

Sustaining teacher career resilience in a resource-constrained rural education setting: A retrospective study

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**Sustaining teacher career resilience in a resource-constrained
rural education setting: A retrospective study**

by

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DEDICATION

*To my two beautiful daughters, Arné and Karlia,
may you always find it easy to learn from storytellers' wisdom*

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A special thank you to

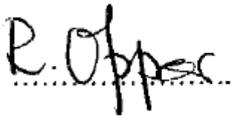
- ❖ My Lord and Saviour, for being the Master Narrator of my life
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DECLARATION - LANGUAGE EDITOR

Declaration

I, Rika Opper, hereby declare that I undertook the editing of the grammatical and language aspects of the thesis **Sustaining teacher career resilience in a resource-constrained rural education setting: A retrospective study.**



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ACRONYMS

ABET	Adult Basic Education and Training
B Ed	Bachelor of Education
B Com	Bachelor of Commerce
CAPS	Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement
C2005	Curriculum 2005
DBE	Department of Basic Education
EFA	Education for All
FET	Further Education and Training (Grade 10 to 12)
FLY	Flourishing Learning Youth
GET	General Education and Training (Grade 0 to 9)
HIV and AIDS	Human immunodeficiency virus and acquired immunodeficiency syndrome
HSRC	Human Science Research Council
NCS	National Curriculum Statement
NEIMS	National Education Infrastructure Management System
NRF	National Research Foundation
OBE	Outcomes-Based Education
RNCS	Revised National Curriculum Statement
RRR	Relationship-Resourced Resilience model
SA	South Africa
SADTU	South African Democratic Teacher's Union
SASCO	South African Student Congress
SCCT	Social Cognitive Career Theory
UN	United Nations

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ABSTRACT & KEY CONCEPTS

The purpose of this study was to gain an in-depth understanding of whether or not, and how teachers in a resource-constrained rural school sustain their motivation in and commitment to teaching over a life-span. The Social Cognitive Career Theory was chosen as theoretical framework because it recognises the importance that factors in the environment play when the career paths of individuals unfold. A conceptual framework for 'teacher career resilience' was developed by merging current thinking on resilience, teacher resilience and career resilience. The life-history design was framed methodologically as biographical research with participatory principles. Teacher participants (n=5, 3=female and 2=male) were selected according to purposive sampling. Data were generated through participatory interview-conversations, which were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim, as well as memory books, joint photograph-taking and field notes in a researcher diary.

Five themes emerged from the guided phenomenological analysis process (Hycner, 1985) and narrative comparison. First, this study exposes illiteracy of learners' parents, demotivated learners, and a negative national teacher fraternity as sources of adversity not previously noted as significant for teachers in rural settings. Second, rural teachers in this study drew strength from their own life experiences of adversity (being from rural areas themselves); and they relied on their own agency in problem solving. Third, in addition participating rural teachers make use of encouraging memories of their own teachers from childhood and partake in informal professional development activities such as collaborative peer discussions rather than mentoring to grow professionally. Fourth, participating teachers in rural resource-constrained South Africa thus use similar internal protective resources (problem solving, strategizing, cognitive restructuring and emotional regulation) in their adaptive coping repertoire to those of other teachers globally. Fifth, teachers did not enter the teaching profession in the same way as has been documented elsewhere; but entered the teaching profession as a result of socio-political and financial influences, chance happenings and the influence of significant teachers in their past.

Teachers seem to balance their use of protective resources between internal and external resources in their current practice. Over time, however they draw more on internal protective resources. Teachers conceptualised their teacher career resilience on a continuum: persevering through adversity, both as young children, and as growing professionals. They use their self-efficacy beliefs, embedded in an adversity drenched past, to manage, overcome and cope despite current chronic adversity. Teachers' overt behavior in adaptive coping processes was dependent on the interrelatedness between their attributes (especially internal

protective resources), the environment (chronic adversity) and the continuous loop of influence (appraisal) between these three factors. Teachers became skilled in resilience processes because of the chronic adversity they face. Teachers' self-efficacy beliefs about their adaptive coping extended beyond what they themselves can achieve to what their efforts in teaching may mean to model hope to learners, as their teachers modelled to them, fostering a certain altruistic career anchor.

Key Concepts

- Career resilience
- Life history design
- Protective resources
- Resource-constrained rural school
- Rural education
- Rurality
- Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT)
- Teacher career resilience
- Teacher resilience
- Teachers' adaptive coping

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CHAPTER ONE RESEARCH RATIONALE AND FRAMEWORK

*“People (and teachers) carry stories and images around with them,
and such stories and images constitute their deepest convictions”.*

~ Wally Morrow (1989, p. 173) ~

1.1 INTRODUCING THE LIFE HISTORIES OF TEACHERS

In this chapter I present the co-constructed¹ life stories of the teachers who participated in this study. In line with life history methodology, I contextualise their stories by presenting a succinct factual summary of the socio-political influence of the apartheid policy on education and describe the consequent risk-laden landscape of teaching in South Africa. I unpack the challenges of teaching by referring to national and international concerns about teacher attrition and the reasons why teachers quit. Following the rationale, I discuss my understanding of relevant concepts in this study and highlight the research questions and methodological decisions that guided me. I briefly sketch the research setting and participants. I end this chapter with a summary of the main findings, and a brief discussion of the next chapter.

This study was inspired by my interest in career psychology. I teach a post-graduate group of students at a higher education institution. Every year the students prepare an assignment called ‘The Career Interview’ (Beale, 1998), for which they have to analyse the career journey of a person older than forty and identify prominent career theories. Since the participants in the assignment have to reflect on their career histories by retelling their career stories they provide detailed recollections of significant events in their career lives and how they feel and think about it at present. Year after year the assignment-participants write about the insights gained through taking a retrospective look at their career life. The awareness of how using a retrospective career journey as a strategy in such an assignment provided insights into career behaviour over time further inspired a formal curiosity: *What can we learn about sustained resilience from teachers’ life histories?*

¹ I relied on data I generated with participants to write the stories, which were subsequently edited by a colleague (Yolandi Woest) who has a literary background. During the third interview-conversation the participants made changes and approved the extended stories (refer to Appendix L).

1.1.1 LIFE STORY OF PARTICIPANT 1

The story of Emma, the one who endured

It was 2 November 1965. At last the baby girl was born; strong and healthy. *'This one is a fighter!'* her grandfather remarked. Her grandmother smiled: *'She will be a strong woman ... one who will conquer great depths in life because she has a God-purpose'*.

These words marked the beginning of Emma's life. Emma has not had an easy life – her family struggled financially. Emma adored her father and remembers him teaching her the English language despite not having any education himself. He continuously encouraged his daughters to obtain an education and Emma truly believed in her father's promise that education will set you free.

Tragedy struck when Emma was only nine years old; her father passed away. No one was able to support Emma's mother and life became very hard. They could not buy the necessary stationery for school, let alone afford to pay school fees. Emma remembers walking six or seven kilometres to school barefoot, with no money or food for the day. Eventually her mother had to leave the three girls on the farm to find a job in the city. Even in the shadow of her father's death, Emma's unwavering faith kept her going.

She worked very hard to meet the demands of school and homelife. Emma was a disciplined learner and progressed rapidly from one grade to the next. She looked up to her teachers with respect and admired their dignity. Unfortunately tragedy struck again; she became very ill and had to stay at home for two months prior to her final primary school examinations. The incredible trust that Emma experienced from the principal gave her the inner strength to complete the examinations and she passed with distinction.

After a long illness, Emma returned to school and finished a few more years. Eventually she complete matric and wanted to become a social worker. However, when she arrived at the college she was not allowed to register for social work. She decided to pursue her next preferred option, which was teaching. Another challenge arose when, despite being a qualified teacher, Emma was unable to find permanent employment. She said to herself, *'I was born to suffer. Even if I try so hard, there is nothing that waits for me'*. In her darkest hours Emma remembered her father's words: *'You must be educated'*.

She realised that she needed to apply her knowledge to solve this problem. She grasped the opportunities offered to her to teach at adult learning centres and was subsequently employed in several contract positions. Emma soon realised that permanent positions were scarce. She started a small catering business on the side in order to supplement her income and close the gap between living expenses and earnings. Her inability to secure permanent employment had caused her to fall behind financially. Her many responsibilities included having to support her children, creating a home and dealing with increasing living expenses. *Why not just quit teaching and find a career that can provide more financial stability?* was a thought that haunted Emma.

Finally, through networking with former colleagues and sheer determination, Emma was appointed in a permanent teaching position. Today her classroom is small and overcrowded, without the luxuries of a chalkboard or electricity. However, she believes that she contributes to the future by remaining in the profession and never giving up on her learners. She regards herself as more than just the person imparting knowledge to learners and has also taken on the roles of parent, guardian and counsellor in the classroom.

Though teaching in South Africa is a challenging career, Emma is determined to leave behind a legacy of helping to develop the country and playing a significant role in the lives of her own and other people's grandchildren. The God-purpose vision of her grandmother became true because Emma did indeed conquer several hardships while becoming a safe haven for many others.



1.1.2 LIFE STORY OF PARTICIPANT 2

The story of Moeketsi², a man with a mission

The History teacher of the matric class noticed Moeketsi from an early age. Here was a boy who was asking questions than were different from those usually asked by the boys his age. The teacher saw this boy questioning the merit of Bantu Education³, interrogating the hidden messages of inferiority in the curriculum and asking about the history that was NOT being taught. The teacher realised that this boy saw that the curriculum of the time did not provide the answers to his questions.

² Moeketsi Kgware is the participant's real name. He requested that his identity be known (Participant [P]2, Interview [I]3, p.2).

³ In terms of the apartheid policy, white and black learners received different curricula as a way to maintain separate development (Booyse & Le Roux, 2010).

Moeketsi has always looked differently at the world and was aware of the social injustices and oppression that were taking place, unnoticed by other boys his age. Hence the reason for his initial career choice: he believed that if he became a lawyer, he would be able to fight for [human?] rights. When his History teacher suggested that he should consider teaching rather than law, he started thinking about teaching. He was horrified by conditions during the apartheid era and noticed that many children left school because of those conditions.

Moeketsi felt something inside him growing ever stronger: the drive to be an agent of change. He said to himself, *'One day we will overcome, we will have a system where all these things will be the past'*. As the last-born of 11 children, Moeketsi did not have an easy childhood. Because of the Group Areas Act he lived in a poor black community. There was little food and even less support. Poverty made it difficult to attend school. Being the youngest in the family, he was often bullied in an abusive manner, but this made him a strong person. He was inspired to show his family that he would one day become a valuable person. Moeketsi enjoyed school even though he did not approve of the curriculum. He stood out because he was disciplined, and this quality created opportunities for leadership and recognition.

After school, and inspired by his teacher, he registered for a bachelor's degree in Education at Vista University, majoring in History and English. He remembered the early nineties and how the release of Mr Mandela positively impacted the country. He joined the South African Student Congress (SASCO) and soon landed himself the position of administrator of the group.

Moeketsi remembered the students' toyi-toying during the apartheid years. Despite these dark days, lack of resources and unsustainable bursaries, he showed leadership and motivation. He inspired many of his fellow students to return to the classroom and fight the one-sided curriculum by teaching the youth their real history. Despite Moeketsi's belief in the power of education, he did not immediately start working as an educator. He was contracted in many positions, which ranged from data worker to selling policies for a funeral home during his free time. During those years he kept his passion for teaching alive by teaching at ABET (Adult Basic Education and Training) centres. He obtained his first teaching position at a school 10 years after graduating. Today Moeketsi is a committed teacher who says that he performed the best he could in all the positions he has held. He is completely invested in education in the broadest sense: creating change for the good wherever he goes.



1.1.3 LIFE STORY OF PARTICIPANT 3

The story of Gogo, grandmother to all

One of Gogo's earliest memories is how she used to hide in the bush after school, only returning home once her abusive father had fallen asleep. What she remembers even more vividly is the strength of her mother. Although her parents were later divorced, Gogo's mother continued to show kindness and forgiveness, which are characteristics that Gogo holds in high esteem.

An abusive father and the divorce of her parents were only some of the many hardships Gogo had to face in her life. Poverty was a condition Gogo knew well. However, she used the little opportunities she had to her advantage: as a young child she had to look after cattle in the veld – a chore usually reserved for boys – and was determined to learn everything the boys knew, and to prove that she could do anything a man can do. Gogo enjoyed the times when it was possible for her to attend school. She tried to pay for her schooling by working as a waitress, but could only finish Grade 10. Instead of being discouraged, Gogo became more determined: she wanted to do more than survive; she wanted to achieve.

She earned a living by teaching at a primary school for five years after completing Grade 10. She then completed Grades 11 and 12 through distance education. Although she initially wanted to become a lawyer or a social worker, she realised that she had grown fond of teaching and decided to register for a certificate in teaching at Vista University. The opportunity for further study provided Gogo with valuable skills and her past has enabled her to teach her learners the value of perseverance. She believes that all the privations she had to endure prepared her for becoming and being a teacher who makes a difference.

Gogo has had her share of difficult times in the teaching profession. At one stage she worked for eight months without receiving a salary, but during that time she was loyally supported by her family. Despite the agony that this caused, she was motivated by the thought that she was educating the nation and making a difference every day.

She laughed with pride as she spoke about her learners, who are very fond of her and always treat her respectfully. She is completely invested in teaching and also has a good relationship with her learners' parents. She understands that the parents entrust their children to her care and she takes full responsibility for educating them.

Gogo is determined to leave a legacy as an educator. She wants to make a difference by teaching children that they should take ownership of their lives and their learning. She feels that, especially in rural areas where many parents are not educated, the learners should use their knowledge to change their own situations. When she retires from teaching, Gogo plans to return to the land, where she might either run her own business or continue teaching and motivating learners in her community.



1.1.4 LIFE STORY OF PARTICIPANT 4

The story of Lazarus, leading the way

“Tell me who your friends are and I will tell you who you are.” To Lazarus this was not just a cliché, but a truth that impacted his life in ways of which he was not always proud.

He attended a school in a township near the mine where his father worked. Unfortunately he made friends with the wrong people and did not progress well at school. When he failed a grade for the second time, his father sent him to a rural school. The real difference between a township school and a rural school was what happened after school. If you attended a township school, you could enjoy leisure time with your friends after school without any adult supervision and have ample time to do ‘*funny things*’, but children attending rural schools had certain responsibilities after school, such as tending cattle in the bush. This meant that there was less time to be influenced by bad friends.

Lazarus finished his primary school years in the rural school and subsequently attended a neighbouring secondary school. Unfortunately he soon fell into bad company again and his schoolwork suffered. One of his teachers reported this to his father, who decided to move him to another secondary school known for its strict discipline. Inspired by the expensive cars some of his father’s friends drove, he was at this time thinking of becoming a mine worker. Despite the strict school environment Lazarus again came under the influence of bad friends who introduced him to smoking and drinking, and he failed Grade 12.

After failing Grade 12 he decided to quit his bad habits and change his life. He renewed his contact with his good friends from the rural area and managed to pass matric. After finishing school, he stayed home for a year as work opportunities were scarce and he could not afford to further his studies. During this time he was supported by his father. Lazarus decided to go to college and

become a teacher, mainly because it would be financially viable. Lazarus took his studies very seriously: he knew that if he did not use this opportunity he would not be able to study again. Knowing how difficult it was to find employment, he became a dedicated student, made good progress and never failed a course.

Despite being qualified, Lazarus was unable to find employment as a teacher. He earned a living by working at a butchery, but never forgot that he was actually a teacher. Memories of his own Grade 6 General Science teacher came back to him. He had enjoyed this teacher's use of humour in the classroom and appreciated the fact that he treated all the learners fairly and equally. That was the kind of teacher he wanted to be one day! After eight years he found employment at a rural school with the help of some friends.

Lazarus is determined to remain in teaching despite the low salary. He especially enjoys teaching in the rural areas because his knowledge of the rural context helps him to find ways to move beyond the limitations placed on teachers by the shortage of resources. He realises that it does not help to complain, and that he has to find solutions to problems through a positive attitude.

Unfortunately his father passed away only three days before he received the offer from the school and Lazarus was sad because he would not be able to show his father the man he had become.



1.1.5 LIFE STORY OF PARTICIPANT 5

The story of Susan, a lady of strength

Susan was born and raised in Swaziland. Her father was employed as a mineworker, and her mother, a South African, sewed clothes for the mine hospital. When her father passed away, she was in Grade 8 and her youngest brother was only eight months old. This was a traumatic time. Since Susan's mother's position did not qualify her for the house they were living in, the family was forcefully removed and accommodated in a smaller house with no electricity. Susan remembered how her mother suffered and her uncles decided that they should return to her mother's land of birth – South Africa – so that her family could support them.

When she arrived in South Africa with her family, Susan immediately wanted to further her studies at a university, but discovered that a South African matric certificate was required for admission. In order to obtain this certificate, Susan enrolled at a nearby high school. Since she had not learnt

Afrikaans while living in Swaziland, Susan pleaded with the principal to allow her to replace Afrikaans with Business Economics. However, the school did not have a Business Economics teacher and the principal suggested that, as she wanted the luxury of choosing her subjects, she should consider going to an adult learning centre.

When she received the registration papers, Susan boldly registered for Business Economics, rather than Afrikaans. As a result, she had to master the subject through self-study. Some of her peers joined her and soon there were seven or eight learners in her group. The principal was prepared to help them, but owing to his busy schedule he generally relied on Susan to take the lead in the classroom. Susan, who was slightly older than the rest of the group, accepted the role of peer instructor.

This led to her decision to apply for admission to the Teachers' Training College, putting aside her initial desire to become a nurse. She had been drawn to the nursing professions because she was inspired by her aunt who was a nurse. However, when she taught her peers she fell in love with teaching and realised that she was born to teach. Despite her love for teaching she remained unemployed for more than six years after she had qualified. To earn money, she started selling second-hand clothes.

She said that it became a big challenge to get full-time employment. She remembers this as a painful time and although she was hopeful each time she went for an interview, especially because she did well in the interviews, she repeatedly discovered that the post had been awarded to 'someone's relative' soon after the interviews. She decided to return to Swaziland, where she taught for two years while staying with her younger sister. She returned to South Africa, confident that she would be employed after having gained experience as a teacher, but nothing had changed. That was when she decided to teach at ABET centres.

While working at the ABET centres, she started volunteering at a rural school and worked a full year without a salary. She remembers how the principal supported her during this time.

Susan finds teaching in South Africa challenging. Initially she was surprised to discover that very few learners had television sets at home and was horrified to learn that some families were using books as toilet paper. South African teachers have to cope with an ever-changing curriculum, but despite the difficult circumstances, Susan experiences a team spirit in the school. She feels that, considering

the many hours they spend at the school, life would be difficult if she did not have supportive colleagues.

Susan believes that in order to cope, one should always work according to a plan and be passionate about the learners. She remains in teaching because she values the potential in each and every learner – reminding them of the high positions they could one day hold.

1.2 THE CRISES OF TEACHING AND TEACHER ATTRITION

These stories are the result of my curiosity about teachers choosing to remain in the profession despite chronic stressful career circumstances. Newspapers often report on teacher strikes, mentioning their crippling effect on the South African education sector (Capazorio, Bowman, & Olifant, 2010; Cohen, 2010). A teacher with 15 years' experience, whose net income is about R4300⁴ per month, says that she cannot survive and is protesting because she feels oppressed (Cohen, 2010). South African teachers are angered by the offer to increase their salaries by only 7% in 2010 (Capazorio *et al.*, 2010). The teacher protests in South Africa may represent far more than the wage dispute that newspapers report on. McCann and Johannessen (2004) found that unfavourable working conditions and changing systems strain teachers' professional growth and development. They assert that there is an exodus of teachers because of unreasonable workloads, feelings of disparity and unmet needs. According to Strydom, Nortjé, Beukes, Esterhuyse and Van der Westhuizen's (2012) findings, South African teachers are disillusioned with their careers because of their failure to experience personal fulfilment, whereas Rangraje, Van der Merwe, Urbani, Van der Walt (2005) point out that South African teachers believe that teaching will not assist them in achieving their personal potential. Bertram, Appleton, Muthukrishna & Wedekind (2006) found that newly qualified teachers tend to seek better opportunities abroad because they believe that working as a teacher in South Africa is not financially rewarding. This is supported by Black and Hosking (1997) and Peltzer, Shisana, Zuma, Van Wyk & Zungu-Diwayi (2009), who found that South African teachers earned uncompetitive salaries.

Castro, Kelly and Shih (2010) report that several studies indicate that resource-constrained schools and a lack of community-based support and parental involvement, as well as low professional development prospects contribute to high teacher attrition. A compounding issue that deserves to be mentioned is the high incidence of absenteeism in the teaching profession, referred to as hidden attrition (Mulkeen & Crowe-Taft, 2010, p. 41). In many cases the cause of absenteeism is involvement in informal money-generating activities undertaken by teachers while they are still occupying permanent teaching posts (Kadzamira, 2006;

⁴ R4300 is equal to 421.99USD.

Mulkeen & Crowe-Taft, 2010). In addition, absenteeism is high amongst teachers infected by HIV and Aids, which results in increased demands being placed on colleagues who have to teach the classes of absent or sick teachers (Theron, Geyer, Strydom & Delport, 2008). It is estimated that in South Africa between 18 000 and 22 000 (5-6%) teachers annually leave the teaching profession (Shisana, 2005). If this estimate is correct, it means that between 49 and 60 teachers resign every day in South Africa. Although the South African Department of Education (2006) reports that teacher attrition due to retirement, death or medical incapacity is on the rise in South Africa, teachers who resign from the profession generally do so by choice. Similarly, an international task force on teachers for EFA (Education for All) (Mulkeen & Crowe-Taft, 2010) found that voluntary resignation was the greatest cause of teacher attrition in most African countries. Mulkeen and Crowe-Taft (2010) report evidence of teaching being used as a career steppingstone in Ghana, where an in-career education system offers study leave opportunities. This system enables teachers to teach temporarily while studying to qualify for other professions. Rothmann and Hamukang'andu (2013, p. 33) found that Zambian teachers who stop experiencing teaching as psychologically meaningful are prone to burnout. High teacher attrition due to stress, emotional fatigue and other related issues is not only a national concern, but also an international phenomenon (Castro *et al.*, 2010).

International literature indicate that Korean teachers sometimes feel inadequate (Lee & Bang, 2011, p. 391) and American teachers drop out of teaching because of “emotional burnout” (Hong, 2010, p. 1530) or “unpleasant emotions” (Cross & Hong, 2012, p. 957). Namibian teachers also report high levels of emotional exhaustion (Louw, George & Esterhuysen, 2011). Raider-Roth, Stieha and Hensley (2012, p. 500) describe how American teachers disconnect from themselves, or Finnish teachers develop a cynical attitude (Pietarinen, Pyhältö, Soini & Salmela-Aro, 2013, p. 63), thus hindering their resilience, while Mansfield, Beltman, Price and McConney (2012, p. 363) refer to the importance of emotional challenges for Australian teachers. Hashweh (2003, p. 431) found that Palestinian teachers who are not self-reflective struggle to accommodate reform.

It is clear that South African teachers share an international concern regarding teacher retention in high-need areas. A recent South African study on the emotional wellness of teachers (Daniels & Strauss, 2010, p. 1392) indicates the “growing negative, cynical attitude” of high school teachers in the Western Cape. The narratives of teachers participating in this study present a desperate outcry from people who feel under-appreciated and are hampered by feelings of low professional self-worth, as is reflected as follows in the article: “... mostly I’m driven to tears, and feeling totally unappreciated” (Daniels & Strauss, 2010, p. 1385). Another study conducted with 21 307 South African teachers in 2008 also concluded that teachers experience significantly high levels of stress (Peltzer *et al.*, 2009). While on the one hand low self-worth and stress cause teachers to leave there are, on the other hand, teachers who

enter the teaching profession hoping to use teaching as a stepping stone (Mulkeen & Crowe-Taft, 2010).

Although it can be argued that South Africa, an emerging economy, has educational contexts that differ from those in their developed counterparts, such as America and Europe, it should be noted that in some instances there are overlapping factors that characterise educational settings in both established and emerging economies. South Africa shares the following overlapping factors: lack of support, no benefits in teaching career and burnout (Daniels & Strauss, 2010; McCann & Johannessen, 2004; Strydom *et al.*, 2012). To illustrate, Brunetti (2006) concluded that the total lack of support from on-site administration and poor management in American inner-city schools cause teachers to resign prematurely. She (Brunetti, 2006, p. 812) describes the educational setting of inner-city schools in America as “one that serves largely poor, minority students and that is situated in or draws students from economically depressed neighbourhoods”. Guarino, Santibez and Daley (2006) agree that settings such as these are hard-to-staff areas and are considered to be high-need, low-income education settings where teacher attrition is high. Similarly, Castro *et al.* (2010) note that teachers leave for different reasons, e.g. to find careers with better benefits, to have more time for themselves and their families, and to have reasonable workloads and opportunities for professional development. American teachers who teach minority groups in inner-city schools quit the profession because of crime, high unemployment and violence (Brunetti, 2006). In the United Kingdom it was found that teachers suffer burnout, overload and a loss of teacher identity because of imposed governmental policy and ever-changing conditions of service (Kirk & Wall, 2010). Teachers in Hong Kong often feel powerless and excluded, which results in teacher attrition (Bottery, Ngai, Wong & Wong, 2008). Studies undertaken in Australia show that instances of ill-health, stress and burnout are common amongst teachers (Howard & Johnson, 2004), and teachers in the Netherlands also often suffer severe burnout (Rothmann, 2011).

Hurst and Rust (1990, pp. 152-166) note that teachers in developing countries are plagued by three crucial factors: while teachers regard themselves as professionals on a par with doctors, lawyers and accountants, they are generally referred to as *civil servants*; they are exposed to *adverse working conditions* because of poverty, excessive learner-teacher ratios, issues regarding discipline and mounting extra-instructional activities; and teachers bear the brunt of *declining societal status and self-esteem*. These and other issues are highlighted by South African and international researchers alike (Bottery *et al.*, 2008; Brunetti, 2006; Castro *et al.*, 2010; Daniels & Strauss, 2010; Howard & Johnson, 2004; Kirk & Wall, 2010; Peltzer *et al.*, 2009; Rothmann, 2011).

It seems that teachers in South Africa face compounded risk – dealing with an emerging economy as well as associated educational reform. The former Department of Education did

not deny the challenges that many teachers face (Department of Education, 2006). Some of the prominent risk factors identified by the Ministry of Education include fragmented teacher training, teacher shortages and a number of unqualified and under-qualified teachers in the system (Department of Education, 2006). Furthermore, the Department affirms that the South African Education system is plagued by poor infrastructure, limited facilities and inadequate teacher training (Department of Education, 2006). At a societal level, the Department maintains that poverty, unemployment and premature death contribute to the negative status of the education system.

The 2009 report of the National Education Infrastructure Management System (NEIMS) revealed that of the 24 460 schools in South Africa (excluding Special Needs Education), 3603 have no electricity supply; 2444 have no water supply; 970 have no ablution facilities; 2759 have no fencing; 19 239 have no libraries; 20 717 have no laboratories; 18 746 are without computer centres; and 4081 have no sports facilities. Apart from the Department itself reporting on the scarcity of resources, it is widely accepted that the education system in South Africa is resource constrained (Bertram *et al.*, 2006; Bhana, Morrell, Epstein & Moletsane, 2006; Christie, 1999; Cross, Mungani & Rouhani, 2002; Daniels & Strauss, 2010; Hoadley, 2007). Linked to the scarcity of resources is the apparent misalignment of teacher supply and teacher demand. Arends (2011) points out that teachers leaving the profession have outnumber teachers entering the profession, which means that South Africa is faced with a teacher shortage (Arends, 2011; Mulkeen, 2010; Mulkeen & Crowe-Taft, 2010). It seems that *rural areas* are affected the most, with shortages reported in scarce-skills areas (Department of Education, 2006). Furthermore, some scholars critically allude to the actual *failure* of education legislation in rural areas (Balfour, Mitchell & Moletsane, 2008; Harley & Wedekind, 2004; Joseph, 2007). Coupled with the additional problems created by rising poverty levels in rural areas (Stats SA, 2012), it seems that rural schooling in South Africa presents a particular challenge for teachers.

1.3 THE SOUTH AFRICAN EDUCATION LANDSCAPE AS CONTEXTUAL BACKDROP OF THE PARTICIPANTS IN THIS STUDY

As I stated in the onset of this chapter life history requires an awareness of the broader social context within which each of the participants and I, historically lived. In Chapter 3 I explain the importance of understanding life stories in context is the crux of life history work. As a result I compiled a brief factual summary depicting pivotal South African-based historical points at the micro-, macro-, meso- and exo-levels to locate my personal understanding of this study within a temporal context of participants' memories. This summary is by no means a commentary on the complexity of South Africa's history and merely serves as a backdrop to the study. In the process of "minding the context" (refer to Table 1.1) I realised that all the participants

(including myself) were born in the period between the 1950s and late 1970s. Throughout this time the leadership in South Africa vigorously applied legalised apartheid policies while people of colour actively demonstrated their disagreement. During the 1980s, when most of the participants and I were of school-going age, there was an increasing international awareness of, and outcry against the way in which the South African law segregated people on the basis of colour. In the early 1990s, when South Africa became a democratic country, the majority of the participants were, just like me, embarking on their teaching careers through further study. I shall therefore provide a brief overview of apartheid and its effect on education in South Africa, specifically with reference to educational reform and the adversity experienced in developing countries.

As can be seen in Table 1.1, schooling systems are framed by political structures (Morrow, 1989). It is therefore important to understand the sociopolitical landscape of education in South Africa. The former Department of Education maintained that the landscape of teaching is complex due to the legacies of apartheid and constant reform (Department of Education, 2006, p. 6) and stated:

“Most currently serving teachers received their professional education and entered teaching when education was an integral part of the apartheid project and organised in racially and ethnically divided sub-systems. The current generation of teachers is the first to experience the new non-racial, democratic transformation of the education system. Since 1994 they have had to cope with the rationalisation of the teaching community into a single national system, the introduction of new curricula, which emphasise greater professional autonomy and require teachers to have new knowledge and applied competences, including the use of new technologies, and radical change in the demographic, cultural and linguistic composition of our classrooms”.

Forced segregation (or apartheid) between races (specifically driving white or European dominance) was common to most colonised countries (Morrow, 1989; Roberts, 2001; Welsh, 2009). After 1652, when the Dutch arrived in South Africa, racial conflict between the natives (Khoisan and black farmers) and white Dutch farmers grew as they fought over land ownership (Roberts, 2001; Welsh, 2009). In 1806 the interracial conflict over land became more intense as the British overpowered the Dutch (Roberts, 2001; Welsh, 2009). Sixty years later the discovery of diamonds and gold led to the South African War, won by Britain. In 1910 the British handed over the political power to the white South Africans (Roberts, 2001). Despite the changing international opinion (e.g. the banning of segregation in the United States), apartheid was legalised (refer to Table 1.1) in South Africa in 1948 (Booyse & Le Roux, 2010; Roberts, 2001; Welsh, 2009).

Table 1.1: Framing participants' life stories within the broader social context (adapted from Roberts, 2001; Wright, 2012; Unterhalter, 1991; Pretorius, 2010)

Micro-level (Individual)	1940s	1950s	1960s	1970s	1980s	1990s			2000+
Participant 1 Pseudonym: Emma			Born 1965	Young child/School		Studied 1994 – 1996	Qualified 1997	Other employment	Teaching since 2001
Participant 2 Moeketsi				Born 1972	Young child/School		Studied 1993 – 1995	Qualified 1996	Teaching since 1997 Other employment
Participant 3 Pseudonym: Gogo		Born 1957	Young child/School		Teaching since 1980	Studied 1984 – 1985	Qualified 1985	Teaching since 1985	
Participant 4 Pseudonym: Lazarus				Born 1972	Young child/School		Studied 1995 – 1996	Qualified 1997	Other employment Teaching since 2008
Participant 5 Pseudonym: Susan			Born 1965	Young child/School		Studied 1995 – 1996	Qualified 1998	Teaching since 1999	
Researcher				Born 1978	Young child/School			Studied 1996 - 2005	HE Teaching
Critical points in broader social context (South Africa): Socio-political landscape									
	1940s	1950s – 1970s		1980s		1990s			2000+
Exo-level (International) Adapted from South African History Online (http://www.sahistory.org.za) Accessed 30 April 2013		1968 – United Nations countries boycott sanctions 1974 – UN bans SA participation		1981 – International Year of Mobilisation for Sanctions against South Africa 1988 – The International Convention against Apartheid in Sports entered into force.		1991 – The Paris Statement adopted by the Conference called on Pretoria to urgently address the education crisis in South Africa. 1992 – The Conference on Educational Assistance to disadvantaged South Africans was organised in New York by the United Nations Educational and Training Programme for Southern Africa. The Conference focused attention on the requirements for educational assistance to black South Africans during the transition period.			
Macrolevel (National: Socio-political) Adapted from South African History Online (http://www.sahistory.org.za) Accessed 30 April 2013	1948 Apartheid legalised	1950 – Group Areas Act 1951 – Bantu Authorities Act 1952 – Defiance Campaign 1956 – Arrests of anti-apartheid activists 1960 – Sharpeville Massacre 1964 – Nelson Mandela sentenced to life imprisonment 1970 – Bantu Homeland's Citizen Act		1985 – State of emergency in 36 magisterial districts 1989 – Local pressure to stop apartheid because of the costs involved		1990 – Nelson Mandela's release announced 1994 – First democratic election 1996 – One Law for One Nation (Constitution)			National strategic plan (2009)
Mesolevel (National: Edu-political) Adapted from South African History Online (http://www.sahistory.org.za) Accessed 30 April 2013		1953 – Bantu Education Act 1959 – Extension of University Education Act 1974 – Afrikaans Medium Decree 1976 – Soweto Uprising		1981 – De Lange Commission 1983 – White Paper on Education Provision 1985/1988 – Increased expenditure on African Education 1986 – National Education Crisis Committee		1993 – Education Coordination Service (FW de Klerk) 1995 – White Paper on Education and Training (White Paper One) 1996 – Bill of Rights 1996 – South African Schools Act 1997 – Abolition of Corporal Punishment Act			SACE (2000) EduLaw (2002) Action Plan (2014) Schooling (2025)

The subsequent apartheid legislation that was most relevant to the field of education was the Bantu Education Act of 1953, which determined that the curriculum for black schools would differ from that for white schools; that this curriculum would prepare learners for life in the so-called 'Bantustans' (as opposed to the cities, where only whites were allowed); and black learners were taught in their mother tongue (not English) (Booyse & Le Roux, 2010; Roberts, 2001). The essence of the Bantu Education Act is captured in a statement made by the Minister of Native Affairs at the time (Nkabinde, 1997, p. 7):

“There is no place for [the Bantu] in the European community above the level of certain forms of labour ... What is the use of teaching the Bantu child mathematics when it cannot use it in practice? That is quite absurd. Education must train people in accordance with their opportunities in life, according to the sphere in which they live.”

Booyse and Le Roux (2010, p. 49) refer to this kind of education provision commented on by Dr Verwoerd (above) as “education as means of ideological domination”. The government at the time promoted the idea of mother-tongue instruction as part of the development of the African child and initially invested in school infrastructure and higher education (Booyse & Le Roux, 2010), training thousands of teachers. However the maintenance, finance, administration and expansion of black schools were left to the black communities (Booyse & Le Roux, 2010). This *separate but equal* dogma and other political actions were initially met with much resistance in the form of peaceful protests (between 1948 and 1956), but protests gradually became more violent (during the 1960s) (Roberts, 2001) (refer to Table 1.1). A few decades followed by a tug of war during which violent reaction to apartheid was met with more stringent apartheid laws. This continued until 1994, when a new government came to power (refer to Table 1.1) and promised to serve unity, open access and quality (Booyse & Le Roux, 2010).

In the end the problem of education in South Africa extends far beyond “schooling for the oppressed”, and some would say that the “main educational problem in South Africa is ... that of how to deconstruct [and consequently *adapt*] the visions [South Africans have] about themselves and what they rightly deserve” (Morrow, 1989, pp. 177-178). I take it that Morrow (1989, p. 178) referred to both black and white South Africans receiving a kind of “inferior” education. Whites were politically “insulated”, while blacks were indoctrinated to accept white superiority. As Soudien (2012, p. 5) aptly puts it:

“to be human in South Africa is obviously shaped by our history but that this history is about a great deal more than race [is his argument]. The substance of our humanity is an immense psychosocial question and arises directly out of how we as South Africans have conquered and subjugated each other”.

Morrow and Soudien's writings alike put me in two minds as a white South African. In undertaking this study I have to unpack my own education, accept the gaps, move through the emotions, all the while dealing with my participants' past (which I have no idea of) ... in trying to be an accountable social researcher, will I fail the participants or in trying to account for subjectivity, will I fail the research process?

Researcher Diary, 10 August 2011

Booyse and Le Roux (2010, p. 59) wrote: “The past cannot be changed; we can, however, learn from the past and move on.” I believe that learning from the past signifies thought and reflection while moving on supposes action, and more specifically *adaptation to chronic challenges*.

Table 1.1 indicates a fast-paced education reform agenda. According to Morrow (1989, p. 1), “the chronic and acute crisis in South African schooling is not like a flat tyre, or even simply a badly-adjusted tappet, it is more like the main bearing seizing up”. Morrow’s analogy was initially published some 14 years prior to the birth of South African democracy, yet he served as a Nostradamus for education. Despite the new government’s pledge to “create a system for the whole nation based on democratic principles”, the road to “a new dispensation” has been difficult (Booyse & Le Roux, 2010, pp. 52, 56). Rust and Dalin (1990) remark that improving education implies reform, whereas Booyse and Le Roux (2010) point out that education, continuity and reform are always in tandem. I therefore ascribe the difficulty of travelling the new road to democracy to constant reform. I agree with the Department of Education’s assertion that the biggest challenge in education is still the dismantling of the apartheid inheritance. Therefore I realise that the landscape of teaching, more so than in most other careers, is tapered with adversity because of South Africa’s sociopolitical past and consequent efforts to move forward through dedicated chronic challenges. To extend Morrow’s analogy of bearings that have seized up one could say that if the faulty bearings are not attended to, the result will be worse destruction and agony, therefore adaptation is vital. Thus, unfortunately for grassroots teachers, improving education meant exposure to constant adversity because of continuous reform for the next 20 odd years as the wheels of democracy turned slowly, carving their way through unknown territory. Some prominent changes in the landscape of education in South Africa are presented in Table 1.2.

Table 1.2: Prominent changes in the landscape of education since 1994 (adapted from Booyse & Le Roux, 2010, pp.51-54)

Change	From	To
Redistribute decision-making power	19 racially, ethnically and regionally divided departments of education	Single national department administratively managed by 9 provincial subsystems and elected school governing bodies
Extend access to education	Poor school attendance	Ten years' free and compulsory education
Non-discriminatory school environments	Segregated access Racial integration not allowed	A constitutional right to basic education Equal access to educational opportunities The right to be instructed in an official language of choice The right to freedom of conscience, belief expression and association No admission tests allowed May not refuse admission if parents are not able to pay school fees
Re-orientation of financial policies	Unequal distribution	Redistribution of public funds towards the most needy sections of the school systems School nutrition schemes Transport subsidies Pro-poor funding policy (poverty index); Fee-free schools (40% of schools in SA receiving all their funding from the state)
Improve general quality of education	Different curricula for different races (Bantu Education Act)	C2005 (1997) – Linked to social justice, human rights, equity and development; learner centred; activity-based; learning facilitation. RNCS (2004) – Strong conceptual knowledge and critical awareness of the social, moral, economic and ethical issues in SA; addressing skill-shortages in SA (Life orientation, mathematics and two languages become compulsory). CAPS (2012) – Improve implementation of RNCS a single comprehensive Curriculum and Assessment Policy document replaces Subject Statements, Learning Programme Guidelines and Subject Assessment Guidelines in Grades R-12.

Table 1.2 clearly shows the five major areas of educational reform in the post-apartheid South African education system. Dalin (1990) points out that most governments use a conventional change model, since such a model defines a process of development *and* implementation and is goal directed. In choosing such a model, a government assumes consensus, and that everyone, especially the teacher, will benefit. Finally, the model highlights a fit between traditional and new practice. However, a traditional change model neglects to involve the grassroots teacher as a valued partner and teachers therefore often feel like the “target of change” (Dalin, 1990, p. 236).

I argue that the five major educational changes highlighted in Table 2.1, which have been implemented since 1994, possibly consistently placed the South African teacher at the grassroots level “at the end of the change-chain” (Dalin, 1990, p. 237). The redistribution of the decision-making power possibly leaves teachers feeling that they are at the mercy of provincial stakeholders and parents (Cross & Hong, 2012). It is possible that the extension of access to education filled up and overcrowded classrooms (Daniels & Strauss, 2010), and perhaps the introduction of rights into education further disempowered teachers who were already finding it difficult to discipline young people (Aitken & Harford, 2011; Rawatlal & Petersen, 2012). A further possibility that should be considered is that the distribution of financial support to learners left an inadequate budget for uplifting the professional status of teaching in terms of salaries (Lethoko, Heystek & Maree, 2001; Olivier & Venter, 2003; Peltzer *et al.*, 2009). Added to all this there is the constant curriculum reform, which feasibly attributes to excessive stress and teacher burnout (Daniels & Strauss, 2010; Howard & Johnson, 2004; Peltzer *et al.*, 2009; Rothmann, 2011). Rust and Dalin (1990, p. 320) write that “the best of ideas, programs, and practices are doomed to fail unless desired change is properly understood and managed”. I do not believe that post-apartheid educational reform attempts have failed, but it does seem to me that teachers find it difficult to manage the chronic adversity they experience in a developing country with an emerging economy.

1.4 RATIONALE FOR A STUDY ON TEACHER RESILIENCE

Williams (2003) and Brunetti (2006) found that, despite the risks explained above, some teachers choose to remain in the teaching profession. Why do teachers stay? Most *fulfilled* teachers will tell you that their career satisfaction stems from strong interpersonal motivation (Brunetti, 2006; Fritz & Smit, 2008; Gu & Day, 2007; Stanford, 2001; Williams, 2003). Teachers explain that their happiness in the teaching profession is the result of being given an opportunity to have a career that they feel they were *called* to do, regardless of whether they teach underprivileged children or are working towards achieving social justice (Brunetti, 2006; Fritz & Smit, 2008). In addition to displaying intrapersonal strength, many teachers who choose to continue in the teaching profession describe how they rely on protective resources. In this regard, Stanford (2001) found that teachers get comfort in and are supported by colleagues, their church and their families. Similarly Castro *et al.* (2010) report on how the support received from colleagues and administrative staff contributes to teachers’ self-preservation. Brunetti (2006) confirms this by pointing out the invaluable motivation offered by support staff to teachers who remain in the profession, and further identifies how these teachers share a common love for and commitment to their students. Earlier I stated that up to 6% of teachers resign every year in South-Africa (Department of Education, 2006; Shisana, 2005). Clearly many more choose to remain in the profession, and there may be hundreds of personal and professional reasons why they choose to remain in the teacher corps. They stay

on and continue to develop, despite the fact that they are among the lowest-paid employees and have to cope with high levels of stress in resource-constrained contexts (Peltzer *et al.*, 2009). This can be construed as teacher resilience (Brunetti, 2006; Castro *et al.*, 2010; Fritz & Smit, 2008).

As described above teachers often enter the profession with a desire to invest in young people, to develop their minds and enrich their lives (Brunetti, 2006; Mestry, 1999). In many cases one may find that *spirited* teachers lose their motivation after a few strenuous years in the profession (Brunetti, 2006). Teachers who suffer burnout and mental exhaustion may decide to exit the profession as soon as possible (Jackson & Rothmann, 2005a). In the light of this reality, I became intrigued by what it is that drives teachers who choose to remain committed to the profession, i.e. their career resilience. I wondered: if the literature shows that teachers are desperate and dissatisfied (Daniels & Strauss, 2010) but remain in the profession anyway (Castro *et al.*, 2010), what is it that sustains this resilience? Based on the assumption that teachers remain in the profession because of resilience, the primary research question guiding this study is:

How can insight into sustained teacher resilience in a resource-constrained rural school broaden our knowledge of teacher resilience?

To unpack the primary research question, I formulated the following secondary questions:

- How do teachers experience teaching in a resource-constrained rural school over time?
- How do teachers in a resource-constrained rural school conceptualise their own teacher career resilience?
- Which risk factors to teacher career resilience do teachers encounter in a resource-constrained rural school over time?
- Which protective resources do teachers in a resource-constrained rural school identify retrospectively?
- How do teachers in a resource-constrained rural school sustain teacher career resilience?

The purpose of this study was to gain an in-depth understanding of whether or not, and how teachers in a resource-constrained rural school sustain their motivation in and commitment to teaching over a life-span. More specifically, I aimed to explore how teachers experience teaching in a resource-constrained rural school, how they conceptualise their teacher career resilience, and how this resilience has been promoted over a life-span within the context of their specific work-life balance.

As a fieldworker in the FLY (Flourishing Learning Youth) project⁵ I became acquainted with the teachers at a rural school in Mpumalanga. I formulated my research questions while observing the optimistic attitudes displayed by teachers despite (to my mind) their less than optimal circumstances (refer to my diary entry dated 3 May 2012 and photographs of the school and context).

Sjoe what a long drive from where we stay...almost 45 minutes from civilization that I am aware of...along the road I saw young mothers with small children waiting for taxis. We passed the urban schools and they seem to have similar things to the naked eye: playground, sports grounds, and buildings. But when we went onto the dirt road I became more aware of the rurality and remoteness...cattle roam freely. Not many cars are visible. Only one small town in-between where we stay and the school. Lots of people walking between settlements. The girls' and boys' bathrooms are ugly and dirty – no running water – I was almost too scared to go – how does the kids feel about this I wonder? – in fact I turned around and asked if I could use the staff bathroom – where I met the “bucket system” (buckets of water – because most days no water available).
Researcher Diary, 3 May 2012



Photograph 1.1
The grounds of the rural school and surroundings are desolate



Photograph 1.2
Resources are available, but scarce in the rural school



Photograph 1.3
Livestock roam the school grounds, and signify the agricultural nature of the school community



Photograph 1.4
Classrooms in the rural school are bare and in disrepair

⁵ FLY (Flourishing Learning Youth), a longitudinal NRF-funded project (National Research Foundation Grant: 82620, CEC12091412827) embedded in an academic service learning module, with L. Ebersöhn as the principal investigator.

1.5 CONCEPTUALISATION

In Chapter 2, I discuss a conceptual framework. I highlight and clarify the following concepts for their significant meaning in this specific study:

1.5.1 RESILIENCE, TEACHER RESILIENCE, CAREER RESILIENCE AND TEACHER CAREER RESILIENCE

Masten and Reed (2005) explain, and this is reiterated by Theron (2011), that the occurrence of resilience depends on the presence of two conditions: first, a person is at risk when facing considerably adverse circumstances; and second, a person shows adaptation and stress management, or develops positively despite the significant risk faced. For the purpose of this study, I agree with Windle (2010) who views resilience in people (teachers, in this study) as the ability to negotiate and to adapt to or manage stress and trauma by utilising protective factors (individual, life and environment assets). I concur with Day *et al.* (2006), who conceptualise teacher resilience as the teacher's degree of commitment to the teaching profession. This furthermore aligns with Windle's (2010) ideas about being able to adapt and manage stress, which was referred to earlier. London's (1983) original descriptions of career resilience are built on the personality dimension (internal factor or personality dimension) of teacher resilience. Since there is no formal definition available of teacher career resilience I draw from the above conceptualisations by Windle (2010), London (1983) and Day *et al.* (2006). For the purpose of this study I view teacher career resilience as: teachers who are able to negotiate, or manage a stressful education setting, and who choose to stay committed to the teaching profession by utilising and sustaining protective factors (individual, life and environment assets) and adapting or re-defining themselves as teacher-workers despite unfavourable and in many cases scarce resource rural education settings they work in. I have chosen teacher career resilience as a multidimensional conceptual model.

1.5.2 RISK FACTORS AND PROTECTIVE RESOURCES

A risk factor is a characteristic (related to a group or situation) that predicts adversity (Masten & Reed, 2005). Examples of risk factors include stressful life events, poverty, unemployment and co-workers' negative attitudes (Collard, Epperheimer & Saign, 1996; Ebersöhn, 2006; Masten & Reed, 2005). Masten and Reed (2005) define protective *factors* as characteristics (related to a group or situation) that predict a constructive outcome in the context of adversity. In following Ebersöhn and Ferreira (2012) and Ebersöhn's (2006) ideas that protection against risk factors are systemically embedded and includes assets or resources, I have chosen to use the term *protective resources*. Examples of protective resources include social capital, material capital, personal strengths or supportive caregivers (Ebersöhn, 2006).

1.5.3 SUSTAIN/SUSTAINED/SUSTAINING AS IT PERTAINS TO RESILIENCE

Pollock and Whitelaw (2005) highlight the ongoing developmental process that *sustainability* proclaims. Day and Gu (2009, p. 424) formulate sustainability in terms of resilience and maintain that “the capacity to manage the interaction between [dimensions], therefore, was key to teachers’ abilities to *sustain* their commitment and effectiveness, that is, to be resilient”. However, another study by Day (2008) indicates that teachers’ commitment is more under strain when they teach in disadvantaged schools and that the effectiveness of the teacher does not always develop over time, which indicates a variance in sustainability over time. Vanderbilt-Adriance and Shaw (2008, p. 47) agree that there is a “decreased likelihood of sustained resilience over time, particularly in the context of higher risk”. Therefore, in the context of this study, sustaining refers to rural teachers’ *continuous* and *enduring* commitment to the teaching profession over time.

1.5.4 TEACHING TEACHERS’ EXPERIENCES AND CONCEPTUALISATIONS

Since I view teachers not only as humans, but also as workers/employees, I was interested in teachers who are active in the profession and at the schools where they are employed, in other words, teachers who are still employed and teach a subject at a school. According to Day *et al.* (2006) teachers, as professionals, develop an integrated **but** fluid identity (work-related and personal). This integration can be explained as the act during which a meeting takes place between *teaching* as an art and teaching as a science (Olivier, 2012). Thus, teachers are not only civil servants; they are core employees (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011) that engage in emotional labour (Kirk & Wall, 2010). As core employees they have skills and knowledge sets that are essential to facilitate learning (focusing the activities of the organisation). However, in recent years (as demonstrated by many researchers), their unstable identity has led to teachers experiencing a disconnect between their sense of service and their “assigned role”, i.e. finding a fit between their personal values and work-related obligations (Day & Gu, 2007, 2009; Kirk & Wall, 2010; Woods & Carlyle, 2002; Woods & Jeffrey, 2002, p. 96).

I regard teachers’ interactions with the systems around them as their experience. According to the systems theory, an individual is a system that interacts with other systems represented by friends, family, community and society (Donald, Lazarus & Lolwana, 2010). An understanding of the *interdependence* between the different systems assists in the exploration of the bi-directional *influence* of a particular context on an individual and *vice versa* (Donald *et al.*, 2010; Theron, 2011). By using a life history design, this influence between context and individual can be explored and recorded as the particular *experiences* of teachers (Goodson &

Gill, 2011; Goodson & Sikes, 2001). Since I was interested in the particular experiences of teachers it follows that I wanted to foreground their voices (Gill & Goodson, 2010). Therefore I listened carefully for the appropriate moment to enquire whether they actually believed that they demonstrate teacher resilience and to determine to what they ascribed their resilience. In so doing I aimed at authentic, process-driven conceptualisations or personal reflections on how the teachers viewed their own teacher resilience.

1.5.5 RESOURCE-CONSTRAINED RURAL SCHOOL

In this study, the term resource-constrained rural school refers to an adverse context that is characterised by schools with limited resources, ranging from basic resources (water and electricity) to sophisticated resources (computer and laboratory facilities), as well as geographic remoteness from a metropolitan area, which would obviously make access to resources even more problematic (Ebersöhn, 2013).

1.5.6 A RETROSPECTIVE STUDY/IDENTIFY RETROSPECTIVELY

Huberman, Grounauer and Marti (1993) observe that teaching as a profession is a way of life. It follows that in this study the concept *over time* refers to the *personal* and *career* histories of the participants. An understanding of the participants' personal and career histories provided the researcher with an opportunity to gain insight into personal meaning making (Mertens, 2010). Personal meaning making over time relates to Super's life-span approach to career development (Watson & Stead, 2006), the concept of *change over time* in the Systems Theory Framework (Patton & McMahon, 1999) and Bronfenbrenner's (2005) concept of temporality.

For the purpose of this study, I have used Cohen *et al.*'s (2011, p. 19) description of retrospective meaning giving: "one can only impute meaning to [lived experiences] retrospectively, by the process of turning back on oneself and looking at what has been going on." In line with the concept of *over time*, as discussed earlier this study, I use a life history design in this study (Roberts, 2002). Life history design is based on the reflexivity of the participants in context resulting in a retrospective investigation (Roberts, 2002).

Figure 1.1 summarises the paradigmatic lenses and research methodology that was used. A detailed discussion of the paradigmatic choices I made is presented in Chapter 3.

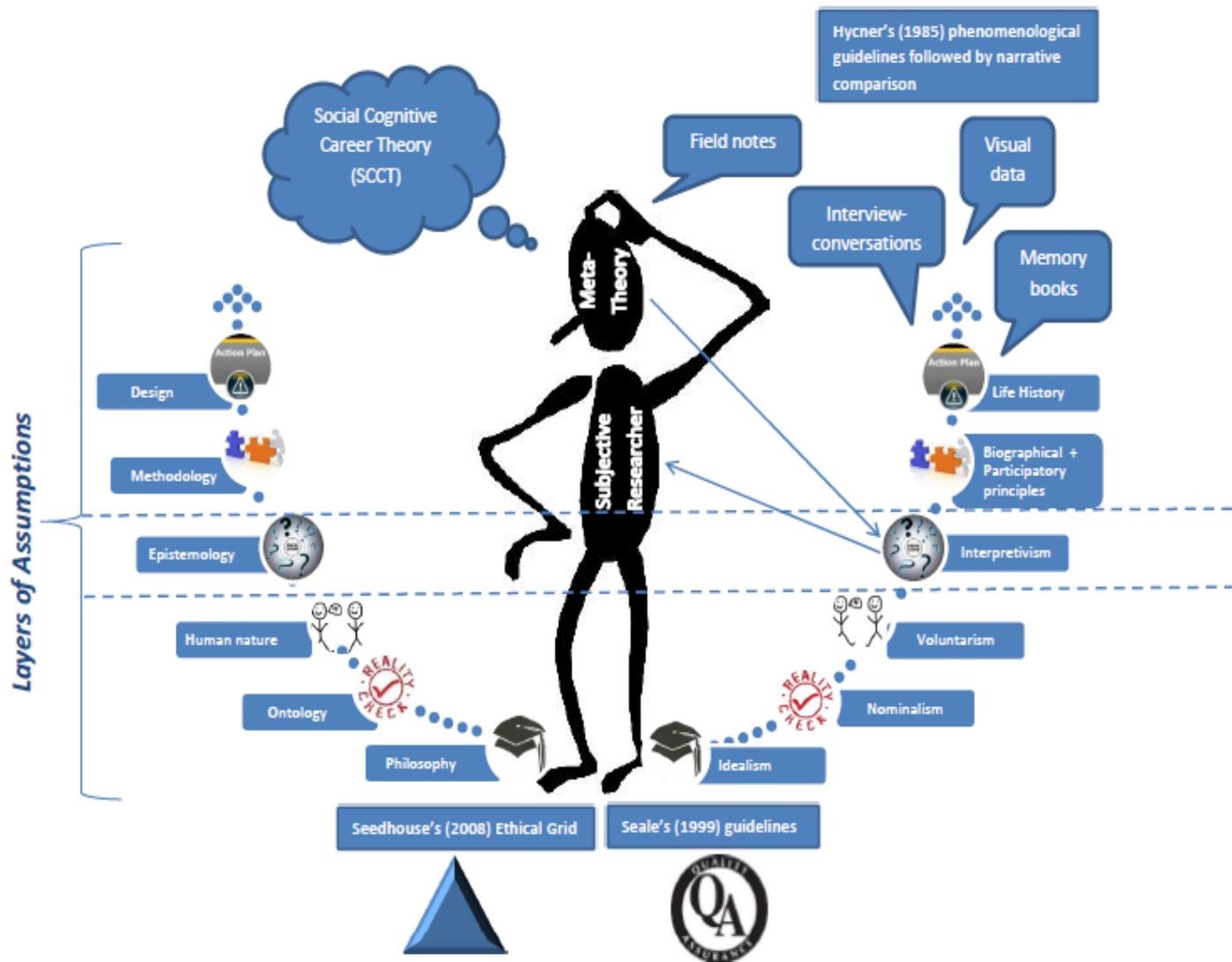


Figure 1.1: My research decisions on paradigmatic lenses and research methodology

1.6 PARADIGMATIC LENSES AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

As indicated in Figure 1.1, I ground myself in a philosophy of idealism and belief in nominalism and voluntarism (Cohen *et al.*, 2011), therefore I chose to work from an interpretivist position (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003). To answer the research questions, I implemented participatory principles (Atkinson, 2005; Chappel, 2000; Thomson & Holland, 2005) and was guided by a life history design (Cole & Knowles, 2001; Goodson & Gill, 2011) situated in biographical research (Bhana *et al.*, 2006; Miller, 2000). I used Seedhouse's (2008) Ethical Grid and Seale's (1999) guidelines to ensure a safe and trustworthy study.

I was concerned with the individuality of each participant's life story (Cohen *et al.*, 2011) and interested in their subjective life experiences (Maree & Van der Westhuizen, 2010). I also wanted to determine how their actions demonstrated teacher resilience throughout their life journeys (Fossey *et al.*, 2002). I therefore gathered data through interview-conversations, participant-generated photographs (visual data), memory books and field notes. I took a

guided analysis approach, analysing the data sets using Hycner's (1985) phenomenological guidelines and comparing co-constructed narratives. I chose the Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) (Lent, Brown & Hackett, 2002) as theoretical framework. I discuss the SCCT next.

1.7 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: SOCIAL COGNITIVE CAREER THEORY (LENT *et al.*, 2002)

I selected the SCCT as the master theory (refer to Figure 1.1) because of its relevance to the South African context (Watson & Stead, 2006) and its fit with the bodies of knowledge included in this study (refer to Chapter 2). In particular, the SCCT recognises the importance that factors in the environment play when the career paths of individuals unfold (Watson & Stead, 2006; Lent *et al.*, 2002). In addition it recognises the importance of context or ecology which coincides with studies on resilience (Masten, 2012; Ungar, 2011). What attracted me to the SCCT was the theory's inclusion of complexity and connectivity in career development (Lent *et al.*, 2002).

The SCCT was developed from Bandura's (1987) social cognitive theory. Drawing from Bandura's ideas, the SCCT emphasises how a person's self-directed thoughts interact with the environment, and how this interaction may influence personal behaviour, which will in turn again influence the environment (Lent, *et al.*, 2002; Watson & Stead, 2006). Another distinctive theoretical underpinning of the SCCT, according to Lent *et al.* (2002), is that the SCCT recognises the capacity of individuals to change, to develop over time, and to regulate their thoughts, emotions and behaviour. In Figure 1.2 I provide an overview of the SCCT's key theoretical constructs.

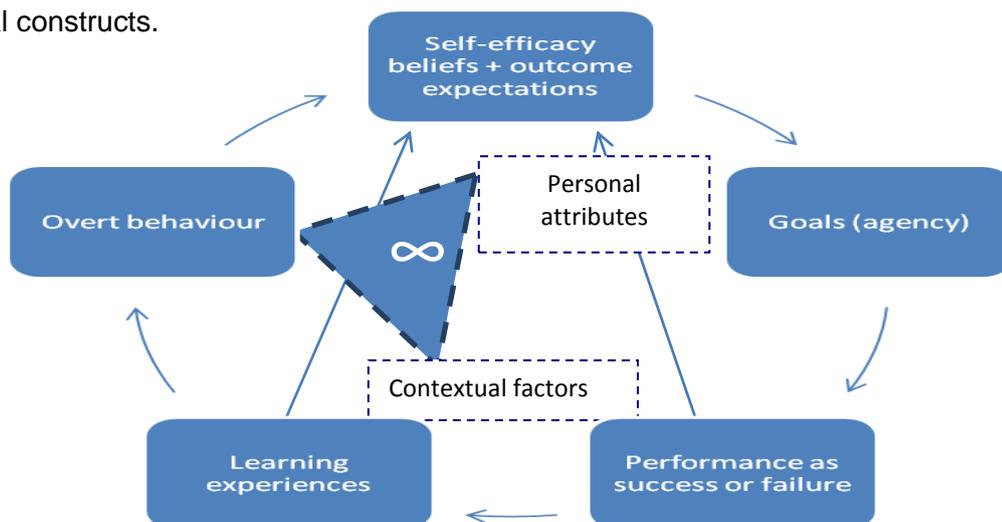


Figure 1.2: The SCCT (adapted from Lent *et al.*, 2002)

As depicted in Figure 1.2, the idea of interrelatedness between attributes, environment and behaviour (triadic reciprocity) is central to the SCCT (represented by the triangle in the middle). The interconnected influence is mutual (represented by dashed lines) and ever-evolving (represented by the infinite sign). The cycle of influence spirals further to how people perceive their own abilities to perform (self-efficacy beliefs) and what they believe the outcome of their performance will be (outcome expectations). The forward-moving circle shows how the act of taking ownership can enable a person to organise and sustain certain behaviour (goals). A feedbackloop then develops, whereby people learn from perceiving their performances as either successful or not. Learning from experience feeds back to self-efficacy beliefs and outcome expectations, but also impact on the person's behaviour. The impact on behaviour then forms another innerloop (the triangle), which in again influences the environment. It is this important aspect of mutual and escalating influence that I would like to put forward as the crux of understanding teachers in their settings.

I will refer more extensively to the broader bodies of knowledge, resilience, teacher resilience and career resilience in Chapter 2. However, I include a brief application of the SCCT to the broader field of resilience in this chapter, where I recognise Tugade and Frederickson's (2007) positive emotion building as positive-outcome expectations (Lent *et al.*, 2002). Furthermore, the triadic reciprocity reflects Ungar's (2011) description of resilience building as a transactional process. The importance of individual agency (career self-reliance and goals) is equally highlighted in resilience work, specifically referring to Ungar's (2011) assertion that navigation implies agency. It follows that in managing changing careers people may require self-efficacy (Brown, 1996; Collard, Epperheimer & Saign, 1996; Rickwood, 2002; Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011; Waterman, Waterman & Collard, 1994; Wessels, 1999). In Table 1.3 I draw a comparison between the SSCT and career resilience thinking in an attempt to build my ideas of an emerging construct, teacher career resilience.

Table 1.3: Comparing the SCCT with career resilience

Social Cognitive Career Theory (Lent <i>et al.</i> , 2002)	Career resilience (Byster, 1998; Collard <i>et al.</i> , 1996; London, 1983; Rickwood, 2002)
Triadic reciprocity Interrelatedness between attributes, environmental aspects and behaviour	Career resilience requires interconnectedness (Collard <i>et al.</i> , 1996; Byster, 1998; Rickwood, 2002), as well as individual attributes (London, 1983)
Self-efficacy beliefs Individuals' beliefs regarding their own capabilities to act and succeed	To foster career resilience individuals are the primary architects of their lives and driven by their core values (Byster, 1998). Being future-focused through analyses of trends (Collard <i>et al.</i> , 1996). High self-efficacy (subdomain identified by London [1983]).

Social Cognitive Career Theory (Lent <i>et al.</i> , 2002)	Career resilience (London, 1983; Collard <i>et al.</i> , 1996; Byster, 1998; Rickwood, 2002)
Outcome expectations Individuals' beliefs regarding the result of an action	A person with career resilience exerts self-confidence and internal control in overcoming barriers to goals (London, 1983).
Goals Individuals take personal agency	In order to develop career resilience, individuals accommodate change while maintaining their personal goals (Byster, 1998) and career self-reliance (Collard <i>et al.</i> , 1996).

I highlight one aspect that seems to feature strongly in all three bodies of knowledge, namely self-efficacy. Rothmann (2011) writes that self-efficacy (as an individual factor that promotes career satisfaction) reflects a positive belief that success will be achieved and therefore it drives action. I note that what London (1993) call self-confidence, what Huberman (1993) refers to as the virtuous circle and what Steffy (1989) describes as self-actualisation all point to self-efficacy. As part of London's (1983) description of career motivation he describes workers with *self-confidence* as having a "belief in themselves and their ability to control their environment and achieve their goals" (London & Mone, 1987, p. 5).

Huberman (1993) notes that teachers' self-confidence will increase when they feel good about themselves, their interactions with students and their contact with colleagues. He calls this a "virtuous circle" of continuous positive self-perception (Huberman, 1993, p. 204). Steffy (1989, p. 23) explains the virtuous circle as "feelings of positive self-worth as a professional" and calls it self-actualisation. Despite the different concepts mirroring the same phenomenon, I conclude that an important aspect of career resilience, teacher resilience and resilience is the ability to reappraise the self and the work situation (Rutter, 2012) with confidence (Day & Gu, 2007) or self-efficacy (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011). Furthermore, I posit that adding the dimension of career resilience to teacher resilience potentially adds to this knowledge base.

1.8 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The key findings based on my study are summarised in Table 1.4. A detailed discussion of my findings is presented in Chapter 6.

Table 1.4: Summary of findings

<i>Findings related to existing knowledge</i>	<i>Findings that appear novel</i>
<p><i>Compared to other teachers globally and locally, participating teachers in rural South Africa:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. face similar current adversities in the teaching profession such as the lack of resources and an unstable education system 2. face similar career-span adversities in the teaching profession such as personal hardship 3. use similar internal protective resources in their current teaching practice such as creative problem solving, having values in education, and a positive attitudes, and spirituality 4. use similar internal protective resources over their career-span such as empathy, the will to learn, and having a sense of accomplishment 5. use similar external protective resources in their current teaching practice such as networking, collegiality, and being encouraged by school leadership, as well as family support 6. use similar external protective resources over their career-span such as being supported by their marital partners 7. use similar adaptive coping strategies such as problem solving, strategizing, cognitive restructuring and emotional regulation 8. also remain in teaching because of a service-anchor 	<p><i>Different to what was found internationally regarding teacher resilience, participating teachers in rural South Africa:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. face additional adversities namely the illiteracy of learner’s parents, demotivated learners negative peers in larger teacher fraternity, and chronic poverty 2. use their own life experiences(teacher nostalgia) such as memories of their own teachers and coming from rural areas themselves, as protective resources <i>rather</i> than engaging in mentoring and induction practices as protective resources; furthermore teacher nostalgia seem to facilitate adaptive coping rather than creating resistance to change 3. use personal agency and initiative in solving problems <i>instead</i> of external bodies, as protective resource over time 4. use spontaneous informal collaborative peer discussions as external protective resource <i>rather</i> than formally organised discussions with peers in current teaching practice 5. use and extend their adaptive coping toolkit using collective problem solving on a day-to-day basis <i>instead</i> of working in solitude and planning ahead 6. <i>rather</i> use adaptive coping strategies such as positive reappraisal and optimism rather than maladaptive coping such as avoidance, distancing or aggression 7. entered the teaching profession as a result of socio-political and financial influences, chance happenings and the influence of significant own teachers <i>rather</i> than choosing teaching as a career because of quality of life and, time for family

1.9 OUTLINE OF CHAPTERS

In this chapter I presented the life stories of the five participants and discussed the rationale for the study. I then contextualised the career lives of teachers in South Africa. In an effort to understand the depth of resilience as it pertains to the teaching career it was necessary to unpack the historical influences to which South African teachers have been exposed over time. I presented a succinct factual summary of the sociopolitical influence of apartheid on education and discussed the difficulties subsequently experienced by teachers in an emerging economy. I formulated the research questions and briefly discussed the selected methodology and conceptual framework. I concluded this chapter with a discussion of the research setting, ethical considerations and a brief overview of the findings.

In Chapter 2 I present my position towards and review recent literature on resilience, teacher resilience, career resilience and resource-constrained rural schools as adverse environments. I present a conceptual framework that includes constructs related to resilience, teacher resilience and career resilience with a life-span career-development approach, which constitutes my theoretical thinking of a conceptual framework on teacher career resilience.

Chapter 3 contains a discussion of biographical research as methodological choice. I explain how I implemented life history design by following participatory principles, highlighting the challenges I faced and the counter measures I took. I also describe how I documented and analysed the data.

In Chapter 4 I present the results of the study. Themes 1, 2 and 3 are discussed in the form of direct quotations from conversations with participants, excerpts from memory books, photographs and diary inscriptions (researcher). I focus on confirmations, contradictions, silences and new insights.

I continue to present the results of the study in Chapter 5. Here, I discuss Themes 4 and 5 and support my discussions with direct quotations from conversations with participants, excerpts from memory books, photographs and diary inscriptions (researcher). I again focus on confirmations, contradictions, silences and new insights. Theme 5 includes the results from a narrative comparison.

Finally, in Chapter 6 I discuss the possible contributions and limitations of the study. I revisit the research questions, theorise the concept *teacher career resilience*. I conclude with recommendations for further research and current practice.

---oOo---

“We teach who we are in times of darkness as well as light. In the middle of my year at Berea, in the small hours of a sub-zero January morning I learned that my beloved father suddenly and unexpectedly died. Far removed from the consolation of family and old friends I was devastated. Every day of the second semester at Berea I had to climb a mountain of personal grief and professional failure to drag myself back into the classroom while ‘the courage to teach’ ebbed and flowed in me, mostly ebbing. I would not repeat that year for fame or money, but it left me with a pearl of great price: deepened empathy for teachers whose daily work is as much about climbing a mountain as it is about teaching and learning”.

~ Palmer (2007, p. xi) ~

2.1 INTRODUCTION

I chose this excerpt as my opening text so that I could continuously reflect on the teaching environment in South Africa (also refer to Chapter 1) while discussing three pivotal bodies of knowledge: resilience, teacher resilience and career resilience. My understanding of these concepts is summarised in Figure 2.1.

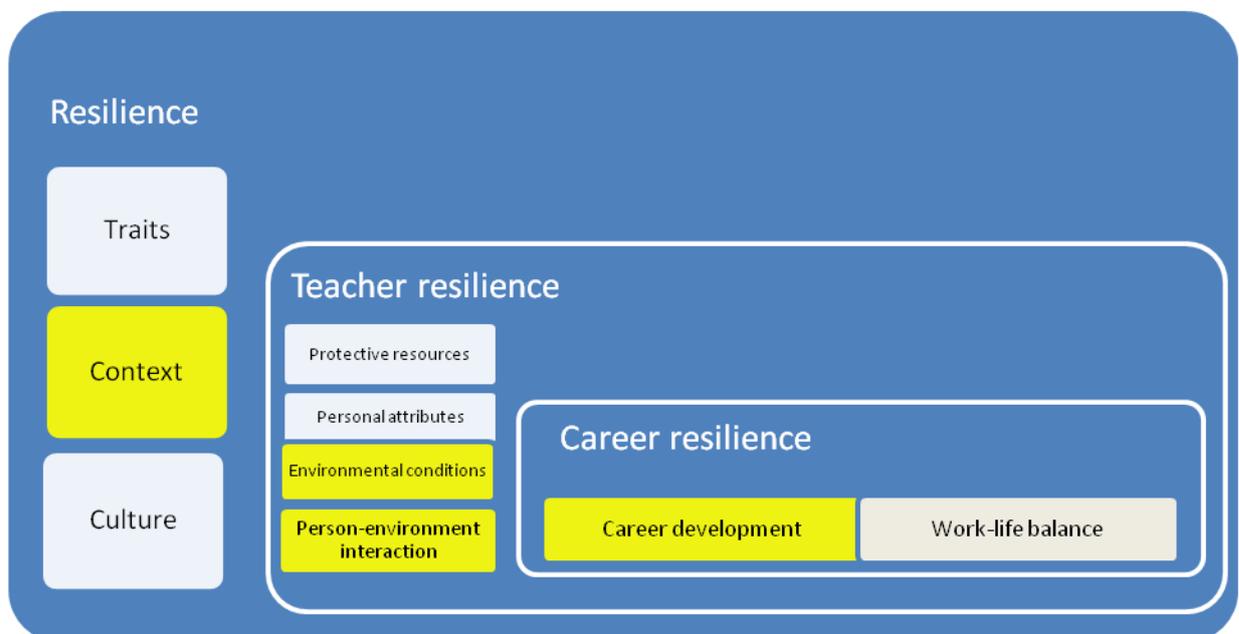


Figure 2.1: A summary of my understanding of resilience, teacher resilience and career resilience

Figure 2.1 shows the interrelatedness of the three bodies of knowledge from which I have drawn in this study. My position with regards to these bodies of knowledge is that the action of

resilient remains a choice that one can make. Resilience, as the broadest body of knowledge, directs the theoretical developments of teacher and career resilience. Although more work has been done on teacher resilience than on career resilience, the importance of career development and work-life balance as part of teacher resilience is foregrounded in current literature. I drew a line (indicated by the yellow blocks) between these bodies of knowledge in situating this study within the “scene” or context of rural education in South Africa. Traits (or personal attributes), culture, protective resources and career development never function independent of the context, which I argue to be central constructs in a conceptualisation of teacher career resilience.

2.2 RESILIENCE

As stated earlier, my position is that being resilient and sustaining the process of resilience is a continuous choice to learn and develop, that is to become better despite an adverse context, or lack of support in order to be of greater good to the global system. Research and scholarly thinking on resilience guide the unfolding of the creation of knowledge about teacher resilience and career resilience. For this reason I include a brief history of research on resilience and current thinking on resilience, and discuss my theoretical understanding of resilience as the background to understanding teacher resilience and career resilience.

2.2.1 A BRIEF HISTORY OF RESEARCH ON RESILIENCE

The word resilience is derived from the Latin word “resile”, which denotes “a *process* of bouncing back, or returning to the original condition” (Strümpfer, 2013, p. 17). Locally (in the South African context) the same notion of “being forbearing, long-suffering, and patient in time of trouble” have typically encouraged people who were part of the apartheid struggle (Strümpfer, 2013, p. 17). The concept of resilience is widely used and known, not only in social science spheres such as education and psychology (Masten, Cutuli, Herbers & Reed, 2009; Strümpfer, 2003, 2013), but also in other fields ranging from operational management, including safety management, engineering (Hollnagel, Woods & Leveson, 2006), physics (Lew, 2001), security, risk and safety consulting (Wessels, 1999) to accident investigation (Hollnagel *et al.*, 2006). However, the pioneering works in the field of developmental psychology (and specifically psychopathology) that were published in the 1970s encouraged the first generation of researchers on resilience, who focused on observing children that succeed despite considerable risk (Masten & Reed, 2005; Masten *et al.*, 2009). Garmezy is said to have had the most prominent influence because of his ideas on the developmental nature of resilience and resilience as a process (rather than traits only) (Rutter, 2012). Refer to Figure 2.2 for my summary of the development in thinking about research on resilience.

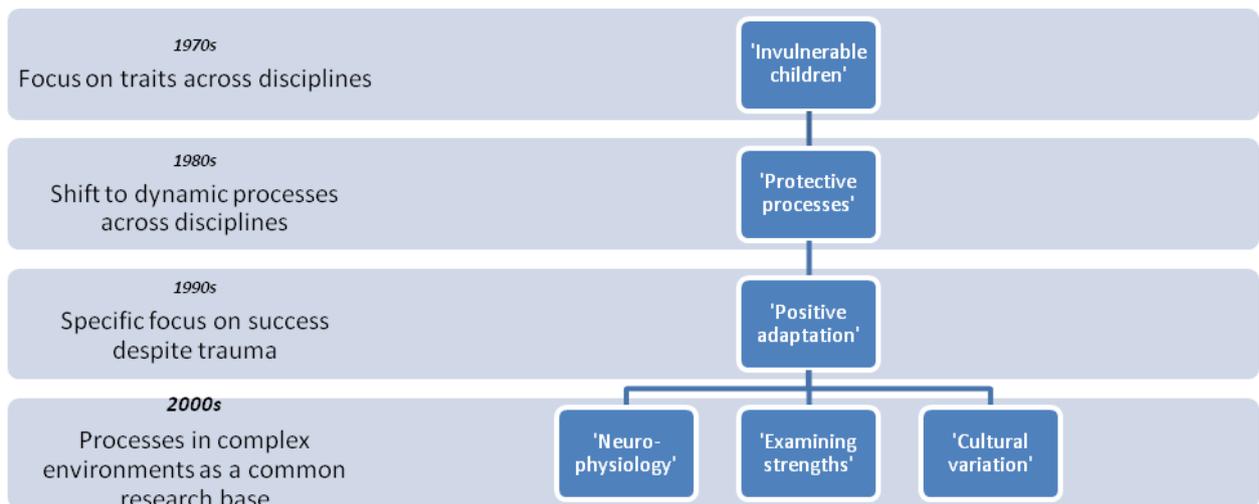


Figure 2.2: History of research on resilience (adapted from Ungar, 2011, pp. 2-4)

Figure 2.2 shows how many social scientists and other researchers globally have provided definitions and debated different views on resilience over time (Bonanno, 2004; Friedman & Martin, 2011; Kumpfer, 1999; Masten & Reed, 2005; Masten *et al.*, 2009; Rutter 2006, 2012; Ryff & Singer 2003; Sumsion, 2003; Ungar, 2011; Windle, 2010). Different disciplines and perspectives within social science, such as developmental psychology, personality psychology and biology, have conceptualised resilience as the ability of a stable person to be stress resistant (Masten & Reed, 2005; Windle, 2010). In this regard Masten (2001), points out how resilience resembles ordinary magic that transpires from normal lives. As depicted in Figure 2.2, a shift in conceptualising and defining resilience as researchable constructs occurred during the 1980s, when theorists considered the dynamism, rather than the static nature, of resilience (Rutter, 2012; Ungar, 2011). Theron (2011) points out how earlier beliefs about the true nature of resilience indicated the apparent indestructible nature of people in adverse circumstances. Our understanding of human resilience as a construct has since evolved (refer to Figure 2.1).

An additional idea comes from Rutter (2006), who suggests that resilience can be revealed by looking at individual reactions as processes of dealing with adversity in context. Rutter (2012, p. 336) emphasises resilience as an “interactive” concept. Therefore the belief that resilience stems primarily from an individual’s internal characteristics is no longer accepted. Theron (2011) and Ungar (2011) explain the expansion of social science researchers’ understanding of resilience by saying that individuals form part of an ecosystem and that they are inclined to use cultural protective factors. Walsh (2007, p. 35) adds another element to the concept of resilience by proposing a “recalibration” facing “unanticipated challenges” and calls it “bouncing forward”.

The idea of recalibration or positive adjustment is not new. As noted earlier, Garmezy, Maston and Tellegen (1984), who worked in the field of developmental psychology, identified three models of resilience: the compensatory model (attention to positive influence that neutralises stressors); the challenge model (past stressors mediate future coping); and the protective factor model (protective factors restrain the effects of risk, thereby changing the outcome). A compensatory model would explain how a “stable” person manages risk; a challenge model would reveal the negotiation process between past experiences and future hope; and a protective factor model would provide insight into resilience processes. However, Rutter (2012, p. 336) argues for a distinction to be made between the fields of human competence, positive psychology, risk and protection, and resilience when investigating resilience. He writes that, depending on the field of study, resilience can be viewed in three ways: “reduced vulnerability to environmental risk experiences” or “overcoming stress or adversity” or experiencing a “relatively good outcome despite risk”. Following Rutter’s (2012) argument I conclude that resilience cannot be described as a concrete phenomenon, instead I believe that resilience is an oscillating concept.

Others agree that resilience as a construct is fluid (Garmezy *et al.*, 1984; Sumsion, 2003). As a result, resilience can be seen as a personality trait (“resilience as a state”), a developmental process (“resilience as a condition”), a learnt skill (“resilience as a practice”) or a combination of these (Benders & Jackson, 2012; Knight, 2007, pp. 546-550). In this regard Masten (1994) distinguishes between static resiliency (individual traits) and dynamic resilience (process oriented). Present-day philosophy on resilience is characterised by the understanding that resilience is a process of risk management and development in spite of adversity (Strümpfer, 2013; Ungar, 2011). Risk management and development occur as a result of complex interactions between a person’s lifespan, life roles, culture and personal beliefs (Mansfield *et al.*, 2012; Ungar, 2011). To illustrate, a concept analysis of resilience resulted in Windle (2010, p. 1) describing human resilience as:

“... the process of effectively negotiating, adapting to, or managing significant sources of stress or trauma. Assets and resources within the individual, their life and environment facilitate this capacity for adaptation and ‘bouncing back’ in the face of adversity. Across the life course, the experience of resilience will vary”.

From Windle’s (2010) description it is clear to me that researchers aim to account for earlier thinking (individual traits) as well as current thinking (resilience as process). However, Ungar (2011, p. 4) points out that the “trait-process debate” causes tension and consequently undermines the potential value that results from resilience-research. Rutter (2012, p. 336, 338) agrees with this when he writes that a focus on influences that “do work differently in the presence of adversity” is needed for rigorous research on resilience and he highlights the importance of a person’s “state of mind”. To balance the trait-process debate I therefore

explored the pioneering work of Frederickson (2004), Ungar (2011), Masten (2012) and Skinner and Zimmer-Gembeck (2011).

2.2.2 IDEAS ON RESILIENCE, POSITIVE EMOTIONS AND COPING

Tugade and Frederickson (2007, p. 319) share insights derived from Masten's (2001) assertion that resilience is ordinary: "resilience may be something that all individuals have capacity to achieve". In line with Frederickson's (2004) broaden-and-build theory, the well-being of people can improve because of flexible attention and thinking (assisted through positive emotions). If positive emotions can become routine, personal resources can increase (Tugade & Frederickson, 2007). In turn, the wealth of positive emotions can be activated during adversity to assist with coping. Tugade and Frederickson (2007) call this resilience. Similarly, in Strümpfer's (2003, 2006, 2013) view, the active process of resiling⁶ supports *strength*. According to Strümpfer (2013, p. 9), fortigenesis or multi-dimensional strength refers to

"... being aware of a demand, a goal, and a direction in which to act ... having the inherent ability and energy to make the effort to do what is required ... requires motivation, determination, steadfastness, and endurance to continue acting, and even recuperate when the potency falters".

In applying these views to the study I undertook, I viewed teachers who resile as following a patterned activity. Thus, in order to maintain awareness (referred to above), the teacher would follow a "pattern of activity" that Strümpfer (2013, p. 17) describes as resilience. I believe that in identifying and understanding this pattern promotes the awareness of resilience as a process that can be reflected on. This coincides with Tugade and Frederickson's (2007) assertion that if happiness becomes routine, coping is increased and consequently resilience is built. In Strümpfer's (2006) earlier work he points out that the term resilience has many different meanings. He argues that the difference between fortigenesis and resilience lies in the fact that the understanding of resilience is divergent (refer to 2.2.1), ranging from "recovery" to "positive coping" to "thriving" (Strümpfer, 2006, p. 30). I summarise my understanding of Strümpfer's (2013) current conceptualisation of resilience in Figure 2.3:

⁶ The verb form of resilience (Strümpfer, 2013, p. 7).

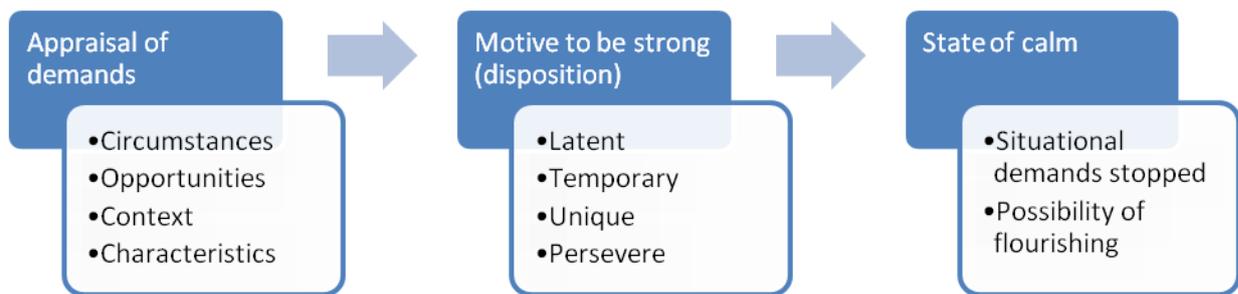


Figure 2.3: My illustration of Strümpfer’s (2013, p. 17) definition of resilience

As pointed out in Figure 2.3, the act of resiliency starts with the individual’s appraisal of the situational demand. The demand is appraised against the specific situation and context, as well as against the opportunities and individual characteristics available to stimulate a motivation to display inner strength (Strümpfer, 2013). Strümpfer (2013) believes that the motive remains a hidden temperament (similar to what Tugade & Frederickson [2007] alluded to earlier) until the appraisal of demand warrants its temporary and unique appearance. However, the motive to be strong will remain active until the demanding situation subsides, and when it does, the person reaches a state of calm (Strümpfer, 2013). He further postulates that, due to the complexity of imaginable variables related to resilience, it is possible that the individual may also have reached personal growth and not just survival (Strümpfer, 2013). This coincides with ideas in the broaden-and-build theory, where effective coping is a result of mental resources gathered as a result of positive emotions (Frederickson, 2004; Tugade & Frederickson, 2007). This means that there is a definite relationship between behaving and thinking optimistically and active resilience. In applying this thinking to my study, the possibility exists that teachers who resile may show positive emotions. Identifying positive emotions is easier when you converse with people and therefore if you can identify the pattern of positive emotions it gives rise to the identification of resilience.

Recent developments in Frederickson’s (2004) theory (Garland, Gaylord & Frederickson, 2011) seem to align with Rutter’s (2012, p. 338) idea of individuals facilitating resilience because of their “state of mind” noted earlier. Garland *et al.* (2011, p. 59) found a link between “dispositional mindfulness”, and the “positive reappraisal” of challenges. They assert that individuals are empowered to re-interpret stressful events through a broadened state of awareness (the practice of mindfulness) to reduce distress (Garland *et al.*, 2011). This ties in with my earlier observation that reflecting on the process of resiliency can build resilience even more. They call this a “mindful coping model” and illustrate the process as an upward spiral, signalling “initial positive emotional experiences [that] predict future positive emotional experiences, in part by broadening cognition and promoting cognitive coping” (Garland *et al.*, 2011, p. 61).

Reflecting on your own ability to remain positive reminds me of positive reappraisal. Garland *et al.* (2011) and Folkman (1997) highlight positive reappraisal as a coping strategy where the individual is actively seeking for meaning in situations. Folkman (2011) writes that coping mechanisms are essential to ensure continued mental and physical health. Combining my understanding of resilience as reflective nature and reappraisal within the context of Ungar's (2011) ecological ideas presented an opportunistic comparison. I have noted the similarity between Folkman's definition of coping and current resilience-thinking (Ungar, 2011). Folkman (2011) refers to coping as a process of protecting individual health against harm which, to my mind, signals a process of facilitated growth amidst the experience of adversity, which is Ungar's (2011) view of resilience (discussed later). Similarly, Skinner and Zimmer-Gembeck (2007, p. 138) point out that, at the deepest level, coping is an "interactional process across real time".

Skinner and Zimmer-Gembeck (2011) highlight the importance of understanding coping as a multi-level phenomenon (combining physiological and sociocultural elements). They relate resilience to coping by referring to relatedness and autonomy as essential resilience processes during coping (Skinner & Zimmer-Gembeck, 2011). These authors argue that seeking social support, negotiating new options and being flexible are part of the adaptive processes that build resilience (Skinner & Zimmer-Gembeck, 2011). These families of coping (Skinner & Zimmer-Gembeck, 2011) signal the importance of interaction between the person and the environment as depicted in SCCT (refer to Chapter 1). Just as the SCCT explains the agency of people in terms of setting goals, Skinner and Zimmer-Gembeck (2011) found that the developmental shifts in means of coping gradually move from action schemas in infancy to coping based on long-term goals in late adolescence. Skinner and Zimmer-Gembeck (2011) further link coping in adulthood and ageing to self-perceived ability when they suggest that older people consolidate control strategies, which possibly leads to increased coping self-efficacy.

Particularly notable in the arguments put forward by Frederickson (2004), Strümpfer (2013), Tugade and Frederickson (2007), and Garland *et al.* (2011) is the focus on individual strengths (highlighting the mind-over-matter coping strategy) and the possibility of the individual flourishing because of the ability to manage reappraised challenges. This reminds me of Rutter's (2012) argument that one way of defining resilience is to look for a *relatively good outcome despite risk*. As noted earlier, and taking my cue from Skinner and Zimmer-Gembeck's (2007, 2011) ideas, I believe that resilience remains a complex concept and warrants multidimensional understanding. The complexity of the concept drove me to further investigate the apparent difficulty in formulating the concept. To further balance the argument

about whether resilience is a trait or a process, or both, Ungar (2011) proposes a social ecologically dependent framework for studying resilience.

2.2.3 AN ECOLOGICAL VIEW OF RESILIENCE ACCORDING TO UNGAR (2008, 2011)

In an attempt to make sense of the person in his or her context, I am encouraged by the ecosystemic perspective. Donald *et al.* (2010) describe the ecosystemic perspective as an integration of ecological theory (core focus on interdependence) and systems theory (core focus on interaction, patterns, cause and effect, goals and values, roles, boundaries and development over time). Ungar (2004a) views the ecological model as being informed by systems theory, thus predicting relationships between risk and protective factors. Risk factors are seen as contextually sensitive and cumulative, whereas resilience factors are neutralising or inoculating agents (Ungar, 2004a).

Bronfenbrenner's (Bronfenbrenner 1979, 2005) model informs the ecosystemic perspective as it emphasises the importance of systems and relationships. Since Bronfenbrenner's revolutionary work many other theorists and researchers have expanded on his ideas. Ungar (2004a) maintains that the ecological theory provides the most prominent discourse on resilience research. I attempted to manage this study by using Sameroff's (2010) ideas. Sameroff (2010, p. 19) presents a "unified theory...[that] combines personal change, contextual, and regulation model[s]". He calls this model the biopsychosocial ecological system. The biopsychosocial ecological system depicts interacting psychological and biological processes, or biopsychological self (Sameroff, 2010). The self, whose internal systems are interdependent, also interacts with and is influenced by the wider settings. When applied to this study and simply put, this means that the individual is not only in transaction with the systems in his or her context, but also with personal systems from within, such as feelings, thoughts and actions. In support of this argument, Theron (2011) and Wood *et al.* (2012) summarise Ungar's (2011) Social Ecological Resilience Theory by saying that the foundations of the resilience framework are reciprocal *actions, reactions and transactions* within an ecosystem. Ungar (2011) based his definition of resilience on said framework. His definition of resilience is illustrated in Figure 2.4.

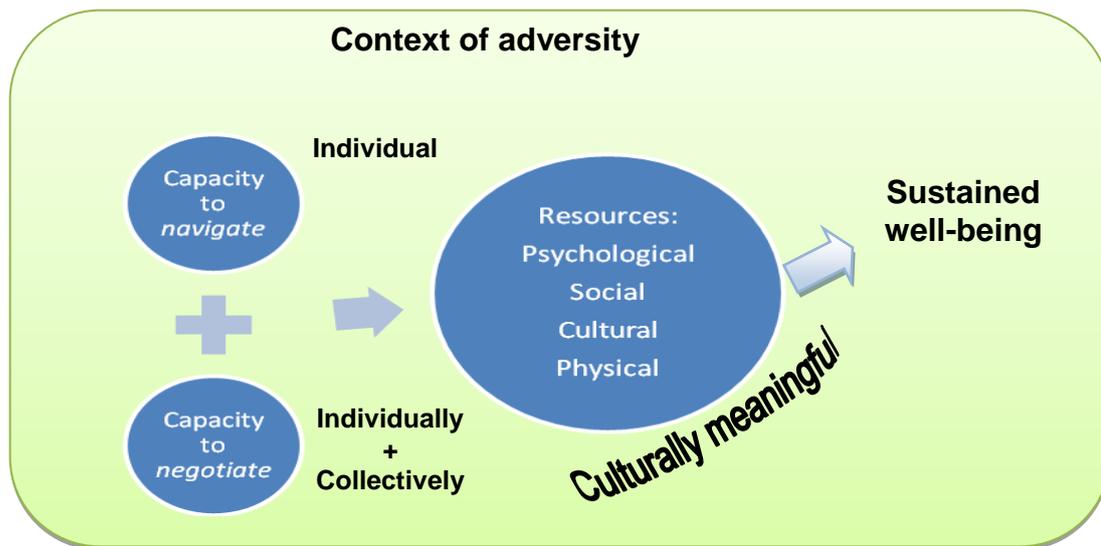


Figure 2.4: My illustration of Ungar’s (2011, p. 10) definition of resilience

As indicated in Figure 2.4, Ungar (2011) foregrounds the context of adversity, as well as the shared capacity of individuals and their ecologies. He asserts that, in order to experience sustained well-being, individuals should be able to navigate their way to resources (psychological, social, cultural and physical) in conjunction with collective negotiation to find cultural meaning embedded in the resources (Ungar, 2008, 2011). The idea of cultural meaning reminds me of Folkman’s (1997) explanation that *finding meaning* is part of positive reappraisal. What remains prominent is the fact that the identification of resilience becomes an act of meaning making. Ungar (2011) comments that the ecological lens on resilience provides two important rules for understanding resilience: implicit to navigation is agency and action; and negotiation, alone and in groups, results in ascribing meaning to the available and accessible resources. Thus, applied to this study the process of teacher resilience is a shared or facilitated process (transactional) between teacher and ecology. Ungar (2011) further describes four principles that are embedded in the ecological view of resilience.

An awareness of the importance of focusing on understanding a *facilitative* social and physical ecology is essential (Ungar, 2011, p. 6). Ungar (2011) calls this *decentrality*: the first principle of studying resilience. He further explains that contextual variability or ecology in resilience is more important than focusing on individual characteristics only. This stands in direct opposition to the thinking of the theorists mentioned above, who emphasise individual thinking and coping (Frederickson, 2004; Garland *et al.*, 2011; Strümpfer, 2013; Tugade & Frederickson, 2007). Attention to the individual’s ecosystem or environment is echoed by Windle (2010), who argues that resilience should be measured within a specific context and/or domain. A similar view is provided by Silk *et al.* (2007), who propose a cross-contextual mediation and moderation model and highlight the reciprocal influence between different systems (e.g. biology and environment). In this study, I followed the principle of decentrality:

therefore I focused both on context and individual characteristics as seen in the behaviour of the teachers.

In following the principle of complexity, Ungar (2011) clarifies the need to account for variance in resilience across time. He justifies his claim by highlighting longitudinal studies that report inconsistent individual resiliency processes and profiles. This variance in resilience across time has also been suggested by Masten and Reed (2002) and Vanderbilt-Adriance and Shaw (2008), who argue that resilience is a dynamic process. Cicchetti (2010) and Masten and Wright (2010) also believe that resilience is a developmental process. Thus, time is an important factor when considering sustained resilience, more so in different contexts. In the study I undertook, this line of argumentation resulted in my view that teacher resilience may vary over time.

Ungar (2011) writes that individuals may follow non-normative or atypical pathways to resilience. In earlier writings, he refers to this as hidden resilience (Ungar, 2004b) and uses the examples of girls using violence to cope with gender bias and children becoming emotionally detached to deal with family problems (Ungar, 2011). These examples signal unusual coping strategies – violence and detachment. Schilling (2008, p. 306) calls unusual coping strategies “strategic resourcefulness” and in his data provides evidence of “adaptive distancing” or disengagement (detachment). Theron (2011) builds on this argument when she remarks that, despite the appearance of generic pathways to resilience, one needs to focus on ecosystemically nuanced pathways because of the fluid nature of resilience, culture and context.

Ungar (2011, pp. 8-9) describes culture as individuals sharing values, beliefs, customs, etc. and points to the complexity of understanding resilience as a result of considering culture (Ungar, 2011). In order to account for this complexity, it becomes important to create a “cultural understanding of resilience” (Ferreira & Ebersöhn, 2012, p. 32). Theron (2011) emphasises the risk involved in directly applying Western conceptualisations of human resilience to African contexts. In this regard Stead and Watson (2006) call for indigenisation and Ebersöhn (2012) for indigenous knowledge systems, maintaining that imported theories and constructs need to be tailored to have significance in another context.

From Ungar (2011), Theron (2011) and Ferreira and Ebersöhn (2012) I gather that context and individuality play an important role in understanding resilience, more so because of what occurs between context and person. An additional thought posed by Masten (2011, p. 496) broadened my thoughts on resilience even further:

“... the concept of resilience encompasses recovery patterns that could require considerable time, perhaps because the adversity continues for a long period or

because the adaptive systems have been damaged in such a way that restoration requires time”.

Picking up on Ungar’s (2011) principles of atypicality and complexity, Masten (2011, p. 495) points out that “pathway models” have become an important influence on resilience research. Essentially, a pathway model opens the discussion to differences in the ways in which individuals achieve adaptive functioning (Masten, 2011). Ungar (2011) states that some resilience pathways would be non-normative, while Theron (2011) views some pathways to resilience as generic. As a result of the focus on different pathways, the importance of a developmental perspective on resilience cannot be ignored (Cicchetti, 2010; Masten & Wright, 2010; Staudinger *et al.*, 1995; Ungar, 2011). Applying this idea to the current study, the assumption can be made that teachers would follow different paths to develop their resilience processes. This is the particular interest I had, what kind of pathways would lead to sustained resilience was a question that remained unanswered after consulting the literature.

2.2.4 A DEVELOPMENTAL TAKE ON RESILIENCE, ACCORDING TO MASTEN AND TELLEGEN (2012)

Masten’s (2011, p. 494) most recent definition of resilience (in line with a systems theory perspective) describes it as “... the capacity of a dynamic system to withstand or recover from significant challenges that threaten its stability, viability or development”. In applying this definition, Masten and Tellegen (2012) provide some pivotal insights on resilience based on the longitudinal work they did with Garmezy (1984) over a period of 20 years. These are summarised in Table 2.1

Table 2.1: Summary of recent resilience thinking in the field of developmental psychopathology (adapted from Masten & Tellegen, 2012 and Shiner & Masten, 2012)

<i>Resilience in developmental psychopathology</i>	
<i>Topics as presented by Masten and Tellegen (2012, pp. 355-358)</i>	<i>Explanation according to Masten and Tellegen (2012)</i>
Meaningful patterns of competence, resilience and maladaptation can be identified	Individuals show life patterns of good or poor competence in the context of high adversity (p. 355).
People who manifest resilience have more adaptive capacity	People with the fewest resources for adapting to adversity are more likely to experience growing adversity of their own making with sometimes disastrous consequences (p. 355)
Late bloomers and turnaround cases	Evidence suggests change over time in adaptive behaviour and individuals shifting from maladaptation to resilience (p. 356). Some signs of the capacity to cope featured in early life may lie dormant until needed in

Resilience in developmental psychopathology	
Topics as presented by Masten and Tellegen (2012, pp. 355-358)	Explanation according to Masten and Tellegen (2012)
	later adulthood (p. 356)
Competence and resilience show considerable continuity and coherence over time	The probability exists that if individuals showed competence in early life they will show competence in adulthood (p. 356)
Competence is multidimensional	People perceive their competence in various life stages differently. A quality competence during early life, such as romantic involvement, has a different value later in life (p. 357)
Early adult competence has roots in childhood	Generally, adaptive children become adaptive adults (p. 357)
Dimensions of competence and symptoms are linked over time: Developmental cascades	Evidence highlights the apparent significance of parent-child relationships for success in the development of salient developmental tasks, even across generations, which is actively carried forward in ongoing relationships with peers and later with romantic partners and one's own children (p. 358)
Personality and competence	Children on pathways to success in adulthood, whether facing low or high adversity, have capacities for emotion regulation, empathy and connection, dedication to schoolwork, and mastery and exploration (Shiner & Masten, 2012, p. 507)

I draw the following conclusions from Masten and Tellegen's (2012) as well as Shiner and Masten's (2012) work: Masten and Tellegen (2012) write that people facing adversity have good or poor abilities to cope, pointing to the ideas of positive emotions and latent motives to be strong (Strümpfer, 2013; Tugade & Frederickson, 2007) as well as the principle of complexity (Ungar, 2011). This sensitised me to the importance of understanding the developmental nature of resilience in teachers. Masten and Tellegen (2012, p. 355) conclude that people with limited resources will experience further adversity "of their own making" and that their self-perceptions of competence vary over time. I believe the application of the idea of dispositional mindfulness (Garland *et al.*, 2011) to these findings of Masten and Tellegen (2012) opens the way for a discussion of people's state of mind (Rutter, 2012) and positive reappraisal (Folkman, 1997) during resiling. In my opinion, this also links with Ungar's (2011) principle of cultural relativity. For this study it means that my understanding of teachers' appraisal and re-appraisal of adversity in context and their own ability to overcome adversity is an important aspect of understanding teachers' resilience over time. This understanding ties in with my initial position that resilience is a continuous reflective process.

Masten and Tellegen (2012) found that the ability to cope in early life sometimes determines a person's ability to cope in later life. However, they also found that not coping in early life does not necessarily imply an inability to cope in later life, or not having the capacity for successful coping (Shiner & Masten, 2012), which supports the idea of latent (Strümpfer, 2013) or hidden

resilience (Ungar, 2011). In following a developmental perspective to resilience I was sensitised to coping processes across the lifespan (Aldwin, 2011). In this regard I drew from Skinner and Zimmer-Gembeck's (2007) model of coping as an interactional process. Basically, Skinner and Zimmer-Gembeck (2007) assert that the developmental nature of coping consists of stress, risk and adversity, followed by adaptive processes to achieve health, competence and development. These authors further detail coping as an interactional process in "real time", explaining that people appraise and re-appraise stress, risk and adversity in terms of context and coping processes (Skinner and Zimmer-Gembeck, 2007, p. 138). According to these authors, coping is a "multi-level adaptive system" that incorporates "multiple components" such as emotion, cognition and behaviour (Skinner and Zimmer-Gembeck, 2007, p. 137). I see these pointing back to Ungar's (2011) idea of decentrality, but also reminds me once more of the importance of cultural meaning. Chun, Moos and Cronkite (2006, p. 49) also highlight the "ever-evolving mutual relationship" between cultural orientation and coping strategies. Thus, for the purpose of this study, I took cognisance of resilience not only as an individual trait, but also as contextually affected and culturally embedded.

2.3 TEACHER RESILIENCE

Against the background of the latest thinking on resilience (described above) I will now unpack my understanding of the depth and breadth of teacher resilience as a construct. In following Huberman's (1993, p. 264) finding that "professional career journeys [of teachers] are not adequately linear, predictable or identical", I will consider the importance of resilience in teaching. When I add the dimension of education to my initial position I described earlier (refer to 2.2) it focus the attention on the sustaining power of resilience for the greater good.

2.3.1 THE IMPORTANCE OF RESILIENCE IN TEACHING

Taking their cue from existing research on resilience, Gu and Day (2007, p. 1314) argue that "underlying resilient teachers' endeavours to exert control over difficult situations is their strength and determination to fulfil their original call to teach and to manage and thrive professionally". Based on their reflection on the importance of resilience in teaching, Gu and Day (2007) write that resilient teachers act as role models to learners, thereby promoting learner achievement. Furthermore, they state that resilience combined with a sense of vocation, self-efficacy and motivation to teach, impact on sustained motivation and commitment in teaching (Gu & Day, 2007). They also mention the importance of sustained motivation through resilience since they argue that teaching is an increasingly difficult profession because of constant change. Gu and Day (2007) describe three important dimensions that mediate teacher resilience, which are captured in Figure 2.5.

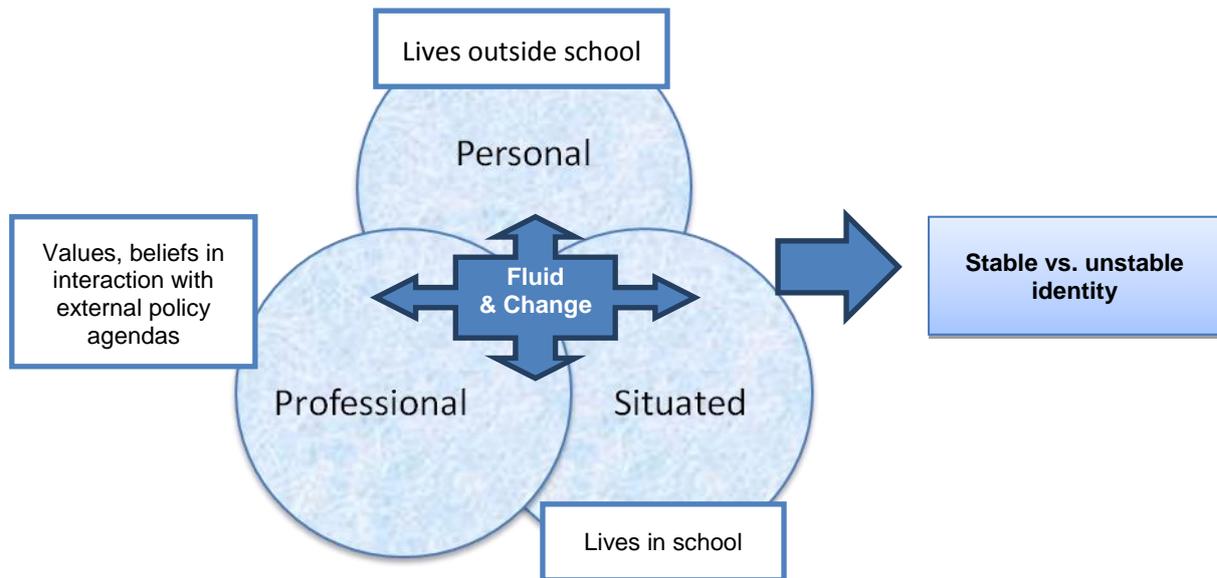


Figure 2.5: My depiction of the dimensions that mediate teacher resilience (Gu & Day, 2007)

I notice that in line with Ungar’s (2011) socio-ecological thinking and Masten and Tellegen’s (2012) ideas on the fluid nature of resilience, Gu and Day (2007) describe how teachers’ lives outside (personal dimension) and inside the school (situated dimension), and their personal and educational values and beliefs interact with policy expectations (professional dimension) (refer to Figure 2.5). They assert that the dimensions are fluid and changeable and that teachers experience variations over time (depicted with the textured filling of circles) (Gu & Day, 2007). These variations may affect teachers’ identities (Gu & Day, 2007). Gu and Day (2007) further conclude that in order to sustain commitment in teaching, teachers need resilience. The teachers who participated in this study experienced variation especially in terms of how they came to choose teaching as a profession (personal dimension).

Some similarities are evident between Johnson *et al.* (2010) and Gu and Day’s ideas (2007). The former author namely identified the following five conditions that support the resilience of early-career teachers: *relationships* (networks, connections and belonging), *school culture* (values, beliefs, norms and behaviours), *teachers’ identity* (dynamically making sense of own values and experiences), *teachers’ work* (the complex role of the teacher: practice, knowledge, ethics and relationships) and *policies and practices* (mandated officially: guidelines, values and prescriptions) (Johnson *et al.*, 2010). I think the professional dimension identified by Gu and Day (2007) resembles the condition of managing official policies and practices in relation to the teacher’s complex role in the school, which in turn points to the situated dimension. Johnson *et al.*’s (2010) condition of school culture can also be placed within the situated dimension, again in interaction with the professional dimension. A strong idea shared by Day and Gu (2007) and Johnson *et al.* (2010, p. 4) is that the identity of a

teacher is “actively constituted through experience in a range of personal, professional and structural discourses”. However, Johnson *et al.* (2010) appear to place more emphasis on relationships than Day and Gu (2007). To illustrate this, Johnson *et al.* (2010) mention not only the importance of relationships between people as a specific condition, but also highlight other conditions such as school culture, teachers’ work, and policies and practices that are dependent on relationships. Gu and Day (2007), on the other hand, mention only the different relationships (with learners or the self) as important positive or negative influences. For the purpose of this study, I was interested in which external protective resources the teachers themselves would identify.

Further support came in the form of a study conducted by Mansfield *et al.* (2012) with early-career teachers, which also highlights the relationship aspect of resilience. In Mansfield *et al.*’s (2012) description of their four-dimensional framework for teacher resilience they offer a succinct summary of overlapping dimensions in the areas of profession, emotion, social and motivation, and interwoven aspects (such as reflection, problem solving and flexibility). Most notable in the framework is the deduction that teacher resilience is a complex, “multi-faceted construct” (p. 362). The complexity of conceptualising teacher resilience is mirrored in a discussion of the density of resilience as a broader concept (refer to Section 2.2 of this chapter). It follows that Mansfield *et al.* (2012) note the difficulty of capturing an all-encompassing definition of teacher resilience, which they say is as difficult as defining the term resilience. When I related the work of Gu and Day (2007), Johnson *et al.* (2010) and Mansfield *et al.* (2012) to the focus of this study, I was alerted to the variations in motivation owing to the interaction between the professional and personal lives of teachers, the significant roles that relationships may play in resilience and the importance of capturing a comprehensive definition of teacher resilience.

2.3.2 DEFINING TEACHER RESILIENCE

The past decade has seen a particular interest in teacher resilience as opposed to studies highlighting stress, burnout and ineffectiveness in teaching (Bobek, 2002; Brunetti, 2006; Castro *et al.*, 2010; Daniels & Strauss, 2009; Day & Gu, 2009; Fritz & Smit, 2008; Gu & Day, 2007; Hegney *et al.*, 2007; Howard & Johnson, 2004; Kirk & Wall, 2010; Knight, 2007; O’Sullivan, 2006; Patterson, Collins & Abbott, 2004; Stanford, 2001; Sumsion, 2003, 2004). The existing literature on teacher resilience has led me to believe that researchers investigate teacher resilience either as a multifaceted characteristic, or as an emergent phenomenon. Some researchers have, for example, put much effort into identifying the characteristics or strategies of teacher resilience because they ultimately want to train pre-service teachers to become more resilient (Bobek, 2002; Bottery *et al.*, 2008; Brunetti, 2006; Castro *et al.*, 2010; Holloway, 2003; Howard & Johnson, 2004; Meister & Ahrens, 2011; Muller *et al.*, 2011). One

may argue that the researchers in this group support the ideas of Strümpfer (2013) and Tugade and Frederickson (2007), who argue that people may have latent resiliency, or that all people are capable of being resilient.

Brunetti (2006, p. 813) defines teacher resilience as “a quality that enables teachers to maintain their commitment to teaching and their teaching practices despite challenging conditions and recurring setbacks”. Sagor (1996) and Bernshausen and Cunningham (2001) identify attributes such as competency, belonging, usefulness, potency and optimism, which teachers use to counter life’s vast worries. Generally the researchers in this group believe that teacher resilience can be **learnt** (Benders & Jackson, 2012; Bernshausen & Cunningham, 2001; Holloway, 2003).

Others deal with the concept more conceptually in an effort to formulate an all-encompassing definition and expand our knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon (Benders & Jackson, 2012; Bernshausen & Cunningham, 2001; Day & Gu, 2009, 2007; Day, 2008; Gu & Day, 2007; Knight, 2007; Parker & Martin, 2009). The authors in this group mostly refer to teachers’ **natural-born** tendencies (Benders & Jackson, 2012; Patterson *et al.*, 2004). Despite the different emphasis on conceptualising the concept, evidence from existing research suggests that in most scholars’ opinion, teacher resilience, like resilience, is a **combination** of innate characteristics, developmental processes and learnt skills (Benders & Jackson, 2012; Bobek, 2002; Gu & Day, 2007; Howard & Johnson, 2004; Johnson *et al.*, 2010; Mansfield *et al.*, 2012; Meister & Ahrens, 2011; Muller, Gorrow & Fiala, 2011; Patterson, Collins & Abbott, 2004; Stanford, 2001; Yonezawa, Jones & Singer, 2011).

Limited psychological theoretical grounding in studies on teacher resilience (Howard *et al.*, 1999; Luthar, Cicchetti & Becker, 2000; Gu & Day, 2007) has led me to focus on a combination of Ungar (2011), Masten and Tellegen (2012), Strümpfer (2013) and Tugade and Frederickson’s (2007) conceptualisations of resilience in terms of valuing both internal and external protective resources, and beyond this, to make sense of the interactions or transactions between the teacher (embedded in culture) and his or her context over time. Consequently, I realised that I needed to follow a “multi-layered approach” to understanding the concept of teacher resilience (Windle, 2010, p. 6). In an attempt to discover the different layers of teacher resilience, I synthesised a myriad of research-based definitions and descriptions of teacher resilience. To complete the synthesis I turned to the work on teacher resilience that had been undertaken in the past decade. I will discuss these layers adopting a systemic perspective, first considering the individual in terms of characteristics and skills; coping, connectedness, the self as professional, dynamism, and then working context as well as context and culture.

2.3.2.1 Teacher resilience in terms of characteristics and skills

Mansfield *et al.* (2012), as well as other authors, highlight personal characteristics and skills such as flexibility (Duval & Carlson, 1993; Fritz & Smit, 2008; Sumsion, 2003) reflection (Duval & Carlson, 1993; Sumsion, 2003) and problem solving (Castro *et al.*, 2010; O'Sullivan, 2006; Patterson *et al.*, 2004; Sumsion, 2003; Yonezawa *et al.*, 2011) as overlapping profession-related aspects of teacher resilience. They also identify other characteristics and skills (less prominent in their data-set), such as commitment to students, effective teaching skills and management skills (Mansfield *et al.*, 2012) as indicators of teacher resilience. These characteristics and skills are widely cited in existing literature. To illustrate, commitment to students is reported by Brunetti (2006) and Stanford (2001) as a crucial characteristic of teacher resilience, while effective teaching and management seem to be core skills of resilient teachers (Barley & Beesley, 2007; Bobek, 2002; Gu & Day, 2007; Holloway 2003; Patterson *et al.*, 2004; Sumsion, 2003).

In this study it therefore remains valuable to understand how personal characteristics such as perseverance (Stanford, 2001; Sumsion, 2003; Duval & Carlson, 1993); a sense of humour (Bobek, 2002, p. 204); optimism (Stanford, 2001); and personal values (Patterson *et al.*, 2004) may support teachers in navigating towards protective resources. In an attempt to understand teaching as a process of emotional self-construction (Johnson *et al.*, 2010; Kirk & Wall, 2010) I bear in mind the prominent role played by individual characteristics, even though resilience research focusing on these has evolved (Fritz & Smit, 2008; Mansfield *et al.*, 2012; Stanford 2001; Theron 2011; Ungar, 2011). Having been alerted to this layer of teacher resilience, I focus on the biopsychological self (Sameroff, 2010) while exploring internal protective factors at the micro-level (Bronfenbrenner, 2005; Masten & Reed, 2005).

2.3.2.2 Teacher resilience in terms of coping

In a quest to make sense of the apparent adjustment or adaptation related to teacher resilience over time, I draw from recent thinking on the theory of coping (Brown, Howcroft & Jacobs, 2009; Ferreira & Ebersöhn, 2012; Roos, 2013; Willers, *et al.* 2013). Coping is evident when feelings of stress subside as a result of cognitive and behavioural management strategies (Folkman & Moskowitz, 2000) and teachers experience the notion of flow (Williams, 2003). In this regard Barley and Beesley (2007) found that resilient teachers actively cope with job demands. Similarly, according to Gu and Day (2007) resilient teachers are able to meet the challenges of the environment. Parker and Martin (2009) highlight the importance of engaging in calming coping strategies on teachers' resilience while Castro *et al.* (2010) note that teachers who seek rejuvenation and renewal cope better.

Resilient teachers also manage difficult relationships and seek help when necessary (Castro *et al.*, 2010). From these studies and the theory of coping I gathered that an important transaction for building resilience lies in increasingly *owning* the self and the situation. Many researchers have come to distinct conclusions that ownership and resilience coincide (Bobek, 2002; Fritz & Smit, 2008; Guenther & Weible, 1983; Henning, 2000; Howard & Johnson, 2004; Patterson *et al.*, 2004; Yonezawa *et al.*, 2011). In contrast with the notion of ownership, some studies point out that religion and spirituality influence resilience-building over time (Fritz & Smit, 2008; Stanford, 2001). Notwithstanding the different foci described above, I remain engrossed in understanding teacher resilience in its authentic context, which is the teacher as a core employee in ecology.

2.3.2.3 Teacher resilience in terms of connectedness

While I was plotting the ideas of other studies into the existing conceptual frameworks created by Mansfield *et al.* (2012) and Gu and Day (2007), some connections and contradictions came to light. Despite Mansfield *et al.*'s (2012) finding that the social aspects of resilience received little attention in their data-set, other studies indicate the contrary. For example, Poulou (2007, p. 101) argues for a focus on social resilience in research based on findings that social and emotional learning will contribute to “educational achievement, resilience and a positive attitude to life”. Muller *et al.* (2011, p. 551), Sumsion (2003) and Williams (2003) also highlight the prominence of “feelings of connectedness” in studies on teacher resilience, and Raider-Roth *et al.* (2012, p. 497) and Duval and Carlson (1993) point out that connectivity between systems and people enhances “repair”.

Studies conducted with rural teachers in particular indicate that connections to students and communities may foster resilience (Barley & Beesley, 2007; Guenther & Weible, 1983; Hardre *et al.*, 2008). Consequently, my awareness of social aspects of teacher resilience was raised to understand school culture (Barley & Beesley, 2007; Johnson *et al.*, 2010); significant relationships (Bobek, 2002, p. 203; Johnson *et al.*, 2010); student affirmation (Meister & Ahrens, 2011; Stanford, 2001); and mentoring practices (Fritz & Smit, 2008; Guenther & Weible, 1983; Halloway, 2003; Meister & Ahrens, 2011; Patterson *et al.*, 2004; Stanford, 200; Sumsion, 2003).

The layer of connectivity is best described by Ebersöhn (2013). Figure 2.6 is a summary of Ebersöhn's (2012) metaphoric illustration of the relationship-resourced model.

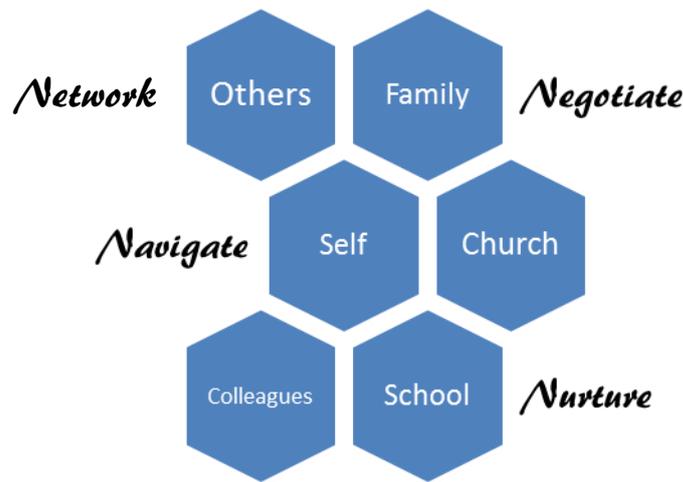


Figure 2.6: Metaphorical depiction of relationship-resourced model (adapted from Ebersöhn, 2012, 2013).

Ebersöhn (2012, p. 29) explains the relationship-resourced resilience model as teachers’ “collective response to “flock”” when faced with chronic adversity, especially in resource-constrained areas. As indicated in Figure 2.6, teachers in resource-constrained settings follow pathways that seem to form a “honeycomb” as they navigate to others (with whom they share relationships) using their relationships to negotiate support and further extend the web of assets through networking and finally sustaining support through nurturing these relationships (Ebersöhn, 2012, p. 38, 2013). In line with broader theory on resilience, this model seeks to account for more than “individual and subjective processes” during resilience building and suggests that resilience “occurs as [a] collective” (Ebersöhn, 2012, p. 29; Ungar 2011). The relationship-resourced resilience model has made notable contributions to my understanding of teacher resilience because of its relevance to the context of this study:

- In applying systems thinking to teacher resilience I was alerted to “collective resilience” in resource-constrained education settings (Ebersöhn, 2013, p. 263) before embarking on the empirical part of this study.
- Since teacher resilience may be relationship driven, sustained teacher resilience in resource-constrained education settings may depend on relationships as a carrier to resources (Ebersöhn, 2012, 2013).

Just as Ebersöhn (2013) found that relationships are the key component to sustained resilience, Rothmann (2013) explains how social integration (highlighting a sense of relatedness and support from the community) promotes positive social functioning. Against the background of the purpose of this study, this argument implies the possibility that teachers in this study could draw on external protective resources in dealing with adversity.

2.3.2.4 Teacher resilience in terms of the self as a professional

Mansfield *et al.* (2012) indicate the profession-related dimension as the second most common cohort of thoughts referred to by teachers in their data. This connection between the world of work and the worker is not surprising as it signifies the interrelatedness of the person and his/her career (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011). The profession-related dimension echoes Yonezawa *et al.*'s (2011) thoughts on professional resilience in teaching and links with the concept of career resilience (Fourie & Van Vuuren, 1998; London, 1983). Through more recent investigations researchers have considered sense of vocation (Day & Gu, 2009) and career fulfilment (Brunetti, 2006; Gu & Day, 2007) as closely related to teacher resilience. Other career-related conditions mentioned in the literature that I considered as part of teacher resilience are self-directed professional development (Guenther & Weible, 1983); employer support (Barley & Beesley, 2007; Brunetti 2006; Day & Gu, 2009; Meister & Ahrens, 2011); respecting content knowledge of teaching subjects and career breaks (O'Sullivan, 2006), and a sense of accomplishment (Bobek, 2002).

2.3.2.5 Teacher resilience in terms of dynamism

Theron (2011, p. 12) explains that “the process of resilience is underpinned by actions, reactions and interactions, or transactions”. From this assertion Theron (2011) denotes the process-led and variance-driven nature of resilience (discussed in Section 2.2). This line of thinking coincides with the ideas of other scholars who highlight variance in the applicability of personal characteristics in teacher resilience over time and context (Gu & Day, 2007; Schoon, 2006; Werner & Smith, 2001). The dynamic transactional nature of teacher resilience is furthermore evident as Bottery *et al.* (2008) emphasise the changing interaction between teacher contexts and personalities. In agreement, Howard and Johnson (2004) suggest that teachers learn strategies (implying process and variance over time) that make them resilient. Castro *et al.* (2010) also view teacher resilience as a process during which teachers use certain strategies to overcome adversity and become insightful. Day and Gu (2007) point out a variance in resilience over career stages. I gather that over time teachers may become better at managing the demands of teaching, possibly cultivating teacher resiliency. Antonovsky (1987) supports this view when he writes that people develop meaningfulness (as part of a sense of coherence) over time, which in turn will support successful coping. As a result, I am aware of dynamic interactions in the career span of teachers, but also remain alerted to dynamism in the life span of teachers in this study.

2.3.2.6 Teacher resilience in terms of working context

When comparing some global studies (refer to Appendices B and C), certain common characteristics of the settings in which teachers work come to the fore. Common characteristics of such settings include constant policy reform (Gu & Day, 2007; Kirk & Wall, 2010; O’Sullivan, 2006), working in hard-to- staff areas, poverty (Brunetti, 2006; Howard & Johnson, 2004; Standford, 2001), unreasonable workloads and lack of resources (Brunetti, 2006; Castro *et al.*, 2010; Stanford, 2001). These ecological characteristics also mirror local studies where similar contexts are described (Dempster, 2010; Fritz & Smit, 2008; Loots, 2005; Olivier, 2009). Although fewer studies on teacher resilience were found on local ground, the working contexts of teachers globally and locally are seemingly similar. It follows that the external and internal protective resources may be similar. This is evident in my content analysis, which is included in Appendix B and C, since Fritz and Smit (2008) allude to the same trends in their study on teacher resilience.

However, Vanderbilt-Adriance and Shaw (2008) argue that all resilience studies are constrained by a narrowed conceptualisation of resilience across time, domains and intensity of risk. I would like to add that even the concept of risk will differ. I refer to a study conducted by Hegney *et al.* (2007), who describe risk as facing draught, hailstorms and bushfires as opposed to having no textbooks or electricity, and teacher absenteeism (local context of South Africa). It can be argued that the risk factors faced by some teachers in well-resourced areas differ from those faced in resource-constrained education settings. Here a case in point is an Australian study (Johnson *et al.*, 2010) that highlights recurring issues in their educational contexts due to induction, training and teacher ideals, rather than the education system as such being under-resourced, as is the case in some parts of South Africa (Loots, 2005; Olivier, 2009). I found an opposing view in the work of Bottery *et al.* (2008), who said that similar resilience strategies were shown by two teachers in dissimilar contexts. This heightened my awareness of resilience as fluid construct. It also brings me to question how important context really is. This layer of understanding teacher resilience prepared me to unpack the working context of the participants in this study with care (refer to Section 2.5).

2.3.2.7 Teacher resilience in terms of context and culture

I agree with Ungar (2011) regarding the importance of understanding teacher resilience within contextual, cultural and personal parameters. Mansfield *et al.*’s (2012) study confirms the notion of cultural influence as they found that the way in which individuals conceptualise resilience depends on specific contextual experiences. In this regard I foreground Day and Gu (2009) and Duval and Carlson’s (1993) finding that values for education will play an important role in teacher resilience. This ties in with the latest thinking on resilience (Ferreira &

Ebersöhn, 2012; Wood *et al.*, 2012), where Ungar (2008, p. 225) defines resilience as the shared capacity (individual and environment) to provide and navigate towards protective resources in “culturally meaningful ways”. Ferreira and Ebersöhn (2012, p. 33) note how individuals may adapt to significant contexts of adversity through “cumulative protection” provided by protective resources, while Poulou (2007, p. 92) comments on the “interplay” between protective and risk factors. In fact, three decades ago already, Guenther and Weible (1983) noted the importance of rural teachers’ knowledge of context in sustaining their commitment to teaching, while Yonezawa *et al.* (2011, p. 922) stress the resilience-building power of “cultural support”. Based on these arguments, my comprehension of teacher resilience has been broadened to investigate the protective resources of rural teachers *within* their context of adversity and the meanings they ascribe to risk and resilience as a result of dominant and personal-cultural connotations.

My assertion from current thinking on teacher resilience (as part of the broader concept resilience) is that protective resources, personal attributes, environmental conditions and person-environment interaction will affect the resilience of teachers (Castro *et al.*, 2010; Theron, 2011; Ungar, 2011; Vanderbilt-Adriance & Shaw, 2008; Windle, 2010). Consequently, I approached my understanding of teacher resilience in this study with careful consideration of the complex theoretical and practical layers embedded in the concept (as discussed above). Even though many studies on teacher resilience cover the career span of teachers, no direct link has been made between teacher resilience and career resilience (Alger, 2009; Bobek, 2002; Bottery *et al.*, 2008; Brunetti, 2006; Choi & Tang, 2009; Clandinin & Connelly, 1996; Cross & Hong, 2012; Day, 2008; Fritz & Smit, 2008; Goodson *et al.*, 2006; Hargreaves, 2005; Hatch, 1999; Henning, 2000; Kirk & Wall, 2010; Koekemoer & Mostert, 2010; Meister & Ahrens, 2011; Parker & Martin, 2009; Philipp & Kunter, 2013; Raider-Roth *et al.*, 2012; Wood *et al.*, 2012; Yonezawa *et al.* 2011).

2.4 CAREER RESILIENCE

I extend my initial position (refer to 2.2) even further and within the realm of education (refer to 2.3) to add another dimension: the sustained power of career development. To broaden our understanding of teacher resilience, I argue for a thorough understanding of career resilience as it pertains to the dynamic concept of resilience in teaching. London (1983) in particular operationalised the concept of career resilience as part of his theory on career motivation. I think London’s (1983) conceptualisation is based on the early ideas about resilience (Ungar, 2011) and Collard, Epperheimer and Saign (1996) added the dimension of dynamism.

London (1983, 1993, 1999) first introduced the idea of career resilience in his theory of career motivation (Collard *et al.*, 1996). London (1983, 1993, 1999) deduced that career motivation

consists of three domains: *career identity* (Which career direction are you following?); *career insight* (How realistic or unrealistic are your perceptions of yourself or the organisation?) and *career resilience* (Can you function during career disruptions or despite unfavourable work contexts?). He (London, 1983, 1999) explains career resilience as the ability to cope or function effectively despite negative working conditions (career uncertainty; poor interpersonal relationships; discrimination or favouritism etc.). A summary of London's (1983, 1993, 1999) ideas on career resilience are presented in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2: Career resilience according to London (1983, 1993, 1999)

Description	<p>Career resilience <i>(is an <u>internal factor or personality dimension</u> that drives behaviour)</i></p> <p>Career resilience is characterised by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A person's resistance to career disruption in a less optimal environment • The ability to cope more effectively with a negative work situation • The ability to adapt to changing circumstances • An attitude that welcomes job and organisational changes • An attitude that looks forward to working with new and different people • Self-confidence and a belief that barriers to goals can be overcome 		
Subdomains	<p>Self-efficacy (high)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-esteem • Need autonomy • Adaptability • Internal control • Need achievement • Initiative • Need creativity • Inner work standards • Development orientation 	<p>Risk taking (high)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fear of failure • Need security • Tolerance of uncertainty and ambiguity 	<p>Dependency (low)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career dependency • Need for superior approval • Need for peer approval • Competitiveness

From Table 2.2 I conclude that London's (1983) original descriptions of career resilience are built on the personality dimension (internal factor or personality dimension) of teacher resilience discussed in Section 2.3.2.1 and in line with trait-focused resilience thinking of the 1970s (Masten & Tellegen, 2012; Ungar, 2011). In his description he focuses mainly on characteristics found in career-resilient people, such as self-confidence and resistance, supported by subdomains such as self-efficacy, tolerance and competitiveness. London's current thinking remains set on career resilience as a trait as he describes "people who are resilient" as having a can-do attitude; believing in their own abilities to achieve and as people who persist (London & Morfopoulos, 2010, p. 48).

Collard *et al.* (1996) elaborated on the earlier ideas of London (refer to Table 2.2) and developed a career resilience model in an attempt to address needs derived from the ever-changing landscape of careers in society during the 1990s (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011). I therefore assume that Collard *et al.* (1996) further developed the concept to account for progressive thinking in the field of resilience (Masten, 2012; Masten & Tellegen, 2012). As part of this model, these authors assert that the way to build career resilience is through aiming for “career self-reliance” (Collard *et al.*, 1996, p. 33). They define the concept of career self-reliance as being able (and committed) to manage ones worklife in a fast-changing environment, and approaching work as something one does for oneself (Collard *et al.*, 1996). They further explain that this increasingly self-driven attitude (foregrounding responsibility and individual accountability) was a response to the failure of organisations to offer job security at the time. Even though the terms *career resilience* and *career self-reliance* are often understood as synonymous (Collard *et al.*, 1996; Wessels, 1999), Collard *et al.* (1996) define career resilience as the *outcome* of being career self-reliant. To illustrate the relationship between self-reliance and resilience these authors developed the model presented in Figure 2.7.

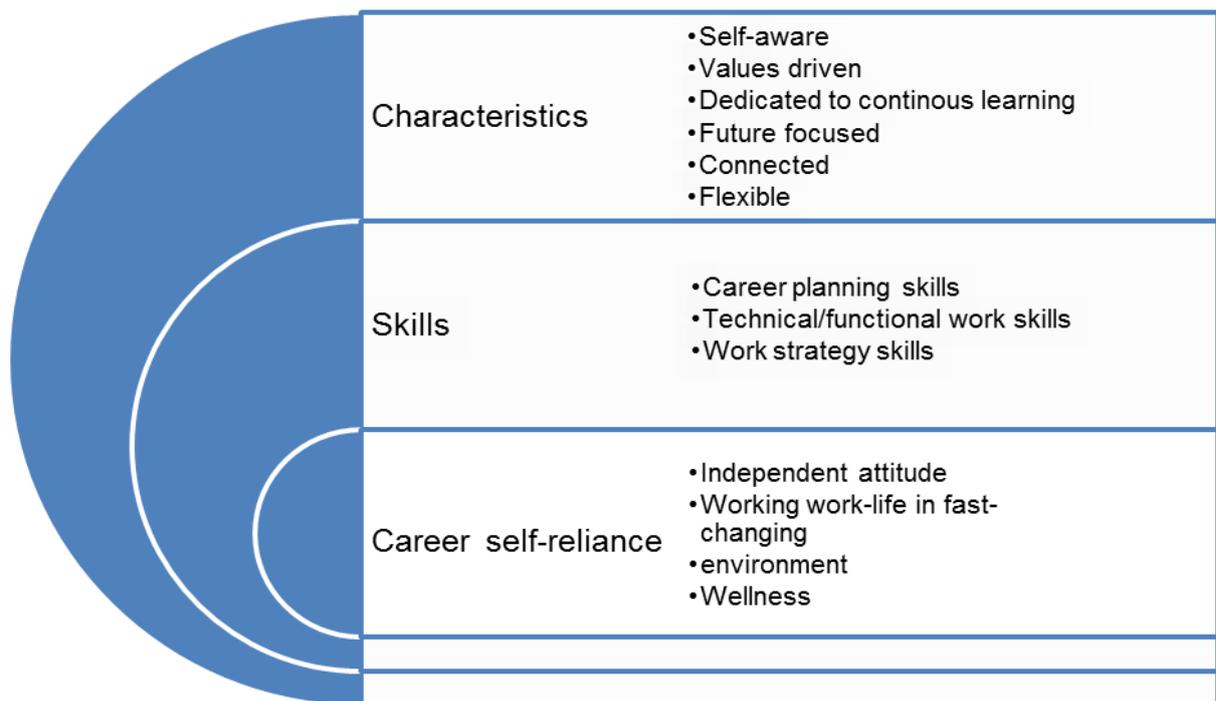


Figure 2.7: The Career Self-Reliance Wheel (adapted from Collard *et al.*, 1996)

The characteristics shown by career-resilient people focus on learning and development. Learning and development expand the original idea of self-focus: knowing the self (self-aware), understanding the meaning ascribed to the own work (values driven), having a professional development plan (dedicated to continuous learning), analysing trends (future focussed), maintaining a network (connected), and anticipating change (flexible). These will all

result in dealing with change in the workplace (Collard *et al.*, 1996). Collard *et al.* (1996) further describe career resilience skills such as career planning, job content (functional) and skills needed to work effectively (initiative, leadership, teamwork, etc.).

These characteristics and skills overlap with research on teacher resilience (refer to Section 2.3). Collard *et al.* (1996, p. 38) highlight the most important difference (from London's [1983] work) in grounding their conceptualisation as follows:

“a systems view: it [career self-reliance or career resilience] requires both independence (self-direction) and interdependence (interconnectedness) ... each of us is a part of a larger systems and it is our connectedness with others as well as our individual accountability that leads to career success”.

Thus Collard *et al.* (1996, p. 37) extended London's (1983, 1993, 1999) focus of career resilience as a characteristic to a focus on “an ongoing process of career development in order to stay healthy and well in their careers in a work world that is characterised by rapid change and turmoil”. I believe that his thinking is more in line with current thinking on resilience and teacher resilience (refer to Sections 2.2 and 2.3). Byster (1998, p. 20-24) critiques the career self-reliance model foregrounding interconnectedness by saying that people need “secondary control” to develop career resilience. She proposes certain abilities to foster career resilience in individuals: individuals are the primary architects of their lives; individuals are driven by their core values; individuals continue to learn in order to remain marketable; individuals connect with career-significant others; and individuals accommodate change while maintaining their personal goals. I believe that Rickwood (2002) builds on the proposal of Byster (1998) and writes that an organisation needs to facilitate a culture of professional development based on career resilience.

I concluded that the process of career resilience thus rests on a person's ability to make sense of his or her career environment (London's [1983] career insight) and how he/she negotiates his/her personal and career identities (Byster, 1998; Rickwood, 2002). Furthermore, I followed Collard *et al.*'s (1996) development of career resilience (extending on innate characteristics) into a process that acts interdependent of the environment in undertaking this study. This links to the broad conceptualisation of resilience by Ungar (2011). For this study it means that understanding the personal architecture of each teacher's career life could highlight core values that the teachers used to manage change. It may also indicate the career-significant others that could influence teacher resilience over time. In reasoning about the career resilience of teachers, the importance of career development pathways is stressed.

2.5 CAREER DEVELOPMENT IN CONTEXT AND OVER TIME

To elucidate on the environment-person interchange, I highlight Patton and McMahon's (Patton, McMahon & Watson, 2006) Systems Theory Framework as a career-development theory since it covers more dimensions than that of older more settled theories of career development.

The emphasis on contextual interaction and personal growth illustrates parallels between Super's (1984, 1990, 1992) life-span development theory and the biopsychological ecological system of Sameroff (2010). This is portrayed in Super's (1990) life-career rainbow, which explains an individual's different life roles over a life span of developmental stages (Watson & Stead, 2006). He explains that psychological and biological personal determinants interact with historical and socio-economic situational determinants (Super, 1990). These personal determinants influence people's life roles (child, student, leisurite, citizen, worker and homemaker) in each life space (growth, exploration, establishment, maintenance and decline) in varying degrees (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011). Similarly, situational determinants influence the career process of the person (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011).

Watson and Stead (2006) write that Super's earlier conceptualisation of his theory revealed the idea that career develops over time. Huberman *et al.* (1993) used Super's work to portray teachers across the career cycle. More recently, Day and Gu (2009) have used Huberman *et al.*'s (1993) interpretation of Super's work to understand the commitment and resilience of veteran teachers over a life span. However, in line with London's (1983) thinking, Super's theory remains locked inside a trait-orientated system (Dawis, 1996).

The teacher as a worker implies that he/she has a "two-way relationship" with his/her employer (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011, p. 54). As mentioned elsewhere, Super (as cited in Shein & Chen, 2011) explains career development by referring to an individual's multiple roles and processes of life-stage advancement, thereby unravelling current thinking on individuals' work-life interaction. However, Patton, McMahon and Watson (2006) allude, more than Super, to the *interdependence* of working individuals and context. Even though, Super's theoretical model does not imply that individuals follow a linear path in their career development (Shein & Chen, 2011), I believe that Patton and McMahon's model accounts for more factors related to the realities of a career path, such as chance and the influence of systems on each other.

Like Sameroff (2010) I adopt what Patton, McMahon and Watson (2006, p. 65) call a "systems worldview", because in this view the linear cause-and-effect operational world is replaced by a world seen as operating in holistic and complex ways. According to the systems worldview, people (themselves complex) are continuously trying to achieve a balance, moving between states of chaos, adjustment and management (Patton *et al.*, 2006). The Systems Theory

Framework allowed the participants and the researcher to search for patterns in this study, to understand the role of biological, social and situational factors in their occupational behaviour over time, and to describe and understand complex interrelated and embedded life and career events (Patton *et al.*, 2006).

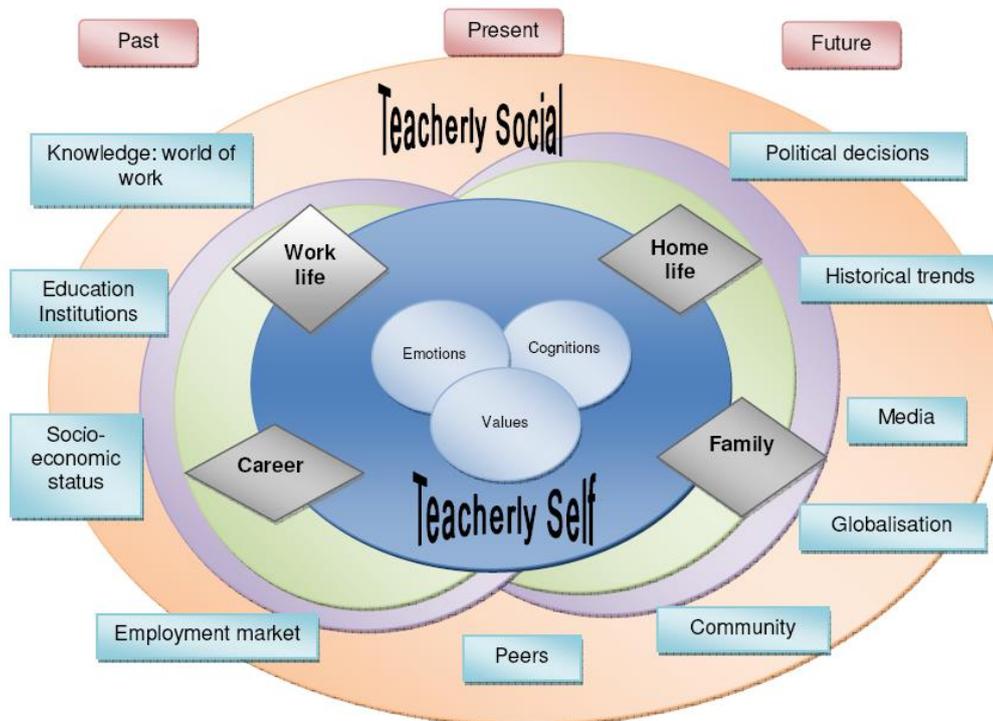


Figure 2.8: The Teacher as core employee within the Systems Theory Framework
(Adapted from Patton, McMahon & Watson, 2006, p. 69)

Figure 2.8 depicts how I believe teachers can construct their careers amidst past, present and future influences in their lives (Patton *et al.*, 2006). Sameroff's (refer to Section 2.2.) explains the "teacherly self", referring to the teacher as a human with inner systems that guide decision making and actions (Kirk & Wall, 2010, p. 627). The teacher is situated in a context that I call the *teacherly social*. This refers to the work-life balance of teachers that are under constant strain and are indicated by the diamond shapes in the figure (Cinamon *et al.*, 2007).

My assertion is that the *teacherly social* also refers to wider systems surrounding the teacher, such as the employment market, the community and the media, and relates to Super's (1990) situational determinants. More examples are placed in boxes around the circles and diamonds. Lastly, the dimension of change over time (Patton *et al.*, 2006) is represented by the top three pink rectangular-shaped boxes marked past, present and future. This relates back to teachers' past experiences, present situations and future career plans. All of these aspects are interdependent and in constant transaction (Theron, 2011; Ungar, 2011). The Systems Theory Framework provided me with a guideline to ensure that I would be sensitive

to the participating teachers' discussions of the *meaning that they personally* attach to their career development paths to date (Patton *et al.*, 2006). More importantly, this theoretical framework guided me in working retrospectively and in giving an account of protective resources and risk factors that emanated through system interaction (Ungar, 2011).

2.6 THE TEACHER AS WORKER: INTRODUCING TEACHER CAREER RESILIENCE

The last two layers of understanding teacher resilience discussed in Section 2.3.2 (working context and self as professional) places emphasis on the teacher as worker. I further unpack the notion of the teacher as worker highlighting the significance of teacher career resilience.

Kirk and Wall (2010) describe teaching as an emotional experience and highlight how teachers invest “emotional labour”. Rothmann (2013) explains that emotional well-being is one essential component of flourishing at work and points out that happy workers equals happy people equals a happy workplace (Rothmann, 2011). Rothmann (2011) further writes that the wellness of employees determines the prosperity of organisations in times of chronic change. These statements have enhanced my understanding of the link between teachers' emotion-filled service and the significant role that their emotional well-being plays in organisational success. Bretz and Judge (1994) conclude that a good fit between person and organisation will typically lead to a high level of job satisfaction. However, Rothmann (2013) argues that, apart from emotional well-being, workers also need psychological and social well-being to flourish at work. To me this illustrates the constant transactions between work and life. On the basis of this statement one might argue that if teachers as core employees do not receive the necessary support from their workplace, the situation may induce stress at home and *vice versa* (Cinamon, Rich & Westman, 2007).

In line with broad resilience thinking, Masten and Reed (2005, p. 86) note that the continuous goal of resilience research is to “preserve, protect and recover good adaptation”. This reminds me of McCarthy and Bernstein's (2011) statement that in order to improve the South African teacher workforce, good teachers need to be produced, used and retained. According to the Department of Basic Education (DBE)⁷, in order to improve the quality of education in South Africa, one of the goals is to “strive for a teacher workforce that is healthy and enjoys a sense of job satisfaction” (Government Gazette, August 2010, p.3). I therefore posit that knowledge regarding career development has potential value when studying teacher resilience.

⁷ In South Africa, the Department of Basic Education is the macro-level employer of teachers. A total of 439 394 teachers working in public and private schools constitute the largest occupation group in South Africa (Education Handbook, 2012). The Department of Basic Education (DBE) was formed in 2010 when the National Department of Education was split into two: DBE and the Department of Higher Education and Training. The DBE has been tasked with overseeing primary and secondary education in South Africa.

Job satisfaction and dissatisfaction depends on various factors. More than 30 years ago researchers already established that factors such as career values and rewards will influence employees' feelings of job satisfaction (Kalleberg, 1977). To add complexity, the changing world of work requires modern-day workers to adapt more frequently to volatile working conditions (Coetzee, 2005; Fourie & Van Vuuren, 1998; Lew 2001; London, 1993; Mirvis & Hall, 1994; Nel, 2006; Shein & Chen, 2011; Watson & Stead, 2006; Wessels, 1999; Wolf, London, Casey & Pufahl, 1995). Such environmental stressors could cause dissatisfaction in the workplace. This is in line with Ungar's (2011) thinking. In this study, I had to be on the look-out for such factors, as these could provide me with insight into the participants' resilience and factors influencing this.

Two important messages become apparent to me: In addition to the possible transfer of an attitude of resilience between teachers and learners (Gu & Day, 2007), the value of resilience for the teacher as a satisfied worker is highlighted. As Weare (2004) suggests, "emotional literacy" will lead to resilience in schools, which is in turn important for the emotional well-being of teachers and learners. Furthermore, individual appraisal of working conditions, organisational policies or practices and available resources will influence job satisfaction (Greenhaus, Callanan & Godshalk, 2000). In this regard, Krovetz (2008, p. 46) indicates how the fostering of resilience in schools and communities may increase the job satisfaction of teachers:

"... you feel the satisfaction that teachers sense when talking about how rewarding it is to work with their students because the students are growing and are appreciative, as are the parents, the principal, and the community".

Thus there is a connection between job satisfaction and resilience in teaching (Gu & Day, 2007; Patterson, 2001; Wasley, 1991). My assumption is that this connection possibly contributes to teacher career resilience (but this falls outside the scope of this study).

2.7 RURAL EDUCATION

As noted in Chapter 1, rural education areas seem to be the hardest hit by adversity (Balfour *et al.*, 2008; Harley & Wedekind, 2004; Joseph, 2007). To contextualise the person-environment interaction and work-life balance of the teachers who participated in this study, I now discuss rural education.

2.7.1 LESSONS FROM ABROAD

Internationally special attention is paid to the issue of rural education (Arnold, Newman, Gaddy & Dean, 2005; Barley & Beesley, 2007; Bouck, 2004; Clarke, Imrich, Surgenor & Wells, 2003; Gregson, Waters & Gruppetta, 2006; Harmon & Schafft, 2009; Hudson & Hudson,

2008; Thompson, 1990; Yarrow, Ballantyne, Hansford, Herschell & Millwater, 1999). In Australian literature, Tytler *et al.* (2011, p. 871) in particular comment on “equity issues” in rural education, while Sharplin (2002), Yarrow *et al.* (1999) and White (2006) highlight the problems encountered with regard to retaining Australian rural teachers. Gibson (1994) focuses on the marginalisation of scattered rural populations served by small rural schools; Lock *et al.* (2009) stress the burden of cost to pre-service teachers doing their practicum at rural schools; and Jarzabkowski (2003) highlights the fact that incorrect preconceived ideas that teaching in a rural school will hinder professional growth remains a challenge when trying to attract teachers. As far back as in 1978, Bessant (1978, p. 130) tried to dispel the apparent difference between rural and urban education problems when he wrote, “the problem for schooling in Australia is to distinguish the real differences from the imagined”.

In other parts of the rural world researchers write about the lack of “crayons or markers” of a “rural Chinese classroom”; overcrowded transport systems; and half-built infrastructure (Lebans & Radigan, 2007, p. 17). In Britain, 15% of public school learners attend rural schools (Clarke *et al.*, 2003). They report that the major challenges faced in British rural education are economic hardship, isolation, small multi-grade classes, special needs, narrow bandwidth despite internet access, and the large operating costs (Clarke *et al.*, 2003). American scholars have also noticed challenges in their rural settings, such as code switching, unappreciative parents and professional isolation (Howley & Howley, 2005). In direct contrast to the above, Malloy and Allen (2007, p. 19) discuss the “benefits of rural schools” in the United Kingdom as “attractive class size, genuine personal relationships and a high degree of involvement in the decision making process”. Schools in rural Africa, such as Ghana, report challenges related to education quality, teacher inefficiency and learner absenteeism (Akyeampong *et al.*, 2007). In Zimbabwe, rural schools are typically under-resourced and cater for small groups of children because of sparsely populated areas (Mukeredzi, 2013). These contrasting ideas sensitised me to the way that rurality may be conceptualised in South Africa as it remains a complex concept (Mukeredzi, 2013; Wright, 2012).

2.7.2 SOUTH AFRICAN RURAL SCHOOL CONTINUUM

Ebersöhn and Ferreira (2012) comment on the dynamically driven, systemically shaped and individually informed concept of *rural*, while Wright (2012) indicates that South African schools, like others, differ because of economic disparity, patterns of migration and the influence of traditional leaders. In this regard Mukeredzi (2013) points out that rural areas are mainly owned by the community, consist of commercial farms and were part of the former ‘homelands’⁸. Wright (2012) explains that many deep rural areas are still under the influence

⁸ “Under apartheid, policies such as the Land Act, the Group Areas Act of 1953 and the Separate Development Act forced native Black South Africans to live in a homeland” (Mukeredzi, 2013, p. 3).

of traditional leadership, which causes political and social confusion. In an effort to grasp the complexity of rurality, I drew from Wright’s (2012, p. 73) idea of a “notional urban-rural continuum” in conjunction with Ebersöhn and Ferreira’s (2012) reminder to clearly describe context in terms of subjective attitude. Wright’s (2012) urban-rural continuum is illustrated in Figure 2.9 and its features are discussed in relation to Ebersöhn and Ferreira’s (2012) insights and Balfour *et al.*’s (2008) generative theory of rurality.



Figure 2.9: My interpretation of the urban-rural continuum (adapted from Wright, 2012, p. 73)

As Figure 2.9 indicates, Wright (2012) explains that nearer to the urban end of the continuum the dimensions of knowledge load, social scale, intellectual orientation and cognitive drive expand (represented by the coloured arrows pointing outwards). At the rural end of the continuum, these conceptual parameters theoretically contract (represented by the coloured arrows pointing inwards). I reason that the spaces in-between the extreme ends occupy dynamic and subjective interplay between forces, agencies and resources similar to the way resilience are fluid (Balfour *et al.*, 2008; Ebersöhn & Ferreira, 2012; Wright, 2012). To further explore the urban-rural continuum I summarise issues faced by African and South African rural teachers in Table 2.4 as reported on by various scholars.

Table 2.4: Issues faced by rural teachers in Africa

<i>Issues faced by rural teachers</i>	<i>Author</i>
Poverty Underdevelopment	Gardiner, 2008
Lack of school material Lack basic services and facilities Poor physical infrastructure Limited and expensive public transport	Mukeredzi, 2013
Increased class size Multi-grade teaching Pressure of performativity	Mukeredzi, 2009
Geographical distance Lack sanitation Rely on borehole or rainwater harvesting No source of electricity	Hugo, Jack, Wedekind & Wilson, 2010

Issues faced by rural teachers	Author
Under- and unqualified teachers	HSRC – Education Policy Consortium, 2005
Derelict buildings Not enough classrooms Broken windows Limited access to water, electricity and sanitation Restricted access to resources such as libraries and books, IT and science equipment	Ebersöhn & Ferreira, 2012
Lack of professional development opportunities Gaps in preparation for rural teaching Difficulty in teaching learners in rural areas	Mulkeen, 2006

Issues in rural education (highlighted in Table 2.4) in Africa are discussed in terms of the four dimensions of contrast (urban vs. rural) suggested by Wright (2012) and the rurality variables highlighted by Balfour *et al.* (2008). Mukeredzi (2013) call on scholars to attentively address the contextual differences between rural and urban settings despite similarities in curricula and practices. As indicated in Table 2.4, teachers in Africa find it difficult to teach children in rural areas (Mulkeen, 2006). A possible reason for difficulties experienced by teachers who try to motivate children in rural areas is that those children receive little to no support from their parents, who are often illiterate, and have to help with work on the land, especially during harvest times (Mulkeen, 2006). Therefore, in line with Wright's (2012, p. 77) thinking, I believe that learners' cognitive drive (the will to know more) may diminish because they are not really exposed to career-based expectations so as not to "disrupt a fundamentally stable life-world" or rural area. Balfour *et al.* (2008, p. 101) opposes this notion, which he calls a "romantic ideal of simplicity and innocence within time and space" and considers the alternative, saying that "the rural environ is transformative, capable of changing behaviour and affecting the motivation of teachers, community workers, and learners". Perhaps the difficulty for teachers lie in transforming learners' ideas about themselves while confronted with overcrowded multi-grade classes with little or no resources (Mukeredzi, 2009). In this study I kept this possibility in mind when exploring the meanings the teachers ascribed to their day-to-day career lives, taking care to also listen for stories of struggle and triumph.

Mulkeen (2006) further notes that more experienced teachers choose to work in urban areas (refer to Table 2.4). In this regard Wright (2012) comments that the knowledge load (intrinsic demand for formal knowledge) is higher at the urban end of the continuum. Furthermore, as indicated in Table 2.4, new teachers entering teaching positions in rural schools have trouble adapting to the community, may become homesick and take advantage of early transfers back to schools in the metropolitan (Gregson, Waters & Gruppetta, 2006). It is possible that teacher training does not sufficiently address the different needs of rural education, as many

international scholars have observed (Arnold *et al.*, 2005; Barley & Beesley, 2007; Bouck, 2004; White, 2006; Yarrow *et al.*, 1999). Since short courses are not readily available in rural areas (Mulkeen, 2006), it becomes desirable to fall into the “rhythms of village life” (Wright, 2012, p. 76) or move back to urban centres (Mulkeen, 2006), which better fits with their professional identity formed during their training (Balfour *et al.*, 2008). Refer to Table 2.4 to see why teachers who originally come from rural areas often cope better with the circumstances presented by rural life, such as great distances, inadequate sanitation, no running water and no electricity (Hugo *et al.*, 2010), but then fail to prepare learners for the “very different environment” that they will encounter in urban settings (Wright, 2012, p. 74).

Ebersöhn and Ferreira (2012) highlight demographic (proximity to services) and geographic (proximity to cities) indicators of rurality. Teachers travel great distances to school or for medical care, so they often start late or do not arrive at school at all (Mulkeen, 2006). As seen in Table 2.4, expensive and inadequate transport services make life hard (Mukeredzi, 2013). This reminds me of what Balfour *et al.* (2008, p. 100) call “isolation in space and time”. I understand that rurality in most cases implies a disconnect from social structures. Furthermore I knew that I had to gauge from participants if they themselves view their context as rural or not. Wright (2012) links social connectedness with intellectual orientation (diversification), which implies that being less isolated (e.g. at urban centres) will spark the drive for more formal knowledge and know how. This ties in with Wright’s (2012, p. 76) idea of the social scale (degree of social awareness) on the urban-rural continuum and the point that he makes, i.e. that abstract school curricula based on “universalising religions” are “impersonal” and “individualistic”. Such universal curricula rather prepare urbanites for the international world and remain highly foreign to the rural classroom (Wright, 2012). This may be why rural people teach in rural schools and remain under-qualified (HSRC – Education Policy Consortium, 2005), especially because of a lack of professional development opportunities (Mulkeen, 2006).

Mulkeen (2006) argues that because of the constraints mentioned in Table 2.4 and discussed above, the quality of teaching in rural areas is often lower. However, I draw from Ebersöhn and Ferreira’s (2012, p. 30) “counter-illustrations” of resilience promotion and well-being in rural schools.

2.8 A MULTI-DIMENSIONAL CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK: TEACHER CAREER RESILIENCE

In pulling my position together I believe that teacher resilience and career resilience are forces that strengthen the process of resilience: teacher resilience adds the dimension of responsible citizenship and career resilience affords the individual a developmental track to grow the

process of resilience. Thus far I have linked pivotal bodies of knowledge (resilience, teacher resilience and career resilience) that pertain to this study. The link I make between these bodies is that in developing an understanding of teachers' resilience, I would need to unpack their personal attributes, cultural orientations, protective resources and unique career-development path in terms of context (in this case rural education) and work-life balance (focusing on person-environment interaction). I think of this integration as an initial conceptual framework of teacher career resilience. Many scholars have argued that resilience in teaching causes teachers to flourish despite adversity (Brunetti, 2006; Castro *et al.*, 2010; Fritz & Smit, 2008). In Section 2.5 I discussed the specific context in which this study is situated, namely education. To further narrow down the links between resilience, teacher resilience, career resilience and rural education, I drew from Ebersöhn's (2012, p. 29, 2013) relationship-resourced resilience model, generated in an environment of "chronic stress" and "poverty", and Rothmann's (2013) perspective on flourishing at work. To merge the scholarly development in resilience work I present a conceptual framework to guide this study in Figure 2.10.

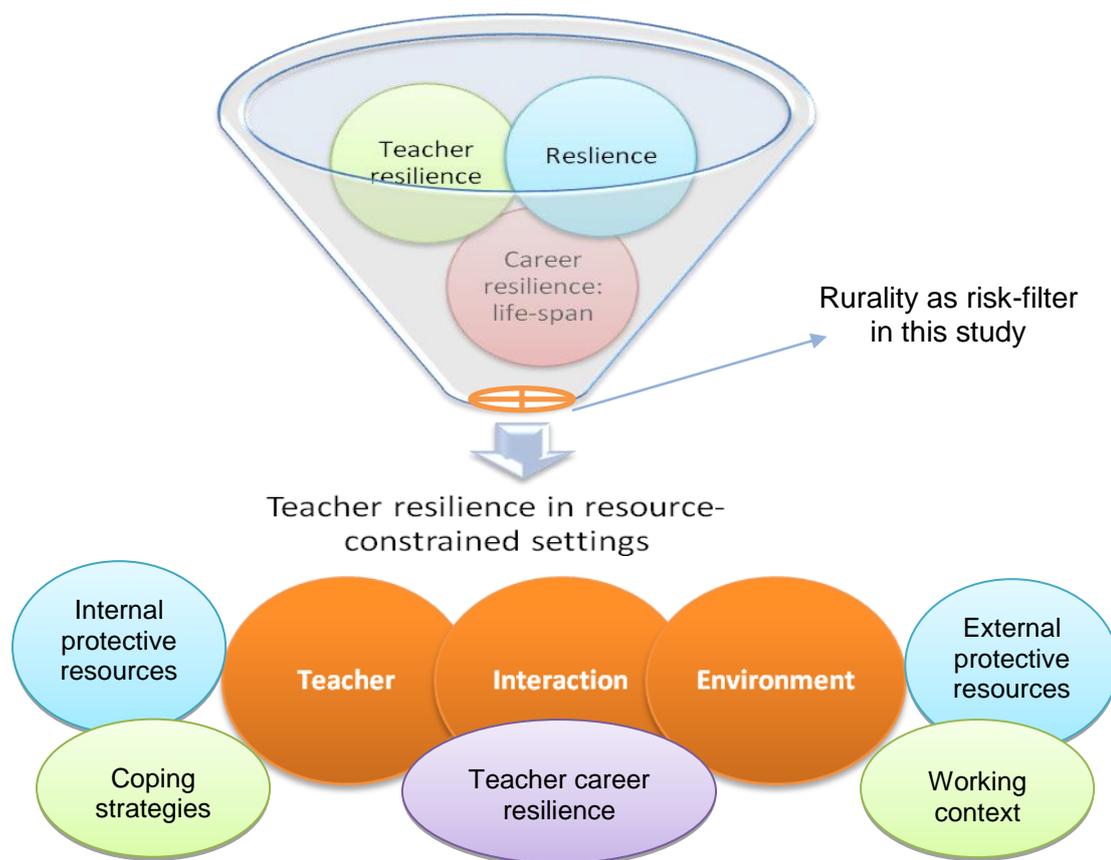


Figure 2.10: Multidimensional conceptual framework of the study: teacher career resilience

As noted in the discussions above, I understand the complex nature of resilience. I realise that in order to understand resilience I need a riskfilter (Figure 2.10). A riskfilter contextualises the significance of resilience. In this study I applied the context of rural schools as a riskfilter to understand the resilience of teachers teaching in a resource-constrained setting.

In merging the three bodies of knowledge, resilience (blue circle in the filter), teacher resilience (green circle in filter) and career resilience (pink circle in filter), and filtering them through rurality as the riskfilter, I conclude that the essence of understanding teacher resilience lies in the interaction between the teacher and his/her environment (overlapping orange ovals). Framing my thinking within the latest research waves on resilience I appreciate the apparent and non-apparent connections (circles in filter overlapping) between resilience (refer to Section 2.2), teacher resilience (refer to Section 2.3) and career resilience (refer to Section 2.5) within a resource-constrained setting (refer to Section 2.7).

Through the filtering process I deduce several key elements needed to understand the teacher resilience of teachers in rural settings. From the body of knowledge about resilience (blue circle) I know that internal as well as external protective resources are possible (blue ovals). A deeper understanding of teacher resilience (green circle) heightened my sensitivity to coping strategies in teaching and the unique working contexts that teachers face (green ovals). Investigating the significance of career resilience (pink circle) in this study highlights the unique architecture of the career development path that the teachers in rural areas typically embarked upon (pink oval). Using these markers I aim to understand teacher career resilience (purple circle) in a particular setting.

2.9 CONCLUSION

By drawing from past and present philosophies on resilience, and through an analysis of the context of teachers in rural education, their unique career development paths and a layered understanding of teacher resilience, I laid the theoretical foundation for important epistemological understandings and methodological decisions in this study. It is evident from the synthesis of theory and literature on resilience, teacher resilience and career resilience that, seen in context, the resilience of teachers is complex, the influence of chance and change on career development while searching for a work-life balance cannot be underplayed; and the understanding of teacher resilience rest on the understanding of resilience. In studying resilience as part of an empirical investigation I remained cognisant of specific elements related to teacher-environment interaction as highlighted in the conceptual framework of teacher career resilience for the study. By following these alerts, I will describe my methodological decisions in Chapter 3.

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CHAPTER THREE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

*“Always, lives are understood within their respective and collective contexts
and it is this understanding that is theorized”.*

~ Cole & Knowles, 2001, p. 11 ~

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I describe how I came to generate knowledge with teachers in a small school in the Mpumalanga mountains (refer to Chapter 1 for a description of the research setting), following the opening statement I quoted from Cole and Knowles (2001). For ease of navigation I present a summary (including the numbering sequence) of the contents of this chapter in Table 3.1 and indicate the main groupings with different colour-sets.

Table 3.1: Outline of the chapter

3.2 Paradigmatic lenses						
3.2.1 Research premise	3.2.2 Ontology	3.2.3 Epistemology: Interpretivism (includes discussion of quality criteria)				
		3.2.3.1 Introduction	3.2.3.2 Knowledge	3.2.3.3 Subjectivity	3.2.3.4 Context	3.2.3.5 Authentic
3.3 Researcher reflexivity (includes discussion of quality criteria)						
3.4 Methodological paradigm						
3.4.1 Biographical research	3.4.2 Participatory principles		3.4.3 Life history design			
	3.4.2.1 Partnership and Power-sharing		3.4.3.1 Origins	3.4.3.2 Fit between life history design and biographical research		3.4.3.3 Definition
3.4.4 <i>Advantages:</i> Biographical research, participatory principles and life history design			3.4.5 <i>Challenges:</i> Biographical research, participatory principles and life history design			
3.4.4.1 Education	3.4.4.2 Optimistic voices	3.4.4.3 Principles	3.4.5.1 Critique	3.4.5.2 Researcher fit	3.4.5.3 Other	
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Analysis b. Changes c. Familiarity d. Time e. Generalisability 	

3.5				
Research Methodology				
3.5.1	3.5.2			3.5.3
Selection	Selection Criteria			Summary of participants
	3.5.2.1	3.5.2.2	3.5.2.3	3.5.2.4
	Adversity	Experience	Optimistic	Conversant
3.5.4				
Data generation and documentation				
3.5.4.1	3.5.4.2		3.5.4.3	3.5.4.4
Introduction	Interview-conversations		Visual data	Memory books
	a. Schedule as guideline			a. Field notes
3.5.5				
Data analysis and interpretation				
3.5.5.1	3.5.5.2		3.5.5.3	3.5.5.4
Categories	Authority of voice		Messiness	Narrative comparison
3.6				
Ethical considerations				
3.6.1	3.6.2		3.6.3	3.6.4
Introduction	Individual level		Deontological and consequential levels	External level
3.7				
Conclusion				

As indicated in Table 3.1 I share my interpretivist paradigmatic assumptions and perspectives, and outline important methodological decisions that linked the research questions with the execution of the biographical study (Atkinson, 2005; Chappel, 2000; Durrheim, 2006; Thomson & Holland, 2005). Guided by Fouché and Schurink's (2011) ideas, I chose **life history** as biographical design (Bhana, 2006; Miller, 2000) following participatory principles to strengthen a collaborative, power-sharing and reciprocal development of understanding as the gateway to theorising (Cole & Knowles, 2001; Goodson & Gill, 2011). I highlight the trustworthiness and quality control strategies throughout the discussions on reflexivity and epistemology by referring to Seale's (1999) guidelines. I discuss how the research process unfolded by describing the philosophical underpinnings of life history design, data-generation strategies and the subsequent analysis of the data. Finally, I discuss how I conducted the study with due consideration of ethical parameters.

3.2 PARADIGMATIC LENSES

Cohen *et al.* (2011) caution me to remain in line with my chosen paradigm in this research project since no two paradigms share common ideologies, values or methods.

3.2.1 META-THEORETICAL PARADIGM: RESEARCH PREMISE

Refer back to Figure 1.1 in Chapter 1 for a summary of the paradigmatic lenses and related perspectives that I chose in order to communicate a clear and unambiguous research report (De Vos & Strydom, 2011). As indicated in Figure 1.1 I was guided by specific ontological, epistemological and methodological suppositions to unfold knowledge about teacher resilience (Cohen *et al.*, 2011; Fouché & Schurink, 2011). My idealistic philosophy of life is indicated by the feet of the researcher, my subjective outlook by the body of the researcher, and my meta-theory (interpretivism) by the head. Before describing the interpretivist position I took in this study, I explain how my philosophy, ontology and thinking about human nature laid the foundation for an interpretivist position in order to achieve design coherence (Durrheim, 2006).

3.2.2 ONTOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE: NOMINALISM

I capture my ontological perspective by first providing my own philosophy of reality, thoughts on human nature and convictions as researcher (taken from my researcher diary and indicated in the green blocks with grey script). I then relate this to the conceptions of social reality, highlighted by others (Cohen *et al.*, 2011).

I believe that what is real to people is real to them, and this reality may or may not be shared by others.

Researcher Diary, 10 August 2011

Believing in realities created by individuals themselves mirrors a nominalist approach to social science (Cohen *et al.*, 2011). I believe that each individual owns his/her own reality (Cohen *et al.*, 2011). Therefore, this study is driven by my belief that people's subjective experiences constitute the reality to be studied. Consequently my research design had to account for multiple realities, and the personal experiences of the participants constitute the knowledge contribution to teacher resilience (Fouché & Schurink, 2011; Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2006).

I believe that as humans we have the exceptional gift (separating us from animals) of 'thinking ourselves into' another person's reality.

Researcher Diary, 10 August 2011

Believing in the power of human beings to act out of free will, thought and emotion, is classified by Burrell and Morgan as voluntarism (Cohen *et al.*, 2011). Furthermore, I believe that as humans we are able to distance ourselves from our own realities through reason and

that at times we make judgements on these realities. This classifies me as an idealist, according to Barr Greenfield (Cohen *et al.*, 2011).

I believe that judging our realities through reason may change how we think or perceive and in turn possibly alter our idea of what our reality is or is not. In short, we are able to each own our own world, whether this world is real to others or not, and whether we choose to rationalize our realities or not.

Researcher Diary, 10 August 2011

It follows that I approach the world and consequently social science from a subjective stance, and in line with an interpretivist paradigm (Cohen *et al.*, 2011). These beliefs are indicated as the first layer of assumptions in Figure 1.1 (refer to Chapter 1), from the feet upwards in the three circles.

3.2.3 EPISTEMOLOGICAL PARADIGM: INTERPRETIVISM

In this section I discuss interpretivism as the epistemological paradigm guiding this study.

3.2.3.1 Introduction

Fouché and Schurink (2011) ask the question: *Which principles and rules reveal reality?* The answer to this question describes my epistemological paradigm. In short, it explains how I believe knowledge is created.

Terre Blanche and Durrheim (2006) explain that epistemology describes the relationship between me as the researcher and the knowledge that can be derived from the study. Therefore, the way in which I engaged with participants and sought answers to research questions were prescribed by my epistemological paradigm. My epistemological paradigm stemmed from my ontological views – as indicated by the first layer of assumptions, and described above (refer to Figure 1.1 in Chapter 1). In addition I was constantly aware of conducting a trustworthy study. Roberts (2002) explains that I can ensure quality by declaring my position transparently and reflexively. In addition I learnt from Roberts (2002, p. 78) that “reflexive monitoring” is an essential aspect of biographical research. However, I was conscious of the warning by Cohen *et al.* (2011) regarding the limitation of researcher reflexivity. In this regard I follow Fontana’s (2003) advice to not only acknowledge my part in the methodological design, but to also recognise the ethical responsibility of being a reflexive researcher (refer to Section 3.6). In Table 3.2 I summarise the various measures of quality in this study. Throughout the discussion of my epistemological stance and reflexivity I refer to how I applied interpretivist criteriology (Seale, 1999) to ensure trustworthiness.

Table 3.2: Summary of measures taken to ensure a trustworthy study

<p>Credibility <i>Can I trust the results?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-constructing reality through sharing and dialogue (transcriptions; photos) • Facilitating and promoting the voice of each participant through researcher reflexivity (researcher diary; regular meetings with supervisors) • Focusing on the participants' definitions of events (transcriptions) • Using narratives to verify raw data and process of re-construction (narratives and member checking)
<p>Transferability <i>Can I use the results?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focusing on context of discovery as participant insights are sought through researcher reflexivity (researcher diary, transcriptions and photo's) • Being mindful of design decisions through researcher reflexivity (researcher diary) • Accounting for impact and understanding at various contextual levels through researcher reflexivity (researcher diary)
<p>Dependability <i>How did I account for change?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constant reflection through researcher reflexivity (researcher diary) • Choosing multiple data sources (transcriptions, photographs, written accounts) • Using narratives to verify raw data and process of reconstruction (narratives and member checking) • Having stakeholder checks (participants and other researchers)
<p>Confirmability <i>Can this study be repeated?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Declaring assumptions through researcher reflexivity (researcher diary) • Constant academic reflection through researcher reflexivity (researcher diary) • Using of colloquial (everyday) language (transcriptions)
<p>Authenticity <i>Are various realities portrayed?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accounting for my views in the study through researcher reflexivity (researcher diary) • Acknowledging various interpretations through researcher reflexivity (researcher diary) • Using life history as a research design choice

3.2.3.2 Knowledge is personal and context bound

In line with interpretivism I believe that “knowledge” is personal and unique (Cohen *et al.*, 2011, p. 6; O'Donoghue, 2007, p. 10) and that the role of social science is to discover how different people interpret the world they own (Cohen *et al.*, 2011; Denzin & Lincoln, 2003; Jansen, 2010). In this study, I focused on understanding the participants' experiences and behaviour over time as these factors relate to teacher resilience (Fossey, Harvey, McDermott & Davidson, 2002) and, in particular, on how the participants made personal meaning of their career resilience over time (Cohen *et al.*, 2011; Fouché & Schurink, 2011). Guided by an interpretivist paradigm, I was concerned with the individuality of each participant's life story (Cohen *et al.*, 2011) and interested in the participants' subjective life experiences (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003) and how their actions demonstrating teacher resilience in their careers transpired from their life journeys (Fossey *et al.*, 2002). It follows that I was interested in the

various ways in which participants have overcome adversity and flourished in a teaching career over a life span (Fouché & Schurink, 2011). Cohen *et al.* (2011) explain that an interpretivist perspective accounts for a variety of explanations because of unique contexts. Cohen *et al.*'s (2011) assertion regarding the multiplicity of reality resonates with the assumptions and beliefs I hold as a researcher and which I described in my researcher diary before embarking on the research journey.

I assume that participants in this study each have distinctive contexts and should be studied as individuals.

Researcher Diary, 13 August 2011

Terre Blanche *et al.* (2006, p. 274) describe the act of “understanding in context” as the first principle of interpretivist research. The same authors state that the researcher becomes the primary “instrument” of data-generation and analysis. This means that it is not possible for me to escape the interaction between myself as the researcher and the participants (Cohen *et al.*, 2011). Consequently, as the primary research instrument, I felt a great responsibility to continuously reflect on my own understanding of the world and my reactions to the participants (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003; Maree & Van der Westhuizen, 2010). Refer to Section 3.3, which deals with my reflexivity as a researcher.

3.2.3.3 Subjectivity as strength in meaning-making

Those outside the interpretivist realm may view a lack of objectivity as a possible weakness (Cohen *et al.*, 2011; Fouché & Schurink, 2011; Nieuwenhuis, 2010a). I drew from the ideas expressed by Snape and Spencer (2003) and others, i.e. that my choice of an interpretivist approach means that my own perspectives and values as a researcher will inevitably influence the findings of this study (Cohen *et al.*, 2011). These authors further assert that I can account for my assumptions by explaining them in a transparent way (Snape & Spencer, 2003). Examples of such transparency can be seen in my researcher diary.

I assume that participants in this study each have distinctive contexts and should be studied as individuals.

I assume that after this first initial contact I will gain access to participants easily – they know my face and we are comfortable with each other.

I assume that all the teachers have stories, that these stories are valuable and worth retelling.

I assume that it will be easy to listen to the participants because their English is good.

I assume that there will be time to meet each time I visit because of the free periods they have.

I assume that they will still be there the next time I visit.

I have to guard against my own prejudices...being white, feeling like an intruder ...

Researcher Diary, 13 August 2011

Writing down these assumptions helped me to face the potential consequences of reciprocal influence between myself as the researcher and the participants (Cohen *et al.*, 2011; Snape & Spencer, 2003). From the continuous reflection on the purpose of this study I realised that the complexity of my subjective approach provided the foundation for an anti-positivist epistemology and idiographic methodology (Cohen *et al.*, 2011).

What is it that I wanted to know? I want to understand the intricacies of a life (of many lives) and how actions and decisions altered or informed values and norms.

Researcher Diary, 3 May 2012

Goodson and Gill (2011) make it clear that life history research cannot be objective, and writes about the importance of dialogue in life history work. This reminds me of how Schurink *et al.* (2011) describe the trustworthiness concept confirmability. In order to ensure confirmability (refer to Table 3.1) and a quality study, I used colloquial (everyday) language to engage in constant conversation with the participants (Goodson & Gill, 2011) and constantly reflected with them on the purpose and meaning of their life stories (Cohen *et al.*, 2011; Snape & Spencer, 2003). In my researcher diary I also continuously reflected on a conceptual level on the meaning of the interpretivist paradigm I had selected.

Interpretivism is not that easy when you are from a different culture. I still believe in everyone's ability to become empathic listeners but to really feel what another person felt – I am not so sure anymore. I think interpretivism requires you to be able to do this. How else can you be authentic in your results?

Researcher Diary, 3 May 2012

3.2.3.4 Revealing the importance of understanding-in-context

Since I knew that my personal understanding of the social world and the participants' understanding of the social world were both important (Snape & Spencer, 2003), I followed Seale's (1999, p. 33) suggestion that a qualitative inquiry should be based on a "context of discovery", rather than on a "context of justification". Cohen *et al.* (2011) suggest that the participants of a study be viewed in relation to the wider population. However, both Nieuwenhuis (2010a) and Seale (1999) state that this is neither the aim of qualitative research, nor of a study of this nature. My goal was to examine participants' insights (Nieuwenhuis, 2010a) while accounting for transferability (Seale, 1999) (refer to Table 3.1). Due to the complexity of social life, and because individuals perceive and experience things emotionally, life history work aims to represent interactive relationships between society and the experiences of individuals, rather than general representativeness (Cohen *et al.*, 2011; Goodson & Sikes, 2001). Even though a critical approach also foregrounds historical and

social meaning making, my aim was not to bring about social transformation, nor to critique oppressive systems at play (Fossey *et al.*, 2002; Jansen, 2010). Rather, I wanted to *verstehen* (understand) the stories of triumph despite oppression as depicted in Table 1.1 (Chapter 1) (Cohen *et al.*, 2011; Fouché & Schurink, 2011; Roberts, 2002; Snape & Spencer, 2003; Terre Blanche *et al.*, 2006).

Cohen *et al.* (2011) write that the quality of data and findings using a life history approach is challenged by three main issues: representativeness, validity and reliability, whereas Seale (1999) argues that demonstrating mindfulness of design decisions is an important counter measure. From Cohen *et al.* (2011), I learnt that reflexivity could be used to discover and battle my reactivity.

This reminds me that what I see or observe in the research field and beyond, and how I think about what I see or observe depends not only on how I look at the participants, but also where I stand in relation to the participants and my preconceived ideas. After reading Cohen I realized that reactivity has two dimensions – reacting from prior bias ideas and reacting in the moment – therefore when I reflect I will need to do more with regard to checking myself against the norm and not influencing the data-generation...[returning to this thought 4 May 2012] – DIFFICULT to do! Although I am by nature a reflexive person – these thoughts and ideas are in my head – also influenced by my background and biases – what worked well was to check myself against other researchers in the field and discussing my thoughts with my supervisors.

Researcher Diary, 13 August 2011 and 4 May 2012

However, mindfulness is not enough, and Cohen *et al.* (2011, p. 580) point out that being reflexive does not necessarily prevent a researcher from being selective and biased. In response to this, I refer back to Table 1.1 (Chapter 1) where I attempted to locate personal understanding of this study within place, time and space.

3.2.3.5 Ensuring an authentic outcome as a subjective researcher

My eagerness to understand the teachers' lives grew stronger after completing Table 1.1 (Chapter 1) (refer to Section 3.4.3.2, where I expand on this). I re-read research texts to make sure that my thoughts remained true to my epistemology. I remained conscious of the methodological decisions I had used. As mentioned earlier, most notable from the temporal framing in Table 1.1 (Chapter 1), is that almost all the participants were young children attending school when the political landscape of apartheid reached its climax (Welsh, 2009), and that most of them studied and qualified as teachers during the birth of the South African democracy in the mid-1990s (Harber, 2010). I do not wish to suggest that all teachers who lived and studied during this time would have experienced the same things to the same

degree. Authenticity (refer to Table 3.1) is shown if the research portrays various different realities (Seale, 1999). I identified this during the interviews and reflected as follows:

Interestingly, Participant 2 is the ONLY participant that referred to apartheid overtly. The other participants never made mention of it unless I approached the topic directly. Why is this? Are these the multiple realities referred to? It means that what transpired from the life histories is authentic!

Researcher Diary, 14 September 2012

While framing the lives of the participants, as seen in Table 1.1 (Chapter 1), I realised how the country's history, and especially my race and social class, might have impacted on my thoughts as a researcher. As indicated in the entries in my researcher diary, I was overcome with emotion.

I realized how intense the socio-political and edu-political battles for freedom were during those days. Doubt and sadness, doubt and sadness, sadness and doubt again ... How is it possible to remain a positive person when the essence of who you are is denied by the government you need to serve? Why is this not foregrounded in our conversations? I do not want to foreground it because I feel ashamed. Will my research fail because of this?

Researcher Diary, 8 May 2012

When I realised that my skin colour and language represented that of the 'oppressor' I became very sensitive, incredibly sad and frustrated. Am I doing the research justice? Will the participants see me as a threat? How true will their sharing be?

Researcher Diary, 13 August 2011

He said, 'There is no place for [the Bantu] in the European community above the level of certain forms of labour ... What is the use of teaching the Bantu child mathematics when it cannot use it in practice?' WHAT?!? Is this why MOST participants have this inner drive to teach the 'African child'?

Researcher Diary, 14 September 2012

Roberts (2002) refers to Scott's (1998) idea that unconscious reasons for actions may remain hidden from participants. This made me aware of my own hidden agendas. What I deduced from Erben (1996) and Scott's (1998) reasoning is that I am assisted in an interpretivist approach (especially used in a life history study) to locate the participants' lives in a broader social text, possibly making hidden messages known. The roles of context, social behaviour and reflection were therefore very important in this study because of my convictions regarding human nature and my approach to research (Cohen *et al.* 2011). The importance of these factors relates not only to creating design coherence, but also to ensuring an articulate approach to generating trustworthy results.

3.3 REFLEXIVITY AND MY ROLE AS A LIFE HISTORY RESEARCHER

Reflexivity grounded and directed my quest for a trustworthy and logical research framework within an interpretivist paradigm (Cohen *et al.*, 2011). As a result I continuously reflected in a researcher diary (refer to Appendix E) in which I documented my personal and scholarly journey, debating and reflecting on my paradigmatic and personal values. I realised that as researcher I engaged with the research process within my own set of “background knowledge” (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2006, p. 2). The advice given by the same authors include that as researcher I should know when to remain distant and when to engage.

I kept my distance from the staff members who avoided me last time. I did not want them to feel pressured to ‘help’ me.

...I felt more comfortable today because the participants of the study waited for me. Sending the sms was a good idea ...

Researcher Diary, 14 September 2012

Taking a strong reflexive stance in this study was a strategy I adopted to ensure a confirmable (refer to Table 3.1) research report (Cohen *et al.*, 2011; Lewis & Ritchie, 2003). In my view, life history design fits naturally with a reflexive stance, since the design is based on a co-construction of reality through sharing and dialogue (Goodson & Gill, 2011; Roberts, 2002). A strategy I used to ensure authenticity (refer to Table 3.1) was to aim for an inclusive methodology that could empower the participants and answers the research questions (Goodson & Gill, 2011). Managing relationships within a qualitative research setting is crucial, and this is particularly true in the case of life history research (Cohen *et al.*, 2011; Goodson & Gill, 2011). Cohen *et al.* (2011) explain as the study unfolds, that the researcher may vary his or her role as either passive observer or active participant. Furthermore, these authors maintain that it may be difficult to negotiate balancing trust, conflict and ambiguity (Cohen *et al.*, 2011). I often reflected on this:

I really felt that I was intruding their space. They avoided my eyes, although friendly and welcoming, they did not want to engage in small talk. I felt horrible. Can research be trustworthy if participants engage because they feel sorry for you?

Researcher Diary, 8 May 2012

Emotions aside...I still want to do good, sound research. I think interpretivism is the answer because the voice of the participant is still foregrounded even though I work interpretively. Maybe I can't interpret with care being one step removed from the emotions. Thus, I need to monitor my own emotions and declare them constantly. Is this what Schutz meant – when we think back on things their meaning becomes more clear, maybe because we could remove a bit of the emotion that overpowered us?

Researcher Diary, 14 September 2012

To further achieve design coherence, I needed to ensure that the interpretivist paradigm fitted with the purpose of this study and the techniques I had chosen (Durrheim, 2006). As I reflected, I realised that an interpretivist paradigm facilitates the importance of retrospective meaning-giving that Schutz refers to (Cohen *et al.* 2011):

... each life story, taken at face value and within context, could represent a wealth of lessons brought to light in retrospect. By examining these lives, and writing up the lessons one may influence the future choices of teachers in similar contexts.

Researcher Diary, 14 September 2012

Another useful strategy a life history researcher can use to generate trustworthy findings is to facilitate and promote the voice of each participant. Therefore I took care to ensure that my own voice not overshadow that of the participants (Gill & Goodson, 2010). To support me in keeping my voice separate and the study credible (refer to Table 3.1), I reflected in my researcher diary and had regular discussions with my supervisors (Cohen *et al.*, 2011; Seale, 1999). To illustrate:

Now that I have spoken to my profs about the insider/outsider issue I feel better. Always remain friendly and never take it personally ... this is what I did and it worked, especially with the staff members that avoided me.

... life-history research is very similar to the therapeutic relationship – whenever the client is ready things will happen – and this is so for the research as well ... BUT to keep my distance from being a therapist was difficult because of being so internally me – always the human, always curious and always reading behind the lines.

Researcher Diary, 5 October 2012

Seale (1999) points out that credibility refers to the truth value of the study. Lewis and Ritchie (2003) refer to the correctness or precision of a study. To ensure the credibility (refer to Table 3.1) of this study, I focused on the participants' definitions of events (Cohen *et al.*, 2011). I used extended narratives to verify raw data (process of reconstruction) and to provide deep descriptions that illustrate the complexity and interaction of the participants' life histories (Schurink, Fouché & De Vos, 2011).

My role as researcher became increasingly more active because of the gradual move from life story to life history construction (Goodson & Gill, 2011). Initially I let the research process dictate the course following the stories of the participants and remaining conscious of them as co-constructors (Goodson & Gill, 2011).

The experiences that these women and men have gone through are an infinite source of wisdom. I feel an obligation (towards education) to tap into their worlds, not to expose them or exploit them but to really listen to them, and maybe, just maybe it will also mean something to them.

Researcher Diary, 8 May 2012

I balanced my engagement with participants, making sure I hear and represent their voices. I approached entry into the lives of the participants as a continuous process (Cohen *et al.*, 2011).

Participant 2 was the most difficult person to set interviews with. However, the second interview with him was by far the most interesting and layered one after a very difficult first interview. He is a very driven person.

Researcher Diary, 14 September 2012

At critical points in the research process I shared some of my own experiences to gain trust (Goodson & Gill, 2011). Cohen *et al.* (2011) point out that being a reflexive researcher implies the interconnectedness of the researcher with the social world, and that he or she may remain influenced by his or her own biography and perceptions. My awareness of how I had selected the participants, how I perceived the research process and setting, what my own background is and how my paradigms shaped my actions supported me to fulfil a role of dependable research instrument (Cohen *et al.*, 2011). Schurink *et al.* (2011) explain dependability (refer to Table 3.1) as the researcher's ability to account for the changes that occur during a study, as well as in the social world. Cohen *et al.* (2011) identify bias as the main concern. In this regard I was aware of three possible sources of bias: the participants, the researcher and the interaction between the two (Cohen *et al.*, 2011). I used multiple data sources (transcriptions – Appendix G, photographs – Appendix J, memory books – Appendix I) and data verification (narrative – Appendix L), kept notes on research decisions taken (Appendix E), and did stakeholder checks (participants – Appendix L; and other researchers – Appendix E).

3.4 METHODOLOGICAL PARADIGM: BIOGRAPHICAL RESEARCH FOLLOWING PARTICIPATORY PRINCIPLES AND LIFE HISTORY DESIGN

I adopted an idiographic approach (focus on individuals), since I was interested in understanding teacher resilience over time (Fouché & Delpont, 2011; Maree & Van der

Westhuizen, 2010). To understand the historical context of the participants I was moved to follow strategies that minimised the perceived power I hold as researcher (refer to Section 3.5.5.2). As indicated in Figure 3.1 I explored, in an interpretivist and *participatory* way, how individual career-life stories are understood retrospectively using a life history design (Cohen *et al.* 2011; Durrheim, 2006; Fouché & Delpont, 2011; Roberts, 2002).

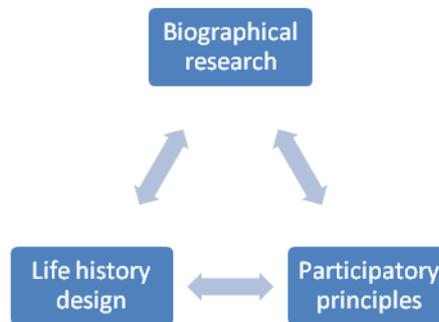


Figure 3.1: The methodological paradigm of this study

There are many ways to conduct a study (Cohen *et al.*, 2011; Fouché & Schurink, 2011; Roberts, 2002). One of the prominent research designs in applied human sciences highlighted by Fouché and Schurink (2011) is narrative-biographical designs. In this design (similar to biographical research) life experiences are gathered through multiple sources, situated in context, and reorganized into a new framework. Throughout this process the relationship between the researcher and the participant is assimilated into the process. However, Roberts (2002) insists that biographical research has a wider reach that extends across *and* beyond social sciences. A discussion of how different concepts are used as synonyms in narrative and biographical work is offered in Section 3.4.3.1. For the purpose of this study I refer to biographical research as the broader qualitative paradigm (Roberts, 2002) and explain my choice of using participatory principles and a life history design as related applications in biographical research in the sections that follow.

3.4.1 BIOGRAPHICAL RESEARCH

Ritchie (2003) as well as Delpont, Fouché and Schurink (2011) categorise biographical research as part of qualitative methods in general, and specifically as naturalistically generated data. Miller (2000, p. 2) explains that, within a biographical perspective, “the past and people’s experience of the past takes on a much more central significance”. Roberts (2002, p. 1) in agreement with Delpont, Fouché and Schurink (2011) asserts that a definition with a single focus for biographical research will not suffice, and that biographical research is a “... fast-moving field which seeks to understand the changing experiences and outlooks of individuals in their daily lives, what they see as important, and how they provide interpretations

of the accounts they give of their past, present and future”. Research designs classified in the genre of biographical research includes life histories, narratives, autobiographies and auto-ethnographies (Fouché & Schurink, 2011; Legard, Keegan & Ward, 2009; O’Donoghue, 2007; Roberts, 2002). It is clear that the field of biographical research is wide and comprehensive.

To add to the wide-ranging nature I learnt that biographical methods consist of the study of various types of oral or written documentation (Ritchie, 2003). In agreement with Ritchie (2003), Goodson and Gill (2011) define biographical research as studying an individual life by using various sources, such as interviews, and presenting the interpretations in various ways. Roberts (2002) adds that the purpose of biographical research is equally empirical and theoretical. He further describes biographical research as covering both historical and present-day issues in society applying autobiographies as well as feminist research (Roberts, 2002). From the wealth of application possibilities described above I understand the need to clearly define the purpose and design of this study (Cohen *et al.*, 2011).

I constructed a flow chart from the work of Roberts (2002), Ritchie (2003) and Miller (2000) to describe how I applied a biographical perspective in this study. The three major ideas are presented in Figure 3.2.



Figure 3.2: My application of a biographical research perspective (Roberts, 2002; Ritchie, 2003; Miller, 2000)

As indicated in Figure 3.2 I used a biographical research approach because I wanted to have mobility in terms of methods, I wanted to focus on the experiences as interpreted by the individuals and I wanted to highlight the broader social context (Miller, 2000; Ritchie, 2003; Roberts, 2002). As a result I chose to engage with the participants using participatory principles and a life history design.

3.4.2 APPLYING PARTICIPATORY PRINCIPLES: PARTNERSHIP AND POWER-SHARING

Boser (2006), Fals-Borda (2001) and Reinhars (1992) explain that participatory research aims to engage participants in the research process, highlighting the meaning-making of the

participant and working towards the common goal of social transformation at individual and societal level. As discussed earlier, I did not aim for social transformation in this study and chose to focus on the principles used in participatory research as a way to actively engage participants and generate authentic data sets. Furthermore, it appears that the participatory research method is complex with comprehensive designs (Atkinson, 2005; Boser, 2006; Dickson & Green, 2001; Reinhars, 1992). As a result I highlight two participatory principles applicable to my study. I call these the principle of partnership (Atkinson, 2005; Maalim, 2006; McAllister, 1999) and the principle of power-sharing (Chappel, 2000; Cornwall & Jewkes, 1995). Both of these were instrumental to understand how teacher resilience may be sustained. Furthermore it allowed me to investigate how meanings of sustained teacher resilience were formulated and acted out by the participants (Giorgi, 2005).

A research partnership is an important characteristic of participatory research (Atkinson, 2005; Bhana, 2006; Chappell, 2000; Cohen *et al.*, 2011; Mbongwe, 2012). As Lister (2000) notes, a partnership implies mutual trust and support as well as a longstanding relationship. It follows that a collaborative relationship with the participants was necessary to achieve *mutual* understanding (Chappell, 2000; Goodson & Gill, 2011). Mutuality (driven by reciprocal trust and support) further implied the intimate sharing of personal stories that demanded empathy, intimacy and emotional involvement of both me and the participants (Atkinson, 2005; Lister, 2000; Tierney, 1998). I aimed at establishing a longstanding relationship in this study over an extended time (20 months – refer to Figure 3.3) in order to build trust, support and mutuality (Lister, 2000). As mentioned earlier I aimed at understanding the historical context of participants. This awareness sensitised me to the possible issue of power in the research relationship. I chose to use participant-generated visual data (photographs) to assist in foregrounding the voice of the participants as a strategy to share the power of data-generation and further extend trust and mutuality (Gaventa & Cornwall, 2006; Lister, 2000; Mbongwe, 2012) (refer to Section 3.5.5.2).

I was thus guided by biographical research and the principles of participatory research (Atkinson, 2005; Chappel, 2000; Mbongwe, 2012; Miller, 2000; Ritchie, 2003; Thomson & Holland, 2005). Many studies have combined biographical paradigms and participatory principles (Atkinson, 2005; Booth *et al.*, 1998; Thomson & Holland, 2005). In this study I requested participants to generate visual data in partnership with me as researcher – echoing the focus on participant experiences highlighted in biographical research. To extend power-sharing I asked participants to write their memories of their past in a memory book (Mbongwe, 2012; Thomson & Holland, 2005) in addition to the interview-conversations we held – also resonating with the focus on participant accounts.

3.4.3 UNDERSTANDING LIFE HISTORY RESEARCH DESIGN

Creswell (2007), Fouché and Schurink (2011) as well as Miller (2000) point out that life history research falls into the broad genre of biographical writings or biographical perspectives. Goodson and Sikes (2001) write that most life historians believe in multiple realities, and that interpretation of data depends on who the interpreter is. This supports my earlier ontological and epistemological reasoning. I agree with O'Donoghue (2007), who recognises the relationship between interpretivism and life history. Even though Goodson and Sikes (2001) assert that life historians hold no distinct system of convictions, I did describe a set of convictions earlier in this chapter in an attempt to frame a coherent research design. Next I defend my choice of a life history research design for this inquiry.

3.4.3.1 Origins and lenses of life history research design

Most researchers use life history and narrative inquiry (two major approaches in narrative work) as closely related constructs by asserting that their conceptualisation and practice are similar (Goodson & Gill, 2011). Both these approaches construct, explain and represent lived experiences through stories (Schwandt, 2007; Shacklock & Thorp, 2005). However, it is Cole and Knowles (2001) who, despite acknowledging the similarities between life history and narrative research, draw a clear distinction between the purpose and analysis of these two methodological procedures. In the same way Roberts (2002) distinguishes between life stories (narratives) and biographical research suggesting that biographical research moves towards interlinking social and political practices with personal views to reveal the personal understanding. I highlight the major similarities and differences in Table 3.3 below.

Table 3.3: Similarities and differences between narrative research and life history research (adapted from Cole & Knowles, 2001; Goodson & Sikes, 2001).

	<i>Narrative research</i>	<i>Life history research</i>
Similarities	Both methods rely on the storied nature of lives. Both methods honour the individuality and complexity of individuals' experiences. Both methods can be influenced by the researcher's orientation and discipline.	
Differences	Narrative research focuses on making meaning of individuals' personal experiences.	Life history research draws on individuals' experiences to make <i>broader contextual meaning</i> by placing narrative accounts and interpretations <i>within a broader context</i> . Life stories or narratives turn into life histories through <i>accounting for historical context</i> .

3.4.3.2 Why life history design fits in the biographical research paradigm

It is the juncture between *experience* and *context* that motivated me to choose a life history design rather than life stories or narratives (Cole & Knowles, 2001; Roberts, 2002). In this regard Goodson and Sikes (2001, p. 17) explain that “without contextual commentary on issues of time and space, life stories remain uncoupled from the conditions of their social construction”. In Figure 3.3 I illustrate my comparison between narrative research and life history research.



Figure 3.3: Representation of difference and similarities between narrative and life history research

In Table 1.1 (Chapter 1), I mapped a history of the lives the participants’ in this study had lived. Since I used a life history research design, I realised that I also needed to make a study of the history of the time. In this regard Roberts (2002) remarks that a life history researcher seeks more than individual stories with personal experience, since the respective social contexts of the participants call for Schutz’s phenomenological stance and Mead’s interactionism (Cohen *et al.*, 2011). Mertens (2010) argues for the importance of *history* in meaning making, development and scholarship in life history inquiry. She proposes that understanding the past will give one an edge when addressing the future; that one can only fully comprehend change and transformation if it is understood within the “mood” of a historical community; and that the importance of contextual influence (cultural, social, political) is highlighted when history is studied (Mertens, 2010, p. 269). Mertens’ argument sensitised me to the broader social context that Cole and Knowles (2001) referred to earlier. I reflected on this in my researcher diary:

As a researcher I have to remain aware of the indigenous or personal experiences as well as the history of the time that the participants in this study lived in order to become whom they are as teachers today.
 Researcher Diary, 1 September 2012

Developing Table 1.1 (Chapter 1) helped me to contextualise the “mood” of the participants’ journeys and enhanced my insight into the textures of their experiences (Mertens, 2010, p. 269). A major contribution that the contextual arena made to my understanding of the participants’ lives was the identification of the timeframe within which they grew up and studied as none of them (with the exception of Participant 2) referred overtly to the context of the time. They tended to focus on their personal journey.

3.4.3.3 Defining life history

According to Cole and Knowles (2001, p.14) various “personal experience methods” exist. These authors emphasise the need for a researcher to avoid getting caught up in the terminology of separate methodological procedures and to rather establish the various approaches to research, since “words used to describe different research methods are codes that reflect, among others things, features of epistemology, purpose, and process” (Cole & Knowles, 2001, p.15). This fusion of methodological terms is evident in existing literature. One example is Mertens’ (2010, p. 270) classification of life history methodology as part of “oral history” research where, according to her, the focus is on the past. Unlike Mertens (2010), Cole and Knowles (2001) separate oral history from life history. Cole and Knowles (2001) assert that life histories belong to the same category as life stories and personal histories, and Miller (2000) lists life history as synonymous with concepts like life story approach, life course research, the autobiographical perspective and the narrative approach. Cole and Knowles (2001) further explain that in the case of oral history, the narrator plays a more dominant role. Mertens (2010) explains that if the same method (oral history) is applied to a present-centred study, it is known as the narrative study of lives and reveals that there is a robust relationship between oral history and present-centred in-depth interviews. While I am inclined to agree with Merten’s assertion that history is important and well worth investigating in order to grasp present and future behaviour, I cannot ignore Cole and Knowles’ (2001) warning not to get caught up in the linguistics of each personal experience method. I therefore selected to work with the descriptions of life history proposed by Goodson and Gill (2011).

Goodson and Gill (2011, p. 22) namely describe life history as an

“account of a life based on interviews and conversations...[and] the collection of written or transcribed oral accounts requested by the researcher. The life story is subsequently edited, interpreted and presented in one of a number of ways, often in conjunction with other sources”.

I also agree with Goodson and Sikes' (2001, p. 19) remark that “we are also keen to make it clear that we do not believe that there is only one ‘proper’ way of doing life history research”. I reflected on my choice of research design in my researcher diary:

In following Goodson, Sikes and Gill's thinking I believe that the life history method resonates with me as a researcher because I enjoy having the eclectic freedom of choice it presents.

Researcher Diary, 10 August 2011

Goodson and Sikes (2001) further explain that examining how individuals relate their experiences and insights through stories within a certain context is the main activity of a life history researcher. I like the idea that life history design appears to allow for a flexible, creative and participant-led approach to answering the research questions in this study (Atkinson, 2005; Bhana, 2006; Cohen *et al.*, 2011; Goodson & Sikes, 2001; Mbongwe, 2012; Tierney, 1998).

3.4.4 ADVANTAGES OF BIOGRAPHICAL RESEARCH, PARTICIPATORY PRINCIPLES AND LIFE HISTORY

The advantages of using a biographical research perspective and life history research design include the natural application of the perspective and design in education studies, the ability to hear the voices of optimistic teachers, and using the embedded principles of mutuality, relationality and respect and reflexivity. These advantages correlate with the participatory principles of partnership and power-sharing.

3.4.4.1 Application in education studies

Cole and Knowles (2001) and Goodson and Sikes (2001) maintain that researchers who pioneered life history research design agreed that the individual presents the window into broader societal settings. They further agree that this presentation holds true regardless of the field of discipline that a research question resides in. In this regard, the life history approach has been widely used within the discipline of education, in particular with regard to understanding teachers' lives, their thinking and their professional development (Cole & Knowles, 2001; Goodson & Gill, 2011; Munchmore, 1999). In agreement Riessman (1993) notes that a biographical research perspective allows for valuable disciplinary contributions in the field of professional teaching. I reflected about my choice of design in my researcher diary:

I believe that the advantages of selecting a life history methodology lies with how compatible the design is with the research question, the aim of the study and my personal convictions as a researcher, an academic and a human being.

Researcher Diary, 10 August 2011

Using Goodson and Sikes' (2001) summary of why one should use the life history method, I argue for the use of the life history method in this study for three reasons. First, it recognises that a teacher as a professional has roles outside of the school context, which include being a parent or a partner, or living in a specific community. These roles potentially influence each other. The benefit of using life history therefore lies in how the methodology tied up with the theoretical stance I took in this study. An example is how the reciprocal influence of roles link with the career development theory of Donald Super (1984) and relates to constructs of the Systems Theory Framework (Patton & McMahon, 1999). Second, the biographical perspective and life history method reflects a focus on interactions between a teacher's perceptions of and experiences in life within an ecological system (similar to Sameroff's [2009] view). Third, the biographical perspective and the life history method could show how resilience processes have formed teachers' identities over time through meaning-making amidst social rules and roles, assisting them to theorise on their resilience as teachers (Miller, 2000).

3.4.4.2 Hearing optimistic teachers' voices

While I was reading about the nature of life history research, it was interesting to note that many studies have utilised this approach specifically to explore the insights of marginalised, excluded or oppressed groups in society (Jacobs, Munro & Adams, 1995; Kiesinger, 1998; Mikecz, 2012; Miller, 2000; Riley, 2010; Rosenthal, 2003; Spector-Mersel, 2011; Suárez-Ortega, 2013; Vannini & Gladue, 2009). I noticed that one of the goals was to evoke sympathy with readers of the research as Miller (2000, p. 5) wrote: "advocacy, or at least sympathy, with their position was implicit". Goodson and Sikes (2001) describe the strategy to foreground the voice of the oppressed or excluded as a great strength of the life history research method. I realise that asking for the insights of *optimistic* teachers in this study also draws on this strength of life history methodology. The voices of hopeful teachers are not that often heard in academic publications, and thus they may be construed as a marginalised group (Fritz & Smith, 2008). In this regard Goodson and Sikes (2001, p. 7) quote Becker's commentary on a study done by Shaw: "by providing this kind of voice from a culture and situation that are ordinarily not known to intellectuals generally...enables us to improve our theories at the most profound level".

For me, improving theories through insights derived from the ordinary (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011) voices of positive teachers becomes an act of academic empathy⁸. Through academic empathy scholars can situate themselves and their students in the stories voiced by enthusiastic teachers. I argue that through the act of academic empathy, scholars (who also train professionals) can use the collective insights (from participants and academics) to complete the circle of learning in training. Learning could be achieved by locating teacher-trainees in the stories of optimistic teachers, from which they might learn more about the strategies that they used in resilience processes as teachers. Therefore, I saw the use of stories to plough insights back into training spheres as an advantage: leveraging the stories as training tools. I reflected on this as follows:

*Language is such a complex ‘thing’ in our country. I want the participants to feel secure and safe. Maybe requesting them to write their stories or accounts in a language of their choice may facilitate respect, insider status and reflexivity.
... having motivational sections in Sotho or Siswati may be more accessible to young teacher-students ...*

Researcher Diary, 10 August 2011

In addition to academic empathy using a biographical approach assisted in retaining the “integrity of people” through combining content and text and resisting a fragmented coding structure (Cohen *et al.*, 2011, p. 553). This means that the biographical approach, together with the participatory principles of partnership and power-sharing assisted in the voices of the teachers remaining authentic.

3.4.4.3 The benefit of life history and participatory principles

In this study I *connected* with participants to reconstruct, reprocess and retell teachers’ attitudes, beliefs and behaviour over time from a biographical perspective (Ritchie, 2003). Cohen *et al.* (2011) indicate some of the core strengths in using biographical research as reporting critical events, key decisions and establishing connections. In following a participatory infused biographical approach I was able to track the evolution of events, establish critical influences and chart consequences of power-sharing actions in partnership with the participants (Cohen *et al.*, 2011; Lister, 2000). Because of the broad biographical perspective I took I felt comfortable with applying the principles that guide life history research as presented by Cole and Knowles (2001) and saw connections to the participatory principles of partnerships and power-sharing. The reason for my comfort can be ascribed to the life history principles of respect (participatory principle of power-sharing), mutuality, relationality (participatory principle of partnership) and reflexivity resonating with my ontological view. The

⁸ *Empathy* means understanding another’s feelings and feeling it for oneself. *Sympathy* differs as it is described as having compassion for that person but not necessarily feeling his or her feelings (Egan, 2007, p. 118).

advantage was thus that I could apply these principles to the study as sources of strength and coherence. Cole and Knowles (2001) describe how a research relationship characterised by **respect** can be the catalyst for deep, passionate and rich stories told by participants. These authors assert that such respect stems not from theoretical distance, but rather from a space of mutual acceptance and esteem. By applying the principle of respect in this study, I created a platform for the participants to share their stories with little reservation. In addition, I applied the participatory principle of power-sharing in exalting the voice of the participant (Gaventa & Cornwall, 2006; Lister, 2000).

Mutuality, according to Cole and Knowles (2001), refers to a safe and open space where participants and researchers can co-create ideas naturally through conversation. I reflected on the principle of mutuality in my researcher diary:

Mutuality reminds me of the work of Prinsloo and Coetzee regarding career facilitation where practitioner and client become partners and have equal contributions to the career exploration exercise in choosing a career.

Researcher Diary, 10 August 2011

Even though this research project is not based on career decision making, it mirrors the kind of relationship that is advocated during career facilitation (Coetzee, 2005; Prinsloo, 1999). While still adhering to ethically sound research behaviour, mutuality in the research relationship (similar to career facilitation) refers to an informal, natural and mutually satisfying endeavour (Cole & Knowles, 2001). The plausible application of the principle of mutuality probably resulted in the participants feeling less threatened by my presence as researcher.

Closely related to mutuality is the concept of **relationality**. Relationality refers to the central role of the relationship between the researcher and the participant. In this regard I concur with Cole and Knowles (2001) who believe that the quality of research depends on the authenticity of the relationship between the researcher and the participant. In applying the participatory principal of partnership I aimed at shared understanding in the study (Chappell, 2000; Goodson & Gill, 2011). By applying the principle of relationality participants in this study were able to share their stories in a way that was comfortable to them (spoken, written, visual), thus providing authentic sources of data. In my view, the common thread throughout all of the principles mentioned above is the action of **reflexivity**. Reflexivity acted as fulcrum for me as the researcher to develop empathy and an ethic of care, and to acknowledge subjectivity and personal views (Cole & Knowles, 2001; Munchmore, 1999). The application of the principle of reflexivity proved to be a great advantage as participants had the opportunity to voice their own learning from re-telling their stories (Cohen *et al.*, 2011). I stood by these principles

throughout the research process because they supported me when faced with the challenges that the life history methodological design presented.

3.4.5 CHALLENGES ASSOCIATED WITH BIOGRAPHICAL RESEARCH, PARTICIPATORY PRINCIPLES AND LIFE HISTORY RESEARCH DESIGN

The most prominent challenges associated with biographical research and life history design I faced was dealing with scholarly critique, finding a balance between the design and my personal style, the issue altered interpretation and lack of generalisability. Other challenges (also related to participatory principles) I encountered were managing change during the research project, watching out for familiarity, and being sensitive to participants' time.

3.4.5.1 Critique from purists

Life history and biographical research work has yielded much debate because it cannot be easily located on a "pure" positivist/anti-positivist continuum (Roberts, 2002, p. 49). Consequently, the methodology was initially rejected by mainstream social science researchers (Munchmore, 1999; Roberts, 2002; Shacklock & Thorp, 2005). Roberts (2002) refers quite extensively to the onslaught of quantitatively oriented researchers who criticised the lack of representation value in life history work. Fouché and Schurink (2011, p. 308-309) allayed my doubts when they wrote that "the further development and execution of the research topic into a research design by a qualitative researcher will depend on the way the researcher believes the research question could be answered most truthfully and thus his or her assumption of how reality should be viewed". As such, my ontological orientation as a researcher, my broad research interest and this study compelled me to follow a life history research design, despite the debate and the criticism levelled against it.

3.4.5.2 A fit between researcher and research design

Goodson and Sikes' (2001) assertion that life history research is by nature individualistic and dynamically dependent on the personality and experience of the researcher posed another challenge. They warn that the choice of doing life history research should not be taken lightly because of a possible inability of the researcher to develop a safe relationship with the participants, a possible inability to be sensitive enough to the reciprocal connections between all aspects of life of the participants, and the negative impact of these possible inability on participants' emotionality. While reflecting on these warnings I became even more convinced that I had selected a fitting methodology:

At the time of registering for this qualification my line manager was an ex-teacher in her senior years. I could not wait to get to work each and every day to learn from her life experiences in a field that was somewhat unfamiliar to me. Although we grew up in different life times (she started teaching the year BEFORE I was even born) I could live myself into her world, despite different languages, cultures and social beliefs.

Researcher Diary, 10 August 2011

In many ways I realised that my training as an educational psychologist prepared me for this methodology

Researcher Diary, 1 September 2012

Goodson and Sikes (2001) observe the parallels between non-judgmental therapeutic interviewing and life history interviewing. I concur with Goodson and Sikes' (2001) recommendation that someone embarking on life history research should have a curious attitude and look through lenses that appreciate connectivity:

My motto in life is: I am because of my history. I believe that this motto, coupled with my training as psychologist and my affinity towards wise people qualifies me to at least try and make a success of the methodology. To illustrate, I tend to befriend older people more easily than peers. Looking back I now realise I craved the wisdom that some older people share.

Researcher Diary, 1 September 2012

Some of my other personal characteristics that fit with the life history research design include being able to listen attentively, the ability to listen beyond what is being said, a willingness to share own relevant stories, the ability to ask non-threatening questions and, above all, the ability to gain people's confidence and make them willing to talk to me (Goodson & Sikes, 2001).

3.4.5.3 Other challenges

Goodson and Gill (2011) discuss four major other potential challenges presented by life history methodology. I summarise challenges with life history and biographic research, and the strategies I used to counter these challenges in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4: Possible challenges and strategies for countering them

Possible challenges	Strategies to counter challenges
<p>Major challenge 1: A constant reflective interaction between theory and the research question that may alter interpretation and analysis of data in life history research.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuous sensitivity to this as reflected in my researcher diary (refer to Appendix E) • Discussions with supervisor and co-supervisor • Reading up on the design and implementation of life

Possible challenges	Strategies to counter challenges
	<p>history methodology in preparation of my research in conjunction with a preliminary field visit</p>
<p>Major challenge 2: The ethical dilemma of an intimate researcher-participant relationship and consequent questioning of authorship in representing the story in life history research. Also indicated by Miller (2000, p. 102) as unequal power in the research relationship and by Cohen <i>et al.</i> (2011, p. 214) as bias.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive disclosure of the goals and purposes of the research using informed consent (refer to Appendix F) • Multiple visits, prolonged engagement • Relied on my professional training and practice as educational psychologist to refrain from taking advantage of the participants • Continuous reflexivity and discussions with supervisors to scrutinise possible bias
<p>Major challenge 3: The validity of inquiry into individual insight and using that to understand others or groups in life history research. Also indicated by Cohen <i>et al.</i> (2011, p. 214) as lack of representation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generated workable assumptions (refer to Appendix E) • Guarded against deducing general assertions from the data documented in researcher diary (refer to Appendix E)
<p>Major challenge 4: The possibility of interrupting the participant's life rather than providing opportunity for personal growth in life history research. In this regard researchers are warned to reconsider bold proclamations of empowerment or emancipation as benefit to the participant. Also indicated by Miller (2000, p. 104) as exposure of the participant.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negotiated informed consent (refer to Appendix F) • Arranged counseling services should they be required • Member checked transcripts (refer to Appendix L)
<p>Additional challenge: (Goodson & Sikes, 2001, p. 20): The relevant skills of the researcher to deal with the intricacies of life history research</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflexivity (refer to Appendix E) • Empathic communication (as a trained and practicing educational psychologist)
<p>Additional challenge: (Goodson & Sikes, 2001, p. 22): The economic viability of the study in terms of time and resources in life history research</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>For researcher:</i> Embedded in NRF project (refer to Chapter 1) • <i>For participants:</i> Participants felt comfortable meeting with researcher during free school periods. Periods were scheduled for 50 minutes at a time. This proved to be the most beneficial arrangement since after school and weekends the participants were not available
<p>Additional challenge: (Miller, 2000, p. 37) Lack of congruency of time-related concepts within biographical perspective</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Established a historical context in which to place the empirical results by referring to the specific societal cohort generation (refer to Chapter 2)
<p>Additional challenge: (Miller, 2000, p. 18) Genuine differences of approach to biographical research</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explicitly stated the ontological and epistemological viewpoints I hold (refer to Chapter 3)
<p>Additional challenge: (Miller, 2000, p. 79) Locating participants who match quotas</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embedded in NRF project (refer to Chapter 1) • Adapted selection criteria (refer to Chapter 3)

Possible challenges	Strategies to counter challenges
<p>Additional challenge: (Cohen <i>et al.</i>, 2000, p. 214) Validity of the research in terms of truly representing the participants' subjective realities. Cannot record all events and as a result a selective focus is needed (Cohen <i>et al.</i>, 2011)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Member checked transcripts (refer to Appendix L)

As indicated in Table 3.4, I relied on the principles of respect, mutuality, relationality and reflexivity proposed by Cole and Knowles (2001) to address the above-mentioned challenges.

a. The challenge of analysis

The issue of altered interpretation and analysis of data (major challenge 1) raised by Goodson and Gill (2011) refers to the repetitive nature of life history methodology. I often experienced this challenge during my reflections before, during and after each visit with the participants. There were days when I thought I had made a mistake in choosing life history methodology, since it felt as if I was reasoning in circles. Continuous conceptual and theoretical reflection forced me to return to literature, and new questions and research avenues emerged (Goodson & Gill, 2011). At one stage I felt overwhelmed when I realised the extent to which possible inter-connected influences such as identity, perception or politics were emerging. This scared me because I was afraid of missing important nuances in the data. Subsequent discussions with my supervisors assisted me with chipping away the edges of worry to confront the core issues in the research study. This speaks to the inherent difference between qualitative and quantitative research designs as highlighted by Fouché and Schurink (2011).

b. The challenge of change

Fouché and Schurink (2011) explain that in qualitative research the researcher will often adapt to the shape of the research process and at times be required to change an action or choice. I did change the way I initially planned to select participants. The most important modification is represented in Figure 3.4:



Figure 3.4: Modification in terms of selection compared to initial planning

I had to review this initial selection criterion for participants because of the limited availability at the school of participants with 15 or more years of teaching experience.

c. The challenge of familiarity

Visiting the research field before the actual start of the research seemed to facilitate familiarity with the participants, even though I did not achieve “insider” status (Rubin & Rubin, 2005, p. 87). I reflected:

I am so glad I visited the school a few months ago before today. I was greeted and accepted so friendly and eagerly by the teachers. I felt welcome!
Researcher Diary, 3 May 2012

I did experience the second and fourth major challenges (refer to Table 3.3) because of the demand for mutuality between the researcher and the participants (Cole & Knowles, 2001; Goodson & Gill, 2011). I was aware of our close relationship and the possibility of it becoming harmful to the participants in terms of power and privacy (Cohen *et al.*, 2011; Goodson & Gill, 2011; Miller, 2000). However, in striving to be a responsible researcher, I was guided by the principles of life history research (described earlier) and remained aware of the need to guard against making the participants instruments of data-generation (Goodson & Gill, 2011). For this reason I included the use of the participatory principles partnership and power-sharing. I also had to consider the fact that careerlife may be an emotional (Kirk & Wall, 2010) and intrusive (Goodson & Gill, 2011) topic. In this regard I disclosed the possible harm and potential benefits of taking part in the research (refer to Appendix F).

Another strategy I used was to send a friendly text message one week to two days prior to each visit. In this message I would update the participants on my progress, reminding them of our next visit to the school as a collective research group (FLY project⁹) and of what we had agreed to do during the upcoming visit. However, I seemed to overcompensate in terms of the researcher-participant relationship during the initial interviews. Looking back I would say that my focus was probably more on establishing a trusting, rather than a research-driven relationship. In this regard I reflected in my researcher diary as follows:

Devastation!! Received feedback from one of my supervisors today on my data analysis...I thought the way I analysed was an issue but I discovered that the way I interviewed was questioned!!
Researcher Diary, 14 September 2012

⁹ Refer to Chapter 1.

Cole and Knowles (2001, p. 27) describe a more unconventional and humanistic standpoint to research relationships as “intimacy and authenticity in [a research] relationship are foundational to research quality and to knowledge production, which is what research is about”. In addition, Goodson and Sikes (2001) draw a comparison between the therapeutic and life history interview. I reflected on this in my researcher diary as I was aware that a life history interview may at times become therapeutic or even intrusive (Jupp, 2006):

Two participants in particular have shared intimate struggles as people – the psychologist inside me recognised the process of ‘laying to rest’ a forgotten issue – I am certain that neither participant realized what had happened...the next time I spoke to the two participants I disguised the way I enquired about the specific issues and I observed closely to see if I need to refer them...but no, their narration bridged the emotion or thought...ai, the beauty of psychology...maybe all researchers should be required to train as psychologists as well...
Researcher Diary, 14 September 2012

I believe that the richness and depth of the data is largely due to the friendly conversations the participants shared with me, and that the interview-conversations were facilitated by my encouragement during the interviews. Mertens (2010) echoes this sentiment when she highlights the work of Josselson (1995), who found the value of personal stories to be more than that of objective psychometric assessments.

d The challenge of time

I was sensitive to the realities of the teachers (little time for anything else but teaching and administrative duties) and tried not to place any unnecessary demands on them. We did not have individual interviews for more than one free period at a time. I also did not insist on written memories when participants were unable to provide these. If participants could not meet with me or could not provide any written memories, I made alternative arrangements with them, such as meeting later in the week or accepting that I would not have written memories as a data source.

e The challenge of generalisability

The third major challenge (refer to Table 3.4) is linked to the epistemological choice of this study: can the insights derived from individuals in a specific context be used to understand individuals or groups in other settings? As part of qualitative research, life history research does not strive to claim generalisation, but rather aims at embracing the uniqueness of findings (Cohen *et al.*, 2011; Seale, 1999). Furthermore, in this study I aimed to generate “working hypotheses” rather than “unassailable truths” (Cohen *et al.*, 2011, p. 243). I concur with Cole and Knowles (2001, p. 10) who maintain that the aim of life history research has

never been to discover “truth”. According to them, life history researchers aim to understand “complexities of a person’s day-to-day decision making and the ultimate consequences that play out in that life so that insights into broader, collective experience may be achieved” (Cole & Knowles, 2001, p. 11). Munchmore (1999) adds that objective interpretations are inappropriate in life history work. However, the question of transferability remains (discussed earlier). In this regard I follow Seale’s (1999, p. 108) assertion that “thick descriptions” in this study may enable readers to judge for themselves if results are applicable in other similar settings (refer to Table 3.1). I reflected on this in my researcher diary:

Maybe the knowledge derived from the lived experiences of these teachers located in a low resource setting can contribute to decisions made by other teachers in similar contexts or even support emotional growth of initial teachers in different contexts
Researcher Diary, 14 September 2012

3.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this section I describe the selection of site and participants, data-generation and documentation strategies and the guidelines I followed to analyse and interpret the data. In Table 3.5 I indicate methodological decisions which serve as a summary of the subsequent discussions on selection procedures, data-generation, and analysis and quality criteria. In subsequent sections I argue the merit of the decisions separately.

Table 3.5: Summary of methodological decisions

<i>Methodological paradigm: Participatory Biographical Research</i> <i>Design: Life History</i>	
Selection of site and participants	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>Selection techniques:</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Convenience selection of research site (existing partnership with school and teachers) b. Purposive selection of participants c. Snowball selection attempted 2. <u>Selection criterion (and rationale):</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Teachers teaching in a resource-constrained, rural school (significant adversity in ecology) b. Seven or more years’ teaching experience and aged 40 and above (revised criterion) (potentially would have had to adapt) c. Conversant in English (operational reason) d. Optimistic outlook in individual participants (likelihood of positive adaptation)

Data generation and documentation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Three participatory interview-conversations, each with five participants (audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim – Appendix G) b. Written memory accounts by three participants (captured in a memory book for analysis – Appendix I) c. Visual data (photographs) of interview artifacts (Appendix J) d. Field notes written in researcher diary (captured electronically in word format for analysis – Appendix E)
Data analysis and interpretation	Life-story analysis: Hycner’s (1985) guidelines to phenomenological analysis (Appendix H) and process of reconstruction (member-checked narrative account – Appendix L) resulting in a narrative comparison (Appendix M)

3.5.1 SELECTION OF SITE AND PARTICIPANTS

Table 3.5 provides a summary of how I selected the site and participants for this study. The research site suited me well since I had easy access to a school due to my involvement in an existing project (as discussed in Chapter 1) (Cohen *et al.*, 2011; Goodson & Sikes, 2001). The established partnership exists as a result of a broad study aimed at understanding resilience in rural schools (Ebersöhn, 2013). At the school I had access to teachers with years of teaching experience and chronic exposure to adversity for whom adaptation, plausibly, was a way of life. I reflected on this in my researcher diary:

I am so fortunate to be part of a broader project doing this research. After initial conversations with random teachers at the school today I identified a few motivated teachers and my supervisor suggested a few ‘optimistic’ teachers (that emerged from other studies) – I thought to myself: one: girl you are LUCKY for many reasons and two: how cool is convenient selection!!
Researcher diary, 13 August 2011

Goodson and Sikes (2001) maintain that since life history research involves the study of a specific phenomenon, it does not make use of random selection. I therefore used purposive selection to choose participants, as suggested by Goodson and Sikes (2001). I purposefully selected teachers whose optimistic attitudes towards schooling were evident from the broader study undertaken at the school, or who were identified through the initial information obtained during my first visit or through an information page (Appendix A). After explaining the purpose of the research (refer to Table 3.6), I requested a total of fifteen (15) potential participants to complete a detailed information page (refer to Appendix A). The purpose of the information page was to determine which participants met the selection criteria in respect of English language capability and years of teaching experience. It also provided valuable information on years and type of training, home language, schools where they have taught and information

on resources available at the school. I used the information pages primarily to inform my selection of participants.

My choice of convenient and purposeful selection techniques in this particular rural context was facilitated by the existing partnership between the University and the school. However, I soon learnt that what I had planned would not necessarily be what happened. Although the convenience of access (using an existing partnership) was helpful to establish a relationship with possible participants, the low response rate necessitated a revision of one of my selection criteria (years of teaching experience) and I attempted snowball selection (refer to Table 3.6). For this purpose, I requested existing participants from the school to act as informants to put me in touch with other teachers in their community who meet the selection criteria (Cohen *et al.*, 2011). Unfortunately this attempt to find additional participants proved unsuccessful.

The disadvantages of both purposive and convenience selection include a lack of generalisability, participant bias and a lack of representativeness (Cohen *et al.*, 2011). I also learnt that using a combination of convenience and purposive selection in a remote area could potentially limit the number of participants taking part in a study. However, I believe that the selection techniques outlined above facilitated a process of including a number of participants who were accessible and able to provide in-depth life histories, and who possibly revealed “hidden” teachers who show teacher resilience (Cohen *et al.*, 2011, p. 159).

3.5.2 SELECTION CRITERIA

To answer the research questions I selected optimistic teachers (with more than seven years teaching experience) currently teaching in a resource-constrained rural area and who were conversant in English.

3.5.2.1 Teachers teaching in adverse conditions: a source-constrained, rural school

As explained earlier, I conveniently selected a school situated in a remote part of rural Mpumalanga, South Africa. It is plausible that teachers working in remote rural areas are likely to experience significant adversity (Ebersöhn, 2013). To illustrate I present photographs of the school and surrounding area to show the context of adversity.



Photograph 3.1
Remotely situated school



Photograph 3.2
Rurality illustrated by livestock roaming freely



Photograph 3.3
Poor infrastructure of classrooms



Photograph 3.4
Dirt road as indication of remoteness and rurality

As indicated in the photographs presented above, teachers in rural areas face difficulty in being isolated because of underdevelopment (Photograph 3.4), derelict buildings (Photograph 3.3), geographical distance (Photograph 3.1) and poverty (Photograph 3.2) (Ebersöhn & Ferreira, 2012; Gardiner, 2008; Hugo *et al.*, 2010; Mukeredzi, 2013). If one considers the idea of relationship-resourced resilience (RRR) (Ebersöhn, 2013), it follows that where great adversity is experienced, there will be protective resources (Ebersöhn & Ferreira, 2012). The teachers in this study classify the school as *remote* because the nearest town is approximately 30 km away and the road from the town to the school is a combination of dirt and tar. Other researchers have found that isolation and hardship are generally synonymous with schools in rural areas (Ebersöhn & Ferreira, 2012; Gardiner, 2008; Hugo *et al.*, 2010; Mukeredzi, 2013). I reflected as follows in my researcher diary:

Sometimes, during a journey to the school, I would notice no car or other form of transportation for 10 to 15kms on end. In conversations with the teachers I learnt that they see their school as also being a rural school, not only remote, because of the school being situated in a rural community.

Researcher diary, 14 September 2012

During our discussions, the participants described their community, since most of its members earn a living through agricultural activity. I reflected:

Every time we visit I am astonished by the road safety of the “bokke and beeste” (goats and cattle) ... when we approach they stand completely still as if knowing that we will pass without harming them. But today I was confronted with another picture ... far in the distance we saw a black circle, at first I thought it was water – only to discover it was a herd of cattle being led over the road to the other side where more greener grass was available. I was driving slow – I think at some stage I stopped because the animals seemed frightened and all over the road. Behind me I saw a car coming at normal speed straight for the group, he simply honked from a few meters away and drove through the crowd of cattle seemingly with no worry to hurt any one ... we looked at each other in the car and started giggling nervously ... so when in Rome came to mind as we progressed through the animals ... so this is rural life we decided.

Researcher diary, 18 April 2013

Rural areas are classified as areas where farms are prominent while population density, economic level of people and levels of infrastructure are low (STATS SA, 2012). Ebersöhn and Ferreira (2012) further highlight isolation and poverty evident in rural areas exacerbated by the lack of transport, and the total absence or limited availability of services and resources.

I reflected:

Some teachers whom I spoke to today exerted that the school is deep rural referring to the fact that one would need at least R50 to travel to be able to buy a newspaper of R7 ... Another researcher who visited the school during another research visit commented that the school is not as rural compared to other schools who have no classrooms, electricity or running water ... I have decided to work with the teacher’s conceptualization that the school is rural and low resourced as it transpired from the interviews.

Researcher diary, 3 May 2012

According to the national Living Conditions Survey of 2009, 38.9% of South Africans live below the poverty line¹⁰ (STATS SA, 2012). Furthermore, the poverty level in the Mpumalanga province is high, with 32.1% of its inhabitants living below the poverty line (STATS SA, 2012). The said survey also revealed that *rural areas* in South Africa in general have the third highest poverty head count¹¹ (SATS SA, 2012). It is also widely accepted that the education system in South Africa is resource restricted (Bertram, Appleton, Muthukrishna & Wedekind, 2006; Bhana, Morrell, Epstein & Moletsane, 2006; Christie, 1999; Cross, Mungani & Rouhani, 2002; Daniels & Strauss, 2010; Hoadley, 2007).

¹⁰“Line drawn at a particular level of income or consumption, households/individuals whose incomes fall below a given level of the poverty line or whose consumption level is valued at less than the value of the poverty line are classified as poor” (STATS SA, 2012, p. 66).

¹¹“This is the share of the population whose income or consumption is below the poverty line, that is, the share of the population that cannot meet its basic needs” (STATS SA, 2012, p. 66).

3.5.2.2 Teachers who had seven or more years' teaching experience and who were aged 40 and above (criterion revised at the time of data-generation)

Initially I planned to investigate how teachers who had been in the teaching profession for at least 15 to 24 years succeeded in sustaining their career resilience over time. I chose 15 to 24 years' teaching experience as a criterion, since such teachers are classified as "pre-veteran" by Day and Gu (2009, p. 446) and Leshem (2008, p. 207), but as "experienced" by Teitelbaum (2008), as cited by Day and Gu (2009, p. 446). Furthermore, I planned to purposefully select at least six teachers aiming for "depth" at the expense of "breadth" in this life history study (Cohen *et al.*, 2011, p. 156; Cole & Knowles, 2001, p. 67; Goodson & Sikes, 2001, p. 24). Goodson and Sikes (2001) suggest that up to six life histories can deliver rich data and should be used to ensure theme saturation.

However, finding six participants with more than 15 years' experience in the conveniently selected school proved to be difficult. Some of the teachers who indicated their interest had to be excluded because they were mostly novice teachers. Other teachers who agreed to participate did not all meet the initial criterion of 15 years and more teaching experience (despite some being in their early forties). As mentioned earlier, snowball selection was not successful. As a last resort I made contact with a neighbouring primary school (approximately 1km away from the school I had access to), which had also joined the partnership with the FLY research team. Unfortunately this strategy also did not yield more participants as the principal denied me access to the staff due to time constraints. As a result I could only partner with five participants who met the criteria and were prepared to participate in the study. In this regard Goodson and Sikes (2001, p. 22-23) write that "it is impossible to say how many informants should be involved in any project" and that "life history samples tend to be small". I reflected on this in my researcher diary:

I am concerned about the limited response rate...apart from the teachers I directly contacted (via my supervisor) the others seemed to avoid me. Was this school over-researched? I learnt later today that the school favoured younger appointees (especially with degrees) ...In addition it emerged today that many of the participants aged 40 and above at this school only started their teaching career a few years after qualifying because of the scarcity of employment opportunities at the time they qualified.

Researcher diary, 14 September 2012

Although all the participants had been qualified as teachers for more than 15 years, only one (Gogo) had more than 15 years' teaching experience in South African rural schools. Emma, Moeketsi and Susan had seven or more years' appropriate teaching experience, and Lazarus had taught in a South African rural school for five years. However, all the participants were aged 40 years and above. In this regard Day and Gu (2009) point out that veteran workers are

those over the age of 45 years. Yow (2005, p. 21) reasons that most people start to ponder their lives starting at the age of 40, saying that “memories of childhood, adolescence and early adulthood may be more easily recalled ... if the event was significant ... it will likely be remembered in some detail”. Interviewing teachers who were 40 years and older therefore made sense. Furthermore, in following Rich and Almozlino’s (1999) and Teitelbaum’s (2008) descriptions, experienced teachers had seven or eight years’ practice experience. This led me to revise the initial criterion to include teachers who are at least 40 years old and have close to seven years’ teaching experience.

3.5.2.3 Teachers who expressed optimistic temperaments

During my second field visit I sought out staff members with whom I had had discussions during the initial visit eight months earlier and who had revealed an optimistic temperament (Clark & Watson, 2008; Merenda, 1987). We talked informally about education in South Africa. Based on Frederickson’s (2004) assertion that optimistic people draw on positive reserves to cope more effectively with adversity, I assumed that teachers with an optimistic outlook may show teacher resilience (Brunetti, 2006; Gu & Day, 2007; Patterson *et al.*, 2004; Theron, 2013; Williams, 2003). To characterise a potential participant as *optimistic*, I noted which participants had expressed hope and optimism, which I assumed could indicate that they were more likely to have adapted in a positive way to adversity (Brunetti, 2006; Gu & Day, 2007; Hegney *et al.*, 2007; Kirk & Wall, 2010; Knight, 2007; Stanford, 2001; Sumsion, 2004). Many such optimistic teachers with whom I spoke to during the initial visit (13 to 15 August 2011) were easily accessible in the staff room or on the school grounds when I visited the school again between 3 and 7 May 2012. I again involved them in informal conversations and also approached specific staff members whom Liesel Ebersöhn had come to know as optimistic during her involvement with the FLY project. The process of selecting more participants and conducting interviews with them is further described in Table 3.6.

Table 3.6: Summary of process to select participants

Field Visit 1 (13-15 August 2011)	
I was introduced to staff at the school. I explained that my involvement (at that stage) was as field worker in the existing ‘FLY project’ – not as researcher. I then mentioned my prospective research topic to some staff members to gauge interest, as well as to potential participants who exuded a positive attitude. It was clear to me at that point that some optimistic teachers were willing to participate in further research.	
Field Visit 2 (May 2012)	
Day 1 (3 May 2012)	I distributed 10 information sheets (refer to Appendix A), accompanied by consent forms (refer to Appendix F) among the staff members with whom I had had discussions during August 2011 (seven in the staff room and three on the school grounds; eight females and two males).

Day 2 (4 May 2012)	Two participants indicated a positive response and interviews commenced with Participant 1 (Emma) (60 minutes) and Participant 2 (Moeketsi) (43 minutes). Three potential female participants returned their forms indicating that they were too busy to commit, or that they did not fit the criteria for the research.
Day 3 (7 May 2012)	I conducted interviews with Participant 3 (Gogo) (66 minutes), Participant 4 (Lazarus) (20 minutes) and Participant 5 (Susan) (56 minutes). The remaining two potential female participants returned their forms, also indicating difficulties and declining my invitation to participate.
Field Visits 3 and 4 (September 2012)	
Day 1 (4 September 2012)	I distributed a total of five more information sheets. Two of these information sheets were given to specific male members of staff after consultation with my supervisor (who had prior knowledge of the teachers and could match them with the selection criteria). I approached three more staff members who fitted the revised age criterion. I conducted second interviews with Participant 4 (Lazarus) (56 minutes) and Participant 1 (Emma) (41 minutes).
Day 2 (5 September 2012)	I conducted second interviews with Participant 3 (Gogo) (42 minutes), Participant 2 (Moeketsi) (35 minutes) and Participant 5 (Susan) (10 minutes). The two potential male participants seemed keen to participate, but we failed to arrange a first meeting. Snowball selection with existing participants did not prove successful in attracting additional participants.
Field visit 4 – Day 3, 4 and 5 (6-8 September 2012)	I completed the collection of photographs and discussed photos with Participant 1 (Emma), Participant 2 (Moeketsi), Participant 3 (Gogo), Participant 4 (Lazarus) and Participant 5 (Susan). One additional potential male participant that I had approached earlier in the week declined participation. The other potential male participant is a regular traveller to my hometown and arranged to make contact with me when he was in the vicinity. The other three potential participants that had received information sheets were absent. Snowball selection provided the name of a friend of one of the participants, but we could not arrange an interview because she lived too far away.
Field Visit 5 (November 2012)	
Day 1 (13 November 2012)	I approached two neighbouring primary schools to recruit more participants. The school principals denied me access to the staff because he felt that they would not have time to participate in the study.
Day 2 (14 November 2012)	Data analysis
Day 3 (15 November 2012)	Data analysis
Field Visit 6 (April 2013)	
Day 1 (17 April 2013)	The possible male participant who often travels to my hometown was transferred to another school. Arranging a follow-up interview with him was not possible. Member-checking of interviews with Participants 1 (Emma) (56 minutes), 3 (Gogo) (59 minutes) and 5 (Susan) (42 minutes) took place.
Day 2 (18 April 2013)	Member-checking interviews with Participants 2 (Moeketsi) (25 minutes) and 4 (Lazarus) (58 minutes) took place.

3.5.2.4 Teachers who are conversant in English

With regard to the criterion that participants needed to be conversant in English, Goodson and Sikes (2001) remark that general fluency, articulation and ability to tell a story will determine the success of a life history account. As researcher I assumed that most teachers would have a command of English since it is the *Language of Teaching and Learning* in the school where the study was conducted. However, considering the socio-political context of the country, I was also aware of the possibility that (as in my own case) English could be the participants' second or third language. As explained in Section 3.4.2, I therefore opted for participatory data-generation techniques that included a verbal mode (English), written mode (language of choice) and photographs (no language required) (Schwandt, 2007).

3.5.3 SUMMARY OF THE PARTICIPANTS

A summary of the participant information is presented in Table 3.7, followed by a short introductory narrative of each participant to explain my choice of pseudonym for them.

Table 3.7 shows that, in order to contextualize the teachers' experiences, I decided to distinguish between the total number of years that have passed since the participants qualified as teachers and the number of years they have actually taught in schools or other institutions. In many instances participants were qualified as teachers but could not find employment in education.

Emma

Participant 1 is a 48-year-old female. To me, she is the personification of endurance; she is a kind soft-spoken oldish-looking woman with the kindest eyes and the strongest, purest heart. She makes plans to get things done – she wants to give to others and God is her strength. I think the thing that stands out is her appreciation of little things that made a difference in her life. Nothing goes unnoticed. She lives with a full and thankful heart. Her gaze catches you off guard and you know that she is looking right into your soul and you just need to share your secret because you instinctively know that she will take care of it – whatever it is – ma'am will be there! Her pseudonym is Emma, the one who endured. Compared to other participants she chronically endured hardships, both as child and as an adult. Nevertheless she retained her faith, pride and belief in her work as teacher. She truly believes that teachers are the foundation upon which a nation is built. Therefore her motto is 'if one child can be educated, that family, that whole family will survive'.

Table 3.7: Summary of participant details

#	Pseudonym	Biographical detail			Selection criteria					Data source and date					
		Gender	Age	Home Language	Self-reported English language ability	Total years (y) qualified as teacher	Total years (y) teaching in SA rural school	Total years (y) teaching at another institution	Total years (y) teaching experience	I1	I2	I3	MB	Ph	FN
1	Emma	Female	48	Sepedi	Good	16y	8y	4y (ABET ¹²)	12y	✓ 4/5/12	✓ 4/9/12	✓ ¹³ 17/4/13	✓ 4/9/12 8/9/12	✓ 4/9/12 8/9/12	✓ 3/5/12 8/5/12 4/9/12 14/9/12 17/4/13
2	Moeketsi	Male	41	Tswana	Excellent	17y	7y	9y (ABET)	16y	✓ 4/5/12	✓ 5/9/12	✓ 18/4/13		✓ 5/9/12 7/9/12	✓ 3/5/12 5/9/12 14/9/12
3	Gogo	Female	56	Siswati	Good	28y	28y	5y (Urban school)	33y	✓ 7/5/12	✓ 5/9/12	✓ 17/4/13	✓ 5/9/12	✓ 5/9/12	✓ 3/5/12 8/5/12 4/9/12 14/9/12
4	Lazarus	Male	41	Tsonga	Excellent	16y	5y	None	5y	✓ 7/5/12	✓ 4/9/12	✓ 18/4/13		✓ 7/9/12	✓ 3/5/12 4/9/12 14/9/12 18/4/13
5	Susan	Female	48	Swazi	Good	15y	10y	2y (ABET) 2y (School at Swaziland)	14y	✓ 7/5/12	✓ 5/9/12	✓ 17/4/13	✓ 5/9/12	✓ 8/9/12	✓ 14/9/12

Data source key
*I*s = Interviews 1, 2 and 3 in the form of transcriptions; *MB* = Written accounts in memory book; *Ph* = Visual data (Photo's symbolizing resilience); *FN* = field notes in researcher diary

¹² Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) is a South African initiative driven by the Department of Basic Education and was designed to offer an accessible route to general education for adult South Africans in an attempt to significantly improve their quality of life (www.abet.co.za).

¹³ This interview could not be recorded.

Moeketsi

Participant 2 is a 41-year-old male. I experience him as a strong man, with strong convictions and someone who does not necessarily see how his own life contributed to the great of others. He is much like the activist you would adore because of his charm and wit and knowledge of the world. He struck me as a go-getter, a man with a mission, focused, dedicated, positive, committed and driven. He has big aspirations because he thinks big. I felt his energy and drive bursting through the air – his excitement that our country is moving in the right direction and his lucid knowledge that we still have things to do makes you want to roll up your sleeves and jump right in! He asked that his name be used because that is his identity, therefore he does not have a pseudonym. He wanted to become a lawyer to fight against the injustices of apartheid South Africa, but realised through the help of his History teacher that he could make a difference to the system from within the teacher corps. He had felt something inside him grow stronger and stronger from the time he was just a matric learner who eagerly observed and questioned the things around him. It was the drive to make a difference. He is Moeketsi, a man on a mission. He has hope in his heart and a headstrong drive to persevere. He says to himself: ‘One day we will overcome, we will have a system where all these things will be the past.’

Lazarus

Participant 4 is a 41-year-old male. He has risen from the proverbial dead...a person who was almost destined to be on the bad side of society BUT his inner-drive made him different – helped him along a better route. And now it has become full circle. He is courteous, friendly and very reserved but as soon as you enquire about his choice to become a teacher his whole being lit up and he speaks of his learners as if they were his own children. He knows that teaching will not make him rich, and he knows that he is not working in the best of circumstances and yet he finds ways to overcome these barriers. He has decided to be positive and he is committed to finding ways to make life easier for the learners – even if it means he has to give up some of his little free time he has available as a teacher. He is for the learners! His pseudonym, Lazarus, shows him leading the way. A difficult childhood filled with turmoil took him on a path of self-discovery and emotional growth to become a Guidance teacher for adolescent learners. He teaches Life Orientation and Social Science to Grade 7, 8, 9 and 12 learners. Despite his classes being overcrowded, he thinks his school is good and he wants to help learners reach their goals. His valiant attitude led him to declare: ‘the reason to be in this profession is about a big South Africa. I understand we are a developing country, without education a country can’t develop, won’t move forward’.

Gogo

Participant 3 is a 56-year-old female. I experienced her as a woman with presence. This soft-spoken lady with the friendly smile never looked stressed – not once – despite the heavy workload, and the many responsibilities she carries in the school. She speaks softly but wisely with so much passion and enthusiasm for teaching that I could have listened to her all the time. She made me feel like a young person standing on the brink of something wonderfully big and she was sharing her ideas of this ‘big’ thing called teaching with such flair and insight. She makes you feel safe, that you belong and that you are important. You want to stay in her presence and learn more and more because she wants to share and she wants to help and be of value to others.

Her pseudonym is Gogo, a grandmother to all. She is calm, wise, and provides a safe presence. She is the symbol of motherhood at the school. In her own words she declares: ‘as ladies ... there is something that we can do because a home without a mother is not a home.’ She has more years of service in teaching than any of the other participants (33 years). She continues to teach because of true passion for the profession and for the sake of the children.

Susan

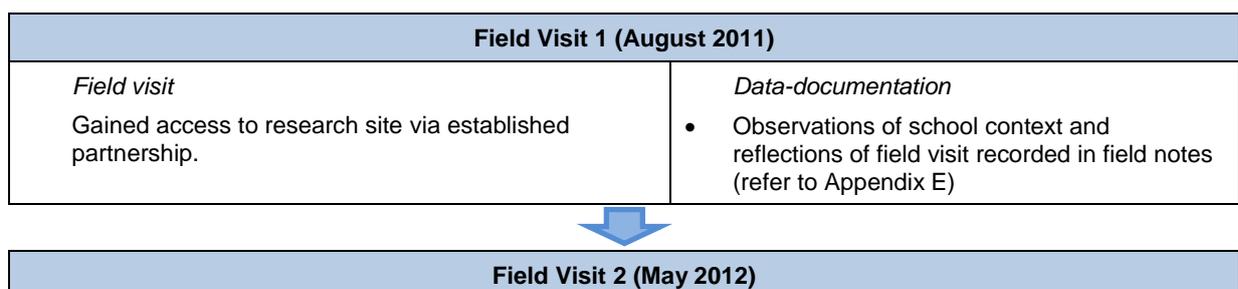
Participant 5 is a 48-year-old female. By far one of the most graceful teachers I have met. She is well spoken, well-groomed and friendly. She has eyes that are filled with intelligence and kindness. I was so impressed with her doing a first interview despite her feeling sick – this shows her commitment! She has so much appreciation for what she has accomplished despite her life journey and one can almost feel the positive mind over context oozing out of her being. She is reserved but when you ask about the learners in her classroom she tells you with so much excitement about her strategies to be more clever than them, to help them become more than their circumstances. Her religious outlook is steadfast and real. Although her age is not young I can see young learners wanting to become teachers because of her – and so she has told me one day that she is so proud of one of the school’s best achievers who is thinking of becoming a teacher. Her pseudonym is Susan, a lady of strength because she compares her own teacher resilience to that of a strong cooking pot: cooking on the stove, the pot suffers, but whatever is brewing inside will nourish and feed others. She is a dedicated go-getter. She impressed me with being intellectually and emotionally strong and focused, which is illustrated by the fact that while in Matric, she managed to teach herself and a number of her peers a subject for which the school did not cater.

3.5.4 DATA-GENERATION AND DOCUMENTATION

In this section I describe the data-generation and documentation strategies I used.

3.5.4.1 Introduction

The data-generation and documentation activities are sequentially presented in Figure 3.5. As indicated, I visited the field six times over a 20-month period.



<p><i>Data-generation</i> Five interview-conversations</p>					<p><i>Data-documentation</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audio recordings of interview-conversations (40–60min x 5) • Verbatim transcriptions of interview-conversations (refer to Appendix G) • Field notes on school context and interview conversations (refer to Appendix E)
<i>Emma</i> (4/5/12)	<i>Moeketsi</i> (4/5/12)	<i>Gogo</i> (7/5/12)	<i>Lazarus</i> (7/5/12)	<i>Susan</i> (7/5/12)	



Field Visit 3 (September 2012)					
<p><i>Data-generation</i> Five interview conversations</p>					<p><i>Data-documentation</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audio recordings of interview-conversations (approximately 60min x 5) • Verbatim transcriptions of interview-conversations (refer to Appendix H) • Field notes on school context and interview-conversations (refer to Appendix E)
<i>Emma</i> (4/9/12)	<i>Moeketsi</i> (5/9/12)	<i>Gogo</i> (5/9/12)	<i>Lazarus</i> (4/9/12)	<i>Susan</i> (5/9/12)	



Field Visit 4 (September 2012)					
<p><i>Data-generation</i> Digital photographs and descriptions of photos Memory books</p>					<p><i>Data-documentation</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eighteen digital photographs and three descriptions of photographs by participants to illustrate their own conceptualization of teacher career resilience (Refer to Appendix J) • Three memory books containing memories written by participants (Refer to Appendix I) • Field notes on school context and photographs (refer to Appendix E)
<i>Emma</i> (4/9/12)	<i>Moeketsi</i> (5/9/12)	<i>Gogo</i> (5/9/12)	<i>Lazarus</i> (4/9/12)	<i>Susan</i> (8/9/12)	
	<i>Moeketsi</i> (7/9/12)		<i>Lazarus</i> (7/9/12)		



Field Visit 5 (November 2012)					
<p><i>Field visit</i> Attempts to locate more participants for the study in neighbouring schools</p>					<p><i>Data-documentation</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflections on field visit recorded in field notes (refer to Appendix E)



Field Visit 6 (April 2013)					
<p><i>Data generation and member checking</i> Five interview-conversations</p>					<p><i>Data-documentation</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audio recordings of interview-conversations

<i>Emma</i> (17/4/13)	<i>Moeketsi</i> (18/4/13)	<i>Gogo</i> (17/4/13)	<i>Lazarus</i> (18/4/13)	<i>Susan</i> (17/4/13)	(approximately 60min x 4) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbatim transcriptions of interview-conversations (refer to Appendix G) • Field notes on school context and interview-conversations (refer to Appendix E)
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Figure 3.5: Participatory data-generation and documentation sequence

I chose the most commonly used life history data-generation strategy, which is referred to as “interview-conversations” as my primary data-generation tool (Banister, Burman, Parker, Taylor & Tindall, 1994, p. 50; p.50; Denzin, 2003, p. 144; Goodson & Sikes, 2001, p. 26, 29; Henning, Van Rensburg & Smit, 2004; Lewis, 2003, p. 57). I realised that life history research would require more than one interview-conversation with each participant because of the open-ended nature of research of this kind (Goodson & Gill, 2011; Miller, 2000). As a result I conducted 15 interview-conversations with five participants (three interview-conversations each). I audio-recorded all 15¹⁴ of these interview-conversations (refer to Appendix G for verbatim transcriptions). Additional data-generation strategies in line with participatory principles include visual data (photographs) and memory books.

3.5.4.2 Using interview-conversations as an instrument for data-generation

According to Goodson and Sikes (2001), it is critical that life history research essentially involves creating a *life history* from a *life story*. Life stories are the personal accounts or lived experiences that participants share during interviews (Goodson & Sikes, 2001; Timmerman, 2009). Life stories are different from *life histories* because life histories represent the second stage, after the first stage of collecting life stories. As I indicated earlier the life history is located within the broader historical context (Goodson & Gill, 2011; Goodson & Sikes, 2001; Timmerman, 2009). Goodson and Gill (2011, p. 40) write that a life history is a “progressive understanding of the [participant’s] life story [as] being located within its historical contexts through collaborative interpretation and meaning-making”. The understanding of a life story within the broader social context earmarks progression towards a grounded conversation or life history (Goodson & Gill, 2011). The progression from life story to life history takes place at the participants’ pace. To answer the research questions that focused on the teachers’ experiences (risk and protective factors) (secondary research questions 1, 3 and 4) and positive adaptation over time (secondary research question 5) I chose to do interview-conversations (refer to Appendix G).

Gubrium and Holstein (2003) remark that interview-conversations have postmodern elements because of the dual purpose they serve. This dual purpose refers to my agenda as researcher (answering research questions) *versus* the participant’s agenda. Because of the dual purpose

¹⁴ One recording was faulty and could not be transcribed.

I promoted authentic participation by creating flexible and informal enabling conversation spaces where the participants and I were equals (Cohen *et al.*, 2011). It follows that during initial interviews I asked very few questions, respecting a ‘vow of silence’ and a flow of reciprocal thoughts and ideas. However, I anticipated that some participants may require more prompting than others (Goodson & Gill, 2011, p. 39). Consequently, to facilitate reciprocal meaning-making, I used Beale’s (1998, p. 300) interview schedule as guideline for the interview-conversations.

a. Career-interview schedule as guideline for interview-conversations

I conducted interview-conversations with the participants during their free periods at school. The length of periods varied from 45 to 60 minutes, depending on the day’s events. I explored other possibilities, for instance to have extended sessions after school or during weekends. However, the participants preferred to do the interviews during their free periods. Different reasons were given by teachers opting to be interviewed during free periods, such as problems with transport after school hours and involvement in income-generating activities over weekends as well as spending time with their families.

I wanted the voices of the participants to be as authentic as possible and I encouraged a flowing interview-conversation process (Goodson & Gill, 2011). As a result I especially aimed at open-ended interview-conversations because of their focus on the participants’ views and perceptions (Nieuwenhuis, 2010). During the initial interviews I encouraged participants to narrate their life stories. Since I anticipated that some participants might need more prompting than others (Goodson & Gill, 2011), I drew on the career-interview schedule prepared by Beale (1998, p. 300) as a supporting guideline. This is presented in Figure 3.6.

<p><i>The Career-interview schedule</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What is your education level and what are occupations of your mother, father and siblings?2. Briefly describe your early home life.3. What is your education history? (years of formal education; area or programme of study and your reason for selecting it)4. What were your favourite school subjects/classes?5. Describe the major influences on your educational decisions.6. What is your employment history? (chronology of jobs and approximate dates of employment)7. How were jobs located?8. What were your reactions to each job? (likes, dislikes and overall level of satisfaction)9. Describe your perceptions of work attitudes and behaviours of others on the job.10. Which work behaviours did you value the most in yourself and in others?11. How do you feel about your career path to date?12. Who or what exerted the greatest influence on your career decisions?13. What are your future career plans?

Figure 3.6: The career-interview schedule (adapted from Beale, 1998, p. 300)

I did not follow the career-interview schedule chronologically, nor did I explore all thirteen questions (refer to Figure 3.6). When participants needed prompting to speak about certain life phases I would discreetly use questions from the career-interview schedule. The schedule merely served as a guideline, especially in the case of participants who were seeking more encouragement than others during the interview-conversations (Goodson & Gill, 2011). The schedule was particularly helpful during my interviews with Moeketsi and Lazarus, who needed more guiding questions to elicit memories from the past (Goodson & Sikes, 2001; Cole & Knowles, 2001). Questions 2, 5 and 11 (highlighted in Figure 3.4) were particularly helpful in directing Moeketsi's and Lazarus' reflective thoughts on their past experiences since they consistently shared more current experiences. I reflected:

I am so glad I visited the school a few months ago before today. I was greeted and accepted so friendly and eagerly by the teachers. I felt welcome!
Researcher Diary, 3 May 2012

I could facilitate my own understanding of the unfolding of the participants' life stories by focusing on critical points in the participants' lives and strategically asking open-ended questions from the career-interview schedule. In this regard we could focus on possible experiences related to their teacher resilience (Cohen *et al.*, 2011; Goodson & Gill, 2011; Sikes & Troyna, 1991). I reflected on this as follows:

Wow! Despite the difference in the flow of each interview, strangely enough A LOT of similarities came to light. These teachers WANT to be here, there is no feeling of being trapped or imprisoned by the choice of becoming a teacher. All of them, as if a mantra, echoes Mr Mandela's vision that education will set you free. All of them see their part in education as educating the future and impacting on the future of our country. I was even suspicious that they decided to say these things to one another but they related it in such sincere manner and in a way that they BELIEVED themselves that I believe them as well.
Researcher diary, 14September 2012

However, I carefully monitored my engagement during the initial interview-conversations to not disturb the flow. In order to promote flow I was sensitive to the "personal elaboration" of each participant (Goodson & Gill, 2011, p. 39; Goodson & Sikes, 2001, p. 29). Table 3.8 summarises the individual unfolding of the interview-conversation process per participant.

Table 3.8: Summary of individual interview-conversations

<i>Participant</i>	<i>What happened during the interview-conversations?</i>		
	<i>Interview-conversation 1</i>	<i>Interview-conversation 2</i>	<i>Interview-conversation 3</i>
Emma	Flowing interview-conversation about childhood	Focused interview-conversation about career life (using Questions 5 and 11) Elements of grounded interview-conversation already evident	Continued grounded interview-conversation (contextualising life story) Member-checking through narrative
Moeketsi	Flowing interview-conversation about current career	Focused interview-conversation about childhood (using Questions 1-4); career life (using Questions 5, 6 and 11). Elements of grounded interview-conversation already evident	Continued grounded interview-conversation (contextualising life story) Member-checking through narrative
Gogo	Flowing interview-conversation about childhood and career life. Elements of grounded interview-conversation already evident	Focused interview-conversation about information gaps (using Questions 9, 10 and 13)	Continued grounded interview-conversation (contextualising life story) Member-checking through narrative
Lazarus	Flowing interview-conversation about current career	Focused interview-conversation about childhood (using Questions 1-4); career life (using Questions 5, 6 and 11) Elements of grounded interview-conversation already evident	Continued grounded interview-conversation (contextualising life story) Member-checking through narrative
Susan	Flowing interview-conversation about childhood and career life. Elements of grounded interview-conversation already evident	Focused interview-conversation about information gaps (using Questions 9, 10 and 13)	Continued grounded interview-conversation (contextualising life story) Member-checking through narrative

As indicated in Table 3.8, Gogo and Susan needed only a single prompt to share their life stories, whereas Moeketsi and Lazarus required more directive questions. During the first interview-conversation (Moeketsi and Lazarus in particular) focused more on the current issues in education and less on their life stories. To ensure that the conversation remained focused on past experiences, I drew on the career-interview schedule during the second interview-conversation.

A limitation of using interview-conversations as a data-generation strategy is its disorganised and scattered interview routine (Cohen *et al.*, 2011). I was nervous because of the unsystematic nature of interview-conversations and it became difficult to suppress the urge to *control* the interview situation. I experienced the difficulty that Cohen *et al.* (2011, p. 413) refer to as “different information collected from different people with different questions”. In this regard Cary (1999, p. 416) refers to the “messiness” of life history research as opposed to a traditional “structured interrogation” (Gubrium & Holstein, 2003, p. 3). Even though this process caused some tension in me, it was also exhilarating. Despite the *messiness* I focused

on one of the strengths of interview-conversations, which allowed me to match each participant with his or her circumstances (Cohen *et al.*, 2011). I found it exciting to almost immediately discover similarities (refer to Table 3.8) in the different unique narratives taking shape, despite the process of data-generation unfolding individually. I was comforted by the occurrence of similar stories, as indicated by re-emerging themes.

3.5.4.3 Visual data: Using photographs as a data-generation strategy

The next second secondary research question emphasise the individual conceptualisation of each participants' personal teacher resilience. To answer this question I chose photographs as visual data-generation strategy (refer to Appendix J). Goodson and Gill (2011) mention the importance of allowing participants to be in control during the unfolding of their life histories. I therefore aimed to engage interactively with the participants so that they could shape the interview agenda (Gubriem & Holstein, 2003). I achieved this by using the participatory principle of power-sharing in a collaborative research partnership to gain insights into the lives of the participants (Atkinson, 2005; Chappel, 2000; Ebersöhn *et al.*, 2010; Thomson & Holland, 2005). As stated earlier, I opted for the use of participant-generated visual data (photographs) to assist in foregrounding the voices of the participants with regard to their conceptualisation of their own teacher resilience, taking my cue from Shaclock and Thorp (2005, p. 161) who state that "visual images add a layer of complexity to our stories and representations pointing to specific moments". The value of using photographs as a data-generation instrument in this study is summarised in Table 3.9.

Table 3.9: The value of photographs in this study (Cohen *et al.*, 2011, p. 530)

<i>Photographs...</i>	<i>In this study...</i>
evoke emotion and reflection.	participants used images to convey metaphoric illustrations of their own conceptualisation of their career resilience.
evoke information and facts.	participants' memories were sparked by the photographs or artefacts they brought to the interviews.
can support and supplement other sources of data and text.	participants affirmed their conceptualisation of their personal resilience through the use of the images they selected.
are time- and researcher-efficient because they convey far more than many pages of text.	the use of photographs as a catalyst resulted in participants and the researcher quickly progressed to a discussion on personal and career resilience.

I requested participants to think of photographs or images that represent or symbolise their teacher resilience. In doing so, I aimed to enrich the interview-conversations by introducing a participant-led and shared activity (Atkinson, 2005; Chappel, 2000; Richardson, 2003; Thomson & Holland, 2005). Asking participants to either bring or take photographs possibly

provided equal control during data-generation (Cohen *et al.*, 2011). I argue that the photographs feasibly conveyed connotations that reach beyond spoken or written words alone (Cohen *et al.*, 2011) and promoted shared participation (Thomson & Holland, 2005).

Although Cohen *et al.* (2011) continue to write about the value of using photographs as constructions, perspectives or power, I was pleasantly surprised by the value of photographs as symbols, representations or metaphors (Richardson, 2003). I reflected on the value of taking these photographs in my research diary:

The mood completely changed when we started talking about the photographs. She could not stop talking metaphorically about the things in her office and I had to take pictures of them all...the door, the computer, the diaries, the memory box.

... a proud lady greeted me this morning “come, I am ready for you ...” I walked behind her and greeted the other staff members. Then she turned around and showed me two photographs and all I could see was her proud smile as she explained who the people were ...

He did not bring any photographs but he knew exactly WHO he wanted as symbol of his resilience – his comrades. It was a few seconds and they were posing, ready for the all-important photograph to be taken. No smiles however, very serious about the significance of capturing a true picture of stature.

Researcher diary, 14 September 2012

Cohen *et al.* (2011) warn against the potential ethical and legal issues of using visual data. To account for the ethical dilemmas of identification and dissemination I sought informed consent from the participants (Cohen *et al.*, 2011). Where it was difficult to obtain informed consent I masked the faces of people on photographs (Prosser, Clark & Wiles, 2008). In some cases the participants named a prominent person in their lives to be photographed. In cases where a photograph could not be taken or informed consent not obtained I described the photograph rather than taking an actual picture (refer to Appendix J).

I shared my own ideas for photographs (refer to Appendix K) with the participants in order to elicit trust and provide a concrete example of what they may bring (Cohen *et al.*, 2011). Some participants (Gogo, Lazarus and Moeketsi) brought artefacts that I could photograph (refer to Appendix J), while Emma brought photographs, which I re-photographed as I did not want to take her originals (refer to Appendix J). Others described a picture they had in their mind (Susan and Emma) and requested me to take photographs matching their ideas elsewhere (refer to Appendix J).

3.5.4.4 Using a memory book as data-generation strategy

I wanted to answer secondary research questions 1, 3 and 4 using memory books as an additional participant-led strategy (refer to Appendix I). It was possible that the initial interview could have sparked the participants' memories, imaginations and reflective thoughts (Goodson & Gill, 2011). Goodson and Sikes (2001) explain how personal writings, especially diaries, may be rich sources of data. I specifically chose not to ask participants to keep diaries because of their busy schedules (Arends & Phurutse, 2011). I searched for an alternative strategy and decided to use the notion of memory books as an "innovative method for biographical research" (Thomson & Holland, 2005, p. 201). Different from Thomson and Holland's (2005) initial ideas I requested participants to voluntarily *write* a few memories in a memory book. Thomson and Holland's (2005, p. 217) work involved the exploration of how young people reacted to memory books as "self-conscious repositories of memorabilia". I realised from the work of Thomson and Holland (2005) that a limitation of using a memory book lies in the intended audience and the time consuming engagement it requires. With the knowledge that teachers have busy schedules I specifically did not request teachers to find more photographs or biographical objects to put in their memory books. Instead I wanted to promote participation and power-sharing (following the principles of participatory research) and allow participants who felt more comfortable with *writing* (as opposed to speaking) to freely express themselves in the safe space of a memory book. I specifically asked them to write in their language of choice (Thomson & Holland, 2005), which proved to be another potential limitation in that I am not conversant in the participants' mother tongue. Despite arranging with a colleague to help me translate the writings I was surprised that the participants chose to write in English. The advantage of asking participants to write memories as stories lies in the authentic, rich and respectable data that an exercise of this kind can generate (Cohen *et al.*, 2011). It could be argued that this strategy supported participants who have different strengths in terms of language ability (language of choice) and modality (writing instead of speaking).

At the end of each first interview I presented samples of my own memories to the participants (refer to Appendix K). In sharing my memories I attempted to facilitate a positive and trusting relationship (Goodson & Sikes, 2001) and provide different examples of how participants could structure their writings. I especially wanted participants to see that they could follow their own preference in presenting their memories as stories, pieces or summarised maps. I was aware that memory books are new in the field of biographical research (Thomson & Holland, 2005) and reflected on the use of memory-writing as a data-generation instrument:

What an interesting day – confirmation that teachers are too busy to do something for themselves is apparent with the lack of stories I got. Another dilemma though – no-one wrote a real story – they gave facts ... the facts is the same as the interviews. Maybe they preferred the oral mode? Maybe they misunderstood?... maybe it was the way I presented my memories (some in summarised fashion). I am irritated with myself because of the great what if??
Researcher diary, 14 September 2012

The reality of teachers' busy lives became apparent. In the four months between the first and second interview-conversations only three participants managed to write down some memories. I reflected:

I am disappointed with two participants not having the time to write any stories but I realise and have empathy for their reality.
Researcher diary, 14 September 2012

3.5.4.5 Using a researcher diary as data-documentation instrument

I regard the researcher diary as more than a tool used to perform an *internal audit* of the study to assess its rigidity and methodological quality (Schurink, Fouché & De Vos, 2011; Seale, 1999). For practical reasons I mostly recorded my notes in a researcher diary (refer to Appendix E) (Goodson & Sikes, 2001; Schurink, Fouché & De Vos, 2011). It facilitated my “epistemological awareness” (Gerstl-Pepin & Patrizio, 2009, p. 300) and mediated my development as a researcher (Engin, 2011) (refer back to Section 3.3). I also did my best to keep a record of what was said and what I experienced (Kelley, 2006).

a. Field notes as a data-documentation strategy

I used field notes as data-generation strategy in this study to supplement the interview-conversations, visual data and memory books (refer to Appendix E). During the pre- and post-interviewing stages (Kelley, 2006; Strydom, 2011), I wrote field notes in the form of reflective thoughts. I recorded what I *knew* had happened during the day and what my thoughts and emotions were (Strydom, 2011). I wrote field notes at descriptive and emotional levels (Cohen *et al.*, 2011). Table 3.10 contains a summary of how I used field notes in this study.

Table 3.10: Field notes at descriptive and emotional levels used in this study (Cohen *et al.*, 2011, p. 466)

Field notes at description level in this study
Key words (describing the journey to the school, the school layout and buildings) Fully detailed written observations (detailed accounts of several encounters with participants and other staff at the school) Pen portraits of participants (summaries of impressions of participants) Reconstructions of conversations (especially where a recording device failed) Descriptions of physical settings/events (such as the library, computer room, school grounds) Descriptions of events, behaviour and activities (overall atmosphere in the school and interaction between staff) Descriptions of the researcher's observations (short narratives of interesting observations)
Field notes at reflection level in this study
Reflections on the descriptions and analyses that have been done (initial ideas of grouping of themes and literature control after returning to reading additional work) Reflections on the methods used for data-generation and analysis (what worked well and what did not) Ethical issues, tensions, problems and dilemmas (noted for discussion with supervisors and asking advice) Reactions of researcher (accounting for my feelings and attitude) Points of clarification (issues noted for further discussion after transcription or analysis) Possible lines of further inquiry (usually after meetings with supervisors)

The potential limitations of using field notes as a data-generation strategy include biasness, impressionistic reflections and the lack of quantifiable measures (Cohen *et al.*, 2011, p. 468). To counter these limitations I checked themes and understandings derived from the researcher diary against other data sources. Consequently, the field notes in this study was intended to provide *additional* examples of themes following the analysis of the primary data sources, namely interview-conversations, photographs and memory books (Adler & Adler, 1994; Cohen *et al.*, 2011).

3.5.5 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Denzin and Lincoln (2005) assert that postmodern tendencies in biographical research include *not* analysing lived experiences, under the assumption that lived experiences cannot be captured in full. In agreement Roberts (2002, p. 46) indicates that one way of presenting data is to have the stories “speak for themselves”. However, I used phenomenological guidelines to complete a guided analysis and relied on the principles of participatory and life history research to lead the unfolding of participants’ lives (Cohen *et al.*, 2011; Goodson & Sikes, 2001; Hycner, 1985). The analysis process consisted of “paradigmatic reasoning” and “narrative reasoning” (Roberts, 2002, p. 11). I used paradigmatic reasoning to categorise

themes following the phenomenological guidelines of Hycner (1985). Thereafter through narrative reasoning I compared the stories to find similarities in the unfolding of the life histories.

Recording all interview-conversations, taking notes and later transcribing the recordings is rigorous research practice (Goodson & Sikes, 2001). I transcribed the first five interview-conversations myself in order to become familiar with the data (Goodson & Sikes, 2001). My data analysis and interpretation approach was informed by my epistemological stance. As a result I dealt with the emergence of categories, the authority of voice and the messiness of life history during the process of data analysis, following Hycner's (1985) guidelines and considering Goodson and Sike's (2001) thinking. A summary of the guidelines (Hycner, 1985) and philosophies (Goodson & Sikes, 2001), and the related actions I took are presented in Table 3.11.

3.5.5.1 The emergence of categories

As Table 3.11 indicates, I started analysing data as soon as I had listened to the first life story (Cohen *et al.*, 2011; Goodson & Gill, 2011; Goodson & Sikes, 2001; Samuel, 2009). Freeman (1996) distinguishes between determining categories before the onset of the research (*a priori* analysis) and determining categories based on the data analysis (aiming at generating hypotheses). In the continuum between these two extremes, categories could also be negotiated between me and the participants, or emerge as a result of "guided analysis" (Samuel, 2009, p. 12). In this study I took a guided analysis approach since I developed categories by following Hycner's guidelines and modified them through continuous interaction with the data (Samuel, 2009). I took a hermeneutic stance in respect of the analysis of each participant's first interview transcriptions because I wanted to understand not only the apparent meaning of each life-story, but also the deeper meaning (Goodson & Sikes, 2001; Nieuwenhuis, 2010b). Cohen *et al.* (2011) write that early analysis can assist in reducing data overload, thereby helping the researcher to focus on specific aspects.

I subsequently discussed possible themes with my supervisors shortly after my first interviews with the participants (refer to Table 3.11). An example is highlighted below:

Today I discussed a few ideas with my supervisors. I noticed that only one participant brought an edu-political view to his life story EXPLICITLY. All the others did it implicitly by the way they have internalized the values of the oppressed. What does this mean? His particular interest possibly stems from his initial career choice of becoming a lawyer.
Researcher diary, 8 May 2012

Table 3.11: Time line of data analysis process (adapted from Cohen *et al.*, 2011, p. 429-430; Goodson & Sikes, 2001, p. 34-36)

<i>Hycner's (1985, p. 279-303) guidelines:</i>	<i>Goodson and Sikes' (2001, p. 34-36) thinking:</i>	<i>When?</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Source</i>
Transcription Bracketing and phenomenological reduction Listening to the interview for a sense of the whole	Be clear, concise and explicit about an analysis framework State epistemological and philosophical position as researcher Start formulating ideas as soon as data is generated because of unstructured interview-conversations researchers	May – June 2012	Listen to and read recordings and transcriptions a number of times to deduce what the participants were saying, rather than what I expected them to say. Early identification of possible themes	Transcriptions with themes (Appendix H) Researcher diary (Appendix E)
Delineating units of general meaning Delineating units of meaning relevant to the research question		June – July 2012	Using participants' word literally to elicit meaning related to the research questions	Transcriptions with themes (Appendix H)
Training independent judges to verify the units of relevant meanings Eliminating redundancies	Make sense of data Interpret information	July 2012	Discussions with other PhD candidates, supervisor and co-supervisor to verify relevance of initial themes. Re-reading literature that relates to the specific themes identified	Researcher Diary (Appendix E)
Writing a narrative summary of each individual interview	Be explicit about researcher background to enhance rigour Engage in researcher reflectivity and reflexivity Acknowledge that the researcher also has a research voice	August 2012	Completed this task before returning to the research field. This was done to elicit understanding of the participant in context and identify possible gaps in the life history	Comparing stories and finding gaps (Appendix M)
Returning to the participants with the summary and themes and conducting a second interview		September 2012	Great care was taken to create a flexible and open space for conversations	Transcriptions with themes (Appendix H) Researcher diary (Appendix E)
Second round transcription, bracketing and listening		September – October 2012	The analysis process was followed a second time. Listen and read recordings and transcriptions a number of times to deduce what the participants were saying. Cross reference earlier themes with themes deduced now	Transcriptions with themes (Appendix H) Researcher diary (Appendix E)

<i>Hycner's (1985, p. 279-303) guidelines:</i>	<i>Goodson and Sikes' (2001, p. 34-36) thinking:</i>	<i>When?</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Source</i>
Clustering units of relevant meaning Determining themes from clusters of meaning	Fit information into a framework (classify, categorise concepts or typology)	November 2012	Common themes were identified in all the participant transcriptions clustered to determine central themes	Transcriptions with themes (Appendix H) Researcher diary (Appendix E)
Modifying themes and summary Identifying general and unique themes for all the interviews Contextualising themes		November 2012	All data gathered were compared to determine modifications and new clusters Seek crystallisation	Comparing stories Finding similarities, gaps and differences (Appendix M)
Composing summaries	Guard against self-publicity	December 2012 – January 2013	An extended narrative of each participant depicting the world as seen by the participant	Extended narratives (Appendix L)
Returning to the participants with the summary and themes and conducting a third interview (member-checking)	Explain life histories as it fits into framework	April 2013	Discuss extended narrative and make modifications as indicated by participants	Extended narratives (Appendix L)

3.5.5.2 Authority of voice

The issue of power and ethics in biographical research and life history research has received much attention and extends to the processes of analysis and interpretation (Cary, 1999; Dhunpath & Samuel, 2009; Goodson & Gill, 2011; Goodson & Sikes, 2001; Jupp, 2006; Shaclock & Thorp, 2005). I addressed the issue of power and ethics in life history research with a solid epistemological foundation and in choosing participatory principles. In true interpretivist style, I assumed that the meaning of participants' lives (inherent in their actions over time) could be "unearthed" (Munchmore, 1999; Schwandt, 2007, p. 160), therefore I focused on the experiences of participants during the analysis (Charmaz, 1995; Cohen *et al.*, 2011; Goodson & Sikes, 2001; Munchmore, 1999). However, Atkinson (2005) notes that the reflective voice of the researcher usually acts as a concealed story in life history research. As a result I was constantly aware of the "challenge of interpretative authority" (Pamphilon, 1999, p. 394). In search for a balance between my voice as the researcher and the authentic voices of the participants I realised that I held the "narrative privilege" (Adams, 2008, p. 181), i.e. the privilege to reconstruct stories from the data. However, what I learnt from the country's socio-political past (refer to Chapter 1) encouraged me to adopt the principles of partnership and power-sharing (refer to 3.4.2). In this regard Erben (1996, p. 160) argues that the pure "science of interpretation" need to include more contextualisation. The life-span contextualisation makes an important contribution towards understanding the career life of each participant as I was motivated to determine which words or silences could cause harm. As a result I constantly maintained an ethical stance embedded in the knowledge of historical events. Adams (2008, p. 179) points out that in following narrative ethics I "must not approach stories with a prescription or typology for analysis", but "must remain contingent on the stories, authors, and audience". Thus, as indicated in Table 3.11, I guarded against self-publicity through reflexivity (Munchmore, 1999), and focussed on the co-construction of stories. I followed Goodson and Sikes' (2001) notions on analysing life history research in educational settings and explicitly stated my background as a researcher to enhance rigour, and acknowledged my own voice in the study.

3.5.5.3 The 'messiness' of life history research

As mentioned earlier, many life history researchers comment on the "messiness" of life history work (Cary, 1999, p. 416; Dhunpath, 2000, p. 545; Gubrium & Holstein, 2003, p. 3; Kiesinger, 1998, p. 72; Lieblich, Zilber & Tuval-Mashiach, 2008, p. 613; Munchmore, 1999, p. 21). The messy part of life history research is moving beyond the life story phase and the perceived power of academe to facilitate an active "re-construction, re-telling and becoming" with the participant as partner (Goodson & Gill, 2011, p. 44). These authors suggest that life history research should be more than me being the narrator of a life story. Life history research

involves collaboration, mutual sharing, interpretation and discussion (Kathard, 2009; Munchmore, 1999). The unfolding of theories and narratives through dialogue, known as the grounded conversation, requires a system that understands the layers of meaning (Dhunpath & Samuel, 2009; Goodson & Gill, 2011; Goodson & Sikes, 2001; Kathard, 2009). The implication was that the participants (as my equals) were co-researchers, and consequently we needed to locate ourselves within the stories. In this regard I view the broader context of society and history as instrumental in paving the way for grounded conversations to take place (Goodson & Gill, 2011; Kelley, 2006).

To make sense of the messiness I constantly returned to the research site and the data sets which Goodson and Gill (2011, p. 43-44) refer to as the beginning of the “process of reconstruction”. I made sense of the data together with the participants and expanded on early ideas while gathering additional data sets (photographs and memory-books). This is the step that Hycner (1985) refers to as returning to the participant with the summary and themes for further clarification. I reflected:

... it was helpful to do a second round of transcriptions, bracketing and listening because of the unique composite of each of the participants' flow during the interviews even though I did enter the second interviews with some thoughts and ideas.

Researcher diary, 5 October 2012

The processes of reconstruction, grounded conversation and respondent validation all have the same purpose: through reciprocity and trust both researcher and participant share insights and interpretations on equal ground to build a meaning-layered narrative within a specific context (Goodson & Gill, 2011; Kelley, 2006). I found that the final interview served as a point of collaborative crystallisation where all sources were compared and cross-referenced and emergent themes were understood in context (Goodson & Gill, 2011; Maree & Van der Westhuizen, 2010; Nieuwenhuis, 2010). I reflected:

I am not sure who was the most excited...me or her...she looked at the pages as if to say wow – my life in just a few pages? At this point I remember the men looking at the pages as if to say – do we have time to go through all of these [constantly paging to look for the end].

...I could tell from her body language that she enjoyed the story – making positive utterances echoing some sentences. She stopped me to make clarifications and changes. At the end she sat in silence and smiled and I thought, it must have been powerful listening to your own story through another person's words

Researcher diary, 18 April 2013

3.5.5.4 Narrative comparison

Thompson (2000) writes that narratives can be analysed as single stories or collections. The principle data-analysis technique I used was a life-story analysis following Hycner's (1985) guidelines to phenomenological analysis (Appendix H) and thereafter reconstructing the interview-conversations in order to reach a grounded conversation and doing member-checking (Appendix L). The reconstruction resulted in a chronological narrative of each participant. After I completed member-checking with the participants in order to facilitate a co-construction of narratives I compared the narratives to "ensure that different interpretations of the text [had] been considered" (Cohen *et al.*, 2011, p. 553). During the comparison of the narratives I wanted to add authenticity (refer to Table 3.1) to the results by highlighting similarities in participants' values in context and personal views over time (Cohen *et al.*, 2011).

Cohen *et al.* (2011, p. 601) write that because of limits to induction I can never know if the themes have been saturated, thus I turn to the "partner of saturation" – theoretical completeness – to substantiate the comprehensiveness of the study. I therefore argue for the trustworthiness of the data in this study because I was able to place generated themes theoretically and conceptually (Cohen *et al.*, 2011). Consequently, in the analysis of the data sets I have thoroughly explored various themes, compared narratives and conducted widespread literature control (refer to Chapters 4 and 5) (Kelly, 2006). The question that needed to be answered was: *Have I managed to answer the research questions using the data set at my disposal?* Refer to Chapter 6 for a discussion on the research questions.

3.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

In this section I describe the ethical guidelines I considered in this study.

3.6.1 INTRODUCTION

Goodson and Gill (2011) write that life history research is plagued by the strong and never-ending challenge of ethics because of the reciprocal nature of the research relationship; whereas Hatch and Wisniewski (1995) highlight the dilemma that life history researchers may have no idea what the impact of life history research may be on a participant. In following biographical methodology (applying participatory principles) the nature of the research project itself demanded a joint collaboration (Bhana, 2006; Thomson & Holland, 2005). In an attempt to apply a rigorous ethical view, I drew from Bhana's (2006) argument that the joint collaboration between researcher and participant should take place within an ethical framework. I applied Seedhouse's (2008) ethical pyramid grid (Cohen *et al.*, 2011, p. 77), presented graphically in Figure 3.7.

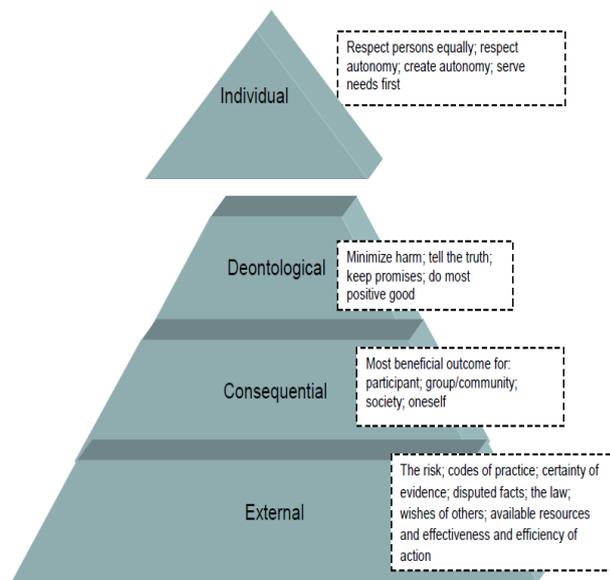


Figure 3.7: Seedhouse’s ethical grid (Seedhouse, 2008, p.174; Cohen *et al.*, 2011, p. 77)

According to Seedhouse’s ethical grid (2008) ethical decisions are made based on four layers: external laws or codes of practice; consequences for individuals or groups; one’s duty to social and educational settings; and respect for individual freedom and autonomy. I deduced that the first and foremost priority is the responsibility to the participants in this study. Therefore I highlighted the “individual layer” and made decisions that served the needs of the participants first. In applying Seedhouse’s ethical grid (2008), I considered several ethical issues in this study (Cohen *et al.*, 2011).

3.6.2 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS ON AN INDIVIDUAL LEVEL

The participants’ identities are not disclosed in the thesis, neither is any information given by which they can be identified (Cohen *et al.*, 2011); therefore confidentiality is ensured. Although the participants are not anonymous to me, I did not make their identities known to other participants or discuss information with others (Cohen *et al.*, 2011). It was only when I attempted snowball selection that the participant who acted as my informant knew the identity of the person referred to me, who was, however, unable to take part in the study. Each participant signed a letter of informed consent (refer to Appendix F). I was aware of the complexity of consent in the case of life history research. In this regard Munchmore (1999) points out that participants may not understand the extent to which a researcher may study them. I negotiated reciprocal understanding in this regard by utilising my skills as trained educational psychologist. I offered my own memories and photograph ideas (refer to Appendix K) and was wary of one-sided interpretations of the participants’ stories (Goodson & Gill, 2011). I followed Bhana’s (2006) recommendation that in participatory work participants control what is being published, therefore I devoted a full interview-conversation to member-checking.

3.6.3 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS ON THE DEONTOLOGICAL AND CONSEQUENTIAL LEVELS

Cohen *et al.* (2011) believe that, as research develops over time, participants should benefit by way of having the opportunity to reflect and learn about themselves. In this regard Goodson and Gill (2011) feel that life history research presents the potential to change an individual's life or self-perception. This also applies to participatory work, which may lead people to an awareness of their own abilities and resources (Bhana, 2006). Although life history can be therapeutic or as Gibbs (2007, p. 67) describes the value of biographical research as “restorative” the interaction with the participant also has the potential to interrupt a person's life (Goodson & Gill, 2011), or expose the participant (Miller, 2000). For this reason I applied my skills as a career-development facilitator and the knowledge of career development gained over a lifespan with great care so as to not claim empowerment and emancipation (Bhana, 2006; Goodson & Gill, 2011). Rather, I focused on the person as a person (Cohen *et al.*, 2011) and aimed to discover insights together with the participants (Bhana, 2006).

3.6.4 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS ON AN EXTERNAL LEVEL

I was aware of the potential therapeutic element that is hidden in life history work, as Goodson and Gill (2011) point out. With regard to this, I was subjected not only to the ethical conduct guidelines as stipulated by the Ethics Code for Researchers at the University of Pretoria, but also the ethical conduct rules for psychology practitioners registered under the Health Professions Act (56 of 1974). I declared at the onset of the research project that participation was voluntary and that participants were free to withdraw at any time during the project. I understood that “inevitable border crossing into therapy, [and] into other social sciences, [as well as] into broad humanistic inquiry” would continuously challenge me as a researcher, which meant that I needed to protect the participants from obvious harm (Goodson & Gill, 2011, p. 30). Therefore I applied what Riessman (2005, p. 473) calls good practice: adhering to “ethics-in-context”. In following Riessman's views, I did not deny the emotion-packed relationship I had with the participants. I acknowledged emotions such as anxiety, uncertainty, conflict and frustration, which impacted on the complexity of the study (Goodson & Gill, 2011). I debriefed regularly with my supervisors following spurts of these emotions during field visits and wrote about them in my researcher diary (refer to Appendix E).

3.7 CONCLUSION

In this chapter I described the various elements of the research methodology that I utilised to unfold an understanding and the meaning of the participants' stories. I therefore used the following statement by Cole and Knowles (2001, p. 11) to introduce the chapter: “Always, lives

are understood within their respective and collective contexts and it is this understanding that is theorized”. I highlighted the research design decisions I made to ensure a specific methodological stream (biographical research with participatory principles). In the next two chapters I describe the results of the study (Themes 1, 2 and 3 in Chapter 4, and Themes 4 and 5 in Chapter 5).

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CHAPTER FOUR

EXPERIENCES OF TEACHERS TEACHING IN A RESOURCE-CONSTRAINED RURAL SCHOOL: ADVERSITIES FACED AND PROTECTIVE RESOURCES USED

*The Hardy Aloe*¹⁵

*Based on Hans Christian Andersen's 'The Snowdrop' (Adapted)*¹⁶

The snow lay deep, for it was the worst winter the Karoo had ever seen. The winter winds blew cold, but there was one crevice where all was snug and warm. And inside the crevice there was a little aloe - in its bulb it lay, under the soil.

One day the rain fell and it trickled through the ice and snow into the soil. Presently a sunbeam, pointed and slender, pierced down to the earth and tapped on the aloe's bulb.

'Come in,' said the aloe.

'I can't,' said the sunbeam, 'I'm not strong enough to reach down the crevice. I shall be stronger when springtime comes.'

When will it be spring?' asked the aloe of every little sunbeam that rapped on its door. But for a long time it was winter. The mountaintop was still covered with snow. The aloe grew quite tired of waiting.

'How long it is!' it said. 'I feel quite cramped. I must stretch myself and rise. I must reach up and say 'good morning' to the spring.'

So the aloe pushed and pushed. The walls of the bulb were softened by the rain and warmed by the little sunbeams. The aloe shot up from under the snow, with a pale green bud on its stalk and long striped leaves on either side. It was still biting cold.

'You are too early,' said the wind and the weather, but every sunbeam sang, 'Welcome,' and the aloe raised its head and unfolded itself - a brilliant yellow glow. It was weather to freeze it to pieces, but it was stronger than anyone knew. It stood in its green jagged dress, bowing its head when the snowflakes fell, and raising it again to smile at the sunbeams, and every day it grew stronger, destined to become man's protection.

'Oh!' shouted the children, as they ran past the kraal, 'see the aloe! There it stands so beautiful and proud - our cattle are safe!'



Photograph 4.1:
Aloe Striatula

¹⁵ The picture is of an *Aloe Striatula* (refer to Photograph 4.1), a hardy plant found in South Africa.

¹⁶ Story adapted with the help from Yolandi Woest from: <http://www.apples4theteacher.com/holidays/spring/short-stories/the-snow-drop.html>.

4.1 PROLOGUE: CONQUERING MOUNTAINS

I came across Hans Anderson's story of the spirited snowdrop flower. The snowdrop flower blooms when winter is still very cold, therefore symbolising hope amidst freezing temperatures. I was reminded of the same robust nature of the aloe striatula found in South Africa (see Photograph 4.1). The indigenous aloe family is well-known for its valuable protective and healing abilities. With the help of a colleague¹⁷, we adapted the story of the snowdrop flower into the story of the hardy aloe, which is a common name for the aloe striatula. For me, the five remarkable people that I introduced in Chapter 1, can all be compared to this hardy plant. They are *Emma, the one who endured* (Participant 1); *Moeketsi, the agent of change* (Participant 2); *Gogo, the grandmother to all* (Participant 3); *Lazarus, leading the way* (Participant 4); and *Susan, a lady of strength* (Participant 5). The themes that emerged will be organised against the backdrop of the story of the hardy aloe (refer to Table 4.1) so as to mirror the metaphorical development of career resilience and sustained career well-being in each of the participants. At the end of the chapter, I compare my findings to existing literature and highlight similarities, contradictions and silences (refer to Appendix D). New insights will also be discussed.

The beginning of a story usually exposes the setting or context in which the rest of the story unfolds. The story of the hardy aloe starts with such a setting:

The snow lay deep, for it was the worst winter the Karoo had ever seen. The winter winds blew cold, but there was one crevice where all was snug and warm. And inside the crevice there was a little aloe - in its bulb it lay, under the soil.

The winter time and extreme weather represents Theme 1 (adversity faced by rural teachers). The hardy aloe with its will to stretch itself and rise, represents Theme 2 (internal protective resources rural teachers use), and the snug, warm crevice as well as the welcoming sunbeams represent Theme 3 (external protective resources rural teachers use).

Just like individuals who are faced with adversity have access to protective resources that support them and help them to cope and flourish despite their circumstances, the aloe striatula has the ability to heal itself when a blade is broken. In this chapter I present Themes 1, 2 and 3. I attempt to sketch the setting or context of participants' childhood and adult hood. I refer to the combined Themes 1, 2 and 3 as ***Prologue: Conquering mountains***. In naming the process I was informed by the experiences of Gogo, who compared her hardship to climbing the highest mountain. The results for Themes 1, 2 and 3 are summarised in Table 4.1.

¹⁷ Yolandi Woest.

Table 4.1: Themes, subthemes, categories and subcategories as related to the research questions and presentation parts in this study

Thesis Chapter	Presentation Part	Secondary research questions	Results Theme	Results Subthemes	Results Categories	Results Subcategories
THESIS Chapter Four	Prologue: Conquering Mountains	<p>Secondary question 1 How do teachers experience teaching in a resource-constrained rural school over time?</p> <p>Secondary question 3 Which risk factors to teacher career resilience do teachers encounter in a resource-constrained school over time?</p>	Theme 1 Adversity faced by rural teachers over time	Subtheme 1.1 Adversity rural teachers faced in the past during their childhood	A: Childhood adversity in microsystem	Socio-economic disadvantage
					B: Childhood adversity in exosystem	Growing up during apartheid
					C: Childhood adversity in macrosystem	Entrenched cultural traditions
				Subtheme 1.2 Current adversity faced by rural teachers	D: Teacher adversity in mesosystem	D1: Teaching in a remote, resourced-constrained rural school D2: Demotivated learners in a rural school
					E: Teacher adversity in exosystem	E1: Low morale of teachers in broader teacher corps E2: The unstable SA education system
					F: Teacher adversity in macrosystem	An undermined teaching profession
		Subtheme 1.3 Chronic adversity rural teachers faced over their life span (past and current)	G: Chronic adversity in the microsystem	Significant personal hardship		
			H: Chronic adversity in the exosystem	Poverty and subsequent financial constraints		
		<p>Secondary question 1 How do teachers experience teaching in a resource-constrained rural school over time?</p> <p>Secondary question 4 Which protective resources do teachers in a resource-constrained rural school identify retrospectively?</p>	Theme 2 The internal protective resources rural teachers use over time	Subtheme 2.1 Enduring internal protective resources teachers use over their life span for resilience (past and current)	I: Emotional aptitude	I1: Empathy I2: Intrinsic motivation
					J: Critical inquiry	J1: Not accepting the status quo J2: The will to learn
K: Values	K1: Dignity K2: Sense of accomplishment K3: Persistence in and dedication to education					
L: Positive attitude	L1: Active engagement L2: Positive adaptation L3: Future plans and dreams					

Thesis Chapter	Presentation Part	Secondary research questions	Results Theme	Results Subthemes	Results Categories	Results Subcategories	
					M: Spirituality	Religious outlook	
				Subtheme 2.2 Current internal protective resources rural teachers use for resilience	N: Critical inquiry	Agency in problem solving	
					O: Values	O1: Responsibility for educating children O2: Belief in power of education	
					P: Positive attitude	Positive reflexive practice	
					Q: Spirituality	Belief that teaching becomes a calling	
			Theme 3 The external protective resources rural teachers use over time	Subtheme 3.1 The external protective resources rural teachers used in their childhood	R: External protective resources in mesosystem	Encouragement by significant teachers	
					Subtheme 3.2 Current external protective resources rural teachers use for resilience	S: External protective resources in mesosystem	S1: Supported by like-minded colleagues and friends S2: Driven by success of learners S3: Encouraged and appreciated by school leadership
						T: External protective resources in exo- and macro-system	T1: Post-apartheid shields and insights T2: Lessons learnt from poverty
					Subtheme 3.3 The enduring external protective resources rural teachers used over their life span for resilience	U: External protective resources in mesosystem	U1: Motivation by and support received from family U2: Inspired by a significant parent

As indicated in Table 4.1, these themes address the following secondary research questions: *How do teachers experience teaching in a resource-constrained rural school over time? Which risk factors to teacher career resilience do teachers encounter in a resource-constrained school over time? Which protective resources do teachers in a resource-constrained rural school identify retrospectively?*

I divided Theme 1, which deals with the adversity that rural teachers faced over their life span, into three subthemes. I found that rural teachers, who faced adversity as children (Subtheme 1.1), currently face adversity as teachers (Subtheme 1.2), and have been facing chronic adversity over their life span (Subtheme 1.3). I arranged the subthemes into categories according to Bronfenbrenner's (2005) bio-ecological theory. In this way I could categorise the problems that the teachers indicated into micro-, meso-, exo- or macro-systems. I categorised the subthemes according to the bio-ecological theory in order to align them with my chosen theoretical frameworks (refer to Chapter 2). Further grouping of the categories provided ten subcategories.

Theme 2 accounts for the internal protective resources rural teachers used over their life span. I identified two subthemes: enduring internal protective resources rural teachers use over their life span (Subtheme 2.1) and internal protective resources used currently by rural teachers (Subtheme 2.2). The internal protective resources (Theme 2) all relate to the teachers' micro-system (Bronfenbrenner, 2005).

In Theme 3, I identified the external protective resources rural teachers use in the meso-, exo- and macro-systems. Theme 3 includes three subthemes. I found that rural teachers used external protective resources during their childhood (Subtheme 3.1), they use external protective resources currently as rural teachers (Subtheme 3.2) and enduring external protective resources over their life span (Subtheme 3.3). I identified eight subcategories.

4.2 THEME 1: ADVERSITY FACED BY RURAL TEACHERS OVER TIME

The snow lay deep, for it was the worst winter the Karoo had ever seen.

4.2.1 INTRODUCTION

As young school-going children the teacher participants experienced the hardship of growing up in poor communities, mostly far removed from urban settings. Some of their most profound memories are presented in the blue textboxes with golden text.

*...we used to travel 7 kilometres from my home to that school...
Then we worked very hard. Knowing that every [day] after school, when we come from school
we knew that mmm-mmm this is my task, I must go and fetch water in the river, and then the
eldest sister must go there on the mountain to fetch wood in order to make food.*

Emma (P1), Interview 1 (I1), p. 3

*...It was hard for me to go to school, I, I am the last born out of eleven kids... having to come
back to school, back from school without food. You see the situation was very difficult.*

Moeketsi (P2), Interview 2 (I2), p. 2

*... so when we were now registering for the subjects, in Grade 12 what we supposed to have,
then Afrikaans was there, I had a problem, I had to go to the principal, I begged the principal to
replace Afrikaans with another subject, then she said, which one do you think you are going to
take? I said I think I can go for Business Economics, she said, you know this is not an adult
centre that you choose, you just have to take what is there, then, okay, it just ended there...*

Susan (P5), Interview 1 (I1), p. 1

*... but in the rural area is where after school, I was just going,
I was a herd boy in fact, just going to look for cattle ...*

Lazarus (P4), Interview 2 (I2), p. 3

These experiences are set against a dark period in South Africa's history when people of colour were discriminated against in the most inhumane ways. I refer back to the brief summary of the apartheid policy in Chapter 1 and a discussion of rural education in Chapter 2. Against this background I present Theme 1 – the adversities that participants in this study faced during their childhood in micro- exo- and macrosystems, (Subtheme 1.1), and currently as rural teachers in meso-, exo- and macrosystems (Subtheme 1.2), as well as chronic adversity they faced over their life-span in meso-, exo- and macrosystems (Subtheme 1.3).

The teachers related their experiences of significant risk and stress within various systems over time. To account for the life span in terms of the temporal dimension, I described criteria for inclusion and exclusion for each subcategory (Bronfenbrenner, 2005; Shein & Chen, 2011; Watson & Stead, 2006; Patton & McMahon, 2006). The temporal dimension is significant in life-history design, and therefore necessary for the research questions focusing on the life span of participants. A summary of Theme 1 is presented in Table 4.2. Applicable data sources are identified with check marks, as with each participant (P) to whom the subcategory applied.

Table 4.2: Summary of results for Theme 1

Theme 1: Adversity faced by rural teachers over time												
Subtheme	Categories	Subcategories	Indicators for		Data source (s)							
			Inclusion Adversity data	Exclusion Resilience data (reported elsewhere in Theme 2 and 3)	I1	I2	I3	MB	Ph	FN		
Subtheme 1.1 Adversity rural teachers faced in the past during their childhood	A Childhood adversity in microsystem	Socio-economic disadvantage	Adversity data related to socio-economic hardship during childhood	Adversity data related to apartheid and culture		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
					P	1, 3	2, 3, 4	5	1, 3	3		
	B Childhood adversity in exosystem	Growing up during apartheid	Adversity data related to being child during apartheid	Adversity data related to socio-economic hardship and culture		✓	✓		✓	✓		
					P	1, 2, 3, 5	2, 3		3	2		
	C Childhood adversity in macrosystem	Entrenched cultural traditions	Adversity data related to cultural traditions during childhood.	Adversity data related to apartheid and socio-economic hardship		✓	✓		✓			
					P	1, 3	4, 2		3, 5			
Subtheme 1.2 Current adversity faced by rural teachers	D Teacher adversity in mesosystem	D1 Teaching in a remote, resource-constrained rural school	Adversity data related to the remoteness and resource-strains of teaching in a rural school	Adversity data related to demotivated learners.		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
					P	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	2, 4	2, 3	1, 3			
		D2 Demotivated learners in a rural school	Adversity data related to learners in a rural school.	Adversity data related to teaching in a remote resource-constrained rural school		✓	✓		✓		✓	
					P	1, 2, 3, 5	1, 3		1			
	E Teacher adversity in exosystem	E1 Low morale of teachers in broader teacher corps	Adversity data related to views and perceptions of other teachers	Adversity data related to society, and SA education system		✓	✓					✓
					P	1, 2, 3, 5	3					
	E2 The unstable SA education	Adversity data related to the SA education system	Adversity data related to society and perceptions of		✓	✓	✓	✓				

Theme 1: Adversity faced by rural teachers over time											
Subtheme	Categories	Subcategories	Indicators for		Data source (s)						
			Inclusion Adversity data	Exclusion Resilience data (reported elsewhere in Theme 2 and 3)	I1	I2	I3	MB	Ph	FN	
		system		other teachers	P	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	1, 2, 3, 4	2	3, 5		
	F Teacher adversity in macrosystem	An undermined teaching profession	Adversity data related to society	Adversity data related to other teachers, and the SA education system		✓	✓		✓		✓
Subtheme 1.3 Chronic adversity rural teachers faced over their life span (past and current)	G Chronic adversity in the microsystem	Significant personal hardship	Data that shows chronic adversity in terms of personal hardship	Data that shows chronic adversity in terms of poverty and financial constraints		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	H Chronic adversity in the exosystem	Poverty and subsequent financial constraints	Data that shows chronic adversity in terms of poverty and financial constraints	Data that shows chronic adversity in terms of personal hardship	P	1, 2, 3, 5	2, 3, 4, 5	3, 5	3, 5	3, 5	
					P	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	2, 3, 4, 5		5		

Key
 P = Participant; I = Interviews 1, 2 and 3 in the form of transcriptions; MB = Memories written in a memory book; Ph = Visual data (Photographs showing resilience); FN = field notes in researcher's diary

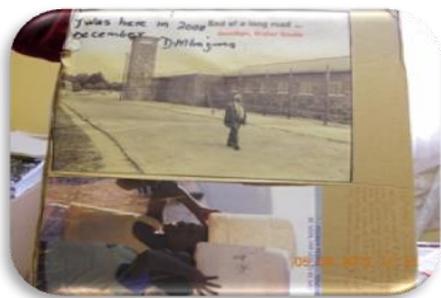
4.3 SUBTHEME 1.1: ADVERSITY RURAL TEACHERS FACED IN THE PAST DURING THEIR CHILDHOOD

The winter winds blew cold

Subtheme 1.1 consists of three categories. Category A focuses on the adversity that rural teachers faced as children in the microsystem. A subcategory of category A is socio-economic disadvantage. Category B deals with adversity faced by rural teachers as children in the macrosystem and a subcategory that was identified relates to teachers growing up during the apartheid era. Category C highlights the adversity faced by rural teachers as children in the exosystem, and the subcategory that emerged was entrenched cultural traditions.

4.3.1 CATEGORY A: CHILDHOOD ADVERSITY IN THE MICROSYSTEM: SOCIO-ECONOMIC DISADVANTAGE

Being socio-economically disadvantaged was a recurring risk factor experienced by all five the participants during their childhood. A repetitive reason for feeling disadvantaged was the omnipresent poor circumstances of participants during their childhood. Emma recalled how they travelled long distances to school and said: *'...there is no food for us to eat...there is no one who cares about you...I used to go to school barefoot, without pocket money'* (P1, I1, pp. 2-3). She also referred back to this memory in her memory book (P1, MB, p. 2). Gogo shared her painful memories of how, as a girl, she used to carry buckets of water to her house. She still remembers the physical pain: *'... it reminds me the pain...when I was carrying this there, it moves backwards and come this side'* (P3, I2, p. 15; P3, Ph2) (refer to Photograph 4.2). Gogo's painful memory of carrying water is captured in Photograph 4.2. This relates to the adversity she faced as a child.



Photograph 4.2:
 Memory box - Child carrying water
 (Gogo, P3, Ph2)

Emma recalled how they struggled to make ends meet when she said: *'...no one helped my mother...by then my mom left us, and then she went to Johannesburg to look for a job. She left my sister, I was 11 years old and my sister, I think she was 13 years old. And then the last born was still young'* (P1, I1, p. 2). She made the same reference in her memory book (P1, MB, p. 2). Susan said: *'You go to school, with an empty stomach, you don't have food, you don't even have a lunch box...you don't even have pocket money'* (P5, I3, p. 16).

The participants' memories of their own parents' low education level and physical absence added to their feelings of distress. Emma said, *'my father did not go to school'* (P1, I1, p. 5), while Moeketsi remarked that his parents *'never went far with education'* (P2, I2, p. 5). Gogo said, *'you know, me, my parents were not educated'* (P3, I1, p. 11) and referred to *'that time'* (P3, I1, p. 11), adding that *'when I was doing Standard 5, my father didn't want me to continue'* (P3, I1, p. 5) and referred to this in her memory book (P3, MB, p. 3). Lazarus also mentioned that *'my parents, both of them were not educated'* (P4, I2, p. 1), which demotivated him. Growing up in a socio-economically disadvantaged community, the inevitable possibility existed that one parent (or both) would work far away from home. In this regard Moeketsi related that before his father retired, he was often absent as he *'was working all over the country'* (P2, I2, p. 6). Gogo's recollections were similar: *'after I was born he [her father] went to Durban when I was seven months, up until he come back, when I was six years'* (P3, I1, p. 1). She also mentioned this in her memory book (P3, MB, p. 1). Lazarus' experience also aligned: *'so because my father was a miner he was coming home monthly'* (P4, I2, p. 5).

4.3.2 CATEGORY B: CHILDHOOD ADVERSITY IN THE EXOSYSTEM: GROWING UP DURING APARTHEID

All the participants made covert comments that related to the adversity experienced as a result of the political segregation that was in force during their childhood. Moeketsi was the only participant who spoke about this overtly and blamed the political system at the time for the poverty he experienced during his childhood: *'you see I grow up, in, in a, like I said before, in...in a poor, in a society which is black dominated and which came as a result of the Group Areas Act'* (P2, I2, p. 2). Apart from his convictions about his poor childhood, Moeketsi strongly expressed his disapproval of *'the conditions of the Apartheids regime'* (P2, I2, p. 3) and stated that he believed that many children exited the school system *'not because they did not want education, but because they were brutally abused'* (P2, I2, p. 3). The reason for children leaving the school system at that time was very clear to Moeketsi as he reflected about apartheid and the administration of corporal punishment, noted earlier (P2, I2, p. 3). These conditions motivated Moeketsi (while studying teaching) to enlist with the South African Democratic Teacher's Union (SADTU), which opposed the ideology of the time (P2, Ph3) (refer to Photograph 4.3). Moeketsi refers to Photograph 4.3 in two ways. With regard to adversity he faced as a young person he shares his memories of apartheid and how he and his friends (from SADTU¹⁸) struggled to accept forced segregation. He later describes his resilience referring to the same photograph saying that the support from friends during this time encouraged him.

¹⁸ South African Democratic Teacher Union.



Photograph 4.3:
 SADTU
 (Moeketsi , P2, Ph3)

Moeketsi described SADTU as *'the team, all SADTU members. Ja, every time they are behind me'* (P2, I2, p. 22). Moeketsi recalled how he, as part of this organisation, opposed apartheid: *'when we were toyi-toying...demonstrating'* (P2, I2, p. 12) despite *'sufferings you see, we will be arrested'* (P2, I2, p. 12).

Emma recalled that *'by that time we used to pay the school fees'* (P1, I1, p. 2), and Gogo stated: *'because long ago you had to have money so that you register for an exam'* (P3, I2, p. 10). Gogo also referred to the major challenge of *'political demands'* in her memory book (P3, MB, p. 4). It is interesting to note that Lazarus stated that he *'didn't feel segregated. That's why I say I enjoyed my whole school years'* (P4, I2, p. 11). Later, during his years at university, Moeketsi was able to voice his frustration with the apartheid regime. He explained how it made him feel: *'especially the history that was written, by that time, to say no this is a type of history that makes us feel inferior about us, as black people...we were not featuring anywhere'* (P2, I2, p. 9).

Participants often alluded to issues they had experienced during the apartheid era. In particular, they recalled struggling with the mandatory school language, Afrikaans. Susan as elsewhere quoted could not do Afrikaans because she was born in Swaziland (P5, I1, p. 1). Gogo stated *'I struggled a little bit with Afrikaans, because you know, I was not good in Afrikaans, so I struggled for two, three years'* (P3, I1, p. 7). Moeketsi had *'done Afrikaans until Matric'* (P2, I2, p. 13). Lazarus, who had to speak Afrikaans when he worked in a butchery, expressed the opinion that *'dit is 'n goeie taal Afrikaans. Maar baie mense sê nee'*¹⁹ (P4, I3, p. 17). It appeared as if some of the participants had been motivated to become teachers in order to be able to oppose the ideas and convictions that supported political marginalisation. In this regard Moeketsi remarked that *'for [an] African child, education is the most important thing, and to give them that education'* (P2, I1, p. 1). Gogo shared the same vision, which was clear when she stated *'I just want to see a change, I just want to empower those young kids'* (P3, I1, p. 3).

¹⁹ Translation: 'It is a good language, Afrikaans. But many people say no'.

4.3.3 CATEGORY C: CHILDHOOD ADVERSITY IN THE MACROSYSTEM: *ENTRENCHED CULTURAL TRADITIONS*

Cultural traditions contributed to the stress that some participants experienced early in their lives. Emma recalled how her grandparents were against education: *‘it seems as if our grandparents were not happy about us when we were going to school they used to say no-no you will suffer until the rest of your life, why can’t you leave school and go to work...Jaaa, they say: “Why are you struggling to educate the girls, you know they are going to get married”’* (P1, I1, p. 3). Gogo shared this experience: *‘when I was doing Standard 5, my father didn’t want me to continue he wanted me to get married’* (P3, I1, p. 5; and referred to in P3, MB, p. 3). She subsequently ran away because her father did not want to discuss other options (P3, MB, p. 3).

Lazarus also did not seem to get along with his father because of *‘that old idea that if you are elder, if you are don’t have to question some of the ideas of him’* (P4, I2, p. 10). Lazarus explained: *‘because sometimes we discuss something he will just say to me I am you father, what I am saying, I am not going to change. Maybe when I try to reason he was telling me, no now you are disrespecting me’* (P4, I2, p. 10). Moeketsi mentioned that his father was *‘a very, very angry man’* (P2, I2, p. 5). In line with this view Susan described her father as a *‘disciplinarian’* (P5, MB, p. 1).

4.4 SUBTHEME 1.2: CURRENT ADVERSITY FACED BY RURAL TEACHERS

‘I can’t,’ said the sunbeam, ‘I’m not strong enough to reach down the crevice.’

Subtheme 1.2 includes three categories. In Category D, which emphasises the adversity faced by the rural teachers in the mesosystem, I identified the following two subcategories: teaching in a remote, resourced-constrained rural school and the demotivated learners in a rural school. Category E emphasises the adversity faced by the teachers in the exosystem. I outline two subcategories: the low morale of teachers in the broader teacher corps and the unstable South African (SA) education system. The third category highlights the adversity faced by teachers in the macrosystem (Category F) and consists of one subcategory that deals with the undermined teaching profession.

4.4.1 CATEGORY D: TEACHER ADVERSITY IN THE MESOSYSTEM

I found that teaching in a remote, resourced-constrained rural school and the demotivated learners in a rural school contribute to current adversity faced by rural teachers.

a. **Subcategory D1: *Teaching in a remote, resource-constrained school***

Participants experienced teaching in a resource-constrained rural school as a risk factor. Emma described the area in which the school was situated as rural, and referred mostly to orphaned children who came to school hungry: *'look at this rural area, here there are lots of orphans'* (P1, I1, p. 8). Moeketsi confirmed that the school was *'remote and underdeveloped'* (P2, I1, p. 5; P2, I3, p. 9). He qualified his observation by explaining how *'the learners here are not that much exposed, they just hear about Olympics...it is a big challenge...because when you look at the Olympics, all sport is equal [unlike here where] all of them can play one sport, soccer or whatever [but no variety], you see, you must have variety'* (P2, I1, p. 5). Moeketsi further explained that the reason for the lack of variety was that *'there are no equipment'* (P2, I1, p. 6). He remarked that Model C schools²⁰ in urban areas *'are fully equipped...they [have] supporting staff and learners don't have to clean the classroom for themselves, you see they focus only on their studies'* (P2, I3, p. 10). Moeketsi concluded that teaching in rural areas is more difficult because *'learners have to do everything and travel far to come to school...you see learners are from the background where parents are not working'* (P2, I3, p. 10). Gogo agreed, saying: *'you know it's very far, you know they [the department] are so scared, the road it's gravel'* (P3, I3, p.10). She gave the following example: *'You know, it's three years ago the wind blew away the roof, even today they [the department] never came to fix it'* (P3, I3, p. 10). Gogo went on to explain: *'when you go to the learners' toilets there, it's a shame. We recorded this and according to my understanding the Department of Education should renovate the classes every five years. But I came here in 2002 to 2013. And they were never here'* (P3, I3, p. 11).

Lazarus confirmed that the school is *'a deep rural school'* (P4, I1, p. 3), but his explanation was different: *'If I want to get a simple newspaper, I must travel from here to settlement...in other words, you must have R40 in your pocket if you want to buy a newspaper'* (P4, I1, p. 3). Susan echoed Lazarus' concern about obtaining newspapers: *'yo, and no newspaper'* (P5, I1, p. 8). Gogo agreed, saying that *'facilities are not found here. The shops are very far, it's thirty-two kilometres away from here'* (P3, I3, p. 10). Lazarus further explained that there are not enough textbooks for the learners, *'you don't have projectors'* (P4, I2, p. 20) and the school has *'no resources'* (P4, I1, p. 3). In her memory book, Gogo wrote that she experienced that lack of resources as a barrier to effective teaching (P3, MB, p. 4). Susan recalled an incident that made her aware of the scarcity of resources: *'When I discovered these learners do not have the sets of televisions, they were supposed to do homework, then the following day I asked and they did not do their work, and I asked them why? [they said] "Mam I was refused, they did not want me to go to so and so... "[I said] "For what?" ...[They said] "So that I can get*

²⁰ Schools that choose to receive a government subsidy as well as levy fees to make up the rest of their budget costs (Soudien, 2012).

the information from the television” ...then I was suffering...[I said] “You don’t have a television at your home? “He said, “No, we don’t”, ...then I asked “How many of you have a television at home? “Only a few learners, two or three out of 40.I think it was last year, yo, I was surprised’ (P5, I1, p. 8). Emma also described how certain learners suffered. She mentioned one specific boy who ‘didn’t have the school uniform, he didn’t have the shoes, he used to wear the torn shirts’ (P1, I1, p. 8).

Apart from the school being resource constrained, the surrounding community is poor and lacks basic resources. I reflected in my field notes: *‘Here we are, on the school grounds, there is no soccer field, no grass, the toilets of the staff are bad and the kid’s bathroom even worse. There is no chalk – you have to get your own, the library books is outdated, the computer centre not functional, classrooms are overcrowded – there is not enough desks or chairs, roofs are broken, electricity sockets have been vandalised, some doors are broken, there is no tearoom with coffee and tea, no tuck-shop, and the nearest town is 32kms away’ (Field notes, 13 August 2011), ‘From the previous visit, I noticed no newspaper headings are visible in the rural areas – nothing, not one!’ (Field notes, 1 May 2012), and ‘Sometimes, during a journey to the school, I would notice no car or other form of transportation for 10 to 15kms on end. Today was no exception’ (Field notes, 14 September 2012).*

Participants indicated that because the school is located in a rural community, parents are mostly illiterate, which places greater responsibility and therefore significant stress on the teachers. Gogo remarked that *‘in rural areas the parents are not educated’ (P3, I1, p, 11) and ‘most of the time you are working with the people who are very poor’ (P3, I3, p. 5). Emma also pointed out that ‘most of the parents here, they are illiterate’ (P1, I1, p. 8; and referred to in P1, MB, p. 1). Moeketsi agreed, saying ‘this is a rural school [because] it is a farmland and a chief-dominated land...[and]...learners are from the background where parents are not working’ (P2, I3, pp. 9-10). According to Gogo, ‘there are still a lot of cattle found here, and they [the community members] depend on agriculture...most people around here are illiterate. To me it’s very rural’ (P3, I3, p. 10). Susan recollected how shocked she was when ‘one other day when I was visiting a family, I asked for a toilet, they use the bucket system, and when I went there I saw a heap of textbooks they are helping themselves with, I was shocked, I was surprised’ (P5, I1, p. 4). As mentioned before Susan was also surprised to learn that most of the learners in her classroom did not have television sets at home. She said, ‘it becomes very difficult because you know, if you’ve got a television, it means at home you educate’ (P5, I1, p. 8). Another problem that Susan identified is ‘no newspaper, you have to bring a newspaper from that side, these learners, they do not have access to newspapers’ (P5, I1, p. 8).*

b. Subcategory D2: Demotivated learners in a rural school

Participants regarded the fact that learners at the rural school were demotivated as a risk factor. During my observations I noticed that some learners often refrained from participating in school activities: *'I wonder why the kids are walking around so much. There is a group of boys sitting between the school building and the toilets – almost feel scared to walk past them ... they look unmotivated and almost untouchable'* (Field notes, 13 Augustus 2011), and *'Interesting to see some of the kids not engaged in the activities that the university students prepared. I asked one of the participants about this and he said that they (the kids) are waiting their time out at school – they have reached the age but they are not strong and not motivated to finish school. They have been condoned too much'* (Field notes, 4 May 2012). Emma described her frustration with the lack of motivation among the learners in her classroom: *'only three can submit their homework, what is that that we are going to assess? This is what makes our work to be difficult...nothing motivates them'* (P1, I1, p. 6; and referred to in P1, MB, p. 1). Emma noticed that learners were *'lazy'* and *'bunking classes'* (P1, I2, p. 2). Moeketsi explained that *'they were not committed, you see'* (P2, I1, p. 2), which resulted in them *'under performing'* (P2, I1, p. 2) and consequently having to do supplementary tests to pass (P2, I1, p. 2). He reasoned that *'if they can improve the conditions, of service, in terms of salaries, I think most learners will be motivated'* (P2, I1, p. 7).

Gogo also referred to demotivated learners: *'you will find the learners, whose parents can afford, can do everything, you know, they are unmotivated'* (P3, I1, p. 11) and pointed out that some were *'misbehaving'* (P3, I2, p. 4). Susan expressed the opinion that learners may have become demotivated because they are constantly made aware of their rights, and not often enough of their responsibilities, stating *'sometimes it is very difficult to teach learners who have got rights'* (P5, I1, p. 5). Emma echoed this when she said, *'it seems as if we consider the rights without the responsibilities'* (P1, I1, p. 11; and referred to in P1, MB, p. 1). Moeketsi expressed his concern as follows: *'[what] keeps me worried most of the time is, as a country in terms of education, we haven't achieved that much, [and] that is the most challenging [thing], because you go out there, and there are still kids, loiters and sleeping in the streets, you see, though they are supposed to go to school, they are supposed to be in class'* (P2, I1, p. 9). Susan showed equal concern, saying *'but now our learners, you give them work to do at home, they just come and repeat the papers of that one, it is not very effective'* (P5, I1, p. 5), to which she added that learners were *'struggling...needs attention...needs care [and] needs motivation'* (P5, I1, p. 9). Susan referred to learners who had passed through the system, and how *'it becomes very painful, [when] you walk across the street, you will find your former learner is working, digging somewhere, they are working next to the road, it becomes very painful, because that is not where I want them to be'* (P5, I1, p. 10).

4.4.2 CATEGORY E: TEACHER ADVERSITY IN EXOSYSTEM

My findings suggest that rural teachers facing the low morale of teachers in the broader teacher corps and the unstable South African (SA) education system, experience these as adversity.

a. Subcategory E1: *Low morale of teachers in the broader teacher corps*

Another risk factor that participants consistently referred to was the low morale of people in the teaching profession. Moeketsi's opinion was that *'people who are sitting there and confuse themselves, I don't think they are contributing [to the country]'* (P2, I1, p. 8). He described those colleagues as *'unhappy'* (P2, I1, p. 9), *'confused'* (P2, I1, p. 9) and *'discouraged'* (P2, I1, p. 9) and stated that such attitudes *'does not help'* (P2, I1, p. 9). Gogo felt that the teachers in the system *'don't have plans...like even if you just give them the plan, they don't use it...those that are not doing it correctly, you know what is happening, they delay everything...they stress the system'* (P3, I1, p.9). She added: *'I was born long, long, long ago...I can use the computer...I can email...others young, young, young educators they cannot do that'* (P3, I2, p. 19). Susan remarked that teachers feel disempowered because *'the government the way it is done, it is made it difficult for educators'* (P5, I1, p. 5). I witnessed the same negative attitude among various teachers in the field: *'I recalled a conversation earlier this week before we left for the research field where a teacher was telling me that teaching has been the worst decision of his life. He is tired, angry and helpless. He lost his passion. He thinks that people who stay in teaching are out of their minds. He is fed up with the constant change; he has had hope for many years, believing that the next year will be better. But now with talk of yet another curriculum change coming he has given up. He started to hate children.'* (Field notes, 13 August 2011).

Emma expressed her dismay with negative teachers, saying *'if you started to see that mmm-mm, this career does not suit me anymore, why can't you study so that you can opt for other career? Rather than criticizing it? If something does not suit you, just leave it like this, don't criticize it, once you started to criticize it, open your mouth, you must know that you are killing the nation'* (P1, I1, p.11), and *'even now a lot of teachers, they are doing nothing with their qualifications'* (P1, I1, p. 5). Emma commented that many teachers waste their hard-earned money, degrading the profession even further: *'we get this money, we go to the beer-hole, we drink'* (P1, I1, p. 9) and *'your salary is your secret, but it seems, to many of teachers is no way secret...right now, we go to the tavern, you meet teachers and learners in there doing the same thing, you meet teachers and learners fighting for a girlfriend, you can see the learner loving the teacher, this is where we started to lose our dignity as teachers'* (P1, I1, pp. 10-11). Emma further explained that teachers' actions are sending the wrong message and warned

that *'we must change our behaviour as teachers and I know it is hard, especially [in] this organisation (referring to teaching), [because we constantly hear] there's no room teachers this, there's no room teachers that...'* (P1, I1, p. 11).

b. Subcategory E2: *The unstable South African education system*

All the participants perceived the unstable education system in South Africa as a risk factor. In addition to financial constraints (referred to later), four of the five participants had to wait up to eight years after they qualified before they were employed as teachers. Not being able to work as a teacher after all the strain to obtain a qualification was extremely disheartening, according to Emma, who relived the pain: *'We are not going to allow a thousand students in this field of being teachers. Twelve years. And then my dream shatters. I just say, okay I am back to square one...I was confused and I said to myself, he-he. I was born to suffer. Even if I try so hard, there is nothing which waits/works for me'* (P1, I1, p. 5). Lazarus also related how, after qualifying as a teacher, *'there were no jobs available for teaching'* (P4, I1, p. 1) and *'after completing my studies I was at home'* (P4, I2, p. 13). He eventually found employment in a butcher's shop, where he worked for eight years. Susan had a similar experience: *'Oh, it was a big challenge! It took me 6 or 7 years to be employed; it was very, very difficult'* (P5, I1, p. 2; and referred to in P5, MB, p. 6). Moeketsi added that he could not be employed as a teacher because *'at that time teaching was having lot of problems, of redeployment, restructuring, you see so there were lot of challenges'* (P2, I2, p. 14). Moeketsi further explained that *'the department did not research, in terms of making sure they have this number of teachers, they confused redeployment, teachers need to be removed from this place to that school, it was all confusion, but they never had a plan'* (P2, I1, p. 7). Emma argued that although money was available for studying to become a teacher, the problem was *'the strategic management [because] they did not do their task very well'* (P1, I1; p. 5). As a result there were too many teachers in certain fields. Susan also struggled to secure employment as a teacher and recalled that *'everything was at a standstill, educators were not employed, it was during that time where there were no vacancies, no posts, it was very very difficult'* (P5, I1, p. 2). Susan was still confused as she reflected: *'That is why we have been asking ourselves, where was this shortage at that time? Because you know, there were no vacancies, no posts, so I don't know, I don't know what was happening, up to now, I still ask myself, was it because of the government at that time, the guy who was in charge of the Education Department, he couldn't do this thing, I don't know, I keep on asking myself this question, because after that there were many jobs, posts'* (P5, I1, p. 8).

After struggling for years to find employment in the teaching profession, participants reflected on various sources of frustration with regard to their profession and employer. They explained how the unstable working conditions in the teaching profession contributed to their distress.

Susan remembered how she and the principal struggled to get approval for her appointment: *'The educator left the school, the principal said, oh, thank you God, now there is a post, he asked me to bring all my qualifications, but suddenly there was no post now, and he didn't know, he couldn't contract me in that one'* (P5, I1, p. 3). Emma explained how she was frustrated with the instability of the systems: *'... and then we started with the Adult Centres, 2001, they opened up a centre at my place, and then I went there, for a period of a year and then they say eeh, they don't want Adult Centres what, what, what...I was discouraged, and then 2003 they re-opened the Adult Centres again'* (P1, I1, p. 5). To explain the instability, Moeketsi said: *'they will get a replacement'* (P2, I2, p. 20), explaining how he could easily be transferred to another school or province because the schools in the rural areas are used to teachers relocating often. Moeketsi also alluded to the issue of too many temporary appointments in teaching, referring to several positions as *'it was a temporary one'* (P2, I2, p. 17). His relief was apparent when he told me that, after three years, *'I got permanent this year'* (P2, I2, p. 18).

Emma talked about how the varying expectations of her macro-employer, the Department of Basic Education (DBE), hinder her ability to do quality work in her classroom: *'And the other thing that I am talking about are our Department of Education, I think they are interested in the quantity of work rather than the quality. Why am I saying so? The quantity of assessment standards, sometimes you will find that they need forty assessment (s) ... commanding [it], ...how can I satisfy them whereas I know that learner's interest comes first ... My aim is to give the learners a quality education rather than the quantity of work. Yes I can give them eighty class works and home works, of which at the end of the day when you ask them about what they have studied or read, they've got nothing on their mind'* (P1, I2, p. 3). She reiterated this sentiment in her writings, where she referred to the challenge of the expectation of quantity assessments at the expense of quality assessments (P1, MB, p. 1). Gogo explained how constant change places pressure on teachers: *'When you are talking about change, you remind me when this OBE started. When the OBE started all of us were so confused. What is this? How are we got to be able to use it? You know. So NCS came in to again, and today it is CAPS'* (P3, I2, p. 19). Susan, equally concerned, explained that *'the only thing that I have noticed they keep on introducing new things...there is always a change, always a change, and in June we will be going for workshops, for another change!'* (P5, I1, p. 7). Lazarus felt that the cause of his change-fatigue was being expected to present new subjects every year and emphasised that *'once they give you new subject, you start from the beginning...it's like you're a first-year teacher again...'* (P4, I2, p. 25).

The participants made it clear that despite the fact that they were suffering from change-fatigue, they were not expecting any support from the DBE in the foreseeable future. Lazarus explained: *'The reason we got the Curriculum Advisor to visit you is to develop, so if I don't, ja,*

don't get visit from my Curriculum Advisor I am not developing...' (P4, I2, p. 26). Susan agreed: *'You cannot say that you have trained an educator for 14 days, isn't it that we go to college for three to four years, so now for 14 days, you expect that the educator is trained on something that she is supposed to be trained for three years'* (P5, I1, p. 7). Furthermore, she added, *'there is too much work, in this education system, more focus is on paper work, than with the learners, there is no ample time spent with the learners'* (P5, I1, p. 7). Referring to her role as manager at the school, Gogo said: *'My biggest challenge is the overwhelming work ... being a manager ... I can see that there is a lot of work to do, you know'* (P3, I1, p. 9). In her writings she also mentioned the political demands in education as a risk factor (P3, MB, p. 4).

The incredible load that teachers carry seemingly caused feelings of being overworked and under appreciated. As a result, they would feel disconnect from their employer, the Department of Basic Education. According to Moeketsi, *'our government, they are not listening, they don't get it...it is very sad...I think by 10 years this government has not come with a clear plan how are they manage, motivate'* (P2, I1, p. 7). With reference to the recent changes in the curriculum he commented that *'maybe they have realized it [OBE and NCS] does not work'* (P2, I1, p. 4). Gogo recalled how, after years of communication to prove that she was being underpaid, *'they didn't even want to acknowledge it...and correct the error'* (P3, I1, p. 2). She also referred to her confusion when the DBE wanted the teachers to enrol for courses at universities and *'they didn't explain to us'* (P3, I1, p. 8).

Lazarus said that since he had started teaching a new subject the curriculum advisors had only visited once (P4, I1, p. 4). He shared his frustration when he said, *'seriously, we need to be developed. I understand that if they visit us we can be developed'* (P4, I2, p. 26). Susan remarked *'they [referring to the DBE] are making things difficult for us'* (P5, I1, p. 5). Emma expressed her dismay with the DBE, saying *'they were supposed to guide us'* but instead *'allow (ed) a thousand students in this field of being teachers'*, with the result that *'after completing my studies I stayed 12 years being unemployed'* (P1, I1, p. 5). In the light of the above, the participants believed that poor management by their macro-employers constituted a significant risk. Moeketsi characterised the authorities as *'misusing money'* (P2, I1, p. 9), being *'corrupt'* (P2, I1, p. 9) and *'not doing anything'* (P2, I1, p. 9). Adding to this, Gogo said: *'It is just that they see that if they can just prop in so quickly, things can be a mess'* (P3, I2, p. 8). Susan explained how she was subjected to *'nepotism'* (P5, I1, p. 1) because *'you will go for the interview, you will hear people say you were very good, but then unfortunately...'* (P5, I1, p. 2) the post had been promised to another. Susan also mentioned that after having taught in Swaziland for two years, she returned to South Africa just to find that *'still it (employment of teachers) was at a standstill'* (P5, I1, p. 2). Emma felt that *'the strategic management did not do their task very well'* (P1, I1, p. 5), while both Lazarus (P4, I1, p. 21) and Gogo (P3, MB, p. 4) referred to *'overcrowded'* classrooms as evidence of poor management.

4.4.3 CATEGORY F: TEACHER ADVERSITY IN THE MACROSYSTEM: *AN UNDERMINED TEACHING PROFESSION*

A major challenge experienced by four of the five participants was their belief that teachers in South Africa are being undermined by their fellow citizens. According to the participants, the continuous societal scrutiny under which teachers live adds to their feelings of vulnerability: *'On every lamp pole there are negative messages – especially about the government and education and politics. This made me aware of what is happening in my own suburb. I started to think about the gossip and bad news displayed on the poles I drive by on my way to work. By the time I reach work I am so sad and distraught about what my eye caught in the passing I cannot feel better for the rest of the day. I feel negative about teachers, I feel irritated with the teacher students and I hate education – because everybody hates education – even the words on the lamp poles are painting a glooming picture, learners failing, educators striking, ministers stealing, money wasted, curricula condemned....no wonder the teachers in the city are feeling the pressures, I think'* (Field notes, 1 May 2012). In this regard Moeketsi remarked that *'this is the most undermined profession'* (P2, I1, p. 7), and that *'teachers deserve better'* (P2, I1, p. 7). To clarify his remark, Moeketsi explained that *'the challenge is this perception, that teachers are the most underpaid, you see, it is a wrong perception'* (P2, I1, p. 7). To illustrate how the profession is being undermined, Susan referred to how their school had been subject to *'vandalism'* (P5, I1, p. 9) by *'the kids, the community, there was a case where the principal says it was members of the community'* (P5, I1, p. 9). Emma added that *'right now people are undermining our profession, even learners they are saying teachers they are poor'* (P1, I1, p. 10) and expressed her concern about the future of teachers, saying *'do you think after 20 years we will be having teachers?'* (P1, I1, p. 1). In her writings, she explained that society today lacks respect for teachers (P1, MB, p. 1). Moeketsi, Emma and Lazarus reflected on how the teaching profession had seemed different during their childhood. Moeketsi fondly remembered the good advice he had received from his teachers: *'One advice that I got from my teachers was to say, the best method of fighting the system is to get, get inside the system'* (P2, I2; p. 5). Lazarus added: *'I was looking up at my teachers'* (P4, I2, p. 2). Emma also remembered that *'when we see our teacher we used to respect them, they were dignified, we used to respect them, even when you were absent from school yourself, and then by mistake, you saw your teacher, you will try to hide yourself'* (P1, I1, p. 10).

4.5 SUBTHEME 1.3: CHRONIC ADVERSITY RURAL TEACHERS FACED OVER THEIR LIFE SPAN (PAST AND CURRENT)

The mountaintop was still covered with snow.

Subtheme 1.3 consists of two categories. Category G deals with the chronic adversity faced by rural teachers in the *microsystem* during both childhood and adulthood. I discovered

significant personal hardships as a subcategory. Category F describes the chronic adversity faced by rural teachers in the *exosystem* over their life-span (both childhood and adulthood). Poverty and subsequent financial constraints will be dealt with as a subcategory.

4.5.1 CATEGORY G: CHRONIC ADVERSITY IN THE MICROSYSTEM: **SIGNIFICANT PERSONAL HARDSHIP**

It seems that participants faced significant stress in their personal lives. Emma became ill during her school years: *'I become ill towards the end of the year when we were supposed to write the final exam, in Standard 5, and I stayed home for 2 months...and then the following year I did not go to school because I wasn't well. I stayed home for a long time'* (P1, I1, p. 4). Lazarus reflected on his troubled life at school, filled with emotional turmoil that ended up in an assault charge in Standard 9: *'In fact, I was arrested, I was in jail for two days'* (P4, I2, p. 14). Lazarus had a troubled relationship with his father and recalled questioning his father's paternity by asking *'is the guy my real father, he is a bad one'* (P4, I2, p. 9). As a child, Gogo also had a troubled relationship with her abusive father and related how she and her sister hid from him: *'So we used to run away every day, you know staying in bush, waiting for him to sleep'* (P3, I2, p. 2). She added: *'It was very terrible because my father was abusive, very abusive'* (P3, I2, p. 2) and *'I ran away and went to my mom, only to find that my father was so angry, was so angry, he came to collect me, he said he wanted to kill me'* (P3, I1, p. 6; and referred to in P3, MB, p. 3).

Gogo shared how she *'didn't even have the Grade 12 certificate...I was doing it alone; there was no teacher, no one to help me'* (P3, I1, p. 7). During her student years *'the problem was money...I was supposed to survive for the whole year with sixty rand... I manage to buy soap...It took me one and a half to two months. Then after that I did not have money. And my mum by that time was not working, remember they were separated, yes, my father was working but staying with another woman. So it was very difficult for me'* (P3, I3, p. 6). Gogo related that she had applied for many fields of study because *'now by that time job was really scarce'* (P3, I3, p. 5). She was still facing financial problems, because *'there is no-one who gives me support'* (P3, I2, p. 5). Gogo also related: *'I lost my mom, I thought you know, let me just hang it a bit then I will just continue, ja, but I think the stress that I have by that time, my son was now at the university, I had to pay for him because I was a single mom, yes, so from there, I think now two thousand and...hey, when that I enrol...whether it was 2009 I don't know, yes, 2009 I enrolled with the Open Learning, ja, and I wanted to do my BEd, everything has been paid, the problem, every time when I am supposed to study, when I am supposed to go and write my exam, I got ill, yes, I left that, I didn't even write'* (P3, I1, p. 7). Gogo talked about the sad experience of losing her sister's daughter to malnutrition and recalled that distressing time (P3, Ph3) (refer to Photograph 4.4). Gogo was reminded of the significant

personal hardship she faced when she chose a picture of the malnourished child on her memory box.



Photograph 4.4:
 Reminder of death of sister's daughter
 (Gogo, P3, Ph3)

Moeketsi shared how he was subjected to *'maltreatment'* (P2, I2, p. 5) and how he was *'beaten'* (P2, I2, p. 5) as a child. He also remembered how his siblings bullied him: *'I grew up with brothers and sisters abusing us...'* (P2, I1, p. 3). As an adult he struggled during the apartheid years: *'will despair, you see all those sufferings you see, we will be arrested you see...I was arrested by the police'* (P2, I2, p. 12). He said that his children currently live very far away, saying *'they are in the Free State'* (P2, I2, p. 19). Susan recollected that as children *'we didn't have a stable home, we were moving from one place to another'* (P5, I2, p. 2). She found it stressful to be attending a boarding school while her mother struggled financially: *'She [her mother] really struggled when now, coming to pay all my fees, she had to go to money sharks where she used to borrow money'* (P5, I3, p. 2). Susan described this difficult time in her writings, adding that *'most of us (brothers and sisters) were not employed by then'* (P5, MB, p. 6). When Susan was still a learner *'there was no teacher'* and *'I was supposed to learn Business Economics on my own'* (P5, I1, p. 1). In addition, Susan's sisters who *'motivated me to become what I am today'* recently passed away and the remaining sister has been diagnosed with cancer (P5, I1, p. 6; and referred to in P5, MB, pp. 2-3; and referred to in P5, Ph1) (refer to Photograph 4.5). Susan described her suffering as a pot cooking on the stove, as indicated in Photograph 4.5.



Photograph 4.5:
 While the pot is cooking on the stove it endures suffering from the heat
 (Susan, P5, Ph1)

Emma, Susan and Moeketsi also experienced personal grief and loss because of the early death of a parent. Emma described her life after her *'strong, loving and caring'* (P1, I1, p. 2)

father had passed away as *'that's when my life started to be sour'* (P1, I1, p. 2). Likewise, Susan recalled how tough it was when her father passed away: *'then my father died in 1977, leaving seven children behind, I was doing Grade 8 and the last born was only seven months old. After the death of my father things changed, we faced a lot of difficulties. We were forcefully removed from that best house...'* (P5, I2, p. 2). Susan described this sad event in her writings (P5, MB, pp. 5-6). She mentioned her mother's incredible financial difficulties, *'especially when coming to paying school fees for all eight kids...after his [Susan's father] death'* (P5, I3, p. 2). Moeketsi recalled with fondness how his father, after retirement, visited the school he attended to bring him food and was sad *'when he passed away [because] I was still in Grade 9'* (P2, I2, p. 7).

Lazarus seemed to be the only participant in this cohort that experienced peer pressure as a significant personal risk factor in his early teens. He recalled how mixing with bad friends caused him to become rebellious, fail matric and develop an addiction to dagga. He said, *'I can say it was because of bad friends, because once you have bad friends, it's obvious you going to do bad things. If your friends are smoking, you will do the same'* (P4, I2, p. 7).

4.5.2 CATEGORY H: CHRONIC ADVERSITY IN THE EXOSYSTEM: POVERTY AND SUBSEQUENT FINANCIAL CONSTRAINTS

A major risk factor that influenced the participants' lives was the effect poverty and the accompanying financial constraints had on them while they were growing up and later in adulthood. Emma remembered how she *'used to go to school with bare foot, without pocket money'* (P1, I1, p. 2). Moeketsi said that *'being poor, being from the poor family, actually disadvantaged me a lot'* (P2, I2, p. 2). Gogo said that at school *'I didn't have the textbooks, because I could not afford them'* (P3, I1, p. 11). Later in life, Gogo could not realise her dream of becoming a lawyer or a social worker *'because of financial constraints, you know you are not able to achieve your goal'* (P3, I2, p. 4). Gogo could also not complete her final school years *'because long ago you had to have money so that you register for the, an exam and all this stuff, buying yourself you know...Ja, ja, so I did not manage to do my Grade 11 and 12, that is Standard 9 and 10, I did not do that, so that was very painful for me'* (P3, I2, p. 11).

Lazarus shared his dream of one day driving a new car, which implied that money was not that readily available: *'I look at these men, they driving beautiful cars...maybe they being paid good salaries...if one day I can become a mine worker, I'm going to be able to buy my own car'* (P4, I2, p. 6). Susan recalled how her family struggled to make ends meet after her father's death and said, *'we were able to get another house, a smaller one this time with no electricity. She [referring to her mother] was not earning enough'* (P5, I2, p. 2).

All the participants emphasised that financial constraints during their student years, and later as working teachers, contributed to their stress levels. Moeketsi stated: *'While you are studying, you are told that the bursary is no more sustainable, they cannot give you funds...it was difficult because, you see challenges, lack of resources, you see lack of bursaries'* (P2, I2, p. 10). After qualifying, he said, *'I came, I stayed for more than one year, six months, you see, you see that...without getting paid...you see the frustration, stress, depression'* (P2, I2, p. 14). Gogo *'worked for 8 months without a salary'* (P3, I1, p. 2), and Susan *'for a year, no salary...'* (P5, I1, p. 2). Susan remarked that before becoming a teacher, *'I couldn't afford to go to university because of funds'* (P5, I2, p. 2; and referred to in P5, MB, p. 6). Moeketsi tried to make sense of this desperate situation as he reflected that *'they [referring to the government] never had a plan, a mechanism, how are they going to do it, that's why it took them more than two years to sort out the teacher's pay, you see, the issue is that they did not have a plan'* (P2, I1, p. 7). Apart from not being paid, it seemed that the little they did get was not enough, according to Lazarus, who remarked that there was *'a lot of strain, because you know, teaching, we are not paid that much'* (P4, I1, p. 3) and *'the salary is not that good'* (P4, I2, p. 20). Emma stated: *'I am earning peanuts'* (P1, I1, p. 6) and *'because I stayed for long time without working [as a teacher] – can you see – I am still having in lots of gaps that I need to fill'* (P1, I1, p. 6).

4.6 THEME 2: THE INTERNAL PROTECTIVE RESOURCES RURAL TEACHERS USE OVER TIME

It was weather to freeze it to pieces, but it was stronger than anyone knew.

4.6.1 INTRODUCTION

Participants experienced personal positive emotions, cognitions and values that they identified retrospectively as protective resources. Some insightful reflections by the participants are highlighted below:

..... why should we say for each and every little thing that we do we need to be paid? Think about the poor old man, he stayed there for 27 years, no one was paying him, because he wanted us to live a better life, so why can't we do the same?

Emma (P1), Interview 1 (I1), p. 9

How many children have left school because of the conditions, during apartheid...I must persevere...That has driven me, and one day we will overcome, we will have a system where all this things, will be the past.

Moeketsi (P2), Interview 2 (I2), p. 3

*... for me each and every day I am educating the nation, I just want to see a change,
I just want to empower those young kids, and say: do whatever you do,
for me I just want to you to be more than what I am ...*
Gogo (P3), Interview 1 (I1), p. 3

*... for me to be a teacher is not about the money, I wanted to help...I mean, I want to,
I wanted to help our country in which way, in other words,
I want to help these learners to be something in future ...*
Lazarus (P4), Interview 1 (I1), p. 3

*... when change comes you must be flexible, (laughing) you must also change, you must not be
rigid, otherwise you will be frustrated, (laughing)...*
Susan (P5), Interview 1 (I1), p. 7

The participants shared a few common traits and attitudes that acted as internal protective resources. In Theme 2, I present the internal protective resources that have helped teachers to adapt to adversity throughout their lives. A summary of Theme 2 is presented in Table 4.3. Subtheme 2.1 contains a discussion of enduring internal protective resources that strengthened the participants during both childhood and adulthood. I categorised these internal protective resources into five categories: emotional aptitude (Category I), critical inquiry (Category J), values (Category K), a positive attitude (Category L) and spirituality (Category M). I divided these categories into subcategories: emotional aptitude requires empathy and intrinsic motivation; Critical inquiry includes not accepting the status quo and the will to learn. In Category K (values) I discovered three subcategories (dignity; sense of accomplishment; and persistence in and dedication to education). Under positive attitude (Category L), I discuss three subcategories (active engagement; positive adaptation; and future plans and dreams). The last category (Category M) as internal protective resource is spirituality.

Table 4.3: Summary of results for Theme 2

Theme 2: The internal protective resources rural teachers use over time												
Subtheme	Categories	Subcategories	Indicators for			Data source (s)						
			Inclusion Protective resource (PR) data	Exclusion External Protective resource data (Theme 3)		I1	I2	I3	MB	Ph	FN	
2.1 Enduring internal protective resources rural teachers use over their life span for resilience (past and current)	I Emotional aptitude	I1 Empathy	PR data related to enduring empathy	PR data related to enduring intrinsic motivation		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
					P	1, 5	2, 3, 4	3, 5	1	3, 5		
		I2 Intrinsic motivation	PR data related to enduring intrinsic motivation	PR data related to enduring empathy		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
					P	1, 3, 4, 5	2, 3, 4	5	3, 5	5		
		J Critical inquiry	J1 Not accepting the status quo	PR data related to an enduring probing of the status quo	PR data related to an enduring will to learn or agency in problem solving		✓	✓		✓	✓	
						P	2, 3, 5	1, 2, 4		5	1, 3, 4	
			J2 The will to learn	PR data related to an enduring will to learn	PR data related to an enduring probing of the status quo or agency in problem solving		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
						P	1, 2, 3, 5	2, 3, 4, 5	4	5	1, 3, 4	
		K Values	K1 Dignity	PR data related to enduring dignity	PR data related to a sense of accomplishment and dedication to education		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
						P	1, 3, 4	2, 4	3	1, 5		
			K2 Sense of accomplishment	PR data related to an enduring sense of accomplishment	PR data related to dignity and dedication to education		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
						P	1, 3, 5	2, 3, 4, 5	5	3, 5	3, 4	
		K3 Commitment to education	PR data related to commitment to education that lasted a life time	PR data related to an enduring sense of accomplishment as well as dignity		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
					P	1, 2, 3	2, 3, 4	4	1	3		
	L Positive attitude	L1 Active engagement	PR data related to a lasting attitude of active engagement	PR data related to positive adaptation and future plans		✓	✓	✓		✓		
							P	1, 3, 5	2, 3, 4	5		2, 5

Theme 2: The internal protective resources rural teachers use over time											
Subtheme	Categories	Subcategories	Indicators for			Data source (s)					
			Inclusion Protective resource (PR) data	Exclusion External Protective resource data (Theme 3)		I1	I2	I3	MB	Ph	FN
		L2 Positive adaptation	PR data related to a never-ending attitude of positive adaptation	PR data related to active engagement and future plans		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
					P	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	2, 3, 4	5	3, 5	3, 4, 5	
		L3 Future plans and dreams	PR data related to an enduring future outlook	PR data related to active engagement and positive adaptation		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
				P	3, 4, 5	1, 2, 3, 4	4	1			
	M Spirituality	Religious outlook	PR data related to an enduring religious outlook	PR data related to the belief that teaching becomes a calling		✓	✓		✓	✓	
				P	1, 5	1, 2		5	3, 5		
2.2 Current internal protective resources rural teachers use for resilience	N Critical inquiry	Agency in problem solving	PR data related to agency in problem solving	PR data related to the status quo or the will to learn		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
					P	1, 2, 3, 5	4	2	3, 5	1	
	O Values	O1 Responsibility for educating children	PR data related to taking responsibility to teach children	PR data related to the belief in the power of education		✓	✓		✓	✓	
					P	1, 2, 3, 5	2		1, 3	5	
		O2 Belief in power of education	PR data related to the belief in the power of education	PR data related to taking responsibility to teach children		✓	✓		✓	✓	
				P	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	1, 3		3	3		
	P Positive attitude	Positive reflexive practice	PR data related to an attitude of positive reflexive practice	PR data related to active engagement or future plans		✓	✓		✓	✓	
					P	2, 5	1, 3		3	1, 3	
	Q Spirituality	Belief that teaching becomes a calling	PR data related to the spiritual belief that teaching becomes a calling	PR data related to a religious outlook.		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
					P	1, 2, 3, 5	4	5	1		

Data source key
P= Participant; I = Interviews 1, 2 and 3 in the form of transcriptions; MB = Memories written in a memory book; Ph = Visual data (Photos symbolizing resilience); FN = field notes in researcher diary

4.7 SUBTHEME 2.1: ENDURING INTERNAL PROTECTIVE RESOURCES TEACHERS USE OVER THEIR LIFE SPAN FOR RESILIENCE (PAST AND CURRENT)

The aloe raised its head and unfolded itself – a brilliant yellow glow.

Subtheme 2.1 consists of five categories. These categories include emotional aptitude (Category I), critical inquiry (Category J), values (Category K), positive attitude (Category L) and spirituality (Category M).

4.7.1 CATEGORY I: EMOTIONAL APTITUDE

In Category I the focus is on the enduring emotional aptitude of rural teachers. I identified two subcategories, namely empathy and intrinsic motivation.

a. Subcategory I1: *Empathy*

The teachers that were involved in this study all revealed the ability to show empathy for others despite their own adverse circumstances. I reflected: *‘Most women came prepared, especially participant 1 and 3. Was it just me or did some participants have empathy for me? I think some of them really wanted to take part in the study because of the study but it felt like one or two felt sorry for me...looks like it is in their nature to help and support someone – no matter what the circumstances or who the person is. I felt welcome and loved!’* (Field notes, 8 May 2012). Emma spoke of a young man that she had assisted and who became a director: *‘That boy was born in a poor family, His mother used to be a domestic worker, and by that time she was earning R250 per month, and the poor woman was having eight children, they suffered a lot. And they are my neighbours’* (P1, I1, p. 7). She explained: *‘I am easily touched if someone is suffering...I don’t feel great if I am happy and somebody is suffering’* (P1, I1, p. 8). She reiterated her feelings of compassion in her memory book where she described the importance of the pastoral role that she fulfils as a teacher (P1, MB, p. 1). Susan explained how she puts her empathy into action: *‘I am also adopting learners, for each and every grade, I have got a child here, that I take care of, last year I had one, I took him from Grade 11, no parents, and he completed Grade 12, and this year I adopted yet another (laughing)’* (P5, I1, p. 10; and referred to in P5, I3, p. 12). Susan described herself as an umbrella giving shade and shelter to others and consequently we took a picture of someone carrying an umbrella (P5, Ph2) (refer to Photograph 4.6). The umbrella signifies how she shows empathy for others.



Photograph 4.6:

An umbrella endures rain, wind and sun to protect the person carrying it
(Susan, P5, Ph2)

Gogo expressed similar feelings when she said, *'I'm very touched when I'm sad...I just want to take care...there is this touching feelings to me'* (P3, I3, p. 5). Another remark, *'the consequences for that (being an abuser), is that now he is staying alone'* (P3, I2, p. 3). She showed empathy with her abusive father saying she *'went to an extra mile I bought him a phone, so he is able to phone me every time'* (P3, I2, p. 3). Lazarus explained how he shows understanding towards the senior learners in his classroom by saying *'if in life you make mistake, it does not necessary mean you can't change'* (P4, I2, p. 19). Moeketsi also spoke with empathy when he related how, even as a school-going child, he already noticed that *'children have left school...not because they did not want education, but because they were brutally abused'* (P2, I2, p. 3). Gogo's empathy extended to others in the community: *'I said to the young lady if you do not have a space, you come and stay with me'* (P3, I2, p. 7). Gogo's empathy for others became clear when she described herself as a door to be opened by others as she is waiting on the other side to provide any kind of support to any learner or colleague (P3, Ph5) (refer to Photograph 4.7).



Photograph 4.7:

I am a door
(Gogo, P3, Ph5)

'I am a door, for any educator, any learner if they open and ask any information from me if they want to learn, let they come to me, then I will be able to help them' (P3, I2, p. 21).

b. Subcategory I2: Intrinsic motivation

People who are intrinsically motivated do not focus on externally driven rewards such as money, fame or fortune. To be intrinsically motivated means that the person's drive or inspiration to act comes from an internal emotion. The participants involved in this study appeared to be intrinsically motivated and driven people. Moeketsi shared *'that inspired me, was to say, let me prove to my family that one day I will become a valuable person in life'* (P2,

I2, p. 2). Lazarus went to college driven by the need to *'pull his life together'* (P4, I2, p. 17). However, after qualifying as a teacher he was unable to find employment: *'I could not just stay home and depending on my parents financially...so I decided to seek a job, I was employed at the butchery'* (P4, I1, p. 2). Susan felt that *'if you are just here (education) because you want to be paid, you won't survive'* (P5, I1, p. 7). She described how even as a young person she believed that *'no matter what the situation is, but if you can be determined, at the end of the day you can at least do something'* (P5, I3, p. 21). Her photographs of a cooking pot and an umbrella symbolise motivated action to help and support others (P5, Ph1 and Ph2) (refer to Photographs 4.5 and 4.7). Susan was motivated and made ends meet *'selling second-hand clothes for a living'* (P5, MB, p. 6) when she was unable to find employment as a teacher.

In her memory book, Gogo wrote: *'I wanted to be a social worker or a lawyer'* (P3, MB, p. 2), which indicated her motivation to continue her education despite her father's wishes. Gogo's motivation extended beyond the self as she declared her motivation regarding education: *'do whatever you do, for me I just want to you to be more than what I am'* (P3, I1, p. 3). She referred to how she motivated the children because she herself had been motivated as a young person to say *'despite of all this problems, I did not stop and say...I will not continue because there are problems, my parents are divorcing and what so ever challenges are there, no'* (P3, I2, p. 13). Emma's inner motivation became apparent as a young girl when her grandparents said that she and her sisters should leave school and get married. Emma recalled: *'... but it didn't bother us so much, eeh, my sister and my younger sister and me, we are like this just like a chain, even when there is no food for us to eat, still we didn't complain so much'* (P1, I1, p. 2).

4.7.2 CATEGORY J: CRITICAL INQUIRY

A person who shows critical inquiry is constantly reflecting about events and analysing the status quo to find meaning and learn from situations. I identified two subcategories under critical inquiry, namely not accepting the status quo and the will to learn.

a. Subcategory J1: *Not accepting the status quo*

Moeketsi exhibited an enquiring mind since a young age: *'It all started when I was in Grade 12...giving him [the teacher] a tough time in class interrogating him, questions in terms of the Bantu Education, why are we studying this, what is it supposed to be'* (P2, I1, p. 1). Moeketsi said *'I would ask why'* (P2, I2, p. 5). Other participants also reasoned about things they did not accept and chose to act differently, for example Gogo, who said, *'I ran away saying I want to learn'* (P3, I1, p. 6). Her probing thoughts are also represented by the picture of a computer,

which she chose to illustrate the assumption that because she was old, she would not be able keep up with technology and change (P3, Ph4) (refer to Photograph 4.8).



Photograph 4.8:
 A computer
 (Gogo, P3, Ph4)
 Sending and receiving e-mails

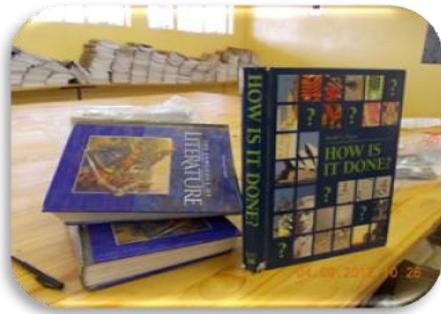
Lazarus talked about his troubled youth and how he decided to change his lifestyle: *'At the end I told myself, no let me quit this thing smoking dagga because I can see this is what contribute (s) to my fail. Then I ended up quit smoking'* (P4, I2, p. 8). He also related how later, at university, *'I said to him (a fellow student), listen, I know who I am here and I know where I come from because honestly speaking I knew that once I loss this opportunity, if I fail my first year there's no way that I will come back'* (P4, I2, p. 17). Lazarus never accepted the fact that he could not find employment and chose to obtain a different qualification (refer to Photograph 4.9) to be able to find a job saying *'then it was for me not easy to [find] the job there (Johannesburg), [and] I ended up training as a security guard'* (P4, I2, p. 14; P4, Ph2) (refer to Photograph 4.9). He represented his critical stance towards being unemployed in Photograph 4.9 – choosing to further train himself in order to be employed.



Photograph 4.9:
 Certificates (training as something other than teacher)
 (Lazarus, P4, Ph2)

Earlier Susan shared the story about how she was able to sidestep doing the mandatory school subject Afrikaans: *'then I entered business economics...that was that (laughing)'* (P5, I1, p. 1). Susan wrote about how she sold second-hand clothes when she could not find employment as a teacher in South Africa (P5, MB, p. 6). Emma used her enquiring mind to understand her learners better. *'Once I enter the classroom because I know my learners, I was able to see there is something wrong with this one and then when the bell rings I will try by all means to invite her or him to my class so that we can sit down and talk. What is bothering you? If he tries to dodge me I will say no, I know you, I can see that there is something which is bothering you...'* (P1, I2, p. 5). This is supported by her choice of a

photograph. The books on the photograph represent knowledge and illustrate her resilience (P1, Ph1) (refer to Photograph 4.10).



Photograph 4.10:
 Books represent knowledge
 (Emma, P1, Ph1)

b. Subcategory J2: *The will to learn*

Moeketsi stated that he was the kind of person that *'would want to know'* (P2, I2, p. 4), and that he had achieved success because he *'was one kind of learner who was disciplined, very disciplined'* (P2, I2, p. 4). Moeketsi, who was searching for new knowledge, was planning to do his honours degree (P2, I2, p. 18): *'I am still furthering my education'* (P2, I1, p. 3). He mentioned that he liked travelling (P2, I1, p. 2) and said, *'I want to see myself knowing what is happening at KZN, in the Western Cape, those are the only provinces and Limpopo'* (P2, I1, p. 4). Lazarus reflected, *'I was thinking, let me go to college...to get education'* (P4, I2, pp. 12-13) and continued his education despite not finding employment as a teacher (P4, Ph2) (refer to Photograph 4.9). He referred to himself as a *'lifelong learner'* (P4, I3, p. 21). Susan *'wanted to be matriculated'* (P5, I2, p. 2; and referred to in P5, MB, p. 6) after returning to South Africa. Later, at the college of education, she *'enjoyed the studying, especially when you were told how to impart the knowledge that you have to someone who doesn't know anything'* (P5, I1, p. 2). During the time of my fieldwork she was advancing herself doing *'advanced certificate courses'* (P5, I1, p. 7) through the universities.

Gogo described her determination to learn as follows: *'So at Vista University I was doing the certificate in teaching...after that I took English and Afrikaans...I specialised in Business Economics...I continued, I did the FDE (Further Diploma in Education)...I continued, after getting this diploma...I upgraded my EMS...I enrolled with a certain college, called Success College, there my aim was to do BA'* (P3, I1, p. 7). During her second interview she again confirmed that *'even today I am still, I am still studying, I am still studying now'* (P3, I2, p. 12). She reiterated her attitude as lifelong learner by referring to the photograph of the computer (P3, Ph4) (refer to Photograph 4.8). Emma wanted to continue her education after her marriage, and told her husband at the time that *'the only thing that you can do for me is to send me back to school'* (P1, I1, p. 4). Her photograph of books confirms her hunger for knowledge (P1, Ph1) (refer to Photograph 4.10). She *'wanted to do computer literacy. And then the duration was three months and then I come back with my certificate'* (P1, I1, p. 4).

4.7.3 CATEGORY K: VALUES

Values acted as enduring internal protective resource for rural teachers. I identified three value-sets. They are dignity; sense of accomplishment; and persistency and dedication to education. Rural teachers used these enduring values to face chronic adversity.

a. Subcategory K1: *Dignity*

Dignity as value provides a person with feelings of self-worth and self-respect. Moeketsi portrayed his dignity by stating his will to become a *'valuable'* (P2, I2, p. 2) person in life and his conviction that he *'deserve[s] better than this'* (P2, I2, p. 2), referring to the apartheid conditions during his school years. Lazarus explained that the inspiration to study teaching (P4, I2, p. 18) and keeping the dream of teaching alive for eight years *'was inside me'* (P4, I1, p. 3). He acted with *'dignity and inner drive throughout his life and chose the road less travelled to make a success of his life'* (Field notes, 18 April 2013). Susan said that her return to Swaziland (because of unemployment) was temporary because she wanted to be a teacher in South Africa and *'volunteered'* her services as a teacher in a rural school (P5, MB, p. 7). Gogo's dignity was reflected in comments such as *'I don't want to be like my [uneducated] parents'* (P3, I1, p. 11) and *'I was staying with my aunt. You know people use (d) to visit...my aunt would go out for a moment but when my aunt came home, I cooked food, organised you know everything for this'* (P3, I3, p. 12). Emma's belief was that *'you have to persevere'* (P1, I1, p. 3). Her dignity is illustrated in the following remark: *'So do you think after 20 years we will be having teachers? So we must come up with something, what is it that we can do to encourage, the young ones to become teachers?'* (P1, I1, p. 11). Her self-worth is apparent from her writings: *'I belong somewhere'* (P1, MB, p. 2).

b. Subcategory K2: *Sense of accomplishment*

Having a sense of accomplishment or pride was a value that sustained rural teachers' efforts over their life span. Moeketsi was proud of his achievements, saying *'I was given an award'* (P2, I2, p. 4) and *'I was presented with a lot of leadership'* (P2, I2, p. 4). Later at university he *'got distinctions'* (P2, I2, p. 11). *'I was performing and with the performance the university was able to give a merit and they will turn that merits as to be money...'* (P2, I2, p. 11). Gogo said, *'you know, at school I was excelling'* (P3, I2, p. 10). Lazarus *'was made head boy...a couple of years'* (P4, I2, pp. 3-4) and at college he excelled because he *'did not even supplement any of [his] subjects'* (P4, I2, p. 18). Lazarus presented photographs illustrating participation and the accomplishment he had achieved despite not finding employment as a teacher after qualifying (P4, Ph1) (refer to Photograph 4.11).



Photograph 4.11:
 Course participation
 (Lazarus, P4, Ph1)

Susan also *'did very well (at school) and went to College of Education'* (P5, I2, p. 2; and referred to in P5, MB, p. 6; and referred to in P5, I3, p. 4). She added, *'naturally I ended up teaching the learners...because I was competent'* (P5, I2, p. 1). Later, when she was working at the ABET Centre, she *'started as a facilitator, then was promoted to be a centre manager'* (P5, I1, p. 2). Gogo got *'this promotional post'* (P3, I1, p. 1) and, 10 years ago, was transferred from another secondary school to the one where she is currently teaching. Gogo was proud of the fact that she had completed her matric certificate through correspondence and remarked: *'I started writing, corresponding, it just took me 2 years, because I wrote 3, I passed them all, I wrote 2 and I passed them all'* (P3, I1, p. 7), and *'I am able to do whatever I want, it is because I persevered'* (P3, I1, p. 11) and *'I can do whatever a man can do'* (P3, I2, p. 5) (she had herded cattle in the veld as a young girl). She alluded to her success as both a learner at school (P3, MB, p. 2) and as a student at the college by choosing pictures of her good marks (P3, Ph7) (refer to Photograph 4.12).



Photograph 4.12:
 Achievement
 (Gogo, P3, Ph7)

As stated earlier Gogo proudly described how she was able to send and receive emails (P3, Ph3) (refer to Photograph 4.4). Emma referred to how she was promoted at primary school because *'they say, no, you are clever, you deserve to be in Standard 3'* (P1, I1, p. 3). She was *'the best learner'* in Standard 5 and one of her essays was used as an example for learners in a higher grade (P1, I1, p. 3). She *'passed Standard 5 with distinction'* (P1, I1, p. 4).

a. Subcategory K3: Commitment to education

The participants showed their commitment to teaching as an unwavering persistency and dedication to education. I reflected: *'Not one teacher participant was absent! Over the 18-month period, they were all there, always! This is dedication!'* (Field notes, 14 September 2012). Moeketsi explained that living through apartheid he *'must persevere'* (P2, I2, p. 3). After qualifying as a teacher and failing to secure employment, Moeketsi took other job opportunities that came his way (P2, I2, pp. 14-16) while remaining dedicated to education: *'I will just go there, keep myself busy in the, in the evening I tend to adult people'* (P2, I2, p. 17). Moeketsi said that, despite not receiving a salary for many months, *'I am still in the field of education'* (P2, I2, p. 3), and *'I won't leave the profession because you know, leaving, you are not solving anything'* (P2, I1, p. 6). Moeketsi felt that his presence in education made a difference (P2, I1, p. 7) and said, *'if we don't have teachers today...who is going to teach your kids?'* (P2, I1, p. 8).

Lazarus shared his passion for education as follows: *'I think for me I will stay in this career forever [because] I enjoy everything here'* (P4, I2, p. 20) and *'... I try to motivate them, because [walking] the narrow road, the road is going to be opened. As long as I've got education'* (P4, I3, p. 23). Gogo explained how she remained motivated to go to school as a young child: *'... here I am today, I am able to do whatever I want, it is because I persevered, during those times it was very painful you know it is like climbing the highest mountain, yes, because by that time we were supposed to pay ourselves, buying ourselves textbooks, you know exercises and textbooks, joh, it was so painful for me, because there was no-one who was going to pay for me'* (P3, I1, p. 11). About her work ethic as a teacher Gogo said, *'... you know I am a hard worker ...'* and explained that *'I do not say it is school out now let me just sit at home and do nothing, relaxed. No, I will continue even after school preparing for the next day'* (P3, I2, pp. 7-8). Referring to the picture of the computer (P3, Ph3) (refer to Photograph 4.4), she announced with conviction that *'I am still here'* (P3, I2, p. 18). Emma explained her persistence in education by saying, *'... you as a teacher, you as a parent, you must come up with a solution'* (P1, I1, p. 8) and her belief that education sustains survival (P1, I1, p. 7). This is why she believed that *'all children must be educated irrespective of their background'* (P1, MB, p. 1).

4.7.4 CATEGORY L: POSITIVE ATTITUDE

Hope and optimism signals a positive attitude. I discuss three subcategories related to hope and optimism in the rural teachers. They are active engagement, positive adaptation, and future plans and dreams.

a. Subcategory L1: Active engagement

Moeketsi's positive attitude was already evident at school, where he participated in school activities and exploited *'every opportunity that will come'* (P2, I2, p. 4). He *'... participated a lot'* (P2, I2, p. 4) and *'... was a member of the debating team'* (P2, I2, p. 4). As an employee Moeketsi had an active relationship with his headmaster: *'I engage him (the principal) most of the time, you see. So it is like we are two people how are fighting, but at the end of the day fighting for a good cause'* (P2, I2, p. 22; P2, Photograph-description 1). He referred to his involvement at his school, explaining *'you see I am almost everywhere, I have got a debating team at school, you see. In the FET and the GT and I am the secretary of the governing body, I am a site steward, I am a disciplinary, member of the disciplinary committee'* (P2, I2, p. 23). Susan described how she engaged on many systemic levels as a teacher: *'... you become an educator everywhere, at home you are an educator, to the community you are an educator, even at the church you are an educator'* (P5, I1, p. 2). She also described herself as a person who wants to help, so she (and others) takes care of the *'education needs'* (P5, I3, p. 12) of some of the learners at school. Her picture of a pot cooking on the stove as symbol of resilience reminds me of this active engagement (P5, Ph1) (refer to Photograph 4.5). Gogo and Emma's engagement with the learners seemed to be their recipe for success as teachers: *'it is patience, you know if a learner cannot be able to do this I just call the learner and just sit down with the learner and try by all means to unpack every challenges that the learner is facing'* (P3, I2, p. 6) and *'when I am in the classroom I can easily identify a child who is having a problem, and then I make sure that I arrange with that learner so that we can sit down and talk, even if he can try by all means to hide, I will stick to the same question'* (P1, I1, p. 7).

Another form of engagement that was evident was that participants sought out, identified and utilised opportunities to improve their adverse circumstances. In this regard Moeketsi said, *'the university was able to give a merit and they will turn that merits as to be money...so you see those were the opportunities'* (P2, I2, p. 11). He was determined to *'grab one scholarship [and] go and study abroad'* (P2, I2, p. 18). Lazarus viewed his decision to study teaching as an opportunity for a better life and said, *'... this is my last opportunity and I knew the mistakes that I did before. Then I said to myself, no let me not do another thing'* (P4, I2, p. 18). Gogo described her engagement with real life when she as a young learner: *'... went to PTA...looking for job...got in one of the restaurants then...requested them that every school*

holiday [she] must go and work there' (P3, I3, p. 11) to be able to pay for her school fees and textbooks.

b. Subcategory L2: *Positive adaptation*

Moeketsi said, *'I enjoyed my school, I enjoyed'* (P2, I2, p. 5). Despite the conditions of apartheid and despite the abuse he endured from siblings, he mentioned *'that kind of pain...makes me to be a better person'* (P2, I1, p. 3). Lazarus also enjoyed school and commented, *'though I was repeating my grade twelve, I was enjoying my life, in fact I can say I enjoyed all my years from primary to high school'* (P4, I2, p. 11). Moeketsi further reflected, *'when you are from a poor background, it doesn't mean it is over, [that] you never go further, you see, [that] you never pursue any career'* (P2, I1, p. 3). He was able to further his education despite the *'restrictions, and political awareness'* (P2, I1, p. 3) at the time. Moeketsi indicated that he wanted to move forward *'to transform, it is the positive route to change the mind-set, of the past, you see, what happened, it happened, but this is not how it is supposed to be, we must have hope for a change, you see all of us, irrespective of colour, you see, we live in one country, we are human beings'* (P2, I1, p. 7).

Susan cheerfully said: *'Can you see how I travelled to be where I am, it wasn't easy'* (P5, I1, p. 3); referring back to being flexible and adaptable as mentioned earlier (P5, I1, p. 7). She felt that facing adversity had made her a strong survivor who could provide joy and learning to others: *'sometimes, when I try to motivate maybe this learners, the grade twelves, you know sometimes I find that when I tell them about, how life was difficult for me. Immediately when I'm telling the learners about the experience you find that it becomes quiet in the classroom'* (P5, I3, p. 20; P5, Ph1; P5, Ph2) (refer to Photographs 4.4 and 4.6). Her positive attitude was clear when she said, *'Life now is good! We are all working and we are happy'* (P5, MB, p. 7). Gogo said: *'I am able to cope...because I know the pain that my mom went through, and she survived...forgiveness is there and don't hold grudges for someone, let everything go away so that you continue and that makes me survive in this world'* (P3, I2, p. 4). To illustrate her ability to adapt positively, she had chosen the photograph of a computer (refer to Photograph 4.8). She explained that it indicated that she kept up with the times and even though she was old, she could use a laptop and send emails (P3, Ph4). Emma related how helping another helped her to cope with her own adversity: *'I was happy, I did not worry about myself!'* (P1, I1, p. 7); and *'even if I am struggling, aah, I don't have to complain, I just take things easy'* (P1, I1, p. 8).

The participants appeared to have retained positive attitudes. Whenever we arrived at the school for a field visit, it was evident that even though prior arrangements had been made, we were not expected. Yet, after the initial confusion, the teachers took the lead and quickly organised venues and interviews. I reflected: *'He said he will take me to Mr F or the Principal.*

Neither was there. He took me to X. I explained the reason for my visit and she immediately arranged for me to see Participant 4 first. We went to the library' (Field notes, 4 September 2012), and 'I asked about the children who are noisy and was told that some teachers attended a funeral of a fellow teacher (of another school). In actual fact the school was short staffed and under pressure. Yet, as visitor I did not feel a negative energy, in fact it looked like things continued as normal – business as usual – as everyone just adapts to the sudden change, they show a positive attitude of moving forward and taking the frustrations in their stride' (Field notes, 5 September 2012).

Moeketsi displayed a positive belief in the school, saying *'this school is doing that! [referring to quality education] It has potential'* (P2, I1, p. 6) and *'... teachers are doing well, they are almost producing each and every person in this world'* (P2, I2, p. 7). Lazarus showed a similar positive outlook and dedication to the school, saying *'I can't say that I am looking for a better school, because once I am saying I am looking for a better school I am saying that I am not developing this one'* (P4, I1, p. 5). He took a photograph of the school's computer laboratory to illustrate this positive attitude (P4, Ph3) (refer to Photograph 4.13).



Photograph 4.13:

Computer laboratory
(Lazarus, P4, Ph3)

He is proud of having resources in rural school. He believes his school cares about the development of learners and the upkeep of resources.

Susan ascribed her positive attitude towards learners to her *'like for the people that is why I am what I am today'* (P5, I1, p. 1), and Gogo explained that *'if you are teaching...you are working with people, you must have love for people'* (P3, I1, p. 2). Gogo's love for people was confirmed by her picture of the door (P3, Ph5) (refer to Photograph 4.7). She said, *'I am a door, for any educator, any learner if they open and ask any information from me if they want to learn, let them come to me, then I will be able to help them'* (P3, I2, p. 21). Gogo's positive outlook became even more apparent when she reflected, *'I can see a change because very slowly I can see our department or government want to reverse'* (P3, I2, p. 8). She declared that her *'positive attitude'* was the result of her interest and focus on student potential (P3, MB, p. 4). Emma expressed a similar attitude, saying *'... my aim is not to come here and demand. I must do something to the community'* (P1, I1, p. 8).

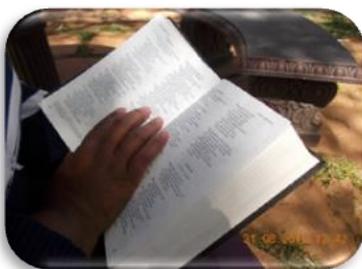
c. Subcategory L3: *Future plans and dreams*

As children, the participants in this study had dreams: *'And then you know when I grow up you know when you grow up while you are still young you have dreams, you know and say I want to be this, I want to do this'* (P3, I2, p.4). Gogo's dream job was to become a *'nurse'* (P3, I1, p. 1), and Susan recalled, *'when I grew up I said I am going to be a nurse'* (P5, I1, p. 1).

Currently, Moeketsi's *'biggest dream is to go and study abroad, maybe in London'* (P2, I2, p. 9), and Lazarus is looking for promotions in education (P4, I1, p. 5) and planning to *'upgrade'* his qualification in order to learn new things (P4, I1, p. 21; and referred to in P4, I3, p. 12). Susan would like to continue her career in education and is considering teaching in higher education (P5, I1, p. 7), and Gogo would like to *'open an extra class, just to encourage and teach the learners'* (P3, I1, p. 6). Emma said, *'I will be happy if I can see myself being a poet or an author...I just want to be a poet, I just want to share my experience with the world by means of poetry...yes, that is my dream'* (P1, I2, p. 6; and referred to in P1, MB, p. 1). I reflected: *'Before we parted I was surprised by her saying that the one thing she would like to do is to write a book someday. Imparting knowledge to the younger generation through the use of poetry. I challenged her to write me one poem before I leave because she says that she has the poems all stuck in her head instead of on paper'* (Field notes, 4 September 2012). She said that after retirement *'I will go to part time to be an adult educator, where I can open my crèche at my place'* (P1, I2, p. 12).

4.7.5 CATEGORY M: SPIRITUALITY: RELIGIOUS OUTLOOK

Moeketsi described his pastor as *'my all-star'* (P2, I2, p. 22) and as a constant source of support (P2, Photograph-description 2). Susan said that she was following the *'Christian way'*, and that *'even if you step on one another's toes, but that doesn't mean that that is going to bring you apart, I don't believe in that one, even if there is something that went wrong between us, we sit and discuss it, so we carry on...I always like to please God'* (P5, I1, p. 6). She referred to her photograph of the Bible (P5, Ph3) (refer to Photograph 4.14), reiterating her belief in Christian roots (P5, MB, p. 1) and learning, saying *'we praise God!'* (P5, MB, p. 7).



Photograph 4.14:
 The Bible
 (Susan, P5, Ph3)

Gogo spoke of her faith and devotion. *'I am a light to other people'* (P3, I2, p. 18; and referred to in P3, Photograph-description 1). Emma described how God had helped their family in their darkest time: *'No one helped my mother. Only God...why am I saying this? Because we survived!'* (P1, I1, p. 2), and *'We did not complain so much, we just say, we know that God is watching us'* (P1, I1, p. 3). She said that religious outlook was a source of strength: *'No one is taking care of me now except God. Because what I want, or what I need, I used to pray: Oh my God, please help me, in this situation...maybe this is the purpose of God, he wanted to use me as a step ladder, he wanted to use me as a bridge, let me serve his purpose...I am doing this to serve the God purpose. If I am helping my neighbour to be, I am just saying I am helping God.'* (P1, I1, p. 7). Her faith in God's support was unwavering: *'I think only God will provide me with the strength and energy to overcome this problem (referring to the stressful events at school)'* (P1, I2, p. 2).

4.8 SUBTHEME 2.2: CURRENT INTERNAL PROTECTIVE RESOURCES RURAL TEACHERS USE FOR RESILIENCE

I must lift the latch and look out, and say 'Good morning!' to the spring.

Subtheme 2.2 highlights the internal protective resources from which teachers have drawn as adults. I used the same categories as in Subtheme 2.1, namely critical inquiry (Category N), values (Category O), positive attitude (Category P) and spirituality (Category Q). However, the subcategories that were identified differ from those in Subtheme 2.1. It transpired that the rural teachers viewed their internal protective resources as being agents in problem solving (critical inquiry); having a responsibility towards educating children and believing in the power of education (values); and engaging in positive reflexive practice (positive attitude). Furthermore they indicated the view that teaching is a calling (spirituality).

4.8.1 CATEGORY N: CRITICAL INQUIRY: AGENCY IN PROBLEM SOLVING

The participants displayed an active will to find solutions. I reflected: *'What struck me was the very quick way the participants organized a relatively quiet place to do the interview. Initially it felt like they were not expecting me at all – despite the sms and arranged visit. But then each participant took it upon themselves to get us organized – so as to not waste much time. I was impressed with their actions to solve the problem of interview space!'* (Field notes, 3 May 2012). Moeketsi made his agency in solving the teaching crisis clear when he said, *'We are the ones who are supposed to make the change in the system...'* (P2, I1, p. 8). When Lazarus failed to find employment as a teacher despite being qualified, he decided to *'train as a security guard'* (P4, I2, p. 14). As a teacher he exhibited the same commitment, saying *'you can't complain that classes are overcrowded, no you must do something if you are a teacher*

to overcome challenges' (P4, I2, p. 21). Susan showed her commitment to solving her own crisis (not being employed as a teacher) by still working at the ABET Centre while continuing teaching as a volunteer at the school: *'I was also working for ABET, to keep me going'* (P5, I1, p. 3; and referred to in P5, MB, p. 7).

Gogo said, *'we are trying, I am trying'* (P3, I2, p. 12) to make a difference in the lives of the learners despite the problematic circumstances by *'pulling ideas together'* (P3, MB, p. 4). Emma was *'... trying to close the gap...I can't keep on blaming the government that I am earning peanuts, whatever, no, I've got eyes, I've got mind, I've got hands, there is something that I can do in order to get an extra income'* (P1, I1, p. 6). Beyond the ownership she took in solving her own crisis Emma described her active stance in supporting her learners: *'You've got to identify the problem, the cause, and you must come up with the solution, by so doing, it means you are helping...'* (P1, I1, p. 9). Her agency is also represented by her photograph of books – searching for solutions to problems through research (P1, Ph1) (refer to Photograph 4.10). Moeketsi stated that he was *'... so proud to be helping...discover the truth'* (P2, I3, p. 8), which is also an indication of his wilful, problem-solving nature. In addition to going *'back to school'* to finish her school career (P1, I1, p. 4), Emma opened her own *'catering business'* (P1, I1, p. 6) and is still working over weekends to *'supplement her income'* (P1, I1, p. 6).

4.8.2 CATEGORY O: VALUES: RESPONSIBILITY AND POWER OF EDUCATION

Current values (as opposed to enduring values discussed in Section 4.7.3) are present values the participants displayed on a daily basis in their work environment. As rural teachers they seemed to value their responsibility to educate children (Subcategory O1) and their belief in the power of education (Subcategory O2).

a. Subcategory O1: Responsibility to educate children

Moeketsi remembered how his teacher instilled in him a belief in education, declaring *'An African child needs people like you'* (P2, I2, p. 3), and *'an African child is out there, crying for a better education'* (P2, I1, p. 1). Moeketsi, who had internalised this call to educate African children, stated that *'for [an] African child, education is the most important thing, and to give them that education'* (P2, I1, p. 1); *'Imagine an innocent child who cannot speak, who cannot write, you see, a disabled child, you see, sitting there, wanting education more than, who supposed to help that person to education?'* (P2, I1, p. 8). Gogo shared the same vision for children: *'I just want to see a change, I just want to empower those young kids'* (P3, I1, p. 3). In her memory book she wrote that she is *'passionate of advocating for kids'*, and that *'her love of children...love [for] teaching [and] being a role model [will] influence generation's value and goals'; 'someone has to advocate for them'* (P3, MB, p. 4).

Emma referred to her responsibility to educate children saying, *'these poor children, need to be educated, irrespective of their situation, there must be somebody for them'* (P1, I1, p. 8). She felt a responsibility to *'make learners' dreams come true'* (P1, MB, p. 1). Susan expressed similar sentiments when she said, *'my concern here is the child, I am concerned about the child, I want to lead the child from childhood to adulthood'* (P5, I1, p. 10). Susan reiterated her dedication to education through the way she described her photograph (P5, Ph1) (refer to Photograph 4.5). She explained that she was like a pot cooking on a stove – the pot endures suffering, but its contents provide nourishment to others. The nourishment symbolises herself as the instrument of development and support to learners.

b. Subcategory O2: *Belief in the power of education*

Moeketsi expressed his steadfast belief in education, proclaiming that *'... the thing that keeps the quality is understanding that education is a basic need, that [it] must be [a] priority, imagine...not [being] educated, it is like a lost nation, you see, so if they understand that education is more important than any other thing...you can do whatever you want to do in life...they [children] deserve it'* (P2, I1, p. 6). He added *'Think about what is the best thing that I can do for my country, I want to be a contributing citizen'* (P2, I1, p. 8). Lazarus stressed a similar value when he said, *'...the reason to be in this profession is about a big South Africa... the country is going to develop...we are a developing country, without education a country can't develop, won't move forward'* (P4, I1, p. 3); and *'I want to build this country'* (P4, I1, p. 4).

Gogo stated earlier that she felt that she educates the nation (P3, I1, p. 3) and in her memory book writing she said that she was *'moulding the future...shaping young minds and influencing them to make good choice[s] in life'* (P3, MB, p. 4). In so doing she said, she had a hand in *'save [saving] the country [by] educat[ing] the nation'* (P3, MB, p. 4). About the power of education in her own life, Gogo said, *'Education...made me stronger, and strong, and strong'* (P3, I2, p. 17; P3, Ph7) (refer to Photograph 4.12). Regarding the importance of education in the country, Emma commented, *'It is tough and it is hard, I wish if all people were thinking like I do, to save the poor children, in the developing country...if we don't help learners to be educated, who is going to teach my grandchildren?'* (P1, I1, p. 8; and referred to in P1, I2, p. 2). Susan echoed this sentiment: *'I want them (the learners) to be somewhere in the offices, holding higher positions'* (P5, I1, p. 10).

4.8.3 CATEGORY P: POSITIVE ATTITUDE: *POSITIVE REFLEXIVE PRACTICE*

Moeketsi felt that taking *‘the experience [in teaching] and go[ing] back [to the classroom] and implement it...that is good’* (P2, I1, p. 5), and Gogo showed an attitude of reflection when she described how she kept up to date in her subject: *‘You know I like a lot of watching the news because I just want to get lot of information as I am teaching economics, you know I just want to know what is happening around the world’* (P3, I2, p. 8). As an educator, she compared herself to a set of diaries that spans a few years (P3, Ph6) (refer to Photograph 4.15), saying that *‘it means that, it is like the book of knowledge, because then you do not make the same mistakes. You have learned maybe from this situation’* (P3, I2, p. 21). Photograph 4.15 represents how Gogo aims to learn through positively reflecting on her own practice.



Photograph 4.15:
 Diaries
 (Gogo, P3, Ph6)

In her memory book, Gogo mentioned that she *‘hone[s] her [teaching] skill over time’* (P3, MB, p. 4), which refers to her continuous reflexive practice as a teacher. Emma described her reflective practice in action when she said, *‘even in the classroom you will see that this learner is irritating, he is disturbing the class and if you started to do a research about that one then you will see that that child needs parental love. He needs someone who will be there for her or for him’* (P1, I2, p. 2). Susan’s practical reflexivity was evident from the fact that she thought about the potential of each child in her classroom and tried to *‘lead the child from childhood to adulthood’* (P5, I1, p. 10). Emma’s determination to teach responsibly, using reflection, is also illustrated by the photograph of books, which are a source of knowledge (P1, Ph1) (refer to Photograph 4.10).

4.8.4 CATEGORY Q: SPIRITUALITY: *BELIEF THAT TEACHING BECOMES A CALLING*

Although none of the participants started out on their career journeys thinking that they wanted to become teachers, they soon realised that they had been called to the teaching profession. Moeketsi stated that *‘... when I was in Grade 12 I chose to be a lawyer...teaching was my second option...I thought going there [referring to becoming a lawyer] and make sure [of] representation in terms of equality’* (P2, I1, p. 1). After his history teacher had remarked on how his interrogation skills would be useful in the teaching profession, he *‘started developing*

the passion...presenting in class [while still at school]' (P2, I1, p. 1) and realised that *'instead of going to law [it] is better to come to teaching and start mobilising'* (P2, I1, p. 1). With regard to remuneration, Moeketsi expressed the opinion that even *'if you improve the salary of the educators, but if you go for money, without passion, you are going to be useless'* (P2, I1, p. 8). He added, *'You must love what you are doing, that is the most basic important thing, you can't do, you can't choose to be a teacher because you have nowhere else to go'* (P2, I1, p. 8).

Lazarus *'was thinking of working in the mines'* because *'my father he was having friends who were driving beautiful cars. Then I said to myself, these people are getting good salaries...So, if one day I can become a mine worker, I'm going to be able to buy my own car'* (P4, I2, p. 6). I noted: *'He has decided to be positive and he is committed to finding ways to make life easier for the learners – even if it means he has to give up some of his little free time he has available as a teacher. He is for the learners! After reflecting about his journey in life we discovered that becoming a teacher was a calling'* (Field notes, 18 April 2013). During her high school years, Susan *'wanted to be a nurse, ja, I wanted to be a nurse, when I grew up I said I am going to be a nurse because I was inspired by my aunt, my aunt was a qualified nurse'* (P5, I1, p. 1). She shared her discovery of her *'love for teaching'* (P5, I3, p. 6) while she was teaching her peers and realised *'I am a teacher...I am a born teacher'* (P5, I2, pp. 1-2). Consequently she *'applied to go to the ABET Centre to be an educator'* (P5, I2, pp. 1-2; and referred to in P5, I3, p. 6).

Gogo had another idea: *'I remember before I started teaching, you know what, I wanted to be a nurse, that was my dream job'* (P3, I1, p. 1). She initially applied for both, but then chose to study teaching, because *'I love to teach'* (P3, I1, p. 3). After qualifying as a teacher she worked as a salesperson and an insurer, but thought *'no let me just go back to teaching'* (P3, I1, p. 1); *'... coming back and back...you know for me I can say it is a calling, yes, really this one is a calling'* (P3, I1, p. 1). Emma's *'aim was to be a social worker'* (P1, I1, p. 4), but since she did not qualify to study social work, she *'opt[ed] for teaching because teaching and social worker is similar'* (P1, I1, p. 4). She regarded teaching *'as a calling, not because of you want to be paid, eeh, mam, you can earn 1 million every month, but at the end of the year, when you look back you can see, mmm-mmm, where is my money?...according to me teaching is not about money'* (P1, I1, pp. 8-9). In Emma's poem she expressed how the *'light'* that symbolises education in her life called her to the *'destination'* of teaching (P1, MB, p. 2).

4.9 THEME 3: EXTERNAL PROTECTIVE RESOURCES RURAL TEACHERS USE OVER TIME

There was one crevice where all was snug and warm.

Participants in this study were supported and encouraged by significant others. A few reflections are presented below.

And then my school Principal Mrs X came to my place, talk to me ... I said I want to come and write but I don't know if I can because I am not strong enough, and then she said, no, please try by all means to come and write. I don't think you can fail Standard 5, wena, you have already passed. You just need the signature. She trusted me so much.

Emma (P1), Interview 1 (I1), p. 4

Ja, in the school I will, I will see, I will take a picture with my principal because, he is an inspiration.

Moeketsi (P2), Interview 2 (I2), p. 21

I understand because I'm coming from a rural area that is why I understand working around here.

Lazarus (P4), Interview 2 (I2), p. 20

You know my mother used to encourage me all the time.

Gogo (P3), Interview 3, (I3), p. 13

... so can you see... it wasn't easy.

Susan (P5), Interview 1 (I1), p. 3

Theme 3 deals with external protective resources that rural teachers have used over time. Table 4.4 provides a summary of the results of Theme 3. I divided the theme into three subthemes: Subtheme 3.1 deals with external protective resources that rural teachers used during their childhood. I identified one subcategory (encouragement by significant teachers) as part of the teacher's mesosystem. Subtheme 3.2 consists of two categories: external protective resources in the mesosystem (support by like-minded colleagues, school leadership and the success of the learners) and external protective resources in the exo- and macrosystems (post-apartheid shields and insights, and lessons learnt from poverty). Subtheme 3.3 deals with enduring external protective resources that the teachers in this study have experienced over their life span. One category (external protective factors in themes system) reveals two subcategories: motivation, support and inspiration by family; and support by a significant parent.

Table 4.4: Summary of results for Theme 3

Theme 3: The external protective resources rural teachers use over time											
Subtheme	Categories	Subcategories	Indicators for		Data source (s)						
			Inclusion External protective resources (EPR)	Exclusion Internal protective resources (Theme 2)	I1	I2	I3	MB	Ph	FN	
3.1 The external protective resources rural teachers used in their childhood	R External protective resources in mesosystem	Encouragement by significant teachers	EPR data related to encouragement by significant teachers	EPR data related to current and enduring resources		✓	✓	✓		✓	
					P	1, 4, 5	2, 3, 4	3		3, 5	
3.2 Current external protective resources rural teachers use for resilience	S External protective resources in mesosystem	S1 Supported by like-minded colleagues and friends	EPR data related to support from colleagues and friends	EPR data related to the success of learners and support from school leadership		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
					P	1, 3, 4, 5	2, 4	4		2	
		S2 Driven by success of learners	EPR data related to the success of learners and how this drives the rural teachers	EPR data related to support from colleagues and school leadership		✓	✓		✓	✓	
					P	1, 2, 3, 5	3		1, 3	3	
	S3 Encouraged and appreciated by school leadership	EPR data related to rural teachers experiencing encouragement and appreciation from school leadership	EPR data related to support from colleagues and success of learners		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
				P	2, 3, 4, 5	2	2	1	2		
T External protective resources in the exosystem and macrosystem	T1 Post-apartheid shields and insights	EPR data related to insights gained in a post-apartheid macrosystem	EPR data related to insights gained from the experience of poverty in the exosystem		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
				P	2	2	4	1	2, 3		
T2 Lessons learnt from poverty	EPR data related to insights gained from the experience of poverty in the exosystem	EPR data related to insights gained in a post-apartheid macrosystem		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
			P	1, 3, 5	3, 4, 5	5	1, 3, 5	1, 3			

Theme 3: The external protective resources rural teachers use over time											
Subtheme	Categories	Subcategories	Indicators for			Data source (s)					
			Inclusion External protective resources (EPR)	Exclusion Internal protective resources (Theme 2)							
3.3 The enduring external protective resources rural teachers used over their life span for resilience (past and current)	U External protective resources in the mesosystem	U1 Motivation by and support received from family	EPR data related to enduring support and motivation received from family	EPR data related from enduring inspiration gained from a significant parent		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
					P	1, 3, 4, 5	2, 4, 5	3	3, 5	1, 3	
		U2 Inspired by a significant parent	EPR data related from enduring inspiration gained from a significant parent	EPR data related to enduring support and motivation received from family		✓	✓		✓	✓	
					P	1	2, 3, 4, 5		5	3	

Data source key

Is = Interviews 1, 2 and 3 in the form of transcriptions; MB = Memories written in a memory book; Ph = Visual data (Photos symbolizing resilience); FN = field notes in researcher diary

4.10 SUBTHEME 3.1: THE EXTERNAL PROTECTIVE RESOURCES RURAL TEACHERS USED DURING THEIR CHILDHOOD

... but every sunbeam sang, 'Welcome'.

In Subtheme 3.1 I identified a single external protective resource all the participants used during their childhood. This protective resource was the encouragement and support that significant teachers provided to the rural teachers as children.

4.10.1 CATEGORY R: EXTERNAL PROTECTIVE RESOURCES IN THE MESOSYSTEM: ENCOURAGEMENT BY SIGNIFICANT TEACHERS

Moeketsi acknowledged the support received from significant teachers during his school years: *'... then one teacher, was my history teacher, he said, you know, one day you are going to be a good teacher'* (P2, I2, p. 3); and *'they (referring to other teachers) appreciated me so much'* (P2, I2, p. 4). Moeketsi further related how his teachers encouraged him to participate in debating challenges, saying *'Go and represent, you see because you are a good English learner'* (P2, I2 p. 5). He admitted that he had learnt valuable lessons from his teachers, explaining *'one advice that I got from my teachers was to say the best method of fighting the system, is to get, get inside the system'* (P2, I2, p. 5). Lazarus *'was impressed by this teacher... in Standard 4, teaching us general science...the style of teaching...because he likes jokes, but when it comes to teaching he was serious...his attitude, he was treating all the learners the same, he was not showing favouritism towards the learners'* (P4, I1, p. 2), and *'I look[ed] up at my teachers... they understood where I am coming [from]'* (P4, I2, p. 2). Susan shared the story of how, as a learner, she was motivated by her principal to teach her peers: *'You are very good with this one, and he say okay, you can even set a test for the learners'* (P5, I1, p. 1).

Gogo related how a teacher showed confidence in her: *'My maths teacher, immediately when I arrived he used to write a problem and say, come [Gogo], come and do it'* (P3, I2, p. 10). Emma told the following story about how a significant teacher boosted her morale: *'I become ill towards the end of the Standard 5) year...we were supposed to write the final exam...I stayed home for two months'* and as mentioned before she experienced incredible trust from her principal who said she can complete her year despite her illness (P1, I1, p. 4).

Participants also acknowledged learning from other significant life-teachers, such as the former president of South Africa, Mr Nelson Mandela, who taught Gogo *'forgiveness'* (P3, I3 p. 17; P3, Ph2) (refer to Photograph 4.2). As another example, Susan learnt to cope with her life's ups and downs from the Bible, which is *'like a road map for life'* (P5, Ph3) (refer to Photograph 4.14).

4.11 SUBTHEME 3.2: CURRENT EXTERNAL PROTECTIVE RESOURCES RURAL TEACHERS USE FOR RESILIENCE

The walls of the bulb were softened by the rain

I identified two categories in Subtheme 3.2. Category S highlights the external protective resources rural teachers use in the mesosystem, such as the support of colleagues, friends, and school leadership, as well as the success achieved by learners. Category T comprises the external protective resources that rural teachers use in their exo- and macrosystems, which include post-apartheid shields and insights, and lessons learnt from poverty.

4.11.1 CATEGORY S: EXTERNAL PROTECTIVE RESOURCES IN THE MESOSYSTEM

Support from colleagues can take many forms. Like-minded colleagues are those that share the educational aspirations of the participants. One example is the shared belief in the power of education. These shared beliefs also extend to friends outside the school context.

a. Subcategory S1: *Support from like-minded colleagues and friends*

Moeketsi recalled how he and his friends *'that time we joined Xhosas, we fight for, all learners in the same year, should pass all, you see. Pass one, pass all'* in order to oppose the apartheid system (P2, I2, p. 9). Later, at university, he joined SASCO (South African Student Congress) and *'we survived through the influence we had at Sasco'* (P2, I2, p. 10). This organisation offered him a sense of belonging (P2, Ph3) (refer to Photograph 4.3). At the school where Moeketsi currently teaches, he draws inner strength from his like-minded SASCO colleagues (P2, Ph4) (refer to Photograph 4.16).



Photograph 4.16:
Comrades
(Moeketsi , P2, Ph4)

Moeketsi said that he was supported by his headmaster, because they were both *'fighting for a good cause'* (P2, I2, p. 22). Lazarus told how he *'joined the good friends where I ended up by completing my Standard 10, passing my Standard 10'* (P4, I2, p. 8), and how *'a friend of mine took me to this place'* (P4, I1, p. 2; and referred to in P4, I3, p. 10), which resulted in his finding employment as a teacher. At school, he said, *'I do have colleagues that support me'*

(P4, I1, p. 5), helping him cope with the demands of teaching. Susan described a colleague at the school as a significant source of strength; *'we understand one another, we share notes, she teaches business studies, to me she is like a sister, we are sharing a lot, her problem becomes my problem, when she is happy, we are happy together'* (P5, I1, p. 6); *'we work together as a team, there is a team spirit'* (P5, I1, p. 9). Gogo referred to the same kind of team spirit: *'We will have lunch together, we brainstorm, we talk you know, new ideas, what are you doing in your department, you know...it has a team feeling...we pull together...our educators are free to voice anything'* (P3, I1, pp. 8, 10). Emma talked about collegial support, saying *'I will go talk to mam X. Mam X, eish, you know I have got this problem and then I can't handle it, can you assist? And she is willing to do that'* (P1, I1, p. 9). I reflected: *'I was early for my interview with participant 3 – she was still having her lunch with another teacher. She welcomed me and I waited for them to finish. They were discussing a learner whose marks were suddenly dropping. They were very concerned and the other teacher remarked that she believes his parents are ill. They were discussing ways to support him and said that they should speak with teacher X about him – report him – so to say. I concluded that they were referring to the school-based support structures at school. It was very clear that these teachers share the commitment and passion for the welfare and success of the learners. They wanted the learners to succeed'* (Field notes, 3 May 2012).

b. Subcategory S2: Driven by successes of learners

Moeketsi proudly remarked that *'about 10 out of 90...are at a tertiary institution'* (P2, I1, p. 2), referring to the learners of the school. Susan said that she had the ability to identify learners *'who have potential'* (P5, I1, p. 9) and explained: *'That is why I like teaching, sometimes you know I always imagine a child this one, has got wonderful this, this one has got that, this one has got a voice, this one can be broadcaster, you know, sometimes I place children somewhere, of which I always think, I think this one is a lawyer, naturally, this one is that, this one is an educator, so that is why I teach'* (P5, I1, p. 10). In the same vein, Gogo shared the following story: *'I have products, you know my learners, they just come to me and say, mam do you still remember me? I say, huh, where did I meet you, they say no, you taught me in this grade, look at where I am now, I said, that's what I want, I don't want anything from you as long as I am helping you to achieve your goals, what makes me more and more every day, you know my learners are passing'* (P3, I1, p. 3), and *'You know my learners, I can see that what I am teaching them, they can benefit, because at the university college now, from this school I have four that is doing BCom Economics, and they are passing, and one is still at Venda University'* (P3, I1, p. 8).

Gogo showed pride in her learners' achievement: *'The test that they wrote last of last week they all passed, the highest was seventy percent. She said to me, how do you do it? I said it*

is patience, you know if a learner cannot be able to do this I just call the learner and just sit down with the learner and try by all means to unpack every challenges that the learner is facing...I am trying by all means at least to draw up the learner at least to level two, so that the learner can obtain a pass. All the learners passed. That makes me so proud. That makes me very happy every time you know, when I am teaching them and they say yo ma'am, even now they said to me ma'am this weekend we are camping' (P3, I2, p. 6). With regard to her choice of a picture of sunlight she said: *'Really I can say to myself for the years that I have worked, really I am a light to other people...Yes, I am a light to other people because you might find that maybe I do not see, but other people can say, I am doing what I am doing because I have been encouraged by all means...Yes, they are taking their own steps but I am able to make their goals successful'* (P3, I2, p. 18; P3, Photograph-description 1). The same belief came to the fore in Gogo's memory book, where she wrote that *'student successes'* was one of the reasons why she loved teaching (P3, MB, p. 4). Emma also shared her success stories: *'... there are many! I am talking about professors! If I met them I am saying, ah, this is my product...yes, I am proud of that!'* (P1, I1, p. 12). In her memory book Emma wrote: *'What keeps me going? High pass rate'* (P1, MB, p. 1), which signifies her learners' success as the driving force behind her commitment to education.

c. Subcategory S3: Encouraged and appreciated by school leadership

Emma wrote that she was able to cope in education because *'my work is appreciated'* (P1, MB, p. 1). Moeketsi embraced the encouragement and gratefulness he received from his principal and declared how his principal inspires him (P2, I2, p. 21; P2, Photograph-description 1). Susan's principal *'was always assisting me'* (P5, I1, p. 3) and when she was not earning money while as a volunteer at the school he never gave up in trying to find a way to employ her. She said that she particularly appreciated *'his understanding, loving, and he is a good listener'* (P5, I1, p. 9) and added: *'our principal, you know he is a father, that's why sometimes when I think of moving to another school, I become scared, maybe I will find another principal'* (P5, I1, p. 9). The most significant thing about her principal, Susan said, was that *'even if there is pressure in his work, immediately when you knock, you go into his office, he just put everything aside and listens to me, he doesn't take everything out to an innocent person'* (P5, I1, p. 9).

Gogo also stated that her principal was very supportive: *'Maybe I wanted to go straight to the principal, I am accepted...he will help me'* (P3, I1, p. 10). The same applied to her deputy principal, who *'is just supporting us'* (P3, I1, p. 10). Despite Gogo's unfortunate experience with the Department of Basic Education, she could also share positive incidents, for example how, after enquiring about her salary not being paid and reports that *'they are going to be rectified, you know those mistakes'* (P3, I1, p. 3), *'within a week I received a cheque'* (P3, I1,

p. 2). Moeketsi reported that *'the school is resourced after they performed, it was when the department assisted...for encouragement and for the commitment. You see the school was supported with resources'* (P2, I3, p. 9). Lazarus stated that he felt encouraged and supported by the Department of Basic Education when they invested in his development as a teacher and said, *'We are doing fine, we attend workshops'* (P4, I1, p. 4). Moeketsi agreed that *'continuous training will be very important'* (P2, I1, p. 4).

4.11.2 CATEGORY T: EXTERNAL PROTECTIVE RESOURCES IN THE EXO- AND MACROSYSTEMS

The participants in this study reflected on their life journeys and brought insights regarding their experiences of apartheid and poverty that seemed to act as external protective resources in their current demanding jobs. It seemed that they had internalised the value of struggling to reach self-worth and as a result had learnt from their own dealings with adversity.

a. Subcategory T1: *Post-apartheid shields and insights*

Moeketsi remarked that *'the curriculum has changed, the injustices have been addressed you develop a lot with time, I would say the challenge is still there, but we are enjoying, we seem to prepare a better generation'* (P2, I1, p. 1). The lesson that he learnt from apartheid was that there is strength in working together as a team with a common goal: *'Later he called me on the school ground and proudly introduced me to his 'comrades' at school – fellow teachers who are also part of the union. He wanted their picture together as another picture that resembles his resilience – their support and like-minded drive'* (Field notes, 5 September 2012; P2, Ph4) (refer to Photograph 4.16). Gogo referred to her picture of Robben Island and said that Mr Mandela's release and subsequent actions had inspired her because of his incredible capacity for *'forgiveness'* (P3, I3, p. 17; P3, Ph2) (refer to Photograph 4.2). Moeketsi mentioned that financial support opportunities were offered at the tertiary institution where he studied, which was a post-apartheid protective factor (P2, I2, p. 11, 18). Emma wrote about the availability of *'lots of resources than before'* (P1, MB, p. 1). Lazarus spoke with fondness of his job at the butchery: *'... the time I was going to the butchery... I can say they did not want us to use the English'* (P4, I3, p. 16). and he was forced to speak Afrikaans, However, this turned out to be to his advantage, as he proudly announced *'because I know the Afrikaans...ek kan...nou ek gebruik Afrikaans baie'*²¹ (P4, I3, p. 16).

²¹ Translation: 'I can...now I use Afrikaans often'.

b. Subcategory T2: Lessons from poverty

Participants talked about how growing up in a rural setting had sensitised them to becoming responsible adults. Lazarus said that *'in the rural area...after school...I was a herd boy in fact,...I can say I think that's made me to change my attitude a little bit...in fact I can say for me to be a herd boy...it was taking me away of doing funny things with friends because now I was alone as herd boy in the bush...I had responsibilities'* (P4, I2, pp. 3-4). Despite being a girl, Gogo also took care of cattle: *'I still remember when we grow at home...there were a lot of cattle at home, no boys to take care of them and my father was in Durban, and I had to look after [them]...it taught me a lot of thing[s] because you know when you are in the veld...you look after cattle...meeting the boys there. You know I learned...how the boys behave...how to fight...using the sticks...how to plough...with the ox'* (P3, I1, p. 4). Gogo's responsibilities as a child are further illustrated by the picture of a girl carrying water on her head (P3, Ph2; and referred to in P3, MB, p. 2) (refer to Photograph 4.2). In this regard she commented: *'... so every time I do not want to see a child carrying this'* (P3, I2, p. 15). As mentioned earlier Emma also had chores to do after school (P1, I1, p. 3). As a result of her circumstances Emma grew up to appreciate the things in life that are so often taken for granted, such as water (P1, Ph2) (refer to Photograph 4.17). Emma explained her picture of the sea: *'The ocean, according to me or the big river, to me it symbolises life. Even if you don't have food but as long as you have water, you can survive. Water is very light, unlike in case of food. And the only thing that we get, is there anything that you get from the water, it is just a source of life. Even if I don't have material things to live off but I still have water to drink and it will quench my thirst and it will satisfy me. The little things that I have it makes me satisfied, I don't have to worry'* (P1, I2, p. 9).



Photograph 4.17:
The ocean
(Emma, P1, Ph2)

Emma said that she actively supported learners who experienced poverty, because she *'does not want them to suffer like me'* (P1, MB, p. 1). Lazarus explained his dedication to education by stating earlier that comes from a rural area and therefore understands the context (P4, I2, p. 20).

Susan said that *'living in a compound situated in an asbestos mine'* (P5, I2, p. 1) had given her and others a sense of belonging (P5, I1, p. 8): *'The mine provided us with shelter, food,*

coal, since it was a very cold place. All the mine houses had stoves and fireplaces...My father occupied a high position at work, so we owned a very big house, enough bedrooms, electricity, bathroom with hot running water...there were many activities that were sponsored by the mine...movies...soccer...swimming' (P5, I2, p. 1). Susan's memories of this time were also captured in her writings (P5, MB. p. 5). After her father passed away and they lost the comforts of good housing Susan recalls *'I think what make me strong was the circumstances that I grew up around...especially being raised by a single parent...sometimes we do not have anything, you walk bare footed...sometimes those circumstances that you came across make you strong'* (P5, I1, p. 15), and *'if you suffered a lot you will say, no let me focus on one thing, so that I can escape from this poverty'* (P5, I3, p. 20).

4.12 SUBTHEME 3.3: THE ENDURING EXTERNAL PROTECTIVE RESOURCES TEACHERS USED OVER THEIR LIFE SPAN FOR RESILIENCE (PAST AND CURRENT)

The walls of the bulb were ... warmed by the little sunbeams.

In Subtheme 3.3 I present enduring external protective resources that teachers experienced over their life span. Rural teachers identified such protective resources in their mesosystem as the continuing support given by family and significant parents.

4.12.1 CATEGORY U: EXTERNAL PROTECTIVE RESOURCES IN THE MESOSYSTEM

Enduring protective resources are those that carried through childhood into adulthood. Teachers used the support from their family and significant parents as lasting resources to cope with chronic adversity.

a. Subcategory U1: *Motivation by and support received from family*

Participants described how family had played a vital role in supporting them as young people and adults. Gogo's family members allegedly played an important role as caregivers, and especially her encouraging mother as noted earlier (P3, I3, p. 13; P3, Ph3) (refer to Photograph 4.4). Gogo wrote that her *'young sister was left with my grandparents [when] my father took us to Durban'* (P3, MB, pp. 1-2). Moeketsi shared the inspiration that he got from knowing his grandfather was a *'highly educated person'*, which made him think, *'Why can't we do it for ourselves also?'* (P2, I2, p. 2). Gogo's grandfather was a chief who inspired her: *'Hey, wena I'm proud, really I'm very proud. But you know my grandfather, is known, he lived a legacy. I can say so'* (P3, Ph3; P3, I3, p. 14) (refer to Photograph 4.4).

Moeketsi 's parents *'were always there for me...they wanted better for everybody, so they just give us opportunities, and say explore the opportunity'* (P2, I2, p. 5). Lazarus drew inner strength from his family and said, *'Yes, they are supportive, definitely'* (P4, I1, p. 3). He was financially supported by his sister while studying: *'Fortunately enough my sister was working, instead of my father being responsible for paying my tuition fees, it was my sister. Even my clothes my sister was buying for me'* (P4, I2, p. 10). Susan recalled how her *'uncles decided that we should come back to South Africa where my mother was born, so that they would be able to assist us'* (P5, I2, p. 2; and referred to in P5, MB, p. 6). Susan shared that while she was trying to secure employment as a teacher, *'my younger sisters, they supported me, encouraging me, motivating me, give me hope, and my mother, was always there...she is proud even now'* (P5, I1, pp. 3, 7). Gogo's family *'were very happy, and they were supportive'* (P3, I1, p. 2). She stayed with her mother and *'was not paying the rent'* (P3, I1, p. 2) while she struggled financially. Emma was particularly strengthened by the strong bond between her and her sisters: *'My sister and my younger sister and me, we are like this just like a chain'* (P1, I1, p. 3). Her photographs also indicate how family and loved ones have been a source of support to her (P1, Ph3 and Ph4) (refer to Photographs 4.18 and 4.19).



Photograph 4.18:
 Daughter and grandson
 (Emma, P1, Ph3)



Photograph 4.19
 Husband
 (Emma, P1, Ph4)

a. Subcategory U2: *Inspired by a significant parent*

Moeketsi talked about an incident when his mother intervened when he and his sister were arguing about something and her spinal cord was accidentally severed. He said that his mother impressed him, because *'for a quite a long time she never blamed me, as a child...she just take it positively and say...these are my kids. They had an argument and I wanted to stop the argument, this is how I was caught in the middle'* (P2, I2, p. 6). Despite the fact that Lazarus mentioned that he had a troubled relationship with his father while he was growing up, he confessed: *'I realise that no he was trying to lead the way...he was trying to show me in the right way'* (P4, I2, p. 9). Susan mentioned that her father had held *'a high position at work'* (P5, I2, p. 1; and referred to in P5, MB, p. 5) and reflected on how her father's

accomplishment at work made her feel safe and secure (P5, I2, p. 1). She described her mother as an inspiration to her and shared her pride, saying *'we are happy that our mother is still alive after all she has gone through in life'* (P5, MB, p. 7). Emma's mother reportedly also motivated her children: *'My mom used to sit with us and tell us 'ow, my children, this is the situation that I am facing, and then you are my only hope...I am here because of you...so be strong enough'* (P1, I1, p. 2). Her father had passed away when she was still young, but she felt a connection with him and when she felt down, she *'started to think about [her] father's words'* (P1, I1, pp. 2, 5). Gogo shared the story of how her mother had taught her the value of forgiveness: *'So she taught me that oh, forgiveness is there and don't hold grudges for someone, let everything go away so that you continue and that makes me survive in this world'* (P3, I1, p. 4; P3, Ph3) (refer to Photograph 4.4).

In summary, as evident from the data sources referred to above the teachers in this study faced many obstacles and challenges throughout their respective lives. They seemed to have managed these adversities using an arsenal of internal and external protective factors.

4.13 LITERATURE CONTROL: THEME 1, 2 AND 3

Next I compare the results of Theme 1, 2 and 3 to existing literature.

4.13.1 INTRODUCTION

I highlight similarities and contradictions between existing literature and the findings of this study. In order to contemplate new insights embedded within Themes 1, 2 and 3, I completed a literature control. I integrated the literature control of Theme 1 as *adversity* and those of Themes 2 and 3 as *protective resources*. The transactional-ecological processes between adversity and protective resources lie at the core of resilience. In each section I highlight global and local studies undertaken with rural teachers. I include studies that took a life-span approach (but not necessarily with rural teachers) in order to reflect on the parallels with this study. To ensure a thorough discussion, I refer to local and global studies on teacher resilience that were conducted in similar settings (marginalised communities and high poverty), as well as studies undertaken with teachers in urban and suburban areas. The reason for including studies that do not take a life-span approach is to enable a reflective discussion of the similarities and differences between adversities faced and protective resources used by rural and other teachers in their *current* practices. Refer to the literature control tables in Appendix D for a summary of findings that support or contradict existing knowledge about the resilience of rural teachers. In addition, in Appendix D silences in this study are revealed when compared to existing knowledge of teacher resilience in rural and other teachers.

4.13.2 CONFIRMING EXISTING KNOWLEDGE ABOUT RURAL TEACHERS' ADVERSITY AND PROTECTIVE RESOURCES

The findings of this study mostly support existing knowledge regarding teacher resilience. In terms of *current* adversities (Subtheme 1.2) faced by teachers and current protective resources (Subthemes 2.2 ad 3.2) identified by them, it seems that the findings of this study are in line with existing global and local literature. In this regard, I found that rural teachers view resource-constrained teaching settings and unstable education systems as risk factors, or as barriers to their commitment. I found that, like other local and global teachers, the teachers involved in this study identified problem solving, values in education, positive attitudes and spirituality as internal protective resources that they used in coping with adversity. In line with rural teachers internationally, teachers in this study regarded supportive colleagues, successful learners and school leadership as external protective resources. In the discussion below I highlight literature that supports the findings of this study in terms of rural contexts.

4.13.2.1 Global studies focusing on rural teachers

Global studies based in rural teaching settings seem to report similar adversities (teaching in a resource-constrained setting and exposure to an unstable education system) and protective resources (problem solving; education values; reflexivity; spirituality; supportive colleagues and school leadership; and successful learners) experienced in current teaching practices (Abel & Sewell, 2001; Barley & Beesley, 2007; Bouck, 2004; Castro, Kelly & Shih, 2010; Duval & Carlson, 1993; Guenther & Weible, 1983; Hardré, Sullivan & Roberts, 2008; Haughey & Huysman, 2008; Jarzabkowski, 2004; Lock *et al.*, 2009; Malloy & Allen, 2007; Moolenaar, Slegers, & Daly, 2012; Murphy, 1983; Sharplin, 2002; Sharplin, O'Niell & Chapman, 2011; Tytler *et al.*, 2011; Williams, 2003). This study supports the international knowledge that unstable education systems (similar to Subcategory E2) are a serious cause of teacher stress as rural teachers experience a perceived lack of upper-management support (Abel & Sewell, 2001; Castro *et al.*, 2010; Haughey & Murphy, 1983; Huysman, 2008). Like rural teachers in this study (refer to Subcategory E2), rural teachers from United States of America (Abel & Sewell, 2001) and Australia (Castro *et al.*, 2010) also experience adversity in teaching in the form of heavy teaching loads and feel disconnected from their respective departments of education (Castro *et al.*, 2010). Other global studies agree that rural teachers experience professional isolation (Haughey & Murphy, 1983; Sharplin *et al.*, 2011; Tytler *et al.*, 2011). Furthermore, Tytler *et al.* (2011) found that rural teachers in Australia feel disadvantaged because they teach in rural and remote schools (like Subcategory D1). Like the teachers in this study, rural teachers in Australia identify very limited access to resources as a risk factor

(Sharplin, 2002), while rural isolation is perceived as a risk factor by rural teachers in America (Guenther & Weible, 1983). Other components (in line with Subcategory D1) that match conditions perceived as adverse by rural teachers in this study to international knowledge are poverty in rural areas (Bouck, 2004) and low levels of literacy (Jarzabkowski, 2004). The finding of this study that rural teachers feel undermined (refer to Category F) is confirmed by international studies that have found that rural teachers believe that the teaching profession is being undermined by society at large (Haughey & Murphy, 1983; Huysman, 2008).

As was found in global studies, I also found that rural teachers use *internal* protective resources (Subtheme 2.2), such as creative problem solving (Castro *et al.*, 2010; Huysman, 2008), values in education (Duval & Carlson, 1993; Hardré *et al.*, 2008; Huysman, 2008; Williams, 2003), positive attitudes (Duval & Carlson, 1993; Sharplin *et al.*, 2011) and spirituality (Duval & Carlson, 1993) in their teaching practices to sustain their commitment to teaching. As indicated in Subtheme 3.2 (current external protective resources), international research reports on *external* protective resources, such as networking and collegiality (Barley & Beesley, 2007; Haughey & Murphy, 1983; Jarzabkowski, 2004; Moolenaar *et al.*, 2012; Sharplin *et al.*, 2011; Tytler *et al.*, 2011), and positive school leadership (Barley & Beesley, 2007; Lock *et al.*, 2009; Malloy & Allen, 2007; Tytler *et al.*, 2011) as factors that may strengthen rural teachers' commitment to teaching.

4.13.2.2 Global and local studies focussing on teachers in other similar settings

The findings of this study (refer to Subtheme 2.1) seem to confirm existing global research findings, i.e. that empathetic, motivated and positive teachers have a greater ability to overcome adversities in teaching, especially in contexts characterised by high poverty (Brunetti, 2006; Cross & Hong, 2012; Williams, 2003). Furthermore, many international studies (in adverse contexts) have found (similar to Subtheme 1.2) that the significant strain placed on teachers' time causes heightened exhaustion levels in teachers (Aitken & Harford, 2011; Choi & Tang, 2009; Gehrke & McCoy, 2007; Hargreaves, 2005; Lee & Bang, 2011; Prew, 2007; Prieto, 2008).

Locally, this study confirms Rawatlal and Petersen's (2012, p. 351) finding that teachers experience the *punitive* Department of Education as disconnected from them because of the perceived top-down management structure (like Subcategory D1). Furthermore, Daniels and Strauss (2010) and Koekemoer and Mostert (2010) confirm the lack of teaching resources as a current adversity faced by many South African teachers. They allege (as reported in Subcategory E2) that South African teachers often feel disconnected from their macro-employer and experience work overload. Other local research shows that 16 years ago Black

and Hosking (1997) already argued that the former Department of Education (now Department of Basic Education [DBE]) mismanaged the changeover from apartheid to post-apartheid schooling, which left teachers at grassroots level at a loss. Like the teachers in this study who described a lack of communication between teachers and the DBE as an element of adversity in teaching, Black and Hosking (1997, p. 232) highlight “government failure” and “managerial slack” as major reasons why teachers experience the education system as stressful. In agreement with this, Peltzer *et al.* (2009) and Fritz and Smith (2008) found that other South African teachers, like the participants in this study, experience stress because of their negative feelings towards the education department, which are caused by work overload and constant change. Teachers in this study also experienced adversity in the macrosystem because teaching as a profession is being undermined and demoralised in society (Category F). Feelings of being undermined and undervalued are echoed by teachers in the studies conducted by Daniels and Strauss (2010) and Koekemoer and Mostert (2010).

This study furthermore confirms the assertions of local researchers that collegial and family support is an external protective resource (Fritz & Smith, 2008; Koekemoer & Mostert, 2010) that teachers draw on. These studies echo empathy, future plans, religion, problem solving, education values and reflexive practices as internal protective resources used by other South African teachers (Fritz & Smith, 2008; Koekemoer & Mostert, 2010). The South African studies show some similarity to international studies. Brunetti (2006) and Cross and Hong (2012) identify empathy as an internal protective resource for teachers. Sumsion (2003) agrees that having self-insight as a result of reflexivity is evident in resilient teachers. Other global studies confirm risk-taking (Sumsion, 2003), self-directed learning (Mushayikwa & Lubben, 2009), sense of accomplishment (Bobek, 2002) and positive adaptation (Cross & Hong, 2012) as internal protective resources (Subtheme 2.1). It is evident that the teachers involved in the current study rely on external and internal protective resources that are similar to self-directed learning, positive adaptation and sense of accomplishment.

4.13.2.3 Life-span approach: local and global findings confirmed

In terms of adversities faced over a life span (Subtheme 1.3) and protective resources identified (Subtheme 2.1 and 3.3), this study supports existing knowledge that teachers face personal hardship as a risk factor to career resilience (Choi & Tang, 2009; Day & Gu, 2007; Henning, 2000). Furthermore, participating teachers identified empathy (Kirk & Wall, 2010), the will to learn (Hashweh, 2003; Sumsion, 2004) and a sense of accomplishment (Choi & Tang, 2009) as internal protective resources (refer to Subtheme 2.1) over a life or career span.

Two local studies on teacher resilience, based in urban and informal settlement settings, took a similar life-span approach in their methodology (Fritz & Smith, 2008; Henning, 2000). Like I did in Subtheme 1.1 (adversity in childhood), Henning (2000) refers to resilient teachers in her study describing childhood adversities (disadvantaged socio-economic background and effects of segregated living during the apartheid era). Fritz and Smith (2008) report that over a career life, resilient teachers in urban areas are intrinsically motivated, energised, determined and religious, and look beyond challenges, which corresponds with Subtheme 2.1 (internal protective resources over time). These authors found, as I also reported in Subtheme 3.3 (external protective resources over time), that resilient teachers depend heavily on the support and motivation of marital partners and family members. A global life-history study done by Choi and Tang (2009) further confirms these findings. Choi and Tang (2009) found that resilient teachers often display a moral purpose in teaching and are driven by a sense of achievement (see Subtheme 2.1, which deals with internal protective resources over time). Furthermore, they describe the interference of personal life commitments as a reason why teachers' resilience diminishes over time (Choi & Tang, 2009). This finding is echoed in Subtheme 1.3 (adversity over time), where I found that over time significant personal hardship is experienced by teachers as adversity.

4.13.3 CONTRADICTIONS REGARDING EXISTING KNOWLEDGE OF RURAL TEACHERS' ADVERSITY AND PROTECTIVE RESOURCES

Despite the vast amount of existing supportive literature that has already been discussed, some contradictions are also evident. Differences were namely found in respect of the adversities that are currently faced by teachers globally and locally. The key findings are listed next and described below.

- Rural teachers seem to face adversity at school level because of learners' parents' illiteracy, demotivated learners and a national teacher fraternity that remains negative because of a seemingly poorly managed education system *rather* than parental over-involvement; lack of discipline in the classrooms and poor school management.
- Rural teachers did not show dissatisfaction or compassion fatigue in their profession, but *rather* indicated personal hardship, especially hardship caused by poverty, as the chronic adversity they had to face.
- Rural teachers participated in informal professional development activities, as *opposed to* their international counterparts who participate in formally organised professional development programmes.
- Rural teachers seemed to sustain their commitment to teaching by relying on their memories of positive teachers in their childhood instead of relying on current mentoring or professional development practices.

- Teachers in this study relied mostly on their own agency for problem solving, *rather* than on external bodies such as employers, and were driven by actual student achievement and not potential student achievement.
- Teachers in local rural areas are not supported or encouraged by their employers to remain there, but are willing to remain there because of their natural blend with the rural communities (being from rural areas themselves).
- *Instead* of mentoring each other, rural teachers chose to work collaboratively and collectively to share their experience and expertise.
- Teachers in this study did not rely on macro-level support from the Department of Education, but *rather* indicated that local school leadership played a more significant role in sustaining their commitment to teaching.

4.13.3.1 Differences between global and local studies on rural and other teachers

Existing studies show that teachers in high-poverty and hard-to-staff schools typically experience parental over-involvement (Cross & Hong, 2012; Koekemoer & Mostert, 2010), lack of discipline and hostility in classrooms (Aitken & Harford, 2011; Daniels & Strauss, 2010), complex staff relations (Aitken & Harford, 2011) and poor school management (Aitken & Harford, 2011; Myburgh & Poggenpoel, 2002) as sources of adversity in teaching practice. According to the findings of this study, parents' illiteracy, demotivated learners, a negative national teacher fraternity and poor education management at the national level are sources of adversity (Subtheme 1.2). Since the study brief focused on positive adaptation over time, it is possible that teachers highlighted only the sources of adversity that impacted them more significantly than others. Rather than assume that these rural teachers do not experience hostile situations, staff issues or parental over-involvement, I therefore hypothesise that these differences may exist, but were not identified owing to the limited scope of the study.

Some studies conducted locally also highlight job dissatisfaction and job compassion fatigue as reasons for diminishing teacher commitment (Koekemoer & Mostert, 2010; Myburgh & Poggenpoel, 2002). Dissatisfaction and compassion fatigue did not appear as adversities in the data of this study, which revealed that personal hardship experienced by teachers over the life span (Subtheme 1.3), especially in terms of poverty, was more likely to contribute to the experience of adversity. It is possible that teachers in this study did not share their concerns about colleagues, community members or school management because their identities are known to the researcher as a result of the longstanding research partnership between the school and the University. However, it is also possible that the teachers who participated are so positively inclined that they do not experience dissatisfaction or compassion fatigue as having a negative effect on their teaching, and why they explained how their dreams and future career plans (Subcategory L3) sustain their hope and optimism and prevent them from

feeling angry and desperate because of the adversities faced in teaching, as discussed by Nieto (2003).

Global literature reflects more contradictory findings in respect of external protective resources. The reason for these discrepancies may be the dissimilarity between the rural contexts of developing and developed countries (refer to Chapter 2). It seems that global and local teachers identify similar sources of support, but describe different ways of receiving it. In this regard Tytler *et al.* (2011) found that rural teachers in Australia identified organised professional learning teams that hold regular subject-specialist meetings and rural teachers attending conferences and seminars on teaching as external protective factors. In this study, the participating teachers shared wisdom through team teaching within the school (Subtheme 3.2). Teachers in this study seemed to share ideas on teaching in much more informal and incidental ways than the organised support structures found internationally (Subtheme 2.2).

Furthermore, Tytler *et al.* (2011) found that teachers in rural Australia receive *professional* support from their families, while teachers in this study appeared to receive family support at a more *personal* level (Subtheme 3.3) and receive professional support from their peers (Subcategory S1). Contrary to the findings of international studies, I found that rural teachers in this study relied heavily on the positive example set by their own teachers to inspire them to act professionally and sustain their commitment to teaching (Subtheme 3.1). Teachers in this study were motivated by their memories of teachers who had positively influenced their lives as children (Category R), and not by a current guiding mentor (Gehrke & McCoy, 2007) or by taking part in system-wide formal professional development programmes (Tytler *et al.*, 2011).

Furthermore, whereas some teachers in earlier studies have viewed external funding and support by the school district as a protective resource (Brunetti, 2006), the teachers in this study relied mostly on their own agency for problem solving (Category N), often using money from their own pockets to take some initiative in their school. Other protective resources identified in global studies involving rural teachers are that teachers often focus on perceived learner competence (Hardré, Sullivan & Roberts, 2008) and receive emotional support from district officials (Gehrke & McCoy, 2007). Contrary to these findings, I found that teachers were driven by actual student achievement (Subcategory S2) and drew emotional support from colleagues (Subcategory S1), parents and family (Subcategory U1), as well as from school leadership (Subcategory S3). In addition, I found that the teachers in this study preferred support from within the school community (Subtheme 3.2) to support from community and neighbourhood links (Reilly *et al.*, 2011). I conclude that teachers in a developing country appear to have similar strategies (learning from each other), but seemingly act in different ways (namely: drawing from their past experiences in teaching, “flocking” and

using established relationships) to share wisdom and experience. I believe that further research on indigenous supportive structures in rural teaching in developing countries may provide an alternative understanding of the various ways in which the professional development of rural and remote teachers may be facilitated.

Another global study that was conducted with rural teachers found that informal introductory sessions between novice and veteran rural teachers can facilitate a positive teaching experience in rural areas (Jarzabkowski, 2004). However, this study revealed that rural teachers ascribe their successful adaptation to rural teaching to the fact that they come from a rural background (Subcategory T2). Apart from having similar backgrounds, teachers commented that the reason for their commitment to teaching was because of their own adverse backgrounds and their desire to uplift learners in rural areas (Subcategory T2). In contrast, however, Brunetti (2006) asserts that some committed rural teachers who come from a privileged background choose to stay in rural schools because of their urge to give back to society. This may be why international literature on rural teaching, unlike national research, focuses greatly on teacher attrition and strategies for retention in rural areas (Barley & Beesley, 2007; Huysman, 2008; Sharplin, 2002). According to the findings of this study, teachers in local rural areas are willing to remain there because of their natural blend with the rural communities (being from rural areas themselves).

4.13.3.2 A life-span approach: differing protective resources over time

I would like to highlight two studies that took a career-span methodological approach. The first, conducted by Lock *et al.* (2009), found that informal mentoring between colleagues can sustain teacher resilience over different career phases in rural schools. However, in my study it appeared as if participating rural teachers decided to connect with other colleagues in the same school to find teaching solutions in an effort to sustain their commitment to teaching over time (Subcategory N). Therefore the teachers involved in this study seemingly did not mentor others, but chose to work collaboratively and collectively to share their experience and expertise. The second career-span study, undertaken with teachers teaching in high-poverty areas, revealed that macro-employer support can sustain the career resilience of teachers. In contrast, I found that the teachers in this study did not rely on macro-level support from the Department of Basic Education. Rather, they indicated that the local school leadership played a more significant role in sustaining their teacher career resilience (Subcategory S3). More research on how to bring the macro-employer closer to the ground-level teacher may provide insight into how a better working relationship may be facilitated.

4.13.4 SILENCES IN THIS STUDY RELATED TO ADVERSITY AND THE PROTECTIVE RESOURCES OF RURAL TEACHERS

This study remains silent on trends prominent in global and local literature. These silences are indicated next and explained below.

- The findings of this study are silent about rural teachers' negative experiences involving learners.
- The findings of this study are silent about rural teachers facing poor staff relations.
- Another silence in the finding of this study is rural teachers' identification of technology as protective resource.

4.13.4.1 Global and local studies in rural settings

Existing research conducted in rural settings reveal that rural teachers face many learner-related problems. In this regard, Jarzabowski (2004) describes teacher's concerns about low learner retention and high absenteeism in rural schools, as well as learner health problems and prolonged substance abuse, while Howard and Johnson (2004) report on how teachers in high-poverty schools daily face violence and disorder. A local study by Olivier and Venter (2003) also reports on poor discipline among learners. However, the teachers in the current study were silent about such negative experiences involving learners. I believe that their notable silence about such problems does not necessarily mean that learners at this school never play truant or misbehave. Keeping in mind that I was focused on positive aspects, it is possible that the teachers are in fact dealing with such problems daily, but feel that they are managing learner misbehaviour effectively and are therefore not experiencing it as a threat to their commitment. A further investigation into learner behaviour and teacher resilience in rural schools may provide more insight in this regard.

Poor staff relations, which seem to be a common theme in other studies on rural education, is something else about which participants remained silent. Guenther and Weible (1983) note that staff limitations and high teacher turnover, like the teacher shortages reported by Huysman (2008) and career stagnation in teaching (Day & Gu, 2007), can demotivate rural teachers. Other researchers found that micropolitics among staff (Yonezwa *et al.*, 2011) and power struggles between teachers (Huysman, 2008) may contribute to teacher stress at rural schools. Furthermore, previous studies have revealed that teachers are emotionally exhausted (Hargreaves, 2005), suffer from lounge fatigue (Mawhinney, 2010), experience a negative school culture (Aitken & Harford, 2011) and evidently suffer from personal health issues caused by teaching (Choi & Tang, 2009). It is possible that, because of the purposeful selection, the teachers who participated in this study have balanced work-life engagement in such a way that the adversities referred to by other research are managed positively.

Silences with regard to protective resources were also identified. Teachers in the current study did not identify the use of technology to solve problems in teaching (Mushayikwa & Lubbe, 2009) or describe their mentoring of other teachers as a protective resource (Gehrke & McCoy, 2007; Mawhinney, 2010; Tytler *et al.*, 2011). It is possible that these teachers disregard technology as a protective factor because of their age, or because of their limited access to the internet. Other global studies show that support received from professionals outside the teaching profession (Gehrke & McCoy, 2007), in-service training (Tytler *et al.*, 2011) and national professional development support (Yonezwa, Jones & Singer, 2011), which were not identified by the teachers in this study, may act as external protective resources. As mentioned earlier, the possibility exists that the current unstable education context in South Africa as a developing country could cause confusion and irritation at ground level, with the result that the education system will not be regarded as a protective factor. This hypothesis requires further investigation.

4.14 CONCLUSION

To summarise, as is evident from the life histories of the five participants, the mountains of adversity that they experienced over time were significant and very similar to those faced by their local and global counterparts in the teaching profession. However, despite the severe element of retrospectively identified risk, it appears that they could access vast internal and external resources.

Some of the contradictions that were evident highlight the fact that the participating rural teachers in South Africa face a mix of adversity in addition to those also experienced in more affluent and developed societies. Such additional adversities faced by the participants include learners' parents' illiteracy, demotivated learners, negative teachers and chronic poverty. When compared to other teachers, the South African rural teachers who participated appear to navigate towards different protective resources. In particular, participating rural South African teachers used the following protective resources during resilience processes: they drew strength from their own life experiences of adversity (being from rural areas themselves) and they relied on their own agency in problem solving. In addition, compared to other teaching practitioners, participating rural teachers in South Africa used different protective resources to promote their professional development, making use of encouraging memories of their own teachers (from childhood) and participating in informal professional development activities such as collaborative peer discussions, rather than mentoring, to enhance their professional growth. Compared to other teachers, participating rural teachers in South Africa did not indicate technology as a protective resource and did not specify negative experiences involving learners or poor staff relations as adversities.

In the next chapter I will discuss Themes 4 (coping strategies) and 5 (defining moments), which emerged from this study.

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CHAPTER FIVE

TEACHERS TEACHING IN A RESOURCE-CONSTRAINED RURAL SCHOOL: HOW DO THEY CONCEPTUALISE AND SUSTAIN THEIR TEACHER CAREER RESILIENCE?

“[Stories] not only convey information but bring information to life”.

~ Cohen *et al.* (2011, p. 553) ~

5.1 MORE THAN SPIRITED SURVIVAL: BIRTHING HOPE

In Chapter 4 I related the first part of the story of the hardy aloe to Themes 1, 2 and 3 in the section called **Prologue: Conquering mountains**. In this chapter I continue to discuss the transactional nature of the adversities and protective resources that the teachers in this study faced over a life span, alluded to in Chapter 4.

The story of the hardy aloe starts with a description of the adversity (deep winter) it faces. As discussed in Chapter 4, the wintertime and snow is an indication of Theme 1 (adversities faced by rural teachers) in this study. The hardy aloe with its will to bloom despite the cold weather represents Theme 2 (internal protective resources used rural teachers), and the aloe's protective bulb and the friendly sunbeams signify Theme 3 (external protective resources used by rural teachers).

The next part of the story of the hardy aloe is rising action. These are the elements that give rise to the climax of the story. The story of the hardy aloe continues:

‘When will it be spring?’ asked the aloe of every little sunbeam that rapped on its door. But for a long time it was winter. The mountaintop was still covered with snow. The aloe grew quite tired of waiting.

And then the climax:

So the aloe pushed and pushed. The walls of the bulb were softened by the rain and warmed by the little sunbeams. The aloe shot up from under the snow, with a pale green bud on its stalk and long striped leaves on either side. It was still biting cold.

The hardy aloe was on a journey of self-discovery. Before spring could arrive and the plant could be useful to man, it had to survive the cold of winter. In a sense it fulfilled its destiny to birth hope. It follows that the climax of this study is the teacher participants' adaptive developmental processes (Ungar, 2004). I call this section **More than spirited survival: Birthing hope**. The hardy aloe not only survives despite the harshness of the winter cold, it blooms, flourishes and eventually provides joy and protection to others. Metaphorically speaking, this relates to how the participants have negotiated their positive adaptive coping

(Ungar, 2004; Folkman & Greer, 2000), thus relating to the secondary question: *How did teachers in a resource-constrained rural school sustain teacher career resilience?* (refer to Table 5.1).

The climax of a story is usually followed by a falling action or winding down, signifying the end of a story. The story of the hardy aloe winds down like this:

'You are too early, ' said the wind and the weather, but every sunbeam sang, 'Welcome, ' and the aloe raised its head and unfolded itself - a brilliant yellow glow.

The last part of a story typically ties all the loose ends in a final resolution. The message of the story becomes clear to the reader. The story of the hardy aloe concludes:

It was weather to freeze it to pieces, but it was stronger than anyone knew. It stood in its green jagged dress, bowing its head when the snowflakes fell, and raising it again to smile at the sunbeams, and every day it grew stronger, destined to become man's protection.

'Oh!' shouted the children, as they ran past the kraal, 'see the aloe! There it stands so beautiful and proud - our cattle are safe!'

The story of the hardy aloe thus ends on a positive note: it was strong and proud, and it ultimately provided joy and protection to others after a journey of defining moments. The message is clear: the aloe's happy blossoming despite adversity and as a result of special moments symbolises hope to others as it offers protection and joy. In Table 5.1 (on the next page) I provide a summary of Themes 4 and 5 with the relevant subthemes, and categories in relation to the research questions and presentation parts in this study.

5.2 THEME 4: ADAPTIVE COPING STRATEGIES OF RURAL TEACHERS OVER TIME

It stood in its green jagged dress, bowing its head when the snowflakes fell, and raising it again to smile at the sunbeams

5.2.1 INTRODUCTION

The participants showed high levels of personal strength as individuals and described their ability to cope with the adversities throughout their lives with spirit and vigour. Some of their self-descriptions are highlighted next.

I would say the challenge is still there but we are enjoying, we seem to prepare a better generation, that what's keep you surviving.
Moeketsi (P2), Interview 1 (I1), p. 1

Table 5.1: Themes 4 and 5, subthemes, and categories

Thesis Chapter	Presentation Part	Secondary research questions	Results Theme	Results Subthemes	Results Categories
Thesis Chapter Five	More than Spirited Survival: Birthing hope	Secondary question 5 How did teachers in a resource-constrained rural school sustain teacher resilience?	Theme 4 Adaptive coping strategies of rural teachers over time	Subtheme 4.1 Coping behaviour	V1: Problem solving V2: Direct action to solve a problem
				Subtheme 4.2 Coping attitude	W1: Cognitive reframing W2: Extracting positive value from negative events
	Epilogue: Career Satisfied Forever After?	Secondary question 2 How do teachers in a resource-constrained rural school conceptualise their own teacher resilience?	Theme 5 Defining moments whereby rural teachers' conceptualise their own teacher resilience	Subtheme 5.1 'Falling' into teaching	X1: Role of significant teacher during childhood X2: Financial and other considerations
				Subtheme 5.2 Falling 'in love' with teaching	Y: Becoming service-anchored employees
				Subtheme 5.3 Love for teaching, forever after	Z: Hopeful future because of adverse past

I am a survivor. I hate to be a failure in life. If I need something I better took an extra mile ... I will try by all means to reach my destination.
Emma (P1), Interview 2 (I2), p. 6

I am surviving in fact because you know, I said to myself I can do whatever a man can do.
Gogo (P3), Interview 2 (I2), p. 5

I said to myself, no let me not do another thing. Because once I fail ... the doors are going to close... understand, you can change your life for the better ... as a teacher you must try to do your work...You can't complain that classes are overcrowded; no you must do something if you are a teacher to overcome challenges.
Lazarus (P4), Interview 2 (I2), p. 18

*you know, you are only going to survive if you have got passion...
I am staying because of the passion.*
Susan (P5), Interview 1 (I1), p. 7

Theme 4 highlights the adaptive coping strategies of rural teachers that emerged from this study. I identified two subthemes: coping behaviour (Subtheme 4.1) and coping attitudes (Subtheme 4.2). In Subtheme 4.1 I identified problem solving (Category V1) and direct action to solve a problem (Category V2) as coping behaviours. Subtheme 4.2 consists of two categories, where category W1 details cognitive reframing as coping attitude and extracting positive value from negative events, while category W2 features emotional regulation as second coping attitude. A summary of Theme 4 is presented in Table 5.2 (on the next page).

5.3 SUBTHEME 4.1: COPING BEHAVIOUR

So the aloe pushed and pushed.

Coping behaviour signals adaptive actions that participants took to elicit alternative solutions to the problems they have faced over a life span. They engaged in problem solving through dedicated commitment to find solutions to problems (Category V1: problem solving), as well as actively strategising to address problems (Category V2: strategising).

Table 5.2: Summary of results for Theme 4

Theme 4: Adaptive coping strategies of rural teachers over time										
Subthemes	Categories	Indicators for		Data source (s)						
		Inclusion Adaptive coping strategies	Exclusion	I1	I2	I3	MB	Ph	FN	
Subtheme 4.1 Coping behaviour	V1 Problem solving	Adaptive coping behaviour data that relates to the action of solving problems	Adaptive coping behaviour data that relates directly to strategising as coping behaviour		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
				P	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	5	1, 5	2	
	V2 Strategising	Adaptive coping behaviour data that relates to directly strategising as coping behaviour	Adaptive coping behaviour data that relates to the action of solving problems		✓	✓	✓	✓		
				P	3, 5	1, 4	3	1		
Subtheme 4.2 Coping attitude	W1 Cognitive restructuring	Adaptive coping attitude data that relates to finding meaning in adverse events	Adaptive coping attitude data that relates to extracting positive emotions from adverse events		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
				P	2, 3, 4, 5	1, 3, 4	3, 5	3	3	✓
	W2 Emotional regulation	Adaptive coping attitude data that relates to extracting positive emotions from adverse events	Adaptive coping attitude data that relates to finding meaning in adverse events		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
				P	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	1, 2, 3, 4	2, 3	3	1, 3	

Data source key
*I*s = Interviews 1, 2 and 3 in the form of transcriptions; *MB* = Memories written in a Memory Book; *Ph* = Visual data (Photographs symbolizing resilience); *FN* = field notes in researcher diary

5.3.1 CATEGORY V1: *PROBLEM SOLVING*

It seems that teachers in this study have responded adaptively to stressful life and career events by actively finding ways to resolve these problems through seeking alternative and sometimes unconventional solutions. Their adaptive coping was evident even before they became teachers. As young children some participants allegedly presented with analytical thoughts and behaviour, questioning the status quo and showing a desire to change their circumstances for the better. Moeketsi remarked how his teacher at the time said to him: *'you always challenge issues, you want to know'* (P2, I2, p. 3) when he questioned the merit of Bantu Education. Before qualifying as a teacher, when he was still studying, he said, *'so we challenged our professors ... we begin to challenge the system'* (P2, I2, p. 10), and *'we engaged with the management of the campus'* (P2, I2, p. 10) to bring about change. Similarly, as a young girl Gogo took control of her domestic violence situation: *'I ran away, saying I want to learn, I ran away and went to my mom'* (P3, I1, p. 6). In the same way, Susan changed her fate by insisting on taking a subject other than the problematic one that was prescribed for matric. She recalled: *'naturally I ended up teaching the learners business economics, because the principal, sometimes he was not there, then I said, ao, I am a teacher'* (P5, I1, p. 1). Lazarus decided to change his self-destructive ways by choosing an alternative lifestyle saying: *'then but at the end I told myself, no let me quit this thing smoking dagga because I can see this is what contribute to my fail. Then I ended up quit smoking'* (P4, I2, p. 8).

Participants allegedly continued with the same problem-focused coping throughout their lives. Moeketsi stated that he believes that all humans have power as individuals to make a change, saying *'so there is a lot that needs to be done, as long as you have [the] chance to live, make the most of it, keep on engaging, keep on talking about these things (poverty, free education), you see, exhaust all possible means, how can the situation be improved, you see'* (P2, I1, p. 9), and *'no, I won't leave the profession...because you know, leaving, you are not solving anything'* (P2, I1, p. 6). *'To have an extra income'* (P2, I2, p. 15), Moeketsi did supplemental work after hours as *'a part-time employee for ABET'* (P2, I2, p. 17). In his opinion, *'it is better to engage the department'* than to *'run away [because] you are not solving anything'* (P2, I1, p. 6). In this regard Moeketsi chose a picture of his principal (P2, Photograph-description 1), saying *'so I engage him most of the time, you see. So it is like we are two people how are fighting but at the end of the day, fighting for a good cause'* (P2, I2, p. 22). He further stated: *'I want to see myself with Zuma, with the next president sitting...so that I can bring change. You see, it starts there, you see'* (P2, I1, p. 8), *'we shouldn't just sit down and say we shouldn't wait for it (change), you see we must start working hard [if] we really want to make a difference'* (P2, I1, p. 9), and added that if *'you want to reach out [to] the whole world, you see, so it is only teaching that gives you the platform'* (P2, I1, p. 8). Gogo confirmed her commitment to finding solutions by saying, *'despite of all this problems, I did not stop and say*

... there are problems, my parents are divorcing and what so ever challenges are there ... I wanted what I wanted. I just wanted just to get a job, that I will love it, that was that' (P3, I2, p. 13).

Despite a stressful resource-constrained environment, Lazarus also displayed commitment to finding solutions, saying *'I would try and organize maybe, by a way of getting resources, like for instance, I will ask sponsors'* (P4, I1, p. 5). In addition Lazarus explained that *'we improvise'* (P4, I1, p. 4) and *'try to overcome'* (P4, I2, p. 20) the scarcity of sources. For example, when there was a shortage of textbooks, *'I prepare notes for them (the learners) every day'* (P4, I1, p. 4). Similarly, Susan said, *'so we were trying to scout for books'* (P5, I1, p. 9) and later explained that *'if you are focused you can beat anything (referring to poverty)'* (P5, I3, p. 21). Similarly Emma described her attempts to make a difference: *'teaching is about caring for each other, because, eeh, you must create a time, where you have to sit down with your learners, you develop them, and you must have a time to sit down with your learners, those, who are having a problem, those who are not coping, it takes a time for somebody to reveal his or her secret, so must be there for that particular person...you've got to identify the problem, the cause, and you must come up with the solution, by so doing, it means you are helping'* (P1, I1, p. 9; and referred to in P1, MB, p. 1).

Susan displayed problem-solving coping behaviour by finding alternative employment as an ABET facilitator when faced with the *'standstill'* (P5, I1, p. 2) in South African education and *'started selling second-hand clothes for a living up until I decided to go back to Swaziland'* (P5, I2, p. 2). Susan related the same story in her writings (P5, MB, p. 6). Emma, confronted with another's desperate position, *'... started to think about the little boy, what can I do?'* (P1, I1, p. 7). She revealed that *'what I like is challenge'* (P1, I1, p. 10). Emma used her salary from doing substitute teaching *'to buy a tent and chest so that [she] can start [her] own business of catering'* (P1, I1, p. 6), because *'there is something that I can do in order to get an extra income'* (P1, I1, p. 6). Emma further remarked: *'I am trying... because I am dedicated'* (P1, I2, p. 2) when she explained how she continuously tries to overcome the problems in teaching. In her writings she explained these problems as *'challenges'*, indicating that they are problems that can be overcome (P1, MB, p. 1). Gogo explained her ability to adapt to constant change as follows: *'I can be able to stay with different people, from different cultures, different races ... it is difficult for you, to find yourself ... with other people, you know, so it is one thing that makes me, in say I am accommodative ... and adaptable to any situation'* (P3, I2, p. 7). Emma said that she welcomes change: *'it means we must change'* (P1, I1, p. 11) and has the ability to adapt to changes: *'I can change'* (P1, I2, p. 2).

5.3.2 CATEGORY V2: STRATEGISING

In addition to problem-solving, participants in this study seemed to build their resilience by regularly engaging in strategising behaviour. In this regard the staff of the school, facing professional isolation, took action and strategically organised themselves into teaching teams, sharing ideas and finding solutions together. Gogo explained: *'we are using the same instruments, this one was designed by my department, but I have already given it to others, someone is designing something, and we just call in one, and say look at this, this is what I tried to do, we need to improve'* (P3, I1, p. 10). Emma agreed and said that she loves *'sharing the knowledge ... with my colleagues ... I don't have to sit down being alone in an office'* (P1, I2, p. 5). Lazarus explained how he consults with other teachers who are experts in certain fields to clear his own understanding of difficult content when needed: *'because there is one man who is teaching Geography. Maybe if we are having problems he will come to Social Science, we just discuss what problem I'm facing then she will help me out'* (P4, I2, p. 25). Susan seemingly uses a similar strategy, which she explained as follows: *'I am teaching Tourism, I am working hand in hand with the Geography educator, because the fields, they integrate, even the maths educator, Tourism has maths in it, calculation, foreign exchange, if I find that there is something difficult, you know, the maths educator, I come running [and say] Mr X, can you please assist me? He won't say, no I don't have time I also have work that I have to do. He will say, with what mam? ... We sit down, he assist me, there is a team spirit'* (P5, I1, p. 9). The same strategy was confirmed by Gogo, who said: *'if maybe I am teaching and there is one topic that I don't understand, I will just call the deputy, treat this for me in class, the deputy will prepare and go to class, if maybe I don't understand anything, I will just go to the educators themselves, and say hey, you are teaching this subject, can you please help me, okay, mam, this is this and this and this'* (P3, I1, p. 10).

To cope with discipline-related challenges the participants reportedly strategised different ways to confront the issues head on. Susan thought about different strategies to tackle discipline issues in the classroom. Using her *letter-strategy* she would confront learners directly saying: *'you know sometimes I scare them, I would say I will invite your parents, their parents they come from far away and there is no transport to here, immediately when promise the learners okay, I am writing a letter, I am going to invite your parents to come, then the learner will start changing'* (P5, I1, p. 3). Another successful strategy that she apparently uses to discipline learners is a *little black book*: *'they are scared of the principal, and also I have got a book, a black book, they know the learners, I have got three books, I will write you the first one, that one I will be giving you a notice, but once your name gets into the black one then it means your name have been blacklisted to the principal's office'* (P5, I1, p. 5). Gogo explained her strategic discipline technique as follows: *'sometimes I tell them just to go outside and just pick the papers ... just pick the papers, this is your punishment. Within two minutes I want to*

see you here in class and just imagine now it's quiet. Every learner is in class but, two minutes they picked up papers and then I say that in two minutes you are back in class' (P3, I3, p. 16). Emma apparently uses a more personal strategy: *'once I enter the classroom because I know my learners, I was able to see there is something wrong with this one and then when the bell rings I will try by all means to invite her or him to my class so that we can sit down and talk'* (P1, I2, p. 5). Furthermore, she described how her belief in *quality* at the expense of *quantity* drives her teaching: *'my aim is to give the learners a quality education rather than the quantity of work. Yes I can give them eighty class works and home works, of which at the end of the day when you ask them about what they have studied or read, they've got nothing on their mind. I must share the knowledge that I have with them'* (P1, I2, p. 3; and referred to in P1, MB, p. 1). Emma can seemingly cope with the needs of the learners in her classroom because she strategically and actively tries to address them.

5.4 SUBTHEME 4.2: COPING ATTITUDE

I must stretch myself and rise.

To minimise emotional distress the teachers in this study adapted by means of coping attitudes. They shared their meaningful wisdom with learners and developed faith in teaching through cognitively reframing negative experiences (Category W1). The participants also extracted optimistic emotions through emotional regulation (Category W2) from facing chronic adversity.

5.4.1 CATEGORY W1: COGNITIVE RESTRUCTURING

Participants seemed to continuously reappraise their experiences of adversity. They used the reappraisal to focus on what they could learn from their past. They then used this knowledge in their current actions to benefit others. Some participants described how they *'adopted'* children in the school (P3, I1, p. 5; P1, I2, p. 2; P5, I1, p. 10). Susan clarified the use of the word *'adopted'* saying, *'no, it's not the formal one...you take care of their educational needs especially ... it's just that you are a person who wants to help'* (P5, I3, p. 12). Lazarus explained how he, like the teacher that had impressed him when he was a schoolboy, uses humour and *'not showing favouritism towards any learners'* (P4, I1, p. 2) as techniques of managing his classroom positively despite the stress of not having enough resources. Gogo reported that she also uses humour in the classroom: *'you know when I am [in] class, sometimes I just pose a joke, I do not come out of class without posing a joke...I will bring them a certain scenario...and say, just think of this, this is like this, then I will pose a joke, they will laugh, sometimes they will bring their own jokes'* (P3, I1, p. 11). According to Gogo, a good relationship with learners means that you *'must be very strict, but [you] should love the*

children' (P3, I3, p. 16; and referred to in P3, MB, p. 4). She reiterated this sentiment when describing her picture of a door as symbolising her availability to learners and others (P3, Ph5).

Gogo further described how her personal sacrifice in the face of rural education benefits her learners explaining *'I am sacrificing a lot, I don't mind coming here at school, to camp with my learners, on the weekend alone, sleeping with them on the floor ... teaching them from Friday to Sunday morning, extra class, already this year I started it at the beginning of the year ... it means that they just get help ... they just came to me and say mam, when are we camping again ... they organize themselves ... and I don't want a cent, I just want to see them passing'* (P3, I1, p. 3; P3, Photograph-description 1). Gogo has committed herself to be a voice for children. According to Gogo, *'there is no-one who can speak on their [the children's] behalf'* (P3, I1, p. 5) and she believes that *'there is something that we can do'* (P3, I2, p. 9), so she makes it her mission to *'encourage my learners, and say hey, don't depend upon someone, just think, what is it that you are going to do, in order to continue'* (P3, I1, p. 11). Gogo related how she *'will take the money (that the learners raised by themselves) and request a [further] subsidy from the school and then I just went to buy some food'* (P3, I1, p. 4) in order to provide extra classes to the learners over weekends.

Another way that participants re-appraised their life histories to find meaning was to identify the good that came out of their own challenged lives. Despite run-ins with the law and falling under the pressure of friends, Lazarus said: *'I was enjoying my life, in fact I can say I enjoyed all my years from primary to high school'* (P4, I2, p. 11). Gogo could not afford to complete her final school years, but remained positive: *'No you know what I did, I went to the college, I taught, because after Grade, Standard 8, I taught for five years'* (P3, I2, p. 11). She added that *'despite all of this problems ... I took the opportunity that was available by that time and said let me get into it'* (P3, I2, p. 13). There was no teacher to teach Susan Business Economics in matric, so she ended up teaching herself and other learners because of her positive adaptation. She decided that *'it means I can be a teacher, if I can make the other learners understand the same level as me, giving them information, teaching them'* (P5, I1, p. 1).

In addition to focusing on the good of what has happened many participants went further and used the meaning they derived from their own life histories in discussing contemporary issues in the classroom, thereby offering life lessons to their learners, thus sharing their wisdom with them. Moeketsi said that he uses teaching *'to talk about these issues'* (P2, I1, p. 2), referring to his own history of abuse and poverty, to invest in a better future mentioned earlier (P2, I1, p. 1). He gave the following example: *'you start in class to encourage, to advise learners in terms of career paths, as a contributing citizen...what do you want to do for your country?...so you see, you advise them...so they are able to choose'* (P2, I1, p. 8). Lazarus reportedly also

uses his own life experiences when teaching: *'I share these stories with Grade 12 to make them realize...'* because, as he said earlier he believes you can make changes to your own life as he has done (P4, I2, p. 19), as does Gogo, who shares her life story with the learners in her class to *'motivate'* (P3, I1, p. 5) them. Susan reported that *'when I try to motivate this, learners...I find that when I tell them about how life was difficult for me, immediately when I'm telling the learners about the experience you find that it becomes quiet in the classroom'* (P5, I3, p. 21). Gogo explained: *'you know in rural areas the parents are not educated, and we are encouraging the learners to change the situation, [we will say] you cannot leave [school] because in the end of the day they will go and work at the farms, so, we are trying, and saying, take responsibility of your future, you are the only one that will be facing your future, and not the friends and not anyone else, even your parents too'* (P3, I1, p. 11).

It appears as if the participants also adapted because they have developed a positive dedication to teaching and as a result experienced job satisfaction despite the resource-constrained setting they worked in. After listening to them and observing their positive mind-over-matter attitude, I concluded that they have made a choice to be satisfied with their career following constant reappraisal of their situation. I reflected: *'Not one teacher participant was absent! Over the 18-month period they were all there, always! This is dedication! I learnt something from their behaviour – being satisfied with your career is a choice, not an emotion – it is a decision to see the positive in your environment, it is an active effort of mind over matter to deal with adversity. It is a wilful action! I can see this in their dedication, in their positive engagement with learners and with their belief in education. I wish all teachers were like this!!! I wish I knew how we can 'breed' more such teachers'* (Field notes, 14 September 2012). In this regard Moeketsi expressed his enjoyment of teaching as *'I am enjoying myself now ... the challenge is still there but we are enjoying'* (P2, I1, p. 1). He also said, *'maybe if I decide to quit because of money, I don't think I will be happy, you see, because the problem will still exist'* (P2, I1, p. 7). Gogo expressed the same sentiment when she said, *'it is the love for my job, I love to teach, I don't mind if the salary isn't worth what I am delivering to the department'* (P3, I1, p. 3); and *'so you know every time I am at school, I am happy'* (P3, I2, p. 7). Lazarus stated that he finds teaching *'rewarding'* (P4, I2, p. 20) and remarked that *'I enjoy teaching'* (P4, I2, p. 22). Susan said, *'you know I enjoy it (referring to teaching)'* (P5, I1, p. 9), and Emma reported to be *'proud of being a teacher'* (P1, I2, p. 2).

5.4.2 CATEGORY W2: EMOTIONAL REGULATION

The participants in this study seemed to consistently regulate their emotions by extracting constructive emotions out of negative circumstances as a way of dealing with adversity. Despite the severe conditions Moeketsi experienced during apartheid, he showed an unwavering optimism in the belief that *'one day we will overcome, we will have a system*

where all this things, will be the past' (P2, I2, p. 3) and even recognized that *'change is there*' (P2, I1, p. 9). He explained his encouraging message despite the destructive past as *'How do I reach to all people? You see, not all of us can be presidents, consider teaching as a platform, to make difference in somebody's life*' (P2, I1, p. 8), and *'I am doing something, I am going to talk to the kids, you see, so [it] is good, there must be something that wakes you up in the morning*' (P2, I1, p. 8). Similarly Susan said: *'so why I teach them, I want them to be something, I am always looking forward to seeing them in higher positions*' (P5, I1, p. 10). Emma expressed an optimistic message by saying: *'I can encourage learners, those who are struggling knowing that where they are it is not their destiny, there is a better place for them and one thing that they must do like I did ... no one is going to suffer, unless you allow the situation, no one is going to suffer. As long as you've got a mind, you've got the hands for the food and the sky is the limit*' (P1, I2, p. 6).

The participants seemingly all shared an optimistic outlook on life and teaching despite limited resources and typically spend their emotional energy looking for ways to make things better. Moeketsi said that *'you develop a lot with time*' (P2, I1, p. 1) and stated that he is motivated to remain in teaching because he *'was able to advance*' (P2, I1, p. 2), and *'teaching give me a lot of experience*' (P2, I1, p. 1). Similarly, Lazarus shared his view that despite a troubled school career (repeating grades and getting into trouble with the law) he remained dedicated at college *'maybe because I was on my own ... no one was going to report to my parents because you know when you are at college ... you understand, you know your responsibilities, you know why you are at college*' (P4, I2, p. 17). Susan said that after having taught in South Africa for such a long time, *'I am getting used to some of the things*' (P5, I1, p. 4). Moeketsi further related how he thought about change in a positive manner: *'certain provinces perform and come at top as compared to others, you see, what mechanisms, strategies are they using? ... you see, how do they do things? So you see, you take the experience, and go back and implement it somewhere*' (P2, I1, p. 5).

Lazarus confidently remarked that *'every day you learn new things*' (P4, I2, p. 20), with Gogo displaying her optimistic reflexivity by saying: *'I can say to myself for the years that I have worked, really I am a light to other people*' (P3, I2, p. 18; P3, Photograph-description 1), and *'yes, I am a light to other people because you might find that maybe I do not see, but other people can say, I am doing what I am doing because I have been encouraged*' (P3, I2, p. 18). She added: *'if I think of Robben Island I say to my mind Mandela was in Robben Island for twenty-seven years without seeing his parents, without seeing his people. Yes I can see it's painful but I'm staying with my parents, I'm staying with my children and for him he was not even allowed to see them*' (P3, I3, p. 17). This thought apparently reminds her to remain progressive. In addition, in her writings Gogo declared that her goal is to influence the new generation in terms of *'positive values*' (P3, MB, p. 4). According to Lazarus, *'as a teacher you*

must try to do your work' (P4, I2, p. 21), because *'if these learners can become something even the country is going to develop'* (P4, I1, p. 3). Emma summarised her investment in education by saying, *'I am a parent, I am not your friend, I am not a teacher only in front of you, I am a teacher, I am a parent, I am a guardian, I am a counsellor, I am everything for you'* (P1, I1, p. 7).

Another form of emotional regulation evident from this study was for teachers to find value in the worth of mutual appreciation despite a less than optimal school environment. On the one hand Susan felt that she was appreciated because the parents of her school *'come, sometimes they phone you, [and say] thank you very much!'* (P5, I1, p. 10), while Gogo said: *'I can see they (the parents) are recognising, what I am trying to do to them (the learners), because I have just extended a hand...they acknowledge what I am doing, the parents are trusting me...they respect me'* (P3, I1, p. 5). On the other hand, Susan explained how she herself appreciated her principal's support: *'he's understanding, loving, and he is a good listener'* (P5, I1, p. 9). Gogo said that she appreciates her deputy principal's understanding of work-related pressures and not keeping to deadlines, explaining that *'he is not blaming us because he knows ... he is just supporting us, that is why in our consultation in the morning he just request from the educators, please guys, submit, please guys'* (P3, I1, p. 9). Moeketsi expressed that *'when people acknowledge your good work'* (P2, I3, p. 12) it develops his belief in himself and his own resilience. Referring to the newly introduced National Curriculum, Moeketsi shared his appreciation of the change: *'it's good, because it goes back to the basics, more structured, unlike the confused OBE²², NCS²³'* (P2, I1, p. 4). Emma's description of the sea – symbolising her appreciation for the little things in life that sustain her, such as water – indicated the wilful decision to be satisfied with what she has (P1, Ph2).

Furthermore the coping attitude of emotional regulation was apparently initiated through appreciation experienced as young people. In this regard Moeketsi remarked: *'So they (his teachers), they appreciated me, so much, because I was one kind of a learner who was disciplined, very disciplined'* (P2, I2, p. 4). Emma, incredibly proud, shared the following: *'I wrote an essay in my mother tongue ... it means, you have to persevere. So I wrote it, unaware of what I am saying, it was a relevant topic, and it was in my history, and then after two days the teacher took the essay and he went to the formals and he read the essay, saying, you fail to write a proper essay, listen to this essay ... and then it was out of 50 and my score: 50 out of 50'* (P1, I1, p. 3). Similarly Gogo related how her parents appreciated her responsible behaviour as a child, saying *'you know my parents used teach me something and you know I listened to them'* (P3, I2, p. 4). Lazarus mentioned his gratitude towards a fair teacher when he was a learner at school, explaining that *'he was treating all the learners the*

²² Outcomes-Based Education.

²³ National Curriculum Statement.

same, he was not showing favouritism towards the learner, so I said to myself, one day, I want to be like this guy' (P4, I1, p. 2).

5.5 EPILOGUE: CAREER-SATISFIED FOREVER AFTER?

This section focuses on Theme 5 of this study (defining moments). I namely discuss how participants engaged with defining moments in their life span to manage their sustained coping and career resilience despite the on-going experience of adversity. In this manner, Theme 5 addresses the following secondary research question: *How do teachers in a resource-constrained rural school conceptualise their own teacher resilience?*

5.6 THEME 5: DEFINING MOMENTS WHEREBY RURAL TEACHERS' CONCEPTUALISE THEIR OWN TEACHER RESILIENCE

The aloe shot up from under the snow

5.6.1 INTRODUCTION

As participants shared their memories of past experiences, their current actions and their beliefs for the future, I was able to reconstruct their life histories in a narrative way. I introduced their narratives in Chapter 1, as a way to foreground their knowledge in this study. Some of their visions and future beliefs are quoted next.

so we want people who will develop passion and say we are the ones who are supposed to make the change in the system.... I want to see myself with Zuma, with the next president sitting, and telling him the importance. I want to see myself [as] the minister of education; so that I can bring change... it starts there.

Moeketsi (P2), Interview 1 (I1), p. 8

so it means we must change our behaviour, we must change our behaviour as teachers and I know it is hard.

Emma (P1), Interview 1 (I1), p. 11

I am accommodative and adaptable to any situation, to me it is fine.

Gogo (P3), Interview 2 (I2), p. 7

you must be flexible, you must also change, you must not be rigid, otherwise you will be frustrated.

Susan (P5), Interview 1 (I1), p. 7

...what makes me to stay? ... I want to build this country...so because now we don't have a textbook, I prepare notes for them every day ... we improvise.
Lazarus (P4), Interview 1 (I1), p. 4

A cross-case analysis of each life history revealed three subthemes. All the participants did not necessarily enter the teaching profession by choice (Subtheme 5.1); participants anchored themselves in teaching (Subtheme 5.2); and participants seemingly developed a hopeful future because of the adversities they themselves had faced as young people (Subtheme 5.3). Subthemes 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3 provide the foundation of the participants' own conceptualization of their resilience in teaching. These themes are summarised in Table 5.3.

5.6.2 SUBTHEME 5.1: 'FALLING' INTO TEACHING

'Come in,' said the aloe.

A cross-case analysis of the life histories of the five participants revealed that each participant entered the teaching profession in a happenstance way (Krumboltz, 2009; Miller, 1983). I found that none of the teachers initially had teaching as a career in mind. They were influenced either by a significant teacher during childhood (Category X1) or chose teaching because it was a financially suitable option at the time (Category X2). In the following subsections I illustrate the categories with *combined* vignettes taken from all the interview-conversations.

5.6.2.1 Category X1: *Role of significant teacher during childhood*

Some participants' choice of career is directly related to a significant teacher during their childhood. Moeketsi believed that he could make a difference to the injustices of political segregation by becoming a lawyer. When his History teacher challenged this idea, Moeketsi changed his career choice. Moeketsi said: *'when I was in Grade 12, at that time, you see I, I chose to be a lawyer, jah, so my history teacher used to tell me, don't be a lawyer, you are going to be a good teacher one day, you that's when I started developing the passion ... the reason why I chose law as my first choice as career, you see at that time in terms of rights, during apartheid, we did not have rights you see and the justice system was just favouring the apartheid's regime, you see, so I thought going there and make sure that representation in terms of equality'* (P2, I2, p. 1).

Table 5.3: Summary of results for Theme 5

Theme 5: Defining moments whereby rural teachers' conceptualise their own teacher resilience										
Subthemes	Categories	Indicators for			Data source (s)					
		Inclusion	Exclusion		I1	I2	I3	MB	Ph	FN
Subtheme 5.1 'Falling' into teaching	X1 Role of significant teacher during childhood	Defining moments in the data indicating the role of a significant teacher during childhood that encouraged participants to choose teaching	Defining moments in the data indicating financial and other considerations in choosing teaching as a career		✓					
				P	2, 5					
	X2 Financial and other considerations	Defining moments in the data indicating financial and other considerations in choosing teaching as a career	Defining moments in the data indicating the role of a significant teacher during childhood that encouraged participants to choose teaching		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
				P	1, 3, 4	4	3, 4	1	4	
Subtheme 5.2 Falling 'in love' with teaching	Y Becoming service-anchored employees	Defining moments in the data describing how participants developed a service-anchor	Defining moments in the data describing happenstance entrance to teaching of future hope		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
				P	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	1, 2, 3, 4	3, 4, 5	1, 5	1, 3, 5	1, 4
Subtheme 5.3 Love for teaching, forever after	Z Hopeful future because of adverse past	Defining moments in the data revealing participants' hope for the future as a result of their adverse past	Defining moments in the data revealing happenstance entrance and becoming service-anchored employees		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
				P	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	1, 2, 4	2, 5	1, 3, 5	1, 3, 5	1
Data source key										
<i>Is = Interviews 1, 2 and 3 in the form of transcriptions; MB = Memories written in a Memory Book; Ph = Visual data (Photographs symbolising resilience); FN = field notes in researcher diary</i>										

Susan's dream was to become a nurse like her aunt. She realised that she had a talent for teaching when she had to do peer instruction, upon request of a teacher, in a South African school: *'during my high school years, it was like I wanted to be a nurse, ja, I wanted to be a nurse, when I grew up I said I am going to be a nurse because I was inspired by my aunt, my aunt was a qualified nurse, so when I was visiting my aunt, she was now going to work, wearing the white uniform with the applets, the stockings, the high heel, when she was moving, I said oh, wanted to be a nurse ... I finished my matric in Swaziland ... when I came to South Africa I wanted to continue with my studies they said I must first obtain the grade 12 certificate, so when I enrolled with one of the schools, I had a problem with Afrikaans, because in Swaziland we didn't do that ... the time that these papers came for registering I entered business economics ... so now what has happened, I was supposed to learn business economics on my own, then some of the learners, they wanted to join me, but there was no teacher ... I ended up teaching the learners business economics, because the principal, sometimes he was not there, then I said, ao, I am a teacher, it means I can be, then I developed a love, yes because for the next period, for the following day I had to go and prepare a chapter so that I am able to teach the learners ...while I was still a learner, yes, that is where I discovered myself and said okay, I am a born teacher, that is where I discovered this'* (P5, I1, pp. 1-2).

5.6.2.2 Category X2: Financial and other considerations

Other participants faced the financial reality associated with a developing country. Gogo wanted to study law or social work, yet could not afford this. She applied to study for so-called more available jobs (where financial assistance in the form of bursaries was available) namely nursing and teaching. Gogo related: *'I wanted to be a social worker or a lawyer ... It's not that I wanted to be a nurse, because now by that time job was really scarce that is why I applied nursing ... [I was interested in social work and law because] I'm very touched when I'm sad ... Most of the time you are working with the people who are very poor, I just want to take care of them ... That is why when I grew up I wanted to be a social worker to take care of people ... the problem was money ... It was good to do teaching because I did not register as an educator and I only had hundred and fifty rand. They took ninety rand and I was left with sixty rand. I was supposed to survive for the whole year with sixty rand'* (P3, I3, pp. 4-6).

Emma wanted to become a social worker, but was not accepted into the social work programme because of not meeting the entrance requirements at the time. She decided to enroll for teaching because it was the only other financially achievable option that resembled social work. Emma shared her story: *'I went to the University of the North, but my aim was to be a social worker, and when I arrived they say no mammy [you do not meet] the criteria ... I say okay why, even if they don't grant me a chance to study for a social worker, let me opt for*

teaching because teaching and social worker is similar, and then is where now I choose teaching as my career' (P1, I1, p. 4).

Lazarus seemed to have 'fallen' into teaching due to a combination of the influence of a significant teacher and financial constraints. Lazarus never considered becoming a teacher. He wanted to earn money to live comfortably. However, he was compelled to choose teaching because of poverty since choosing teaching was an easier financial route to become educated. He struggled to find employment as a teacher but through his memories of encouraging school teacher she remained motivated to find a teaching position. Having entered the teaching profession he since developed a service-anchor, investing in the development of South Africa. He described his experience: *'Not at all (thinking of becoming a teacher?). I did not have that idea not at all, in fact for me I was just going to school for the sake of go to school because of parents ... Not knowing which career to take by then (referring to when he was at school) [and] because my parents, both of them were not educated ... I was looking up at my teachers as the one who can train me, they were understand where I am coming because my mom was not educated ... I was impressed by this teacher who was teaching me ... my idea, I was thinking of working in the mines ... my father, his friends were driving beautiful cars. Then I said to myself, these people are getting good salaries. Maybe if one day I can become a mine worker, I'm going to be able to buy my own car ... I was sitting at home, I was thinking let me go to college ... To get education and I was thinking, this is the easier road for me to achieve what I want ... it was easy because even the tuition fees (for teacher education) by then it was not that much expensive' (P4, I1, pp. 2-4; P4, I2, pp. 9-13).*

5.6.3 SUBTHEME 5.2: FALLING 'IN LOVE' WITH TEACHING

I must reach up, and say 'good morning' to the spring.

The participants in this study seemingly all developed a service-anchor (Schein, 2006). Their commitment to the future of children namely stemmed from a career anchor of service and dedication.

5.6.3.1 Category Y: *Becoming service-anchored employees*

Moeketsi's passion and his commitment to educate African children acted as a driving force to sustain his resilience in teaching. Moeketsi said preparing a better generation mentioned earlier: *'keep you surviving, you see, for [an] African child education is the most important thing, and to give them that education, you see ... that has driven me, and one day we will overcome, we will have a system where all this things, will be the past ...how many children have left school because of the conditions, during apartheid ... that [if learners are] not*

educated, it is like a lost nation... be patriot, love your country, and think about what is the best thing that I can do for my country, I want to be a contributing citizen, but what do I do? How do I reach to all people? You see, not all of us can be presidents, consider teaching as a platform, to make difference in somebody's life' (P2, I1, pp. 1, 6, 8; P2, I2, p. 3).

Gogo's service-anchor became apparent as she described her drive to improve the country and shape the future: *'no it is the love for my job, I love to teach, I don't mind if the salary isn't worth what I am delivering to the department, for me each and every day I am educating the nation, I just want to see a change, I just want to empower those young kids, and say [to them]: do whatever you do, for me I just want to you to be more than what I am ... you know my learners, I can see that what I am teaching them, they can benefit ...being an educator, and keeping on, I think one other things is just to mould the learners for the future' (P3, I1, pp. 3, 8, 11).*

Emma allegedly anchored herself in teaching because of her dedication to service despite the continuous struggle to find employment and teaching in a resource-constrained setting: *'Unfortunately after completing my studies I stayed 12 years being unemployed ... 12 years. And then my dream shatters ... there are learners who come to me crying, saying that they don't have school uniforms, wearing the torn shoes, the torn shirt, ... especially in this Mpumalanga province ...one salary it needs to satisfy many people ... teaching is about caring for each other, because, eeh, you must create a time, where you have to sit down with your learners, you develop them, and you must have a time to sit down with your learners, those, who are having a problem, those who are not coping, it takes a time for somebody to reveal his or her secret ...why am I a teacher? ...this is the place that I belong and I wish all children must be educated, irrespective of their background ... I am proud of being a teacher, because to be a teacher, being a teacher to me means a lot. I am not just an educator, I am a social worker, a parent, a guardian, a pastor, a councillor' (P1, I1, pp. 5, 9; P1, I2, p. 2).*

Lazarus has anchored himself in teaching because of his developed sense of service. He indicated that he realises that children at school need a leader and that he is fulfilling that role. He said: *'for me to be a teacher is not about the money, I want to help our country in [every] which way, in other words, I want to help these learners to be something in future, I am not doing it to be paid, the reason to be in this profession is about a big South Africa. Because if these learners can become something even the country is going to develop, because I understand we are a developing country, without education a country can't develop, won't move forward' (P4, I1, p. 3).*

Susan's early adult life showed a growing passion for and general enjoyment of teaching, despite the challenges she faced. Her passion for teaching grew because of her concern for children and the consequent service she could provide: *'my concern here is the child, I am*

concerned about the child, I want to lead the child from childhood to adulthood, and also to unlock the realities of life, that is why I like teaching, sometimes you know I always imagine a child this one, has got wonderful this, this one has got that, this one has got a voice, this one can be broadcaster, you know, sometimes I place children somewhere, of which I always think, I think this one is a lawyer, naturally, this one is that, this one is an educator, so that is why I teach ...I tell them, that is what motivates them, I always want to see them somewhere, you know sometimes it becomes very painful, you walk across the street, you will find your former learner is working, digging somewhere, they are working next to the road, it becomes very painful, because that is not where I want them to be, I want them to be somewhere in the offices, holding higher positions, so why I teach them, I want them to be something, I am always looking forward to seeing them in higher positions' (P5, I1, p. 10).

5.6.4 SUBTHEME 5.3: LOVE FOR TEACHING, FOREVER AFTER

There it stands so beautiful and proud - our cattle are safe!

The participants appeared to foster an optimistic view of the future. Their optimism was seemingly born out of adversity. Furthermore, the data revealed that teachers (because of their own adverse past) are dedicated to model a hopeful view of the future.

5.6.4.1 Category Z: *Hopeful future because of adverse past*

Susan's ability to be a flexible teacher, and adapt to constant change in the teaching profession, reportedly provided her with a future vision of hope and is driving her sustained commitment. She stated: *'I started as a volunteer, for a year, no salary...teaching is very very challenging, you know, you are only going to survive if you have got passion ... the only thing that I have noticed they keep on introducing new things ... if you are just here because you want to be paid, you won't survive, there is too much work, in this education system, more focus is on paper work and paper work, than with the learners, there is no ample time spent with the learners ... I am staying because of the passion ... the only thing that will survive, is when change come you must be flexible, (laughing) you must also change, you must not be rigid, otherwise you will be frustrated, (laughing)'* (P5, I1, pp. 2, 7). Central to Susan's idea of commitment in teaching is that the individual should be flexible and passionate about teaching. Susan realised that she developed a love for teaching after she discovered that her talents are adaptable and zealous.

The life-span development of Lazarus' resilience was allegedly informed by his conviction that growing up in a rural area had prepared him to deal with adversity. He could sustain his teacher resilience by having an optimistic attitude regarding his past and the road that he had traveled on an emotional level. He said: *'I share these stories with grade twelve. To make*

them realize that if in life you make mistake, it does not necessary mean you can't change. Understand, you can change your life for the better. I understand because I'm coming from a rural area and that is why I understand working around here ... you must do something if you are a teacher to overcome challenges ... it comes from the things that I went through, understand. That's why I'm saying because I'm from a rural, I know everything, I know challenges ... But for me because I'm from a rural area I know this thing, class is overcrowded, no text books. But me, I understand the situation ... If in life you make a mistake, it does not necessary mean you can't change. I want to help these learners to be something in future, I am not doing it to be paid, the reason to be in this profession is about a big South Africa' (P4, I2, p. 19, 21; P4, I1, p. 3). The core of Lazarus' statement is investing in a 'big' South Africa by helping learners to reach their potential.

The life-span development of Emma's resilience is evident from her incredible endurance of adverse circumstances as a young person. As such Emma's perseverance and faith can be seen as driving forces for her sustained resilience in teaching. More particularly her own struggle to complete her school career, and her father's promise that education will mean something one day, provided the seeds for her belief in the power of education for others. She shared her experience: *'I used to go to school with bare foot, without pocket money. But I was happy! ... we worked very hard. Knowing that every after school, when we come from school we knew that mmm-mmm this is my task, I must go and fetch water in the river ... it seems as if our grandparents were not happy about us when we were going to school they used to say no-no you will suffer until the rest of your life ... but it didn't bother us so much, eeh, my sister and my younger sister and me, we are like this just like a chain, even when there is no food for us to eat, still we didn't complain so much, we just say, we know that God is watching us ... I was the best learner ... knowing that if one child can be educated, that family, that whole family will survive ... maybe this is the purpose of God, he wanted to use me as a step ladder ... so my aim is not to come here and demand. I must do something to the community' (P1, I1, pp. 3, 4, 7, 8). The crux of Emma's story lies in the fact that she is committed to teaching because she serves a 'God-purpose'. This purpose entails being an instrument of support to learners. In her view her suffering in life has made her strong, dedicated and proud to be of service to others.*

The life-span development of Gogo 's resilience is mirrored in the personal hardships she had to endure as a child and young adult. Her own adverse circumstances shaped her belief and hope for future generations, as she reflected: *'Building their (the learners') future, you know, shaping their young minds, if I won't be able to do that, you know, me, my parents were not educated you know, that was that, you know, that time, so I said, to myself, I don't want to be like my parents, here I am today, I am able to do whatever I want, it is because I persevered, during those times it was very painful you know it is like climbing the highest mountain, yes,*

because by that time we were supposed to pay ourselves, buying ourselves textbooks, you know exercises and textbooks, joh, it was so painful for me, because there was no-one who was going to pay for me' (P3, I1, p. 11). The bottom line of Gogo 's description is her passion and excitement to be part of creating a new future through moulding and shaping the learners of tomorrow.

Moeketsi's early adult life shows a pattern of sustained coping despite continuous systemic adversity. The life-span development of Moeketsi's resilience is reflected in the convictions he held as a young learner at school while living in poverty. Most prominent in Moeketsi's narrative is his unwavering dedication and future hope, which seemingly sustained his resilience in teaching across his life span. He shared his perceptions: *'I had a poor background, I grew up with brothers and sisters abusing us, so you see, that kind of pain, you see, it makes me to be a better person ... when you are from a poor background, it doesn't mean it is over, [that] you never go further, you see, [or that] you never pursue any career ... he (my father) finished standard 1, you see, then he said you must be better than me, go out there and establish [a] life for yourself ... So life was very difficult but that only inspired me, I said, let me prove to my family that one day I will become a valuable person in life. I deserve better than this ... what happened, it happened (referring to apartheid), but this is not how it is supposed to be, we must have hope for a change, you see all of us, irrespective of colour, you see, we live in one country, we are human beings ...so start, in your family, where you come from ... apart from that (being inspired by family), the conditions of the apartheid regime ... actually inspired me ... to be a good teacher because you always challenge issues, you want to know '* (P2, I1, pp. 3, 7, 8; P2, I2, pp. 2, 3). At the heart of Moeketsi's statement lies the hope that transformation will succeed. Moeketsi believes that through teaching he can be part of the social transformation needed in the country. This apparently sustains his commitment to teaching.

To summarise, as evident from the cross-case analysis and subsequent vignettes presented, participants in this study entered teaching in a happenstance way, yet developed a service-anchor in teaching and model hope for the future because of their adverse past.

5.7 LITERATURE CONTROL: THEME 4 AND 5

Next I will compare the results of Theme 4 and 5 with findings from existing literature, highlighting similarities and contradictions.

5.7.1 INTRODUCTION

In order to delineate new insights I compared the results of this study with those of similar studies reported on in existing literature. I discuss prevailing knowledge on coping strategies used by teachers (Theme 4) and defining moments in teachers' lives that introduced them to teaching, anchored them in the teaching profession and sustained their commitment (Theme 5). From the comparison it transpired that the results of this study are echoed more in global than in local research.

5.7.2 CONFIRMING EXISTING KNOWLEDGE ABOUT HOW RURAL TEACHERS COPE IN TEACHING

Existing international literature confirms my finding that teachers in rural schools use both problem-solving (Category V1) and strategising coping behaviour (Category V2), whereas their international counterparts use cognitive restructuring (Category W1) and emotional regulation as coping attitudes (Category W2). I highlight career-span studies and local studies that confirm the findings of my study in terms of coping strategies.

5.7.2.1 Confirmation that rural teachers use coping behaviour

I found that the rural teachers who participated in this study managed adversity in teaching by making use of behavioural coping in the form of problem solving (Category V1). Duval and Carlson (1993) highlight a similar above-average commitment of rural teachers in rural Vermont to engage in problem solving. Williams (2003) and Sharplin *et al.* (2011) also identified diligent, direct-action coping as typical ways in which rural teachers address adversity. Williams (2003) highlights rural teachers' active use of ideas to find solutions, mirroring the analytical and questioning behaviour of the teachers in this study (Category V1). It seems that internationally rural teachers also make use of strategising coping behaviour (Category V2). In this regard, Barley and Beesly (2007) found, as did I, that rural teachers will strategically use their positive relationships with learners to cope with teaching demands. This strategy is echoed by the findings of Guenther and Weible (1983) and Haughey and Murphy (1983). In particular, Hardré *et al.*'s (2007) finding that rural teachers use various classroom strategies to engage learners resonates with my findings (Category V2).

Coping behaviour that corresponded to what I found was reported in other international non-rural research settings. Evidence of strategising coping behaviour indicating innovative classroom ideas as strategy to cope with teaching expectations is provided by both Cross and Hong (2012) and Zurlo *et al.* (2007). Cross and Hong (2012) found, as did I, that teachers in high-poverty areas and hard-to-staff conditions use their supportive relationships with learners as a strategy to cope with classroom challenges. Zurlo *et al.* (2007) also point out that

teachers will strategically mobilise social support to deal with classroom concerns, echoing my finding that teachers organised themselves into teaching teams at the school where the study was conducted (Category V2). In Austin, Shah and Muncer's (2005) work I recognise work engagement and accepting responsibility as problem-solving coping behaviour. This resonates with the findings of my study, which indicate that teachers are actively engaged in finding alternatives and solutions to the problems they face. Kyriacou (2001) agrees, describing coping behaviour in terms of teachers who take action.

I emphasise two career-span studies whose findings are similar to mine. Day and Gu (2007) define problem-solving coping behaviour as teachers' continuous interest in improving their abilities and finding alternate ways to solve problems, whereas Choi and Tang (2009) describe how teachers cope as they strategically work with the uniqueness of learners in their classrooms – showing similarity with the teachers in this study who strategise classroom management by getting to know the children in their classrooms (Category V2).

Two local studies also confirm the findings of this study. While Koekemoer and Mostert (2010) found problem solving to be a coping behaviour, in this case seen in the finding of solutions (Category V1), Mukeredzi (2013) highlights the way in which teachers cope by strategically using their knowledge about learners' contexts during classroom practice (Category V2).

5.7.2.2 Confirmation that rural teachers use coping attitudes

International evidence exists that teachers in rural and non-rural settings use cognitive restructuring (Category W1) and emotional regulation (Category W2) as coping attitudes. I therefore highlight career-span studies and a local study that confirms cognitive restructuring as a coping attitude.

The teachers in this study used a coping attitude of cognitive restructuring – appraising past and present experiences, finding meaning through the reappraisal, and using their insights as a moral imperative to lead by example (Category W1). The process of cognitive restructuring through appraisal is echoed in international studies done in rural settings. Jarzabkowski's (2003) finding that rural teachers are able to manage adversity because of their ability to move forward in a positive way by accepting change and quickly adjusting to it, confirms my finding. Similarly, Huysman (2008) found that rural teachers will appraise rural teaching conditions, accept them and actively engage with their work responsibilities in order to enjoy their work. Williams (2003) further found that rural teachers tend to focus on good teaching, after appraisal, so as to broaden their optimistic outlook on teaching and strengthen their resilience. This mind-over-matter attitude is also evident in the work of Guenther and Weible (1983), who

noted that teachers cope through self-directed professional development as a result of cognitive restructuring (Category W1).

A second coping attitude, emotional regulation, came to light during this study. Rural teachers extracted constructive emotions from their present and past adversities, and became optimistic and appreciative through reflexivity (Category W2). In this regard, Williams (2003) and Sharplin *et al.* (2011) found, as also indicated by the teachers in this study, that making constructive statements, laughing and having fun in teaching will foster a coping attitude. Other global studies (conducted in non-rural contexts) are in agreement that coping is maintained by being encouraging and optimistic (Mansfield *et al.*, 2012), controlling one's emotions (Kyriacou, 2001) and choosing a positive attitude (Riachards, 2012).

As part of emotional regulation, I found that teachers in this study indulge in mutual appreciation as another form of coping (Category W2). This means that, apart from taking pleasure in being appreciated, they build their own resilience by appreciating others. In this regard, Barley and Beesley (2007) found that rural teachers who take part in reciprocal appreciative leadership will foster a sense of ownership and create a culture of care. In line with this finding, Williams (2003) explains that rural teachers who become increasingly resilient are appreciated by leadership and, in turn, show appreciation for others.

A career-span study done by Hasweh (2003) reports (as also indicated in Subcategory W1) that teachers become more resilient over time if they actively and consciously accommodate change through reappraisal. In line with this, Choi and Tang (2009) indicate that teachers who embrace change and learn from it cope better in teaching. A local study done by Henning (2000) from a life-span perspective confirms that actively reappraising one's own teaching career and thereafter purposefully managing professional development through cognitive restructuring will in time build resilience in teachers.

5.7.3 CONFIRMING EXISTING KNOWLEDGE ABOUT HOW RURAL TEACHERS DEVELOPED FUTURE HOPE AND COMMITMENT (AS SERVICE-ANCHOR) TO TEACHING

This study confirms the important place of having a service anchor (Category Y) in teaching and the influence of past experiences on future beliefs in teaching (Category Z). Schein (1990) describes a career anchor as reflecting a specific career-aspect that motivates one's decision to remain despite the availability of alternative career options. Quek (1999) teachers may develop service anchors because of the profession itself moulding future generations. This is in line with my finding that teachers in this study develop service-anchors in teaching. Schein (1990) explains a service-anchored person as one who wants to be of value, making the world a better place, and one who often disregards financial rewards. Guenther and Weible (1983)

found that rural teachers stay in teaching because of their mission to counsel future generations – that is a service anchor. In this regard Strydom *et al.* (2012) found that teachers anchor themselves in teaching because they subscribe to an ethic of caring. Ekiz (2006) confirms the notion of developing love for and commitment to learners as a service-anchor on the basis that teachers did *not* enter the teaching profession with a natural moral imperative (Category Y).

Fritz and Smit (2008, p. 162), two local researchers who conducted a narrative study with two teachers, found that these teachers remain in the teaching profession and develop positive future outlooks because of “autotelic engagement” and “flow”. Fritz and Smit (2008) describe autotelic activities as the kind of activities that teachers do because they find it intrinsically rewarding, highlighting their commitment to teaching and showing their service-anchor. Like the teachers who experience flow in teaching, i.e. where the teacher has “focused concentration, ... is unaware of self ... and perceives balance in ability and requirement of the task” (Fritz & Smit, 2008, pp. 160-161), teachers in this study share and work from a similar service-anchor. As also discussed in Ekiz’s (2006) findings, teachers in this study did not necessarily enter the teaching profession because of their love of and commitment to teaching. Many other studies confirm that career anchors of love and commitment to children will sustain teacher resilience (Brunetti, 2006; Fritz & Smit, 2008; Gu & Day, 2007; Kirk & Wall, 2010; Knight, 2007; Patterson, Collins & Abbott, 2004; Stanford, 2001).

I found that the participating teachers had developed a hopeful outlook on the future because of (not despite of) their adverse past. Some confirmation from existing literature exists. Bobek (2002) and Howard and Johnson (2004) notice that teachers build resilience in dealing with past adversities which in turn facilitates the management of future problems, as reminiscent in Frederickson’s (2001) ‘broaden and build’ theory. Abednia (2012) shares a similar idea when he explains that past knowledge and experience contribute to the professional development of teachers. This is a reverberation of the developmental and transactional nature of resilience that Ungar (2008), Windle (2010) and Theron (2011) argue for. Because of their education-related struggles the teachers in this study developed teacher resilience over time. Furthermore, they were found to share a sense of purpose in education, especially hope in education, which reminds one of the pedagogy of hope in Freire’s (1994) work. Internalised hope appears to be a pathway to resilience born from adversity and maintained because of adversity. Such hope is characteristic of any teacher as “a quiet but determined confidence that enables action and encourages persistence” (Bullough, 2011, p. 18). Besides a pedagogical hope perspective, psychological hope theory (Snyder *et al.*, 2000) posits that hopeful people invest psychological energy in goal-directed thinking, which causes them to act with agency. This assertion is echoed by Day *et al.* (2006), who emphasise the significance of how social histories of teachers’ impact on and form their current identities as teachers.

Similarly, Prieto *et al.* (2008, p. 359) found that teacher resiliency is promoted through teachers seeing problems as “challenge demands”, i.e. demands that challenge them to actively and positively overcome adversity and promote benefits over time.

5.7.4 CONTRADICTIONS REGARDING EXISTING KNOWLEDGE OF TEACHERS’ COPING BEHAVIOUR AND ATTITUDE

Several nuance-filled contradictions exist between the findings of this study and existing literature. These are summarised in bullet form and are subsequently discussed:

- Teachers coped through problem solving that focussed on real-time solution finding *instead* of effective time management or planning ahead.
- Teachers coped through collective problem-solving coping behaviour *rather* than facing problems in solitude.
- Teacher nostalgia fostered coping *rather* than nostalgia creating resistance to change.
- Teachers developed strategising coping behaviour being teacher leaders themselves, modelling best practice and displaying initiative *rather than* having been given additional responsibilities.
- *Instead* of avoidance, they engaged in reappraisal to learn from adversity; *instead* of distancing or escaping, they used their past memories to teach; and *instead* of uncontrolled aggression, they used constructive emotions to foster optimism and mutual appreciation in their daily practice as teachers.

This study showed that teachers coped through problem solving that focused on real-time solution finding. Austin *et al.* (2005) and Kyriacou (2001), however, highlight planning ahead and effective time management as coping behaviour. It is possible that teaching settings in rural areas, and in particular in emerging economies where poverty is high, do not rely on planning ahead as a sufficient coping mechanism because of system flux. Some follow-up inquiry into the different coping behaviours that are required to teach effectively in rural settings (as opposed to other settings) may inform a better judgement.

Another contrast comes from the work of Richards (2012), who highlights teachers’ engagement in solitude as a problem-solving coping behaviour. Teachers in this study, however, tended rather to engage in interaction as a problem-solving coping behaviour, which reminds me of Ebersöhn’s (2012, p. 30) collective response to adversity called “flocking”. Drawing from Ebersöhn’s (2013) relationship-resourced resilience theory, it is possible that the teachers in this study (facing chronic adversity) engaged in interaction (rather than solitude) to solve problems and cope because relationships are the vehicles to resources in resource-constrained settings. Seemingly in line with this, teachers in this study took it upon themselves

to adapt to adversity, as opposed to expecting macro-employer induction support activities (Gehrke & McCoy, 2007). This means that they themselves became the navigators and negotiators of resources (Ebersöhn, 2013; Ungar, 2011). Furthermore, teachers in this study reportedly rely on accessible connections with others and therefore did not allude to the use of technology as a coping behaviour. Contrary to this finding, Reily *et al.* (2011) found that teachers manage adversities in teaching by using technology and organised action research.

Teachers in this study's strategising coping behaviour developed as a result of their own nostalgia of their past. Contrary to teacher nostalgia fostering coping, Goodson *et al.* (2006) found that nostalgia creates resistance to change. Hargreaves (2005) agrees, saying that teacher nostalgia will give rise to negative attitudes and change fatigue. However, the teachers in this study seem to use what they have learnt from their adverse pasts to create better futures. My hypothesis is that the teachers in this study became stronger through socio-political adversity, and therefore have a different kind of nostalgia, with their nostalgic memories being those of flourishing despite hardship. This may be why they currently persist in coping with chronic adversity. More research focusing on the professional growth of teachers as a result of socio-political struggle can provide better insight into how teacher nostalgia may affect the coping behaviour of teachers in South Africa.

Choi and Tang (2009) assert that teachers who have been given additional responsibilities will develop appreciation for the broader impact of their own actions on student learning and will, as a result, facilitate strategizing coping behaviour. In contrast with this, I found that the teachers involved in this study, being teacher leaders themselves, preferred to develop strategising coping behaviour, modelling best practice and displaying initiative (Merideth, 2007).

In contrast with Sharplin *et al.* (2011) and Griffith, Steptoe and Cropley (1999) findings that teachers use avoidance and distancing coping strategies to build their resilience, I found that teachers in this study managed change by using cognitive restructuring and emotional regulation as coping attitudes. Instead of using avoidance (Griffith *et al.*, 1999; Austin *et al.* 2005), they engaged in reappraisal to learn from adversity; instead of distancing or escaping (Austin *et al.*, 2005; Sharplin, *et al.* 2011), they used their past memories to teach; and instead of uncontrolled aggression (Austin *et al.*, 2005), they used constructive emotions to foster optimism and mutual appreciation in their daily practice as teachers. Another example is that Williams (2003) observed that teachers in rural areas use self-styled sabbaticals and week-long retreats to facilitate their own resilience. However, it seems that teachers in this study found pleasure and psychological energy in working with the learners towards developing a better future – once again highlighting the strategy of engagement rather than disengagement.

5.7.5 CONTRADICTIONS REGARDING EXISTING KNOWLEDGE OF HOW TEACHERS ENTERED THE TEACHING PROFESSION, AND DEVELOPED FUTURE HOPE AND COMMITMENT (AS SERVICE-ANCHOR) TO TEACHING

The major contradictions found in this study in terms of entering the teaching profession, and developing a service-anchor and future hope are the following:

- Teachers' response to various sociopolitical and financial influences, and chance happenings, have made their career life pattern unpredictable, yet the call to teach developed over time as service-anchor in teaching *rather* than appearing as a career motif since childhood.
- Teachers in this study entered teaching because of the role played by a significant teacher during their childhood or the lack of opportunity to study something different (whether academically or financially driven) *rather* than choosing teaching because of the career offering quality of life, time for family and job security.

There seems to be a disparity between my finding that teachers in this study did not choose teaching because of an initial call to the profession, and Day and Gu (2009) and Hanson's (1995) findings that such an initial call to teach is prevalent. Many studies illustrate how happy teachers declare that they felt *called* to teaching since early childhood (Day & Gu, 2009; Duval & Carlson, 1993; Kirk & Wall, 2010; Knight, 2007; Koekemoer & Mostert, 2010). However, none of the teachers in this study had teaching in mind as a *first* career choice while growing up. Rather, it appears that over time they responded to various sociopolitical and financial influences and chance happenings that made their career-life pattern unpredictable (Patton, McMahon & Watson, 2006). However, their career motifs and values (related to a calling) developed during their habitus as teachers, plausibly serving as sustaining career anchors (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011). Despite falling into teaching, the participants then developed a love for the career to which they later referred as a calling. I described this as a service-related career anchor that developed over time.

Together with happenstance (Krumboltz, 2009; Miller, 1983) (where participants *fell* into teaching), teachers in this study gradually saw career anchors (Schein, 2006) mirrored in the teaching profession. This possibly contributed to sustaining their commitment to teaching over time. Fokkens-Bruinsma and Canrinus (2012) argue that people enter teaching because of intrinsic (satisfying curiosity), extrinsic (external praise) or altruistic (contributing to society) reasons. Despite teachers in this study developing a service-anchor in teaching (discussed earlier), they *entered* the profession for different reasons, as also described by Fokkens-Bruinsma and Canrinus (2012). One reason relates to the role played by a significant teacher during their childhood, and another is the lack of opportunity to study something different (whether academically or financially driven). There may be many reasons for this contradiction

and more research is needed in the context of emerging economies (plagued by unemployment) to understand which prevailing conditions motivate people to choose teaching and how they sustain their commitment once they have entered teaching as a career. Another question that arises from this finding is how the teachers developed a service-anchor, despite having been “forced” to settle for their second or third option, or for the only available career option.

Some studies indicate that the choice of teaching as a career directly relates to a person choosing a career that will offer quality of life, time for family and job security (Fokkens-Bruinsma & Canninus, 2012; Richardson & Watt, 2005). These considerations were not mentioned by the participants in the current study. One reason for this difference may be because the sampling for my study differed from that of the other studies mentioned, which involved student teachers who had just entered the field of teaching and whose career anchors may perhaps develop over time. Despite Benders and Jackson’s (2012) assertion that properly trained teachers will develop career anchors, and Bernshausen and Cunningham (2001), and Howard and Johnson (2004) indicating that mentorship will facilitate the development of career anchors, the findings of this study suggest that life-span development and a combination of internal and external protective resources support the likelihood of becoming a service-anchored employee.

5.7.6 SILENCES IN THIS STUDY THAT RELATE TO TEACHERS’ COPING BEHAVIOUR, ATTITUDES AND BECOMING SERVICE-ANCHORED EMPLOYEES

Notable silences in this study relate to:

- Exercising or having hobbies as a form of combating stress.
- Teachers’ ideas about their own content knowledge as strategising coping behaviour.
- Control as career-anchor.

Problem-solving coping behaviours about which participants in this study were silent include exercise activities (Austin *et al.* 2005; Richards, 2012), hobbies (Seidman & Zager, 1991) and time relaxation (Kyriacou, 2001). The reason for the silence could be because teachers were not explicitly asked what they did to relax or combat stress; instead, following the flowing interview-conversation style in life-history research, participants themselves decided what they wanted to shared. The possibility exists that they did not consider information about relaxation activities to be important. Further investigation into how rural teachers spend their time may shed light on more coping strategies and protective resources. Furthermore, additional research to determine how rural teachers spend their leisure time may provide information on how they choose to rejuvenate in order to retain a positive attitude.

Another notable silence in this study relates to content knowledge as a strategising coping behaviour. Although Hong (2010), using a life-span methodology, determined that their growing confidence in their subject expertise seemed to a sustaining coping mechanism in teachers, the teachers in this study did not mention their content knowledge as a source of coping. The reason for this silence may again be that my selected methodology did not probe classroom practice, but rather the development of the teacher's career path. However, research on the competence and efficacy of teachers in rural setting may provide ideas on their use of content knowledge in the classroom. More research on how content knowledge can foster resilience may be worthwhile, especially in the light of recent policy that places much more emphasis on training programmes focused on teachers' content knowledge.

The findings of this study remain silent about teacher control as a career anchor, as reported by Benders and Jackson, (2012). The teachers involved in this study focused more on their feelings of self-worth and their impact on the future of their learners than on the sense of security that comes from being in control. It is possible that experienced teachers of their age (mid-forties and higher) attach greater importance to a service anchor than to being in control. It would be interesting to compare the career anchors of beginner and veteran teacher in rural settings in future studies.

5.8 CONCLUSION

From the literature control it is obvious that protective resources (problem solving, strategising, cognitive restructuring and emotional regulation) used in their adaptive coping repertoire by the participants in this study, who are teachers in rural South Africa, are similar to those used by teachers in other parts of the world. Like other teachers, participating rural teachers in South Africa also remain in teaching because of a service anchor.

However, teachers in this study are also able to cope with chronic adversity by extending their adaptive coping toolkit and using real-time solutions, collective problem solving, teacher nostalgia, initiative, reappraisal, and their past memories and constructive emotions as coping strategies. The teachers that participated in this study did not enter the teaching profession in the same way as most others in the teaching fraternity, but did so as a result of sociopolitical and financial influences, chance happenings and the influence of significant own teachers.

Unlike many of their teaching counterparts, participating rural teachers in South Africa do not combat stress by exercising or practising hobbies. They also do not mention their own content knowledge as strategising coping behaviour, nor do they highlight teacher control as a career anchor.

In Chapter 6 I conclude this study by answering the research questions, theorising the findings and making recommendations for further research.

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CHAPTER SIX CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world”.

~ Nelson Mandela, former president of South Africa, 1993 Nobel Peace Prize laureate ~

6.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I discuss my conclusions and answer the research questions. I reconsider my conceptual framework and discuss insights on teacher career resilience. I reflect on the limitations of the study and discuss its potential contribution to understanding teacher resilience. Finally, I make recommendations regarding teacher training, practice and future education research.

6.2 OVERVIEW OF THE PRECEDING CHAPTERS

In Chapter 1 I introduced the five teachers who participated in the study by presenting their co-constructed life stories. The purpose of this study was to gain an in-depth understanding (within a life-span approach) of how teachers in a resource-constrained rural school have succeeded in sustaining their teacher resilience. I formulated relevant research questions and unpacked the crises of teaching, teacher attrition and the troubled South African education landscape.

To account for the broad social context of the participants in this study, a brief overview of apartheid and its effect on education was provided and the challenge of adapting to adversity in developing countries was discussed. I described my theoretical assumption that teachers remain in teaching because of teacher resilience and discussed the following important concepts that were used: resilience and teacher resilience, risk and protective factors, sustaining as it pertains to resilience, teachers’ experiences, resource-constrained rural school, and the concept of retrospective understanding. An overview of the methodological choices in this study was also provided.

In Chapter 2 I explained my meaning-making of existing knowledge about resilience, teacher resilience and career resilience. My meaning-making resulted in an emerging conceptual framework based on teacher career resilience. I described the historical evolution in resilience-related thinking, highlighted current thinking and discussed the way in which current thinking on resilience direct research developments in the areas of teacher and career

resilience. I summarised recent developments in research on teacher resilience and concluded that I needed to take various influences into account when studying teacher resilience: the teacher as an individual, context and culture, connectivity, dynamism, adaptive coping, working context and the teacher as a professional. I adopted a critical stance in respect of career resilience in order to better understand the link with resilience and teacher resilience, and highlighted the importance of career development, job satisfaction and work-life balance as elements that contribute to career resilience in teaching. As a result I posited a conceptualisation of teacher career resilience. A study of rural education as it pertains to international and local knowledge was also undertaken and the insights gained from the literature review were summarised in the form of a multi-dimensional conceptual framework, I refer to as teacher career resilience, indicating rurality as the filter for this study.

In Chapter 3 I unpacked my paradigmatic lenses, elaborating on my choice of interpretivism as epistemology and the centrality of reflexivity in this study. I explained how I used biographical research with participatory principles and life-history design as the methodology (referring to combined advantages and challenges), how I selected the participants and how we generated and documented the data. A discussion of the data analysis and interpretation processes, as well as the ethical considerations, was also included.

In Chapter 4 I presented the results of the study covering Theme 1 (adversity faced by participants), Theme 2 (internal protective resources used by participants) and Theme 3 (external protective resources used by participants). I presented these themes that had emerged against the backdrop of the story of the hardy aloe. I substantiated the themes by using verbatim transcriptions, participant-generated visual data, participant-generated memories written in a memory book and field notes recorded in my electronic researcher diary and interrogated the significance of the results against existing knowledge. The three themes were treated as a combined phenomenon to account for a transactional ecological view of resilience processes and highlighted consequent similarities, contradictions and silences.

In Chapter 5 I presented the rest of the results covering Theme 4 (adaptive coping strategies) and Theme 5 (defining moments). As in the case of Chapter 4, I verified the results against existing literature and discussed for similarities, contradictions and silences in the findings.

6.3 CONCLUSIONS IN TERMS OF RESEARCH QUESTIONS

I now use the findings of this study to answer the secondary research questions (Sections 6.3.1 to 6.3.5) and the primary research question (Section 6.3.6). The possible contributions of the study to existing theory on teacher resilience are indicated. In answering the secondary research questions, I have decided to change the order in which they were originally asked since each answer lays the foundation for the answer to the next question. In this way each

answer builds on the next and eventually culminates in the answer to the primary research question. The first question that I will answer concerns the risk factors that teachers in this study who had developed teacher career resilience encountered over time (original secondary question 3), after which I will highlight the protective resources that teachers retrospectively identified (originally secondary question 4). After highlighting risk factors and protective resources I will describe the experiences of teachers teaching in a resource-constrained rural school over time (originally secondary question 1) and report on how the teachers in this study conceptualised their own teacher career resilience (originally secondary question 2). Finally, I will answer secondary question 5, which pertains to how teachers in this study sustained their teacher resilience before reflecting on the primary research question.

6.3.1 WHICH RISK FACTORS TO TEACHER CAREER RESILIENCE DO TEACHERS ENCOUNTER IN A RESOURCE-CONSTRAINED RURAL SCHOOL OVER TIME?

As indicated in Chapter 4, I argued that the results that emerged in Theme 1 (risk factors to teacher resilience that teachers in this study identified over time) address the above-mentioned secondary question (originally secondary question 3). I start by focusing on risk factors in the light of Theron's (2011) statement that resilience cannot be construed in the absence of adversity.

The results of Theme 1 consists of three risk factor groupings: risk factors encountered during childhood (Subtheme 1.1); risk factors currently faced by teachers (Subtheme 1.2); and risk factors that have been around since childhood and continue to pose a threat to teachers (chronic adversity) (Subtheme 1.3). A further classification of the risk factors highlighted risk factors encountered in the microsystem (Categories A and G), the mesosystem (Category D), the exosystem (Categories B, E and H) and macrosystem (Categories C and F).

In the literature control sections (refer to Sections 4.13.2 and 4.13.3) I highlighted adversities faced by the participating teachers that are either similar to, or different from those experienced by their international counterparts. In Figure 6.1 the adversities that are similar and additional adversities faced by the teachers in this study are summarised.

As argued in Section 4.13.2, existing literature indicates that both global and local studies on teacher resilience mostly describe adversity experienced by teachers (left column in Figure 6.1) at *current* micro- (orange), meso- (blue), macro- and exo-levels (pink). Existing studies report on teachers *within* the teaching profession as *adults* and signal risk factors in teachers' current or career-span teaching practices (Bertram *et al.*, 2006; Brunetti, 2006; Castro *et al.* 2010; Daniels & Strauss, 2010; Fritz & Smith, 2008; Howard & Johnson, 2004; Patterson *et al.*, 2004; Peltzer *et al.*, 2009).

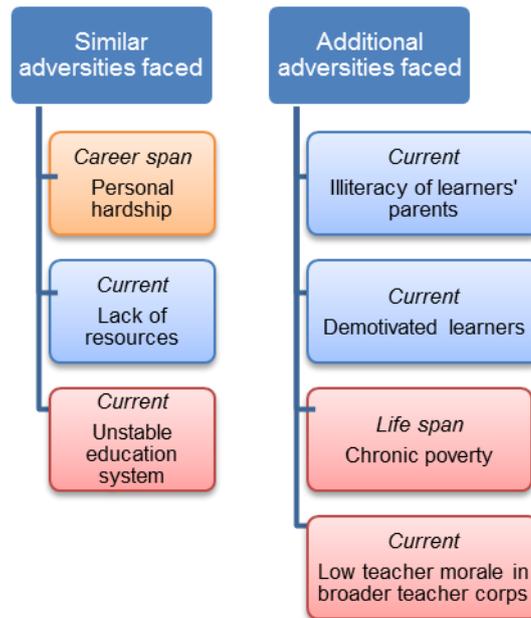


Figure 6.1: Summary of findings of Theme 1

However, I found that the teachers who participated in this study encountered *additional risk factors in their current teaching practice, as well as risks over a lifetime*. This finding expands on a career-span perspective by including the time before teachers entered the profession. In their current practice they indicated that they encountered the illiteracy of learners' parents and demotivated learners as risk factors. Despite experiencing learners as demotivated, the teachers did not describe experiences with learners as negative. Rather, they commented on their concern for learners who do not take education seriously. When they discussed this concern, they referred back to their own schooldays. They explained that the hardships they had faced as learners had made them value the education they received. They found it disturbing when learners were demotivated. They commented on the fact that learners are given many rights, but are not made aware of their responsibilities. Furthermore, teachers experienced the fact that learners' parents are often illiterate as a risk factor because they are not able to assist with homework tasks or stimulate literacy through creating a culture of reading. These meso-level risk factors are compounded at the macro-level, where the broader teaching fraternity reveals a negative attitude towards teaching.

Teachers in this study also live with chronic poverty as a life-span risk factor. This means that they have not only encountered risk factors as teachers in their current practice, but that the presence of adversity is a constant in their lives. From this I came to understand that adversity can be perpetual or chronic, as it has been continuously present in the lives of the teachers in this study. This understanding expanded my original conceptualisation of teacher resilience and added an additional dimension to the conceptual framework that was discussed in Chapter 2. In the multidimensional conceptual framework (refer to Figure 2.10) I did not

present adversity as an element that is chronically present over time. However, I conclude that temporality in adversity is as important as temporality in resilience (Ungar, 2011; Strümpfer, 2013). Consequently, I need to expand on my understanding of rurality as risk filter. To account for the parallel existence of adversity and resilience I posit that, rather than being only a risk filter, rurality is in fact a risk *and* resilience filter. I expound on this in Section 6.3.6.4.

6.3.2 WHICH PROTECTIVE RESOURCES DO TEACHERS IN A RESOURCE-CONSTRAINED RURAL SCHOOL IDENTIFY RETROSPECTIVELY?

As reported in Section 4.13.2, the teachers in this study identified internal and external protective resources (results of Themes 2 and 3). Figure 6.2 contains a summary of the internal (pink) and external (green) protective resources that teachers in this study identified retrospectively, which are similar to those (refer to Section 4.13.2) established as protective resources used by other teachers in resilience processes. Again, following a life-span perspective, I classified the teachers' identification of similar internal and external protective resources in their current practice (on the left), as well as resources they used over their career span (on the right).

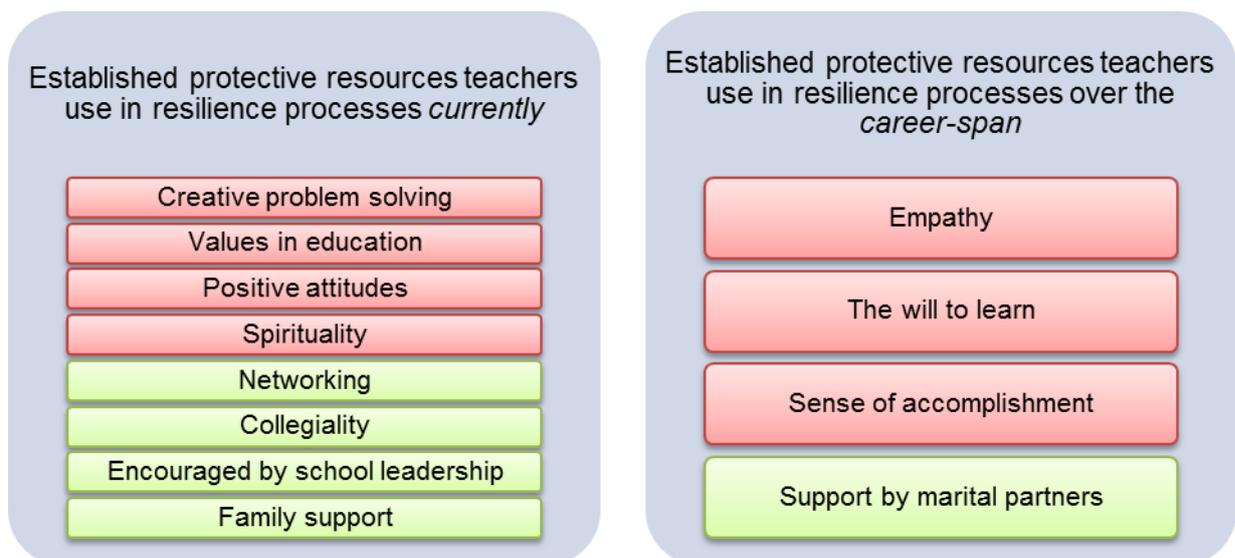


Figure 6.2: Summary of findings related to existing knowledge on protective resources

As indicated in existing knowledge about teacher resilience (refer to Section 4.13.2), the participating teachers reportedly also use the following *internal protective resources* in their *current practice*: creative problem- solving techniques (Category N); values (responsibility to teach children and faith in the power of education) as internal protective resources (Category O); a positive attitude (positive reflexive practice) (Category P); and spirituality (developing the belief that teaching becomes a calling) (Category Q) (refer to Figure 6.2). Furthermore, in

agreement with what is known, the teachers in this study also rely on networking and collegiality (Subcategory S1) as external protective resources and draw on encouragement received from school leadership (Subcategory S3). In addition, they rely on support from their family members (Subcategory U1).

Like other teachers, the teachers who participated in this study identified *internal protective resources* that they have used over their *career span*. Internal protective resources include: showing empathy towards others – especially learners (Subcategory I2); demonstrating a willingness to learn and develop as teachers (Subcategory J2); and experiencing a sense of accomplishment with regard to their work (Subcategory K2). As indicated in other studies on teacher resilience, I conclude that in their current practice the teachers in rural resource-constrained schools who participated in this study also seem to balance their use of protective resources between internal and external use, and that over time they draw more on internal protective resources (refer to Figure 6.2). The contradictory findings I identified are summarised in Table 6.1.

Table 6.1: Novel findings as they pertain to the use of protective resources

<i>In teacher resilience processes:</i>	<i>teachers from rural, resource-constrained schools in this study use ... as protective resources</i>	<i>instead of ...</i>
<i>Internal protective resource</i>	their own life experiences (teacher nostalgia) to cope with current adversity (examples include using their memories of own teachers, as well as memories of also heralding from a rural area)	engaging in mentoring and induction practices.
<i>Internal protective resource</i>	personal agency and initiative to solve problems	relying on external systems (such as government departments) to solve problems.
<i>External protective resource</i>	spontaneous, informal, collaborative peer discussions	formally structured discussions with peers.

From Table 6.1 it is clear that the teachers involved in this study use internal protective resources (pink) more readily than external protective resources. In this regard they *tend to leverage their own memories and personal agency, rather than rely on external support such as mentoring, induction or employer support*. This means that I had to revisit my original thinking (Section 2.8) in order to account for the possible weighting of protective resources because of the risk-resilience filter. The consequence is that internal protective resources (on the side of the teacher) and external protective resources (on the side of the environment) move closer together (refer to Figure 2.10). I also found a connectedness in the interaction between teachers and the environment. What I gathered from these findings is that, in their teaching careers, teachers in rural areas may especially draw on their personal resources

(existing internal protective resources) over time, as external protective resources may be few and not easily accessible. Their reliance on their own internal protective resources also mirrors the triadic reciprocity evident in the SCCT (Lent *et al.*, 2002). By this I mean that teachers' overt behaviour in adaptive coping processes is dependent on the interrelatedness between their attributes (especially internal protective resources), the environment (chronic adversity) and the continuous loop of influence (appraisal) between these three factors.

6.3.3 HOW DO TEACHERS EXPERIENCE TEACHING IN A RESOURCE-CONSTRAINED RURAL SCHOOL OVER TIME?

In this study, teachers reported retrospectively on a life span of facing adversity and using protective resources that supplemented their already existing adaptive coping strategies. In the light of the findings discussed in Sections 6.3.1 and 6.3.2, I use Figure 6.3 to explain how teachers have experienced teaching in a resource-constrained rural school over time.

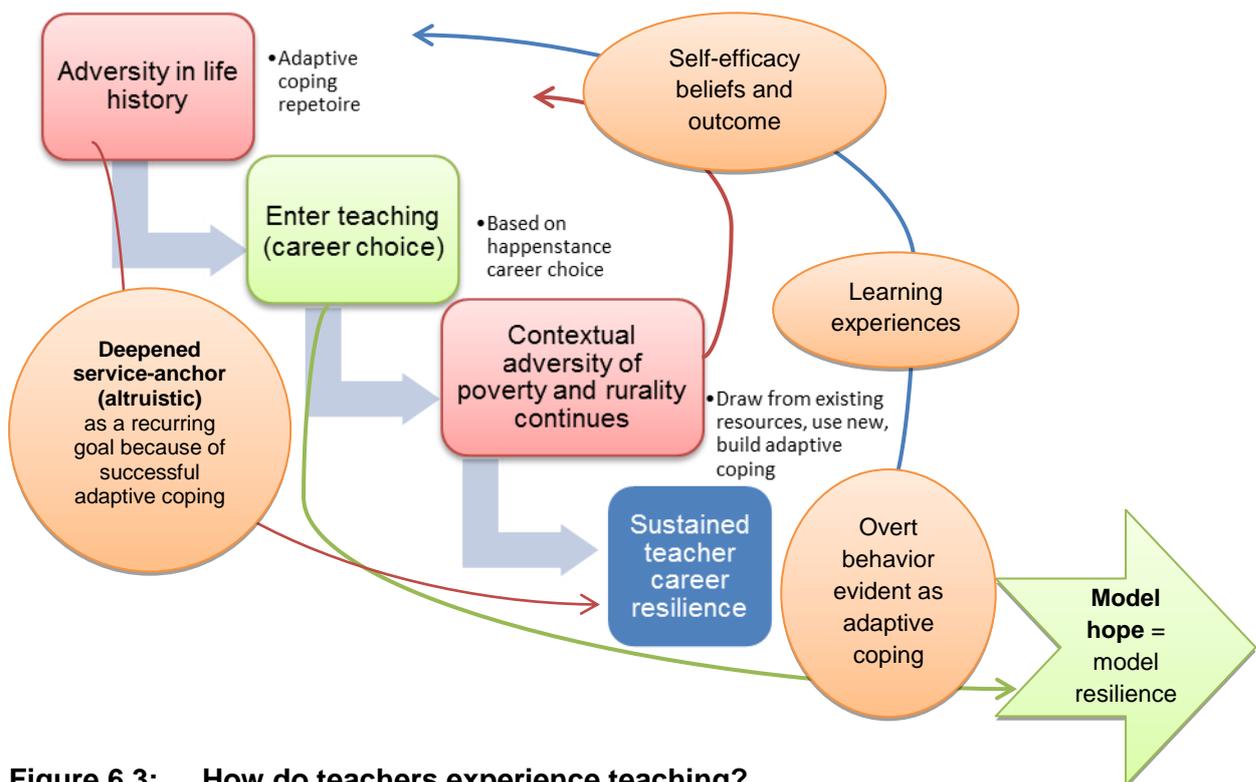


Figure 6.3: How do teachers experience teaching?

As I argued in the answers to the research questions above, teachers in rural, resource-constrained schools live with risk and use various protective resources to mediate the effect of those risks. In Figure 6.3, I illustrate my position that teachers in this study model their resilience on past experiences. These past experiences seem to create a hopeful attitude because of their awareness of their proven ability to cope with the adversities they faced and still live with. The chronic personal hardship and poverty teachers faced as children continue

as an adversity in their current teaching. This is evident in the contextual adversities of poverty and rurality that are synonymous with an emerging economy.

However, since their childhood years the teachers had developed the capacity to resile and they are adept at the resilience processes required in a chronic adversity context. They know how to negotiate and navigate towards scarce protective resources. This is in line with the self-efficacy beliefs, outcome expectations and goals advocated by the SCCT (Lent *et al.*, 2002). To illustrate, I hypothesise that since the teachers learnt to mediate adversity as children, their self-efficacy beliefs of being able to rise above adversity were developed. This supported optimistic outcome expectations: *in the face of adversity I can still cope*.

Trusting that they were capable of dealing with adversity and consequently expecting a positive outcome built participating teachers' confidence and enabled them to continue with personal agency (goals) in the form of adaptive coping behaviour. Thus, by adaptively coping with chronic adversity (indicated by the infinity sign), I posit that the teachers in this study developed sustained self-efficacy in their lifetime (indicated by the blue feedback arrow). Sustained self-efficacy provided a positive feedback loop (indicated by the pink arrows). The positive feedback loop in turn fostered more adaptive coping, modelling hope for future equality. In essence the teachers model hope that societal equality will be achieved because of the struggles they themselves had endured and are still enduring and mediating.

According to the SCCT (Lent *et al.*, 2002), when failure is experienced it will diminish the self-efficacy of a person. However, a risk-resilience filter can lead teachers to often experiencing success in coping with adversity, which in this study strengthened their appraisal of their ability to overcome adversity. As such the adversity they faced does not stand independently from the adaptive coping cycle. Just as Frederickson (2004) describes people becoming more optimistic because of a continuous flow of positive affect, I argue that participating teachers became skilled in resilience processes because of the chronic adversity they face. It is possible that the teachers' self-efficacy beliefs about their adaptive coping extend beyond what they themselves can achieve to what their efforts in teaching may mean through modelling hope (by example) to learners (as modelled by their teachers). Thus, I extend on the idea of the service anchor (Schein, 2006), which seems to deepen to the extent of altruistic service *because* of chronic adversities conquered for the teachers in this study.

6.3.4 HOW DO TEACHERS IN A RESOURCE-CONSTRAINED RURAL SCHOOL CONCEPTUALISE THEIR OWN TEACHER CAREER RESILIENCE?

Temporality in the combined process of past influence and future hope, as depicted in Figure 6.3, is evident from the teacher’s conceptualisation of their teacher resilience. Teachers in this study conceptualised their teacher career resilience on a continuum: persevering through adversity, both as young children and as growing professionals, using their self-efficacy beliefs embedded in an adversity- drenched past to manage, overcome and flourish despite current chronic adversity. While resiling as teachers in a rural school, they develop a deepened sense of service, possibly mirroring the adaptive behaviour they witnessed from their own teachers in their childhood. As a result, I reason that despite their happenstance entrance into teaching, teachers in this study recognise their own teacher resilience as part of modelling future hope for societal equality that they carry forward because of their own adversity-saturated past.

6.3.5 HOW DID TEACHERS IN A RESOURCE-CONSTRAINED RURAL SCHOOL SUSTAIN TEACHER CAREER RESILIENCE?

I illustrate my reasoning about the way that teachers in this study sustained teacher resilience in Figure 6.4.

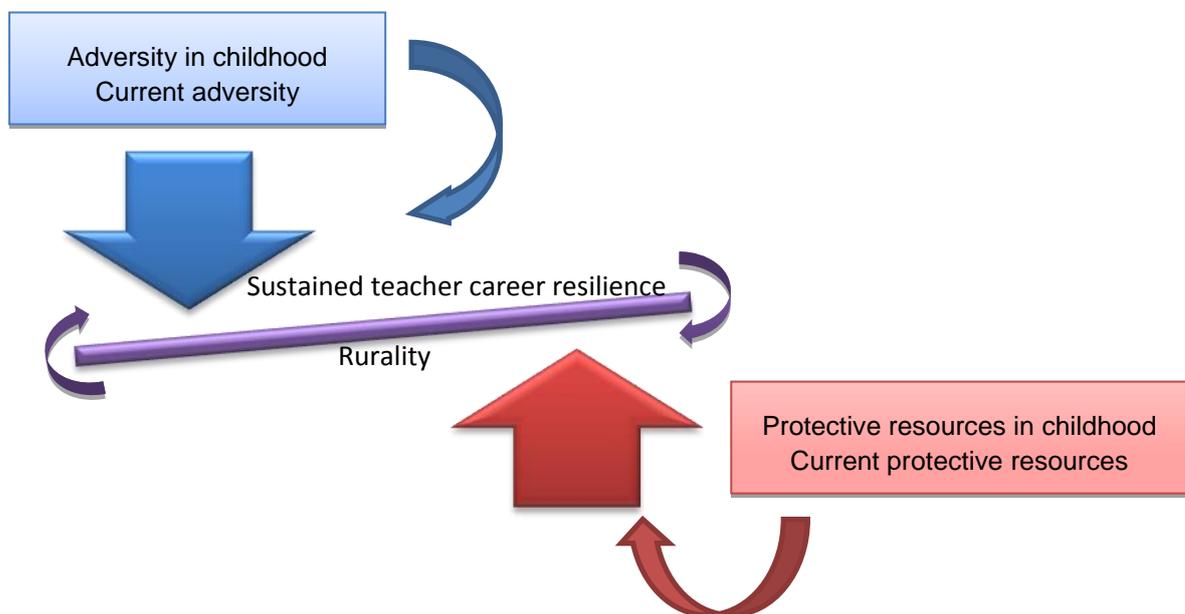


Figure 6.4: Teachers’ way of sustaining teacher career resilience

I view sustained teacher resilience (indicated by the purple bar in Figure 6.4) in the context of chronic adversity as a balance between adversity (blue arrow) and protective resources (red arrow). My reason for referring to sustained teacher resilience as a balance between adversity and protective resources is the way in which the teachers in this study conceptualised their teacher resilience (refer to Section 6.3.4). Teachers in this study ascribed their resilience in

teaching, and specifically in teaching in rural areas, to having themselves endured hardship (blue arrow pushing down) and conquered struggle (red arrow pushing up). Mindful of the protective factor model (Zimmerman & Arunkumar, 1994) and Ungar's (2011) transactional model, I argue that participating teachers sustained their commitment to teaching because of their knack of utilising resilience processes: balancing the reciprocal interaction between adversity and protective resources. This balance indicates a sustained functioning that provided a space and opportunity for them to flourish in their career.

This conclusion confirms that resilience is shaped by dynamic interactions between the individual and the environment (Theron, 2011; Vanderbilt-Adriance & Shaw, 2008). It is evident that the context of the teachers (rurality and resource-constrained schools) acted both as *adversity* and *resource* (indicated by the purple arrows). I contend that the participating teachers remain in rural education *because* of their life history within rural communities (that is, being rural and having experience of rurality). As a result I used the term rurality as part of the balance bar (purple bar). Teachers in this study could sustain their teacher resilience as a result of the reciprocity between their adversity, their context and the resources they felt comfortable accessing and using. I suggest that, in the field of teacher resilience, this requires cognisance of indigenous processes of resilience, taking into consideration the influence of culture and collectivism (for example within the Afrocentric cultural context), as suggested by Theron (2011) and argued by Ebersöhn (2012).

6.3.6 HOW CAN INSIGHT INTO SUSTAINED TEACHER RESILIENCE IN A RESOURCE-CONSTRAINED RURAL SCHOOL BROADEN OUR KNOWLEDGE OF TEACHER RESILIENCE?

Historians write that “our view of history shapes the way we respond to the present and the way we try to resolve current problems in an attempt to secure a better future” (Booyse & Le Roux, 2010, p. 41). When I apply this insight to the findings of this study, I believe that the cumbersome past experienced by the teachers in this study (filled with inequality) is the unfortunate and tragic (or maybe timely) catalyst for modelling future hope, signalling societal change and transformation. In the following section I will structure my thoughts on the contribution of this study to the existing knowledge base on teacher resilience.

6.3.6.1 Childhood adversity and becoming a teacher

I contend that the adversity of childhood experiences and socio-economic deprivation during the apartheid era gave rise to vocational duty in practising teachers (although childhood adversity did not cause a conscious choice of teaching as a career). The adversities that teachers mediated enabled their resiling. Resiling could be sustained because the adversities did not subside and teaching as a career presented with continuous risk factors.

6.3.6.2 A moral imperative to teach can be developed over time

After falling into teaching, described by Miller (1983) and Krumboltz (2009) as happenstance, teachers gradually developed to embrace teaching as a service anchor (Schein, 2006), or what I posit as an altruism anchor. The developed moral imperative to teach possibly contributed to them sustaining their commitment to teaching over time. As in Ekiz's (2006) study, teachers in this study did not necessarily enter the teaching profession with a love for and commitment to teaching, but these motives and values developed during their habitus as teachers, plausibly serving as sustaining career anchors (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011). Many other studies confirm that career anchors of love for and commitment to children can sustain teacher resilience (Brunetti, 2006; Fritz & Smit, 2008; Gu & Day, 2007; Kirk & Wall, 2010; Knight, 2007; Patterson, Collins & Abbott, 2004; Stanford, 2001). However, the teachers in this study also honour the love and commitment they experienced from their teachers as learners. Thus, in looking back, they are able to pay homage forward, creating a cycle of sustained resilience.

6.3.6.3 Adding teacher nostalgia and modelling hope to the concept of teacher resilience

Goodson, Moore and Hargreaves (2006) refer to the significance of historical knowledge as teacher nostalgia. A possible contribution reflected in this study is the importance of extending developmental understanding of the career span of teachers to early life and career choice behaviour. This study therefore adds to the existing knowledge of teacher resilience and highlights two additional dimensions to understanding how teachers sustain their resilience, i.e. the importance of teacher nostalgia for teacher resilience, by taking cognisance of teachers' life histories, and the hope that they model and cherish that South Africa will eventually achieve societal equality.

6.3.6.4 The prominence of adversity in teacher resilience

I conceptualise teacher resilience as follows: Resilient teachers are those who are able to negotiate or manage stressful education settings and choose to remain committed to the teaching profession by navigating towards, utilising and sustaining protective resources (individual, life history and environment assets) and continuously adapting or redefining themselves as teacher-workers despite the unfavourable settings (resource-constrained rural education) in which they work. This confirms thinking on resilience that suggests that individuals interact in a *meaningful* way with their ecologies to steer towards positive adaptation (Wood, Ntaote & Theron, 2012). Based on the insights I gained, I adapted the conceptual framework I initially used (refer to Figure 6.5).

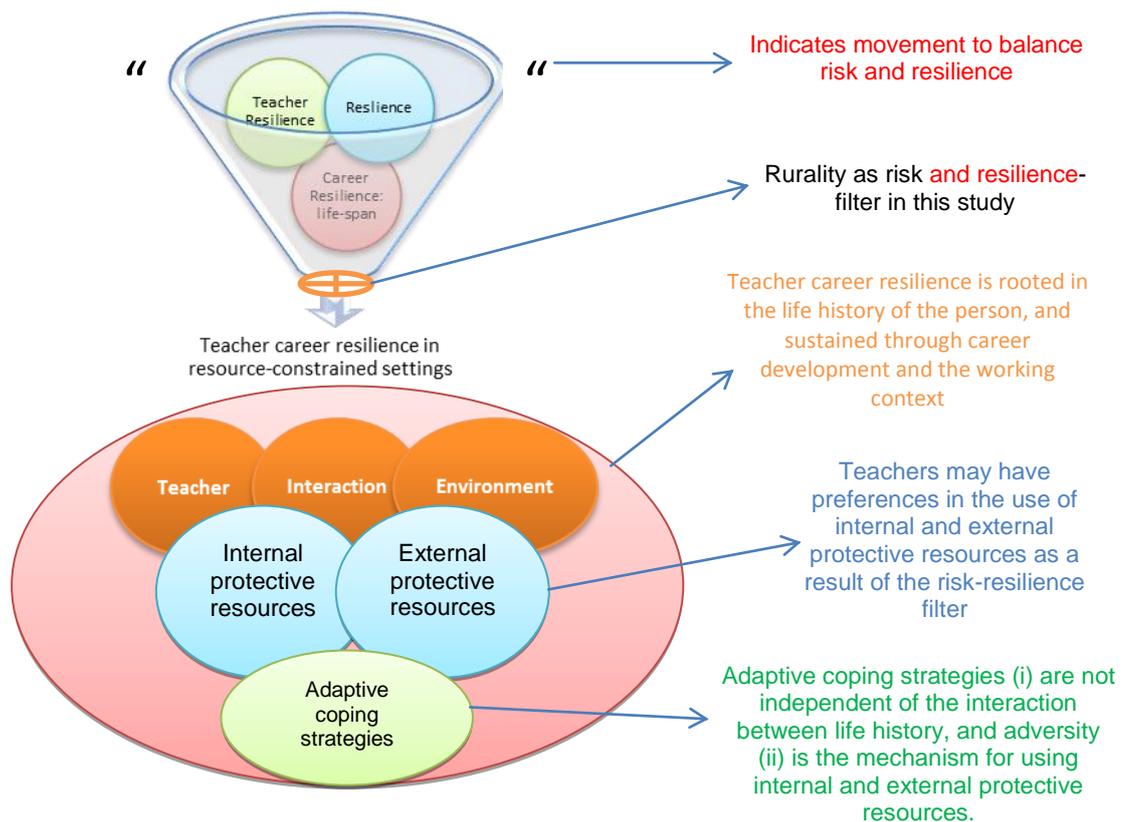


Figure 6.5: Adapted evidence-based conceptual framework of teacher career resilience

6.3.6.5 Teacher career resilience

My position regarding resilience, teacher resilience and career resilience was introduced and outlined in chapter 2. As such I argued that being resilient, and sustaining this process of resilience is a continuous flow of choices made to develop oneself for the greater good of mankind. Some theorists contrasted this position saying that people either have a tendency to resile, that they are born with it. Others developed their theories focusing on resilience as a skill that can be learnt and nurtured. From this study I can now say that my position did not take into account the strong presence of context, specifically the context of continuous adversity. I therefore broaden my position to include the importance of adversity as filter in understanding sustained resilience, not just the choice to develop. However, my position that people sustain resilience because of investing in the greater good of mankind has been supported.

In Chapter 2 I argued for a stronger input from career development theories in understanding teacher resilience following the view I hold of the teacher as a professional and a worker as well as the importance having a life-span view on teacher resilience. This is not to say that the concept of teacher resilience should change to teacher career resilience. As a result, I placed career resilience theoretically in-between the bodies of knowledge that pertain to resilience

and teacher resilience (refer to Figure 2.11). However, in Figure 6.5 I expanded on my initial thinking. In fact I highlighted the teacher as professional by placing the construct *career* as part of teacher resilience to show the focus on career development. As discussed at Sections 1.7 and 2.5, the SCCT (Lent *et al.*, 2002), Systems Theory Framework (Patton & McMahon, 1999) and the work of Super (1992) alike highlight how career development covers a life span. Thus, evident from this study is how teachers' career resilience emerged much earlier than their actual career choice. In line with the ideas of Mansfield *et al.* (2012) and Ungar (2011) my conjecture is that teacher career resilience result from interaction between life roles (as Super [1992] mentioned), personal beliefs (evident from SCCT) and past, present and future influences (as described in the Systems Theory Framework).

6.4 FINAL REFLECTIONS

“A teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops.”

~ Henry Adams (1838-1918) ~

The Education of Henry Adams

Teaching remains one of the most valuable professions in the world because teachers as storytellers can provide the cornerstone for a well-functioning society. In generating theory on resilience, investing in proactive prevention programmes or researching resilience tenets, the process of resilience building remains complex (Ungar, 2011). To illustrate this, Ebersöhn (2013, p. 119) concedes that “the risk that RRR is but a peculiar phenomenon”, and Theron (2011) notes the difficulty and complexity of offering an all-inclusive developmental, contextually driven and culturally sensitive programme to promote resilience.

6.4.1 REFLECTION ON THE LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

A potential limitation of this study is the small number of teachers who participated and the bounded research setting. Life-history work claims *depth* rather than *breadth* of information (see Chapter 3). It was unfortunately not possible for me to interview more than five experienced teachers (Cohen *et al.*, 2011; Miller, 2000) as I had access to only one rural school, attempts at snowball sampling were unsuccessful and that the number of teachers matching my selection criteria was limited. It is conceivable that teachers in other parts of rural South Africa and internationally may not necessarily feel, think and act in the same ways as the teachers in this particular school. Notwithstanding the small number of participants, I am confident that the depth of the interviews in conjunction with the additional data-generation strategies ensured quality data sets. In addition I also provide rich descriptions of participants and data to readers, which can possibly assist transferability to other similar contexts and cases (Seale, 1999).

As a novice researcher whose background and ethnicity differ from those of the participants, I occasionally experienced moments of doubt and uncertainty. I realised that life history design would touch on sensitive past political experiences, which I found hard to deal with (Goodson & Sikes, 2001; Miller, 2000). Focusing on the career development path of the teachers helped me to gain broad insights and I continually reflected with my supervisors and in my researcher diary. My training as a psychologist assisted me in following the flow of the thoughts that the participants shared, rather than keep to a strict research agenda. Nevertheless, the interference of a therapeutically driven relationship made me question the quality of some of the research findings. In addition, I was concerned that the socio-political exploration of themes could compromise the co-constructing of the life histories of the participants and for that reason refrained from exploring more than factual information. This presented an additional limitation, that in some cases the stories of the participants are not complete. However, following in-depth member-check with all participants and consistently employing a reflexive stance (refer to Chapter 3) restored my confidence in the authenticity of the life stories, and thereby the findings I obtained.

It was also challenging to have to generate similar data sets with each participant. I knew that teachers have very little free time and planned to compensate for that through prolonged engagement in the research field. Unfortunately two of the participants were still unable to complete memory books. Furthermore, some participants opted for photograph-descriptions rather than taking actual photographs with me. Notwithstanding the different data sets, I managed to interview all the participants three times, as is evident in Appendix H and L. Since those interviews showed depth of discussion, the need for memory books was not critical. It should also be noted that in the case of participants who did complete memory books, the memories they shared were the same as those shared during the interviews. I therefore assume that the two participants who had not completed memory books would have shared what they had already included during the interviews.

Another limitation that pertains to the methodological choice in this study is that the data generation strategies are mainly self-report strategies that present the voices of the teachers in this study as a truth. Even though the aim of life history methodology is not to interrogate the stories of participants (Goodson & Gill, 2011; Goodson & Sikes, 2001; Roberts, 2002) the findings should be read with cognisance of this limitation. Further to this, in focusing on the lives of participants the attention to current issues in rural schools remains an area to be explored.

6.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, I make recommendations for further research, suggest ideas for teacher training and offer recommendations for the practice of teacher retention, teacher professional development and teacher support.

6.5.1 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

- A follow-up investigation of the application of my conceptualisation of teacher career resilience involving a bigger sample (which includes other rural and resource-constrained schools).
- Follow-up studies into the silences evident from this study:
 - Research with younger teachers on the use of technology as potential protective resources in rural education settings
 - Further investigation into which strategies rural teachers rely on to combat stress
 - Research on rural teachers' ideas on how they use their own content knowledge as strategy for adaptive coping
- Follow-up research focusing on how the life histories of teachers (specifically those who had adverse childhoods) may contribute to their decision to become teachers and their sustained career well-being.
- Further research on indigenous supportive structures in rural teaching in developing countries.
- Follow-up research on *voices from the past* influencing teachers' current and future hope in teaching.
- Research on other career anchors that teachers may develop over time in teaching.
- Further investigation into the relationship between learners, parents and teachers in rural areas as potential protective resources and risk factors.
- Further research on rural teachers' indigenous use of communities of practice.

6.5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TEACHER TRAINING

It may be worthwhile to use teacher career development cases (such as those reflected in this study) during initial teacher training to facilitate a deeper understanding of the complex career life of a teacher. Furthermore, it is possible to use the life-history design in conjunction with the SCCT as a training tool to support student-teachers in exploring their self-efficacy beliefs and outcome expectations regarding teaching. During teacher training one could then possibly facilitate the construction of career anchors and future visions of teaching by using the student teachers' (and others') own pasts to facilitate learning, thereby developing a reflexive practice.

The findings of this study further highlight the importance of ensuring that student-teachers gain insight into how to develop their own adaptive coping strategies and practise the use of internal and external protective resources. Following these recommendations, possible study themes that emanate from this study could include: Work-life balance in rural education; adaptive coping strategies in rural education; and navigating towards and accessing internal and external protective resources in rural education.

6.5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE PRACTICE OF TEACHER RETENTION, TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TEACHER SUPPORT

My recommendations are directed at school and national levels.

6.5.3.1 At school level

School leadership may explore teachers' pasts to identify evident protective resources that could be used to facilitate adaptive coping in current practices. School leadership may also work on retention strategies by focusing on teacher nostalgia as a protective resource. District offices in rural areas may investigate how rural schools can connect with each other in order to share protective resources, and may possibly explore ways in which adversity can be used to foster teacher resilience instead of focusing on how adversity can be alleviated.

6.5.3.2 At national level

Policy makers may investigate the possible inclusion promoting resilience in rural teachers by assisting in the development of adaptive coping strategies, possibly acknowledging the cultural use of protective resources in different settings and offering work-life balance initiatives as policy prerogatives. In-service training programmes may facilitate the pro-active preparation of teacher students in terms of rural education. Such pro-active initiatives may include exposing students to various forms of situational learning, or learning in context. Situational learning means gaining knowledge of and experience in different contexts of education (rural vs. urban), and exposure to diverse challenges in education (at different levels such as micro-, meso, exo- and macrolevels).

6.6 AN ENDURING VOICE

I conclude this thesis with a poem written by one of the participants in this study (Figure 6.6). The poem signals the essence of the contribution that this study makes towards existing knowledge of teacher resilience: the importance of a person's past journey for current persistence and future hope.

I don't belong here!

Under the trees
 On the streets
 In a wet shack sleeping like pigs
 With stomach filled with air
 No jersey only skinny bones
 Neighbours and classmates belittling me
 Pushing me away to farm labour

Farm labour, education
 What to do?
 I looked at the mirror
 Education coloured in black at the start
 White at the end
 Labour belittled at the beginning dark ~~at the end~~

What to do?
 Beginning or ending -
 I belong somewhere,
 The light my destination.

Figure 6.6: Emma's poem²⁴ (P1, MB, p. 2)

²⁴ One of the participants was inspired after an interview to write this poem in her memory book.

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APPENDIX A – INFORMATION PAGE

Sustaining teacher career resilience in a scarce resource rural education setting: A retrospective study

INFORMATION PAGE

Dear Participant

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

Please complete the following:

Name and Surname?						
Gender?						
Age?				Nationality?		
Where did you grow up?						
In which town do you live currently?						
Which language(s) do you speak at home?						
Which language(s) do you speak at school?						
Your contact number:						
Are you currently study? If "yes" please write the course name.						
How do you rate you're your English language ability?	Average		Good		Excellent	
	Reading in English...					
	Writing in English...					
	Speaking in English...					
Which grades are you teaching at the moment? Please indicate past and present experiences.	1	2	3	4	5	6
	7	8	9	10	11	12
How long have you been teaching?	Less than 15 years		Between 15 to 24 years		More than 24 years	
Please list the subjects that you have taught before						
Describe your classroom please:						
Describe your school please:						
Why do you teach?						

APPENDIX B - Summaries of some global and local studies on teacher resilience (2000 – 2010).

Table 1: Global Studies on Teacher Resilience

Global Studies on Teacher Resilience and Resilience in rural communities			
YEAR: Author(s), Year and Country [Context]	Research Question(s) or Basis of enquiry or Purpose	Theory and/or Methodology	Findings
2001: <i>Stanford</i> , America [urban; poor; distressed]	How do they explain their endurance and continued enthusiasm for their work? What are their sources of satisfaction and support?	Grounded Theory Qualitative (Focus groups)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Love and commitment to children. 2. Finding meaning in teaching and being optimistic. 3. Having family, colleagues and religion as sources of support.
2002: <i>Bobek</i> , America [urban and rural]	Understanding of resilience	Qualitative (Interviews)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Having significant relationships with others. 2. Being competent and skilled. 3. Taking personal ownership and advancing. 4. Having a sense of humour. 5. Having a sense of accomplishment when dealing with the children.
2003: <i>Sumsion</i> , Australia [city]	What enables some early childhood educators to sustain their commitment to a career in children's services despite multiple adverse conditions that lead to high rates of attrition from the field?	Qualitative (Case study)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Having personal qualities such as self-insight, leadership skills, risk-taking and perseverance, macro perspective and self-preservation. 2. Surrounded by contextual features such as a support network, mentor and on-going professional development opportunities. 3. Interplay between the personal qualities and contextual features shaped her sense of teacher-self: seeing teaching as inquiry and connectedness and appreciating the bigger picture.
2004: <i>Sumsion</i> , Australia [city – child care]	To what did these teachers attribute their resilience and their capacity to thrive professionally in child care, despite the challenging circumstances that lead so many teachers to leave the	Qualitative (Interviews)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Self-insight 2. Commitment to on-going learning 3. Moral-purpose and philosophical stance 4. Selecting a workplace that resembles own work-ethos. 5. Employer support 6. Professional freedom and agency. 7. Collegiality

Global Studies on Teacher Resilience and Resilience in rural communities			
YEAR: Author(s), Year and Country [Context]	Research Question(s) or Basis of enquiry or Purpose	Theory and/or Methodology	Findings
	sector?		8. Recognition (skills and expertise)
2004: Patterson, Collins & Abbott , America [urban]	What strategies are used by urban teachers to build their resilience?	Qualitative (Interviews)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Having personal values that guide decision-making. 2. Developing professionally through personal agency. 3. Mentoring others. 4. Taking a “no-victim” stance and being resourceful and wise. 5. Love and respect for the children and seeking social justice. 6. Having social support networks.
2004: Howard & Johnson , Australia [unemployment, poverty, family breakdown and interpersonal violence]	To investigate ‘resilient’ teachers’ strategies for coping with stress in day-to-day teaching in some very disadvantaged Australian schools.	Qualitative (Interviews)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agency 2. Strong support group 3. Competence and sense of achievement
2006: Brunetti , America [inner city high schools; economically disadvantaged, minority families and often do not speak English as a first language; insufficient resources and school structures]	“What motivates experienced inner city high school teachers to remain in the classroom?”.	Life History Interviews Survey	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Devotion to the children. 2. Professional fulfilment through social justice and addressing needs. 3. Having support structures which includes the principal, the teaching teams and the administrators.
2006: O’Sullivan , Ireland [Educational reform]	To examine how veteran physical education teachers have negotiated their lives as teachers within the cultural norms and expectations of the Irish educational system and to critique the role of professional development experiences over the course	Questionnaires Interviews	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Creative use of available sources. 2. Choose or change to a subject discipline that inspires and energizes you and build respect for the subject. 3. Delegate tasks. 4. Governmental Career break policy (support from employers). 5. Professional and community support.

Global Studies on Teacher Resilience and Resilience in rural communities			
YEAR: Author(s), Year and Country [Context]	Research Question(s) or Basis of enquiry or Purpose	Theory and/or Methodology	Findings
	of their teaching lives.		
2007: <i>Knight</i> , Australia	Present a framework for resilience education that can be used by teachers in schools.	Document Analysis	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Emotional Competence: positive self-concept; internal locus of control; autonomous; sense of humour. 2. Social Competence: communication, relationships; empathy; benevolence. 3. Futures-orientated Competencies: optimism; problem solving; spiritual; sense of purpose; critical thinking; flexible and adaptive; proactive.
2007: <i>Hegney et al.</i> , Australia [rural – adversities: drought, hailstorms and bushfires]	Develop, implement and evaluate a model that enhances psychological wellness in rural people	Critical participatory action research	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Characteristics of Resilient people: move on despite being bruised and battered; resourcefulness; accepting and embracing change; positive, adaptable and flexible; innovative, creative and proactive; future-orientated; risk-taking; hard-working go getter; sense of humour; develops strong networks; religion or spirituality; sense of hope; 2. Shapers of resilience: connection to land; family; background and culture; being part of a rural community – sense of belonging and being known;
2007: <i>Gu & Day</i> , England [political and administrative control over teachers]	Exploration of career long variations in teachers' commitment and effectiveness.	Case studies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Staff collegiality 2. Positive pupil behaviour 3. Promotion 4. Effective school leadership 5. Family support 6. Positive teacher-pupil relationships
2009: <i>Day & Gu</i> , England [political and administrative control over teachers]	What factors sustain or hinder veteran teachers' commitment and resilience?	Case studies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work-life adjustment 2. Strong agency 3. Efficacy 4. Moral purpose

Global Studies on Teacher Resilience and Resilience in rural communities			
YEAR: Author(s), Year and Country [Context]	Research Question(s) or Basis of enquiry or Purpose	Theory and/or Methodology	Findings
			5. Achievement
2010: <i>Castro, Kelly & Shih</i> , America [high-needs areas: urban and rural contexts and special education]	What strategies do new teachers employ in response to adverse situations?	Qualitative (Interviews)	1. Having help-seeking and problem-solving behaviour. 2. Managing difficult relationships. 3. Seeking rejuvenation and renewal.
2010: <i>Kirk & Wall</i> , England [neo-liberal reforms to education]	Examines the importance of 'emotional labour' in the constitution of the 'teacherly-self'	Narrative Inquiry Work-life history	1. Emotional ties with children; empathy 2. Sense of ownership 3. To be able to marry a teacher identity of optimism and belief with a school ethos

Table 2: Local studies on Teacher resilience and other related studies

Local studies on Teacher resilience and other related studies			
YEAR: Author(s), Year and Country [Context]	Research Question(s) or Basis of enquiry or Purpose	Theory and/or Methodology	Findings
2005: <i>Loots</i> , [Rural communities, HIV & AIDS]	How can care-givers use the asset-based approach to address community related coping with HIV & AIDS?	Qualitative (Focus groups)	1. Emotional and social support from within the community 2. Agency and ownership 3. Actively engaged
2006: <i>Bertram, Appleton, Muthukrishna & Wedekind</i> , [teacher migration and teacher shortages]	How many newly qualified teachers actually stay in SA and teach?	Surveys	1. 27.4% of the newly qualified teachers will teach abroad and most to return after 2 years 2. 63.3% will teach in SA but only 33% of these have secured a position and then only a governing body position 3. 7.2% planned not to teach
2008: <i>Fritz & Smit</i> , [context of constant adversity faced in teaching]	How do teachers manage to continue teaching with professionalism facing	Ethnographic narratives	1. Being a self-perceived "doer". 2. Viewing the school as a family. 3. Having a home family that supports and motivates.

Local studies on Teacher resilience and other related studies			
YEAR: Author(s), Year and Country [Context]	Research Question(s) or Basis of enquiry or Purpose	Theory and/or Methodology	Findings
	constant adversity and negative publicity?		4. Spiritual support through religion.
2008: <i>Theron, Geyer, Strydom & Delpert</i> , [HIV & AIDS]	The challenges of HIV & AIDS in teaching	Literature review	1. An intervention programme called Reds (Resilient Educators) have impacted positively
2009: <i>Olivier</i> [rural schools]	Investigate relationships in the Asset-based approach	Qualitative (Interviews)	1. Group work fosters relations 2. Communication fosters relations 3. Support and empathy fosters relations
2009: <i>Peltzer, Shisana, Zuma, Van Wyk & Zungu-Diwayi</i> , [context of constant adversity faced in teaching]	Job satisfaction among South African teachers	Survey	Found that in fact most participants rated their job satisfaction low. The dissatisfaction was proved to contribute to ill health.
2010: <i>Daniels & Strauss</i> , [Western Cape]	How do teachers construct their emotional well-being?	Case study	They found that the educational workplace is experienced as overwhelmingly negative by teachers. As such teachers are emotionally vulnerable and had a low sense of self-worth which demotivated them in terms of quality, productivity and ethics.
2010: <i>Dempster</i> , [rural schools]da	How do teachers who follow an asset based approach offer psycho-social support in their community?	Qualitative (Case study design)	1. A caring school environment created opportunities for learners to develop resilience. 2. A sense of belonging was created that sustained children's coping.
2010: <i>Bagherpour</i> , [rural schools]	How did sustainable initiatives affect resilience in schools?	Participatory Reflection and Action	Teamwork, collaboration, leadership and integrity significantly contribute to sustainability of resilience.

APPENDIX C - Trends analysis of some global and local studies on teacher resilience (2000-2010)

Content Analysis

Global Studies on Teacher Resilience			
YEAR: Author(s), Year and Country [Context]	Findings	Theme Abbreviation	
2001: Stanford , America [urban; poor; distressed]	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Love and commitment to children. 2. Finding meaning in teaching and being optimistic. 3. Having family, colleagues and religion as sources of support. 	LCC MPO SSS, SFR	
2002: Bobek , America [urban and rural]	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Having significant relationships with others. 2. Being competent and skilled. 3. Taking personal ownership and advancing. 4. Having a sense of humour. 5. Having a sense of accomplishment when dealing with the children. 	SSS CSA OAC, CSA HSH MPO	
2003: Sumsion , Australia [city]	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Having personal qualities such as self-insight, leadership skills, risk-taking and perseverance, macro perspective and self-preservation. 2. Surrounded by contextual features such as a support network, mentor and on-going professional development opportunities. 3. Interplay between the personal qualities and contextual features shaped her sense of teacher-self: seeing teaching as inquiry and connectedness and appreciating the bigger picture. 	OAC, CSA SSS, SFE MPO	
2004: Sumsion , Australia [city – child care]	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Self-insight 2. Commitment to on-going learning 3. Moral-purpose and philosophical stance 4. Selecting a workplace that resembles own work-ethos. 5. Employer support 6. Professional freedom and agency. 7. Collegiality 8. Recognition (skills and expertise) 	OAC, CSA OAC MPO OAC, SFE SFE OAC SSS CSA	
2004: Patterson, Collins & Abbott , America [urban]	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Having personal values that guide decision-making. 2. Developing professionally through personal agency. 3. Mentoring others. 	PVA OAC, CSA SSS, PVA	

Global Studies on Teacher Resilience			
YEAR: Author(s), Year and Country [Context]	Findings	Theme Abbreviation	
	4. Taking a “no-victim” stance and being resourceful and wise. 5. Love and respect for the children and seeking social justice. 6. Having social support networks.	MPO, CSA LCC SSS	
2004: Howard & Johnson , Australia [unemployment, poverty, family breakdown and interpersonal violence]	1. Agency 2. Strong support group 3. Competence and sense of achievement	OAC SSS CSA	
2006: Brunetti , America [inner city high schools; economically disadvantaged, minority families and often do not speak English as a first language; insufficient resources and school structures]	1. Devotion to the children. 2. Professional fulfilment through social justice and addressing needs. 3. Having support structures which includes the principal, the teaching teams and the administrators.	LCC MPO, CSA, PVA SSS, SFE	
2006: O’Sullivan , Ireland [Educational reform]	1. Creative use of available sources. 2. Choose or change to a subject discipline that inspires and energizes you and build respect for the subject. 3. Delegate tasks. 4. Governmental Career break policy (support from employers). 5. Professional and community support.	OAC OAC, CSA OAC, PVA SFE SSS, SFE	
2007: Knight , Australia	1. Emotional Competence: positive self-concept; internal locus of control; autonomous; sense of humour. 2. Social Competence: communication, relationships; empathy; benevolence. 3. Futures-orientated Competencies: optimism; problem solving; spiritual; sense of purpose; critical thinking; flexible and adaptive; proactive.	OAC, PVA HSH LCC MPO, PVA	
2007: Hegney et al. , Australia [rural – adversities: drought, hailstorms and bushfires]	1. Characteristics of Resilient people: move on despite being bruised and battered; resourcefulness; accepting and embracing change; positive, adaptable and flexible; innovative, creative and proactive; future-orientated; risk-taking; hard-working go getter; sense of humour; develops strong	MPO, SSS, CSA, OAC, PVA	

Global Studies on Teacher Resilience			
YEAR: Author(s), Year and Country [Context]	Findings	Theme Abbreviation	
	networks; religion or spirituality; sense of hope; 2. Shapers of resilience: connection to land; family; background and culture; being part of a rural community – sense of belonging and being known;	SSS, PVA	
2007: <i>Gu & Day</i> , England [political and administrative control over teachers]	1. Staff collegiality 2. Positive pupil behaviour 3. Promotion 4. Effective school leadership 5. Family support 6. Positive teacher-pupil relationships	SSS LCC CSA, SFE SFE SSS LCC	
2009: <i>Day & Gu</i> , England [political and administrative control over teachers]	1. Work-life adjustment 2. Strong agency 3. Efficacy 4. Moral purpose 5. Achievement	SSS, SFE OAC, PVA CSA MPO, PVA CSA, SFE	
2010: <i>Castro, Kelly & Shih</i> , America [high-needs areas: urban and rural contexts and special education]	1. Having help-seeking and problem-solving behaviour. 2. Managing difficult relationships. 3. Seeking rejuvenation and renewal	SSS, SFE OAC PVA	
2010: <i>Kirk & Wall</i> , England [neo-liberal reforms to education]	1. Emotional ties with children; empathy 2. Sense of ownership 3. To be able to marry a teacher identity of optimism and belief with a school ethos	LCC OAC MPO, SFE, PVA	
Local studies on Teacher resilience and other related studies			
2005: <i>Loots</i> , [Rural communities, HIV & AIDS]	1. Emotional and social support from within the community 2. Agency and ownership 3. Actively engaged	SSS OAC CSA, PVA	
2006: <i>Bertram, Appleton, Muthukrishna & Wedekind</i> , [teacher migration and teacher	1. 27.4% of the newly qualified teachers will teach abroad and most to return after 2 years 2. 63.3% will teach in SA but only 33% of these have secured a position and		

Global Studies on Teacher Resilience			
YEAR: Author(s), Year and Country [Context]	Findings	Theme Abbreviation	
shortages]	then only a governing body position 3. 7.2% planned not to teach		
2008: <i>Fritz & Smit</i> , [context of constant adversity faced in teaching]	1. Being a self-perceived “doer”. 2. Viewing the school as a family. 3. Having a home family that supports and motivates. 4. Spiritual support through religion.	OAC, PVA LCC, SFE SSS SFR	
2008: <i>Theron, Geyer, Strydom & Delpont</i> , [HIV & AIDS]	1. An intervention programme called Reds (Resilient Educators) have impacted positively		
2009: <i>Olivier</i> [rural schools]	1. Group work fosters relations 2. Communication fosters relations 3. Support and empathy fosters relations	SSS, SFE CSA SSS, SFE	
2009: <i>Peltzer, Shisana, Zuma, Van Wyk & Zungu-Diwayi</i> , [context of constant adversity faced in teaching]	Found that in fact most participants rated their job satisfaction low. The dissatisfaction was proved to contribute to ill health.		
2010: <i>Daniels & Strauss</i> , [Western Cape]	They found that the educational workplace is experienced as overwhelmingly negative by teachers. As such teachers are emotionally vulnerable and had a low sense of self-worth which demotivated them in terms of quality, productivity and ethics.		
2010: <i>Dempster</i> , [rural schools]	1. A caring school environment created opportunities for learners to develop resilience. 2. A sense of belonging was created that sustained children’s coping.	LCC, SFE OAC	
2010: <i>Bagherpour</i> , [rural schools]	Teamwork, collaboration, leadership and integrity significantly contribute to sustainability of resilience.	SSS, SFE, PVA	

Theme Key:

Abbreviation	Description	Grouping
LCC	Teachers show deep rooted love, commitment and devotion to children they teach.	The Teacherly Self
MPO	Finding meaning, being optimistic and positive about teaching	The Teacherly Self

Abbreviation	Description	Grouping
SSS	Social support structures – Friends, Family, Colleagues	The Teacherly Social
CSA	Feeling competent, skilled, sense of achievement, professional advancement	The Teacherly Self
OAC	Sense of ownership, agency, taking control of situation, managing	The Teacherly Self
HSH	Having a sense of humour	The Teacherly Self
SFE	Support from employer	The Teacherly Social
PVA	Personal values, integrity, self-preserving attitude, fulfilment	The Teacherly Self
SFR	Strength from religion or spiritual source	The Teacherly Self

APPENDIX D - LITERATURE CONTROL

Key:

C – Description of the research context or setting:

R – Rural;

U – Urban;

S – Suburban;

I – Informal settlement;

H – High-poverty; Hard-to-staff schools;

Sp – Special Education;

A – HIV/AIDS;

V – Various (Rural, Urban, Suburban etc.);

N – Not specified;

L/G – Specifying if the study was done locally (South Africa) or globally:

L – Local study;

G – Global study;

A study indicated with an * and highlighted with a colour (orange) – The researchers took a similar life-span methodological approach in the study;

A study indicated with an ** and highlighted with a colour (blue)– The researchers took a similar career-span methodological approach (at least two career cycles) in the study;

Findings supporting existing knowledge on teacher resilience

Theme 1: Adversity experienced by rural teachers over time

Subtheme	Category	Subcategory	Author and year				This study confirms that teachers experience.....as adversity.	
			Local Studies	C	Global Studies	C		
Subtheme 1.1 Adversity experienced in the past during childhood	A Micro-system	Socio-economic disadvantage	Henning, 2000*	I			Own low-income household Adverse background	
	B Exo-system	Growing up during Apartheid	Henning, 2000*	I			Segregated living	
	C Macro-system	Entrenched cultural traditions						
Subtheme 1.2 Current adversity experienced as rural teachers	D Meso-system	D1 Teaching in a low-resourced rural and remote school	Lethoko, Heystek & Maree, 2001	U	Alger, 2009**	U	Lack of resources	
					O'Sullivan, 2006**	N		
			Koekemoer & Mostert, 2010	N			Under resourced schools Feeling disadvantaged Access to resources Lack appropriate materials and books Poverty Rural isolation Low levels of literacy	
			Olivier & Mostert, 2003	N				
			Daniels & Strauss, 2010	U				
					Tytler et al., 2011	R		
					Sharplin, 2002	R		
					Lee & Bang, 2011	N		
					Bouck, 2004	R		
					Guenther & Weible, 1983	R		
			Jarzabkowski, 2004	R				
	D2 Depraved attitude of learners in a rural school		Olivier & Venter, 2003	N	Alger, 2009**	U	Unmotivated and ill-prepared learners	
					Mushayikwa & Lubben, 2009	N	Ill-prepared learners	
	E Exo-system	E1 Low morale of teachers in broader teacher corps				Cross & Hong, 2012	H	Teachers are discouraged by fellow teachers who act indifferently to learners' needs
			E2 The unstable SA education system	Peltzer et al., 2008	V	Alger, 2009**	U	Perceived lack of upper-management support Heavy teaching load
					Abel & Sewell, 1999	R		
						Castro, Kelly & Shih, 2010	R	
						Haughey & Murphy, 1983	R	
						Huysman, 2008	R	Unrealistic expectations
				Lethoko, Heystek & Maree, 2001	U	Mushayikwa & Lubben, 2009, p.376	N	"Deprived professional environments" Non-competitive teacher salaries
				Peltzer et al., 2008	V			
				Olivier & Venter, 2003	N	O'Sullivan, 2006**	N	
			Daniels & Strauss, 2010	U			Feeling disconnect from employers	
			Lethoko, Heystek & Maree, 2001	U	Castro, Kelly & Shih, 2010	R		
			Rawatlal & Petersen, 2012	S				
					Lee & Bang, 2011	N	Professional isolation	
				Tytler et al., 2011	R			
				Aitken & Harford, 2011	H			
				Sharplin, O'Niell & Chapman, 2011	R	No follow through on consultative input		
				Haughey & Murphy, 1983	R			
		Koekemoer & Mostert, 2010	N	Day & Gu, 2007**	V	Work overload (paper work)		
		Jackson & Rothman, 2005b	V	Kirk & Wall, 2010**	N	Lack of communication		

Findings supporting existing knowledge on teacher resilience
Theme 1: Adversity experienced by rural teachers over time

Subtheme	Category	Subcategory	Author and year				This study confirms that teachers experience.....as adversity.
			Local Studies	C	Global Studies	C	
	F Macro-system	Undermined and demoralised teaching profession	Myburgh & Poggenpoel, 2002	U	Abel & Sewell, 1999	R	Constant change Teaching is a deprived and undermined profession Feeling undermined, not respected Feeling undervalued Low public esteem Demotivation of teachers
			Rawatlal & Petersen, 2012	S	Castro, Kelly & Shih, 2010	R	
			Fritz & Smit, 2008*	U	Day & Gu, 2007**	V	
			Peltzer et al., 2008	V	Mushayikwa & Lubben, 2009	N	
			Daniels & Strauss, 2010	U	Huysman, 2008	R	
			Koekemoer & Mostert, 2010	N	Haughey & Murphy, 1983	R	
			Myburgh & Poggenpeol, 2002	U			
Subtheme 1.3 Adversity experienced during the <u>life span</u> (past and current)	G Micro-system	Significant personal hardship			Choi & Tang, 2009**	N	Personal reasons: life commitments
	H Exo-system	Poverty and subsequent financial constraints			Day & Gu, 2007**	V	Adverse personal events

Table 1 Findings supporting existing knowledge on teacher resilience (Theme 1)

Findings contradicting existing knowledge on teacher resilience
Theme 1: Adversity experienced by rural teachers over time

<i>Subtheme</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>Subcategory</i>	<i>L/G</i>	<i>This study contradicts existing knowledge that teachers experience.....as adversity.</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>This study pointed out that teachers experience.....as adversity.</i>
Subtheme 1.1 Adversity experienced in the past during <u>childhood</u>	A Micro-system	Socio-economic disadvantage				
	B Exo-system	Growing up during Apartheid				
	C Macro-system	Entrenched cultural traditions				
Subtheme 1.2 Current adversity experienced as rural teachers	D Meso-system	D1 Teaching in a low-resourced rural and remote school	G	Being inadequately prepared for teaching profession in terms of skills and knowledge (Gehrke & McCoy, 2007)	Sp	Low resourced, rural and remote school
			L	School as hostile environment (Daniels & Strauss, 2010)	U	
			G	Parental over- involvement (Cross & Hong, 2012)	H	Illiterate parents
	D2 Depraved attitude of learners in a rural school	L	Disrespectful, misbehaving learners (Daniels & Strauss, 2010)	U	Learner's demotivated attitude	
		G	Classroom discipline (Aitken & Harford, 2011)	H		
		E Exo-system	E1 Low morale of teachers in broader teacher corps	G	Complexity of staff relations (Aitken & Harford, 2011)	H
	E2 The unstable SA education system	G	School management (Aitken & Harford, 2011)	H	Broader education system management	
		L	School leadership (Myburgh & Poggenpoel, 2002)	U	School leadership seen as protective factor	
	F Macro-system	Undermined and demoralised teaching profession	L	Difficult parents (Koekemoer & Mostert, 2010)	N	Broader societal disrespect and undermining
Subtheme 1.3 Adversity experienced during the <u>life span</u> (past and current)	G Micro-system	G1 Significant personal hardship	L	Lack of job satisfaction (Myburgh & Poggenpoel, 2002)	U	Poverty and hardship
			L	Job compassion fatigue (Olivier & Venter, 2003)	N	Poverty and hardship
	H Exo-system	H1 Poverty and subsequent financial constraints				

Table 2 Findings contradicting existing knowledge on teacher resilience (Theme 1)

Findings that are *silent* in comparison with existing knowledge on teacher resilience

Theme 1: Adversity experienced by rural teachers over time

Subtheme	Category	Subcategory	Compared to <i>global</i> literature the findings of this study are silent about.....as adversity experienced by teachers.	C	Compared to <i>local</i> literature the findings of this study are silent about.....as adversity experienced by teachers.	C	
Subtheme 1.1 Adversity experienced in the past during childhood	A Micro-system	Socio-economic disadvantage					
	B Exo-system	Growing up during Apartheid					
	C Macro-system	Entrenched subcultural thoughts					
Subtheme 1.2 Current adversity experienced as rural teachers	D Meso-system	D1 Teaching in a low-resourced rural and remote school	Negative school culture (Aitken & Harford, 2011)	H	Conflict with co-workers (Koekemoer & Mostert, 2010) Teaching took away personal and family time (Koekemoer & Mostert, 2010) Having no say in the school (Olivier & Mostert, 2003)	N	
			HIV and AIDS pandemic (Wood, Ntaote & Theron, 2012)	A			
			Lack of or inconsistent school management and/or administrative staff support or staff politics (Aitken & Harford, 2011)	H			
			Parents' ambivalent attitude (Lee & Bang, 2011)	N			
			Limited staff (Guenther & Weible, 1983)	R			
			Teacher turnover (Guenther & Weible, 1983)	R			
			Power struggles between teachers (Huysman, 2008)	R			
			Non-teaching duties (Haughey & Murphy, 1983)	R			
	D2 Depraved attitude of learners in a rural school	Violence and disorder (Howard & Johnson, 2004)	H	Ill-discipline of learners (Olivier & Venter, 2003)	N		
		Absenteeism of learners (Jarzabkowski, 2004)	R				
		Low learner retention (Jarzabkowski, 2004)	R				
		Learner health problems (Jarzabkowski, 2004)	R				
		Substance abuse among learners (Jarzabkowski, 2004)	R				
	Uncertainty about socializing with rural community (Sharplin, 2002)	R					
	E Exo-system	E1 Low morale of teachers in broader teacher corps	Lounge fatigue (Mawhinney, 2010)	N			
			Micro politics between racially different teachers (Yonezawa, Jones & Singer, 2011)	U H			
			Teacher shortages at rural schools (Huysman, 2008)	R			
		E2 The SA education system	Time constraints due to training obligations (Gehrke & McCoy, 2007)	Sp			Peer evaluations (Daniels & Strauss, 2010)
Scope of school subjects (less offered because of rural setting) (Guenther & Weible, 1983)			R	Poor ability of subject advisors (Daniels & Strauss, 2010)			U
			R	Large classes (Olivier & Venter, 2003)			N
Promotion and evaluation policies (Haughey & Murphy, 1983)			R	Inconsistent discipline procedures (Rawatllal & Petersen, 2012)			S
Opportunities of professional improvement (Haughey & Murphy, 1983)	R						

Findings that are <i>silent</i> in comparison with existing knowledge on teacher resilience						
Theme 1: Adversity experienced by rural teachers over time						
Subtheme	Category	Subcategory	Compared to <i>global</i> literature the findings of this study are silent about.....as adversity experienced by teachers.	C	Compared to <i>local</i> literature the findings of this study are silent about.....as adversity experienced by teachers.	C
	F Macro-system	Undermined and demoralised teaching profession	Parents expecting too much from teachers (Reilly et al., 2011)	N		
			Poor parental attitude towards education (Haughey & Murphy, 1983)	R		
Subtheme 1.3 Adversity experienced during the <i>life span</i> (past and current)	G Micro-system	G1 Significant personal hardship	Personal emotional exhaustion (Hargreaves, 2005)**	N	Depression (Olivier & Mostert, 2003)	N
			Physical and mental exhaustion (Jackson & Rothman, 2005a)	V		
			Job insecurity (Jackson & Rothman, 2005b)	V		
			Personal health issues because of teaching (Choi & Tang, 2009)**	N		
			Career stagnation (Day & Gu, 2007)**	V	Lack of control (Jackson & Rothman, 2005b)	V
	H Exo-system	H1 Poverty and subsequent financial constraints	Health issues (Day & Gu, 2007)**	V	Little time for recreation (Olivier & Mostert, 2003)	N
		Weather-related issues such as avalanches or mudslides (Clarke et al., 2003)	R	Stress-related illnesses (Peltzer et al., 2008)	V	

Table 3 Findings that are silent in comparison with existing knowledge on teacher resilience (Theme 1)

Findings supporting existing knowledge on teacher resilience								
Theme 2: Rural teachers' internal protective resources over time								
Subtheme	Categories	Subcategory	Author and year				This study confirms that.....acts as internal protective resource for teachers.	
			Local Studies	C	Global Studies	C		
Subtheme 2.1 Internal protective resources experienced during the life span (past and current).	I Emotional aptitude	I1 Empathy			Brunetti, 2006	H	Empathy	
					Cross & Hong, 2012	H	Empathy	
			Koekemoer & Mostert, 2010	N	Duval & Carlson, 1993	R	Showing love and care for others	
					Barley & Beesley, 2007	R	Culture of caring	
					Cross & Hong, 2012	H	Physical and psychological support to students	
					Kirk & Wall, 2010**	N	Empathy	
		I2 Intrinsic motivation	Fritz & Smit, 2008*	U			Intrinsic motivation	
	J Probing cognitions	J1 Not accepting status quo			Sumsion, 2003	H	Risktaking	
					Brunetti, 2006	H	Challenges that willed action	
					Sumsion, 2004**	H	Commitment to on-going learning	
					McCann & Johannessen, 2004	N	Working within the spirit of inquiry	
					Hardré, Sullivan & Roberts, 2008	R	Learning goals	
					Mushayikwa & Lubben, 2009	N	Self-directed professional development	
	K Values	K1 Dignity and inner drive	Fritz & Smit, 2008*	U			Sense of energy	
					Tytler et al., 2011	R	Taking initiative	
					Sharplin, O'Neill & Chapman, 2011	R	Self-worth	
					Bobek, 2002	N	Sense of accomplishment	
		K2 Sense of accomplishment				Choi & Tang, 2009**	N	Sense of achievement
						Howard & Johnson, 2004	H	Sense of achievement
						Duval & Carlson, 1993	R	Enthusiasm and devotion
					Fritz & Smit, 2008*	U	Nieto, 2003*	U
		K3 Persistency in and dedication to education				Choi & Tang, 2009**	N	Purpose-filled determination
						Sumsion, 2004**	H	Moral purpose
						Gu & Day, 2007**	V	Inclined to serve, moral purpose
						Howard & Johnson, 2004	H	Moral purpose
					Mansfield et al., 2012	N	Persistency	
						Williams, 2003	R	Flow
	L Positive attitude	L1 Active engagement			Muller, Gorrow & Fiala, 2011	N	Opportunities for participation	
				Huysman, 2008	R	Interactions with students		
				Malloy & Allen, 2007	R	Teacher-student engagement		
						Williams, 2003	R	Flexibility
L2 Positive adaptation			Fritz & Smit, 2008*	U			Look beyond challenges	
					Cross & Hong, 2012	H	Focus on the positive	
					Mansfield, Beltman, Price & McConney, 2012	N	Positive and optimistic despite challenges	
					Stanford, 2001	U		
					Huysman, 2008	R	Expressed high job satisfaction	
					Jarzabkowski, 2004	R	Flexible, adjust quickly to changing conditions	
L3 Future plans and dreams	Koekemoer & Mostert, 2010		N			Pursuing studies		
				Sharplin, O'Neill & Chapman, 2011	R	Goal focussing		
				Hardré, Sullivan & Roberts, 2008	R	Future goals		

Findings supporting existing knowledge on teacher resilience									
Theme 2: Rural teachers' internal protective resources over time									
Subtheme	Categories	Subcategory	Author and year				This study confirms that.....acts as internal protective resource for teachers.		
			Local Studies	C	Global Studies	C			
	M Spirituality	Religious outlook	Fritz & Smit, 2008*	U	Sharplin, O'Neill & Chapman, 2011	R	Religious beliefs		
			Koekemoer & Mostert, 2010	N	Standford, 2001	U	Spirituality		
Subtheme 2.2 Current internal protective resources experienced as rural teachers	N Probing cognitions	Agency in problem solving	Fritz & Smit, 2008*	U	Sumsion, 2003	H	Leadership skills		
					Cross & Hong, 2012	H	Active response to challenges		
					Castro, Kelly & Shih, 2010	R	Committed to "fix the bad" (p.964)		
					Mansfield et al., 2012	N	Problem solving		
					Huysman, 2008	R	Creative challenges		
					Howard & Johnson, 2004	H	Sense of agency		
					Patterson, Collins & Abbott, 2004	U	Active approach to resolve problems – do not play victim role		
						H			
					Kirk & Wall, 2010**	N	Sense of ownership		
							McCann & Johannessen, 2004	N	Duty towards young people
	O Values	O1 Responsibility towards educating children				Brunetti, 2006	H	Responsibility for students	
						Huysman, 2008	R	Responsibility of daily teaching	
						Duval & Carlson, 1993	R	Service mission	
						Hardré, Sullivan & Roberts, 2008	R	Responsibility to create safe learning environment	
						Patterson, Collins & Abbott, 2004	U	Personal value: social justice	
				Meister & Ahrens, 2011**	S	Student affirmation			
		O2 Belief in power of education					Stanford, 2001	U	Love and commitment
							Nieto, 2003	U	Ability to shape the future
								H	
							Williams, 2003	R	Inspiring young people
Fritz & Smit, 2008*	U						Educating future generations		
P Positive attitude	Positive reflexive practice				Mansfield et al., 2012	N	Focused on learning and development		
					Lee & Bang, 2011	N	Wisdom through reflection		
					Sumsion, 2003, 2004	H	Self-insight		
					Koekemoer & Mostert, 2010	N	Taking time to reflect		
						R			
					Myburgh & Poggenpoel, 2002	U	Developing self-efficacy beliefs		
							Hashweh, 2003**	N	Critical examination of own practices
							Patterson, Collins & Abbott, 2004	U	Spirituality and calling
Q Spirituality	Belief that teaching is a calling					H			
					McCann & Johannessen, 2004	N	Naturally inclined to be a teacher		
					Duval & Carlson, 1993	R	Teaching is a calling or a mission		
					Koekemoer & Mostert, 2010	N	Teaching is a calling		
							Gu & Day, 2007**	V	Sense of vocation

Table 4 Findings supporting existing knowledge on teacher resilience (Theme 2)

Findings contradicting existing knowledge on teacher resilience
Theme 2: Rural teachers' internal protective resources over time

Subtheme	Categories	Subcategory	L/G	This study contradicts existing knowledge that.....acts as internal protective resource for teachers.	C	This study pointed out that teachers experience.....as internal protective resource.	
Subtheme 2.1 Internal protective resources experienced during the <i>life span</i> (past and current).	I Emotional aptitude	I1 Empathy					
		I2 Intrinsic motivation					
	J Probing cognitions	J1 Not accepting status quo					
		J2 The will to learn					
	K Values	K1 Dignity and inner drive					
		K2 Sense of accomplishment					
		K3 Persistency in and dedication to education					
	L Positive attitude	L1 Active engagement					
		L2 Positive adaptation					
		L3 Future plans and dreams	G	Anger and desperation (Nieto, 2003)	U H	Hope and optimism	
M Spirituality	Religious outlook						
Subtheme 2.2 Current internal protective resources experienced as rural teachers	N Probing cognitions	Agency in problem solving	G	External funding and support by school district (Brunetti, 2006)	H	Own initiative and sometimes funding from teacher's own pocket, or initiatives from learners Connecting with others to find solutions	
			G	Informal mentoring by colleagues (Lock et al., 2009)**	R		
	O Values	O1 Responsibility towards educating children					
		O2 Belief in power of education					
	P Positive attitude	Positive reflexive practice					
Q Spirituality	Belief that teaching is a calling						

Table 5 Findings contradicting existing knowledge on teacher resilience (Theme 2)

Findings that are <i>silent</i> in comparison with existing knowledge on teacher resilience							
Theme 2: Rural teachers' internal protective resources over time							
Subtheme	Categories	Subcategory	Compared to <u>global</u> literature the findings of this study are silent about.....as internal protective resources experienced by teachers.	C	Compared to <u>local</u> literature the findings of this study are silent about.....as internal protective resources experienced by teachers.	C	
Subtheme 2.1 Internal protective resources experienced during the <i>life span</i> (past and current).	I Emotional aptitude	I1 Empathy					
		I2 Intrinsic motivation					
	J Probing cognitions	J1 Not accepting status quo					
		J2 The will to learn	Willingness to ask for help (Patterson, Collins & Abbott, 2004)	U H			
	K Values	K1 Dignity and inner drive					
		K2 Sense of accomplishment					
		K3 Persistency in and dedication to education					
	L Positive attitude	L1 Active engagement					
		L2 Positive adaptation					
		L3 Future plans and dreams					
	M Spirituality	Religious outlook					
	Subtheme 2.2 <i>Current</i> internal protective resources experienced as rural teachers	N Probing cognitions	Agency in problem solving	The use of technology to solve problems (Mushayikwa & Lubben, 2009)	N		
				Professional autonomy (Haughey & Murphy, 1983)	R		
O Values		N2 Responsibility towards educating children					
		N3 Belief in power of education					
P Positive attitude		Positive reflexive practice	Mentoring others (Mawhinney, 2010)	N			
	Mentoring others (Patterson, Collins & Abbott, 2004)		U H				
	Professional freedom (Sumsion, 2004)**		H				
Q Spirituality	Belief that teaching is a calling						

Table 6 Findings that are silent in comparison with existing knowledge on teacher resilience (Theme 2)

Findings supporting existing knowledge on teacher resilience
Theme 3: Rural teachers' external protective resources over time

Subtheme	Categories	Subcategory	Author and year				This study confirms that.....acts as external protective resource for teachers.	
			Local Studies	C	Global Studies	C		
Subtheme 3.1 External protective resources experienced in the past during <u>childhood</u>	R Meso-system	Encouragement by significant teachers			Ekiz, 2006	N	Previous experience of teaching and learning Images of what teachers should be, based on positive experiences of own significant teachers	
Subtheme 3.2 Current external protective resources experienced as rural teachers	S Meso-system	S1 Supported by like-minded colleagues and friends	Goekemoer & Mostert, 2010	N	Brunetti, 2006	H	Support from other teachers	
					Stanford, 2001	U		
			Fritz & Smit, 2008*	U	Sumsion, 2004**	H	Collegial support	
					Mawhinney, 2010	N	Sharing ideas over lunchtime	
					Mawhinney, 2010	N	Spontaneous collaboration	
					Muller, Gollow & Fiara, 2011	N	Social connectedness	
					Johnson et al., 2010	N		
					Yonezawa, Jones & Singer, 2011	U	Learning communities (self-created)	
					Jarzabkowski, 2004	R	Collegial community	
					Tytler et al., 2011	R	Good relations amongst teachers	
					Barley & Beesley, 2007	R		
					Haughey & Murphy, 1983	R		
					Mansfield et al., 2012	N		
				Moolenaar, Slegers & Daly, 2012	R	Collective efficacy		
				Muller, Gorrow & Fiala, 2011	N	Professional support by colleagues		
				Myburgh & Poggenpoel, 2002	U	Sharplin, O'Neill & Chapman, 2011	R	Networking
						Howard & Johnson, 2004	H	Strong connection with others
						Hashweh, 2003**	N	Collaborative social climate
						Meister & Ahrens, 2011**	S	Networking with colleagues
		S2 Driven by success of learners				Kitching, Morgan & O'Leary, 2009	N	Student achievement
						Williams, 2003	R	Witnessing students' growth and development
						Brunetti, 2006	H	Seeing students succeed
		S3 Encouraged and appreciated by school leadership		Kamper, 2008		H	Day & Gu, 2007**	V
			Sumsion, 2004**		H	Recognition		
			Brunetti, 2006		H	Treated fairly by principal		
			Tytler et al., 2011		R	Positive school leadership		
			Cross & Hong, 2012		H	Support from school principal		
			Lock et al., 2009**		R			
			Howard & Johnson, 2004		H	School leadership support		
			Barley & Beesley, 2007		R			
		Johnson et al., 2010	N	Community and care by leadership				
		Malloy & Allen, 2007	R	Meaningful participation				
				Meister & Ahrens, 2011**	S	Building leadership		

Findings supporting existing knowledge on teacher resilience							
Theme 3: Rural teachers' external protective resources over time							
Subtheme	Categories	Subcategory	Author and year				This study confirms that.....acts as external protective resource for teachers.
			Local Studies	C	Global Studies	C	
	T Exo-system	T1 Post-apartheid shields and insights					
		T2 Lessons from poverty					
Subtheme 3.3 External protective resources experienced during the life span (past and current)	U Meso-system	U1 Motivation and support by family	Fritz & Smit, 2008*	U	Stanford, 2001	U	Marital relationships Involvement and interaction with family
			Koekemoer & Mostert, 2010	N			
		U2 Inspired by a significant parent			Day & Gu, 2009**	V	Support from significant others

Table 7 Findings supporting existing knowledge on teacher resilience (Theme 3)

Findings contradicting existing knowledge on teacher resilience
Theme 3: Rural teachers' external protective resources over time

Subtheme	Categories	Subcategory	L/G	This study contradicts existing knowledge that.....acts as external protective resource for teachers.	C	This study pointed out that teachers experience.....as external protective resource.		
Subtheme 3.1 External protective resources experienced in the past during childhood	R Meso-system	Encouragement by significant teachers	G	Having a current mentor (Gehrke & McCoy, 2007)	Sp	Significant teacher(s) from childhood		
Subtheme 3.2 Current external protective resources experienced as rural teachers	S Meso-system	S1 Supported by like-minded colleagues and friends	G	Organized professional learning teams and subject specialist meetings (Tytler et al., 2011)	R	Spontaneous professional learning and sharing amongst subject specialists		
			G	Teachers make use of community and neighbourhood links (Reilly et al., 2011)	N	Teachers make use of school community, less of wider community		
			G	Attending conferences or seminars (Tytler et al., 2011)	R	Sharing wisdom and team-teaching within the school		
			G	Sufficient salary (Haughey & Murphy, 1983)	R	Collegial support, encouragement by leadership and successful learners		
		S2 Driven by success of learners	G	Focussing on perceived competence of learners (Hardré, Sullivan & Roberts, 2008)	R	Teachers focus on student success rather than perceived competence		
		S3 Encouraged and appreciated by school leadership	G	Emotional support via district officials (Gehrke & McCoy, 2007)	Sp	Emotional support from colleagues at school and school leadership		
			G	System-wide formal professional development (Tytler et al., 2011)	R	Professional development based on childhood memories of own teachers		
			G	Macro-employer support (Sumsion, 2004)**	H	School leadership		
		T Exo-system	T1 Post-apartheid shields and insights					
			T2 Lessons from poverty	G	Giving back to society because of privileged background (Brunetti, 2006)	R	Giving back because of poor background	
G	Informal introduction to rural teaching between novice and veteran teachers (Jarzabkowski, 2004)	R		Coming from a rural background themselves				
Subtheme 3.3 External protective resources experienced during the life span (past and current)	U Meso-system	U1 Motivation and support by family	G	Professional advice given by family members (Tytler et al., 2011)	R	Personal support from family		
		U2 Inspired by a significant parent						

Table 8 Findings contradicting existing knowledge on teacher resilience (Theme 3)

Findings that are *silent* in comparison with existing knowledge on teacher resilience

Theme 3: Rural teachers' external protective resources over time

Subtheme	Categories	Subcategory	Compared to <i>global</i> literature the findings of this study are silent about.....as external protective resources experienced by teachers.	C	Compared to <i>local</i> literature the findings of this study are silent about.....as external protective resources experienced by teachers.	C
Subtheme 3.1 External protective resources experienced in the past during childhood	R Meso-system	Encouragement by significant teachers				
Subtheme 3.2 Current external protective resources experienced as rural teachers	S Meso-system	S1 Supported by like-minded colleagues and friends	Current mentoring practices (Gehrke & McCoy, 2007)	Sp		
			Support from other professionals outside of teaching (Gehrke & McCoy, 2007)	Sp		
			Informal school-based mentoring (Tytler et al., 2011)	R		
			Mentoring by colleagues (Johnson et al., 2010)	N		
			Informal mentoring by colleagues (Lock et al., 2009)**	R		
		S2 Driven by success of learners	Learners' experience as protective resource (Lee & Bang, 2011)	N		
			Supportive relationship with community (Barley & Beesley, 2007)	R		
			Involvement in and from community (Lock et al., 2009)**	R		
			High expectations of learners (Barley & Beesley, 2007)	R		
			Peer-tutoring (Clarke et al., 2003)	R		
		S3 Encouraged and appreciated by school leadership	Whole-school in-service training (Tytler et al., 2011)	R		
			National professional development support (Yonezawa, Jones & Singer, 2011)	U H		
			Adequate initial preparation (Darling-Hammond, 2003)	N		
			Formal induction processes (Johnson et al., 2010)	N		
			Strategies to retain staff (Barley & Beesley)	R		
Staff part of decision-making (Haughey & Murphy, 1983)	R					
T Exo-system	T1 Post-apartheid shields and insights					
		T2 Lessons from poverty				
Subtheme 3.3 External protective	U Meso-system	U1 Motivation and support by family				

Findings that are <u>silent</u> in comparison with existing knowledge on teacher resilience						
Theme 3: Rural teachers' external protective resources over time						
Subtheme	Categories	Subcategory	Compared to <u>global</u> literature the findings of this study are silent about.....as external protective resources experienced by teachers.	C	Compared to <u>local</u> literature the findings of this study are silent about.....as external protective resources experienced by teachers.	C
resources experienced during the <u>life span</u> (past and current)		U2 Inspired by a significant parent				

Table 9 Findings that are silent in comparison with existing knowledge on teacher resilience (Theme 3)

Findings supporting existing knowledge on teacher resilience								
Theme 4: Rural teachers' adaptive coping strategies over time								
Subtheme	Categories	Author and year				This study confirms that teachers indicate ... as resilience proces over time.		
		Local Studies	C	Global Studies	C			
Subtheme 4.1 Coping behaviour	V1 Problem solving	Koekemoer & Mostert, 2010	N	Austin et al., 2005	N	Work engagement/Accept responsibility		
				Duval & Carlson, 1993	R	Engage with energy and above average commitment		
				Williams, 2003	R	Diligent minds		
				Mansfield et al., 2012	N	Focused on learning and improvement		
				Sharplin et al., 2011	R	Direct-action coping		
				Kyriacou, 2001	N	Take action		
				Day & Gu, 2007**	V	Change management and continuous interest in improving classroom knowledge		
				Williams, 2003	R	Creative ideas		
	V2 Strategising				Williams, 2003	R	Laughing and having fun	
					Cross & Hong, 2012	H	Positive and supportive relationships with learners	
					Barley & Beesley, 2007	R	Strong relationships between staff and learners	
					Zurlo et al., 2007	N	Mobilise social support	
					Haughey & Murphy, 1983	R	Ability to work with students and engage with students	
			Mukeredzi (2013)	R			Knowledge of learners' contexts	
						Cross & Hong, 2012	H	Innovative and unconventional methods
						Zurlo et al., 2007	N	Innovation
	Subtheme 4.2 Coping attitude	W1 Cognitive restructuring			Hashweh, 2003**	N	Teacher accommodative change	
					Choi & Tang, 2009**	N	Embrace change and learn from it	
				Williams, 2003	R	Decision to focus on good teaching		
				Kyriacou, 2001	N	See problems in perspective		
				Huysman, 2008	R	Choose to accept rural teaching conditions and actively engage with their work-responsibilities in order to enjoy it		
				Bobek, 2002	N	A sense of personal responsibility		
		Henning, 2000*	I		Guenther & Weible, 1983	R	Self-directed professional development	
					Jarzabkowski, 2003	R	Accept change and adjust quickly	
W2 Emotional regulation					Williams, 2003	R	Appreciating others and being appreciated	
					Barley & Beesley, 2007	R	Reciprocal appreciative leadership and sense of ownership Culture of caring	
					Mansfield et al., 2012	N	Being positive and optimistic	
					Kyriacou, 2001	N	Keep feelings under control	
				Sharplin et al., 2011	R	Positive statements		
					Richards, 2012	N	Choose positive attitudes, reflection	

Table 10 Findings supporting existing knowledge on teacher resilience (Theme 4)

Findings contradicting existing knowledge on teacher resilience					
Theme 4: Rural teachers' adaptive coping strategies over time					
Subtheme	Categories	L/G	This study contradicts existing knowledge that teachers indicate ... as resilience process over time.	C	This study pointed out that teachers indicate ... as resilience process over time.
Subtheme 4.1 Coping behaviour	V1 Problem solving	G	Induction support activities (Gehrke & McCoy, 2007)	Sp	Positive self-driven adaptation
		G	Plan ahead (Kyriacou, 2001)	N	More focus on finding alternatives in the here and now
		G	Effective time management (Austin et al., 2005)	N	
		G	Solitude (Richards, 2012)	N	Interaction
	V2 Strategising	G	Resistance to change because of nostalgia (Goodson, Moore & Hargreaves, 2006)* Resistance to change and consequent negative attitude because of change fatigue (Hargreaves, 2005)*	N	Change management because of nostalgia
		G	Using group activities with learners (Reilly et al., 2011)	N	Use individual attention and gather personal knowledge of learners
Subtheme 4.2 Coping attitude	W1 Cognitive restructuring	G	Distracting and avoidant coping (Griffith et al., 1999)	N	Positive engagement
		G	Escape avoidance (Austin et al., 2005)	N	
	W2 Emotional regulation	G	Avoidance and distancing strategies (Sharplin et al., 2011)	R	Emotional ownership
		G	Discuss feelings with others (Kyriacou, 2001)	N	Self-reflection
		G	Uncontrolled aggression (Austin et al., 2005)	N	Optimism

Table 11 Findings contradicting existing knowledge on teacher resilience (Theme 4)

Findings that are silent in comparison with existing knowledge on teacher resilience					
Theme 4: Rural teachers' resilience processes over time					
Subtheme	Categories	Compared to <u>global</u> literature the findings of this study are silent about ... as a teacher resilience process over time.	C	Compared to <u>local</u> literature the findings of this study are silent about ... as a teacher resilience process over time.	C

Findings that are <u>silent</u> in comparison with existing knowledge on teacher resilience					
Theme 4: Rural teachers' resilience processes over time					
Subtheme	Categories	Compared to <u>global</u> literature the findings of this study are silent about ... as a teacher resilience process over time.	C	Compared to <u>local</u> literature the findings of this study are silent about ... as a teacher resilience process over time.	C
Subtheme 4.1 Coping behaviour	V1 Problem solving	Autonomy (Williams, 2003)	R		
		Avoid confrontations (Kyriacou, 2001)	N		
		Relax after work (Kyriacou, 2001)			
		More time on particular tasks (Kyriacou, 2001)			
		Self-styled sabbaticals and weeklong retreats (Williams, 2003)	R		
		Have a healthy home-life (Kyriacou, 2001)	N		
	V2 Strategising	Exercise (Austin et al., 2005)	N		
		And Hobbies (Richards, 2012; Seidman & Zager, 1991)			
		Change management through strong collaboration between community and school (Lock et al, 2009)**	R		
		The use of technology (Reilly et al., 2011)	N		
		The use of group work (Reilly et al., 2011)			
		Creating communities of learners (Reilly et al., 2011)			
W1 Cognitive restructuring	Organized action research (Reilly et al., 2011)				
	Develop and adapt curriculum to fit rural communities (Guenther & Weible, 1983)	R			
	Confidence about content knowledge (Hong, 2010)**	R			
	Induction courses (Gehrke & McCoy, 2007)	Sp			
	Recognise one's own limitations (Kyriacou, 2001)	N			
Subtheme 4.2 Coping attitude	W2 Emotional regulation	Nurturing the nurturers (Malloy & Allen, 2007)	R		

Table 12 Findings that are silent in comparison with existing knowledge on teacher resilience (Theme 4)

Findings supporting existing knowledge on teacher resilience						
Theme 5: Defining moments						
Subtheme	Categories	Author and year				This study confirms that teachers indicate ... as defining moment.
		Local Studies	C	Global Studies	C	
Subtheme 5.1 'Falling' into teaching	X1: Role of significant teacher during childhood					
	X2: Financial and other considerations					
Subtheme 5.2 Falling 'in love' with teaching	Y: Becoming service-anchored employees	Strydom et al., 2012	N			Ethic of caring; charitable involvement
				Brunetti, 2006	H	Social justice as career anchor
		Fritz & Smit, 2008*	U			Autotelic activities/engagement
				Ekiz, 2006	N	Developing love for and commitment to learners as career anchor
				Bernshausen & Cunningham, 2001	N	Sense of belonging as career anchor
Subtheme 5.3 Love teaching, forever after	Z: Hopeful future because of adverse past			Guenther & Weible, 1983	R	Counselling future generations
				Hoo		
				Abednia, 2012	N	Past knowledge and experience contribute to professional development
				Bobek, 2002	N	Dealing with past adversities facilitate management of future problems
				Howard & Johnson, 2004	H	
				Day et al., 2006	V	Social histories impact current teacher identity
		Fritz & Smit, 2008*	U		Flow	
				Prieto et al., 2008	N	Challenge demands

Table 13 Findings supporting existing knowledge on teacher resilience (Theme 5)

Findings <u>contradicting</u> existing knowledge on teacher resilience					
Theme 5: Defining moments					
Subtheme	Categories	L/G	This study contradicts existing knowledge that teachers indicate ... as resilience process over time.	C	This study pointed out that teachers indicate ... as defining moment.
Subtheme 5.1 'Falling' into teaching	X1: Role of significant teacher during childhood	G	Original call to teach (Day & Gu, 2009)	V	Happenstance entrance to teaching
		G	Hanson (1995)	V	
		G	Belief in ability to teach (Fokkens-Bruinsma & Canrinus, 2012) discusses 3 motives...none coincide with happenstance	N	
	X2: Financial and other considerations	G	Intrinsic, extrinsic and altruistic reasons (Fokkens-Bruinsma & Canrinus, 2012)	N	Limited career choice options – possibly because of emerging economy
		G	Quality life, family, job security (Richardson & Watt, 2005)	N	
Subtheme 5.2 Falling 'in love' with teaching	Y: Becoming service-anchored employees	G	Teachers have been properly prepared for teaching (Benders & Jackson, 2012)	V	Teachers develop career anchors over life span
		G	Mentor support (Bernshausen & Cunningham, 2001)	V	Combination of external and internal support structures
		G	Mentoring by senior people (Howard & Johnson, 2004)	H	
		G	School environment (Barley & Beesley, 2007)	R	Life span career anchor development – not just school environment
		G	Political nostalgia cause resistance to change (Goodson, Moore & Hargreaves, 2006)*	N	Political nostalgia acts as career anchor
Subtheme 5.3 Love teaching, forever after	Z: Hopeful future because of adverse past	G	<i>Current</i> experience of struggle and constraints lead to future hope (Bottery et al., 2008)	V	Past and current experiences of struggle and constraints lead to future hope
		G	Social nostalgia cause resistance to change (Goodson, Moore & Hargreaves, 2006)*	N	Social nostalgia causes hope
		G	Teacher education programme that introduces poverty and diversity creates future hope (Smiley & Helfenbein, 2011)	U	Own adverse past creates future hope

Table 14 Findings contradicting existing knowledge on teacher resilience (Theme 5)

Findings that are <u>silent</u> in comparison with existing knowledge on teacher resilience						
Theme 5: Defining moments						
Subtheme	Categories	Compared to <u>global</u> literature the findings of this study are silent about ... as defining moments.		C	Compared to <u>local</u> literature the findings of this study are silent about ... as defining moments.	
Subtheme 5.1 'Falling' into teaching	X1: Role of significant teacher during childhood					
	X2: Financial and other considerations					

Findings that are <u>silent</u> in comparison with existing knowledge on teacher resilience					
Theme 5: Defining moments					
Subtheme	Categories	Compared to <u>global</u> literature the findings of this study are silent about ... as defining moments.	C	Compared to <u>local</u> literature the findings of this study are silent about ... as defining moments.	C
Subtheme 5.2 Falling 'in love' with teaching	Y: Becoming service-anchored employees	Teacher control as career anchor (Benders & Jackson, 2012)	V		
		Teachers being part of <i>hiring</i> colleagues (Barley & Beesley, 2007)	R		
Subtheme 5.3 Love teaching, forever after	Z: Hopeful future because of adverse past				

Table 15 Findings that are silent in comparison with existing knowledge on teacher resilience (Theme 5)

Researcher Diary
13 August 2011
After first contact

I am so excited to start with this research! I realised so many things these few days spending some time in the field. Most of what I realised are assumptions I have:

- I assume that participants in this study each have distinctive contexts and should be studied as individuals.
- I assume that after this first initial contact I will gain access to participants easily – they know my face and we are comfortable with each other.
- I assume that all the teachers have stories, that these stories are valuable and worth retelling
- I assume that it will be easy to listen to the participants because their English is good
- I assume that there will be time to meet each time I visit because of the free periods they have
- I assume that they will still be there the next time I visit.

Oooh.....I have to guard against my own prejudices.....being white, feeling like an intruder, when I realised that my skin colour and language represented that of the 'oppressor' I became very sensitive, incredibly sad and frustrated. Am I doing the research justice? Will the participants see me as a threat? How true will their sharing be? This reminds me that what I see or observe in the research field and beyond, and how I think about what I see or observe depends not only on how I look at the participants, but also where I stand in relation to the participants and my preconceived ideas. I need answers! I need confirmation! Why am I reacting this way?

After reading Cohen I realized that reactivity has two dimensions – reacting from prior bias ideas and reacting in the moment – therefore when I reflect I will need to do more with regard to checking myself against the norm and not influencing the data generation...[returning to this thought on 4 May 2012] – DIFFICULT to do! All though I am by nature a reflexive person – these thoughts and ideas are in my head – also influenced by my background and biases – what worked well was to check myself against other researchers in the field (especially Black African researchers) and discussing my thoughts with my supervisors.

The positives of today

I am so glad I visited the school a few months ago before today. I was greeted and accepted so friendly and eagerly by the teachers. I felt welcome! Furthermore, I am so fortunate to be part of a broader project doing this research. After initial conversations with random teachers at the school today my supervisor suggested a few 'positive' teachers (that emerged from other studies) – I thought to myself: one: girl you are LUCKY for many reasons and two: how cool is convenient selection!!

Field notes – the kids

I wonder why the kids are walking around so much. There is a group of boys sitting between the school building and the toilets – almost feel scared to walk past them....they look unmotivated and almost

BZ
depraved
attitude

untouchable. They have wild looks in their eyes, although they also gave the impression that if they weren't in a group they would have participated – it was cool not to participate. I observed them for a few minutes – they were curious about what was done – even mocking some of the other kids that participated with vigour – but when no one was looking (accept me) they were trying to see what was being done.

The day continued with not much incident. I noticed the classes are very rowdy – it seems as if there is no teacher in the class and then upon inspection there is!! Maybe they are not interested in what is being taught...I say this because they were more interested in the students and other learners on the outside – trying to catch my attention as I took photo's of the school ground.

Field notes – thoughts on the teaching profession

I am seeing teachers smiling, sitting during their off periods marking scripts or discussing their next class with a colleague or sitting in their classroom preparing for the next lesson. They exert an attitude of positive action. They are not standing around **badmouthing teaching**. They seem to be focussed and dedicated. So much so that I did not even want to disturb them too much as they were not relaxing in between lessons they were being scholars of their methodology. I am so curious as to why the teachers here in the far away places are so different from the ones I have met in the city. I recalled a conversation earlier this week before we left for the research field where a teacher was telling me that teaching has been the worst decision of his life. **He is tired, angry and helpless. He lost his passion.** He thinks that people who stay in teaching are out of their minds. He is fed up with the constant change, he has had hope for many years, believing that the next year will be better. **But now with talk of yet another curriculum change coming he has given up.** He started to hate children. He thinks he has reached nothing in life because each year the learners are worse. **He said that everybody at his school feels this way and they feel trapped because they do not see a future for themselves.** With this in mind I was travelling to the school site and thinking – the people in the city have so much more to make a difference – why aren't they seeing this – why are they "more" stressed than the teachers in the rural place. What makes the difference? **Here we are, on the school grounds, there is no soccer field, no grass, the toilets of the staff are bad and the kid's bathroom even worse. There is no chalk – you have to get your own, the library books is outdated, the computer centre not functional, classrooms are overcrowded – there is not enough desks or chairs, roofs are broken, electricity sockets have been vandalised, some doors are broken, there is no tearoom with coffee and tea, no tuck-shop, and the nearest town is 32kms away- and yet the teachers come to school happy and satisfied with vigour and drive. Why?**

↳ B1 low resource

Interestingly (or not) he is not the only teacher who feels and thinks this way. A friend of mine recently left teaching after 11 years of suffering away – this may not seem significant although this was the friend at university that said she was a born teacher, called to the profession and will persevere because it is her passion. Then when I started reading the literature the same story echoed, teachers in western cape, kwazulu natal, freestate, Mpumalanga, Limpopo. Even when I taught distance education for the university I was privileged to speak with many teachers at grass root level. They are tired, alone and hopeless. **They have given up. They are negative. They have burnt out.**

B3 low morale

C3 Edu System

B3
B3
B3

Researcher Diary

1 May 2012

Before the first data collection visit

I phoned one participant to try and arrange interview dates before we visited the school. No luck. She works over weekends and prefers to be met at school. She is very interested in having the interview but she says time is an issue. I realized that teachers are busy people – I always knew this but it became real now. Another participant said I should just come to the school and then we can arrange an interview. This made me feel insecure. I like planning things – I like being in control and this really freaks me out!! I wonder is all research this “uncertain”?? What do the more experienced people do? The fact that I could not secure interviews before I arrived made me nervous and this added to my fears. Feeling like an outsider probing in became more intense. I am sure that participants are thinking “why does this white lady want to know these things?” I am not sure how to check my bias and how this is influencing my behaviour. Being a control person makes this very difficult. I will note this and speak with my supervisor about these feelings.

Field notes – Observing the area/context

From the previous visit I noticed no newspaper headings are visible in the rural areas – nothing, not one! Some advertisements are painted on the houses as we pass by but there is no indication of news, or what is going on. This is very dissimilar to the city. One every lamp pole there are negative messages – especially about the government and education and politics. This made me aware of what is happening in my own suburb. I started thinking about the gossip and bad news displayed on the poles I drive by on my way to work. By the time I reach work I am so sad and distraught about what my eye caught in the passing I cannot feel better for the rest of the day. I feel negative about teachers, I feel irritated with the teacher students and I hate education – because everybody hates education – even the words on the lamp poles are painting a glooming picture, learners failing, educators striking, ministers stealing, money wasted, curricula condemned....no wonder the teachers in the city are feeling the pressures, I think. Is this why the teachers in the rural area are feeling less negative – they are not confronted that much with society’s gaze?? Are they aware of what people think? Or is the fact that parents and surrounding communities are illiterate? The other day at a function we talked about our jobs and one person, a teacher, looked as if she wanted to run away when we said how much we earned. Another person remarked very crudely that she should get out while she still can – there is no future in teaching – why would you put yourself through that suffering, he was arguing. I wondered if the same happened in the rural area. From the initial conversations it did not seem to be the case. I wonder what my study will reveal.

B1 - remote / rural

C3
edu system

D2
demoralized prof.

access to possible participants were hindered by the funeral, cultural differences, language barriers and teachers generally being busy people and off periods are for work – nothing else.

However – the POSITIVES of this day:

1. Being a group of researchers, bouncing ideas, supporting each other.
2. Having been at the site before.
3. Having my supervisor here: getting encouraged; able to speak quickly and getting reinforced.

My fears despite the positives:

1. Not getting any forms back
2. Not securing enough interviews
3. Not having enough time to do interviews
4. Not having a safe/conducive space to interview
5. Imposing!!!!
6. Maybe participants are not willing to share their stories
7. What would be their benefit?

Interpretivism is not that easy when you are from a different culture. I still believe in everyone's ability to become empathic listeners but to really feel what another person felt – I am not so sure anymore. I think Interpretivism requires you to be able to do this. How else can you be authentic in your results?

Field notes – the school

Sjoe what a long drive from where we stay...almost 45 minutes from civilization that I am aware of...along the road I saw young mothers with small children waiting for taxis. We passed the urban schools and they seem to have similar things to the naked eye: playground, sports grounds, buildings. But when we went onto the dirt road I became more aware of the rurality and remoteness...cattle roam freely. Not many cars are visible. Only one small town in-between where we stay and the school. Lots of people walking between settlements.

The girls and boys bathrooms are ugly and dirty – no running water – I was almost too scared to go – how does the kids feel about this I wonder – in fact I turned around and asked if I could use the staff bathroom – where I met the “bucket system” (piles of water – because most days no water available). Just outside the gate there is a tuck shop and many children actually go there during break.

Field notes – Overall interview notes

What struck me was the very quick way the participants organized a relatively quiet place to do the interview. Initially it felt like they were not expecting me at all – despite the sms and arranged visit. But then each participant took it upon themselves to get us organized – so as to not waste much time. I was impressed with their actions to solve the problem of interview space! I observed an interesting thing: the two male participants needed a lot more prompting and question-like interference from me...this frustrated me at times because the female participants seemed only to need a single prompt and they had ‘verbal diarrhoea’.

B1
low resource
rural
remote

G3
agency
in
prob.
solving

Some teachers whom I spoke to today exerted that the school is deep rural referring to the fact that one would need at least R50 to travel to be able to buy a newspaper of R7...Another researcher who visited the school during another research visit commented that the school is not as rural compared to other schools who have no classrooms, electricity or running water...I have decided to work with the teacher's conceptualization that the school is rural and low resourced as it transpired from the interviews.

Field notes – Interview with participant 3

I was early for my interview with participant 3 – she was still having her lunch with another teacher. She welcomed me and I waited for them to finish. They were discussing a learner who's marks were suddenly dropping. They were very concerned and the other teacher remarked that she believes his parents are ill. They were discussing ways to support him and said that they should speak with teacher X about him – report him – so to say. I concluded that they were referring to the school-based support structures at school. It was very clear that these teachers share the commitment and passion for the welfare and success of the learners. They wanted the learners to succeed. They feel valued if they have a hand in their success, although they do not want something in return, accept the respect and success of the learners.

K4
Support by
like-minded
coll.



K5
driven by success of
learners.

3. To him the only thing that will make him leave in 10 or so years' time will be if his salary does not become better.
4. Why does he stay? He can develop and make a difference.
5. He says he has job satisfaction. He loves working with the staff and the kids. (I never see him in the staff room but mostly on the school grounds).

Most amazingly I was impressed with the insight he portrayed with regard to the concept of resilience. He remarked that this is one of the reasons why he enjoys teaching life orientation because he uses his own life as an example to the older children. To teach them the importance of taking life seriously and making the best of his opportunities. We talked about friends being a form of social support, but that friends can easily become your downfall – as was illustrated by his life journey. A remarkable thing was that, although he was at school pre-1994 he never felt segregated. It seems that he was too busy with doing “silly things” as he refers to smoking dagga and not taking school seriously.

We parted with me fore-warning him about the photo's I want him to take. He looked very interested in this activity and he said that there will be a lot of photo's that he will want to take.

Field notes – interview 2, participant 1

The second interview for the day was with Participant 1. During our first interview she came very prepared with her life stories written down already. I wasn't too sure where to start with her today. At first I planned for us to start with a member check of the transcript but then I saw that she proudly opened her “homework” booklet (the booklet I gave her the previous time to write some stories in). So I packed away the transcription and asked her to describe her stories to me. She gave a breakdown of her choice as being a teacher, why teaching is important and why she will continue in the profession even after she retires. Her story and message was the same as last – she has the passion and commitment, the drive and sense of responsibility that makes teaching a calling. She wants to help people and be there for them. A true angel of hearts. And very proud of that. I realized very quickly that we are going to repeat the first interview and was very pleased that her “story” remained unchanged – actually echoed and her “free-time” activity. I said we could move on to the next activity and that is to take photographs. I explained as with Participant 4, that this research is about understanding their resilience and we talked a bit about the concept. We agreed that being the committed person she is today is because of her surviving her childhood and early career years. Even more than surviving is notion of flourishing or becoming better and better at what you do or who you are. She agreed that she is a survivor. I then explained that I would like her to think of 3 pictures that we can take with the camera that can resemble or represent her resiliency as a teacher...she immediately said water – a symbol that represents life and growth; even if you do not have food you can survive on water. She asked me to get a nice picture of the sea or a big river. Another picture is of her family (which she will bring from home) and her learners – they encourage and motivate her. The third picture is of books that represent knowledge (she chose some books in the library and we took a picture of that). Knowledge is what keeps you moving forward, knowledge helps you understand and become better at what you do. Find answers, finding solutions.

Before we parted I was surprised by her saying that the one thing she would like to do is to write a book someday. Imparting knowledge to the younger generation through the use of poetry. I challenged her to write me one poem before I leave because she says that she has the poems all

C#1
get
Fin system
Constraints

M1
Pos: WP
Relations WP

I4
Inter
plans
+
dreams.

Dear participant,

Letter requesting informed consent

I wish to invite you to be part of this project where the aim is to understand how teachers understand their careers. The main goal of this research project is to answer the following question: what sustains teacher career resilience in a scarce resource education setting over time? Your participation in this project is voluntary which means you may choose to withdraw from the activities at any time during this study. Your identity will be kept anonymous when the study's findings are published.

What would be expected of you?

I will visit you at least three times. During **the first visit** you and I will have a conversation (in English) about your life as a teacher. This session may last between 60 and 80 minutes. I will tape-record this session so that I may be able to listen to your stories again and I will write the conversation word-by-word after our meeting (when we meet again I will show you this story so that you can see if what I typed is what you said). At the end of this visit I will share my own written story with you. This may give you an idea for our next session together when I would like you to write your life history in a language of your choice. Writing down your story may take some hours of your free time. There will be a three month gap between my first and second visit. I hope that over this period you will have time to write your life story.

During our **second visit** I will invite you to share your written story with me. We will also continue to discuss your life history. I hope that we can share many stories being a teacher and what it means to us. This session may also last between 60 and 80 minutes, and again I will tape-record this session so that I may be able to listen to your stories later and I write down our conversations (when we meet again I will show you this story so that you can see if what I typed is what you said). At the end of this session I will share some photographs on my cell phone with you. These photographs are of the things and people that I think help me cope as a teacher with my work and life demands. This may give you an idea for our next session together when I would like you to take some photographs with your phone (or if your phone does not have that function with the school's camera) of the things and people that you regard as your support. Taking photographs will take some time. There will be an eight month period between my second and third visit. This will fall over the Christmas holidays. I hope that in this time you will be able to take pictures.

During our **third visit** we will use the stories that you have told me, the main story you have written down and your photographs to discuss how you understand your career life history as a teacher. This session may also last between 60 and 80 minutes, and again I will tape-record this session so that I may be able to listen to and write-up your stories later. I will ensure that you also see this written story so that you can see if what I typed is what you said.

What are the possible risks and / or benefits to you if you participate?

This journey that we will take together may make you think of things in your career life that has made you happy or excited. It may even remind you of times that you were very angry or perhaps sad. If you remember sad things and it makes you feel distressed I will be able to refer you to somebody that can work through your feelings with you. However, the opportunity to think back on your life may also be beneficial because it presents the possibility of placing decisions and chance-happenings in perspective. I hope that taking part in this project presents this opportunity for you.

If you have questions regarding the study please feel free to contact me at 084 248 47 61 or my supervisor Prof Liesel Ebersohn at 012 420 2337.

Kindly let me know if you would like to participate in this study by completing the acceptance note below.

Friendly regards,

Sonja Coetzee

sonja.coetzee@up.ac.za



I, _____ hereby consent to take part in the study of Ms Sonja Coetzee entitled: **Sustaining teacher career resilience in a scarce resource rural education setting: A retrospective study**. In addition, I consent to having Ms Coetzee use/publish the photographs and stories I share with her in her research documentation.

Signature:

Date:

APPENDIX G – EXAMPLES OF TRANSCRIBED INTERVIEWS

Participant 1 – 4 May 2012 (Interview 1)

R: Thank you for agreeing to have an interview with me.

P: MMMM

R: So basically the goal of this interview is for me to get to know your story

P: okay

R: of how you became a teacher, how long have you been a teaching, so maybe as a start we should go through these questions and I will make some notes as we go along

P: okay

R: so your name and surname

P: Makopo

R: Makopo...like that?

P: Yes,...Maduba

R: Okay, so the English name you told me yesterday?

P: Francina?...

R: Yes, where does that come from? Is it a second name?

P: Aah, it is there it is Makopo Maduba Franscina

R: Okay, With an S or a C

P: With a C

R: Like that?

P: Yes

R: Okay this is your surname and this is your...?

P: Jaah, Aah, it is my culture name, the name from my grandparents

R: Oh okay, and what does it mean if I may ask?

P: Maduba? Eeh, a strong lady who used to conquer ...especially in case of a fight

R: Oh okay, it almost sound like being a survivor?

P: yes

R: you get things done?

P: Ja

R: So they knew when they gave you the name that this is you. Is this you? Is that who you are? A strong lady?

P: (laughing) aah, I am not sure, I can't say yes...

R: why?

P: But they must be people who used to assess me and they know mmmm yes

R: mmmmm yes, this is the one

P: Jaa

R: mmmm that's beautiful. And then you are female?

P: Yes

R: and then your age?

P: My age: I was born in 1965 on the second of November, and then you can calculate from there

R: I am not a good mathematician but I will do the calculation.

R: Tell me a little bit of where you grew up?

P: Okay. I grew up at Tafelkop. Next to Groblersdal. Jaa is Far from here. I am not sure about the kilo's but it is a long distance.

R: So, How long did you live there? You were born there?

P: I was born there. You know what, my grandfather bought a farm there, and then my father, let me say he was a first born, and you know in our culture, the first born, especially the male used to inherit his father's riches, the legacy, and that is why we stayed with the grandparents and we grew up there. And then unfortunately my father passed away in 1974 on 24 of December. That's when my life started to be sour. Just imagine living without Father, my mom was a house wife. Doing nothing at that time, because my Father was a strong man. He was a Foreman at Murray and Roberts construction. He is the one who built Carlton Centre in Johannesburg. And then, he was loving and caring Father, you know.

We were three girls. I am the second born. Yes, and then, from there is where now life become hard. For us, because there was no one who used to provide us with the school fees. Remember, by that time we used to pay the school fees we used to buy the stationery. No one helped my mother. Only God....why am I saying this? Because we survived. I used to go to school with bare foot, without pocket money. But

I was happy! Because my mom used to sit with us and tell us “ow, my children, this is the situation that I am facing, and then you are my only hope...I am here because of you...so be strong enough...”

Participant 1 – 4 September 2012 (Interview 2)

F I think last week I talked about my personal life.

R Personal life ja, yes you did.

F You know that?

R You gave me a very nice summary of your life as a young child and later. So these are you teacher stories? Good. So you want to speak about that?

F Can I start?

R Yes you can, thank you.

F Okay my life as a teacher, from 1998 to date, which is 2012, after completing my higher education diploma from the University of the North, which is presently known as the University of Limpopo. I worked at Ramotsi Secondary School a period of three months as a temporary teacher because I was substituting someone there. What I have realised about the present education, they have made a lot of things easy for the learners. There is a lot of resources, they can get information from the computers and then also the TV and the radios and even the newspapers. Unlike in our time, it was hard for us even to buy a copy of a magazine and in case of food, presently learners are given healthy food every day to fill their stomach, no one sleeps with an empty stomach and then even the scholar transport is available. And then what surprises me is that our learners it seems as if they are not serious about their work and then if you started to talk to them, they are the one who says ‘don’t do this to me’, of which you are not fighting with them, you are trying to give them the direction. What they know is to talk about their rights, they’ve got rights and then they talk less about the responsibility because rights and responsibility they go hand in hand. So there is a high failure rate of learners, I don’t know why because they’ve got resources. They are given a textbook for free, everything is for free for them. I think they lack vision, we try by almost to motivate them and even to give them our background and then again there is a high teenage pregnancy at school. In our time it was a taboo. We didn’t want to see a learner being pregnant, as long as she or he is still a student but right now they take it as if it is a routine, it is something that they must do and they enjoy it. They don’t think about the illegitimate child, what will happen to the child? Okay fine they can talk about the grant that they are getting, it is doing nothing. A two hundred Rand is just like a two cent. So I wish to see them changing, I wish to see them having a vision for a better future because they are the one who is supposed to lift the torch and then why am I a teacher? Sometimes I use to ask myself this question why am I a teacher, because I’ve got other options. I can change from being a teacher to be something else, an engineer or whatever but because of the love and sympathy that I have, I think this is the place that I belong and I wish all children must be educated, irrespective of their background. Yes we do have children with different backgrounds but it is for them to change their situation and I don’t want them to suffer like me because

I suffered a lot but the dedication and commitment made me who I am today and I am proud of being a teacher, because to be a teacher, being a teacher to me means a lot. I am not an educator, I am just a social worker, a parent, a guardian, a pastor, a councillor and in other hands because there are a lot of children who are often, especially in this Mpumalanga province now, one salary it needs to satisfy many people. Why am I saying this? There are learners who come to me crying, saying that they don't have school uniforms, wearing the torn shoes, the torn shirt, which means month end I must put the mamma's and give them into my budget, just to please them to buy them a pair of shoes or buy them the school uniform and some of them will ask money to buy the underwears. This is what I am doing, not because the money I am getting is enough, it is not enough but I wish to share, I wish there is someone who will be there for them. Just to show them love because some of them they need attention. Even in the classroom you will see that this learner is irritating, he is disturbing the class and if you started to do a research about that one then you will see that that child needs parental love. He needs someone who will be there for her or for him. So I am trying, I wish I can but it is hard but because of I am dedicated, I think God will provide me with the strength and energy to overcome this problem. The challenges that I am facing, the lazy learners, the bunking of classes, some of them they just come in early in the morning and the first period when you go to your classroom you won't find him, or some you find them during first period and second period when you go there again you won't find him but at least there is an attendance register that we use to fill each and every period. When you enter into the classroom it is the one which guide us who is present and who is absent and it is you know who will do the follow up. And then a lot of absentees, some of them they just decide to absent themselves from school and our learners lack respect, they don't respect teachers and it is so painful because we don't hate them we love them. We are here to give them the direction, we don't serve as educator, we serve as road sign because when the road sign says no entry and then you just force yourself to enter

Participant 2 – 4 May 2012 (Interview 1)

R: As I have said the previous time I visited the purpose of this study is to understand teachers who have lots of experience in the teaching field, how they came to be a teacher, what is their career life story, where did everything start, so with that I am going to give the floor to you to explain where was teaching born in your life?

P: you know, it all started when I was in Grade 12, at that time, you see I, I chose to be a lawyer, jah, so my history teacher used to tell me, don't be a lawyer, you are going to be a good teacher one day, you that's when I started developing the passion, then you see I started presenting in class, you see I was just giving him a tough time in class interrogating him, questions in terms of the Bantu Education, why are we studying this, what is it supposed to be, then you see every time he will say no, you giving me a tough time in class, you just take over, because at some stage he was accused of teaching us politics, so we started there. Teaching was my second option, then he said to me, an African child is out there, crying for a better education, which is internationally XXXXXXXX, you see,

R: okay, why did you initially want to get into lawyer work?

P: No, the reason why I chose law as my first choice as career, ys at that time in terms of rights, during apartheid, we did not have rights ys and the justice system was just favouring the apartheid's regime, ys, so I thought going there and make sure that representation in terms of equality...

R: mmm, making the wrong things right...

P: jah, you see, democratic rights, freedom...

R: and now teaching is giving you that?

P: teaching give me a lot of experience, ys, instead of going to law, is better to come to teaching and start mobilising, ys,

R: are you still happy teaching? Have you ever thought of continuing your education and becoming that lawyer?

P: No, ys, I am enjoying myself now, as compared, in the past it was very difficult, but now I...

R: what is now in your life that is making you stay in teaching? You say you are enjoying it so what is it that you enjoy?

P: the curriculum has changed, the injustices have been addressed there, ys, you develop a lot with time, I would say the challenge is still there but we are enjoying, we seem to prepare a better generation, that what's keep you surviving, ys, for African child education is the most important thing, and to give them that education, ys,

R: it's that legacy of moving forward and getting better,

P: yes, ys, yes...ys

R: any of your family members...are they teachers?

P: yah, my brother, my forth born, he is a teacher but he resigned. Now he is a municipal manager. And my other sister is also teaching, 3 out of 11 kids, they are teachers,

R: okay, and I can't remember last time you said how many years have you been teaching...its more than 15?

P: no, it's more than 8 years,

R: okay more than 8, so this is your 9th year basically teaching, okay, is it 9 years at this school?

P: no its different, almost 5 provinces now...

R: sjoe, so you have been a South African traveller...

P: jah, I like travelling you see, to see how do they do things in the other province,

R: and how does this one compare?

P: this one is still lacking there and there, they are far behind, as compared to other provinces, that's why in terms of results of matric, ys, they underperform,

R: you are teaching matrics?

P: no, I am teaching Grade 11,

R: I saw there at the entrance it looked like the matric pass rate went a bit down?

P: jah,

R: from 2010 to 2011, what happened? Do you know?

P: (laughing) no, you know the type of learners that we have, ja, and the system that the department used ys, the last must be condoned to grade 12 ys, and they were not committed, ys, so that's the problem, it's like we tend to make them fail at grade 11, we don't want them to go to grade 12, we want our scores to remain high, so we just condone, condone, and then you condone a group that is not committed, ys,

R: and where are they now? Do you know?

P: no, I don't know...

R: so they not living in the area...

P: no some are...only about 10 out of 90 that are at a tertiary institution, but the rest we see them, some are still supplementing,

R: to finish the...

P: to finish the matric, they going to ABET ys,

R: ah last time you said something about you also studying further, isn't it?

P: yes,

Participant 2 – 5 September 2012 (Interview 2)

R And then, okay. Today's interview is more about your past, because we spoke a lot about your, your views on education last time and the change that needs to happen and whatever. So there is only three specific things that I wanted to clarify with you because this research is about the, the resilience of teachers, and you had been indicated as being one of the resilient people. I need to understand where that resilience comes from, in your, in your past, so I would like...

I Resilience in the context of?

R Of, despite working in a rural place, you are still teaching, you are still passionate about teaching, despite low resources in the class room, you, you still do the best you can, a good quality teacher.

I Yes.

R So, so that is, I need to understand is it, is it the school that, that makes you, or were you born like that? Where does it come from, has it grown over the years, or, or whatever. So I thought an easy way, this is a timeline and then we will look at negative and positive stuff, to understand how the influences happened. So I thought your, your date, your birth year was nineteen seventy something, I think?

I My birth date?

R Ja, your, the year that you were born.

I Nineteen seventy two.

R Ja, nineteen seventy two.

I Yes.

R All right. So if we think about, when you were born until you went to school. Can you recall any positive and negative things that happened in your life that contributed to who you are today?

I Yes, so I should start with the negatives?

R Well, which ever, which ever.

I Okay.

R Let us start with the negative and we can move on to the positives.

I Okay. Thank you for, for giving me this opportunity, first of all. In fact, you see I grow up, in, in a, like I said before, in...

R In a poor.

I In a poor, in a society which is black dominated and which came as a result of the Group Areas Act.

R Ja.

I So, being poor, being from the poor family, actually, disadvantaged me a lot. It was hard for me to go to school, I, I am the last born out of eleven kids. So, you see, it gave, having to get support from the family, having to come back to school, back from school without food. You see the situation was very difficult.

R Very much. Plus you mentioned last time that there was some abuse from the brothers and the sisters?

I Brothers and sisters abuse, you see.

R Ja.

I All those forms of abuse. So life was very difficult but the only that inspired me, was to say, let me prove to my family that one day I will become a valuable person in life. I deserve better than this.

R So that feeling, you had it always in yourself, it was not somebody that gave it to you? That feeling of you want to prove to your family?

I No. I had it but you see, I grew in a family where the grandfather, was a professor, the vice chancellor at University of Turfloop at that time.

R Okay.

I So to us, when we grew, she, he has already passed away.

R Okay.

I So to us it was an inspiration.

R I see.

I To say, if...

R He has reached that top...

I If in the family there is this highly educated person, what, why can't we do it for ourselves also?

R That is wonderful.

I That is the legacy that he has left.

Participant 3 – 8 May 2012 (interview 1)

R: Please tell me about your career history?

P: I worked as a an assistant in a furniture, as a sales person and also I left that one, I went to an insurance company, that was IGI, yes, IGI, I think, I worked for almost a year then I realised, no let me just go back to teaching,

R: was it the teaching pulling you back or was it this work pushing you away?

P: no, it was pushing me because there in the insurance company it was not a basic salary, it was just a commission, that time, so I said to myself, no let me just go, because I had to move around you know going to mines, and all these places you know, and by that time there was no transport, you have to

hike, you know, yes, it was in the 80's, I think it was 1982, 83 up until April because it was in 83 that I went back to teaching, yes, I worked in a certain farm, around Malelane, then I worked there for almost 9 months, then I went to the college, in 1984, so I did only 1 year special course in teaching, because I had an experience by that time, so I came back in 1985 there now I started teaching again, yes, as a qualified teacher, up until today,

R: so you taught for 5 years in the primary school before leaving, getting your qualification and getting back into teaching again,

P: yes,

R: so 1985, you started where?

P: I started in primary school, it was called XXXXXXX. I taught there 1985 – 1992, I went to a secondary school around Hazyview, also rural, then I taught for three years, then I went back now because that was , that place was very far, it was because of marriage that time, so I came back again, it is there now I taught in a secondary school called XXXXX secondary school, that school, it is where I taught for 7 years, from there I got this promotional post, I moved to xxxxx

R: so because of promotion that you were coming to xxxxxxx.

P: it is 10 years now, so if I can count, all these years, before I break I just combine all these years, you know they count to roughly 30 years.

R: I am 34 years old, so my 34 years of living you have taught 30 years! Wow!

P: (laughing) yes, it is roughly 30 to 35, if I can just count,

R: what keeps you going strong?

P: (laughing) coming back and back...you know for me I can say it is a calling , yes, really this one is a calling because I remember before I started teaching, you know what I wanted to be a nurse, that was my dream job, during 1977 I applied for nursing, no that was in 1980, it was in 1983 no, I said let me just change to teaching I want to be a nurse, I applied in nursing and also in teaching, there comes the first acceptance letter from teaching – I took it, after a week the nursing comes and I have already signed a contract, (laughing)

Participant 3 – 5 September 2012 (Interview 2)

I Then we can start.

R Thanks

I Okay start

R You did good homework I see?

I No, no, no I didn't it is just a few, only some of this I maybe I just did remember...

R Ja, okay.

I Ja because I did not include the whole piece and now I remembered that I should include the whole piece. Ja so I can start?

R Yes I have put up my other thing broke so I am using this thing of my husband's.

I Wow!

R So it is recording.

I Wow. Thank you interesting, ja.

(Whispering)

I Okay. So what I have noted here is that, when I grew up, I was staying with my grandfather and grandparents.

R Grandparents yes, yes.

I Grandparents because you know my father after I was born he went to Durban when I was seven months, up until he come back, when I was six years.

R So you never knew him really?

I Yes.

R Mmmm.

I Yes.

R For work, did he leave?

I It is for work.

R For work?

I Yes, he was working in Durban.

R Mmmm.

I Yes, he went for a long period but now I am living with my father. My mother is passed away so she passed away in 1988. It is a long time.

R It's a long time.

I So at home we are only two girls, there is no brother.

R Just the girls?

I Yes just girls, so I am the elder but that is so nice and then you know, you know or, during those times, since my father left home while I was seven months and he came back when I was six years. It means that now, my younger sister was my half young sister. Yes, we are sharing the mother and not the father.

R Okay.

I At that stage. So after that he come back home and he took me with my mom and leave my half-sister at home, so we went to Durban.

R Okay.

I For a period of two years.

R Okay.

I But it was very terrible because my father was abusive, very abusive.

R Physically abusive?

I Physically abusive.

R I am sorry.

I So we used to run away every day, you know staying in bush, waiting for him to sleep so that maybe we go to the neighbors but he was not drinking.

R Just abusive?

I He was not, even today he is not drinking, he is not smoking. I do not know what went wrong with him.

R Still?

I Yes, yes.

R Is he still abusive?

I Yes! But now you know the results for that, the consequences for that, is that now his is staying alone. Because after my mom, my mom, after my mom, my mom passed away in early eighty eight but they were now separated, I can say they have just divorced by that time. So he got married to another woman and then he had seven children with that woman.

R Mmmm.

I Then but because he is abusive five years ago, he fought with my, you know stepmother and my stepmother went back.

R She went back.

I Yes and now he is staying alone.

R Mmmm.

I He has realized that now I have a daughter, that is me. He reversed and came back to me now

R And you have forgiven him?

I Yes, of course.

R Mmmm.

I Yes, yes I have forgiven him. Daily he is phoning me, I even went to an extra mile I bought him a phone, so he is able to phone me every time. Last weekend I was with him, I drove from here and to home so that I can see him you know. So that was the situation.

R So that has, that has made you a strong lady as well?

I Of course.

R Mmmm?

I Yes it has taught me to forgive that's it. You know, you know that is why every time I us to teach other people that you must forgive. Every time, yes it is painful but you can let it go.

Participant 4 – 8 May 2012 (Interview 1)

P: describe your school?

R: what is the first thing that comes to mind

P: aow, but this is a good school

R: okay, it will be good if I hear the good things...

P: (laugh) okay, if I write good it is not all right?

R: no its good, I will then ask you what is good – you don't have to write it I will record it myself,

P: okay (writing) ja

R: I am sorry for intruding on your time

P: okay

R: so you have been teaching less than 15 years in total, and the grades you are teaching?

P: grade 12, 8 and 7

R: you are teaching all of them at the moment?

P: yes mam

R: and the previously any other grades that you have taught?

P: last year I was teaching grade 9

R: you just said that you have been teaching for 5 years, at this particular school?

P: yes mam

R: so you started your teaching career here? And before then?

P: when I was working?

R: yes, you are 40 so you started teaching when you were 35, so...

P: noo, before I came here I was working in a butchery...

R: really? That is interesting...any particular reason why in a butchery?

P: noo we xxx from Limpopo, by then there were no jobs available for teaching,

R: have you always wanted to become a teacher?

P: yes mam,

R: and butchery was something...to get...money from?

P: yes, because I could not just stay home and depending on my parents financially

R: for support...

P: financial support yes, so I decided to seek a job, I was employed at the butchery I think I worked there for 8 years,

R: 8 years, wow, okay, what kind of teaching qualification did you do?

P: it was the primary teacher's diploma

R: okay, this was before you started working at the butchery?

P: No, I, when I was working in the butchery I was having a diploma, imagine working in a butchery...having the teacher's diploma

R: wow, so the butchery helped you to get your education...

P: no I was educated, no I went to college,

R: oh after school

P: yes after school...after I completed my studies I did not get employment, so I decided to work in a, in fact I did not decide it, there was no work, so I ended up working in a butchery,

R: because that was the opportunity, that was not your choice,

P: yes it was not my choice...

R: okay, so how did you stumble across the job here at XXXXX

P: at XXXXX, a friend of mine took me to this place,

R: okay, a friend, also a teacher friend?

P: yes,

R: so for a long time you wanted to become a teacher, since school days?

P: yes, since school days,

R: so and who and what made you want to become a teacher during your school days?

P: okay, I was impressed by this teacher who was teaching me, in standard 4, teaching us general science, because of the way he was teaching us, I mean the style of teaching and then I said one day I want to be like Mr XXXXXX. Because he likes jokes, but when it comes to teaching he was serious, and his style of teaching, his attitude, he was treating all the learners the same, he was not showing favouritism towards the learner, so I said to myself, one day, I want to be like this guy...by the way that is what I am doing now, I am not showing favouritism towards any learners.

R: that means he impressed you

P: he impressed me by the way of teaching, attitude, everything,

R: he was the guy that got you thinking about teaching...but for 8 years while working in the butchery who was then keeping this dream alive?

P: aah, no one, it was inside me,

Participant 4 – 4 September 2012 (Interview 2)

R Okay thanks, so last time we, I tried to get to know you a little bit better and explained to you the research and that is what this interview was all about. Now today I want to go into more focus on your career life specifically right from right from birth up until today.

I Yes.

R So that's why I drew it like this. This is a time line so I'm going to put the date that you were born here, nineteen...

I Seventy two.

R Seventy two. Right that was the day that you were born.

I Yes.

R Okay. Now the idea of this research is to understand all the good and the bad in your life.

I Okay.

R For me to make sense of why you are the good teacher that you are.

I Okay.

R So can we speak a little bit about the, what you can remember from the early childhood?

I Okay.

R The positive things or the positive people in your life that made a good impact on you as a person today?

I Okay. You mean at my young age?

R At your young age, ja. Let's say primary school and high school.

I Okay. Primary school I can say teachers.

R Your teachers?

I Ja.

R Okay.

I Because my parents, both of them were not educated because my father was just a mine worker.

R Okay.

I And my mother was not educated at all. So...

R So, ja...

I The fact was I was looking up at my teachers as the one who can train me, they were understand where I am coming because my mom was not educated, even when it come to motivation. She was not motivating us.

R Okay. So your teachers had a great impact on you?

I Yes, very much.

R What year did you go to primary school? Can you remember?

I It was in, was my first primary school, I was attending my first primary school in Palaborwa because my father was working at Palaborwa Mining Company. So I started my primary school at Palaborwa I think it's nineteen eighty one.

R Nineteen eighty one?

I Ja.

R Okay.

I By then because of the environment that there was because me in fact [inaudible] in Palaborwa I was staying in a township, so I starting to do funny things so my father decided to take me out of this place, township. He sent me a rural area.

R That means one of the negative influence in your life may have been the township...

I Yes.

R Environment.

I Ja, exactly.

R I can write that down.

I Negative influence by the township.

R Which means your dad saw what happened?

I Ja because life from the township is different from the rural areas. So he decided to take me out of the township. Then I, in fact I failed my grade, not my grade, back then it was called sub, I failed my Sub B.

R Okay.

I Twice.

R Oh dear. In the township environment?

I Ja.

R Okay. Is it because of the friends or?

I Ja no clearly because of the friends.

Participant 5 – 8 May 2012 (Interview 1)

R: so let's start with when did you know you were a teacher?

P: (laughing) maybe I can say when I was doing grade 12, when I was a learner, mmm, actually I was born in Swaziland, I finished my matric in Swaziland, but my mother is a South African, so, immediately when our father passed away, then our mother decided to come back to South Africa, that is actually why we are now citizens of South Africa, so actually when I came to South Africa I finish o-level in Swaziland, so when I wanted to continue with my studies they said I must first obtain the grade 12 certificate, so when I enrolled with one of the schools, XXX XXX High School, the subjects, I had a problem with Afrikaans, because in Swaziland we didn't do that, so when we were now registering for the subjects, in grade 12 what we supposed to have, then Afrikaans was there, I had a problem, I had to go to the principal, I begged the principal to replace Afrikaans with another subject, then she said, which one do you think you are going to take? I said I think I can go for business economics, she said, you know this is not an adult centre that you choose, you just have to take what is there, then, okay, it just ended there...so fortunately, the time that these papers came for registering, the principal was not there, he asked another educator to do it for me, then when we were busy I then I entered business economics, the educator said no, who told you we have this subject at our school? Then I said, aowa, the principal agreed...that was that (laughing)...so now what has happened, I was supposed to learn business economics on my own, then some of the learners, they wanted to join me, but there was no teacher...

R: you started a revolution...

P: (laughing) yes! So you know, then the principal said, he said, okay I can assist you, because you are seven or eight, that is how we started, and naturally I ended up teaching the learners business economics, because the principal, sometimes he was not there, then I said, ao, I am a teacher, it means I can be, then I developed a love, yes because for the next period, for the following day I had to go and prepare a chapter so that I am able to teach the learners, yes, and I opted a very good, I was a teacher my self, teaching myself and teaching the others, that is when I started, then it means I can be a teacher, if I can make the other learners understand the same level as me, giving them information, teaching them, sometimes the principal would say, hey, he used to call me XXX XXX that is my other name, XXX you are very good, you are very good with this one, and he say okay, you can even set a test for the learners, because I was competent, I set the test, I marked the test and then I said, it means that is where I developed the love for teaching, I then applied to go to the ABET centre to be an educator, but during my high school years, it was like I wanted to be a nurse, ja, I wanted to be a nurse, when I grew up I said I am going to be a nurse because I was inspired by my aunt, my aunt was a qualified nurse, so when I was visiting my aunt, she was now going to work, wearing the white uniform with the applets, the stockings, the high heal, when she was moving, I said oh, wanted to be a nurse, I don't know how it changed, then in grade 12 I said, oh I can be a teacher, I wanted to be a teacher...

R: well, the nurse and the teacher, they are both in service of people, so you had a strong inclination for that...

P: for that yes, the like for the people that is why I am what I am today...

R: it looks like you are a gifted person if you could teach, while you were still a learner...

P: yes, while I was still a learner, yes, that is where I discovered myself and said okay, I am a born teacher, that is where I discovered this...

R: and at the college? Did you enjoy the studying?

P: yes, I enjoyed the studying, especially when you were told how to impart the knowledge that you have, to someone who doesn't know anything, you know I was enjoying each and every day, especially, the knowledge that they were giving us, so that we are going to assist the other people who need to be assisted, not only the learners, you know, when you are training to be an educator you become an educator everywhere, at home you are an educator, to the community you are an educator, even at the church you are an educator,

Participant 5 – 5 September 2012 (Interview 2)

R Okay because we had such a good interview the last time, Today I only wanted a little bit more information about your background, from where you were born because I see we spoke a lot about when you were at school and when you studied and whatever; then sharing the stories with me and then we will take some photos for resilience. I see you have prepared quite a lot, thank you. I appreciate it very much.

P Okay so what is it that you want to know?

R So I was thinking if you could share with me some, when you were growing up even before school, the challenges that you faced and then the positive things in your life that you used to overcome those challenges or the people that helped you?

P Okay. Maybe I am just going to give what I've kept out of there?

R That's fine. Yes, yes.

P Okay, then to start with I was born in Swaziland.

R Mmm, I remember.

P Yes, living in a compound situated in an asbestos mine, [inaudible] mine, my father was employed by the mine. I obtained my primary and secondary certificate at a school mine. Then the mine provided us with shelter, food, coal, since it was a very cold place. All the mine houses had stoves and fireplaces depending on the type of work that you were doing. Those who were doing better jobs were given better houses with electricity.

R Okay.

P My father occupied a high position at work, so we owned a very big house, enough bedrooms, electricity, bathroom with hot running water.

R That's nice.

P There were many activities that were sponsored by the mine. There was a hall where we used to watch movies on a Friday, there was also a nightclub for grownups, strictly for people above the age of eighteen.

R Okay.

P There was also a soccer field where teams used to play against one another. There was a swimming pool, although my father did not allow us to go and swim there because he believed that it has not been supervised by the authorities.

Emma, P1, I



1 Participant 1 – 4 May 2012 (Interview 1)

2 R: Thank you for agreeing to have an interview with me.

3 P: MMMm!

4 R: So basically the goal of this interview is for me to get to know your story

5 P: okay

6 R: or how you became a teacher, how long have you been a teaching, so maybe as a start you should go through these questions and I will make some notes as we go along

7

8 P: ok;

9 R: so your name and surname

10 P: Makopo

11 R: i iakopo...like that?

12 P: Yes...Maduba

13 R: Okay, so the English name you told me yesterday?

14 P: Francina?..

15 R: Yes, where does that come from? is it a second name?

16 P: Aah, it is there it is Makopo Maduba Francina

17 R: Okay, With an S or a C

18 P: With a C

19 R: Like that?

20 P: Yes

21 R: Okay this is your surname and this is your...?

22 P: Jaah, aah, it is my culture name, the name from my grandparents

23 R: Oh okay, and what does it mean if I may ask?

24 P: Maduba? Eeh, a strong lady who used to conquer... especially in case of a fight

25 R: Oh okay, it almost sound like being a survivor?

26 P: yes

27 R: you get things done?

28 P: Ja

29 R: So they know when they gave you the name that this is you. Is this you? Is that who you are? A strong lady?

30

31 P: [laughing] aah, I am not sure, I can't say yes...

32 R: why?

33 P: But they must be people who used to assess me and they know mmmm yes

34 R: mmmmm yes, this is the one

35 P: Jaa

36 R: mmmm that's beautiful. And then you are female?

37 P: Yes

38 R: and then your age?

39 P: My age: I was born in 1965 on the second of November, and then you can calculate from there

40 R: I am not a good mathematician but I will do the calculation.

41 P: Tell me a little bit of where you grew up?

42 P: Okay, I grew up at Tafelkop. Next to Groblersdal. Jaa is Far from here, I am not sure about the kilo's but it is a long distance.

43

44 R: So, How long did you live there? You were born there?

45 P: I was born there. You know what, my grandfather bought a farm there, and then my father, let me say he was a first born, and you know in our culture, the first born, especially the male used to inherit his father's riches, the legacy, and that is why we stayed with the grandparents and we grew up there. And then unfortunately my father passed away in 1974 on 24 of December. That's when my life started to be sour. Just imagine living without father, my mom was a house wife. Doing nothing at that time, because my father was a strong man. He was a Foreman at Murray and Roberts construction. He is the one who built Carlton Centre in Johannesburg. And then, he was loving and caring father, you know.

52 We were three girls. I am the second born. Yes, and then, from there is where now life become hard. For us, because there was no one who used to provide us with the school fees. Remember, by that time we used to pay the school fees we used to provide the stationery. No one helped my mother. Only God... why am I saying this? Because we showed... I used to go to school with bare feet, without pocket money. But I was happy! Because my mom used to sit with us and tell us 'ow, my children, this is the situation that I am facing, and then you are my only hope... I am here because of you... So be strong please...'

59 R: Your mom sounds like a strong woman herself...

61 P: Jaana, and then I started my primary school, at M7 primary school. It was a missionary school.

Religious outlook

Comment [C1] (1) ...

Comment [C2] (2) ...

Comment [C3] (3) ...

significant parent

Sense of accomplishment

of style

62 R: Is that in the vicinity? Or was it far from where you stayed?

63 P: eeh, we used to travel 7 kms from my home to that school, and then, that means I was brilliant because they used to, let me say when I was doing standard 1, at the end of the year they say no you don't have to be in standard 2. By that time we were using the standards not the grades. I said why? They say no, you are clever, you deserve to be in standard 3. And also my sister. They put my sister in standard 5, yes the first one, ...? Knowing that every after school, when we come from school we knew that mmmmmm this is my task, I must go and fetch water in the river, and then the eldest sister must go there on the mountain to fetch water in order to make food.

70 And then by then my mom left us, and then she went to Johannesburg to look for a job. She left my sister, I was 11 years old and my sister, I think she was 13 years old. And then the last born was still young. We used to left her with our grandparents and then it seems as if our grandparents were not happy about us when we were going to school they used to say no-no you will suffer until the rest of your life, why can't you leave school and go to work. There was a farm next to us

75 R: Because in those days it was more important to work, to get money, to get food...

76 P: Jaah, they say: Why are you struggling to educate the girls, you know they are going to get married

78 R: So the husband must provide...

79 P: And then, but it didn't bother us so much, eeh, my sister and my younger sister and me, we are like this just like a chain, even when there is no food for us to eat, still we didn't complain so much. We just say, we know that God is watching us, even our father, he sees us and he'll do something for us

83 Okay, when I was doing standard 5. They started to do secondary school Form 1. I was the best learner. I got my letter of certificate. And then, I wrote an essay in my mother tongue

84 R: which is?

85 P: ++++++ African language+++++

87 R: and it means?

88 P: eeh it means, ... perspective. So I wrote it, unaware of what I am saying, it was a relevant topic, and it was in my history, and then after two days the teacher took the essay and he went to the formal and he read the essay, saying, you fail to write a proper essay, listen to this essay. Because my introduction was saying ++++++ African language+++++ you must persevere knowing that ++++++ there is someone here where it is going to...?? And then I said eeh... when there is no one who cares about you I know that one day I will become somebody...

95 P: that is so beautiful

96 P: and then it was out of 50 and my score: 50 out of 50

97 R: I would have given you 60 out of 50

Comment [C4] (4) ...

Comment [C5] (5) ...

Comment [C6] (6) ...

Comment [C7] (7) ...

Comment [C8] (8) ...

Comment [C9] (9) ...

Comment [C10] (10) ...

Comment [C11] (11) ...

Comment [C12] (12) ...

Comment [C13] (13) ...

98 P: [laughing] okay, and then from there I became ... the end of the year when we were supposed to write the final exam, in standard 5. And then I stayed home for 2 months. And then my school principal Mrs XXXXXXX came to my place, talk to me and asked: are you better? Do you think you can come to school and write your final exam? I said I want to come and write but I don't know if I can because I am not strong enough, and then she said, no, please try by all means to come and write. I don't think you can fail standard 5, wena, you have already passed, you just need the signature. She trusted me so much. And then I talked to my mother, eeh, the following week, I went to school, I write, ... they were pedestrians/the great distance? And then I went back home, the following... until I finished the exams. Is where now I passed standard 5 with distinction. And then the following year I did not go to school because I wasn't well. I stayed home for a long time. And then it was aahhhhh???????? I never noted it down.

110 And the next year, I went back to school, eeh XXXXXXX Secondary School, Did Form 2, passed, did Form 3 and passed it. After passing Form 3, it is where I met my husband, I was married and then when I arrived there. He started saying, no, you cannot sit here doing nothing for the whole day. What is it that you want to do? Keare, the only thing that you can do for me is to send me back to school. Aare, do you want to go to school? Keare, yes, Aare, okay, I don't have a problem with that as long as you want to do this.

116 R: wonderful husband...

117 P: Jaa, then there was this ??????? not ABET. It was adult, call it -hat??

118 R: oh mmm Adult Learning C...

119 P: Ja-jas, I went there. There was no Form 3. They say, because you have passed Form 5. You can do Form 5. We used to go there after school and there was a teacher Mr XXXXXX, who taught us there and then, there and then, I have managed to pass

123 ... I say okay why, even if they don't grant me a chance to study for a social worker, let me opt for teaching because teaching and social worker is similar, and then is where now I choose teaching as my career

126 1994 I passed my course 1, 95 course 2, 96 I was doing course 3 and is when I ... then in 1997 I did my higher education diploma with the University of the North. And I managed to XXXXXX in record time. 1998 I went back to the University of the North, I wanted to do computer literacy. And then the duration was three months and then I come back with my certificate ... unemployed

132 R: what are you telling me?

133 P: at my province, really mam I am telling the truth.

134 R: this now near Groblersdal?

135 P: Yes

Comment [C14] (14) ...

Comment [C15] (15) ...

Comment [C16] (16) ...

Comment [C17] (17) ...

Comment [C18] (18) ...

Comment [C19] (19) ...

Comment [C20] (20) ...

Comment [C21] (21) ...

Comment [C22] (22) ...

Comment [C23] (23) ...

Comment [C24] (24) ...

Comment [C25] (25) ...

136 R: How is this possible?
137 P: ooh...
138 R: but why? What would be the reason?
139 P: We don't know - it means as if the strategic management they did not do their task very well.
140 Because they have introduced ETAFSA???? And then is where now many students got the advantage
141 of being educated... they were supposed to guide us, saying that
142 eh-eh...
143
144 R: you have the educational, no work
145 P: yes... But I said mmm-mmm, but me not complete this...
146... his last words to us: he said, I have got only three girls and these are
147 my children, even if I don't have a son you are my daughter and contrary you are my son so what I
148 want from you, you must be educated, forget about boys, just imagine, it was in the olden days. But
149 because he used to live with the wife, my father did not go to school but, mmm he knows how to
150 speak English, properly. He is the one that taught us this is my body, this is my head, this is my
151 mouth, even things. So my father promised us something, then I wanted to fulfil his dreams, like in
152 the... and then we started with the Adult Centres, 2001, they opened up a centre at my
153 place, and... encouraged, and then 2003 they re-opened the Adult Centres
154 again, and I was a centre manager, at XXXXXX primary school, XXXXXX there was a post at
155 XXXXXX secondary school. And, I went there for a while...
156
157 R: how was it teaching at the ABET and at the primary school? Was it different?
158 P: It was not different, it was the same.
159 R: how?
160 P: those people they are illiterate, they know nothing about writing, you have to start from the start,
161 you start with the phonics, warra, warra warra...
162 P: okay
163 P: you teach them, they behave like small children,
164 R: so it is like teaching small children
165 P: yes, but what I like about the adult, they are committed to what they are doing

Comment [C29]...
Comment [C30]...
Comment [C31]...
Comment [C32]...
Comment [C33]...
Comment [C34]...
Comment [C35]...
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Comment [C37]...
Comment [C38]...
Comment [C39]...
Comment [C40]...

170 R: mmm, you don't have to motivate them
171 P: ...
172...
173...
174...
175... and then the adult one, there is a lot of competition, you know, where there is a
176 competition there is a progress, no-one wants to be a loser.
177 R: mmm, healthy competition
178 P: yes.
179 R: so you work at home, and then what happened?
180 P: ah!
181...
182...
183...
184... And then I used my salary to buy a tent and chest so that I can start my own
185 business of catering.
186 R: wow, that's interesting! So this was in 2006?
187 P: yes, 2006, I started my catering, XXXXXX Catering and Supply Services
188 R: Is it still running?
189 P: No, right now it is not working you know, aah, as you know that in some sectors there are lot of
190 corruption even if you submit your whatever, they don't consider you
191 R: Mmm the tender
192 P: Jaah, but in case of weddings I used to go there and decorate, the decorations
193 R: mmm, can really go to you are a creative artistic person?
194 P: even now I can phone my daughter and ask her to send you my photos, last weekend I was having
195 2 weddings, we went there to decorate.
196 R: oh, that's why you told me over the weekends you are a busy lady?
197 P: Jaah, I am trying to close the gap, my daughters are now grownups, I must send them to
198 tertiary, and I have got lot of gaps, even to renovate my place where I am staying, because I stayed
199 for long time without working - can you see - I am still having in lots of gaps that they need me to fill
200 R: yes, yes, yes
201 P: so I can't keep on blaming the government that I am seeking payouts, whatever, No I've got eyes,
202 I've got mind, I've got hands, I get an extra income

Comment [C41]...
Comment [C42]...
Comment [C43]...
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Comment [C45]...
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Comment [C50]...
Comment [C51]...

203 R: that is very interesting - do you know any other teachers that think like you? That are also
204 supplementing their income?
205 P: eeh, there is another lady at my place, she is a teacher, and she is doing the same, in fact she is
206 my competitor, because we are in the same business. But for now I think I am special.
207 R: mmm, that is very apparent...
208 P: because in case of teaching...
209...
210... when if he can try by all means to help, I will stick to the same question, don't hide this, I am a
211 parent, I am not your friend, I am not a teacher only in front of you, I am a teacher, I am a parent, I
212 am a guardian, I am a counsellor, I am everything for you. Just open your mouth and then is where I
213 started now to interview/analyse me...
214 R: that is so beautiful, but you sound like the person that takes care of everybody, who is taking care
215 of you?
216 P: aah, no one is taking care of me now except God. Because what I want, or what I need, I used to
217 pray. Oh my God, please help me, in this situation. And there is a young boy by the name of XXXXX
218 XXXXX. He is now a deputy director in the Department of Social and what-what...
219 R: social development?
220 P: Jaah, in PTA. That boy was...
221... children they
222 suffered a lot. And they are my neighbours, and that boy was very clever, he passed matric in 1994
223 when I was at the University of the North. And then fortunately, unfortunately, fortunately the
224 mother was helping a teaching. The woman and the husband were a teacher. But I don't know what
225 went wrong, they did not help the poor boy. Just to tell him about the bursaries that they know, but
226 I started to think about the little boy, what can I do? Knowing that if one child can be educated, that
227 family, that whole family will survive, I arranged with my friend XXX XXX he was the cleaner at our
228 campus. I have got a brother, and I wanted him to come at our school, maybe there is something
229 that he can do, and then XXX said don't worry about accommodation, don't worry about food,
230 don't worry about anything my sister, I will provide. And then I went back home and I told the boy
231 XXXX prepare yourself, next month I need you to go with me, just to pay a visit, I have arranged
232 everything there, even the bursaries, and then XXXXX came and they started their orientation, eh-eh
233 now he is going to pay for the meal? Kaare don't worry about the meal, each and every one that I
234 am having, we will share it, and we started to share it...
235...
236...
237... you I am now a deputy at my department! You know what, I was happy, I did not worry about
238 myself! I just say, maybe this is the purpose of God, he wanted to use me as a step ladder, he
239 wanted to use me as a bridge, let me serve his purpose. Even know, I don't expect anything from the
240 poor boy, not because, I told myself, I am not doing this to please the boy or to please the world, I
241 am doing this to serve the God purpose. If I am helping my neighbour to be, I am just saying I am
242 helping God

Comment [C52]...
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Comment [C54]...
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Comment [C56]...
Comment [C57]...
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Comment [C59]...
Comment [C60]...
Comment [C61]...
Comment [C62]...
Comment [C63]...

243 R: the God-purpose - I like that! That is so beautiful
244 P: so that is why I wanted to be a social worker, because, you know what, I am easily touched, if
245 somebody suffers... not I am abused! So but even now, even if I am struggling, aah, I don't have
246 to complain, I just take things easy. In case of my work, rural...
247... which they need us to put hands in our pocket and do something to help them, I don't feel great if
248 I am happy and somebody is suffering...
249... the XXXXX, they will just sleep during the first period, what is wrong with you? I am not feeling well.
250 What is the problem? She...
251... a teacher, you as a parent, you must come with a put a pot, you can just give them the fruit, the
252 banana or the apple and after 5 minutes you go back to her or to him, you will see the difference.
253 This person is not ill, there is something wrong with him or with her. There was a boy here, last year
254 he was doing matric. XXXX XXXXX, eeh...
255...
256... my husband was working at XXXX Mils, he used to work at XXXXX with the with shirt with the
257 emblem. And then I asked my husband, can I use old your shirt, you are no more using them, aah
258 you can take them, what are you going to do with them? No, I am going to give another learner at
259 my school, why are you doing that? No, this is the little I can offer... I just collected the shirt, and then
260 I got the shirt and I gave the shirt to him, he was so happy! He cried, and his question was: how did
261 you identify me? What makes you to do this for me? 'Nha... Nothing. Nothing. Nothing.
262 I take you as my boy... he failed matric, and then even during the
263 matric dance, I am the one who bought him clothes, I say no, you must join your class mate, I will
264 buy so that you can have some new clothes for that occasion...
265...
266...
267 R: mmm, giving back
268 P: so mmm, eeh... and, I don't if all people were thinking like I do, to
269 save the poor children, in the developing country...
270... even
271 if you gave their children the school work they cannot ask them: he... Let
272 me check your books... whatever, no, nothing... my aim is not to come here and
273 demand. I must do something for the community, even if I passed away, these people they must
274 know they have lost a person. There was someone for them, even if right know some of them cannot
275 realize what I am doing, but once I open the gate?, it is then that it said mm-mm, we need mam
276 ma-gogo, if she was here...
277 R: so the passion for being at school is about helping the learners, is that what I am hearing?
278 P: Jaah! Is about helping the learners, knowing that, if we don't help learners to be educated, who is
279 going to teach my grand children?
280 R: mmm, the future
281 P: Jaah! Because these poor children, need to be educated, irrespective of their situation, there must
282 be somebody for them, and that person must take it as a calling, not because of you want to be paid

Comment [C64]...
Comment [C65]...
Comment [C66]...
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Comment [C76]...
Comment [C77]...

283 eh, mam, you can earn 1 million every month, but at the end of the year, when you look back you
284 can see, mmm-mmm, where is my money? So is better for you, even if you get 1 cent, when you
285 look at the girls, you say mmm-mmm, this is my money. This is my money. This is what I've done
286 with my money.

287 R: you have used it. So teaching is not about money.

288 R: what is it about then?

290 P: teaching is about caring for each other, because, eeh, you must create a time, when you have to
291 sit down with your learners, you develop them, and you must have a time to sit down with your
292 learners, those, who are having a problem, those who are not coping. It takes a time for somebody
293 to reveal his or her secret, so must be there for that particular person, if your learner is not
294 performing well, you must identify the learner, you are not studying! You are not studying!
295 Nol you've got the problem, you've got to identify the problem, the cause, and you must come up
296 with the solution, by so doing, it means you are helping.

297 R: and who helps you in the school to help these learners? Who is also supporting you?

298 P: mam XXXXX. If I have got a problem, maybe that problem is too sensitive, instead of helping I
299 started to cry, is where you'll go to talk to mam XXXX. Mam XXXX, eeh, you know I have got this
300 problem and then I can't handle it, can you assist? And she is willing to do that

301 R: that's good...and from the community? Are there other professionals in the community that you
302 can ask to support you to with the learners?

303 P: they've got the home base carers, but we did not include them in this programme

304 R: okay, is there a reason why they were not included?

305 P: no, let me say it because of some of the problems we used to handle, we managed to come up
306 with a solution, because sometimes, when you've got a problem with a child, we used to write a
307 letter and invite the parents to come, so that the learner, the teacher and the parent, can sit down
308 and talk, and after that you as a teacher, you have to monitor, whether you have done your
309 homework, thoroughly, or there is something that needed to be added there,

310 P: that is lovely, that means that you get in the parents, the ownership of solving the problem, is
311 here with the problem being solved and the teacher follows through to see that things are being
312 done, okay, that is so beautiful,

313 P: ja mam, why should we say for each and every little thing that we do we need to be paid? Think
314 about the poor old man, he stay at there for 27 years, no one was paying him, because he wanted us
315 to live a better life, so why can't we do the same? What are we doing with this money?
316
317

Comment [C145] Q: ...
Comment [C146] Q: ...
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Comment [C175] Q: ...
Comment [C176] Q: ...
Comment [C177] Q: ...

355 ...
356 ...
357 ...

358 R: what would you do?

359 P: ...
360 ...
361 this, I used to be looking at my teacher wearing nice, always dressing nice. Dressing like the musician,
362 R: the occasion of learning

363 P: yahl And then when we look like this, maybe one day I want to look like Mam XXY. But gone are
364 these days...

365 R: I think people like you are keeping it alive...

366 P: but only few, what about the rest? what about the rest? What is happening with our profession?
367 Who is going to develop our youth? They must take measures their role model
368 ...
369 ...

370 R: I agree with you, even the children at the university you can see...but then again there are those
371 ones who has got the heart, the god-purpose that you spoke of, so many of them as well, they are
372 there, they are there...

373 P: it will be better if they can keep it that way, aah, this is the question that worries me too
374 much...ew, by friend's grandchildren, are they going to be educated? Ammm? We will see? We
375 cannot say we will see. We must sit down as teachers and talk about it

376 ...
377 ...
378 ...

379 ...
380 ...
381 ...
382 ...
383 ...
384 ...

385 ...
386 so...

387 R: that is the worst weapon ever...

388 P: yes. Okay for an example, here, I am not comfortable with my career so I will have to say, I can
389 offer another career...I can study while I am still busy working, after that...
390 ...
391 ...

391 R: ja, I want to say maybe there is something that we can do...if you can learn from the wise ladies
392 like yourself, and we can show them that despite your life, you are here with your passion and your

Comment [C180] Q: ...
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Comment [C221] Q: ...

318 R: so if PTA phoned you tomorrow and say mam come work for us, we will pay double your salary, all
319 the resources are there, its beautiful, no orphaned children, everybody is happy, will you go?

320 P: everybody is happy? it means even if I can go and work there, with all these things I will
321 go there to compare the life there, the urban life and the rural life.
322 ...
323 ...
324 ...

325 R: so you will not forget your roots, the roots of coming from here,

326 P: no I won't, until there is someone who is going to take my place taking care of them, knowing that
327 mmm, there is someone who is there for my learners, and my people,

328 R: you are true angel...I think you know that, but also hope that people are seeing that and valuing
329 that...

330 What are the things in your life, your history that makes you who you are?

331 P: apart from their behaviour, this is where we are struggling, but even if it is tough well, I am still
332 saying, they need to be educated,

333 R: despite them being misbehaving, not motivate!

334 P: and then I used to say, okay.

335 ...
336 ...
337 ...
338 can't you prepare yourself now, because
339 ...
340 ...
341 kitchen, they ... used to travel 8 kms, just imagine.

342 R: you see and that's a life of being thankful,

343 P: yes,

344 R: mmm something we don't see in the young ones today,

345 P: yes, I used to ask myself this question, what will happen to our grand grand children, are they
346 going to be educated?
347 ...
348 ...
349 ...
350 ...
351 ...
352 ...
353 ...
354 ...
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390 ...
391 ...
392 ...

393 purpose, for teaching, and look at what you have reached, how many children have you
394 reached...many, many, many,
395 P: ...
396 R: yes, yes, and you are proud of that
397 P: yes I am proud of that
398 R: so we must bring back the proudness of being a teacher...
399 P: yes!

400 ...
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450 ...

Participant 3 – 5 September 2012 (Interview 2)

2 I Then we can start.

3 R Thanks

4 I Okay start

5 R You did good homework I see?

6 I No, no, no I didn't it is just a few, only some of this I maybe I just did remember...

7

8 R Ja. okay.

9 I Ja because I did not include the whole piece and now I remembered that I should include the whole piece. Ja so I can start?

10

11 R Yes I have put up my other thing broke so I am using this thing of my husband's.

12 I Wow!

13 I Wow. Thank you interesting, ja.

14 (Whispering)

15 Okay. So what I have noted here is that, when I grew up, I was staying with my grandfather and grandparents.

16 Grandparents yes, yes.

17 ~~Grandparents yes, yes. I was staying with my grandfather and grandparents. When I was six years old, my father was abusive and I was staying with my grandfather and grandparents.~~ **Mixed**

18 So you never knew him really?

19 Yes.

20 Mmmm.

21 Yes.

22 For work, did he leave?

23 It is for work.

24 For work?

30 I Yes, he was working in Durban.

31 R Mmmm.

32 I Yes, he went for a long period but now I am living with my father. My mother is passed away so she passed away in 1988. It is a long time.

33

34 R It's a long time.

35 I So at home we are only two girls, there is no brother.

36 R Just the girls?

37 I Yes just girls, so I am the elder but that is so nice and then you know, you know or, during those times, since my father left home while I was seven months and he came back when I was six years. It means that now, my younger sister was my half young sister. Yes, we are sharing the mother and not the father.

38

39

40

41

42 R Okay.

43 I At that stage. So after that he come back home and he took me with my mom and leave my half-sister at home, so we went to Durban.

44

45 R Okay.

46 I For a period of two years.

47 R Okay.

48 I ~~My father was abusive and I was staying with my grandfather and grandparents.~~

49 R Physically abusive? **Mixed**

50 I Yes, yes.

51 R I am sorry.

52 I So we used to run away every day, you know staying in bush, waiting for him to sleep ~~and then we would go to the bush and stay there.~~

53

54

55 R Just abusive?

56 I He was not, even today he is not drinking, he is not smoking. I do not know what went wrong with him.

57

58 R Still?

59 I Yes, yes.

60 R Is he still abusive?

61 I Yes! But now you know the results for that, the consequences for that, is that now he is staying alone. Because after my mom, my mom, after my mom, my mom passed away in early eighty eight but they were now separated, I can say they have just divorced by that time. So he got married to another woman and then he had seven children with that woman.

62

63

64

65

66

67 R Mmmm.

68 I Then but because he is abusive five years ago, he fought with my, you know stepmother and my stepmother went back.

69

70 R She went back.

71 I Yes and now he is staying alone.

72 R Mmmm.

73 I ~~My father was abusive and I was staying with my grandfather and grandparents.~~

74

75 R And you have forgiven him?

76 I Yes, of course.

77 R Mmmm.

78 I Yes, yes I have forgiven him. Daily he is phoning me ~~and I am still angry with him.~~

79

80

81

82 R So that has, that has made you a strong lady as well?

83 I Of course.

84 R Mmmm?

85 I ~~Yes, yes I have forgiven him. Daily he is phoning me and I am still angry with him.~~

86

87

88 R Because if you hold on to the pain...

89 I ~~Yes, yes I have forgiven him. Daily he is phoning me and I am still angry with him.~~

90

91

92 So every time

93 ~~These learners they are misbehaving but I am able to cope with them. It is because I know the pain that my mom went through, and he survived on that one, you know.~~

94

95

96

97

98 R Mmmm.

99 I I still love my father but you know, by that time he was married to another one. ~~and that makes me survive in this world.~~

100

101

102

103 R That is wonderful. You are your mother's daughter. Thank you for sharing this with me

104

105 I I know. [laughs]

106 R okay.

107 I And then you know when I grow up you know when you grow up while you are still young you have dreams, you know and say I want to be this, I want to do this. ~~and they have their own dreams, I am going to be a doctor. They have their own dreams, I am going to be a doctor.~~

108

109

110

111

112 R Yes

113 I ~~Yes, yes I have forgiven him. Daily he is phoning me and I am still angry with him.~~

114

115

116

117

118 R Ja.

119 I ~~Yes, yes I have forgiven him. Daily he is phoning me and I am still angry with him.~~

120 R No you have the passion for it.

121 I ~~Yes, yes I have forgiven him. Daily he is phoning me and I am still angry with him.~~

122

123

124 R Oh?

125 I Yes. Yes. ~~Yes, yes I have forgiven him. Daily he is phoning me and I am still angry with him.~~

126

127 say why do I do this? Uh uh, I was not something like that child like

empathy

Mixed

Pos. adapt

EXO
Pony

128 that one always you need the reasons, why do you say they must do
129 this? *161*
130 *162*
131 *163*
132 *164*
133 R So you had to do that? *165 R*
134 I had to do that. *166 I*
135 A You had to be the boy, as well? *167*
136 I *168*
137 *169*
138 *170 R*
139 *171 I*
140 R Mmmm. *172*
141 I That is why, you know I am a surviving in fact because you know, I said
142 myself I can do whatever a man can do. Why not? So that is why,
143 even if now I am staying with children, who are not my children, boys
144 and I am able. *173 R*
145 R To manage them. *174 I*
146 I To manage them, to council them, to guide them... *175*
147 R That is why. *176*
148 I Because, I know what it is that is done by men. *177*
149 R Yes. *178*
150 I You know, it was very hard when you are in the veld because
151 sometimes you have to learn how to fight. *179*
152 R Shoo. *180*
153 I Yes, using the sticks. I liked that it was very hectic sometimes but,
154 And I also learned how to plough. *181 R*
155 R Plough? *182 I*
156 I Yes because you know they were using this... *183*
157 R With the ox or the... *184*
158 I With the ox, yes, yes, with the ox. We still have the fields. *185 R*
159 R oh! *186 I*
187
188
189
190 R
191 I
192
193
194 R

Accomplishment

engagement

Process of Learning

160 I used to go there and check because my father now is old, you know I
161 used to check if they are still there, but I know one day I retire I will go
162 and use that. So we learn that, you know, so I said to myself, why
163 while I was young I was able to do one two three, *164*
165 R No. *165 R*
166 I *166 I*
167 *167*
168 *168*
169 *169*
170 R Wonderful. *170 R*
171 I *171 I*
172 *172*
173 R Wonderful. *173 R*
174 I She said to me, how do you do it? I said it is patience, you know if a
175 learner cannot be able to do this I just call the learner and just sit down
176 with the learner and try by all means to unpack every challenges that
177 the learner is facing. *177*
178 *178*
179 *179*
180 passed. *180*
181 R That is okay. *181 R*
182 I *182 I*
183 *183*
184 *184*
185 R Mmmm? *185 R*
186 I *186 I*
187 *187*
188 *188*
189 *189*
190 R Yes I remember from last time you said that. *190 R*
191 I *191 I*
192 *192*
193 *193*
194 R Okay, okay. *194 R*

195 I *195 I*
196 *196*
197 *197*
198 *198*
199 *199*
200 *200*
201 *201*
202 *202*
203 R Yes. *203 R*
204 I It is difficult for you, to find yourself... With other people, you know, so
205 it is one thing that makes me, in say... *204 I*
206 R Very much. *206 R*
207 I Ja. *207 I*
208 R *208 R*
209 I So for now I am staying
210 with other ladies from Eastern Cape, just imagine. *209 I*
211 R Eastern Cape? *211 R*
212 I Eastern Cape, they are speaking Xhosa but I am staying with them, I
213 do not have a problem. *212 I*
214 *214*
215 *215*
216 *216*
217 *217*
218 *218*
219 *219*
220 *220*
221 *221*
222 *222*
223 *223*
224 *224*
225 R They loved you... *225 R*
226 I *226 I*
227 *227*
228 *228*
229 *229*
230 *230*
231 *231*

Adapt to change

Empathy

Happy @ work

Persevering

232 school preparing for the next day. *232 I*
233 *233*
234 *234*
235 *235*
236 R Ja. *236 R*
237 I Ja, is it benefitting our country or... *237 I*
238 R What is happening. *238 R*
239 I To what is happening to the economy. *239 I*
240 R That is amazing. *240 R*
241 I Of our country. *241 I*
242 I I do not know whether it is the right thing that I am doing. *242 I*
243 R I think, I think the fact that the children want you to stay, they want to
244 camp with you that tell you it is the right thing *243 R*
245 I It is the right thing. *245 I*
246 R Yes, you are making a difference, big difference. *246 R*
247 I Do you know that? *247 I*
248 I I do not know, well I can accepted it, as you are saying now. *248 I*
249 R I think so. *249 R*
250 I I accepted it. *250 I*
251 *251*
252 *252*
253 *253*
254 *254*
255 *255*
256 *256*
257 *257*
258 *258*
259 R Ja. *259 R*
260 I That is why they just want to bring a little bit in, you know just a little bit. *260 I*
261 R Step by step. *261 R*

Positive outlook

262 I Step by step, so I can see if maybe you can just sit down as ladies, there is something that we can do and change because you know a home without a mother it is not a home.

263 X

264

265 R That is not a home.

266 I We have good ideas.

267 R Yes.

268 I And we know how to do it.

269 R Exactly.

270 I We do not show, hey do this, do this. No, we do it on our own. So if I can be able to mobilize my educators here, I see that there is something that what we can do.

271

272

273 R Plus then that ladies are equipped to go further and mobilize others and so the better making becomes bigger.

274

275 I They can. Yes, yes.

276 R That is wonderful.

277 I Yes, I can see that one can help us a lot.

278 R Let's hear your other story.

279 I Yes, everything, there is, I have just right, written, ja, no. That is nice, that is nice.

280

281 R (Going through pages)

282 I Oh, okay this one is just a history, that in which year I was staying with my aunt.

283

284 R Okay.

285 I Ja.

286 R Okay.

287 I Ja, from, I think it was from nineteen sixty eight to nineteen sixty nine, I was staying with my aunt.

288

289 R And your age then was?

290 I Sorry?

Handwritten notes:
Ja
Sorry to be done

291 R Your age, how old where you? Staying with your aunt? Where you still at school?

292

293 I I think it was eleven years because I was born fifty seven.

294 R Ja.

295 I Ja, I think I was eleven years, yes.

296 R Okay, so you were still at school?

297 I Yes I was still at school by that time. In 1968 in the year seventy one I was still at school but it was far from my home. then I stayed with my relatives.

298

299

300 R Okay.

301 I Ja mom's parents there because it was...

302 R Be closer.

303 I Ja, to be closer to the school. You know at school I was excelling especially when it come to the primary school I never got below position three. Position one, two and three. One, two and three, up until I passed my grade, that was standard six.

304

305

306

307 R Six.

308 I Yes then I went to secondary.

309 R So you achieved?

310 I Ja, ja, ja.

311 R Despite...

312 I Because you know why do I say so while I was at school, if maybe that day I do not go to school because maybe I was ill, you know the teacher continues teaching.

313

314

315 R Yes.

316 I [Redacted]

317 I [Redacted]

318 I [Redacted]

319 R Mmmm.

320 I Ja it was just that, you know. So in, at secondary school I was doing science, I did science up until standard eight, that is grade ten today, and I passed.

321

322

Handwritten notes:
✓ accomplish

Handwritten notes:
teach

323 R Mmmm.

324 I With (snaps fingers)

325 R Like nothing.

326 I [Redacted]

327 I [Redacted]

328 R I remember.

329 I [Redacted]

330 I [Redacted]

331 R I can you imagine, but you completed it through the FET college, did you not, later?

332

333 I No you know what I did, I went to the college, I taught, because after grade, standard eight, I taught for five years.

334

335 R Okay.

336 I Yes.

337 R Okay.

338 I I started teaching in a primary school for a period of five years.

339 R I remember that.

340 I After five years then I went to a college for only one year.

341 R Okay.

342 I Ja.

343 R Ja, because you had the experience.

344 I Yes, I had the experience.

345 R I remember.

346 I Just for only one year after that I was employed now as an educator.

347 R Okay.

348 I Since then up until today. So while I was the first year after the college I, I did my grade 12 corresponding, three.

349

350 R I remember that.

351 I Yes, I was corresponding.

Handwritten note:
EXO

352 R It was correspondence?

353 I Yes.

354 R Okay.

355 I Yes, so I passed...

356 R Ja.

357 I The first three subjects the following year...

358 R Ja.

359 I I passed the other three subjects, then I got my matric certificate. After that you know, I continue with the Vista University.

360

361 R Yes.

362 I Doing the diploma issues.

363 R Nothing stopped you?

364 I Nothing stopped me.

365 R Mmmm.

366 I [Redacted]

367 I [Redacted]

368 R I remember.

369 I Yes.

370 R So you are a lifelong learner, really?

371 I Ja, ja, ja, ja.

372 R Okay.

373 I Ja, I am life long learner, learner.

374 R Now you see that is, because my study is about career resilience.

375 I Okay.

376 R Of teachers, of, despite an abusive father despite moving a lot. You become somebody who can actually motivate others, because of your life history.

377

378

379 I That is true.

Handwritten notes:
will to learn

380 R So, so you will agree with me if I say you are a resilient teacher?
381 I Ja, ja, I agree with you.
382 R Mmmm.
383 I [redacted]
384 I [redacted]
385 I [redacted]
386 R No money?
387 I Yes, [redacted]
388 I [redacted]
389 R And you took the opportunities that were available?
390 I And I took the opportunity that was available by that time and said let
391 me get into it. Even if, do you still remember when I said to you, in a
392 certain year I will tend to another job but I came back?
393 R You come back.
394 I Yes.
395 R Yes, yes.
396 I Yes I so that there are opportunities in education.
397 R The insurance and the [inaudible] I remember, I remember.
398 I Yes you still remember.
399 R Now if, if I had to say that that you can take three photographs.
400 I Okay.
401 R Of the things that represent or that symbolizes this resilience that you
402 have.
403 I Okay.
404 R What photographs do you think we can take? What would you chose
405 for us to, I have my camera here?
406 I Okay.
407 R So we can we can, we can photograph.
408 I Do you in fact you want, you want what? The material...

439 R Oh, there is that side. Okay let me take the whole box. Let me just get
440 a nice clear picture. It has everything on it, let us do the other one.
441 I This one represents me. You know when I grow
442 R When you were younger?
443 I [redacted]
444 I [redacted]
445 I [redacted]
446 I [redacted]
447 R And it is heavy.
448 I And it is heavy, I do not know, you know my mum relieved me and put
449 it down, so that I rest every time when she bring back if it moves.
450 R Ouch.
451 I So every time I do not want to see a child carrying this, I do not want to
452 see a child carrying this.
453 R No, no it should not be.
454 I It should not be.
455 R It should not be.
456 I [redacted]
457 R And you know how it feels.
458 I And it is heavy you know that is why I developed you know here, to me,
459 every time you can think that maybe I was stressed or what, yes.
460 R And it is the muscle that was hurt maybe?
461 I Yes, yes, yes.
462 R There is our freedom guy.
463 I This one reminds me the Robin island because I was in Robin island in
464 two thousand.
465 R You were?
466 I Yes I was there, I was there in two thousand. That is why this thing,
467 when was it? I do not remember, they came here in two thousand and
468 four when I made this.
469 R I think so.

409 R Anything, if it was me I would, I would photograph my family, because
410 they give me the support. I would photograph the Bible because that
411 represents my faith and my belief that God has a purpose for me, and
412 I would photograph a light because, I believe that I should be a light to
413 other people.
414 I Okay.
415 R So, and that, that is the, those are the, let us say what I see in myself
416 as being a resilient person. So if you would have to say what, what,
417 what represents for you...
418 I Wow. One thing that I have, I don't know whether I have the, you know
419 I used to stay with my memory box here.
420 R Oh. Is it still here?
421 I Yes, this is it!
422 R Oh, is that from the, from the project?
423 I Yes, from the project.
424 R The fly project or the, no the stars, the stars project?
425 I Yes. Yes. It is the stars project.
426 R This is lovely!
427 I This is lovely you know here, wow, it reminds me a lot of things...
428 R That is beautiful.
429 I This one, it reminds my mom.
430 R Of your mother.
431 I Yes, yes. You know every time she used to sit down, you know, ja, I
432 remember all those days.
433 R Can I take a picture of this whole box?
434 I Yes, yes, yes.
435 R Or shall I...
436 I You can.
437 R Or do you want these three pictures maybe?
438 I There is another one here.

470 I But it is still here.
471 R Six, eight years ago, wow.
472 I [redacted]
473 I [redacted]
474 R Oh, I am sorry.
475 I So every time you know when I see, every, we used to stay with that
476 young, is eight daughter and three map, and this reminds me my, my
477 [redacted]
478 R Okay.
479 I And there is a school around home which is named after him. Ja it is
480 called Mazima Primary School.
481 R Wow.
482 I It is my surname, Mazima. Yes, so every time, you know I see this I
483 said, oh my grandfather and he looks like this one.
484 R Wow!
485 I Yes, and he was the chief around home.
486 I [redacted]
487 I [redacted]
488 I [redacted]
489 I [redacted]
490 I Yes, keeps me strong.
491 R Where you come from.
492 I Where I come from.
493 R Your past
494 I Yes. So, at school I was motivated, you know I told you that my father
495 wanted me to be a dressmaker.
496 R Yes.
497 I So I embraced this and at school you know, I was excelling. This is
498 what I was doing, these are the notes, I wanted you to show you the
499 results. Oh, they are at home.

500 R Okay, okay.
501 I This is it.
502 R Oh let me...
503 I Can you see that, hundred percent?
504 R Let me take a photo, let me take this photo.
505 I [Redacted]
506 R Wow, you must be so proud. (Taking photographs) I can see it.
507 I Ja.
508 R There is the ninety three.
509 I Yes.
510 R And there is the hundred.
511 I Wow!
512 R Wow, Shoo.
513 I So this things, the education, education they made me stronger, and strong, and strong. I used to show the learners and say, look at it you can see when was it, look at the year.
514
515
516 R Ninety five.
517 I Nineteen ninety five, so you can do it, the woman said.
518 R It is possible.
519 I You can do it.
520 R Wow.
521 I So it makes me, you know stronger, and stronger, and stronger and stronger.
522
523 R That is so beautiful.
524 I Yes.
525 R Wow.
526 I That is it.
527 R Shoo. You must not forget this when you retire, you must take it.

17

528 I Yes I will take it, I will take it.
529 R Ja
530 I I will take it, because at home I have something that I should put also inside. You said, I do not know, as you have said no you, you say, you say, you are saying to me you know, you remind me, you make me recall that you know you, you really I can say to myself for the years that I have worked, really I am a light to other people.
531
532
533
534
535 R So you also choose the light?
536 I Yes.
537 R Yes.
538 I Yes.
539 R Yes.
540 I [Redacted]
541 [Redacted]
542 [Redacted]
543 R Yes.
544 I Yes, I think that one can.
545 R And it means that you are a leader because you are showing the way?
546 I Yes.
547 R For then, they take there our steps but you are lighting it for them?
548 I Yes they are taking their own steps but I am able to make their goals successful.
549
550 R That is wonderful.
551 I To make them achieve what they want.
552 R Okay, I will us the light picture for you as well then
553 I Okay.
554 R Okay.
555 I All right.
556 R Thanks for that, okay.

Photo of a light
all means mention
reflexivity

18

557 I And then I can take a computer, you know a computer is just an, something that has been invented very lately. Look at me when I was born long, long, long ago, meaning that I am a lifelong learner.
558
559
560 R Yes, yes.
561 I I can us the computer with out I got my laptop I can email and received email and do everything.
562
563 R Shoo.
564 I Others young, young, young educators they cannot do that
565 R They cannot.
566 I Yes.
567 R You see it is that thing of being flexible and adaptable.
568 I Okay.
569 R And, and being able to, to adapt to new things and change and whatever else.
570
571 I Yes, yes.
572 R that is what resilience is. It means you will never bend out of shape, ever, ever, ever because you are so flexible.
573
574 I Flexible.
575 R And you can adapt and you can, and you can handle change easily.
576 I Easiy. When you are talking about change, you remind me when this OBE started.
577
578 I [Redacted]
579 R What is this?
580 I How are we got to be able to use it? But at the end of the day, we were able and we still even us, to, to pick up the challenges and say why can't they do it in this? [Redacted]
581
582
583
584
585 R We even see it at the University.
586 I Yes.
587 R It is very bad.

19

588 I Very bad.
589 R Shoo.
590 I [Redacted]
591
592 R And you are doing everything.
593 I Doing every changes, you know.
594 R And your learners are getting seventy percent for their tests.
595 I Yes, yes.
596 R That is the difference.
597 I Yes, that is that, so I can us a computer.
598 R I will you use the computer, I will take a nice picture.
599 R That is a nice one.
600 I Okay. And another thing, I think you can use, wow, it is nice. You can use this set of...
601
602 R Diaries.
603 I Of dairies.
604 R Oh, then we turn it to see the dates?
605 I Okay.
606 R Is it showing the dates at the back? At the, the...
607 I They are not showing the...
608 R Not, okay that is fine.
609 I They are not showing the dates, but I do not know.
610 R Ja, let us put it like that, then it is fine.
611 I Ja.
612 R I will remember it is dairies.
613 I Ja.
614 R Ja, I have it.
615 I You know a dairy keeps an information.

Consistency

Photo 4

Will to learn
Expectations

19

20

616 R And I see you...

617 I That happened long, long ago. So if you are an educator you must be
618 like a diary because if I want to record something when did this
619 happen, I would go to my dairy, and open it and say, ja this is it. I
620 noted it down, so meaning that now I am able to tell you about things
621 that have been done long, long ago.

622 R Because you kept like a journal almost?

623 I Yes, it is like a journal.

624 R Wow.

625 I It is like it...

626 R And it means that, it is like the book of knowledge, because then you
627 do not make the same mistakes. You have learned maybe from this
628 situation.

629 I Yes and...

630 R Going forward.

631 I Going forward, you know.

632 I And you can also take a picture of this door.

633 R Okay.

634 I Ja.

635 R And what does that represent?

636 I I think the door for me here, you know if you open it, you find what is
637 inside. So for me, I am a door, for any educator, any learner if they
638 open and ask any information from me if they want to learn, let them
639 come to me, then I will be able to help them.

640 R You are available.

641 I I am available for them.

642 R Shoo, that is very nice.

643 I That is a door.

644 R That is very nice.

645 I For me it symbolizes that.

reflexive practice

poets out look

21

646 R Opportunity to learn.

647 I Opportunity to learn.

648 R Shoo.

649 I That is that, I do not know.

650 R I do not what to take any more of your time, you are a busy lady.

651 I Yes.

652 R I appreciate it so much that you have taken the trouble to write down
653 for me.

654 I Okay.

655 R And for again for seeing me today, despite of your busy schedule.

656 I Okay.

657 R So what will happen from here now is, I will visit you again next year in
658 May.

659 I Okay.

660 R First I, I have to give you the news. I was at the doctor and they told
661 me that I am pregnant again!

662 I Okay.

663 R So I will be having my baby in February.

664 I Next year?

665 R Next year February.

666 I Thank you.

667 R I will bring some pictures in May.

668 I Wow.

669 R And then May, what will happen is in the mean time, I will be writing
670 your story.

671 I Okay.

672 R And I am trying to make a book of that as well.

673 I All right.

22

674 R That is why I will be using the pictures as well, and then in, in May I will
675 bring that book and you must check that I have written what you have
676 said and then we will be finished.

677 I All right.

678 R Is that okay?

679 I Thank you so much.

680 R Thank you.

681 I Thank you for being patient.

682 R No worries, no worries if I may have that? Can I have this one?

683 I Ja.

684 R Thank you because I, I want your...

685 I But it is still what were discussing.

686 R Did you, is it your, Okay I will bring it back to you if you want.

687 I Okay.

688 R You can put it in your box.

689 I All right.

690 R Then you can just put your name.

691 I Okay.

692 R Because I am recording these stories inside the other book.

693 I All right.

694 R The book with the pictures, So thank you very much.

695 I Thank you too.

696 R Hope you have a good day.

697 I Have a nice day too, so are you coming tomorrow?

698 R We are bringing the students tomorrow.

699 I Students tomorrow.

700 R So I will not be able to have interviews.

701 I Ja that is why because you will be busy with these students.

23

702 R Ja ja and Lizal is only coming on Thursday she had something's at
703 work.

704 I Okay.

705 R So I will be just checking the students.

706 I Checking the students, all right.

707 R Supporting them tomorrow.

708 I Okay, no, thank you.

[End of Recording]

24



Participant 4 – 8 May 2012 (Interview 1)

P: describe your school?

R: what is the first thing that comes to mind

P: aow, but this is a good school

R: okay, it will be good if I hear the good things...

P: (laugh) okay, if I write good it is not all right?

R: no its good, I will then ask you what is good – you don't have to write it I will record it myself,

P: okay (writing) ja

R: I am sorry for intruding on your time

P: okay

R: so you have been teaching less than 15 years in total, and the grades you are teaching?

P: grade 12, 8 and 7

R: you are teaching all of them at the moment?

P: yes mam

R: and the previously any other grades that you have taught?

P: last year I was teaching grade 9

R: you just said that you have been teaching for 5 years, at this particular school?

P: yes mam

R: so you started your teaching career here? And before then?

P: when I was working?

R: yes, you are 40 so you started teaching when you were 35, so...

P: noo, before I came here I was working in a butchery...

R: really? That is interesting...any particular reason why in a butchery?

P: noo we xxxxx from Limpopo, P: so there is some attraction to that for much his

[Redacted]

R: and butchery was something...to get...money from?

EXU
not so true according to second interview.

P: yes, because I could not just stay home and depending on my parents financially

R: for support...

P: financial support yes, so I decided to seek a job, I was employed at the butchery I think I worked there for 8 years,

R: 8 years, wow, okay, what kind of teaching qualification did you do?

P: it was the primary teacher's diploma

R: okay, this was before you started working at the butchery?

P: No, I when I was working in the butchery I was having a diploma, imagine working in a butchery...having the teacher's diploma

R: wow, so the butchery helped you to get your education...

P: no I was educated, no I went to college,

R: oh after school

P: yes after school... [Redacted]

R: because that was the opportunity, that was not your choice,

P: yes it was not my choice...

R: okay, so how did you stumble across the job here at XXXXX

P: at XXXXX, a friend of mine took me to this place

R: okay, a friend, also a teacher friend?

P: yes,

R: so for a long time you wanted to become a teacher, since school days?

P: yes, since school days,

R: so and who and what made you want to become a teacher during your school days?

P: [Redacted]

R: that means he impressed you

P: he impressed me by the way of teaching, attitude, everything,

Mohrathu
MESO
Hechinyano

P: yes

R: are you working with the electricity? Or is it just for the light?

P: [Redacted]

R: so low and no resources, but still you are teaching and you have this dream of building the country, so what makes you stay?

P: ...what makes me to stay?...no, I want to build this country,

R: so that's what's keeping you here – it's building the nation?

P: yes, building the nation.

R: so how do you teach without resources?

P: we improvise mam

R: give me an example

P: [Redacted]

R: I see, so even those who do not have the textbooks will have the notes...

P: [Redacted]

R: yes, because if all the preparation,

R: [Redacted]

R: why would that be?

P: [Redacted]

R: only once for the five years that you are working here?

P: only once, the problem now, is I cannot tell you who my advisor is...

R: and that is from the department's side...

P: yes,

R: so you feel a little bit cut off,

P: jaah, a little bit cut off,

R: do they not visit the school?

P: [Redacted]

inner drive
Moti by Fam

EXU
Power of edu
MESO

MESO

3

disorient

MESO

EXU

4

R: and you don't have time to go there because you have the children...so under which HDD do you fall in the school

P: under the principal

R: okay, these are your colleagues at the Department and internally at the school? Do you have friends that support you?

P: *friends*
Yes, I have friends that support me. Mam XXX.

R: and your future plans, are you staying at the school? Are you looking for something better? Are you looking for promotion?

P: *future plans*
No, I am looking for promotion. I am looking for a better school, but I am not sure if I can find one.

R: wow, that's a big responsibility...okay, so promotion for the money but the greater calling here...

P: jaah, promotion for money but not changing schools...

R: if you were made the management of this school, what would you change and what would you keep the same?

P: okay, ...if I were the management of the school, I would change the way we are doing things, but I would keep the same.

R: so that is something that you would want to change, so it is not happening at the moment...

P: no its not

R: and what would you keep the same?

P: I would keep the same the way we are doing things, but I would keep the same.

R: at least they are doing something,

P: some time I am asking myself one question: why are we still here? because of the environment, that is why we are still here.

R: plus, year after year we are looking at teachers with potential, we don't do much, it is the teachers who continue the growth and development, because you are willing, that's wonderful..

XXXX

X I am looking for a better school, but I am not sure if I can find one.

XXXX

R: that's wonderful

5

ps. outlook ✓
active copying ✓

1 Participant 2 - 5 September 2012 (Interview 2)

2 R And then, okay. Today's interview is more about your past, because
 3 we spoke a lot about your, your views on education last time and the
 4 change that needs to happen and whatever. So there is only three
 5 specific things that I wanted to clarify with you because this research is
 6 about the, the resilience of teachers, and you had been indicated as
 7 being one of the resilient people. I need to understand where that
 8 resilience comes from, in your, in your past, so I would like...

9 I Resilience in the context of?

10 R Of, despite working in a rural place, you are still teaching, you are still
 11 passionate about teaching, despite low resources in the class room,
 12 you, you still do the best you can, a good quality teacher.

13 I Yes.

14 R So, so that is, I need to understand is it, is it the school that, that makes
 15 you, or were you born like that? Where does it come from, has it
 16 grown over the years, or, or whatever. So I thought an easy way, this
 17 is a timeline and then we will look at negative and positive stuff, to
 18 understand how the influences happened. So I thought your, your
 19 date, your birth year was nineteen seventy something, I think?

20 I My birth date?

21 R Ja, your, the year that you were born.

22 I Nineteen seventy two.

23 R Ja, nineteen seventy two.

24 I Yes.

25 R All right. So if we think about, when you were born until you went to
 26 school. Can you recall any positive and negative things that happened
 27 in your life that contributed to who you are today?

28 I Yes, so I should start with the negatives?

29 R Well, which ever, which ever.

30 I Okay.

31 R Let us start with the negative and we can move on to the positives.

32 I Okay. Thank you for, for giving me this opportunity, first of all. In fact,
 33 you see I grow up, in, in a, like I said before, in...

34 R In a poor.

35 I In a poor in a society which is black dominated and which came as a
 36 result of the Group Areas Act.

37 R Ja.

38 I So that feeling, being in a poor family actually disadvantaged me
 39 and it was hard for me to go to school. I am the last born out of
 40 five children. So, you see, it gave, having to get support from the
 41 family, having to come back to school, back from school without food.
 42 You see the situation was very difficult.

43 R Very much. Plus you mentioned last time that there was some abuse
 44 from the brothers and the sisters?

45 I Brothers and sisters abuse, you see.

46 R Ja.

47 I All these forms of abuse, it was very difficult.

48 I

49 I

50 R So that feeling, you had it always in yourself, it was not somebody that
 51 gave it to you? That feeling of you want to prove to your family?

52 I Yes, I had it that you see, I grew in a family where the grandfather was
 53 a professor, the was a professor at University of Tooting at that time.

54 R Okay.

55 I So to us, when we grew, she, he has already passed away.

56 R Okay.

57 I

58 R I see.

59 I To say, if...

60 R He has reached that top...

61 I

62 I

63 R That is wonderful.

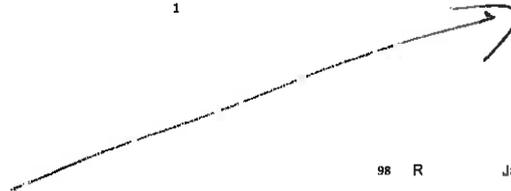
64 I That is the legacy that he has left.

EXO

EXO

MESO
Motivation
dignity

MESO



65 R Ja, ja.

66 I

67 R Okay.

68 I

69 I

70 I

71 I

72 I

73 I

74 R Ja

75 I

76 I

77 I

78 R Yes.

79 I

80 I

81 I

82 I

83 I

84 I

85 I

86 R That drive, that has driven you

87 I

88 I

89 R That means that, I am not sure if you are familiar with the terms, social
 90 justice?

91 I Yes.

92 R That is exactly that.

93 I Yes.

94 R You want social justice...

95 I

96 R To happen.

97 I To happen.

EXO

MESO

MESO + VALUE

EXO

persistence VALUE

VALUE
optimism

My words, not
participant.

98 R Ja, so that is your biggest drive force, actually.

99 I Hmm.

100 R All right. This, this history teacher, that was in your secondary school?

101 I It was in my high school.

102 R Ja.

103 I Yes, secondary school.

104 R And primary school, were there any other teachers that made, had an
 105 impact on you, the same way?

106 I

107 R

108 I

109 R Participated and...

110 I Yes.

111 R Okay.

112 I

113 R Because of that what has, what had happened to you? Did, did all the
 114 teachers look positive at that attitude of yours?

115 I

116 I

117 I

118 I

119 R Okay. That is a good.

120 I

121 I

122 R Oh?

123 I For the, for the person, achiever.

124 R That is wonderful. And leadership opportunities at the school, did you,
 125 were you presented with that?

126 I

127 I

probing cognition
→ will to learn.

Positive attitude

MESO

128 R Okay.
129 I [redacted] MESO
130 [redacted]
131 R So, it seems like you enjoyed school very much.
132 I [redacted] Pos. att.
133 R Even though you did not agree with the curriculum?
134 I [redacted] MESO
135 [redacted]
136 [redacted]
137 R Ja, ja.
138 I Is to get the know the in and outs of the system.
139 R Okay.
140 I So that inspired me a lot.
141 R Okay. All right. In your family did you have the same kind of question principal? Because we are talking about school now, but were you the same child at home?
142
143
144 I [redacted] Prob. Cog
145 [redacted] MICRO
146 [redacted]
147 R Okay.
148 I [redacted]
149 [redacted]
150 R So your mom had a good impact on you?
151 I [redacted]
152 [redacted]
153 R Okay.
154 I [redacted] MESO
155 [redacted]
156 R And they wanted better for everybody.
157 I [redacted]
158 [redacted]

159 R Can you tell me, your, your nicest memory of your mom? Of how she believed in you? Just one nice memory, that you can recall?
160
161 I You see the nicest memory, it was when me and my elder sister were fighting and then my mother wanted to intervene. [redacted] MESO
162 [redacted]
163 [redacted]
164 [redacted]
165 R Yes.
166 I [redacted] MESO
167 [redacted]
168 [redacted]
169 [redacted]
170 [redacted]
171 R That means she is a strong woman.
172 I She is a strong woman, even now she is eighty three years.
173 R Wow, still living?
174 I She is still living.
175 R And the spinal cord, did it, did it fix, or is she, does, can she walk, and?
176 I Ja, she can walk, she can do...
177 R Oh, so that, that is not a problem.
178 I She went back to work.
179 R Okay.
180 I [redacted]
181 [redacted]
182 [redacted]
183 R Plus it means that, some of that perseverance, it runs in the blood now.
184 I Yes.
185 R Because that, it shows her perseverance just to go through.
186 I Exactly.
187 R Okay. And your fondest memory of your father?
188 I [redacted] MESO
189 [redacted]
190 [redacted]

191 R [redacted] MESO
192 [redacted]
193 R Okay.
194 I [redacted]
195 [redacted]
196 R That is nice.
197 I [redacted] X
198 [redacted]
199 R Okay.
200 I You see.
201 R Okay. Because you were the youngest, you were at school when he was retired?
202
203 I Yes I was still at school.
204 R So you had the best of him, basically.
205 I [redacted] MICRO
206 [redacted]
207 R Wow.
208 I in standard seven.
209 R Ja.
210 I [redacted] Parental support
211 [redacted]
212 R That is nice.
213 I [redacted]
214 [redacted]
215 R And that, that is kind of believe form a parent, that drives you to do things and become somebody, is it not?
216
217 I Yes, a lot.
218 R Yes.
219 I [redacted]

220 R That is wonderful. Okay so, when did you start you school career? That would have been...
221
222 I Nineteen eighty one.
223 R Nineteen eighty one. And you completed matric?
224 I Nineteen ninety two.
225 R Nineteen ninety two. Ja, so you must have been very happy, okay, let me start here. So you went to collage after that?
226
227 I I went to the university.
228 R You were university.
229 I To Vista University.
230 R Nineteen ninety three?
231 I Nineteen ninety three, to nineteen ninety six.
232 R Okay, and you studied what again?
233 I Bachelor of Arts and Education.
234 R Oh, okay, like a B Ed.
235 I Ja, B Ed.
236 R And your majors were the, the...
237 I English and History.
238 R English and History. The English teacher and the history teacher?
239 I Ja.
240 R This must have been a very exciting time, with, with Mandela being released and things changing?
241
242 I Ja, you see, Mandela was release in nineteen ninety, the eleventh of February. I was in grade ten.
243
244 R Ja.
245 I So it was an exciting moment.
246 R Wonderful.
247 I [redacted]
248 [redacted]

249 [redacted]
250 [redacted]
251 [redacted]
252 [redacted]
253 R Okay
254 I [redacted]
255 [redacted]
256 R Okay.
257 I I become the secretary, you see.
258 R You are a born leader, it sounds like.
259 I Ja, you see.
260 R It sounds like.
261 I I would say that, I would say that.
262 R I remember our conversation last time, we said that you would become the Minister of Education one, one day...
263 I Yes.
264 I With this drive that you have.
265 R [redacted]
266 I [redacted]
267 [redacted]
268 R Oh.
269 I And look at the curriculum issues, you see the difference between South Africa, you see do you manage to cope, you see.
270 R Okay. So tell me a little about your university years. What were the challenges and what were the highlights?
271 I The challenges we had, I remember a Misses and professor Breedenkamp. They were my lecturers, my history lecture specific. We had a lot of challenges, we challenged the curriculum.
272 R Mmm, again?
273 I [redacted]
274 [redacted]
275 [redacted]
276 R Yes.

MESO

Pos aff

EXO

311 I You see in terms of merit, to use their merits to register.
312 R [redacted]
313 [redacted]
314 I Exactly.
315 R You felt you did not have the resources.
316 I [redacted]
317 R Ja.
318 I Ja.
319 R Okay, wow. Tell me about your greatest success at university?
320 I [redacted]
321 R Wow, despite the resources, despite the bursaries, despite the curriculum.
322 I Ja, I got.
323 R You were performing?
324 I [redacted]
325 R I see.
326 I That will be used in the following year.
327 R Yes.
328 I So you see those were the opportunities, you see.
329 R Which means you grab the opportunities that were available?
330 I Yes.
331 R It is not like there were not any opportunities?
332 I No.
333 R There were some.
334 I There were some opportunities.
335 R Ja ja. At least, you were right. And let us say what was your, your darkest day during university?

value

Value
+EXO

280 I So you see.
281 R You are not featured in, anywhere in that history?
282 I Ja, [redacted] so we challenged our professors.
283 The professor was a vice chancellor of the campus, Mrs. Breedenkamp was the lecturer, you see, they were husband and wife.
284 Oh, okay.
285 I Attending at the same university.
286 R I see.
287 I You see, so we begin to challenge the system, and say you know, there, but we continue to study the same history, and say no, we want to have this degree. At the end of the day we go back to class, we are going to teach the learners what is real. And they were in full support, to say ja, we hope you will make difference there, out there.
288 R And look now, we, we have difference. So you wanted a voice for the black people.
289 I Exactly.
290 R Yes, okay. And other challenges as, as a student did you find it difficult to, to cope with university life versus school life?
291 I [redacted]
292 [redacted]
293 R Ja.
294 I [redacted]
295 [redacted]
296 R Financial.
297 I Financial, you see you do not have money for the next year to register, you see all those things
298 R Okay, but yet you survived?
299 I [redacted]
300 [redacted]
301 R Ja.
302 I [redacted]
303 [redacted]
304 R Financial.
305 I Financial, you see you do not have money for the next year to register, you see all those things
306 R Okay, but yet you survived?
307 I [redacted]
308 [redacted]
309 [redacted]
310 [redacted]
311 R Ja.

EXO

Active Coping

Active Coping self

EXO

EXO

MESO

ACTIVE Coping

Active coping

MICRO

MICRO

341 I [redacted]
342 R Okay.
343 I When you...
344 R Demonstrating how you felt.
345 I [redacted]
346 [redacted]
347 R Where you, where you arrested?
348 I [redacted]
349 R Because of demonstrating?
350 I Demonstrating and then we will be released after few days, you see.
351 R [redacted]
352 [redacted]
353 [redacted]
354 R So it is not, it is not, okay, I can see.
355 I No it does not count at all.
356 R Okay. What kind of friends did you make at university and are they still your friends at the moment?
357 I Ja, I still, two of them, they are still my friends.
358 R Okay, are they also...
359 I Not only two but plenty of them, some of we are working together.
360 R Okay.
361 I You see, we have worked together.
362 R Are they still teaching?
363 I Ja they are still teaching, no we are apart from one another. He is, he is a coloured. Alberts, from Groblersdal.
364 R Okay.
365 I Ja, he resigned.
366 R Why?

X.

370 No he said no, the challenges he cannot overcome the challenges.
371 R At his school?
372 I At teaching, so he wanted to explore. You know as I said you find
373 being part of the ATKV, the Afrikaans club.
374 R Ja.
375 I Afrikaans group, so that is why he decided to go to, to the media
376 industry.
377 R Okay.
378 I [REDACTED] **X**
379 [REDACTED]
380 [REDACTED]
381 R Oh wow.
382 I [REDACTED] **X**
383 [REDACTED]
384 R Wow, okay.
385 I So I, today I find myself in a province where there is no Afrikaans. Ja.
386 R Which means it was another opportunity that you grabbed.
387 I Ja that was another opportunity that I grabbed.
388 R That is wonderful, ja.
389 I And that really opened doors for me.
390 R Okay, so after being qualified as a teacher. Now we talking nineteen,
391 ninety seven. Where did you start work?
392 I [REDACTED] **X**
393 R Oh, okay.
394 I I was a field worker, then I was a promoted, wa bona, to be in office
395 data worker, you see.
396 R Wow. So you did not start your career life as a teacher?
397 I No I did not start career.
398 R Any particular reason for that?

428 I After stats, after stats SA, I went to social development.
429 R Is that in ninety nine then?
430 I In nineteen, ninety nine.
431 R Ja, the Department of Social Development?
432 I Yes.
433 R Okay, and how long did you stay there?
434 I [REDACTED]
435 R Okay.
436 I For HIV Aids program.
437 R So the stats was that also a contract?
438 I Yes it was a contract.
439 R Okay. So one year contract at social development. Did you enjoy the
440 different scenery, the different work, or was it quite a similar kind of
441 work?
442 I No I enjoy it, I enjoy it because you know, because, like I find myself
443 [REDACTED]
444 R Okay.
445 I As a salesman.
446 R Okay, Okay.
447 I [REDACTED]
448 R When was that? Also...
449 I It was in the same year, well you see after work I would do an extra
450 job.
451 R Okay.
452 I After hours.
453 R To have an extra income?
454 I To have an extra income.
455 R Supplement ja, okay. You like work it seems?

399 I [REDACTED] **EXU**
400 [REDACTED]
401 R Ja. I know from some of the other interviews, people were saying that
402 they did not get salaries for eight months and...
403 I [REDACTED] **EXU**
404 [REDACTED]
405 [REDACTED]
406 I [REDACTED]
407 [REDACTED] Without getting paid
408 R School
409 I [REDACTED] depression. **EXU**
410 R How do you sustain yourself?
411 I [REDACTED] **X**
412 R Okay.
413 I You see.
414 R Okay.
415 I Because she was already in the system.
416 R [REDACTED]
417 I I worked for two years.
418 R Two years until, ninety, ninety nine?
419 I Until nineteen ninety nine.
420 R But you moved up quickly, it sounded like you, you progressed there,
421 you did not stay.
422 I No, I did not stay.
423 R Clerk, you became..
424 I [REDACTED]
425 R Ja within stats SA?
426 I No, not within.
427 R After, after that?

456 I Ja, hey, work, we work.
457 R You do not lie around and play games!
458 I No.
459 R You work.
460 I We work.
461 R Wow. All right, so after the year contract with social development, at
462 the HIV part, you moved on to?
463 I [REDACTED]
464 R That would be two thousand and one?
465 I Yes.
466 R Okay. Tshwane municipality doing?
467 I I was a secretary, portfolio committee secretary.
468 R [REDACTED]
469 I [REDACTED]
470 R That is a five year?
471 I Yes.
472 R Until two thousand and five?
473 I Ja.
474 R Okay. Did you keep on doing the AVBOB in between?
475 I No I, I left that one.
476 R Okay. So you got enough income there?
477 I Yes.
478 R So two thousand and five, and then two thousand and six?
479 I [REDACTED]
480 R Okay. But that is actually your first teaching?
481 I Yes.
482 R Job.

598 R No, no curriculum problems there?
599 I No, no curriculum problems.
600 R You like it?
601 I No, I enjoy it, I enjoy it much.
602 R [Redacted]
603 [Redacted]
604 [Redacted]
605 [Redacted]
606 R Why?
607 I [Redacted]
608 [Redacted]
609 [Redacted]
610 [Redacted]
611 R Okay, Okay.
612 I Everybody would see...
613 R Well it is progressing...
614 I Ja, you see.
615 R Okay, all right. Now if I had to ask you if you could think of three pictures, photographs what we can take that would describe your resilience, I have my camera here, what would you, what would we go and photograph?
616
617
618
619 I Where in the school?
620 R In the school, or maybe a symbol. For me I would take a picture of my family, I would take a picture of the Bible, and I would take a picture of a light, because the light symbolizes leadership and going towards something, and that is what I believe I also do, so...
621
622
623
624 Pic I [Redacted]
625 [Redacted]
626 R Really?
627 I We fight, we fight a lot, I am a union member, I am a site steward, you see
628
629 R Yes.

CONCEPT OF CAR. RES.

660 I Ja, this is the...
661 R Let us take a picture of that then?
662 I Ja.
663 R Ja, that is a good idea, then you might not...
664 I This is the organization.
665 R Ja. Do you mind if I take a picture?
666 I No, I do not mind.
667 R Okay. I am not, I am just going to take a picture of the...
668 I Ja.
669 R Of the, of the emblem there.
670 I Ja.
671 R All right. And then we will take a picture of the, you and the headmaster tomorrow. Let me get a nice clear one.
672
673 R Ja, it is good and things that symbolizes the strength that you have and the commitment, and the passion. Okay. Did you manage to write any stories for me or did you have a busy four months?
674
675
676 I You see studies and work pressure, you see, you do not have time to...
677
678 R That does not matter.
679 I Ja, meetings all the time.
680 R I know, ja.
681 I You see.
682 R I think.
683 I You see I am almost everywhere, I have got a debating team at school, you see. In the FET and the GT and I am the secretary of the governing body, I am a site steward, I am a disciplinary member of the disciplinary committee, you see there is a lot.
684
685
686
687 R Yes I can see.
688 I You work, you see, hardly from, second period from the class.
689 R Ja.

630 I So I engage...
631 R And you are the challenger?
632 I Ja, so I engage him most of the time, you see. So it is like we are two people how are fighting but at the end of the day, fighting for a good cause.
633
634
635 R Okay. Is he here today?
636 I No he is not here, he will be here maybe tomorrow the sixth.
637 R Maybe tomorrow?
638 I Ja. He will be here tomorrow.
639 R So you must remind me so that I can take a picture of you two together then.
640
641 I Okay.
642 R Okay, that is picture number one, and the second picture?
643 I You see I would, I would like to take a picture in the, with my pastor you see, my all star.
644
645 R Oh, Okay. You do not have a picture with him?
646 I No, I do not have.
647 R Okay, okay. Will it be possible, where is he, is he around?
648 I He is around at Nhazatshe.
649 R Okay.
650 I But, you know, I do not want to inconvenience him because he is working.
651
652 R Oh, of course, of course, okay. Well I can describe that, and then the third picture?
653
654 I I will, I do not know.
655 R Anything, maybe at school what is, what is, what symbolizes for you the social justice at the school maybe?
656
657 R The team, all SATU members. Ja, every time they are behind me, they have elected me as their leader.
658
659 R Is that this SATU?

Active Copying
Pic I
Pic II
Pic III
Pic IV

690 I I was called for a, there is a parent who has, who has been someone to come...
691
692 R Oh dear.
693 I And account for the learner's conducted, you see. Then I have to ask a members, Zima and other colleagues you see, can you handle this matter I have got a serious interview. You see every time they need to get a free period...
694
695
696
697 R Ja.
698 I You are busy.
699 R You are busy.
700 I You are in the meeting, all this and this and this.
701 R That means I am very lucky to have gotten you today, so I appreciate that very much, thank you.
702
703 I Ja, you see.
704 R Okay. Well that is it for today, I am happy we should just remember to take the picture with the head master tomorrow.
705
706 I Okay.
707 R And then from here on the proses works like this, I will probably only visit again next year May.
708
709 I Okay, no problem.
710 R And then I am hoping to have written all these things down, so that you can do checking.
711
712 I Ja.
713 R To see that I have not lied of what you were saying.
714 I No, you are welcome.
715 R Thank you very much.
716 I You are more than welcome.
717 R Appreciate it very much.
718 I Ja.
719 R Okay.

720 I

[Redacted text]



721 R

Thanks.

722 I

Ja. I am available.

723 R

Thank you very much, okay. Let me put this thing off.

724

[End of Recording]

725

726

Susan, P5, I1

Participant 5 - 8 May 2012 (interview 1)

2 R: so let's start with when did you know you were a teacher?

3 P: [laughing] maybe I can say: when I was doing grade 12, when I was a learner, mmm, actually I was
4 born in Swaziland, I finished my matric in Swaziland, but my mother is a South African, so,
5 immediately when our father passed away, then our mother decided to come back to South Africa,
6 that is actually why we are now citizens of South Africa, so actually when I came to South Africa I
7 finish o-level in Swaziland, so when I wanted to continue with my studies they said I must first obtain
8 the grade 12 certificate, so [redacted]
9 [redacted] to when there were
10 now registering for the subjects, in grade 12 what I was supposed to have from Africa was there, I
11 had a problem, I had to go to the principal, I begged the principal to replace Africans with another
12 subject, then she said, which one do you think you are going to take? I said I think I can go for
13 business economics, she said, you know this is not an adult centre that you think, you just have to
14 take what is there, then, okay, it just ended there... so fortunately, the time that these papers came
15 for registering, the principal was not there,
16 [redacted]
17 [redacted]
18 what has happened, I was supposed to learn but the school was busy with the examiners, they wanted to
19 [redacted]

20 R: you started a revolution?
21 P: [laughing] yes!
22 [redacted]
23 [redacted]
24 [redacted] because I was the only one who had to go to school, so because for the next term, for the following day, had
25 to go and make a chapter so that I am better than the learners, yes, and I started a very good, I
26 was a learner myself, teaching myself and teaching the others, that is what I did, then it means
27 that I was a teacher, if I can make the other learners understand the same level as me, giving them
28 information,
29 [redacted]
30 [redacted]
31 [redacted]
32 [redacted] have during my high school years, it was like I wanted to be a nurse, I wanted to
33 be a nurse when I grew up I said I am going to be a nurse because I was inspired by my aunt, my
34 aunt was a qualified nurse, so when I was making my own, she was always going to work, wearing the
35 white uniform with the apron, the stockings, the high heel, when she was working, I said oh,
36 I wanted to be a nurse!
37 [redacted]

38 R: well, the nurse and the teacher, they are both in service of people, so you had a strong inclination
39 for that...
40 P: for that yes, [redacted]

78 P: [redacted] but I was also working for adult, to keep me going,
79 [redacted]

75 R: it's self service principle...
76 [redacted]
77 [redacted]
78 [redacted]
79 [redacted]
80 [redacted]
81 [redacted]
82 [redacted]
83 [redacted]
84 [redacted]
85 [redacted]
86 [redacted]
87 [redacted]
88 [redacted]
89 [redacted]
90 [redacted] where does it mean? (laughing),
91 R: so who supported you throughout all of this?
92 P: [redacted]
93 [redacted]
94 R: must have been terrible when she passed on?
95 P: yes, it was, it was terrible...
96 R: your father passed and you came back to SA, and then when you went back to Swaziland did your
97 mother follow you?
98 P: no, my younger sister came to Swaziland, we left her in Swaziland, she already started work so she
99 time when there were no job opportunities I went back to Swaziland, [redacted]
100 [redacted]

101 R: so are you seen by our government as SA-n?
102 P: yes,
103 R: your English is very good, did you have school in English in Swaziland?
104 P: [redacted]
105 [redacted]
106 [redacted]

107 R: do you find that is something that has made you stronger now?
108 [redacted]

EXO ✓

meso

encouragement
accomplishment
calling

Poshi outlook

employer - encourage
agency

EXO

family
adapt.

3

41 R: it looks like you are a gifted person if you could teach, while you were still a learner...
42 P: yes, while I was still a learner, yes, that is where I discovered myself and said okay, I am a born
43 teacher, that is where I discovered this.
44 R: and at the college? Did you enjoy the studying?
45 P: yes, [redacted]
46 [redacted]
47 [redacted]
48 [redacted]
49 [redacted]
50 [redacted]
51 R: okay, it is an important role hey? So after you finished your college education did you start
52 immediately with teaching?
53 P: [redacted]
54 R: why? What happened?
55 [redacted]
56 [redacted]
57 [redacted]
58 [redacted]
59 [redacted]
60 P: yes, oswa, and I had to go back to Swaziland to teach, I taught in Swaziland, what I finished college
61 was, I taught in Swaziland for 2 years,
62 [redacted]
63 R: at the colleges or at the centres
64 P: at the centres,
65 R: so this was in SA when you came back
66 P: yes this was in SA,
67 R: so what year did you finish at the college?
68 P: 1998,
69 R: then back to Swaziland from 99 to 2000?
70 P: yes, yes, I started teaching full time in 2003, 2001 and 2002 ABET, then 2003 full time here at this
71 school, but it was not full time, [redacted]
72 R: how did you come to work without a salary?
73 [redacted]

109 R: can you give an example of that?
110 [redacted]
111 [redacted]
112 [redacted]
113 [redacted]

114 R: so you must find it very strange that here in SA...
115 P: eh, you know when I came here, to teach here, there are things that I saw that are not in
116 Swaziland, these things, especially, in Swaziland the education is very very expensive, you know,
117 every institution is build by the parents, even the building, the structure of the school is build by the
118 parent, not the government, the government only employs and pays people, but the community
119 must sit with the parents of the school, so if you pay school fees you also pay for the building fund,
120 so that there is going to be a structure, so in each and every community you find that there is a
121 school, the school has been built by the parents,
122 R: which means they are proud of it and they keep it beautiful.
123 P: yes, [redacted]
124 [redacted] even the textbooks, you have to buy, and once
125 you buy it you keep it, it becomes valued to you, it your priority, you spent money, you know I
126 was to buy [redacted]
127 [redacted] but
128 [redacted] because now it has been a long time since I have been here, I am getting used to some of
129 the things,
130 [redacted]

131 R: is it very expensive to stay in Swaziland if the parents are keeping the system good?
132 P: it is only on the education part, otherwise live is nice there, but coming to education is very very
133 expensive, that is why we have a high number of Swazi learners here, at, education is very expensive,
134 very expensive
135 R: but is it also quality of not?
136 P: [redacted]
137 [redacted]
138 [redacted]
139 [redacted]
140 [redacted]
141 [redacted]
142 [redacted]
143 [redacted]
144 [redacted]
145 [redacted]

146 R: and seemingly there is more of quality than here...
147 [redacted]

calling
she will
to learn

EXO-D

EXO

per manage
publish school
accomplishment

Poshi

2

meso
growth

4

147 P: yes, I think so because I have taught there...

148 R: what are the major differences between the two?

149 P: I know some people find it difficult to work with...

150 R: so its about the learners and not the curriculum, and they forget the responsibilities that go with the rights.

151

152 P: ...

153

154

155 you know...

156

157

158

159

160 R: mmm, the idea will give me, give me...

161 P: yes! It becomes very difficult,

162 R: would you say that it is the biggest challenge?

163 P: that...

164

165

166

167

168 R: so how do you overcome this challenge, how do you get their attention? How do you get them to take responsibility? What is your magic?

169

170 P: you know sometimes I scare them, I would say I will invite your parents, their parents they come from far away and there is no transport to here, immediately when promise the learners okay, I am writing a letter, I am going to invite your parents to come, then the learner will start changing, you must always have things, otherwise it wont help.

171

172

173

174 R: what other strategies do you use, because I am sure some of them, they don't have parents, parents are dead or they are too far away,

175

176 P: and some of them, you know, they are scared of the principal, and also I have got a book, a black book, they know the learners, I have got three books, I will write you the first one, that one I will be giving you a notice, but once your name gets into the black one then it means your name have been blacklisted to the principal's office, so the principal, they are also scared of him (laughing), so they are also scared of that one.

177

178

179

180

181 R: so have you ever really blacklisted somebody?

182 P: (laughing) no! I don't want to give the principal work, its just that I am just scaring them (laughing)

MESO
MESO

EXO
EXO

Classroom management
Classroom management

5

183 R: and you say its working...

184

185

186

187 R: who is your support here at the school? Who are the people that you can have tea with?

188 P: the educators? Ms XXX at the bookshop, we understand one another, we share notes, she teaches Business studies, to me she is like a sister, we are sharing a lot, her problem becomes my problem, when he is happy, we are happy together...

189

190

191 R: is there also people that you don't get along with?

192

193

194

195

196

197

198

199

200 F: and at your family home?

201

202

203

204 R: that's far, do you still often with each other?

205 P: yes we do! And she will be coming home, tomorrow she will be having an operation...

206

207

208

209

210

211

212

213

214 XXX

215 P: I grew up in a mine, it was before our father passed away, she (the mother) was employed at the mine hospital, she was sorting the clothes for the hospital...

216

217 R: she must have been so proud of you...

Colleagues
Family
C

Significant research workshop

6

218 P: yes! ... but at...

219

220

221 R: did you further you education after the college?

222 P: yes I did the ACE Management and Practice...

223 R: are you now looking for promotion jobs?

224

225

226

227

228

229

230 R: so you are staying because of position? Or if other opportunities come...

231 P: ...

232

233 R: are you looking for other opportunities?

234 P: no I am not, I wanted to go back to where I started, I wanted to back to be a teacher at the Adult centre, even the tertiary.

235 R: you have been teaching for 12 years in SA... it means you have seen the system change twice... is something good staying or is it all becoming bad?

236

237 P: ...

238

239

240

241

242

243

244

245 R: so the department changing, keep on staying, you see that as something that is hindering the development of teachers.

246

247

248

249 R: so how do you cope with the change?

250 P: the only thing that will survive, is when change come you must be ... (laughing) you must also change, ... otherwise you will be frustrated, (laughing)

251

252 R: so you are flexible

family

Mikro motivation

EXO

Career resiliency
Future plans
decisions

EXO
expectation

EXO

Positive adaptation

7

253 P: that is the principal

254 R: but if you think about it, it must have been tough leaving Swaziland to come here...

255

256

257

258

259

260

261 R: I am interested in that era when principal not be employed, I can only know what I read in the books and the books tell us that there was a shortage of teachers...

262

263 P: ... after that they wanted educators,

264

265

266

267

268

269 R: so many that you can choose anywhere... now lets talk a little bit about the school again, do you see this as a rural school or a deep rural school?

270

271 P: ah it's a deep rural school...

272 R: why do you say that?

273 P: ...

274

275

276

277

278

279

280

281

282

283

284 R: so that means the area is very low resourced and remote...

285

286 R: so that means they do not have any access to the printed media...

287 P: they don't...

288 R: so do they use your library?

area of biology

EXO
employment

MESO

EXO

MESO

Security

8

289 P: ...but only if you, because I...
290 ...see, it is very challenging, those are the types of books that we have here.
291 trying to scout for books, we need to have books for learners for grade 7, story book.
292 R: and even magazines and newspapers...
293 XXX
294 R: describe your classroom
295 P: okay my classroom, miked,
296 R: so you look at your class and you see the learners who see the gifted ones, and then the resources
297 are not many...what is happening with the plugs...
298
299
300
301 R: that's why you are locking your place...
302 P: yes, I am locking...
303 R: your school...
304 P: ...
305
306 R: ah, that makes a difference,
307 P: you know some other principals, they are very very difficult, but...
308 that's why sometimes when I think of moving to another school, I become scared, maybe
309 will find another principal...
310
311
312 R: why can't they...
313
314
315
316
317
318
319 XXX
320
321
322

active coping
success depends on
diversified
job satisfaction
encouragement
take unboxed
edu strategies

MEJO

323 R: so why do you teach?
324 ...my concern here is the child, I am concerned about the child, I want to lead the child from
325 childhood to adulthood, and also to unlock the realities of life, that is why I like teaching. sometimes
326 you know I always imagine a child this one, has got wonderful this, this one has got that, this one has
327 got a voice, this one can be broadcaster, you know, sometimes I place children somewhere, of which
328 I always think, I think this one is a lawyer, naturally, this one is that, this one is an educator, so that is
329 why I teach...
330 R: and then you tell the learners this?
331 P: yes! I tell them, that is what motivates them, I always want to see them grow up here.
332
333
334
335
336
337
338
339 R: you are a mother to the nation...who says thank you to you?
340 P: the educators, the parents, sometimes you know, he parents they come, sometimes they phone
341 you, thank you very much! Thank you, thank you!
342
343
344

responsibility
Success
belief
optimism
invest ment

MEJO

appreciation?
AB!

My life as a teacher
1998 - 2012

Lots of resource than before

Healthy food everywhere
Schooler brings post talking about rights
less responsibilities
High failure rate
High teenage pregnancy rate

Post apartheid

High demand of learners

Why am I a teacher?

Love and sympathy
All children must be educated
irrespective of their background
- I don't want them to suffer like me.

Not an educator or social worker, parent, character pastor, etc. One salary to satisfy many people



Why

CHALLENGES

Learning classes
Presentation
Lack of resources
Quantity of assessment
ment standard
Oral work!

Parents who ignore their children's education

What keeps me going?

High pass rates
To make learner's dreams come true
If my work is appreciated

Ngobeni Chanté

P1, SB, P.1

- respond from my learners, they pass, learn, they get help from me, *driven by success* ✓
- save the country, educate the nation *H4* ✓
- * passionate of advocating for kids *H4* ✓
- hone my skill over time *I3* ✓
- love of children, as they do not have ✓
- a voice, power so someone has to advocate for them. *H4, H5* ✓
- student potential *I2* ✓
- students successes - if they do not understand the concept and learn through my help
- positive attitude and sense of humor *H2* ✓
- they share with me
- maulding the future *H5* ✓
- staying younger (come to the level of learners)
- securing job
- shaping young minds and influence them to make good choice in life / shape pre-adult minds to be productive citizens and leaders *H* ✓
- love teaching - pulling ideas together *G3* ✓
- being a role model, influence generations value and goals *H* ✓

- idealistic
- committed
- Challenges
 - overcrowded classes *K3*
 - No resources *K3*
 - political demands *K3*
- C2* *K3*

(M1)

(M1)

(H)

↓
looking and moving forward in a positive way!

Significant P hardship

After the death of my father, things changed, we faced a lot of difficulties. We were forcefully removed from the best house. Luckily at that time my mother was employed by the mine as a hospital taylor. We were able to get another house, a smaller one this time with no electricity. She was not earning enough, so she was assisted by our uncles to make ends meet. poverty

After obtaining my "O" level certificate, I couldn't afford to go to the university because of funds. Things were more difficult up until my uncles decided that we should come back to South Africa, where my mother was born so that we ^{would} be near them. financial contribute

I had to go back to school again, because I wanted to be manipulate. I did very well and went to College of Education. will to learn

Sense of accomplishment Spirit. hardship We were moving from one place to another. Most of us were not employed. On the other hand, we didn't have a stable home. Employment

After I had finished at the college, it took me five years to be employed. I started selling second-hand clothes for a living up until I decided to go back to Sweden. Willingness not accepting status quo

Participant 1 – Pictures that resemble resilience

Picture 1 = Books (persevere in finding solutions)



P1
Photo 1

→ the will to learn.
→ primary cognitions!
+ reflexive practice

Picture 2 = Water/sea (appreciation for little things in life that sustains it and recognising its significance)



P1
Photo 2

↓ a lesson from poverty.
→ job satisfaction is a choice!

Pictures 3 and 4 = family and friends being a support



P1
Photo 3
husband



P1
photo 4

family support

Participant 2 – Pictures that resembles resilience

Picture 1 – Union



P2
Photo 1

Lessons from apartheid.
→ active change! (NI)
like minded colleagues + friends

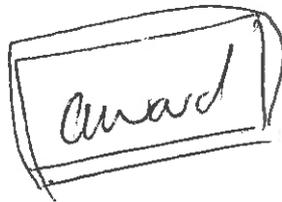
Picture 2 – Union friends



P2
Photo 2

Show the faces
19/04/2013

Photo of
Participant with
headmaster (3)



reward
they
recognize.

P3, Photo 8

Sunlight

easy seen

→ Creativity
→ taking status quo

by all means

→ driven by
Success of
learners

I can say to myself for the years that I have worked, really I am a light to other people. Yes, I am a light to other people because you might find that maybe I do not see, but other people can say, I am doing what I am doing because I have been encouraged by medium. Yes they are taking their own steps but I am able to make their goals successful. To make them achieve what they want.

And then I can take a computer, you know a computer is just an, an, something that has been invented very lately. Look at me when I was born long, long, long ago, meaning that I am a lifelong learner. I can use the computer with out I got my laptop I can email and received email and do everything. Others young, young, young educators they cannot do that. You know. So NCS came in to again, and today it is CAPS but I am still there. Doing every changes, you know.

Sense of accomplishment

will to
learn

— positive adaptation.



→ Persistence in + dedication to education
Not accepting status quo

P3 Photo 3

You know a dairy keeps an information. That happened long, long ago. So if you are an educator you must be like a diary because if I want to record something when did this happen, I would go to my dairy, and open it and say, ja this is it. I noted it down, so meaning that now I am able to tell you about things that have been done long, long ago.



P3 Photo 4

Mistakes → reflexive practice

I think the door for me here, you know if you open it, you find what is inside. So for me, I am a door, for any educator, any learner if they open and ask any information from me if they want to learn, let they come to me, then I will be able to help them.

empathy



→ positive outlook

positive relationship with

learning P3 Photo 5

Participant 3 – Pictures that resembles resilience

Mother = "You know every time she used to sit down"

Yes and this one reminds me my sister's daughter, you know I think my sister's daughter died because of malnutrition.

So every time you know when I see, every, we used to stay with that young, ja eight daughter and three man, and this reminds me my, my grandfather was a chief.

And there is a school around home which is named after him. Ja it is called Mazima Primary School.

Supported by family
wife
encouragement



→ life style of rural children
→ significant personal hardship

Lesson for party

P3 Photo 1

"When I was young I had a, you know we were fetching water from the river and every time when I see a child carrying this, it reminds me the pain. It reminds me the pain because I do not know what happened. When I was carrying this here, it moves backwards and come this side. So every time I do not want to see a child carrying this, I do not want to see a child carrying this."

This one reminds me the Robin Island because I was in Robin Island in two thousand.



→ being socially eco. disadvantaged
→ family support

Lessons from grandfather!

P3 Photo 2

So I embraced this and at school you know, I was excelling. This is what I was doing, these are the notes, I wanted you to show you the results. Can you see that, hundred percent? Can you see the ninety three percent? So this things, the education, education they made me stronger, and strong, and strong. I used to show the learners and say, look at it you can see when was it, look at the year. Nineteen ninety five, so you can do it. So it makes me, you know stronger, and stronger, and stronger and stronger.

Consistent - clear objectives
Strut but being



P3 Photo 6



P3 Photo 7

→ the will to learn
→ sense of accomplishment

Participant 4 – Pictures that resembles resilience

Photos of his certificates resemble the will to learn despite not having a job after he was qualified as a teacher.



P4 Photo 1



P4 Photo 2

→ sense of accomplishment

→ the will to learn

→ not accept status quo

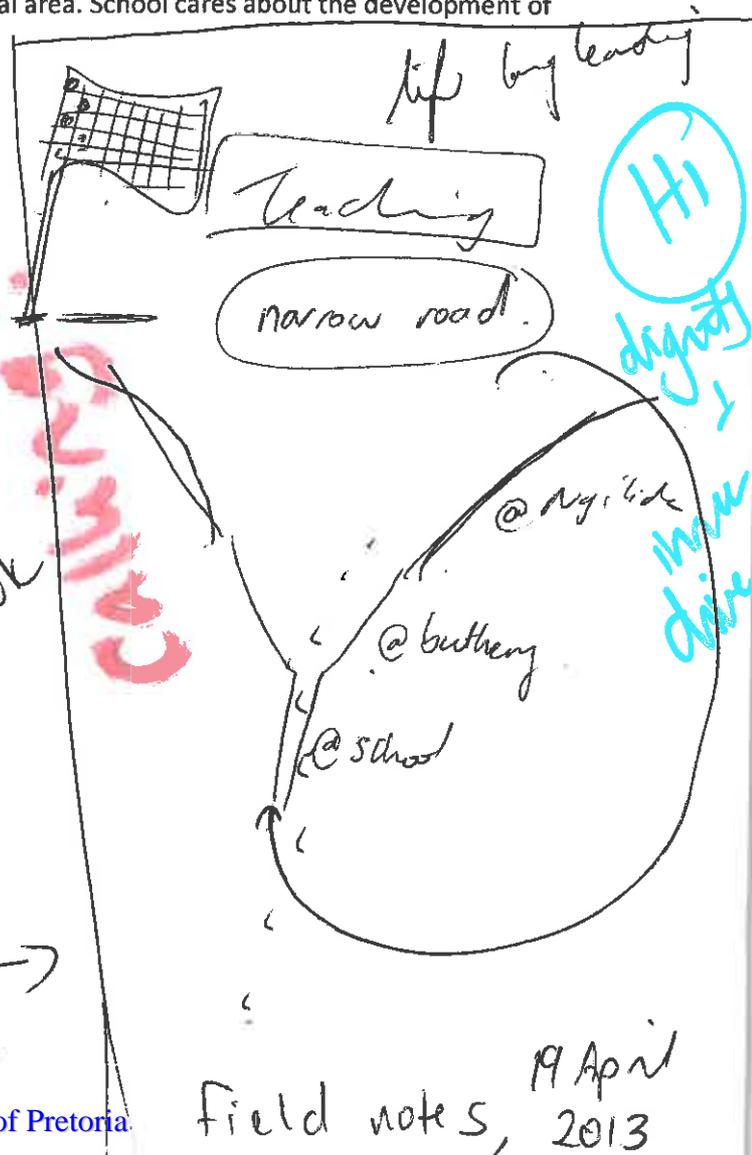
the computer center – proud of having resources in rural area. School cares about the development of learners and the upkeep of resources.



P4 Photo 3

↑ positive outlook

Dignity + inner drive →



The story of my CAREER...

1997/7/16/1
 I wanted to study
 but not what my mother wanted...
 So I asked
 for my guidance
 teacher...

SOTLO

Prof Ebenesher
 1999 And he
 Reminded
 School
 guidance
 Dr. Melan
 Career guidance

2001 Prof Naidoo
 Young Academic - 2008
 teaching + learning 2010
 2002 PHD A-HA!
 2009
 2008
 2009
 2008
 2010

The path of the just is as the shining light,
 that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.
 - Proverbs 4:18

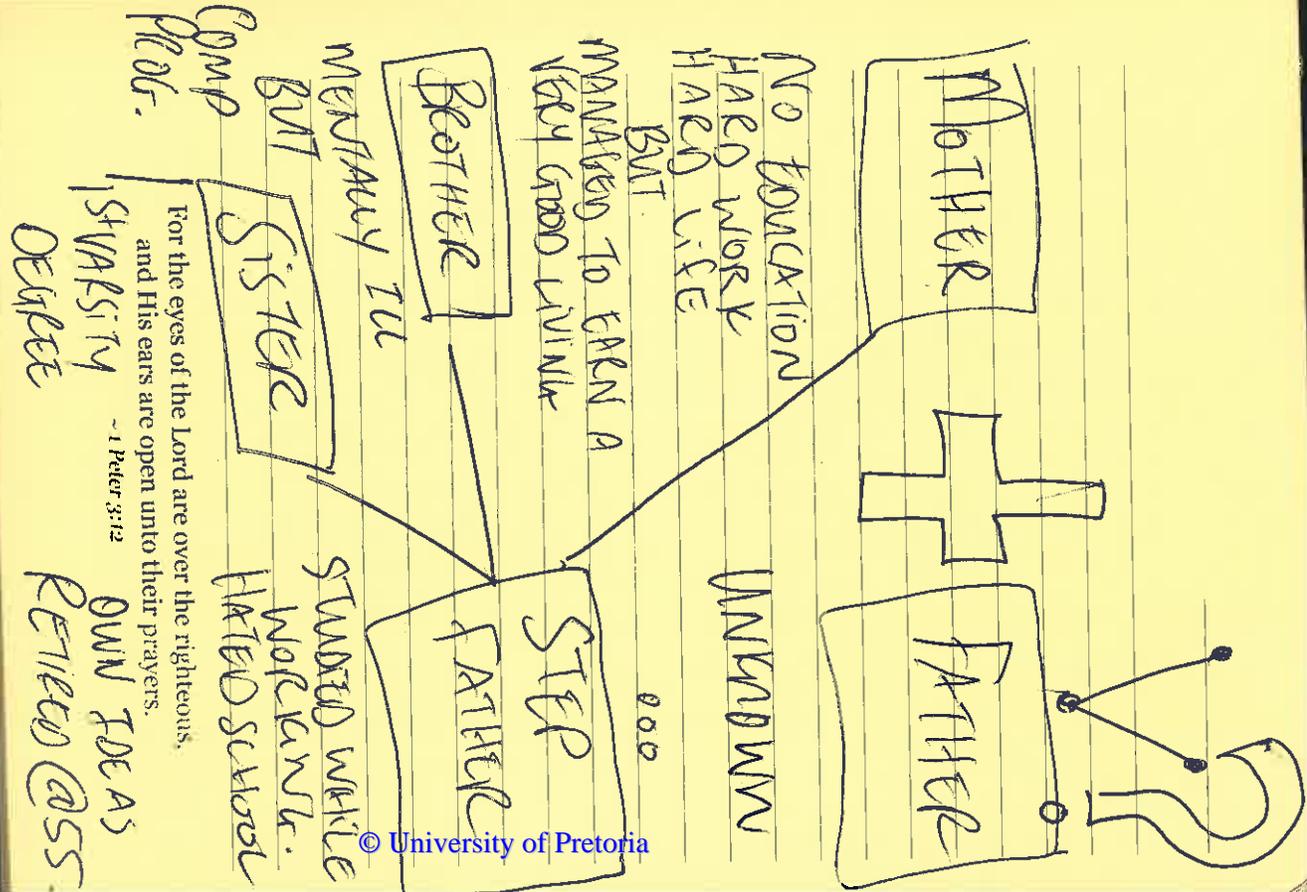
I WANT TO BE ABLE TO HELP
 EVERY PERSON WHO KNOCKS...

I went to varsity NOT
to play, but to get
away from home.
I found school - I felt a
sense of belonging, recognition
achievement, got recognition
In more than one way - money +
knowledge + excellence.

Now I am hooked.

I love my work!

P.S. turned out - I am more like
her than I thought
"Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God."
- Matthew 5:8



Rural = cattle, goats
ploughing
woman working field

The Story of Emma, the One who Endured

[Participant 1]

Pseudonym description: Participant number one is a 45⁺ year old female. I called her *Emma, the one who endured*, because compared to the other participants in this study she chronically endured hardships as both a child and as an adult and still kept her faith, pride, and belief in her work as teacher. She truly believed that teachers were the foundation upon which a nation is built therefore her motto is *"if one child can be educated, that family, that whole family will survive"*.

It was ~~2~~ November 1965. At last, the baby girl was born; strong and healthy. *"This one is a fighter!"* her grandfather remarked. Her grandmother smiled: *"she will be a strong woman...one who will conquer great depths in life because she has a God-purpose"*. These words marked the start of the life of Emma.

48 years later Emma was a teacher who taught Languages (Afrikaans, English and Northern Sotho), Social Studies and Economic and Management Sciences (EMS) to Grade 7 and 10 learners in a rural school in South Africa. Her classroom was small and overcrowded, without the luxuries of a chalkboard or electricity. However, she chose to teach and had been teaching for 17 years because she wanted to *"educate fellow South Africans"*. Her genuine interests were the children and how she could be of help. The ones who ignite her passion were those who had problems, children without parents and children who needed a role model to help them develop. Emma has not had an easy life and teaching has not been her first choice in career.

Emma's father was the first born son and according to cultural norm entitled to his father's farm. Hence, she and her 2 sisters had to stay on the farm. Her mother was a house wife. Her father was a construction worker who travelled a lot. As a young girl Emma adored her father. He was kind and loving and she remembers him as a very strong man, providing for the whole family so that her mother could be at home with them. Despite not having any education her father taught them the English language. He encouraged his girls to obtain an education despite the belief that working for an income was more important at the time. Emma truly believed in her father's promise that education will set you free.

Tragedy struck when Emma was only 9 years old. Her father passed away. Emma was devastated and could not imagine living without her father. Times were very tough in those days, no one was able to support Emma's mother and life became very hard. They could not buy the necessary stationary for school let alone afford to go to school. Emma remembers walking barefoot 6 or 7kms to school, with no money or food for the day. Eventually her mother had to leave the three girls on the farm to find a job in the city. Her grandparents, although caring, decided that going to school was not a priority and that the girls should rather earn money on a neighboring farm. They believed that getting married to a man who could provide for you was more important than education. However, Emma and her sisters still believed that God had a plan for them. Emma believed in God's plan and knew her father was watching and this made her strong and dedicated.

She continued going to school despite the disapproval of her grandparents. She worked very hard to meet the demands of school and home-life. Every afternoon after school she fetched water from the

Earth - never give up.

river thinking about her mother's words: *"ow, my children, this is the situation that I am facing, and then, you are my only hope...I am here because of you...so be strong enough"*. Apart from the strength she drew from thinking about her mother working in the city she said that she and her sisters were like a chain – supporting each other through these tough times. They reminded each other of God's plan for them.

Emma loved going to school, she truly believed in the power of books. Emma was a problem solver and knowledge provided solutions. She stood out among her peers and as a result the teachers decided to advance her quicker from one grade to the next. Emma looked up to her teachers with respect and admired their dignity. She felt ashamed if she missed school even if she was absent with a legitimate reason. She received certificates of distinction, indicating her scholastic achievements. She recalls a specific essay she had written in her mother tongue that was used as an example for older learners in the school one year. The topic of her essay was perseverance and how you will become somebody one day even if no one cares about you. Apart from the message being relevant to her life history her ability to write a proper essay was highlighted to learners older than her. *She believed!* *He was very proud of this achievement.*

The God-purpose vision of her grandmother became true and Emma did conquer several hardships. Unfortunately tragedy struck again. Emma became very ill and had to stay at home for the 2 months prior to her final primary school exams. By then the school principal had come to know Emma well and visited her at home. She asked if Emma is strong enough to write the exams. Emma was still very weak and hesitated. The principal said: *"Please try by all means to come and write. I don't think you can fail standard 5, wena, you have already passed. You just need the signature."* The incredible trust that Emma experienced from the principal gave her the inner strength to pursue the exams. She passed with distinction.

After an extended period of illness Emma went back to school and finished a few more years but did not complete her matric because she got married. Her husband wanted her to be happy and asked her what she wanted to do with her life. Emma said *"the only thing you can do for me is to send me back to school!"*. Emma completed her matric and decided she wanted to study further. More than anything she wanted to become a social worker. She believed that she could help others with similar situations than herself. Unfortunately she did not qualify to study for a social worker. Emma thought about her goal in life and she then decided that teaching is the best alternative to fulfill her purpose. Her God-purpose.

1994-1996 - BA degree 1997 HED.
In-between completing matric and her university studies she gave birth to 3 children, even writing her final exams at university being pregnant with the third child. She never failed. After completing her diploma she even went back to do another course in computer literacy. She craved the knowledge.

Another challenge arose – despite being a qualified teacher she struggled to get permanent employment for 12 years. Her dream to live her purpose was shattered. She believes that poor management lead to this catastrophic situation were many people were educated as teachers through grants, yet no governance in place to secure employment despite the promise thereof. She was shocked and overwhelmed with sadness. She said to herself: *"I was born to suffer. Even if I try so hard, there is nothing which waits for me"*. In her darkest of hours Emma thought back to her father's promise *"you*

must be educated". She realized that she needed to solve this problem with her knowledge. She looked beyond teaching at a school and saw the opportunities of teaching at adult learning centres and was subsequently employed in several contract positions thereafter. She progressed very well, despite having contract positions, ~~she~~ quickly reached managerial levels. From here other opportunities to teach at secondary and primary schools became available. Emma remembers with fondness how she compared the adult learners with the children at the school. The greatest difference between them was the commitment of adult learners. They *wanted* to learn, they *wanted* to succeed. Unlike the learners of today.

Emma soon realized that teaching was a difficult profession. Permanent positions were scarce. She decided to buy some goods to manage a small catering business on the side. She needed to do this to supplement her income and close the gap between living expenses and earnings. She fell behind financially because of not getting permanently employed. She has had many responsibilities supporting her children, creating a home and dealing with increasing living expenses. Why not just quit teaching? And find a career that can provide more financial stability...was a thought that haunted Emma.

Emma, the one who endured, said no: *"I can't keep on blaming the government that I am earning peanuts, whatever. No I've got eyes, I've got a mind, I've got hands, there is something that I can do in order to get an extra income"*. Emma accepted the challenge of teaching as a profession in South Africa. More so she believed that she contributed to the future by remaining in the profession because she never gave up on her learners. She regarded herself not only as the person imparting the knowledge to the learners but she assigned herself in many roles within the classroom: parent, guardian, counselor. These roles made Emma a pillar of strength and support in her school and in her community. As guardian she saw other people struggling and she helped them whether it was to take them into her home or arranging with friends to support another. In her classroom, as parent, she was intently aware of the learners who had not eaten – her solution was having a basket of fruit available. She noticed the learner with the torn shirt – her solution was asking her husband for his old work shirts to give to the learner. As counselor she realized the potential of a learner with no means to study further – her solution was arranging with her cleaner-friend at the university to find information on bursaries etc. Emma believed: *"if one child can be educated, that family, that whole family will survive"*.

Emma realized that even though teaching was difficult in South Africa because you needed to deal with demotivated learners, illiterate parents and little resources, she believed in leaving behind a legacy of developing a country and leaving something behind for her and other's grandchildren. Teaching was more than a job to her...it was a personal investment. Teaching would not make you financially wealthy; it would enrich your life. Emma took responsibility for finding solutions and being there for the learners, no matter how devastating the situation seemed to be. Emma said that she was supported in her school by other educators who also believe in education like she did.

Emma also drew inner-strength from the example set by Mr Nelson Mandela himself. Her conviction was that he did not sit in prison for 27 years for money, he had been there because he wanted his people to have better lives. She taught much more than the government curriculum in her classroom. She taught the learners the value of education and taking responsibility for their own learning.

Sometimes she got frustrated with today's learners, thinking that they have an easier life— no school fees, having food schemes at school, being driven by buses. She got sad when she saw the children not valuing the fortunate positions they were in. She got even sadder when she saw the same children devaluing and undermining education and teaching as a profession. She was deeply haunted by the thought of the possibility that in some year's time there would be no teachers left to teach the youth because people shy away from becoming teachers because they said that teachers are poor and earning less than others.

Emma's solution to this fundamental problem of a general reluctance to become teachers was that current teachers must change their behavior. Teachers must regain the dignity and respect they once had. They must not have relationships with learners and spend time in taverns drinking. The importance of teachers must be emphasized again: no teacher – no career! She explained that a doctor is a doctor because there was a teacher, or an engineer is an engineer because there was a teacher who taught him/her. She was very proud of the *"products"* she has delivered – even professors! She believed that negative teachers in the system should rather leave teaching instead of being negative about teaching and discouraging others. She said that *"you must know that you are killing the nation...the tongue is very much dangerous, even the bible says so..."*. Emma truly believed that being a teacher is a calling and that you should not teach if you want to earn lots of money. Emma's strategy for success with her learners was to spend time with them understanding their situations and trying to develop them. She said that you need to look at the ones who had problems, the ones who were not coping and be patient with them because it takes time for children to share their secret. She said above all you should not blame the learner for not performing and scold them for not studying. She said you must identify the problem first, find out what the cause is and then come up with a solution.

Emma describes her career resilience as books that resemble knowledge. She says that the picture of books reminds her that she perseveres in finding solutions. She also recognizes the power of water and a picture of the sea resembles for her the appreciation she has for the little things that sustains life. The significance of a little thing like water is important to her. Similarly, she describes the sustainability of her resilience as recognizing and giving thanks to the little things in life. Her other pictures were of family and friends. Emma said that her family and friends provided much needed support and contributed to her becoming resilient.

Rural education?

Have you only been teaching in rural areas?

Is this a rural school

Over a life time

What role did your context play?

How did you stay positive?

Participant 1 – Pictures that resemble resilience

Picture 1 = Books (persevere in finding solutions)



P1
Photo 1

+ reflexive practice
→ the will to learn
→ primary cognitions!!

Picture 2 = Water/sea (appreciation for little things in life that sustains it and recognising its significance)



P1
Photo 2

↓ a lesson from poverty.
→ job satisfaction is a choice!

Pictures 3 and 4 = family and friends being a support



P1
Photo 3
husband



P1
Photo 4

family support

1957

The Story of Gogo, the Grandmother of All

[Participant 3]

Pseudonym Description: Participant number three is a 55 year old female. I called her Gogo, because she is the grandmother of all. She is Gogo because of her calm, wise, safe presence – she is the symbol of motherhood at the school as she in her own words declared: *“as ladies...there is something that we can do because a home without a mother is not a home”*. She has the most years of service in teaching (30 years) compared to the other participants and stays in teaching because of true passion for the profession and for the children.

Gogo stayed with her grandparents because her father took a job in Durban when she was still a baby (7 months old). Her parents separated and her mother had another baby with a different man. Her father remarried and fathered another 7 children with his new wife. When Gogo turned 6 her father came back and took Gogo to live with him in Durban for two years. This was a terrible time for Gogo. She explained that her father used to abuse her physically. This was why her parents separated and eventually divorced in the first place. She remembers how she ran away to hide in the bush until he fell asleep before returning to his house after school. She said she does not understand what went wrong with him because he did not drink alcohol or smoke anything, he was just physically abusive. Even his second wife decided to leave him because of his abusive nature. Gogo was so impressed with her mother's strength to love her father despite his abusive nature that she also managed to forgive him. Despite the abuse Gogo had to endure from her father she took pity on him and he is currently staying with her. Gogo said *“yes, I have forgiven him. Daily he is phoning me, I even went to an extra mile I bought him a phone, so he is able to phone me every time...yes it is painful but you can let it go...how are you going now to be able to teach learners if you do not forgive...I am very strong in that way. I do not know how to hold a grudge for someone. So every time these learners they are misbehaving, but I am able to cope with them. It is because I know the pain that my mom went through”*. Gogo still remembers her father wanting her to get married when she was in grade 7. He wanted her to stay in his house but Gogo wanted to learn and she ran away despite her father becoming very angry.

In the end Gogo returned home to her mother but stayed with her mother's relatives because they lived closer to a school. She loved going to school and she excelled. Despite being absent some days because of illness she could catch up with her schoolwork and perform as if she was not even absent. She especially loved doing mathematics and science but unfortunately her family could only afford for her to complete her subjects up until grade 10. She described this situation as very painful for her because she loved to learn. Despite not finishing her formal school years she herself taught in a primary school for 5 years after completing grade 10. After this she went to a college of education. She then completed her grade 11 and 12 through correspondence study and enrolled at Vista University for a certificate in teaching. Gogo is very proud of her achievement to complete matric through correspondence study because she asserts that she never had a teacher to support her – she managed to pass without a teacher next to her side. Gogo happily agreed with me that she was a lifelong learner because at her age she is still studying today and is enrolled for a course in Management at the University of Johannesburg. Gogo said that studying further helped her to understand herself better and provided her with valuable

relativ/neighbor

booked/poor
taking care

knowledge on how to approach difficult situations and solve problems. Gogo remained focused on her learning despite the devastating time when her mother passed away in 1988. She struggled to complete her studies but eventually managed despite being ill as well.

manage of social worker = money Jobs scarce. applied

As a young girl Gogo had her own dreams and they differed from her father's ideals. He wanted her to become a dressmaker. She wanted to be a nurse and considered being a teacher as well. She applied for both courses and when the letter accepting her into the teaching course arrived first, she immediately signed the contract. In the end she chose to be an educator because it was financially more achievable and ~~the thought of injured people scared her~~. She declared her everlasting passion for teaching because she realized how her skill for listening carefully and to be a responsible person fitted with being a teacher. She remembers how she became such a strong and dedicated person. She said that when she was little there were no brothers to do the boy-chores in her family. She was the eldest and had to look after the cattle in the veld – a chore that would have been a boy's chore. That is where she learnt a lot about the nature of a boy, mixing with the other boys who looked after their family's cattle. She said to herself that that is where she learnt she can do whatever a man can do. It meant she had to learn to fight like a boy (protecting their cattle) and to plough with oxen. She also said that this is why she can deal with any type of children, boys or girls. She can manage them, council them and guide them. In addition she said she never regretted making the choice in becoming an educator and she can never leave education because her childhood prepared her for the profession. She declares that one day when she retires from teaching she will return to the land, possibly running her own business or continuing to teach and motivate learners in her community.

Despite her declaration that being in education is a calling she has had her share of difficult times in the profession. She worked eight months without receiving a salary, then eventually when they paid her after she went to a council-member, she was underpaid and despite communication with the department the mistake has never been rectified. She said that this was a very painful time for her because she expected a full salary having been a qualified teacher. She said her family did a lot in supporting her during this time. Despite the agony Gogo endured during these months she was motivated to continue her service thinking that each and every day she is educating the nation and making a difference. The salary did not matter, what mattered was empowering the youth and she wanted them to achieve their goals – this was her pride and joy! Gogo describes teaching as a complex multi-faceted profession. She described how she has little time for herself because she is busy at school the whole day balancing teaching and management duties. Then when she arrives home she has to prepare not only for her classes the next day but also for meetings and complete other administrative duties. Being a manager at the school is a challenging task because of the difficulty in managing adults as opposed to learners. What she finds most frustrating is that the fellow educators she needs to manage seem to not have plans that they make or if you gave them a plan they did not follow it. This created situations where they were late in submitting important documents and in turn delayed the submission deadlines the manager has had with the principal. However, Gogo appreciated her deputy principal who understood this problem and who did not blame the manager for constantly moving deadlines. Also, her school holidays were all booked up with courses, some of which the Department of Education is paying and she had no choice in attending them.

*she prepares for her class by
100% preparation in economics.*

Despite the heavy workload described above Gogo was very proud of the work she was doing for the Department of Education. Even her colleagues at the Department were impressed with the results she has gotten from her learners. When they asked her how she did it she delightfully told them: *"it is patience, you know if a learner cannot be able to this I just call the learner and just sit down with the learner and try by all means to unpack every challenge that the learner is facing"*. Gogo was a very dedicated teacher. She was constantly thinking of new strategies to teach the learners. She proudly told me her innovative secret to success in getting the learners to be committed and to pass Business Economics: during some weekends they 'camp' at the school, in her classroom. They organized food and sleeping bags for the whole weekend and then they did extra school work during the weekend. They worked on difficult concepts and wrote mock papers during the day and slept on the floor of the classroom during night. And the 55-year old woman also slept on the floor with her learners. Her learners loved this extra learning adventure and it was helping them to pass. They constantly asked Gogo when they were going to 'camp' again. Another secret to her success is to remain young at heart. Gogo said that she went the extra mile in staying on the level of the learners so that she can reach them easily. She said she reached them through the use of humour in class. She would always pose a question that is related to life and she would use a funny way of relating a scenario to draw their attention to a serious issue or difficult concept.

Gogo said some of her best characteristics were being an adaptable and accommodative person. She said that when she had been a young girl she was not afraid to mix with other children and this taught her to understand different people and accommodate their differences. She shared with me how she has opened her house to a young lady from another province that did not have a place to stay. Even though this lady spoke a different language Gogo felt an obligation to guide her because she saw her as still being a child. She wanted to share her house with this person to support her. Gogo truly believed that women can make a difference in society because they have good ideas and they were not shy to do things and mobilize people.

Gogo laughed with pride as she spoke about her learners in her classroom. She said that they were very fond of her and they always respected her presence in class. She was completely invested in teaching as she related: *"you know every time I am at school, I am happy...and at home during the afterhours I am preparing for the next day...I like watching the news because I want to get a lot of information as I am teaching economics, you know I just want to know what is happening around the world"*. Gogo said she has had a good relationship with the parents of the children in the school. She understood that the parents were entrusting their children to her and she has taken full responsibility to educate them. Parents were even phoning her and asking her to have conversations with their children when they realized that they were naughty at home. Gogo appreciated the respect she received from the community and the learners a lot. In fact Gogo wished for more parents, despite being illiterate, to be in contact with the school because it contributed to successful learners.

Gogo agreed with me when I said that she seemed to be a resilient teacher. She said *"I agree with you...despite all of this problems, I did not stop and say I will not continue because there are problems, my parents are divorcing and what so ever challenges are there...I wanted what I wanted...I wanted to get a job that I will love, that was that. And I took the opportunity that was available by that time and*

said let me get into it." And more than the troubles in education Gogo realized that her life history made her strong because she said: "here I am today, I am able to do whatever I want, it is because I persevered during those times it was very painful you know, it is like climbing the highest mountain." Gogo also told me a sad but brave story about how she as a young school child went to the city to work during the school holidays to be able to pay for her exercise books and school fees. She said it was very difficult because she had to use her hard earned money to pay for a train ticket to get to the city in the first place. She could only make enough money for her exercise books and school fees – she could not afford textbooks. This encouraged Gogo to be strong and resilient. She wanted to do more than survive, she wanted to achieve and today to teach learners the value of persevering. Apart from Gogo's resilience she described that the collegial support from fellow managers and other educators at the school contributed to a team feeling at the school. She said that they pulled together using strategies like brainstorming and team-teaching. She also referred to the principal's open door policy as an encouraging factor for her. Gogo was pleased with how her school dealt with problem situations because she said that "our educators are free to voice anything, but we are encouraging them to do that, we want to hear their voice, then we sit down and say, guys, do you hear what has been said, let's work around it".

Gogo aimed at leaving a legacy as an educator. She wanted to make a difference by teaching children that they should take ownership of their lives and their learning. She said that especially in rural areas, where many parents are not educated, the learners should use their knowledge to change the situation for them. This is why Gogo became very sad when she realized that many poor children in the community had become reluctant to learn. She said that they were demotivated and were valuing money more than education because they opted to work on farms rather than coming to school despite education being free and books supplied by the Department.

Rural - very rural
 (rural)
 facilities not found in shops away from
 = Shops ≠ urban
 = primitive people
 no cattle
 no depend on agriculture
 no old age people
 illiterate
 partially resources: resources

$$\frac{30}{12y = P.}$$

$$\frac{20}{y} = 5.$$

Participant 3 – Pictures that resembles resilience

Mother = "You know every time she used to sit down"

Yes and this one reminds me my sister's daughter, you know I think my sister's daughter died because of malnutrition.

So every time you know when I see, every, we used to stay with that young, ja eight daughter and three man, and this reminds me my, my grandfather was a chief.

And there is a school around home which is named after him. Ja it is called Mazima Primary School.

Supported by family
wise
in conversation



→ life style of rural children
→ significant personal hardship.

Lesson for party

P3 Photo 1

"When I was young I had a, you know we were fetching water from the river and every time when I see a child carrying this, it reminds me the pain. It reminds me the pain because I do not know what happened. When I was carrying this here, it moves backwards and come this side. So every time I do not want to see a child carrying this, I do not want to see a child carrying this."

This one reminds me the Robin Island because I was in Robin Island in two thousand.



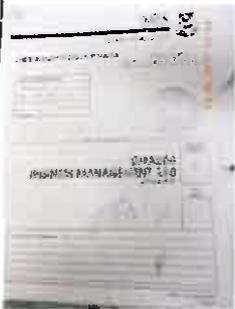
→ being socially eco. disadvantaged
→ family support

Lessons from grandfather

P3 Photo 2

So I embraced this and at school you know, I was excelling. This is what I was doing, these are the notes, I wanted you to show you the results. Can you see that, hundred percent? Can you see the ninety three percent? So this things, the education, education they made me stronger, and strong, and strong. I used to show the learners and say, look at it you can see when was it, look at the year. Nineteen ninety five, so you can do it. So it makes me, you know stronger, and stronger, and stronger and stronger.

Consistent - clear
Strut but being
Achieves



→ the will to learn
→ sense of accomplishment

P3 Photo 6

P3 Photo 7

P3, Photo 2

Sunlight
easy seen
→ Creativity
→ taking status quo
→ by all means
→ driven by
Success of
learners
will to
learn

I can say to myself for the years that I have worked, really I am a light to other people. Yes, I am a light to other people because you might find that maybe I do not see, but other people can say, I am doing what I am doing because I have been encouraged by medium. Yes they are taking their own steps but I am able to make their goals successful. To make them achieve what they want.

And then I can take a computer, you know a computer is just an, an, something that has been invented very lately. Look at me when I was born long, long, long ago, meaning that I am a lifelong learner. I can use the computer with out I got my laptop I can email and received email and do everything. Others young, young, young educators they cannot do that. You know. So NCS came in to again, and today it is CAPS but I am still there. Doing every changes, you know.

Sense of accomplishment

— positive adaptation.



→ Persistence in + dedication to education
not accepting status quo

P3 Photo 3

You know a diary keeps an information. That happened long, long ago. So if you are an educator you must be like a diary because if I want to record something when did this happen, I would go to my diary, and open it and say, ja this is it. I noted it down, so meaning that now I am able to tell you about things that have been done long, long ago.



P3 Photo 4

I think the door for me here, you know if you open it, you find what is inside. So for me, I am a door, for any educator, any learner if they open and ask any information from me if they want to learn, let they come to me, then I will be able to help them.

Mistake → reflexive practice

empathy



↓
→ positive outlook

positive relationships with learners

P3 Photo 5

- ① Akorol @ Ng!an  was!!!
- ② Appl'cahn; 3 days late call = passed on = pass-fail road open. losing a father

The Story of Lazarus, leading the way

[Participant 4]

Pseudonym description: Participant four is a 40 year old male. A difficult childhood filled with turmoil took him on a path of self-discovery and emotional growth to become a guidance teacher for adolescent-learners. He teaches life orientation and social science to grade 7, 8, ~~9~~ and 12 learners. Despite his classes being overcrowded he thinks his school is good and he wants to help learners reach their goals. He is Lazarus, leading the way with his valiant attitude whereby his undertaking is *"the reason to be in this profession is about a big South Africa. I understand we are a developing country, without education a country can't develop, won't move forward"*.

Lazarus had a soft-spoken humble presence. It is difficult to believe that before his five years teaching at this school he was working in a butchery for eight years. He said that he could not find employment as a teacher for a long time despite being qualified. He wanted to be a teacher but took the job at the butchery to earn a living.

He said that his grade 6 general science teacher's teaching style impressed him very much. He enjoyed this teacher's use of humour in the classroom and appreciated how he treated all the learners fairly. He was especially pleased with how the teacher treated learners equally and he wanted to be the same kind of teacher one day. During this time the passion for becoming a teacher was born and kept alive all the while Lazarus was working in the butchery. He said that *"for me to be a teacher is not about the money, I wanted to help our country, I want to help these learners to be something in future"*

He described the school where he was teaching currently as a deep-rural school. He qualified his description by illustrating that when he wanted to buy a newspaper, a simple daily action for most of us, he had to travel to the nearest settlement which will cost you more than R20 for a one-way trip. This meant to buy a R7 newspaper he needed more than R40 just for travel costs. He continued saying that the school and area is low resourced, despite the school having access to electricity they do not have textbooks – a very important resource especially to teach social sciences. Notwithstanding the low resources Lazarus said that he improvised by preparing notes for the learners from the single textbook he as the teacher had available. This frustrated him because he felt he was wasting time copying the textbook for learners while they each should have one in front of them. In addition he was unsatisfied with the lack of support he received from the Department of Education. He said that he started teaching a subject unknown to him when he was employed at the school. In the five years that has passed he has had only one workshop on this particular subject and he has not been visited by a subject advisor. He feels at a loss with this subject unlike his other subject where he has been visited, supported and developed. He felt that management was not listening to his pleas for help in this regard. Lazarus said that he will not leave this school because *"once I am saying I am looking for a better school I am saying that I am not developing this one..."*

Lazarus said that when he was growing up his teachers were the ones who had a positive influence on him. His father was a mine worker with little formal schooling and his mother had no formal schooling at

all. He said that because of his parents not being educated they failed to motivate him and therefore he looked up at his teachers to learn and develop. Lazarus had a youth filled with emotional turmoil. He attended a school in a township nearby a mine where his father worked. Unfortunately he made the wrong friends there and he did not progress well at school. He failed a grade twice and then his father decided to send him to a school in a rural area, away from the bad influence in the township. This meant that he saw his father only once a month when his father returned home from the mine near the township. During this time he was not thinking of becoming a teacher. In fact, he only attended school because his parents forced him to attend. The difference in being in a township school as opposed to a rural school was the activities that kept you busy after school. If you attended a township school you could enjoy leisure time with your friends after school without any adult supervision. But if you attended a rural school you had certain responsibilities after school. Lazarus had to attend to the cattle in the bush which meant he did not have time to be influenced by bad friends. He finished his primary school years in the rural school and attended a neighboring secondary school.

Soon after starting the secondary school Lazarus mixed with bad friends again and his school work's quality dropped. One of his teachers reported to his father that Lazarus was not doing well. His father decided to enroll him at another secondary school known for disciplining ill-disciplined children. Lazarus remembered being severely punished via corporal punishment for doing something wrong at this school. But he said that this changed him to be more responsible again. During this time he was thinking of working in the mine, the same as his father, because he saw his father's friends driving beautiful cars and he deduced that mine workers earned a good salary. At that time he was thinking that earning a good salary and being able to buy a beautiful car was important. Despite the strict school environment Lazarus again mixed with bad friends and he failed grade 12. He said that these friends introduced him to different ways of enjoying life – smoking and drinking. The principal of the school was concerned and called Lazarus' father to the school. He was severely punished by his father, the teacher and the head master. Lazarus realized that smoking contributed to him failing school. He decided to quit. He remembered his good friends from the rural areas and went back to them. He managed to pass matric after contacting these friends again.

Despite his father playing a key role in trying to support Lazarus to stay in school, at the time when Lazarus was a child he thought his father was too strict and that he followed an old way of doing things. Lazarus said that if he questioned his father's will or tried to reason with his father, his father saw this negotiation as being disrespectful towards him, the elder. In hindsight however Lazarus confesses that he had realized when he became an adult his father was trying to lead the way.

After school Lazarus stayed home for a year. During this year he did not work and was supported by his father. Lazarus decided to go to college and become a teacher mainly because it was financially viable for him. Lazarus argued with his father about what to study. His father wanted him to do electrical engineering but Lazarus said he did not have strong enough marks for mathematics and science. He felt that he disappointed his father. He thought that he could best achieve studying education because it seemed attainable to him. Lazarus said he also felt more committed to his studies at college than he was at school because he did something he chose for himself. He enjoyed the freedom of choice and took the responsibility of studying very serious. He also knew that if he did not use the opportunity to study

he would not be able to study again. He thought that being at the college was his last opportunity because he cannot go to the mines and he realized how difficult it is to get employment. This made him a dedicated student and he progressed well (without failing) while many of his friends who rather enjoyed drinking failed and supplemented their subjects. In the end his sister, who was working at the time, also supported him financially. Through her support he was able to buy clothes. Lazarus was very aware that if he did not complete his qualification his father will not pay for something else. This motivated him to complete his qualification. Despite being qualified Lazarus stayed home again because he did not get employed as a teacher. A friend of him advised him to relocate to Johannesburg in order to look for jobs. Still he was not able to find a post at a school. He took an opportunity to train as a security officer but unfortunately he was never registered as a security officer because the security officer's board did a background check and saw that he was arrested for a minor offense when he was still at school. They did not register someone if they were previously arrested. Lazarus was devastated. He decided to return home and as a result of another friends' advice he called an employment agent. He submitted all his details and qualifications to this agent and waited ^{for} a call. Soon after he submitted his paperwork he was offered a position at the butchery. Out of sheer frustration and desperation he took the job and worked there for eight years. Lazarus, however, did not give up on teaching. Another friend told him about the scarcity of teachers in this area and he decided that he would come here and search for a position at a school. : application (friends)

Lazarus conceptualized his resilience as being able to change his ways and become a more responsible person. He said that he taught his grade 12 group of learners this as well: *"to make them realize that if in life you make a mistake, it does not necessarily mean you can't change. Understand, you can change your life for the better."* Lazarus specifically did not share his life story with the younger learners because he knew that they are not emotionally mature enough to understand it. However, having shared his life journey with the grade 12's Lazarus was leading them into their futures. In a sense he was doing the same thing as his father, leading young people to better lives, but he used a different method.

Lazarus said that he will stay in teaching despite the low salary. He enjoyed the development and growth that you experience in teaching. He especially enjoys teaching in the rural area (being from there himself) because he understood the ways of communities and people in rural areas. Being from a rural area himself he has knowledge of the context that helps him to find ways to move beyond the little resources available. He has taken the responsibility to be a teacher very seriously and said that he must find ways to overcome the challenges in teaching – that was his duty as a teacher. He said that it did not help to complain, he had to find a solution through a positive attitude. He ascribed his resilience and his positive attitude to his past and the road that he has travelled on an emotional level. Having resilience started for him at having an understanding of the rural life or context.

Lazarus saw his future in teaching and wanted to study further. He specifically wanted to upgrade his qualification from a teaching ~~certificate to a diploma~~ degree. ACE

Another challenge within teaching is that you are constantly expected to teach a new subject. Lazarus said that he was frustrated with this because he never gets the chance get more experience in a certain subject because you constantly need to offer a "new" subject. In a sense you stay a "beginner teacher"

changing = feeling much better

* because of this. Lazarus described a team feeling at the school whereby they support each other through strategies like team teaching. He gave an example of how the geography teacher helps him with difficult concepts in his social science subject.

Lazarus has never considered leaving teaching. He said maybe if the salaries do not improve in the next decade he might consider leaving but it will be difficult. He said *"I enjoy my work here. Ja, I enjoy it, where it be teaching, colleagues, learners, even the environment"*

Photos of his certificates resemble the will to learn despite not having a job after he was qualified as a teacher. The other photo is of the computer center – proud of having resources in rural area. School cares about the development of learners and the upkeep of resources.

(*) (NB) Remind Liesel about
Tuks football clubs t-shirt for
Mr Shikati

→ sponsoring WP football club - ??

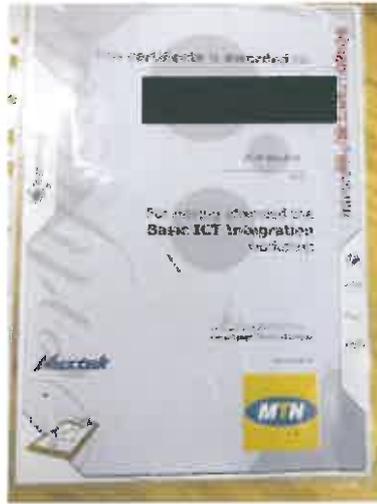
(###)

Participant 4 – Pictures that resembles resilience

Photos of his certificates resemble the will to learn despite not having a job after he was qualified as a teacher.



P4 Photo 1



P4 Photo 2

→ sense of accomplishment.

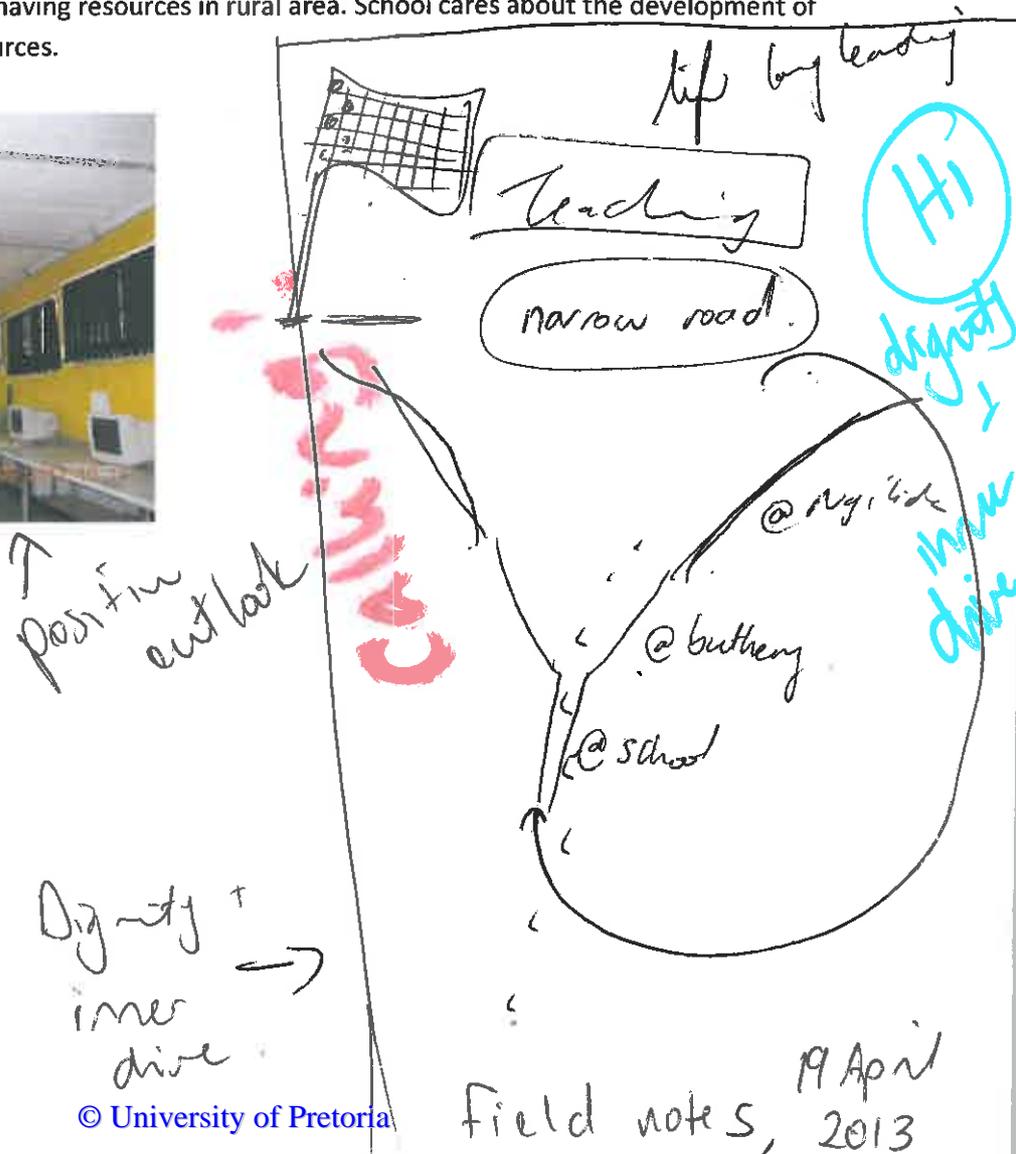
→ the will to learn

→ not accept status quo

the computer center – proud of having resources in rural area. School cares about the development of learners and the upkeep of resources.



P4 Photo 3



• Moeketsi

= ad

Change to real name

The Story of Charlie, an Agent of Change

[Participant 2]

Pseudonym description: Participant number two is a 39 old male. He wanted to become a lawyer and change the injustices of apartheid SA but realized through the help of his History teacher that he can make a difference to the system from within the teacher corps. Charlie felt something inside him grow stronger and stronger since long ago when he was just a matric learner who eagerly observed and questioned the things around him. It was the drive to make a difference, and therefore he is *Charlie, agent of change*. He had hope in his heart and a headstrong drive to persevere. He said to himself: *"...one day we will overcome, we will have a system where all this things will be the past"*.

There was a young passionate boy in the History class. He was a matric learner and he eagerly observed and questioned the things around him. He was aware of the social injustices and oppression going on. He believed that things should change. *He wanted to change things*. He wanted to study law and change things. He was sure that with knowledge of the law you could fight for rights. He thought that one can represent equality using the justice system. His History teacher told him to consider teaching rather than law. The teacher saw this boy questioning Bantu Education, interrogating the hidden messages and asking about the history that is NOT being taught. The teacher realized that this boy saw that the curriculum of the time did not provide the answers to the questions the boy was asking. The teacher was impressed by this and said to this boy: *"don't be a lawyer; you are going to be a good teacher one day...an African child is out there, crying for a better education...what I will say to you, and African child need people like you."* More than the curriculum failing the children, Charlie saw another thing happening at school. He was horrified by the conditions of Apartheid and he noticed that many children exited the schooling system because of the conditions at the time. He asked himself why these children did not want education but he soon realized that they left because of being brutally abused through corporal punishment, and not because they did not want education. Charlie felt something inside him grow more and more strong. It was the drive to be an agent of change. He had hope in his heart and a headstrong drive to persevere. He said to himself: *"...one day we will overcome, we will have a system where all this things will be the past"*.

He took the advice of his history teacher: *"the best method of fighting the system is to get inside the system"* and in just over 20 years later Charlie has his own classroom and his own learners. He was a committed teacher, and he had a mission he told me: *"the choice to be an educator is to provide broad knowledge and ensure that South Africa become the best country through education and can develop and improve the quality of life for its people, economically, socially, technologically, and it is only through education that we achieve our goals"*. He said that the curriculum has changed and injustices have been addressed, although the challenge was still out there, at least change is happening.

The last born of 11 children, Charlie did not have an easy childhood. He lived in a poor black community as a result of the Group Areas Act. Food was scarce and support even less. Charlie felt disadvantaged living in a poor community and struggled to go to school because of poverty. Being the youngest in the family he was often bullied in an abusive manner. Charlie said this made him a strong person because

despite having a low self-esteem he was inspired to show his family that he will one day become a valuable person. Charlie said that knowing good and evil and the pain of abuse prepared him to talk about such issues in the classroom. He recognized that being poor or abused did not make you less of a person. Charlie said that ^{he} enjoyed school even though he did not agree with the curriculum. In fact Charlie stood out from others because he was a disciplined learner, and being disciplined created opportunities for leadership and recognition. Charlie grabbed every opportunity that crossed his path such as being part of the debating team or representing the school at various functions. He felt pride and honour especially when he was awarded for his achievements.

Charlie looked up to his father and mother, who with only a few years of formal schooling, supported and encouraged him to better himself. Charlie remembered his father's visits to his school during his retirement years and remembers *"he went to school and will bring food at the school and say 'where is my boy'"*. His father encouraged him by saying to Charlie that he should just be happy and be successful. Unfortunately his father died when he was still a young boy. Charlie's mother was still alive and he recalled her powerful demeanor as he described his fondest memory of her. He said that she never punished him or held a grudge despite her breaking her spinal cord trying to intervene between him and one of his sisters arguing one day. He was so impressed by his mother's perseverance to walk again and not blaming him or his sister for the accident. He learned something from his parents. He learned that they wanted their children to succeed and so they created opportunities for them and they allowed them to explore these opportunities. But it was the legacy of his grandfather, a learned man, which inspired Charlie to pursue a career. His grandfather was the vice chancellor at the University of Turfloop at that time. Charlie used to say to himself that if there was this accomplished man in his family it meant that they can do it for themselves as well. And so three out of the eleven children became teachers. Two remain in teaching, himself and his sister. His brother decided to pursue a career at the municipality.

In 1993 Charlie started studying a Bachelor of Education at Vista University. He majored in History and English. He remembered the early nineties and how the release of Mr Mandela impacted positively on the country. He saw how fighting the system using politics made an impact and at university he joined the South African Student Congress (SASCO) and soon became the secretary of the group. During those years the students demonstrated through toi-toing and Agent Change recalls: *"the darkest days when we were toi-toing, demonstrating you see, and the police will come, wa bona, and we will despair, all those sufferings, we will be arrested...and then released after a few days"*. Despite these dark days, lack of resources and unsustainable bursaries he showed leadership and motivation during his years at University because of the support he had in being part of SASCO. Apart from the brotherhood experienced at SASCO, Charlie still grabbed the available opportunities: he performed well academically and was awarded merits which were used as achievement bursaries. This way he could pay for his studies. He still challenged the curriculum at the University especially the history that was written. Charlie noticed that the history that was taught at University excluded the black people and he realized that this made the black people feel inferior. He and other friends were inspired by this one-sided curriculum to go back to the classroom and teach the reality to the youth. Unfortunately some of his friends left education since then. A very good friend said he cannot overcome the challenges and has decided to join the media industry. However, Charlie felt that leaving the profession would not solve

anything. He believed he is a resilient teacher because *"the commitment, the hard work, the effort, perseverance, the challenges, you see I am still here in the system. And I still believe that things will change for the better."* Charlie said that one of his biggest dreams is to study curriculum studies abroad, comparing South Africa's curriculum issues with other developed countries. He wanted this knowledge because he believed that he could then make a better difference in his classroom or even work at the Department of Education. He was enrolled for Honours and was looking for scholarships to study his Masters in Education abroad.

Charlie was employed at this school three years ago and only got a permanent position the year before this year. Times were tough at the beginning and he had to be supported by his fiancée for over a year while not receiving a salary. He thought back to these days remembering frustration, stress and depression. Despite these memories Charlie's sparkle in his eyes remained while he said *"I believe my presence should make a difference...so maybe if I decide to quit because of money, I don't think I will be happy because the problem will still exist"*. The problem remained that children need to be educated and it seemed that many teachers were not committed. The solution according to Charlie was transformation, change, quality of life for all, irrespective of colour, we were all human beings. Because of his beliefs he saw his principal as an inspiration because despite arguing a lot they were fighting for the same thing in the end: transformation. Charlie engaged a lot with the principal because he was a union member and site steward. In the classroom Charlie also made a difference. He encouraged and advised learners. He wanted learners to be responsible citizens. He feared that if we did not invest in young people as teachers today there will be no-one left to teach our children one day. He believed that children deserved good impartial education. He valued interaction between role players and believed that we could learn from other developed countries. Charlie said that a well-thought through and clear government teacher recruitment plan would assist in managing and motivating more young people to become teachers despite low salaries. This would counter the negative perception on teaching out there. ~~Agree Charlie~~ said *"if you go for the money, without the passion, you are going to be useless"*.

Learners however, according to Charlie, were not committed and were being condoned too much. This placed stress on the schooling system. Despite the stress, he was furthering his studies in education. He believed that schools in the rural community were used to teachers relocating easily and get replacements for the teachers that leave. He liked traveling and has lived in five provinces in South Africa. If he did manage to go abroad he said it will be easy to find a replacement for the subject he taught. He was aiming to understand curriculum delivery in all the provinces, even in countries abroad and one day work for the Department of Basic Education to pursue his mission.

Despite Charlie's belief in the power of education he did not start out as an educator after graduating in 1996. He was contracted in many positions ranging from a data worker for STATS SA, to working on the HIV/AIDS programme at the department of Social Development while selling policies for AVBOB during his free time. Thereafter he was contracted by the Tshwane Municipality for a 5 year contract. During all of the contract positions he kept his passion for teaching alive by teaching at the ABET centers. He got his first teaching job at a school in 2006. Charlie was a committed employee and citizen saying that in all the positions he was working he would perform the best. This was true for where he was currently working as well. He was completely invested in education in its broadest sense as he explained *"I am*

*Scholarship Model C - Urban Pta
2 years*

almost everywhere, I have got a debating team at school, you see. In the FET and the GT and I am the secretary of the governing body, I am a site steward, I am a member of the disciplinary committee, you see there is a lot..."

Charlie said that he is career resilient because of the support and communal goal he experience at his union. The friends he has made at the union serves as his source of encouragement.

Participant 2 – Pictures that resembles resilience

Picture 1 – Union



P2
Photo 1

Lessons from apartheid
→ Dialectic change!
→ like minded colleagues + friends

Picture 2 – Union friends



P2
Photo 2

Show the faces
19/04/2013

P2
Photo 3

Photo of
Participant with
headmaster

3



reward
they
recognition.

The Story of Susan, Lady of Strength

[Participant 5]

boarding school

Pseudonym description: Participant number five is a ⁴³47 year old female. Despite growing up in a neighboring country and completing her formal schooling there she was a South African. Unfortunately when her family returned to South Africa she had to re-do her matric year before she could enroll at a tertiary institution. She was a dedicated, go-getter, intellectually and emotionally strong and focused. ^{lady} Consequently she chose a subject at the school where there is no teacher and convinced the principal that she will teach herself the subject. She ended up not only teaching herself but also her peers, even setting papers like a proper teacher! Therefore she is *Susan, lady of strength* because she compares her own teacher career resilience to that of a strong cooking pot: cooking on the stove, the pot suffers, but whatever is brewing inside will nourish and feed others.

Susan was born and grew up in Swaziland. Her father was employed as a mine worker at a nearby asbestos mine and her mother, a South African, sewed clothes for the hospital at the mine. Susan remembered how her mother suffered because they were eight children. Her father passed away when she was only in grade 8 ^{and} her youngest brother was only 8 months old. This was a traumatic time. She remembers that when the mine closed down many people who had established their lives at that mine had to leave everything they knew. Susan's family was forcefully removed from their house after her father's death. They were put into a smaller house with no electricity. This was because her mother did not hold a high position in the mine like her father did. Her mother and her uncles decided they should leave Swaziland and return to ^{her} land of birth – South Africa – in order for them to support them. Susan said that leaving behind the house was easier than leaving behind the community she grew up in. She had come to love life in the compound because of the established rituals: movies on Friday in the community hall; a nightclub for grownups over eighteen; playing soccer on the field and swimming in the swimming pool. She felt especially sad for the older people who had to look for other jobs because job opportunities were very scarce. Some of her siblings stayed behind in Swaziland. Despite financial difficulties Susan excelled at school and wanted to study further.

When Susan and her family arrived in South Africa Susan immediately wanted to further her studies at the university. Unfortunately, the South African universities required a completed South African matric certificate. Susan enrolled at a nearby high school. Growing up in Swaziland Susan was never introduced to the Afrikaans language. She had pleaded with the principal to allow her to exchange the subject Afrikaans with Business Economics. Unfortunately there was no teacher to teach her this subject and the principal said that she should consider going to an adult learning center if she wanted the luxury of choosing subjects. On the day that the registration papers came, Susan took a bold step and wrote Business Economics rather than Afrikaans. The consequence of this was that Susan had to do the subject as self-study. Some of her peers wanted to join her and they quickly became a group of seven or eight learners. The principal said that she would teach the group but had a busy schedule and so she relied on Susan to take the lead in the classroom. Susan said with a sparkle in her eyes: "then I said, ow, I am a teacher, it means I can be, then I developed a love, yes because for the next period, for the following day I had prepared, I was a teacher, teaching myself so that I am able to teach the learners". The principal

male = principal

- high school = matric¹

Teachers + college = ENG BILICIA

suffering after death *

financial constraints
borrow money

Colleg of Educator

was impressed with her that he allowed her to set and mark papers. The trust the principal placed in her ability to teach and evaluate her peers made Susan feel competent. She decided that she would apply at the ABET center to become an educator. She made this decision while she initially wanted to become a nurse. She wanted to become a nurse because she was inspired by her aunt who was a nurse. She admired her aunt's beautiful uniform and wanted to look as graceful as she did. However, when she taught her peers she fell in love with the act of teaching and this discovery made her realize that she was born to be a teacher.

When Susan studied to be a teacher she particularly enjoyed the way that teaching enriched her whole life. She made sense of the teaching methodologies in a way that also helped her to be helpful in other aspects of her life. She said that becoming a teacher improved her communication with others in the community and at church in such a way that she became a teacher at the church and in her community, not just at a school.

Despite her love for teaching she stayed unemployed for six to seven years after she was qualified. To earn money she started selling second hand clothes. She said that it became a big challenge to get full time employment. She remembered this time as a painful time because she was so hopeful each time she went for an interview, especially because she did well in the interviews, only to discover that someone's relative was appointed soon after the interviews. She decided to return to Swaziland and taught there for two years. In this time she stayed with her younger sister. She returned to South Africa, confident that she would be employed now having had experience but everything was still at a standstill. She decided to teach at the ABET centers. She started volunteering at this school and worked a full year without a salary. She remembered how the principal supported her in this time. He relentlessly fought the Department of Education for her to be appointed there because he saw her worth in his school. In the end he managed to appoint her using another school's vacant post because he lost a post after another educator left his school. She described her principal as a father figure, having good listening skills and being understanding. She described how his open door policy made her feel secure.

Susan finds teaching in South Africa challenging. She shared with me a story about a time she visited a learner's family in the rural area. She remembers being so shocked when she saw the family using books as toilet paper when she used their bathroom. She realized in horror that the learners felt no ownership of textbooks, possibly because the government supplies the textbooks. She recalled how she thought this differed from Swaziland. At Swaziland education was expensive and less dependent on government funds. There, parents and communities were responsible for the upkeep of school buildings and infrastructure. She believed that because the upkeep came directly from the parents' and communities' pockets they had more respect for the education they received. Because of education being so expensive in Swaziland many rural schools close to the border, like this one, had many Swazi children. Susan said that the main difference between teaching in Swaziland and South Africa is the attitude of the learners. She said that the learners in South Africa are more aware of their rights than the children in Swaziland. Unfortunately the South African children were not made aware of the responsibilities that went with the rights and they have become ill-disciplined as a result. Susan said that teachers are failing these days because the government has taken away their ability to discipline. She remembered how she

was at school when corporal punishment still meant something and learners performed well and had more respect because they did not want to receive corporal punishment. She even recalled attending school with Mr Mandela's children in Swaziland where they were beaten if they did not adhere to the rules.

Apart from the challenges in the classroom Susan said that the nature of the profession itself is problematic. As teachers they needed to cope with constant change. One of the most frustrating changes in teaching is the constant upgrade of the curriculum. She said that what concerned her was the fact that teachers' qualifications are 3 to 4 years. Comparing curriculum change training to this seemed problematic since these sessions were 14 days at most. She said that *"the only thing that will survive, is when change come you must be flexible, (laughing) you must also change, you must not be rigid, otherwise you will be frustrated, (laughing)"*.

Despite feeling overwhelmed Susan was determined to make a success as a teacher. As a result she started using certain strategies in her classroom. One of these techniques includes "scaring" the learners. She enjoyed telling me how she tells her learners that if they have not completed their homework or if they were disruptive their names get written in books. She told her learners that if their name appears in the first book the learner must consider it a warning. If their name progressed to the black book they should know that they have been "blacklisted" with the principal. Fortunately the learners are afraid of the principal and so this technique is a very effective tool for disciplining the learners. When I asked her if she really blacklist^s the learners with the principal she gave a naughty laugh while saying that she would never give the principal work but the technique is working. Another scare technique that she used with success is telling the learners that she will incite their parents to the school to discuss their behavior. Being a rural school the learners would know that their parents will have to travel far for this meeting and they would be ashamed if their parents had to come to school. Susan believed that you should always have a plan otherwise you will not cope. Other ways that she coped as a teacher is surrounding herself with like-minded colleagues and believing in God. She enjoyed discussing notes and supporting each other through tough times. She tried not to have enemies and resolve conflict quickly by discussing a problem and finding a way forward. She used to be supported by her sisters before they passed away and only have one sister left, also a teacher in another province, who motivates and supports her.

In many ways Susan stayed in teaching because of her passion for the job. She furthered her education and completed an ACE in Education Management. She would move to college or tertiary training if she could. But for now she stayed. She said that *"nowadays, teaching is very, very challenging, you know, you are only going to survive if you have got passion...but if you are just here because you want to be paid, you won't survive...there is too much work, in this education system, more focus is on paper work and paper work, than with the learners, there is no (ample time) spent with the learners, (contact time) is spent with the learners, there, but it is not up to that extend, because you have to focus on the paper work"*.

Susan had one daughter who studied Tourism Management. She is also a grandmother to a 8-month old baby boy.

Susan described her school as a deep rural school. She was surprised by how few learners had television sets at home. She only discovered this the year before after she gave them homework to watch the news on television. More than absent televisions she said that these learners also did not have access to newspapers. The school had a lovely library but they are dependent on donations and this meant that many of the books they received were inappropriate or above their learners' reading ability. In addition the school had been subject to vandalism many times. Unfortunately members of the community break into the school and steal the plugs and light fittings. Despite these circumstances there was a team feeling in the school. She described how she as the tourism teacher worked hand in hand with the geography teacher and the mathematics educator when their expertise was needed. They supported each other in these ways. She said that if she did not have these supportive colleagues life would be difficult at school because you spent so much time there and without the support your morale will be very low. I asked Susan why she taught and she said: *"my concern here is the child. I am concerned about the child, I want to lead the child from childhood to adulthood, and also to unlock the realities of life, that is why I like teaching, sometimes you know I always imagine a child this one, has got wonderful this, this one has got that, this one has got a voice, this one can be broadcaster, you know, sometimes I place children somewhere, of which I always think, I think this one is a lawyer, naturally, this one is that, this one is an educator, so that is why I teach..."* Susan saw the potential in each and every learner and this motivated her to stay in teaching. She said that she found it very painful when she saw her former learners, with potential digging along the roads instead of holding high positions in offices. She decided to support some of the learners by adopting them. - *cater for education..*

Susan said that she sometimes get phone calls from the parents thanking her for what she had done for their children. This made her feel proud of what she achieved as an educator.

Susan described her career resilience as that of a cooking pot on the stove. While the pot is cooking on the stove it endures suffering from the heat. But the food cooking in the pot will nourish and feed many. Susan endures a lot of heat while being a teacher, but this heat cultivates strategies and knowledge in which she uses to encourage and motivate her learners. She also describes herself as an umbrella. In the same way that the pot suffers on the stove, an umbrella endures rain, wind and sun to protect the person carrying the umbrella. In the same way Susan has shown strength as a person, enduring the onslaught of education so that she herself becomes the instrument of development and support for her learners. Susan also describes the Bible as being a source of strength to her. She explains that in the bible she reads about happy events and sad events and she realized that the Bible is like a road map for life. She identifies with the characters in the Bible, who has had, similar to her, to endure hardships and who has experienced positive things. Somehow the roadmap that the Bible provides becomes a reality check for her whereby she sees how to cope with life's and teaching's demands.

Participant 5 – Pictures that resembles resilience

- significant personal hardship

While the pot is cooking on the stove it endures suffering from the heat. But the food cooking in the pot will nourish and feed many. Susan endures a lot of heat while being a teacher, but this heat cultivates strategies and knowledge in which she uses to encourage and motivates her learners.



*Ps
Photo 1*

*positive outlook
motivation
→ active engagement*

She also describes herself as an umbrella. In the same way that the pot suffers on the stove, an umbrella endures rain, wind and sun to protect the person carrying the umbrella. In the same way Susan has shown strength as a person, enduring the onslaught of education so that she herself becomes the instrument of development and support for her learners.



*Ps
Photo 2*

*motivation
positive outlook
persistence + dedication to
education
empathy*

Susan also describes the Bible as being a source of strength to her. She explains that in the bible she reads about happy events and sad events and she realized that the Bible is like a road map for life. She identifies with the characters in the Bible, who has had, similar to her, to endure hardships and who has experienced positive things. Somehow the roadmap that the Bible provides becomes a reality check for her whereby she sees how to cope with life's and teaching's demands.



*Ps
Photo 3*

- religious outlook

APPENDIX M NARRATIVE COMPARISON

		Emma	Charlie	Gogo	Lazarus	Susan
Narratives	intro (pseudonym description);	The enduring one done	The agent of change done	The grandmother of all done	Leading the way done	Lady of strength done
	life as a child = primary + secondary school	45 Parents semi-educated Grew up on farm Attend rural/remote school Sick during school years Father died Cultural belief Wanted to learn Strong Mother Admired teachers Religion	39 Parents semi-educated Awareness of social injustice Disciplined at school Abuse from siblings Poor community Father died Strong Mother Questioned education Poverty	55 Attend rural/remote school Teacher as role model? Wanted to learn Abusive father Strong Mother Poverty	40 Parents semi-educated Teachers as role models Not achieving at school Did not like school Emotional turmoil Attended rural and township schools	47 Parents? Different country Father died Strong Mother Wanted to learn Rural school? Religion
	Career choice life as an adult (career focus)	Social worker because wanted to help other people in sad situations (did not qualify) Teaching as second choice Enjoyed studying Computer course	Lawyer because wanted to change injustice (persuaded differently) Teacher influence for choice as teacher	Nurse because ?(injuries scary) Teaching as second choice (financially viable)	Mineworker because seemingly good salaries Initially not a teacher Took Opportunity (financially viable) to become and passion was born	Nurse because of aunt's attire and demeanor (BUT fell in love with teaching as learner)
How do rural teachers experience teaching in a scarce resource education setting over time? Which barriers (risk factors) to career resilience do rural	life as a teacher over time = job timeline	17 years? Bad management Scarce permanent positions No full time	8 years? Bad management Not employed as	30 years? No salary for 8	5 years? Not employed as	? Not employed for 6 – 7

		Emma	Charlie	Gogo	Lazarus	Susan
<p>teachers encounter in a scarce resource education setting over time?</p> <p>Which protective resources do rural teachers identify retrospectively?</p>	Career anchors?	<p>employment for 12 years</p> <p>Father's promise Belief in knowledge Problem solving Other opportunities</p>	<p>teacher for ? No salary for 12 months?</p> <p>ABET Support from friends relatives Other job opportunities</p>	<p>months Heavy workload Constant change</p> <p>Supportive manager Pride in work as educator Team spirit at school</p>	<p>teacher for 8 years Constant change</p> <p>Team spirit at school Being from a rural area Find solutions Progression</p>	<p>years Learners with rights Unable to discipline learners Constant change Paper work</p> <p>Team spirit Supportive manager</p>
<p>How do rural teachers conceptualise their own teacher career resilience behaviour over time?</p>	Teacher career resilience behavior over time (specific focus on teaching)	<p>Belief in education Developing a country</p>	<p>Belief in education Social justice/change</p>	<p>Belief in education Educate a nation Her past prepared her</p>	<p>Belief in education (teaching is a serious affair) Developing the country</p>	Potential of learners
<p>How do rural teachers conceptualise their own teacher career resilience behaviour over time?</p>	<p>Conceptualization of career resilience</p> <p>Born with it?</p>	<p>Having knowledge Appreciate little things and recognize significance Support from family and friends</p> <p>?</p>	<p>Commitment Hard work Effort Perseverance Support from union friends</p> <p>?</p>	<p>Patience Dedication Adaptable Accommodative Pride Invested in teaching Took opportunities</p> <p>?</p>	<p>Change his ways and become more responsible Find solutions</p> <p>?</p>	<p>Flexible Tough times makes you valuable to others Religion</p> <p>?</p>
<p>How do rural teachers experience teaching in a scarce resource education setting over time?</p>	Conceptualization of rural education	School = ?	School = ?	School = ? Demotivated learners?	School = deep rural Newspaper	School = deep rural Newspaper Television sets Vandalism Donations (inappropriate)

		Emma	Charlie	Gogo	Lazarus	Susan
						material)
<p>Which protective resources do rural teachers identify retrospectively?</p> <p>If rural teachers addressed barriers (risk factors) to career resilience in a scarce resource education setting over time, how did they promote and sustain career resilience?</p>	How was resilience sustained?	Passion = Have Strategies Have compassion Selfless acts Support	Passion = Union friends – fighting for a cause	Passion = Patience Have strategies Have compassion Calling Dedication	Passion = Calling	Passion = Born teacher Have strategies



RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

CLEARANCE NUMBER :

EP 07/02/04

DEGREE AND PROJECT

PhD
Sustaining teacher career resilience in a scarce resource rural education setting: A retrospective study

INVESTIGATOR(S)

Sonja Coetzee

DEPARTMENT

Educational Psychology

DATE CONSIDERED

04 November 2013

DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE

APPROVED

Please note:

For Masters applications, ethical clearance is valid for 2 years

For PhD applications, ethical clearance is valid for 3 years.

**CHAIRPERSON OF ETHICS
COMMITTEE**

Prof Liesel Ebersöhn

DATE

04 November 2013

CC

Jeannie Beukes
Liesel Ebersöhn
Prof R Ferreira

This ethical clearance certificate is issued subject to the following condition:

1. It remains the students' responsibility to ensure that all the necessary forms for informed consent are kept for future queries.

Please quote the clearance number in all enquiries.