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Conceptualisations of teacher resilience in challenged education spaces

by

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Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

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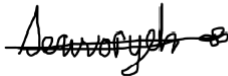
Prof L. Ebersöhn

PRETORIA

September, 2021

DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I, Irene, Seaworyeh, declare that this study titled: “**Conceptualisations of teacher resilience in challenged education spaces**”, which I hereby submit for the degree Master Education in Educational Psychology at the University of Pretoria, is my own work and has not been previously submitted by me for a degree at this or any other tertiary institution.



2021-09-09

.....
Irene Seaworyeh

.....
Date

ETHICAL STATEMENT

The author, whose name appears on the title page of this mini-dissertation, has obtained, for the research described in this work, the applicable research ethics approval. The author declares that she has observed the ethical standards required in terms of the University of Pretoria's *Code of ethics for researchers and the Policy guidelines for responsible research*.

ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE



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CC Ms Thandi Mngomezulu
Prof. Liesel Ebersöhn

This Ethics Clearance Certificate should be read in conjunction with the Integrated Declaration Form (D08) which specifies details regarding:

- Compliance with approved research protocol,
- No significant changes,
- Informed consent/assent,
- Adverse experience or undue risk,
- Registered title, and
- Data storage requirements.

DECLARATION FROM THE LANGUAGE EDITOR

Edit declaration

I, Wilna Swart, solemnly declare that August 2021 I performed the professional language-edit of Ms Irene Seaworyeh's Master's dissertation entitled 'Teacher Conceptualisations of Teacher Resilience in Challenged Education Spaces'.

The academic standard of Ms Seaworyeh's work, which includes content and citation, is exceptional and no doubt she deserves the highest accolades. The amount of intellectual energy invested in this research paper bodes well for Ms Seaworyeh's continued learning and working careers.

Ms Seaworyeh received comprehensive editorial notes, comments and recommendations during the editing process. Editorial amendments were accepted or rejected at the discretion of the client who submits the paper for moderation.

As ethical editor, I reminded Ms Seaworyeh that avoiding plagiarism was outside of my remit and gave her guidelines in this regard.

Ms Seaworyeh has every reason to be very proud of her Master's degree and I believe she will reap many and varied benefits for not settling for anything but the best in her pursuit of this academic qualification. May you prosper and flourish, Irene, in your life and career after investing so much in this extremely important academic endeavour.



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ABSTRACT

In order to address the limited existing knowledge on teacher resilience in challenged contexts, this qualitative secondary data analysis study explored teacher conceptualisations of teacher resilience in challenged Global South educational spaces. Phenomenology framed the study, and the theoretical framework was the Relationship Resourced Resilience theory. The study purposively sampled extant qualitative baseline and intervention Isithebe data on peri-urban primary school teachers from challenged contexts (purposively selected teachers n=38, females n=36, males n=2) from purposively selected peri-urban primary schools (n=6) in socio-economically challenged contexts in the Nelson Mandela Metropole).

Following thematic analysis of textual and visual participatory and reflection data (verbatim transcriptions and photographs), it became evident that teachers conceptualised that teacher resilience was enabled by *Being a quality teacher* and *Supportive relationships*. Teachers mobilised relationships as protective resources to allow them to give and receive social support. The relational space also enabled teachers to act as role models to school stakeholders. Both of these positive outcomes from relational pathways supported teacher wellbeing in the form of job satisfaction. Teachers also used opportunities for professional development to participate in life-long learning to ensure quality education.

Key words: Teacher resilience, challenged contexts, Global South, relationships, social support, teacher professional development, job satisfaction, role model.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO AND CONTEXTS OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Countries in the Global South are characterised by historical colonial occupation, recent political democratisation, current contextual inequalities and struggles against poverty (Montiel, 2018). South Africa's infrastructure has been moulded by its colonial history (Coovadia et al., 2009), which resulted in fragmented service delivery and ever-increasing inequality in living standards (Dados & Connell, 2012). Structural inequality (Ebersöhn & Loots, 2017) and environmental adversity, such as poverty (Ebersöhn, 2014), have a significant impact on the effectiveness of South African teachers. In the Southern African context, it has become of paramount relevance to investigate how teachers can resile despite such difficulties. As a result, research that focuses on teacher resilience has escalated (Ebersöhn & Loots, 2017; Ebersöhn, 2012, 2014). Literature defines teacher resilience as processes where teachers employ protective resources (Beltman et al., 2011) and coping strategies (Mansfield et al., 2016) in response to hardships to remain in the teaching profession (Ebersöhn, 2014).

Global South countries are characterised by significant challenges such as social injustice, structural and economic inequality and marginalisation, which have put great strain on the development of these countries. Globalisation and postcolonialism are inherent to Global South spaces, where the lack of equality in the allocation of resources is exacerbated. One of the greatest challenges faced by the Global South is the ability to adapt to the changes of global forces. Education systems are expected to provide quality teaching and learning, despite the challenges that plague their environment.

In the present study, I drew on existing qualitative data from the Isithebe study¹, conducted by the Centre for the Study of Resilience (CSR), University of

¹ The Isithebe study (Ebersöhn et al., 2020) is a school-based intervention research study on social connectedness as a pathway to teacher resilience, conducted with teachers (n = 38; M = 2; F = 36) in six peri-urban primary schools in socio-economically challenged contexts in the Eastern Cape.

Ebersöhn et al. (2020) draw on Nokele (2006) to explain the value of the *eating mat, or wooden tray (isithebe)*, for both isiXhosa and isiZulu South Africans. For example, amaXhosa sometimes put the dish or meat on a large Woven mat in front of the people for them to help themselves. Isithebe is therefore a symbol of bringing family together, of connecting people and of preventing isolation. Isithebe shows nurturing, trust, comfort, care and support as well as a deep interest of people in one another.

Pretoria (UP) to explore teachers' conceptualisation of teacher resilience in a challenging educational context. I examined teacher insights regarding pathways that, from their perspective, enabled them to resile in their profession despite chronic and cumulative challenges in the education space.

In this chapter, I present the rationale for the study, accompanied by the purpose, objectives and research questions. I situate my study within a larger intervention study (the Isithebe study), discuss paradigmatic perspectives and the chosen theoretical framework, concluding with a brief overview of the research design.

1.2 RATIONALE

This section describes the challenges that teachers face globally, and in the Global South, the possible shortage of teachers, and the possible consequences of these challenges. I briefly introduce teacher resilience as a body of knowledge and conclude with possible contributions by this study.

Teachers are no different from other people who search for satisfaction and professional and personal fulfilment in their careers (Ellison & Woods, 2020; Gu & Day, 2013). Yet, globally, teachers face social injustice, structural and economic inequality, and marginalisation (Ebersöhn, 2014; Castro et al., 2010; Subotzky, 1997). Countries in the Global South are characterised by historical colonial occupation, recent political democratisation, current contextual inequalities and struggles against poverty (Montiel, 2018). These result in fragmented service delivery and ever-increasing inequality in living standards (Dados & Connell, 2012). Over the past two years Covid-19 has added globally to the intensity of the challenges mentioned above (Duffield & O'Hare, 2020; Sachs, 2020).

Early teacher dropout rates (Day & Gu, 2009; Ewing et al., 2003), burnout (Coetzee et al., 2015) and inadequate teacher retention strategies (Lynch, 2016) are not unique to the South African context, seeing that high levels of teacher attrition is a global concern (Mansfield et al., 2016). Studies situated in the Global North, for example in the United States of America (Burton et al., 2013; Burton & Johnson, 2010), Australia (Nolan et al., 2014; Johnson et al., 2010) and China (Gu & Li, 2013) indicate that these countries also face a shortage of teachers (Xaba, 2003).

Global South countries are characterised by significant challenges such as social injustice, structural and economic inequality and marginalisation, which put

great strain on the development of these countries (Ebersöhn, 2016, 2017). Globalisation and postcolonialism are inherent to Global South spaces and aggravate the lack of equality in the allocation of resources (Ebersöhn, 2019a; Ebersöhn, 2019b; Milner & Khoza, 2008). Yet education systems are expected to provide quality teaching and learning, despite the challenges that prevail in their environment (Ebersöhn, 2019a; Ebersöhn, 2019b; Milner & Khoza, 2008). Many schools, and consequently teachers, are not adequately equipped to cope with these challenges (Milner & Khoza, 2008).

The working conditions of South African teachers is characterised by poverty, a lack of resources, poor infrastructure, and inadequate and unreliable service delivery (Ebersöhn & Eloff, 2004). As a result, teachers experience distress and burnout, causing them to leave the profession (Day, 2012; Ebersöhn & Ferreira, 2012). For teachers to remain in the profession and to sustain quality teaching and learning, a resilience approach must be used to address the difficulties inherent to the profession.

Currently research on teacher resilience is on the rise (Ebersöhn & Loots, 2017; Ebersöhn, 2012, 2014). Scholars interested in teacher resilience seek to know how teachers could continue in the profession, prevent burnout, and provide high-quality teaching in the face of adversity (Beltman et al., 2011). Ebersöhn (2014) defines teacher resilience as the adaptive processes in which teachers engage to adapt to challenges. During such processes, teachers employ protective resources (Beltman et al., 2011) and coping strategies (Mansfield et al., 2016) to remain in the teaching profession when faced with hardships.

A large percentage of teacher resilience literature is created in the West and Global North (Hart & Nash, 2020; Gu, 2018; Burton et al., 2013; Cross & Hong, 2012), with little representation of teacher resilience in the Global South. Turner (2007) asserts that cross-border access to and sharing of knowledge should be emphasised.

With the aforementioned in mind, the current study explored the teacher resilience of teachers facing “high levels of illiteracy, unemployment, poorly developed infrastructure, limited access to welfare services, HIV/AIDS-related loss and grief, caretaking responsibilities and additional financial strains” (Ebersöhn & Ferreira, 2012, p.13). Exploring the aforementioned may contribute to teachers’ perspectives of teacher resilience in a Global South space such as South Africa.

1.3 PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1.3.1 Objectives and purpose of the study

In this section I address the purpose and objectives of this exploratory study. Teacher resilience in the Global South remains under-researched (Theron, 2018; Ebersöhn & Loots, 2017; Rockenbauch & Sakdapolrak, 2017; Ebersöhn, 2014; Beltman et al., 2011;). Therefore, in studying this phenomenon, the dominant purpose of the study was explorative (Rahi, 2017).

To contribute to the emerging field of teacher resilience I explored the experiences of teacher resilience reported by teachers (n = 38, Male = 2, Female = 36) in schools (n = 6) (see Table 1.2) in a challenged context. The objective underpinning was to generate accounts of teacher resilience as voiced by the teachers themselves in a challenging Global South context (Beltman et al., 2011).

Stebbins (2001) states that exploratory research, as the term implies, intends merely to explore the research questions and does not intend to offer final and conclusive solutions to existing problems. Explorative research thus aims to gain insight and understanding by using the perspectives of a specific group of individuals (in this study teachers in challenging contexts) on a particular topic of interest (conceptualisations of teacher resilience). Explorative research is of great value for this study as it has a dynamic, flexible nature and leads to unexpected findings and new ideas (Swedberg, 2020; Wang et al., 2000). Furthermore, explorative research guides future research as it focuses on subsequent research questions and therefore advances the effectiveness of the findings (Dacre & Qualter 2012; Keaveney, 1995).

A limitation of explorative research is that the sample may not be representative as it might not have been selected on a probability basis. In explorative research, it is highly likely that the chosen sample either does or does not represent the phenomenon under study (Azarian, 2011). It is moreover not known in advance whether something novel will emerge from the phenomenon being explored (Swedberg, 2020). To overcome this limitation, my supervisor guided me in ensuring that the context and participants being explored as well as the research questions were unique to the body of knowledge dealing with teacher resilience.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research question directed the study:

- How do teachers in peri-urban primary schools in a challenged education spaces conceptualise teacher resilience?

1.5 THE ISITHEBE STUDY: BACKGROUND OF EXTANT DATA USED IN THE CURRENT STUDY

1.5.1 Introduction

In this section, I provide the background of the extant data obtained from the Isithebe study (Ebersöhn et al., 2020), from which I selected qualitative data to address the research purpose, questions and objectives. I describe the selection of in-service teachers who generated baseline qualitative, and participatory reflection and action (PRA) data (Chambers, 1994, 2012) in the Isithebe study (see section 3.4 in Chapter 3).

1.5.2 Description of the Isithebe sample: Teachers in primary schools in challenging educational contexts

The Isithebe study investigated social connectedness as a pathway to teacher resilience. The Isithebe intervention spanned 12 months (September 2018 to September 2019) and included pre- and post-intervention, mixed-method measurements of teacher resilience and social connectedness (Ebersöhn et al., 2020). Isithebe is a school-based intervention study with conveniently sampled teachers ($n = 38$; $M = 2$; $F = 36$) in purposively selected peri-urban primary schools ($n = 6$) in the Eastern Cape. The schools were in challenging educational contexts, given the high level of socio-economic deprivation that they experienced, as discussed later in this chapter.

For the purpose of this study 'challenging contexts' refers to school spaces in a Global South context that have experienced significant economic and social transformation, leading to substantial differences in living standards and resource availability (Dados & Connell, 2012). The aforementioned is demonstrated by the schools' quintiles or resource levels. To signify 'schools in challenging educational contexts' as typical examples of similar schools in a postcolonial Global South space, Isithebe study purposively selected schools classified as Quintile 3 schools,

indicating social class and being non-fee-charging, by the National Norms and Standards for School Funding (NNSSF) of the Department of Education (DoE, 1998). Secondary schools, schools in rural areas and schools in medium- and high-income areas were excluded from the study.

The National Norms and Standards for School Funding (NNSSF) allocates funds to schools according to their poverty score. The NNSSF was implemented in 2006 to determine which schools needed funds (Chutgar & Kanjee, 2009; South Africa, 1996). According to Chutgar and Kanjee (2009), the poverty score of a school, or quintile rank, is from Q1 up to Q5 and is based on the poverty level of the community in which it is located. The schools represented in this study fall in Quintiles 1 to 3 and were declared non-fee-paying, which are generally characterised by low levels of education and income (Darin-Mattsson et al., 2017; Chutgar & Kanjee, 2009; South Africa, 1996). Teachers in quintiles 1 to 3 schools have less access to resources and opportunities, yet they are exposed to the most risk (Bhana et al., 2006; Ebersöhn, 2016).

Table 1.1: Characteristics of peri-urban primary schools included in the Isithebe sample (DOE, 2018, adapted from Bosch, 2020)

School	Sector	Quintile	Urban or rural	Total learners	Total educators	Learner–teacher ratio
1	Public	3	Urban	796	22	36,2:1
2	Public	3	Urban	645	19	33,9:1
3	Public	3	Urban	977	26	37,6:1
4	Public	3	Urban	1489	39	38,2:1
5	Public	3	Urban	1416	36	39,3:1
6	Public	3	Urban	1061	27	39,3:1

The Quintile 3 primary schools included in the study were public schools in a peri-urban area (Nelson Mandela Metropole in the Eastern Cape) with high learner-to-teacher ratios, as indicated in the annual *Government Gazette* published by the DoE (2018).

The Nelson Mandela Metropole has experienced a general increase in human development, as confirmed by the Eastern Cape Socio-Economic Consultative Council (ECSECC, 2017). The education level of the population has also shown an

increase, as seen in the increase in number of people with matric or a higher education certificate (ECSECC, 2017). However, according to the Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality's Integrated Development Plan (2016), poverty and inequality are prevalent in the area, as indicated by factors such as unemployment and low household incomes. In 2016, the estimated number of households that were living on R30 000 or less per annum reached 16.40%. When employing the upper poverty line definition, the number of people living in poverty also increased over this 10 year-period, from 552 000 in 2006 to 640 000 in 2016 (ECSECC, 2017).

The inclusion criteria for conveniently selecting teachers from the six primary schools selected as participants were ease of access and willingness to take part in the study (Emerson, 2015). Convenience sampling is a category of non-random sampling techniques where members of a specified population meet specific criteria such as being easily accessible, the context being geographically accessible, and their being available and willing to participate (Etikan et al., 2016).

An advantage of convenient sampling is therefore the accessibility of researcher subjects. In the current study convenient sampling was appropriate because the research participants' data were readily available owing to the current study being part of the larger Isithebe study. Researchers indicate that convenience sampling is inexpensive and less time-consuming than other methods (Sedgwick, 2013). The data selection process took very little time and was not tedious as the data were readily available and ethical clearance for the larger study and the current study had already been approved. Consequently, no costs were incurred during this research process. The main limitations of convenience sampling are that it is biased and samples are not representative of a population as researchers also indicate the effects of outliers in a sample (Etikan et al., 2016; Wu et al., 2014). Some authors furthermore argue that the selected sample may not apply to the researched phenomenon and can distort the quality of the data and results (Etikan et al., 2016; Emerson, 2015; Wu et al., 2014). To overcome the aforementioned limitations, a clear description of inclusion and exclusion criteria for the sample (see Table 1.2 and the relevant discussion) was used to avoid outliers and to avoid using a sample that did not apply to the phenomenon of the study. The conveniently sampled population data were compared across the six schools to allow for generalisability to other challenging education contexts.

Based on the demographic questionnaire used in the Isithebe study, the participant base can be described in terms of gender, age, home language, teaching subject, grade as well as period in the teaching profession, as illustrated in Table 1.2. This table also indicates that most participants were above 40 years old and female. Only four of the selected teachers were under the age of 40. Regarding teaching experience, 10 teachers had over 24 years of experience, another 8 had between 15 and 24 years' experience and 16 teachers had fewer than 15 years' experience. Every teacher participant had a professional tertiary teacher qualification and four of the teachers had postgraduate qualifications.

1.5.3 Description of the purposively sampled qualitative Isithebe data

1.5.3.1 Introduction

I purposively selected qualitative PRA data from the Isithebe baseline data set as well as body-sculpting data from the Isithebe intervention training session. The choice to employ purposive sampling to select data sources was informed by the resources available and the context of the study (Laher & Botha, 2012). As a result of my continued collaboration in the larger research programme, the existing data were readily accessible and representative of the population studied (Durrheim & Painter, 2014). Figure 1.1 depicts the purposively sampled Isithebe data. A more in-depth explanation is given in section 3.3.3 in Chapter 3.

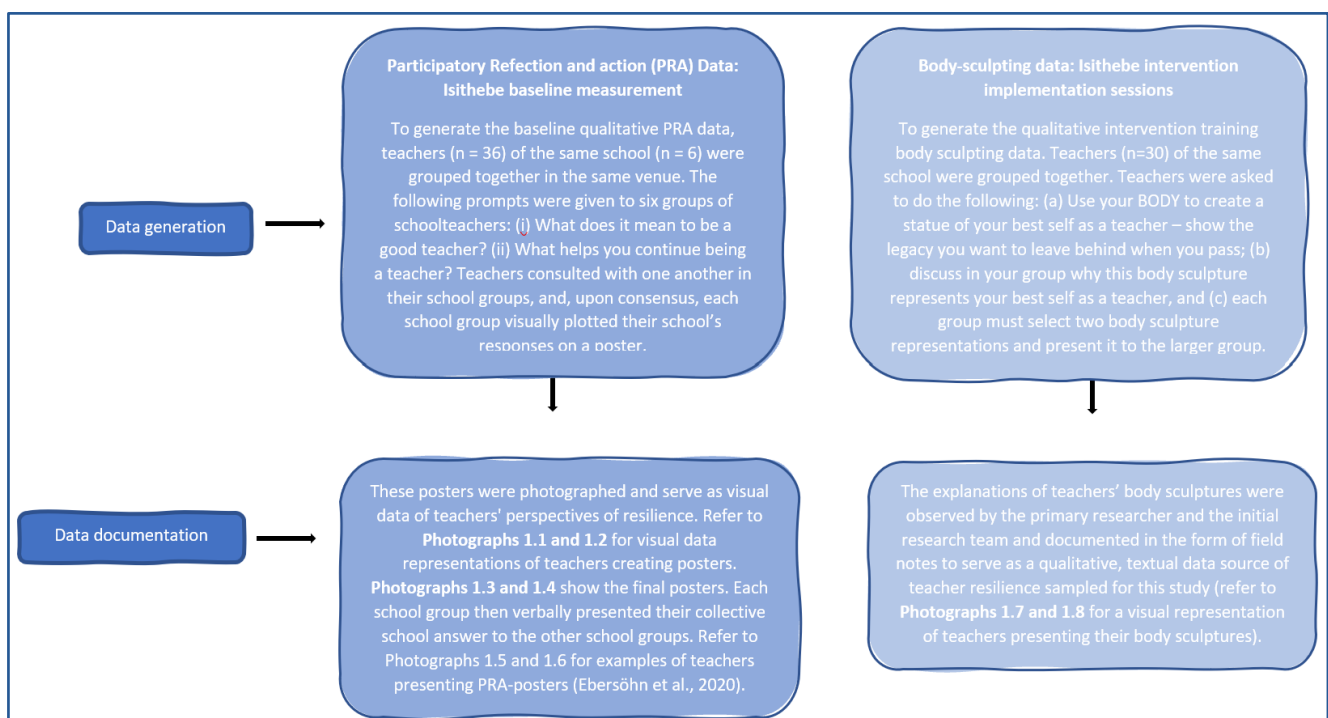


Figure 1.1: A depiction of the purposively selected Isithebe data

Table 1.2: Participants: Isithebe baseline data (18 September 2018) (Adapted from Ebersöhn et al., 2020)

Peri-urban primary school	Teacher	Gender	Age	Home language	Teacher qualification	Grade teaching	Subjects teaching	Teaching duration	Total teachers per school
A	1	F	58	IsiXhosa and English	Senior Phase Teaching Diploma (SPTD); Remedial Education; Educational Psychology	Grade 7	English, Social Science; Technology	More than 24 years	4
	2	F	50	IsiXhosa	Junior Phase Teaching Diploma (JPTD); Remedial Education; Bachelor of Education (BEd)	Grade 4	IsiXhosa	Between 15 and 24 years	
	3	F	57	IsiXhosa	BEd Honours	Grade 3	IsiXhosa, Maths, English, Life Skills	More than 27 years	
	4	F	50	IsiXhosa	BEd Intermediate Phase	Grade 3	IsiXhosa, Maths, English, Life Skills	Between 15 and 24 years	
B	7	F	53	IsiXhosa	JPTD; BEd Honours	Grade 3	IsiXhosa, Maths, English, Life Skills	Between 15 and 24 years	5
	8	F	43	IsiXhosa	Early childhood	Grade R	No information available	No information available	
	9	F	53	IsiXhosa	JPTD; BEd	Grades 4–7	English, Social Science	More than 24 years	

	10	F	48	No information available	JPTD	Grade 1	Foundation phase subjects	Fewer than 15 years	
	11	F	50	IsiXhosa	JPTD; BEd Honours	Grade 3	IsiXhosa, Maths, English, Life Skills	Between 15 and 24 years	
C	12	F	38	IsiXhosa	NQF Level 4	Grade R	IsiXhosa, Maths, Life Skills	Fewer than 15 years	5
	13	F	54	IsiXhosa	JPTD	Grade 2	All Junior Phase subjects	Between 15 and 24 years	
	14	M	50	IsiXhosa	Senior Teacher's Diploma (STD); Advanced Certificate of Education (ACE); BEd Honours	Grade 7	Maths, Natural Science	More than 28 years	
	15	F	49	IsiXhosa	Foundation Phase Diploma; BEd	Grade 1	IsiXhosa, English, Maths, Life Skills	Between 15 and 24 years	
	16	M	31	IsiXhosa	BEd of Arts and Culture	Grades 4–7	IsiXhosa, EMS, creative arts	Fewer than 15 years	
	17	F	45	IsiXhosa	Senior Primary Education Diploma	Grade 4	Natural Science and IsiXhosa	Fewer than 15 years	
18	F	47	IsiXhosa	JPTD; ACE: Life Orientation (LO)	Grade 3	IsiXhosa, English, Maths, Life Skills	Fewer than 15 years		

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	19	F	53	IsiXhosa	Diploma	Grade 2	IsiXhosa, English, Maths, Life Skills	More than 24 years	
	20	F	No information available	IsiXhosa	JPTD	Grade 3	All Foundation Phase subjects	More than 24 years	
	21	F	54	IsiXhosa	JPTD; Bachelor of Arts (BA); BA Honours	Grade 6	Life Skills; Social Sciences	More than 24 years	
	22	F	53	IsiXhosa	JPTD	Grade 1	IsiXhosa, English, Maths, Life Skills	Fewer than 15 years	
	23	F	60	IsiXhosa	JPTD; Remedial Education	Grade 2	All JP subjects	More than 24 years	
	24	F	60	IsiXhosa	JPTD; Remedial Education	Grade 4	Social Science; Life Skills	More than 24 years	
E	25	F	49	IsiXhosa	Junior primary	Grade 1	All Foundation Phase subjects	Fewer than 15 years	2
	26	F	47	IsiXhosa	Honours in Education	Grade 2	All subjects	Between 15 and 24 years	
	27	F	55	IsiXhosa	Diploma in Education	Grades 4-5	English	Fewer than 15 years	
	28	F	52	IsiXhosa	SED; ACE	Grades 4-6	Life Skills	Fewer than 15 years	

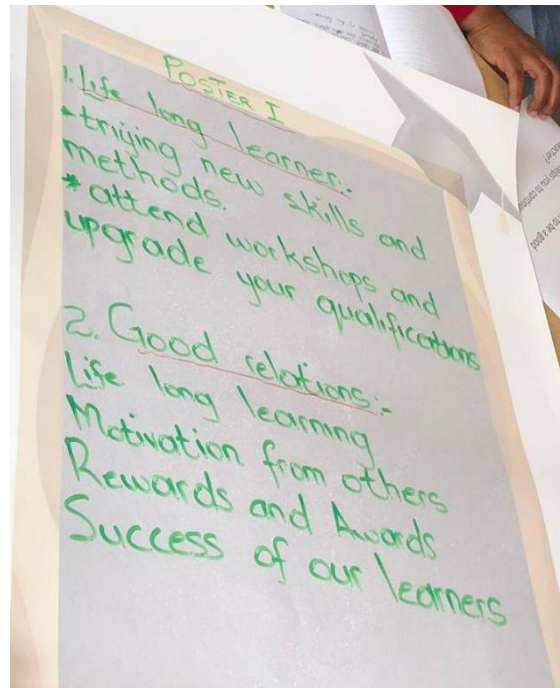
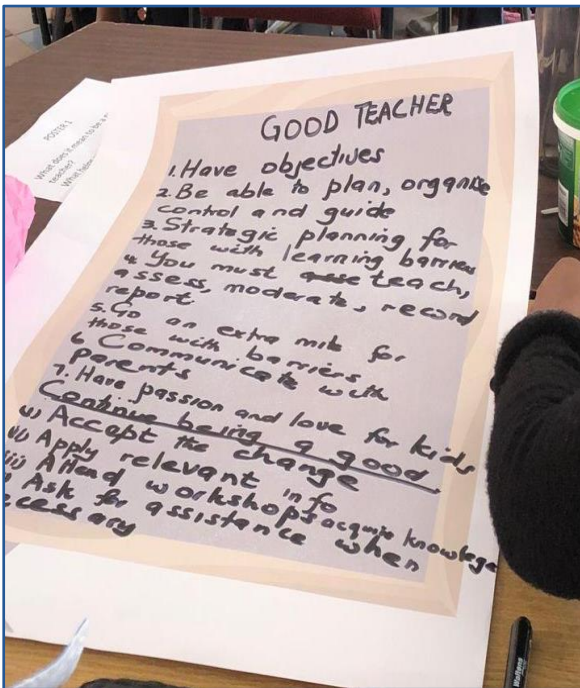
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	29	F	63	IsiXhosa	BEd	Grade 7	English; Economic and Management Sciences	More than 24 years	
	30	F	46	IsiXhosa	NQF level 2; NQF level 4	Grade 12	All subjects	Fewer than 15 years	
	31	F	46	IsiXhosa	JPTD; Remedial	Grade 1	IsiXhosa, Maths; Life Skills	Between 15 and 24 years	
	32	F	53	IsiXhosa	JPTD	Grade 3	All Foundation Phase subjects	Fewer than 15 years	
	33	F	54	IsiXhosa	JPTD	Grade 2	All Foundation Phase subjects	Fewer than 15 years	
	34	F	52	IsiXhosa	JPTD – Junior Phase; Foundation Phase	Grade 3	All Foundation Phase subjects	Fewer than 15 years	
	35	F	55	IsiXhosa	Diploma ACE: LO	Grades 4–5	Natural Science and Technology	Fewer than 15 years	
	36	F	23	IsiXhosa and English	BEd Foundation Phase	Grade 3	All Foundation Phase subjects	Fewer than 15 years	
	37	F	47	IsiXhosa	Early Childhood Development (ECD)	Grade R	Maths, Life Skills; English	Fewer than 15 years	
	38	F	33	IsiXhosa	ECD	Grade R	Language, Life Skills, Numeracy	Fewer than 15 years	
								TOTAL TEACHERS IN DATA SET	36

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Photographs 1.1 and 1.2: Teachers in their school groups generating qualitative PRA poster data
(Photographs by Z. Bosch, 18 September 2018)



Photographs 1.3 and 1.4: The completed qualitative PRA posters
(Photographs by Z. Bosch, 18 September 2018).



Photographs 1.5 and 1.6: Teachers during the baseline research in their school groups presenting their PRA posters to the other groups (Photographs by Z. Bosch, 18 September 2018).



Photograph 1.7: A teacher depicts “I and other teachers teach them” (SB, P1) through body sculpture at the Isithebe intervention (Photograph by Z. Bosch, 15 March 2019)



Photograph 1.8: Teachers illustrating the Isithebe study intervention implementation through body sculptures (Photograph by Z. Bosch, 15 March 2019)

1.6 CONCEPT CLARIFICATION

In this section all the concepts that appear in this research paper are explained to contextualise them in the current study. A more in-depth elucidation is available in Chapter 2.

1.6.1 Teacher conceptualisations

For this study, teachers had to be able to create meaning of their situation within their contexts. This involved making sense of challenging life experiences with words and examples and arriving at precise verbal definitions. The meta-theoretical lens used in this study is phenomenology. Phenomenology focuses on lived experiences and the social context of participants. In this research it allowed teachers to gain insight into and attach personal meaning to teacher resilience in challenging contexts (Nieuwenhuis, 2016; Creswell, 2009). Teachers' conceptualisations helped me answer the research questions. Teachers, in six different groups, divided by school, were asked to conceptualise teacher resilience in a PRA discussion activity. Their responses were recorded and transcribed verbatim. In addition, they individually enacted through body sculpting their conceptualisations of the legacies they would like to leave behind when they pass.

1.6.2 Teacher resilience

Teacher resilience is an interactive socio-ecological process and is described as teachers remaining dedicated to the teaching profession and their learners as well as providing quality teaching and learning despite the cumulative and chronic risk associated with the field of education (Ebersöhn, 2014). The current study refers to 'teacher resilience' as teachers using collective adaptive strategies and combining shared resources to achieve positive outcomes collectively (Ebersöhn, 2014).

1.6.3 Challenging contexts

Ebersöhn (2014) posits that the challenging Global South context, located outside of Europe in the Global South, can be described as an environment plagued with poor infrastructure and inequality (Ebersöhn & Loots, 2017). A challenging context is characterised by a postcolonial history that becomes evident in the unequal allocation of resources to education.

In this study a challenging context moreover refers to environments that are plagued by adversity, e.g., a lack of resources, political change and expectations from the governing bodies, grief caused by HIV/AIDS losses, high crime rates, child-headed households and poverty (Robinson & Robinson, 2003). The Nelson Mandela Metropole fits the context of a challenging educational context as in that province the

schools are classified as in Quintile 3, indicating the high level of poverty and low socio-economic status.

1.6.4 Peri-urban primary schools

According to the DoE (2018), peri-urban primary schools fall in Quintile 3 and therefore do not charge school fees. In addition, these schools are funded by the government in terms of the South African Schools Act (Act No. 84 of 1996). The term 'primary schools' on the other hand refers to a subsectorial classification that specifically refers to schooling from Grade R to Grade 7 (DBE, 2009). The phrase 'peri-urban primary school' was used in the current study to refer to 36 teachers at six primary schools in the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan area in the Eastern Cape.

1.7 PARADIGMATIC PERSPECTIVES

1.7.1 Meta-theoretical paradigm: Phenomenology

The meta-theory that was employed for the study is phenomenology (Morgan & Sklar, 2012). A phenomenological study attempts to eliminate bias and preconceived assumptions about human experiences, feelings and responses to a particular situation. This approach provided me with the opportunity to delve into the perceptions, perspectives, understanding and feelings of teachers who have experienced or lived in the phenomena of interest to this study (Creswell, 2009).

Phenomenology in qualitative research is based on the notion that knowledge is a subjectively constructed reality (Gitchel & Mpofu, 2012; Jansen, 2007; Goulding, 2005). Furthermore, it was a means to ensure the voices of the teachers were heard, which might prompt action and at least challenge preconceived notions and complacency about teacher resilience in challenging contexts.

According to Measor (1985), a research participant must be able to articulate their thoughts and feelings about the experience being studied. It may have been difficult for the teachers to express themselves owing to language barriers, age, cognition, embarrassment and other factors. However, PRA and arts-based strategies were employed to overcome any language barriers (Chambers, 1994). Researcher bias is said to be an obvious limitation, because the researcher's personal bias may influence the results generated by the data (Creswell, 2009). Therefore, although researcher bias is difficult to detect, my supervisor reviewed every step I took and any bias identified received due attention and was rectified.

1.7.2 Methodological paradigm: Qualitative

I opted for a qualitative methodological research approach as I found it best suited to address the purpose and the research questions of my study (Nieuwenhuis, 2016; Thanh & Thanh, 2015). Qualitative research focuses on obtaining a holistic account of the problem being studied by gaining insight into the multiple perspectives of participants (Creswell, 2014). The emphasis was on how the peri-urban primary school teacher participants conceptualised and constructed meaning of their thoughts regarding teacher resilience.

Using a qualitative research approach has various benefits. Qualitative data collection methods provided an understanding of each individual's personal experiences of the phenomenon within its natural setting and also determined how the participants interpreted constructs (Symon & Cassell, 2012). The qualitative research methodology provided me with a comprehensive description of the existing data with a focus on the teachers' experiences concerning the phenomenon under study (Nieuwenhuis, 2007; Sandelowski, 2000).

While it offers several advantages, qualitative research also has limitations. Owing to the small sample size, which is usually purposively selected, a major limitation is that the findings generated by the study may be difficult to interpret and quantify, therefore they cannot be generalised to other contexts (Rahaman et al., 2017; Nieuwenhuis, 2016). In addition, qualitative research may be viewed as having low credibility, as the basis of the research is not established by testing hypotheses or theories that yield objective results (Rahaman et al., 2017; Thanh & Thanh, 2015; Creswell, 2009).

1.8 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1.8.1 Relationship-resourced resilience theory

I opted for the relationship-resourced resilience theory (Ebersöhn, 2012) because I wanted to make sense of how South African peri-urban primary school teachers resile despite being embedded in a context of chronic and continuous risk. This theory posits that to share resources is to share responsibilities. This highlights the collectivist, interdependent nature of indigenous individuals (Ebersöhn, 2019a; Ebersöhn, 2019b). Furthermore, Ebersöhn (2019) states that collective responses may be innovative and sustainable when multiple individuals connect (supporting,

seeking affiliation) and share existing resources. The social collectivist dimension of teacher resilience recognises the interactive, collectivist impact of personal, professional and situational factors on the work and lives of teachers. In addition, it contextualises teachers' will to sustain their professional commitment. The theoretical lens assisted me in conceptualising teachers' resilience in challenging educational spaces.

Resilience in the relationship-resourced resilience theory is "the result of flock-responses: accessing, mobilising, networking and nurturing sustained resource use by means of systemic relationships as resource guardians" (Ebersöhn, 2012, p. 36). For people to flock, resilience is necessary as it facilitates this process of adaptive coping (Ebersöhn, 2014). Flocking mobilises social support, cultural resources and collective resources. The flocking process follows the following steps: teachers collectively identify learners and colleagues who need support; teachers are knowledgeable about the type of support or resources necessary to buffer the challenge; teachers then negotiate the use and distribution of these resources; and lastly, teachers value reciprocity and monitor how resources are used; and reciprocals are held accountable (Ebersöhn, 2019a; Ebersöhn, 2019b). If teachers can mobilise and identify their risks collectively and utilise the flocking pathway to resile in challenging educational spaces, the quality of teaching and learning could improve.

The theoretical framework provided a lens through which to consider the data derived from the lived experiences of individual teachers. The data showed which pathways they collectively used to negotiate access to and their use of protective resources. It also revealed how teachers used the flocking principle and applied the ubuntu ideals to foster teacher resilience in environments rife with adversity. Furthermore, the theoretical framework also provided an understanding of how teachers who teach in challenging contexts can use flocking and the interdependent nature of ubuntu as resilience strategies and opportunities to connect to learners and peers socially. The theory moreover includes how the teachers achieved success despite the social realities that are common in this context (Ebersöhn, 2019a; Ebersöhn, 2019b).

1.9 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY: BRIEF OVERVIEW

In this section I provide a detailed discussion of the pragmatic lens, the research design I utilised, quality criteria and the ethical considerations of the present study.

Figure 1.1 provides an overview of the research process. I selected a qualitative approach as the methodological lens as it had the potential to facilitate understanding and provide rich descriptions of the data. In addition I chose phenomenology as meta-theoretical paradigm as it could capture the participants' subjective experiences effectively (Goulding, 2005), as captured in the existing Isithebe data. Secondary data analysis relates to explorative research questions as this study aimed to reanalyse existing data, and was therefore a suitable research design (Mouton, 2001). I selected this particular research design based on the methodological approach and research problem (Creswell, 2009) (see Figure 1.1). Secondary data analysis was done to explore existing qualitative data arising from the Isithebe baseline and training data sets. As I did not take part in the initial study, decisions regarding the initial research design and data collection methods were made by the primary researcher. I made a selection from the existing Isithebe sources using purposive selection criteria. Selection involved purposively selecting specific data sources generated at baseline and during the intervention training, using deductive analysis to analyse the selected data by identifying a priori themes and subthemes. A quality review process was followed by adhering to the ethical requirements and standards applicable to using existing data (Cheng, & Phillips, 2014; Silverman, 2016).

Nokele (2006) notes the value of the *eating mat, or wooden tray (Isithebe)* for both isiXhosa and isiZulu South Africans. For example, amaXhosa sometimes put the dish or meat on a large woven mat in front of the people for them to help themselves. Isithebe is therefore a symbol of bringing family together. Of connecting people. Of preventing isolation. Isithebe shows nurturing, trust, comfort, care and support, as well as deep interest in one another.

Isithebe study: Social connectedness as a pathway to teacher resilience

Extant baseline data set

Isithebe study baseline data on Teacher Resilience from conveniently sampled teachers in six purposively (Maree, 2016) selected peri-urban, primary schools in socio-economically challenged contexts in the Eastern Cape.

Purposively selected body sculpting teacher resilience data (n=38; M=2; F=36).

Purpose of study:

Explore teachers' conceptualisations of teacher resilience in challenged education contexts

Research question:

- How do teachers in peri-urban primary schools in a challenged education spaces conceptualise teacher resilience?

Paradigms

META-THEORETICAL PARADIGM:
Phenomenology

METHOLOGICAL PARADIGM:
Qualitative

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK:
Ebersöhn's relationship resourced resilience (2019).

RESEARCH DESIGN:
Secondary data analysis

Qualitative secondary data analysis was chosen as appropriate research design as in-depth descriptions were advanced in the available data (Mouton, 2001).

Selection and documentation of existing document's:

Non-probability sampling, specifically the combination of convenience and purposive sampling strategies, formed part of intentional sampling, which was employed in the

Deductive analysis:

In deductive analysis the identification of a particular theme was inspired by the theoretical framework of the current study as well as research found in existing literature (Joffe, 2012).

DATA ANALYSIS:

The thematic analysis (Braun and Clark, 2006) of verbatim transcriptions of PRA group discussions and body-sculpting data.

ETHICS:

Extra consideration was given to aspects of informed consent and confidentiality related to secondary data by creating ethical access to data participation. The extant data was stored securely and archived under regulations stipulated by the Protection of Personal Information Act 4 of 2013. The research complied with the ethical considerations set out in the Isithebe Study: Ethics Reference number EP 06 11 01 Versveld 19-002.

Credibility:

Credibility was promoted by following a rigorous process associated with the analysis of secondary data (Nieuwenhuis, 2016; Merten, 2010).

Triangulation:

Triangulation "involved the employment of multiple external data collection methods concerning the same events was enhanced by multiple external analysis methods" (Fusch, Fusch & Ness, 2018, p.

Transferability:

This involved having a clear and accurate understanding of whether aspects of the findings could be viewed as lessons learnt and applied to similar settings (Nieuwenhuis, 2016).

Dependability:

This was ensured by recording the research process in detail and documenting the analysis process using coding (Anney, 2014).

Confirmability:

Confirmability was ensured by providing accurate descriptions of qualitative secondary data (Anney, 2014).

1.10 CHAPTER OUTLINE

Chapter 1: Introduction and context of the study

This chapter provides an outline of the background and rationale of the study, including a brief description of the contextual background. I outlined the purpose and the possible contributions. Furthermore, I highlighted the key research questions and methodological approach. I concluded this chapter by giving an overview of the current study.

Chapter 2: Literature review

This chapter focuses on the relevant literature relating to my research focus. The scholarly conversations generated key themes, debates and discussions that informed my study. This chapter also includes the theoretical framing of the study, namely the relationship-resourced resilience theory (Ebersöhn, 2019a; Ebersöhn, 2019b).

Chapter 3: Research methodology

I address the research methodology and elaborate on the chosen research design and selection strategy as well as the data analysis process. Furthermore, I consider the limitations of the study, including quality criteria and ethical issues to emphasise the importance of just and fair research throughout the study.

Chapter 4: Findings of the study

Chapter 4 includes a description of the results of the deductive data analysis process according to the previously identified a priori themes and subthemes. These results are viewed in parallel with the literature discussed in Chapter 2 as well as the theoretical and conceptual frameworks that guided the current study.

Chapter 5: Conclusions and recommendations

In this chapter, I answer the research questions of the current study. The adapted conceptual framework that was relevant to this study is included in the final chapter as the framework contributed to how the study was contextualised. The limitations, strengths and potential for future research are also discussed. The final recommendations in Chapter 5 serve as the conclusion of the study.

1.11 CONCLUSION

In summary, Chapter 1 outlines the research paper and gives an overview of what is presented in successive chapters. The goal of this chapter was to present an overview of the background and rationale of the study. I provided a brief review of the key concepts and a description of the pragmatic perspectives provided. Finally, aspects of the ethical considerations and quality criteria were explained. Chapter 2 provides a comprehensive review of the relevant existing literature on teacher resilience.

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CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I explore current literature on teacher resilience in challenged education contexts. I discuss the effects of postcolonialism, globalism and the Global South on educational spaces. I discuss teacher retention as a global and local phenomenon. I discuss how teachers mobilise within a social ecological system using internal and contextual resources to resile. I present a conceptual framework for the study. Figure 2.1 below illustrates the focus of the literature review and intersections between the findings from the various bodies of literature.



Figure 2.1: Intersection between various bodies of literature relevant to study

2.2 THE CONTEXT OF TEACHING IN A CHALLENGED CONTEXT: THE GLOBAL SOUTH AND POSTCOLONIALISM

2.2.1 Introduction

It is critical to investigate factors that relate to and encourage teacher resilience in challenging educational contexts better to understand teacher resilience (Nel, 2015; Moore, 2013). Therefore, in the next section I discuss globalisation and the postcolonial, Global South context. Discussion of postcolonial spaces follows and,

lastly, structural disparity, high risk and resource constraints as well as its effects for the teaching context are discussed.

2.2.2 Globalisation and a Global South context

Challenges are endemic to the teaching profession and globalisation has been a major contributor to these challenges. Globalisation and the effect this has had on teachers globally and how the recent Covid-19 virus intensified these challenges are phenomena worth discussing.

Globalisation makes adequate provision for the transfer and exchange of culture, information systems, concepts, beliefs, skills, technologies and processes of thinking across borders (Mkhize, 2004). This factor has influenced several disciplines, including psychology and education in the Third World, by using Western theoretical and conceptual lenses to explain indigenous concepts (Mkhize, 2004). Odeh (2010) argues that globalism has created a divide between two economic realms that separate the world. The term "Global South" is synonymous with "low income" and often politically marginalised "backward economies" (Dados & Connell, 2012, p. Teachers from the Global South bear the brunt of the challenges, which further increases their resilience (Ebersöhn, 2019a; Ebersöhn, 2019b). Therefore, a discussion of education systems cannot be the primary focus without considering the context in which teachers find themselves (Tikly, 2001). Teachers in the Global South are forced to teach in English and other Global North languages to prepare learners for the Global North economy (Pérez, 2018). It is important for the Global South to shift away from the dominant Global North perspectives of education (Pérez, 2018). In so doing Global South knowledge is marginalised, and the production of Global North knowledge systems favoured (Pérez, 2018).

Teachers in the Global South are already facing inequality and marginalisation (Grujters & Behrman, 2020; McFarlane, 2010). The Covid-19 pandemic has further exposed and entrenched inequality in the field of education (Malta, 2020). Teachers living and teaching in informal settlements faced greater exposure to the virus owing to poor housing and classroom conditions. The increasing and persistent challenges that are ever-present in the teaching profession necessitate exploring how, amid unequal service delivery and resource distribution, pathways of resilience are formed (Ebersöhn, 2019a; Ebersöhn, 2019b).

2.2.3 A postcolonial Global South educational space of structural disparity and marginalisation

In the previous section I discussed globalisation and the Global South context. Next I deal with the stressors synonymous with a postcolonial Global South space, namely structural disparity, high risks, inequality and resource constraints.

Postcolonialism may be described as the resilience of indigenous people to overcome the effects of colonisation (Sartori, 2021). It is apparent that while the word 'postcolonialism' refers to a period that has ended, the consequences of a 'colonial history' should not be overlooked (Okazaki et al., 2008). Kwame Nkrumah popularised the term 'neo-colonialism', meaning 'new colonialism' (1965) in his book, 'The New Colonial History' (Nkrumah & Nkrumah, 1965). Colonial powers forged fraudulent treaties that are still in effect to this day, forcing various populations down the same economically damaging path (Sartori, 2021; Young, 2016; Ypi, 2013). Infrastructure in the Global South is deeply rooted in poverty and many of its inhabitants are found in informal settlements or slums, where they have limited access to water and sanitation, health care and resources (Carmody et al., 2020; Dados & Connell, 2012; McFarlane, 2010).

In underprivileged Global South populations, the provision of essential public facilities such as sanitation, electricity, fire protection and recreational facilities has been identified as a concern (Ebersöhn, 2017). The consequences of poverty, even in the face of resilience and considerable family support, hinder teachers' professional ability and motivation as well as their opportunities for development (Edwards, 2016). Poverty in education affects teachers' ability to provide quality education as they are faced with, among others, continual policy changes, curriculum reform, shortages of textbooks, poor service delivery and a lack of sanitation (Ebersöhn & Loots, 2017; Gu, 2014).

Teachers in the Global South are often faced with high levels of illiteracy, unemployment, poorly developed infrastructure and limited access to welfare services (Tikly & Barrett, 2013). As a result, the teaching environment represents struggle, a lack of professional identity and constant pressure (Day, 2012). Ebersöhn and Loots (2017) argue that teachers use the collective nature of indigenous people to work in conjunction with educational policy to encourage the wellbeing and resilience that will buffer them against the challenges they face.

2.2.4 Challenges in the South African educational context

In the previous section I discussed the challenges synonymous with a Global South space and its effects on teachers, while in this section I address educational challenges in the South African context.

Despite the establishment of democracy in 1994, the psychosocial and socio-economic status of many indigenous employees in the South African workplace have remained unchanged (Magubane, 2019). South African teachers face chronic and accumulated stressors, which are products of a complex socio-political background (Ebersöhn, 2014). Postcolonialism has had damaging consequences for the African education system. The constitutional framework for achieving a structure that accommodates a multinational population effectively is in place but not applied at grass-roots level (Henrard, 2002).

When exploring the current state of educational reform in South Africa, it is apparent that there is a disconnection between policy intention, its output and the impact it has on quality education (Tikly & Barrett, 2013). The lingering effects of postcolonialism have thwarted the efforts of the Department of Education (DoE) to fulfil the right to basic education as learners are still exposed to extreme poverty, high dropout rates and poor academic attendance, performance and achievement (Marishane, 2016; Henrard, 2002). Political, social and economic influences are affecting school systems profoundly. Currently, 62% of public schools in South Africa are clustered in the poorest and most underdeveloped rural areas (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), (2018). Studies suggest that many South African schools do not have the means to overcome learning difficulties and teachers appear to be poorly prepared to deliver quality education (Milner & Khoza, 2008; Bryan, 2005).

There are many different reasons for South Africa's low quality of education. It may be assumed that not enough money is allocated to the education budget. In 1982, the apartheid government spent R146 (on average) educating a black child, but allocated R1 211 for a white child (Currie & De Waal, 2013). Badat and Sayed (2014, p. 130) report as follows:

The School Register of Needs, commissioned by the Ministry of Education to determine the needs of schools, indicated in 1996 that there were significant infrastructural and other backlogs: 65,380 classrooms were needed, about a 25 percent increase from the

total number of classrooms that then existed; 60 percent of schools did not have access to electricity and telephones; 35 percent were without potable water; and 12 percent did not have access to toilets—pit latrines constituted 47 percent of all school toilets. The new government would need to muster enormous resources to overcome the educational legacy of apartheid.

It is clear that the influence of colonialism still plays a strong role in the education system and has an even greater effect on the quality of education (Mlachila & Moeletsi, 2019).

2.2.5 Challenges in the teaching profession

In the previous section the challenges inherent to the teaching profession were discussed. In the current section I present the challenges in the teaching profession and its effects on teachers and students.

Teaching is rated as one of the most stressful professions (Kyriacou, 2001) and Covid-19 brought a wave of additional stressors (Flores & Swennen, 2020; MacIntyre et al., 2020). Teachers face structural inequality, poor infrastructure, strenuous workloads, consistent changes in the curriculum and salary-related dissatisfaction (Gruijters, & Behrman, 2020; Herman et al., 2020; MacIntyre et al., 2020). The following can be added in the present climate: Covid-19 stressors of working from home; health concerns of the individual teacher, their students and loved ones; the uncertainty of the future; travel restrictions and a lack of resources (MacIntyre et al., 2020).

Teachers have always been expected to cope with high levels of occupational stress (Herman et al., 2020). Over time, chronic stress and the expectation to cope can lead to burnout (Coetzee et al., 2015). Teachers facing the aforementioned challenges may leave the profession (Flook et al., 2013; Collie et al., 2012), causing an increase in early teacher dropout rates (Day & Gu, 2010; Ewing et al., 2003) and detrimentally affect teacher retention (Lynch, 2016).

Researchers have found that chronic emotional and environmental challenges negatively affect the quality of teaching (Wong et al., 2017). Burnout, stress and teacher efficacy therefore affect instruction quality, student motivation, and achievement (Burić & Kim, 2021; Schleicher, 2018; Zee & Koomen, 2016; Klassen & Tze, 2014). A lack of teacher retention causes a decline in social cohesion and sense of belonging within the schooling environment and community, and also has an

impact on the quality of teaching and learning (Wong et al., 2017; Ingersoll & May, 2011). Owing to the adverse consequences of teacher attrition and burnout, researching the exact patterns of teacher stressors that might lead to burnout and attrition can help to inform intervention efforts and contribute positively to the body of resilience knowledge.

2.2.6 Teacher retention, an international or national phenomenon

In the previous section the challenges inherent to the teaching profession were discussed. In the current section the effects of a challenging context on teacher retention and attrition are dealt with.

Teachers play an important role in society and are integral in the development of a country's social and economic future (Lindqvist et al., 2014). It is necessary for a country to have enough teachers to meet a society's educational needs and standards (Kelchtermans, 2017). Teacher retention and attrition are influenced by increased workloads (Bridges & Searle, 2011), poor working conditions, long working hours (Kelchtermans, 2017), poor wages, the ever-changing curriculum, a lack of resources, and being an unstable emotional environment (Johnson & Kardos, 2008; Villegas & Davis, 2008; Loeb et al., 2005).

Early teacher dropout rates (Day & Gu, 2010; Ewing et al., 2003), burnout (Coetzee et al., 2015) and poor teacher retention (Lynch, 2016) are not specific to the sub-Saharan African context as high levels of teacher attrition is of concern at the international level (Mansfield et al., 2016; Lindqvist et al., 2014). Studies situated in the Global North, for example in the United States of America (Burton et al., 2013; Burton & Johnson, 2010), Australia (Nolan et al., 2014; Johnson et al., 2010) and China (Gu & Li, 2013) indicate that they are all currently struggling to bridge the teaching gap caused by poor teacher retention. Teachers' work is now arguably more complex, challenging and difficult than at any other time (Johnson & McElroy, 2012), and monitoring teacher quality is even more challenging (Gu, 2018). Teachers are expected to cope with stress, avoid emotional exhaustion and burnout (Chang, 2009; Tait, 2008), and to develop high levels of resilience, especially in challenging contexts (Brunetti, 2006). Therefore, resilience may be the best way to understand why teachers stay in the teaching profession, despite the often dissatisfying and stressful conditions (Beltman et al., 2011).

2.3 TEACHER RESILIENCE

2.3.1 Introduction

In the previous section I discussed the context of teaching in a Global South and the postcolonial environment. In the current section I deal with teacher resilience as a body of knowledge and how, despite the prevailing challenges, teachers remain in the profession, provide quality education and experience eustress.

2.3.2 Resilience

In this section I define and discuss resilience, first as a trait and then as a systemic pathway characterised by internal and contextual factors. Resilience is a complex process that depends on diverse personal and contextual assets that interact in a complex way (Mansfield et al., 2018). Therefore, resilience is process-oriented and deals with how adversity and vulnerability co-exist and mobilise preventive capital in aligned processes within one framework (Ebersöhn, 2016). Resilience and the change in conceptualisation of resilience are theorised in this section as a dynamic mechanism rather than a fixed feature. I address the supportive and risk factors involved in resilience and the complex interplay between the two.

"The term resilience was derived from the word *resile* in Latin, which refers to the phenomenon of 'bouncing back'" (Strümpfer, 2013). The first round of resilience research was centred on resilience as a result of internal resources and individual personality (Richardson, 2002). The temperament of an individual as well as their emotions and willingness to motivate themselves plays a major role in recognising resilience. Resilience-related personality traits include mindfulness and openness to experience, while neuroticism is the opposite of resilience. The value of self-efficacy, optimism, internal control locus, adaptive coping mechanisms and a strong self-concept has been noted by other researchers (Wosnitza et al., 2014; Mansfield et al., 2016; Tait, 2008; Hjemdal, 2007).

Resilience has been researched extensively and many of the studies are similar in the way they conceptualise the phenomenon and develop their findings relating to the concept (Gu & Day, 2013). The literature confirms that resilience is a complex mechanism that relies on unique personal and contextual assets that connect over time in a complex way (Beltman & Mansfield et al., 2018; Gu & Li, 2013; Ungar, 2011; Masten & Reed, 2005). Experiencing better than anticipated outcomes

despite adversity and the complex pathways that lead to effective growth have become known as resilience (Ungar, 2011; Masten, 2001). In the teacher resilience profile of teachers in a challenging setting such as South Africa, Ebersöhn (2014) posits the coexistence of both the traits and the dynamic interactional and multisystemic process as indicators of resilience.

2.3.3 Global knowledge on teacher resilience

2.3.3.1 Introduction

This section locates the study within teacher resilience research over the past few decades. I begin my discussion with a description of the term ‘teacher resilience’ as understood in the international context. I then review literature on teacher resilience, followed by a discussion of how individual and contextual protective resources and risk factors contribute to teacher resilience. I conclude with a discussion of the multisystemic nature of teacher resilience and national teacher resilience.

2.3.3.2 Teacher resilience knowledge within international and national contexts

In the following section, I discuss patterns of teacher resilience knowledge in international and national contexts. Researchers in countries like the United Kingdom, the United States and Australia, for example, (Nolan et al., 2014; Burton et al., 2013; Gu & Li, 2013; Burton & Johnson, 2010; Johnson et al., 2010) have studied the resilience of teachers in education. Although each country finds itself in a different geographic location, there are commonalities among educational challenges found in all these contexts. Several researchers have found that teachers’ jobs have become more complex and challenging as a result of policy adaptation, curriculum changes, the Global South context and globalisation, structural disparity, a lack of resources, marginalisation and, recently, Covid-19 (Grujters & Behrman, 2020; Herman et al., 2020; MacIntyre et al., 2020; Herman & Reinke, 2014; Price et al., 2012; Boyle et al., 1995). Ebersöhn (2017) states that resilience may lead to quality teaching and learning when used in challenging educational contexts. Many teachers stay in the profession and the question is: Why? Why do they stay? What keeps them passionate, motivated and committed to their learners, despite the vast array of challenges they face daily? To find the answers it is essential to understand teachers in the school, cultural and organisational environment and to conceptualise the demanding nature of the profession and the consequences of these contexts

(Ebersöhn, 2019a; Ebersöhn, 2019b; Mansfield et al., 2016; Coetzee et al., 2015; Parker & Martin, 2009). Consequently, there is a need to build an interdependent body of teacher resilience research to assist teachers with buffering against inequality and structural disparity in postcolonial Global South spaces.

Teachers face many challenges, yet internationally they remain passionate and committed to their careers (Gu & Li, 2013; Day & Gu, 2010). Teaching is an emotionally and physically draining career (Gu & Li, 2013) and although many researchers have explored the resilience of youth (Ungar et al., 2013), only a few of the studies focused on the resilience of teachers (Gu, 2018). Research will generate insights about how teachers cope with adversity and strengthen efficiency by incorporating a teacher resilience lens (Ebersöhn, 2017). Experiencing resilience leads to a perception of the capacity to live with losses that can have an impact on potential resilience outcomes. This involves not only understanding personal capabilities and shortcomings, but also raising awareness of contextual opportunities and resilience-promoting coping mechanisms (Hwang et al., 2017; Gu & Day, 2013).

A systematic concept of resilience was developed from previous Australian projects (Peixoto et al., 2018) and this was used to direct the ENhancing Teacher RESilience in Europe (ENTREE) project. In the ENTREE programme, teacher resilience in the face of difficult situations applies to the mechanism of constructive adaptation and continued professional engagement and development (Wosnitza et al., 2014). In resource-constrained settings, a teacher's environment often provides resources enabling them to leverage in their adaptive response to adversity (Ebersöhn, 2019a; Ebersöhn, 2019b).

Teachers in challenging contexts experience social and professional isolation because of their geographical location (Burton et al., 2013). South African teachers find it difficult to adapt to the many curriculum changes, complex appraisal systems and trade union requirements (Heugh, 2013; Evans & Cleghorn, 2012). Teachers in contexts characterised by adversity and poverty (Mansfield et al., 2018) experience a lack of professional support and poor infrastructure and service delivery (Heugh, 2013; Burton & Johnson, 2010; Castro et al., 2010).

A cross-national study with researchers from South Africa and Australia was conducted to examine how resilience was experienced in these countries (Beltman, 2020; Mansfield et al., 2018). It was found that networking with friends, family and colleagues was common in both countries. "South African data suggests

relationships had a collective power to meaningfully support community cohesion which in turn buffered against systemic risk to support resilience processes of teachers and students” (Beltman, 2020, p. 66). This correlates with Ebersöhn’s (2012) finding that South African teachers are relationally connected to one another and resources within their environment and, through mobilisation of multisystemic relationships, resilience is possible.

2.3.3.3 Pathways to teacher resilience

In this section, I detail the importance of teacher professional development, relationships, intrinsic characteristics and traits of teachers that may be used as resilience enablers.

Teacher professional development enables teacher resilience. Research indicates that teacher professionalism relates to more than just policy. It relates to how teachers view themselves as quality facilitators of knowledge, their job satisfaction and being lifelong learners (Flores, 2018). The willingness of teachers to identify and set career goals, and elements such as engagement, interpersonal and professional teaching skills, are central to teacher professionalism (Peixoto et al., 2018). From a social-ecological viewpoint, resilience mechanisms are rooted in the various environments of their working lives, and these contexts are fundamentally ambiguous and unstable (Mansfield et al., 2012). Teachers need to adapt and be open to developing new strategies and approaches because of the complexity of their work.

Relational pathways can support teacher resilience. Teachers' emotions depend on relational interactions with learners, colleagues, and the community. This suggests that relational experiences do not occur independently within the teacher or the educational environment, but include exchanges between persons and the environment (Spilt et al., 2011). Teachers' relational satisfaction can be divided into three major categories: positive emotions arising from positive student engagement and support; positive emotions owing to positive self-reflection; and positive emotions attributable to positive working environments and support (Cross & Hong, 2012).

Teachers engaging with children from impoverished families also see their teaching as acts of care and kindness. They feel that more consideration and help is required for these children. Consequently, by giving learners the privileges of which culture and tradition have deprived them, these teachers describe themselves as

intellectual caregivers (Ben-Peretz et al., 2003). Recognising the effect of the different macro-level influences on the lives of the learners made the teachers empathetic to the sensitive condition of the learners and parents and helped them to pacify negative feelings (Cross & Hong, 2012). Coping mechanisms are therefore related to deep convictions (about the strengths of their learners and what quality teaching involves), well-developed professional identities (academic caregivers and nurturers) and the relational help that teachers gain and offer learners, often in challenging educational contexts. In addition, the willingness of teachers to be empathetic enables them to refocus their minds in ways that keep them optimistic and dedicated to providing the learners with quality education (Cross & Hong, 2012).

Intrinsic characteristics and traits of teachers are mobilised as significant *intrapersonal pathways to teacher resilience*. Teacher resilience is understood as a multifaceted phenomenon that results from the interaction between individual characteristics and contextual factors (Wosnitza et al., 2014). Resilient teachers show potential for development and fulfilment personal and professionally relevant goals. Motivation and efficacy, optimism and social and emotional competence, having a sense of moral purpose and vocation, courage, effective problem-solving skills, commitment to life-long learning facilitate the resilience of teachers in challenging educational contexts (Burić & Kim, 2020; Gu, 2014; Le Cornu, 2013; Cross & Hong, 2012; Pretsch et al., 2012; Morgan, 2011).

Research on college graduates majoring in education has shown that they put substantially more emphasis on the 'contribution to society' aspect than non-education majors. The considerations of salary, job security, prestige and 'advancement opportunities' were more significant in non-educational majors (Guarino et al., 2006; Shipp, 1999).

Hong (2012) examined disparities in the psychological reactions of leavers and stayers in the teaching profession. Leavers displayed lower values in self-efficacy and positive affect than stayers. Stayers identified and used multiple techniques, such as optimism, to avoid burnout.

Teachers approach the profession with unique values (efficacy), talents, expertise and a collection of techniques that allow them to deal with challenging or daunting conditions. Other scholars emphasise persistence as a result, combining components such as optimism, determination, devotion, fun, excitement and zeal (Day & Gu, 2014). Teacher resilience is a particular achievement at personal level in

that it is closely related to the strength, determination and professional devotion of teachers, and the inner calling to teach, along with the determination to serve, separates teaching from other professions (Gu, 2018). Research consistently shows that teachers with an inner desire, strength and optimism also aspire to making a difference in their classroom every school day (Day & Gu, 2014).

2.3.4 Teacher resilience in a challenging South African educational context

In tackling the issue of low-quality schooling in South Africa, government initiatives have had marginal impact (Mlachila & Moeletsi, 2019; Badat & Sayed, 2014). Educational results suggest that even though schools may be accessible and available, enrolment is not just about attendance, and attendance does not inherently mean learning (Badat & Sayed, 2014). Furthermore, South African educators have identified extensive infrastructure problems such as transport to and from school, regular electricity outages, poor supply of water to schools and inadequate sanitation (Ebersöhn, 2012). For this purpose, South African teachers focus primarily on positive community relationships to meet the needs of learners and their families (Mansfield et al., 2018). A study on resilience in South African schools refers to the significance of relations acting as a mutual force by leveraging partnership as a crucial protective resource to benefit at-risk populations dramatically and reduce the detrimental consequences of a high-risk climate (Mansfield et al., 2018; Ebersöhn, 2012).

Bronfenbrenner's bio-social ecological systems model parallels current resilience research assertions that resilience is multisystemic and no longer focuses on the individual (microsystem) possessing resilient traits (Ungar et al., 2013). Authors propose that individuals have a reciprocal relationship with the environment and leveraging relational partnerships within this ecology is a crucial protective resource (Mansfield et al., 2018; Ungar et al., 2013; Ebersöhn, 2012).

Within the micro- and mesosystems, teachers utilise support systems, personal relations with learners, colleagues and the community at large to resile. Teachers in challenging educational contexts use interpersonal pathways like supportive relationships with students, colleagues and the community to resile (Ebersöhn, 2018; Morgan et al., 2010). The bio-social ecological systems model postulates that one must consider the macro- and exosystem in which an individual

is located. This includes policies related to welfare and education as available resources and also as possible adversity.

Within the exosystem a lack of physical resources in the classroom creates an opportunity for teachers to mobilise, using social capital, to share physical resources. The macrosystem includes educational policies with which teachers need to keep up to date to facilitate transformation and maintain quality teaching and learning practices (Loots et al., 2012). The macrosystem encompasses the overarching belief system that includes nationwide socio-political and cultural values (Rosa & Tudge, 2013). The overarching belief system that teachers in South Africa use is 'ubuntu', an Afrocentric method of coping inherent to indigenous people. It emphasises interdependence and the collective is connected through the sharing of resources – be it interpersonal or physical.

According to Mansfield et al. (2012), resilient teachers are able to provide quality education when they manage their time effectively; take part in profession-related training; are adaptable; and have essential teaching skills and reflexive qualities (p. 362). Sadly, schools in poverty-stricken contexts receive minimal support and struggle with high teacher–student ratios as well as a lack of support from DoE officials (Theron & Engelbrecht, 2012). In a study conducted by Burić and Kim (2020), it was found that teachers with high levels of self-efficacy were more likely to provide quality educational instruction. They tend to look beyond the challenges and focus on utilising their strengths to maximise learner outcomes (Burić & Kim, 2021).

Teachers struggle to provide good quality teaching consistently over an extended period (Gu, 2014; Gu & Day, 2013). South African teachers face inequality, structural disparity, poor infrastructure, unemployment, and curriculum or policy changes (Edwards, 2016; Ebersöhn, 2014) but, although they face myriad challenges, they are still able to resile. Gu and Day (2007, p. 1314) posit that “underlying resilient teachers’ endeavours to exert control over difficult situations is their strength and determination to fulfil their original call to teach and to manage and thrive professionally”. According to Johnson et al. (2010), early career teachers draw on the following factors to stay in the profession and thrive: relational factors (network, connections and belonging), school culture (values and beliefs, norms and behaviours) and teacher identity.

Gu and Day (2013) 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 found that teachers who strive to teach as best they can (Gu & Li, 2013) encounter unrelenting mental and emotional challenges (Gu & Day, 2013). Gu and Day (2013, 2007) argue that teachers are able to remain in the profession and manage the uncertainties inherent to their careers owing to educational purpose and moral values. Johnson et al. (2010) share the same sentiments. Gu and Day (2013) furthermore argue that to counter teacher attrition a resilience process is needed, which involves complex relations between several internal and contextual resources found within the individual and in their context (Price et al., 2012; Gu & Day, 2007).

Indigenous people understand that a person needs contextual resources like spirituality to cope; you need God, and you need your ancestors. Both Christianity and African ancestry are based on social connectedness and relations between people and their faith, thus drawing on social, cultural and spiritual capital to resile (Ebersöhn et al., 2012; Phasha, 2010). The Indigenous Pathways to Resilience (IPR) study found that individuals in challenging contexts draw on several resources to adapt to chronic and cumulative stressors. Challenging rural contexts induce a shared identity, a shared understanding and a shared set of norms, beliefs and values. The IPR study found that this cultural pathway was effective and utilised by younger and older teachers (De Gouveia, 2015; Ebersöhn, 2014).

Fernandes et al. (2019) posit that contextual factors are vital in establishing teacher resilience because they operate as a protective resource that teachers use to adapt to and overcome stressful situations. In the Global South context, contextual factors, including the level of support from school or government authorities and encouragement from family and co-workers using other teachers as a collective problem-solving network), have been found to be critical for teacher resilience (Coetzee, 2013). Other significant contextual factors that were shown to retain teachers in their careers include demonstrating empathy with and instilling optimism in students, feeling accomplished in their work through problem-solving skills, maintaining a positive attitude and relying on their spirituality (Coetzee, 2013).

2.4 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

In this section I propose a conceptual framework (Figure 2.2) for the current study by integrating the theoretical framework, namely the relationship-resourced resilience theory (Ebersöhn, 2012, 2019) (see section 1.8.2 in Chapter 1) and insights from the

literature review to craft working assumptions for this explorative study. The conceptual framework of this study serves the purpose of describing what relational concepts may be present, based on the conceptualisations and experiences of the teachers (Anfara Jr & Mertz, 2014).

The literature reviewed and the context of the teachers allowed me to explore teacher awareness and knowledge of adversity (adversity and the postcolonial Global South context was indicated by the fist shape at the top of the page and the two blue squares to the left and right of the diagram) inherent in the narrated context, and an impetus to build additional resources. Teachers use protective resources (indicated by the two yellow squares at the bottom of the figure) to mediate challenges. Teachers adapt to the environment by mediating adversity, which results in teacher resilience (indicated by the “road” that runs throughout the diagram). I placed the “road” in this position to indicate teacher resilience as a multisystemic pathway that is not linear and is created and adapted by the teacher. Teacher resilience is aided by teachers’ intrapersonal characteristics, professional expertise or goals, spirituality, unique attributes of a challenging context, social capital and moral obligation. Teachers value resource sharing, and the relational path that mitigates against adversity towards resilience, as related to Ebersöhn’s (2012, 2013) concept of flocking in her relationship-resourced resilience framework (see section 1.3. in Chapter 1).

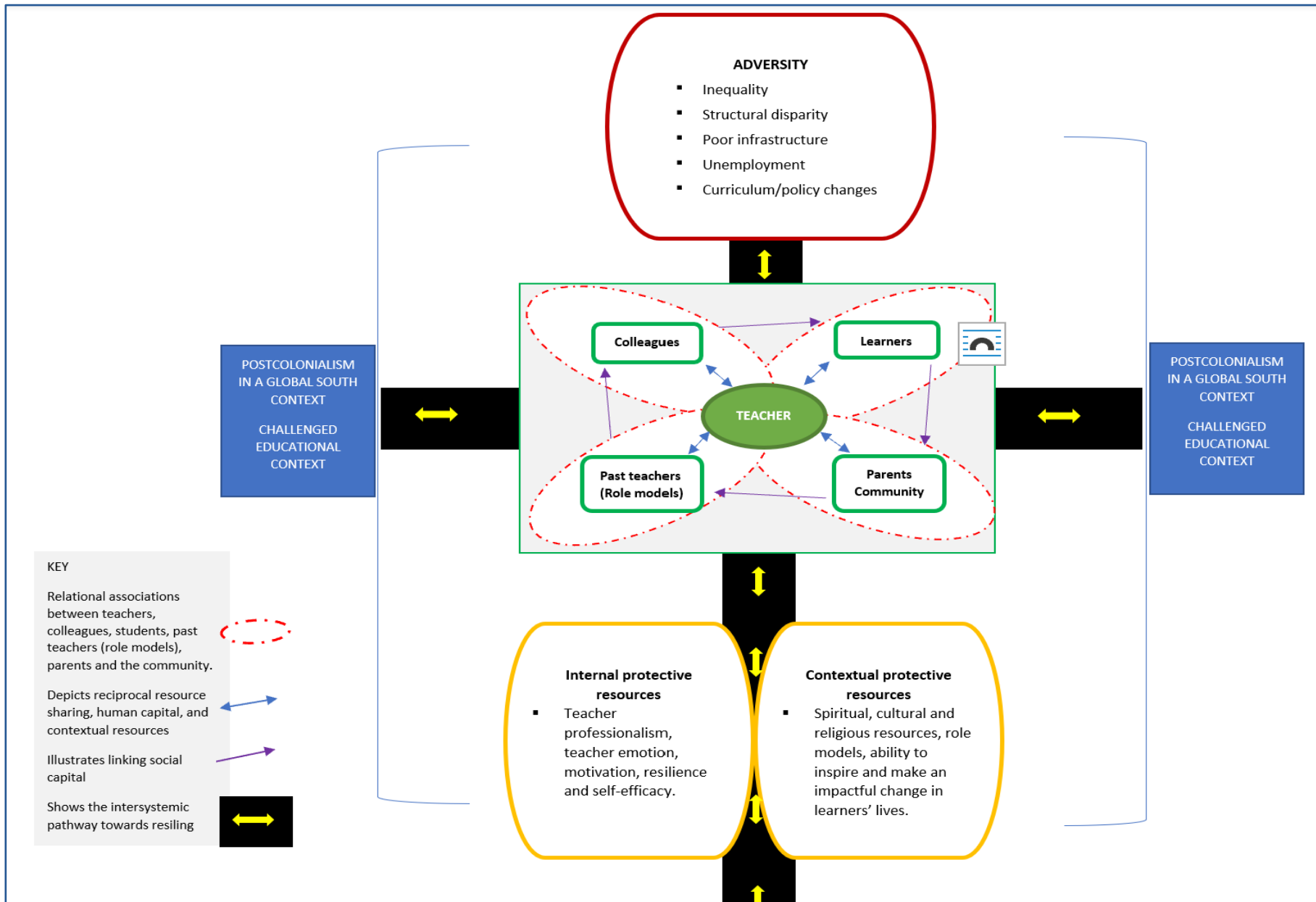


Figure 2.2: Evidence-based conceptual framework of resilience of peri-urban primary school teachers in challenging educational contexts

I derived working assumptions for the study from the theoretical framework and insights from the literature review.

- I assume that peri-urban primary school teachers in South Africa work and live in spaces of structural disparity, marginalisation, inequality and poverty synonymous with the Global South and postcolonial contexts (Ashcroft et al., 2013). The working assumption for this study is that peri-urban primary school teachers in South African public schools in challenging contexts are able to resile, based on social support (Aldeman & Chuong, 2014).
- I assume that rich, detailed descriptions of peri-urban primary school teachers will give insight into what enables teachers to negotiate or manage challenging educational spaces, and how teachers are supported to resile (remain in the teaching profession and provide quality education by utilising and sustaining protective resources that support them, despite their unfavourable environment).

2.5 CONCLUSION

In Chapter 2, I conducted a critical evaluation of pertinent research on teacher resilience. I contextualised challenging contexts by discussing challenges inherent in the postcolonial and Global South contexts and the implications for education. The effects of the identified challenges on the teaching profession were explored. It was critical to determine whether these challenges were exclusive to the Global North or to countries in the Global South, such as South Africa. It was determined that structural disparities, high risk, resource restrictions, poverty, and marginalisation characterised Global South contexts, affecting teaching quality, causing burnout and early retirement. As a result, I explored resilience and teacher resilience in order to better understand how, why, and what protective pathways teachers used to buffer against chronic risk in order to continue in the profession, provide high-quality education, and experience eustress. Finally, I established the theoretical foundations of the research.

In Chapter 3, I address and defend my decision to use certain research methods and strategies in the current study. In answering the primary and secondary research questions, I discuss the research design, data interpretation and analysis strategies. I conclude with a discussion of ethical considerations and standards of rigour related to the study.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 2 I explored the existing literature relevant to the current study. To contextualise the study, I presented a description of the chosen theoretical framework, namely the relationship-resourced resilience theory (Ebersöhn, 2019a; 2019b).

The aim of Chapter 3 is to discuss the methodological approaches and guidelines used to answer the following primary research question: How do primary school teachers in challenging spaces conceptualise teacher resilience? I present a description of the secondary data analysis as I selected this research design to apply in the current study. This is followed by a discussion of the sampling selection, data set, data selection strategies, data analysis and interpretation procedures that I employed. I complete the chapter with a discussion of the ethical guidelines and quality criteria adhered to during the study.

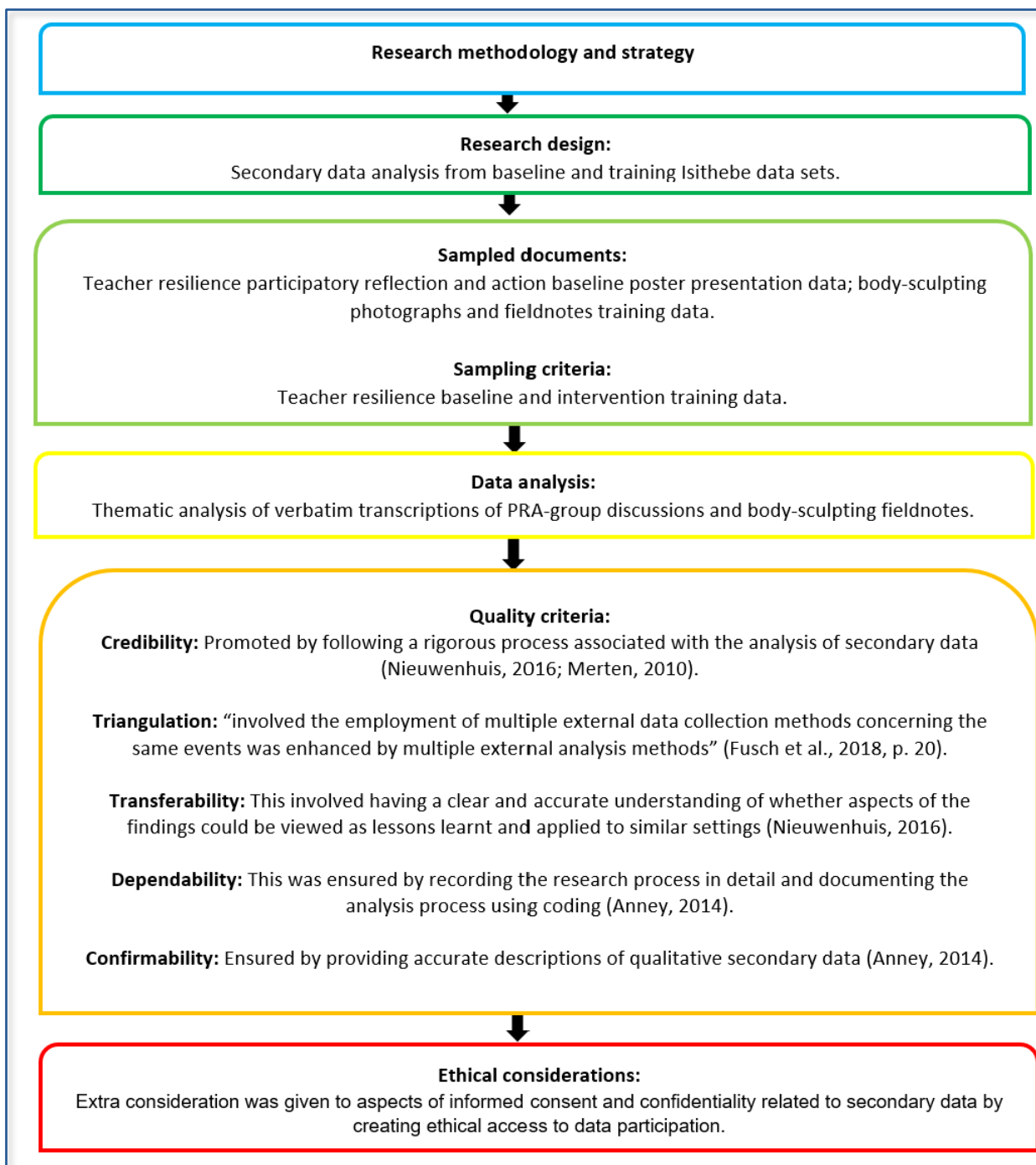


Figure 3.1: Overview of Chapter 3

3.1.1 Secondary data analysis

Secondary data analysis, according to Mouton (2001), is an empirical research design that entails "reanalysing [existing] data in order to test hypotheses or validate models" (p. 164). Given that the study aims to explore the conceptualisations of teachers regarding teacher resilience in challenging contexts (Nieuwenhuis, 2016), I opted for secondary data analysis of data from an intervention study baseline and training data

set. According to Nieuwenhuis (2007), it is essential to use a research design that is compatible with the relevant philosophical assumptions and appropriate for the chosen research questions as well as the pragmatic approach of the study. Therefore, in the sections that follow, I discuss the advantages and the disadvantages of using secondary data analysis as a research design.

3.1.2 Advantages of secondary data analysis

In comparison to first-hand data collection strategies, secondary data analysis allows researchers to access data on a broad scale, resulting in higher-quality data analysis (Gray, 2013; Smith, 2008). I concur with Smith (2008) as the current study utilised data collected over one year. The data included visual and textual data in the form of PRA posters, body-sculpting photographs and field notes (see Appendices C and D). The use of the aforementioned data allowed for comprehensive analysis. In addition, reusing data is more cost-effective than funding a new data collection process (Morrow et al., 2014; Gray, 2013; Jones & Coffey, 2012). Furthermore, a significant amount of time is saved by reusing existing qualitative data (Castle, 2003; Mouton, 2001). Secondary data analysis is an appropriate and useful design to apply in explorative research studies (Castle, 2003). The aforementioned was especially relevant to the current study because it was imperative to capture accurate accounts of the characteristics of the particular group of teachers who were represented in the secondary data that were derived from the primary Isithebe study.

A further advantage of using secondary data analysis is the creation of new knowledge and fresh insights to support or refute existing theories (Heaton, 1998; Jones & Coffey, 2012). Moreover, a secondary researcher is more detached from the data and can therefore be more objective in the analysis process (Gray, 2013). Secondary analysis limits the possibility of inconveniencing and causing harm to vulnerable participants when discussing or analysing sensitive topics (Gray, 2013; Jackson, 2019). Limiting of possible harm is accomplished through extensive use and reuse of generated data (Jackson et al., 2019; Bernard et al., 1986). Gray (2013) further highlights the fact that secondary data analysis is a convenient approach for students or first-time researchers like me. Having discussed the advantages, I now discuss the limitations of secondary data analysis.

3.1.3 Disadvantages of secondary data analysis

In this section I illustrate the disadvantages of secondary data analysis. Researchers have debated whether the reuse of qualitative data adheres to the fundamental principles of qualitative research (Corti, 2018; Heaton, 2008; Corti & Bishop, 2005). Challenges include the 'problem of data fit,' or whether data obtained for one (primary) function can be utilized for another (secondary) one. The semi-structured nature of qualitative data and the generally flexible nature of research designs can result in data sets with varying comprehensiveness in coverage of themes, necessitating the need to ensure that data be used to satisfy the new purposes of a secondary study. A further limitation was that I was not personally involved in the actual data collection process or the social connectedness intervention. My lack of involvement in the primary data collection phase could nevertheless be construed as an advantage in this study because I was able to view and analyse the data objectively. However, I had to spend time studying the context and background of the primary research environment to eliminate any possible errors. In September 2019, I visited the primary research site, where I was able to observe PRA discussions, interact with the participants and had first-hand experience of the study's context. I reflected on the data collection process in my research diary (see Appendix G for the researcher diary):

Today is the day of the Isithebe intervention. We were up early and ready to go. The participants took a while to come and a lot of them were late. Very few teachers represented some of the schools and, upon talking to some of them, they indicated that it was because of how far away the schools were; they indicated that transport was a problem.

The participants received transportation money as they registered; this was an incentive but when I spoke to one of them, I realised just how much of a difference it was making. The teachers were all so friendly; it was wonderful to watch them interact with the primary researcher and my supervisor; it was like they had seen old friends; it was all hugs, smiles and laughs. The teachers were divided into the six school groups, the PRA activity commenced, field notes were being taken by one of the other researchers and photographs were being captured of the entire process. Another researcher and I were audio-recording the responses. The teachers came up with some insightful presentations. It was quite something to experience the data collection process at first hand.

Secondary data analysis is conducted systematically to ensure the recognition and thorough comprehension of the study's context (Irwin, 2013). To avoid bias, I

regularly attended supervisory meetings, where the content was viewed and reviewed from multiple perspectives.

A noticeable limitation of the current study was the incompleteness of data sets and lack of availability of full data sets (Gray, 2013). Upon analysing the initially selected baseline data set, it was established that to provide in-depth, nuanced descriptions of teacher resilience more data from the extant Isithebe study would be needed. Therefore, after consultation with my research supervisor, steps were taken to source various complete data sets that were representative of the phenomenon under study. Consequentially, all the data sets generated during the 12-month intervention were investigated, from which a purposive sample could be selected. The PRA poster presentations that were generated during the baseline research (18 September 2018) as well as the body-sculpting and field note data, generated during the intervention training (15 March 2019), were selected and analysed (see Appendices C and D).

3.2 EXTANT ISITHEBE DATA SET

3.2.1 Data sets

In the following section, I discuss the data sets derived from the Isithebe Social Connectedness Intervention Study aimed to examine social connectedness as a roadmap to teacher resilience in challenging educational spaces. Objectives included: (i) establishing the resilience of teachers; (ii) finding the social connection of primary school teachers employed in school spaces marked by extreme socio-economic disadvantage; (iii) determining the effect on their resilience of an intentional social connection intervention with teachers; and (iv) refining a piloted social connection intervention to promote the resilience of teachers (Ebersöhn et al., 2020).

In the Eastern Cape, South Africa, six primary schools in lower socio-economic communities were purposely included and teacher participants (n = 36, Female = 34, Male = 2) were conveniently sampled from these schools (Ebersöhn et al., 2020). The transferability of outcomes was restricted to: (i) educational spaces marked by common problems of institutional inequality; (ii) primary schools; (iii) predominantly female teachers over 40 years of age with a range of teaching experience; and (iv) tertiary credentials in teaching.

According to Ebersöhn et al., (2020), the Isithebe intervention study utilised a concurrent mixed-methods intervention design to generate teacher data over time. The study took place over a year and followed a participatory reflection and action (PRA) approach. The social connectedness intervention was co-constructed with teacher participants and implemented over six months. During the intervention and post-intervention phases, quantitative and qualitative textual and visual data were obtained at the baseline. Qualitative data were recorded, and transcribed verbatim, and visual data were thematically analysed. Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25 was used to analyse the quantitative data (Ebersöhn et al., 2020).

During the Isithebe baseline data collection, each teacher completed a demographic questionnaire (see Appendix A) in which age, gender, school and language were indicated. Quantitative measures included the Teacher Resilience Questionnaire, consisting of selected items from existing scales, extracted from ENTREE (Peixoto et al., 2018), and the Bibliography of Teacher Resilience (BriTE) (Mansfield et al., 2016), an assets-based model (Morgan, 2011), and contextual teacher resilience items (Coetzee, 2013).

Pertinent to the current study are the qualitative data collected, which consisted of PRA data sources (Chambers, 1994), verbatim transcriptions of PRA group discussions, poster presentations and arts-based data in the form of body-sculpting data (Ebersöhn et al., 2020). I describe this data collection method comprehensively in section 3.3.4 as it relates to the Isithebe data that were sampled for analysis. In Figures 3.2 to Figure 3.4 I describe the participants at baseline.

On average, the September 2018 and March 2019 cohorts worked with two to nine participants per school. There were two male participants in school C (see Figure 3.2), while the remaining schools comprised female participants only.

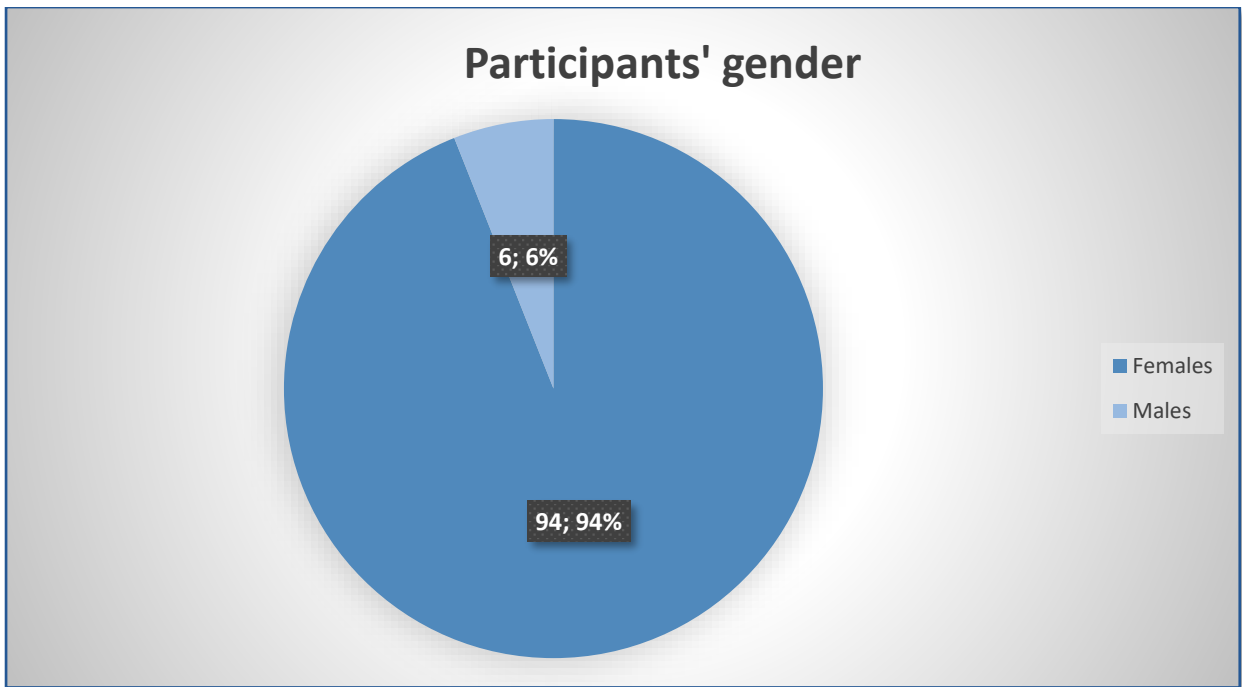


Figure 3.2: Isithebe participants: Gender (Adapted from Ebersöhn et al., 2020)

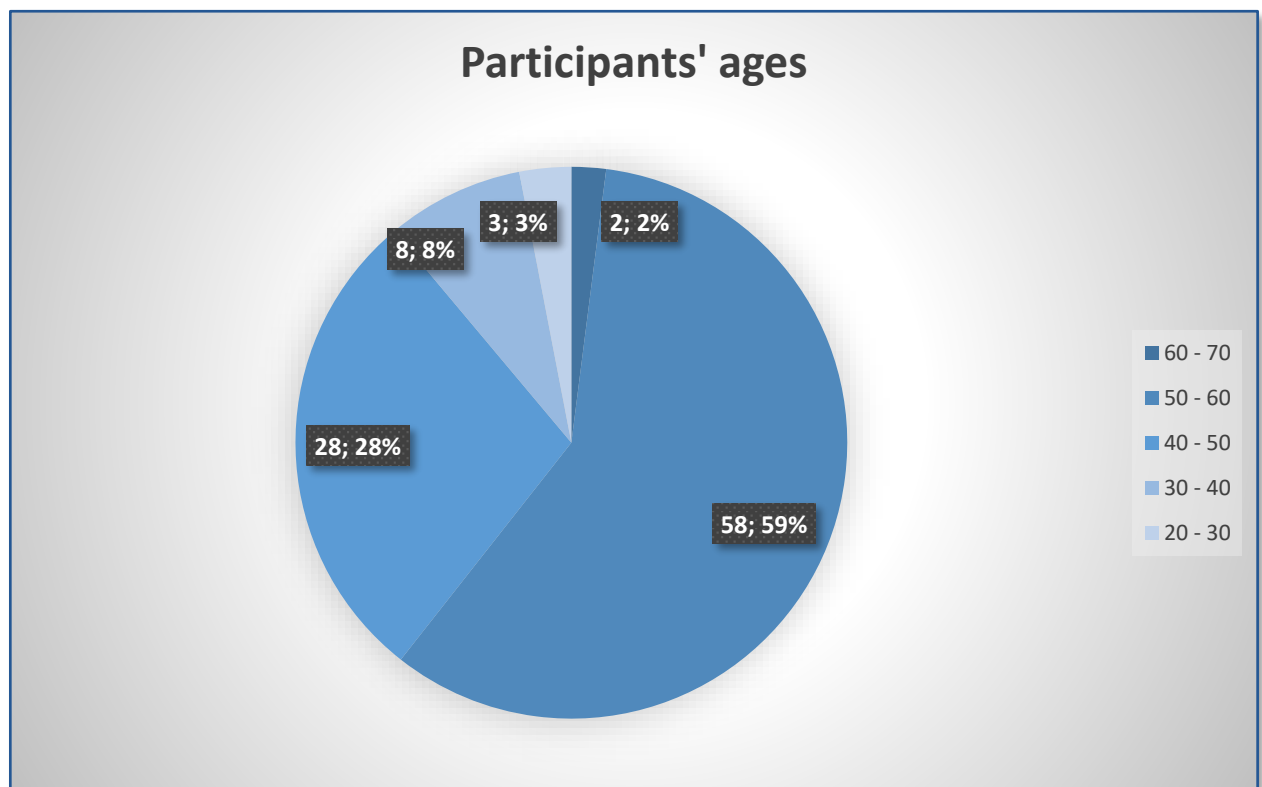


Figure 3.3: Isithebe participants: Ages (Adapted from Ebersöhn et al., 2020)

The data indicate that 21 participating teachers were over 50 years of age (see Figure 3.3). One teacher fell in the age group 20 to 30 and another in the 60 to 70 age group, indicating that the majority of the teachers were between 50 and 60 years of age.

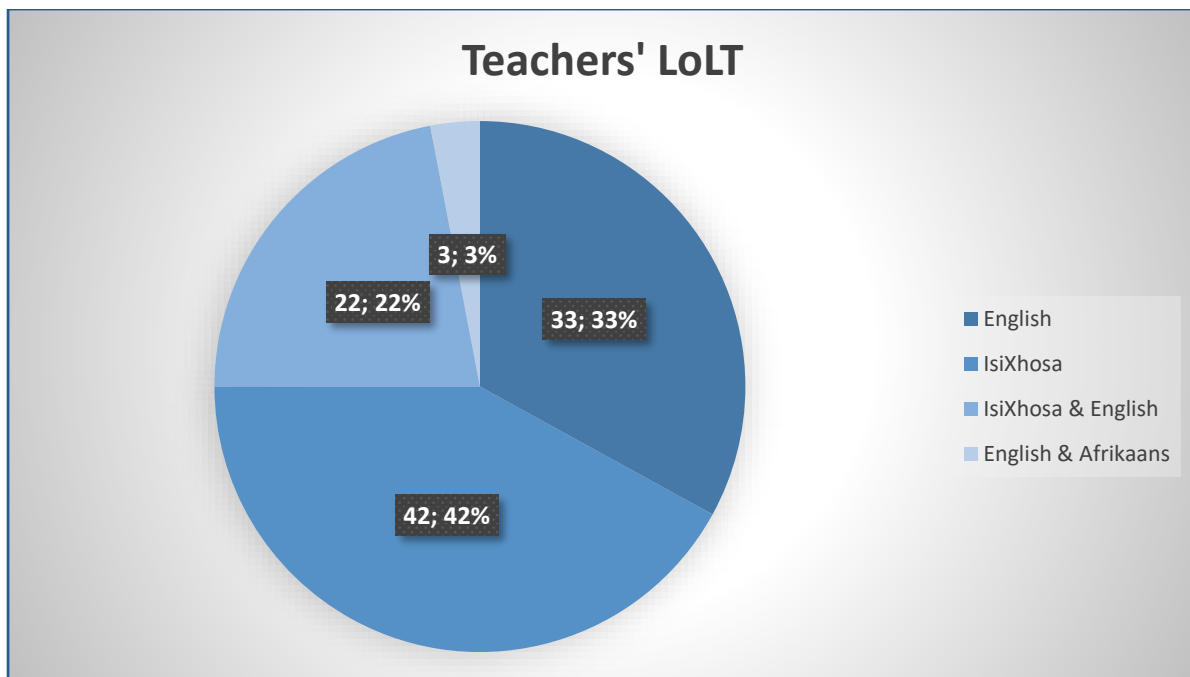


Figure 3.4: Isithebe participants: Language of learning and teaching (Adapted from Ebersöhn et al., 2020)

A significant number of teachers indicated isiXhosa as their home language. Figure 3.4. is a pie chart indicating the home languages commonly spoken by people living in the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan area. According to the Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality (2016) Integrated Development Plan, 82.7% of its population speak isiXhosa at home. Many of the teachers taught in isiXhosa and a few taught in English. However, even though the language of learning and teaching (LoLT) is English, this is not the home language of any of the teachers. In line with the school's preferred LoLT, the Isithebe intervention training sessions were administered in English.

3.3 PURPOSIVELY SAMPLED QUALITATIVE TEACHER RESILIENCE FOR SECONDARY ANALYSIS

3.3.1 Purposive sampling

Any procedure for selecting units of observation from a population of interest (people or objects) is referred to as a sampling strategy (Babbie & Mouton, 2005). The essence of qualitative analysis is to select those participants, sites, documents and resources that will best allow the researcher to explore the phenomenon under study and answer the primary research question (Creswell, 2009). Therefore, the current

study used two non-probability sampling strategies: convenience and purposive sampling (Cohen et al., 2017).

With purposive sampling, the specific focus is on readily available data sources, implying that the selected sampling strategy was highly appropriate (Etikan et al., 2016). Therefore, sampling for this study included the careful selection of relevant data from the qualitative secondary data, as recommended by Gravetter and Forzano (2009). The purpose of this in the study was to acquire appropriate qualitative data that adequately captured and described the teacher participants' conceptualisations of teacher resilience in challenging spaces (Starks & Brown Trinidad, 2007).

A limitation of purposive sampling is its reliance on the non-random selection of participants (Etikan et al., 2016). Including a non-random sample prohibits the research from being generalised to the population at large (Etikan et al., 2016). However, this limitation was reduced by sampling from two cohorts. Furthermore, the study had no intention of generalising the findings to the larger population, therefore, the abovementioned limitations associated with purposive sampling did not hinder the study. I selected the following data sources from the baseline PRA group discussion and body-sculpting activity (see Appendices C and D), together with Photograph 3.1 and Photograph 3.2.

Photograph 3.1 and Photograph 3.2 illustrate the Isithebe intervention training session and are visual representations of teachers presenting their body sculpting.



Photograph 3.1: Intervention session (Photograph by Z. Bosch, 18 March 2018)



Photograph 3.2: The intervention session, a teacher's body sculpture (Photograph by Z. Bosch, 18 March 2018)

3.3.2 Extant Isithebe participatory reflection and action data

3.3.2.1 Implementation and documentation of participatory reflection and action data

Participatory reflection and action (PRA) allowed the participating teachers to share agency and self-empowerment strategies in the community engagement process, expressing personal narratives and highlighting individual perspectives of their lived experiences (Abedi & Badragheh, 2011). The study integrated the precepts of PRA by creating an environment in which participants had the freedom to share their views and beliefs about resilience and social connectedness at the data collection and intervention stage. The Isithebe study generated qualitative data at various intervals: (i) at the pre-intervention and (ii) post-intervention stages as well as (iii) processed data. The current study utilised PRA data from the pre-intervention baseline stage. Teachers ($n = 36$) from each school ($n = 6$) were present at the time of baseline data collection in September 2018 (Table 1.3 contains details regarding the baseline data collection stage).

Table 1.3: Teachers present at the Isithebe baseline measurement

	School A	School B	School C	School D	School E	School F	TOTAL
September 2018	4	5	5	8	2	12	36

According to Ebersöhn et al. (2020), the pre- and post-intervention data generation sessions included peri-urban primary school teachers being arranged into groups of six, representing the six different schools ($n = 6$). The primary researchers used two prompts to encourage conversation between teachers in their school groups. Teachers were asked to discuss and answer the following questions: (i) *What does it mean to be a good teacher?* (ii) *What helps you continue being a teacher?* Participants consulted among themselves in their groups and, upon reaching consensus, one participant verbally presented the collective answer to the other five school groups and researchers.

The PRA group poster presentation responses were audio-recorded. I transcribed the recordings verbatim (see Appendix B). According to Patton (2002), transcribing audio recordings provides researchers with the opportunity to immerse themselves in the data, an experience that generated emergent insights. The PRA group presentations, addressing the different prompts, were also documented as visual data (see Appendix C).

3.3.2.2 Advantages of PRA-based activities

In this section, I detail the advantages of using PRA-based activities. One advantage of PRA is that the activities do not require high levels of literacy of participants. Furthermore, it allows the researcher to obtain rich contextual data involving participants' perspectives, based on their unique experiences. In addition, PRA activities are inexpensive but can nevertheless yield extensive information (Ebersöhn et al., 2016). PRA activities were used to explore teachers' lives, and to explore challenging educational contexts, experiences and perceptions concerning teacher resilience (Chambers, 1994, 2006).

In addition, PRA was viewed as the appropriate method for the initial and the current study as PRA allows researchers to gain insight into challenging contexts from and with primary researchers and indigenous people who are embedded in such contexts (Chambers, 1994). PRA emphasises the equal value of contributions by all

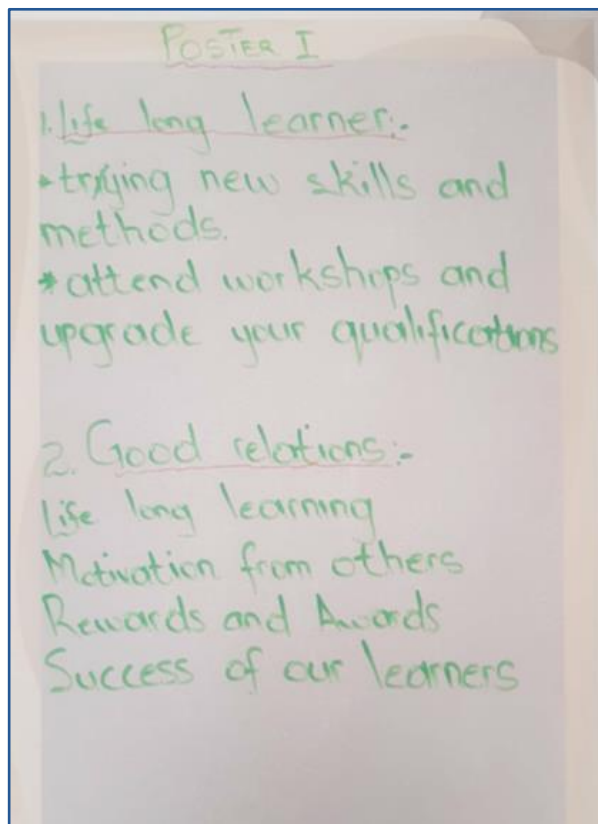
participants; therefore, the relations with participants and stakeholders, and also between participants, were valued equally and relations were formed naturally and were also reciprocal (Busza, 2004; Kidd & Kral, 2005). Furthermore, a strength of PRA activities is that sharing is open-ended, visual and facilitated in a group (Chambers, 1994). Mukherjee and Chambers (2012) posit that the use of visual representations make ideas simple to understand and provide a tangible basis for discussion. The tangible products of the PRA activity were documented in the form of photographs (see Photograph 3.3, Photograph 3.4 and Appendix C, in which pictures of the posters were recorded). This served as a visual reminder of the activity, discussion and outcomes reached during the PRA group activities (Chambers, 1994). In Photograph 3.4 a participant is seen holding a poster and presenting the group's answers verbally and textually.



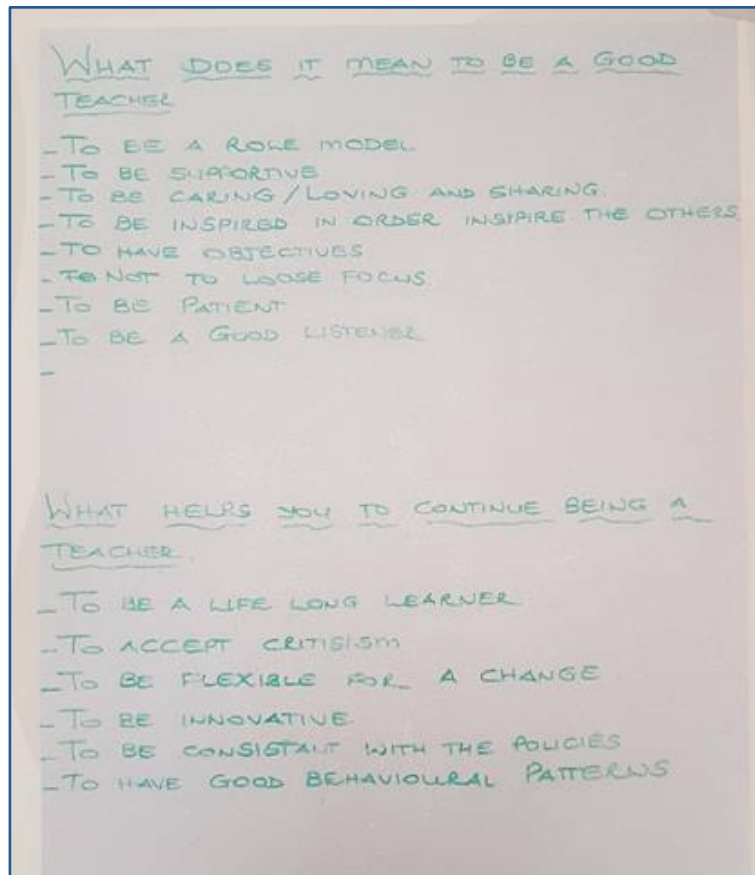
Photograph 3.3: Teachers in discussion in their school groups (Photograph by Z. Bosch, 18 September 2018)



Photograph 3.4: A teacher is presenting their school's PRA poster (Photograph by Z. Bosch, 18 September 2018)



Photographs 3.5 An illustration of the PRA answers to the questions by schools A and B (Photographs by Z. Bosch, 18 September 2018)



Photographs 3.6: An illustration of the PRA answers to the questions by schools A and B (Photographs by Z. Bosch, 18 September 2018)

3.3.2.3 *Limitations of using PRA*

In the following section, I discuss the limitations of using PRA-based activities. One limitation of PRA is the difficulty related to earning the trust of participants. This challenge was overcome by the primary researcher, who implemented certain introductory activities and then related to the participants according to their different levels of communication literacy. In addition, 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 the participants (Chambers, 2006).

An additional possible challenge may be that certain participants within a specific group could be ignored unintentionally, by implication or bias (Ebersöhn et al., 2016). Another limitation of PRA is related to the role of the primary researcher as a facilitator rather than an expert. This may be a challenge to researchers because they are traditionally viewed as experts, contrary to what PRA advocates. The participants are the experts in their situation and both the participants and researchers are to learn from one another, creating a context of learning (Leurs,

1996). To remove any unilateral control over the data collection process, the primary researcher assumed the role of a committed participant who was willing to learn.

The posters created by each school were documented and the participants' responses were photographed (see Appendix C). Photographs can serve as an alternative source of qualitative data (Polkinghorne, 2005). Photographs in qualitative research inspire alternative insights and contribute to extracting additional knowledge that would have been difficult to obtain through other methods (Banks, 2018; Packard, 2008). Moreover, photographs generally provide objective evidence (Schwartz, 1989). Objective evidence can include facial expressions, emotions and gestures made by the participants, depicting their environmental settings (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). Unique contexts are captured in visual data, which suit the theoretical framework of the current study (Banks, 2008).

A limitation in using photographs is the issue of confidentiality. The risk of exposure can be controlled by excluding the participants' faces from the photographs, blotting them out or avoiding presentation of the photographs in public, unless the participants have given their consent (Leavy, 2014).

3.3.3 Arts-based methodology: Body-sculpting data

3.3.3.2 Implementation and documentation of the arts-based methodology

In this section, I discuss the process used to implement the arts-based methodology and how body-sculpting data were collected and documented. The arts-based methodology is based on the premise that the creative process of art-making facilitates the exploration of feelings and aesthetic projections, which are more intense than verbal activities (Malchiodi, 2005). Leitch, (2006) posits that an arts-based methodology can bring out unconscious thoughts and conceptualisations that are not affected by language. It is a technique that allows each participant truly to express themselves. Therefore it is not just for those who are artistically gifted (Liebmann, 2004). An arts-based methodology allows the researcher to create a novel environment to conceptualise human affairs. According to Knowles and Cole (2008), an arts-based methodology "gives the reader a virtual sensory experience of nature in all its glorious richness and complexity" (p. 6). The Isithebe study used multiple arts-based therapies and research techniques, but the current study focused only on the body-sculpting technique.

In March 2019, as part of the Isithebe training process, teacher participants (n = 30) engaged in a body-sculpting activity. Table 1.4 indicates that School F had the highest attendance and Schools B and E had the lowest, while Schools A and C had the same number of attendees.

Table 1.4: Teacher attendance at the March 2019 intervention implementation session

	School A	School B	School C	School D	School E	School F	TOTAL
March 2019	5	2	5	4	2	12	30

The activity entailed that the teachers had to employ body sculpting to illustrate teacher resilience. Teachers were asked to do the following: (a) *Use your BODY to create a statue of your best self as a teacher – show the legacy you want to leave behind when you pass*; (b) *discuss in your group why this body sculpture represents your best self as a teacher*, and (c) *each group must select two body sculpture representations and present it to the larger group* (see Appendix D). The selected body sculptures were presented to the larger group and were visually captured as photographs (see Appendix D). Observations were also documented in field notes (see Appendix D).

3.3.3.3 Advantages of an arts-based methodology

In this section, I detail the advantages of using the arts-based methodology. An advantage of the arts-based methodology is that it enables participants to express themselves vicariously in the situation (Knowles & Cole, 2008), allowing for innovative conceptualisations of the phenomenon being studied. The approach is based on having an empathetic experience where researchers can ‘walk’ in participants' shoes and truly understand the expressions of their thoughts. Furthermore, the arts-based methodology allowed the study to address the qualitative nuances of teacher resilience appropriately. Piantanida et al. (2003) posit as follows:

Art and aesthetic expression is valued for its power to cultivate one’s own sensibilities, engender empathy toward others, evoke or provoke responses from others, offer release for troubling experiences, celebrate the human spirit, and/or foster awareness of and sensitivity toward marginalized or disenfranchised groups e.g., economically or politically disadvantaged minorities (p. 188).

The commonality across all arts-based methodologies is that it involves reflecting on nonverbal cues and creative expression, together with facilitating a trustworthy, secure context that allows individuals to build trustful relationships (Backos & Pagon, 2011).

3.3.3.4 Limitations of using the arts-based methodology

In the current section, I discuss the limitations of using the arts-based methodology, while noting that a potentially significant limitation of the arts-based methodology is the degree of creativity and spontaneity in the creative process. This may lead to something meaningful, but that meaning might not be used in the way it was intended by the creator (Parry, 2015). Researchers who apply the arts-based methodology are susceptible to losing themselves in inquiry when the data collection process is complex and many activities are conducted (Knowles & Cole, 2008). The primary researcher overcame this limitation by creating a detailed intervention manual that described the systematic overview of the implementation of the Isithebe arts-based methodology and the materials to be used (Ebersöhn et al., 2020). Furthermore, Knowles and Cole (2008) argue that one should use descriptive language to translate participants' insights. Merleau-Ponty (1992) posits that an attempt to describe the phenomenon may conceal participants' actual expressions. The primary researcher overcame this limitation by incorporating photographs, audio recordings of participants' responses and observations (in the form of field notes). I transcribed the body-sculpting data and the primary researcher and I conducted an in-depth thematic analysis, under the supervision of my research supervisor. In this way the teachers' expressions of resilience were interpreted thoroughly, without personal projections or bias.

3.3.3.5 Observation documented as field notes

In this section, I discuss the process for making observations and how the observation data were collected and documented. To gather data about the social world the researcher must go into the social situation and observe it (Angrosino & Mays de Perez, 2000). The primary purpose of using observation in the current study was to collect nonverbal information to inform the researcher of how participants experienced the body-sculpting activity while they engaged in it, and what transpired. The selected body sculptures were discussed, and observations were made in field notes.

3.3.3.6 Advantages of using observation

In the present section, I detail the advantages of using observation, which include observation of participants in their natural setting. Angrosino and Mays de Perez (2000) note that this does not interfere with the participants' behaviour, or the activity being observed. Observation allowed the researchers to read non-verbal cues regarding the topic being discussed, which contributed to robust interpretations during the data analysis stage. Furthermore, observations may be used to supplement other data sources (Mukherjee & Chambers, 2012). The current study used pictures and verbatim transcriptions, including observations to supplement the other data sources.

3.3.3.7 Limitations of using observation

In this section, I look at the possible limitations of using observation. A potential limitation is observation bias, which involves the researcher bringing certain talents, experiences, beliefs, bias and related limitations to the study, through which the observer affects the situation being observed (Angrosino & Mays de Perez, 2000). A further limitation of observation is that researchers are highly selective and may unintentionally ignore or intentionally leave out aspects that do not appear to be relevant to them (Emerson et al., 2001, 1995).

3.4 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

In the current study, I applied the guidelines for primary inductive thematic analysis, as proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006), and illustrated in Figure 3.5 below, while a detailed description of the code-generating process is captured in Appendix F.

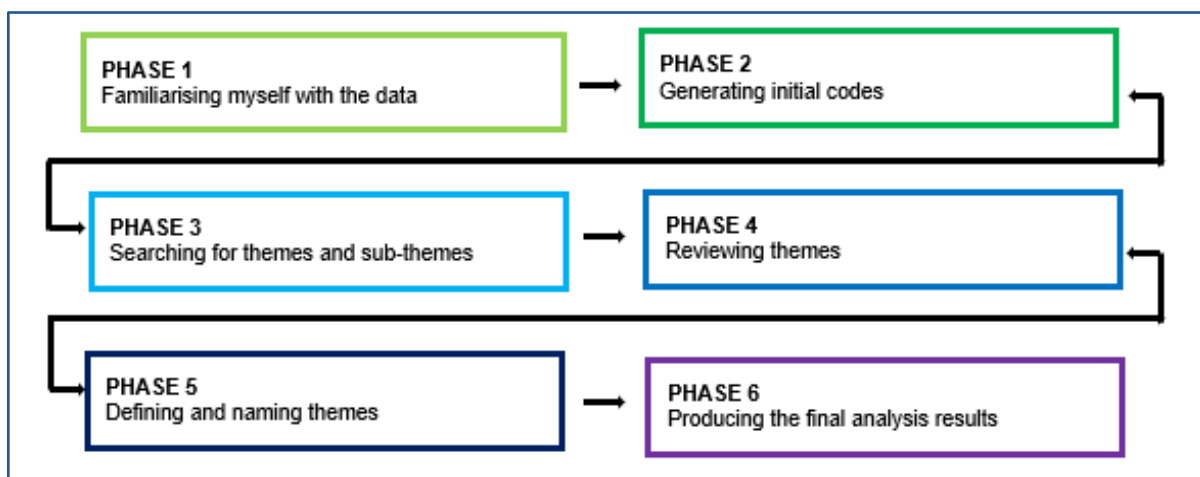


Figure 3.5: Inductive thematic analysis as proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006)

I thematically analysed the six verbatim transcriptions (see Appendix B), and six photographs documenting the schools' answers to teacher resilience conceptualisations by means of body-sculpting photographs and field notes (see Appendix D). The thematic analysis was conducted according to the guidelines for this proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006), as illustrated in Figure 3.5.

I used thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) to analyse the textual and visual data. According to Flick (2014), data analysis may be described as a process that involves the interpretation of textual and visual data. Data are analysed in an attempt to infer statements about the implicit and explicit conceptualisations, and making meaning of the data to establish what is represented in it.

Creswell and Miller (2000) posit that qualitative data analysis is a meticulous process that requires the preparation of data for analysis, conducting different analyses, obtaining an in-depth understanding of the data, representing the data and making interpretations. In this research study, qualitative data analysis aimed to draw on the data collected in terms of words, phrases, themes and patterns (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). One of the most common approaches to the analysis of written and visual data involves the identification of recurring themes or patterns (Byrne, 2014). Considering that multiple existing data sources were used, I chose to use the thematic inductive analysis approach to analyse the data (Clarke & Braun, 2013) and reported recurring themes or patterns that emerged from the data (Vaismoradi et al., 2013). &

Thematic analysis is an investigative approach for the identification and analysis of qualitative data patterns (Clarke & Braun, 2013). It is a methodology that helps the investigator to arrange and explain data sets in depth (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Braun and Clarke (2006) state that thematic analysis attempts to theorise the sociocultural contexts and the systemic conditions that enable individual accounts to be formed and allow data to be viewed socially and psychologically. In the current study, the goal was therefore to recognise and extract common recurrent and significant themes that originated from the teachers' conceptualisations, representations, viewpoints and perspectives on the resilience of teachers (Vaismoradi et al., 2013).

Willig (2013) asserts that "a theme refers to a particular meaning pattern found in the data" (p. 181). Braun and Clarke (2006, p. 82) recommend that, in relation to the research question, a theme captures essential aspects of the data and describes these aspects as a degree of patterned responses or meaning within the data set.

Willig (2013) contends that codes assigned to emerging data patterns and responses permit the researcher to answer the research questions. I coded the data patterns accordingly.

3.5 QUALITY CRITERIA

3.5.2 Credibility

Credibility in qualitative research refers to “the truth of the data or the participant views and the interpretation and representation of them by the researcher” (Cope, 2014, p. 89). Credibility establishes whether the research findings are congruent with the perceived social reality, to determine if there is correspondence between the researcher's viewpoints and the social constructs that have been put forward by the research (Mertens & Hesse-Biber, 2013).

During the secondary data analysis process, the extended interaction with the data represents the measure of integrity that was attained. I maintained a research journal (see Appendix G), which details all the procedures that have been pursued and proves that credible secondary research was conducted.

In this research study, the rich representations of the different levels of meaning and culture contained in the qualitative secondary data supported credibility (Morrow, 2005). I sought consultation and supervision, as well as peer analysis with the primary researcher to enhance credibility and ensure trustworthiness (Agar et al., 2004). Representing the original data in the form of accurate, trustworthy and true analysis also ensured credible research results.

3.5.3 Triangulation

Triangulation enhances the credibility of a study (Creswell, 2013). In this research I employed triangulation of data sources, data collection methods and of researchers. To achieve the triangulation of different *data sources*, teachers from six schools were purposefully selected to take part in the study (see section 3.2 of this chapter for more information on the Isithebe data set). Triangulation of *data collection methods* was achieved by using multiple data sources, namely: audio recordings of PRA-directed group activities, an arts-based methodology, body sculpting (for which data were transcribed verbatim), observations (documented in the form of field notes) captured in my researcher diary, and the collection of visual data in the form of photographs. The triangulation of researchers was achieved by the input of the primary researcher,

a co-researcher (is a PhD candidate), my supervisor and I. I achieved triangulation of theory by using multiple perspectives to interpret the data and a thorough literature review in which multiple sources were reviewed.

3.5.4 Transferability

"Transferability refers to the extent to which the findings of the study can be allied to other settings or groups in another context" (Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009, p. 6). Bengtsson (2016) posits that the more representative the sample size is, the more generalisable the results may be. I ensured transferability by providing descriptions of the research design and of the selection and characteristics of the participants in the study (Nieuwenhuis, 2016; Elo et al., 2014) as well as detailed descriptions of the conceptualisations of the teachers who participated in the broader study. Therefore, it may be deduced that the data generated by the current study produced rich, descriptive findings (Nieuwenhuis, 2016).

3.5.5 Dependability

Dependability refers to stability in research, such as the choice of research design and its implementation as well as the data gathering techniques and reflective appraisal of the project, which may be subject to change as the study is conducted (Bengtsson, 2016). The study discusses the research procedures that enabled me to produce dependable findings (Terre Blanche et al., 2006). This contributed to an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon being studied (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). All the teachers' qualitative teacher resilience data sources, obtained at baseline and during the intervention training, were included to produce enough information for rich descriptions (see Appendices A and B).

3.5.6 Confirmability

"Confirmability denotes the degree of neutrality and the extent to which the findings of the research are a clear representation of the voices of the participants and are free of any researcher bias" (Nieuwenhuis, 2016, p. 125). Researcher bias is unavoidable. Therefore, it is important to acknowledge its occurrence and guard against it. The present study used inanimate data collected. There was no direct contact with the participants and in this instance the lack of direct involvement with the participants limited the risk of researcher bias to an extent (Nieuwenhuis, 2016).

I further established confirmability through reflection in my researcher diary (Appendix G) and debriefing meetings with my supervisor. These means enabled me to ensure that the data fully supported my insights (Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009).

3.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

3.6.2 Permission to use qualitative secondary data analysis as a research design

Ethical approval to conduct the current study was obtained from the Faculty of Education's Ethics Committee at the University of Pretoria². It is possible for ethical concerns to arise at any stage of the research process and are not constricted to the data analysis and collection processes (Cohen et al., 2017; Creswell, 2009).

When doing research in the form of qualitative secondary analysis of existing data, the researcher is expected to respect the rights and dignity of the participants who are portrayed in the existing original data sources (Elias & Theron, 2012). In using multiple data sources, I ensured that the confidentiality, integrity and anonymity of the participants' data were maintained (Clarke & Braun, 2013). Furthermore, I applied reasonable judgement to ensure that no potential bias is introduced (Elias & Theron, 2012).

Bless et al. (2006) state that all participants should be informed about the type of research and its purpose. The participants in the initial intervention study were informed of their rights, during and after the study, with regard to the potential risk concerning confidentiality. However, no sensitive information obtained from participants was used in the study. All participants were given pseudonyms to protect their identity and the identity of the schools were also kept confidential (Creswell et al., 2007). After the study, all the data generated during the research study will be kept at the University of Pretoria for five years in case the study is recalled and essential evidence is required for the validation of data.

Another aspect to be taken into consideration was ethics (Irwin, 2013; Jones & Coffey, 2012). Owing to the sensitivity of individual interactions between the primary researcher and the participants, it was the responsibility of the primary researcher to secure the participants' data (Irwin, 2013). Concerns over ethical implications and informed consent are raised when using secondary research data

² Ethics reference number: EP 06/11/01 Versveld 19-001

(Irwin, 2013). Therefore, extreme care was taken to ensure confidentiality, anonymity and data protection with the use of this secondary data beyond the original purpose (Morrow et al., 2014) by employing codes to identify and analyse the data.

3.7 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I addressed the study's methods of sampling, analysis and documentation of data in response to the research question. Concluding the chapter, I stipulated the quality criteria and ethical considerations that were adhered to. In Chapter 4, I discuss the results and findings of the study.

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CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I present the thematic analysis results. I provide verbatim extracts for transparency in and authentication of each theme, subtheme and, where relevant, category. I conducted literature control to establish the findings of the study³ and to answer the research questions.

4.2 DATA PRESENTATION

I used a system of coding so that responses can be traced back to the raw data, the verbatim transcriptions. Furthermore, in the tables the codes SA, P2 and L2 refer to School A, page 2 and line 2. (see Appendix B). Each theme is captured in a table detailing the criteria for inclusion and exclusion.

Table 4.1: Information of the schools participating in the study

Data source (transcript)	Page no.	Line no.
School A – (SA)	P 2	L 2
School B – (SB)	P 3	L 2
School C – (SC)	P 4	L 2
School D – (SD)	P 5	L 2
School E – (SE)	P 6	L 2
School F – (SF)	P 7	L 2

4.3 THEMATIC ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

4.3.1 Introduction

In Figure 4.1, I provide an overview of the two themes, each with subthemes and, where applicable, categories. The discussion of results proceeds with a description of the inclusion and exclusion criteria, extracts from the raw data, literature control and validation.

³ Some results and findings of the current study form part of the report prepared for The Synergos Institute: 'The Isithebe Social Connectedness Study', (Ebersöhn et al., 2020).

The themes are as follows: Theme 1, *Being a quality teacher enables teacher resilience*; and Theme 2, *Supportive relationships enable teacher resilience*. Figure 4.1 provides an overview of the results derived from the thematic analysis.

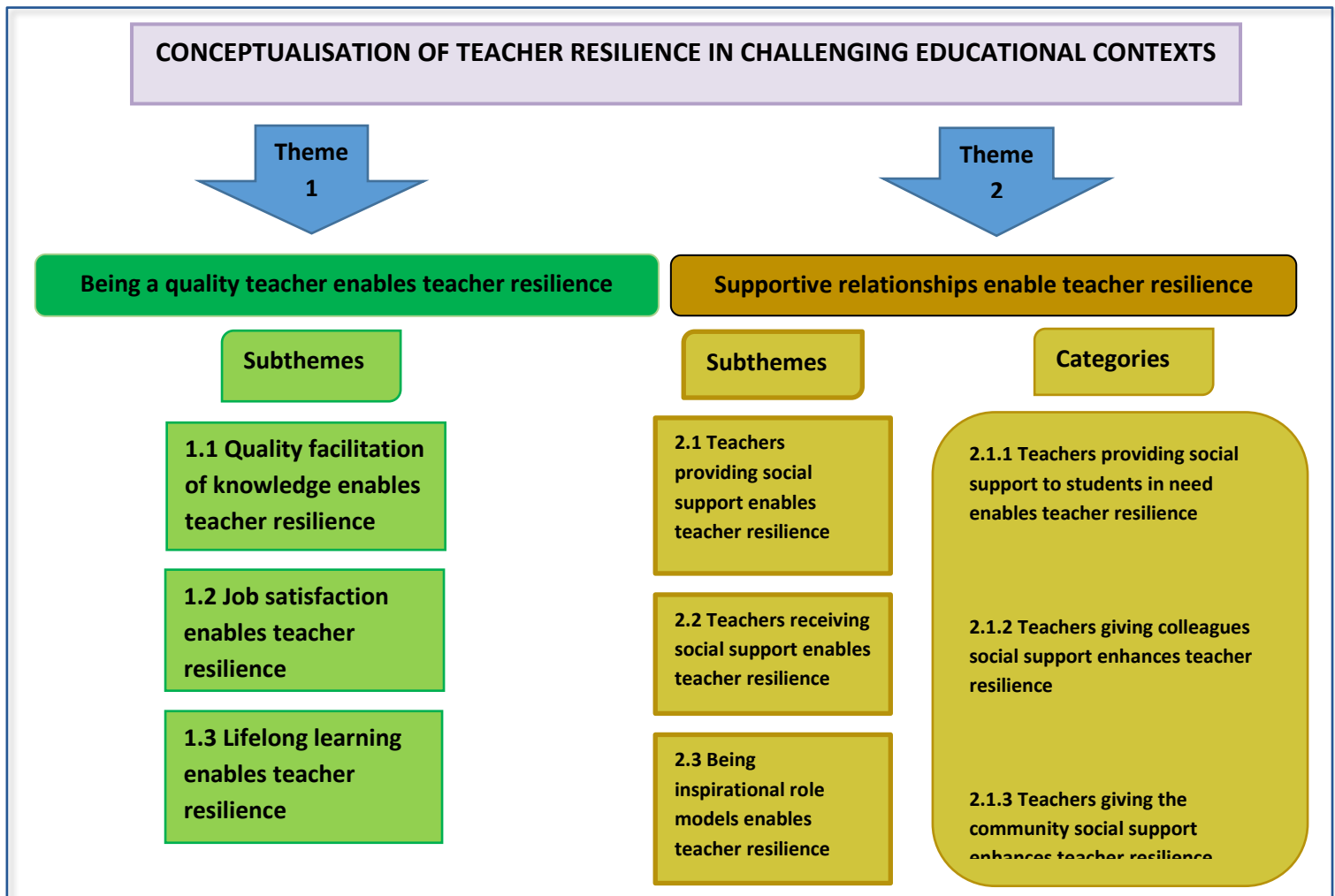


Figure 4.1: Data analysis results referring to teacher resilience in challenging educational spaces

4.3.2 Theme 1: Being a quality teacher enables teacher resilience

4.3.2.1 Introduction

The first theme focuses on the significance of being a quality teacher in supporting teacher resilience. Quality teaching practices influence future positive outcomes by contributing to expectations about teachers' abilities to respond to the demands of the teaching profession and by acknowledging personal strengths as well as the importance of professional teaching experience and training (Gu & Day, 2013). Theme 1 includes three subthemes: 1.1 Quality facilitation of knowledge enables

teacher resilience; 1.2 Job satisfaction enables teacher resilience; and 1.3 Lifelong learning enables teacher resilience.

4.3.2.2 Subtheme 1.1: Quality facilitation of knowledge enables teacher resilience

This subtheme refers to teachers’ perspectives on valuing quality formal teaching and learning practices in order to resile. Quality facilitation of knowledge denotes teacher expressions on quality instruction as intentional and classroom-based, through graded and instructional learning (Gu, 2018). Teachers explained that teacher instructional capacity enables learners to grasp the content being taught and to develop during the learning process.

In the context of teacher resilience, the working definition of this subtheme, and the inclusion and exclusion criteria, is presented in Table 4.2. After this table follows participant responses related to quality facilitation of knowledge-enabling teacher resilience, and validation of this concept in existing literature.

Table 4.2: Quality facilitation of knowledge enables teacher resilience

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
Any instances where teachers mentioned that their resilience was supported by their professional teaching practices, skills and instruction in the school or classroom environment.	Instances where teachers did not indicate professional teaching practices, skills and instruction as resilience-enabling.
Working definition	Participant response example
Quality teaching (facilitating knowledge and information; classroom-based, through graded and instructional learning) supports teachers in challenged contexts to resile.	And then for a teacher to be a facilitator of knowledge, you’re not a banker of knowledge, you’re a facilitator, and knowledge already exists within the children and the schooling environment (SE, P4, L73–75).

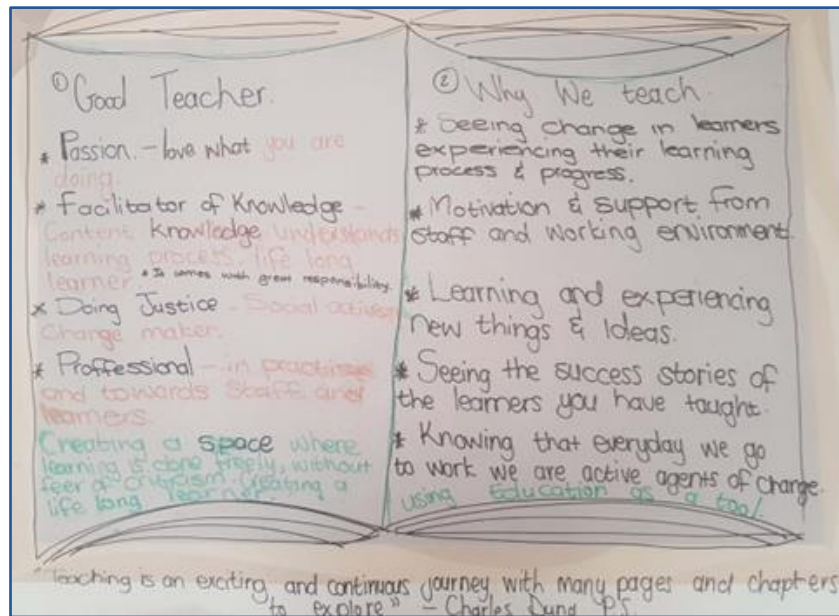
A) Participant responses related to ‘quality facilitation of knowledge enables teacher resilience’

Teachers “are superheroes in children’s lives” (SC, P1). “They have capacity to impact learners’ lives positively or negatively” (SB, P1); “I and other teachers teach them”; “... each learner to hold all positive things” (SB, P1).

“And then for a teacher to be a quality facilitator of knowledge, you’re not a banker of knowledge, you’re a facilitator, and knowledge already exists within the children and the schooling environment” (SE, P4, LL73–75).

“So, you’re facilitating the knowledge and also you have ... content knowledge, you understand the curriculum, you understand the ... new DBE ... whatever they come with, you learn” (SE, P1, LL75–77).

“And you also understand the learning process. A child doesn’t understand something just by learning it once [participants murmur in agreement]; it’s continuous” (SE, P4, LL78–79).



Photograph 4.1: Poster created by School E to present ‘what it means to be a good teacher’ at the pre-intervention in September 2018



Photograph 4.2: Teachers from School C body sculpting to indicate “... [Teachers] are superheroes in children’s lives” (SC, P1) (March 2019 meeting). (Adapted from Ebersöhn et al., 2020).



Photograph 4.3: A teacher from School B body sculpting to enact “I and other teachers teach them” (SB, P1) (March 2019 meeting). (Adapted from Ebersöhn et al., 2020).



Photograph 4.4: A teacher from School B body sculpting to show “Each learner to hold all positive things” (SB, P1) (March 2019 meeting). (Adapted from Ebersöhn et al., 2020).

B) Literature control validation of ‘quality facilitation of knowledge enables teacher resilience’

The results derived from subtheme 1.1 concur with findings in existing literature on teacher knowledge about quality facilitation of knowledge. Teachers with extensive subject background knowledge enjoy the teaching experience (Castle & Buckler, 2018), as it allows them to provide learners with quality teaching and learning (Shankar, 2013). For teachers to resile, they need content knowledge, although content knowledge is not enough if you do not understand how learners learn and if they do not retain the information taught (Shankar, 2013).

For quality teaching to take place, teachers must know about children’s development and human growth and have in-depth insight into successful, context-specific teaching and learning practices, especially in challenging contexts (Hollins, 2011). Furthermore, according to Hollins (2011), teachers must have:

an understanding of how to identify and develop appropriate classroom assessment approaches for evaluating learners’ progress in relation to discipline-specific knowledge, practice and how to manage the demands of standards-based curriculum and assessment” (Hollins, 2011, p.397).

This understanding is necessary for facilitating quality teaching practices. The participants of this study shared the aforementioned views as they indicated that having sufficient knowledge of quality-intentional classroom-based teaching techniques helped them to resile, despite their challenges.

Points derived from the results indicated teachers voiced that knowledge of facilitation, skills that aligned with quality classroom management and subject facilitation, and having an understanding of children's development enable resilience. As supported by literature, resilience occurs when teachers facilitate classes and are equipped with knowledge through workshops and other programmes to understand the ever-changing curriculums (Day, 2019; Day & Gu, 2009, 2014; Ebersöhn, 2014).

4.3.2.3 Subtheme 1.2: Job satisfaction enables teacher resilience

This subtheme refers to how job satisfaction is necessary for teachers to become agents of change, to resile in challenging educational spaces and maintain dedication to and a passion for teaching. Job satisfaction, according to Hina et al., (2014), is an individual's subjective perception of their job, while Rothman and Coetzer (2002)

define it as a positive emotional appraisal of one's work experiences. Teachers stated that seeking significance and intent in their work helped them resile. It was important for teachers to know that they would play a significant and positive role in learners' lives. Teachers also mentioned that getting constructive input and recognition from their students was relevant for job satisfaction. Teachers' job satisfaction also depends on positive relationships with students and co-workers (Steger & Dik, 2010).

In the context of teacher resilience, the working definition of the subtheme, as well as inclusion and exclusion criteria, is presented in Table 4.3. Directly thereafter participant responses related to job satisfaction as resilience-enabling follow, concluding with the validation of this concept in the existing literature.

Table 4.3: Job satisfaction enables teacher resilience

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
Instances where teachers described how their resilience was supported when they experienced purpose and satisfaction in their professional roles.	Instances where teachers did not describe the purpose of teaching and aspects of the occupation that lead to job satisfaction as resilience-enabling.
Working definition	Participant response examples
Job satisfaction (feeling happy to go to work and being proud of the work they do) supports teachers in challenged contexts in resiling.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ And what give us drive also to wake up every day is being passionate about our learners, knowing that our core business is to teach and also when you receive that feedback from your learners ... it makes you proud knowing very well that you have unlocked the potential of that kid (SD, P3, LL66–68). ➤ Motivation from others, rewards and awards, success of the learners (SA, P 1, LL5–6).

A) Participant responses related to job satisfaction as resilience-enabling

“Uhhh. Knowing that every day we go to work we are active agents of change [participants all murmur yes in agreement]. Every day I go to work I am doing something great, great, great in society and I know that. And then, using education as a tool ... will leave you with a quote ... that symbolises why we use this book as a symbol and it says ‘teaching is an exciting and continuous journey with many pages and chapters to explore’” (SE, P5, LL103–107).

“We teach because we see change in the learners and experiencing ... the learning progress of learners. I think that is payment enough. And then motivation and support from staff and working environment. So, the more your ...relationship with your staff members is good ... the more resources your school is able to acquire, the better your teaching practice is going to be; the more enjoyable the teaching practice will be; the easier it’s going to be for you to get up in the morning and go back to work. Learning and experiencing new things and ideas. Like being in a situation like this, where I’m learning from you guys and we’re all learning from each other ... experiencing new ideas” (SE, P4, LL91–98).

“It’s the passion you have ... you will just have that feeling when you stay away from your learners, you miss them; even during the holidays. [Murmuring in agreement from other participants]. And some of your colleagues, you miss them too” (SC, P3, LL46–48).

“You’ve got one year to have a huge impact in one child[’s] or 39 learners’ life, like in my instance” (SE, P4, LL81–82).

“Understanding that you are a social activist. You are not just going to be a teacher; you will be a mother, you will be a psychologist, you will be a therapist, you will be a snot-wiper, a nurse, etc. And also, a change-maker; you’re making a huge impact in society. One child[’s] life is going to impact how many more lives ...” (SE, P4, LL83–86).

“Have passion and love for the kids” (SE, P5, L114).



Photograph 4.5: A teacher from School B body sculpting “Children must grab every ... that come their way and take responsibility” (SB, P4) (March 2019 meeting). (Adapted from Ebersöhn et al., 2020).



Photograph 4.6: A teacher from School C using her body to sculpt her interpretation of “Your vision will come true if you listen to whatever I tell you” (SC, P3) (March 2019 meeting). (Adapted from Ebersöhn et al., 2020).



Photograph 4.7: A teacher from School A using her body to sculpt depicting “Any child whom I have touched must expand” (SA, P3, March 2019 meeting). (Adapted from Ebersöhn et al., 2020).



Photograph 4.8: Teachers of all six schools body sculpting to show what it means to be a teacher (March 2019 during the intervention). (Ebersöhn et al., 2020).

B) Literature control validation of 'job satisfaction as resilience enabling'

According to Pretsch et al. (2012), resilience interventions predict that teacher resilience leads to increased wellbeing and job satisfaction, and that "resilience as a personal tool ... buffers the effects of the teaching profession's specific occupational difficulties" (p. 331). Extensive research was undertaken by Mansfield et al. (2016), who found that teaching is as important as breathing; therefore, resilient teachers are often characterised as those who, despite their professional challenges, feel fulfilled, committed and self-sufficient. Altruistic rationales for becoming a teacher have been described as a significant coping strategy that predicts a positive outcome in the face of adversity (Ebersöhn, 2016). Individuals enter the profession because they have a passion and enthusiasm for and find enjoyment in teaching. Some see it as fulfilling their purpose in life or giving back to society. This represents positive emotional states that have also been identified as crucial for the stability of teachers and their desire to stay in the profession (Le Cornu, 2013; Tait, 2008).

Based on the findings, the participants understood the purpose of teaching under the topic of job satisfaction. Job satisfaction in the context of teaching differs from other careers as it does not imply financial gain, but refers to building careers, producing quality students, finding fulfilment in and understanding of the teacher's

role as social activist. This shows that educators play a bigger role in shaping and transforming the lives of students than initially assumed.

4.3.2.4 Subtheme 1.3: Lifelong learning enables teacher resilience

This subtheme refers to professional teacher development and the need for new teaching skills and methods. Subtheme 1.3. is associated with instances of lifelong learning, such as enrolment in structured courses offered by the department or self-enrolment in skills development programmes that assist teachers in their professional development (Sessa & London, 2015). This subtheme relates to subtheme 1.1 as teachers recognised that they needed not only curriculum content awareness, but also competence in quality formal instruction.

In the context of teacher resilience, the working definition of the specific theme, as well as inclusion and exclusion criteria, is presented in Table 4.4. This table is followed by participant responses related to lifelong learning in enabling teacher resilience, and concluded with the validation of this concept in the existing literature.

Table 4.4: Lifelong learning enables teacher resilience

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
Instances where teachers indicated that professional development supported them to resile.	Instances where teachers did not indicate professional development as resilience-enabling.
Working definition	Participant response examples
Teachers who participate in professional development throughout their lifespan are supported to resile despite a challenged context.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Learning and experiencing new things and ideas. Like being in a situation like this, where I'm learning from you guys and we're all learning from each other. Experiencing new ideas. That's the fun part about teaching. You come home every day with a new experience, [a] new idea, new conversation, and [a] new story even (SE, P4, 5, LL97–100). By trying new skills and new methods; attend workshops, upgrade yourself too (SA, P1, LL3–4).

A) Participant responses related to 'lifelong learning enables teacher resilience'

“Even if you are ... going to ask questions. But you must accept his criticism. Positive criticism. ... to be flexible for (a) change. The other one, to be innovative. To be consistent with the policies ... to have good behavioural patterns...” (SB, P2, LL29–31).

“Going to the second question ... to continue being a good teacher, you need to accept the change because things are changing, curriculum changes as well. Uhh ... Apply relevant information ... you must also be a person who is willing to attend workshops because there are further changes being applied. And also, you must be a person who ... always acquires knowledge. Ask for assistance when necessary and be able to network with the schools around you ...” (SE, P5, LL114–119).

“Erhmm, you must be creative as we know that sometimes we lack some, eh ... ehh, things that we have to use at our schools. We can’t say I don’t have this. You must see what you can do ... to make things happen” (SC, P2, LL39–41).

“And then, erhm, the changes that are happening, you know, sometimes you know ... you have been teaching for long time ... Sometimes it can become boring but the changes ... as we know that CAPS is quite different from what we used to teach in 1991, in 1994” (SC, P3, LL48–51).

“Errh ... unfortunately sometimes ke lento ekuthiwa kuchanging [this thing called changing], it’s an unprohibit yourself project, you must be willing to change so that you can be an agent of ...” (SD, P3, LL60–61).

B) Literature control validation of ‘lifelong learning enables teacher resilience’

Teacher resilience is related to “quality retention”, according to Day and Gu (2010), cited in Mansfield et al., (2016). This concerns the retention of devoted, committed, and goal-oriented teachers who prioritise continuous professional development, improving their competence, and the ability to engage in high-quality teaching regardless of their professional level. The results of a major study conducted in the United States argues that when teachers were devoted and resilient, their students were more likely to succeed (Taylor, 2011). Furthermore, differences in student achievement were driven more by teacher traits such as self-efficacy and teacher development than by school demographics. (Taylor, 2011).

In many countries teacher quality has recently been at the core of educational reforms dealing with student performance, teacher accountability and lifelong learning. In 1997 Singaporean prime minister Gok has been quoted as saying:

Every school must be a model learning organization. Teachers and principals will constantly look out for new ideas and practices, and continuously refresh their own knowledge. Teaching will itself be a learning profession, like any other knowledge-based profession of the future (Darling-Hammond, 2017, p. 292).

Governments have required improvements in teacher education and have sought new solutions to teacher education problems to improve the standard of teaching (Campbell et al., 2017; Darling-Hammond, 2017). Teaching requirements have been established, and teacher education providers must comply with accreditation requirements (Campbell et al., 2017). Furthermore, findings in literature emphasised the significance of resilience and lifelong learning in teacher quality (Campbell et al., 2017; Day & Gu, 2014).

Based on the results, the participants highlighted that it was important for a teacher to be creative in producing quality teaching because the quality of teaching relies on different factors, including flexibility, adaptability and creativity (Taylor, 2011). Teachers are required to produce more than could reasonably be expected as they are held accountable for students' outcomes, behaviours and other factors contributing to their failing. Therefore, adaptability, flexibility and creativity are avenues towards achieving resilience in challenging contexts.

4.3.3 Theme 2: Supportive relationships matter for teacher resilience

4.3.3.1 Introduction

Theme 2 shares teacher experiences about support from and to students, colleagues and the broader community (family, friends and the community at large). The theme includes three subthemes: 2.1 Teachers providing social support enables teacher resilience; 2.2 Teachers' receiving social support enables teacher resilience; and 2.3 Being inspirational role models enables teacher resilience.

4.3.3.2 Subtheme 2.1: Teachers providing social support enables teacher resilience

4.3.3.2.1 Introduction

Social support is resilience enabling and denotes 'flocking' as social support mechanism. Flocking refers to a supportive social pathway to resilience that recognises socioecological risks, fosters agency, regulates emotions, and manages the supply and distribution of social resources in order to enable the collective to

resile (Ebersöhn, 2019). This subtheme includes instances where teachers provide social support to students, colleagues and the community, which is seen as enabling resilience. This subtheme includes three categories: 2.1.1 Teachers providing social support to students in need enables teacher resilience; 2.1.2 Teachers giving colleagues social support enhances teacher resilience; and 2.1.3 Teachers giving the community social support enhances teacher resilience.

In the context of teacher resilience, the working definition of the category, as well as inclusion and exclusion criteria, is presented in relevant tables in each section. Each category-specific table is followed by participant responses related to teachers providing social support to students in need as resilience enabling, concluding with validation in existing literature of this concept.

4.3.3.2.2 Category 2.1.1: Teachers providing social support to students in need enables teacher resilience

This category examines instances in which teachers reported that their resilience was supported when they provided social support to students who were in need, enabling students to continue learning despite the challenging circumstances in which these students required assistance or depended on teachers for support.

Table 4.5: Teachers assisting students in need matters for teacher resilience

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
Instances where teachers expressed the resilience-enabling capacity of providing help/assistance to students in need.	Instances where teachers did not mention assisting students in need as resilience-enabling
Working definition	Participant response examples
Teacher resilience is promoted in a challenged context when teachers help students with difficulties or specific needs, enabling them to resile.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ You must be a motivator and must be caring and loving. You know the challenges that we have in our schools, without love, that you are able to forgive and forget what your learners have done to you ... makes you be able to come back the following day (SC, P2, LL36–38). ➤ It must be supportive; you have to support ... the children as well as the learners (SB, P2, LL17–18).

A) Participant responses related to teachers providing social support to students in need as resilience-enabling

“As a teacher, we all know that ... we are supposed to be teaching, assessing the kids, monitoring their work ... report to the parents in terms of the progress of your little ones as well; you must also have a strategic plan(ning) ... for those learners with barriers because you cannot just watch and sit whilst there are learners with ... erh ... barriers” (SE, P5, LL109–113).



Photograph 4.9: A teacher from School B body sculpting to indicate providing support to students ““Light, love and a sense of belonging” (SB, P3) (March 2019 meeting). (Adapted from Ebersöhn et al., 2020).



Photograph 4.10: A teacher from School C body sculpting to depict “Not leave them behind” (SC, P1) (March 2019 meeting). (Adapted from Ebersöhn et al., 2020).



Photograph 4.11: Teacher from School A body sculpting to show what it means to “Give them the guidance ...” (SA, P2) (March 2019 meeting). (Adapted from Ebersöhn et al., 2020).

B) Literature control validation of ‘teachers providing social support to students in need enables teacher resilience’

Research conducted by Wald (2015) shows that negative student–teacher relationships affect the psyche and the resilience of teachers in public and private schools. The current theoretical framework, namely the relationship-resourced resilience theory (Ebersöhn, 2012) emphasises that resilience arises as a collaborative mechanism whereby individuals flock collectively to access, mobilise and share assets for successful adaptation in adverse conditions. Relationships as a support mechanism for students in challenging spaces are therefore important for both individual and collective resilience (Ebersöhn, 2014). From this point of view, teachers and students are engaged in negotiating the significance of both cognitive and social-cognitive interactions, which gives value to the essence of teaching and learning (Harber et al., 2012). A lack of dedication and engagement as well as good supportive relationships between teachers and learners will make the educational

setting unfavourable (Schuitema et al., 2016). Furthermore, because of the emphasis placed on connecting with students' understanding of learning, motivation and relationships, the relationship-resourced resilience theory (Ebersöhn, 2014) guides teachers to consider students' unique understanding of relationships that result from the ongoing process of meaning-making and collective engagement (Mansfield et al., 2016; Schuitema et al., 2016; Wald, 2015).

Based on the research analysis, it is clear that teachers play a critical role in teaching and are expected to give learners support and develop meaningful relations. Therefore, this result implies that it is important for a teacher to have psychological and spiritual capabilities to encourage and motivate students (Schuitema et al., 2016; Harber et al., 2012).

4.3.3.2.3 Category 2.1.2: Teachers giving colleagues social support enhances teacher resilience

This category includes instances of teachers sharing that their resilience was supported when they were emotionally and professionally supportive towards one another. Teachers indicated that the aforementioned enabled them to resile as quality teachers in challenging spaces.

In the context of teacher resilience, the working definition of the specific category, as well as inclusion and exclusion criteria, is presented in Table 4.6. This table is followed by participant responses related to teachers giving colleagues social support, thereby enhancing teacher resilience, concluding with validation of this concept in existing literature.

Table 4.6: Teachers providing social support to colleagues enables resilience

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
Instances where teachers indicated emotional and professional peer support as resilience-enabling.	Instances where teachers did not share emotional and professional peer support as resilience-enabling.
Working definition	Participant response examples
Emotional and professional support to colleagues support teachers to resile despite a challenged context.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Supporting your colleagues (SC, P2, L36). ➤ And, umm, also you must be supportive; supporting learners and supporting your colleagues (SC, P2, LL35–36).

A) Participant responses related to teachers giving colleagues social support, thereby enhancing teacher resilience

“And also, being good listeners and this is applicable to both teachers and learners so that at the end of the day we are able to solve problems” (SD, P3, LL57–58).

“Supporting your colleagues” (SC, P2, L36).

“And, umm, also you must be supportive; supporting learners and supporting your colleagues” (SC, P2, LL35–36).

“... and some of your colleagues, you miss them too” (SC, P3, LL46–48).

B) Literature control validation of teachers giving colleagues social support, thereby enhancing teacher resilience

The research undertaken by Mansfield et al. (2018) indicates that teachers from both developed and developing countries identified interpersonal interactions, particularly collective interaction with colleagues, to be valuable and resilience-enabling. The collective and interdependent nature of South Africans is embedded in the teaching profession, especially in challenging contexts where teachers flock to resile collectively, despite the adversity they face in their schools (Ebersöhn, 2012). Castro et al. (2010) conclude that establishing teacher peer groups can provide additional resources for teachers' resilience where none previously existed.

Another study by Morgan et al. (2010) found that teachers can respond positively to adversity if they experience positive events, such as positive relationships with students and colleagues. Mansfield et al. (2016) agree with Morgan and his co-authors in stating that trustworthy and supportive colleagues support teacher resilience. The data highlight the fact that teacher resilience is not an inherent condition, but rather the product of a complex combination of multiple aspects of a teacher's personal, interpersonal and systemic environment.

From this analysis it is clear that teachers are faced with various challenges. However, they can provide support to one another, thereby promoting positive relations among them. This enhances the processes of teaching and learning, subsequently creating friendly working environments conducive to quality teaching and teacher retention.

4.3.3.2.4 Category 2.1.3: Teachers giving the community social support enhances teacher resilience

Category 2.1.3 refers to teachers giving the community social support, which creates a resilience-enabling environment and encourages them to be resilient. Social support is given to the community at large, implying that teachers lend support in the form of time, care, a listening ear and, therefore, in sharing the same moral obligations as the community, teachers mobilise social capital to resile.

In the context of teacher resilience, the working definition of this specific category, as well as inclusion and exclusion criteria, is presented in Table 4.7. Teachers value giving social support to the community and use it as a pathway to mobilise assets and promote resilience. Table 4.7 is followed by participant responses related to teachers giving the community social support, thereby enhancing teacher resilience, and concluded with validation of this concept in existing literature.

Table 4.7: Giving the community social support

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
Instances where teachers used support from family, colleagues and friends to resile.	Instances where teachers did not use social support to resile.
Working definition	Participant response example
Teacher resilience is promoted in a challenged context when teachers' social support is the support of friends, family, colleagues and the community at large.	And then, erh, also the support from your family, support from your friends. Sometimes we will feel you ... losing it and then they support you and you keep on going (SC, P3, LL51-53).

A) Participant responses related to teachers giving the community social support, thereby enhancing teacher resilience

“And then, erh, also the support from your family, support from your friends. Sometimes we will feel you ... losing it and then they support you and you keep on going” (SC, P3, LL51–53).

“Teacher ... it means having good relations with each other, knowing very well that we do not operate as an island, we need each other” (SD, P3, LL56–57).

“It’s that continuous support from ... the stakeholders” (SD, P3, LL65–66).

“Motivation from others” (SA, P1, L5).

B) Literature control validation of teachers giving the community social support, enhancing teacher resilience

It is imperative that teachers have the skills to communicate and relate to society at large. A study conducted by Wang and Eccles, (2012) found that social forms of skill refer to those skills that are exercised when interacting with others. Many of the skills highlighted in the preceding section are exemplary social skills, including kindness (friendliness, generosity), empathy, perspective-taking and patience. All these skills can be learnt (Fiorilli, 2019) and are therefore measurable and differentiable from declarative knowledge and behaviour (knowledge about empathy does not initiate empathic behaviour). Moreover, developing warm and caring relationships is crucial for establishing a functional classroom environment and community. Emotion regulation is likely to be a key modulator of effective classroom management and a core constituent of teacher resilience (Mayer et al., 2016; Mansfield et al., 2012). Suryaratri et al. (2020) found that there is a substantial positive association between social support and resilience in primary school teachers in Indonesia. Therefore, the more social support a teacher has, the more resilient they will be.

Based on the results, teachers and the community need to support one another, as teacher collaboration is of key importance to the brainstorming of new ideas on how to improve the process of teaching and learning. It can also shed light on how to adapt to working environments, how one can adapt to cope with the challenges faced in terms of teaching different learners from various backgrounds and teaching different subjects.

4.3.3.3 Subtheme 2.2: Teachers receiving social support enables teacher resilience

This subtheme refers to the importance of teachers receiving social support and assistance. Social support in this instance refers to teachers receiving relational support, guidance and advice from friends, family, colleagues and the community at large (Ebersöhn, 2019; Fiorilli et al., 2017). Teachers value the aforementioned relational support, guidance and advice they receive because this helps them to mobilise assets to resile.

In the context of teacher resilience, the working definition of the specific subtheme, as well as inclusion and exclusion criteria, is presented in Table 4.8. When

teachers receive support, encouragement and advice from family, colleagues and the local community, they are more likely to resile. Table 4.8 is followed by participant responses related to teachers receiving social support to enable teacher resilience, concluding with validation of this concept in existing literature.

Table 4.8: Relational support from friends, family, colleagues and community

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
Instances where teachers mentioned the resilience-enabling capacity of receiving social support, guidance and advice from their learners, colleagues and community/society.	Instances where teachers did not mention the resilience-enabling capacity of receiving social support, guidance and advice from their learners, colleagues and community/society.
Working definition	Participant response examples
When teachers who work in a challenged context receive social support, including guidance and advice from friends, family, colleagues and the community at large, it supports them to resile.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ And some of your colleagues, you miss them too (SC, P3, L47–48). ➤ And then, erh, also the support from your family, support from your friends. Sometimes we will feel ... you losing it and then they support you and you keep on going (SC, P3, L51–53). Motivation from others (SA, P1, L5).

A) Participant responses related to teachers receiving social support to enable teacher resilience

“And then motivation and support from staff and working environment. So, the more ... your relationship with your staff members is good, is in a good place, and the more resources your school is able to acquire, the better your teaching practice is going to be. The more enjoyable the teaching practice will be. The easier it’s going to be for you to get up in the morning and go back to work” (SE, P4, LL93–97).

“And then, erh, also the support from your family, support from your friends. Sometimes we will feel you ... losing it and then they support you and you keep on going” (SC, P3, LL51–53).

B) Literature control validation of teachers receiving social support to enable teacher resilience

A schooling environment that encourages resilience and wellbeing is marked by team spirit, mutual values and shared overall goals between colleagues and the community. In addition constructive relational engagement between teachers and their friends, colleagues and the community promotes social capital (Cameron & Lovett, 2015). Coleman (1988) states that social capital may be defined by systems of interaction that include increased levels of interpersonal trust and norms of mutual aid and reciprocity. To mobilise social capital, teachers have to be willing to receive support, guidance and encouragement from colleagues and the community, and the community has to be willing to give guidance and support. Teachers and community members need a foundation of trust, autonomy, collegiality and leadership to flock together as a collective and thrive, despite the challenges that they face.

Based on the results, the participants highlighted that it was the responsibility of a teacher to share love, to care about, to inspire others, and to be supportive. A teacher should show support to colleagues and learners, and society at large, this being reciprocal. The purpose of teaching and learning is to inspire, encourage and motivate individuals within and outside the context of teaching and learning; this is possible when individuals mobilise their collective relational capital.

4.3.3.4 Subtheme 2.3: Being inspirational role models enables teacher resilience

This subtheme refers to the importance of teachers being role models who can inspire their students. Teachers value their profession as a noble space which positions them well to have a positive impact on the lives of their students, their families and communities. This enables teacher resilience as teachers feel that they are making a difference despite severe constraints and adversities (Angelista, 2018). In the context of teacher resilience, the working definition of the specific subtheme, as well as inclusion and exclusion criteria, is presented in Table 4.9.

When teachers are role models in the lives of their students, they are more likely to resile. Table 4.9 is followed by participant responses related to the concept of teachers as role models in students' lives, which matters in enabling teacher resilience, concluded with validation of this concept in existing literature.

Table 4.9: Teachers, as role models in students' lives, matter for teacher resilience

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
Instances where teachers noted the resilience-enabling capacity of motivating, inspiring and positively influencing others as part of their professional role.	Instances where teachers did not mention motivating, inspiring or having a positive impact on students as resilience-enabling.
Working definition	Participant response example
Teachers value the resilience-enabling capacity of instances where they can serve as role models in their profession.	Eerh, what does it mean to be a good teacher? Is to be a role model (SB, P1, L10–11).

A) Participant responses related to the importance of teachers as role models in students’ lives to enable teacher resilience

“Eerh, what does it mean to be a good teacher? Is to be a role model” (SB, P1, LL10–11).

“You know it very well; that is now ... each and every child, he sees an elderly person as a role model. ... As an elderly person, you are also a teacher. That is why ... these kids see you as a role model. What you are doing ... you must do everything in a [the] right ... way. That is, you must follow that [the] rules and the regulations. That makes that ... are accepted in the community. That is why we say now, eerh, a good teacher ... must be a role model” (SB, P1, LL12–17).

“The other one, you must be inspired. Inspired ... the others. If now you are not inspired, obviously you cannot inspire ... the others” (SB, P2, LL19–20).

“And be inspirational so we can inspire others as well and being exemplary at all times and we are also an agent of change” (SD, P3, LL58–59).

“You must be a motivator and must be caring and loving. You know the challenges that we have in our schools, without love; that you are able to forgive and forget what your learners have done to you ... makes you be able to come back the following day” (SC, P2, LL36–38).

B) Literature control validation in existing literature of teachers as role models in students’ lives, and its importance in enabling teacher resilience

The results indicate that participants highlighted it was important that teachers are positive, inspire others and that they are role models for their students. This implies that it is important for teachers to have adaptive interpersonal skills such as optimism, a moral obligation and vocation, so that when students display challenging behaviour,

the workload is too high and their context seems unbearable, they can cope, adapt and 'do the right thing', despite how difficult it may be (Lumpkin, 2008).

'Doing the right thing' may be described as a virtue of many role models. To conduct oneself appropriately is socially valued; being honest, diligent and committed to providing quality education is morally valued (Gu & Day, 2013; Lumpkin, 2008). Gu and Day (2013) state that teachers learn to respond positively to adversity and that over time a resilience response is learnt. Students learn from their teachers' responses to adversity and model their behaviour (Lumpkin, 2008). The social learning theory (Bandura & Walters, 1963, Bandura, 1986) supports the aforementioned and emphasises that children learn behaviours, attitudes, values and beliefs through observing the behaviour of significant others (Sanders & Mazzucchelli, 2013). Teachers in this study also indicated that students watched what they did, concluding that they had to "do everything in the right way" (SB, P1, L15).

Teachers who serve as role models tell the truth, respect others, fulfil their responsibilities, are fair and impartial, receive and reciprocate trust and live moral lives. They inspire their students towards living meaningful lives and this moral fulfilment enables teacher resilience (Mukminin et al., 2017).

4.4 CONCLUSION

This chapter includes a report of the results obtained during data collection. The chapter comprised presentation of the data, analysis of the results and the three themes that were identified, along with their subthemes, to support the results of the study. The findings were grouped into two main themes regarding what mattered to support teachers' resilience.

I found that teachers from the Global South used similar resilience-enabling pathways as teachers in well-resourced contexts, which do not have any challenges with structural disparities. Teachers in challenged contexts, like others globally (Day & Gu, 2014; Sessa & London, 2015), are able to resile by drawing on their professional competence to be good teachers and invest in professional development to ensure they are high-quality teachers. In addition, as with teachers elsewhere in the world (Harber et al., 2012; Morgan et al., 2010), teachers in challenged contexts are motivated by job satisfaction and inspiring others relationally, by giving support and receiving it from individuals in and outside of their schools. However, unlike

teachers in the Global North, the participating teachers did not mention financial increments, hobbies like yoga, exercise or trips away as resilience-enabling.

In the chapter that follows I provided a summarized overview of the content of each chapter. I addressed the research questions and revisited the conceptual framework based on the findings. I concluded the research report with findings, conclusions and recommendations.

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CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to provide a summary and an outline of the content of Chapters 1 to 4. I address the primary research questions and revisit the conceptual framework given findings. A review of the limitations of the current study, and recommendations for future research, practice, development and training conclude the chapter.

5.2 OVERVIEW OF THE PREVIOUS CHAPTERS

5.2.1 Chapter 1

Chapter 1 commences with an introduction and rationale to the study titled, *Teacher conceptualisations of teacher resilience in challenged education contexts*. The geographic location is then described to give the reader some background of the context of the schools and province in which the Isithebe baseline data set originated. With the contextual background clarified, the chapter continues by considering the purpose and possible contribution the study might make in the broader field. This is followed by the primary and secondary research questions directing the study. Key concepts are clarified next, to ensure mutual understanding of relevant terms. The paradigmatic perspectives, which include meta-theoretical paradigms, methodological

paradigm, as well as the theoretical framework, are then described. The chapter closes with an outline of subsequent chapters.

5.2.2 Chapter 2

By analysing globalisation and the Global South context, this chapter set out to familiarize the reader with relevant literature relating to teacher resilience in challenging educational contexts. Furthermore, the impact of a postcolonial Global South context on educational settings. I examined the Global South challenges in the context of South Africa, as well as challenges in the teaching profession and whether these challenges contribute to teacher retention globally or specifically in South Africa. Despite the numerous challenges that teachers encounter, many remain in the profession and continue to provide quality instruction while also experiencing eustress. To this effect, an investigation of teacher resilience and resilience in a challenging South African context was required. I identified and disused the processes that teachers utilized to resile. The chapter ends with a conceptual framework for teacher resilience knowledge, which was based on the study's literature review.

5.2.3 Chapter 3

The chapter provides an explanation of the research process followed, which includes the research design and other methodological decisions. This includes a description of secondary data analysis as research design, as well as a discussion of its advantages and limitations. Subsequently, the step-by-step process of an inductive thematic analysis employed in the current study is described. The chapter is concluded with an exploration of the relevant ethical considerations and standards of rigour applicable to the current study.

5.2.4 Chapter 4

I derived the results of the study from a qualitative thematic data analysis, presented and described for the purpose of the current, secondary study. Two themes emerged through thematic analysis, each with particular inclusion and exclusion criteria. These themes, along with their relevant subthemes and, where relevant, categories, are discussed and substantiated with relevant visual and textual data. I compared the results with existing knowledge on teacher resilience.

5.3 ADDRESSING THE RESEARCH QUESTION: HOW DO TEACHERS IN PERI-URBAN PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN CHALLENGING CONTEXTS CONCEPTUALISE TEACHER RESILIENCE?

This study found that, given a challenged context, teachers drew on several pathways to use available contextual resources in order to support their resilience. Teacher conceptualisations gave insight into especially relational pathways, and professional development pathways that teachers use to negotiate through challenging educational spaces, in order to remain in the profession and provide quality education.

Teachers mobilised relationships (past and current colleagues, family and friends, learners) as protective resources to enable them to give and receive social support. The relational space also enabled teachers to act as role models to school stakeholders. Both of these positive outcomes from relational pathways supported teacher wellbeing in the form of job satisfaction.

Opportunities for professional development is another contextual resource teachers used. The availability of and access to development structures made it possible for teachers to participate in life-long learning so that they can be the quality teachers they aspire to be.

Others (Ebersöhn, 2019a; Ebersöhn, 2019b; Coetzee et al., 2015) have found that, even in the face of adversity and an unstable educational context, teachers are capable of identifying resources to resile. Ainsworth and Oldfield (2019) and Mansfield et al. (2012) also affirm the significant role that contextual factors play in the development of teacher resilience and suggest that contextual factors are just as important as individual factors. Furthermore, authors such as Low et al. (2011) and Mansfield et al. (2012) indicate that teachers value the important influence of past and current colleagues, whom they hold in high esteem, as an intrinsic factor in choosing teaching as vocation and staying in the profession (Gu, 2014). Mansfield et al. (2012) report that, in two Global South, postcolonial environments, the support from family and friends acts as a buffer against professional and emotional challenges. Mansfield et al. (2018) confirm the significance of contextual protective resources for teacher resilience in South Africa and Australia.

Fernandes et al. (2019) and Flores (2018) also observe that strong indices of teaching professionalism affect teacher resilience. Peixoto et al. (2018) found that teacher capacity to utilise versatility in their career strongly correlates with teacher

propensity to resile. The ability of teachers to remain resilient is strongly dependent on professional values and teacher professionalism (Flores, 2018). Peixoto et al. (2018) concur with the aforementioned. In addition, Gu (2018) indicates the significance of professional engagement and commitment in teacher resilience, while Lobeck (2018) states that high professional inspiration is needed for teacher devotion.

The Relationship-Resourced Resilience (RRR) model theorizes that individuals use social capital to flock as a way to share available social resources and promote resilience. Teachers in this study indicate that their flocking (giving and receiving social support) assisted them to experience job satisfaction as they could be instrumental in being role models to support the development of learners, colleagues and school-community stakeholders. Besides the centrality of relationships as a pathway teacher also indicated that the availability of accessible structural contextual opportunities for teacher professional development promote teacher resilience.

From the findings I revisit the working assumptions presented in Chapter 2. It was found that indeed, South African peri-urban primary school teachers in public schools are able to resile based on social support. Teachers indicated that giving and receiving social support enables teacher resilience. Additionally, I assumed that teacher conceptualisations would give insight into the (i) pathways that teachers use to negotiate through challenging educational spaces, and (ii) how teachers are supported to remain in the profession and (iii) provide quality education. Teachers indicated that relational and professional development pathways supported their capacity to provide quality education by giving access to lifelong learning. These pathways also support teacher job satisfaction, which promotes retention.

5.4 CHALLENGES AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

In the following section I discuss the limitations of the study. The selected research design of secondary data analysis contributes to a perceptible limitation in the present study. The researcher did not take part in the recruiting of participants (Andrews et al., 2012) or in the primary research study's data collection process (Andrews et al., 2012; Greenhoot & Dowsett, 2012). The present study was thus limited by the research design to collect supplementary data in order to further investigate the resilience of teachers.

Furthermore, the selecting methods and the sample size of the present study have also been a limitation. The use of purposive selection restricted the generalisability

of the results of the analysis to the particular studied population and thereby limited the interpretation to other populations (Acharya et al., 2013). The findings of the present study, may be generalisable to related settings (teachers in peri-urban primary schools in challenging contexts), similarly based on a limited data set.

Furthermore, as outlined in Chapter 1, IsiXhosa was primarily the home language of the participants and, therefore, possible language difficulties should be considered in interpreting the poster and body-sculpting responses. This may have potentially influenced responses, resulting in non-responses or affirming responses, as stated in Chapter 4. In addition to this, teacher resilience indicators depended on the self-perceptions of the participants.

5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations for future research, practice and training, as it relates to teacher resilience in challenging contexts are highlighted in this section.

5.5.1 Future research

Based on the results and conclusions of the current study, the following is recommended for possible future research:

- The current research focuses on peri-urban primary schools in the Eastern Cape in challenging contexts. Future research may be undertaken in challenging contexts in provinces besides the Eastern Cape, in other primary or secondary schools.
- In challenging contexts or environments other than South Africa, researchers could potentially aim to determine the reliability of peri-urban primary school teachers' conceptualisations.
- Further research with a wider, more representative sample could be carried out to explore in-case analysis of teacher resilience with respect to school, age and gender comparisons.

5.5.2 Practice

It is recommended that educational departments assist teachers in challenged contexts by enrolling them into professional development courses that are conducted at their schools to avoid transportation and accommodation challenges. It is recommended further that Continual Professional Development be made mandatory to stay within the teacher profession as it reduces teacher attrition (Geldenhuys & Oosthuizen, 2015).

This may promote engagement, social support and resourceful networking amongst teachers as they may have to meet in a central location (Lessing & De Witt, 2007).

5.5.3 Training

On the basis of the current report, it is proposed that institutions of teacher training should include a module that emphasises the development of contextual protective resources. During pre- and in-service training retired teachers should be allocated groups of 5-6 pre- and in-service teachers to share teaching and coping strategies to highlight the importance of social support and having and being a role model to colleagues, learners and the community to experience job satisfaction. The department of education should encourage School Based Support Teams to collaborate with institutions of teacher training to facilitate mandatory teacher development conferences for in and pre-service teachers where lifelong professional development is emphasised to experience eustress and to resile. Additionally, it is recommended that teacher training institutions facilitate monthly/quarterly or bi-annual debriefing sessions where pre- and in-service teachers voice out concerns, discuss teaching methodologies and approaches and share resources. This will help nurture positive relationships and give teachers access to give and receive social support to experience job satisfaction and thus remain in the teaching profession.

5.6 CONCLUSION

I conclude this thesis with a photograph of the teachers across primary schools, with the research supervisor, primary researcher, and research assistants on the Isithebe mat. I chose **Photograph 5.1** as it supports the finding that relationships matter as a contextual resource and enables resilience. I placed the pictures on the Isithebe mat to depict the relational connections made throughout the intervention study and studies that arose through the extant study (Nokele, 2006). The Isithebe mat depicts the essence of sharing resources, of connecting and bringing people together and resilience which is what this study did for the participants, researchers, and what the participants themselves use to resile in their challenged context. The excerpts from my research diary serve as reflective comment to accompany the photographs and conclude the study.



Photograph 5.1 Participating Isithebe teachers and researchers (September 2018 to September 2019) (Adapted from Ebersöhn et al., 2020).

I was in awe of the impact of research today, I saw what it could do, and I felt honoured to be a part of this process because you could really see that this intervention did change their lives and it was something that they would never forget. I watched them and thought wow each teacher standing here has a story, they have challenges, they are embedded in contexts of chronic adversity but as they stand in our presence, they all had the warmest countenance and the most inviting embrace and I could only imagine the impact that they were making on their students.

It was at this point when I realised just how important this research project was and just how important resilience was because each teacher here was still in the profession despite all they are faced with and they touched on it and even if they did not, the distance that they travelled to join us alone spoke a lot about their characters and commitment. They are heroes in my eyes because what they do is not easy and I pray that our research can make a difference in the eyes of our readers because it is not about the big grammar and accolades but the lives it changes, Jessica and Prof. did that and kudos to them!

(Researcher Diary, 21 September 2019)

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APPENDIX A: SOCIAL CONNECTEDNESS AS A PATHWAY TO TEACHER RESILIENCE: DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE

Demographic questionnaire

Social connectedness as pathway to teacher resilience

Dear Participant

The information you provide by completing this page will help me understand who you are and where you come from. It will also help me to structure the research process in such a way that it suits your preferences. The information will never be known to belong to you specifically because when I write up the findings of the research I will not use your name.

Please complete the following:

Name and surname:			
Gender:			
Age:		Nationality:	
Your contact number:			
Teacher qualifications:	Name of qualification:	Training institution:	Year completed:
Are you currently studying? If "yes" please provide details to the left:	Current programme:	Institution where enrolled:	Year in which study commenced:
Have you received any in-service training (additional training offered by the school)?			
How far away do you live from the school where you teach?			
How long does it take you to get from your house to your school?			
What is your home language?			
In which language(s) do you teach?			
Which other languages do you use at school?			
Which grades are you teaching at the moment?			
Which subjects are you teaching?			

Which grades have you taught in the past?			
Which subjects have you taught in the past?			
How long have you been teaching?	Less than 15 years	Between 15 and 24 years	More than 24 years
How long have you been teaching at this school?			
What do you enjoy about being a teacher?			
What do you dislike about being a teacher?			
Why do you teach?			
Tell us about communities you are a part of outside of school:	Church	Sports team	Other
Tell us about any volunteer work in which you are involved:			
Tell us about any programmes or initiatives your school runs for staff members:	Birthday celebrations	Staff socials or team building	
	Year-end functions	Other	
Do you socialise with staff members outside of work?			
Tell us about your family relationships:	Married	Partner	
	Children	Other	

APPENDIX B: TRANSCRIBED PRA GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Verbatim transcriptions of poster 1

A system of coding is used to refer to verbatim quotes of participants, which enables clear referencing of the transcriptions. I compiled a table defining inclusion and exclusion criteria for themes. For example, in Table 4.1 the codes SA, P2 and L2 refer to School A. The specific response can be found on page 2, line 2.

Data source (transcript)	Page no.	Line no.
School A	P 2	L 2

	School A
	18 September 2018, 00:00:51
	[Murmuring, participants settle down]
1	P: Clears throat, afternoon everyone ...
	[Participants respond in union, afternoon]
2	P: Number one says a, a lifelong learner is, as teacher you must know that you have to learn ... Until
3	you've stopped the teaching or until you die. By trying new skills and new methods, attend workshops,
4	upgrade yourself too. Then number two, la ... am ... Good relations, uhh you must have a good relations
5	to enjoy it because you have good relations and then lifelong learning, motivation from others, rewards
6	and awards, success of the learners. That's all.
	[Clapping]
	END
	School B
	18 September 2018, 02:57:35
	First 2 seconds are inaudible

7	P: But eehh ... I'll say also we didn't clarify that is now which teacher are we talking about? Are we
8	talking now about da good samartarian [Samaritan]
	Laughter
9	P: Oh, we are talking about the school teacher. Eeh, as we are sitting there as a ... as Garrett, we
10	decided, lets say, this one, we are going to take it as it is, as teachers. This word teacher. Eerh what
11	does it mean to be a good teacher? Is to be a role model.
	[Murmurs in agreement]
12	P: You know it very well that is now, if now one, each and every child he sees an elderly person as a role
13	model. That is why I am saying to you eeh ... he did not say which teacher it is. As an elderly person you
14	are also a teacher. That is why, that is now, they, these kids see you as a role model. What you are
15	doing, you, that is now, you must do everything in a right ... way. That is, you must follow that rules and
16	the regulations. That makes that is now, that are accepted in the community. That is why we say now,
17	eerh, a good teacher it must be a role model. It must be supportive, you have to support that is now,
18	that is ... the children as well as the learners. Secondly that is now a good teacher must be caring, loving
19	and sharing. The other one, you must be inspired. Inspired ... the what ... the others. If now you are not
20	inspired obviously you cannot inspire that is the others. To have objectives. Not to lose focus. As a
21	teacher you know what to do. They must not lose focus. To be patient. To be a good listener. The
22	second question says what helps you to continue being a teacher?
	[Silence]

23	P: ... The sterotypeness ...
	[Murmur in agreement]
24	P: ... does not ... fit to be a good teacher. You must be a lifelong learner. Yes.
25	Other participants say "yes"]
26	P: To accept criticism ...
27	Participants mmmmh in agreement]
28	P: If you are wrong, you are wrong. If now they try, yes, to show you. That is now, eerh ... this thing you
29	must do it in this way. Even if you are eerh going to ask eerh ... going to ask questions. But you must
30	accept his criticism. Positive criticism. Eerh to be flexible for a change. The other one, to be innovative.
31	To be consistent with the policies ... to have good behavioural patterns ... this comes from Garret
32	primary school. [Laughs]
	[Clapping and laughter from other participants]
	END
	School C
	18 September 2018, 03:01:02
33	P: You do your job. You must know what you're doing ... and then you must be very patient, be hard
34	Worker ... And erh keen to learn. And also learn from your colleagues, you learn even from your
35	learners, you can learn something. And umm, also you must be supportive, supporting learners and
36	supporting your colleagues. You must be a motivator and must be caring and loving. You know the
37	challenges that we have in our schools, without love, that you are able to forgive and forget what your
38	learners have done to you ... makes you be able to come back the following day. And erh you must be a

39	lifelong learner. Erhmm you must be creative as we know that sometimes we lack some, eh ... ehh,
40	things that we have to use at our schools, we can't say I don't have this. You must see what you can
41	do ... to make things happen. You must be patient, you must be a communicator and you must be a
42	good listener. Before you communicate you must hear what the other person is saying then you will be
43	able to communicate with that person. And then erh, what erh ... erh helps us to continue being
44	teachers? Erh ... I ... erhmm it reminds me of what my sister used to say, she says eh ... when a things are
45	getting tough she goes and buys herself the 2litre coke. [Participants laugh] and then erh, it's the
46	passion you have, you, you will just have that feeling when you stay away from your learners, you miss
47	them even during the holidays. [Murmering in agreement from other participants]. And some of your
48	colleagues you miss them too. And then erhm, the changes that are happening, you know, sometimes
49	you know ... you have been teaching for long time, more than twenty years, twenty five years, twenty
50	seven years. Sometimes it can become boring but the changes as we know that CAPS is quite different
51	from what we used to teach in 1991, in 1994. And then erh, also the support from your family, support
52	from your friends. Sometimes we will feel you, you losing it and then they support you and you keep on
53	going. And then erm also responsibility, thinking if I stop working ... this is going to happen, this is not
54	going to be able to happen. So it makes you stay working and also you sticking to your principles. You

55	know, don't be tossed about ... uh ... by the wind. That's what makes us stay in teaching.
	[Clapping]
	END.
	School D
	18 September 2018, 00:01:34
56	P: ... Teacher ... it means having good relations with each other, knowing very well that we do not
57	operate as an island, we need each other. And also being good listeners and this is applicable to both
58	teachers and learners so that at the end of the day we are able to solve problems. And be inspirational
59	so we can inspire others as well and being exemplary at all times and we are also an agent of change.
60	Errh ... unfortunately sometimes ke lento ekuthiwa kuchanging, it's an unprohibit yourself project, you
61	must be willing to change so that you can be an agent of ...
62	[In union other participants say "change"]
63	P: ... Change and be tolerant at times, knowing very well that when we are there as a staff we are
64	coming from different backgrounds therefore we have to be tolerant. Coming to the second question,
65	what helps you to continue being a teacher? It's that continuous support from the colleagues and the
66	stakeholders. And what give us drive also to wake up every day is being passionate about our learners,
67	knowing that our core business is to teach and also when you receive that feedback from your
68	learners ... it makes you proud knowing very well that you have unlocked the potential of that kid.
	[Clapping]
	END

	School E
	18 September 2018, 00:03:47
69	P: I am Ms [anonymous] from [School E]. Uhm, for the first one, being a good
70	teacher neh. The ideas that we came up with was first passion. We believe that a teacher should love
71	what they do, they should wake up in the morning with, with joy and not like with nhuuhh [heavy
72	sigh] ... it's Monday [laughter of participants] but to actually be excited to go to work [other participants
73	mumble in agreement]. As she said when you miss your kids when it's during holidays. And then for a
74	teacher to be a facilitator of knowledge, you're not a banker of knowledge, you're a facilitator,
75	knowledge already exists within the children and the schooling environment. So you're facilitating the
76	knowledge and also you have conten ... content knowledge, you understand the curriculum, you
77	understand the ... the new DBE nex, whatever they come with you learn, you research that stuff. And
78	you also understand the learning process. A child doesn't understand something just by learning it once
79	[participants murmur in agreement] it's continuous. And you also are a lifelong learner yourself, you're
80	also continuously upgrading your teaching practice and understand that it comes with great
81	responsibility. Being this facilitator of knowledge comes with great responsibility. You've got one year
82	to have a huge impact in one child or thirty-nine learners' life like in my instance. Okay, also the third
83	one is doing justice. Understanding that you are a social activist. You are not just going to be a teacher
84	you will be a mother, you will be a psychologist , you will be a therapist, you will be a snot wiper, a

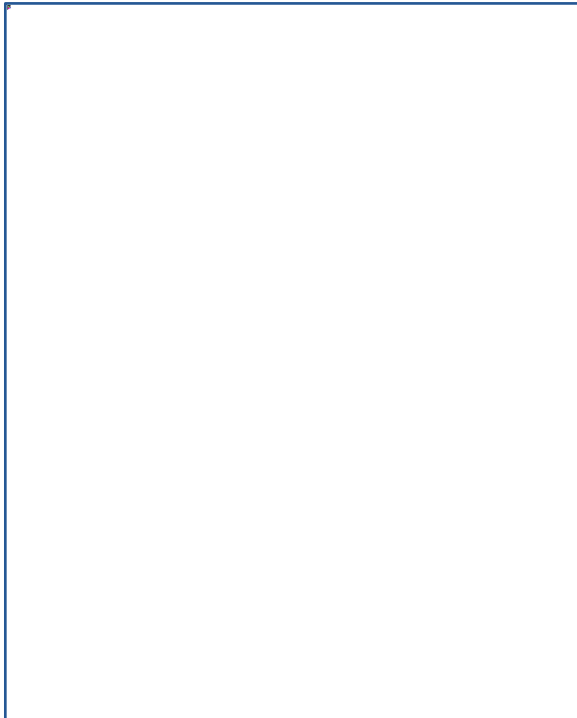
85	nurse etc. etc. And also a change maker, you're making a huge impact in society, one child life is going
86	to impact how many more lives, maybe ... I dunno, lots ... lots of lives. Also uhm understanding the values
87	of professionalism, right, practices towards the learners, towards your work and towards your staff
88	members. Uhm, creating a space where learning is done freely without fear of criticism. Creating a
89	lifelong learner yourself. So these learners, when they leave your classroom they must be sooo
90	encouraged and soo in love with learning that they continue to learn, they don't stop. Okay and then to
91	answer the second one we said why we teach right? We teach because we see change in the learners
92	and experiencing that learning process and experiencing the learning progress of a learner ... I think
93	that is payment enough. And then motivation and support from staff and working environment. So the
94	more your ... your relationship with your staff members is good, is in a good place and the more
95	resources your school is able to acquire, the better your teaching practice is going to be. The more
96	enjoyable the teaching practice will be. The easier it's going to be for you to get up in the morning and
97	go back to work. Learning and experiencing new things and ideas. Like being in a situation like this
98	where I'm learning from you guys and we're all learning from each other. Experiencing new ideas.
99	That's the fun part about teaching. You come home every day with a new experience, new idea, new
100	conversation, new story even. Uhhh, seeing the success stories of the learners you have taught. I

01	mean I'm waiting for the day when one of my learners comes up to me as a scientist at NASA and
02	they are like, MISS IT'S MEE!! [Laughter] and I am going to be like what, I actually had an impact in that
03	child's life. Uhhh. Knowing that every day we go to work we are active agents of change [participants
04	all murmur yes in agreement] every day I go to work I am doing something great, great great in society
05	and I know that. And then using education as a tool. And then to end off [School E]
06	will leave you with a quote that underst ... that symbolises why we use this book as a symbol and it says
07	teaching is an exciting and continuous journey with many pages and chapters to explore".
	Clapping]
	END
	School F
	18 September 2018, 00:01:51
08	P: Policies in your heart ... because uhm, without policies as a teacher ehm ... you won't know how to go
09	about. Must have objectives. Be able to plan, control and guide. As a teacher we all know that, as a
10	teacher we are supposed to be teaching, assessing the kids, monitoring their work, doing erh reports,
11	report to the parents in terms of the progress of your little ones as well, you must also have a strategic
12	Planning ... for those learners with barriers because you cannot just watch and sit whilst there are
13	learners with erh barriers. Uhhh ... you must be able to communicate with everyone that is around
14	you. Have passion and love for the kids. Going to the second question ... to continue being a good

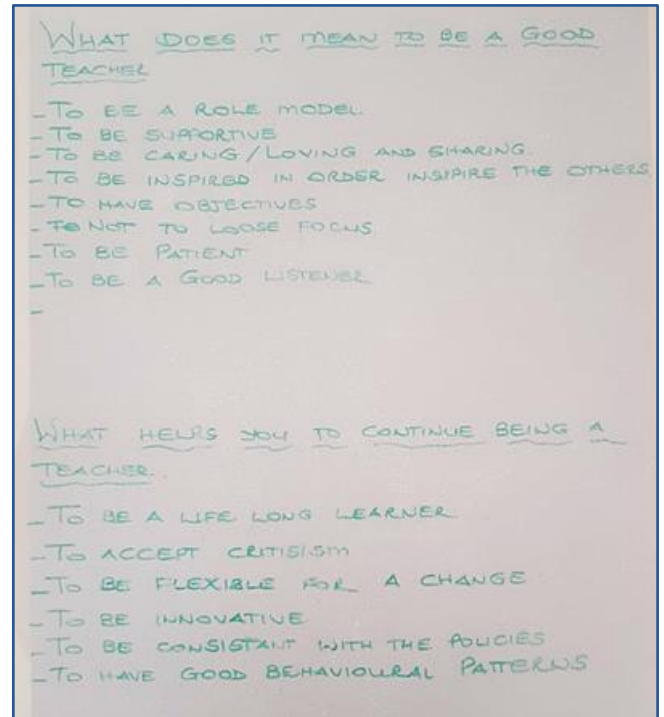
15	teacher, you need to accept the change because things are changing, curriculum changes as well. Uhh ...
16	Apply relevant information ... you must also be a person who is willing to attend workshops because
17	there are further changes being applied. And also you must be a person who ... always acquires
18	knowledge. Ask for assistance when necessary and be able to network with the schools around you, so
19	that's all we are having.
20	F: Thank you
	[Clapping]
	END.

APPENDIX C: PARTICIPATORY REFLECTION AND ACTION (PRA) POSTERS DATA

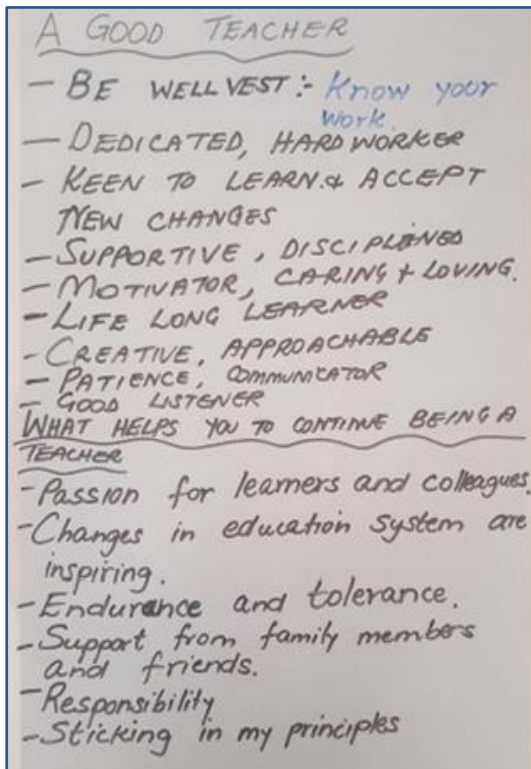
School A



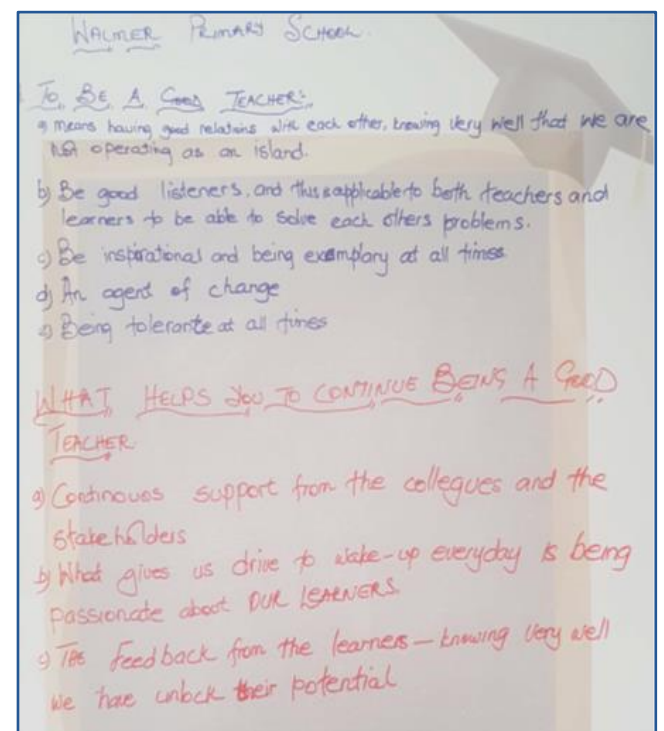
School B



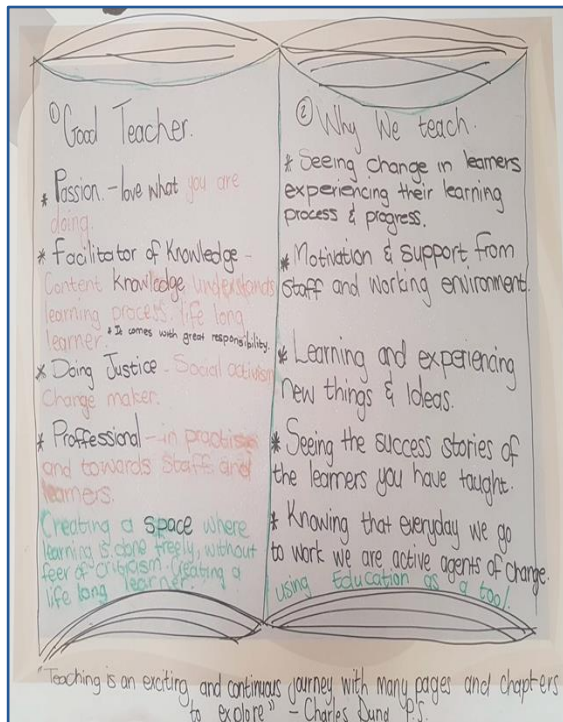
School C



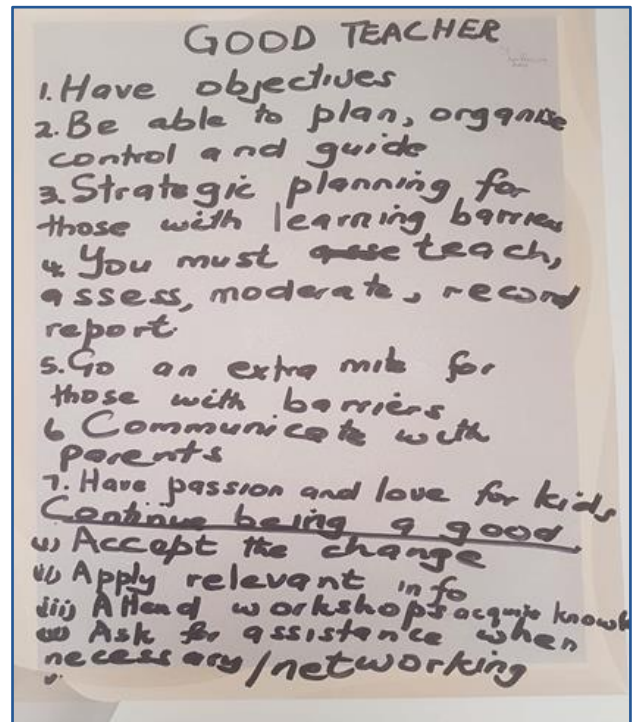
School D



School E



School F



APPENDIX D: BODY SCULPTING PHOTOGRAPHS AND FIELD NOTES



Quote: I want to walk with children and not leave them behind, I want to assist them.

School C



Quote: I think a lot of us are superheroes in childrens' lives, they rely on us when they experience problems and we are then their heroes.

School C



Quote: I want each learner to hold all positive things and I and other teachers teach them.

School B



Quote: These are the fruits of my hands

School A



Quote: I want to teach children that if they trust God, all good things will happen to them.

School B



Quote: I wish for everyone in the community and the world to love the young ones and give them the guidance they need.

School A



Quote: any child whom I have touched must expand.

School A



Quote: I give the light, love and a sense of belonging.

School B



Quote: I am always ready to listen to every child's problem.

School C



Quote: Children must grab every that come their way and take responsibility.

School B



Quote: Your vision will come true if you listen to whatever I tell you.
School C



Quote: You are welcome.
School C



Quote: Through my guidance children
can explore the world

School B

APPENDIX E: ISITHEBE STUDY – INFORMED CONSENT LETTERS



REQUEST FOR PARTICIPATION AND INFORMED CONSENT TEACHERS

Dear Sir/Madam

I am currently busy with a PhD study in Educational Psychology at the University of Pretoria on the following topic: “Social connectedness as a pathway to teacher resilience in school communities in challenged settings.” My study forms part of the STAR project, in which you have been participating in recent years. This study wants to explore the ways in which social connectedness can have an impact on teacher wellbeing and the wellbeing of families in their communities.

You are herewith requested to participate in my study. Your participation is voluntary and you may withdraw from the study at any time if you wish to do so. All information you provide will be treated as confidential and your name will not be made public to anyone or when presenting findings. We will use pseudonyms to protect your identity. You will also not be asked to provide any information that could result in your identity being made public. You will have full access to the collected data during your involvement, as well as to the final results of the project. The collected data will be stored in a safe place at the University of Pretoria for 15 years. As this is a funded project, data will also be available in an open repository for public and scientific use where needed.

For the purpose of my study you will be requested to participate in participatory workshop sessions, taking the form of group discussions and some writing/drawing activities, which will be recorded in the form of posters, photographs and audio-recordings. For these workshop sessions you will be asked to tell us about your experiences of a social connectedness intervention, and how these experiences had an impact on teacher wellbeing and the well-being of families in your communities.

The benefit of this study is that the findings can inform others about the ways in which social connectedness can build teacher resilience in challenging settings. For you, a potential benefit entails that you may gain additional knowledge and skills about social connectedness during discussions, which you can apply in future. We do not foresee any risks, will respect your dignity at all times and not harm you in any way.

If you are willing to participate, please sign this letter to indicate your consent. This will mean that you agree to participate willingly and that you understand that you may withdraw from the study at any time. Under no circumstances will your identity be made known to others. If, however, you would like your face to be shown when photographs are published, kindly tick the relevant block below.

Warm wishes

Mrs Jessica Versfeld

0842077743

email: Jessica.versfeld@up.ac.za

Prof. Liesel Ebersöhn (Supervisor)

email: liesel.ebersohn@up.ac.za



**INFORMED CONSENT
TEACHERS**

Title of research project: Social connectedness as a pathway to teacher resilience

I, _____ the undersigned,
in my capacity as teacher at _____
(name of school) hereby agree to participate in the abovementioned research. I
understand that my contribution will be treated as confidential and anonymous, and
that I may withdraw from the study at any time, if I wish to do so.

My face may be shown on photographs

YES	NO
-----	----

Signed at _____ on _____ 2018.

Participant

Researcher

Witness

APPENDIX F: GENERATION OF CODES

1. Discussion of the process of primary inductive analysis

1.1 Introduction

In the following section, I systemically discuss the six steps of an inductive analysis used in this study.

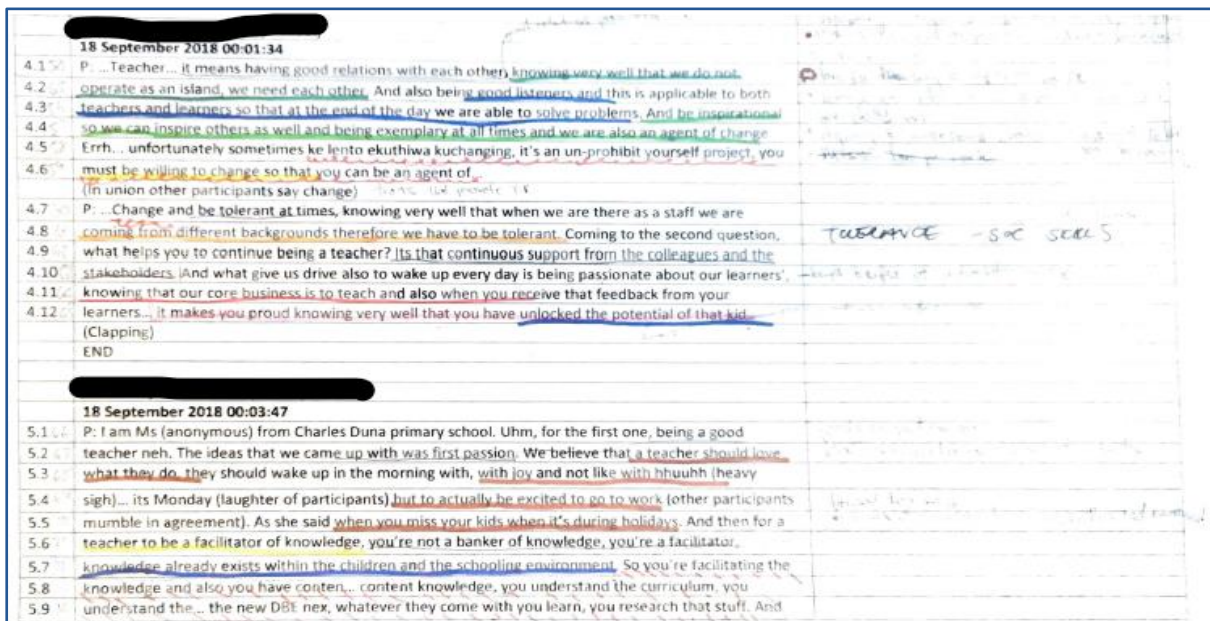
1.2 Phase 1: Familiarising myself with the data

After I had organised the different data sets (i.e., posters, photographs and observations), I started transcribing the audio-recordings. I repeatedly examined, read and re-read the data to familiarise myself with and immerse myself in the transcribed data (Braun & Clarke; Willig, 2013). By immersing myself in the data, I was able to develop ideas about the nature of the data and identify meanings and patterns that emerged concerning my research questions (Willig, 2013). I made margin notes with regard to my general thoughts and ideas to guide my initial sorting process (Braun & Clarke, 2006). I include one of the notes I made below:

“I have started reading through the data and although I was not a part of the initial data collection, I am able to re-experience teachers’ conceptualisations of teacher resilience. I can already identify the more outspoken teachers and the quieter ones. It’s already evident that these women have been in the system for some time and somehow are still so full of life. I’m very nervous about what to add and exclude; I don’t want to miss out on any useful information. I even transcribed the ‘umms’, ‘hmmms’ and ‘neh’s’ – it made reading over the transcriptions real, more realistic, if I may say.”

1.3 Phase 2: Generating initial codes

In this phase, I commenced with the coding of the data by systemically identifying interesting elements of the data across all data sets. As I analysed the data to generate meaningful codes, I continued making margin notes and underlined in colour similar patterns regarding teacher resilience that emerged across the data sets. This process allowed me to easily collate the data with each specific code (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). **Photograph 3.7** illustrates the underlined content and how patterns began to develop.



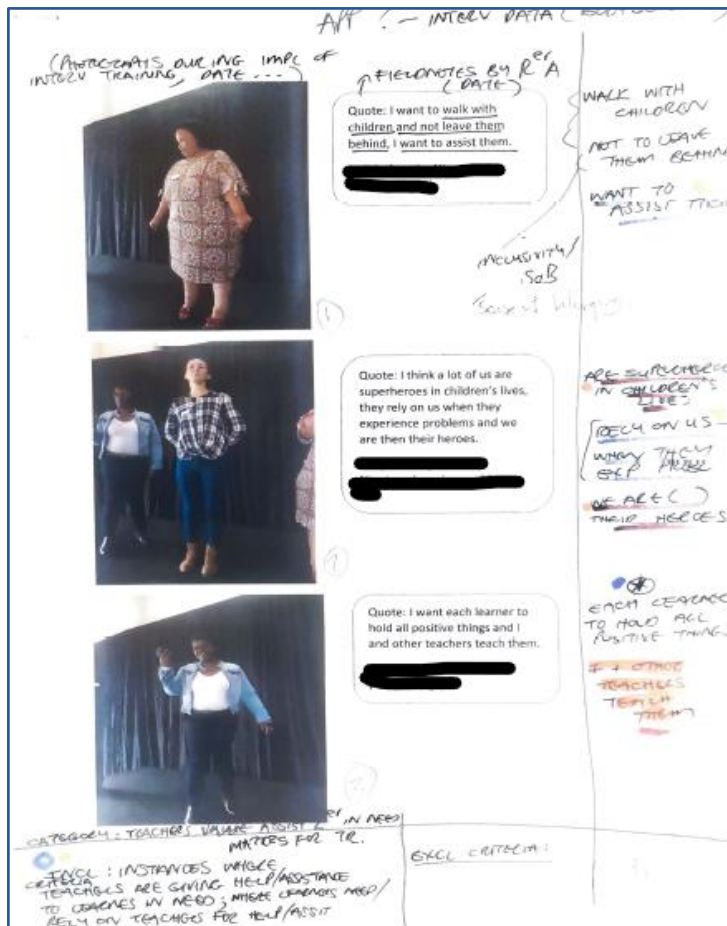
Photograph 1: Illustration of the underlined content and how patterns began to develop

To identify instances of teacher resilience, I read and re-read the transcriptions, coding for recurring words that reflected core meanings, based on the participants' experience (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2008). It was at this stage that my supervisor identified the necessity of including additional data; therefore, body-sculpting pictures and observations were purposively sampled and included. Because this was something novel to me, I completed this in two stages. I initially underlined recurring phrases and words, illustrated in **Photograph 2**



Photograph 3: An illustration of the first stage of body-sculpting code generation where the underlined content and the development patterns began to take shape

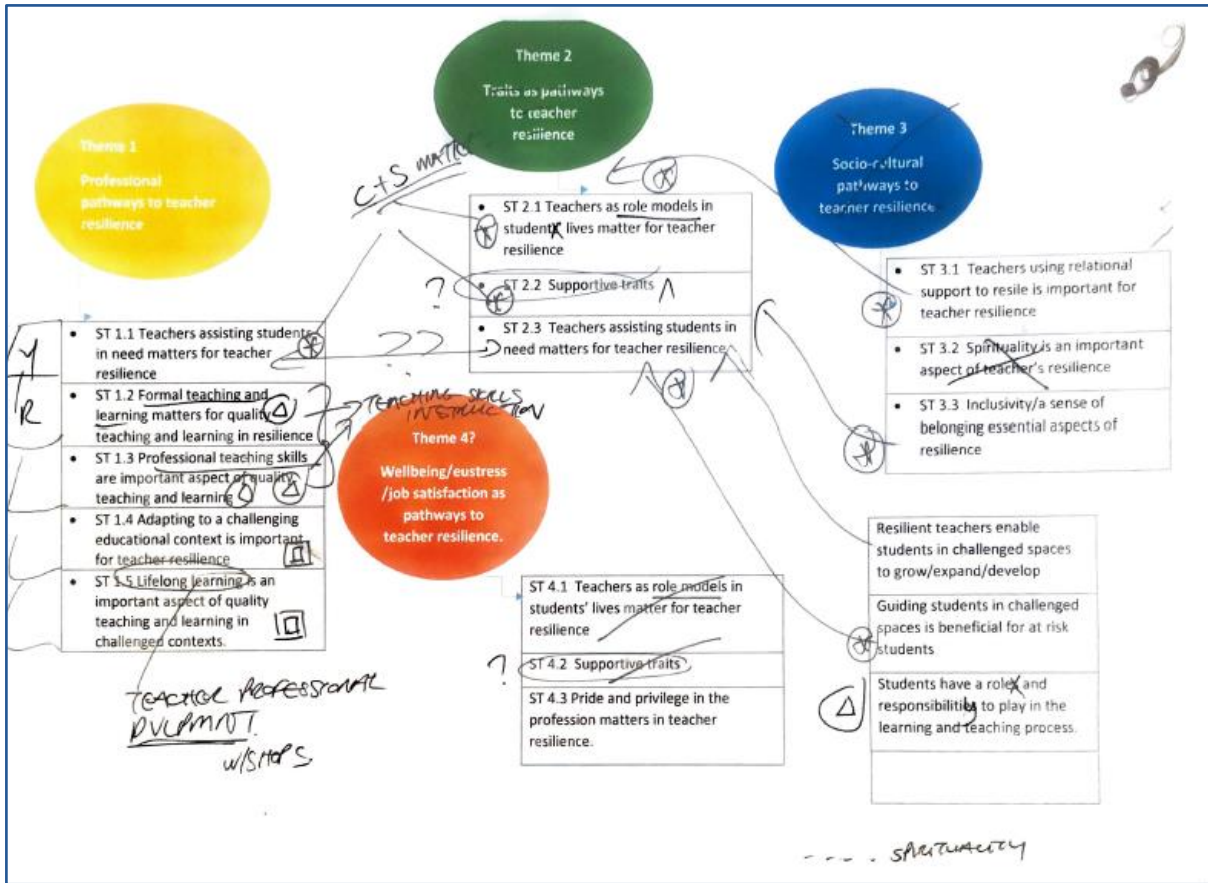
After further consultation and supervision, my supervisor and I co-created the final code generation by highlighting and indicating the specific words of importance, as illustrated in **Photograph 4**.



Photograph 4: An illustration of the second stage of body-sculpting code generation where the underlined content and the development patterns began to take shape

1.4 Phase 3: Searching for themes and subthemes

Once the initial codes had been generated, I organised the codes into possible categories, broader themes and subthemes, gathering all collated data to fit a possible theme (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). I grouped the data according to the colour-coded group into identified, related categories. Upon consultation with my supervisor, I was able to review the themes and make the necessary corrections. **Photographs 5** and **6** illustrate the initially identified and revised themes.



Photograph 5: The first generation of themes and subthemes

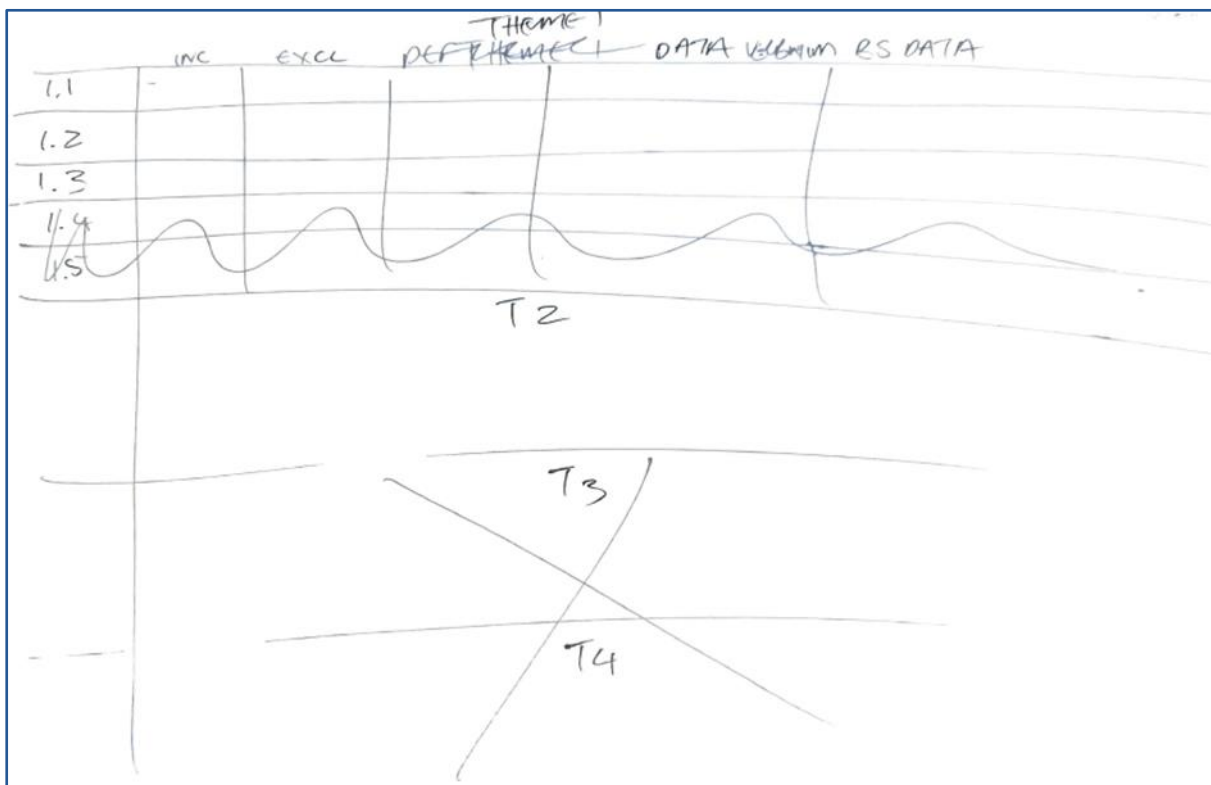
CATEGORY TITLE	INCLUSION	EXCLUSION	DEFINITION	EXTRACTS
context is important for teacher resilience	their personal, social and professional lives.	in their personal, social and professional lives.	and professional lives as an effect of teaching in challenged educational contexts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Even if you are eerh going to ask eerh... going to ask questions. But you must accept his criticism. Positive criticism. Eerh to be flexible for a change. The other one, to be innovative. To be consistent with the policies... to have good behavioural patterns... Ehmim you must be creative as we know that sometimes we lack some, eh... ehh, things that we have to use at our schools, we can't say I don't have this. You must see what you can do... to where things happen And then erhm, the changes that are happening, you know, sometimes you know... you have been teaching for long time, more than twenty years, twenty five years, twenty seven years. Sometimes it can become boring but the changes as we know that CAPS is quite different from what we used to teach in 1991, in 1994 Errh... unfortunately sometimes ke lento ekuthiwa kuchanging, it's an un-prohibit yourself project, you must be willing to change so that you can be an agent of... So you're facilitating the knowledge and also you have conten... content knowledge, you understand the curriculum, you understand the... the new DBE nex, whatever they come with you learn, you research that stuff. Learning and experiencing new things and ideas. Like being in a situation like this where I'm learning from you guys and we're all learning from each other. Experiencing new ideas. Going to the second question... to continue being a good teacher, you need to accept the change because things are changing, curriculum changes as well. Uhh... Apply relevant information... you must also be a person who is willing to attend workshops because there are further changes being applied. And also you must be a person who... always acquires

Handwritten notes: CREATIVITY, CREATIVITY?

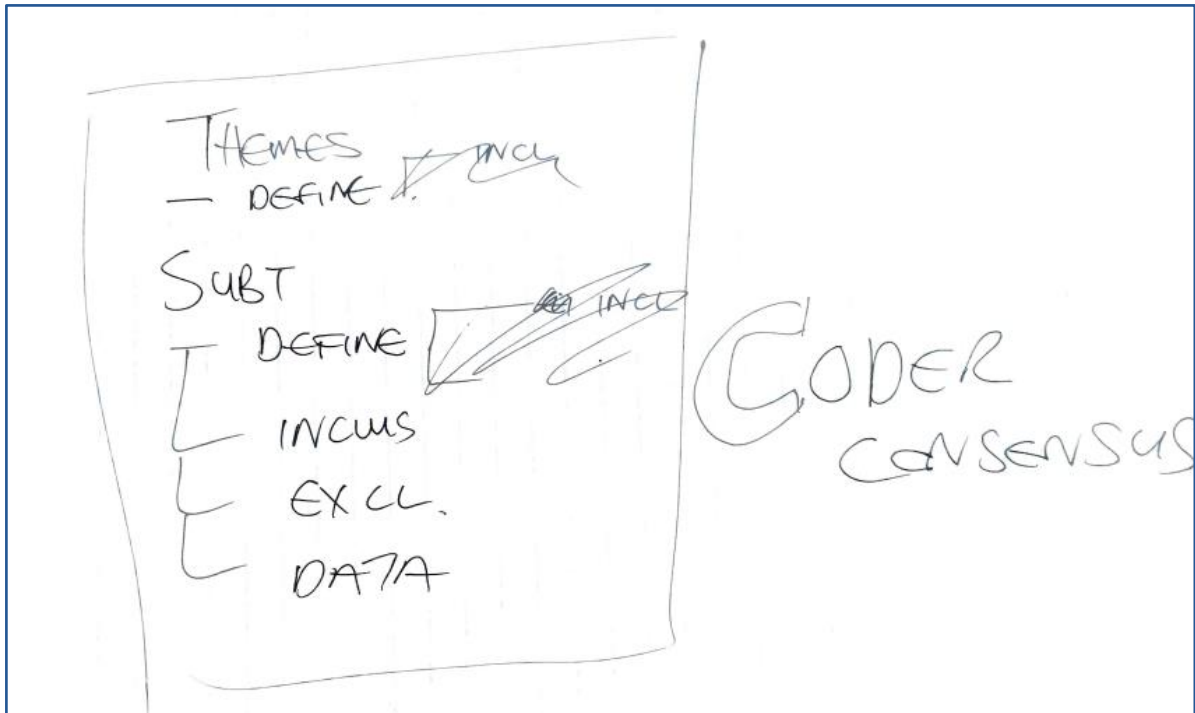
Photograph 6: Further generation of themes and subthemes

1.5 Phase 4: Reviewing themes

Thereafter I received further guidance from my supervisor where we reviewed and modified preliminary themes and subthemes from the collated and coded data until we were satisfied with the categorising of the themes in the context of each of the data sets. **Photographs 7 and 8** illustrate this process (Braun & Clarke, 2006). I followed an inductive process, which involved going back and forth between categories, themes and subthemes to identify any recurring patterns that were evident across all the data sets, to establish a comprehensive set of themes across all data sets, as illustrated in **Photograph 9** (Creswell, 2009). I refined the themes, as well as integrated new subthemes to consolidate the emerging themes.



Photograph 7: Illustrates guidance received from supervisor on theme review and creation



Photograph 8: Illustrates guidance received from supervisor on theme review and creation

BEING A TEACHER MATTERS.

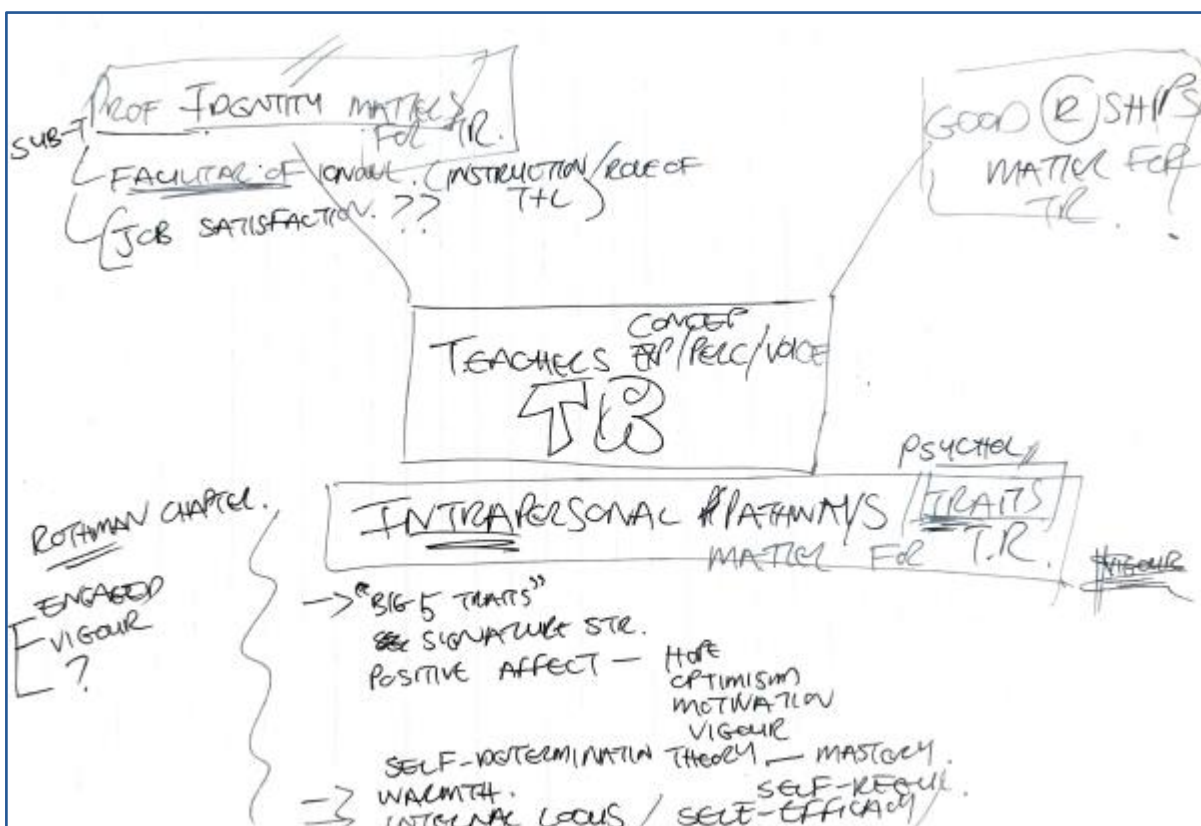
THEME 1 PROFESSIONAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENTAL PATHWAYS TO TEACHER RESILIENCE

CATEGORY TITLE	INCLUSION CRITERIA	EXCLUSION CRITERIA	DEFINITION	VERBATIM DATA	BODY SCULPTING DATA
1. FORMAL TEACHING AND LEARNING					
1.1 Formal teaching and learning matters for quality teaching and learning in resilience (α)	Any instances of professional teaching practices, skills and instruction in the school/ classroom environment	Instances professional teaching practices, skills and instruction in the school/ classroom environment.	Formal teaching is facilitating knowledge, information, intentional, and classroom based, assessed and instructional.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> And then for a teacher to be a facilitator of knowledge, you're not a banker of knowledge, you're a facilitator, knowledge already exists within the children and the schooling environment. So you're facilitating the knowledge and also you have content... content knowledge, you understand the curriculum, you understand the... the new DBE nex, whatever they come with you learn, you research that stuff. And you also understand the learning process. A child doesn't understand something just by learning it once (participants murmur in agreement) it's continuous 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "I and other teachers teach them"
1.2 Students have roles and responsibilities to play in the learning and teaching process.	Instances where students actively take responsibility for their learning.	Any instances where learners have no care for the teaching or learning process.	Learner is to be a proactive agent of the teaching learning process, they are responsible and model behaviour that promotes learning.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Each learner to hold all positive things" "Children must grab every that come their way and take responsibility" "children can explore"

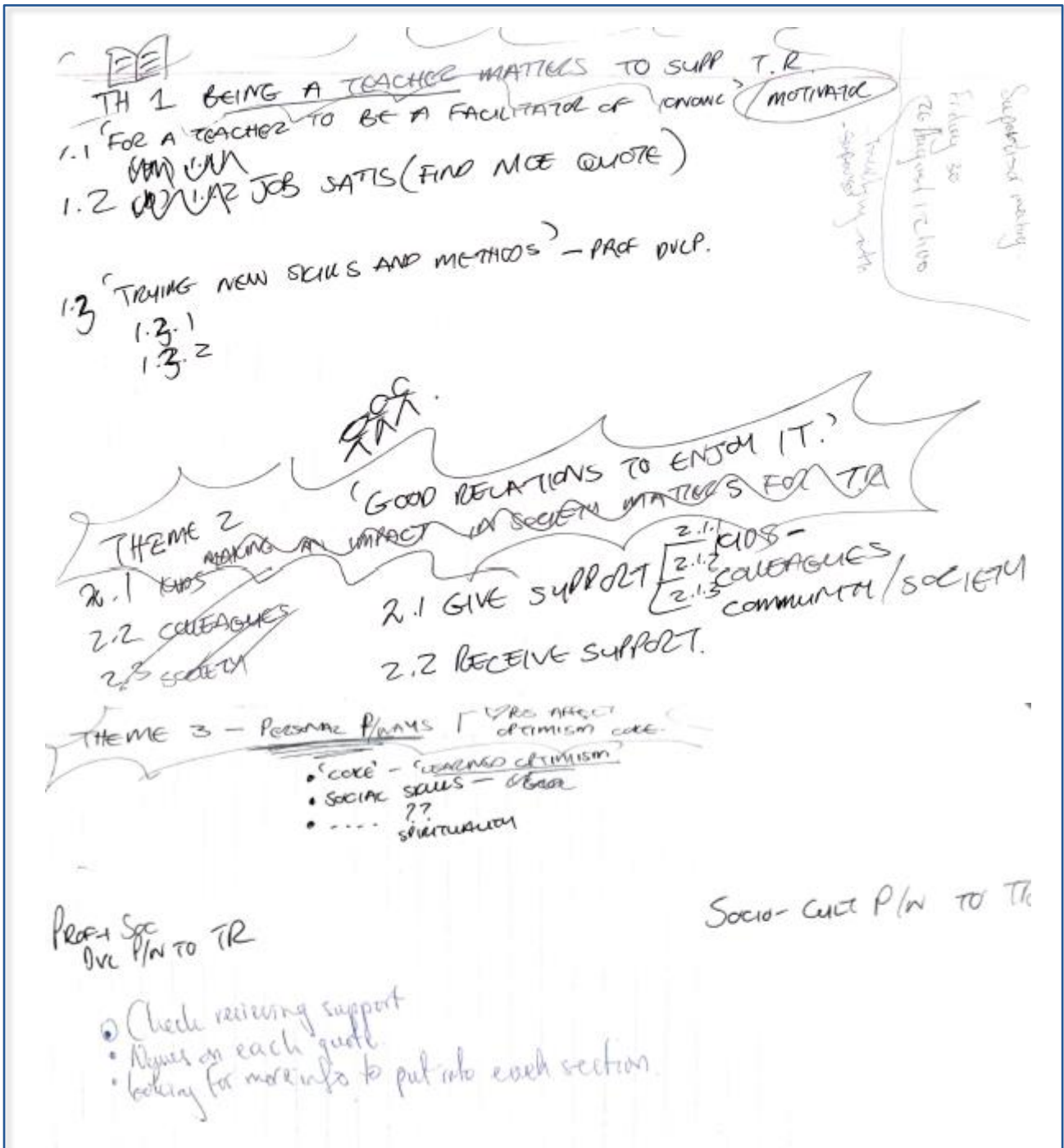
Photograph 9: Illustrates guidance received from supervisor on theme review and creation – the inductive process of going back and forth between categories

1.6 Phase 5: Defining and naming themes

An ongoing examination to 'define and refine' the specifics of each theme was done to generate a classification system in terms of what each theme and subtheme entailed and what aspect of the data was captured. After supervision at this point, the colour codes on the thematic analysis were removed and it was suggested that the body-sculpting pictures should be included (refer to **Photographs 10, 11 and 12**). I checked each theme in relation to the coded extracts and also with other themes, to avoid overlap (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). Each theme was given a working title and then assigned a name for final analysis.



Photograph 10: Illustrates the ongoing examination and refinement of themes and subthemes



Photograph 11: Further illustrates the ongoing examination and refinement of themes and subthemes

PROF ID *Teacher conceptualizations of learners' conceptions in challenging situations*

THEME 1: BEING A TEACHER MATTERS TO SUPPORT TEACHER RESILIENCE					
CATEGORY TITLE	INCLUSION CRITERIA	EXCLUSION CRITERIA	DEFINITION	VERBATIM DATA	BODY SCULPTING DATA
1.1 "FOR A TEACHER TO BE A FACILITATOR OF KNOWLEDGE"					
1.1.1. Formal teaching and learning matters for quality teaching and learning in resilience <i>FFSTRUCTION</i> <i>TEACHING + LEARNING</i>	Any instances professional teaching practices, skills and instruction in the school/ classroom environment	Instances professional teaching practices, skills and instruction not in the school/ classroom environment.	Formal teaching is facilitating knowledge, information, and classroom based, assessed and instructional.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> And then for a teacher to be a facilitator of knowledge, you're not a banker of knowledge, you're a facilitator, knowledge already exists within the children and the schooling environment. (School E- Charles Duna primary school) So you're facilitating the knowledge and also you have conten... content knowledge, you understand the... the new DBE nex, whatever they come with you learn, you research that stuff. (School E- Charles Duna primary school) And you also understand the learning process. A child doesn't understand something just by learning it once (participants murmur in agreement) it's continuous. (School E- Charles Duna primary school) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "I and other teachers teach them" (Nomkhita, female, Garrett primary) Each learner to hold all positive things" (Nomkhita, female, Garrett primary) "Children must grab every that come their way and take responsibility" (Phumla V Masinda, Female, Garrett) "children can explore" (Vagaz, male, Garrett primary) "Children must grab every that come their way and take responsibility" (Phumla V Masinda, Female, Garrett) "through my guidance" (Vagaz,

Photograph 12: Illustrates the indication for the addition of body-sculpting photographs

1.7 Phase 6: Producing the results of the final analysis

This phase involved the final analysis and writing the thematic analysis report. Upon further consultation with my supervisor, we selected those extracts that related to the research questions and literature (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Finally, I developed the inclusion and exclusion criteria that guided the composition of each theme (refer to **Figure 1**). I included a subsection of the final analysis (Refer to **Photograph 12**, which illustrates a subsection of the final analysis).

Theme 1: Being a quality teacher enables teacher resilience

Subtheme: 1.1.1 Quality facilitation of knowledge enables teacher resilience			
	Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria	Definition
	Instances where teachers did indicate professional teaching practices, skills and instruction as resilience-enabling.	Any instances where teachers mentioned that their resilience was supported by their professional teaching practices, skills and instruction in the school or classroom environment.	Quality teaching (facilitating knowledge and information; it is classroom-based, via graded and instructional learning) supports teachers in challenged contexts to resile.
Subtheme: 1.2.1 Job satisfaction enables teacher resilience			
	Instances where teachers described how their resilience is supported when they experience purpose and satisfaction in their professional roles.	Instances where teachers did not describe the purpose of teaching and aspects of the occupation that lead to job satisfaction as resilience-enabling.	Job satisfaction (feeling happy to go to work and being proud of the work they do) supports teachers in challenged contexts to resile.
Subtheme: 1.3.1 Lifelong learning enables teacher resilience			
	Instances where teachers indicated that professional development supported them to resile.	Instances where teachers did not indicate professional development as resilience-enabling.	Teachers who participate in professional development over their lifespan are supported to resile despite a challenged context.

Theme 2: Supportive relationships matter for teacher resilience

Subtheme: 2.1 Teachers providing social support enables teacher resilience			
Category	Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria	Definition
2.1.1 Teachers providing social support to students in need enables teacher resilience	Instances where teachers expressed the resilience-enabling capacity of providing help/assistance to students in need.	Instances where teachers did not mention assist students in need as resilience-enabling.	Teacher resilience is promoted in a challenged context when teachers help students with difficulties or specific needs, it enables their resilience.
2.1.2 Teachers giving colleagues social support enhances teacher resilience	Instances where teachers indicated emotional and professional peer-support as resilience-enabling.	Instances where teachers did not share emotional and professional peer-support as resilience-enabling.	Emotional and professional support to <u>colleagues</u> support teachers to resile despite a challenged context.
2.1.3 Teachers giving the community social support enhances teacher resilience	Instances where teachers use support from family, colleagues and friends to resile.	Instances where teachers did not use social support to resile.	Teacher resilience is promoted in a challenged context when teachers social support is support from friends, family, colleagues and the community at large.
Subtheme: 2.2. Teachers receiving social support enables teacher resilience			
	Instances where teachers mentioned the resilience-enabling capacity of receiving social support, guidance and advice from their learners, colleagues and community/society.	Instances where teachers did not mention the resilience-enabling capacity of receiving social support, guidance and advice from their learners, colleagues and community/society.	When teachers who work in a challenged context receive social support, including, guidance and advice from friends, family, colleagues and the community at large it supports them to resile.
2.3 Being inspirational role models enables teacher resilience			
	Instances where teachers note the resilience-enabling capacity of motivating, inspiring and positively influencing others as part of their professional role.	Instances where teachers did not mention motivating, inspiring or having a positive impact on students as resilience-enabling.	Teachers value the resilience-enabling capacity of instances where they can serve as role models in their profession.

Figure 1: An illustration of the final categories, inclusion, and exclusion criteria for analysis

Although thematic analysis is a useful and flexible method for summarising the most important aspects of data, the flexibility may also pose a limitation since it permits a range of analytical opinions (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Javadi & Zarea, 2016). It is possible to cause an overlap between themes and this may result in a mismatch with

analytical claims. To counteract this limitation, I ensured that I referred to my research questions to remain focused. Frequent consultation with my supervisor aided this process. Additionally, coding and analysing is a time-consuming and demanding process; therefore, additional time was allocated for the process to avoid discrepancies (Babbie & Mouton, 2005).

APPENDIX G: RESEARCHER DIARY

November 2018

I had my first supervisory meeting today. I am writing my thoughts because I am more than overwhelmed about even getting accepted into this program!

This is going to be quite an experience; everyone is friendly and just as nervous as me, I guess ... there are 2 first years, Jo and Zahne, they are friendly. I got to know a little bit more about my supervisor, she is superwoman, I pray that I will be able to get to that point one day and be just as successful.

My honours research was nothing like what we discussed today. We will be using secondary data, I think this will make things a bit easier and save me a lot of time when it comes to data collection. I will need to do some research on it as I am not very confident about research, I am from uKZN and this is UP, it is another standard altogether and I am hoping that I can achieve the "UP" standard.

We need to submit our first draft of the entire proposal to our supervisor in January, I am very anxious, I do not want to disappoint.

7 January 2019

I am supposed to submit the proposal draft today, and I did, super proud of what I came up with, it is just a start but I am proud that I managed to put it together. I had to deal with a lot of personal issues while putting it together so I am hoping that does not reflect in my writing.

28 January

Prof. has reviewed my proposal, it is fair to say that I still have a lot to learn. I had very encouraging comments so I am looking forward to working on her comments. I appreciate her asking us to do the whole proposal because it is helping us complete it faster.

Supervisory group meeting

Today we discussed administrative procedures and we spoke about resilience. We discussed how resilience is not a trait, that it is more systemic and supported by

several structural pathways. I have a better understanding of resilience, also that if you say resilient you are saying it's a trait. One has to say 'resilience or resile'.

I have a new understanding of adversity -social-economic issues, inequality, postcolonialism, unemployment and factors that affect teacher's ability to resile. This was a new one for me ... "resile". In essence, how will teachers produce quality teaching and learning despite all the challenges that they face? We discussed that if teachers resile then more teachers will feel fulfilled and provide quality teaching, eustress-not distress. We then discussed pathways of adaptation, the asset-based approach- I have read up more on this approach. I was quite surprised to know that there are aspects of psychology that focus on more than just the negative and more of the positive. Also that the resources an individual has in their environment can be used to "resile", I hope I used it correctly.

We moved onto a discussion of the literature review, it is been communicated that this will be the most difficult part of my research journey, the way it was spoken about I am convinced that I am going to struggle. Although I am using the concept of resilience in my own life, I am going to remain positive. I need to research what is known and what are the gaps, I am not writing everything she said because it is a lot, but it's a lot... e.g. What is known includes models, measures, population-, pre-service, in-service, post-service trends for models, etc, it is a lot.

I will also have to start on my methodology, asap and to mind map each section, this will help. It was a long meeting, with a lot of information to remember and to keep track of.

The other ladies and I have been asked to do create a researchers journal, I will not lie I am not thrilled about this because I am very informal, I don't think I can be "formal" in a journal. I am just going to continue with how I have been writing and submit the best work that I can. This is who I am, this is how I write and yes I struggle with grammar, spelling and punctuation, at times but this is a process right... I am just going to have to learn.

February 2019

I am summarising my month; it has been quite busy, and I have not been able to really sit down and jot my thoughts down. I am super very proud of myself; I have made a lot of progress. I submitted the first part of my proposal and I got a C+. I was not the happiest because I know I could have done better. The comments confirmed

my lack of writing skills! I do not know how to write academically, I am not surprised, I am more of a creative writer, I took myself to the writing clinic because this research journey is going to be long if I do not make some changes. It had to be done, I went to Hatfield for the first time after registering. I was scared because the campus was so big and yes, I got lost. I got the help that I needed, I had to watch a couple of youtube videos and complete several writing exercises. I know I am not an academic writing guru – far from it – but I am proud to say I am better off than I was initially. For my second proposal submission, I got a 70 something percent !! I was really happy about that; I will be going to the writing clinic more often for more academic writing assistance.

I have almost completed my proposal, my research colleagues and I are completing the last section of the proposal and it is not as difficult as the first two sections. I think I am gradually getting into the swing of things... slowly. My research colleagues and I have been instructed to share resources and that has helped. We will also be applying for ethical clearance quite soon. I have seen some of the research conducted by Prof's previous students and I am in awe they have set the bar high and am hoping I will not lower her standard.

I put each assignment part together and I was pleasantly surprised with what I came up with, Prof. is so patient and is really helping me through this, I appreciate her guidance a lot. I will be completing my proposal next week. That is all for Feb for now.

3 March 2019

Final proposal submitted! I am beyond over the moon! Research is not my strong point so I have been looking forward to the coursework aspect of this degree, but I have to say I am very proud of what I have come up with. This has not been the easiest process but here I am doing what needs to be done. Research is complicated, with many new terms and concepts that one must understand and apply, I am glad to say that, I did the reading, note writing and have developed a lot over the last few weeks. I struggled with my theoretical framework, I used the broaden and build theoretical frame and had to change it to the Relationship Resourced Resilience theoretical frame at the last minute. I am starting to understand how different theorists conceptualise resilience and how they relate to the teaching context and specifically the South African context. I have a lot more faith in my capabilities now. There was

support from every direction and that helped, I hope that I passed and that when I defend my proposal, I remember everything.

13 March 2019

Proposal defence day today, proud to say it has been successfully defended!

I was super nervous today; I have been so anxious in the days leading up to this because I have not had much self-confidence. Today I stood in a room filled with renowned researchers and successfully defended my proposal I cannot believe that it was me! I am beyond excited, beyond proud of myself. It has been difficult, moving to Pretoria from Eastern Cape, to staying with my sister and moving to my place and feeling homesick and bouts of I imposter syndrome and then today happens, and it all just fell into place, I still cannot believe that that was me out there. I hope I did well and that I will not have many changes to make.

The comments by the other supervisors were all valid, they asked about the sample size, whether PRA was a good method to use and what type of action will my research ignite in the participants? I was stunned for a second and then like I rehearsed, I indicated that I would consult further with my supervisor regarding the matter and will be guided by her suggestions. I was relieved when I was done!

27 March 2019

Supervisor meeting

The purpose of this meeting was to discuss the completion of the first three chapters. I have to combine the work done in my assignments and my proposal and place them into the three chapters, then I need to expand on them. We discussed Chapter 1, it is quite different from the proposal, a lot more information needs to be added and discussed, I want to do my best. So in Chapter 1, I need to complete the study rationale, aim, research questions, objectives, secondary questions, paradigms – I need to understand this more – theoretical, meta and the methodology and then the research design, the sample and data analysis and ethics. We discussed rigour in research and it was the first time I had heard of this in research. I have an understanding of reliability and validity but this is not the same, it refers to credibility, confirmability etc. It was new to me, I also need to discuss the ethics involved in secondary data analysis. Then complete Chapter 3 and discuss the paradigms. I am overwhelmed it dawned on me how difficult this will be, but we strive on.

9 April 2019

My research proposal was approved!!!! I am so happy! I am so excited about what is yet to come. It was my process of being resilient. Language difficulties, adapting to challenges and acknowledging but overcoming my insecurities which were my form of adversity. I used the resources/assets in the UP System, the writing clinic, the NMQ lectures, my supervisor and friend who is doing her PhD All the assets in my system were a pathway towards me overcoming my challenges and getting this approval. I owe this success to my supervisor, she was nothing but patient, I am extremely proud!

13 April 2019

I started working on Chapter 1 today, I am still writing before I type which takes slightly longer than directly typing, I am learning how to type without writing but progress is slow. I am going over the contextual background of the study and I am unsure of what I am writing. I am not even sure if I am referencing the primary study correctly, we were told that it is called the social connectedness intervention, I think it is correct. I write and then at some point I wonder if I am using the correct academic language information or if the information I am using is correct.

15 April 2019

I submitted my title registration and abstract today. It has been quite a process for my title, and it has changed. From educational psychologist conceptualisations of teacher resilience to teacher conceptualisations of teacher resilience in challenged education contexts. It took me some time to understand the effects of the changes and how it changes the focus of my research, but I get it now. The focus is on how teachers understand how they resile, how they stay in this profession despite their challenges. The focus being on teachers and not educational psychology/ist because if I am understanding how, they conceptualise I may distort their voices, and this is essentially about them. I hope I am on the right track here.

I have had access to the audio recordings of the intervention baseline session, I have transcribed the PRA poster presentation data. It is quite something to hear the voices of the men and women I have been reading so much about, it is really is quite something to hear the passion and enthusiasm in their voices. Transcribing really

does bring you closer to the participants especially since I was not a part of the initial data collection process.

23 April 2019

After transcribing the PRA poster presentations I am a bit worried that the data is not enough. Prof. and I had a meeting to discuss this, and she identified body sculpting data that was generated during one of the intervention training sessions in March. The body sculpting data includes pictures and fieldnotes. Prof. contacted Jessica and Zahne to meet up with me to discuss the dataset, dates and the fieldnotes because it is all a bit muddled up at the moment. I am hopeful that we will get this done without any difficulty. I know that having another dataset will bring forth in-depth descriptions of the phenomenon under study and maybe shed new light and give more meaning to the resilience process.

Prof. emailed me and my research colleagues today about joining Jessica for the data collection on the 19th and 20th of September. I think it is going to be very exciting if we get to go because we will get to meet and interact with the research participants. We also have an OPG assignment group presentation due on those dates so I wonder whether we will be allowed to leave. It would also be quite refreshing to be out of Pretoria for a min.

26 April 2019

I have started typing Chapter 3, there are so many gaps in my knowledge base, I feel as if I do not know all I need to know about my study. I am reading over the Isithebe manual and reading through my proposal. The things that I am not sure about I am doing more research about because right now I am seeing flames with coursework and research.

29 April 2019

To get the data analysis started I have begun to read through the data I had transcribed and the notes from the meeting with Zahne and Jessica. Although I was not a part of the initial data collection, I can experience teachers' conceptualisations of teacher resilience through listening to the audio recordings and looking through the photographs of the sessions and of the posters. A dropbox folder was created where all the data that was collected was made available to us to read through. It

makes things easier and makes one feel like they are a part of the research process. Jessica and Zahne had interesting stories and renditions about the sessions they had and gave me insight into the initial data collection process, I got a 'feel' about the participants and the entire process. They had laughed about the late coming, about being flexible, about which schools were more vocal than others and which participants were outspoken, how Jessica got all the group members talking. It sounded like it wasn't easy, but it was fun at the same time.

6 May 2019

Flights are being booked for us to join Jessica and Prof. for data collection, I am so excited, we managed to speak to Prof. Safia and Dr Funke about it and we were granted permission to go. I applied to work for JGF as an assessor and we leave for Rustenburg on the Sunday of the data collection weekend. I hope that I will be able to go to both because I need the extra money. I do not want to burden my dad in his retirement to pay for the remainder of my fees so I need to make it work.

10 May 2019

I submitted Chapters 1 and 3 yesterday to Prof. and I do not think I wrote well ... Prof. says it is not bad, she asked my research colleagues to share with me what they had done for those chapters and they really know how to write well. I wonder why I am not understanding things in the same way or finding the information that they have. Everyone is being supportive and I feel like we are working as a team but I also feel like I am holding the 'team' back. My research colleagues seem to have gotten the hang of everything and I am struggling. It is not a nice feeling but upon going through their documents I can see where I have gone wrong and I can work on my mistakes. I hope the next draft I send will be better than the one I sent yesterday.

20 May 2019

Supervisor meeting regarding my thematic analysis.

Prof. discussed what is needed in the analysis, how to create the inclusion and exclusion categories, how to create definitions, they need not be general but related to my study. I had several themes, so I have to group the themes, include what is relevant and remove what is not relevant. I need to look for cultural aspects and relational pathways-so for instances where relationships bolster teacher resilience

and whether teachers experience work-related wellbeing. Completing a thematic analysis thing is not easy, at all, like everything else in this course. I am hoping that I can complete it and complete it very well. I need to buy coloured pens, koki pens and highlighters because I find it easier to work on hard copies and highlight and underline the relevant statements.

As hard as this is it is interesting how one can have a pool of information and can analyse data to find meaning in what is being said, it is a fascinating bit difficult process. I have another meeting with Prof. on the 5th of June and she would like me to have developed my themes and subthemes.

05 June 2019

It is 4 am and I have a meeting with Prof. later on in the day and I have not finalised my thematic analysis. Master's is challenging, I am going through obstacles from every direction. I had to redo the thematic analysis, I had client observations last week, a Schreuder and Coetzee essay to submit, I had a test on Monday, and I have a semester test next week, to say I am overwhelmed would be an understatement. I need to muster up the courage to tell Prof. I feel like I am letting her down and that I am struggling. I feel like I do not know what I am doing, and everything is getting me down on every front.

I emailed Prof. her response was comforting. I don't know what I was expecting, I was very anxious but she was so understanding. I appreciated her response, it was one less thing to stress about. I will submit the finalised thematic analysis to her as soon as possible.

24 June 2019

Supervisor meeting.

I managed to finalise the thematic analysis, Prof. indicated that I need to correlate the colours I used to highlight with the appropriate theme, create a table, collapse one of my themes, make sure my extracts fit the appropriate category. To read over everything again and relate certain concepts to the challenging context. Today was an eye-opener, I am doing research! It is not easy! But after meeting with Prof., I can look at the data differently, I understand better than I did before the meeting, it is like light appeared at the end of a tunnel and I am blown over by Prof's ability to conceptualise everything and put it into perspective. Then when I get home and must

do it on my own, I am lost again. I have got this, back to the drawing board. Resilience is not an easy concept, I thought it was just about thriving, overcoming. But it is about relationships, systemic resources, and internal feelings of positive affect. I just need to find meaning from the data and describe them using the appropriate terms.

25 July 2019

We, as in Jo Zahne and I had to submit our progress reports today. Filling the form in makes me feel like I have such a long way to go, I have started Chapter 1, a little bit of 2 and 3 but I do not think I have had much progress on those chapters, a lot is going on at home and with my course work, I am worried about completing.

I spoke to a colleague and she assured me that this process is just as long for her and that she is also struggling, I felt like I was alone in this so that was defiantly comforting.

26 August 2019

Supervisor meeting regarding my thematic analysis.

Not an easy session but a lot was accomplished, my themes are starting to take shape. It is not that I am wrong, but I think I do not have a polished academic writing vocabulary. For example, I can write something but when Prof. reads it and uses her own words it sounds so professional. I use whole sentences to say what she describes in a word. It is getting there I just need to look for more quotes to go under each section and look at the section on receiving support. It is defiantly a lot better than it was some months ago.

11 September 2019

Preparatory meeting regarding the Port Elizabeth data collection/post-intervention session.

Today we had a meeting with Prof., Jessica, Jo and Zahne regarding the intervention schedule, we were all given a role. Jo and Zahne would take field notes, I would help her with registration and hand out materials when needed and help with the audio recording of the participants' responses. I am very excited to be a part of this process, it is going to be quite something to meet the people who have actually made all of this possible. Prof. says we should bring our research and that she will meet with each of us to discuss our progress while we are there.

20 September 2019

Supervisory meeting with Jessica and Prof. regarding the thematic analysis.

Today's meeting was in such a relaxed setting, it was just beautiful to be right in front of the ocean. We discussed the finishing touches of the thematic analysis, there are a few changes here and there. I need to add the body sculpting pictures to the final analysis and send it to Jessica for her to also check whether it is okay, I think she will also make some changes where she deems fit and will share them with me once she is done. Today Prof. made me feel like I had made a lot of progress, that felt good! For once I wasn't doing something wrong, but I had worked hard and done something good even though it didn't feel like that because I still don't know if this is exactly what she wants. Although she says it is good and so does Jessica and they have done research before so I will take their word. I am still working on Chapters 1, 2 and 3. Progress is slow but steady for now. I am just worried that I may not be able to do much research in the next few months because exams are around the corner and I got a job at the department as a teacher's assistant, so I do not have as much free time as I did before and working and studying is a skill I am slowly developing.

21 September 2019

Today is D-Day. We were up early and ready to go. The participants took a while to come and a lot of them were late. Very few teachers represented some schools and upon talking to some of them it was because of how far the school was and how transport was a problem. The participants received transportation money as they registered, this was definitely an incentive but when one spoke to them, I realised just how much of a difference it was making. The teachers were all so friendly, it was wonderful to watch them interact with Jessica and Prof. Ebersöhn, it was like they had seen old friends, it was all hugs, smiles and laughs. What stood out to them the most was the impact that they had made in these teachers lives. When the teachers reflected over the experience, they spoke about how they learnt to use each other as resources and how they did not realise the strength they had within and how much talent they had. They learnt many ways to work around not having much to come up with something beautiful. They also indicated how invaluable the relationships and skills they developed during the process. It really was something to finally see the

faces and the people behind those audio recordings I transcribed. They were so warm and welcoming it was as if we knew them.

I was in awe of the impact of research today, I saw what it could do, and I felt honoured to be a part of this process because you could really see that this intervention did change their lives and it was something that they would never forget. I watched them and thought wow each teacher standing here has a story, they have challenges, they are embedded in contexts of chronic adversity but as they stand in our presence they all had the warmest countenance and the most inviting embrace and I could only I imagine the impact that they were making on their students.

It was at this point when I realised just how important this research project was and just how important resilience was because each teacher here was still in the profession despite all they are faced with and they touched on it and even if they did not, the distance that they travelled to join us alone spoke a lot about their characters and commitment. They are heroes in my eyes because what they do is not easy and I pray that our research can make a difference in the eyes of our readers because it is not about the big grammar and accolades but the lives it changes, Jessica and Prof. did that and kudos to them!

January 2020

So I did not touch my research again until January. I found a job at Rosebank College and, their computers had viruses and I only had one USB stick, my stick contracted a virus from the computers there and my research was destroyed. My partner is into IT and he did everything he could, we tried retrieving the data, and fixing the corrupt files but what came up was fragmented documents and it meant that I had to start all over again. From Chapters 1 to 3 – I was devastated, to say the least. I had no desire to start over, none whatsoever. I was able to retrieve my data analysis through my emails but not the actual chapters because most of my correspondence with Prof. regarding chapter revisions were all hardcopies and I never thought of sending them to myself via email. I learnt a valuable lesson. My partner consistently reminded me of getting virtual storage and to email everything to myself so that I have copies of my documents everywhere. It was a humbling experience. I spent my festive season with family and came back in early January to start over and complete as much as I could before my coursework began.

I managed to complete Chapter 1 and sent it to Prof. for review

16 March 2020

Research progress report. I am behind and overwhelmed with coursework. I need to do Chapter 2, I have started Chapter 3 but I am not done yet, there's still quite a lot to get through.

April 2020

It has been some weeks and I will not lie I am struggling with Med coursework, work and research ... and Covid 19, how can I forget how my year has been turned upside down.

08 June 2020

Managed to submit Chapter 3

13 July 2020

Prof. emailed regarding appointing external examiners; she wants us to submit in August ... I am very worried about that because I am finding it difficult to get work done while on lockdown. I am not depressed but I am not okay, and I am struggling complete my research. Med has not gotten any easier. It is business as usual as if Covid does not exist, we have work, and it needs to get done. I am struggling with this and just barely keeping afloat.

16 July 2020

I redid and sent Chapter 3 again, it was much better than the first draft, I am not on track but I am making some progress and that is what I am most excited about. I got my review back today and I need to work on quite a lot. My partner had a mild stroke and everything is on me now, cooking cleaning, getting groceries, doing physio with him and all my work. I am not finding things easy but somehow one must plan and get everything done no matter what.

23 July 2020

I submitted my first drafts of Chapters 4 and 2 today! Progress!

29 July 2020

It was not a very good Chapter 2; I was in a rush and did not put much thought into what I was putting down and it is safe to say I have disappointed Prof. She is not happy with what I submitted, and I am embarrassed that that is what I sent to her. Still, we rise, I have got to do this again. Completing Chapter 2 gives me so much anxiety and I think it is from back in the first year when it was drilled into us that it is going to be very difficult. All in all, it has to be done. I appreciate that Prof. is giving me another chance!

31 July 2020

Chapter 4 was good, I am happy! More work to do but it is not as bad as Chapter 2. I am hoping I can work towards submitting in November because I do not think I will make it for the August submission.

August - December 2020

I worked on my Chapter 1, 3, 4, 5 and re-did Chapter 2. Research is not easy!!! During this time I missed final submissions. My sister is a doctor and during Covid, she went through a divorce and depression and I had to be there for her. I spent almost two months in KwaZulu-Natal and then had to come back for practicum work, then I had an accident in November and the rest of the year was not easy. I worked back and forth with Prof. on my research, and I can say that I am only working on revisions and that this is better than having to start from scratch. I am hoping I can submit next year in May, I hope I will have done enough. Jo and Zahne both submitted this year and I am feeling the pressure to complete too.

January - 24 May 2021

I am still not ready to submit just yet. I am still doing revisions. Prof. says it is necessary to use metacognition when writing research. I think I got to a point where I would just do my revisions and send and hope for the best. It hasn't been the best decision as I am still working on my research now. I decided to work this year and save up for my internship next year while doing research, sometimes work does take precedence over research. Although I am still pushing. I had major changes to Chapter 4. My themes were all wrong and the language I used to describe them was inappropriate, with Prof's guidance I reworked them, and I am hopeful that they are

much better. I am worried that my language skills and inconsistency are getting in the way of me completing. I have to work on this so I can complete my thesis.

Chapter 1 is going okay; I am working on revisions and now being more cognisant of what I am submitting. I need to make more changes to my theoretical framework, and it seems I am confusing my conceptual framework and my conceptual framework, I made revisions before, but it seems I am still not getting it right. I have had to talk to friends for motivation and guidance and I am comforted by the fact that this is all a part of a bigger picture and that this is just how it is. One just has to put their head down and work.

I am also doing revisions on Chapter 2. I am reading articles again to make sure I understand resilience is not a trait. I get this but I seem to be penning my thoughts down incorrectly. I just need to keep working on the revisions and make sure I get this done.

June – August 2021

The last few months have been very hectic. I have been working hard to complete my thesis. I completed Chapter 1, 3, 4, and the professor asked me to send my work to a language editor. This makes me very nervous about writing because I feel like everything I am writing may be incorrect. I completed Chapter 2 and 5 and eventually sent it to the language editor. I read through it all and understood what Prof was saying, although it cost me an arm and a leg ☹️. This academic journey is not easy, but I am learning that sometimes you need that help to put your thoughts down appropriately and that it does not mean that what is there is all wrong, it just needs that refinement. Since then, it has been a rat race of me working and sending drafts to Prof. and her sending them back. I have to be honest though, the back and fourth has really made me understand what I have written in each chapter and realise that I am very repetitive, I am learning to be concise. The maximum number of words a dissertation should have is 25000, and what I have written so far is 38344, so I have been working on reducing the number of words. I am praying that I will complete my thesis at the end of this month. I really appreciate Prof. for being so patient and guiding me through this process, I am really excited that the end is near and that I will be contributing to the teacher resilience body of knowledge.

29 August 2021

At 7 am this morning I woke up to the best email! Prof. approved my chapters!! Its finally happening, I am completing my thesis, and submitting is now a reality! I was doubting myself so much when I had to reduce the word count but somehow, I managed to do it, I am so grateful for Profs' patience and the language editor!! Wilna, my language editor has been such a wonderful support!! I am overwhelmed with the support and professional expertise she has provided!! I will now submit the chapters to her and Mardeleen. God is good, I just need to get m ethical clearance, I have been waiting for over 2 months, but I know I will get it this week!! This research journey was hard, very very very hard, but I am so grateful for Profs. guidance and patience. At some point I did not believe I would finish it, I was doubting my writing skills and so many other things. I never thought I could complete this, but I have learnt that one has to trust the process and that I have to learn how to have more faith in myself and what I can produce. But professor Ebersöhn though, she has been a wonderful inspiration and supervisor. All I can say now is thank you Lord, you have done a wonderful thing!