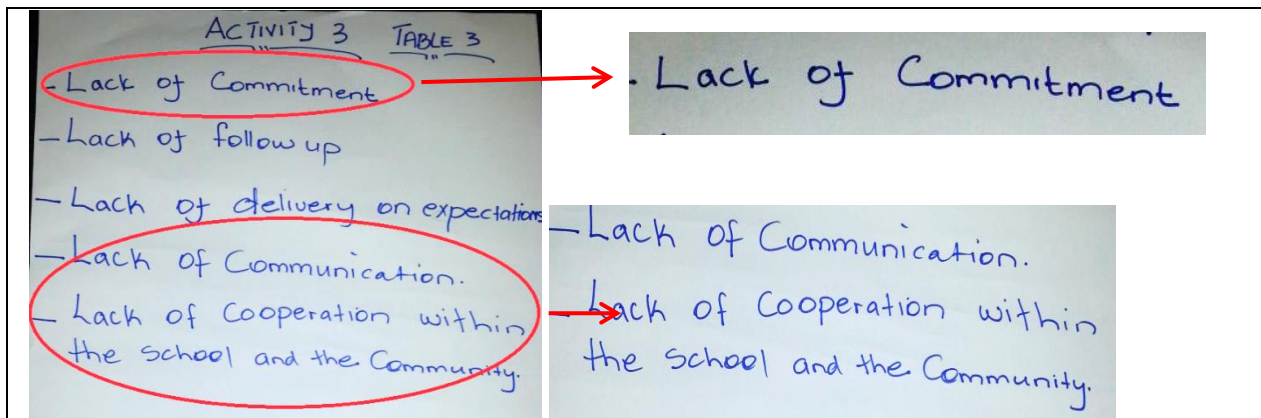
Photograph 6.11:
Data source: Visual data: PRA-directed group activity 4, Group 3

Lack of commitment, communication and cooperation as barrier to teacher resilience
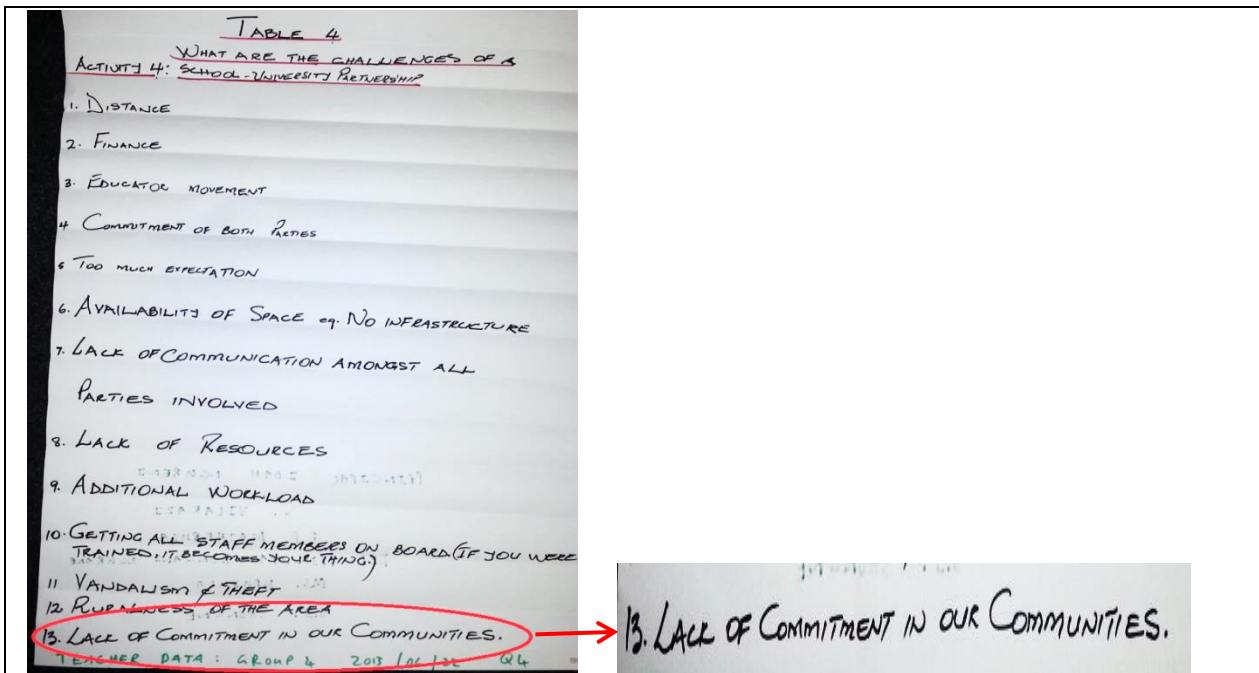
Photograph 6.12:
Data source: Visual data: PRA-directed group activity 4, Group 4

Lack of commitment is illustrated as posing a barrier to association with a HEI that could as a result hamper teacher resilience

Er ... I have already talked about the lack of commitment. Commitment actually, it speak[s] to-to-to partners. If one partner is more committed and the other is not committed; is a challenge. So commitment must be on both sides. There must be a balance of forces here [he used hands to demonstrate balance]. There must not be more on one side and less on one side. So I hope that is well-captured.

Data source: Transcription of PRA-directed group activity 4, Group 3, p. 8-9, Lines 42-50

And number thirteen is a lack of commitment in our communities. Our communities, they mentioned the other group that ... er [holding his head, trying to remember the point mentioned before] ... people expect to gain immediately. If there is nothing after a month ... ooh! Nothing! [loud voice] ... we do not get anything! So they are not committed.

Data source: Transcription of PRA-directed group activity 4, Group 4, p. 9, Lines 78-84

Teacher participants linked a lack communication with a lack of cooperation and consultation within the school community. Teachers expressed that they are aware of communication difficulties in their schools and that this could pose a possible barrier to the implementation of intervention projects as a result of a HEI association.

> *And also we have spoken about the lack of communication [he paused for a moment and smiled] which is coupled with the lack of cooperation within the school community. There is a challenge with communication in our schools and we are aware of that.*
>
> **Data source: Transcription of PRA-directed group activity 4, Group 3, p. 10, Lines 62-70**
>
> *I think one other one is lack of consultation, which goes with communication, because we need to consult. It is not our thing that we are here, we are partnering with the university; it needs to sink to [sync with] everybody, all stakeholders, that as a school, we are starting a partnership with the university. And we indicate a number of factors that will be involved in the partnership, so that everybody is taken up on.*
>
> **Data source: Transcription of PRA-directed group activity 4, Group 3, p. 11, Lines 91-99**

Lastly, the concern was conveyed by teacher participants that if only a select few teachers from each rural school are approached for participation in a possible association with a HEI it might negatively influence the sustainability of initiated projects. Teacher participants suggest that all teachers from the rural schools should be involved in the association activities as this would foster commitment by all stakeholders:
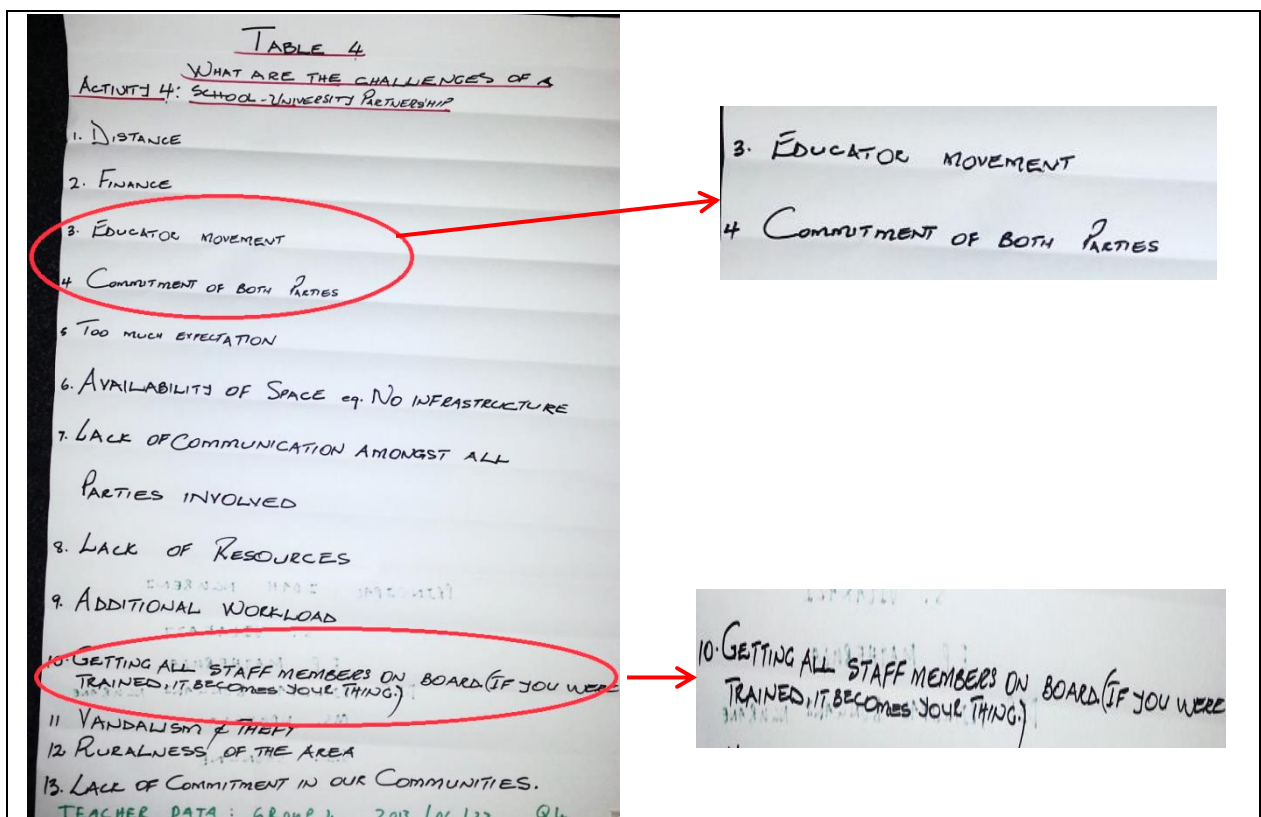
Photograph 6.13:
Data source: Visual data: PRA-directed group activity 4, Group 3

Teachers suggesting the involvement of all teachers from rural schools to improve commitment by all stakeholders

> *The third one is educator movement. By educator movement I mean that the educators that are involved now, that are here [pointing fingers at the teachers], that are being "workshopped", if they happen to leave a school, then the project dies, because the other educators will not be able to know what is going on; they would not be able to take the project forward. So the educator movement is another thing. Er … number four is commitment, commitment of both parties. By parties I mean the university and the schools. If we are not committed, it will not work.*
>
> **Data source: Transcription of PRA-directed group activity 4, Group 4, p. 171, Lines 16-27**

6.3.3   Category 3.2.3: Teacher concerns regarding proximity of the higher education institution to the school community

Category 3.2.3 refers to teacher concerns regarding the proximity of the HEI to the school community. Instances of this category, *Teacher concerns regarding proximity of the higher education institution to the school community*, emerged primarily from PRA-directed group activities as data sources. Table 6.10 shows the inclusion and exclusion criteria of Category 3.2.3. In this section, teachers report on the distance between the HEI and the school community as a possible barrier.

Table 6.10: Inclusion and exclusion criteria for Category 3.2.3: Teacher concerns regarding proximity of the higher education institution to the school community

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
• Proximity of the higher education institution in relation to the school community as a constraint entails instances where the distance between the HEI and the rural schools is seen as a possible constraint.	• This category excludes data that relates to demonstrated evidence that the proximity of the HEI is a constraint to the success of association with a HEI.

Teacher participants argue that the distance between the rural schools and the HEI might pose a possible barrier to the successful implementation of the association with a HEI as face to face meetings are needed to sustain such an association:

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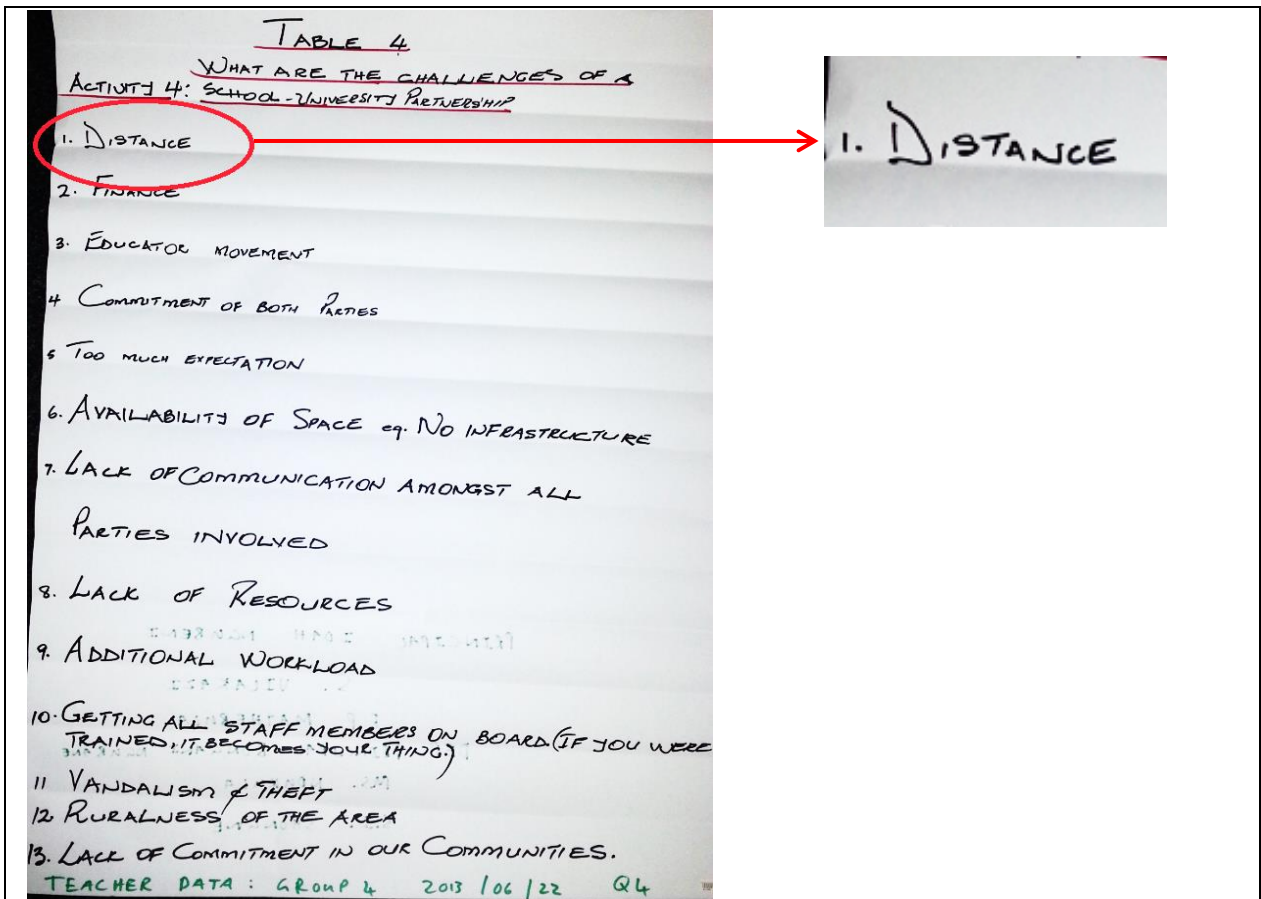
Photograph 6.14:
Data source: Visual data: PRA-directed group activity 4, Group 4

Proximity of the HEI to the rural schools are expected to be a barrier

Er ... the distance, between ... er ... the schools in the province involved in the programme and the university is a barrier. University is too far. Sometimes we need to see each other face-to-face [illustrated by using fingers] to make sure that things happen. [Speaking softly] And it would not happen because the university is too far.

Data source: Transcription of PRA-directed group activity 4, Group 4, p. 7, Lines 5-11

Because physically there is ... eh ... huge distance between schools in the rural area, more in particular of where we are and the universities. You know there is no university that is less than 300 km from where we are. Most universities are beyond ... which have been given ... the history that Mpumalanga does not have the [a] university.

Data source: Transcription of PRA-directed group activities 2 & 3, Group 3, p. 5-6, Lines 78-85

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6.3.4   Category 3.2.4: Lack of finances and infrastructure to sustain the association with a higher education institution as a teacher concern

This category refers to teacher concerns regarding the lack of finances and infrastructure to sustain a possible association with a HEI. Data for this category emerged from discussions on PRA-directed group activities with one group of teacher participants (Group 4). Table 6.11 includes the inclusion and exclusion criteria for Category 3.2.4: Lack of finances and infrastructure to sustain the association with a higher education institution as a teacher concern. A concern is expressed by teachers with regard to sustaining a HEI association as they report that a lack of finances and resources, such as buildings and instruction materials, might hamper the process of implementing the association.

Table 6.11   Inclusion and exclusion criteria for Category 3.2.4: Lack of finances and infrastructure to sustain the association with a higher education institution as a teacher concern

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
• Instances where teachers perceive that a lack of finances and infrastructure to support the association will be detrimental to the success of future association with a HEI. • This category includes instances where resources for instruction purposes (such as library books) might be donated by stakeholders of the association and the school does not have the necessary infrastructure to use the donations.	• This category excludes instances where the lack of finances and infrastructure is an impediment to rural education in general and not to the success of an association with a HEI.

Teacher participants voiced their concerns regarding a lack of finances and infrastructure to host educational resources such as library books and science equipment as a possible impediment to a HEI association:

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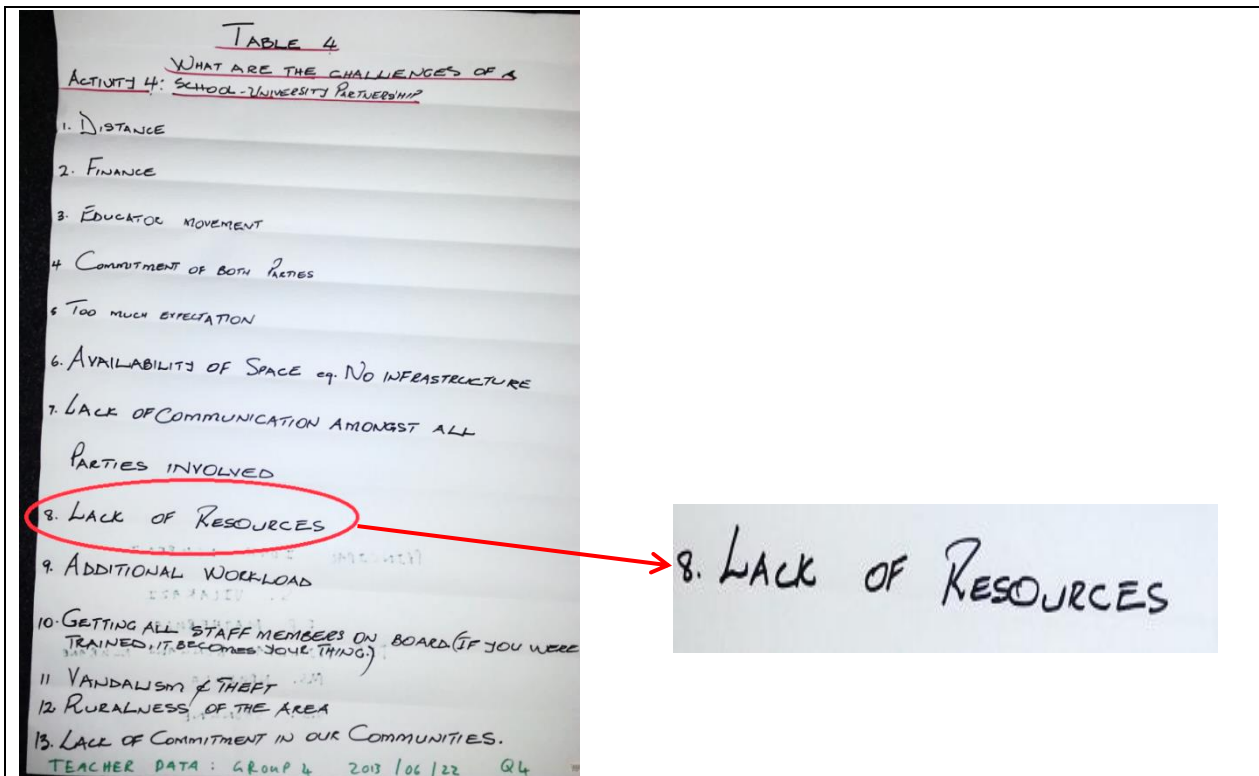
Photograph 6.15:
Data source: Visual data: PRA-directed group activity 4, Group 4

Teachers stated that a lack of resources may hamper the HEI association

Secondly is finance. Er … about finances, is that … er … everything involves money. Sometimes people with money are reluctant to give, to pay, to do that. So we need to get a lot of money for the project.

Data source: Transcription of PRA-directed group activity 4, Group 4, p. 7, Lines 11-15

Number six is the availability of space; no infrastructure. Sometimes you might find that the university want[s] to give you books for a library or apparatus for the laboratory only to find that you need to build a laboratory or a library and you do not have a space, [and] that becomes a barrier because you would not be able … you cannot put books on the floor.

Data source: Transcription of PRA-directed group activity 4, Group 4, p. 8, Lines 32-39

… is lack of resources. Er … this one … er … is the same as [looking for the other point on the white board] the other one I have just mentioned. You might find that the university wants to give you books and you do not have a library. They want to give apparatus and you do not have a laboratory; something like that.

Data source: Transcription of PRA-directed group activity 4, Group 4, p. 8, Lines 46-52

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To summarise, as evident from the in-case analysis of case B, teachers expressed both positive expectations and concerns about a possible association with a HEI. Expectations to benefit from a possible HEI association included the expectation that such an association will formally develop teacher capacity, motivate both students and teachers and enhance the school's status. Teacher concerns about a potentional association with a HEI included lack of delivery on expectations of stakeholders, lack of teacher support, commitment and cooperation when intervention projects are implemented, proximity of the HEI to the school community and lastly lack of finances and infrastructure to sustain the association with a HEI.

6.4 Introduction to literature control of Theme 3

In this chapter, as in chapters 4 and 5, I focus on similarities, contradictions, silences and possible new insights that emerged from the data on teacher resilience expressed by rural teachers without a HEI association (Case B). In this theme, rural teachers elaborated on *positive expectations* to benefit from the association (Subtheme 3.1) as well as specific *teacher concerns* (Subtheme 3.2) that they foresee when a HEI association with their schools is implemented. The findings in this study indicated that teachers fostered positive expectations in relation to formal teacher capacity development, student and teacher motivation and the enhancement of their schools' status. With regard to teacher concerns about a potential association with a HEI, teachers elaborated on a lack of delivery on the expectations of stakeholders, a lack of teacher support, commitment and cooperation when intervention projects are implemented, the proximity of the HEI to the school community and, lastly, a lack of finances to sustain a possible association with a HEI. I will compare teachers' positive expectations and concerns, as highlighted in this chapter, with existing literature on associations with HEIs. It should, however, be noted that few studies, globally and locally, have been conducted from the perspective of rural teachers with a possible future association with a HEI and therefore this study as such contributes to the existing knowledge base. However, I acknowledge that I cannot exclude the influence of other associations that these teachers might have as a factor contributing to these findings. Further research is necessary to explore this possibility.

6.4.1 Confirmations, contradictions, silences and contributions relating to positive expectations and concerns of rural teachers with a potential association with a HEI

One function of associations with HEI's is the mutual benefits it holds for all stakeholders (Butcher et al., 2009; Calabrese, 2006) as reflected in the finding of positive expectations to

benefit from a potential association with a HEI. As discussed in Chapter 5, relating to formal teacher capacity development as a benefit of a HEI association, teachers from rural schools without a HEI association expressed a *positive expectation of the formal development of teacher capacity* (Category 3.1.1) with regard to knowledge acquisition and teacher craft skills (Berry, Daughtrey & Wieder, 2009; Bryan, 2005; Bryan & Henry, 2008; Bryan & Henry, 2012; Lieberman, 1986; Oseland, Catchlove & Miller, 2012; Sandholtz, 2002; Schneider & Kipp, 2015; Wollebaek & Selle, 2002). This finding correlates well with the functions of associations with HEI's that highligths the importance of learning activities that result in updating teacher knowledge and skill (Wilson et al., 2007).

Student and teacher motivation (Category 3.1.2) were expressed by teachers in rural schools without a HEI association as positive expectations of future association with a HEI. In Chapter 4 I elaborated on this specific aspect as I indicated that literature from the USA (Brunetti, 2006; Castro, Kelly & Shih, 2010) and the UK (Gu & Day, 2013) supports teacher motivation being encouraged by in-school support such as is provided by the association with a HEI. Teacher motivation, as it relates to Theme 3 in Category 3.1.2, is therefore confirmed in literature. However, the current study is from a different perspective, namely that of rural teachers with a possible future association with a HEI. As in Chapter 5, I indicated that literature on student motivation in relation to i) teacher resilience and ii) an association with a HEI, is limited. I found this to be true for this subtheme as well. Literature on associations (Weisinger & Salipante, 2005) does, however, indicate that students' educational goals have been shown to improve as a result of associations.

Rural teachers in schools without an association with a HEI (Case B) indicated that they had concerns regarding the *lack of delivery on the expectations* (Category 3.2.1) that members of a possible association with a HEI might have. Global and local literature confirm that expectations in an association should be reasonable (Parry et. al., 2011) and communicated clearly (Ebersöhn, Loots, Eloff & Ferreira, 2015; Thomas, Smith-Tolken, Naidoo & Bringle, 2011; Wang & Zhang, 2014) to contribute to a mutual understanding of the scope of the association between rural schools and a HEI. Strier (2011), an Israeli researcher, also confirmed this finding and indicated that the process of association-building is affected by variables such as a lack of symmetry between members, different perceptions, goals and perspectives of association and related role conflicts (Bartholomew & Sandholtz, 2009). This finding contributes to existing knowledge in terms of rural teachers who have the hope of establishing an association with a HEI expressing a lack of delivery on expectations of stakeholders as a concern and possible barrier to the successful implementation of an

association. In this regard I assume that a lack of delivery on expectations of teachers might hamper the development of teacher resilience.

Teacher concerns regarding *a lack of teacher support, commitment and cooperation* (Category 3.2.2) when intervention projects are implemented are reported by teachers in this study who are in schools without an association with a HEI. International researchers elaborated on a lack of staff involvement as an impediment to teacher resilience (Barley & Beesley, 2007; Kirk & Wall, 2010). In this instance, I assume that a lack of cooperation and commitment when intervention projects are implemented could also hamper the development of teacher resilience as well as hinder the potential success of such association with a HEI. Development of teacher commitment and teacher resilience is supported by knowledge on social support in the workplace. In this respect a Korean researcher, Jo (2014) highlighted the positive correlation between teachers' relationships with individuals both inside and outside of schools with teacher commitment. Thus, support (in the form of cooperation and commitment) by teacher peers is valuable and can contribute to the success of intervention projects and also contribute to adaptive behaviours (teacher resilience) (Akdere & Egan, 2005; Jo, 2014; Kirschner, Dickinson & Blosser, 1996; Tait, 2008; Taylor, 2013).

SA studies (Balfour, Mitchell & Moletsane, 2008; Ebersöhn & Ferreira, 2012; Nkambule, Balfour, Pillay & Moletsane, 2011), Australian studies (Burton, Brown & Johnson, 2010; Burton & Johnson, 2010; Johnson, Down, Le Cornu, Peters, Sullivan, Pearce & Hunter, 2014; Price, Mansfield & McConney, 2012), a study from the USA (Barley, 2009) and a study in Norway (Caspersen & Raaen, 2014) elaborate on rural life as isolated. I relate the isolation (distance from HEIs) of rural schools with teachers' concern in this study (Case B) about the *proximity of the HEI to the school community* (Category 3.2.3) being a possible barrier to the success of a potential association.

Lastly, *a lack of finances and infrastructure to sustain association with a HEI* (Category 3.2.4) is expressed by teachers in this study (Case B) as a concern. In my opinion a lack of financing and infrastructure to sustain interventions in rural schools is a serious concern globally and locally. In South Africa, for instance, the government mandated that HEIs should be more responsive to the socioeconomic issues of the country (Fourie, 2003), yet no material means and/or funding has been provided by the government (Castle & Osman, 2003; The Department of Education, 2004) to achieve these goals. The White Paper (Thomson, Smith-Tolken, Naidoo & Bringle, 2011) further supports the provision of expertise and infrastructure to community service programmes in the South African context, but no means to achieve this was provided. In global association literature of HEI associations the importance of resourcing associations efficiently is evident (Akdere & Egan, 2005; Butcher & Egan, 2008; Dhillon,

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2009; McIntyre, 2006). A study done from an Australian perspective by Kearney (2015) also supports the finding that funding and/or the provision of resources to sustain an association, as well as a lack of support structures to sustain the engagement, hampers the successful implementation of associations. I agree with global researcher Feiman-Nemser (2001) that a single institution (such as a HEI and/or the Department of Education and/or the government) alone cannot provide the expertise, authority and financial resources to create the much needed structures and processes to sustain, for instance, HEI associations with rural schools. In this regard all the stakeholders, schools, HEIs, the government of the country, private and non-profit organisations all have important roles to play. De Beer (2014), a SA researcher, concurs and states that collaborations between local communities, the third sector (community-based, faith-based and non-profit organisations, local citizens and citizen groups) and HEIs could provide viable and sustainable infrastructure.

Teachers in this study who did not have an association with a HEI indicated that they expected their *school to gain status* through the association with a HEI (Category 3.1.1). Literature in this regard was found to be limited and this finding could be seen as a new insight into existing knowledge.

Teachers in this study fostered the *hope and aspiration* as well *positive expectation* to benefit from a future association with a HEI. A person with high levels of hope tends to accept challenges and focus on success rather than failure. A person with hope remains focussed on the possibility of attaining personal goals and maintains a positive emotional stance (Snyder, 2002). Thus, characteristics of hope may then play an important role in overcoming adverse circumstances (Kim, Lee, Yu, Lee & Puig, 2005:144). In resilience literature hope and aspiration is mentioned as a significant contributing factor to positive affect in adaptation (Coetzee, Ebersöhn, Ferreira & Moen, 2015; Mansfield, Beltman, Price & McConney, 2012; Sumsion, 2010; Tait, 2008). Hence, I posit that the hope and aspiration for future association with a HEI enhances already present teacher resilience.

6.5   Conclusion

Although the teachers in schools without an association with a HEI expressed positive expectations and concerns of an association with a HEI, I argue that the findings are new and contribute to new insight in existing knowledge as no studies have been conducted from this perspective (positive expectations and expected concerns by teachers in rural schools without a HEI). I found in this study that teachers in rural schools that hope to establish association with a HEI reported on both *positive expectations* (including formal teacher development in terms of knowledge acquisition and teacher craft skills, student and teacher motivation, school status

enhancement) and *concerns* (lack of delivery on high expectations fostered by all stakeholders, resulting in a lack of support and commitment and a lack of financial resources to sustain a HEI association) about the successful implementation of such an association. As I found few studies that were conducted from the perspective of rural teachers hoping to establish an association with the investigating HEI, I postulate that this study contributes to existing knowledge on the development of teacher resilience in rural contexts as it relates to involvement with a HEI. I therefore concluded that even the very hope and expectation to gain from such an association potentially strengthen teacher resilience. However, further research in this regard is necessary.

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7.1   Introduction

In the preceding chapters, I discussed the findings of this study against the backdrop of existing literature on teacher resilience, associations and HEI associations. In this chapter, I present the conclusions in terms of the research questions. I revisit my conceptual framework and discuss insights into teacher resilience as they relate to rural teachers in resource-constrained settings. I furthermore reflect on limitations of the study and its possible contribution to the knowledge base of teacher resilience and HEI associations. Finally, I propose recommendations for future training, practice and future education-related research.

7.2   Conclusions in terms of research questions

I now use the findings of this study to answer the secondary research questions (sections 7.2.1 to 7.2.3). I address the primary research question in section 7.3. Answering the research questions provides insight into important pathways to teacher resilience and how teachers in rural schools achieve resilience. These insights should be viewed taking into account the limitations in this study (see section 1.8.5 in chapter 1 and section 7.5 of this chapter). In this regard the findings of this study relate to expressions of teacher resilience by teachers from four rural schools with constrained resources. I now further elaborate on each answer of the secondary questions. My discussion commences with the first secondary research question, which answers the question about how experiences of protective resources and risk factors of teachers in rural schools compare in the presence or absence of a HEI association. I next highlight the protective resources and risk factor expressions of teachers in rural schools with a HEI association (Secondary question 2) and how a HEI association promotes, or not, teacher resilience in terms of the protective resources and risk factors (Secondary question 3). Finally, I will answer secondary research question 4, which relates to teacher resilience expressions in terms of protective resources and risk factors of rural teachers without a HEI association.

7.2.1 Secondary question 1

How do experiences of protective resources and risk factors of teachers in rural schools compare in the presence or absence of a HEI association?

Teachers participating in this study reported protective resources and risk factors when teaching in a rural context irrespective of a HEI association. Teachers showed adaptive behaviour by knowing about available protective resources when confronted with adverse rurality circumstances (such a as lack of a lack of service delivery, the detrimental socioeconomic circumstances of students and their families, students engaging in health risk behaviours, a lack of physical resources for instruction purposes as well as limited opportunities for the professional development of teachers). Like others (Ebersöhn, 2012; Coetzee et. al., 2015) I found that teacher expressions of protective resources and risk factors in and out of the rural school context are interdependent. Interdependence refers to the interaction of protective resources with risk factors to achieve a state of wellbeing and reduce a potentially negative outcome (Ungar, 2004).

Thus, I found (section 4.3.1), like others (Ungar, 2004; Ebersöhn, 2012; Coetzee et. al., 2015), that teacher resilience in rural schools occurs in a landscape of protective resources (see the right-hand side of Figure 7.1) and risk factors (see the left-hand side of Figure 7.1).
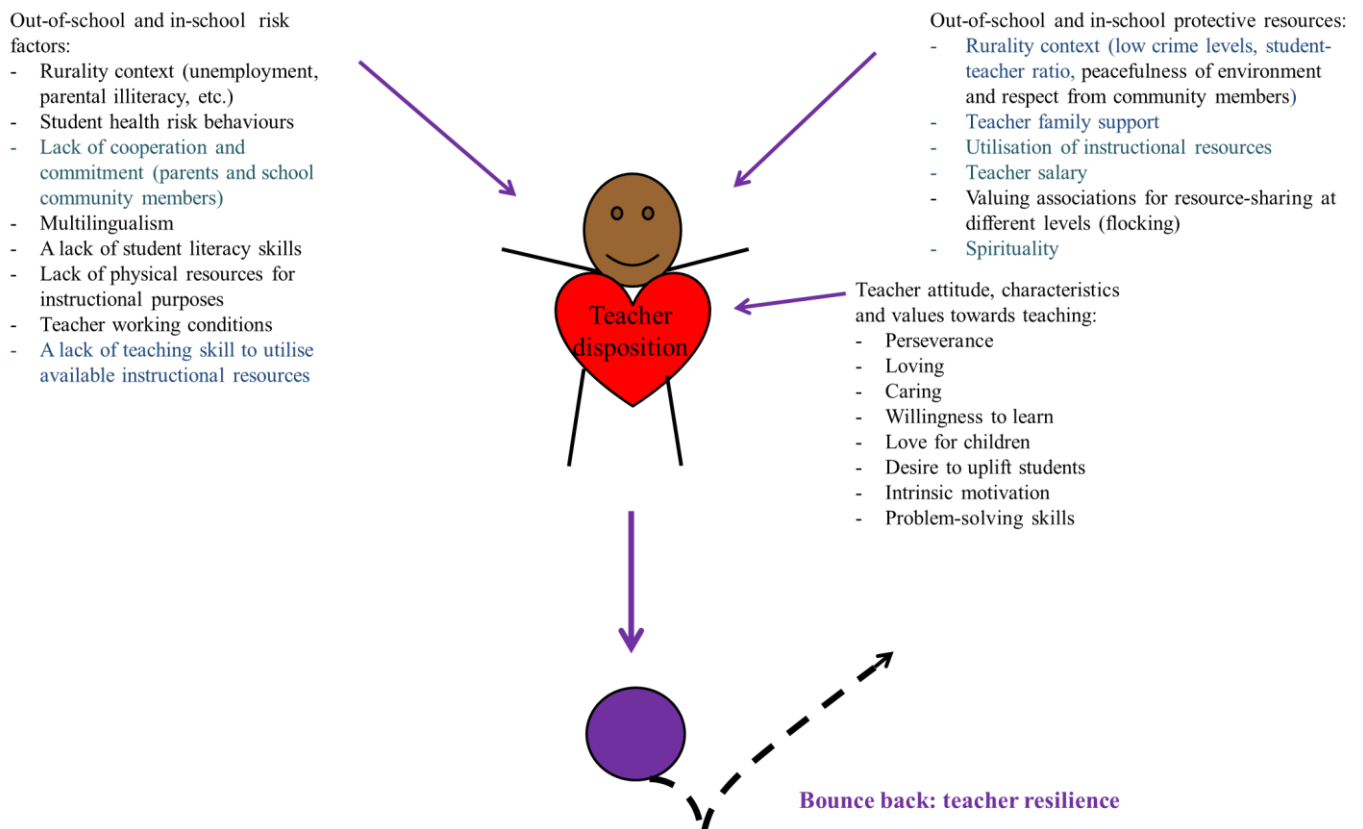
Figure 7.1:   Teacher resilience expressions in terms of protective resources and risk factors irrespective of an association with a HEI

However, when compared with international studies (see sections 4.3.1.1.3 and 4.3.1.2.3) I found several contradictions (see indications in blue in Figure 7.1) when comparing the expressions of teacher resilience by rural teachers in this study as they relate to protective resources and risk factors, namely a lack of physical resources, teacher salary, low student-teacher ratio, teacher family support, spirituality and informal teacher capacity development. I conclude that teacher resilience (in terms of protective resources and risk factors) in rural schools in this study is present, irrespective of an association with a HEI and that teachers use various internal and external resources (other than HEI associations) to adapt to adverse rural circumstances. My original conceptualisation of teacher resilience (Chapter 1, section 1.5.2) was expanded by this understanding. I realised the importance of the context and its interdependence with the protective resources and risk factors that were identified by rural teachers. In my original conceptual framework I did not take into account the dynamic and reciprocal interaction between the different systems (micro-, meso-, exo- and macro-systems) of teachers. I further elaborate on this aspect in section 7.3. I will now elaborate on contradictions evident in this study, which relate to this particular secondary research question.

In Chapter 4, section 4.3.2, I mentioned contradictions with other studies regarding protective resources and teacher resilience in rural schools. The first contradiction relates to a lack of physical resources in rural schools, illustrated in both South African and global literature (Burton, Brown & Johnson, 2013; Burton & Johnson, 2013; Daniels & Strauss, 2010; Ingersoll, 2001; Koekemoer & Mostert, 2010; Rohleder, Swartz, Carolissen, Bozalek & Leibowitz, 2008; Sharplin, 2002; Tuerk, 2005), while the finding in the current study is that teachers identify the availability of physical resources for instruction purposes as a protective resource that they can draw on. Some teachers who participated in this study have been involved in a longstanding partnership with the HEI. As part of the HEI intervention teachers have been trained by members of the HEI to apply an asset-based approach and identify and mobilise the resources that are available within their school setting. Teachers involved in the HEI association valued resource-sharing with teachers from other schools and as such I infer that teachers shared their training during informal conversations with each other. This training as well as individual teachers' positive disposition might have contributed to teachers' acknowledging that physical resources are available within their schools.

With reference to the contradiction, the low student-teacher ratio found in these rural SA schools as opposed to the high student-teacher ratio portrayed in literature, I posit that in the district in which the schools participating in this study is located there are various schools in close proximity to one another, and this contributes to a lower student-teacher ratio in these rural schools.

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Teacher family support was found in this study to hamper teacher commitment and teacher resilience as opposed to teacher family support illustrated in literature as a protective resource. The teacher in this study who indicated that his family did not support his teaching career is a young male teacher. It is possible that his family wanted him to pursue a different career, which contributes to this lack of support from the members of his family. Teaching is a resource-intense career, especially with regard to time. This teacher mentioned that he spent a great deal of extra time at school on extra classes. His family might show negative affect towards his career choice as they believe that the effort it requires to teach does not match the financial compensation. In addition, his commitment to his profession and the management of his time seem to take valuable family time.

Teachers in this study indicated the salary as a factor contributing to teacher resilience and their continued teaching in rural schools. In rural communities, such as in this study, teachers are compensated by the government. Due to educational reform in South Africa with a view to addressing inequalities in the education system it might be argued that teachers' salaries have greatly improved in recent years. Teachers in this study reported that they themselves mostly come from similar rural communities. In comparison with other employment opportunities available in these communities, teaching may be viewed as a highly regarded career.

Teachers in this study indicated that they themselves grew up in rural communities and that staying and teaching in such a community is their way of giving back to rural communities, which is opposite to their international counterparts, who indicate that they are giving back to rural communities due to their privileged background.

Spirituality was identified as a protective resource in this study, although most teachers who participated in this study remained silent on this aspect. I cannot assume that spirituality or religion is not important to these teachers, but I believe that the teachers participating in this study might not have felt comfortable discussing their spirituality and that they did not consider it appropriate to reflect on such a deeply personal matter. It is also possible that teachers did not reflect holistically on factors that influence their teaching commitment and the related teacher resilience. Further research in this regard is required.

Rural teachers in this study identified informal teacher capacity development as an important means to develop their skills and knowledge. This is in contrast with the views of international teachers, who would rather engage in formal development activities presented by relevant institutions (refer to Chapter 4, section 4.3.2, for further elaboration). As teachers in rural schools find it challenging to attend formal teacher training activities, due to distance and

time constraints, it seems that they engage in conversations with peer teachers informally to develop teacher capacity with a view to supplementing their formal professional development.

7.2.2 Secondary questions 2 and 3

What are the protective resources and risk factor expressions of teachers in rural schools who participated in a HEI association; and How do HEI associations promote/not teacher resilience in terms of protective resources and risk factors in rural schools?

Secondary research questions 2 and 3 are supported by the findings of this study, which emerged in Theme 2: Expressions of protective resources and risk factors when a rural school has an association with a HEI (which was argued for in chapter 5). The results of Theme 2 consist of: i) teachers expressing teacher resilience in terms of protective resources and risk factors as a result of their association with a HEI (Subtheme 2.1); and ii) teachers negotiating challenges when implementing a HE intervention (Subtheme 2.2).

I found that teacher resilience expressions in terms of protective resources and risk factors were encouraged by a HEI association. As found by others, teachers in this study also expressed challenges and benefits when there was a HEI association with their rural school. Teachers also had to negotiate frustration due to a lack of information regarding HE intervention projects. In addition, the teachers in this study also experienced a lack of cooperation and commitment amongst school community members and parents. Similar to other studies, teachers in this study experienced a lack of information of how to obtain funds and sponsors for the implementation of intervention projects. I also found, as was found in other, similar studies, that teachers experienced an association between a HEI and rural schools as beneficial. These teachers' expressed benefits include formal teacher capacity development, comprehensive teacher understanding of school community risks that require teacher support, teacher motivation as well as resource provision to support instruction practices. Student motivation also emerged as a demonstrated benefit, expressed by teachers in this study, when HE intervention projects are implemented. These expressed benefits can be related to functions of HEI associations in terms of knowledge generation, teacher education and training and mutual benefits. However, further research to determine the benefits to the HEI is necessary.

I highlighted, in literature control (section 5.3.1), the similarities and differences between these benefits and challenges in comparison with international literature. Challenges that teachers experienced in this study are contradictory to challenges identified by teachers internationally. I found in this study, in contradiction to other studies, that teachers in this study needed to negotiate their disappointment in school community members' lack of continued

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participation in intervention projects when a HEI association was implemented, as opposed to support and cooperation offered by school community members due to a personal connection with the school (Barely & Beesley, 2007; Burton, Brown & Johnson, 2013). In this study teachers expressed their frustration due to a lack of feedback from HEI members regarding HE intervention projects and found this to be a challenge to the successful implementation of HE intervention projects. Figure 7.2 reflects a summary of findings relating to the way that a HEI association with a rural school could strengthen existing teacher resilience.
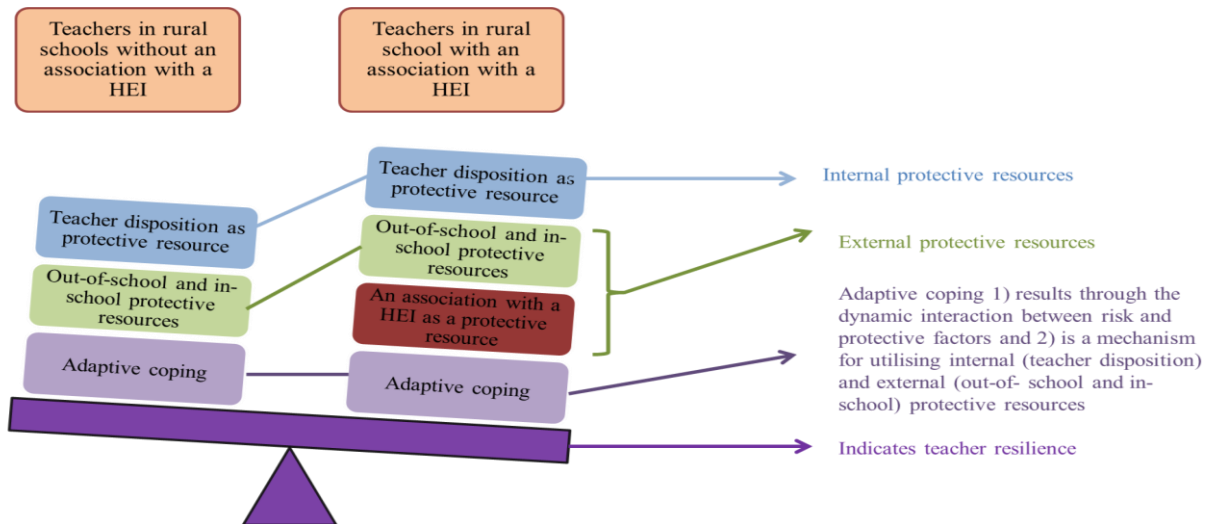
Figure 7.2:   HEI associations as an additional pathway to increase teacher resilience

I argued in the previous research question that teachers in this study experienced protective resources and risk factors regardless of an association between a HEI and a rural school. I posit that an association with a HEI could strengthen existing teacher resilience in terms of protective resources (illustrated in purple in Figure 7.2). A HEI association tips the scale of teacher resilience in rural schools. This is the case here as a HEI association offers an additional external protective resource that teachers can use, namely access to much-needed resources. The availability of services to teachers teaching in rural schools is hindered by isolation and the long distances that rural teachers need to travel to access basic services and training. Services, including teacher development activities, are even less accessible to rural South African teachers when compared to South African schools in urban areas. A HEI association provides teachers teaching in a rural resource-constrained setting with access to alternative social capital. The HEI association therefore offers an opportunity for social and human capital development by extending social capital to isolated teachers, those who are teaching in rural schools. Hence, training and knowledge (human capital) are offered by members of the HEI in association with rural schools, in so doing buoying existing teacher

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resilience. The relevance of access to social and human capital (teachers' professional development) will be expounded on during the discussion of the primary research question in section 7.3.

7.2.3   Secondary question 4
What are the teacher resilience expressions in terms of protective resources and risk factors of teachers in rural schools who did not participate in a HEI association?

This secondary research question is supported by the findings that emerged from Theme 3 (chapter 6). As discussed earlier, I found that: i) teacher resilience in terms of protective resources and risk factors exists in these resource-constrained rural settings irrespective of a HEI association with a rural school (section 7.2.1); and ii) that an association between a HEI and rural schools could enhance teacher resilience in terms of protective resources and risk factors already present in that context (section 7.2.2). Teachers in rural schools without a HEI association (Case B) fostered the hope of such a relationship with the investigating HEI being established based on perceived expectations of possible benefits. The findings reflected in this regard therefore relate to these teachers' aspirations to form an association with the HEI. Teacher participants consequently reported on both the expected benefits of and concerns about a potential association with a HEI, which was compared to both local and global studies (see section 6.4) correlating with literature on the functions of HEI associations (Calabrese, 2006; Feiman-Nemser, 2001). The findings in this regard contribute to existing knowledge on teacher resilience and HEI associations, as I found in this study that even the hope of an association being established between these rural schools (Case B) and the investigating HEI resulted in expressions of teacher resilience. Hence, it appears as if the anticipation of teachers that such an association may be established buffers teacher resilience. As illustrated in Figure 7.2, I posit that teachers' hope of a potential association between rural schools and a HEI would tip the scale in favour of enhanced resilience in terms of protective resources and risk factors by teachers. However, the enhanced teacher resilience might not be as high as it would be when there is an actual association between the rural schools and a HEI. I argued earlier (section 6.4) that few studies have been conducted from the perspective of a potential association between rural schools and a HEI and that this study therefore contributes to existing knowledge in this regard. New insight, as it relates to secondary research question 2, refers to teachers in this study indicating that their schools' status would be enhanced as a result of an association with a HEI. In addition, I argued earlier (section 6.4.1) that the motivation of students is a new

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insight that contributes to the knowledge bases of teacher resilience as well as a HEI association. However, further research in this regard is required.

7.2.4 Summary of findings in terms of the similarities and differences between cases

In this section I reflect on the similarities and differences that had emerged during the data analysis (cross-case analysis). Teachers from both cases expressed protective resources in a rural context and out-of-school and in-school risk factors that promotes teacher resilience regardless of an association with a HEI. Table 7.1 reflects the similarities found in cases A and B and comprise theme 1 discussed in Chapter 4 and secondary research question 1 discussed in 7.2.1 of this Chapter.

Table 7.1 Similarties in cases A and B

Similarities in Cases A and B	
Protective resources in a rural context	Contextual rurality factors as protective resources
	Physical resources for instructional practices
	Teacher family support as a protective resource
	Teacher disposition facilitates protective resources
	Teacher salary promotes teacher retention
	Teachers value associations for resource sharing in various systems
	Spirituality as a pathway to protective resources
Out-of-school and in-school risk factors that hinder teaching in rural schools	The negative impact of rurality risk factors on rural education
	Student health risk behaviours as an impediment to rural education
	Lack of cooperation and commitment between teachers, parents and school community members as a barrier to rural education
	Lack of resources in schools to support instructional practices
	Students' lack of literacy skills as a barrier to rural education
	Multilingualism as an in-school risk factor as a barrier to rural education
	Teachers' working conditions as a challenge in rural education
	Limited teacher skill to use available resources

Table 7.2 and 7.3 highligt the differences in cases A and B that emerged from the data analysis. Table 7.2 summarises teachers' expressions from both cases that show similarity but differed in nuances. For example teachers in case A expressed protective resources and risk factors as a result of their schools' association with a HEI whereas teachers from case B expressed similar

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themes in this regard but this was stated as an expectation of benefit and concern and not as a fact. The differences between cases is highlighted and integrated in theme 2 (Chapter 5) and theme 3 (Chapter 6) and 7.2.2 and 7.2.3 of this chapter.

Table 7.2 Nuanced differences between cases

Teacher resilience:	Teachers in Case A expressed …	… as opposed to … as expressed by teachers in Case B.
Protective resources	…. formal teacher capacity development in terms of knowledge acquisition and training for teacher craft skill as a result of an association with a HEI	… the *expectation* for formal teacher capacity development through the provision of infrastructure and instruction material as well as the acquisition of teacher knowledge and craft skill ….
	…. student and teacher motivation as a result of a HEI association	… the *positive expectation* for teacher and student motivation when engaging in a HEI association …
Risk factors	… teacher disappointment in lack of continued participation in intervention projects *by school community members and parents*	… teacher concerns regarding lack of teacher support, commitment and cooperation when intervention projects are implemented …

Explicit differences between cases were also evident from the analysis of this comparative case study as illuminated in Table 7.3.

Table 7.3 Explicit differences between cases

Differences between cases	
Case A: Promoting protective resources in rural schools with a HEI	Teachers expressed that the HEI association increased their understanding of school community risks that require support.
	Teachers expressed that the association with the HEI resulted in resource provision to support instructional practices.
Case A: Challenges negotiated for teacher resilience while implementing a HE intervention	Teachers expressed lack of information regarding intervention projects as a frustration.
	Teachers also expressed lack of information to obtain sponsor to implement intervention projects.
Case B: Positive teacher expectation to benefit from possible association with a HEI	Status enhancement as a positive expectation of an association with a HEI.
Case B: Teacher concerns about potential association with a HEI	Lack of delivery on expectations of stakeholders as a teacher concern.
	Teacher concerns regarding proximity of the HEI to the school community.
	Lack of finances and infrastructure to sustain the association with a HEI as a teacher concern.

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7.3   Primary research question

How can insight into expressions of protective resources and risk factors by teachers in rural schools, in the presence or absence of HEI associations, inform knowledge on teacher resilience?

In Chapter 1 I postulated that an association between rural schools and a HEI could promote understanding of this protective resource as a pathway to teacher resilience. I will now first attend to how findings supplement knowledge of teacher resilience in terms of protective resources and risk factors in rural schools in the absence of a HEI association.

7.3.1   Protective resources and risk factors mediate adversity

The findings of this study confirm the existing view of resilience as meaningful interaction between individuals and their context that results in positive adaptation (Theron, 2012). Congruent with Ebersöhn (2014:2), I found that teachers in resource-constrained education settings needed continually to adapt in a sequence of linked incidents in response to accumulative risk. Teacher traits such as positive affect, optimism, perseverance and flocking for resource-sharing therefore buoy teacher adaption processes (Ebersöhn, 2014:2). Based on the findings of this study, I conceptualise teacher resilience as experienced by teachers who negotiate difficulties in the education setting by utilising protective resources (internal and external) continually to adapt to such detrimental circumstances. Adaptive behaviours displayed by teachers result in positive development that buffers teacher retention despite unfavourable teaching circumstances. Hence, regardless of an association with a HEI, teachers show certain individual, internal and external protective resources that they use to negotiate risk factors, which promotes teacher resilience. I found evidence of the following protective resources in the South African sample:

- Individual protective resources in the form of teacher disposition (positive attitude, orientation, personal characteristics and goals) and spirituality
- External protective resources inherent in the rural context (peacefulness, low crime rates, low student-teacher ratio and the value of respect), physical or infrastructure capital (physical resources for instruction practices), teacher salary and social capital (which comprise relationships with family, peer teachers, school community members, parents, the local district and distal education sectors).

With reference to social capital, I, like Ebersöhn (2013; 2014), found that teachers valued resource-sharing at various levels, which has been referred to as "flocking" (Ebersöhn, 2013; 2014). Teachers were found to use protective resources collectively to mediate adversity. This

is coherent with the Relationship Resource Resilience framework that was developed by Ebersöhn (2013; 2014). I furthermore found that teachers in rural schools use relationships to link individual resources as a way to adapt to adversity (flocking). Thus, I, like Ebersöhn (2013; 2014) found that teachers navigate toward and negotiate relationships (external supports) to acquire much needed resources in a resource-scarce setting. Positive adaptation is then made possible by the use of relationships to support and strengthen systems (Ebersöhn; 2013:98; 2014).

7.3.2 An association between rural schools and a HEI as pathway to teacher resilience in terms of protective resources and risk factors

I argued earlier, in section 7.2, that an association between rural schools and a HEI enhances teacher resilience in terms of protective resources and risk factors already present in the context of high-risk and high-need schools. I postulate that a HEI association provides an additional external protective resource to teachers in resource-constrained education settings. Like other researchers (Briggs, 2004; Bryce, 2006; Coleman, 2000; Hayes, 2014), I posit that a HEI association is a voluntarily established relationship. Supported by the Place-based Social Mobility System (Johnson, 2012) (section 1.6), I found when teachers engage in a HEI association they access social capital (bonding, linking and bridging) that could enable the development of human capital to buoy teacher resilience. Thus, according to the Place-based Social Mobility System individuals who are situated low socioeconomically (in this study referring to teachers teacing in a low socioeconomic setting) who have access to proximity capital (in this study the association between the HEI and the rural schools) can then access proximal capital. Proximal capital also refers to bridging of social capital (Jordan, 2006) illustrated in the finding that teachers value associations for resource-sharing in various systems (see section 4.1.1.6). I further posit that accessing proximal capital leads to the development of human capital that can promote teacher resilience in terms of protective resources (see section 7.4 for further elaboration). I also found that when teachers aspire to establish an association between a HEI and their school (section 7.2.3), this expectation buoys teacher resilience in terms of protective resources and risk factors.

Reflecting on the Jordan's (2000; 2006; 2008) relational model, individuals' (rural teachers and members of the HEI) participation in a growth-fostering connection (association between rural schools and a HEI) result in development and awareness of relational competence. Mature relational functioning move towards mutuality (in this study through a voluntary association between rural teachers and HEI members) which provides the opportunity to partake in a relationship that is reciprocally growth-fostering. Results indicated

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that the association between rural schools and the HEI was beneficial to the schools as reflected in subtheme 1.1: Protective resources and the rural context (see 4.1.1.1). However, further research is necessary to explore the value of the association to HEI members. The move towards mutuality results in mutual empowerment and the development of courage. As explained earlier (section 1.7) mutual empowerment comprise of experiencing energy, creativity and flexibility, reflected in my finding of student and teacher motivation as a result of an association with a HEI or the hope of such an association. Courage was displayed by all stakeholders as they displayed the ability to enter into an association between rural schools and a HEI even when they undoubtedly had some reservations and fears. Further research is required to explore the subtleties of the development of courage when engaging in an association between rural schools and a HEI.

The findings of this study therefore supplement existing knowledge of teacher resilience in terms of protective resources and risk factors and HEI associations in the following way: An additional pathway to teacher resilience is revealed by the relational aspect of an association between rural schools and a HEI. The relational aspect of a HEI association with rural schools consists of a reciprocal, dynamic appraisal of protective resources to mediate risk that unfolds in the space of a collaborative association.

7.4 Evidence-based amended conceptual framework: HEI associations with rural schools as pathway to teacher resilience in terms of protective resources and risk factors

I adapted the initial conceptual framework (section 1.7) based on these findings. This adaption of my initial conceptual framework correlates with employing a constructivist grounded theory approach to my data analysis as it allows for constructing theoretical interpretations based on the ideas that emerged from the data analysis (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007; Charmaz, 2003; 2011). Figure 7.3 shows the amended evidence-based conceptual framework.

Teacher resilience
in rural schools

Out-of-school and in-school risk
factors in rural schools:
- Unemployment
- Illiteracy of parents
- Student health risk behaviours
- Lack of instructional materials
- Multilingualism
- Student literacy barriers
- Teacher working conditions

Out-of-school and in-school
protective resources in rural
schools:
- Contextual rurality protective
  resources
- Physical resources for
  instructional purposes
- Teacher family support
- Teacher disposition
- Spirituality
- Associations for resource
  sharing

Higher
Education
Institution

Social and
human capital

Teachers
from
other
schools

Peer teachers
and principal

Students

Teachers

Micro-

Parents and
school
community
members

Meso-

Exo-

Macro-

Shows the association between teachers
in a rural school with a HEI : Bonding
social capital (Proximity capital)

Illustrates linking social capital
(i.e. spill over and concentration
effect)

Reciprocal resource sharing:
Bridging social capital (Proximal
capital) and human capital
(includes the aspiration/hope and
expectancy of benefits)

Indicates teacher resilience

Out-of-school and in-school risk and
protective factors influences the
bounded system

Figure 7.3: **Adapted evidence-based conceptual framework of teacher resilience in terms of protective resources and risk factors when there is a HEI association**

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Figure 7.3 reflects various components of teacher resilience (protective resources and risk factors) in relation to an association between rural schools and a HEI. I view teacher awareness and knowledge of risk factors (in-school and out-of-school, indicated by the orange block on the left of the figure) inherent in their particular context as an impetus to build additional resources. Teachers then make use of protective resources (indicated by the green block on the left of the figure) to mediate risk factors. Teacher adaption then comprises of teacher appraisals to mediate adversity, which results in teacher resilience (indicated by the purple-dotted circle in the exo-system, as identified in the figure). I place this indication of resilience (the purple-dotted circle in the exo system) in this position to indicate teacher resilience due to the use of protective resources (teacher disposition, spirituality, unique attributes of a rural context, physical capital, financial capital and social capital) other than a HEI association. I acknowledge that I cannot exclude the influence of other associations that these teachers might have and their contribution to teacher resilience. However, I did report on the value teachers place on resource-sharing at various levels (section 4.11.6) and how this relates to Ebersöhn's (2013; 2014) concept of "flocking" in her Relationship Resources Resilience framework (see also section 7.3.1 in this chapter). Further research is required to explore the subtleties of this particular resource in promoting teacher resilience as raised in this study.

As argued in the theoretical framework (Place-based Social Mobility System - section 1.6.1), an association is a reciprocal relationship that gives members of the association access to proximity capital. Each member brings to this relationship a different type of capital, i.e. economic, cultural, social and human. An association with a HEI is illustrated by the dotted red oval, and illustrates that such an association creates a connection between the teachers' micro- and macro systems. Familiarity is then created between the teachers and the members of the HEI, comprising the bonding aspect of social capital. Due to the association that rural teachers have with the HEI, linking of social capital occurs (as indicated by the green reciprocal arrows in the figure). Linking social capital relates to the "concentration" and "spillover" effects discussed in the theoretical framework (section 1.6.1.3). Social capital is consequently shared between places (the HEI and rural schools) and within places (between teachers, parents, school community members, teachers from other schools in the vicinity) referring to the bridging aspect of social capital. Bridging social capital is also coined "proximal capital" (see section 1.6.1.3). Accordingly, the following working assumption was largely confirmed and amended: *When proximity capital (via an association with a HEI) is accessed by teachers teaching in rural resource-constrained settings, proximal capital (bridging social capital) is accessed, which enables and enhances teacher resilience.* Enhanced teacher resilience as a result of a HEI association or the expectation of such an association is indicated by the second

purple-dotted circle at the outer section of the figure reflecting the framework. As argued earlier, I postulate that the teacher resilience in terms of protective resources and risk factors effects of a potential HEI association might be fewer than when there is an actual HEI association. Further research could help to identify the extent to which the hope of a potential association with a HEI could broaden knowledge of teacher resilience in terms of protective resources and risk factors as it relates to HEI associations. Answering the primary research question confirmed that: i) protective resources and risk factors is present in rural schools where the need and risk are high owing to teachers' utilising various internal and external protective resources; ii) that the presence of a HEI association could enhance and promote teacher resilience in terms of protective resources and risk factors; and iii) that the expectation of teachers to form an association with a HEI could buffer teacher resilience in terms of protective resources and risk factors.

7.5   Reflecting on limitations of the study

As I was a novice researcher who entered the field as an Afrikaans-speaking Caucasian female, a middle-class, graduated woman, I at times experienced uncertainty with regard to customs. I differed in relation to background, culture and home language and in some instances in gender from the teachers participating in this study. This could have affected my views and interpretations. I continuously reflected on my viewpoints in this regard and remained open to deepening my understanding of the participants' perspectives (see Appendix H for my research journal). In addition I made use of member checking to gain an understanding of and in an effort to represent teachers' perspectives accurately. Being a novice researcher employing PRA techniques for the first time often resulted in uncertainty and doubt on my part. I continuously reflected with my supervisor and co-researcher in this regard. The presence of my supervisor and co-researcher during the PRA-directed activities offered much needed support in facilitating the activities.

Another delimitation relating to a purposeful selection of teacher participants could have resulted in teacher participants' (Case A), who have been involved in the ongoing partnership since 2005, providing responses to please the researchers. In order to address this delimitation I employed several data collection strategies, data sources, reflexivity and member checking.

As argued earlier (in section 3.4.2), generalizability was not the aim of this study. Although the teacher participants in this study were unique, they showed similarities in that they taught at rural schools in the same area and are faced with similar socioeconomic challenges. I provided an audit trail in my researcher diary (Appendix H) to allow other researchers, based on their own judgment, to undertake similar further research.

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The scope of my study is limited to teachers in the rural context and how a HEI association could promote, or not, teacher resilience. Further research from the perspective of other stakeholders need to be included. Cohort studies in FLY are conducted to gain insight into the perspectives of the different stakeholders, namely students, learners, parents and teachers.

In addition, the scope of my study is delimited as I mainly studied risk factors and protective resources identified by teachers in this specific adverse context of rural education in South Africa. The results of this study did not yield data on the interaction of protective resources and risk factors, but rather protective resources and risk factors that could be present in similar education contexts.

7.6   Recommendations

In this section I offer recommendations for future research as well as recommendations for practice and future training and development.

7.6.1   Recommendations for future research

- Follow-up investigation of the application of my conceptualisation of teacher resilience when there is an association between rural schools and a HEI using a bigger sample, one that includes teachers from different districts.
- Follow-up investigation exploring HEI members' views on how a HEI association with rural schools benefits stakeholders as it relates to the functions of HEI associations.
- I postulate that the association between the rural schools and the HEI can be described as a transformational association/partnership. A transformational association is based on genuine engagement and a focus on common goals and mutual benefits (Butcher et al., 2011). However, further research is necessary to define the association in this study in terms of its purpose, nature and strategy to determine if it can be described as such.
- Further research on how relational competence develops over teachers' career life span as a result of a HEI association.
- Follow-up investigation into the subtilties of bridging social capital (proximal capital) as a result of a HEI association from the perspective of the HEI members, the rural school community members and parents.

- Further research on the role that teacher hobbies and/or extracurricular activities as it relates to life work balance and the role it can play as a protective resource in sustaining and developing teacher resilience.

- Further research on how contextual and sociocultural challenges impede rural teachers' ability to create, sustain and participate in growth-fostering relationships.

- Further research on the interaction of protective resources and risk factors in similar rural education contexts.

- Further research is required to explore the subtleties of the development of courage when engaging in an association between rural schools and a HEI.

- Follow-up studies on the silences and contradictions evident from this study:
    o Further investigation of spirituality as an important pathway to teacher resilience and the reasons why it was not mentioned in this specific study as an important pathway, as illustrated by international studies

    o Research on how teachers in rural schools draw on student relationships as a resilience strategy

    o Further investigation of how hope and expectation could be promoted by a possible association with a HEI and how it could buffer teacher resilience

    o Further investigation of how a HEI association between rural schools and a HEI enhances school status

    o Further investigation into the subtleties of student motivation as a result of an HEI intervention

    o Additional investigation of how the unstable education system influences the development of teacher resilience in this particular sample.

7.6.2   Recommendations for practice and future training and development

It may be worthwhile to use cases, such as reflected in this study, to determine how teachers in training and veteran teachers could utilise an association with a HEI to foster teacher resilience and assist with acquiring strategies to reduce adversity in their school community. The value of establishing relationships (interdependence with others) and utilising the associated resources is critical in resource-constrained rural schools to promote community and school development. Strategies to foster meaningful relationships for resource-sharing could be valuable to student teachers as it would enable them to obtain much needed support during their teaching years. Training of school principals in the application of flocking strategies could contribute to the development of all school personnel.

The concepts of proximity capital and proximal capital and how they relate to flocking could be used to assess teachers' awareness of the social support that is available within their rural school and school community. Moreover, further exploration of these concepts could help to inform future intervention strategies that could enable teachers and school community members to access and mobilise support strategies within the school community.

It could be valuable to expose student teachers in training to teaching in rural schools, as well as giving them the opportunity to experience the inherent differences between rural and urban schools. In addition, such pro-active initiatives might reveal the circumstances that might be encountered in rural schools could help student teachers to identify and mobilise viable support structures to buffer teacher resilience as well as alleviate poverty.

I recommend that the constructs of proximity capital and proximal capital and how they relate to resilience should be included in the training of health care professionals in a variety of fields. For example, student psychologists could explore how proximity and proximal capital could be utilised in daily living as an important resource in relationships. An in-depth understanding of how these types of capital inform human relationships may assist student psychologists to make meaningful recommendations with regard to challenges their clients are experiencing in their lives. In addition, an awareness of how these concepts (as identified in this study) could inform resilience in general and may serve as an additional resource that may be put at health care professionals' disposal to assist their clients.

In addition, it might be worthwhile to determine how teachers in training and veteran teachers could utilise protective resources and risk factors in education settings, rural or urban, to develop teacher resilience. I further recommend that these constructs should be included in the training of health care professionals in a variety of fields. For example, student psychologists could explore how protective resources and risk factors could be utilised in daily living to foster resilience and yield recommendations that is meaningful and helpful to their clients.

7.7 Conclusion

This study helped fill the scientific knowledge hiatus in South African rural education research on teacher resilience by documenting knowledge on pathways to teacher resilience in terms of protective resources and risk factors and the value of a HEI association in promoting teacher resilience in resource constrained schools where the need and risk is high. I conclude this thesis with the following picture, which depicts how rural teachers, despite adversity and challenging circumstances nevertheless manage to flourish.

---ooOoo---

Picture 7.1: Flourishing rural teachers

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APPENDICES

Please note that all appendices are saved on the included CD

Appendix A: Summary of trends on teacher resilience

Appendix B: Summary on partnerships trends

Appendix C: Individual consent for participation in a research study

Appendix D: Demographic questionnaire

Appendix E, F, G, H, I: Data sources

> Appendix E: PRA-directed group activities

- Case A1 (Raw data, initial analysis, final analysis)

- Case A2 (Raw data, initial analysis, final analysis)

- Case B (Raw data, initial analysis, final analysis)

> Appendix F: Interviews

- Case A1 (Raw data, initial analysis, final analysis)

- Case A2 (Raw data, initial analysis, final analysis)

- Case B (Raw data, initial analysis, final analysis)

> Appendix G: Visual data

- Photos 2013 (First visit)

- Photos 2013 (Group)

- Photos 2013 (PRA-directed group activities)

- Photos 2015 (Visit)

> Appendix H: Researcher diary, field notes and observations

- Field notes (extracted from researcher diary)

- Researcher diary, field notes and observations

> Appendix I: Co-researcher diary and notes

> Guide for colour coding - analysis

Appendix J: Guiding questions for interviews

Appendix K: Additional information

> Resource leaflet

> Ethical clearance form DBE

> Group and participant allocations

> Invitation to rural schools

> Programme PRA-directed group activities

Appendix L: Research schedule

Appendix M: Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Appendix A Table 1 Summary of conceptualisations of teacher resilience

Conceptualisations of teacher resilience			
Author(s), Year and Country (Context)	**Focus and contribution**	**Methodology and/or sample**	**Gaps**
Thieman, Henry & Kitchel, 2012	• The importance of teachers practicing mindfulness and focussing on enabling strategies to work purposively with the school environment and the building of relationships. • They further elaborated on the practical strategies and approaches that promote and protect resilience in children.	Qualitative study: Interviews with 35 teachers	Literature lacks a comprehensive understanding of teacher resilience, a complex and multi-faceted phenomenon.
Gu & Day, 2013	• Focussed on teachers' perceptions of the disparity in their work, lives and the effectiveness thereof. • Concluded that for teachers to teach at their best involves a constant mental and emotional challenge. For teachers to be able to manage their working conditions, resilience becomes a necessity. • Teacher resilience is defined as managing the	Qualitative Longitudinal study (period of 3 years): Semi-structured interviews (two yearly) Document analysis	Further investigation with regards to how socio-cultural and policy demands and challenges of teachers is mediated by the personal, relational and organisational conditions of teachers' work. Little research regarding ways in which teachers' capacity to be

Conceptualisations of teacher resilience			
Author(s), Year and Country (Context)	**Focus and contribution**	**Methodology and/or sample**	**Gaps**
	unavoidable uncertainties inherent in the realities of teaching, driven by their educational purposes and moral values, influenced by their biographies and the conditions of their lives. • The resilience process among teachers involves the complex relations between multiple levels of internal and external factors rooted in the individual, relational and organisational conditions of teachers' world of work and work. • Resilience is viewed as much more than only the capacity to survive and thrive in adversity.		resilient may be nurtured, sustained or diminished are evident.

Appendix A Table 2 Summary of individual and contextual protective resources and risk factors contributing to teacher resilience

Individual and contextual protective resources and risk factors contributing to teacher resilience			
Author(s), Year and Country (Context)	**Focus and contribution**	**Methodology – sample**	**Gaps**
Ingersoll, 2001	• Found that school staffing problems is not solely due to teacher shortages, but due to excess demand placed on teachers due to qualified teachers leaving the profession for reasons other than retirement. Other reasons for leaving the profession included job dissatisfaction and pursuing a different career.	Longitudinal survey data of 6733 elementary and secondary school teachers	If teacher staffing problems is to be addressed, further research into the organisational sources of low teacher retention should be conducted.
Tait, 2008	• The possible impact of the relationships among resilience, personal efficacy and emotional competence on first year students' sense of success, confidence and commitment to the profession is explored. • The researchers identified several categories that represented the capacities of novice teachers namely demonstrating social competence, taking advantage of opportunities to develop personal	• Qualitative study: Questionnaires conducted by twenty-two teachers to illicit first-year teaching experiences • Additionally four teachers were selected who took part in three additional research tasks (quiz about stress,	

Individual and contextual protective resources and risk factors contributing to teacher resilience			
Author(s), Year and Country (Context)	**Focus and contribution**	**Methodology – sample**	**Gaps**
	efficacy, using problem-solving strategies, ability to rebound after a difficult experience, learning from experience and setting goals for the future, taking care of oneself, and maintaining a sense of optimism	guided interview and a personal metaphor of teaching).	
Beltman, Mansfield & Price, 2011	• Focused on reviewing what methodologies has been used to examine teacher resilience, how teacher resilience is conceptualised, what are the key risk and protective factors for teacher resilience and how these risk and protective factors relate. • Examined what the implications are for pre-service teacher education programmes, schools and employers. • The researchers found that most studies on teacher resilience relied on participants self-reports in the form of in-depth interviews to explore teachers' experiences and others made use of developed	Systemic review of recent empirical studies on teacher resilience.	• A limited number of studies directly examining teacher resilience are evident. • Further research is necessary to examine key factors of teacher resilience and the interaction thereof in different settings. • Interventions to determine the impact of and how to enhance key factors relating to teacher resilience.

Individual and contextual protective resources and risk factors contributing to teacher resilience			
Author(s), Year and Country (Context)	**Focus and contribution**	**Methodology – sample**	**Gaps**
	surveys or established measures of related constructs such as self-efficacy or burn out. • The researchers highlighted many risk and protective factors relating to and contributing to teacher resilience. Key individual protective factors included efficacy and intrinsic motivation and contextual protective factors included formal mentor programmes and collegial support in the workplace. • The researchers found that the relationship between risk and protective factors is complex and dynamic and unique to individuals.		
Price, Mansfield & McConney, 2012	• Focussed on the construct of resilience in the broad political landscape of teachers' work and the labour process of teaching, within a neoliberal globalised economic paradigm.	Critical discourse and labour process perspectives	Further research on the construct of teacher resilience and how related constructs such as high rates of early career attrition can be used to shape and potentially control teacher identity and the nature of teachers'

Individual and contextual protective resources and risk factors contributing to teacher resilience			
Author(s), Year and Country (Context)	Focus and contribution	Methodology – sample	Gaps
			work.

Appendix A Table 3 Summary of coping strategies and characteristics of teacher resilience

Coping strategies and characteristics of teacher resilience			
Author(s), Year and Country (Context)	**Focus and contribution**	**Methodology – sample**	**Gaps**
Bobek, 2002 America (Urban and rural)	• Identified resources to develop resilience in teachers comprising of establishing significant adult relationships, having a sense of personal responsibility, social and problem-solving skills, sense of competence, expectations and goals, confidence, a sense of humour and a sense of accomplishment.	Qualitative study: Interviews with 13 young adults from rural and urban areas who experienced adversity but managed to attend college. Additionally the young adults' former high school teachers were interviewed and documents on their activities and progress was reviewed.	
Howard and Johnson, 2004 Australian (Unemployment, poverty)	• Investigate strategies used by resilient teachers to cope with stress related to day-to-day teaching in disadvantaged Australian schools. • Identified indicators of teacher resilience namely a sense of agency, strong support groups, pride in achievements and competence in areas of personal importance.	Qualitative study: semi-structured interviews with ten teachers in Australian schools	

Coping strategies and characteristics of teacher resilience			
Author(s), Year and Country (Context)	**Focus and contribution**	**Methodology – sample**	**Gaps**
Brunetti, 2006 America (economically disadvantaged, insufficient resources and school structures)	• Illustrated how teachers' resilience helped them to overcome difficulties and recurring setbacks and persisted in their work as teachers. • Identified three broad factors that motivated teachers to remain teaching in inner city classrooms for 12 years. The factors include: 1) devotion to their students, 2) professional and personal satisfaction, and 3) support from administrators, colleagues and the organisation of the school.	He conducted a qualitative study using a survey and extended interviews with nine teachers	Further research is suggested in different settings (urban and rural) to explore the kind of working conditions and support needed for teachers to perform at their best.
Castro, Kelly & Shih, 2010 America (Urban and rural contexts and special education)	• Illustrated that teachers uses a variety of strategies, including help-seeking, problem-solving, managing difficult relationships, and seeking renewal, to build additional resources and support.	Qualitative study: Interviews with fifteen first-year teachers in various high-needs areas (urban teachers, rural teachers and special education teachers).	• Further research to investigate the difference between successful and unsuccessful teachers in the same context is warranted to identify the ways they cope or don't with adversity. • Additional studies can explore

Coping strategies and characteristics of teacher resilience			
Author(s), Year and Country (Context)	**Focus and contribution**	**Methodology – sample**	**Gaps**
,			the role of life experiences, especially for first-career and second-career teachers.
Thieman, Henry and Kitchel, 2012	• Research synthesis aiming to introduce the concept of resilience to agricultural education and defining the contribution of the phenomena of resilience to the study of agricultural educator stress and burnout. • The researchers suggested a conceptual framework, portraying the relationship between teacher resilience and agricultural educator stress and burnout.	Research synthesis	
Taylor, 2013 African American	• Eight themes of resilience as identified in Polidore's Theory of Adult Resilience in Education model. The resilience themes included: religion, flexible locus of control, optimistic bias, autonomy, commitment, enjoys change, positive relationships, education viewed as important. An	Qualitative study: She used a narrative inquiry technique with four female retired African American teachers who taught in the same rural school district.	

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Coping strategies and characteristics of teacher resilience			
Author(s), Year and Country (Context)	**Focus and contribution**	**Methodology – sample**	**Gaps**
	additional resilience theme, efficacy also emerged.		

Appendix A Table 4 Summary of teacher resilience as relationship-based

Teacher resilience is relationship-based			
Author(s), Year and Country (Context)	**Focus and contribution**	**Methodology – sample**	**Gaps**
Ebersöhn, 2012 South Africa	• Highlights the value of using resources and relationships to sustain school reform (specifically in adverse educational settings) in her explanation of her Relationship-Resourced Resilience (RRR) theory. RRR reflects the notion that actions, reactions and transactions between school and a community can lead to positive adaption.	Longitudinal case study (8 years of data) using a Participatory Reflection and Action approach with partnership schools (primary and secondary schools in rural and urban areas) and teachers in South Africa.	
Peters and Pearce, 2012	• Found that principals support and leadership skills contribute either to teacher attrition and/or building the capacity for resilience.		
Le Cornu, 2013 Australia	• The project funded by Australian Research Council aimed to investigate the dynamic and complex interplay among individual, relational and contextual conditions that operate over time to promote early career teacher resilience. • Highlights that positive relationships, specifically	Collaborative qualitative research: 60 interviews with beginning teachers and their principals.	

Teacher resilience is relationship-based			
Author(s), Year and Country (Context)	**Focus and contribution**	**Methodology – sample**	**Gaps**
	with other colleagues, is vital for early career teachers as it fosters a sense of belonging and social connectedness.		
Mansfield, Beltman & Price, 2014 Australia	• The resources available to manage challenges experienced by early career teachers are investigated. • It was found that multiple, varied and ongoing challenges are experienced by beginning teachers and the importance of personal and contextual resources are highlighted. • They further elaborate on the importance of relationship in the resilience process and argue that relationships are important on three levels: firstly, the *classroom level* (with students), secondly at the *school level* (with colleagues, staff, administration and parents) and thirdly, *out of the school context* (friends and family relationships).	Qualitative study: semi-structured interviews with 13 Australian early career teachers.	
Caspersen and	• Compared how novice teachers and experienced	Qualitative study (based on	

Teacher resilience is relationship-based			
Author(s), Year and Country (Context)	**Focus and contribution**	**Methodology – sample**	**Gaps**
Raaen, 2014	teachers cope with their work and how this ability is affected by the level of collegial and superior support and collaboration. • Found few differences regarding novice and experienced teachers' coping levels, although he did conclude that they differed in terms of levels of collegial and superior support and collaboration. • Concluded that teachers' work environment in terms of support from colleagues, collaboration with colleagues and professional and relational support from superiors contributes to resilience in teachers and their ability to cope.	observations combined with semi-structured interviews) and quantitative survey	

Appendix A Table 5 Summary of teacher resilience viewed as a dynamic process

Teacher resilience viewed as a dynamic process			
Author(s), Year and Country (Context)	**Focus and contribution**	**Methodology – sample**	**Gaps**
Luthar, Cicchetti & Becker, 2000	• Found that resilience can be seen as a dynamic process, influenced by interactions between the individual and environment, within a social system of interrelationships. • They concluded that research on the process of resilience has the potential to enhance the understanding of processes affecting at-risk individuals. • Portrayed teacher resilience as a 'dynamic process encompassing positive adaptation within the context of significant adversity' (Luthar, Cicchiettu & Becker, 2000:543).	Critical appraisal of resilience.	
Gu and Day, 2007 England	• They examined the role of resilience in teacher effectiveness and located the concept of resilience in the discourse of teaching as an emotional practice. • The researchers presented a portrayal of three	Qualitative study: Longitudinal study (four years)	Promoting resilience in teachers in times of change remains overlooked. The works and lives of teachers who continue to do their best despite challenging and changed

Teacher resilience viewed as a dynamic process			
Author(s), Year and Country (Context)	**Focus and contribution**	**Methodology – sample**	**Gaps**
	resilient teachers in their early, mid and late careers exploring career long variations in teachers' commitment and effectiveness. • The researchers found that resilience is multidimensional, socially constructed, relative, dynamic and developmental in nature.		circumstances with their beliefs about their core purposes intact, is neglected in research literature
Gu and Li, 2013 Beijing	• The interaction of individual qualities and contextual factors influences the nature and sustainability of teacher resilience in the context of where teachers work and live. To achieve sustainability of teacher resilience, resilient capacities need to be nurtured by the social and intellectual environments of teachers' professional and personal lives over time.	Questionnaire survey of 568 primary and secondary school teachers in Beijing Additional in-depth semi-structured interviews with a sub-sample of six teachers	
Johnson, Down, Le Cornu, Peters, Sullivan, Pearce & Hunter, 2014	• Transactional and ecological perspectives on teacher resilience contextualise teachers' experiences within broader social, cultural, relational and political arenas. This focus enables	Qualitative study: interviews with sixty graduates who were beginning their teaching careers in schools in Western and	Currently lacking in literature is an in-depth understanding of the interplay between personal and contextual factors especially among

Teacher resilience viewed as a dynamic process			
Author(s), Year and Country (Context)	**Focus and contribution**	**Methodology – sample**	**Gaps**
Western and Southern Australia	researchers to identify more spaces to support teachers than just in their local workplaces. • The researchers concluded that four conditions contribute to early career teachers' resilience namely acknowledging the complex, intense and unpredictable nature of teachers' work, developing teachers' curriculum and pedagogical knowledge and strategies and providing support to create engaging learning environments and ensure access to appropriate ongoing support, resources and learning opportunities.	Southern Australia.	early career teachers' experiences (Johnson, Down, Le Cornu, Peters, Sullivan, Pearce & Hunter, 2014:3) which can further inform how teacher resilience can be promoted over different career phases of teachers.

Appendix A Table 6 Summary of teacher resilience as developmental in nature

Teacher resilience is developmental in nature			
Author(s), Year and Country (Context)	**Focus and contribution**	**Methodology – sample**	**Gaps**
Polidore, Edmonson and Slate, 2010 Rural South of the United State of America	• Propose an adult resilience framework comprising of a developmental perspective and an ecological perspective. The developmental perspective postulates that adults develop resilience through establishing relationships throughout their lifetime. The ecological perspective involves the way adults adapt to external processes, such as their environment and the social values of their time. • Themes that emerged from their study led to the emergence of a model of adult resilience in teaching. The themes were 1) deeply committed, 2) enjoys change, 3) bias for optimism, 4) flexible locus of control, 5) ability to control events, 6) moral and spiritual support, 7) positive relationships and 8) education viewed as important. • Identified seven resilience themes in the	Case study on the experiences, perceptions, thoughts and feelings of three female African American educators, pertaining to their teaching experiences before, during and after desegregation in the rural South of the United State of America	Further research on expanding the research concerning each theme and sub category as it pertains to education and adults will be valuable.

Teacher resilience is developmental in nature			
Author(s), Year and Country (Context)	**Focus and contribution**	**Methodology – sample**	**Gaps**
	development of adult resilience namely religion, flexible locus of control, bias for optimism, autonomy, commitment, embracing change and fostering positive relationships.		
Mansfield, Beltman, Price and McConney, 2012	• Explored how graduating and early career teachers perceive resilient teachers. • The results indicated that graduating and early career teachers perceive that resilience for teachers comprises characteristics that are multi-dimensional and overlapping and that views of resilience can develop according to a teachers' career stage.	Survey data from 200 graduation and early career teachers.	• Further research is needed with regards to the notions that teacher resilience may change with career stage and the process of teacher resilience in action. • Furthermore research on how teacher resilience is manifested by individuals in their particular context.
Gu & Li, 2013 Beijing	• Argue that resilience can differ and vary as a result of a combination of factors of teachers' work-place and personal influence and their ability to deal with these influences.	Questionnaire survey of 568 primary and secondary school teachers in Beijing and in-depth semi-structured interviews with a sub-sample of six teachers	

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Teacher resilience is developmental in nature			
Author(s), Year and Country (Context)	**Focus and contribution**	**Methodology – sample**	**Gaps**
		with different years of experience.	

Appendix A Table 7 Summary of the importance of teacher resilience in a rural ecology

The importance of teacher resilience in a rural ecology			
Author(s), Year and Country (Context)	**Focus and contribution**	**Methodology – sample**	**Gaps**
Burton and Johnson, 2010 Rural south-eastern United States	• Highlights the significance of relationships and found that identity and relationships are crucial for teaching in general and particularly in rural communities indicating the untapped resource of being part of a rural community. Teachers who engage with the rural community in which they teach can provide valuable insight into the needs and complexities of the everyday life of rural teachers. • A key element in preparing, recruiting and retaining teachers in any community is the synergy of relationships and identity.	Narrative portraiture with two novice teachers in rural south-eastern United States.	
Ebersöhn and Ferreira, 2011 South Africa	• Explain that despite adversities and the prevalence of HIV/AIDS, teachers are in a unique position to promote resilience. • Three themes are highlighted in their findings, namely, teachers utilise resources to support	Participatory reflection and action data from a longitudinal study with fifty seven teachers from six schools in three South African provinces.	

The importance of teacher resilience in a rural ecology			
Author(s), Year and Country (Context)	**Focus and contribution**	**Methodology – sample**	**Gaps**
	resilience in schools, teachers establish partnerships and networks to promote resilience in schools and vulnerable individuals make use of the school-based support team.		
Peters & Pearce, 2012	• Importance of forming positive relationships with students is highlighted. • Suggested that often the challenges and significance of forming positive relationships with other adults (peers, family and colleagues) is overlooked.		
Burton, Brown and Johnson, 2013 United States	• Found that 1) rural teachers are professionally isolated, 2) rural teachers are different from urban and/or suburban teachers, 3) rural teachers are often lacking in professional knowledge/teaching credentials and 4) rural teachers are particularly resistant to change. • The local community is experienced as a source of support and that the isolation relates to life beyond	Researched published research on rural teachers between 1970 – 2010 using a narrative analysis approach	

The importance of teacher resilience in a rural ecology			
Author(s), Year and Country (Context)	**Focus and contribution**	**Methodology – sample**	**Gaps**
	the community, such as lack or resources, student progress and district management.		

Appendix B Summary of Higher Education association (partnership) trends

Appendix B Table 1 Situating partnerships within the education context

Situating partnerships within the education context			
Author(s), Year and Country	**Focus and contribution**	**Methodology – sample**	**Gaps**
McIntyre, 2009 Scotland and England	• Reviewed partnerships in western countries and argued that partnerships between schools and universities are crucial for the development of teachers and inclusive education. • Partnerships where there is collaboration with teachers in schools, can bridge the theory-practice gap that can result in innovating inclusive pedagogies. Teachers' professional development, and in effect student learning, can be significantly enhanced by school-university partnerships.	Literature review	
Waitoller and Kozleski, 2013b United States of America	• "partnerships for inclusive education have the potential to be conductive vehicles since they can simultaneously connect theory to practice, implement and innovate inclusive pedagogies, and	Qualitative study: Drawing on cultural history activity theory and literature on boundary work.	Little is known about the kinds of tensions, learning, and identities that develop when two professional communities engage in partnership

Situating partnerships within the education context			
Author(s), Year and Country	**Focus and contribution**	**Methodology – sample**	**Gaps**
	develop teacher capacity". • Contribute to knowledge on partnerships for inclusive education. • Advances theoretical tools to examine and further understand the work of inclusive education partnerships		work. Boundary practices that occur when various professionals from different communities come together to serve students should be further researched.
Waitoller and Kozleski; 2013a	• Suggest that opportunities is created by partnerships between schools, universities, non-governmental organisations, and other professionals to apprentice teachers in practices that can dismantle complex barriers to learning. As a result, teacher development is then part of a larger partnership agenda that focusses on student learning		
Moran, Abbott & Clarke, 2009 United Kingdom	• In teacher education, models of partnerships are both commonplace and questioned. Attention has been given to issues such as the respective roles and responsibilities of partners, which includes the		Less focus has been given to partnerships during the induction and beyond and how partnerships can be strengthened and sustained.

Author(s), Year and Country	Focus and contribution	Methodology – sample	Gaps
	assessment and mentoring of student teachers, the transfer of resources to schools and the selection of designated training schools.		
Darling-Hammond, 2010 United States of America	• Teachers' professional collaboration has supported teachers as they manage the myriad of challenges and complexities of teaching. This is also evident in other countries such as Korea, Singapore and Finland.		
Bartholomew & Sandholtz, 2009 United States of America	• Partnerships can relate to teachers' work lives and roles in reform and therefore has international relevance.		
Trent and Lim, 2010 Hong Kong	• They highlighted in their findings how attention to teacher identity construction can deepen our understanding of SUP's within other similar educational settings.	Qualitative case study that explored the experiences of two groups of secondary school English language teachers as they participated in school-university partnerships (SUP's).	Comprehensive understanding of how partnerships goals (universities and schools substantive working together to set and meet educational goals) can be attained is necessary. They suggest further research in

Situating partnerships within the education context			
Author(s), Year and Country	**Focus and contribution**	**Methodology – sample**	**Gaps**
		Drew upon theories of identity construction and made use of in-depth interviews.	different educational settings to add to the existing understanding of how SUP's and teacher identity interact. The voices of all stakeholders (teachers, universities, consultants, school authorities) who play a crucial role within both the establishment and implementation of a SUP, should be explored

Appendix B Table 2 Partnerships and the role on Higher Education Institutions

Partnerships and the role on Higher Education Institutions			
Author(s), Year and Country	**Focus and contribution**	**Methodology – sample**	**Gaps**
Minner & Hiles, 2005	• The development of grant programmes that focus on leveraging resources through partnerships to improve education has been undertaken by various federal agencies as a response to the NCLB legislation.		The infrastructure (i.e. nearby institutions of higher education, stable economic base, human resources) to develop partnerships in rural communities is often lacking.
Mariage & Garmon, 2003 United States	• Universities often undertake partnerships with underperforming and challenging schools where the needs are great and diverse. Therefore, translating research into practice may only be one part of a more systemic change effort that has the potential to introduce multiple collaborative structures and points of entry to further teachers' professional development and identity needs.	Primary and elementary school in diverse rural setting. Data: MEAP Reading and Mathematics tests, Computer-assisted Instruction, Participant observation	It is unclear how or whether a focus on implementing research based interventions (reading strategies) can 1) build a capacity for engaging in educational change; 2) create a collaborative infrastructure to help teacher learn more broadly, 3) meet the unique professional development and professional autonomy needs of individual faculty and 4) transform the culture of a building, including the norms, roles, beliefs, responsibilities, ways of thinking,

Partnerships and the role on Higher Education Institutions			
Author(s), Year and Country	**Focus and contribution**	**Methodology – sample**	**Gaps**
			and professional dispositions.
Gibbons, 1998	• Suggested the importance of alliances and partnerships as one way to involve different types of expertise needed for understanding complex problems in schools of developing countries.		
Mansfield, Price, McConney, Beltman, Pelliccione, Wosnitza, 2012 Australia	• Governments, the community and the profession views teacher attrition a pivotal concern, therefore in an attempt to understand this trend a lot of research has been conducted from an attrition perspective as to ascertain how resilience can be developed in teachers.		
Bartholomew & Sandholtz, 2009 United States of America	• Teacher professional development has taken an increased importance as the recognition that teachers make a significant difference in learners' achievement grow. Consequently, collaborative arrangements between universities and schools are put forward as one way to school improvement.		
NCTAF, 2003	• The National Council on Teaching and America's Future (NCTAF) put forward a key strategy for		

Partnerships and the role on Higher Education Institutions			
Author(s), Year and Country	**Focus and contribution**	**Methodology – sample**	**Gaps**
	improving school that includes the recruitment, preparation and retaining of good teachers.		
Feiman-Nemser, 2001 United States	• Reminds us that "if we want schools to produce more powerful learning on the part of students, we have to offer more powerful learning opportunities to teachers".	Critical Appraisal	Need for a continuum of serious and sustained professional learning opportunities for teachers.
Vogel & Avissar, 2009	• In general teacher education, models of collaboration between universities (or teacher training institutions) and schools is ample.		Partnerships are less well documented within the field of special education.
Waitrolle & Kozleski, 2013	• There has been an increasing movement toward clinical based experiences in teacher training and towards shared responsibility, for teachers' and students' learning, between universities and districts.		Little is known about the kind of tensions, learning, and identities that develop when two professional communities, such as a school-university partnership, engage in partnership work.

Appendix B Table 3 Partnerships and the role of Higher Education Institutions in South Africa

Partnerships and the role of Higher Education Institutions in South Africa			
Author(s), Year and Country	**Focus and contribution**	**Methodology – sample**	**Gaps**
Nkambule, Balfour, Pillay & Moletsane, 2011 South Africa	• Informed by research on rurality and rural education, developing interventions to improve conditions of rural life is imperative in South Africa.		
Gilles, Wilson & Elias, 2010	• Numerous programmes are implemented by various schools, universities and states internationally to develop and retain quality teachers and further inform educational practices.		Higher Education Institutions are uniquely positioned to contribute to this marginalised knowledge base.
Vaillancourt, 2007	• Highlights universities essential role in innovations for democratizing knowledge.		
Thomson, Simth-Tolken, Naidoo & Bringle, 2011 United States of America South Africa DRC	• Demonstration of social responsibility and a commitment to the common good by means of contributing expertise and infrastructure to community service programs is encouraged by The White Paper. • Indicated the pivotal role of higher education institutions in the broader transformation agenda of	Comparative case study analysis of three countries	To extent to which the intent of Service Learning (as a particular means of preparing students to be socially responsible and engaged in strengthening the third sector) varies across contexts.

Partnerships and the role of Higher Education Institutions in South Africa			
Author(s), Year and Country	**Focus and contribution**	**Methodology – sample**	**Gaps**
	the state and higher education institutions' opportunity to become a knowledge-based instrument in social equity.		
Fourie, 2003 South Africa	• The South African government mandated that higher education institutions be more responsive to the socio-economic issues of the country. • Argued that universities are positioned uniquely as generators, transmitters and appliers of knowledge, especially in this current era of globalization and the knowledge society.	Evaluation of eight service learning projects of the University of the Free State	Investigating the role of higher education in sustainable community development necessitates a closer look at the conditions for sustainable development.
Ebersöhn, Loots, Eloff & Ferreira, 2015 South Africa	• Social responsiveness of universities to the needs of a transforming society, such as South Africa, is socially responsible and strategies aimed at proactively managing the myriad of challenges that are experienced in community engagement, is of eminence.		
Castle & Osman, 2003 South Africa	• National policy goals which aim at social reconstruction and development can be actualised through service learning. Opportunities for	Review of two case studies of service learning piloted in the Wits College of Education in	Inventions of new models and creation of new ways of thinking about service that will demon state

Partnerships and the role of Higher Education Institutions in South Africa			
Author(s), Year and Country	**Focus and contribution**	**Methodology – sample**	**Gaps**
	integration of teaching, research and outreach is provided for by service learning while simultaneously the social purpose of higher education is strengthened.	2001	democracy is necessitated.
Harmon & Shafft, 2009	• Public participation in civic and community affairs can be nurtured by schools (thus teachers) as schools often function as centres of community activities. • Most often schools are the principal source of local employment in rural areas, where human capital is increased by educating young people and providing them with social skills and knowledge to become economically productive adults. • Social integration of communities and neighbourhoods can be improved by well-functioning schools by strengthening local identity and sense of commonly held purpose (Shared responsibility and collaborative actions needs to be taken by rural communities and its schools that		

Partnerships and the role of Higher Education Institutions in South Africa			
Author(s), Year and Country	**Focus and contribution**	**Methodology – sample**	**Gaps**
	will build community and strengthen positive outcomes for all students, utilizing community social capital. • Teachers then are seen as important role players as they are uniquely positioned to facilitate further community involvement.		

Appendix B Table 4 Partnerships and power and empowerment

Partnerships and power			
Author(s), Year and Country	**Focus and contribution**	**Methodology – sample**	**Gaps**
Kearney, 2015 Australia	• An engaged approach to community engagement is not easily achieved as it requires a shift from a traditional paradigm that is often rooted and resistant within university systems. This shift in paradigm and practice that is required results in disrupted and redefined power relations. Consequently, knowledge creation processes and what knowledge is created are transformed. A context of engagement is encouraged by factors such as mutuality and reciprocity, transparency, and trust and respect. A major barrier to community engagement can result from non-alignment of institutional context with a context of engagement.	Presented a case study of a long-term community-university partnership with data comprising observations and field notes, individual interviews, group discussions, and participant reflections.	
Waitroller and Kozleski, 2013b	• Dynamics of power, assumptions about privilege, and what kind of knowledge is valued strains relationships between schools and universities.		

Partnerships and power			
Author(s), Year and Country	**Focus and contribution**	**Methodology – sample**	**Gaps**
	• Conflicts and tensions are created when universities and schools engage in partnerships as they challenge each other's' expertise, practices, policies and social arrangements. At the heart of these tensions power struggles arise about whose agenda, artefacts, and motives are valued.		
Cardini, 2006	• Makes a valuable observation regarding power in partnerships, "… to challenge current social organisation by promoting more progressive relationships, the theoretical definition of partnership has to recognise the issue of power and establish working relationships in which struggle and dissent are discussible and transformable issues".		
Parry, Harreveld and Danaher, 2011 Australia	• Addresses the research question, "Which forms of partnerships add value to and are valued by Australian schools and faculties of teacher education?" in their study. • They found that the valuing of partnerships		

Partnerships and power			
Author(s), Year and Country	**Focus and contribution**	**Methodology – sample**	**Gaps**
	depends on explicit and sustained efforts to value the contribution of individual partners. Therefore interpreting the partnership as the sum of all parts, rather than be largely to advantage to the host institution.		

Appendix B Table 5 Nature of partnerships and factors contributing to successful partnerships

Nature of partnerships and factors contributing to successful partnerships			
Author(s), Year and Country	**Focus and contribution**	**Methodology – sample**	**Gaps**
Butcher, Bezzina and Moran, 2011	• Identified a set of five guiding principles that they believe promote the emergence of a transformational form of engagement and enhance sustainability. These principles are that partners 1) work out of shared purpose, 2) lead collaboratively, 3) relate on a basis of trust, 4) ensure appropriate and adequate resources, and 4) remain open to learning and change. • Concluded their article with the following: When purposes are aligned, when relationships are nurtured through time-rich communications, and when partners acknowledge the strengths of each other and are open to change, then sustainable, transformational partnerships and initiatives can develop. The outcome is a mutual capacity development, the creation of knowledge, the forging of deep, long-term connections, and the transformation of relationships to ones of genuine		

Nature of partnerships and factors contributing to successful partnerships			
Author(s), Year and Country	**Focus and contribution**	**Methodology – sample**	**Gaps**
	engagement so as to address the educational goals of quality and equity		
McIntyre, 2006	• Put forward four essential ingredients for effective and sustainable partnerships based on his work in Oxford and on earlier experiences of Initial Training Education (ITE) in Scotland. Firstly, he emphasised the importance of showing respect for practising teachers' expertise by academic teacher educators and showing an attitude of learning is important, secondly, teachers needed to be more open with regards to new learning, as this will facilitate the use of their expertise to help beginning teachers. Thirdly, he emphasised the need to resource partnership arrangement effectively and lastly he suggested that the ITE curricula be re-located from the universities into the schools.		
Moran, Abbott and Clarke, 2009	• Explored in their research student and beginning teachers' experiences of teacher education in	Qualitative approach, a purposive sample and face-to-	Little evidence of either seamless transition or structured approaches to

Nature of partnerships and factors contributing to successful partnerships			
Author(s), Year and Country	**Focus and contribution**	**Methodology – sample**	**Gaps**
United Kingdom	Northern Ireland. Their study specifically focused on views of key induction providers on the effectiveness of partnership arrangements. • They highlighted three characteristics namely consistency, continuity and community as key features of a reconceptualised partnership model. *Consistency* entails the reality of the existence of multiple partnerships that can be a cause of tension. With regards to *continuity*, the researchers suggest that learning of beginning teachers needs to be placed at the heart of the partnership. And lastly with regards to *community*, learning of beginning teachers take place within complex, scattered networks of expertise or professional communities of practice.	face semi-structured interviews.	progression for beginning teachers, despite multiple partners and partnerships.
Kearny, 2015 Australia	Identified four needs for collaborative partnerships, namely, a vision and goals needs to be defined; shared and endorsed by both the community and the university, a methodology with values such as	Presented a case study of a long-term community-university partnership with data comprising observations and	

Nature of partnerships and factors contributing to successful partnerships			
Author(s), Year and Country	**Focus and contribution**	**Methodology – sample**	**Gaps**
	mutuality and reciprocity, transparency, and trust and respect, nurtures a context of engagement; a set of goals that is both mutually beneficial and can be achieved and lastly the three R's framework, namely, relationships, recognition and reflection is a strategy for sustainability.	field notes, individual interviews, group discussions, and participant reflections.	
Prilleltensky, 2001 Tennessee	Made a valuable observation where he mentioned that infrastructure, skilled university staff and processes where the voices and involvement of local residents are included needs to be deliberately created to ensure the success and sustainability of community-based endeavours, such as school-university partnerships.		
Thomson, Smith-Tolken, Naidoo & Bringle, 2011 United States of America South Africa DRC	• A partnership is collaborative in nature and must be informed by a shared vision, enable reciprocity, attain mutual goals and benefits, allow for collaborative decision-making and roles and expectations should be clarified and communicated clearly to be successful. • Found that significant differences in historical,	Using a comparative analysis across three widely different context	To extent to which the intent of Service Learning (as a particular means of preparing students to be socially responsible and engaged in strengthening the third sector) varies across contexts.

Nature of partnerships and factors contributing to successful partnerships			
Author(s), Year and Country	**Focus and contribution**	**Methodology – sample**	**Gaps**
	political, economic and social conditions shape the relationships in university-community partnerships and can be negated by values of reciprocity, mutual benefit, democratic processes and community voice.		
Burton, Brown & Johnson, 2013	• The critical role that the notion of insiders and outsiders play in the acceptance of new ideas and values should also be considered when forming partnerships. Therefore, efforts to establish trust and commitment are crucial.		
Kirschner, Dickinson and Blosser, 1996 United States	• Contributed to the knowledge base on challenges involved in negotiating collaborative relationships, in their long term cooperative school-university partnership between school-based teachers and university-based educators at the Ohio State University. • They found that in order to build a community of learners, time, careful nurturing and constant support from all stakeholders is important.	Collaborative action research to revise and restructure the EPIC program.	

Nature of partnerships and factors contributing to successful partnerships			
Author(s), Year and Country	**Focus and contribution**	**Methodology – sample**	**Gaps**
	• Additionally, they found that collaborative action research provided the support for sustained conversations and integrations of multiple ideas and perspectives that helped to overcome the challenge of working collaboratively.		
Akdere and Egan, 2005 United States	• Found that the essential ingredients for successful partnership formation include supportive institutional structure, commitment by organization leaders and commitment of resources. • Additionally, commitment of all stakeholders is of importance in the formation of community partnerships.	Survey research exploring higher education and community partnerships from a Human Resource Development perspective.	Human and social capital is important themes in partnerships therefore new methods to increase community members' and the community organisations' human capital and social capital are needed.
Ebersöhn, Loots, Eloff & Ferreira, 2015 South Africa	• Bridging the gap between higher education and society is a focus in research agendas globally. • Recommended, in their long-term research with teacher partners in a rural ecology, that a partnership should be well conceptualised, expectations clearly communicated during the informed consent phase and that a flexible research		

Nature of partnerships and factors contributing to successful partnerships			
Author(s), Year and Country	**Focus and contribution**	**Methodology – sample**	**Gaps**
	schedule should be adapted as a means to evade probable barriers.		
	• In unequal and rural ecologies, barriers can be expected in establishing a committed, long-term partnership between rural teachers and university researchers.		
	• Poverty can be utilized as a motivating factor for collaboration in higher education community engagement partnerships.		
	• As higher education community partnerships in rural ecologies take longer to progress, and an awareness of contextual, personal and professional difficulties community partners may have to discuss, may circumvent possible obstacles and encourage proactive management of these obstacles.		
	• Teachers in rural South Africa seem to navigate partnership-barriers as they are motivated by the association with a partnership that documents		

Nature of partnerships and factors contributing to successful partnerships			
Author(s), Year and Country	**Focus and contribution**	**Methodology – sample**	**Gaps**
	aspects of inequality as well as contest indifferent attitudes towards continued post-colonial inequalities. • Partnering with teachers in rural ecologies can have mutual benefits for partners involved, it is important to take into account and respect teachers' work responsibilities and related time constraints.		
Strier, 2011 Isreal	• He found several important factors relating to the process of partnership management that includes: role perspectives, group affiliation, institutional context, power relations, the organizational culture of the partnership and the societal perceptions of social problems aimed to be addressed by the partnership. • Illustrated that the process of partnership building is affected by variables such as lack of symmetry between partners, different perceptions of partnerships, role conflicts, organizational cultures,	Conducted a qualitative study that examined the lived experiences of participants in an innovative university-community partnership in Israel.	Transferable knowledge should take into account the national scene, experience are unique and context-related and should be further investigated in different contexts.

Nature of partnerships and factors contributing to successful partnerships			
Author(s), Year and Country	**Focus and contribution**	**Methodology – sample**	**Gaps**
	institutional context, professional views and unequal access to decision making processes.		
	• Partnership's unique ability to combine multiple views, agendas and perspectives can be a source of strength as well as a source of tension and conflict.		
	• He found in his study that the partnership is understood from four conceptions namely, educational, professional, instrumental and political which exist side by side within the realm of the partnership.		
	• Partnerships may be a platform to negotiate critical social tensions as well as be a source of social commonality to facilitate to a critical and egalitarian dialogue between different stakeholders.		
	• Success of partnerships is dependent on the leaders' ability to provide a learning and reflexive organizational culture and a participative organizational structure that will enable the		

Nature of partnerships and factors contributing to successful partnerships			
Author(s), Year and Country	**Focus and contribution**	**Methodology – sample**	**Gaps**
	integration of supplementing, competing and conflicting agendas that forms part of a partnership.		
Minner and Hiles, 2005 United States	• Found in their study that partnerships make a significant difference to rural schools and districts, but much is still to be discovered to identify the critical elements that contribute to success.		Further research is needed to determine the commonalities among different types of partnerships that operate in substantially different rural contexts.
Sandholtz, 2002 United States of America	• In her study she found that school-university partnerships 1) offer multiple and varied opportunities to teachers for professional development, 2) help provide structure for activities based on teacher collaboration and 3) offer the opportunity to increase the professional development options for teachers. • She confirmed that teacher appreciate opportunities to explore, reflect, collaborate with peers, work on authentic learning tasks, and engage in hands-on active learning.	Explored the range of professional development opportunities for teachers in four secondary schools affiliated with the same school-university partnership. Data was collected via surveys, 24 in-depth interviews, structured tasks and informal observation. She made use of adult workplace learning as a framework.	Further research on the model developed: it hold advantages in terms of planning, implementation, expediency and resources, but does not support ongoing teacher learning. Further research on the extent to which and the ways in which partnerships lead to fundamental change in school and district in-service programs.

Nature of partnerships and factors contributing to successful partnerships			
Author(s), Year and Country	**Focus and contribution**	**Methodology – sample**	**Gaps**
Bryan and Henry, 2012 United States	• Effective partnerships are a process that engages the stakeholders in mutual and respectful collaboration and shared responsibility. Mutual goals and outcomes are accomplished by a reciprocal relationship. • Propose a model to help school counsellors through the process of building partnerships. • "rich and effective partnerships are built on a foundation of shared principles or values that enable a healthy collaboration process among partners and lead to improved success and access for students and their families, especially those who are less advantaged schools".		Further research is needed to examin the family and community factors or conditions that promote or hinder the partnership-building process. Additionally, further research is needed to determine whether the partnership process works differently in different types of schools (affluent vs less affluent vs rural vs urban and suburban schools). Questions regarding the sustainability and effects or outcomes of partnership programs using the proposed model compared to other models.

Appendix B Table 6 Functions of partnerships

Functions of partnerships			
Author(s), Year and Country	**Focus and contribution**	**Methodology – sample**	**Gaps**
Knowledge generation, research and education and training			
Timperly, Wilson, Barrar and Fung, 2007 United States of America	• Highlights the importance of career-long learning activities, such as updating knowledge and skills, reflecting on teaching experiences and collaborating with colleagues.	Synthesis of research evidence produced for the New Zealand Ministry of Education's Iterative Best Evidence Synthesis (BES) Programme	
Timperley, 2008 Switzerland	• Suggests in The Education Practice Series -18, that collegial interaction and knowledgeable expertise external to the group (can be researchers or a principal) is some ways of improving teacher learning, improving learner outcomes that might in return improve teacher resilience.	Syntheses of the research on teacher professional learning and development that has been demonstrated to have a positive impact on valued student outcome.	
Darling-Hammond, 1994 United States	• In teacher education, partnerships are ''restructuring teaching knowledge, the form and content of teacher education, and the nature and governance of teaching''. • Partnerships has the potential to foster professional	Literature overview and analysis of the status of teaching as an occupation and of teacher development in the United States.	

Functions of partnerships			
Author(s), Year and Country	**Focus and contribution**	**Methodology – sample**	**Gaps**
	learning communities for teachers, creating the opportunity to analyse their practice and construct new knowledge in collaboration with others (Bickel and Hattrup, 1995). • echoes the importance of partnerships and states that partnerships are "restructuring teaching knowledge, the form and content of teacher education, and the nature and governance of teaching". • Partnerships show the potential to foster professional learning communities where teachers can analyse their practice in collaboration with others which can result in building existing knowledge.		
Mutual benefits			
Lieberman, 1986 United States of America	• School-university partnerships have the potential for collaborative research and development. • Identified the potential of school-university	Collaborative interaction research	

Functions of partnerships			
Author(s), Year and Country	**Focus and contribution**	**Methodology – sample**	**Gaps**
	partnerships to create avenues of collaborative research and development which in return contribute to teachers' professional development. • Partnerships create avenues by which relationships or networks of trust can be established among stakeholders. When relationships between schools and universities are strong, social capital is high and both institutions benefit. • Effective partnerships affirm members and stakeholders by focussing on constructive ways to produce collaborative change that benefit all stakeholders. • The creation of collaborative transformative learning environments that are mutually beneficial can be fostered by school-university partnerships. • Social capital is viewed as the heart of these partnerships including the attributes of bonding, bridging and linking. It is found that as bridging		

Functions of partnerships			
Author(s), Year and Country	**Focus and contribution**	**Methodology – sample**	**Gaps**
	capital increases, the members of the partnership form relationships based on mutuality.		
Calabrese, 2006 United States of America	• Both stakeholders, the university and the school, benefit and have the potential for mutual transformation.	Case study of a partnership with an inner-city high school and university doctoral action research	
Fox and Wilson, 2015 England	• Their study reports potentially different outcomes with regards to the development of beginning teachers' professional practice which is dependent on how they network and hereafter build social capital. • They found that building social capital is important for both recruitment and retention of beginning teachers as developed social capital will not only enable them to overcome demands and stresses of initial training education but also foster self-efficacy and resilience to develop as professionals once employed.	Conducted a study based on qualitative case studies from three secondary schools trainees during a full-time year-long programme in England.	

Functions of partnerships			
Author(s), Year and Country	**Focus and contribution**	**Methodology – sample**	**Gaps**
Ebersöhn and Ferreira's, 2010 South Africa	• Research on how teachers function as resources to sustain resilience in the face of HIV/AIDS-compounded adversities they found teachers formed partnerships with children and families, community volunteers and community organizations, businesses and government to promote resilience in schools. • They concluded that establishment of networks with service providers that function eco-systemically and are relationship-driven can enable teachers to promote resilience in schools.		
Butcher, Egan and Howard, 2009 Australia	• Benefits of transformational education and stated that "education is a major force for bringing positive transformations". • They put forward that education provides knowledge, skills, intellectual stimulation, social interaction and entertainment and that an underlying benefit of education is increased hope.		

Functions of partnerships			
Author(s), Year and Country	**Focus and contribution**	**Methodology – sample**	**Gaps**
	• Their findings suggest that when mutually beneficial partnerships based on transformational education is fostered, that increases in hope are likely to occur. They state that to "become more hopeful is to become more empowered, and to become more empowered is to become better able to escape the cycles of disadvantage" (Butcher, Egan & Howard, 2009:8). • A potential benefit of school-university partnerships, established with Hope Theory as a basis, can lead to increased hope that empowers people and communities who have experienced disadvantage. • Broader increases in hope throughout one's entire life are encouraged by enhanced hope in the educational sphere.		
Strier, 2011 Isreal	• Poses the question whether partnerships between universities and communities are suited to solve	Conducted a qualitative study that examined the lived	Transferable knowledge should take into account the national scene,

Functions of partnerships			
Author(s), Year and Country	**Focus and contribution**	**Methodology – sample**	**Gaps**
	problems or are they incessant exercises in relationship-building. • Conclude that university-community partnerships may be one way to influence participants' social perceptions of social problems which in return may have a ripple effect that encourages teacher resilience.	experiences of participants in an innovative university-community partnership in Israel.	experience are unique and context-related and should be further investigated in different contexts.
Challenges to forming partnerships			
Bartholomew and Sandholtz, 2009 United States	• Three main conclusions were derived from this study that highlights the complex issues embedded in school–university collaboration. Firstly, they found that as the partnership progresses, contradictory goals may come to light that could negatively affect the partnership work. They found that initially the school and university partners seemed to share common or complementary goals. Second relates to the role of the teacher, where school and university partners may hold opposing	Conducted a case study with 22 schools in the state of California in the U.S. to examine how differing views on the teacher's role in school reform affected the work of a school–university partnership. Data was collected over a period of four years and drew from three sources: documents, interviews, and	

Functions of partnerships			
Author(s), Year and Country	**Focus and contribution**	**Methodology – sample**	**Gaps**
	perspectives. Third, a reform context is created by high stakes testing and accountability measures where the policy environment is merged to instructional practice. • The professional development of teacher and educational opportunities for their learners can be enhanced by collaborative efforts between schools and universities. As a result partnerships are a prevalent component of school reform efforts. Logistical issues, institutional differences and institutional responses to reform are all challenges that can be come across in partnerships.	observations.	
Wang and Zhang, 2014 China	• Their study resulted in the identification of several issues pertaining to school-university collaborations. Issues included time constraints and lack of energy to engage in research on the part of the student teachers, mutual respect and reasonable expectations, effectiveness of the school	Conducted a collaborative action research project with a group of university researchers and a group of senior secondary school English teachers in an attempt to promote teacher	

Functions of partnerships			
Author(s), Year and Country	**Focus and contribution**	**Methodology – sample**	**Gaps**
	organisation, pressure and motivation from the university researchers, authorship in publications and lastly appropriate forms of teacher research • To ensure successful collaboration the development mutual understanding and reasonable expectations is of importance.	autonomy in the Chinese context. They collected data from questionnaires, interviews, reflective journals, project meeting discussions and research reports.	
Kearney, 2015 Australia	• The focus of the study involves resettlement issues in Australia. The established partnership aimed to to enhance educational opportunities for a Samoan-heritage community. In her exploratory paper, she identified three challenges for community engagement in an Australian context, namely 1) *institutional perceptions* within the higher education sector (relating to engaged approaches being misunderstood or undervalued); 2) *community perceptions* based on mistrust; and 3) a *lack of support structures* for sustaining engagement. Kearny responded to the three	Presented a case study of a long-term community-university partnership with data comprising observations and field notes, individual interviews, group discussions, and participant reflections.	

Functions of partnerships			
Author(s), Year and Country	**Focus and contribution**	**Methodology – sample**	**Gaps**
	identified partnership challenges in the following way: With regards to the first challenge, she considered conditions within universities that support mutual engagement, resulting in suggestions for academics to develop as engaged scholars. She emphasised that the community-university partnership needs to be perceived as legitimate, worthwhile and with the imprimatur of leaders on both sides (Kearny, 2015: 31). For the second challenge she advocated the need for a methodology that builds relationships among all members of the partnership. She emphasised that aspects such as mutuality and reciprocity, transparency, trust, and respect should be valued in the partnership. Furthermore, it was important that the partnership be viewed as mutually beneficial for both the academic institution and the school members. For the third challenge, she identified		

Functions of partnerships			
Author(s), Year and Country	**Focus and contribution**	**Methodology – sample**	**Gaps**
	conditions that sustain community engagement practices. These include the importance of quality relationships within a partnership, recognition of achievements and the importance of reflection and a commitment to lifelong-learning.		
Parry, Harreveld and Danaher, 2011 Australian	• Found in their study that when collaboration is viewed by one or more partners as counterproductive and even inauspicious to particular members' interests can cause tensions and strains on the partnership which can possible contribute to partnerships being devalued.	Qualitative inductive comparative case study method: Four Australian schools and faculties of teacher education	Teacher education schools and faculties and their multiple partners need to develop strategies that enhance the mutual benefits of their relationship and that fulfil as far as possible within the real and growing constraints, their separate and shared interests.

Individual consent for participation in a Research Study
A research project of the University of Pretoria
Project Title: Flourishing Learning Youth

Invitation to participate

We would like to invite you .... to participate in a research study. Your participation is voluntary and you may withdraw from the study at any time. However, for you to be part of the research you are requested to sign this consent form, which gives you permission to participate in the study.

Description of the research

The study aims to capture your perceptions of the existing partnerships between schools and a University.

Risks and Inconveniences

We do not see any risks for you in participating in this study. If any problems do arise you can speak to us and we will make sure that you understand what is going on and feel comfortable to continue in the study. Your identity will not be revealed to anyone and any information that we get from the study will remain private.

Confidentiality

All of the information that we get from the study will be kept strictly confidential and will only be available to the research team. No information will be shared with anyone else. Please note that none of the questions in this study are designed to collect information that will require us to contact anyone. All the information we get from the study will be stored in locked files in research offices at the University of Pretoria.

Because confidentiality is important we would expect that any information you hear is also private and that you would not discuss this information with anyone.

Benefits

We hope this study will benefit you, your school and also your community. There are no financial benefits to this study.

What are the rights of the participants in this study?

Participation in this study is purely voluntary and any participant, at any particular time during the study, may refuse to continue their participation or stop without giving any reason. You will not be affected in any way, should you decide not to participate or want to stop taking part in the study.

Has this study received ethical approval?

This study has been approved by the Education Ethics Committee of the University of Pretoria.

Questions

Please feel free to ask about anything you don't understand and take as long as you feel necessary before you make a decision about whether or not you want to give permission to take part in the study. If you have questions later that you don't think of now you can phone Prof Liesel Ebersöhn, at 012 420 2337 or you can ask us next time we come to visit the school.

Informed consent

I hereby confirm that I have been informed about the nature, conduct, risks and benefits of this study. I have also read or have had someone read to me the above information regarding this study and that I understand the information that has been given to me. I am aware that the results and information about this study will be processed anonymously. I may, at any stage, without prejudice, withdraw my consent to participate in this study. I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and (of my own free will) declare I may participate in this study.

(a) Writing your name on this page means that you agree to be in the project and that you know what will happen to you in this study. If you decide to quit the project all you have to do is tell the person in charge.

Name: _____ (Please print)

Signature: _____ Date: _____

(b) Writing your name here means that you agree that we can take **photographs and audiovisual** footage of you during the project and **share these images** during discussions, as well as reports we write about the project. We will not share your name with the people who see the images. If you decide that we should rather not take photographs or audiovisual footage of you in the project, all you have to do is tell the person in charge.

Name: _____ (Please print)

Signature: _____ Date: _____

I, _____ herewith confirm that the above person has been informed fully about the nature, conduct and risks of the above study.

If you have any further questions about this study, you can phone the investigator, Prof Liesel Ebersöhn at 012 420 2337. If you have a question about your rights as a participant you can contact the University of Pretoria Education Ethics Committee at 012 339 8612

2

Demographical questionnaire

A. PARTICULARS		
Questionnaire number		
Interviewee surname and name*		
Date of birth		
Age		
Nationality		

GENERAL INSTRUCTION	Tick the box where necessary, or answer the question in the space provided.

A.	DETAILS OF TEACHER

		Male	Female
1.	What gender are you?	1	2

2.	How old where you on your last birthday?	
Below 30 years		1
30-40 years		2
41-50 years		3
51-60 years		4
61-70 years		5
71-80 years		6
81-90 years		7
90-100 years		8

3.	What is your highest level of education? (Choose ONE)	
Grade 7 and lower		1
Grade 8-9		2
Grade 10-11		3
Grade 12		4
Post school qualification: certificate, diploma		5
If yes, what certificate /diploma did you receive?		
If yes, where did you attain your certificate, diploma?		
Post school qualification: degree		6
If yes, what degree did you receive?		
If yes, where did you attain your degree?		

4.	What is your current relationship or marital status? (Choose ONE)	
Married		1
Living together, not married (living with partner)		2
Single, (not in relationships)		3
Divorced / separated / partner died		4
Other		5

5.	What is your home language?		
Afrikaans	Speak	1.1
	Read	1.2
	Write	1.3
English	Speak	1.1
	Read	1.2
	Write	1.3
isiNdebele	Speak	1.1
	Read	1.2
	Write	1.3
isiZulu	Speak	1.1
	Read	1.2
	Write	1.3
isiXhosa	Speak	1.1
	Read	1.2
	Write	1.3
Sepedi	Speak	1.1
	Read	1.2
	Write	1.3
Sesotho	Speak	1.1
	Read	1.2
	Write	1.3
Setswana	Speak	1.1
	Read	1.2
	Write	1.3
Shona	Speak	1.1
	Read	1.2
	Write	1.3
Siswati	Speak	1.1
	Read	1.2
	Write	1.3
Tshivenda	Speak	1.1
	Read	1.2
	Write	1.3

6.	Where do you live?

8.	Where did you grow up?

9.1	What is the main source of income you received in the last month? (Choose ONE)	
Received NO income	1
Formal salary / earnings on which you pay income tax	2
Informal earnings from jobs you do (no income tax)	3
Contributions by adult family members or relatives	4
Government pensions / grants	5
Grants / donations by private welfare organizations	6
Other sources	7

9.2	Do you have an additional source of income?	
No	1
Yes	2

2

If yes, what do you do?

10.	To what services do you have access?	
Running water		1
Electricity		2
Health services		3
Transport		4

If yes, what type of transport:

Other	5

If yes, what other services:

11.	How far do you travel to work?	
Less than 10 km		1
Between 10 km and 30 km		2
Between 30 km and 60 km		3
More than 60 km		4

12.	How do you travel to work?	
DBE Bus		1
Own transport		2
Taxi		3
Bicycle		4
Walking		5
Other		6

Please specify:

B.	TEACHER

1.	What subjects do you teach currently?	
		1
		2
		3
		4
		5
		6

2.	What subjects did you teach previously?	
		1
		2
		3
		4
		5
		6

3.	Describe your school.

3

4.	Describe your classroom.

5.	How long have you taught at this school?	
Between 1 and 5 years		1
Between 5 and 10 years		2
Between10 and 15 years		3
Between 15 and 20 years		4
More than 20 years		5

6.	What language (s) do you speak at home?	
		1
		2
		3
		4
		5
		6

7.	What language (s) do you speak at school?	
		1
		2
		3
		4
		5
		6

8.	What do you like about being a teacher?

9.	What do you dislike about being a teacher?

C.   PARTNERSHIP

1.	What do you believe this partnership to be about?	
The university is helping the child to learn.		1
The children are assisted to know what to do after school.		2
The children are taught how to apply for funding for further studies.		3
The children learn how to apply or register for studies.		4
The children are taught how to find a job (job seeking skills etc).		5
The university helps children with emotional trouble (sadness, grief, trauma).		6

4

2.	What type of feedback did you receive from the school on the students working with the children?	
Feedback from your own child.		1
Feedback from the school.		2
Written report done by the student working with your child.		3
Not applicable		4

		Yes	No	N.A.
3.	Would you like to receive some sort of feedback?	1	2	3
If yes, in what way?				

PARTY		VERBATIM
Researcher	*1*	Okay, well basically what we're doing today is just
	2	to reflect what we've done in the workshop last
	3	year in June there at Badplaas and the reason for
	4	that is just to make sure that the information that
	5	you gave us, that I've written it correctly and
	6	understood it correctly, so that I can represent
	7	your perceptions on the partnership, and not my
	8	own ideas. Okay?
	9	
Male voice	*10*	[indistinct]
	11	
Researcher	*12*	Because we want a honest and truthful repre-
	13	sentation of what you think and how we can
	14	improve it and use it in the future.
	15	But firstly I'd just like to - you remember we did the
	16	Mission and Vision statement. So we put it
	17	together for you for each school on a paper like
	18	this, so it gives you the Mission.
	19	
	20	So the Mission was: *Enhance holistic develop-*
	21	*ment through education of the greater eKulundeni*
	22	*area for a working partnership and to further*
	23	*develop learning and all aspects of learners,*
	24	*teachers and community members.*
	25	Okay so that was the one that we all decided on in
	26	that day.
	27	
Male	*28*	Yes.
	29	
Researcher	*30*	Then the Vision is: *To see the community in*
	31	*pursuit of poverty alleviation towards indepen-*
	32	*dence and a changed life [indistinct] for the better.*

	1	Okay that is what we decided on.
	2	
	3	There is just an explanation of what this flight
	4	project with the University is about, just to give you
	5	a quick recap of that, so you can go and read that.
	6	And here we've got contact numbers and email
	7	numbers of people who can assist you when you're
	8	having a problem.
	9	•Like Mr Ngubani and I was talking earlier,
	10	sometimes you've got a problem with a child in the
	11	classroom with specific problems, and you don't
	12	know how to address that problem - you can phone
	13	these people, They are all willing to help, and
	14	maybe get some advice.
	15	
	16	Okay, so you'll see there is a - they've got different
	17	areas of expertise that you can see, so there is
	18	one for teachers' careers, to develop teachers'
	19	careers.
	20	•I'm an educational psychologist.
	21	•Dr Roux works with learners and their challenges.
	22	•Dr Funke works with language literacy.
	23	Okay, so there's quite a few. And I think –
	24	•Eugene, where is yours?
	25	
Male voice	26	...[indistinct – *intervenes*]
	27	
Researcher	28	Ja, that is there.
	29	
Male voice	30	Yes.
	31	
Researcher	32	And he works with community engagement.
	33	

Participant	1	Yes.
	2	
Researcher	3	Alright, so you'll see there, it tells you there what is
	4	the focus of that.
	5	So I'm going to give one for your school and you
	6	can put it up somewhere, and there's one for
	7	Ngalandi as well, for you to use.
	8	
	9	Alright, okay, next we're just going to go through
	10	those activities that we did last time.
	11	
	12	So you remember that we had five questions that
	13	we did and then we collapsed[?] I think question
	14	2 and 3 together.
	15	•So the first one was: *What do you know about*
	16	*the ongoing collaboration or partnership?*
	17	That was the first question we asked, and what
	18	I did is I went through all the presentations and
	19	I got the main ideas from all of them, so this is
	20	what I've got.
	21	
	22	What you need to do is to listen if that is what you
	23	remember you said, okay. And if there is anything
	24	else you would like to add, you can tell me that
	25	and I can add to the data.
	26	
	27	Alright, so the first thing or the one if you want to
	28	just have a look at it together there:
	29	•*is working together and to show commitment.*
	30	•It's about *sharing of ideas and information*.
	31	•It's about *identifying and using available*
	32	*resources. You will gain new insight.*
	33	No, that's fine.

	1	•It's about *identifying challenges and how to*
	2	*minimise it.*
	3	•It's about *referral networks, initiation of projects*
	4	*benefits both the educators and the community,*
	5	*and it assists students with career guidance and*
	6	*subject choices.*
	7	Is there anything you would like to add from that,
	8	that you remember? *[Pause]*
	9	Or is it all of the ideas that was taken up?
	10	*[Chuckles]*
	11	
Male voice	12	Yes.
	13	
Researcher	14	Is that basically what you meant? Okay.
	15	
	16	••So the second one was the two activities
	17	together: *So why do you think teachers in schools*
	18	*partner with the University, as well as what are the*
	19	*benefits to work with the school/university*
	20	*partnership?*
	21	•Okay, the first thing was that you've said that
	22	-It *brings hope. It brings knowledge and shares*
	23	*ideas. It brings new insights and self discovery*.
	24	-It's - you are able to identify challenges, establish
	25	projects.
	26	-It helps to alleviate poverty.
	27	-It helps to assist with career guidance and subject
	28	choices.
	29	-It gives you the process and procedures to apply
	30	at university.
	31	-It helps you with specific teaching skills, problem
	32	solving skills.
	33	-It can establish the counselling centre, or a

	1	library.
	2	-It could also assist with the science centres for
	3	equipment and then also it mobilises resources
	4	and learning.
	5	Is there anything you would like to add to that?
	6	*[Pause]*
	7	
Participant	*8*	...[indistinct – *voice too soft*]
	9	
Researcher	*10*	Are you happy with that?
	11	
Male voice	*12*	Yes.
	13	
Researcher	*14*	Alright, okay let's do the fourth one. We can just
	15	have a look at that again.
	16	•••Okay, so this is *why the challenges of the school*
	17	*- what are the challenges of a school/university*
	18	*partnership?* Okay, so you said
	19	-maybe we expect too much and the scope and
	20	roles are not made clear. Okay, so roles and
	21	scope from the University as well as from your
	22	side.
	23	-A lot of the time people expect to earn money
	24	when they get involved in the partnership.
	25	-A challenge is clear planning. You need specific
	26	dates to be able to plan appropriately.
	27	-Feedback is sometimes a problem. So what you
	28	want is communication and consultations to be
	29	improved.
	30	-Another challenge is the workload of teachers.
	31	Okay, so you've got too many things already to
	32	add to that partnership responsibilities.
	33	-There's a lot of the times a shortage of resources

	1	and knowledge. In other words, how to apply to
	2	the University and funds available. Okay.
	3	-A lot of the times there's transport problems
	4	where teachers live far away or they're not part of
	5	the community of the school.
	6	-A challenge is frequent face-to-face meetings.
	7	-Learners don't have adequate foundation skills a
	8	lot of the time, so that makes it more difficult for
	9	you to teach as you should or as you want to.
	10	-A lot of the times there's lack of space, for
	11	example, maybe there's place to do a library or a
	12	science lab., but then you don't have the space to
	13	actually accommodate it,
	14	-and then the last one was vandalism and theft -
	15	that that often happens when things are
	16	established at schools.
	17	Is there anything else you would like
	18	...[intervenes]?
	19	
Participant	*20*	[indistinct] it covers a lot of things that we've said.
	21	
Researcher	*22*	Ja.
	23	
Participant	*24*	Ja.
	25	
Researcher	*26*	Okay. Are you both happy with that one?
	27	
Participant &	*28*	Yes.
male voice	*29*	
	30	
Researcher	*31*	Alright. Okay, so this is the last one that we're
	32	going to do.
	33	So this was activity 5. We just carried on, nè.

Male *(in back-ground)*	1 2 3	Okay, [indistinct] this.
Researcher	4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17	•••••Okay so we're on activity 5. *So how can a teacher[?]/school/university partnership grow?* Okay so these were suggestions that you've made for how we can make it grow. So you said -frequent communication and consultation with meetings and follow ups would be a good idea. -You wanted full commitment from all parties involved. Okay. -Also you thought of involving community members as well as other teachers at the schools and not just a specific few. -Obtaining more funding and sponsors for projects at the schools.
Male voice	18 19	Hm-hm.
Researcher	20 21 22 23 24	-Okay, update teaching methods so that you can have new information and relevant information. -And then establish a Vision and Mission, which we did do last year in September I think.
Male voice & Participant	25 26 27	Hm. Yes.
Researcher	28 29 30 31 32 33	-And then you also said T-shirts is a good idea, because it's a marketing and association as well. -And then the last one is to celebrate the milestones that you've reached. Okay is there anything else you would like to add to that question? *[Pause]*

	1	
Male voice	*2*	That is good[?].
	3	
Researcher	*4*	Are you all happy with that?
	5	
General	*6*	Yes.
	7	
Researcher	*8*	Okay, perfect. Alright. So the next thing is just
	9	next time when we come - we come in September
	10	again, then we would like to make a Bambanani for
	11	all T-shirt for each of you. So we were thinking –
	12	-maybe you must just tell us what colour would you
	13	like?
	14	-Can we put the Vision and Mission at the back
	15	and maybe just Bambanani for all at the front?
	16	-How would you like it to look, the T-shirt that
	17	we're going to make? And a colour maybe?
	18	So you three are going to decide on the T-shirt
	19	now because you're here.
	20	
	21	[general laughter]
	22	
General	*23*	Ja.
	24	
Researcher	*25*	Ja. So I don't know if you've got an idea how you
	26	would like to have it look? And what colours you
	27	like maybe?
	28	
Male voice	*29*	What colours does the University use?
	30	
Researcher	*31*	The University has got - it's red, yellow, black,
	32	white, hey?
	33	

Male voice (2)	*1*	Ja, in terms of [indistinct] the logo[?] ...
	2	
Researcher	*3*	The University colours?
	4	
General	*5*	Ja. Ja.
	6	
Male voice (2)	*7*	The colours, ja.
	8	
Male voice	*9*	Okay.
	10	
Male voice (2)	*11*	And the standard [indistinct] University T-shirt will
	12	be white and then using those colours.
	13	
Researcher	*14*	Hmm, I think it's like the ones we gave you last
	15	time.
	16	
Male voice (2)	*17*	It was white nè?
	18	
Researcher	*19*	Hmm. It was white.
	20	
General	*21*	Ja.
	22	
Male voice (2)	*23*	But any colour they can ...[intervenes]
	24	
Researcher	*25*	They can make it any colour that you
	26	want ...[indistinct – *voice fades*] to because we'll
	27	order it.
General	*28*	
	29	Ja.
Participant	*30*	
	31	Is it bright, bright green.
Male voice	*32*	
		[indistinct]

Participant	*1*	
	2	Is it bright? Because [indistinct] anything that is
	3	green, it shows life ...
Researcher	*4*	
	5	Hm.
Male voice	*6*	
	7	[indistinct]
Participant	*8*	
	9	.. and associated with life.
Researcher	*10*	
	11	Hm. Is it a dark green or a light green? [Indistinct]
Participant	*12*	
	13	It can be any ...
Researcher	*14*	
	15	Any green? Okay.
Participant	*16*	
	17	.. any green ...[indistinct – *voice fades*]. [Indistinct]
	18	maybe. I know, I'm talking to my friends, the two
	19	colleagues.
Researcher	*20*	
	21	Hm.
	22	
	23	*[pause]*
Participant	*24*	
	25	Which colour then? The University colour they've
	26	got this ..
Male voices	*27*	
	28	Hm. Ja.
Participant	*29*	
	30	.. gold, you said it's yellow? Gold and yellow, or -
	31	which one?
Researcher	*32*	
		Ja, it's actually gold, but ja, they use yellow as

	1	well.
Participant	*2*	
	3	It's gold, then that is fine. It is fine. And the
	4	blue ...[indistinct – *voice fades*].
Male voice	*5*	
	6	Ja, because the reason why I was asking
	7	about ...[indistinct – *intervenes*
Researcher	*8*	
	9	It's the association?
Male voice	*10*	
	11	Ja, and to show that we are working with the
	12	University of Pretoria, something like that, you
	13	see?
Male (back)	*14*	
	15	[indistinct]
Researcher	*16*	
	17	I think maybe if we put like the ...
Male	*18*	
	19	The logo.
Researcher	*20*	
	21	.. the logo on, as well.
Male	*22*	
	23	The logo, it's fine.
General	*24*	
	25	Hm. Yes. Okay.
Researcher	*26*	
	27	That would make sense maybe.
Participant	*28*	
	29	Ja, it can make sense if it has the logo.
Researcher	*30*	
	31	Hm. Maybe put the Bambanani for all at the back
	32	with the Vision and Mission on it, and then in front
	33	do the University logo?

General		Ja. Yes.
Male voice (2)		Will you be able to fit the whole Mission at the back? [Indistinct]
Researcher		*Uhm* I think they will be able to, hey Eugene?
Male voice		Let me see.
Researcher		We'll ask.
General *[two males speak]*		[indistinct] like all this. …[Indistinct – *parties speak simultaneously*] Maybe let's just put the name. There's also the cost implication as well
Researcher		Hm. Ja.
Male		[indistinct] are there.
Researcher		Ja, we'll find out.
General *[two males speak]*		If it's a small print ...[intervenes] [indistinct] able [indistinct] you can fit all this ...[intervenes]
Researcher		In there?
General *[two males speak]*		If it's a small print .. Ja. ... because people have a problem with reading anything, they won't be able to read it.

Researcher		Ja.
Male voice (2)		Yes, that's true.
Male voice		Let's rather use the name rather.
Researcher		Ja, the name only.
Male voice		The name at the back and then University one[?] at the front?
		Ja.
		…[End of recording]…