

CHAPTER 2

Motivational theories and resilience as construct

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter an overview and rationale for this study were given. It was mentioned in Chapter one that for the purpose of this study resilience training would be considered as an example of strengths-focussed training.

In this chapter an overview and critical summary of the key motivational theories are given. The motivational theories will be used to explain the reasoning behind using resilience training as an example to support the concept of strengths-focussed training mentioned in the problem statement. Therefore, resilience as a construct is reviewed to enable the reader to have a more holistic understanding of the construct in this context. Furthermore, this chapter will identify parameters and criteria for determining the effect of strengths-focussed training on the individual within the team.

2.2 MOTIVATIONAL THEORIES OF BANDURA AND SKINNER

2.2.1 Bandura's social cognitive theory

Bandura's social cognitive theory is based on several key assumptions that concern (a) the reciprocal nature of influence amongst the following three aspects: personal, behaviour and environmental factors; (b) the relation of learning to motivation; and (c) the enactive and vicarious sources of behavioural change. These assumptions are discussed to provide a broader understanding of this theory of thinking and learning.

2.2.1.1 Reciprocal interaction

Bandura developed a framework of triadic reciprocity that considers personality as an interaction amongst three things, which he describes as the environment, behaviour and the person's psychological processes (Bandura 1986:18).

The behavioural link is demonstrated by an instructional sequence in which a facilitator presents information and directs learners' attention to instructional aids. Environmental influence on behaviour occurs when the facilitator says, "Look here," and learners direct their attention with little conscious effort. That learners' behaviours alter the learning environment is evident when the facilitator asks a question and learners give wrong answers. The facilitator repeats the material instead of presenting new information (Pintrich & Schunk 1996:161).

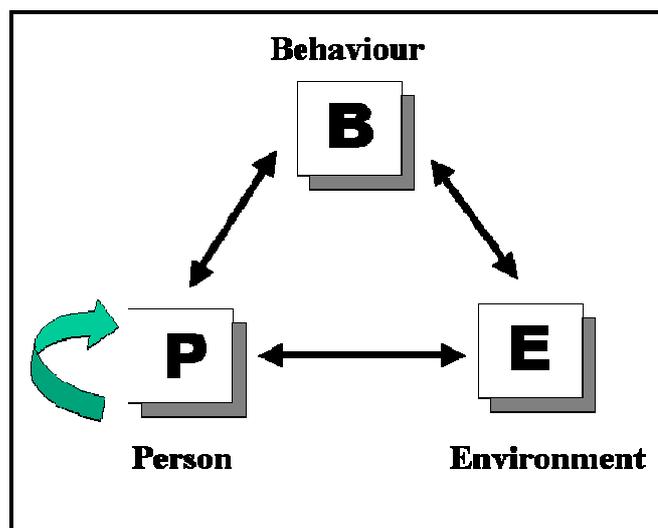


Figure 2.1 Model of triadic reciprocity

The behavioural-personal factor interaction can be demonstrated with *perceived self-efficacy*, or beliefs concerning a person's capabilities to perform actions at designated levels. Self-efficacy is seen to be a personal factor and therefore influences such achievement behaviours as choice of tasks, persistence and effort. In turn, learners' behaviours modify self-efficacy. As learners work on tasks, they observe their progress toward their goals. These progress indicators convey that learners are capable of learning and performing well, which enhances their self-efficacy for further learning (Pintrich & Schunk 1996:161).

An example of personal-environment factor interaction can be found in learners with learning disabilities, many of whom hold a low sense of self-efficacy for performing well. That personal factors can influence the

environment is shown with individuals who react to learners with learning disabilities based on attributes typically associated with them rather than on what the learners actually do. Some facilitators may judge these learners as less capable than non-disabled learners and hold lower academic expectations for them, even in content areas where the former learners are performing adequately. In turn, feedback from the facilitator (environmental factor) influences self-efficacy (personal factor). A statement from the facilitator, "You're doing great!" will have a better effect on self-efficacy than the pronouncement, "I doubt whether you can learn this" (Pintrich & Schunk 1996:162).

This perceived self-efficacy is very important within the organisational context as a learning environment. Once the employee or manager knows his or her strengths and implements the learning from the resilience training in the workplace, the implementation will have a positive influence on his or her self-efficacy every time success is achieved. When the team-leader or manager knows the strengths of employees, or team members, and utilises the employees according to those strengths, this will also have a positive influence on the self-efficacy of the employee. When the environment (manager or team-leader) always just focuses on the negative (mistakes that are made) and no recognition for performance is given, it leads to the employee feeling that he or she is just there to do the job and not for what he or she can contribute. These negative environmental results have a negative effect on the motivation or morale of not only the employee but also of the team in which this employee functions. The manager within the senior management team also experiences the same positive or negative issues which impacts on the rest of the team which reports to him or her.

It must be understood that the direction of influence among the three factors (environment, behaviour and the person's psychological processes) is not always the same. The reason for this is that typically one or two factors will outweigh the others. Environmental factors take priority when life in the learning environment is highly regimented and there are many rules and procedures. Personal factors will be significant when environmental influences are weak. Learners who must write a term examination paper and can select a topic from a list will choose one they enjoy or have an interest in. Within

the learning environment the three factors would typically interact with each other. As a facilitator conducts a learning facilitation intervention with a group of learners, they think about what the facilitator is saying (environment influences cognition – a personal factor). Learners who do not understand a point raise their hands to ask a question (cognition influences behaviour). The facilitator reviews the point (behaviour influences environment). Later on during the session, the facilitator gives learners work to complete (environment influences cognition, which influences behaviour). As learners work on the task, they believe they are performing it well (behaviour influences cognition) and decide to ask the facilitator if they can continue to work on it (cognition influences behaviour) (Pintrich & Schunk 1996:162).

The small loop in Figure 2.1 originating from the person factor means that personal factors influence one another. Thus, the use of an effective learning strategy will promote the acquisition of skills and can lead learners to feel more confident about learning because they understand and can apply the strategy. In turn, higher self-efficacy may affect learners' choices of strategies. Such interaction within a person is important given the complex relations possible among personal cognitions, beliefs and emotions (Pintrich & Schunk 1996:162).

These personal factors have a direct influence in the organisational context. The type of environment that employees work in on a daily basis, will affect the individual either positively or negatively. Should the environment be negative it influences the individual negatively and the opposite is true as well: if the environment is positive and stimulating, the environment will influence employees in a positive and stimulating way. If employees experience the environment in a positive and energised way (environment influences cognition, which influences behaviour), they will in turn want to influence their performance in the workplace. When the employee is in the learning environment there will be other variables that influence the behaviour of the employee than when he or she is working on the production line. Learners can experience the learning environment as a place where they can be relaxed and where their opinions and experience are valued. In the working environment and more specifically, the production line, pressures relating to performance and production are very high and can influence

employees either positively or negatively. When employees feel valued and have high self-efficacy, they can withstand production pressures and stress easier than employees who feel worthless, of no value to the company, the team, or the department, and can never do anything right.

2.2.1.2 Bronfenbrenner's bio-ecological systems theory

Bronfenbrenner (1977) proposes an ecological systems model of the lifelong progressive accommodations individuals make to the changing environments in which they develop. In the most recent conceptualisation of this model Bronfenbrenner discusses the concept as a bio-ecological paradigm. This paradigm rests on two main assumptions (Bronfenbrenner & Ceci 1994). These assumptions can be investigated within a process-person-context-time model. The first assumption that Bronfenbrenner makes is that human development occurs through "processes of progressively more complex reciprocal interactions". These interactions occur between active, evolving "biopsychological" human beings and the individuals, objects and symbols in their environments. For these interactions to be effective, they must occur with regularity over extended periods of time (Bronfenbrenner 1995:620). Since Bronfenbrenner deals with a more complex (systems) interaction this theory is an expansion of Bandura's theory of reciprocity.

The second assumption is where the ecological environment is considered to be the context in which the human development occurs. The ecological environment is viewed as a set of "nested structures" due to the fact that developmental outcomes are influenced by interactions within micro-systems (immediate settings that contain the developing person). The remaining structures, in order of the distance of their influence on the developing individual, include meso-systems (processes among two or more micro-systems; both containing the developing person), exo-systems (processes between two or more settings; only one contains the developing person), macro-systems (influences of the broader cultural and socio-economic environments), and chrono-systems (effects of consistency and change over the life course) (Bronfenbrenner & Ceci 1994: 568 – 586).

Ford (1987:94) summarises human behaviour as a function of the situation under which it occurs. This view of human behaviour by Ford supports the statement made by Bronfenbrenner (1989:225). He stated that "every human quality is inextricably embedded and finds both its meaning and fullest expression, in particular environmental settings, of which the family is the prime example. As a result, there is always interplay between the psychological characteristics of the person and the special environment; the one cannot be defined without the other".

Within the organisational context it must be understood that the employee does not only relate to the self, the environment and psychological aspects but also operates within various systems. Whatever is learnt or experienced within the one system has an effect on the other and whatever is implemented within the one system impacts on the other. Types of systems that can be mentioned are those of the family, team, department, organisation and community (religious and social). When an employee is working within a very negative environment and is exposed to it the whole day, he or she does not go home to his or her family as positive as the person who is happy in the work environment and experiences self-worth and a sense of being valued, feels challenged, and has a sense of purpose. This negative team environment (considered as one system), therefore, has a negative influence on the employee's home life (another system), sense of belonging in the community (another system), etc. The family is mentioned here because if the wellness is not strong in the family, the individual experiences difficulty to overcome pressures within the organisational context or the other way around. As such the family is definitely an important behavioural system for any individual, that cannot be overlooked.

2.2.1.3 Learning and motivation

Social cognitive theory distinguishes learning from the performing of actions previously learned. People learn much by observing models, but the knowledge and skills they acquire may not be demonstrated at the time of learning (Rosenthal & Zimmerman 1978).

The perception is that people will not demonstrate skills until they are motivated to display them. This motivation to perform previously learned skills might stem from the belief that the skills are appropriate in the situation and that the consequences will be positive. It is also stated that motivation affects performance and learning (Pintrich & Schunk 1996:162).

This supports the organisational example (see 2.2.1.1.) mentioned under the "personal-environment factor" stating that when the environment (manager or team-leader) mostly focuses on the negative (mistakes that are made) and no recognition for performance is given, it can lead to the employee feeling that he or she is just there to do the job and not for what he or she can contribute (even though this employee could be deemed competent to execute his or her job). The manager within the senior team experiences the same positive or negative issues as the employee reporting to him or her. When the manager is positive or negative, it creates either a positive or negative environment for the team or department. This affects the motivation or morale of not only the manager but also of his whole team or department.

2.2.1.4 Enactive and vicarious learning

When a person learns by doing and experiencing the consequences of his or her actions, it is described as *enactive learning*. When enactive learning takes place, successful actions are retained and those that lead to failure will be discarded.

This process of enactive learning is important when considering the type of training that is given. Resilience training gives the learners the chance to discover their strengths and to go back and apply the applicable knowledge, skills and attitudes attained during the various training sessions. Newly attained knowledge, skills and attitudes are applied in those areas that the learners feel that they need improvement, change or success.

Vicarious learning occurs from observing live or symbolic (e.g. film) models in the absence of overt performance by learners. Vicarious learning is possible in more ways than learners having to perform every action at the time it is learned. This way of learning saves learners from personally experiencing

negative consequences. Complex-skill learning typically occurs enactively and vicariously. Learners observe facilitators explain and demonstrate skills. Through observation, they may learn some components of a skill and not others. Practice allows learning facilitators to provide corrective feedback to help learners perfect their skills (Pintrich & Schunk 1996:163).

Bandura contends that behavioural consequences, whether personally experienced or modeled, inform and motivate learners rather than strengthen behaviours as postulated by Skinner (1953). Consequences inform learners of the likely outcomes of actions. If learners fail or observe models fail, they learn that something is wrong and they may take steps to correct the problem. From a motivational perspective, learners learn behaviours that they value and believe will have desirable consequences. The belief is that modeled behaviours will prove useful and will lead people to attend to and learn from models (Pintrich & Schunk 1996:163).

Senior managers need to realise that they are considered to be role models within the team and that how they lead the team has a positive or negative influence on the team, the team's performance and behaviour. The way that the manager handles the individual within the team has a direct impact, not only on motivation, but also on the desire to keep on learning and the reason to perform.

2.2.2 Bandura's self-efficacy theory

Bandura has proposed a general social model of cognition and behaviour, and together with others has applied it to many different domains of human behaviour. Examples of such applications are found in the fields of mental health, such as coping with depression and phobias; physical health behaviour, such as recovery from a heart attack and cessation of smoking; athletic performance; decision-making in organisations; sales performance in business; career choices, and academic achievement. Schunk is regarded as the leading theorist regarding the role of learner self-efficacy in classroom settings (Pintrich & Schunk 1996:26, 88).

Two aspects that differentiate self-efficacy from self-concept and self-competence are depicted in recent research (Pintrich & Schunk 1996:88). The first difference is perceived to be the fact that the definition of self-efficacy includes the concepts "organise and perform courses of action". These concepts represent the theory's more specific and situational view of perceived competence, which includes behavioural actions or cognitive skills necessary for competent performance. The second difference is the fact that self-efficacy is mentioned with reference to a specific goal ("...achieve chosen types of performance"). This again reflects the more situational perspective of the self-efficacy theory in contrast to the personality and developmental heritage of expectancy-value and perceptions-of-competence research.

A further aspect of the self-efficacy theory is that it proposes outcome expectations. Outcome expectations form a second construct to motivational behaviour and affect. Outcome expectations are defined to be: "judgments or beliefs regarding the contingency between a person's behaviour and the anticipated outcome" (Pintrich & Schunk 1996:89).

This concept of contingency between response and outcome is then related to the *locus of control* construct, which regards the contingency between behaviour and reinforcement. Self-efficacy beliefs and outcome expectations are usually positively related.

However, it is possible for a learner to have a relatively high efficacy belief for a task but at the same time low outcome expectations. Bandura suggests that outcome expectations, self-efficacy beliefs and efficacy judgments are positively related (Pintrich & Schunk 1996:89 - 90).

It was found that people who are confident about their ability to succeed usually manage to succeed. However, those people who are more preoccupied with their ability to fail may also fail. Kreitner and Kinicki (1998:127) have drawn and adapted a basic model to display the mechanisms of self-efficacy and specify that they have drawn from the work that Bandura has done in this regard. Figure 2.2 illustrates a model of how self-efficacy beliefs can pave a way for success or failure.

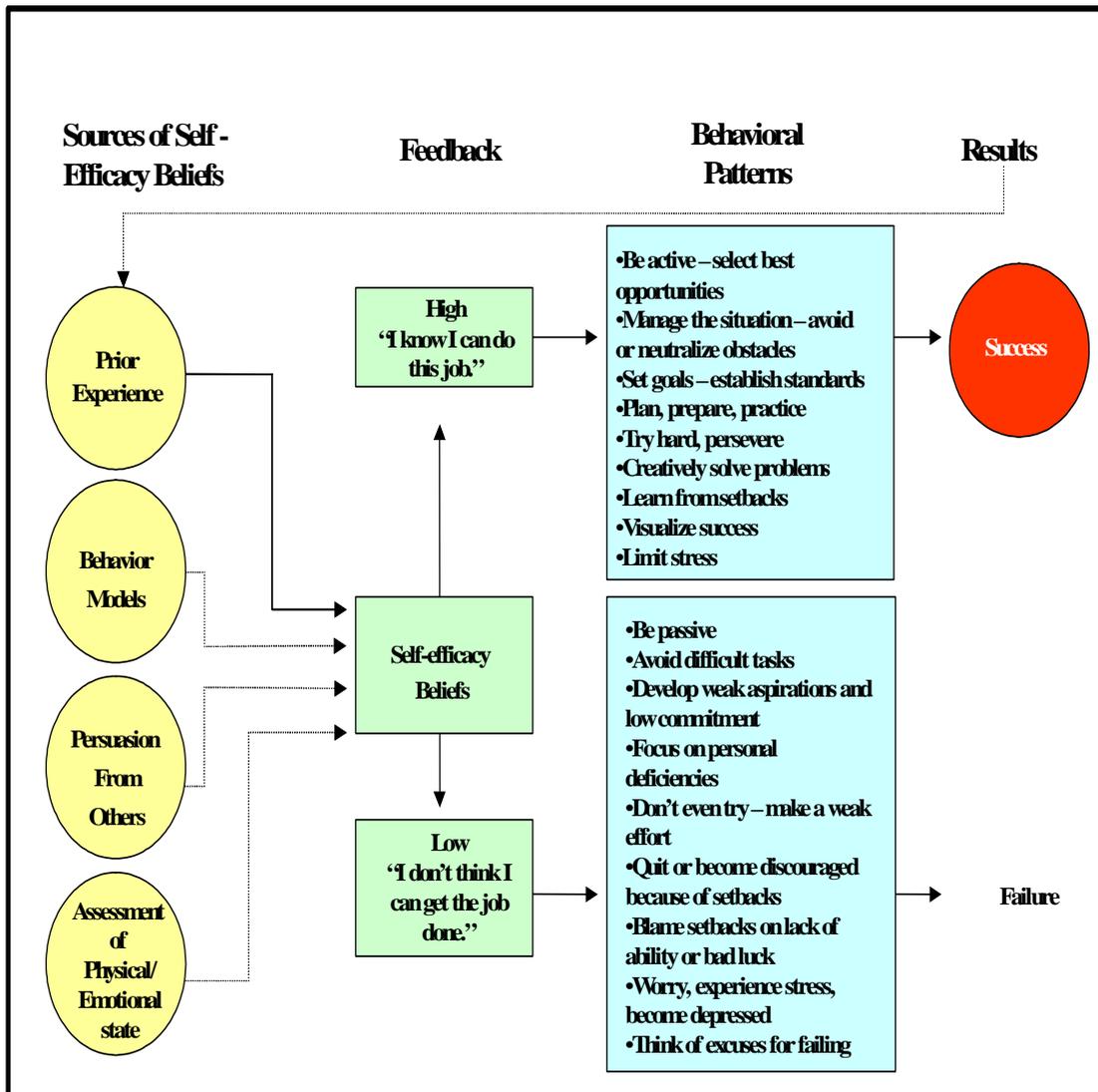


Figure 2.2 A model of how self-efficacy beliefs can pave the way for success or failure (Kreitner & Kinicki 1998:128)

In describing the model, an example is used of an individual who is given the task to prepare and deliver a 10-minute talk. As the individual starts to prepare for the presentation, the four sources of self-efficacy beliefs will come into play, namely prior experience, behaviour models, persuasion from others and physical or emotional assessment. Prior experience is connected to self-efficacy beliefs with a solid line and is listed first. Depending on your past experiences the expected outcome could be predicted. If it was positive, the expectancy outcome could be high and vice versa. Physical and emotional factors affect the individual's self-confidence. Self-efficacy requires constructive action in each of the following managerial areas within any

organisation: recruiting/selection/job assignments; job design; training and development; self-management and goal-setting, and quality improvement (Kreitner & Kinicki 1998:128).

Training and development, goal setting and quality are the managerial areas where self-efficacy, self-efficacy expectations and performance contribute to positive outcomes by learners. Training and development improves employees' self-efficacy expectations for key tasks through facilitated learning experiences as well as mentoring, role modeling, coaching, leadership and rewards. Goal setting needs to match the individual's perceived self-efficacy. Goals and quality standards can be made more challenging as the self-efficacy and performance (Kreitner & Kinicki 1998:129) of the employees improve.

However, the statement regarding goals that should match the individual's perceived efficacy is not applicable within the food and beverage manufacturing environment. Although goals are very important to achieve the outputs of the organisation, they are determined by the external environmental needs and not according to the perceived efficacy of the individual. Quality within the food and beverage manufacturing environment is very important and non-negotiable. Having said this, the implementation of the model is important within any organisation and needs to be taken into consideration to try and eliminate unnecessary stress and morale problems. During resilience training stress is one of the components that is addressed. Employees are trained on what stress is and stress-relieving techniques are facilitated to support the employee in managing stress actively within the high performance environment in which they work daily.

The self-efficacy belief of an employee is a very important variable within resilience training, which is given as an example of the "strengths-focussed" concept in the problem statement of this study. Self-efficacy and self-esteem are important aspects of personal mastery of the resilient individual and it will impact on the motivational behaviour and performance of the individual within the team. All these factors determine whether the team will be able to ensure successful results, which in turn, influence the performance of the team.

2.2.3 Skinner's operant conditioning model

Skinner has refined Thorndike's conclusion that behaviour is controlled by its consequences. Thorndike is famous for his law of effect theory. As a behaviourist, Skinner believed it was pointless to explain behaviour in terms of unobservable inner states such as needs, drives or thought processes and therefore paid little attention to the idea of self-determination. Skinner drew an important distinction between two types of behaviour. The one is named respondent behaviour and the other operant behaviour. Skinner labeled stimulus-response (S-R) connections respondent behaviour while operant behaviour is also known as the response-stimulus (R-S) model. Examples of respondent behaviour are the shedding of tears when peeling an onion and reflexively drawing one's hand from a hot stove. Operant behaviour refers to a sophisticated technology of behaviour control. Skinner taught pigeons to pace figure-eights and how to bowl. Skinner did this by reinforcing the underweight (and therefore hungry birds) with food whenever they closely simulated target behaviours. Skinner's work has significant implications for organisational behaviour as the vast majority of organisational behaviour fall into the operant category (Kreitner & Kinicki 1998:465).

The effect of this theory can be observed on those type of learned behaviours that employees show due to production pressures. Typical behaviours can include wrong behaviours, for example, taking "short cuts" from policies and procedures to save time and not getting caught, wrong behaviour modeling from mentors and applying it in the workplace, and so on. It starts off, maybe, by being deliberate and taking a chance, but becomes unwanted and unsafe behaviour. During resilience training learners were exposed to the process of doing self-reflection. During this process the learners had to determine "why" they behave the way that they do. They were taught to examine their "life scripts" (see 1.2.4) and were brought to the realisation that they have control over changing these scripts, so that the latter do not control the learner. When this approach is implemented in the workplace many unwanted behaviours improve or even change. This approach relates back to and supports the triadic model of reciprocity of Bandura and Bronfenbrenner's bio-ecological systems theory. When an individual goes

back to the basics of safe and correct behaviour at all times, no matter what the production pressures are, it will inevitably have either a positive or negative influence on both the learner and the team. Examples that can be given of this are motivation, self-efficacy beliefs and performance within the team, which influences the team's overall outputs and even self-efficacy beliefs of the team as a whole.

2.3 GENERAL PERSPECTIVE ON RESILIENCE

2.3.1 Introduction

The concept of *invulnerability from harmful influences*, or *resilience*, was historically founded by work published in the early 1970's (Garmezy & Neuchterlien 1972; Anthony 1974; Garmezy, Masten, Nordstrom & Terrorese 1979). Later studies of specific populations of resilient children and adolescents followed (Garmezy 1974; Garmezy & Rutter 1983; Werner & Smith 1988). In these later studies, the subjects were children and adolescents who were classified as being at risk of psychiatric disorders, delinquency and other negative life outcomes because of a variety of individual, family and environmental factors (e.g. neonatal stress, poverty, abuse, physical handicaps, alcoholism and criminal activities). Rather than focusing on those children and adolescents who were casualties of these negative factors, however, the studies focused instead on those who had not succumbed. The questions asked were: what is it about these children and adolescents that enabled them to survive? What made them apparently immune to the factors that negatively affected others? Instead of focusing on individual deficit, the new approach focused on individual strengths and thus the concept of resilience emerged in the psychological literature.

To a certain degree interest in resilience again came under the spotlight with the September 11 events at the World Trade Center in New York. People thought that after that hardship the city and the people involved would not be able to reconstruct their lives. The opposite was proved very soon. Although some found it more difficult than others, people could still stand up after this trauma and face life again. Some people can overcome brutal hardships and

become very strong as a result of it whilst other people become crushed for considerable periods of their lives or longer (Louw 1999: 1).

Self-actualisation is a multi-faceted concept which suggests that individuals become the very best they may become. In terms of resilience, this implies that the individual continues to strive for his or her ultimate, individual best, rather than cease self-actualising in the face of obstacles. Self-actualisation is not a question of perfection, as perfection is unattainable. Rather it is something everyone is capable of, and something which resilient individuals stubbornly pursue and attain. Thus, it can be argued that self-actualisation is related to resilience (MacFarlane 1998: 14).

The way that people sometimes show resilience in the most difficult of difficult situations, has fascinated students of human behaviour. The study of resilience has a “positive emphasis on upliftment and hope” and focuses on the “achievements and successes of people”. It is seen to be “striking in a scientific community which is preoccupied with illness, pathology and maladjustment” (Louw 1999: 1).

2.3.2 Resilience within the corporate environment

Greef (2002: 27) states that employees within the corporate environment of today have to “beat the odds” and “bounce back” rather than winning and coming out at the top the whole time. This is because emotional contracts between employers and employees are unspoken but very clear to the workers on the following aspects:

- there is no job security;
- employees have to work as long as they add value and there is work to do; and
- they have to figure out how to add value.

Jack Welch, the former Chief Executive Officer of General Electric, made the following statement “We need people who are eager to stay but ready to go” and for Welch this in short is resilience. People of today need a specific mindset that will support them in meeting the demands of the workplace

environment. They also need to be emotionally intelligent and have a healthy lifestyle with a soul connection (Greef 2002:27).

Resilience is a conscious choice. It is not those things that go wrong that make us vulnerable but the way that we as individuals think about them. Resilience can be fostered through training interventions. Organisations need balanced, happy individuals with a whole set of critical attributes, attitudes and skills which go beyond basic job related skills. These critical attributes are trainable (Greef 2002:27-28). All organisations have individuals that work within specific processes and systems whether they are workers or managers.

Researchers are increasingly moving towards a model that focuses on strengths with resilience as basis. The reason for this is that resilience can be seen as qualities generally associated with personal maturity and which predict superior performance in a variety of jobs. Resilience should not only be addressed on the personal side but should also be taken further to the organisation. This is important so that the organisation can become the place where people would like to be but also want to develop the best in themselves. Employees should be challenged to be resilient in their jobs and careers as well (Strumpfer & Kellerman 2002:40-41).

Due to the positive nature of resilience training, the learners are more motivated, which leads to the desire to implement the new learning and discoveries about themselves in the workplace. This motivation leads to the improvement of performance, which stimulates a positive sense of self-efficacy and self-efficacy beliefs, and results in general in a more positive environment and good performance.

The family is not a direct part of the problem statement of this study but it must be noted that it can be deduced from Bandura's theory of reciprocity and Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory that the family is part of the environment or system that is influenced positively by the resilience training. The resilience training can also, according to the above-mentioned theories, influence the employee within the workplace in a positive way. For example, if the employee is happy at home, he or she will have a greater chance of being happy at work, or the other way around. Research has shown that these two

systems (Bronfenbrenner) or environments (Bandura, referring to work and home) can either have a positive or negative influence on each other. For the rest of this chapter reference will be made to environments.

As part of recruitment practices, many companies recruit for resilience. They do this by listing resilience as one of the personality traits that the future employee should exhibit. However, on enquiry what resilience means, many different views are given. This applies to both psychology and HRM literature (Kellerman & Strumpfer 2002:28).

Resilience is considered to enable a person to maintain emotional and physical health. It further supports and enables an individual to embrace opportunities but also cope better with future shock (Conner 1992:14).

It must also be taken into consideration that much more formal research on resilience has been done on children than on adults. Resilience has only started to trigger interest from organisations as some of the sources quoted in this study will show.

2.4 RESILIENCE AS A CONSTRUCT

There are positive views that suggest that researchers are in agreement with each other. However, the theoretical and research literature on resilience indicates just the opposite, as it does not reflect consensus about definitions. These variations are more specifically reflected in both the operationalisation and the measurement of key constructs within resilience (Luther, Cicchetti, & Becker 2000; Louw 1999). Resilience is a very broad construct and therefore this study will consider the following categories as set out and described in Louw (1999) and elsewhere in order to put resilience into perspective:

- Resilience as an innate trait or ability of the individual;
- Personality traits of resilient individuals;
- Resilience as a process;
- Life cycle as a perspective for resilience;
- Resilience as a systemic construct.

2.4.1 Resilience as an innate trait or ability of the individual

Several researchers like Louw, Wagnild and Young (in Louw 1999:9) view resilience as an intrinsic ability or an aspect of personality that “moderates the negative effects of situations”.

This definition is taken further by Flach (in Louw 1999:9) by asserting that resilience lies in the individual’s ability to experience in full the pain that is caused by a crisis and adversities within the individual’s life. The individual can overcome this adversity, survive the stress and rise above the disadvantage. The tumult and disorganisation created by crisis is painful for any individual. The idea of the ability to bounce back is the ability that empowers people to achieve a higher level of personal integration. It helps them to find a deeper appreciation of the values that guide their lives. The ability supports the individual’s recovery. It is also referred to as a combination of both chemistry and personality factors by researchers like Flach; Valentine & Feinauer; Gamezy and Miller (in Louw 1999:9-10).

Performance by the employee is important in the corporate environment. Therefore the innate qualities mentioned above are important from a corporate point of view as they will enable the individual to thrive better in extreme and adverse situations and to ‘bounce back’ faster whilst performing. Performance cannot take place if the employee is not allowed to master those outcomes in which the employee is expected to perform. Providing resilience training, as a component of strengths-focussed training, is a way of creating a learning environment whereby functional skills can be attained by the learners to enhance their coping abilities, amongst many others, and as a result helps them to thrive.

Bounce-back ability includes the individual’s ability to handle stress, to effectively utilise knowledge of past successes, optimism, and the capacity to handle stress. *Thriving* includes the individual’s ability to be optimistic, happiness (*carpe diem*), not succumbing to negative resilience, and mindfulness whereby the individual has the capacity to enjoy moments during the course of the day or week. When a person has the ability to bounce back and thrive in the working environment, it has positive effects on the

individual. These positive effects include, but are not limited to, strong self-efficacy, positive self-esteem, motivation, the utilisation of opportunities to improve performance, and so on. These positive effects influence the moral and performance of the team and of departments. The learners apply the learning from the resilience training in their family environment as well. The family members ask the learner to teach them the skills acquired from the resilience training because they see the change in skills, knowledge and attitudes of the learner who underwent the resilience training. In this way the learning is transferred to both the home and work environments. This behaviour relates to the following motivational theories discussed earlier in this chapter:

- Bandura's reciprocal interaction (behaviour, environment and psychological influences);
- Bronfenbrenner's bio-ecological systems theory: when one thing changes (like knowledge, skills and attitudes) in a system, it directly contributes to changes within those systems that relate to the one affected by the change;
- Bandura's social cognitive theory (learning and motivation);
- Bandura's self-efficacy theory: person's judgment of his or her capacity to perform (figure 2.2);
- Skinner's operant conditioning (behaviour is controlled by the consequences).

The positive consequences that are created become a mutually beneficial relationship to both the employee and the organisation in which the employee functions.

2.4.2 Personality traits of resilient individuals

The most prominent researchers regarding the personality traits of resilient individuals are Higgins (1994) and Berliner and Bernard (1996). In terms of the personality traits of resilient individuals, they are considered to be friendly but also competent at social relations. They are inclined to be both creative and empathetic, have an internal locus of control but also volunteer to help where possible. They have the ability to understand and be sensitive to

others, which can be attributed to empathy. Their ability to be flexible makes them open to compromise. They display acceptance of a delayed gratification for their own personal needs. Their ability to laugh at their own mistakes makes them see the humour in life (Higgins 1994:20-21).

- a. Social competence. Central personality traits, which are commonly associated with resilience, are described as the social competence within the individual. This refers to the ability to establish and sustain positive relationships, to demonstrate empathy, as well as a sense of humour. Another trait is resourcefulness, which can be described as the ability to reach decisions in a creative as well as a reflective manner, which enables the individual to consider other solutions. Autonomy and a sense of purpose are the other two traits that Berliner and Bernard refer to. These include the ability to behave independently with optimism and ambition, which describes a sense of purpose (Berliner & Bernard 1996:4). MacFarlane (1998:21) views the personality traits to be autonomy, emotional responsiveness, optimism, creativity and social competence.
- b. Autonomy. Autonomy is described as to be empowering and to promote a sense of control. It can be further defined as "...stable, separate, independent and private" or as "...the right to safe boundaries". Autonomy is viewed from the perspective of "emotional disengagement". Individuals who are resilient succeed in separating themselves from the adversity that they find themselves in (Young-Eisendrath 1996:116; Wolin & Wolin 1993:88-100).
- c. Self-control. The individual's ability to focus and control his or her impulses is part of being a resilient individual. Self-control is considered to be the foundation for the individual's experience regarding feelings relating to his or her ability of self-control. This results in the motivation of the individual to keep on no matter what difficult situation the individual faces. This motivation develops a positive mentality within the individual (Joseph 1994: 30).

It can be agreed that there are many characteristics that withhold individuals from becoming victims in adverse situations. Parr, Montgomery & De Bell

(1998:26) confirm the statements made by Berliner and Bernard but prefer to expand the above-mentioned three areas into seven broad dimensions. These seven dimensions elaborate on those of Berliner and Bernard discussed earlier in this section.

They entail that the individual will:

- Be socially adept;
- Have a positive outlook on life;
- Have a vision and sense of mission;
- Accept responsibility in taking risks;
- Be creative and have a sense of humour;
- Be able to monitor; and
- Regulate emotions, have insight and be perceptive.

2.4.3 Resilience as a process

Resilience is a dynamic process that can be learned at any given point in life by an individual (Flach & Freiberg in Louw 1999: 11; Greef 2002:28; Saleebey in Louw 1999:11). It is further described as a “multi-faceted process from which people draw and learn from the best” they can find in their environment, which can include family, school or the community (Flach & Freiberg in Louw 1999: 11).

With regard to resilience training, as a component of strengths-focussed training, no formal research has been undertaken within the corporate environment before. For the purpose of this literature review, previous resilience studies undertaken on both adults as well as children are considered as far as they can be made applicable to the organisational context.

Resilience is considered to be a dynamic construct, which reflects the fact that resilience cannot be seen as a static trait. Resilience takes development, context and domain into consideration. Specified contexts can include social, cultural and political contexts (Cicchetti & Garmezy 1993; Freitas & Downey 1998; Massey, Cameron, Ouellette & Fine 1998). These contexts can be considered as an extension of Bronfenbrenner’s bio-ecological systems theory

where each of the three contexts (social, cultural and political) is seen as three systems. It also supports the “multi-faceted process” discussed in this paragraph.

The significance of the aspects discussed in this section on the organisation is that resilience training can contribute to a multi-dimensional process of ensuring wellness and well-being of the employee. Many organisations have an employee assistance programme which looks after the overall wellness and health of the employees. Resilience training, therefore, does not have to be a stand-alone or once off training programme but can contribute within the organisation as part of a multi-faceted process.

2.4.4 Life cycle as a perspective for resilience

Not all researchers on resilience are of the opinion that resilience is an attribute that is “born into children or even acquired during their development”. Rutter (in Louw 1999:12) describes resilience as a “set of social and intra-psycho processes, which develop over time”. It is thus seen as normal development under difficult situations. He argues that a number of positive personal attributes as well as the family, social and the cultural environment in which the child is involved further supports this development.

Contrary to the above, Dugan and Coles (in Louw 1999:10) consider resilience to be a “multidimensional construct or capacity that is made up of a pattern of related abilities which permits people to be active, persistent and flexible in applying a variety of skills and strategies across a range of situations and problems”. This does not only refer to the recovering capacity of an individual but also to the fact that resilience is considered to be something that can be developed in all people. This recovering capacity of employees is critical in any organisation where change and stress are the order of the day. Therefore it is very important that employees both within themselves and within their teams should be skilled and made aware of resilience and what it means to them as employees. As a result they will be able to thrive under these difficult and stressful situations. Thriving would contribute to the employee’s ability to prosper in adverse situations, whether it is in the work place or at home, and to the ability to ‘bounce back’ fast.

Environmental support includes the interaction of biological, psychological and sociological factors. Egeland et al (1993) reason that it is so because the individual will increasingly utilise his or her experiences, attitudes, expectations and feelings as situations derive. Louw (1999:13) specifies that this approach sees resilience as “an interaction between nature and nurture”.

There is some comparison between the bio-ecological systems theory of Bronfenbrenner as well as Bandura’s triadic model of reciprocity. Both theories refer to the effect of the interaction of the environment, as part of either the triadic model of reciprocity, or as a system within the bio-ecological theory, with the individual. The new experiences, attitudes, knowledge and skills that the individual obtains are applied in the workplace and results in better performance and motivation of the individual. Improvement in performance and motivation creates a cycle of positive events for the employee. The individual wants to implement more of the acquired knowledge, skills and attitudes leading to more success and resulting in a happier family life. The employee therefore comes to work more relaxed and focuses on what needs to be done during working hours. This positive cycle of events results in the employee completing the tasks at hand without having to spend more hours at work to complete tasks. As a result there is more time to spend at home with the family and to create better relationships with the spouse, children, friends, and so on. The extra time and quality spent at home leads to a more balanced life style that contributes to the total well-being of the employee as a whole.

2.4.5 Resilience as a systemic construct

During the study of resilient families it was found that a systemic approach was necessary. This approach did not only focus on the individual within a certain context but it examined resilience within a system, which included the relationships and processes within that system as well. This is where the phrase “relational resilience” comes from. The importance of family beliefs and spirituality to family resilience is also mentioned by Walsh (in Louw, 1998:13). Both Walsh and Brookes-Gunn (in Louw, 1999:13) agree that family processes and relations create the interactional processes which enable

families to overcome adversities. This study recognises the positive contribution that the resilience training has on both the workplace and the family. According to the bio-ecological systems theory, systems in which learners are daily exposed to in the working and home environment are considered to be the: team, department, organisation, family, community, church, etc. As discussed in section 2.4.4, when things go well in the family, the chances are better that it will go well within the workplace despite problems and adversities, and vice versa. These reciprocal relationships between the employee, environment and systems (home, team, department, performance, etc) are described in the scenario stated in section 2.4.4.

The concept of bouncing back during times of adversity is not an individual matter. Further, resilience is described to be a complex relationship between inner strengths as well as outer help throughout an individual's life span. This web of relationships and experiences "teach people mastery, doggedness, love, moral courage and hope" (Butler 1997:25).

2.4.6 Resilience as a holistic construct

From the beginning of section 2.4, various categories of resilience as a construct were stated to put resilience in perspective. From these categories that were considered, the schematic representation of resilience as supplied by Friedman (2003:4) can be adopted (figure 2.3). The holistic approach is clearly shown in the detailed schematic representation. This representation embraces all the concepts discussed as part of the resilience construct in this chapter.

2.5 Parameters and criteria

From the literature review it followed that there are a number of critical aspects that has an influence on the individual within the team:

- An employee who feels valued within the organisation, team or at home has higher self-efficacy and self-efficacy beliefs than the employee who is not feeling valued. This higher self-efficacy and self-efficacy beliefs can withstand production pressures and reduce stress but the opposite is also

true. When employees do not feel valued within the organisation, team or at home, they have lower self-efficacy and self-efficacy beliefs, struggle to withstand production pressures and stress much easier. These aspects refer to the mastery, support and bounce-back-ability of the individual.

- Motivation affects both performance and learning of the individual in the team or department. The way that managers handle the individuals within the team has a direct effect, not only on the motivation of that individual, but also on the desire of the individual to keep on learning and to perform. The new skills, knowledge and attitudes that the individual learn are applied within the workplace resulting in better performance and motivation of the employee. Giving resilience training is a way of creating a learning environment whereby the learners can enhance their coping abilities and can attain functional skills, amongst others. These aspects refer to the resourcefulness, mastery, support and bounce-back ability of the individual within the team.
- Self-efficacy and self-esteem are important skill sets that the learners are equipped with because of the influence it can have on both the motivational behaviour and performance of the individual within the team.

These insights highlight the positive effect that the following variables have on each other: the individual, the environment, systems (team, department, organisation, etc.), behaviour, performance and the psychological aspects of the individual and thus serve as criteria and parameters to determine the effects of strengths-focussed training on the individual within the team.

The following four critical skills sets or variables that were identified are highlighted again:

- Mastery. Sense of control; decision making; organising and self-efficacy / self-esteem.
- Support. Support includes internal, interpersonal, systemic and spiritual support.
 - **Internal support:** inner strength; hardiness, self-efficacy, positive self-reflection;

- **Interpersonal support:** receiving, giving and empathy;
 - **Systemic support:** within the organisational context;
 - **Spiritual:** Values, intuition, mindfulness and beliefs.
- Bounce-back ability. This section has four sub-skill sets consisting of:
 - Individual's ability to handle stress;
 - Effective utilisation of past successes to create a positive mindset for now (boosting self-esteem);
 - Individual's optimism;
 - Individual's capacity to handle change.
 - Resourcefulness. The sub-skill sets are:
 - Creativity and out-of-the-box thinking;
 - Individual's ability to use networks effectively;
 - Learned resourcefulness.

These aspects are included in the schematical representation by Friedman adopted for this study (figure 2.3).

2.6 CONCLUSION

In this chapter an overview and a critical summary were given of the motivational theories of Bandura, Skinner, Bronfenbrenner and resilience as a construct. From the literature review it could be deduced that a positive environment leads to higher morale, whether it is for the employee on the shop floor or a manager in his or her management team. When employees' strengths are known and utilised accordingly, morale and self-efficacy are affected in a positive way. When an employee feels positive and energised, the employee in turn wants to influence his or her performance positively. It is therefore evident that employees should be handled according to their strengths rather than their weaknesses, which focus more on the negative side.

An employee who feels valued within the organisation, team or at home has higher self-efficacy and self-efficacy beliefs than the employee who is not

feeling valued. This higher self-efficacy and self-efficacy beliefs can withstand production pressures and reduce stress but the opposite is also true. When the employees do not feel valued within the organisation, team or at home, they have lower self-efficacy and self-efficacy beliefs, struggle to withstand production pressures and stress much easier. It could also be deduced from the review that motivation affects both performance and learning. Therefore, the way that a manager handles the individual within the team has a direct effect, not only on the motivation of that individual, but also on the desire of the individual to keep on learning and to perform. The new skills, knowledge and attitudes that the individual learn are applied within the workplace resulting in better performance and motivation of the employee. Giving resilience training is a way of creating a learning environment whereby functional skills can be attained by the learners to enhance their coping abilities, amongst others. Self-efficacy and self-esteem are important skill sets that the learners are equipped with because of the influence they can have on both the motivational behaviour and performance of the individual within the team.

These insights highlighted the positive effect that the following variables have on each other: the individual, the environment, systems (team, department, organisation, etc.), behaviour, performance and the psychological aspects of the individual. A theoretical foundation for using strengths-focussed training to improve performance has therefore been established. The theoretical foundation also guided the process of identifying parameters and criteria for determining the effects of strengths-focussed training on the individual within the team (see Annexure D section A). The criteria and parameters for determining the effects of strengths-focussed training on team performance are determined in Chapter three (see Annexure D section B).

In Chapter three of this study a literature review of psycho-education, adult learning and team performance within human resource development context is conducted. This is done to contextualise the parameters and criteria for determining the effect of strengths-focussed training on the performance of the team.

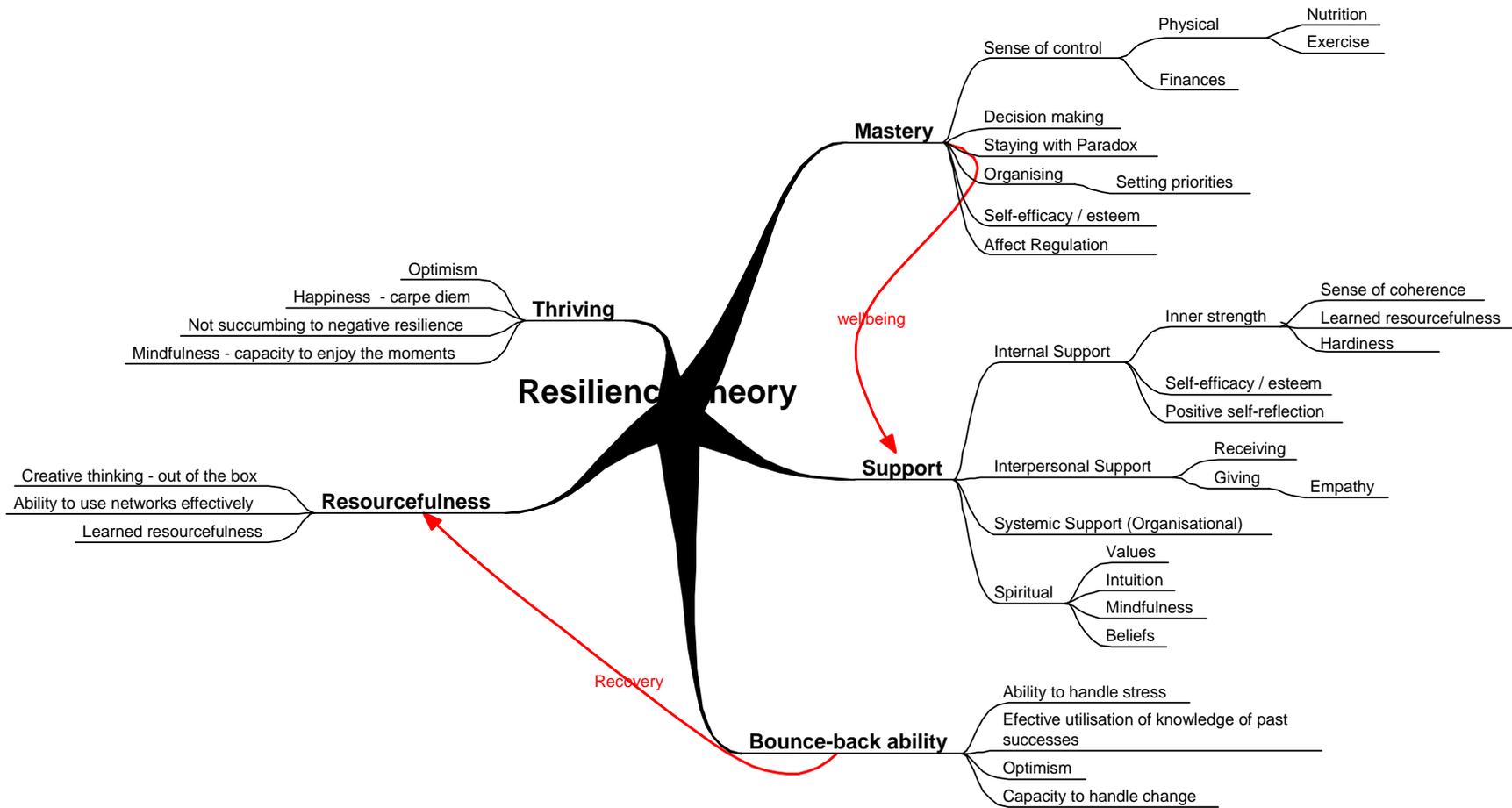


Figure 2.3 A schematic representation of resilience (Friedman 2003:4)