

**Exploring adolescent resilience during COVID-19 in a township
context**

by

Shannon Enid Wakefield

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

**MAGISTER EDUCATIONIS
(Educational Psychology)**

in the Faculty of Education

at the

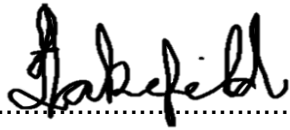
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA

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AUGUST 2022

DECLARATION

I, Shannon Enid Wakefield (student number: 13305604), declare that the mini-dissertation titled, *Exploring adolescent resilience during COVID-19 in a township context*, which I hereby submit for the degree Magister Educationis in Educational Psychology at the University of Pretoria, is my own work and has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other tertiary institution.”



Shannon Wakefield

18 August 2022

ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE



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DEGREE AND PROJECT

M.Ed

Exploring adolescent resilience during
COVID- 19 in a township context

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APPROVAL TO COMMENCE STUDY

08 June 2021

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

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

ETHICS STATEMENT

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

DEDICATION

I dedicate this research to my incredible husband, Jonty, who has always encouraged me to pursue my dreams and continues to enable my resilience.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To have achieved this milestone in my life, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the following people:

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ABSTRACT

COVID-19 has permeated news since December 2019 and has impacted all areas of life. Despite widespread coverage of the pandemic, there is still a need for greater research on understanding adolescent resilience in different contexts against the backdrop of COVID-19. This study made use of an exploratory qualitative design that used a secondary analysis of a pre-established qualitative data set to explore socio-ecological understandings of adolescent resilience during COVID-19 lockdown conditions in Zamdela, a South African township. Seventy-nine participants in grades eight to ten were selected and data originally generated through a draw-and-write methodology were re-examined. This study, framed by Social Ecology of Resilience Theory, aimed to explore what resources a sample of Zamdela middle adolescents identified as enabling for their resilience (or what resources have helped them do well when things get tough) within the context of COVID-19 and despite the risks of township living during a pandemic. The findings of the study shed light on and extend resilience theory in that it provides insight into the importance of personal, institutional, and relational resources when it comes to understanding adolescent resilience in Zamdela, South Africa within the context of COVID-19.

Key Terms:

Resilience, adolescent, middle adolescence, COVID-19, lockdown, township, South Africa, Social Ecological Theory of Resilience.

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I certify that I have edited Shannon Wakefield's mini-dissertation, *Exploring adolescent resilience during COVID-19 in a township context*.



LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

RYSE	Resilient Youth in Stressed Environments
RYSE-RuSA	Resilient Youth in Stressed Environments – Russia and South Africa
SETR	Social Ecological Theory of Resilience
SA	South Africa
NGO	Non-governmental Organisations
LAC	Local Advisory Committee

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION	ii
ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE	iii
ETHICS STATEMENT	iv
DEDICATION	v
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	vi
ABSTRACT	vii
LANGUAGE EDITING CERTIFICATE	viii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS.....	ix
LIST OF FIGURES	xiv
1. CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE OF THE STUDY	1
1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT.....	2
1.3 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY.....	3
1.4 RESEARCH QUESTION.....	4
1.4.1 Sub-question.....	4
1.5 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: SOCIAL ECOLOGICAL THEORY OF RESILIENCE (Ungar, 2011)	4
1.6 CONCEPT CLARIFICATION	6
1.6.1 Resilience.....	6
1.6.1.1 Personal protective factors	6
1.6.1.2 Social protective factors	6
1.6.1.3 Physical ecological protective factors	7
1.6.1.4 Institutional protective factors	7
1.6.1.5 Cultural protective factors	7
1.6.2 Risk.....	7
1.6.2.1 Township context of Zamdela	8
1.6.2.2 COVID-19 lockdown conditions	8
1.6.3 Adolescence	9
1.7 ASSUMPTIONS	9
1.8 METHODOLOGY	10
1.8.1 The primary study	10
1.8.1.1 Participants who generated the primary data	10

1.8.1.2	Data generation	11
1.8.2	The secondary analysis	11
1.8.2.1	Epistemological paradigm	11
1.8.2.2	Methodological paradigm	11
1.8.2.3	Documentation sample	11
1.8.2.4	Data analysis and interpretation	12
1.9	QUALITY CRITERIA	12
1.10	ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS.....	12
1.11	CONCLUSION	12
2.	CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW	14
2.1	INTRODUCTION	14
2.2	THE RISK TO ADOLESCENT WELLBEING OF COVID-19 AND LIVING IN A TOWNSHIP	14
2.2.1	South African COVID-19 lockdown conditions	15
2.2.2	Risks associated with township living	18
2.2.3	Risks associated with middle adolescence	19
2.2.4	Conclusion to risks section.....	21
2.3	FACTORS THAT PROTECT ADOLESCENT WELLBEING	21
2.3.1	Personal resources	22
2.3.2	Relational resources	23
2.3.3	Physical ecological resources	26
2.3.4	Institutional resources	28
2.3.5	Cultural resources	29
2.3.6	Conclusion to resources section	31
2.4	CONCLUSION	31
3.	CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY	33
3.1	INTRODUCTION	33
3.2	THE PRIMARY STUDY.....	33
3.2.1	Contextualisation	34
3.2.2	Participants	38
3.2.2.1	Purposive sampling	38
3.2.2.2	Snowball sampling	39
3.2.2.3	Description of participants	40
3.2.3	Ethics.....	40

3.2.4	Qualitative data generation: Methods and procedure	40
3.2.5	Primary qualitative data analysis	43
3.3	THE SECONDARY ANALYSIS	43
3.3.1	The purpose of the secondary analysis	43
3.3.2	Paradigmatic perspectives	44
3.3.2.1	Epistemological paradigm informing the secondary analysis	44
3.3.2.2	Methodological paradigm informing the secondary analysis	45
3.3.3	Methodology of the secondary analysis	46
3.3.3.1	Documentation sample	47
3.3.3.2	Data analysis used in the secondary analysis	47
3.3.3.3	Quality criteria	51
3.3.3.3.1	Credibility	51
3.3.3.3.2	Transferability	51
3.3.3.3.3	Dependability	52
3.3.3.3.4	Confirmability	52
3.3.3.3.5	Authenticity	53
3.3.3.4	Ethics of working with secondary data	53
3.4	CONCLUSION	54
4.	CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	55
4.1	INTRODUCTION	55
4.2	THEMATIC CATEGORY 1: PERSONAL RESOURCES	55
4.2.1	Theme 1a: Agency and mastery	55
4.2.2	Theme 1b: Hopeful or positive stance about the self and future ..	62
4.2.3	What the relevant literature reports about personal resources	64
4.3	THEMATIC CATEGORY 2: INSTITUTIONAL RESOURCES	66
4.3.1	Theme 2a: Support from an educational institution	67
4.3.2	Theme 2b: Support from faith-based organisations	69
4.3.3	What the relevant literature reports about institutional resources	72
4.4	THEMATIC CATEGORY 3: RELATIONAL RESOURCES	73
4.4.1	Theme 3a: Sense of belonging, being welcome or accepted	74
4.4.2	Theme 3b: Social support	75
4.4.3	What the relevant literature says about relational resources	78
4.5	THEMATIC CATEGORY 4: CULTURAL RESOURCES	79

4.5.1	What the relevant literature reports about cultural resources	82
4.6	THEMATIC CATEGORY 5: PHYSICAL ECOLOGICAL RESOURCES	83
4.6.1	Theme 5a: A green space/park.....	83
4.6.2	Theme 5b: Safe spaces in the built environment	85
4.6.3	What the relevant literature reports about physical ecological resources	86
4.7	CONCLUSION	87
5.	CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	89
5.1	INTRODUCTION	89
5.2	RESEARCH QUESTION REVISITED AND FINDINGS DISCUSSED	89
5.3	REFLEXIVITY	94
5.4	LIMITATIONS OF THIS STUDY	95
5.5	RECOMMENDATIONS	96
5.5.1	Recommendations relating to future research	96
5.5.2	Recommendations for Educational Psychologists	97
5.6	CONCLUSION	98
6.	LIST OF REFERENCES	100
7.	ADDENDA	124
7.1	ADDENDUM A- Audit Trail (open codes, candidate themes, and defined themes)	124
7.2	ADDENDUM B - Ethical clearance for my study	131

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1:	Google Maps image of the Sasolburg area with the township of Zamdela demarcated in red (Google, n.d.)	35
Figure 2:	Housing in Zamdela (photo courtesy of the RYSE-RuSA team)	36
Figure 3:	Sasol plant on the outskirts of Zamdela (photo courtesy of the RYSE-RuSA team)	36
Figure 4:	Degradation and the results of poor services visible in Zamdela streets (photo courtesy of the RYSE-RuSA team)	37
Figure 5:	A school in Zamdela (photo courtesy of the RYSE-RuSA team).....	37
Figure 6:	Example of a picture drawn, photographed, and sent to the RYSE-RuSA team by Participant V075, a girl	41
Figure 7:	The explanation written, photographed, and sent to the RYSE-RuSA team by this participant	42
Figure 8:	Visual summary of my study's findings	56
Figure 9:	Participant VO62's drawing depicts that seeking advice has helped to foster his resilience	57
Figure 10:	Things that have helped participant VO-085 do well in life so far.....	58
Figure 11:	Playing soccer is something that has helped to distract Participant V061 from their current life and situation.....	59
Figure 12:	Participant V064 drew a television that she saw as a distraction from life	60
Figure 13:	Participant V050's drawing of music used to calm or soothe herself	61
Figure 14:	Listening to music and writing in a diary helped to distract Participant V079 from their life	62
Figure 15:	Various trials that Participant VO-016 sees as obstacles to build him on his path to success.....	63
Figure 16:	Participant V089's drawing of herself engaging in her schoolwork that she believes will help her achieve in life.....	64
Figure 17:	Participant VO-090's drawing of the Victorious Girls Foundation that gave her a safe space to go and connect with others	67
Figure 18:	Participant VO-071's drawing of herself going to school	68
Figure 19:	Participant V218's drawing depicting the idea that "Education is the key to success"	68

Figure 20:	Participant VO-049's drawing of a school	69
Figure 21:	Participant V059's drawing of a church	70
Figure 22:	Participant V071's drawing of the "house of God"	70
Figure 23:	Participant V087's drawing of church where she "find[s] inner peace"	71
Figure 24:	Participant V088's drawing of going to church and reading her Bible to help her feel better	72
Figure 25:	Participant V083 drew a picture about how his family supports his resilience by being there for him even when his context is "not friendly"	74
Figure 26:	Participant V049's drawing about things that have helped her.....	76
Figure 27:	Participant V096's drawing about how her friends and church were important once she had lost hope in life.....	76
Figure 28:	Participant V051's drawing of his mother who helps him to do well in life	77
Figure 29:	Participant VO-070's drawing of her family that motivates her to be more successful in life.....	78
Figure 30:	Participant V085 drew a picture of the church that has helped teach him Ubuntu values such as being faithful and showing respect to others	80
Figure 31:	Participant VO-048's drawing of her mother	81
Figure 32:	Participant VO-095's drawing of the running water that helps to calm her.....	84
Figure 33:	Participant V077's drawing of a park where she goes to "get some peace"	84
Figure 34:	Participant V217's drawing of a library that helps her feel better when she is hurt	85
Figure 35:	Visual representation of how the SETR principles relate to my research findings.....	90
Figure 36:	Participant VO-095: Sample of inductive data analysis of visual data	125

1. CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

My masters study is of limited scope and uses data generated by the Resilient Youth in Stressed Environments (RYSE)–Russia and South Africa (RYSE-RuSA) project that was a follow-on to the original RYSE study (Ungar et al., 2021). The RYSE-RuSA study that had a longitudinal mixed methods design, aimed to explain how different systems in adolescents’ lives function adaptively to support resilience over time despite stressors associated with the “carbon-intensive extraction and production industry” (Theron et al., 2019, p. 3). The original RYSE-RuSA data on which my study draws was generated in the township of Zamdela, South Africa, during Lockdown levels 2–4 in 2020. With the onset of COVID-19 and the challenges it posed to numerous lives (Beames et al., 2021; Derigny et al., 2022; Fouché et al., 2020; Gittings et al., 2021; Haffejee & Levine, 2020; Jassat et al., 2022; Laxton, 2021; Theron, L., Levine, D. T., et al., 2022), it was essential to revisit this data (i.e., conduct a secondary analysis) to identify reported resilience enablers with the hope that these findings could be used to enable resilience resources in the lives of Zamdela youths in this context.

Resilience is a person’s capacity to adjust well to disasters and other hardships (Masten & Motti-Stefanidi, 2020). Extensive research has indicated how resilience enabling factors can be found in systems within a person (e.g., their psychological system) and in a person’s lifeworld (e.g., their family system or built environment) and how a threat to these factors (such as COVID-19) can inhibit a person’s ability to develop or function normatively (Masten et al., 2021; Sanders et al., 2017). For the most part, resilience research has centred around North American and European contexts and has neglected the viewpoints of those from other countries and contexts, including African communities (Blum & Boyden, 2018; Donald et al., 2014). Since resilience enabling factors are contextual and culturally bound (Ungar & Theron, 2020), a unique opportunity presented itself to explore resilience enabling factors in a sample of middle adolescents (between grades 8-10) living in Zamdela, South Africa, in the context of COVID-19 by re-analysing some of the data generated in the RYSE-RuSA study.

The motivation for my study is multifaceted. First, given COVID-19, it was safer for all involved for me to conduct a secondary analysis of data. Also, a secondary analysis allowed me to save on the time and financial costs involved in research (see Christensen et al., 2015; Irwin, 2013; Seabi, 2012). Second, I was a full-time teacher and, in 2020, I taught a Grade 3 class whose members showed resilience despite the challenges COVID-19 brought to their education. In 2020, it was imperative for me, as a teacher, to help my class identify and use various resources in their lives to foster their own resilience for current and future success. Since I worked in a private school, I recognised that my class was not representative of most young people in South Africa and wondered if youths from different contexts or age demographics would report similar resilience-enabling resources during COVID-19 in South Africa. Third, the original RYSE-RuSA study included participants in middle adolescence and I am aware that this life stage has its own unique risk factors (Barbot & Hunter, 2012; Lorenz & Kray, 2019; O'Donnell et al., 2022), and wanted to explore which resilience resources were most reported on despite these risks. With this in mind and the knowledge that there is a need for greater research into adolescent-informed conceptualisations of resilience (Beames, et al., 2021; Liebenberg & Scherman, 2021) as well as resilience in a non-Western context (Van Rensberg et al., 2018), I aimed to add to this growing body of knowledge by contributing middle adolescent conceptualisations of resilience in a township context during COVID-19.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Resilience refers to the ability to cope or do well despite challenging circumstances (Derigny et al., 2022; Masten & Motti-Stefanidi, 2020; Sanders et al., 2017; Zhu et al., 2022). This capacity to manage despite challenges draws on resources both within and outside of individuals that help them manage when they face significant challenges (Eichengreen et al., 2022; Pswarayi, 2020; Scorgie, et al., 2017; Vindevogel et al., 2015). Typically, which resources are more helpful (or less helpful) relates to the risks at play and the situational and cultural context in which young people find themselves (Eichengreen et al., 2022; Ungar, 2019; Vindevogel et al., 2015). In the context of COVID-19 fairly extensive research has explored both child and adolescent resilience to the various COVID-19 related risks (e.g., Beames et al., 2021; Liu et al., 2022b; Masten & Motti-Stefanidi, 2020; N'dure Baboudóttir et

al., 2022). Although there has been some research into child and adolescent resilience in an African context during the pandemic, it is not extensive (Duby et al., 2022; Fouché et al., 2020; Gittings, et al., 2021; N'dure Baboudóttir et al., 2022). Since both risk and resilience are sensitive to contextual dynamics (Eichengreen et al., 2022; Pswarayi, 2020; Scorgie, et al., 2017; Vindevogel et al., 2015), it is important to explore what supported adolescent resilience in African contexts during COVID-challenged times.

Even though Gittings et al. (2021) shed some light on how COVID-19 lockdown conditions threatened various aspects of adolescent life in South Africa, I found little additional information regarding adolescent resilience during COVID-19 in South Africa. For example, although the COVID-19-focused issue of the South African Journal of Science included articles on resilience during COVID-19 (Maree, 2022; Theron, L., Levine, D. T., et al., 2022) and other local studies also examined adolescent resilience during the pandemic (Duby et al., 2022), much more is needed. Further, I could find no study that investigated the resilience of middle adolescents living in resource-constrained contexts (such as Zamdela township) in South Africa during lockdown. I believe this gap to be problematic because there is a need for contextual conceptualisations of resilience (i.e., based on age and location) during COVID-19 as Zhu and colleagues (2022) have noted. My study addresses this gap since there is a need for research on resilience to target specific subpopulations of young people to identify and strengthen resilience enablers across various systems in ways that are meaningful to that specific group of young people as Sanders et al. (2017) have noted. Additionally, as middle adolescence presents a unique set of risk factors (Rubin et al., 2021; Tur-Porcar et al., 2019) and resilience resources vary depending on age (Eichengreen et al., 2022) it is important to explore context-specific conceptualisations of resilience. This is important to help practitioners create context-specific interventions to bolster resilience.

1.3 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of my study is to explore the resources that a sample of middle adolescents from Zamdela reported as resilience enabling during the 2020 COVID-19 lockdown. The original RYSE-RuSA study generated data during South African levels 2–4 COVID-19 lockdown conditions (Theron et al., 2019). Since the

conceptualisation of resilience is contextually sensitive (Liebenberg & Theron, 2015; Machenjedze et al., 2019; Ungar, 2011; Ungar & Theron, 2020) I used the opportunity of the unique lockdown context of COVID-19 to gain an understanding of the preferred (i.e., most reported on) resilience resources of Zamdela's adolescents (whose average age was 16). It is my hope that a better understanding of what enables the resilience of this sample of middle adolescents will enable mental health workers (like Educational Psychologists) to provide more tailored services for them.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTION

My study of limited scope was guided by the question: What resilience-enabling resources were reported by middle adolescents living in Zamdela during 2020 COVID-19 lockdown?

1.4.1 Sub-question

How frequently were these resources reported (i.e., which were more and less prominent in the adolescents' accounts)?

1.5 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: SOCIAL ECOLOGICAL THEORY OF RESILIENCE (Ungar, 2011)

I chose the Social Ecological Theory of Resilience (SETR) (Ungar, 2011) for this study since it framed the RYSE study (Ungar et al., 2021) and the RYSE-RuSA study (i.e., the study in which the data that I will use was generated). Furthermore, SETR has been used in other resilience studies of children (Fouché et al., 2020; Van Breda, 2022) and youths in adverse South African contexts (e.g., Gopal & Nunlall, 2017; Hills et al., 2016; Van Breda & Theron, 2018; Van Rensburg et al., 2018; Wood et al., 2012).

Ungar's (2011) social ecology theory is founded on four principles: decentrality; complexity; atypicality; and cultural relativity. According to him, decentrality takes the focus off the individual person and their intrinsic resilience resources and places it on the context/environment and the interactions between the two. Ungar (2012) postulated that resilience is available only to the extent that the social ecologies make resilience resources accessible and available. For example, youths with strong social support networks adjust more positively to adversity as Thurman et al.

(2017) pointed out and neighbourhood security could strengthen youth resilience against crime (Ungar, 2012, 2019).

As a principle of SETR, complexity refers to how people's views of resilience enablers change over time and between contexts (Ungar, 2011, 2019). At different developmental stages, specific resilience enablers are prioritised above others (Eichengreen et al., 2022; Yoon et al., 2019). For example, resilience studies with adolescents emphasise resilience enablers in the school setting and adolescents' own aptitude and self-esteem, whereas children tend to prioritise parental support (Eichengreen et al., 2022). Additionally, in terms of complexity, SETR discourages simplistic accounts of resilience or mono-systemic explanations (e.g., that resilience is rooted mostly/only in psychological strength or specific personality traits (Masten, 2014)). Instead, multiple resources from multiple systems (e.g., biological, psychological, social, and environmental systems) make resilience possible (Masten et al., 2021; Ungar & Theron, 2020). As detailed in the fourth principle, complexity is further heightened by how cultural norms and values play into the resources that adolescents report as resilience-enabling (Ungar & Theron, 2020).

Principle three, atypicality, speaks to unexpected resilience enablers (Ungar, 2011). Van Breda (2018) suggested that resilience enablers are context-specific and that what is socially acceptable as resilience-enabling in one context might not be deemed socially acceptable in another. Further, so-called mainstream society might disregard the enabling value of more atypical resources (Ungar, 2011). For example, the use of substances to cope with adverse situations may be seen as unacceptable by some but may be resilience-enabling for others (Tur-Porcar et al., 2019) such as street-connected youth (Hills et al., 2016). Similarly, "antisocial behaviours" (Van Breda, 2018, p. 10) such as self-harm or gang involvement can be used to foster resilience by promoting a sense of belonging, power, and meaning.

The final principle of SETR is cultural relativity (Ungar, 2011). Perceptions of resilience and what enables resilience are often culturally specific in the sense that norms and values shape how people understand resilience and which resilience-enabling resources are considered meaningful (Panter-Brick, 2015). In South Africa, an example of cultural relativity could be seen in the traditional African appreciation

of collective or interdependent ways-of-being and values/beliefs associated with Ubuntu (Van Breda, 2018, 2019). Additionally, for African adolescents, relational resources are often found to be a primary enabler of resilience (Van Breda & Theron, 2018). In contrast, some Western studies conducted in contexts that value individualistic culture highlight personal resilience resources as being essential for resilience (Fullerton et al., 2021).

1.6 CONCEPT CLARIFICATION

In my study, the following concepts are central.

1.6.1 Resilience

Resilience is the capacity of any system to function or develop normatively despite exposure to significant risk (Masten, 2014). In my study, this definition is operationalised as the capacity of an adolescent to function normatively (e.g., continue to be engaged in school) despite the challenges of township life and COVID-related lockdown. Importantly, this capacity is not just personal; it is also supported by protective factors in the systems to which adolescents are connected (Lerner & Johns, 2015; Masten, 2021; Ungar & Theron, 2020).

1.6.1.1 Personal protective factors

These factors refer to intrinsic resources that foster resilience, including age, gender, and psychological strengths (e.g., self-efficacy, self-regulation skills, and positive outlook/self-esteem) (Christodoulou et al., 2019; Hennein et al., 2021; Sanders et al., 2017). Personal protective factors can also be physiological (e.g., a healthy immune system) (Ungar, 2019). In my research, I explore these personal protective factors (i.e., personal demographic, physiological, and psychological factors) as reported by Zamdela participants.

1.6.1.2 Social protective factors

Social protective factors refer to any interpersonal relationships that foster resilience (Hennein et al., 2021). This includes relationships with family, friends, neighbours, and the greater community (Visser, 2012). Typically, these relationships are enabling when they provide a sense of belonging, being welcome or accepted, as

well as social support (Masten, 2014). In my study, social protective factors include any relational resource identified by Zamdela participants.

1.6.1.3 Physical ecological protective factors

These factors refer to resilience enablers that are found in the natural and built environment (e.g., green space, a park, and/or quality housing) (Ungar & Theron, 2020). Typically, these enablers offer a sense of peace, escape, wellbeing, or security to those who have access to them (Adams et al., 2017; Feng et al., 2022; Nissen et al., 2020; Scorgie et al., 2017). In my study, ecological protective factors include any resource in the physical environment identified by Zamdela participants.

1.6.1.4 Institutional protective factors

Institutional resources are services offered by organisations or establishments (e.g., schools or community centres) (Theron & Van Breda, 2021). Typically, institutional protective factors or resources provide a service that fosters feelings of wellbeing, a sense of community and/or acceptance, and instrumental or informational support (Bester & Kuyper, 2020; Ebersöhn, 2015; Jefferis & Theron, 2017; Sanders et al., 2017; Sulimani-Aidan & Melkman, 2022). In my study, institutional protective factors include any services offered by organisations or establishments and identified by Zamdela participants.

1.6.1.5 Cultural protective factors

Culture refers to shared ideas, values, and beliefs or rituals that are practised by a specific group of people, as well as cultural norms (Masten, 2021). Typically, these values, beliefs, and norms support resilience when they encourage healthy life choices, quality human relationships, a sense of belonging, or a powerful identity (Ungar et al., 2019). In my study, cultural protective factors include any enabling value, norm, or belief identified by Zamdela participants.

1.6.2 Risk

A risk refers to a threat or to an adverse context that heightens the chances of a negative outcome (Luthar et al., 2000). In my study, risk refers to various socio-ecological conditions or hardships faced by adolescents in Zamdela, South Africa,

in 2020. They also include COVID-19 lockdown conditions as well as risks associated with middle adolescence.

1.6.2.1 Township context of Zamdela

Despite there being some resilience resources available in a township, my study focused on the risks associated with the context of Zamdela, in particular as a township (Maringira & Gibson, 2019; Mulligan, 2015; Theron et al., 2021). Townships were established during the apartheid era in South Africa and were put in place to physically separate different race groups and intentionally disadvantage those classified as non-white (Theron, L., Levine, D., et al., 2020). The petrol company Sasol established Zamdela in 1954 to house their employees of colour (Moloi, 2018). Like other townships (see Christodoulou et al., 2019; Du Toit et al., 2018; Sekhampu, 2013), Zamdela is characterised by poor infrastructure, poverty, high levels of unemployment, and poor service delivery (Rampedi, 2017; Statistics South Africa, n.d.b).

1.6.2.2 COVID-19 lockdown conditions

South Africa had one of the earliest and bad enough set of initial lockdown conditions that were even worse for township residents in the country (Turok & Visagie, 2021). Despite various changes to the lockdown rules as lockdown levels varied, South Africans had to wear masks in public, wash or sanitise their hands, and maintain social distancing (Zuma, 2020a). The data I examined was primarily generated by the RYSE-RuSA team during lockdown levels 2–4 in 2020 (April 21, 2020 to December 15, 2020). This time was characterised by increased hunger, job loss and unemployment, education inequality, and a general decline in mental health (Spaull et al., 2020). Additionally, the initial lockdown regulations affected where and when people could move around (Fouché et al., 2020), there was a limit on the number of people allowed at gatherings, schools were closed (along with the National School Nutrition programme as Haffejee and Levine (2020) pointed out), and gatherings in public places (such as parks) were prohibited (Government of South Africa, 2021b). Lockdown level 3 (June 1 to August 17, 2020) saw the reintroduction of the National School Nutrition Programme meals (Haffejee & Levine, 2020) and lockdown level 2 (18 August 18, to September 20, 2020) allowed

for the gradual reopening of schools as well as gatherings of up to fifty people in indoor and outdoor venues (Government of South Africa, 2021a; Zuma, 2020a).

1.6.3 Adolescence

Adolescence is a term that refers to the transitional stage through which a person goes on the path to adulthood and is recognised as being between the ages of 10 and 24 (Sawyer et al., 2018). Other terms for adolescents include young people and youths (Ebersöhn, 2015). Adolescence can be divided into early, middle, and late adolescence (Lonigro, Longobardi, & Laghi, 2022; Rubin et al., 2021; Tur-Porcar et al., 2019). Middle adolescence spans the ages 14–16 (Mampane, 2014; Rubin et al., 2021; Tur-Porcar et al., 2019). In general, adolescence is considered to be a tumultuous developmental stage, and the predominant factor of adolescence is the physiological changes of puberty (Lerner & Johns, 2015; Louw & Louw, 2014). However, middle adolescents are believed to be especially vulnerable to engaging in risky behaviours (Barbot & Hunter, 2012; O'Donnell et al., 2022). In this study, adolescents refer to a sample of participants who took part in the RYSE-RuSA study and were in Grades 8–10 (average age of 16).

1.7 ASSUMPTIONS

In this study, I assumed that there would be preferred resilience resources among a sample of middle adolescents from Zamdela. My assumption related to my teaching experience and reflections on my own life, as well as the literature I read when developing the proposal for this study. For instance, while teaching in 2020, I discovered that many of the children in my class found their self-efficacy and the support of their parents, teacher, and peers to be important to their belief in their ability to overcome the hardships presented by COVID-19 and learning under lockdown conditions. Similarly, I have found that my attitude toward an adverse situation, my faith, and emotional support from my husband and family give me the courage to face adverse situations. According to systematic reviews of resilience research in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Africa (Theron, 2020b; Van Breda & Theron, 2018), adolescents' preferred (most prominently reported) resilience enablers are relational resources (typically with family). Personal strengths were reported almost as often as relational ones (Theron, 2020a; Van Breda & Theron, 2018). Since Zamdela is a township with few physical ecological or structural

resources, I expected middle adolescents to be more likely to report relational and personal resources (according to the systematic reviews I read).

Although I have no personal experience of living in a township, I grew up next to a township in eSwatini and often engaged in working with soup kitchens and other outreach activities in the area. Through these interactions, it was often clear to me how ingrained religion and spirituality were for many residents. This might have influenced the meaning I made of the data since, based on my experience, I expected to find strong evidence of religion and faith to be resilience-enabling. There is some evidence in the resilience literature that adolescents draw on religion and faith to cope well with adversity (Beames et al., 2021; Brittian et al., 2013; Höltge et al., 2021).

1.8 METHODOLOGY

The methodology that informed my study is detailed in Chapter 3. What follows below is a brief summary.

1.8.1 The primary study

The RYSE-RuSA study followed a longitudinal mixed methods design that combines strengths of both quantitative and qualitative research in the same study (Morgan & Sklar, 2012). The RYSE-RuSA research team chose a South African site and a Russian site and invited adolescent participants to generate data on three occasions between 2020 and 2021. Because my study draws only on the qualitative data generated in 2020 in South Africa (SA), what follows is specific to the South African study and the 2020 qualitative data generation.

1.8.1.1 Participants who generated the primary data

The participants who generated the primary data shared a geographical context (Zamdela township near Sasolburg; see 3.2.1 for details). They were recruited by the RYSE-RuSA research team. The RYSE-RuSA team used purposive and snowball sampling in the original research since participants were required to fit specific criteria for them to participate in the study. The inclusion criteria, reasons for the choice of sampling method, as well as the advantages and disadvantages

thereof are discussed in Chapter 3 (Section 3.2.2.1 and 3.2.2.2). In total, 302 participants (mean age of 17) generated the primary data (Section 3.2.2.3).

1.8.1.2 Data generation

In the primary study, the qualitative data was generated by participants in Zamdela using a draw-and-write method, in which participants were encouraged to draw pictures related to the research topic and were asked to explain their drawings in a written response as suggested by Mitchell et al. (2011). The reasons behind the RYSE-RuSA team's choice of a draw-and-write method as the primary data generation method as well as the advantages and disadvantages of this method are discussed in Chapter 3 (Section 3.2.4).

1.8.2 The secondary analysis

1.8.2.1 Epistemological paradigm

I chose interpretivism as the epistemological paradigm for my secondary study because it emphasises individuals making meaning of their own environments and/or experiences (Jansen, 2016; Van Der Walt, 2020). This paradigm is highly influenced by hermeneutics and phenomenology, and a trademark of this approach is that reality is socially constructed and contextually sensitive (Jansen, 2016; Van Der Walt, 2020). The reasons for my choosing interpretivism as the epistemological paradigm, as well as the advantages and disadvantages of this approach are discussed in Chapter 3 (Section 3.3.2.1).

1.8.2.2 Methodological paradigm

I chose a qualitative methodological approach. A qualitative paradigm relies on subjective data created by working with people to understand better their perspectives and insights about a chosen research focus (Christensen et al., 2015; Nieuwenhuis, 2016b). The reasons for my choosing the aforementioned paradigm, as well as its advantages and disadvantages, are discussed in Chapter 3 (Section 3.3.2.2).

1.8.2.3 Documentation sample

For the secondary analysis, I made use of purposive sampling to select relevant documents from the 2020 RYSE-RuSA dataset. Because I was interested in what

supports the resilience of middle adolescents, I sampled the documents ($n = 79$) generated by participants who were in Grades 8–10 (average age 16). A full description of the document sample as well as related participant demographics is detailed in Chapter 3 (Section 3.3.3.1).

1.8.2.4 Data analysis and interpretation

The original data was created using a participatory method in which participants contributed to analysing the visual data by providing a written explanation of their drawings (Machenjedze et al., 2019). I made use of inductive thematic analysis to further analyse the selected data; i.e., I identified similarities or patterns in the visual and narrative data that I had selected following Rule and John (2011) and Yin (2018). While analysing the data, I made use of a frequency table to record how often the identified resources were reported (see Maree & Pietersen, 2016). I discuss the reasons for my choosing inductive thematic analysis, as well as the advantages and disadvantages of this analytic approach in Chapter 3 (Section 3.3.3.2).

1.9 QUALITY CRITERIA

Lincoln and Guba (1994) noted that to establish trustworthiness in qualitative research, a variety of quality criteria must be adhered to. These criteria include credibility, dependability, transferability, confirmability, and authenticity. In Chapter 3 (Section 3.3.3.3), I discuss these criteria in detail.

1.10 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

My study is associated with the RYSE-RuSA study. The RYSE-RuSA study received ethical clearance from the Ethics Committee, Faculty of Education (UP17/05/01). I received related ethical clearance to do a secondary analysis, and a copy of the ethics clearance certificate can be found in Addendum B. When I interacted with the participants' data, I was careful to work ethically as I explain in Chapter 3 (Section 3.3.3.4).

1.11 CONCLUSION

Overall, resilience is a topic that has interested psychologists and researchers alike for many decades and is driven by an interest in what makes some people better

able to deal adaptively with challenging circumstances and even do well despite them (Masten et al., 2021; Sanders et al., 2017). Not surprisingly then, research has been conducted on risk factors and resilience-enabling resources worldwide (Masten & Motti-Stefanidi, 2020; Reddy, 2020). Even so, there are repeated calls to explore which resources matter to specific populations at specific points in time (e.g., Chandra et al., 2011; Zhu et al., 2022). With this in mind, the focus of my study was to explore the resources that a sample of adolescents in Grades 8–10 from Zamdela reported as resilience enabling during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Given the situational and cultural sensitivity of resilience (Eichengreen et al., 2022; Pswarayi, 2020; Scorgie et al., 2017; Vindevogel et al., 2015), and SETR principles (Ungar, 2011), it is important to know what has been reported in African studies of youth resilience. I review these and other studies next (in Chapter 2). In Chapter 3, I explain the methodology that informed the secondary analysis that I did. I report the findings of that analysis in Chapter 4 and in Chapter 5, I conclude my study.

2. CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Resilience is a topic that has interested psychologists and researchers alike for many decades; it is driven by an interest in what makes some people more able to deal with challenging circumstances or even do well despite them (Sanders et al., 2017; Ungar & Theron, 2020). Research has been conducted on risk factors and on enabling resilience factors worldwide (Masten & Motti-Stefanidi, 2020; Reddy, 2020). It is important to understand the risks experienced by a specific population as well as to examine the various factors they believe enable and/or reinforce their resilience (Chandra et al., 2011). As explained in the preceding chapter, my study focuses on a sample of adolescents in Grades 8–10 living in the township of Zamdela during the COVID-19 lockdown period of 26 March to 30 April 2020. Accordingly, in this chapter, I explore risk factors associated with township living in middle adolescence and South African COVID-19 lockdown conditions. In addition to this, I examine personal, relational, physical ecological, institutional, and cultural resilience resources. Given the situational and cultural sensitivity of resilience, where possible, I foreground African resilience literature in this review.

2.2 THE RISK TO ADOLESCENT WELLBEING OF COVID-19 AND LIVING IN A TOWNSHIP

Despite widespread media coverage on COVID-19 since late 2019, there is still scope for further research on the implications of COVID-19 on the resilience of young people living in South Africa. Initially, much resilience research was focused on the elderly and those with co-morbidities because they were identified as the most vulnerable demographics for severe symptoms of COVID-19. In South Africa, research into career possibilities during COVID-19 (Walters et al., 2022) has appeared as well as into employment trajectories in post COVID-19 times (Altman, 2022; Maree, 2022) as well as about how COVID-19 has impacted people of various ages living in low-income areas (Jassat et al., 2022; Theron, L., Levine, D. T., et al., 2022).

Masten and Motti-Stefanidi (2020) investigated resilience in the context of COVID-19 by viewing the pandemic as a multisystemic natural disaster that caused

extensive disruption, threatened numerous lives, and required a multisystemic response to combat its hardships. Globally, and in South Africa, governments have put in place measures such as handwashing, social distancing, and mask wearing to curb the spread of the virus and to keep people safe (Zuma, 2020a). While they had important health-protecting functions, COVID-19 protection measures had, potentially, a negative impact not just on the livelihoods of adolescents in South Africa but also on their mental health and on their access to basic necessities and others (see Gittings et al., 2021). For example, interpersonal relationships have been identified as important enablers of resilience around the world (Reddy, 2020), but lockdown limited access to them. This is of particular concern in the South African context given the belief in Ubuntu that is based on the recognition of the interconnectedness of humans and the valuing of self along with the valuing of others in the community (Mkhize, 2013) and the related preference for being with others.

2.2.1 South African COVID-19 lockdown conditions

COVID-19 refers to the SARS-CoV-2 virus that was first identified in Wuhan, China, and reported to the World Health Organisation (WHO) in December 2019, and that was declared a pandemic on March 11, 2020 (Sly et al., 2021). In South Africa, a state of disaster was declared on March 26, 2020 and, in the months and years that followed, South Africa transitioned through various levels of COVID-19 lockdown conditions (Government of South Africa, 2021a). These different levels were characterised by different regulations but handwashing, mask-wearing, and social distancing remained through all the different alert levels (Zuma, 2020a).

The initial hard lockdown period in South Africa (lasting from March 26 until April 30), known as lockdown level 5, was characterised by a high infection rate of COVID-19 and low readiness of the health systems in South Africa, so drastic measures were put into place to contain the spread of COVID-19 and to preserve lives (Government of South Africa, 2021a). These measures included restricting the movement of all South African citizens so all, except essential workers, were housebound, all schools were closed, only basic essential goods were sold in shops, roadblocks were common around the country. These rules were enforced by both the South African National Defence Force and the South African Police Services

(Fouché et al., 2020). During this time, the Department of Basic Education also made the decision to suspend the National School Nutrition Programme which resulted in millions of children being unable to receive food with serious consequences for them as Haffejee and Levine (2020) have noted.

Lockdown level 4 began after this hard level 5 lockdown period ended and lasted from May 1 to May 31, 2020. Under lockdown level 4, health systems were seen to be readying themselves for an increase in COVID-19 cases with a moderate to high spread of cases around the country, according to the Government of South Africa (2021a). Some level 5 rules were relaxed but the rules and regulations that characterised level 4 lockdown included restriction on the movement of people (in the form of a curfew and restricted movement between provinces). Only certain goods could be purchased, exercise was allowed (but only between 06H00 and 09H00), schools and country borders were closed, gatherings (except for funerals, and being at work or shopping) were prohibited, public premises (such as parks and casinos) were closed, there was a prohibition on the sale of alcohol and tobacco products and all those who had the ability to work from home were encouraged to do so (see Government of South Africa (2021b) for more details). During this time, although there was some relaxation of the restrictions (such as allowing the sale of stationery and educational books) there was a general increase in education inequality since some educational institutions transitioned to online learning while other institutions did not have the capacity or capability to do so and this meant that many young people missed out on valuable learning time with serious consequences (Fouché et al., 2020). Children from wealthy families were reportedly twice as likely to be attending school (online or in person depending on the in-person restrictions) than children who were attending non-paying schools (Spaull et al., 2020).

Lockdown level 3 lasted from June 1 until August 17, 2020, and was characterised by greater healthcare readiness, a moderate spread of COVID-19, and restrictions targeted at addressing the high risk of potential transmission (Government of South Africa, 2021a). While many of the original rules from lockdown alert level 4 remained, some changes were made, including a more relaxed curfew (between 22H00 and 04H00), allowing the resumption of sporting activities (as long as players

and officials adhered to stringent measures), and the opening of hotels and lodges to guests (Zuma, 2020b). Very importantly, during this stage the Department of Basic Education was instructed to re-open the National School Nutrition Programme and millions of children, once again, had access to meals (Haffejee & Levine, 2020). Some of the restrictions that remained in place included social distancing, working from home where possible, the closing of South Africa's provincial and international borders, and the prohibition of the sale of alcohol and tobacco products (Zuma, 2020b).

Lockdown level 2 lasted from August 18 to September 20, 2020 and was characterised by healthcare systems having a high level of readiness as well as a moderate spread of COVID-19 and, while many restrictions were adapted or lifted, physical distancing and leisure and social restrictions were still in force in South Africa (Government of South Africa, 2021a). Some amendments to restrictions included permitting gatherings of fifty people (at funerals and religious gatherings, and in casinos) subject to social distancing, mask wearing, and other regulations. Gyms, fitness centres, and public spaces were opened, interprovincial travel was allowed for leisure purposes, and the sale of liquor and tobacco products was no longer prohibited although restricted in terms of places and times of purchase and consumption. The government continued to encourage those who could work from home to do so. Other regulations that remained in place included social distancing, hand sanitising, mask wearing, restrictions on international travel for leisure. Night clubs remained closed and all cultural initiation practices were prohibited (Zuma, 2020a). During this lockdown level, schools were systematically reopened and many children were excited to be with their friends again while many adults, still confined to their homes, were nervous about the further spread of COVID-19 with their children being back at school.

Throughout the various lockdown levels, there was great concern about school disruptions and the impact of this on learners. Under lockdown levels 4 and 3, many government schools were closed to learners and staff alike but with the start of lockdown level 2, there was a phased-in approach to schooling and certain grades were allowed back on campuses. These schools were gradually opened to all grades (Government of South Africa, 2021c). In stark contrast to this, many South

African independent schools instituted online learning from the beginning of lockdown. Concern about the inevitable increase in educational inequality in South Africa was great since approximately 40% of school days (between eighty-two and eighty-seven) were missed in government schools.

Of great concern, too, was the recognition that many learners had lost access to school meals and this placed even greater pressure on strained family resources (Spaull et al., 2020). Given all this and the uncertainty associated with the COVID-19 pandemic and various lockdown conditions, there was an increased risk that adolescents' mental health would deteriorate during these times (Beames et al., 2021; Laxton, 2021). Additionally, since adolescents place high emphasis on peer relationships, the restrictions pertaining to social distancing were also found to have altered young people's relationships through the conditions imposed by physical distancing. Also, the stigma attached to having contracted the virus added to this risk of deteriorating mental health (Tomlinson et al., 2021). Additionally, with COVID-19 restrictions impacting the amount of physical activity in which adolescents were able to engage, there was also the risk attached to being increasingly sedentary that has been linked to a negative impact on both the physical and mental wellbeing of adolescents (Derigny et al., 2022).

2.2.2 Risks associated with township living

In keeping with the recognition that resilience is related to risk exposure (Masten, 2014), the focus of this section is on the risks associated with living in a township environment. However, in no way do I mean to imply that there are no resilience resources available to those who live in townships nor that there are no advantages to such a life (see Maringira & Gibson, 2019; Mulligan, 2015; Theron et al., 2021).

A great number of sub-Saharan African youths are exposed to many different risks, including poverty, communicable diseases, and high levels of violence and loss (United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund, 2022). While these risks are present regardless of the specific country, they are typically likely, if not prominent, in township contexts. Townships are characteristically underdeveloped living areas and were established originally to physically separate people of different races during apartheid in South Africa (Du Toit et al., 2018; Sekhampu, 2013; Van

Breda, 2010). Townships are typically characterised by transmissible illnesses, poor employment opportunities, poor infrastructure, rapid population growth rates, high levels of unemployment, cramped living spaces, and the establishment of small illegal bars known as shebeens (Christodoulou et al., 2019; Du Toit et al., 2018; Sekhampu, 2013). Additionally, townships are generally associated with poor neighbourhoods (Moloi, 2018; Ungar & Theron, 2020), poor or non-existent service delivery, overcrowding, high rates of violence, and with few structural resources available for young people living in the area (Moloi, 2018). Additionally, those living in township contexts face the risks of violence and food insecurity (Christodoulou et al., 2019). South African townships are characterised by these same adverse contexts, regardless of where in the country they are located (Haffejee & Levine, 2020; Moloi, 2018).

There is a great likelihood of youth living in townships engaging in gang violence, substance abuse, and criminal behaviour (Bantjes et al., 2019; Breen et al., 2019; Christodoulou et al., 2019; Maringira & Gibson, 2019). Adolescents living in townships also deal with household poverty, high unemployment rates (see Titi et al., 2022), corruption, and unreliable service-delivery (Theron, L., Levine, D., et al., 2020). In addition to these limited resources, adolescents in townships also face risks associated with overcrowding, poor facilities, food insecurity (Titi, et al., 2022), increased instances of communicable diseases (Theron, 2018b), as well as the poor quality education available in schools for Black sub-Saharan youths in general (Theron, 2020a; Van Breda, 2018).

Townships have been seriously affected by COVID-19 challenges (Turok & Visagie, 2021). Township residents had little relief from the economic challenges associated with lockdown (Gittings et al., 2021). Structural disadvantage often made it harder for township youth to comply with COVID- related public health regulations (Theron, L., Levine D., et al., 2022).

2.2.3 Risks associated with middle adolescence

Although adolescence is a time period that has protective resources (Ebersöhn, 2015), strengths (Özcan & Vural, 2020), and the increase of various cognitive and

emotional skills (Liu, Xu, et al., 2022; Rubin et al., 2021), in this section I focus on the risks associated with this developmental stage.

In general, adolescence is a tumultuous time period in a person's life and is characterised by great amounts of physical and psychological change, formation of gender identity and self-awareness, and the fostering self-acceptance (Barbot & Hunter, 2012; Ebersöhn, 2015; Özcan & Vural, 2020; Rubin et al., 2021; Tur-Porcar et al., 2019). During adolescence, there is a shift from reliance on parents to a greater emphasis on one's peer group for emotional support and negative emotional states tend to be more intense and frequent during this time (Lonigro et al., 2022). Also, adolescence is a crucial time for young people to develop a purpose for their lives and is often reflected through the decisions they make about school subjects and career paths (Chen et al., 2022).

There are various internal and external risk factors that are associated with the adolescent stage in life, some of which include experiencing negative emotions, comparing oneself to peers, engaging in risky sexual behaviours and engaging in rebellious behaviours (such as criminal activity), becoming aware of limited future job opportunities and of the lack of after-school programmes (Ebersöhn, 2015). Additionally, anxiety, depression, and risk of suicide are common risks for adolescents (Liu, Zou, et al., 2022; Rubin et al., 2021). Although adolescents are believed to engage in more risky behaviours than other age demographics, the motivation for their risky behaviour has more to do with their desire for reward (e.g., peer acceptance) than it has to do with their not seeing the risks associated with their actions (Barbot & Hunter, 2012). This ties in with the level of importance adolescents place on belonging to their peer groups as well as the realistic identity formation and emotional self-regulation development that is taking place at this time in their lives that can be positively or negatively impacted by the company they keep (Barbot & Hunter, 2012; Ebersöhn, 2015).

Middle adolescence typically spans the age period of 14 to 16 years (Mampane, 2014; Rubin et al., 2021; Tur-Porcar et al., 2019). Middle adolescence is typically associated with a greater sense of reward anticipation despite various known risks (Lorenz & Kray, 2019) and the peaking of social, cognitive, and emotional

vulnerabilities before they decline again during late adolescence and into adulthood (Barbot & Hunter, 2012). Substance use is commonly initiated during middle adolescence and has the potential to increase risky behaviours (O'Donnell et al., 2022). Additionally, despite there being some level of socio-emotional development by middle adolescence, cognitive development still has a way to go in terms of impulse control and this adds to the threat of engagement in risky behaviours (Barbot & Hunter, 2012). Middle adolescents are believed to be especially vulnerable to lockdown-related restrictions (Lee et al., 2021).

2.2.4 Conclusion to risks section

This review shows that adolescents living in township contexts face many challenges and risks to their wellbeing and resilience. The adolescents who took part in the Resilient Youth in Stressed Environments–Russia and South Africa project faced additional risks presented by various COVID-19 lockdown conditions along with the unique risks associated with middle adolescence (Rubin et al., 2021; Tur-Porcar et al., 2019). Despite these challenges, African studies of adolescent resilience show that there are both internal and external resources available to help adolescents do well or be alright when life gets tough (Breen et al., 2019; Theron & Van Rensburg, 2020; Ungar et al., 2021; Van Breda, 2018).

2.3 FACTORS THAT PROTECT ADOLESCENT WELLBEING

Resilience promoting resources are both intrinsic and extrinsic (Masten, 2021). Early international studies on resilience focused on North American and European understandings of what resilience means (Yoon et al., 2019). Resilience was seen mostly to be a set of characteristics in a person that acted as a buffer against the effects of stress in that person's life (Fullerton et al., 2021). Early researchers believed that how resilience looked and how it was supported in youths would be similar in different countries around the world with little recognition of the role of culture or context in how resilience was viewed and experienced (Theron et al., 2013). Subsequently, there has been a shift toward a socio-ecological understanding of resilience that refers to how internal and external systems that fit a given context enable resilience (Masten et al., 2021; Theron, L., Levine, D., et al., 2020; Wills & Hofmeyr, 2019). Various enablers of resilience, such as personal, relational, physical, ecological, institutional, and cultural resources, all play a

pertinent role in promoting resilience among young people both globally and in the South African context. In line with more recent social ecological, multisystemic understandings of resilience, it is expected that these enablers will interact with and inform each other to foster resilience in the lives of young people (Masten, 2021).

2.3.1 Personal resources

Personal resources are a person's psychological and physiological characteristics (Ungar, 2019; Ungar & Theron, 2020) that vary based on life stage and context (Eichengreen et al., 2022). Personal resources include individual skills, agency, self-efficacy (Christodoulou et al., 2019; Masten, 2021), mental toughness, optimism, meaning in life, and adaptability (Fullerton et al., 2021), along with self-esteem and purpose in life (Sanders et al., 2017). Other aspects of personal resources include humour, self-reliance (Eichengreen et al., 2022), motivation (Duby et al., 2022), physical wellbeing, and social and behavioural skills (Theron, 2020a).

In general, these resources could be used actively by intentionally using cognitive and/or behavioural strategies as coping mechanisms to reduce or control stress in stressful situations, or passively by avoiding or disengaging from various sources that cause stress in life. Coping strategies help young people become well-adjusted and show resilience despite hardships or challenges in life (Beames et al., 2021). These skills also involve taking agency in and mastering help-seeking behaviours, engaging in activities to keep busy and/or provide distraction from challenges in life as well as taking action to find peace or self-soothing (Masten & Motti-Stefanidi, 2020). Using active coping strategies such as help-seeking behaviours, engaging in faith-based practices that comfort, and making attempts at self-soothing during COVID-19 have been linked to adolescents coping better with the various stresses associated with the pandemic (Beames et al., 2021). It should be noted, however, that adolescent perceptions of care (or lack of care) are paramount to whether or not adolescents decide to engage in such behaviours of help-seeking (Van Rensberg et al., 2018).

For African young people, characteristics such as assertiveness and a sense of self-worth (Jefferis & Theron, 2017), along with intelligence and affective strengths are linked to greater resilience capabilities (Bester & Kuyper, 2020). As seen in

international research (Masten, 2014), the concepts of self-esteem and agency (especially when related to seeking access to resources) are also echoed in African resilience literature (Pswarayi, 2020). There is also a marked connection between a drive to do well in school and African adolescent resilience (Gorongu & Mampane, 2021; Theron & Van Rensburg, 2020). Relatedly, a sense of responsibility, self-motivation (to become educated so as to better themselves), adaptability and problem-solving (for example, finding a way to get to and from school) are important personal enablers of their resilience (Gorongu & Mampane, 2021). In contexts where social ecologies are unable to foster resilience effectively, African young people may rely more or mostly on personal resources in order to manage when life gets difficult (Singh & Naicker, 2019; Theron, 2018b, 2020).

During COVID-19, it was found that, despite the lockdown conditions and forced restrictions, young South African people still found ways to enact a form of agency through defying country-based regulations and attempting to create a form of normalcy through meeting up with others, going on other social outings, and going for haircuts (Gittings et al., 2021). DUBY et al. (2022) conducted a study that echoed the idea of young South African people exerting agency in their lives to source and elicit help to prevent them from falling behind in their studies during COVID-19 lockdown conditions.

2.3.2 Relational resources

Relational resources include connections that provide social, emotional, instrumental, informational, and motivational support (Guvenc, 2015; Lloyd-Jones, 2021). Resilience research has underscored the importance of quality caregiving, social connectedness, and a sense of belonging and being supported by others as being key relational resources for young people (Masten, 2021). In general, supportive and involved parents along with positive peer interactions and access to mentors have been identified as being important to adolescent resilience (Eichengreen et al., 2022; Sanders et al., 2017). These relationships foster resilience since they can offer emotional support in the form of having someone to share life's difficulties with, having someone available to listen to them, encourage them, and even offer advice when it is asked for or needed (Eichengreen et al., 2022). Additionally, adolescents with harmonious family relationships and friendly

relationships with peers are better equipped to cope with the challenges afforded by life (Tang et al., 2022). Relational resources have been especially important in the context of COVID-19 since it was found that young people used social connection (Beames et al., 2021) and social media (Laxton, 2021) to cope with the unique stresses brought on by the pandemic and various lockdown conditions. In addition to this, young people find that parents or other adult figures (for example, teachers and religious leaders) bolster resilience through their acceptance of them and a belief in them (Beames et al., 2021).

Prior to COVID-19, a review of resilience studies showed that relational resources were the most prominent resource reported by South African young people (Van Breda & Theron, 2018). While immediate or extended family members often provided social and other supports (Höltge et al., 2021), other adults (who might not be blood relatives; e.g., teachers or neighbours) have also been identified as key resilience resources for South African adolescents (Theron & Van Rensburg, 2020). Research has also drawn attention to the specific attachment of many South African youths to female authority figures in their lives (Ungar & Theron, 2020), possibly because so many households are female-headed (Maringira & Gibson, 2019).

During COVID-19 lockdown conditions, caring connections with others (including friends, family, and community members) were seen as important for adolescent resilience, however, these connections were only one resilience resource utilised by adolescents at this time (Theron et al., 2021). Theron, L., Levine, D. T., et al. (2022) found that greater levels of caregiver warmth and supervision were associated with greater mental health and overall resilience to COVID-19 lockdown conditions in disadvantaged communities. For some young people, however, COVID-19 lockdown conditions exacerbated difficult family relationships and there were some reported increases in family violence during lockdown conditions (Gittings et al., 2021). Despite this, N'dure Baboudóttir et al. (2022) found that many African young people also enjoyed the time they were able to spend with their families at home and felt that this time aided in their resilience to the lockdown conditions. Also, some young people found that avoiding difficult family relationships by non-adherence to lockdown regulations (e.g., not staying at home) or even enlisting a third-party

relationship in the form of a mediator was enabling of their resilience (Gittings et al., 2021).

While there is an emphasis in the resilience literature on how positive child-parent relationships enable resilience, for adolescents, there is also the potential for peer relationships to have a positive impact on it (Sanders et al., 2017). Developmentally, adolescents are in the midst of forming their identity and often rely on their peer group to inform this process (Ebersöhn, 2015). Thus, adolescents tend to place high emphasis on social support systems and peer groups and relationships (Höltge et al., 2021) and they use friendship groups as a source of belonging, closeness, and intimacy (Beames et al., 2021). Peer relationships and the potential positive role they play in adolescents' lives are especially important when young people face substantial risks and their emotional needs are not being met by the family system (Sanders et al., 2017). Social support from peers is often associated with adolescent resilience in African contexts (Höltge et al., 2021), especially when these peers encourage constructive behaviours and hope (Van Breda & Theron, 2018; Vindevogel et al., 2015). In line with this, Theron et al. (2021) also found that allowing emerging adults to help facilitate COVID-19 management strategies within their social ecologies helped to foster resilience.

For some African adolescents, teachers have even been known to take on a parental role through providing various forms of care including offering support and comfort and teaching adolescents how to live with and treat others well (Theron & Van Rensburg, 2020). A study involving 18 young Zimbabweans between the ages of 15 and 17 highlighted the positive role that teachers play in adolescents' lives through counselling, guiding, and acting as confidants for them (Gorongwa & Mampane, 2021). These findings were echoed in a study involving 28 Sesotho-speaking adolescent girls from the Free State in South Africa, in which it was found that teachers are able to champion resilience through pre-empting support for the adolescents, offering guidance and motivational support, and advocating for change in the education setting (Jefferis & Theron, 2017). Teachers and their provision of emotional support and material resources have been found to bolster adolescent resilience during COVID-19 in South Africa (Theron et al., 2021).

2.3.3 Physical ecological resources

Physical ecological resources refer to external resilience-enabling factors located in the built milieu (Ungar & Theron, 2020) and in the natural environment (Theron & Van Breda, 2021). Internationally and in South Africa, there has been research into physical ecological, resources that young people have found to bolster their resilience to adverse contexts (DaViera et al., 2020; Feng et al., 2022; Li et al., 2021; Scorgie et al., 2017; Theron & Van Breda, 2021). Often, these resources are physical buildings, such as a home, a school, a church (DaViera et al., 2020; Scorgie et al., 2017), a library (Nissen et al., 2020) or an accessible recreation centre (Theron et al., 2021). Identified resources also include green spaces and/or parks in which young people feel safe (Feng et al., 2022; Li et al., 2021). It is important to note that feeling safe is intersubjective and is the result of a collectively socially constructed meaning of the term (DaViera et al., 2020; Scorgie et al., 2017). Even with this in mind, studies have highlighted how young people, despite the adverse context in which they were living, were typically able to find and identify places in their environment where they felt safe and/or were able to avoid areas they deemed unsafe (Adams et al., 2017; DaViera et al., 2020; Scorgie et al., 2017).

Around the world, including in South Africa, community mapping and other participatory methods have been used to identify where young people feel safe in their different communities (Adams et al., 2017; DaViera et al., 2020; Scorgie et al., 2017; Vindevogel et al., 2015). In a study conducted with Chicago youth, it was revealed that every young person had at least one physical place in which they felt safe and that the two most reported places to feel safe were at their home or at their school (DaViera et al., 2020). These findings are reflected in a study that explored what 59 young people living in Hillbrow, Johannesburg, viewed as safe and as dangerous places in their neighbourhoods. Areas identified as safe included their homes, friends' homes, churches, and green spaces or parks (Scorgie et al., 2017). In addition to research highlighting the importance of physical structures and infrastructure in adolescent resilience, there has also been research into the role that green spaces and parks play in the mental health of adolescents (Li et al., 2021; Nissen et al., 2020; Scorgie et al., 2017). Despite safety concerns about thugs, gangs, and violence (especially at night) in urban park spaces, parks were

highlighted as a space where some young people feel safe and connect with others (Adams et al., 2017; Feng et al., 2022; Scorgie et al., 2017).

In South Africa, the sense of safety perceived in a physical ecology is partially related to how accessible it is seen to be and also to the social or relational resources the space may afford (Scorgie et al., 2017; Theron & Van Breda, 2021). For example, Khuzwayo et al. (2016) highlighted how violence from adults and others can make adolescents feel unsafe in a variety of settings such as living spaces, schools, and while commuting to and from school. Additionally, some young South Africans reported that green spaces felt safer when they were being supervised by family or community members (Adams et al., 2017). In another South African study, adolescents found green spaces to be safe when they were crime and gang free, litter-free, and free from people abusing substances (Nissen et al., 2020).

Across countries, it has also been found that perceptions of danger as well as strategies to assist in feeling safe vary depending on sex (DaViera et al., 2020; Scorgie et al., 2017). Internationally, there is evidence that boys are more likely to view danger in terms of physical violence, whereas girls are more likely to view it as relational or sexual violence or harassment (DaViera et al., 2020). These perceptions can influence the use of resources in the physical ecology. In South Africa, for example, schools have been identified as a safe space by many boys because they offer protection from outside dangers but not by girls for whom sexual harassment by their schoolmates is often endemic (Scorgie et al., 2017).

There is a history of physical ecological resources being under-reported by young people living in resource-constrained environments such as a township (Van Breda & Theron, 2018). A study conducted by Theron et al. (2021) during COVID-19 mirrored this in that a group of emerging adults from a township mostly reported implicit references to physical ecological resources as being enabling of their resilience. Additionally, it was found that adverse physical ecologies made it more challenging for young people to adhere to COVID-19 lockdown regulations and, at times, made them more vulnerable to contracting the virus (Theron, L., Levine, D. T., et al., 2022).

2.3.4 Institutional resources

Institutional resources are services, supports, and/or training opportunities offered by the state and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) (Theron & Van Breda, 2021; Ungar & Theron, 2020). These services and supports aid in adjustment to adversity (Ungar & Theron, 2020), and, among others, they typically include support from educational institutions (Sanders et al., 2017), community centres or projects or faith-based organisations (Theron & Van Breda, 2021; Ungar & Theron, 2020; Van Rensberg et al., 2018), mental health services that are meaningful (Theron, L., Levine, D. T., et al., 2022) and cash transfers or grants (Little, et al., 2021). Many institutions aim to address not just physical and material needs but psychosocial and emotional needs, too (Tam et al., 2021). It should be noted that, despite institutional resources having the potential to promote resilience, their usefulness to do so depends on the individual's specific culture as well as their context (Höltge et al., 2021).

Since adolescents spend much time in school (Jefferis & Theron, 2017; Sanders et al., 2017; Sulimani-Aidan & Melkman, 2022), there is potential for this institutional resource to reinforce resilience in their lives (Ungar et al., 2019). It is also thought that a sense of belonging (i.e., feeling included, respected, and accepted) in a school context is especially important for at-risk youth since it fosters a sense of hopefulness (Sulimani-Aidan & Melkman, 2022). Schools also provide an opportunity for young people to access relational resources in the form of teachers and peers, both of which are essential to adolescent resilience (Ebersöhn, 2015; Höltge et al., 2021; Jefferis & Theron, 2017; Sanders et al., 2017). In addition to this, some schools bolster resilience through providing learners with instrumental support in the form of their waiving school fees and also providing food for learners (Bester & Kuyper, 2020). During COVID-19 lockdown conditions in South Africa, there was concern around lack of access to schooling facilities as being a challenge to core developmental tasks (Theron et al., 2021).

Vindevogel et al. (2015) reported on how young people in post-war Uganda identified being educated or being in a school as resilience enabling since it was a tangible marker of progress being made in life. Also, Sanders et al. (2017),

conducted a study with over 500 New Zealand adolescents and reconfirmed the notion that education has the potential to bolster resilience through the positive impact it could have on an adolescent's future life opportunities. Additionally, schools have the potential to provide young people with access to various services that can bolster their resilience (Ungar et al., 2019). These resources can include academic support (Sulimani-Aidan & Melkman, 2022), material resources such as food (Ungar et al., 2019), and relational support (in the form of positive relationships with friends, teachers, and family and community members) (Sulimani-Aidan & Melkman, 2022; Ungar et al., 2019).

In South Africa, there is support for this view that school systems have been identified as a key resilience resource in adolescents' lives (Höltge et al., 2021; Van Breda & Theron, 2018). In addition to this, young South African people are known to draw on support not just from their school systems but from their faith-based communities, too (Höltge et al., 2021; Van Breda & Theron, 2018). These faith-based communities have the potential to offer young people access to material, psychological, and social resources (Brittian et al., 2013). For example, young people learn values that discourage risk-taking behaviour and protect their health and wellbeing (Van Breda & Theron, 2018).

2.3.5 Cultural resources

Context, including culture, plays a vital role in how youths perceive and manage adverse situations (Makhnach, 2016; Theron et al., 2013). Additionally, celebrating cultural factors and narratives has been found to foster resilience, especially among indigenous people (Masten, 2021). Culture is generally developed based on the common characteristics of the majority of the community and encompasses shared beliefs, rituals, and even behaviours (Makhnach, 2016). More than this, culture can also be understood as a community sharing a common knowledge about or an understanding of the world (Panter-Brick, 2015) and culture has also been described as something that has potential benefit for all (Tubadji, 2021).

The enactment of cultural beliefs and practices can offer a sense of identity. For instance, a study with street adolescents (with an almost even split between females and males and a mean age of 16) in Durban, South Africa, reported that ancestral

beliefs and religion supported their resilience to the hardships they faced in life (Hills et al., 2016). In addition, these young people had learned to embrace street life culture and this provided a sense of belonging (Hills et al., 2016). Similarly, in the context of COVID-19, it has been found that engagement in cultural practices (e.g., group singing) or “signalling compliance with cultural norms and rules” could serve as protective factors and had the potential to promote general happiness and resilience in the context of the pandemic (Tubadji, 2021, p. 1220).

Specifically for a sub-Saharan African context, a sense of community or togetherness is a driving cultural value, typically referred to as Ubuntu (Hage & Pillay, 2017). South African culture, although diverse, is permeated with Ubuntu-related values that deemphasise the individual and encourage interdependence (Mangaliso et al., 2021; Van Breda, 2019). These Ubuntu-related values are characterised by respect, communalism, and a reverence for God and one’s ancestors (Mangaliso et al., 2021; Phasha, 2010). Ubuntu also promotes generosity in various forms, such as being attentive to others’ needs and taking care of these needs (Van Breda, 2019).

Ubuntu-related values that enable adolescent resilience in sub-Saharan Africa include behaving respectfully towards others, having good manners and being disciplined, living in peace with others, and helping others (Vindevogel et al., 2015). Put differently, these values encourage altruism, sharing, and mutual assistance and thereby facilitate a joint sense of identity that provides strength, comfort, and guidance in times of hardship (Soji et al., 2015). Respect for these values gives many youths access to relational, emotional, and instrumental support, all of which are resilience-enabling (Phasha, 2010; Van Breda & Theron, 2018). This was illustrated, for example, in a study of seven African male learners living in child- and youth-headed households in Soweto, South Africa. This study highlighted that the good of the community surpasses the good of the individual, thus reinforcing the collective nature of South African communities, and the resilience of these young people (Hage & Pillay, 2017). Unfortunately, in post-colonial South Africa, Ubuntu has often been found to be expressed within groups, as opposed to between groups, and this has led to great protection of those in the groups and to the othering of those outside the group (Van Breda, 2019).

Even during COVID-19 lockdown conditions, there were still instances of Ubuntu values enabling young people's resilience in South Africa. For example, there were instances of neighbours sharing food with others and churches providing for community members' needs – both of which illustrate the collectivist nature of Ubuntu (Theron et al., 2021). Additionally, under lockdown conditions, it was found that young people were open to others helping monitor their compliance to regulations – highlighting the notion of interdependence and respect for elders – both of which reflect Ubuntu values (Theron, L., Levine, D. T., et al., 2022).

2.3.6 Conclusion to resources section

I have looked at studies reporting the various resources that foster adolescent resilience. Where possible, I reported African resilience studies. From this review, it is clear that resilience resources and enablers can be found in various systems and subsystems in a young person's life. I anticipate that this will also be true for adolescents living in Zamdela during COVID-19 lockdown conditions.

2.4 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, risk and resilience are contextual (Eichengreen et al., 2022; Pswarayi, 2020; Scorgie et al., 2017; Vindevogel et al., 2015). This means that research is needed into specific contexts in order to assess what risks are being faced as well as where resilience resources are located for individuals in the specified context. While early international studies focused on European and North American contexts (Yoon et al., 2019), there have been some advancements in resilience research in an African context and, with this, there has been a move towards a socio-ecological and systemic understanding of resilience (Masten et al., 2021; Theron, L., Levine, D., et al., 2020; Wills & Hofmeyr, 2019).

While there were studies of adolescent resilience in the context of South African townships (e.g., Mampane, 2014; Maree, 2022; Maringira & Gibson, 2019; Singh & Naicker, 2019; Theron & Van Rensburg, 2020; Theron, L., Levine, D., et al., 2020; Van Breda, 2010), they typically focused on personal, relational and/or educational resources. Additionally, except for a handful of studies (Duby et al., 2022; Gittings et al., 2020; Jassat et al., 2022; N'dure Baboudóttir et al., 2022; Theron et al., 2021), there has been no focused attention to what has supported the resilience of South

African adolescents in COVID-challenged times. Given this, adolescent resilience (inclusive of any resource) in the context of Zamdela township during lockdown 2020 is the focus of my study. In the next chapter, I report on the methodology I used to study the resilience of adolescents (average age 16) in a township during COVID-challenged times.

3. CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The primary study, Resilient Youth in Stressed Environments (RYSE)–Russia and South Africa (RYSE-RuSA) was a follow-up to the original RYSE study (Ungar et al., 2021). My study uses RYSE-RuSA data generated during Time 1 (2020) data collection. When I began my research in January 2021, South Africa was under lockdown regulations that impacted the movement and behaviour of people; social contact was limited, and mask wearing and hand sanitising were enforced (Government of South Africa, 2021a). At this time, vaccinations were being rolled out but were still limited. I chose to conduct a secondary analysis of existing data as a response to safety concerns for participants and myself. Additionally, I chose to conduct a secondary analysis of data since it had the potential to save on costs and time, answer new questions that had not been asked of the data (see Ruggiano & Perry, 2019; Tarrant, 2017) and create an in-depth description of the phenomenon of adolescent resilience in a specific context as suggested by Maree and Pietersen (2016). Although the quantitative data has been analysed and reported on (Theron, L., Rothmann, S., et al., 2022), and a paper on the qualitative data is under review and forthcoming from Theron et al. (in press), there is still scope for research that uses the qualitative data generated. Hence, my decision to do a secondary analysis of the qualitative RYSE-RuSA data generated in 2020.

In the sections that follow, and as is customary in secondary data analyses, I describe the primary study (i.e., the RYSE-RuSA study). Thereafter I focus on explaining my secondary analysis. I then conclude this chapter.

3.2 THE PRIMARY STUDY

The RYSE-RuSA study followed a longitudinal mixed methods design that combines strengths of both quantitative and qualitative research in the same study (Morgan & Sklar, 2012). The purpose of the primary RYSE-RuSA study was to explain how different systems in adolescents' lives function adaptively over time despite stressors associated with the “carbon-intensive extraction and production industry” (Theron et al., 2019, p. 3) and how these systems support adolescent resilience. Explained differently, the primary study aimed to generate a comprehensive

understanding of resilience among adolescents living in a stressed environment and to use that understanding towards having a positive effect on adolescent wellbeing. This coincides with the global shift towards promoting the health of adolescents as well as their wellbeing (Theron et al., 2019).

To achieve this aim, the RYSE-RuSA research team chose a South African site and a Russian site and invited adolescent participants to generate data on three occasions between 2020 and 2021. Because my study draws only on the South African qualitative data generated in 2020, what follows is specific to this.

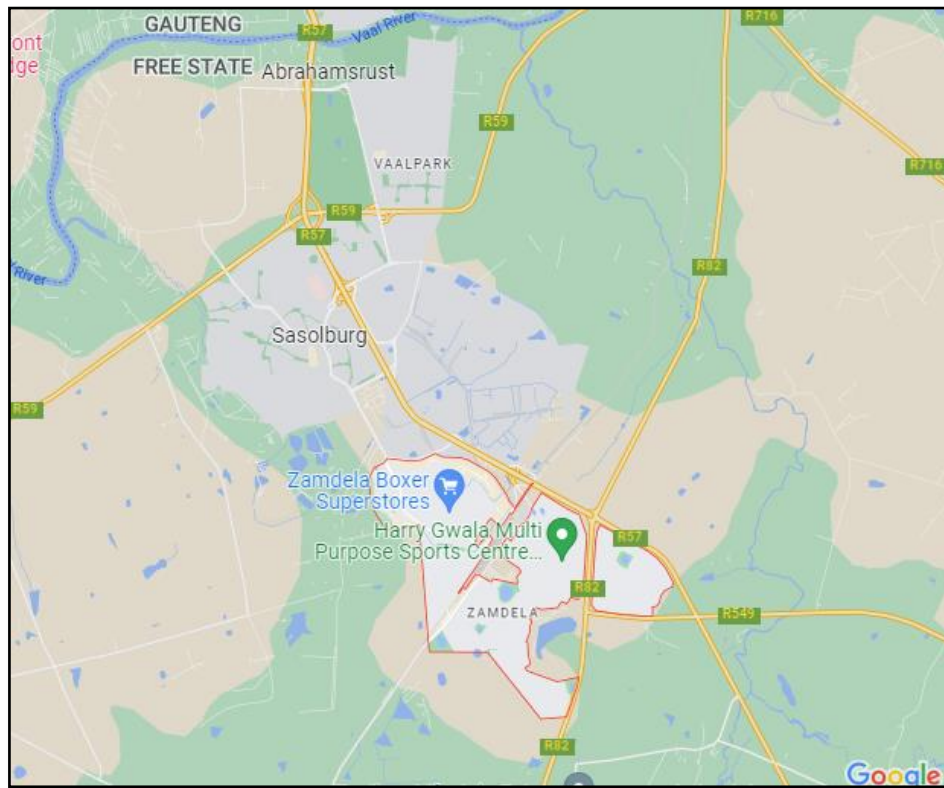
3.2.1 Contextualisation

In South Africa, the RYSE-RuSA study was conducted in the geographically adjacent towns of Sasolburg and Zamdela. The residents of Sasolburg and Zamdela are stressed, typically, by pollution from Sasol's chemical complex of mine, chemicals plant and refinery, the Seriti coal mine that is used to supply Eskom's nearby Lethabo power station, and large volumes of trucking activity (Hallowes & Munnik, 2020). Along with this, residents also face pollution from dust and also the smoke from wood fires that are used, especially in winter months, to keep homes warm (Muyemeki et al., 2021). Residents of Sasolburg and Zamdela deal with a polluted water source that includes run-off from an old refinery as well the polluted local river in which rubbish is dumped as well as smoke pollution at night from tyres being burnt (Hallowes & Munnik, 2020). The issue of Sasol and the strain it puts on the two communities is challenging since the company is also a primary employer of those in the area (Khoza, 2021).

Sasolburg (26.8059 S, 27.8396 E) is an industrial area and centre of coal mining in the Vaal Triangle (Hallowes & Munnik, 2020) and was named after the petrochemical company Sasol. The town was established to provide housing for Sasol employees in 1954 according to Statistics South Africa, n.d.a.. It was designed as a "garden city" in which trees line the streets. The wealthier middle-class white population lives to the north of the chemical plants and the working-class white population lives closer to the chemical plants (Hallowes & Munnik, 2006, p. 20).

Figure 1

Google Maps image of the Sasolburg area with the township of Zamdela demarcated in red (Google, n.d.)



Zamdela (26.8577 S, 27.8725 E), meaning *to despise* or *to undermine* (Statistics South Africa, n.d.b), was established in 1954 in the Metsimaholo municipality of the Free State Province according to Moloi (2018). This area, classified as a township, was established under apartheid as inexpensive housing on the edge of the town for Black workers who could commute to nearby Sasolburg and Sasol (Sekhampu, 2013; Wills & Hofmeyr, 2019). Since the end of apartheid, the area has continued to be predominantly Black with characteristics of a typical South African township, including a great influx of migrants searching for work in the area (Christodoulou et al., 2019). In a visit to Zamdela in October 2021, President Cyril Ramaphosa commented on the poor state of the potholed roads as well as the poor service delivery in the area related to the provision of water and sewage and, along with the rest of the country, the issue of electricity was also noted as a problem in Zamdela (Khoza, 2021). In terms of recent news, there have been instances of gender-based violence (Kgongoane, 2022a), of fire that has damaged homes (Kgongoane, 2022b), and of crude oil theft (TIMESLIVE, 2022) in Zamdela.

Figure 2

Housing in Zamdela (photo courtesy of the RYSE-RuSA team)



Figure 3

Sasol plant on the outskirts of Zamdela (photo courtesy of the RYSE-RuSA team)



Figure 4

Degradation and the results of poor services visible in Zamdela streets (photo courtesy of the RYSE-RuSA team)



Figure 5

A school in Zamdela (photo courtesy of the RYSE-RuSA team)



Approximately 90,000 people live in Zamdela with a population density of 3 851 persons/km² and where most of the inhabitants (99.4 %) are African (Statistics South Africa, n.d.b). The unemployment rate is approximately 43%, roughly 18% of residents live in informal settlements, and 35.5% of households are female headed (Resilient Youth in Stressed Environments, n.d.). In Zamdela, there are approximately 25,067 households with an average household size of 3.2 (Statistics South Africa, n.d.b) . Sesotho is the predominant language in the area, with IsiXhosa and isiZulu being the next widely spoken languages (Resilient Youth in Stressed Environments, n.d.; Statistics South Africa, n.d.b).

It is also important to note the temporal context in which the Time 1 RYSE-RuSA data was generated. The start of this data generation on February 25, 2020 preceded the initial hard lockdown period (March 26 March to April 30, 2020) in response to the COVID-19 pandemic in South Africa. However, most of the qualitative data was generated during less severe 2020 lockdown periods (i.e., from April 04 to December 15, 2020).

3.2.2 Participants

In line with using a qualitative methodology, the RYSE-RuSA team made use of non-probability sampling in order to gain participants for the study. More specifically, the research team used purposive as well as snowball sampling to recruit participants. Both the sampling methods and description of participants are detailed below.

3.2.2.1 Purposive sampling

Purposive sampling is used in social research aimed at generating qualitative data with the purpose of creating in-depth descriptions as opposed to seeking findings that can be easily generalised (Morgan & Sklar, 2012). Purposive sampling is used when there is a specific purpose in mind (Maree & Pietersen, 2016), and the researcher defines certain characteristics that participants must have before setting out to find those in the population that match these characteristics (Christensen et al., 2015). In order to qualify for inclusion in the original RYSE-RuSA study, participants had to confirm that they were between 15 and 24 years of age, were reasonably fluent in English with the ability to read and write in English, that they

lived in Sasolburg or Zamdela, were affected (negatively or positively) by the petrochemical industry, and that they were responding to an advert about the project that they saw or were given by someone in their community.

Local gatekeepers formed part of a local advisory committee (LAC) that was used to help determine context-appropriate sampling methods (see Ungar et al., 2021) to identify young people who fit the inclusion criteria. Under advisement of this committee, advertisements on social media and in local shops (Theron et al., 2019), and local gatekeepers (such as staff from local non-government organisations) were used to help facilitate participant recruitment (see Theron, L., Rothmann, S., et al., 2022). The gatekeepers also used the wording of the advertisements to tell young people whom they believed to be eligible about the study.

While purposive sampling can be seen as a weaker sampling method because it limits generalisability, it fulfils the role of creating a deeper and more trustworthy view of the case or phenomenon being studied (Christensen et al., 2015; Rule & John, 2011). Purposive sampling also provides a way of creating a sample when involving everyone who fits the demographic is not an option (Morgan & Sklar, 2012; Rule & John, 2011).

3.2.2.2 Snowball sampling

Snowball sampling was recommended by the local advisory committee as a way of recruiting participants who matched the required criteria. Snowball sampling involves having a sampled person identify other potential participants who meet the stipulated inclusion criteria and is often used in contexts where participant populations are difficult to find (in this case, individuals who matched the RYSE-RuSA inclusion criteria) (see Christensen et al., 2015). COVID-19 lockdown made it difficult to go into the community and schools to make adolescents aware of the study. In the RYSE-RuSA study, individuals who were eligible to participate were invited to invite others who fit the eligibility criteria to join the study (Theron, L., Rothmann, S., et al., 2022). They used the study advertisements for clarity regarding the inclusion criteria.

3.2.2.3 Description of participants

At Time 1, 302 adolescents between the ages of 15 and 23 (mean age of 17 with $SD=1.856$) consented to participate in the qualitative work of the RYSE-RuSA study. Of these adolescents, 177 (mean age of 17 with $SD=1.734$) self-identified as girls or young women and 125 (mean age of 18 with $SD=1.9$) self-identified as boys or young men. Of the 302 participants, 109 participants were from Sasolburg (mean age of 16 and $SD=0.745$) and 193 participants (mean age of 18 and $SD=1.876$) were from Zamdela.

3.2.3 Ethics

Ethical clearance was gained from the Faculty of Education Ethics Committee (UP17/05/01) at the University of Pretoria. For the primary study, ethical considerations included gaining informed written consent and caregiver co-consent for adolescents under the age of 18. In order to ensure participant anonymity and confidentiality, all identifying markers were removed when the documents (the drawings and explanations) were labelled and in reports on the data; scans and pictures were labelled by assigned participant numbers and uploaded to an online repository. I used these labels when reporting on the data.

3.2.4 Qualitative data generation: Methods and procedure

Since the original qualitative data was generated using a participatory method (see Theron et al., 2019), participants can be viewed as co-researchers or co-generators of knowledge as pointed out by Rule and John (2011). The chosen participatory method was the draw-and-write one. This method has participants being encouraged to draw pictures related to the research topic and being asked to explain their drawings in the form of a discussion or written response (Mitchell et al., 2011). Drawings are a creative expression and are reflective of individual experiences (Rule & John, 2011). The original research brief given to participants included a page with the instructions to draw a picture answering the question: “What has helped you to do well in your life so far?”

During Lockdown levels 3, 4, and 5, research opportunities were limited because of regulations prohibiting the movement of people around the country (Government of South Africa, 2021a) and university moratoria on in-person research. During these

lockdown levels, participants still created drawings and scanned or took photos of their work, included an explanation (written or typed), and sent them to the research team via WhatsApp (or email if they preferred). These scans and images were also then added to an online repository (in password-protected Google Drive). The advantages of using technology and social media in research is that it can continue regardless of lockdown conditions and using electronic methods meant that there was the potential of reaching a large number of participants in a short amount of time as Christensen et al. (2015) have made clear. Limitations could include issues surrounding confidentiality and preserving the anonymity of the participants, difficulty with debriefing the participants (Christensen et al., 2015) and the inability of some participants to take part in research because of internet and data constraints. Using online methods was appropriate for the Zamdela township since, although 67.5 % of the population has no access to the internet, over 90% have access to cell phones (Statistics South Africa, n.d.b) and so were able to send photos of their work to the RYSE-RuSA research team. Additionally, it was a safer way for the RYSE-RuSA team to generate data during the higher lockdown levels in South Africa. The drawing brief was shared via WhatsApp/email.

Figure 6

Example of a picture drawn, photographed, and sent to the RYSE-RuSA team by Participant V075, a girl

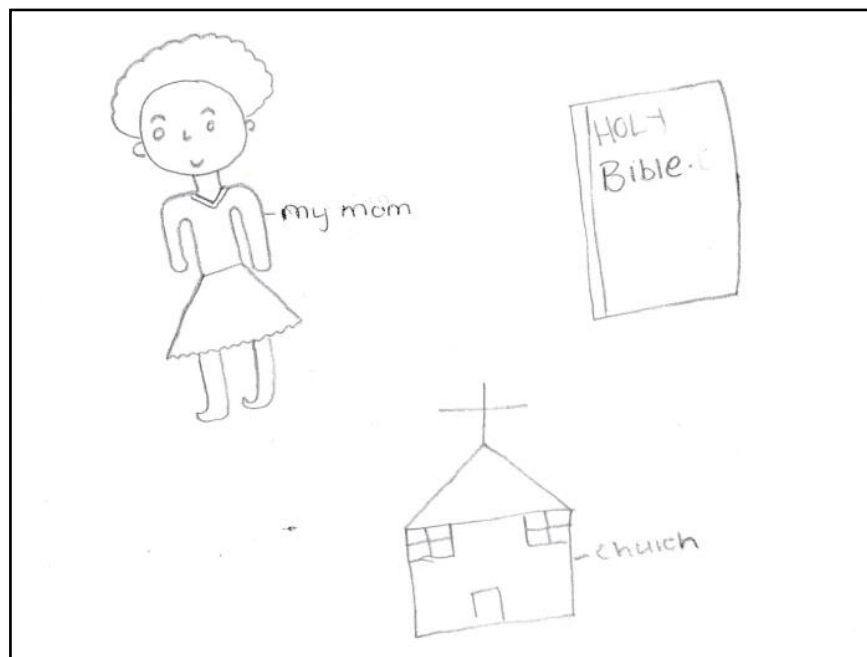
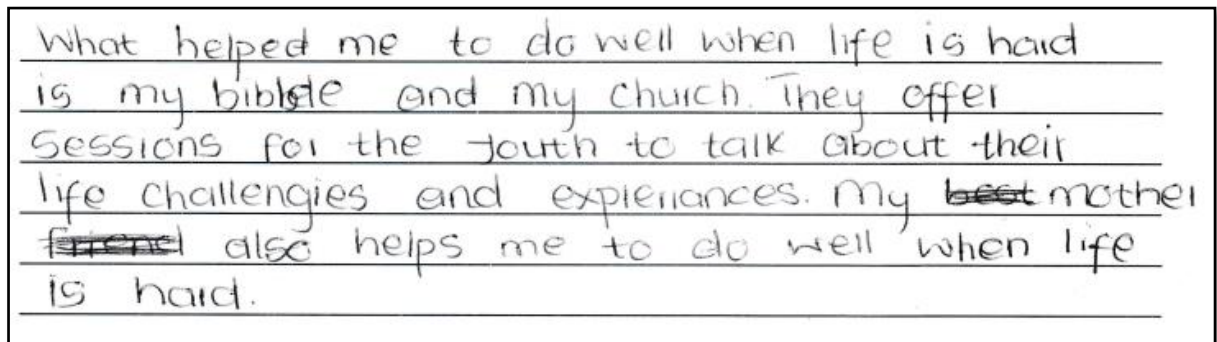


Figure 7

The explanation written, photographed, and sent to the RYSE-RuSA team by this participant



What helped me to do well when life is hard is my bible and my church. They offer sessions for the youth to talk about their life challenges and experiences. My ~~best~~ mother ~~friend~~ also helps me to do well when life is hard.

Data was generated in person when lockdown restrictions were less severe. In such instances, drawing and writing equipment (including paper and pencils) was provided and participants were advised that the researchers were more interested in the content of their drawings than in their artistic quality. A second lined page was provided with the instruction: "Please help us to understand what your drawing means by writing a couple of sentences explaining what it means." To document the generated data, the RYSE-RuSA research team scanned the original drawings and explanations, deidentified them by labelling each with a participant number, and uploaded them to a virtual repository.

The advantages of using a draw-and-write method of data collection include creating a sense of ownership of the data, shifting the power relations between participants and researchers, and creating an opportunity to explore unconscious beliefs and/or views that may be depicted in the drawings (Machenjedze et al., 2019; Rule & John, 2011). Additionally, using drawings in data collection provides an opportunity for self-expression in a way that removes language as a barrier to participating in the research (Rule & John, 2011). In the RYSE-RuSA study, although drawings were used as part of the data generation, there was also a requirement that participants had the literacy skills to explain their drawings, and this could be a potential disadvantage. Other disadvantages include the time needed to generate the data as well as the cost of the various materials used in the data generation including, but not limited to pencils, paper, coloured pencils or crayons, and printing costs (Machenjedze et al., 2019) as well as cell phone data to allowing them to WhatsApp

drawings and written documents. In the RYSE-RuSA study, participants were provided with a small amount of cell phone data to cover the expense of sending the photographs and scans to the research team.

3.2.5 Primary qualitative data analysis

The primary qualitative analyses aimed to understand how young people in South Africa and Russia were able to adapt to and even thrive despite the stressed environments in which they lived (Theron et al., 2019). In particular, the study team was interested in which resources mattered more, or less, for participants' mental health outcomes when they reported lower and higher levels of stress¹. The question that directed this primary analysis was: "Which resources do adolescent participants report as resilience-enabling and how do the reported resources differ—if at all—relative to the levels of risk young people report being exposed to?" The team applied inductive thematic analyses (see Braun & Clarke, 2021; Terry et al., 2017) to the full qualitative data set ($n = 302$) to answer this question.

3.3 THE SECONDARY ANALYSIS

3.3.1 The purpose of the secondary analysis

The purpose of my study was to explore the resources that a sample of adolescents in Grades 8–10 living in Zamdela reported as resilience enabling during 2020 COVID-19 lockdown. The question that directed my secondary analysis was "What resilience-enabling resources are reported by middle adolescents living in Zamdela during 2020 COVID-19 lockdown?" Additionally, since the secondary research questions relate to the most frequently reported resources that enable resilience, I used a frequency table to explore which resources were reported more and less often.

I chose to conduct a secondary analysis of qualitative data since it was safer for both participants and me as a researcher during COVID-19 lockdown conditions, as mentioned above, and it also provided me with the opportunity to establish insight into a difficult-to-reach population group (i.e., adolescents in a township during COVID lockdown conditions) (Irwin, 2013). In addition to saving on time, using

¹ (L. Theron, personal communication, January 12, 2021)

secondary data was advantageous since it reduced the “burden of participation” (Ruggiano & Perry, 2019, p. 83) for participants by limiting the requirement to collaborate with researchers to generate new data (Mozersky et al., 2022). Challenges associated with a secondary analysis of qualitative data include ethical considerations (see section 3.3.3.4), potential lack of rigour given the different contexts in which the data was generated compared to when I analysed it (see section 3.3.3.3) (Ruggiano & Perry, 2019; Theron, L., Mampane, M. R., et al., 2020). Additionally, qualitative researchers in developing countries (such as the RYSE-RuSA team in South Africa) often make use of participatory data generation methods aimed at understanding a culturally specific concept (e.g., resilience) while empowering participants through the process of research (see Irwin, 2013). In light of this, another limitation could, therefore, be my removal from the context in which the original data was generated. To deal with this removal from the data context, it was important for me to be reflexive and, following Irwin (2013), to use the data to generate questions. Through engaging with an overview of the generated data and reading around gaps in current resilience research, I was able to create my primary and secondary research questions. I then took these questions back to the primary researcher, Professor Linda Theron, who was able to guide me on the appropriateness of my questions for the context. Also, I had numerous conversations with other members of the original RYSE-RuSA research team to aid in my understanding of the data generation context.

3.3.2 Paradigmatic perspectives

3.3.2.1 Epistemological paradigm informing the secondary analysis

I chose interpretivism as the epistemology for my study because it places emphasis on individuals making meaning of their own environments and/or experiences and has the ability to offer an in-depth, unique and contextually sensitive view of a construct (i.e., what enabled middle adolescent resilience during COVID-19 in Zamdela) (Jansen, 2016; Nieuwenhuis, 2016b; Thanh & Thanh, 2015; Van Der Walt, 2020). This paradigm is highly influenced by hermeneutics and phenomenology, so a trademark of this paradigm is that reality is socially constructed and contextually sensitive (Jansen, 2016; Van Der Walt, 2020). This means that to understand a construct such as adolescent resilience in a township during COVID-19 lockdown conditions, research should be conducted within that

specific context, reinforcing the SETR principles of complexity and cultural sensitivity (Ungar, 2011). Since I was not part of the original data generation process, it was important for the original participants' own analyses to inform my interpretation of the data; their explanatory sentences assisted in my understanding of the data and highlighted personal views of the phenomenon that is resilience. Interpretivism is, therefore, appropriate in a secondary analysis since it aims to understand unique human experiences while emphasising and relying on participants' own views of the explored phenomenon (Thanh & Thanh, 2015).

A strength of this approach is the ability of the research to offer an in-depth, unique, and contextually sensitive view of a construct (i.e., what enabled adolescent resilience during COVID-19 in Zamdela) (Nieuwenhuis, 2016b; Van Der Walt, 2020), while a shortcoming is that the interpretations run the risk of being influenced by the lens through which the researcher and/or interpreter views it (Van Der Walt, 2020). Following Maree (2016), this was managed through peer examination. To better understand the data, I engaged with the team who generated the primary study data. However, I do acknowledge that this risk would have been further reduced had I been able to interact with the participants too.

3.3.2.2 Methodological paradigm informing the secondary analysis

The conceptualisation of resilience is context-specific (Liebenberg & Theron, 2015; Machenjodze et al., 2019; Ungar, 2011; Ungar & Theron, 2020). For this reason, the qualitative data was better suited to answer my research question because of its naturalistic and contextually sensitive nature (see Nieuwenhuis, 2016b). Hence, I chose a qualitative methodological approach for my study since it supports the purpose of developing a richer understanding of resilience from the perspective of adolescents living in a specific stressed environment (Zamdela) during a stressful period (COVID-19 in 2020). Qualitative research recognises that systems are dynamic. It is interpretive and relies on subjective data created by people to better understand their perspectives on and insights into a specific research phenomenon in specific, natural environments (Christensen et al., 2015). The principles of qualitative research fit with SETR as a theoretical framework since they speak to the SETR principles of complexity and cultural relativity (see Section 1.5).

A qualitative methodological approach is beneficial when the purpose of a study, such as mine, is exploratory and aims to understand the thinking of a specific group of people (see Christensen et al., 2015, and Nieuwenhuis, 2016b). A limitation could be the subjective nature of interpreting the research data. To manage this researcher bias, I clarified my assumptions (see Section 1.7) and theoretical orientations (see Section 1.5) before starting the analysis as Maree (2016) has advised. As I had a limited understanding of both the context and data being examined it was essential for me to ask questions and work closely with both the RYSE-RuSA research team and my supervisor, Professor Linda Theron, who was the principal investigator in the original study. Both the team and my supervisor were able to provide insight into the context of Zamdela and I also scoured social media and newspaper reports about Zamdela to deepen my understanding.

Qualitative research methodologies, including arts-based research such as a draw-and-write method, are appropriate in resilience research because they aim to create a more comprehensive understanding of resilience in a non-threatening manner (Liebenberg & Theron, 2015; Machenjedge et al., 2019). In resilience research, arts-based research methods are appropriate because they create a space for the participants' voices and work well with young people in vulnerable populations (Liebenberg & Theron, 2015). Additionally, engaging in arts-based research carries the potential to further support participant resilience through encouraging them to connect with themselves and to consider people in their lives who have helped them to do well along with things that have helped (Masten, 2009). Arts-based research methodologies are therefore appropriate for resilience research since they not only help the researcher understand a construct such as adolescent resilience from an insider perspective but can also promote adolescent resilience at the same time (Coad, 2020).

3.3.3 Methodology of the secondary analysis

Following several published secondary analyses (e.g., Ghio et al., 2021; Hughes et al., 2020; Kadri et al., 2018; Kummer et al., 2019; Westlake et al., 2021), I move now to explain how I selected data for my secondary analysis and how I analysed that data.

3.3.3.1 Documentation sample

I used purposive sampling to select data from data that was generated in Zamdela during Time 1 (2020) of the RYSE-RuSA study. I sampled documents (i.e., drawings and explanations) that would fit my interest in the resilience of middle adolescents. To that end, I considered only the data generated by participants in Grades 8 to 10. There were 79 participants, and their average age was 16; of these, 47 were young women and 32 were young men. The majority (76%) were in Grade 10.

In total, I sampled and analysed 13 individual drawings, 13 scans of written explanations pertaining to these drawings, and 65 scans of combined drawings and explanations (a total of 91 documents). One participant (VO-090) contributed two different drawings and two sets of explanatory sentences. The drawings were predominantly in black-and-white, but 7 were in colour. The project manager of the original RYSA-RuSA research team shared these documents with me via an online repository in the form of a password-protected Google Drive.

3.3.3.2 Data analysis used in the secondary analysis

I used inductive thematic analysis to analyse the scanned written explanation and drawings to identify patterns in the data (following Rule & John, 2011 and Yin, 2018). An advantage of using inductive thematic analysis is that it is flexible and it enabled me to allow the data to inform unique codes pertaining to what enabled adolescent resilience (see Terry et al., 2017). I conducted inductive thematic analysis according to the six steps or phases listed in Braun and Clarke (2006, 2021). I did this to answer the question “What resilience-enabling resources were reported by middle adolescents living in Zamdela during 2020 COVID-19 lockdown?”

Phase 1 – familiarising yourself with the dataset

The project manager of the original RYSE-RuSA study gave me access to relevant data via an online repository (a password-protected Google Drive). I then repeatedly perused the visual data and read the narrative data in order to engage with and become familiar with the content (see Terry et al., 2017). This immersion in the data was especially important since, as mentioned earlier, I was not part of the original data generation process. While repeatedly engaging with the data, following Braun and Clarke (2006), I made sure to think about how the data was providing possible

answers to my research questions. During this step, I started to make notes of the initial ideas that were coming through in the data like, for example mothers or female figures as resilience-enablers.

Phase 2 – coding

Next, I re-examined all the data and added codes or labels to them. These initial open codes were paraphrases of how the identified segments of data (e.g., an aspect of a drawing or its explanation) answered my research question like, for example, “offering advice”, “feeling loved” and “practicing self-care.” I coded all instances of any resource that helped the participants do well despite life’s challenges. I worked systematically through all the data, giving my complete attention to each document being coded (see Braun & Clarke, 2006). I repeatedly viewed and engaged with the data, following Terry et al. (2017) to create richer coding and also to consolidate these codes (see Audit Trail in Addendum A).

Additionally, because I was interested in knowing which resources were more and less prominent, I conducted a frequency count. While this is more typical of content analysis (Krippendorff, 2019; Neuendorf, 2017), it contributed to my understanding of the data because it provided clear evidence about which resources were most and least reported on by the sample of adolescents in Grades 8 to 10 (average age 16) living in Zamdela during COVID-19 lockdown conditions.

Phase 3 – generating initial themes

During this step, I combined some of the original open codes into a single thematic label that summarised the similarity of those codes, clustering those that shared a main concept or idea (Braun & Clarke, 2021). For example, I summarised codes referring to supportive grandparents and mothers and siblings into the thematic code of supportive family. Additionally, I examined the appropriateness of the clustered codes (the initial or candidate themes) and, where necessary, I adjusted them. For example, I assigned the open codes of *journaling*, *listening to music and playing sport*. Initially, I had grouped these codes into two candidate themes called *co-curricular activities* and *self-soothing activities*. Upon further reflection, I merged these as *taking action to self-soothe*. I made this adjustment because taking action

to self-soothe could be seen as an act of agency on the part of the adolescents to bring a sense of calm or peace to them.

Phase 4 – developing and reviewing themes

Next, I explored which of these summative thematic codes could be combined into potential thematic categories (see Braun & Clarke, 2006). In this step, I used a multisystemic framework (see Ungar & Theron, 2020) that is aligned with Ungar's (2011) SETR framework (particularly the complexity principle) and grouped identified thematic codes into resource categories: personal; relational; physical ecological; institutional; and cultural resources. This multisystemic approach also fit how I conceptualised the protective factors associated with adolescent resilience (see 1.6.1 to 1.6.5). To assist with this process of grouping the themes into thematic categories, and as advised by Braun and Clarke (2021), I made use of a visual representation (a tree map) of the candidate themes with the proposed thematic codes that fitted into them.

Part of reviewing my themes and categories involved presenting my identified candidate themes and related resource categories to a peer (who was also completing their research in resilience) as well as to our research supervisor. During these presentations, we discussed the appropriateness of the thematic codes as well as which of these codes needed to be combined. Also, we engaged in conversations about the appropriateness of the candidate themes for the various resource categories as well as the appropriate names given to the resource categories. For example, my original definitions of the candidate themes *structural* and *ecological resources* were better explained by the more comprehensive definition of *physical ecological resources*, so I combined them into one candidate theme (see Braun & Clarke, 2021). Additionally, after reviewing the thematic codes, it became clear that another candidate theme was necessary and, thus, I introduced *institutional resources*.

Phase 5 – refining, defining and naming themes

This step involved ongoing scrutiny of my themes and subthemes within each category as well as developing a synopsis of each theme and subtheme (see Braun & Clarke, 2021). These themes are a reflection of my own meaning-making of the

data as well as my level of (in)experience in engaging with thematic analysis. I acknowledge that, while identifying the candidate themes and thematic categories, I interpreted the data according to my interpretivist epistemological stance and recognise that my interpretations were influenced by both my positioning and related assumptions (see 1.7) and (in)experience. For this reason, I was careful to detail the inclusion and exclusion criteria (see Addendum A) so that others would have insight into how I interpreted the data. As forewarned by Braun and Clarke (2021), I am aware that others might interpret the data differently and so the themes and categories I put forward are "provisional" (p. 17) at best.

Next, I shared these candidate themes with my supervisor and the peer who was also conducting research in resilience and we engaged in critical reflection on their meaningfulness (see Braun & Clarke, 2006). Through this iterative process, I established clear definitions and theme names. During this process, it was also imperative to review if there were overlaps in the themes and to assess the relevance of the themes themselves in the context of my study as well as the relation of each theme to the others (see Braun & Clarke, 2021). For example, when considering the candidate theme of *cultural* resources, I originally coded the theme of *spiritual/religion* as separate to the theme of *Ubuntu*. Based on discussions with my supervisor and peer, and having consulted relevant literature indicating how Ubuntu encompasses traditional African religion and spirituality (see Van Breda, 2019), I chose to combine the two thematic categories into one encompassing thematic category.

Phase 6 – writing up

This was the final step in the process in which I aimed to select vivid examples of each theme and subtheme I identified in the data and relate them back to my research questions as Braun and Clarke (2006) have suggested. This was possible only after going through all of the steps mentioned above and engaging with the data repeatedly. The full write-up of the themes and subthemes appears in Chapter 4.

3.3.3.3 Quality criteria

Lincoln and Guba (1994) noted that to establish trustworthiness in research, a variety of quality criteria are to be adhered to. These criteria include credibility, dependability, transferability, confirmability, and authenticity. Given the participant contribution to the analysis of the data using a draw-and-write methodology, confirmability and credibility are heightened, and, thus, the trustworthiness of the study is, too (see Rule & John, 2011).

3.3.3.3.1 Credibility

Credibility, otherwise known as the truth value of the study, refers to the degree to which results can be seen to be true to the context or participants' insights (Yardley & Bishop, 2017). Credibility can be enhanced through using well-established research methods, making use of a research design that fits the question, using well-defined sampling criteria (see 3.2.1 and 3.2.2) and detailed data collection methods, and having debriefing sessions with a research supervisor (Nieuwenhuis, 2016a). Specifically, I made use of debriefing sessions with my supervisor who was the lead researcher on the original RYSE-RuSA study and appealed to other researchers from the primary study to clarify any confusion I had with the data (such as how the data was generated during the original study as well as how the original sample was created).

Credibility was also heightened through participants explaining their own data in the form of written descriptions of their drawings (see Rule & John, 2011). When I was analysing and reporting on the data, I ensured that I read the written explanations of participants' drawings while looking at the drawn pictures. I did this to ensure that original participant input would inform my understanding of the generated data. Where further clarification was needed, (e.g., a clearer scan of a picture) I asked a member of the original RYSE-RuSA research team for assistance.

3.3.3.3.2 Transferability

Transferability does not aim to create generalisable claims but, rather, aims at having people make links or connections between the various elements in a research study and their own research or experience (Nieuwenhuis, 2016a). This is also known as applicability and correlates with external validity in quantitative

research (Yardley & Bishop, 2017). To increase transferability of research, focus should be placed on both the context and the participants involved in a research study (Nieuwenhuis, 2016a). In my research, I included rich descriptions of the original RYSE-RuSA participants (see section 3.2.2.3) and the Zamdela township context (see section 3.2.2) to allow other researchers to draw conclusions regarding whether or not the findings would suit their own researched contexts (Yardley & Bishop, 2017).

3.3.3.3.3 Dependability

Otherwise known as consistency, dependability pertains to how stable or consistent the research process and methods are over time (Yardley & Bishop, 2017). There is a strong connection between dependability and consistency with consistency in research implying a level of dependability, too (Nieuwenhuis, 2016a). To increase dependability in my research, I made use of an audit trail (Janesick, 1994; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Merriam & Grenier, 2019). This audit trail allows for others to follow the decisions I took to see if the findings are reliable (see Addendum A). Additionally, in line with Merriam and Grenier (2019), I also included a comprehensive description of how I analysed the data (see Section 3.3.3.2).

3.3.3.3.4 Confirmability

Confirmability is also known as neutrality and is related to objectivity or reduced researcher bias in the data (Connelly, 2016; Yardley & Bishop, 2017). While making decisions pertaining to thematic categories and themes, I made use of an audit trail (see Addendum A) that highlights my decision-making processes to help others understand them better (see Morse, 2015 and Nieuwenhuis, 2016a). To further prevent researcher bias and increase confirmability, I invited feedback from one of the original RYSE-RuSA research team members (who was central to the primary analyses of the RYSE-RuSA qualitative data) on the themes I identified. Following Connelly (2016), he considered critically my thematic categories and themes reported in Chapter 4. He generally endorsed them but queried how I had interpreted three quotes. As recommended by Morse (2015), I considered this feedback and alternative view of the data and updated my interpretation according to his recommendations.

3.3.3.3.5 Authenticity

Authenticity includes aspects of fairness (Amin et al., 2020) and refers to how completely different realities are represented in the data and reported on by the researcher (Connelly, 2016). Each original participant illustrated their unique perspective and understanding of what enables resilience through a draw-and-write methodology process (as described in 3.2.4). Creative methods such as this have been known to improve authenticity of data since they give weight to and highlight the unique voices and subjective truths of participants advocated by Spencer et al. (2020).

Although there is a risk of researcher bias, I guarded against this by analysing the drawings and written explanation together to allow the writings to inform my understanding of the relevant drawings. Additionally, to work authentically and showcase the unique and subjective voices of the participants, I used rich quotes from the data and reported on them alongside drawn examples. I also made sure to use a variety of diverse examples from the data. Rather than favouring a few voices I gave weight to many. I used a great number of examples from the data to expose different realities before allowing them to inform my reconstruction and understanding (Amin et al., 2020) of what enabled adolescent resilience in Zamdela during COVID-19.

3.3.3.4 Ethics of working with secondary data

As a secondary analysis of data, permission was granted by the Principal Investigator of the RYSE-RuSA study, Professor Linda Theron, to use copies of original data generated. The original RYSE and RYSE-RuSA study received ethical clearance from the Faculty of Education Ethics Committee (UP17/05/01), and I obtained an amended ethical clearance (UP 17/05/01 THERON 21/02) from the University of Pretoria before I began my secondary analysis of the data. The data set was stored in a password-protected file and was not shared with any third parties. Participants from the original research also signed informed consent to a secondary analysis of the data being generated.

I ensured that no anticipated harm could come from my secondary analysis. I guarded against harm by presenting the research findings in a respectful manner so

as not to inflict shame or discomfort on the original participants (see Leedy & Ormrod, 2014). I achieved this by avoiding discriminatory language in my writing (see Braun & Clarke, 2013) and using the inclusive language guidelines set out by the American Psychological Association (2021). For example, I refrained from using “male” and “female” to describe the participants and referred, rather, to participants as boys or girls or young men and women depending on their age. Additionally, I viewed each participant’s data as valuable to advancing the knowledge and understanding of middle adolescent resilience in Zamdela during COVID-19 (see Brakewood & Poldrack, 2013). In line with the Health Professions Council of South Africa (2011) requirements, all identifying information was removed in my reporting of the data to protect the identity of the participants.

In line with the Health Professions Council of South Africa (2011) requirements and the Bill of Rights of the Constitution of South Africa (Republic of South Africa, 1996), I aimed to respect the dignity of the participants who generated the data used in my study. This started with my making sure that participants had consented that their drawings and explanations could be re-used. In the original RYSE-RuSA study, participants were given autonomy to choose whether or not their data could be used in a secondary analysis; I checked that all 79 whose data I wanted to use had agreed to this in the signed consent forms. In my research, I also aimed to treat the information shared in the data with dignity and respect (see Brakewood & Poldrack, 2013). To do this, it was important for me to keep sensitive information, like the names of the participants and related information in the password protected Google drive, confidential (see Hughes et al., 2020). Additionally, following APA guidelines (2021), I aimed to use inclusive language and avoid labelling participants. For example, I did not use terms like “poor people” to describe participants living in a township.

3.4 CONCLUSION

In this chapter I have outlined the methodology involved in both the primary RYSE-RuSA study. I also outlined the methods I followed to conduct my secondary analysis of the primary data. In the following chapter, I report the results of my secondary analysis.

4. CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In response to the question “What resilience-enabling resources were reported by middle adolescents living in Zamdela during 2020 COVID-19 lockdown?” I identified five different thematic categories and ten themes (as illustrated in Figure 8 on p. 55). The size of the box indicates the frequency (and thus saturation) of the various thematic categories (i.e., the larger the box, the more instances of that thematic category were reported in the data). Following more recent resilience theory (Masten et al., 2021; Ungar & Theron, 2020), the thematic categories reflect a multisystemic view of resilience and examine the personal, relational, physical-ecological, institutional, and cultural resources that enable resilience according to a sample of adolescent participants (average age 16) in the RYSE-RuSA study in 2020. Next, I detail each of these thematic categories and themes. I use mostly current African resilience literature (as reported on in Chapter 2) to make meaning of the themes.

4.2 THEMATIC CATEGORY 1: PERSONAL RESOURCES

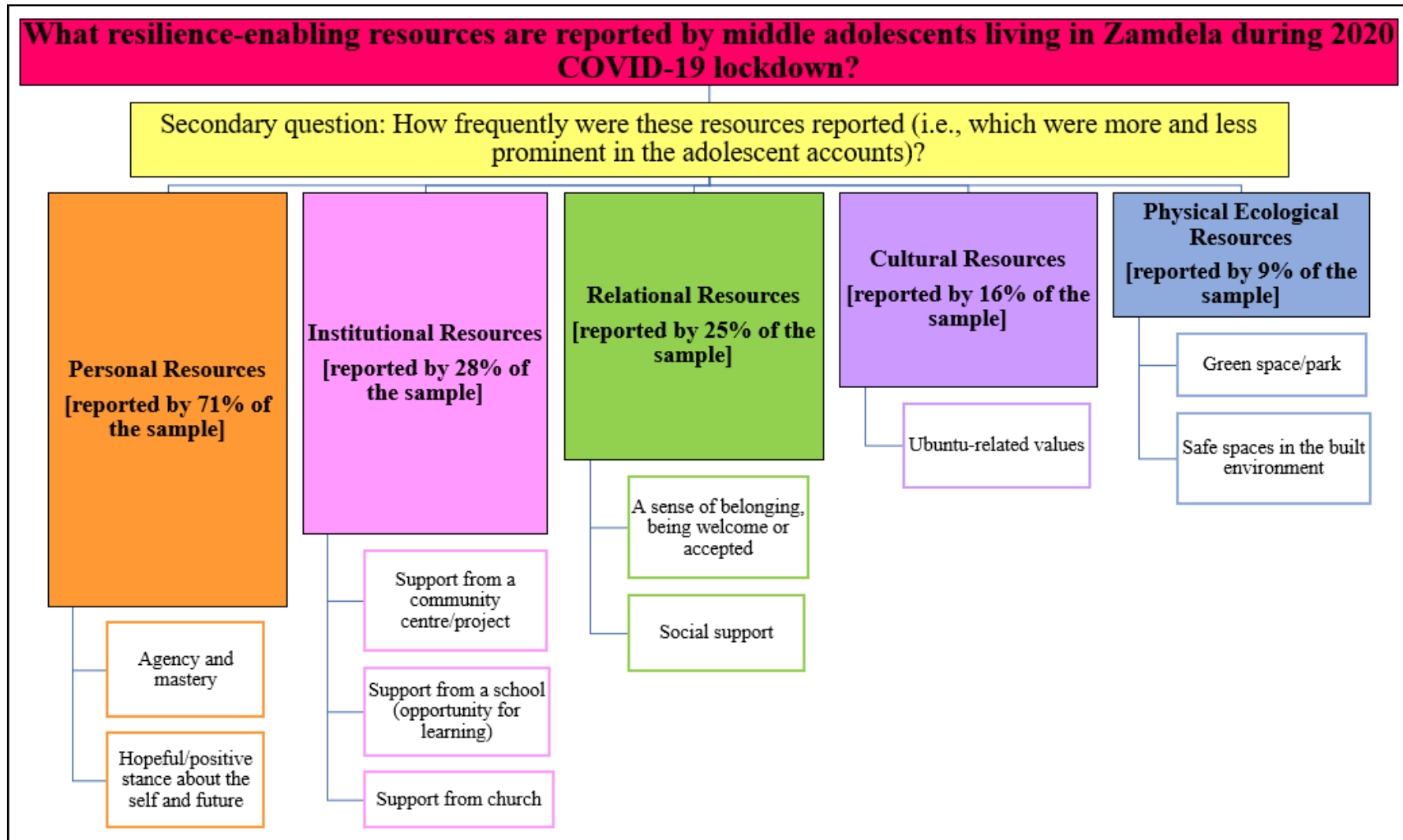
Personal resources can be seen as a person's psychological and physiological strengths (Ungar, 2019; Ungar & Theron, 2020). Among others, these could include individual skills (such as problem-solving), health status, agency, self-efficacy, and executive functioning (Christodoulou et al., 2019; Masten, 2021). My analysis of the data showed that personal resources typically referred to middle adolescents reporting (i) agency and mastery and (ii) a hopeful and positive stance about themselves and/or the future. This was the most reported resilience resource (reported by 56 of the 79 [71%] middle adolescent participants).

4.2.1 Theme 1a: Agency and mastery

Also known as active coping or mastery motivation (Masten & Motti-Stefanidi, 2020), resilience-supporting agency refers to any constructive action taken by an individual to master a challenging situation. Some participants (38 out of 79 [48%]) reported at least one action that supported agency and mastery. Of these, 9 participants reported help seeking behaviours, 16 reported engaging in activities to keep busy or to distract them from challenges, and 16 reported taking action to self-soothe. Each is detailed below.

Figure 8

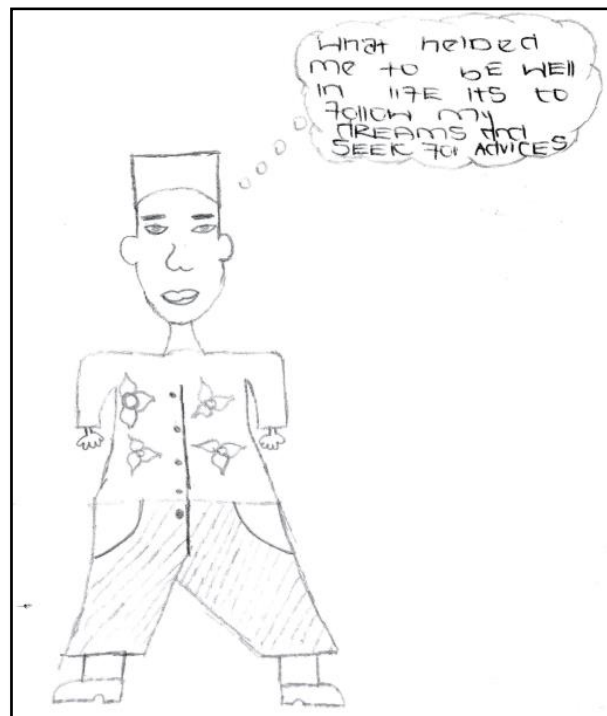
Visual summary of my study's findings



Help-seeking behaviours. Taking action to master a challenging situation included any actions taken to seek advice or guidance, work through difficult experiences and/or negative emotions, and/or learn about life or even how to handle it. These included interacting with people who could provide guidance and support and/or seeking motivation or even self-help from inanimate sources such as books. It did not include advice, encouragement, and/or motivation offered without the individual having taken action to seek it. For example, help-seeking behaviour was reported by Participant VO62 (a boy). He drew a picture (Figure 9) that depicted how seeking advice has helped him to do well in life so far and, in his description, he elaborated that one should “seek for good advice” in life.

Figure 9

Participant VO62’s drawing depicts that seeking advice has helped to foster his resilience



Similarly, participant VO72 (a girl) took action that brought relief. She wrote, “Venting out to my friends and family really helped.” Participant VO76 (a girl) echoed this by saying how, when she had a problem, she would “go to someone whom [she would] feel comfortable talking to or trust and then [she would] tell the person what was wrong.” Participant VO-085 (a girl) drew a picture (Figure 10) that showed an array

of things that have helped her to do well in life so far; she elaborated on her drawing by writing about the importance of taking action to “get help, get yourself out there, become your own best advocate . . .”

Figure 10

Things that have helped participant VO-085 do well in life so far



While the above examples imply interacting with other people to gain help or bring about relief, Participant VO-052 (a boy) wrote that “having a book on hand is like having a pocket coach. When you need it, you can reach for it at a moment’s notice.” Similarly, Participant V212 (a boy) and Participant V081 (a girl) reported on how books have helped to motivate them in life. Participant V212 said, “[My] drawing is about the book of Township Boys whereby it helped me solve my problem as a boy” while Participant V081 wrote, “[T]he Motivate Book that I read when my life is not ok so that I can be motivated so that I can be well in life.” Participant V084 (a girl) reported how she “went to music for strength” and how “music gave [her] the courage to hold [her] head up high and conquer everything.”

Taking action to keep busy. A few participants (16 out of 79 [20%]) reported on engaging in activities to keep busy or distract themselves from their challenges.

Taking action to keep busy did not include instances of others initiating engagement with the participant in order to help distract them from everyday life and neither did it include engaging in faith-based activities since faith-based activities were seen less as a means of distracting themselves and keeping busy but, rather, about connecting to a higher power or being.

Figure 11 is a depiction by Participant V061 (a boy) of a boy playing soccer. He explained, “The thing that has helped me to do well in life when I keep facing hard times is playing soccer. Playing soccer keeps me busy and entertained because I put my focus on it.”

Figure 11

Playing soccer is something that has helped to distract Participant V061 from their current life and situation

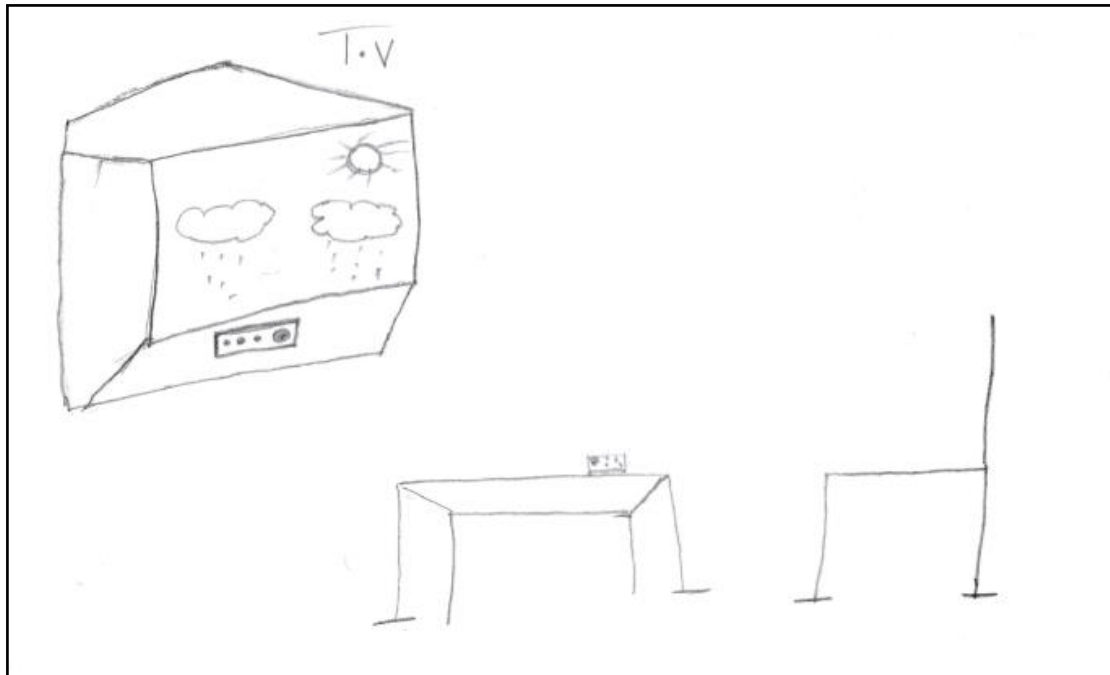


In addition to playing sport or exercising, participants used television, books, and extracurricular activities, such as debating, to keep busy and distract themselves. As seen in Figure 12, Participant V064 (a girl) expanded on her drawing of a

television to explain, “TV is a little getaway for my mind and reality in my own way.” Participant V215 also reported on how they “watch football and play video games” when they “are bored.” Boredom was a significant challenge for many adolescents during COVID-19-related lockdown conditions as Bösselmann et al. (2021) have noted. Participants V065 (a girl) offered a unique perspective on activities to keep them busy and distracted from challenges when they wrote, “Do[ing] debate so that I cannot think a lot about what I am going through” while VO-089 (a girl) wrote, “Since I was a photographer I was able to get my mind off things and negativity I got from people.”

Figure 12

Participant V064 drew a television that she saw as a distraction from life



Music and reading books were also mentioned as distractions and, as Participant VO-096 (a boy) described it, “I enjoy making music. . . and it is my escape from the world into my little world.” Participant V072 (a girl) also highlighted the powerful nature of reading as a form of distraction by describing reading as something she used to do “a lot to keep [her] mind off of many things.”

Taking action to self-soothe. Taking action to self-soothe included any reference to an action that brought a sense of calm or peace to a participant.

Participant V050 (a girl) drew a picture of speakers and music notes (see Figure 13) and wrote, “[E]very time when I’m sad or angry I’ve got my music to calm my nerves.” Participant V052 (a boy) echoed this sentiment by stating, “I often listen to music whenever I don’t feel well. It helps me calm my feelings.” Figure 14 is a drawing of how Participant V079 (a boy) depicted his statements: “Any time I feel bad I just write or listen to music” and “Listening to music really heals and reduces my anger and stress.”

Figure 13

Participant V050’s drawing of music used to calm or soothe herself

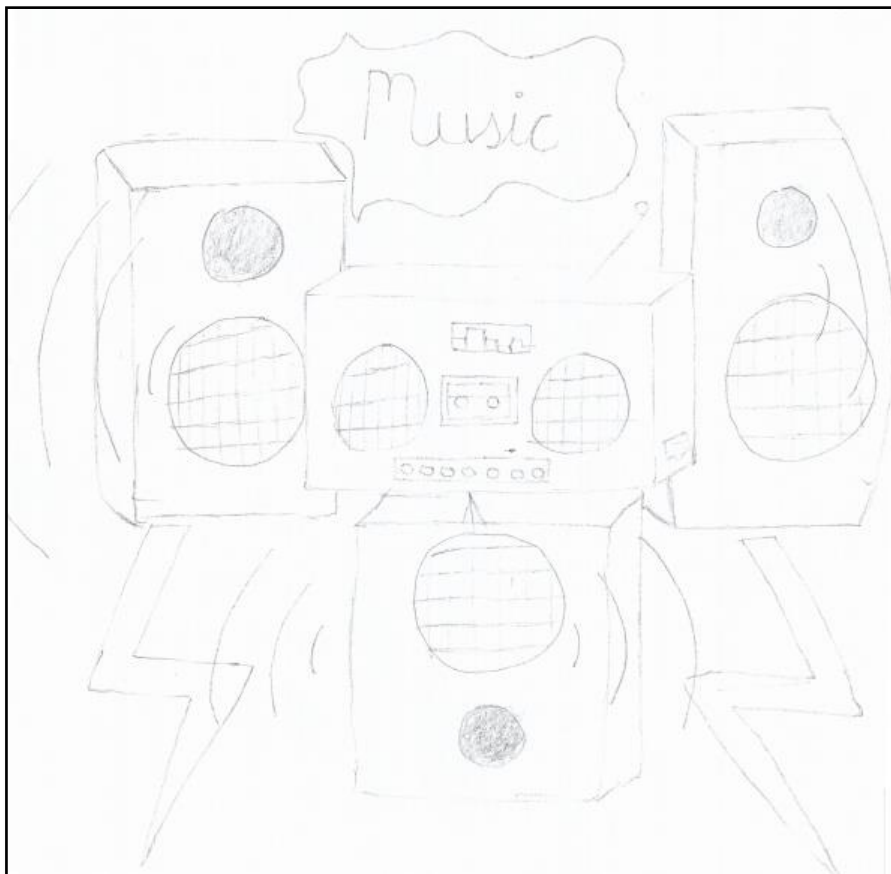
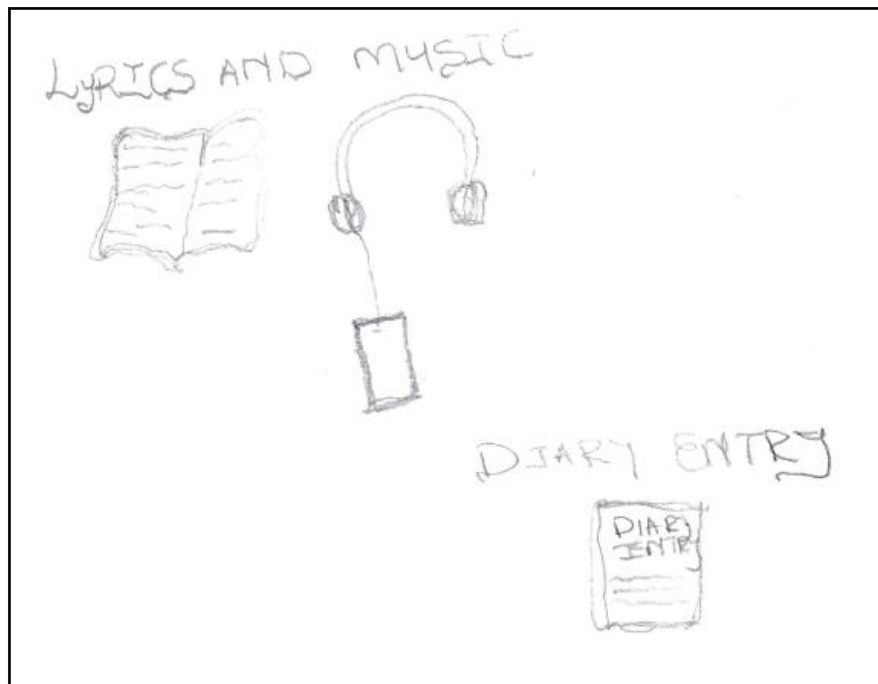


Figure 14

Listening to music and writing in a diary helped to distract Participant V079 from their life



4.2.2 Theme 1b: Hopeful or positive stance about the self and future

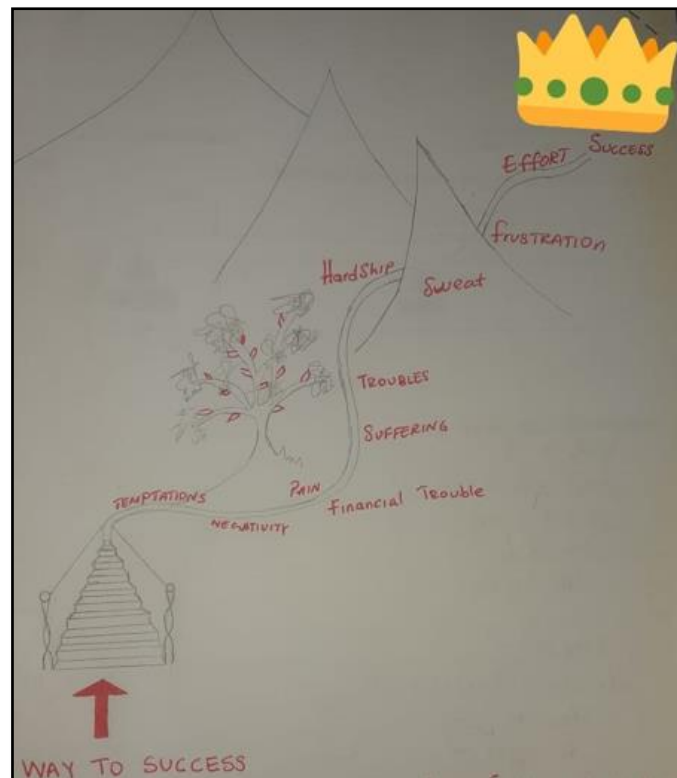
A hopeful or positive position towards the self and the future includes instances of positive and hopeful thinking and attitudes towards the self and the future as well as future-oriented ways of being and doing (Mikus & Teoh, 2022). This aspect of hope or positivity included setting goals, being engaged in education because of its potential to support future success, having feelings of being confident in one's abilities to achieve life goals, as well as having a powerful sense of self or a powerful identity. It also included the view that things will get better and will work out in the end or that there is a plan for their future that is good. It did not include instances of being happy or content in life or instances of faith-related beliefs that bring calm or peace since these are focused on the present, whereas hope and positivity are more future-oriented (Mikus & Teoh, 2022). Some participants (27 out of 79 [30%]) reported on how a hopeful or positive stance about the self and the future has helped them to do well despite being challenged by various hardships, including lockdown. Many of these participants were girls or young women (15 of the 24 participants).

For example, with regard to a positive stance about themselves, Participant VO-090 (a girl) wrote how she was “empowered and inspired” by attending a foundation for girls. Participant V062 (a boy) reported the hopeful, confident belief that he “can get what [he] want[s]. . . and [is] a person who does not give up in life.” Participant VO-083 (a girl) was similarly positive about herself. In reflecting on the helpful role of her sister on her resilience, she could recognise personal attributes that had improved. She wrote, “I have become a kinder, smarter and overall happier person.”

In relation to a positive or hopeful stance about the future, Participant VO-016 (a boy) drew the picture seen in Figure 15 about there being “so many trials to pass through before [he] can make it to the top” and that these trials “are not here to harm [him] but to build [him].” Mirroring this positive idea is the statement of Participant V094 (a girl) who wrote, “At hard times I know what I want and I always believe that I will make it someday.”

Figure 15

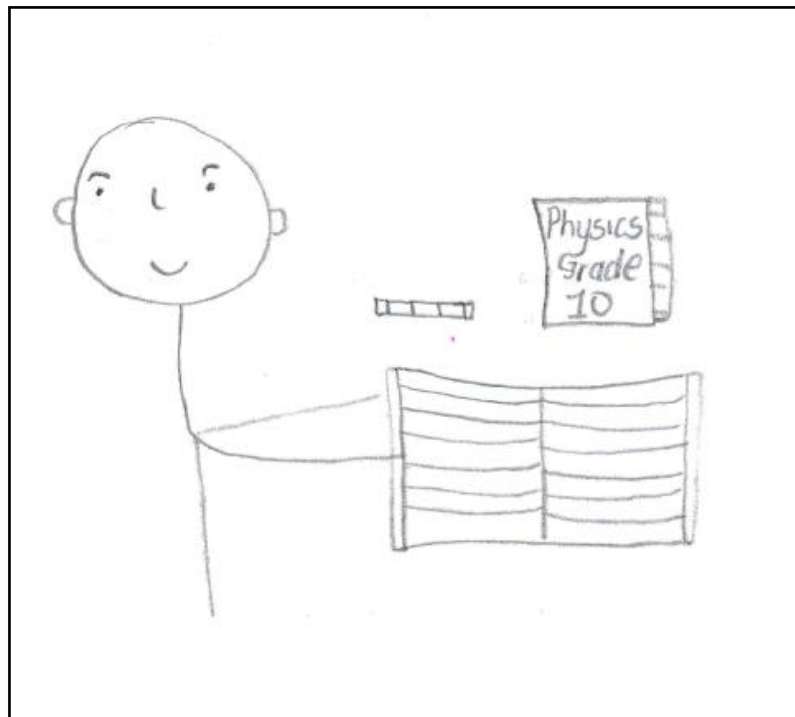
Various trials that Participant VO-016 sees as obstacles to build him on his path to success



Positive views about the self were also reflected in the sentiments of Participant V070 (a boy) who drew a picture of a cell phone and wrote, “I can help people.” Participant V089 (a girl) was similarly confident about herself and the future. She drew a picture of herself (see Figure 16) working and explained, “I believe if you are doing well in/with your schoolwork you can achieve anything in life.” The same was true of Participant VO-065 (a girl) who wrote that she would “study hard, achieve [her] goal, to turn out the best [she] can be.” She said she would “work hard to get where [she want[ed] to be.”

Figure 16

Participant V089’s drawing of herself engaging in her schoolwork that she believes will help her achieve in life



4.2.3 What the relevant literature reports about personal resources

The theme of personal resources being resilience-enabling is well-established in African resilience literature (Bester & Kuyper, 2020; Duby et al., 2022; Gittings et al., 2021; Goronga & Mampane, 2021; Jefferis & Theron, 2017; Pswarayi, 2020; Theron et al., 2021; Ungar & Theron, 2020) and is reported on in Chapter 2 (see 2.3.1). African resilience literature reports on how there is a greater reliance on

personal resources in situations where social ecologies do not foster resilience (Singh & Naicker, 2019; Theron, 2018b). My study aligns with this since the sample of Grade 8 to 10 adolescents in Zamdela had limited access to social and physical ecologies during COVID-19 (given social distancing regulations as well as legislation restricting the movement of people around the country) and this could explain why personal resources were the most reported resource in the data I re-analysed.

My findings highlighted both agency and mastery (see section 4.2.1) as well as how having a hopeful or positive stance about the self and the future (see section 4.2.2) acted as a personal resource that enabled adolescent resilience in a sample of Zamdela adolescents (with an average age of 16). These findings align well with previously published resilience literature on agency and mastery and on having a hopeful or positive stance about the self or future as being resilience enabling (Christodoulou et al., 2019; Duby et al., 2022; Masten, 2021; Pswarayi, 2020). African resilience literature highlights how help-seeking behaviours (Singh & Naicker, 2019), engaging in activities to keep busy or to distract oneself (Duby et al., 2022) and taking action to self-soothe (Theron et al., 2020b) all enable resilience. Also, there is evidence in African resilience literature (Gorongana & Mampane, 2021; Theron & Van Rensburg, 2020) that shows how self-motivation (e.g., becoming educated and bettering oneself) and self-esteem (Pswarayi, 2020), and a sense of self-worth (Jefferis & Theron, 2017) are resilience-enabling. While only a few studies have considered the resilience of young African people during COVID-19 conditions (Duby et al., 2022; Gittings et al., 2021; Theron et al., 2021), these studies highlight how some young people still found ways to exert agency in their lives during lockdown conditions (e.g., leaving their homes to attend hair appointments or social gatherings). My findings echo this in that most of the personal resources reported by a sample of Zamdela young people (in Grades 8 to 10) were related to agency and mastery.

Despite there being an emphasis on having a hopeful or positive stance about the self and future in African resilience literature, during COVID-19 many studies reported on how adolescents' mental health declined with many young people reporting a lack of hope (Gittings et al., 2021; N'dure Baboudóttir et al., 2022). My

study, however, found that a hopeful or positive stance about the self and the future was the second-most reported personal resilience enabler among this sample of adolescents living in Zamdela during COVID-19 lockdown conditions.

Although personal resources were the most reported resilience resource, fewer than 50% of the participants reported on personal resources as being enabling of their resilience. This supports the multisystemic nature of resilience (Höltge et al., 2021; Masten, 2021) in that resilience is not just a result of personal strengths but, rather, involves the interactions between youths and their physical and social ecologies (Theron, L., Levine, D. T., et al., 2022).

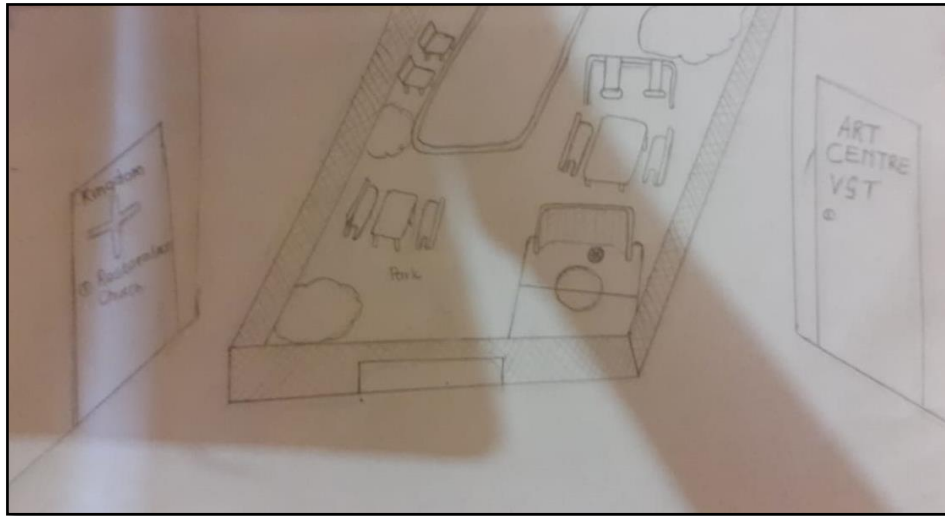
4.3 THEMATIC CATEGORY 2: INSTITUTIONAL RESOURCES

Institutional resources refer to various services offered by the state, an organisation, foundation, or establishment such as schools or non-governmental organisations (NGOs) (Theron & Van Breda, 2021).

Participants reported that institutional resources provided services or allowed them to engage in practices that promoted a feeling of increased wellbeing in them along with a sense of community and/or acceptance that went along with the different institutional resources mentioned. Institutional resources included (i) support from a community centre or project, (ii) support from a school (opportunity for learning), and (iii) support from a church. Some participants (22 out of 79 [28%]) reported institutional resources that had helped them do well in life so far. Of the participants, 6 boys reported on institutional resources while the rest (16 out of 22) who did so were girls. Of these participants, 4 reported receiving support from a school and 18 from a church (detailed in the sub-themes). Participant VO-090 (a girl) was the only person to report on receiving support from a community centre or project. She drew the picture seen in Figure 17 and explained, “Whenever I feel like I’m not worth it, once a month I attend a victorious girls foundation and the speakers really motivate me and they help to improve my self-esteem.” Additionally, she explained, “After attending V.G.F. [Victorious Girls Foundation] everything changed because I’m empowered and inspired.”

Figure 17

Participant VO-090's drawing of the Victorious Girls Foundation that gave her a safe space to go and connect with others



4.3.1 Theme 2a: Support from an educational institution

Support from an educational institution meant that participants had the opportunity to learn, improve themselves, and increase their academic abilities. The 4 participants who reported on school being a resource for their resilience were all girls. This subtheme excluded reference to teachers since they are included in relational resources.

Participant VO-071 (a girl) drew a picture (see Figure 18) and reported that she goes “to school so [she] can live a better life and change. . . the situation [she is] living now.” Similarly, Participant V218 (a girl) drew a picture of a book (Figure 19) and wrote, “The book I drew represents education. Education is the key to success to me; it has helped me a lot.” Participant VO-049 (a girl) drew a picture of the school building (see Figure 20) and reported that “schoolwork has helped [her] to get going.” Participant VO-084 (a girl) had a lot to say about how her school “ha[d] helped [her] so far to do good” in that “it has given [her] purpose in life and taught [her] about self discipline and self love” and that it “has made [her] somehow feel like [she is] going somewhere in life and has made [her] see things differently.” She also noted that the school had not just helped her resilience but, rather, that “the

school has made a lot of learners feel at home [because] it has been a place of love and kindness.”

Figure 18

Participant VO-071’s drawing of herself going to school



Figure 19

Participant V218’s drawing depicting the idea that “Education is the key to success”

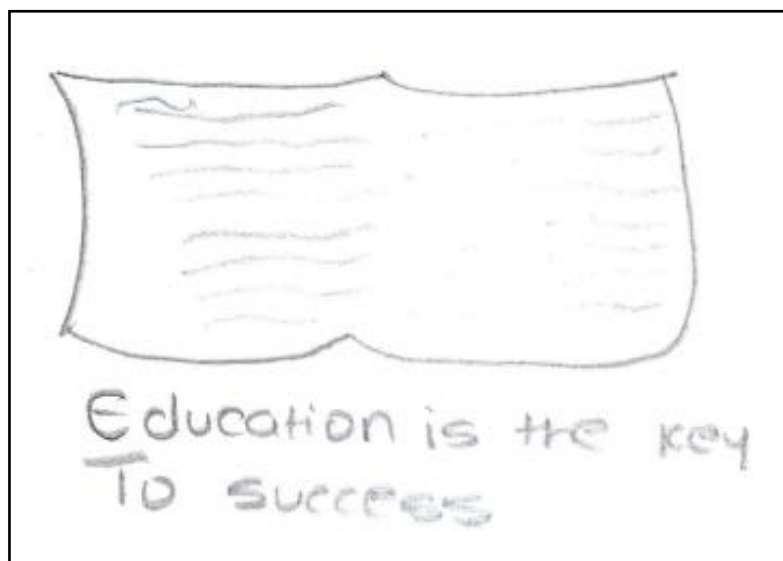


Figure 20

Participant VO-049's drawing of a school



4.3.2 Theme 2b: Support from faith-based organisations

This theme refers to emotional support and guidance and the facilitation of comforting beliefs offered by faith-based organisations, typically referred to as church by participants. It included examples of participants engaging in faith-based practices that comfort. Of the 18 participants who reported receiving support from a church, 6 were boys.

For example, Participant V059 (a boy) drew a picture of a church (see Figure 21) and wrote about how “church helped a lot because of the things [he] learned from church.” Participant V085 (a boy) reinforced this idea of learning from the church by reporting, “My church has helped me with many things . . . It also helped me to know more about the bible.” Participant V072 (a girl) reported on how “prayer and going to church helped [her] a lot during difficult times in [her] life.” This sentiment was echoed by participant V221 (a girl) who reported, “Church makes me feel good when I’m sad or upset.” Figure 22 shows a picture that was drawn by Participant V071 (a girl) who wrote, “This [the church] is what keeps me moving in life [and] church has a big impact in my life, a good one.” Participant V077 (a girl) said, “When my life became hard that I didn’t even know what to do, one thing I did was go to church

and pray.” Participant V087 (a girl) also drew a picture of a church (Figure 23) and reported that she drew it “because that is where one could find Christ and find inner peace regardless of any situation.”

Figure 21

Participant V059’s drawing of a church

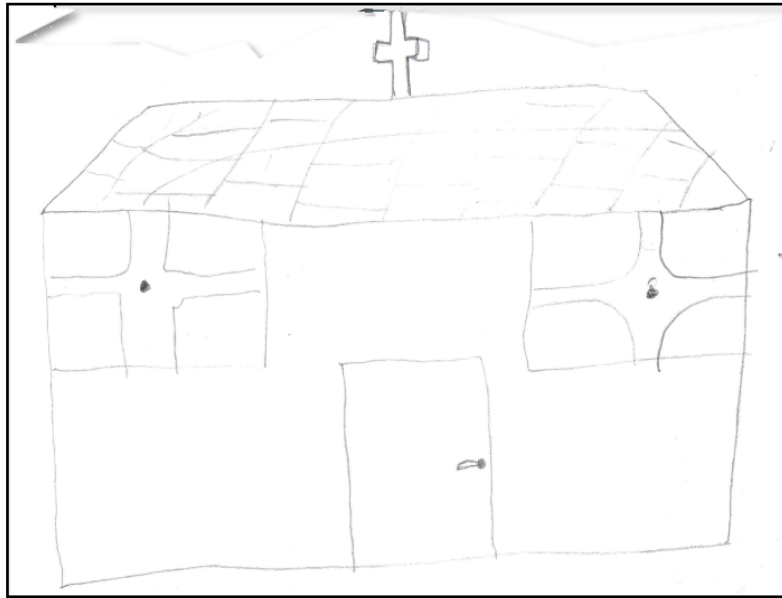


Figure 22

Participant V071’s drawing of the “house of God”

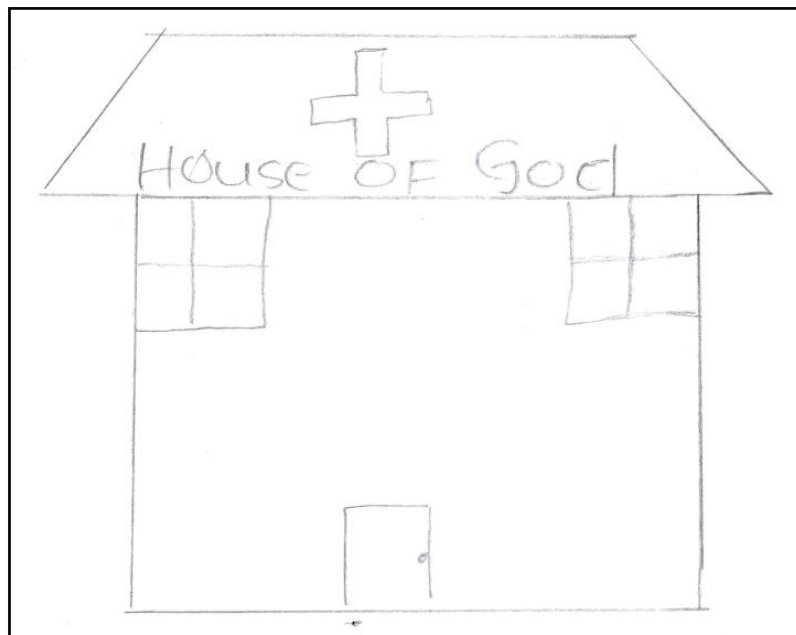
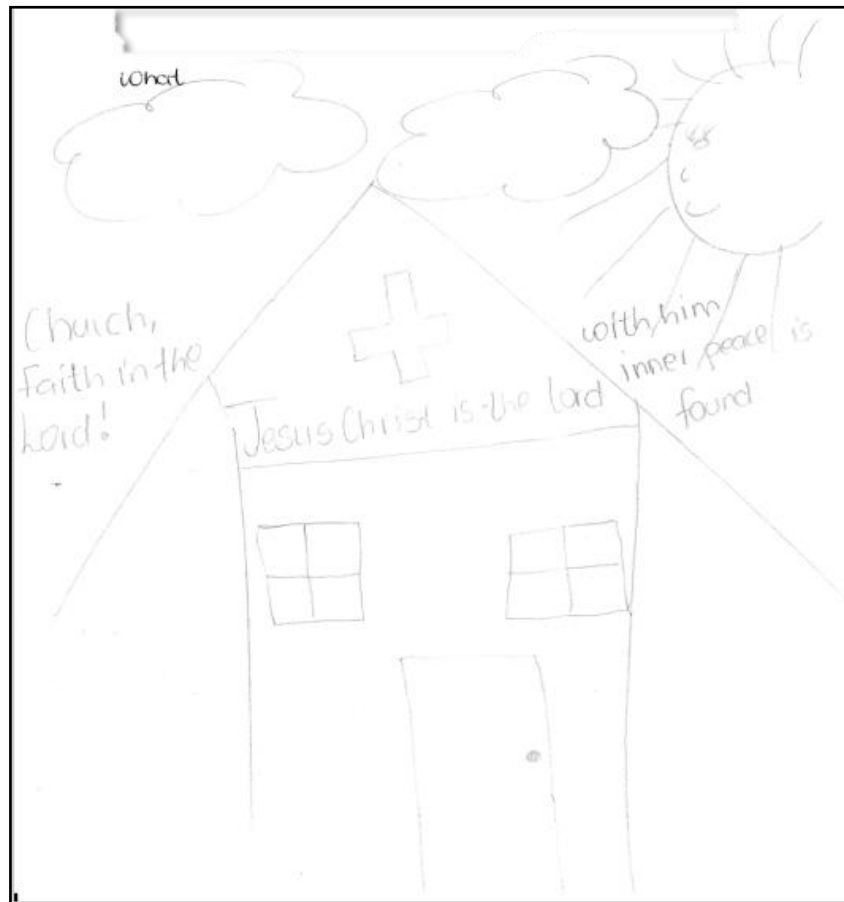


Figure 23

Participant V087's drawing of church where she "find[s] inner peace"



Participant VO-097 (a girl) wrote, "The Bible helped me to be relieved from all stress and bad things that have been happening in my life." This was echoed in the words of participant V081 (a girl) who explained, "When my life is hard, I often read a bible to make me feel ok." Participant V077 (a girl) elaborated further to include that they "go to church to pray" when "their life became hard." Participant V090 (a boy) echoed the idea when he wrote, "God help me all the time when it's hard in life, I just kneel down and pray. God protects us every day and also give us the blessing." In addition to prayer and reading the Bible to feel better or to feel comforted, Participant V088 (a girl) drew a picture (Figure 24) and wrote about how she would "go to church and pray a lot" and how, when she comes "back from church [she] feel[s] better."

Figure 24

Participant V088's drawing of going to church and reading her Bible to help her feel better



4.3.3 What the relevant literature reports about institutional resources

As detailed in Chapter 2 (see 2.3.3), institutional resources enabling adolescent resilience are quite well-reported in the resilience literature, also African studies of youth resilience (Jefferis & Theron, 2017; Little et al., 2021; Sulimani-Aidan & Melkman, 2022; Theron & Van Breda, 2021; Ungar & Theron, 2020; Van Rensberg et al., 2018). These resources often offer not just psychological and emotional support (Ebersöhn, 2015; Höltge et al., 2021), but may also provide for material needs (Bester & Kuyper, 2020).

Institutional resources were the second-most frequently reported resilience-enabling ones. The prominence of faith-based institutions fits with African studies of resilience that report that many young Africans draw strength from faith-based practices or supports (Theron, 2020; Van Breda & Theron, 2018). While there was some reference to educational institutions (schools), I was surprised that only four participants referred to schools as providing useful supports or practices. The South

African resilience literature has reported that schools are prominent resilience-enablers (Van Breda & Theron, 2018). Perhaps there were limited references in the data I used because schools were often closed or inaccessible in 2020 in response to lockdown (Spaull & Van der Berg, 2020).

Interestingly, no participants who generated the data that I used reported on how institutional resources enabled their resilience through providing for their material and/or physical needs. This could have been because of the COVID-19 lockdown conditions that were in effect during the Time 1 data collection (see 2.2.1). For example, COVID-19 lockdown conditions exacerbated existing food insecurity and financial concerns for many young people in South Africa (Gittings et al., 2021) and access to institutional resources (such as food parcels and social support grants) were sporadic at best (Habib, 2020).

4.4 THEMATIC CATEGORY 3: RELATIONAL RESOURCES

Relational resources are generally located outside of the individual (Liebenberg, 2020) and refer to any relationship that a participant reported as having been supportive of their resilience. A relational resource could be a person or people (Luthar, 2006), a spiritual being, or even an object or material resource that young people connect to (Masten, 2014). Resilience-enhancing relationships generally support problem-solving, promote open communication, and inform prosocial attitudes and behaviour (Liebenberg & Scherman, 2021). Relational resources can also allow for open communication. These resources, therefore, provide support while also providing contextual knowledge or information, affirmation, and guidance to the individual (Liebenberg, 2020).

In my study, relational resources included (i) a sense of belonging, being welcome or accepted, and (ii) social support. A quarter of the participants (20 out of 79 [25%]) reported these relational resources. Only 3 boys reported on relational resources and the rest (17 out of 20) were girls. Of these participants, 7 reported on a sense of belonging or being welcome or accepted and 16 reported on support and encouragement from others.

4.4.1 Theme 3a: Sense of belonging, being welcome or accepted

Some participants (6 out of 20) reported on a sense of belonging, being welcome, or being accepted as factors that aided their resilience. Only 2 boys reported on this subtheme. Typically, participants reported this sub-theme when they were made to feel welcome by parents, teachers, friends, and even when a journal felt welcoming. Similarly, this sub-theme related to interactions with parents, teachers, and friends supporting participants and making them feel that someone believed in them or allowed them to be themselves. It excluded any reference to conditional acceptance (e.g., being welcome provided they made their family or community proud).

Participant V083 (a boy) drew the picture seen in Figure 25 and reported, “My drawing simply means in every bad or sticky situation, my parents are always there for me. Even though my environment or society is not friendly I always depend on my parents.” Participant VO-068 (a girl) reported that “being surrounded by sisters who believe that you can actually make it are the best” while Participant VO-084 (a girl) echoed this when she wrote, “I feel like I’m valuable and important” to others, including her “teachers at school.”

Figure 25

Participant V083 drew a picture about how his family supports his resilience by being there for him even when his context is “not friendly”



Although mostly associated with family or friends, there were participants who also reported on feeling a sense of belonging and being welcome as a result of their relationship with a spiritual being, with people in their church communities, or experiencing a sense of connection to an inanimate object (e.g., a journal or a diary). For instance, Participant V085 (a boy) attributed a sense of belonging to his faith-based community "...where [he finds] peace and . . . get[s] to unite with many Christians." Similarly, Participant VO-090 (a girl) reported, "Knowing my identity in Christ made me to grow spiritually knowing that I have a father in heaven that loves me." Participant V080 (a girl) reported, "[W]riting to me is like a mute best friend I never had" and that "it [pen and book or paper] means a lot to me".

4.4.2 Theme 3b: Social support

Social support refers to any advice, encouragement, emotional and/or instrumental support offered by other people (typically friends, family members, and other significant adults). In my study, only 2 of the participants who reported on support and encouragement from others were boys. The remaining 14 participants were girls.

Emotional support, defined as empathy or caring for another's wellbeing and success (Lloyd-Jones, 2021), was the most reported form of social support. For example, Participant V223 (a girl) explained, "My best friend... understands me" and "they [my family] always make sure I am happy." Participant V084 (a girl) wrote about how her "grandmother was always there to support and [offer] advices". Also reflecting this viewpoint were Participant V083 (a boy) who reported, "My parents are always there for me" and participant V075 (a girl) who said, "My mother also helps me to do well when life is hard." The drawing in Figure 26 was done by Participant V049 (a girl) who explained, "A lot of things or people . . . actually get me in a good mood after difficult times." She also included, in her explanation, "My mother. . . showers me with her love; smile and she sings for me so that I can feel better." Her drawing and explanation demonstrate how others (i.e., her mother) have played a role in uplifting her or making her life better when things get tough.

Figure 26

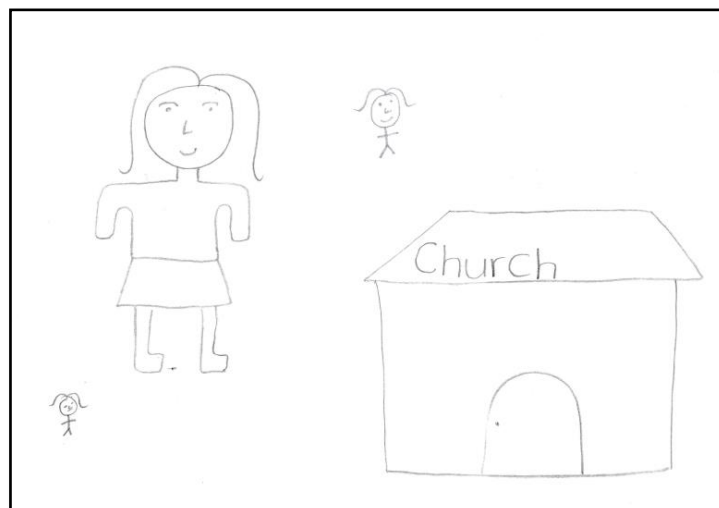
Participant V049's drawing about things that have helped her



People outside of the family unit also provided emotional support. Participant VO-084 (a girl) reported, “[B]eing at school helped me to deal with anxiety and the pressure that I got at home. My teachers at school make me feel like I’m valuable and important.” Also, Participant V096 (a girl) drew the picture seen in Figure 27 and wrote in her explanation, “I once lost hope and I wanted to give up in life. My friends came to me and asked me to join them at church after I told them my problems.”

Figure 27

Participant V096's drawing about how her friends and church were important once she had lost hope in life



Family members often provided encouragement. Participant V051 (a boy) drew the picture seen in Figure 28 and explained it by writing, “What has made me to do well in life are my mother’s words of encouragement. The motivational words that she speaks to me makes me to want to do more about life.” The notion of family members offering motivational support (i.e., support of competence, relatedness, and autonomy (Guvenc, 2015)) was also reported by Participants V094 (a girl) who wrote, “I am so happy that I have the most supporting family who always motivate me and advise” and VO-083 (a girl) who said, “My sister has always encouraged me to do well in my studies.” VO-070 (a girl) drew a picture (seen in Figure 29) and wrote, “They [my parents] always told me that I must work hard so that I could be successful.” In addition to family members offering motivational support, Participant V219 (a girl) reported, “My teacher . . . helped me to admit that I fail and I have to keep it up next time.” Participant V089 (a girl) reported, “What has helped me to do well is to always listen to my elders when they are reprimanding of something wrong that I did.”

Figure 28

Participant V051’s drawing of his mother who helps him to do well in life



Figure 29

Participant VO-070's drawing of her family that motivates her to be more successful in life



Instrumental support (help offered by someone else taking action or doing things for a participant (see Morelli et al., 2015)) was mentioned by Participant VO-048 (a girl). She reported that her “mom always makes things happen for [her].” No other participants reported on instrumental support.

4.4.3 What the relevant literature says about relational resources

Prior to the context of COVID-19, relational resources were identified as one of the most important resilience enabling resources used by young people (Laxton, 2021; Luthar, 2006; Masten, 2014), also in South Africa and Africa (Theron, 2020; Van Breda & Theron, 2018), as mentioned in Chapter 2 (see 2.3.2) This prominence might be because of the developmental stage of adolescence (i.e., the strong emphasis placed on peer relationships (Ebersöhn, 2015; Höltge et al., 2021; Lonigro et al., 2022)), as well as the collective nature of traditional African ways-of-being and related valuing of interdependence (Ebersöhn, 2015; Theron & Van Breda, 2021). African resilience literature highlights how relational resources for adolescents include relationships with their families (especially their parents), their peers

(Ebersöhn, 2015; Höltge et al., 2021), and even their teachers (Gorongwa & Mampane, 2021).

In African resilience research, specifically, there has been research done that supports the idea that emotional support from family members or adult caregivers is key to promoting adolescent resilience to life's challenges (Bester & Kuyper, 2020; Höltge et al., 2021; Pswarayi, 2020; Theron & Van Rensburg, 2020; Ungar & Theron, 2020). Additionally, peers and peer relationships have also been found to promote adolescent resilience in an African context (Pswarayi, 2020). Some studies (Duby et al., 2022; Gittings et al., 2021; Theron et al., 2021) highlight relational resources (especially in the form of an older female figure and/or teacher) as being paramount to enabling adolescents' resilience during COVID-19. This falls in line with cultural values of connectedness and the value of generosity among many African communities (Van Breda, 2019).

Although my research highlights that some participants found relational resources to be enabling of their resilience, it was reported as only the third-most frequent resilience enabler. The fact that other resources were cited more frequently could mean that they were more important or more accessible to the adolescents in my study. This finding differs from those found in African and other resilience literature that sees relational resources as being the most commonly reported on resilience enabler for adolescents (e.g., Laxton, 2021; Masten, 2014; Van Breda & Theron, 2018). I suspect that relational resources might not have been readily accessible to the adolescents who generated the data that I used, given how 2020 lockdown conditions often limited opportunities to meet up with people outside of the immediate household (Fouché et al., 2020; Gittings et al., 2021).

4.5 THEMATIC CATEGORY 4: CULTURAL RESOURCES

Culture is seen as “shared knowledge or shared expectation—a shared understanding of the world” (Panter-Brick, 2015, p. 234). This shared understanding often takes the form of collectively endorsed values (Masten, 2021). In my study, these values were typically related to Ubuntu. Ubuntu encourages appreciation for the interconnectedness of people (Barac et al., 2021). In addition, Ubuntu encourages moral ways of being, including being forgiving, and showing empathy,

respectful consideration towards others, and generosity (Van Breda, 2019). These moral aspects are often passed on by faith-based organisations and by elders (Van Breda & Theron, 2018), hence the references to both in this section. Some participants (13 out of 79 [16%]) reported Ubuntu values that helped them to be alright when life was hard. Of these participants, 8 were girls and 5 were boys.

Participant V085 (a boy) drew the picture seen in Figure 30 and explained, “Church has helped me with many things like being faithful and showing respect to others.” Participant V071 (a girl) also reflected this view in writing, “It [church] has taught me respect and caring for people” and adding, “When you respect someone you will be able to love value and care for him/her.” Respecting others includes caring for them as Participant VO-048 (a girl) explained after drawing a picture of her mother (Figure 31). “I can’t wait till I’m financially stable so that I can spoil her. We argue but I’ll never disrespect her.”

Figure 30

Participant V085 drew a picture of the church that has helped teach him Ubuntu values such as being faithful and showing respect to others

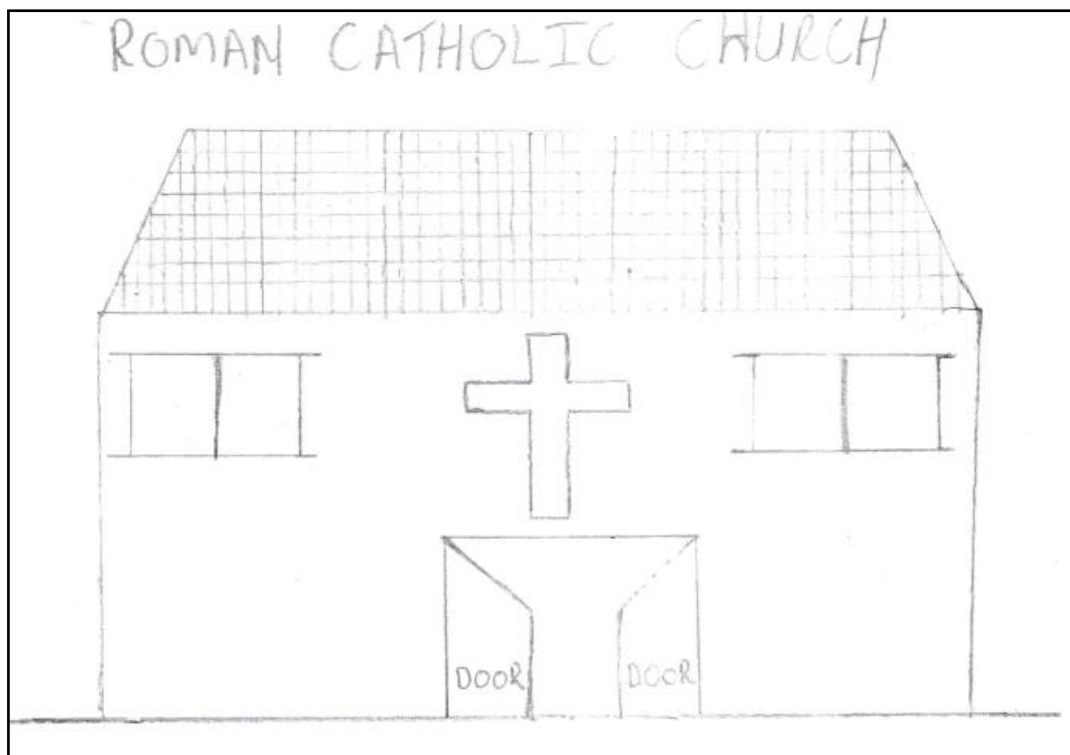


Figure 31

Participant VO-048's drawing of her mother



Glimpses of Ubuntu values can also be seen in the words of Participant VO-049 (a girl), who wrote, “It’s also said that children are the [ones] that should take care of their parents.” Similarly, Participant V078 (a boy) wrote, “Crime does not pay” and Participant VO-065s (a girl) advocated, “Respect . . . and love each other.” Likewise, Participant V074 (a boy) wrote about his appreciation of specific musicians related to how their lyrics reinforced Ubuntu values: “I also feel he’s [Rod Wave] telling a story, mostly about love, care, good people and bad people and the awareness of how little of the Earth you experience.”

Finally, Ubuntu values were evident in the desire to be generous to others (e.g., model resilience and so inspire others or share enabling information). Participant V094 (a girl), for example, summed this up in writing, “I want to see myself being an example to other youths outside.” Similarly, Participant V212 (a boy) reported on how a book [*Township boys’ book*] taught him respect for himself and others. He was generous in sharing this learning, saying, “It helped me to help other boys at my age to stop using drugs because it is not good for their health.” Participant VO-

090 (a girl) reported, “I was formed in my mother’s womb and He [God] really made/created me for bigger things and to help others or comfort others as I have been comforted.”

4.5.1 What the relevant literature reports about cultural resources

Cultural resources as an adolescent resilience enabler are sometimes reported in African resilience literature (Hage & Pillay, 2017; Hills et al., 2016; Van Breda, 2019; Vindevogel et al., 2015), and also reported on in Chapter 2 (see 2.3.5). Culture in Sub-Saharan Africa is typically characterised by a sense of togetherness or community (often termed Ubuntu) (Mkhize, 2013; Van Breda, 2019) as well as a respect for both God and ancestors (Mangaliso et al., 2021). When African adolescents honour these norms, they have access to others (e.g., their family and/or community and/or faith-based organisations) and the various emotional or instrumental supports they may offer (Theron & Van Breda, 2021). Additionally, culture affords the opportunity for individuals to find and foster their identity which is also resilience-enabling (Hills et al., 2016).

In my study, young people’s reporting on living morally, respecting others, extending generosity, and living for the collective good fits well with resilience studies that have reported on Ubuntu values (Mangaliso et al., 2021; Van Breda, 2019; Van Breda & Theron, 2018). Still, in my study, culture was second least frequently reported as a resilience-enabling resource. This was perhaps not surprising since there are reports that cultural resources are often under-reported in South African studies of child and youth resilience (Van Breda & Theron, 2018). I suspect that the infrequent reporting of cultural resources in my study could be explained by a lack of collective culture given the large migrant population in Zamdela (see 2.2.2). Additionally, cultural values may not be well reported on because of the growing Western influence that has meant that young people are identifying less with traditional African values (Ramphela, 2012). Adopting more of a Western view or culture could perhaps also account for participants in my study not mentioning ancestral beliefs as a source of resilience; this differs from some African resilience research (e.g., Hills et al., 2016; Mangaliso et al., 2021; Van Breda, 2019). The absence of references to ancestors in the data I analysed could perhaps also relate to the draw-and-write methodology. The studies that reported on the value of ancestral support

on adolescent resilience typically included individual or group conversation-style interviews with young people (e.g., Theron, 2016), rather than on drawings and written explanations.

4.6 THEMATIC CATEGORY 5: PHYSICAL ECOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Physical ecological resources refer to external resilience-enabling factors located in the built and natural environment (Ungar & Theron, 2020). In my study, physical ecological resources refer to various resources found in a participant's immediate environment that offered a sense of peace, security, escape and/or enabled a sense of wellbeing. These physical ecological resources included (i) a green space or park and (ii) safe spaces in the built environment. Of the participants, 7 out of 79 [9%] reported physical ecological resources that helped them to do well in life thus far. Only 1 boy reported on physical ecological resources while 6 out of the 7 were girls.

4.6.1 Theme 5a: A green space/park

This refers to any outdoor space that includes greenery, like built or designed green spaces or parks that offer a place for participants to safely visit. All 4 participants who reported on this resilience enabling resource were girls.

Participant VO-095 (a girl) drew a picture of an outdoor space (see Figure 32) and reported, "The sound of running water helped me to be calm during my difficult times." Participant VO-085 (a girl) drew a picture of a park with various activities and her explanation was about the personal resources (like believing in herself) that the space affords. Likewise, Participant VO-090 (a girl) reported, "A park helps me to have peace of mind because it is so peaceful restful and fresh air" while Participant V077 drew a picture of a park (Figure 33) and reported, "I just went to the park to clear my mind off to get some peace."

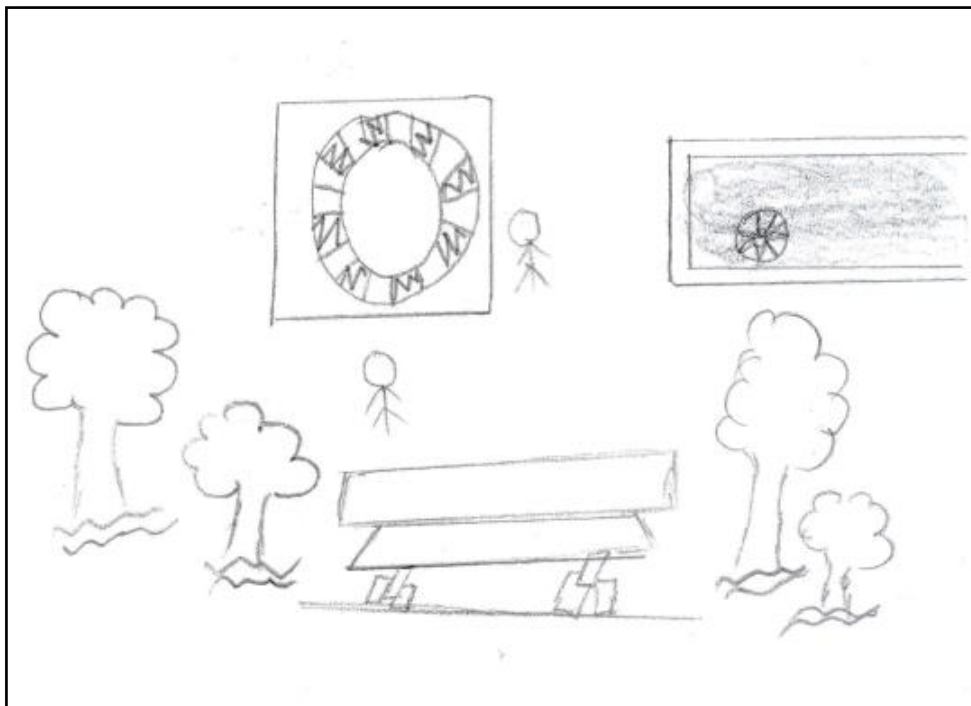
Figure 32

Participant VO-095's drawing of the running water that helps to calm her



Figure 33

Participant V077's drawing of a park where she goes to "get some peace"



4.6.2 Theme 5b: Safe spaces in the built environment

Safe spaces in the built environment are spaces that offer a sense of security or peace to participants when they access the space. These spaces included a library or a house. In my research, three participants reported on safe spaces that aided in their resilience to life's challenges. One participant was a boy and the other two were girls.

Participant V083 (a boy) and Participant V094 (a girl) both drew pictures of a house that they lived in with their families. While their drawings were of resources in the built environment, their descriptions were of the relational resources (parents and family) that the space afforded them. Participant V083 wrote, "My parents are always there for me" and Participant V094 wrote, "My drawing or picture it shows my family. . . and they support me."

Participant V217 (a girl) was the only participant to draw a picture of a library (Figure 34) and report on it being a building that brings comfort. She wrote, "When I am hurt, I always go to the library in my community so that I can feel better."

Figure 34

Participant V217's drawing of a library that helps her feel better when she is hurt



4.6.3 What the relevant literature reports about physical ecological resources

The theme of physical ecological resources being enabling of adolescent resilience is included in some African resilience literature (DaViera et al., 2020; Feng et al., 2022; Li et al., 2021; Scorgie et al., 2017; Theron & Van Breda, 2021) and is detailed in Chapter 2 (see 2.3.3). In this literature, primary forms of physical-ecological resources associated with adolescent resilience include schools, churches, libraries, living spaces, and green spaces or parks (Scorgie et al., 2017). These places were seen as resilience-enabling only if they were seen as safe and free of violence (Adams et al., 2017; Nissen et al., 2020; Scorgie et al., 2017). Additionally, there is evidence to support the idea that physical-ecological resources provide access to social and relational resources (e.g., opportunities to meet up with supportive peers) that are also linked to enabling adolescent resilience (see Scorgie et al., 2017; Theron & Van Breda, 2021). In other words, it is not just about the space, but the supports that are accessible via those spaces.

My research aligns well with the above-mentioned literature in that participants reported on how spaces such as schools, libraries, their homes, and parks fostered their resilience. Additionally, participants also reported on how access to these spaces allowed them to access support from others or even provided the opportunity to find peace and calm or distract them from life's challenges. It should also be noted that physical-ecological resources were the least frequently reported resilience-enabling resource in my research. In some ways, this fits with the tendency for physical ecological resources to be somewhat under-reported in African resilience studies (Theron & Van Breda, 2021). Also, the limited reporting of physical ecological spaces could reflect the under-resourced physical ecology of most townships (e.g., few green spaces; poorly maintained public buildings) (Christodoulou et al., 2019; Theron et al., 2021), also in Zamdela (Rampedi, 2017). At the same time, the limited reference to physical spaces could be related to young people feeling unsafe in different settings or spaces in Zamdela (as detailed in 2.2.2) as opposed to an absence of physical-ecological resources.

4.7 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the findings in my study predominantly align with trends already seen in the African and international resilience literature that I reviewed. My study shows that personal, relational, physical ecological, institutional, and cultural resources mattered for the resilience of the 79 adolescents who participated in the RYSE-RuSA study during 2020 lockdown. This fits with what we know broadly about adolescent resilience elsewhere (Beames et al., 2021; Eichengreen et al., 2022; Fullerton et al., 2021; Masten & Motti-Stefanidi, 2020) and locally (Bester & Kuyper, 2020; Duby et al., 2022; Goronga & Mampane, 2021; N'dure Baboudóttir et al., 2022; Pswarayi, 2020; Theron & Van Rensburg, 2020; Van Breda & Theron, 2018). These resources also generally fit well with the limited research on young people's resilience during COVID-19 in a township context (Maree, 2022; Theron et al., 2021; Theron, L., Levine, D. T., et al., 2022), in the sense that these studies reported personal, relational, ecological, institutional, and cultural resources too.

Overall, my study contributes an understanding of what enabled middle adolescent resilience in a specific context (Zamdela township) at a specific point in time (COVID-related lockdown, 2020). Of all the identified resources, personal resources were most frequently reported on and physical ecological resources least. It is possible that 2020 lockdown limitations, which frequently restricted access to resources in young people's social and physical environments (Fouché et al., 2020; Gittings et al., 2021; Tomlinson et al., 2021), could account for the emphasis on personal resources. Still, it is interesting that resilience studies with emerging adults in township contexts during 2020 lockdown did not place similar emphasis on personal resources (Theron et al., 2021; Theron, L., Levine, D. T., et al., 2022). Relational supports were central to how they adjusted to the challenges of lockdown in a township context. Their emphasis on relational supports versus the emphasis on personal supports by the participants in my study is a timely reminder that even in the face of the same stressors (i.e., COVID- and township-related challenges), which resources matter more could vary across developmental stages (Yoon et al., 2019). Put differently, resilience is complex (Ungar, 2011).

In the next chapter I return to the theoretical framework informing my study to make further sense of my findings and conclude this study of limited scope.

5. CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I conclude my study of limited scope by considering the extent to which my findings address my primary research question. I then reflect on the effectiveness of my chosen research methodology as well the various limitations of my study. Finally, using the findings from my study, I highlight various recommendations for future research and for educational psychologists in South Africa.

5.2 RESEARCH QUESTION REVISITED AND FINDINGS DISCUSSED

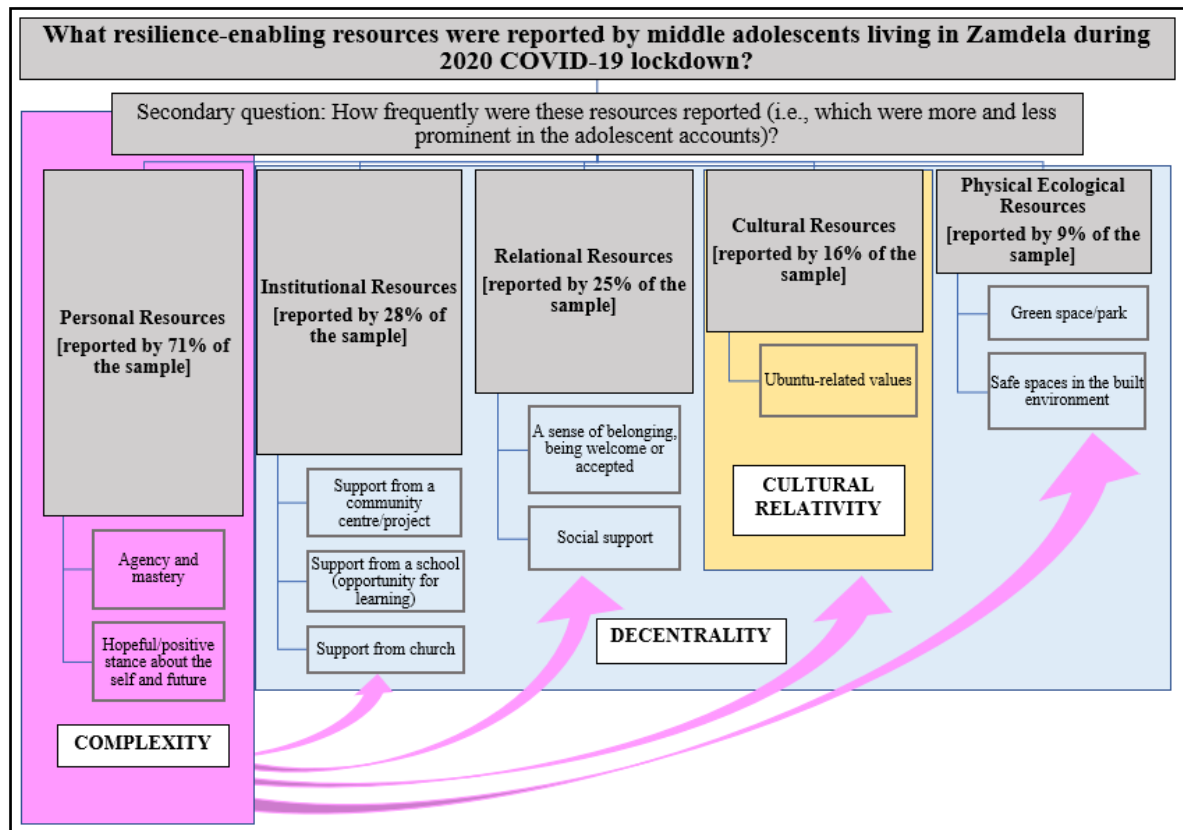
The primary research question that directed my study of limited scope was: ‘What resilience-enabling resources were reported by middle adolescents living in Zamdela during 2020 COVID-19 lockdown?’ It links to the following sub-question: “How frequently were these resources reported (i.e., which were more and less prominent in the adolescent accounts)?” Figure 35 provides an illustrated summary of my findings as they relate to my primary and secondary research questions as well as how they relate to the relevant principles of SETR (Ungar, 2011; 2015) since the SETR approach to understanding resilience is the theoretical framework that underpins my study. Figure 35 illustrates the SETR principles of decentrality, cultural relativity, and complexity that are applicable to my study

The findings of my study were based on the data generated by 79 middle adolescents living in the township of Zamdela during COVID-19 lockdown conditions in 2020. I identified five thematic categories in the data: personal resources, relational resources, physical ecological resources, institutional resources, and cultural resources. Said differently, and as presaged by SETR (Ungar, 2011), my study showed that the resilience enablers of a sample of adolescents (average age 16) living in a South African township during COVID-19 2020 lockdown conditions were multisystemic. This notion of resilience resources being multisystemic is emphasised in the more recent resilience literature (Höltge et al., 2021; Masten, 2021; Theron, L., Levine, D. T., et al., 2022), and challenges more historic

understandings of resilience as person-centred or mainly psychological (Masten, 2014).

Figure 35

Visual representation of how the SETR principles relate to my research findings



With regard to my sub-question, personal resources were the most reported enabler of adolescent resilience (56 out of 79 participants [71%]). Personal resources were reported in international studies (Beames et al., 2021; Masten & Motti-Stefanidi, 2020) and local ones (Duby et al., 2022; Gittings et al., 2021) on adolescent resilience during COVID-19, but these reports did not place as much emphasis on personal resources compared with resources in other systems as my findings did. As noted in the previous chapter, it is possible that 2020 lockdown limitations, which frequently restricted access to resources in adolescents' social and physical environments (Fouché et al., 2020; Gittings et al., 2021; Tomlinson et al., 2021), could account for the emphasis on personal resources. Alternatively, it is possible that personal resources were most reported since they form part of everyday life and are potentially more easily identified by the adolescent participants (Van Breda

& Theron, 2018). For example, Life Orientation—a compulsory subject in high school—can be used to help learners connect with themselves and focus on internal resilience resources through identifying their strengths and dreaming of their futures (Theron, 2018a). All the participants who generated the data that I used were school attending. Further, relying on personal resilience resources is especially evident in contexts in which social ecologies are resource constrained and so struggle to provide relational, institutional or ecological supports (Sanders et al., 2017; Singh & Naicker, 2019; Theron, 2018b).

In my research, the least reported enabler of adolescent resilience was physical ecological resources (it was reported by only 7 out of 79 participants [9%]). This, too, aligns well with resilience literature. Typically, resilience studies prioritise human resources and neglect to report ecological ones even though these are important to resilience (Ungar & Theron 2020). This neglect is perhaps more prominent in an African context, like Zamdela township, where physical ecological resources are limited (Christodoulou et al., 2019; Rampedi, 2017; Theron et al., 2021). Likewise, young people are unlikely to report physical ecological spaces or places if they do not feel safe in these contexts (Adams et al., 2017; Nissen et al., 2020; Scorgie et al., 2017).

My findings, as reported on in Chapter 4, differ from studies explaining what enables adolescent resilience, including adolescents living on the African continent, in terms of the emphasis placed on relational resources. Unlike in some resilience literature (Laxton, 2021; Luthar, 2006; Masten, 2014; Van Breda & Theron, 2018), in my research, relational resources were not reported to have been one of the predominant resilience resources for adolescents with only 20 out of 79 participants [25%] reporting relational supports. Relational resources could be less reported on in my research since the data was generated during COVID-19 lockdown conditions when gatherings and the movement of people were restricted. Additionally, during lockdown conditions, there was a reported increase in family violence (Gittings et al., 2021), as well as school closures that could have inhibited adolescent access to relational resources as resilience-enabling ones (Fouché et al., 2020; Government of South Africa, 2021c). This difference is a reminder that the most

reported/preferred enablers of resilience may differ based on the temporal context in which adolescents find themselves (Ungar, 2019).

In interpreting my findings through the theoretical lens of SETR (Ungar, 2011), it is evident that aspects of decentrality, complexity, and cultural relativity are all applicable to my research. The aspect of atypicality, however, is not evident in my study. I shall elaborate on each of these principals and discuss them in the context of my findings.

Decentrality, in SETR, aims to decentralise the individual and their personal resilience resources while placing greater focus on the context or environment in which the person operates as well as the interactions between the two (Ungar, 2011). This means that resilience would be possible only to the extent that the social ecologies make resilience resources available (Van Breda, 2018). Although my research did not find extrinsic resilience enablers to be the most prominent resource for a sample of middle adolescents in Zamdela, there was clear evidence of a relationship between external resources and how they interact to foster resilience. For example, Participant VO-084 drew a picture of a school building and reported on how an external resource (i.e., school) “has helped [her] so far to do good” and that it helped foster her intrinsic resources by teaching her “about self discipline and self love.” Also, even though personal resources were most prominently reported, they were not the only resource to be reported. In short, the fact that adolescents reported more than personal resources speaks to the relevance of the decentrality principle.

Complexity, as an element of SETR (Ungar, 2011, 2019), highlights the notion of how resilience enablers could differ over time and at different points in time, and in different contexts. In my study of limited scope, relational resources were not as well emphasised by my sample of middle adolescents living in Zamdela during COVID-19 lockdown. As mentioned earlier in this section, this was probably related to lockdown factors. Simultaneously though, this illustrates complexity in that what is typically key to adolescent resilience i.e., relationships (Masten, 2014) was not key for middle adolescents participating in the RYSE-RuSA study during lockdown in a township. SETR’s principle of complexity is also associated with multisystemic

theories of resilience i.e., the understanding that resilience draws on personal (physical/psychological), relational, physical, ecological, institutional, and cultural resources (Ungar & Theron, 2020). In totality, my findings (see Figure 35) highlight how a number of different resources from different systems enabled resilience and so illustrate this complexity. Often, resources from two or more systems interacted. For example, some participants reported on physical ecological resources (e.g., a community centre) as well as relational resources (e.g., encouragement from others) that these spaces afforded them. Others reported on how institutional resources (e.g., churches and related services) afforded them access to cultural resources (e.g., learning respect for others).

Cultural relativity, in the SETR framework, highlights the culturally-specific nature of resilience in that different cultures identify and prioritise different resilience resources (Ungar, 2011). The findings of my research refer to the culturally-specific resilience resource of Ubuntu-related values. Still, cultural resources were not well reported as a resilience resource among this sample of Zamdela middle adolescents during COVID-19 with only 13 out of 79 [16%] reporting on how Ubuntu-related values helped foster their resilience. Zamdela adolescents may not have reported on cultural resources because of a growing Western influence in their context, leading them to identify less with traditional African values (see Ramphele, 2012).

In the SETR framework, atypicality highlights how resilience enablers are sometimes unexpected or not endorsed by the mainstream (Ungar, 2011). My findings do not point to any atypical resilience resources among a sample of middle adolescents from Zamdela. This could be because of COVID-19 lockdown regulations enforced school closures and encouraged everyone to stay at home. In the home setting, participants may not have been able to draw or write about their resilience enablers in privacy and may also have needed to use shared resources to get their data to the RYSE-RuSA research team. For these reasons, participants may have chosen not to share any atypical resilience resources to avoid conflict or being judged by their family members who could have been privy to the information they offered (Braciszewski et al., 2018).

5.3 REFLEXIVITY

To work reflexively I needed constantly to try to identify personal biases in an attempt to minimise their impact on the research process (see Christensen et al., 2015; Pousti et al., 2021). Reflexivity in my study involved my questioning the relationship with the research context and data (Corlett & Mavin, 2018) and was an ongoing activity that occurred throughout the entire research process (Smith & Luke, 2021). Since my study was a secondary analysis of qualitative data that was generated in a township context, I worked hard to understand that context. As explained in Chapter 3, that included regular conversations with the RYSE-RuSA team about the context and repeated searches for information that would help me understand the context of Zamdela. Also, I was aware of my own assumptions of what a township would be like and what I assumed would be enabling of adolescent resilience in this context (see 1.7). I found this research process to be eye-opening in terms of the importance of keeping an open mind through the research process since the information I found out (i.e., the types of resilience enablers for Zamdela middle adolescents) may well have been different from what I was expecting as Braun and Clarke (2013) cautioned. This is especially important since I am a student educational psychologist who will be working with young people in the future, and I want to be able to help foster their resilience. To do this, I will need to keep an open mind regarding their risks and resilience resources and allow them, as the young people of Zamdela did, to inform me of the details of their own unique context.

Also, my positionality in being a 27-year-old white, English-speaking female from an upper middle-class urban area may have impacted how I interpreted the data and made meaning of the findings (see Corlett & Marvin, 2018). Since my study was a secondary analysis of qualitative data in which I used inductive thematic analysis, it was important for me to be aware of my own privileged position and how this was different from the demographic of the participants in the study. Being aware of my privilege throughout the process of analysing the data allowed me to guard against my biases and engage with the data more objectively. Based on my assumptions (see 1.7), I thought that adolescents living in Zamdela during COVID-19 would primarily rely on personal, relational, and institutional resources to foster their resilience. Through my analysis of the data, my assumptions were mostly confirmed,

but it was clear that relational resources were less reported on than I had expected, and this finding helped me to expand my own understanding of resilience in a context different from my own.

As a master's student involved in an already established study, I experienced a sense of security and support, for the most part, while I was conducting this research. Since this was the first time I had conducted a secondary analysis of qualitative data and the first time I had engaged in inductive thematic analysis, there were times I felt overwhelmed by the unfamiliar process. As an inexperienced researcher, I was able to draw on the expertise of others (e.g., my supervisor and members of the original RYSE-RuSA research team) to guide me in practical ways. For example, my supervisor provided feedback and input into my candidate themes and thematic categories and a member of the original research team taught me how to code the data before he critically considered my findings to ensure that they aligned well with the context and data with which he was already familiar. This input of the original RYSE-RuSA research team members contributed to the confirmability and overall trustworthiness of my study (see Connelly, 2016).

5.4 LIMITATIONS OF THIS STUDY

Reflecting on my study helped me to identify specific limitations that include the following.

- A limitation could be that the primary study excluded follow-up interviews. This could have deepened my insight into the drawings and explanations of the participants by allowing me to ask any clarifying questions and to allow participants to inform the data in the form of a member check. This would have added to the study's credibility (see Rule & John, 2011; Yardley & Bishop, 2017) and could have allowed for less of a research-practice gap (Collins et al., 2018)
- My study explored the resilience-enabling resources reported on by a sample of adolescents in Grades 8 to 10. Therefore, although this sample addressed my research questions about middle adolescents, it did not account for adolescents in other grades or individuals at other life stages.

- Another limitation of my study is that I analysed only the data generated by a sample of Zamdela middle adolescents at a single point in time using data during Time 1 of the RYSE-RuSA study. I did not use data from Time 2 or 3 (primarily because the volume of the data did not fit with the limited scope of a mini dissertation). Still, cross-sectional studies are limited, especially when the focus is something as dynamic as resilience (Beames et al., 2021; Fullerton et al., 2021).
- A limitation could be that my study explored resilience resources among a gender-diverse sample of Zamdela adolescents. This could be problematic since conceptualisations of risk and resilience could vary depending on sex (DaViera et al., 2020; Scorgie et al., 2017). I might have achieved greater insight had I focused only on data generated by either girls or boys.
- Since the RYSE-RuSA study included only school-attending adolescents in 2020 another limitation is that my findings do not help us to understand the resilience of non-school attending middle adolescents. A substantial number of 16-year-olds in South Africa are not school-attending and this was made worse during COVID-19 as Hall (2022) has noted.

5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

5.5.1 Recommendations relating to future research

To address the limitations, I recommend the following.

- A future study on middle adolescent resilience that uses one-on-one interviews, in conjunction with draw-and-write methodologies, to explore individual insights (see Creswell, 2018) could be carried out. Using interviews to allow participants to clarify and/or inform the data would add to the study's credibility (see Rule & John, 2011).
- Second, since there is a need for more resilience research that draws on adolescent (rather than adult/researcher) insights (Liebenberg & Theron, 2015), I suggest instituting a follow-up study that conducts a secondary analysis of the data generated by all the adolescent participants (not just those in Grades 8–10) from Time 1 in the RYSE-RuSA study to conceptualise a more complete view of multisystemic adolescent resilience during COVID-19 lockdown conditions. This study's findings could then be compared with

my own to establish a more comprehensive view of adolescent resilience during COVID-19 and what role the stage of adolescence itself might play (see Yoon et al., 2019).

- Third, since enablers of resilience are contextual and change over time (Ungar 2011, 2019) it would be beneficial to conduct a secondary analysis of the primary data generated during Time 2 and Time 3 of the RYSE-RuSA study to create a more comprehensive understanding of adolescent resilience over time. There is a need for more longitudinal studies in resilience research (Beames et al., 2021; Masten et al., 2021).
- Fourth, since resilience resources could vary depending on sex (DaViera et al., 2020; Scorgie et al., 2017), I suggest an exploration of the resilience resources in a gender-specific subset of data. Additionally, since further research is needed into resilience resources among transgender and gender diverse people (Gorman et al., 2022; Chavanduka et al., 2021) such a study could explore resilience resources among a sample of participants who fit into this demographic.
- My final recommendation is that there be a follow-up study that purposefully explores the resilience of middle adolescents who have dropped out of school. Since many adolescents are no longer in school (Hall, 2022), a study of this scope would allow for a more comprehensive understanding of adolescent resilience.

5.5.2 Recommendations for Educational Psychologists

As reported in Chapter 3 (3.3.3.3.2), the findings of my study could be valuable to educational psychologists working in similar contexts to that in which the data for my study was generated. It is important to be aware of the multisystemic and contextual nature of resilience when one is working as an educational psychologist (Lerner & Johns, 2015; Masten, 2021; Ungar & Theron, 2020). It is my hope that my findings will encourage South African educational psychologists to explore contextual and multisystemic resilience factors with their clients and, where possible, draw similarities from my findings. My findings, although potentially relevant to other township contexts, may not be transferable to other more affluent contexts. However, based on the age demographic, educational psychologists could use my findings to create a basic frame of reference for which resilience resources

might be most important for middle adolescents. Additionally, my recommendation for educational psychologists would be to involve a draw-and-write technique to help foster resilience among their clients. It could be used in a group or in individual settings and would be appropriate given the language diversity in the country (see Rule & John, 2011). While engaging in a draw-and-write activity, educational psychologists would also be fostering resilience by presenting the opportunity for clients to connect with themselves and identify resilience-enabling resources (Coad, 2020; Masten, 2009).

Also, it is my hope that my research might contribute to interventions directed at increasing resilience among adolescents living in South African townships. With townships often being resource-constrained (Titi et al., 2022), it is essential to facilitate multiple resources to foster adolescent resilience. Put differently, I hope my study encourages multisystemic interventions that do more than build strengths in adolescents (see Ungar (2011) on SETR's principles of decentrality and complexity). Additionally, since systems are interlinked and impact one another, using a multisystemic intervention in a township context has the potential to have a positive impact not just on individual adolescents but on their families and community members as well (Porter & Nuntavisit, 2016; Splett et al., 2015).

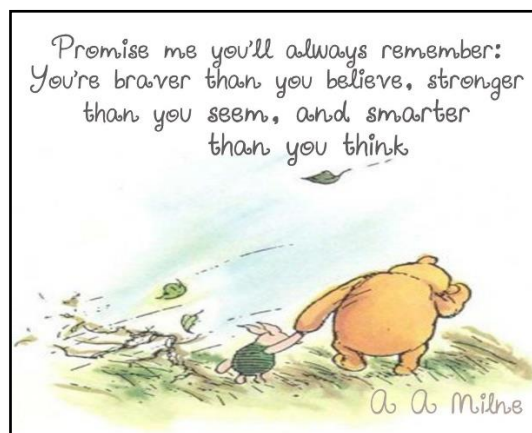
My study is a timely reminder that educational psychologists must become aware that townships are not only about risk, given that there are resources available that can enable resilience (Maringira & Gibson, 2019; Mulligan, 2015; Theron et al., 2021). While these need to be amplified and/or sustained (Titi et al., 2022), such professionals should not assume that their clients from township contexts have no access to environmental and other resources. For example, Participant VO-095 illustrated the multisystemic nature of resilience as well as how she was able to draw on a resource within her environment ("running water") and her own agency ("writing poems") to enable her resilience.

5.6 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the findings of my study show that many resilience-enabling resources from different systems (i.e., psychological, social, institutional, ecological, and cultural) mattered for the resilience of a sample of adolescents (in Grades 8 to

10) living in Zamdela township during COVID-19 2020 lockdown conditions. If professionals take cognizance of the multisystemic and contextually sensitive nature of resilience, my findings could empower them with knowledge to help bolster resilience among adolescents living in townships. This knowledge could also impact the type of intervention provided since there is evidence to support the belief that multisystemic interventions have a greater and more sustainable impact on adolescent resilience (Porter & Nuntavisit, 2016; Splett et al., 2015).

While reflecting on my findings, I was inspired by the young people from my study who, despite COVID- and township-related challenges, found ways to use resources (both within and outside of themselves) to bolster their resilience. With this in mind, calling on A.A. Milne's famous advice, we need to remember that "[adolescents] are braver than [they] believe, and stronger than [they] seem, and smarter than [they] think", provided they can draw on culturally relevant resources in themselves, their families and peer group, accessible institutions, and the physical ecology.



(Trevino, n.d.)

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7. ADDENDA

7.1 ADDENDUM A- Audit Trail (open codes, candidate themes, and defined themes)

Question guiding coding: What resilience-enabling resources were reported by adolescents living in Zamdela during 2020 COVID-19 lockdown?

Extract 1

V064: What helps me to be ok when life is hard, it is mostly watching tv. Because most of the series/movies or Soap make me escape the reality am face because when I watch a tv/movies I get interested a lot because I want to understand each and every step of the movie and to learn a little tip/advice there, because they always show something to know about in life or for fun. So, by watching tv is a little getaway for my mind and reality in my own way.

Extract 2

VO-085: Sisters are the most precious present sent by God I can proudly say I've got the best one. At times I may be upset with her sometimes I make her mad. At times I will make her sad, but I will never find another girl that loves me more than her. My sister has always encouraged me to do well in my studies and she made me feel like I'm the most special girl ever. My sister has always had my back like nobody's business she always corrects me whenever I am wrong. I thank my sister for sharing in my happiest moments. For listening to my saddest stories and telling me when I'm being stupid without fear that I'll get upset. She's the only person who tell me the truth no matter how hard it may be to say. Seeing my sister makes me happy I wish the best for her cause she deserves it. I thank my sister for making me a better person I know I have become a kinder, smarter, and overall happier person since my childhood.

Extract 3

VO-095: The sound of running water helped me to be calm during my difficult times. I put all my thoughts and pain on a paper. I use a pen and paper to get things off my chest. I am a writer (poetess). Writing poems helped me a lot during the lockdown most.

Extract 4

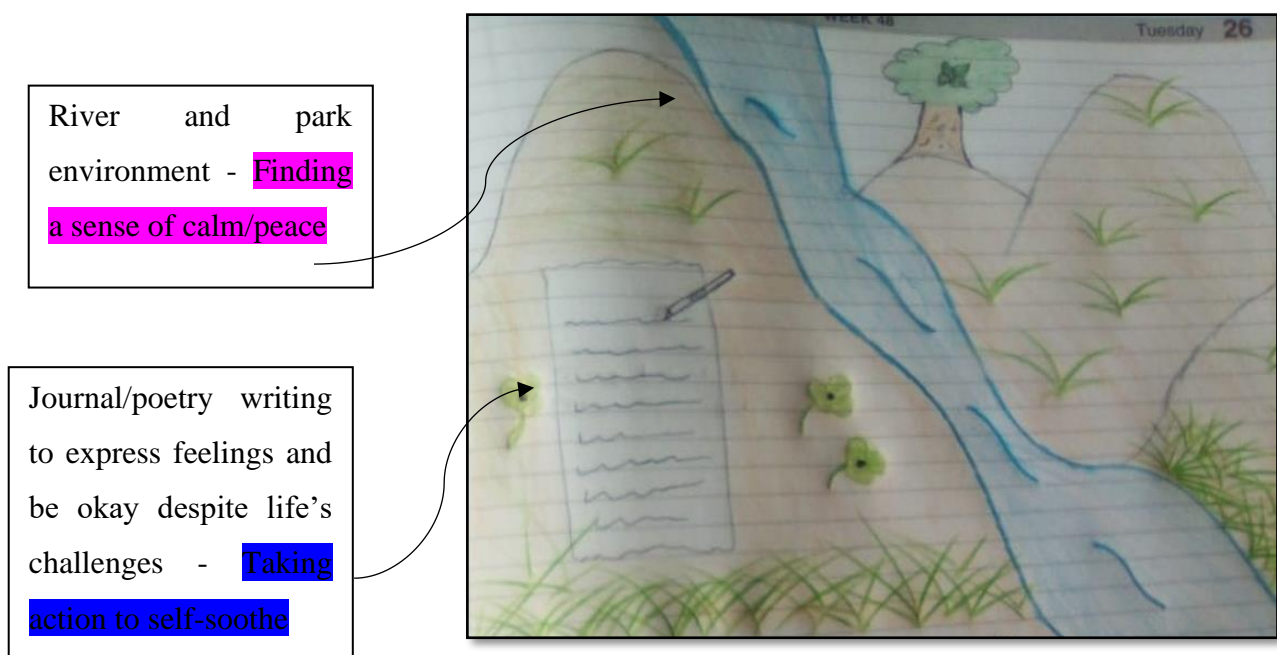
VO-084: School has helped me so far to do good. It has given me purpose in life and taught me about self-discipline and self-love. School made me feel like the most alive human being ever and has made me somehow feel like I'm going somewhere in life and has made me see things differently. Being at school helped me to deal with anxiety and the pressure that I got at home. My teachers at school made me feel like I'm valuable and important. The school has made lots of learners feel at home it has been a place of love and kindness most of the things that I know I was taught them at school. It taught me about humility, respect mostly loving one another as sisters

Extract 5

V071: My drawing indicates the church, the house of God. There are many things that I can talk/share about my drawing. For instance, this is what keeps me moving in life. Church has a big impact in my life, a good one. It has taught me respect and caring for people, respect is a key point in life because when you respect someone, you will be able to love, value and care for him/her. Church has taught me not to give up in life, no matter how hard it is no matter how the situation confusing or difficult, but you must have perseverance.

Figure 36 - Participant VO-095

Sample of inductive data analysis of visual data



<i>Extracts that appeared to address my research question</i>	<i>Open code</i>	<i>Candidate themes</i>
<i>What helps me to be ok when life is hard, it is mostly watching tv. . . most of the series/movies or Soap make me escape the reality am face . . . watching tv is a little getaway for my mind and reality in my own way</i>	<i>Doing something to escape reality/hardship</i>	<i>Taking action to keep busy</i>
<i>because when I watch a tv/movies I get interested a lot because I want to understand each and every step of the movie and to learn a little tip/advice there, because they always show something to know about in life or for fun</i>	<i>Seeking help or advice</i>	<i>Agency and Mastery</i>
<i>I will never find another girl that loves me more than her. My sister has always encouraged me to do well in my studies and she made me feel like I'm the most special girl ever. My sister has always had my back like nobody's business she always corrects me whenever I am wrong. I thank my sister for sharing in my happiest moments. For listening to my saddest stories and telling me when I'm being stupid without fear that I'll get upset. She's the only person who tells me the truth no matter how hard it may be to say. . . I thank my sister for making me a better person</i>	<i>Being supported by a loved one</i>	<i>Social support</i>
<i>I know I have become a kinder, smarter, and overall happier person since my childhood</i>	<i>Positive view of the self</i>	<i>Hopeful/positive stance about the self and future</i>

<p><i>The sound of running water helped me to be calm during my difficult times</i></p>	<p><i>Finding a sense of calm/peace</i></p>	<p><i>A green space/ park</i></p>
<p><i>I put all my thoughts and pain on a paper. I use a pen and paper to get things off my chest . . . Writing poems helped me a lot during the lockdown most.</i></p>	<p><i>Taking action to self-soothe</i></p>	<p><i>Agency and Mastery</i></p>
<p><i>I am a writer (poetess)</i></p>	<p><i>Positive view of the self</i></p>	<p><i>Hopeful/positive stance about the self and future</i></p>
<p><i>School has helped me so far to do good. It has given me purpose in life and taught me about self- discipline and self-love. School made me feel like the most alive human being ever and has made me somehow feel like I'm going somewhere in life and has made me see things differently. Being at school helped me to deal with anxiety and the pressure that I got at home. My teachers at school made me feel like I'm valuable and important. The school has made lots of learners feel at home it has been a place of love and kindness</i></p>	<p><i>Benefits of school to be okay/feel good about self/life</i></p>	<p><i>Support from a school (opportunity for learning)</i></p>
<p><i>It taught me about humility, respect, mostly loving one another as sisters</i></p>	<p><i>Being respectful of others/ Ubuntu values</i></p>	<p><i>Ubuntu-related values</i></p>
<p><i>For instance, this is what keeps me moving in life. . . Church has a big impact in my life, a good one</i></p>	<p><i>Benefit of a faith based-organisation to help keep going/be okay in life</i></p>	<p><i>Support from faith-based organisations</i></p>
<p><i>It has taught me respect and caring for people, respect is a key point in life because when you respect someone, you will be able to love, value and care for him/her</i></p>	<p><i>Being respectful of others/ Ubuntu values</i></p>	<p><i>Ubuntu-related values</i></p>

<i>Drawing of a river and park environment</i>	<i>Finding a sense of calm/peace</i>	<i>A green space/ park</i>
<i>Journal/poetry writing to express feelings and be okay despite life's challenges</i>	<i>Taking action to self-soothe</i>	<i>Agency and Mastery</i>

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Category	Candidate theme	Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion criteria
<i>Personal resources</i>	<i>Agency and Mastery</i>	<i>Instances of help-seeking behaviours (e.g., interacting with people who can provide guidance/support and/or seeking motivation or even self-help from inanimate sources [such as books]), engaging in activities to keep busy/distract from challenges and/or taking action to self-soothe (an action that brought a sense of calm or peace)</i>	<i>It did not include advice, encouragement, and/or motivation offered without the individual taking action to seek it; instances of others initiating engagement with the participant in order to help distract them from everyday life or engaging in faith-based activities</i>
	<i>Hopeful/positive stance about the self and future</i>	<i>This included setting goals, being engaged in education because of its potential to support future success, feelings of being confident in one's abilities to achieve life goals as well as having a powerful sense of self/powerful identity. It also included the view that things will get better and will work out in the end or that there is a plan for their future that is good</i>	<i>It did not include instances of being happy or content in life or instances of faith-related beliefs that bring calm or peace</i>
<i>Institutional Resources</i>	<i>Support from a community centre/project</i>	<i>Included participants referring to a physical community centre or community-based project that offered an opportunity for connection</i>	<i>This excluded reference to learning or improving themselves in a school or faith-based setting</i>

		<i>with others and/or self-improvement</i>	
	<i>Support from a school (opportunity for learning)</i>	<i>Included participants having the opportunity to learn, improve themselves and increase their academic abilities in a school environment</i>	<i>This excluded reference to teachers since they were included in relational resources</i>
	<i>Support from faith-based organisations</i>	<i>Emotional support and guidance, and facilitation of comforting beliefs offered by faith-based organizations, typically referred to as “church” by participants. It included examples of participants engaging in faith-based practices that comfort</i>	<i>It excluded instances of feeling safe in the physical setting of the church since this was included in physical ecological resources</i>
<i>Relational resources</i>	<i>Sense of belonging, being welcome or accepted</i>	<i>This included instances of participants being made to feel welcome/comfortable by parents, teachers, friends, and even an inanimate object (e.g., a journal). Similarly, this sub-theme related to interactions with parents, teachers, friends, and even an inanimate object (e.g., a journal) supporting participants to feel as though someone believed in them or their being able to be themselves</i>	<i>It excluded any reference to conditional acceptance (e.g., being welcome provided they made their family/community proud)</i>
	<i>Social support</i>	<i>Social support refers to any advice, encouragement, emotional, informational and/or instrumental support offered by other people (typically friends, family members, and other significant adults)</i>	<i>It did not include support sought out/initiated by the individual</i>
<i>Cultural resources</i>	<i>Ubuntu-related values</i>	<i>Included examples of appreciation of moral ways of being, appreciation for interconnectedness of people,</i>	<i>It did not include examples of faith-based actions to comfort or soothe and did not</i>

		<i>respect for others, generosity, empathy, and forgiveness. These moral aspects are often passed on by faith-based organisations and elders</i>	<i>include instances of seeking support from faith-based institutions</i>
<i>Physical ecological resources</i>	<i>Green space/park</i>	<i>This refers to any built/designed green spaces or parks that offer a place for participants to visit or to relax in and feel safe/peaceful in</i>	<i>This did not include any instances in which participants were made to feel better by spending time with others in a green space/park (e.g., playing soccer with friends in a park). These were coded as relational resources</i>
	<i>Safe spaces in the built environment</i>	<i>Safe spaces in the built environment are spaces that offer a sense of security or peace to participants when they access them (e.g., library/house)</i>	<i>This did not include instances of being made to feel safe by individuals in physical buildings (e.g., being made to feel safe by teachers at school). This was coded under relational resources</i>

7.2 ADDENDUM B - Ethical clearance for my study



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA
Faculty of Education

RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

CLEARANCE NUMBER: **UP 17/05/01 THERON 21-02**

DEGREE AND PROJECT

M.Ed

Exploring adolescent resilience during
COVID- 19 in a township context

INVESTIGATOR

Mrs Shannon Wakefield

DEPARTMENT

Educational Psychology

APPROVAL TO COMMENCE STUDY

08 June 2021

DATE OF CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

27 July 2022

CHAIRPERSON OF ETHICS COMMITTEE: Prof Funke Omidire

CC

Mr Simon Jiane
Prof Linda Theron

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

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