

Sustainability of psycho-social support by teachers to enhance resilience in a school

Samiramis Bagherpour

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**Sustainability of psycho-social support
by teachers to enhance resilience in a school**

by

Samiramis Bagherpour

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Department of Educational Psychology
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SUPERVISOR:

Dr Ronél Ferreira

CO-SUPERVISORS:

Prof Liesel Ebersöhn

Dr Kesh Mohangi

PRETORIA

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*In loving memory of Neil du Sautoy,
whose attitude and zest for life inspired me to not give up*

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DECLARATION

I, Samiramis Bagherpour (student number 29263272) hereby declare that all the resources consulted are included in the reference list and that this study titled:

Sustainability of psycho-social support by teachers to enhance resilience in a school

is my original work. This thesis was not previously submitted by me for any degree at another university.

S. Bagherpour

August 2010



Supervisor : Dr Ronél Ferreira
Co-supervisors : Prof Liesel Ebersöhn & Dr Kesh Mohangi
Degree : M.Ed (Educational Psychology)

The purpose of this study was to report on the sustainability of school-based psycho-social support projects that have been initiated in a school in the Eastern Cape. More specifically, the study explored how insights into sustainable psycho-social support by teachers might inform knowledge on resilience in schools. The study forms part of the broad STAR (Supportive Teachers, Assets and Resilience) research project that has been ongoing since 2003.

The current study utilised Interpretivism as metatheory and Participatory Reflection and Action (PRA) as methodological paradigm. A case study design was selected, with eight purposefully selected primary school teachers as participants, who have been involved in the STAR project since 2003. Two field visits were undertaken for data collection purposes. The participants took part in two PRA-based workshops, with the second workshop taking the form of a member checking session. In addition to the PRA-based workshops, I relied on observations, field notes, photographs, audio-recordings and a research diary as data collection and documentation strategies.

Subsequent to thematic data analysis four main themes emerged. Firstly the importance of teamwork in sustaining psycho-social support initiatives was identified, with the various roles and responsibilities within the team, and school management acting as a silent partner emerging as sub-themes. Secondly, participants highlighted collaboration (with the University of Pretoria, community and other schools) as underlying reasons for sustaining support efforts. Thirdly, participants regarded acknowledgement by others as motivating factors, with reference to acknowledgement on multiple levels and acknowledgement resulting in self-confidence as sub-themes. Finally, participants focused on teacher identity as the determining factor for sustaining psycho-social support initiatives, referring to being in

a caring profession, putting children first, being change agents in the community and being committed and dedicated.

Based on the findings of the study, I can conclude that sustaining psycho-social support seemed to establish the school as a protective resource to promote resilience. The acknowledgement of teachers' abilities and capabilities similarly had a positive effect on teachers' identification and mobilisation of assets and resources in collaboration with community partners, which in turn positively impacted teachers' confidence.



KEY WORDS

- ❖ Participatory Reflection and Action
- ❖ Psycho-social support
- ❖ Resilience
- ❖ School-based support
- ❖ STAR intervention
- ❖ Sustainability
- ❖ Teachers



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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND GENERAL ORIENTATION

1.1 INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE

The current study formed part of a broad research project, namely the STAR project. The STAR (Supportive Teachers, Assets and Resilience) intervention emerged from a number of studies (Ebersöhn, 2008; Ferreira, 2006; Loots, 2005; McCallaghan, 2007; Mnguni, 2006; Odendaal, 2006) resulting in a longitudinal research project on resilience in schools. In the project, researchers (Ebersöhn, Ferreira & Mnguni, 2008; Ferreira, 2007; Ferreira, Ebersöhn & Loots, 2008; Ferreira, Ebersöhn & McCallaghan, 2010a; Ferreira, Ebersöhn & Odendaal, 2010b) initially partnered with teachers in a primary school in an informal settlement community in the Eastern Cape. The aim of the Participatory Reflection and Action (PRA) partnership was to investigate how resilience in a school could be addressed by teachers' psycho-social support initiatives, initially within the HIV/AIDS realm. All of these studies constitute the pilot phase of the STAR intervention.

In further phases of the project the STAR intervention was replicated in three other schools in two additional South African provinces (Ebersöhn, 2006; Ebersöhn, 2007; Ebersöhn & Ferreira, forthcoming; Loots, Ebersöhn, Ferreira & Eloff, 2009; Olivier, 2009). Currently the project is in a dissemination research phase where teachers trained in STAR (until 2007) are trained as facilitators to implement STAR with teachers in neighbouring schools (Ebersöhn, 2008; Ebersöhn, 2009). The current study reports on the sustainability of teachers' psycho-social support projects in the initial STAR pilot school in the Eastern Cape. More specifically, the study explored how insights into sustainable psycho-social support by teachers might inform knowledge on resilience in schools.

Literature on HIV/AIDS initiatives and their sustainability suggests that clear guidelines or specific models are limited regarding the implementation of sustainable intervention programmes. Existing studies in this field of interest often focus on the effectiveness of HIV/AIDS programmes and initiatives (Campbell, Foulis, Malmane & Sibiyi, 2005; Eshel, Moore, Mishara, Wooster, Toledo, Uhl & Wright-DeAgüero,

2008; Weir, Figueroa, Byfield, Hall, Cummings & Suchindran, 2008), rather than on the sustainability thereof. From existing studies it seems that, although the initial response to programmes might appear to be positive and well-received by communities, projects may not sustain. Existing programmes typically address areas such as the impact of minority AIDS initiatives in strengthening HIV prevention (Eshel *et al.*, 2008), youth HIV/AIDS programmes, where the social context and specific environments are taken into consideration (Campbell *et al.*, 2005), safe sex programmes (Weir *et al.*, 2008), as well as programmes to intervene in mother-to-child transmission (Doherty, McCoy & Donohue, 2005). These programmes are but a few examples of initiatives that seemingly had the vision to make a difference but may have dissipated due to variations in underlying factors, contexts, location, approaches and often a lack of asset management.

On the other hand, other projects are reported to have been sustainable over a timeframe of five years. There is for example, an HIV/AIDS initiative project which sustained in Ugandan schools (Norton & Mutoni, 2007), whilst another involved a narrative intervention strategy implemented in Ethiopia, Botswana and Zimbabwe in assisting individuals coping with and combating HIV/AIDS (Gallavotti, Petraglia, Harfort, Fraft, Pappas-Deluca & Kuhlman, 2005). A common theme in these two projects' apparent sustainability relates to the consideration of individuals' social contexts as well as the related cultural influences. In the study conducted in Ugandan schools, emphasis is placed on peer education and mentorship. Such peer education is similar to the current phase of the STAR initiative, where educators are presently facilitating the intervention amongst colleagues in other schools, to implement the programme in their communities.

No clear indicators are, however, provided in available literature in terms of the reasons for some programmes being sustained over time and others not. Ebersöhn and Eloff (2006) identify the asset-based approach which encourages ownership of and responsibility for programmes by people facing adversity as one possible way of allowing for sustainability. The current study aims to provide possible explanations in terms of how teachers sustained (or not) particular psycho-social initiatives by employing the asset-based approach, following participation in STAR. The study further aims to explain how the participating educators might have overcome

obstacles and adapted to various situations demanded by their environment and social contexts. In addition I focus on the significance of sustaining psycho-social support for schools to function as protective resource, where individuals have been required to cope with challenges and vulnerability such as HIV/AIDS related stressors.

1.2 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study was to explore and describe (Mouton, 2001) the sustainability of psycho-social support initiatives stemming from the STAR intervention, in the initial school involved in the project. In order to achieve my purpose, I identified the various sustained initiatives in the selected school (within the context of the broader STAR research project over the last seven years) on the one hand, and on the other hand initiatives that were seemingly not sustained. I then described how and why the various initiatives were sustained over time (or not). Lastly, I focused on the potential of sustainable initiatives to promote resilience in a school.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The current study was guided by the following primary research question:

How can insights into sustainable psycho-social support by teachers inform knowledge on resilience in schools?

In order to answer my research question, I addressed the following secondary questions:

- ❖ Which psycho-social initiatives were sustained and why?
- ❖ Which psycho-social initiatives were not sustained and why?
- ❖ How did sustainable initiatives effect resilience in the school, or not?

1.4 WORKING ASSUMPTIONS

Based on the literature I consulted on sustainability, resilience in school-based support and psycho-social support I undertook this study with the following assumptions:

- ❖ I assumed that the information obtained from the participating teachers would indicate some kind of relationship between sustainability, resilience and psycho-social support to community members.
- ❖ I assumed that the educators' strategies and initiatives to support the community in coping with the HIV/AIDS pandemic could have enhanced the school's resilience.
- ❖ I assumed a possible link between sustainability of the STAR initiatives that have been introduced since 2003 and promoting resilience in the school.

1.5 CONCEPT CLARIFICATION

In the following section I provide clarification of the key concepts of this study.

1.5.1 TEACHERS

Landsberg (2008) refers to a teacher as a person who transfers knowledge and facilitates learning while assuming the additional roles of leader, manager and administrator. For the purpose of this study teachers refer to the eight educators of a primary school in the Eastern Cape initially involved in the STAR project. All the teachers are females aged between 40 and 50 years.

1.5.2 PSYCHO-SOCIAL SUPPORT

Dalton, Ellis and Wandersman (2001) explain psycho-social support as the collaboration of community members to create an environment that promotes competence and helps prevent problems (Pollock & Whitelaw, 2005). The World Health Organisation (2009) refers to psycho-social support as structured programmes aimed at enhancing skills, counselling and educational support and facilitated by a multidisciplinary team, to meet the specific needs of a community. These support structures are generally aimed at enabling communities facing adversity and thus increase resilience. Van Gelder and Kraakman (2008) report from their studies that children who are infected with or affected by HIV/AIDS are at risk of psycho-social problems such as depression, high levels of stress, deterioration of services, and weakness of social institutes. Among other difficulties, these children

are required to adapt and cope in continuously changing and unfamiliar surroundings as well as lack of support structures.

Within the context of this study, psycho-social support refers to the support provided by the teachers to the children and community in dealing with vulnerability, such as HIV/AIDS related challenges, in one specific primary school in the Eastern Cape. This support takes on various forms, such as prayer groups, vegetable gardens, providing food parcels, soup kitchens, and sourcing uniforms for the children (Ebersöhn, 2009; Ferreira, 2007; Ferreira *et al.*, 2008; Ferreira *et al.*, 2010b).

1.5.3 SUSTAINABILITY

Sanders and McCormick (1993) describe sustainability as the ability to maintain a task or project over a prolonged period of time. Guardia and Pol (2002) further describe sustainability as the capacity to endure through time and maintain certain functions into the future (Pollock & Whitelaw, 2005). In support of this description, Froding, Eriksson and Elander (2008) regard adaptability as one of the fundamental factors in sustaining projects and increasing their success.

For the purpose of this study, sustainability refers to the ability to maintain STAR-initiated psycho-social support initiatives. The time frame of 'sustaining' entails the beginning of the STAR project at the school (November 2003) until the time of my data collection in November 2009. Indicators of sustainability denote school-related stakeholders investing time and resources in psycho-social support projects.

1.5.4 RESILIENCE IN SCHOOLS

According to Gillespie, Chaboyer and Wallis (2007:125), resilience is "*The capacity to transcend adversity and transform it into opportunity for growth*". In support of this definition, Schreuder and Coetzee (2008) explain resilience as goal directed behaviour of coping and rebounding. Ebersöhn and Eloff (2002) agree by proposing that resilience is the ability to adapt and cope.

Jukes, Phil, Simmons, Fawzi and Bundy (2008) indicate that education generally has a significant influence on people's self-efficacy and thus the social support networks

they form, and that good education may serve as a protective resource in challenging times or situations. Oliver, Collin, Burns and Nicholas (2006) emphasise the importance of building resilience in young people through their participation and decision-making that generally involve meaning, control and connectedness. These authors believe that the best way for young people to experience such attributes is within the context of their school communities. Knight (2007) elaborates, stating that schools can fulfil a significant role in developing and promoting healthy social and emotional development which is grounded in risk and resilience theory, as environments and individuals imply both risk and protective possibilities.

Within the context of this study resilience refers to strategies in a school to support individuals to bounce back when facing trauma and challenges (such as HIV/AIDS related challenges). This ability is proposed to be supported by school communities being able to sustain psycho-social support initiatives stemming from STAR initiatives introduced by teachers since 2003.

1.6 PARADIGMATIC PERSPECTIVE

In this section, I introduce the theoretical framework, metatheory and methodological paradigm that guided the study. Detailed discussions follow in Chapters 2 and 3.

1.6.1 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

I relied upon the underlying philosophy and principles of the asset-based approach to interpret the results of the current study. The asset-based approach is a strength-based approach that propagates the use of resources, capacities, strengths and assets to overcome adversity (Ebersöhn & Eloff, 2006). This approach focuses on collaboration, participation and partnerships in order to mobilise resources and assets that have been identified within the individual and community (Ebersöhn & Eloff, 2006; Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993). The asset-based approach proposes that every system possesses assets that need to be identified and mobilised (Ebersöhn & Eloff, 2006; Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993). This principle might hold true for the current study, as the STAR intervention included asset mapping and the mobilisation of assets by teachers, as well as by others in the school community (Ferreira, 2006; Olivier, 2009).

Sustainability is regarded as a key component of the asset-based approach (Ebersöhn & Eloff, 2006; Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993; Mathie & Cunningham, 2003). It seems essential that the community and outsiders collaborate in community-based initiatives, in order to enhance sustainability (Ebersöhn & Eloff, 2006; Mathie & Cunningham, 2003). From examining existing literature on sustainability of various established programmes and initiatives it further seems clear that programmes that demonstrate adaptability of both the project and the management team are seemingly more sustainable than those who follow rigid rules and criteria (Gallavotti *et al.*, 2005; Norton & Mutoni, 2007).

The idea of collaboration and sustainability thus supports the underlying principles of the asset-based approach. The STAR intervention is based on collaboration between teachers, researchers and the community, with the common goal of sustaining psycho-social support provided to children and communities facing challenges.

1.6.2 METATHEORETICAL PARADIGM

I relied on Interpretivism as metatheory. I therefore interpreted potential meanings and actions against the frame of reference and perceptions of the participants (Williams, 2000). By employing an interpretivist approach I aimed to gain an understanding of the experiences of the participants (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2003) in terms of the sustainability of the psycho-social support initiatives they started. As such, an interpretivist stance enabled me to understand the participants' perceptions in terms of their sustained provision of psycho-social support, not only to the children at school, but also to the wider community.

1.6.3 METHODOLOGICAL PARADIGM

As methodological paradigm, I relied upon Participatory Reflection and Action (PRA), which is based on principles of self-development and the expectation that people will take action when faced with challenges (Chambers, 2008). I thus emphasised the importance of active involvement of the various role players throughout this research project. It follows that participants and researchers were both involved and collaboratively responsible for the processes and outcome of the study (Chambers,

2008). Being part of a broad research project, the current study aligns with the methodological paradigm of related STAR studies.

1.7 BRIEF OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

I utilised a case study research design, focusing on a current phenomenon within its real life context (Yin, 2007). A case study design is regarded as especially suitable in studying social phenomena (Yin, 2007). The school and eight female teachers from a primary school in the Eastern Cape were selected purposefully in terms of certain selection criteria (included in Chapter 3) and their involvement in the STAR project (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2002).

I undertook two field visits (17 June 2009 and 2 November 2009). My primary data collection comprised of a PRA-based workshop (Chambers, 2008) at the school in the Eastern Cape. I, together with a co-field worker¹, facilitated a two hour workshop in collaboration with our three supervisors and the participants. The workshop was supported by data collection by means of observation (De Vos, Strydom, Fouche & Delport, 2005), field notes and a research diary (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2002). Five months later, I co-facilitated a second PRA-based workshop, primarily for member checking purposes, but also as potential source of additional raw data. In thematically analysing the data I relied on Terre Blanche and Kelly's outline of thematic content analysis (Terre Blanche & Kelly, 2002).

1.8 QUALITY CRITERIA

In an attempt to add to the trustworthiness of this study I employed several strategies (Welman & Kruger, 2001). The various researchers (myself, a co-field worker, and our supervisors in collaboration with the participants) analysed the data obtained during the PRA-workshop, placing categories of psycho-social support initiatives on a timeline. The analysis was confirmed during a second informal workshop five months after the initial data collection, by the participating teachers, during a member checking activity (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2002). At this stage the participants had

¹ Ms. Georgina Dempster, MEd (Educational Psychology) student, exploring the various forms of psycho-social support in a school context.

the opportunity to correct or clarify any misunderstandings that might have occurred during the initial data collection phase.

Throughout, I firstly aimed to achieve *transferability* (Cohen *et al.*, 2003) by providing a rich description of the context, research process and activities I facilitated. My observations and the data collection activities were documented by means of photographs, field notes and audio recordings (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2002). In addition, I attempted to provide a detailed account of the meanings and understandings gained of the research context in this mini-dissertation, which might be transferred into similar contexts (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2002). Secondly, in an attempt to obtain *dependable* findings, I relied upon continuous reflection and debriefing with my supervisors (Cohen *et al.*, 2003).

Thirdly, I aimed for *credible* findings by familiarising myself with the STAR intervention progress and development prior to entering the research context. In addition, I used multiple data sources and debriefing sessions with my supervisors and co-researcher to identify any possible biases or subjectivity which could have influenced me (Appendix D). In the fourth place, I employed multiple methods of data collection and analysed participants' verbatim responses rather than my own feelings and views, in order to adhere to *confirmability* (Seale, 2000; Appendix C1, C2, D, E, F & G). Finally, in order to obtain *authenticity* (Seale, 2000), I created opportunities during the workshop to allow the participants to express themselves and listen to each others' perspectives on the progress and sustainability of the various projects (Appendix C1 & C2). More detailed discussions in terms of the various quality criteria I strived to adhere to are included in Chapter 3.

1.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

I followed the ethical guidelines stipulated by the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Education, University of Pretoria (Ethics Committee, 2008). I was aware of and respected the needs of the participants, and kept their best interest at heart (Rossman & Rallis, 2003; Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2002). At the time when I entered the research field, the participants had been participating in the STAR research project since 2003. As such, informed consent had already been provided

and permission to conduct the research had been obtained from the school principal and the Department of Education (Appendix B).

I focused on treating participants fairly and with dignity. I aimed for the study not to harm the participants in any manner and revealed potential benefits where possible. In addition, I did not discriminate against any person involved in the study and the participants had the right to withdraw at any time of the study (Ethics Committee, 2008; Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2002). In terms of confidentiality and anonymity, it was the participants' request to be identified in publications or reports following the study, resulting in me not disguising identifying information in photographs. In Chapter 3 I discuss the ethical guidelines I adhered to in more detail.

1.10 OVERVIEW OF CHAPTERS

CHAPTER 1: Introduction and general orientation

This chapter provides a general orientation to the study, illustrating my rationale for pursuing research of this nature. After formulating the questions that guided this study I defined the key concepts and provided an overview of the theoretical framework and selected research design and methodology. I concluded the chapter by briefly referring to quality criteria and research ethics.

CHAPTER 2: Literature review

This chapter outlines the theoretical framework of the study. I focus on the principles of the asset-based approach and how these principles relate to the core of this study. I discuss literature on resilience and sustainability of previous and ongoing HIV/AIDS initiatives and focus on the elements that could mobilise or inhibit such projects. I conclude the chapter by linking the asset-based approach, sustainability and resilience, to provide an overview of my integrated conceptual framework.

CHAPTER 3: Research design and methodology

In this chapter I discuss the selected research design, methodology and process of the current study. I explain the various methods of data collection and documentation I employed, as well as the data analysis and interpretation strategies I followed. I justify my choice of research design and processes in terms of the focus of the current study and the research questions formulated in Chapter 1. Finally, I include a

discussion of the ethical guidelines governing the current study as well as the quality criteria I strived to uphold.

CHAPTER 4: Research results and discussion of findings

Chapter 4 comprises a presentation of the data analysis and interpretation I conducted. I present the results in terms of the themes and sub-themes that emerged. I then relate the results to relevant literature as discussed in Chapter 2, thereby discussing the findings of the study.

CHAPTER 5: Conclusions and recommendations

In the final chapter of this mini-dissertation I relate the findings to the research questions formulated in Chapter 1, to come to final conclusions. I highlight the potential contributions of the study as well as the challenges I faced. I conclude with recommendations for possible future research, training and practice in this field of research.

1.11 CONCLUSION

This chapter provided an overview of the chapters to follow and a basic orientation to the study. I described my rationale for undertaking the study, stated the research purpose and clarified the key concepts I relied upon. I briefly presented my conceptual framework and introduced the research design and methodology. I provided the ethical considerations and quality criteria that I adhered to in an attempt to enhance the rigour of the study.

Chapter 2 is based on a literature review of the concepts and themes related to this study. I explore available literature on the asset-based approach in relation to the sustainability of HIV/AIDS initiatives and how these could enhance resilience (or not) amongst vulnerable communities, specifically within the context of schools.



2.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the preceding chapter was to provide a general orientation to the current study. I presented my rationale, formulated the research questions that guided this study and stated my assumptions. I clarified the key concepts and provided a brief overview of the research design and methodology.

Based on existing literature it seems evident that many programmes and interventions on prevention and education within the HIV/AIDS realm have been initiated over the past few decades. Throughout, it appears that programmes that have managed to result in people overcoming challenges and adversity often actively involve members of the community (Ashford & Parker, 2001; Mathie & Cunningham, 2003; Perkins, Borden & Villarruel, 2003). Furthermore, sustainable programmes typically seem to have been adapted in terms of the cultural values of the communities they have been implemented in. As the current study focuses on the sustainability of one example of a school-based community intervention, I explore existing literature on sustainability in this chapter. However, based on the theoretical backdrop of the said intervention (STAR), I commence with an overview of the asset-based approach, which guides the project and arguably has implication for this sustainability study.

In my discussion, I thus aim to relate the core concepts of the asset-based approach to community development and school-based approach initiatives that might form part of community development. After presenting definitions and basic assumptions of sustainability, I discuss the potential influence of the asset-based approach on sustaining projects such as HIV/AIDS initiatives and intervention programmes. I also present some factors that could influence sustainability (positively and negatively) and provide case examples of projects that sustained and discontinued, contemplating possible reasons in each instance. In addition, I discuss how resilience in a school might be enhanced by employing an asset-based approach when implementing school-based support initiatives. I conclude the chapter by linking the

asset-based approach, sustainability and resilience, thereby providing an integrated overview of my conceptual framework.

2.2 ASSET-BASED APPROACH

I selected the asset-based approach as underlying framework, based on my view that communities and individuals possess the ability to make positive changes and achieve goals by relying on available resources (Ebersöhn & Eloff, 2006; Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993). In addition I believe that the recognition of assets could mobilise and enable a community or an individual to achieve goals (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993). The underlying philosophy of the asset-based approach aligns with the interpretivist paradigm I selected, as both assume the existence of multiple realities (Ebersöhn & Eloff, 2006; Williams, 2000). Furthermore, the asset-based approach looks to overcome challenges, requiring of people to make meaning of their environments through positive perception and by focusing on assets. This principle is in line with the interpretivist view that individuals make unique interpretations of their contexts, with the interpretations potentially being done in a positive manner. In the next section I discuss the potential implementation of an asset-based approach in community-based support initiatives.

The asset-based approach focuses on systems, ecosystems and contexts while keeping in mind individual assets and strengths (Ebersöhn & Eloff, 2006). Based on research in the field of Positive Psychology, intrinsic strengths, assets and resources are emphasised (Snyder & Lopez, 2002). This focus thereby highlights the importance of building relationships and identifying resources as well as continuously reminding the members of a community, or even professionals, of available resources (Kriek, 2002). An emphasis on assets and strengths might inevitably result in positive effect (Ebersöhn & Eloff, 2006).

Another underlying principle of the asset-based approach relates to the identification of resources from the inside of a community, before looking outwards for assistance. Such an approach typically increases ownership of challenges and resources available in a community (Ebersöhn & Eloff, 2002). Studies indicate that the asset-based approach might be actualised differently in varying contexts but that the sustainability of its outcomes is dependent on teamwork, collaboration, flexibility and

intrinsic solutions to the various challenges faced by a community (Ebersöhn & Eloff, 2006).

2.2.1 UTILISING THE ASSET-BASED APPROACH IN INITIATING COMMUNITY SUPPORT PROJECTS

According to Kretzmann and McKnight (1993) a needs-based approach to community development can be devastating to a community, as such an approach emphasises the severity of problems in order to attract resources. This, in turn, might create a feeling of hopelessness amongst the members of a community when they adopt a view of themselves as being incapable of initiating positive change (Mathie & Cunningham, 2003). The asset-based approach to community development and mobilisation of existing resources, on the other hand, focuses on a community's ability to create positive change by identifying and mobilising assets, including those that might be unrecognised (Mathie & Cunningham, 2003). These assets and resources include relationships amongst people in a community that might contribute to local associations and informal networks (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993; Mathie & Cunningham, 2003).

According to Kretzmann and McKnight (1993) five steps are typically employed when mobilising a community's assets. The first step involves the *Mapping of assets in the community*. During mapping, the question is asked *which resources are available in solving a particular problem*. These may vary from individual assets to associations and local organisations (Mathie & Cunningham, 2003). Assets are often not acknowledged by the members of a community and careful facilitation may be required to highlight some of these (Ebersöhn & Eloff, 2006). Secondly, *Building relationships* is one of the key elements in solving problems through collaboration. These relationships include relationships between the various role players and factors in a community, such as individuals, associations between citizens, local institutions and physical assets of a community. Good leadership, as well as collaboration and communication between the various role players are regarded as important (Mathie & Cunningham, 2003; Petersen, Bhana, Fisher, Swarts & Richter, 2010). The third step of asset mobilisation involves *Mobilisation for economic development and information sharing*. Mobilisation relies on strengthening a community's capacity to shape and exchange information through which the local

economy can be developed. Tsai (2002) notes that knowledge sharing on a hierarchical level may have a negative impact on the building of relationships and creation of a collaborative atmosphere, whereas lateral informal information sharing could enhance it. Mchembu (2004) elaborates, by explaining knowledge as a form of freedom and a protective factor against risk, in particular in rural communities.

The fourth step in asset mobilisation involves *Convening a community to develop a vision and a plan*. This step can assist in defining goals and developing a plan of action, which may in turn evolve into various strategies that could lead to action. Three commitments are suggested that needs to be agreed to at the onset of a planning process in order to enhance the coordination of the full capacity of a community. Firstly, the various assets and capacities in the community need to be outlined. Secondly, as many members of a community as possible are included in the planning process of asset mobilisation, as it is important to have representatives from different sectors of the community (Ebersöhn & Eloff, 2006). Thirdly, planning can be followed by problem solving, as this could allow for problem solving strategies to be related to the here and now, which may in turn result in concrete and achievable goals.

The fifth and final step of asset mobilisation entails *Leveraging outside resources to support locally driven development*. It is important to note that only once the variety of local resources have been identified and mobilised in order to solve problems, attention should be redirected to outside resources (Vasta, 2004). According to Vasta (2004), outside influences or contributions are generally not sustainable, once again emphasising the suggestion that a community identifies its own assets and strengths to effectively overcome adversity, as opposed to relying on external aid.

Mathie and Cunningham (2003), commenting on the five steps of asset mobilisation, emphasise that community action which is based on the utilisation of internal resources and skills, have a better chance of success than those merely relying on external assistance. In identifying assets, individuals are usually more inclined to take action and form meaningful collaborations. Therefore, people's sense of identity or purpose in life is infused in various assets and capacities they acknowledge. Through a sense of purpose and enablement, members of a community might feel enabled to

challenge the way in which resources are distributed and channel these in more effective ways (Mathie & Cunningham, 2003).

The STAR intervention, on which my study focuses, is built on the principles of asset mobilisation as described in the previous paragraphs. The teachers involved in the programme identified existing resources and assets in the community (Ferreira, 2006; Loots, 2005), set goals and collaborated with the school community to mobilise potential resources in addressing challenges and reaching their goals. It seemed evident that, as more assets were identified, more goals could be achieved. In addition, possible changes seemed to have occurred amongst the teachers in terms of self-esteem as well as amongst other community members and children as the project progressed (Ferreira, 2006; Loots, 2005; McCallaghan, 2007; Mnguni, 2006; Odendaal, 2006). In the next section I discuss resilience in relation to the asset-based approach.

2.2.2 RESILIENCE AND THE ASSET-BASED APPROACH

Literature on resilience (Gallavotti *et al.*, 2005; Greene, Galambos & Lee, 2003) indicates that community support might increase resilience on both an individual and a group level (e.g. in schools). The higher the perceived community support the better the potential levels of resilience, or willingness to cope when facing adversity and trauma (Greene *et al.*, 2003). Ebersöhn and Eloff (2002) summarise this idea by explaining that the environment makes demands on an individual, who may experience these demands in the form of anxiety or tension, resulting in a choice of how to cope with the situation. The ability to adapt and cope therefore seems to be linked to resilience (Greene *et al.*, 2003).

Perkins *et al.* (2003) illustrate the potential value of collaboration and a positive approach to youth development, by describing the importance and need for a model that incorporates positive youth development with risk and resilience. These authors posit that resilience could play an essential role in helping youth overcome challenges by becoming active partners in their own development as well as that of the community. In essence, Perkins *et al.*'s (2003) programme relies on the basic principles of asset-based intervention, providing young people with the foundations that could enable them to make decisions that might promote their own positive

development (Ebersöhn & Eloff, 2006). In addition, programmes that incorporate youth in a positive manner and as a result may enhance their skills could aid young people in developing assets that can serve as protective resources, which could in turn reduce the possibility of their involvement in risky behaviours (Blyth, 2000). Perkins *et al.* (2003) further found that such enablement could increase the probability of youth being willing to contribute to community development at large and assist in sustaining existing assets and strengths within a community. In the next section I discuss how these factors may potentially influence risk factors and protective resources when facing adversity.

2.2.2.1 Risk factors and protective resources

Risk factors refer to conditions that could increase the probability of harm or helplessness to environmental stressors, whereas protective resources generally enhance a person's resilience in terms of modified or altered conditions that could enhance adaptive responses to environmental stressors (Petersen *et al.*, 2010; Schreuder & Coetzee, 2008). Risk factors and protective resources are multifaceted, ranging from personal to interpersonal and socio-cultural (Petersen *et al.*, 2010). Barry and Jenkins (2007) emphasise that protective factors can be increased through the enhancement of competence, which can in turn increase resilience in the face of risk and adversity.

A competency enhancement approach to resilience requires of communities to fulfil active and fully participating roles as well as equal partnership in implementing interventions (Smedley & Syme, 2000). Barry and Jenkins (2007) elaborate by stating that the majority of intervention programmes aimed at building resilience (especially in children) is most successful when emphasis is placed on promotive factors to overcome adversity. It therefore seems important to build promotive factors internal and external to the individual (Fergus & Zimmerman, 2005). On an individual level, one would, for example, aim at strengthening self-efficacy and coping skills, while external resources can be built by strengthening the assets and resources within a community (Fergus & Zimmerman, 2005). This strategy can, for example, be used in the context of children infected and affected by HIV/AIDS to overcome adversity, as described in the next paragraph.

Cook and Du Toit (2005) provide an example of this strategy of building on internal and external promotive factors in a community, as a key factor in overcoming adversity and enhancing resilience, in their research with children affected by HIV/AIDS. Cook and Du Toit's (2005) project aims at bridging the gap between policy and innovative responsive practice with regard to HIV/AIDS. Their research draws on current resilience theory to assist children and their communities to successfully cope with the effects of HIV/AIDS by using the protective factor model (Cook & Du Toit, 2005). The protective factor model is explained in terms of the interaction of protective resources with risk factors to reduce the probability of negative outcomes. In other words, protective resources may moderate the effects of exposure to risk and alters or modifies the subsequent response (Cook & Du Toit, 2005; Ebersöhn & Eloff, 2006).

According to Cook and Du Toit (2005), the key in enhancing resilience in such a project is providing in children's basic needs such as safety, shelter and food, and also providing opportunities to participate in the various aspects of community life, through which community members may be able to experience growth and achievement and hence increase protective and promotive resources. The presence of supportive adults in children's environments can also positively influence their sense of security and coping strategies as they are allowed to disclose their feelings and concerns (Ebersöhn & Eloff, 2002). However, the cultural context of children and communities must be considered as these may also impact on how coping takes place and resilience is enhanced.

2.2.2.2 Facilitating resilience in communities

The principles of resilience do not only apply to psycho-social support but to various other sectors of support in society, such as in the agricultural and ecological sectors (Burns, Audouling & Weaver, 2006; Southey, 2001). Tobin (1999) suggests three ways in which resilience can be sustained in communities from an ecological perspective. These ways are explained in terms of the mitigation model proposed by Waugh (1996), the recovery model described by Peacock and Ragsdale (1997), and a structural-cognitive model put forward by Tobin and Montz (1997). Although these models were developed in various contexts, they may be applied within the context of psycho-social support and thus within the context of this study.

The *Mitigation model* (Waugh, 1996) aims to reduce risk and protect communities in terms of their design standards. Specific goals are set which are achievable and reasonable for a specific community. The implementation of programmes or initiatives is done in accordance with a community's resources and by capable people. Good leadership and an effective managerial system are regarded as essential, and a well-organised support structure and working relationship are generally utilised to reduce risk factors (Tobin, 1999). Although the aim is to minimise risks there are times, however, where devastation can occur and where a community needs to overcome and recover from disasters (Southey, 2001; Tobin, 1999). In such instances, the recovery model might be utilised (Peacock & Ragsdale, 1997).

The *Recovery model* is not regarded as a simple clean-up and restore effort but rather viewed as a long-term rehabilitation process (Burns *et al.*, 2006; Tobin, 1999). The most important factor for success in this model is viewed as local participation in any rehabilitation programme. Research indicates that outside aid and rescue efforts are not always sustainable if a local community has not been involved in the process of dealing with problems. Therefore, the focus is on recovery, which implies the accumulation of existing assets in the community and the rebuilding of infrastructure (Tobin, 1999). This principle corresponds with the underlying principles of asset mobilisation, as discussed in section 2.2.1 (Mathie & Cunningham, 2003; Vasta, 2004).

Within the recovery model, assets in the community are of individual and community-based nature and are suggested to be utilised on a psycho-social rather than an ecological level. Once available resources and assets have been identified the community needs to analyse how the resources might be distributed in uplifting the community at large in the face of adversity and disaster (Kelly, Somlai, Benotsch, Amirkhanian, Fernandez, Stevnsen, Sitzler, Mcauliffe, Brown & Opgenorth, 2006; Tobin, 1999). Goal setting and agreement upon a specific plan of action by the community is viewed as an essential strategy in such a rehabilitation approach. If the recovery model is implemented and carried out successfully the outcome is generally enhanced levels of resilience of a community as this model typically enables and motivates community members to continue in rebuilding their communities (Bradford, 2007; Piot, 2006; Tobin, 1999). The principles of the recovery model are in line with

that of both the asset-based approach (Ebersöhn & Eloff, 2006) and PRA (Chambers, 2008) as it also aims to identify assets and resources within the community in order to motivate and enable community members in taking action to bring about change. The application of these principles and community participation and action can be noted on various levels in the STAR project and in initiatives such as the soup kitchen, counselling services, involvement of volunteer care workers as well as vegetable gardens (Ferreira, 2006; Loots, 2005; Odendaal, 2006).

Just as the ecology of human development may occur through mutual accommodation between a person and the environment, it could also facilitate individuals to withstand certain risk factors faced in terms of development (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Therefore, comprehensive planning for sustainability and the enhancement of resilience further require a shift in structure and way of thinking by society in order to be adaptable in accommodating possible daily challenges. Such a philosophy is referred to as the *Structural-cognitive model* (Armstrong, Birnie, Lefcovitch & Ungar, 2005; Tobin, 1999). It is, however, clear that the three models mentioned above are interrelated and might have a significant effect on the sustainability of goals through resilience enhancement when viewed in a holistic manner. These examples and key concepts of resilience once again highlight the underlying principles of the asset-based approach, placing an emphasis on resources rather than needs (Ebersöhn & Eloff, 2006).

2.2.2.3 Schools' potential role in promoting resilience

Literature indicates that education (schools) can considerably reduce risk factors with regard to challenges such as HIV/AIDS and related risk behaviours (drug abuse, alcohol abuse and sexual abuse). Jukes *et al.* (2008) indicate that educated people are typically more in control of their behaviours as they are more frequently exposed to interventions and prevention messages, subsequently understanding these better. For example, within the HIV/AIDS realm it is indicated that as the pandemic matures and prevention messages become more common and frequent, education can serve as a protective resource. Education and an understanding of HIV/AIDS might equip individuals to take the necessary measures and make decisions that could protect them against risk behaviours (World Health Organisation, 2007; Zimmerman & Arunkumar, 1994).

Education is thus believed to hold the potential to enhance self-efficacy, which could in turn increase an individual's perception of the level of control over behaviour (Jukes *et al.*, 2008). In addition, education may have a significant influence over social support networks, which may in turn serve as a protective resource in decision making. It seems apparent that a strong link is propagated between education and the reduction of risk behaviours, such as HIV/AIDS infections, as individuals' beliefs and norms might be altered by means of increased knowledge levels (Dent & Cameron, 2003; World Health Organisation, 2007).

School-based programmes may fulfil an important role as part of larger community-based initiatives in enhancing resilience when facing challenges and hardships. As stipulated by the World Health Organisation (2007) it is, however, essential that school-based programmes are provided at an age-appropriate level and focus on building skills and actively involving participants. This recommendation is in line with the underlying principles of the asset-based approach. In addition, in order for such programmes to be effective they are required to address the concerns of both academic and support staff (Dent & Cameron, 2003; World Health Organisation, 2007). This approach can be noted in the STAR intervention, where the programme is aimed at targeting areas identified by teachers and through the enhancement of skills amongst the participants (teachers) (Ferreira, 2006).

By enhancing skills in key stakeholders in a school the resilience amongst teachers may be strengthened, which in turn may filter down to the school context (Dent & Cameron, 2003). Existing studies illustrate that children in high risk contexts and in face of adversity often view their schools and teachers as a protective resource which could enhance their resilience (Brooks, 2006). This may be due to positive peer influences, teacher support and academic achievements (Brooks, 2006; Olsson, Bond & Burns, 2003). Dent and Cameron (2003) indicate that schools could play a significant role in providing a safe and caring environment for vulnerable children where teachers are able to facilitate support actions across systems through psycho-social support. As in the case of the STAR initiative, resilience may be enhanced through the enablement of the teachers to create a safe school environment that

meets the children's basic needs and emotional well-being (Ebersöhn & Ferreira, forthcoming; Olsson *et al.*, 2003).

The importance of addressing specific needs and challenges within a community is further emphasised by a study undertaken by Wagner, Flisher, Caldwell and Vergani (2007). *Health Wise South Africa* is an American-based study, aimed at reducing risk behaviour among adolescents, which was adapted for the South African context. An evaluation of this study highlighted the importance of cultural adaptation and meeting local needs in order for a programme to be sustainable (Oliver *et al.*, 2006; Wagner *et al.*, 2007). In the *Health Wise* programme, life skills education is utilised in reducing risk behaviours through various activities, such as role play, making positive healthy decisions, examining one's attitude and developing skills. These actions have proven to possess the potential to serve as protective resources. Other positive outcomes of the programme include adolescents' ability to self-manage their impulsivities and make healthy decisions, which in turn implies a positive impact on them negotiating relationships, reducing tension and understanding individuals' rights to choose their actions (Oliver *et al.*, 2006). This example of a school-based initiative therefore seems to have enhanced adolescents' resilience in facing challenges with regard to individuals' rights, relationship choices and the protection against HIV-related difficulties (Oliver *et al.*, 2006; Wagner *et al.*, 2007). The authors believe that the effectiveness and sustainability of this initiative can be related to the teamwork and participation of stake holders in the community. In the next section, I discuss the underlying factors of sustainability of community projects and how it might influence resilience within a community.

2.3 SUSTAINABILITY

As stated earlier existing literature on community-based projects and HIV/AIDS initiatives reveal that many of the existing programmes fail to sustain over time and might dissipate in face of challenges and difficulty. Vanwynsberge, Carmichael and Khan (2007) use a cultural model in conceptualising sustainability. According to these authors, an understanding of the cultural context and background of communities is relevant to understand and sustain HIV/AIDS programmes. Loup, De Assis, Costa-Couto, Thoenig, Fleury, De Camargo and Larouza (2009) also emphasise cultural knowledge in their study of sustainability of HIV/AIDS programmes in Brazil. They

focus on the importance of collaboration between various sectors of a community and outside resources, and the active involvement and participation of community members in enhancing sustainability in community initiatives.

The context of community-based initiatives therefore seems to have a significant impact on the adaptability of a community facing adversity (Pollock & Whitelaw, 2005). Adaptability can be regarded as one of the key factors in sustaining a project and enhancing its success (Froding *et al.*, 2008; Pollock & Whitelaw, 2005). In addition, studies conducted on existing HIV/AIDS initiatives and prevention programmes regularly highlight the importance of social cohesion and involving the members of a community in implementing and maintaining initiatives, by mobilising existing assets and resources (Vanwynsberge *et al.*, 2007). This line of argumentation supports the underlying philosophy of the asset-based approach and the principles employed for the purpose of the STAR intervention (Ebersöhn & Eloff, 2006; Ferreira, 2006). In the following section I explore the possibility of providing psycho-social support by means of interventions.

2.3.1 PROVIDING PSYCHO-SOCIAL SUPPORT BY MEANS OF COMMUNITY-BASED INTERVENTION

Richter, Manegold and Pather (2004) refer to psycho-social support as mobilisation and support of households and communities as a whole to cope with adversity and challenges to enhance social community development (or, for the purpose of the current study, resilience in schools). These forms of support are often mobilised through collaboration with government, foreign donors, NGOs and community-based projects (Richter *et al.*, 2004). Foster (2002) refers to psycho-social support as the ability to create hope through community healing and to initiate community development which may in turn enhance a sense of belonging amongst community members or vulnerable individuals.

Psycho-social support can take on many forms, such as religious interaction, support in work settings or providing basic commodities to individuals or groups of people. The aim of psycho-social support is to enhance quality of life for an entire community, thereby improving individual wellness indirectly (Dalton *et al.*, 2001). It involves the collaboration of community members with work organisations to improve the social

conditions of the community. Some examples of the psychosocial support provided by the teachers involved in the STAR intervention include prayer groups, soup kitchens, vegetable gardens, and provision of food parcels (Ferreira, 2006; Loots, 2005; Odendaal, 2006).

Psycho-social support programmes may be structured in different forms aimed at particular vulnerabilities and challenges a community may face (World Health Organisation, 2009). Such programmes are often structured and facilitated by a multidisciplinary team aimed at mobilising a community to meet their needs (World Health Organisation, 2009). Examples of support programmes include youth centred programmes aimed at creating a sense of belonging among under-privileged or vulnerable youth, which could assist with medical care and the prevention of high risk behaviours (Foster, 2002; Richter *et al.*, 2004; World Health Organisation, 2009). Strebel (2004) explores psycho-social support programmes (offered to orphans and vulnerable children due to the effects of HIV/AIDS) in forms of home-based services as well as medical and school training support. Strebel (2004) also conducted research in rural East African communities where psycho-social support is drawn from family kinship traditions and locally available resources. These resources are typically utilised by collaborating with government and NGO's, involving local community members in developing community gardens. Strebel's (2004) approach has been found to be sustainable and efficient. Another form of psycho-social support includes actions where faith-based organisations share resources and experiences with members of a community, enabling them to form orphan care-based networks, where children's safety and basic needs can be supported, in turn enhancing their emotional well-being (Foster, 2002; Strebel, 2004; World Health Organisation, 2009).

Research conducted by Foster (2002) indicates that a lack of emotional well-being often only becomes apparent some time after trauma or stressful situations. This delayed manifestation emphasises the importance of continuous psycho-social support in communities, specifically with regard to children and youth in addressing problems and mitigating the impact of adversity. Foster (2002) views psycho-social support as a way of motivating communities in becoming self-sufficient and actively participate in their own development. Therefore, psycho-social support programmes

are required to be strategically integrated into community-based programmes (in this instance, schools) that provide support (including unconditional positive regard, respect, nurturing, involvement and developing networks) (Foster, 2002; Richter *et al.*, 2004).

2.3.2 SUSTAINABLE INTERVENTIONS AND COMMUNITY-BASED PROJECTS

Wiley (2007) describes a sustainable project as, on the one hand, one that can continue its operations with the idea of achieving and accomplishing goals, and on the other hand the idea of longevity. Jamieson (1998) elaborates by explaining sustainability as human survivability and the ability to overcome ecological disasters. Sustainability therefore implies well-being, where well-being does not decline through time (Jamieson, 1998). Related to resilience (well-being over time) Beckerman (1995) and Turner, Doktor & Adger (1995) distinguish between so-called strong sustainability (the natural capital that should be sustained) and weak sustainability, centred on mere well-being. In another context, Bartholomew, Parcel, Kok and Gottlieb (2001) explain sustainability as the process whereby programme implementation is maintained by institutionalising a programme into the routine activities of an organisation. Strong sustainability can be related to resilience, which implies well-being over time (Jukes *et al.*, 2008).

Projects and programmes may experience various sustainability challenges in terms of progression or success. For example, the success of an open educational resource project may be reliant on the sustainability of human and shared resources, the management of various responsibilities and costs (Wiley, 2007). Another aspect for consideration relates to the idea of sustainability being about incentives and not necessarily financial resources, as costs can be met with resources other than money (Wiley, 2007). This leads to yet another important consideration in aiding sustainability, in terms of a clear understanding of goals and the provision of incentives that could motivate participants to engage in relevant activities to reach the goals set by community members, such as recognition of their efforts and enhancing self-esteem through increased knowledge (Jamieson, 1998; Wiley, 2007).

As part of the initial phases of the STAR project, Ferreira (2007) illustrates the potential value of community engagement through an asset-based approach, where

outside resources such as NGOs, volunteers and researchers could act as facilitators in implementing initiatives and dealing with challenges within a community. Through the process of facilitation of an intervention with stakeholders in a community, a community might be encouraged and enabled to collaborate with outside sources in identifying assets and mobilising these when facing adversity and coping with challenges such as HIV/AIDS (Ferreira, 2007; Froding *et al.*, 2008). Such a process of collaboration and facilitation implies teamwork and thus information sharing, which may essentially imply peer-education. Through peer-education and a process of enablement, a community might gain a sense of identity and subsequently become more adaptable in facing challenges (Masten, Herbers, Jannette, Cutuli, Lafavor & Theresa, 2008).

Team work and collaboration is mentioned as potential reasons behind the success of a HIV/AIDS initiative implemented in a secondary school in Uganda (Norton & Mutoni, 2007). Based on the approach that was followed, a strong sense of community and support structures within schools are regarded as potentially having a positive impact on the resilience of schools (Greene *et al.*, 2003). Another example is the *Positive Youth Development Action* in the United States of America which built on the importance of youth gaining a sense of identity through involvement in their communities, and subsequently building positive relationships (teamwork) (Perkins *et al.*, 2003). Within this context, resilience can be related to sustainability as a potential key force behind sustainability, and an important factor in the implementation and success of support initiatives within schools and communities (Guardia & Pol, 2002).

2.3.3 SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOOD FRAMEWORK

The social development model (Patel, 2005) and sustainable livelihood framework (Helmore & Singh, 2001) are examples of approaches attempting to enhance human development. Such enhancement can be achieved by focusing on the process of strengthening citizen participation in decision-making for actions within communities. Strengthening citizen participation can in turn increase welfare and community development (Helmore & Singh, 2001; Patel, 2005; Rakodi & Lloyd-Jones, 2002). This approach of active citizen participation in community development is based on Sen's capability approach (Brocklesby & Fisher, 2003) which emphasises people's capabilities to be a functional part of both interpersonal and external conditions of the

community they live or work in. The process of active citizen participation further implies the identification of assets and resources within the people of a community, aligning with underlying principles of the asset-based approach (Ebersöhn & Eloff, 2006; Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993).

As such, the capability framework analyses the micro-level within macro-level policy issues potentially impacting on human development (United Nations Development Programme, 2003). These factors are important when considering resource-scarce countries and their attempts to break poverty cycles. Therefore, one needs to identify resources within the community and amongst the members of a community, which is also the basis of the STAR project, directed by the principles of the asset-based approach (Ferreira, 2006).

The sustainable livelihood approach (Helmore & Singh, 2001) can be regarded as a multifaceted approach. It utilises a livelihood asset model to understand vulnerability to poverty and developing strategies. These strategies focus on increasing the livelihood asset base of people living in poverty in a sustainable manner (Helmore & Singh, 2001). Fisher (2003) views livelihood as sustainable when it is able to withstand stress and adversity. A community's ability to enhance assets for the present and future through use of available resources can play a major role in sustainability (Mathie & Cunningham, 2003).

Various forms of capital are regarded as interconnected. These sources of capital include human, social, political, economic (financial), infrastructural and natural capital, which are identified as essential assets needed for sustainable livelihood. A multifaceted approach is therefore seemingly needed to highlight the interplay of the various elements of people's lives and the different assets they can build on through collaboration and sharing of knowledge (Helmore & Singh, 2001). The sustainable livelihood approach further correlates with the underlying principles of the asset-based approach of identifying resources and assets within a community and mobilising them through teamwork and collaboration with the community members (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993).

The application of the sustainable livelihood framework to asset-based community development (ABCD) was illustrated in a study conducted by Mathie and Cunningham (2003). This study focused on strengths possessed by people and aimed to solve problems through collaborative action based on existing strengths and resources, (in other words associating human capital with social capital) (Ashford & Parker, 2001). Recognition of assets such as coping strategies and support networks may allow people to gain a sense of purpose and capacity, which may in turn result in enabling an individual to be an active part of community development. This strategy aligns with the principles of the asset-based approach of empowering individuals by identifying individual resources and enhancing self-esteem (Bebbington, 1998; Ebersöhn & Eloff, 2006). It is important that the attributions and contributions of participants are recognised in order to allow an opportunity for mutual gain to be acknowledged (Mathie & Cunningham, 2003).

In addition, networking, as well as informal and formal associations at community level is regarded as important. Networking and associations can lead to recognising opportunities and local initiatives growing securely while mobilising people for change and increasing trust and leadership (Bebbington, 1998; Kelly *et al.*, 2006). Community level activity that may increase a community's asset-base (while simultaneously being cognisant of interconnections with other aspects of community life), is encouraged through sustainable livelihood and the ABCD model. These approaches are therefore seen as citizen-centred models as they encourage the proactive role of the citizen replacing the passive dependant role of a client. The proactive role of the citizen can be regarded as a key factor in sustainability of community initiatives and improvements in livelihoods as it follows the very foundations of the asset-based approach to enablement and mobilisation (Bradford, 2007; Mathie & Cunningham, 2003; Petersen *et al.*, 2010).

2.3.4 IMPLEMENTATION OF POTENTIALLY SUSTAINABLE INTERVENTIONS

With programmes aimed at mental health, such as HIV/AIDS interventions, three key factors are recommended to be taken into account (Eke, Spink-Neumann, Wilkes & Jones, 2006; Glasgow, Lichtenstein & Marcus, 2003; Schoenwald & Hoegwood, 2001). Firstly, *Compatibility and goodness of fit* of the programme within the context in which it is being implemented needs to be considered, in terms of (a) the

characteristics of the intervention, (b) its credibility and (c) the theoretical underpinnings, as well as its accessibility by particular participants (Simmons & Shiffman, 2007). In addition, the characteristics of programme facilitators are regarded as important, to ensure that facilitators are properly trained, have a clear role definition and are able to provide appropriate support (Schoenwald & Hoegwood, 2001).

In taking the characteristics of participants into account, attention needs to be paid to the age, gender, ethnicity, cultural identification and context of participants, as any programme needs to be adapted to meet the goals of the target population. Therefore, collaboration with participants is regarded as essential (Perkins *et al.*, 2003). Next, service delivery characteristics are important. This entails considerations such as time, venue, frequency and length of each intervention and support session (Kelly *et al.*, 2006). Furthermore, organisational and service system characteristics are important, referring to the goals and visions of a programme. Support sessions are regarded as important in keeping a programme sustainable and ensuring that participants find themselves in a safe and collaborative environment.

The second key factor of typical HIV/AIDS interventions relates to ensuring *Participation and collaboration of potential uptake agencies and participants*. Participation by all stakeholders and participants from the initial phase of a programme is regarded as the ideal, in order to instil ownership of the programme by the community and allow for a smooth transfer from research to adoption, to implementation and finally resulting in sustainability (Eke *et al.*, 2006; Hamdallah, 2006). Programme implementation ideally focuses on the utilisation of existing resources that is sustainable over time, as opposed to introducing new resources that are often not sustainable post a research project (Mukoma, 2006). This principle further reiterates the importance of acknowledging and identifying available assets and strengths within a community and amongst participants (Ebersöhn & Eloff, 2006; Pollock & Whitelaw, 2005). Ensuring sustainability requires of participants and/or the uptake agency to be trained by initial programme developers or implementers during the research phase, in order to allow for the coordination and follow through of a programme. Furthermore, Eke *et al.* (2006) mention that if more resources are

required a community might be encouraged to first look within for their own resources and assets before turning to NGOs or outside help.

The last key factor of sustaining community interventions is *Developing intervention support packages*. This step is essential for ensuring fidelity and capacity for sustainability of HIV/AIDS intervention programmes. Such a package can include manuals, practical assistance guides or support materials, depending on the type of intervention programme being implemented (Eke *et al.*, 2006; Hamdallah, 2006). In some programmes, such as the STAR intervention, the teachers took part in workshops and support sessions organised by the original implementers of the project to highlight challenges and achievements, and to acknowledge how they have overcome certain barriers or how the programme might be adapted to meet new goals. In the STAR intervention specifically, teachers have been actively involved in providing psycho-social support to children in their schools, as well as their communities at large (Ebersöhn, 2007; Ebersöhn, 2009; Ebersöhn & Ferreira, forthcoming).

2.4 INTEGRATED CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

In this chapter I explored the asset-based approach as theoretical background to the current study. I aimed to demonstrate how the asset-based approach could be related to resilience in communities when faced with challenges and adversities. The concept of an asset-based viewpoint might provide individuals and communities with strategies to identify existing assets and resources when implementing psycho-social support programmes. The first step in the asset-based approach is to identify adversities and resources that exist in a community (in this case a school). These assets can then be mobilised by relying on good leadership and management, teamwork and collaboration which could in turn increase knowledge within the community. Once resources have been mobilised in this manner, the community may implement psycho-social support. Through implementation of psycho-social support, resilience within a school may be enhanced (amongst teachers and learners). By relying upon mobilised assets and enhanced resilience, psycho-social support may be sustained.

In linking the above mentioned elements to the asset-based approach, it seems apparent that such attributes within a community intervention programme might enhance sustainability and resilience in the face of adversity. Figure 2.1 provides an overview of how I integrated the principles of the asset-based approach with sustainability and resilience, as background to undertaking the empirical study and interpreting the results.

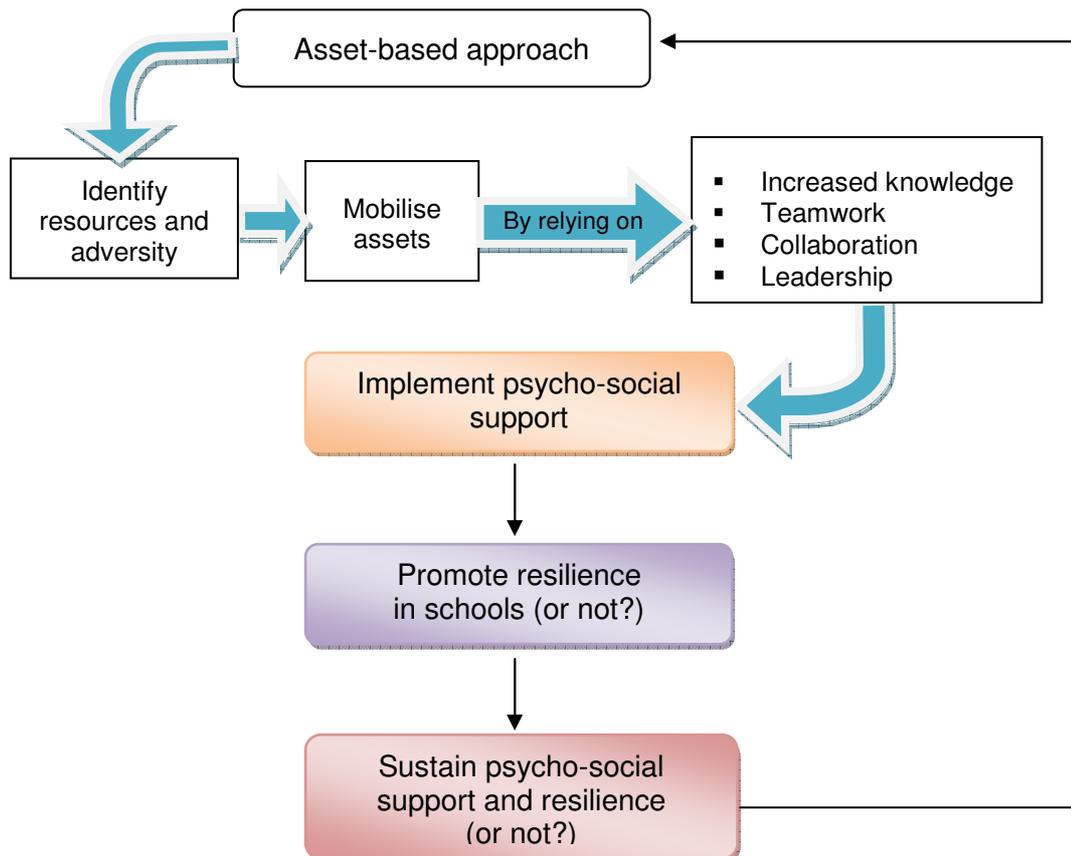


FIGURE 2.1: Integrated conceptual framework

2.5 CONCLUSION

In this chapter I discussed the asset-based approach as a possible foundation for community support projects and interventions, which in turn could lead to enhanced levels of resilience within communities. I also referred to the potential roles that schools could fulfil in enhancing resilience through education and the implementation of support programmes. I then discussed how the asset-based approach, together with enhanced levels of resilience within a community, may facilitate the sustainability of psycho-social initiatives. I concluded the chapter by providing a visual

representation of the integrated conceptual framework I employed for the purpose of making meaning of existing literature underlying to my area of interest.

In the following chapter I outline the research procedures and methodology I employed. I highlight my selected research paradigm and its relevance for this study. I then discuss my research design and relate it to the research questions and the purpose of the study. I provide a detailed account of my data collection and the steps involved in analysing and interpreting the data I obtained.



CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter I discussed the core concepts of the asset-based approach and how the application of the principles of this approach could potentially facilitate the success and sustainability of programmes and interventions in a community. I highlighted existing research on the asset-based approach in relation to resilience against the background of adversity in disadvantaged schools and communities. Research indicates (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993; Mathie & Cunningham, 2003) that if the principles of the asset-based approach are adopted and applied by community members, the long-term sustainability of psycho-social programs is more probable.

In this chapter I discuss the research process I followed. I describe the selected paradigmatic perspective and research design of the current study. Throughout, I relate the methodological choices to the research question and purpose of the current study. I provide a detailed account of the data collection, data analysis and interpretation procedures I utilised. In conclusion, I discuss the ethical procedures and quality criteria I followed in conducting this study.

3.2 PARADIGMATIC PERSPECTIVE

In Chapter 2 I discussed the theoretical perspective of the current study. In this section I discuss the epistemological and methodological paradigms I relied upon during this study.

3.2.1 AN INTERPRETIVIST EPISTEMOLOGY

For the purpose of the current study, I adopted an interpretivist paradigmatic viewpoint. An interpretivist paradigm denotes understanding the subjective world of participants' experiences (Cohen *et al.*, 2003). As such, researchers are required to make a consistent effort to enter into the world of an individual or a community, attempting to understand it from within. In this way the authenticity of experiences

can be retained and honoured. Rossman and Rallis (2003) emphasise that humans are creators of their worlds. Taking agency in shaping their everyday worlds is therefore regarded as a fundamental principle of this paradigm. This viewpoint is consistent with the purpose of the study, as the aim was to understand and interpret participants' (teachers') subjective experiences of factors potentially influencing sustainability of psycho-social support initiatives and how the sustainability of the projects may enhance (or not) resilience in the school.

As researcher, I worked directly with participants to understand and build a view on sustainability of psycho-social support intervention from an asset-based approach within a particular context and school. In this way the generated data could be meaningful to participants and might be applicable to the particular community (Cohen *et al.*, 2003; Rossman & Rallis, 2003). As interpretivist researcher, I therefore aimed to make sense of the feelings, experiences and social situations as they occurred in the real world (Terre Blanche & Kelly, 2002). Geertz (2003) describes this process of meaning making as empathic identification where the researcher aims to grasp the subjective intentions of participants.

By relying on an interactive model of data collection (PRA) which is also the essence of interpretivist research (Lincoln & Denzin, 2003; Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2002), I aimed at gaining a rich and in-depth understanding of the context I studied. As an interpretivist researcher I valued the lives and contexts of the participants, characterised by multiple interpretations and grounded in cultural complexity throughout the study (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). This approach allowed me to gain an understanding of the particular social actions and the meanings attached to these (Schwandt, 2000). However, I faced the potential challenge of subjective interpretations of the information provided by the participants during the PRA workshops (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Lather, 2003). I therefore relied on a research diary and partook in debriefing sessions with my supervisors in an attempt to guard against subjectivity and my own projections and bias during data analysis and interpretation.

I also considered the salient challenge of how to define my own understanding as understanding relies on background and context of other meanings (Schwandt,

2000). I therefore conducted background research on the STAR intervention context and how the project was initiated through studying previous research on this project prior to entering the research field (Ferreira, 2006; Loots, 2005; Odendaal, 2006). I also conducted member checking to ensure that what I understood of the data I collected was consistent with what the participants wished to convey to me.

3.2.2 PRA AS METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

PRA research generally focuses on addressing social challenges by means of enhanced levels of acquired knowledge and skills, which could enable community members to effectively utilise the resources available to them. This could in turn transform and improve social structures and well-being. I regard PRA as a suitable methodological paradigm for the current study as participants have been actively involved in the STAR project since 2003 and have therefore been collaborating with PRA researchers in improving resilience by psycho-socially supporting the community. Chambers' (2008) view of PRA as a process where people in a community are encouraged to define and identify their problems and become actively involved, could therefore be observed in the STAR project (Ferreira, 2006, 2007, 2008; Ebersöhn, 2008, 2009).

Although PRA implies several benefits for research, I had to keep the potential challenges of this approach in mind. Challenges include the potential vulnerability of the participants (based on the context of poverty and HIV/AIDS) and thus their possible exploitation during the research process (Chambers, 2008; Strydom, 2005). These challenges were, however, not evident in the current research as the participants have been involved in the STAR intervention since 2003 and have contributed to positive changes in their community, based on their own contributions (Ferreira, 2006, 2007, 2008; Ebersöhn, 2008, 2009). Furthermore, the participants' role in the current study was to provide feedback on their experiences. Based on my observation, participants seemed to enjoy sharing their views, perceptions and successes (refer to my research diary in Appendix E). Another potential challenge relates to the value-directed approach of PRA (Chambers, 2008) which might have had an impact on the objectivity of the study and me as researcher. However, in terms of the paradigmatic approach based on Interpretivism I did not strive to obtain

objective findings but, instead, aimed at gaining a deep understanding of one group of teachers' experiences (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2000).

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

As stated in Chapter 1, I relied on a case study design to explore how insight into sustainable psycho-social support by teachers might inform knowledge on resilience in schools. The case in this study is namely the psycho-social support projects initiated by teachers who have been involved in the STAR project since 2003. I thus collaborated with teachers in one specific school in the Eastern Cape, and purposefully selected the school (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2002), as the school has been involved in the STAR project since the start of the project in 2003 (Ferreira, 2006).

Yin (2007) describes case studies as processes of empirical enquiry which focus on phenomena which are often complex social phenomena, in the context of real life. I selected a case study design in my attempt to provide thick, in-depth descriptions of the factors potentially resulting in the sustainability (or not) of the psycho-social initiatives within the selected school context (Yin, 2007) in order to identify any potential relation with resilience in the school. Stake (2000) refers to such a case as an instrumental case study.

In order to be able to provide a thick description of a phenomenon a researcher needs a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon at hand (Yin, 2007). To understand the complexity of a case and the data obtained it is thus recommended that a researcher utilises multiple methods of data collection and documentation (Stake, 2000). In aiming to do this a co-researcher and I conducted two PRA workshops (of two hours each, the last one for member checking purposes), two months apart, for the purpose of our studies (June and November, 2009). We recorded the participant discussions using audio equipment, made use of research diary, and documented evidence visually as photographs. In this way I documented observations in an attempt to gain an inside view of the events that transpired and the experiences of the participants (Yin, 2007).

Using a case study design implied various advantages within the context of the research focus. Firstly, a case study design allowed me to understand the research situation in depth as I was an active participant in the PRA workshop and data collection activities (Lindegger, 2002). Secondly, the detailed and rigorous report of the results (Chapter 4) might provide readers with an opportunity to draw their own conclusions (Stake, 2000). Thirdly, due to the participants' active involvement in the research process based on the nature of PRA, they were able to experience their reality as constructed by them (Stake, 2000).

Although a case study design implied several advantages for the purpose of this study there are potential criticisms in terms of gathering authentic information, as it might be difficult to determine causal links when relying on a case study design (Lindegger, 2002). In addition, generalisations cannot be made from a single case. The subjectivity of the researcher in interpreting the data and phenomenon at hand is further viewed as a potential challenge in case study designs (Lindegger, 2002). In this study, I aimed to address the potential challenge of subjectivity by keeping a research diary to document my feelings and perceptions. In addition, debriefing with my supervisors and co-researcher assisted me in combating subjectivity and remain aware of my own preconceived ideas and assumptions. Furthermore, I did not strive to obtain generalisable findings, based on the selected paradigm of Interpretivism.

3.4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this section I describe the research process in terms of the case study design that I employed, the manner in which I selected the participants and the data collection techniques I utilised. As an introduction to my discussion, Figure 3.1 provides an overview of the research process.

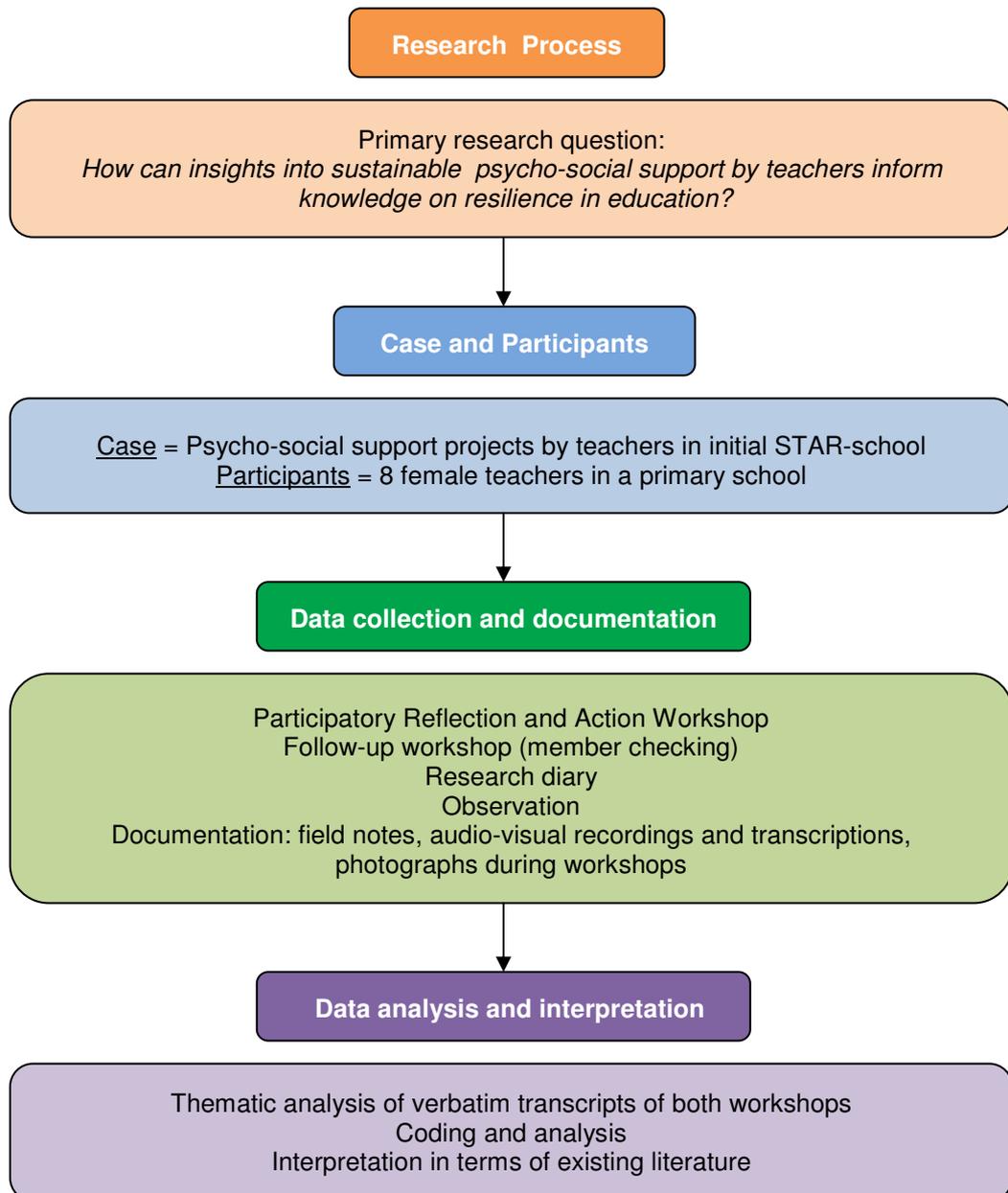


FIGURE 3.1: Research process

3.4.1 SELECTION OF CASE AND PARTICIPANTS

The criteria for purposeful participant selection were that the teachers were required to have been part of the initial STAR intervention in order to provide insight into the challenges and successes of the psycho-social support initiatives implemented over the past seven years. Table 3.1 provide a summary of the teacher participants involved in this study.

TABLE 3.1: Description of teacher participants

Participants	Ages	Qualifications	Grades being taught
1	42	Teaching diploma Certificate in Special Education	2
2	48	Teaching diploma Certificate in Special Education	1
3	43	Teaching diploma Certificate in Special Education	3
4	41	Teaching diploma B.Tech	2
5	50	Teaching diploma	2
6	40	Teaching diploma B.Com	3
7	46	Teaching diploma B.Ed	5
8	48	Teaching diploma Advanced certificate in Education	7

Purposeful sampling involves a process of selecting information rich cases which address issues that are central to the purpose of enquiry. These cases are considered information rich as they are special or unique in some way (Patton, 2002). Ladico and Spaulding (2010) describe an information rich case as a case that clearly illustrates some feature or purpose of interest, where a phenomenon is most likely to occur and where participants possess a particular type of experience (Forrester, 2010). This description is applicable to this study as all eight participants have been involved in the STAR intervention since 2003. All of the participants have played a role in implementing psycho-social support projects to initially support vulnerable children in the wider community.

The advantage of using purposeful sampling is that an enquiry based on this method of selection usually allows for in-depth understanding of a phenomenon. Furthermore, the information obtained is generally fluid, and continues until the information being provided becomes redundant with no new information being provided (Forrester, 2010). A potential challenge of using this method of sampling is that one may prematurely focus data collection activities on one experience and understanding and could possibly misunderstand a broader range of data. However, as the current study builds on related studies forming part of the broader STAR project, I do not regard this potential limitation as relevant to this study.

3.4.2 DATA COLLECTION AND DOCUMENTATION

In collecting data I relied on multiple data collection strategies, in an attempt to enhance the rigour of the current study (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2002). The primary data collection strategy was two PRA-based workshops (Chambers, 2008; De Vos *et al.*, 2005). The workshops were supported by observation, documented in the form of field notes and research diaries (Cohen *et al.*, 2003). Terre Blanche and Durrheim (2002) refer to the strategy of utilising various data sources as triangulation. I thus collected material and data in diverse ways in order to “*home in*” on the correct understanding of the phenomenon under study (Kelly, 2002).

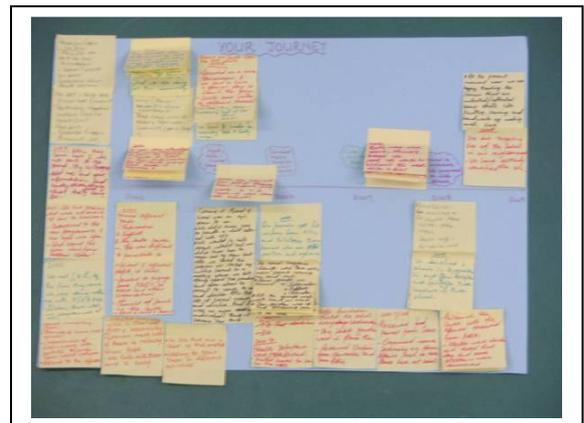
3.4.2.1 PRA-directed workshops with teachers

During the first visit to the school in the Eastern Cape (27 June 2009), my co-researcher and I conducted a PRA-based workshop which lasted two hours. PRA implies research activities during which members of a community (in this case eight teachers of a selected primary school in an informal, urban settlement in the Eastern Cape) are actively involved with researchers in achieving a common goal or overcoming challenges that govern their lives (Strydom, 2005). Ideologically and epistemologically, PRA engages participatory ways of empowering communities, aiming to enable individuals and groups of people to both express and enhance their knowledge and thereby take action (Chambers, 2008). Such active involvement generally results in a holistic understanding of a phenomenon and an effective way of facilitating change (Strydom, 2005).

The STAR intervention based on the principles of PRA has evolved and progressed since 2003 (Ebersöhn & Ferreira, forthcoming). During PRA, outsiders facilitate activities that local people (participants) are involved in, such as compiling maps, diagrams or analyses (Chambers, 2008). I regard the PRA-based workshop we conducted as a suitable technique for the current study, as it allowed me to facilitate activities with a specifically targeted interest group (in this case teachers). During the first PRA-directed workshop we² facilitated a process whereby the participants shared their experiences on implementing and initiating different forms of school-based psycho-social support in the community since 2003. We requested the participants to write down their experiences and other initiatives they started on post-its and position these on a timeline to provide an indication of when they had experienced which events. For this part of the workshop, participants worked individually. Photographs 3.1 and 3.2 demonstrate the PRA activities during which the participants captured their perceptions and then compiled a timeline.



PHOTOGRAPH 3.1: Capturing perceptions



PHOTOGRAPH 3.2: Timeline

Following the initial workshop activity (capturing ideas on post-its) I co-facilitated an informal discussion with participants where they were requested to elaborate on the timeline and their noted experiences. These experiences included (a) challenges the teachers experienced in initiating and sustaining support projects, (b) how teachers persevered and overcame challenges, as well as (c) successes which motivated teachers to continue with the various psycho-social support projects. The participants participated with ease and spontaneously, providing rich descriptions of their

² Ms Georgina Dempster MEd (Educational Psychology) and Ms Samiramis Bagherpour MEd (Educational Psychology).

experiences (refer to Appendix D & E) (Welman & Kruger, 2001). For data analysis purposes the discussion was audio-tape recorded and transcribed verbatim (Appendix C1 & C2) following the field visit.

In an attempt to enhance the rigour of the study and the credibility of results and transcriptions (Appendix C2), I made use of member checking by co-facilitating a second PRA-based workshop (second field visit, 2 November 2009). During this session our aim was to ensure that our understanding of information provided during the first workshop was an authentic reflection of what the participants had intended to convey (Chambers, 2008; Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2002). The data analysis preceding the second workshop five months after the initial visit entailed the co-researcher and I organising timeline data into emerging themes (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2002). We presented the participants with these themes, thereby creating an opportunity to discuss our results with participants and correct any misunderstandings or misinterpretations (Welman & Kruger, 2001). This member checking workshop was also recorded and transcribed, for data analysis purposes (refer to Appendix C2 for transcriptions of the second PRA workshop).

During the member checking workshop, I asked open ended questions about the teacher participants' perceptions on potential factors that might have assisted or enabled them in sustaining and overcoming the challenges associated with the psycho-social support initiatives they had been involved in. Once this discussion had been completed we categorised the importance of the various identified themes by facilitating a discussion of the teachers' accomplishments in terms of sustaining and expanding on psycho-social support initiatives and networks.

PRA allowed me, as researcher, to gain valuable insight into the perceptions of the participants. I was able to gain firsthand experience of the communities' perceived needs and challenges, as well as available resources, assets and acquired skills such as effective problem solving (Chambers, 2008; Strydom, 2005). In an attempt to limit researcher bias in the research process, I continuously reflected on my own experiences and the research process. In addition, debriefing sessions with my supervisors assisted me in guarding against being biased and keeping the participants' best interest in mind at all times (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2002).

Due to the nature of PRA-based workshops certain challenges arose. One of the potential challenges of PRA is that, as researcher and participant, roles could change from the typical or traditional way of conducting research (Chambers, 2004). As researcher one is required to be open to learn from the community or the participants in the research process, as researchers are not necessarily viewed as the experts who are teaching or instructing the participants (Chambers, 2008). In addition, researchers should allow and enable participants to undertake tasks and actions independently and not rely on the researcher to bring about change (Chambers, 2004). Another challenge that may occur in PRA-directed workshops relates to power and process. In PRA processes a progressive shift is made from control to empowerment (Chambers, 2004). Therefore, it is important for researchers to disempower themselves by talking less and listening more, trusting the participants' ability to think and lead the process (Chambers, 2004).

Despite the potential challenges implied by the selected methodology, I did not experience these during the study, as the participants were used to PRA because of their prolonged involvement in PRA-based research since 2003. They therefore took the leading role in the research process. Another challenge in PRA-directed workshops concerns the facilitation of a group in such a way that all participants have an opportunity to share their experiences (Chambers, 2008). This challenge may arise when some participants dominate a discussion. In an attempt to address this potential challenge, we as facilitators allowed for careful turn taking and aimed to involve all participants by requesting their contributions (Chambers, 2004).

3.4.2.2 Observation

Social and behavioural scientists consider observations to be the fundamental base of a variety of research methods (Angrosino & Mays de Perez, 2000). It is important that an observer observes both the behaviour and setting of participants (naturalistic observation) (Angrosino & Mays de Perez, 2000). Observation is often utilised as data collection strategy in interpretivist research, as it allows the researcher to capture the naturalistic setting of the phenomenon under study (Terre Blanche & Kelly, 2002). In the current study, I observed the school context and the participant teachers during the PRA workshops, in order to add to my understanding of the

context and content of their contributions during data collection activities (refer to Appendices C1, C2 and F for textual and visual documentation).

Due to the interpretivist nature of this study, observation allowed me to gain insight into the verbal responses and interaction within the group during the PRA-based workshops (Cohen *et al.*, 2003). As an observer, I was able to document noteworthy information (De Vos *et al.*, 2005). However, as a researcher, I had to also keep in mind that observation was not the only form of data collection in this study, as it could not provide adequate conclusive data to address the research questions (Welman & Kruger, 2001). Therefore, I relied upon other forms of data collection (namely audio-visual recordings, a research diary and photographs) to ensure a rich and comprehensive pool of data for analysis purposes.

During field visits and the PRA activities I co-facilitated, I used field notes (section 3.4.2.3, Appendix E) and photographs (section 3.4.2.4, Appendix F) to capture my observations. I mainly engaged in unstructured observation, following an impressionistic approach by noting what I saw as I observed it to be (Kelly, 2002). By employing unstructured observation I could take into account the entire sequence of events and follow a naturalistic approach in the sense that I (the observer) could interact while taking notes of my observations (Kelly, 2002). I was also selective in my observations as I was guided by specific questions pertaining to specific events (namely the sustainability of psycho-social support initiatives).

3.4.2.3 Field notes and research diaries

I started a research diary (Silverman, 2009) prior to undertaking my first field visit, based on my readings of existing documentation on the STAR project (Ferreira, 2006; Odendaal, 2006). I noted information regarding the STAR intervention and the projects that have reportedly developed since 2003. I subsequently formulated possible questions that I could ask as part of the planned workshop during my first field visit (refer to Appendix E for my field notes, Appendix D for my research diary and Appendix G for my co-researcher's research diary).

Terre Blanche and Durrheim (2002) describe field notes as an essential part of data collection as it allows the researcher to take note and record interactions of

participants, their attitudes and verbatim responses. According to Rossman and Rallis (2003) field notes are comprised of two major components: descriptive notes of what the researcher (me) observes and, secondly, a researcher's comments on the data or research project itself. During the field visits I undertook, I reflected on my experiences, the research process and the activities that took place. I made field notes of my observations during the PRA-workshops and the discussions that followed, as well as of my thoughts and perceptions regarding the research process. After each data collection session I reflected on the events that had occurred, the processes involved and my emotions and feelings related to the research, the participants and the information obtained at that stage, in an attempt not to forget any details of what had transpired (Rossman & Rallis, 2003; Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2002).

During the member checking workshop, I was more selective on the notes I made as I had ascertained certain themes and sub-themes at that stage, based on the data collected during the first visit (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2002). As such, my note taking was guided by my ongoing analysis as well as the theoretical background I had obtained (Lincoln & Denzin, 2003). I also noted any areas of uncertainty that I needed to clarify or discuss with my supervisors. In addition, I again documented my observations of the participants' non-verbal messages and the progress of the session in the form of field notes.

I regard the research diary I kept and the manner in which I relied upon field notes to document my observations, as suitable methods of keeping record of my experiences over time, and allowing for critical reflection and brainstorming on the events and research processes (Chambers, 2008). By employing critical reflection, I was able to make meaning of and identify possible predispositions and mind sets in relation to my study.

3.4.2.4 Visual data documentation techniques

By collecting visual data (Appendix F) as researcher, I attempted to provide a more holistic and descriptive image of the environment, the participants and the activities they were involved in (Cohen *et al.*, 2003; De Lange, Mitchel & Stuart, 2008). I firstly captured visual data (photographs) as evidence of the data collection we engaged in,

namely the PRA-workshops. Secondly, I was able to visually document the work of NGOs and the atmosphere at the school during my field visit, as well as the various ongoing psycho-social support projects at the school (De Lange *et al.*, 2008; Kelly, 2002). Refer to Appendix F for the visual data I collected and subsequently analysed.

I remained aware of the ethical implications of including photographs as visual documentation technique. In terms of research ethics, it was essential that participants gave consent for the photographs to be taken and published. Although the identity of the participants usually needs to be protected at all times (Kelly, 2002), as stated in Chapter 1, teachers participating in this research study requested to be known, and acknowledged in my mini-dissertation and any forthcoming publications.

I further had to keep in mind that taking photographs could be distracting for the participants and that I (as the researcher) might not be able to capture a naturalistic image based on the participants acting in what they perceived to be a socially desirable way rather than naturally (Kelly, 2002). As such, I had to ensure that the method of photography was non-invasive and subtle. However, I did not experience this potential challenge in this study, as the participants have been using cameras to capture evidence of their work and development for the purpose of the broader STAR project since 2003, and are therefore familiar with visual imagery and documentation.

3.5 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

In Appendices C, D, E, F and G I provide examples of the data analysis I completed of the transcriptions, field notes, research diaries, visual data and audio recordings. The purpose of data analysis is to place real life into perspective, in other words to make the “*strange familiar*” (Terre Blanche & Kelly, 2002:141). To be able to provide this perspective, a researcher needs to categorise, order, manipulate and summarise the data obtained, in answering a specific research question (Cohen *et al.*, 2003). Terre Blanche and Kelly (2002) regard the purpose of data analysis as the provision of a comprehensive rich description of a phenomenon being studied. This can be done by thoroughly describing the characteristics, processes and contexts of data and data collection activities. I view data analysis as an ongoing process that does not only occur at the end of the research process but rather throughout an

investigation, evolving as more information is gathered and a better understanding of the phenomenon is obtained (Cohen *et al.*, 2003).

Data analysis requires of a researcher to initially study and read through the data (visual data, transcripts, research diary and field notes) repeatedly and engage in breaking down the data into themes and sub-themes. Once this has been done, one can commence in building conclusions and formulating reaching findings (Terre Blanche & Kelly, 2002). I selected to conduct thematic analysis through the systematic coding of themes. I consulted Terre Blanche and Kelly's outline of thematic content analysis (Terre Blanche & Kelly, 2002) which falls within an interpretivist paradigm and involves five basic steps.

The first data analysis step is described as *Familiarization and immersion*. This step involves the process of collecting data and gaining an understanding of what type of interpretation is likely to occur. Rossman and Rallis (2003) emphasise the importance of reviewing data thoroughly in order to understand and know the data. Due to the interpretivist nature of my study I had a fairly good overview of the data obtained but needed to again immerse myself into the data when commencing with data analysis, by working through the text (Terre Blanche & Kelly, 2002). For this purpose, I transcribed the audio recordings of both workshops. I also considered and tabulated the information and reflections from my research diary to grasp a deeper understanding of the data.

The second step of data analysis involved *Inducing potential themes*. This step typically occurs when a researcher aims to establish which organising principle naturally underlies the data in terms of the formulated research questions. In labelling categories I aimed to use the language of the teacher participants and guarded against biased language (Terre Blanche & Kelly, 2002). In addition, I refrained from developing an ethic view where my views, categories and meaning making did not form the basis of the data but rather the meaning that the participants seemed to hold in terms of their experiences, which in turn governed the themes (Patton, 2002). Based on the initial PRA-based workshop, certain themes emerged which related to my research questions. While I was analysing the data I kept in mind the processes,

functions and possible contradictions that could have arisen without losing sight of the aim and purpose of the study (Patton, 2002; Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2002).

Thirdly, I completed the data analysis step of *Coding*. This process involved the breaking up of the data I obtained in an analytically relevant way, in terms of several themes. Emerson, Frets and Shaw (1995) explain coding as the formal representation of analytic thinking where the researcher locates evidence of a category or theme. In doing this, I marked the parts of the data that related to each theme. I colour coded each theme and marked data relevant to the particular theme accordingly. The data varied from phrases to sentences and at times paragraphs (Terre Blanche & Kelly, 2002). The process of data analysis is demonstrated in Appendices C1, C2 and D.

The fourth data analysis step I completed was *Elaboration*, thereby linking the various parts of the data I obtained, allowing for careful comparison of text that appears to belong together. After carefully coding and categorising themes with related data, I tabulated each theme with the relevant data, allowing me to view and analyse the emerging themes and sub-themes. In this way, I was able to identify similarities and differences of the data under each theme, which in turn allowed for a closer inspection of the data (Lincoln & Denzin, 2003; Terre Blanche & Kelly, 2002).

Finally, I completed the step of *Interpretation and checking*. This last step of content analysis involves the written account of interpretations and findings related to the phenomenon under study. "*Interpretation means attaching significance to what we found, making sense of findings, offering explanations, drawing conclusions, extrapolating lessons, making inferences, considering meanings or otherwise imposing order*" (Patton, 2002:480). Thus, as I carefully analysed the themes and sub-themes I also attempted to identify any weak points, contradictions or over interpretations (Rossman & Rallis, 2003; Terre Blanche & Kelly, 2002). In addition, I reflected on my level of objectivity by discussing the results I obtained with other members of the research team and considering related previous findings (Terre Blanche & Kelly, 2002). Throughout, I attempted to integrate the categories identified in the various data sources.

3.6 QUALITY CRITERIA

Trustworthiness is the qualitative researcher's attempt to ensure that the findings of a study are relevant and based on the researcher's ability to be open to information and listen without taking the expert role (Cohen *et al.*, 2003). In an attempt to maximise trustworthiness in this study, I aimed to adhere to the qualitative criteria as specified by Durrheim and Wassenaar (2002).

3.6.1 CREDIBILITY

Credibility refers to the soundness of qualitative research findings (Welman & Kruger, 2001). Where positivist researchers tend to deal with validity threats such as holding variables constant, qualitative researchers typically identify these factors as events and try to understand whether or not they did indeed occur and whether or not they had influenced the findings (Cohen *et al.*, 2003).

I aimed to enhance the credibility of my research by familiarising myself with the STAR intervention, its progress and development prior to entering the research field, as well as the various projects that have been initiated since 2003 and were documented at that stage (Welman & Kruger, 2001). I was also able to familiarise myself with the research field during my first encounter with the teachers as I conducted in-depth qualitative research, in collaboration with a co-researcher and my supervisors. Furthermore, I utilised multiple data sources in an attempt to increase the credibility of the study. These sources included workshops, audio recordings, photographs and observations, documented in the form of field notes (Welman & Kruger, 2001).

Finally, I relied on debriefing sessions with both my supervisors and my co-researcher in an attempt to add to the credibility of the findings. These debriefing sessions allowed me to unpack the research events I had experienced, as well as possible biases, subjectivity or generalisations I might have made about the community or the programme (Durrheim & Wassenaar, 2002). Peer debriefing further allowed for discussions on the preliminary findings and conclusions of the study.

3.6.2 TRANSFERABILITY

Transferability in qualitative research relates to external validity in quantitative research (Seale, 2000). Transferability refers to the continuum of generalising research findings to a broader population. This is important when a researcher's aim is to make a wider claim or to describe a specific population (Durrheim & Wassenaar, 2002). In qualitative research, transferability is generally achieved by providing thick descriptions of the research context (Seale, 2000).

Although I cannot simply generalise the findings to other contexts or communities, as each community interacts and develops differently based on their ethos and dynamics (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000), I am able to claim some level of transferability in this study. I base such a claim on the fact that I am studying a particular phenomenon (the sustainability of psycho-social support in a school community and its potential effect on resilience), for which the findings could be applicable to other contexts similar to the context of the study (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). I aimed to increase transferability by providing a detailed description of the school, teachers providing psycho-social support, community, various projects, the STAR intervention and what it stands for (Seale, 2000).

3.6.3 DEPENDABILITY

Dependability in qualitative research is similar to reliability in quantitative methodology (Seale, 2000). In interpretive research the goal is not to replicate findings but rather to explore a specific phenomenon in depth and to gain a rich understanding (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). In interpretive research the researcher expects that people will react and behave differently in changing contexts. Therefore, reliability of results is not propriety, although one generally aims to convince the inquirers of research that the findings reflect the research activities and that these did in fact occur in the manner in which they are reported (Durrheim & Wassenaar, 2002).

As such, dependability refers to the ability to track and audit changes that occur in the research process (Seale, 2000). In an attempt to ensure dependability and to convince readers of the progress of the research process, I thoroughly recorded my

reflections and changes in thinking and concepts in my research diary. My thoughts, ideas and progress were also discussed during debriefing sessions with my co-researcher and supervisors (Durrheim & Wassenaar, 2002).

3.6.4 CONFIRMABILITY

Confirmability implies findings that minimise researcher bias. A data or audit trail can assist with enhancing confirmability. In this way the researcher is able to employ reflexivity and allow for provisions on methodological and self-critical accounts of how the research had been completed (Seale, 2000). Subsequently, researcher bias can be reduced and objectivity enhanced. I employed multiple methods of data collection and analysed the participants' verbatim responses, guarding against the potential influence of my own feelings and views. I included direct quotations by the participants in Chapter 4, where I present the results of the study (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000).

3.6.5 AUTHENTICITY

Authenticity refers to the representation of different realities, in other words fairness (Seale, 2000). In addition, it implies a researcher's ability to empower participants to share different points of view (educative authenticity). As such, it implies research that has empowered members to take action and be mobilised (catalytic authenticity) (Seale, 2000).

This study, which is concerned with the sustainability of psycho-social support in a school community, is based on the finding that the initial STAR intervention (Ferreira, 2006) and subsequently the projects that followed (Loots, 2005; McCallaghan, 2007; Mnguni, 2006; Odendaal, 2006) had catalytic authenticity, as participants were seemingly empowered to take action. The current study confirms that several of the intended actions continued over time and were seemingly sustained. I believe that educative authenticity occurred during the workshops facilitated by my co-researcher and I, when the participants were able to express and hear one another's points of views and perspectives on the sustainability of the projects they had initiated (Seale, 2000).

3.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

In conducting this research I adhered to the ethical guidelines as prescribed by the Ethical Committee of the Faculty of Education, University of Pretoria (Ethics Committee, 2008). As mentioned in chapter one, the research participants were aware of the research process, were not deceived and did not experience harm or distress during the current study (Seale, 2000; Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2002).

3.7.1 ANONYMITY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Although the confidentiality and anonymity of participants in qualitative studies are generally expected to be protected, the participants in the STAR project prefer to be known in terms of their identity (Cohen *et al.*, 2003; Seale, 2000; Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2002). Therefore, despite the fact that I refrained from disclosing the participants' identities in my report in Chapter 4, I disclose the participants' faces in the visual data I include in this mini-dissertation. Informed consent was provided by the participants for this purpose (Appendix A). In terms of the broader project, permission was obtained to conduct research from both the school principal and the Eastern Cape Department of Education in 2007 (Appendix A). All the data including audio-visual material, field notes and my research diary, as well as the transcripts are also kept in a safe environment (Durrheim & Wassenaar, 2002).

3.7.2 TRUST

To adhere to the principle of trust, I ensured that the participants were aware of the purposes of this research study as well as the research process prior to commencing with data collection. I aimed to present a true account of the information the participants provided in such a manner as to not cause any distress or anxiety (Cohen *et al.*, 2003; De Vos *et al.*, 2005; Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2002). I did not deceive the research participants in any way during or after the research study. Based on the participants being part of the STAR project since 2003, a firm relationship of trust had been established between them and the primary investigators by the time the current study commenced.

3.7.3 VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

In conducting this study I followed the ethical principle of *autonomy* (Durrheim & Wassenaar, 2002). The principle of *autonomy* requires of a researcher to respect the participants' autonomy. As guidelines such as informed consent and voluntary participation (Seale, 2000) were addressed at the outset of the study (Appendix A), the participants were familiar with these requirements and guidelines when the study commenced, based on their involvement in the STAR project since 2003. Through the ethical clearance obtained for the wider STAR project (Appendix A), this study was able to utilise the initial criteria and principles of informed consent and voluntary participation. The participants were, however, again reminded that they could withdraw from the study at any point (Durrheim & Wassenaar, 2002).

3.7.4 PROTECTION FROM HARM

In an attempt to follow the guideline of *nonmaleficence* I kept the participants' well-being in mind throughout this study. I aimed to ensure that no harm would be brought on to the participants. I kept potential risks in mind and evaluated possible harmful situations to ensure that the benefits of the study outweigh any potential harm (Durrheim & Wassenaar, 2002; Seale, 2000; Welman & Kruger, 2001). One way to do this was to be open and clear on how the information I collected would be reported on and published (Durrheim & Wassenaar, 2002).

The principle of *beneficence* requires of a researcher to conduct research that is of benefit to the research society, the body of knowledge and the participants of a study (Durrheim & Wassenaar, 2002). I believe that this research could add to the body of knowledge on strategies of how to sustain psycho-social support in a school community in supporting vulnerable children. The principles of the asset-based approach that have been mobilised as part of the STAR project could be implemented in similar contexts to mobilise different communities to become self-sustaining. In addition, I am of the view that the participants of this study might feel empowered and recognised by acknowledging what they had achieved and by the magnitude of their commitment and accomplishments.

3.8 MY ROLE AS RESEARCHER

The objective of a PRA researcher in a research setting is to ensure freedom and integrity for both the researchers and participants. The relationship between researcher and participants depends primarily on the level of collaboration within the research (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). As PRA-based workshops rely on collaboration between participants and researchers, we aimed to meet both the participants' needs to freely and openly express themselves in a safe and familiar environment, and the needs of us as researchers to observe and communicate, as well as reflect on the data generated by the participants (Lincoln & Denzin, 2003; Rossman & Rallis, 2003).

As stated elsewhere, during my first visit to the field my role was that of a field worker where I, together with a co-field worker, facilitated a PRA-based workshop and utilised observation as supporting data collection strategy. My observations focused on the participants' perceptions and account of the various projects they had initiated, which were documented in my research diary in the form of reflections and field notes. During the second field visit my role was that of a researcher conducting member checking and ensuring that we had obtained a clear understanding of the participants' perceptions and input at that stage. In addition, I fulfilled the role of co-researcher working in a team, where my role included support to others on a collaborative and emotional level. I was also involved in joint reflection discussions on our experiences and observations, which led to elaborating on our thoughts and ideas in understanding the phenomena we researched.

During the research process I remained aware of my role of identification or dis-identification with the participants (Eagle, Hayes & Sibanda, 2002). I was also aware that my perceptions and personal beliefs could influence my interpretation and understanding of the data obtained. I therefore relied on a research diary as a way of reflecting on my thoughts and potential subjectivity. In addition, in writing the research report I made use of reflective language to indicate that the findings are based on both the evidence and my own process of meaning making (Eagle *et al.*, 2002).

3.9 CONCLUSION

In this chapter I discussed the research methodology I employed in undertaking this study, to provide a holistic view of how the data was collected and analysed. In addition, I attempted to provide a detailed view of the selected case by describing the research context (school in the Eastern Cape) and the participants involved in the research.

In the next chapter I present the results in terms of the themes and sub-themes that emerged. I then discuss these in relation to current research and literature as described in Chapter 2, in order to highlight correlations and contradictions, thereby presenting the findings.



CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter I discussed the research process that guided this study. I explained the interpretivist paradigm as the selected lens that directed this research and presented the case study research design I utilised. I provided detailed accounts of the data collection and documentation strategies I employed in the study, as well as the data analysis and interpretation techniques I relied on. I concluded the chapter by discussing my role as researcher and describing the ethical considerations and quality criteria I considered.

In this chapter I present the research results in terms of the themes and sub-themes that emerged subsequent to my analysis of the data obtained during the PRA-based workshops. I conclude the chapter by presenting the findings of this study, thereby situating the results within relevant literature and highlighting similarities, as well as potential contradictions that could be identified.

4.2 RESEARCH RESULTS

During data analysis, four main themes entailing several sub-themes emerged. Figure 4.1 provides an overview of these themes and sub-themes.

<p>Theme 1: Functioning as a team Sub-theme 1.1 Roles and responsibilities within the Masizakheni³ team Sub-theme 1.2 School management as silent partner</p>
<p>Theme 2: Collaboration with others Sub-theme 2.1: Collaborating with the University of Pretoria Sub-theme 2.2: Collaborating with the community Sub-theme 2.3: Collaborating with other schools</p>
<p>Theme 3: Being acknowledged Sub-theme 3.1: Acknowledgement on multiple levels Sub-theme 3.2: Acknowledgement as motivational factor Sub-theme 3.3: Acknowledgement resulting in self-confidence</p>
<p>Theme 4: Being true to oneself as a teacher Sub-theme 4.1: Being in a caring profession Sub-theme 4.2: Putting children first Sub-theme 4.3: Being change agents in the community Sub-theme 4.4: Being committed and dedicated</p>

FIGURE 4.1: Themes and sub-themes

4.2.1 THEME 1: FUNCTIONING AS A TEAM

The participants identified the fact that they were part of a team as a contributing factor in sustaining and extending psycho-social support initiatives at school and in the school-community. Two sub-themes emerged as part of this theme, relating to roles and responsibilities; and the role of school management. Table 4.1 provides an overview of the inclusion and exclusion criteria I used to categorise the data.

TABLE 4.1: Inclusion and exclusion criteria for Theme 1

Theme	Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
Sub-theme 1.1: Roles and responsibilities within the Masizakheni team	Any reference to individuals' roles and responsibilities related to the STAR project	Any reference to management or the coordination of responsibilities
Sub-theme 1.2: School management as silent partner	Any reference to school management supporting the participants without being actively involved	Any reference to other forms of management or active support by others

³ Team name, meaning "let's build together"

4.2.1.1 Sub-theme 1.1: Roles and responsibilities within the Masizakheni team

The participants indicated that they regarded teamwork as one of the most important foundations underlying the success in sustaining and developing the STAR intervention. It seems as if the teachers fulfilled various roles and responsibilities in their STAR involvement, despite some of these roles apparently being difficult to manage as several of their comments would indicate: *“school they like to call us social worker. We are social workers now. I cannot do that social work”* (Workshop 1, P3⁴, line 297); and during our second visit: *“We are social workers. We are Aids counsellors. We are advisors, you know. We are doing. We are change agents”* (Workshop 1, P2, line 299). In my research diary I noted: *“It is incredible how these ladies work together and the amount of effort they put in to ensure the programme is running efficiently despite their own personal lives. They take multi-tasking to a different level”* (Reflection 1, p.1, line 15).

The participating teachers seemed able to follow up on children causing concern as a result of teamwork, in collaboration with volunteers and NGOs: *“care giver she manages to go down and do a home visit”* (Workshop 1, P1, line 24); and later: *“That’s why we are saying this care giver has big role”* (Workshop 1, P1, line 32). On their timeline of how the programme has evolved since 2003, the participants listed achievements and obstacles during the initial workshop, specifying amongst other things, the positive involvement of caregivers as part of their team in their attempt to support the community. In my field notes I remarked: *“having care givers is helping and relieving pressure”* (Field notes, p.1, line 2).

In addition to providing support, the involvement of caregivers and volunteers reportedly had a positive effect on school attendance and discipline, which in turn seemed to provide a better working environment for both teachers and learners: *“ever since we’ve got a caregiver, and volunteers they stop coming late and we follow up and we know that there is a problem”* (Workshop 2, P2, line 55). The participant continued: *“Improvement in absenteeism the appointment with us together with the volunteers and care givers”* (Workshop, 2, P2, line 58). While noting my observations during the workshop I mentioned: *“their success seems to have been fuelled not only*

⁴ P = Participant

by their dedication but effective partnership and collaboration with all participating members in and out of the school environment” (Reflection 1, p.2, line 32).

4.2.1.2 Sub-theme 1.2: School management as silent partner

While discussing teamwork and its significance in moving forward and achieving goals, the participants referred to school management and the seemingly positive effect of management’s support on their team work. The participants’ comments and discussions suggest that effective management and support by school management positively influenced teachers’ efforts to provide and sustain psycho-social support: *“To get support from the management the principal to understand what you are doing. Even if he is not here at school, someone who is involved”* (Workshop 2, P1, line 231). I reflected on this view in my research diary: *“the principal seems very involved and supportive of the process. We met him briefly but he seems to be very proud of his school and the ongoing projects”* (Reflection 2, p.3, line 60).

The teachers appeared to feel heard and supported by the principal of the school, as he reportedly assisted them when facing challenges: *“Sometimes is one of the better ways to get support, even from the head. Because if maybe M didn’t want us to grow, he would not advise and organise something because some of the things are organised by him other are organised by us”* (Workshop 1, P1, line 383). During the second field visit I observed and reflected on the principal’s commitment and involvement: *“even though this man is extremely busy and over loaded with work and responsibility he took the time to meet with us and update us on what has been happening at school. It breaks my heart that after all this hard work and success they have to deal with drug problems. His energy and involvement is touching”* (Reflection 2, p.3, line 62).

4.2.2 THEME 2: COLLABORATION WITH OTHERS

During both field visits collaboration frequently emerged as a theme. The participants indicated how various aspects of collaboration facilitated their efforts to provide and adapt psycho-social support. Three sub-themes regarding collaboration emerged: collaboration with the University of Pretoria, collaboration with the community, and

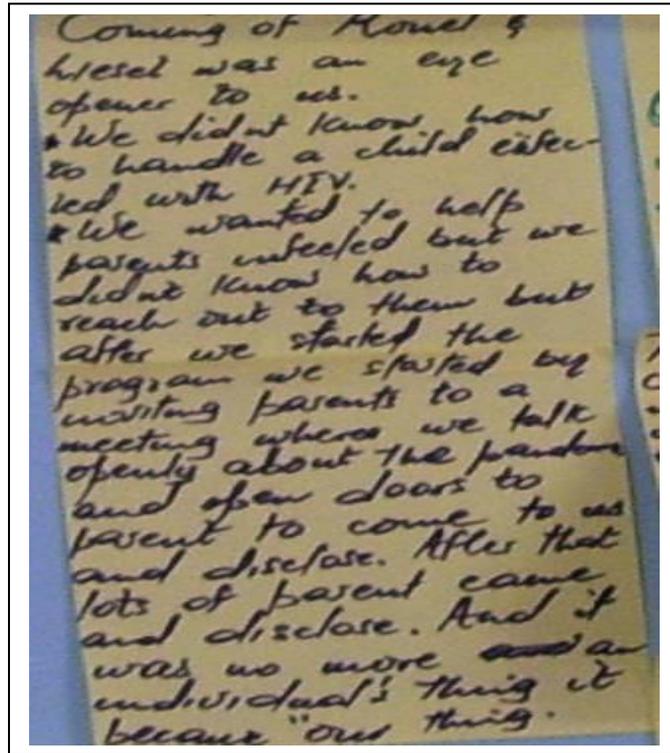
collaboration with other schools. Table 4.2 provides an overview of the inclusion and exclusion criteria for the sub-themes of Theme 2.

TABLE 4.2: Inclusion and exclusion criteria for Theme 2

Theme	Inclusion criteria	Exclusion Criteria
Sub-theme 2.1: Collaborating with the University of Pretoria	Any reference to working with or receiving support from the University of Pretoria (researchers or field workers)	Any reference to other institutions or organisations
Sub-theme 2.2: Collaborating with the community	Any reference to working in partnership with the community	Any reference to other organisations or NGO's
Sub-theme 2.3: Collaborating with other schools	Any reference to working with or attempting to assist other schools in neighbouring communities	Any reference to work only related to the Masizakheni group or selected primary school context

4.2.2.1 Sub-theme 2.1: Collaborating with the University of Pretoria

According to the participants, their involvement in the STAR project had a positive impact on their perception of their own knowledge and abilities. Throughout, they indicated that the support from the University of Pretoria had a positive influence on their activities, stating: *“We could see there is the problem how am I going to help this parent until you came”* (Workshop 1, P1, line 288). The participants often referred to the initial phases of the intervention as “the change” and during their discussions, statements such as “before the change” or “before the programme” often arose. In my research diary I noted: *“It is so clear that these ladies so appreciate and value the input and guidance that is provided by L and R. They always talk about before the change or before we were aware”* (Reflection 1, p.2, line 38). On the timeline that was created during the first workshop the participants repeatedly indicated support by the University of Pretoria and the primary researchers of the project as encouraging to the team, as illustrated in Photograph 4.1. In support, one of the participants stated: *“But since you came here we manage now to find out what happened to the parents, why they withdraw”* (Workshop 1, P1, line 281).



PHOTOGRAPH 4.1: Support by researchers of the University of Pretoria

Support by and collaboration with the University of Pretoria evidently motivated the participants in their efforts to sustain and further develop the support initiatives they started.. One participant summed this up: *"I mean we were not aware before.....we are here only for the children but when we were exposed to the reality of the.....and then we were touched"* (Workshop 2, P7, line 263). Another participant reiterated appreciation for this collaboration by mentioning: *"Association with the University of Pretoria"* (Workshop 2, P1, line 331). Photograph 4.2 provides supportive evidence of the partnership between the participants and the primary researchers (R. Ferreira and L. Ebersöhn) of the University of Pretoria.



PHOTOGRAPH 4.2: Partnership between participants and primary researchers

4.2.2.2 Sub-theme 2.2: Collaborating with the community

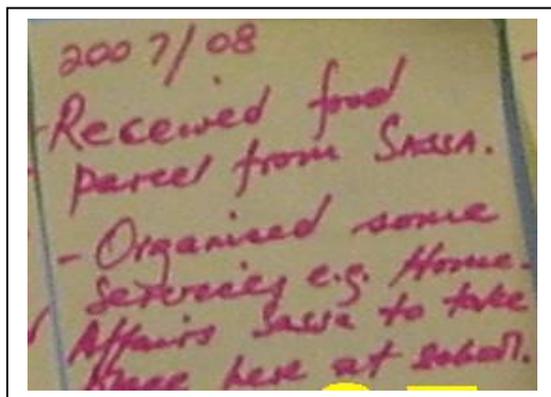
During both field visits it became evident that the participants seemed to have been proactive in developing and adapting their ideas and projects into a sustainable support programme by collaborating with the community, which in turn reportedly resulted in the development of additional psycho-social support initiatives. Participants, for example, described their collaboration with NGOs: *“With Hope, uh, not Hope now, Olive Leaf. They are there and busy doing activities but there is someone who is helping them there”* (Workshop 1, P2, line 50). The collaboration with Olive Leaf (a NGO) reportedly allowed for school children to learn skills such as crocheting and sewing: *“handwork on Wednesday’s né, then it is something that they can do there, they enjoy it”* (Workshop 1, P3, line 99). Participants enthusiastically provided examples of the handwork they discussed, demonstrated in Photographs 4.3 and 4.4, captured as follows in my field notes: *“Knitting and sewing taught at school as extra activities with NGOs”* (Field notes, p.1, line 7).



PHOTOGRAPHS 4.3 and 4.4: Examples of handwork created by the children

The teachers’ collaboration and teamwork within the school were seemingly transferred into the community as the STAR project developed. Participants indicated their belief that the school and the community are partners and could directly affect each other: *“It is for the community. It is no longer the teacher and the learner. The parents are coming in and out”* (Workshop 1, P3, line 79). This perception of collaboration with care givers and parents in the school-community seemingly led to increased parental involvement and more parents willing to request assistance in the community: *“And even here in this office of our care giver you will see learners, parents floating in and out everyday, everyday”* (Workshop 1, P3, line 85).

Some of the facilities and services that were initiated and had become part of the school-community were reported to be a direct result of contributions by members of the community working hand in hand with the school. One example is a soup kitchen that was started by a third party at the school in 2008, despite the participants' reported difficulty to start a soup kitchen in earlier years, as explained in the following manner: *"It was a question of the department sometimes we have the ... for the soup kitchen but we didn't know what to do until this people came and they saidfor a person to come and change that"* (Workshop1, P1, line 217). Another project involved the distribution of food parcels, for which outside aid was reportedly provided, to families in the school-community. The soup kitchen and feeding schemes were repeatedly indicated on the post-its and referred to during the first workshop, as demonstrated in Photographs 4.5 and 4.6.



PHOTOGRAPH 4.5:
Reference to food parcels at school



PHOTOGRAPH 4.6:
Soup kitchen at school

It seems as if collaboration with the members of community and other institutions such as NGOs resulted in providing for the basic needs of the children in the school. My co-researcher summarised her views during our member checking workshop: *"The first time we came you had started the soup kitchen which was wonderful, the food parcels, the feeding scheme that the department of education helped you with. Vegetable garden which I see is growing beautifully again, uniform and toiletries that ATTIC had helped you with. That is just basically the basic need of the children and of the community"* (Workshop 2, R1, line 12); and: *"The services you organise at the school. Like the home affairs to come here. The counselling centre that you have up and running. And your referral system when people need to go to the doctor"* (Workshop 2, R1, line 21). In response and confirming this summary, a participant

stated that: *“ever since we’ve got a care giver, and volunteers they stop coming late and we follow up and we know that there is a problem”* (Workshop 2, P2, line 55). In my research diary I also expressed admiration for participants’ ability to organise and the initiative they had taken: *“they seem to have their own organised world of law and order with everything running as smoothly as possible. Despite all the need and obstacles these ladies have become a well run organisation that does not waste time with needs but moves forward and makes things happen”* (Reflection 2, p.3, line 78).

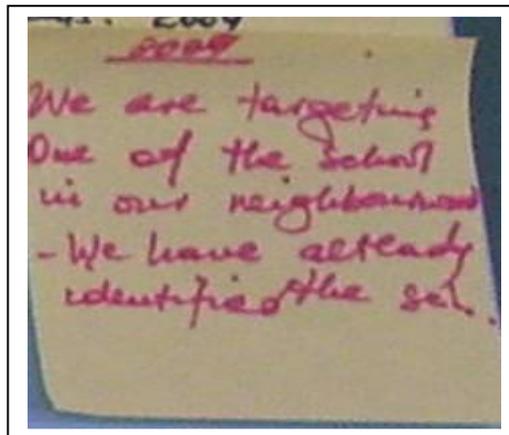
4.2.2.3 Sub-theme 2.3: Collaborating with other schools

One of the recurring themes during both workshops relates to the participants’ desire to expand the STAR project to surrounding schools. Participants appeared to have a distinct wish to help other schools in neighbouring communities to experience what they had experienced, and to transfer and extend the awareness and knowledge that they had gained from the STAR intervention to other schools. A participant summarised this idea as follows: *“But my wish is everybody should know about this”* (Workshop 1, P3, line 4). Another participant explained their efforts in trying to help other schools through appropriate channels: *“So I think when I was there I spoke to the district about our project. And I said this project is working very well”* (Workshop 1, P1, line 397). She elaborated by referring to a school that was reportedly struggling and in need of assistance: *“I was there and I told him we are going to compare with him, so that we are starting a programme to..., so that we limit this programme of learners who don’t manage to listen. I think this is our plan also”* (Workshop 1, P1, line 401).

Throughout, the participants indicated the wish to share information with other schools who could benefit from their knowledge and experiences: *“we must explain to the other school for what we are doing we don’t do it for ourselves and keep it like this, No, we want to share”* (Workshop 2, P1, line 259). Some participants referred to the working relationship they seemingly had with a neighbouring school, for example saying: *“facilitate to the neighbouring school so that we can work hand in glove”* (Workshop 2, P3, line 268). Yet, a few of the participants indicated slight levels of frustration and disappointment in terms of the initial response they received from some of the schools identified as potential partners. In support of this view I noted in my research diary: *“there seems to be an air of frustration and annoyance as the*

other schools are not responding in the enthusiastic way as these ladies had hoped to get. Maybe it is because they are so passionate about it and would like the same passion in others” (Reflection 2, p.4, line 85).

As indicated, participants appeared to cherish the knowledge they had reportedly gained: *“knowledge is power, when you’ve got knowledge you’ve got that power”* (Workshop 1, P7, line 447); and *“We want to help the others so that it grows as a family that’s why we go to the other schools, because we don’t want to give some people something thatthat’s why we working hand in glove”* (Workshop 2, P3, line 266). In addition to their verbal report on this desire, the participants indicated their attempts to facilitate the programme to other schools on the post-its during the first workshop when they created the timeline, as indicated in Photograph 4.7.



PHOTOGRAPH 4.7: Disseminating STAR to other schools

4.2.3 THEME 3: BEING ACKNOWLEDGED

Participants seemed to value being acknowledged for their efforts to provide psycho-social support to children and the community. They received acknowledgement on various levels, such as at school, within the school-community, from the University of Pretoria, as well as in the media. This acknowledgement seemingly impacted their motivation and self-confidence positively. Table 4.3 provides an overview of the inclusion and exclusion criteria I used to categorise the sub-themes of Theme 3.

TABLE 4.3: Inclusion and exclusion criteria for Theme 3

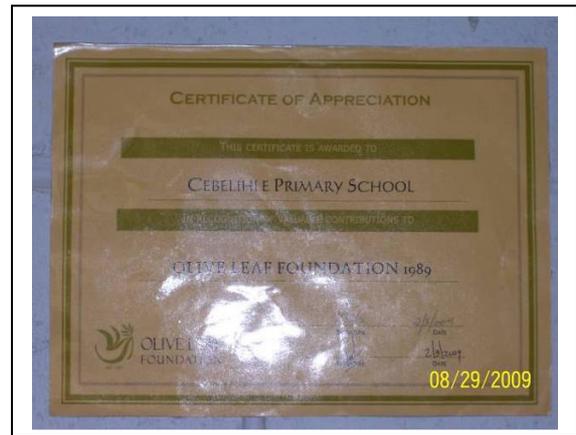
Theme	Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
Sub-theme 3.1: Acknowledgement on multiple levels	Any reference to participants being acknowledged by different institutions or people (government, community, other schools)	Any reference to the participants being acknowledged by their team members
Sub-theme 3.2: Acknowledgement as motivational factor	Any reference to participants' enhanced levels of motivation due to acknowledgement by others	Any reference to other motivating factors that may have influenced the participants
Sub-theme 3.3: Acknowledgement resulting in self-confidence	Any reference to participants' confidence as a result of being acknowledged for their efforts	Any reference to confidence through other achievements

4.2.3.1 Sub-theme 3.1: Acknowledgement on multiple levels

The participants seemed aware of being acknowledged on various levels, ranging from inside the school to outside in the school-community, the University of Pretoria and even the media (local newspaper). The following comment illustrates the participants' feelings of pride based on them being acknowledged by external agencies: *"our school is identified out of 24 schools in *. We are one of the schools that are identified by health, environmental health something. Those who were here they brought us trees"* (Workshop1, P1, line 242). During the second field visit another participant elaborated: *"So we were given the school of excellence not only for the learners but for the programme, it's bigger than the school. It's the communityevery time"* (Workshop 2, P2, line 242). Photographs 4.8 and 4.9 demonstrate acknowledgement by media and external agencies. In my research diary I reflected on this acknowledgement: *"They truly deserve to have media exposure on their achievements and successes and to be recognised for what they are doing. The small amount of exposure that they have had seems to provide an enormous level of motivation to continue and strive for even more"* (Reflection 2, p.4, line 96).



PHOTOGRAPH 4.8:
Recognition by the newspaper



PHOTOGRAPH 4.9:
Recognition by local external organisations

The participants initially seemed to experience little support from the school-community: *“And there is no support at all. But what we are doing is very good but they don’t know what is happening in the real world, the real world in the classroom. And they don’t know the communities where we are working”* (Workshop1, P2, line 336). However, participants noted the realisation that they had been receiving support from community members by being acknowledged for their efforts: *“but he came here last week a big popcorn to say I recognise our outside efforts, very good work. (applause). So he bought us some popcorn for Gr R’s and 1’s”* (Workshop 1, P1, line 233). During the first field visit I reflected on my observations on this perception of the participants: *“Although they are very positive and enthusiastic there seems to be an underlying feeling of aloneness, as if they are not valued enough (I tend to agree as their efforts are priceless)”* (Reflection 2, p.4, line 88). During the second workshop I noted: *“They are so gracious and really praise any help and recognition they receive”* (Reflection 2, p.4, line 94).

The efforts of the participants also seemed to be acknowledged by other schools in the community, as mentioned by a participant: *“And the neighbouring schools, even now there is another school far away from us they could see us from the papers. Come to see what we are doing ‘cause they want to be involved with”* (Workshop 2, P3, line 248). Furthermore, participants indicated that both children and the local high school acknowledged and cherished the support provided by the STAR intervention team: *“To be recognised by other schools, ‘cause before we, we, the high schools came to us. They were on our mind but they came early to us, to see what are you*

doing, 'cause we can see all that is happening in your school" (Workshop 2, P3, line 245).

4.2.3.2 Sub-theme 3.2: Acknowledgement as motivational factor

It seemed as if acknowledgement of their efforts and achievements promoted participants' motivation to continue contributing to the school, children and school-community. One participant summarised this idea: *"you know when it is starting to be involved because we want and he said We are not driven by anybody. We said we want to start something that will go ahead"* (Workshop 1, P1, line 157). Another participant emphasised that if they were effective they would be acknowledged: *"Things that work, people see that ..."* (Workshop 2, P6, line 332).

The participants seemingly felt appreciated through acknowledgement, which in turn encouraged and motivated them to sustain psycho-social support: *"to motivate you more when you see that you do something for someone else and that person appreciate you, that person accepts you, that's what it is"* (Workshop 1, P2, line 355). The connection between feeling appreciated and being motivated was reiterated by another participant in the following manner: *"The recognition from other schools and neighbourhood. That makes us keep going"* (Workshop 2, P3, line 252). In my research diary I noted: *"it seems that the only reward they long for is positive recognition of their efforts passion"* (Reflection 2, p.4, line 104).

4.2.3.3 Sub-theme 3.3: Acknowledgement resulting in self-confidence

The third sub-theme that emerged relates to demonstrated confidence of participants, which seemingly developed alongside sustaining STAR initiatives. One participant described their experience: *"I don't care what the others are saying, the recognition from the department, the recognition from the community. As long, as long I know that what I'm doing make me happy. I am happy now because there are some people that are unhappy even the community is very pleased with us. Ja"* (Workshop1, P2, line 417). Another example of self-confidence is provided in the following contribution: *"there is someone who is looking up upon me that I can help because there are parents that are coming into my class, there are parents in my community that are coming to my house for assistance"* (Workshop1, P4, line 447).

A participant summarised their levels of confidence regarding their ability to teach and support children: *“at least now things are better, now we can be free, we are going far, do you understand? At least our children are doing better now and most of the people like to say, teachers, educators, incompetent. We are not incompetent we are competent it’s only the area that we are working in is very poor”* (Workshop 2, P3 line 100). The participant continued: *“its not that we are incompetent, we are competent. It’s only because of those challenges that we have we, most of those challenges that we had before, but now we, everything is fine for us, we do our best. So even that self-esteem even for the teachers the educators”* (Workshop 2, P3, line 108).

Participants’ apparent confidence was noted in their tone of authority when they spoke about their achievements and experiences: *“If we were not competent we would not have collaborated with other schools. We would not be as far as we are now because we’ve been. Confidence...educator as a person”* (Workshop, P3, line 108). They seemed aware of their confidence (and possibly by implication, self-esteem). Confidence seemingly had a positive effect in fulfilling their roles and maintaining enthusiasm to sustain initiatives: *“all of these supports esteem. It’s not possible without esteem”* (Workshop 2, P2, line 202); and: *“Competence/confidence”* (Workshop 2, P3, line 333). In my research diary I noted participants’ confidence: *“it seems that the educators have more confidence from the first visit. Not that they hadn’t taken ownership before but now they speak of the programme as it is their very own project and they speak of their abilities and skills like experts who do not necessarily need approval because they know what they are doing and they believe in their skills and potential”* (Reflection 2, p.2, line 53).

4.2.4 THEME 4: BEING TRUE TO ONESELF AS A TEACHER

In this theme, aspects such as a love for people and fulfilling a role in a caring profession firstly came to the fore. Secondly, the participants emphasised their aim of putting children first at all times. Thirdly, the participants seemed to view themselves as change agents in the community and fourthly, their commitment and dedication to the STAR programme and its process were highlighted. Table 4.4 provides an overview of the inclusion and exclusion criteria I applied in categorising the sub-themes of Theme 4.

TABLE 4.4: Inclusion and exclusion criteria for Theme 4.

Theme	Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
Sub-theme 4.1: Being in a caring profession	Any reference to the participants' calling to be a teacher and compassion to children and community	Any reference to their roles as facilitators or mentor
Sub-theme 4.2: Putting children first	Any reference to children's well-being and meeting their basic needs	Any reference to other priorities within the school context
Sub-theme 4.3: Being change agents in the community	Any reference to the participants facilitating and enhancing community development	Any reference to activities that fall outside the scope of the STAR intervention project
Sub-theme 4.4: Being committed and dedicated	Any reference to the participants' work ethic and dedication to provide psycho-social support to children and the community	Any reference to commitments to activities outside of the school or community context

4.2.4.1 Sub-theme 4.1: Being in a caring profession

The participants identified their love for people and their choice of a caring profession as factors contributing to them remaining involved in STAR and sustaining support projects. This idea was evident from statements such as the following: *“It is for the community. It is no longer the teacher and the learner. The parents are coming in and out”* (Workshop 1, P1, line 247). The following contribution further demonstrates that, despite obstacles, the participants' love for children and their commitment to their careers seemingly motivated them to persist to provide assistance and support: *“the lack of, uhm, resources they make us to resist but our teachers here at school everything, everything, we are overcoming the change, we are doing what we are supposed to do. And if I council these children, these learners in our classrooms we are doing it in”* (Workshop 1, P2, line 321). The same participant later added: *“we love these children”* (Workshop 1, P2, line 363). I captured my observations on the participants' commitment due to the love for their profession in my field notes: *“the participants express their love for the children. They love what they do despite lack of resources”* (Field notes, p.1, line 14).

Several comments suggested that, even though the participants seemed motivated, their ultimate goal was to provide continuous support in the school-community by means of STAR-related projects. One participant summarised this idea as follows: *“There were two. Sometimes you can’t make someone to change, you can’t change people, you can’t force them to change. You can’t make them think differently. It must be something that comes to you. Ja, inside you. When you are doing things, something, do it with all your heart, ne, and I don’t care about the recognition from somebody else. If I know that what I am doing, I am doing for”* (Workshop 1, P2, line 411). I also reflected on this apparent willingness to make a difference in my research diary: *“There is a sense of selflessness among these teachers. They want to see their community flourish and willing to do so much to get there”* (Reflection 1, p.2, line 40).

4.2.4.2 Sub-theme 4.2: Putting children first

In their provision of psycho-social support, as well as sustaining initiatives, teachers seemed to put children’s needs first. The teachers appeared to be alert in terms of children who seemed not to cope, as demonstrated in contributions such as the following: *“we were aware of children that did not perform well”* (Workshop 1, P1, line 23). Teachers reportedly aimed to understand possible causes of vulnerability: *“To identify what have I seen, hey man, what is happening to this child. You always ask the question, understand”* (Workshop 1, P2, line 368). Due to the nature of HIV/AIDS and the stigmatisation often surrounding it, participants reportedly took care to insure that, in this regard, children were accepted and not stigmatised in school. A participant described their approach: *“We take them we don’t say they are affected or infected because we don’t label them”* (Workshop 1, P4, line 66); and later continued: *“Ja, we don’t want them stigmatised”* (Workshop 1, P4, line 69).

Strong consensus seemed to prevail that children’s needs had to be met with urgency rather than delayed responses, and that this was a priority of STAR. One participant summed this up: *“The child, the learner first and then everything will follow. The child’s time is not tomorrow, the child’s time is today. Now!”* (Workshop 2, P3, line 215). In addition, discussions and the timeline created during the workshop highlighted that, despite individual obstacles, children apparently experience a sense of belonging in school and in the school-community because of support. One

participant mentioned: *“Yes because if a child is hungry he will be bullying other children and now we’ve got food at school and everyone is full now there is no bullying at all”* (Workshop 2, P1, line 302). Another participant added: *“Children feel that they belong but there is a respect for all. They belong with the school, to this community, to the organisation”* (Workshop 2, P3, line 65). I further reflected on this point: *“I get a sense as if the teachers know each child in the school on a very personal level as if there is complete understanding of each individual child. I’m not certain if this is the case but it certainly feels like it”* (Reflection 2, p.3, line 74).

4.2.4.3 Sub-theme 4.3: Being change agents in the community

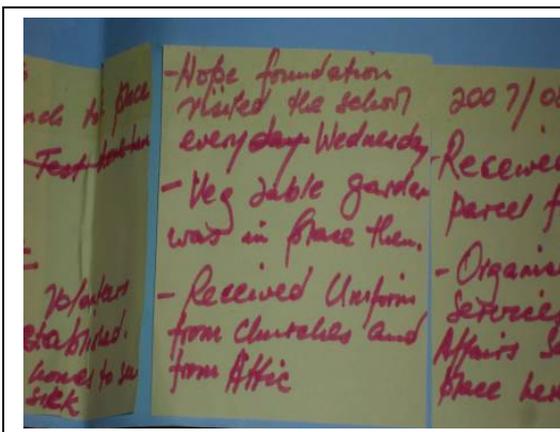
Participants seemed to view themselves as change agents in the community as STAR initiatives enabled positive change in the school-community. In my research diary I wrote: *“It almost feels as though they see it as their responsibility to bring about change. As if it is their role”* (Reflection 2, p.4, line 103). Participants themselves highlighted their role as change agents: *“Change agents. We are the change agents”* (Workshop 2, P3, line 214); and: *“we want to develop the community as we have said we started with our school and we went to community”* (Workshop1, P1, line 247).

One participant spoke of the apparent change that could be observed in the children at school: *“Willing to work because they can see the atmosphere there is a change to learners. Learners don’t abuse each other here”* (Workshop 1, P1, line 306). Another participant elaborated: *“Now they can answer questions in class, to be involved, to be actively involved in groups, to play, because they’ve got something in the stomach”* (Workshop 2, P1, line 80). Participants also reported an increase in the number of children enrolling in, and attending the school: *“At least now when I come I know my children will be in the classroom, there is no delayed at all, when I want to do this, I will get my learners in the classroom”* (Workshop 2, P3, line 92). In addition, participants reported some change in the children’s behaviour and discipline, saying: *“that there is no undermining of the learners now we can identify”* (Workshop 2, P5, line 113).

Besides the apparent change that occurred within the school, participants reported changes benefiting the school-community. In this regard they mentioned the school-

based soup kitchen serving parents and vulnerable people in the school-community: *“We even got a soup kitchen here”* (Workshop 1, P3, line 77). The soup kitchen was indicated on the post-its, which was placed on the timeline at the first workshop we conducted. Participants indicated that the soup kitchen was started in 2009, by an independent outsider who approached the school with the request to provide this service. In addition, feeding schemes for all school-going children has been implemented on a daily basis since 2009, in collaboration with the Department of Education, as noted in my field notes: *“They provide food for learners and community with the assistance of DOE”* (Field notes, p.1, line 10).

The vegetable garden has reportedly been sustained to the participants’ satisfaction after hiring a caretaker to maintain the garden during school holidays: *“That grounds man he likes that garden very much. So fortunately for them they don’t close when we close”* (Workshop 1, P1, line 504). Participants explained that the produce of the garden was being used as supplement in the soup kitchen and children’s feeding schemes. In my field notes I stated: *“vegetable garden used as food for children and soup kitchen”* (Field notes, p.1, line 5). Photograph 4.10 illustrates the participants’ reference to the development of the vegetable garden on the timeline, and Photograph 4.11 illustrates the vegetable garden that has been sustained.



PHOTOGRAPH 4.10:
Reference to vegetable garden



PHOTOGRAPH 4.11:
Vegetable garden at the school

Besides these projects, the participants indicated that they started a counselling centre at the school in 2008. In addition, through collaboration with outside resources the participants reported that they provided food parcels for vulnerable families in

need. Photograph 4.12 demonstrates the counselling room facilities and photograph 4.13 an example of the food parcels that are provided to families in need.

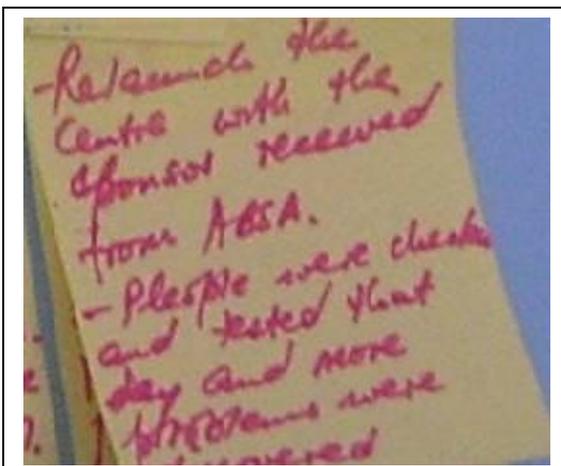


PHOTOGRAPH 4.12:
Counselling room at school

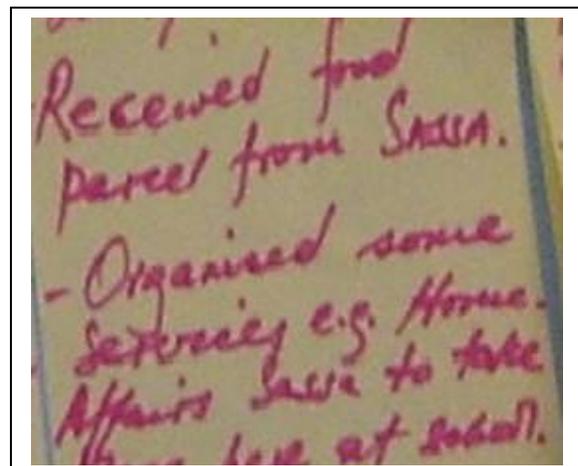


PHOTOGRAPH 4.13:
Providing food parcels to families

Additional services provided by the Masizakheni team were also identified, such as providing advice to families in applying for governmental grants and contacting the local home affairs office. Furthermore, the provision of school uniforms and toiletries to children through collaboration with NGOs was indicated as being sustained since 2006. Photographs 4.14 and 4.15 refer to these collaborations as illustrated on post-its during the initial workshop.



PHOTOGRAPH 4.14:
Reference to the provision of school uniforms



PHOTOGRAPH 4.15:
Reference to support with grant applications

4.2.4.4 Sub-theme 4.4: Being committed and dedicated

The participants' dedication and commitment to STAR initiatives and sustaining commitment was highlighted throughout. Participants seemed committed to ensure that additional skills development classes (initiated in collaboration with an NGO for children in 2009 [refer to Photographs 4.3 and 4.4]) would continue on a weekly basis. One participant summarised their commitment: *“Even if we are very busy on Wednesday we don't have a car but we do it because they come without being called”* (Workshop 1, P3, line 100). The after-school classes entail skills training, such as sewing and knitting. Another participant emphasised the team's dedication and efforts in the following way: *“And I wish to say, although the teachers hands are full there are people in this room, here that are very strong. They are very very strong Who are very, very strong. Even if it is rainy or windy they are there for the sake of this group, the team”* (Workshop 2, P1, line 218).

Participants' commitment could be observed in the various projects that had been initiated and sustained, with teachers persevering despite challenges. One participant said: *“project...vegetables...because.. and see if they are of value and then we are going to establish more even.... These are the cows that are sometimes our focus to financial constraints”* (Workshop 1, P1, line 159). The participants referred to projects and assets as cows (based on this symbol being used in the STAR project), indicating dedication to sustain projects: *“We don't neglect the cows”* (Workshop1, P1, line 164). Photograph 4.16 provides evidence of the sustained vegetable garden, and Photograph 4.17 of the HIV/AIDS information centre.



PHOTOGRAPH 4.16:
Vegetable garden (initiated in 2004)



PHOTOGRAPH 4.17:
HIV/AIDS information centre (initiated in 2004)

In addition to teachers' commitment, the following comment by one of the participants indicated that school management also appeared to be dedicated to sustaining school-based projects: "*Even the vegetable garden we had nothing but he [school principal] was prepared to take money from his pocket*" (Workshop 2, P2, line 240). It further appeared as if, in addition to the responsibility that participants displayed towards initiatives to support children and the school-community, they enjoyed being part of STAR. One participant stated: "*So I don't want to miss a single moment with the programme. I enjoy the programme*" (Workshop 1, P4, line 444).

4.3 RESEARCH FINDINGS

In the following section I relate themes and sub-themes that emerged from existing studies and literature. I aim to identify both correlations and contradictions that may exist between the literature and results of this study.

4.3.1 TEAMWORK AS SUPPORTIVE FACTOR IN SUSTAINING INITIATIVES

Teamwork and being part of a team appeared to be a driving force behind sustaining the STAR projects initiated by the participants since 2003. Participants emphasised functioning as a team and working as a united front. The potential value of teamwork is noted by Kretzmann and McKnight (1993), Mathie and Cunningham (2003), as well as Kelly *et al.* (2006), emphasising that relationships amongst people in the community could contribute to the development of local networks, which may in turn be regarded as an asset or a resource in the wider community. These authors explain that the mobilisation of economic development is dependent on strengthening a community's ability to communicate effectively and share information. Such behaviour seems consistent with the activities of the STAR project and the participants' efforts to contribute to community development, by working as a team and supporting one another's efforts.

A study conducted by Perkins *et al.* (2003) on the effectiveness of collaboration, teamwork and a positive approach to youth development in the United States of America relates to this finding. The youth development project premises positive youth development as a precursor to community youth development. In the study, resilience reportedly played an essential role in helping youth overcome challenges

by becoming active partners in their own development, as well as that of the community (Perkins *et al.*, 2003). Aligning the results of the current study with Perkins *et al.*'s (2003) study, it seems as if the participants' collaboration and teamwork contributed to sustainability of STAR initiatives (such as the vegetable garden, soup kitchen and skills development projects). The participants in the current study further reported that children were increasingly willing to participate in classrooms and that their behaviour and discipline improved despite obstacles and challenges related to poverty and HIV/AIDS. Sustaining projects could indicate that resilience was promoted within the school and amongst children, as similarly found in the study by Perkins *et al.* (2003).

In further support, literature (Blyth, 2000; Perkins *et al.*, 2003) indicate that programmes and interventions that involve youth in a positive manner (and as a result enhance skills) could assist them in developing assets that can serve as protective resources. This can in turn reduce the possibility of youth's involvement in risky behaviours (Blyth, 2000) and assist in sustaining assets and strengths within a community (Perkins *et al.*, 2003). This idea is supported by findings of the current study, indicating the potentially positive outcome of teamwork and feeling part of a team to enhance sustainability of psycho-social support projects.

In addition to the seemingly positive effect of unity that exists within the Masizakheni team, I found that the participants regarded the support they received from school management as another contributing factor to sustaining projects they initiated. In correlation, Waugh (1996) and Wiley (2007) mention that leadership and managerial systems are essential to sustain projects. A well-organised support structure and working relationship could also assist in reducing risk factors. This possibility is consistent with findings of the current study, where participants referred to school leadership in a positive light and apparently valued consistent support in this regard. The positive support from school management may have served as an additional motivational factor to remain involved in initiatives to support the school-community. This possibility is, however, merely a hypothesis that could be explored further. Bradford (2007) highlights goal setting and agreement on a specific plan of action by a community as other essential factors that may enhance resilience, as these factors can enable and motivate community members to continue rebuilding a community. I

relate this idea to the current study, in terms of the participants' efforts to allocate roles and responsibilities to each team member to ensure effective management and goal achievement in order to sustain initiatives. As such, role clarification and taking on specific responsibilities seem to be important in sustainability and working towards a specified goal as part of a team.

4.3.2 COLLABORATING WITH OTHERS TO SUSTAIN INITIATIVES

Collaborating with others, such as neighbouring schools, institutions (University of Pretoria), NGOs as well as the community seemed to assist teachers to sustain psycho-social support they provide in the school-community. Mathie and Cunningham (2003), as well as Petersen *et al.* (2010) similarly state that, within the context of collaboration, strongly built relationships is a key factor in problem solving. These authors describe important relationships among a variety of role players in the community, mentioning individuals, associations between citizens, local institutions, physical assets and resources of a community, and management teams within communities. According to Wiley (2007) the successes of an educational resource project he studied may be linked to the sustainability of human and shared resources, management of various responsibilities and costs. I found that teachers faced challenges yet were able to sustain projects by (amongst others) collaborating. Participants appeared to rely on individuals (including themselves), associations and physical assets and resources to sustain initiatives.

Elsewhere (Ebersöhn & Ferreira, forthcoming; Ferreira 2007) the prospective value of community engagement by the same teachers was stressed in terms of an asset-based approach (where resources from outside of the community could facilitate implementation of initiatives and dealing with challenges within the school-community). Such community networks include NGOs, volunteers and researchers. A community could rely upon external resources as a means to identify and mobilise assets to mediate the effects of challenges and difficulties related to HIV/AIDS (Ferreira, 2007; Froding *et al.*, 2008; Helmore & Singh, 2001). This view is consistent with findings of the current study, indicating that collaboration with the University of Pretoria as well as NGOs (such as Olive leaf and ATTIC) seemingly enabled participants to sustain school-based support (soup kitchen, vegetable garden, referral systems, providing uniforms and toiletries, counselling, feeding scheme).

In addition to the role players already mentioned, participants also identified collaboration with the school-community (volunteers and care workers) to sustain support. Based on such collaborative relationships, resilience was seemingly promoted in the school-community. This finding is consistent with existing literature on resilience (Jukes *et al.*, 2008; Wagner *et al.*, 2007), which indicates that community support might increase resilience on both an individual and a group level (e.g. schools). Promoting resilience conceivably also affected sustainability positively, which reciprocally promoted resilience in the school. Literature indicates that schools generally provide a safe environment for vulnerable children, which is in turn regarded as a protective resource (Brooks, 2006). This can be partly attributed to peer-support, positive teacher feedback, academic achievement as well as a sense of belonging. These positive factors may play a significant role in enhancing resilience within a school (Ebersöhn & Ferreira, forthcoming).

As described in Chapter 2, the application of a sustainable livelihood framework to asset-based community development (ABCD) has been illustrated in a study conducted by Mathie and Cunningham (2003), focusing on the strengths of people and solving problems through collaborative action, based on existing strengths and resources (Ashford & Parker, 2001). Bebbington (1998) and Kelly *et al.* (2006) agree that the importance of networking can potentially mobilise communities through increased trust and leadership. In the current study I found that participants relied on resources in conjunction with collaboration to solve problems. For example, in order to sustain the vegetable garden during school holidays teachers reportedly collaborated with a caretaker to water and maintain the garden. Furthermore, to address high absenteeism amongst children, teachers apparently collaborated with volunteers and care workers to (i) follow up on families with absentee children, and (ii) provide support (e.g. food parcels) so that children could attend school.

According to Eke *et al.* (2006) sustainability requires participants or uptake agencies to be trained by initial programme developers in order to be able to coordinate and follow through with a programme. These authors maintain that a community needs firstly to identify internal resources and assets, before turning to NGOs or outside help. These recommendations are consistent with the principles of STAR, as participants' involvement was facilitated by researchers from the University of

Pretoria during the initial phase of the project. In this regard the primary researchers continuously collaborate with participants to explore the nature of support.

4.3.3 BEING ACKNOWLEDGED AND SUSTAINING PSYCHO-SOCIAL SUPPORT

It seems that acknowledgement could have a positive effect on the sustainability of psycho-social support. Existing research shows that people's sense of identity or purpose is often infused with the various assets and capacities they are acknowledged for (Mathie & Cunningham, 2003). Through a sense of purpose and enablement, members of a community might feel enabled to change the way that resources are distributed and channel them into more appropriate directions (Mathie & Cunningham, 2003). The findings of Mathie and Cunningham's (2003) study are consistent with those of the current study, confirming that the extent to which participants were acknowledged seemed to contribute to their confidence, possibly affirming their sense of purpose (and achievement) as teachers.

Mathie and Cunningham (2003) further mention recognising participants' contributions for mutual gain. In support of this, Bebbington (1998), as well as Kelly *et al.* (2006) add that networking, as well as informal and formal associations at community level, might provide windows of opportunity that could be recognised as potential motivational factors. In the current study, I found that acknowledgement of participants most probably impacted positively on their motivation and desire to collaborate with other schools in the community to implement STAR elsewhere.

Bebbington (1998), as well as Ebersöhn and Eloff (2006), elaborate by saying that the recognition of assets (such as coping strategies and support networks) might lead to a sense of purpose and experienced capacity, which may in turn result in the enablement of individuals to contribute to community development. Wiley (2007) and Jamieson (1998) are in agreement that recognition of efforts may enhance self-confidence, and subsequently motivation to reach goals. This possibility is supported by the findings of this study, showing participants expressing their pride at being acknowledged by others (teachers in other schools, community members and media). Acknowledgement seemingly provided participants with a sense of achievement and ownership.

4.3.4 RELYING ON TEACHER IDENTITY TO SUSTAIN PSYCHO-SOCIAL SUPPORT

Not all teachers seem equipped to provide psycho-social support (Machawira, 2008; Ogina, 2008). In this study I distinguished certain characteristics which I posit as qualities of teachers who, on the one hand, will be drawn to provide psycho-social support, and on the other hand, motivate them to sustain such psycho-social support (compassion for others, dedication to growth and knowledge, the wish to be change agents, as well as the desire to put children's needs first). Barry and Jenkins (2007) state that protective resources may be increased through enhanced feelings of competence, which could in turn increase levels of resilience. A competence enhancement project requires communities to fulfil active and participating roles and be partners in implementing an intervention (Bradford, 2007; Petersen *et al.*, 2010; Smedley & Syme, 2000). STAR met these requirements for participants by emphasising capacity development to support children. Barry and Jenkins (2007) continue by saying that the majority of programmes aimed at building resilience are mostly successful when emphasis is placed on promotive factors to overcome adversity. In the current study the participants' main focus was to prioritise children's needs by mobilising existing resources.

4.4 CONCLUSION

In this chapter I presented the results of the study and then situated these within the framework of existing literature. I aimed to illustrate both correlations and inconsistencies between known literature and the findings of the study.

In the next chapter I come to final conclusions based on the research findings. I present my conclusions in terms of the research questions that guided this study. I also discuss the possible contributions and limitations of the study, and conclude with recommendations for future training, research and practice.



CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 4, I presented the results of the study. I then interpreted and discussed the themes and sub-themes in terms of existing literature as presented in Chapter 2.

In this chapter, I provide an overview of the preceding chapters and come to conclusions based on the research, in terms of the research questions formulated in Chapter 1. I then discuss the potential contributions of the study, as well as the challenges I faced. I conclude the chapter with recommendations for further research, training and practice.

5.2 OVERVIEW OF PRECEDING CHAPTERS

In Chapter 1, I presented a broad outline of the study and discussed the rationale for the study. I described the purpose of the current study namely to explore the sustainability of psycho-social support initiatives initiated as part of the STAR intervention in one particular school in the Eastern Cape Province. After formulating research questions I stated working assumptions, based on literature I consulted. I then defined the concepts of sustainability, resilience and psycho-social support. I summarised the selected epistemological and methodological paradigms, and presented a brief overview of the research design and methodology I employed. I concluded the chapter by briefly referring to the ethical guidelines and quality criteria I strived to adhere to.

In Chapter 2 I presented the conceptual framework of this study, discussing literature on the asset-based approach, resilience, sustainability and community mobilisation. I commenced the chapter by exploring and discussing the basic principles of the asset-based approach and how the application of these principles might influence community mobilisation. I then attempted to link resilience to the asset-based approach. Thereafter I explained sustainability in terms of the asset-based approach and enhanced levels of resilience, in the light of examples of community projects. I

provided examples of sustained projects, and concluded the chapter by highlighting current emerging concepts and themes based on existing literature in support of sustainability and the asset-based approach.

In Chapter 3, I discussed Interpretivism as selected epistemology and PRA as the methodological paradigm. I described the case study research design I selected, relating this choice to the purpose of the study. Thereafter, I presented and justified the research methodology and research processes I followed, against the background of the research questions. After describing the selection of the case and participants, I explained the preferred methods of data collection and documentation, namely PRA-based workshops, observations, field notes, audio-visual methods and research diary. I then described the process of thematic data analysis and interpretation I employed. I explained the ethical guidelines I adhered to and the quality criteria I strived to obtain.

In Chapter 4 I presented the results of the study, in terms of the themes and sub-themes that emerged, subsequent to the data analysis I completed. The four themes relate to teamwork, collaboration with others, being acknowledged, and being true to oneself as a teacher. After presenting the results, I discussed the findings of this study, relating the results to existing literature presented in Chapter 2. I attempted to highlight correlations and possible contradictions that arose.

5.3 CONCLUSIONS

In this section I present conclusions. I structure my discussion in accordance with the secondary research questions that guided the study. As a final conclusion (section 5.3.4), I reflect on the primary research question I formulated in Chapter 1.

5.3.1 SECONDARY RESEARCH QUESTION 1

Which psycho-social initiatives were sustained and why?

In this study, various psycho-social initiatives were identified as sustainable. In this regard sustainable projects characteristically prioritised children's basic needs (for example a daily feeding scheme for children on school premises, providing uniforms and toiletries for the children, maintaining a school-based vegetable garden, and

providing a soup kitchen for school-community members). In addition, sustained psycho-social support gave precedence to safety and a sense of belonging to vulnerable school-community members, by rendering support (i.e. home visits, school-based counselling services, information sharing opportunities and referral systems to assist with the community's health care and emotional well-being). Transferring STAR knowledge to teachers in surrounding schools (dissemination of STAR) was seemingly also sustained.

Participants seemed able to sustain psycho-social support based on dedication, working as a team, collaborating with others, by identifying and mobilising strengths and resources, and by encouraging each other to build on identified assets. In addition, sustainability was possible because teachers took on different roles and responsibilities. Similarly, effective management of support and collaboration within the group and with school-community partners (resources and NGOs) contributed to sustain psycho-social support. In this regard, I posit that dedication to their profession as teachers and to the school-community motivated teachers to persevere and contributed to sustaining psycho-social support, which probably reinforced their caring nature.

Participants' desire to share their skills and knowledge regarding psycho-social support in the school-community seemed to be significant in sustaining projects (teamwork and collaboration). Sharing knowledge and acknowledgement of their work likewise seemed to motivate teachers and build their confidence.

5.3.2 SECONDARY RESEARCH QUESTION 2

Which psycho-social initiatives were not sustained and why?

Participants initially struggled to maintain or start certain initiatives (2004/2005). Initial challenges involve sustaining the vegetable garden, as well as establishing a soup kitchen. However, they shared strategies to address such challenges. These strategies were underpinned by their dedication to make a difference and be meaningful to others. In this regard teachers related the significance of their teacher identity, and their chosen profession, which focuses on helping others. In addition, acknowledgement of their support seemed to strengthen their motivation and dedication to continue providing support. In response to challenges, the school

employed a caretaker after some years, to cultivate the vegetable garden specifically during school holidays. As a result of collaboration, teamwork and support from school management a vegetable garden (in some form or another) has been part of the school landscape since 2004.

Secondly, participants indicated that they had always desired a school-based soup kitchen for children. Yet, for various reasons it was reportedly a challenge to initiate the project. Yet, by collaborating with the Department of Education a feeding scheme introduced at school now provides daily meals to children (supplemented by produce from the vegetable garden). In addition, a community businessman recognised school-based support efforts and approached the school to establish a soup kitchen for vulnerable school-community members.

5.3.3 SECONDARY QUESTION 3

How did sustainable initiatives promote resilience in the school, or not?

Teachers' ability to manage and sustain psycho-social support, as well as acknowledgement on multiple levels, had a positive effect on their confidence. Teacher confidence apparently resulted in a desire to set more goals in terms of providing support. Teachers' experiences of collaboration and teamwork, as well as their dedication to the teaching (caring) profession, probably contributed to sustainability of psycho-social support. In this regard, teachers' sustained psycho-social support conceivably mobilised the school as protective resource.

Similarly, participants' inherent caring nature, motivation, dedication and ability to function as a team working towards a common goal resulted in several sustainable projects (maintained over seven years, despite some initiatives not succeeding as initially planned). Participants' ability to maintain psycho-social support, despite reported logistical problems, provides further evidence of how teachers promoted resilience in this school.

Based on the findings I propose that, in order for teacher-driven psycho-social support to sustain, members are required to work together to identify and mobilise collective assets and resources. A collaborative approach, and sharing information

between teachers and school-community members seem appropriate both to take on challenges, and also to adapt in order to sustain school-based support.

Teachers' sustaining of support therefore appears to have enhanced resilience in this school which was evident in, amongst others things, teachers' adaptability to provide support, children's reported eagerness to learn and respond in classrooms (despite vulnerability). In this regard, school attendance apparently increased and behavioural and discipline problems decreased. This study provides an example of how teachers can promote resilience in schools by sustaining psycho-social support. By teachers providing for basic needs, and creating a sense of belonging in the school environment, children's ability to adapt in the face of adversity is arguably buoyed.

5.3.4 REFLECTING ON THE PRIMARY RESEARCH QUESTION

This study was guided by the following primary research question: ***How can insight into sustainable psycho-social support by teachers inform knowledge on resilience in education?*** I can conclude that teachers are able to apply the asset-based approach in school-communities to provide and sustain psycho-social support in order to promote resilience in schools. Implementing the asset-based approach is a way for teachers to take action for well-being in a school-community. Based on teamwork and collaboration assets and resources can be identified and mobilised within a community. Establishing and sustaining support appears to have a positive effect on teachers' confidence to set additional goals to mediate adversity.

In terms of sustainability, the findings of this study reveal that teacher identity, collaboration, teamwork, leadership, management, information sharing and knowledge acquisition probably play a significant role in developing and sustaining school-based psycho-social support. It seems as if sustainability might be achieved when the core principles of the asset-based approach are taken into consideration, (as in the case of STAR intervention). In Figure 5.1 I revisit the conceptual framework that guided me to interpret findings (refer to Figure 2.1), and indicate how findings potentially inform knowledge on resilience in education.

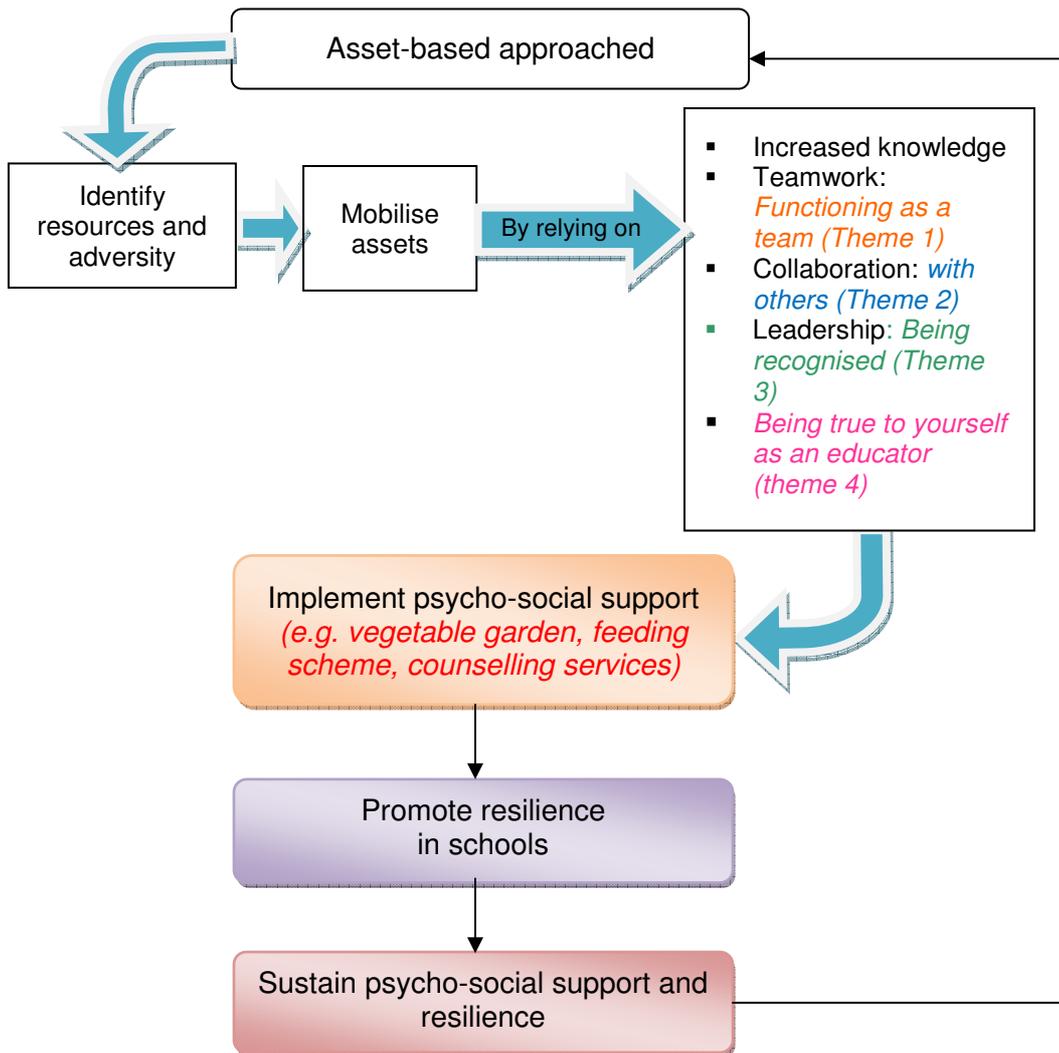


FIGURE 5.1: Situating findings within conceptual framework

The asset-based approach is built on the premise that communities can be enabled through mobilisation of available assets and resources within a community. This may be dependent on sharing of individual resources and management of responsibilities. STAR is conceptualised on principles of the asset-based approach to develop and sustain community initiatives. For instance, one of the emerging themes relates to functioning as a team. I propose that through teamwork the participants were able to mobilise team assets in that each teacher fulfilled roles and responsibilities. The mobilisation of this asset may be seen as one possible explanation that may have contributed to sustaining psycho-social support.

Participants' collaboration with one another and with other community members and organisations emphasises another aspect of the asset-based approach, namely that

systems and contexts are viewed in conjunction with individual assets and strengths. I postulate that teachers' networking across systems (collaboration) reflect the systemic approach (underlying the asset-based approach) and may predict sustainability of psycho-social support. I base my argument on the finding that participants succeeded in integrating psycho-social support into community initiatives.

In addition, acknowledgement of participants' support appeared to have a positive impact on their confidence and furthermore served as a motivational factor to sustain psycho-social support. This finding is consistent with one of the aims of the asset-based approach, namely that individuals or communities overcome challenges by making meaning of their contexts through a positive outlook.

I posit that by identifying individual assets and resources teachers were able to mobilise assets in the form of psycho-social support. Conversely, sustaining support led to teachers being acknowledged in various contexts, probably enhancing their dedication to make a difference (as prescribed by their caring teacher identity).

As mentioned previously, psycho-social support based on the principles of the asset-based approach, can be sustained once it has been integrated into a community-based programme that provides various forms of support (such as basic needs and emotional support). Teachers provide these forms of support to children in the school. This finding provides an indication of teachers' identity as care providers in the school-community system. The provision of psycho-social support also seemed to create a safe and nurturing environment for vulnerable children, enhancing the perception of the school as a protective resource. Managing various responsibilities and sharing knowledge and resources seemed to assist teachers in sustaining the school as a positive and nurturing environment. Reflecting on sustainability of psycho-social support, it appears as if teachers' implementation of STAR was compatible with needs in the school-community. Sustained psycho-social support by teachers in collaboration with community partners apparently promotes resilience in the school.

5.4 POSSIBLE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE STUDY

This study adds to existing knowledge on how resilience can be promoted in schools by explaining how teachers can apply an asset-based approach to provide and sustain psycho-social support in a school-community. The findings of this study (which is based on the asset-based approach) may therefore serve as a guide to future school-based community initiatives. It is apparent that school-based initiatives can be sustained and developed. It seems clear that the basic principles of the asset-based approach (such as collaboration, teamwork and identifying community assets and resources) served as building blocks to sustain psycho-social support. Teachers implemented these asset-based principles to take on roles and responsibilities within their team, which subsequently allowed for effective management of the team. Furthermore, teachers' collaboration lead to other projects, resulting in acknowledgement by colleagues and community members. In this way the study provides Educational and Community Psychology insights regarding ways to sustain schools-based community support.

This research can further contribute to the body of knowledge on sustainability. The findings suggest that the sense of achievement and successes of psycho-social projects and their sustainability and growth over time have potentially lead to increased levels of resilience, both amongst teachers and learners in facing adversity. The findings therefore suggest a link between the effects of sustainability and resilience.

5.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

One of the limitations of the current study relates to the lack of generalisability of the findings as the findings pertain to one school in a specific community only. However, I merely set out to gain an in-depth understanding of the sustainability of psycho-social support projects initiated in a specific community within the context of the STAR project. The findings may be transferred to a similar context based on in-depth descriptions and background on this study, which is in line with interpretivist research.

The difference in language and culture between the participants and myself (as well as my co-researcher and supervisors) may present as a limitation, as I might have drawn conclusions based on my subjective frame of reference, shaped by my cultural beliefs. I aimed to provide a detailed description of participants' expressions regarding sustaining psycho-social support. Through member checking I aimed to ensure that the themes which emerged reflect participants' sentiments. As this study followed an interpretivist paradigm, I hold the assumption that the creation of shared meaning can only occur in an interpretivist, subjective manner between individuals.

As an educational psychologist in training I occasionally struggled to maintain a balance between my varying roles as a researcher and my future profession. Listening to participants' challenges and successes I found it demanding to refrain from becoming emotionally involved and wanting to offer solutions or share joy, instead of being an observer and facilitator. However, through close supervision by my supervisors and by reflecting in a research diary I monitored my subjectivity. Finally the participants involved in this study are female, which could imply a narrow gender-based perception of sustaining psycho-social support as teachers.

5.6 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, I make recommendations for training, practice and future research in this section.

5.6.1 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TRAINING

I recommend that examples of community-based intervention initiatives and their sustainability might be included in training programmes aimed at both undergraduate and postgraduate students in the fields of Social Work, Teaching, Psychology and informal volunteer programmes. Training in the asset-based approach may bring about understanding of a research-based approach to community development and enablement. In addition, the potential link between sustaining support and resilience could be highlighted to equip students in the helping professions to understand an aspect of community development. Insight into the idea of enabling a community by working with resources on both individual and group levels could lead to community members following an enabling and asset-focused approach to addressing adversity.

5.6.2 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PRACTICE

Based on the findings of the study I recommend that teachers from different schools meet and visit one another, to share experiences of implementing and sustaining psycho-social support. In addition, schools could collaborate to identify potential assets and resources together with other schools in order to enable resilience in school-communities. I recommend that social workers and practitioners visit institutions (such as schools) where community-based support is provided to share knowledge on providing support in school-communities.

5.6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Based on the findings that sustainability of psycho-social support probably promoted resilience in a school, future research projects might focus on phenomena such as the following:

- ❖ The application of the asset-based approach in other intervention programmes to sustain psycho-social support initiatives in different contexts and communities.
- ❖ The level of dedication and passion of community members in executing intervention programmes and the effect of such attitudes on the sustainability of support initiatives.
- ❖ The potential influence of teachers' increased levels of resilience, its impact on the success of the STAR project and hence the increased levels of resilience within the participating school and communities.
- ❖ The specific influence of support received from school management on teachers' levels of motivation and drive within the STAR research project.
- ❖ The involvement of school children in the maintenance and execution of projects and the subsequent effect on their self-esteem and self-worth, which may in turn increase individual levels of resilience.
- ❖ The outcome of disseminating STAR to other schools.

5.7 CONCLUDING REFLECTIONS

In this study I explored and discussed the sustainability of psycho-social support in one specific school community in the Eastern Cape. These support initiatives were based on the principles of the asset-based approach. Findings indicate that various projects could be sustained. Through the application of asset-based principles, this, in turn, brought about a sense of belonging and confidence. The findings of this study further indicate that the sustainability of school-based psycho-social support seems to be dependent on the dedication of teachers providing support, as well as their willingness to help each other and collaborate with others in order to increase a supportive knowledge base. The acknowledgement of their support similarly had a positive effect on teachers' confidence and willingness to identify and mobilise assets and resources in collaboration with community partners. Sustaining psycho-social support seemed to establish the school as a protective resource to promote resilience.



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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Ethical clearance

Appendix B: Documentation for consent and participation

Appendix C1: Transcription(Initial PRA-workshop)

Appendix C2: Transcription (member checking)

Appendix D: Research Diary – Reflections

Appendix E: Field Notes

Appendix F: Photographs

Appendix G: Audio recordings of workshops





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Appendix A: Ethical clearance

Appendix B: Documentation for consent and participation



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Appendix C1: Transcription(Initial PRA-workshop)

Appendix C2: Transcription (member checking)



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Appendix D: Research Diary – Reflections



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Appendix E: Field Notes



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Appendix F: Photographs



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Appendix G: Audio recordings of workshops