

**EXPLORING RESILIENCE AS A COMPONENT OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS
AMONG SELECTED GRADE 10 AND 11 LEARNERS IN
THABO MOFUTSANYANE DISTRICT, EASTERN FREE STATE**

by

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DECLARATION

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I declare that **EXPLORING RESILIENCE AS A COMPONENT OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS AMONG SELECTED GRADE 10 AND 11 LEARNERS IN THABO MOFUTSANYANE DISTRICT, EASTERN FREE STATE**, is my work and that every source that I have used or quoted has been shown and recognised through complete citations. In addition, I have verified the dissertation's originality through an authenticity-checking programme, which conforms to the established standards for originality.

Finally, I attest that I have not previously submitted this work, or any section of it, for assessment at Unisa for another degree or at any other institution of higher learning.



SIGNATURE

January 2024

Date

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my mother, my two sons, my daughter, and all who believed in me.

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I would like to thank the Almighty and my ancestors.

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ABSTRACT

There is global concern about the poor academic performance of learners, specifically learners from disadvantaged backgrounds such as those found in the Thabo Mofutsanyane District. However, there are some learners in the Thabo Mofutsanyane District, who are performing well academically, despite the disadvantages they face. Therefore, an investigation was necessary to establish why certain learners succeed academically, despite the adverse conditions. The researcher utilised a case study design to explore this phenomenon and collected data through individual and focus group interviews as well as academic reports. Thematic content analysis was used to analyse the data obtained from learners, teachers, and parents/guardians. Two schools, with twenty participants from each school, were chosen, using a purposive sample technique. In this study, the researcher found several factors that enabled learners from disadvantaged backgrounds to be academically resilient and, thereby, academically successful. These include, for example, positive intrapersonal characteristics such as self-efficacy beliefs, confidence, self-dialogue, fear of failing, and the ability to use the deprived conditions as intrinsic motivation for self-improvement and personal growth. Other social factors are their family members, teachers, principals, the school governing body (SGB), the DBE District Office and the Department of Education. Findings further indicated that, besides the resources provided by the community centres, neighbours and friends, the use of digital technology also enabled academic resilience. There is a need for further studies to explore how private tutoring, proxy teachers and a belief in supernatural powers can enhance academic resilience and, thereby, academic success. More research is also needed to determine how the Department of Education, the DBE District Offices, SGBs and school principals' use of electronic devices and financial resources can promote academic resilience and the academic success of learners. Lastly, another avenue for further studies is on the role played by cultural rituals and the community, as well as intelligence as a biological aspect in the learners' psychological, social and environmental readiness, and on how this could promote academic resilience and academic success.

KEYWORDS: academic resilience, academic success, resilience risk, protective factors

KGUTSUFATSO

Ho na le ngongoreho ya lefatshe ka ho se sebetse hantle ha baithuti dithutong, haholoholo baithuti ba tswang malapeng a hlokang menyetla jwaloka a fumanehang Seterekeng sa Thabo Mofutsanyane. Le ha ho le jwalo, ho na le baithuti ba bang karolong ya Thabo Mofutsanyane, ba sebetsang hantle dithutong leha ba na le mathata. Ka hona, ho ne ho hloka hlahala dipatlisiso ho fumana hore na ke hobaneng ha baithuti ba bang ba ntse ba atleha dithutong, ho sa tsotellehe maemo a mabe. Mofuputsi o sebedisitse moralo wa boithuto ho hlahloba ketsahalo ena mme a bokella dintlha ka dipuisano tsa motho ka mong le tsa sehlopha se tsepamisitsweng maikutlong hammoho le ditlaleho tsa thuto. Tshekatsheko ya diteng tsa thitokgang e ile ya sebediswa ho sekaseka dintlha tse fumanweng ho baithuti, matitjhere, le ho batswadi/bahlokomedi. Ho ile ha kgethwa dikolo tse pedi, tse nang le baithuti ba mashome a mabedi ba tswang sekolong se seng le se seng, ho sebediswa mohlala o nang le morero. Thutopatlisisong ena, mofuputsi o fihletse dintlha tse mmalwa tse kgonahatsang baithuti ba tswang malapeng a futsanehileng hore ba kgone ho mamella dithutong, mme ba kgone ho etsa jwalo, ba atlehe dithutong. Tsena di kenyelletsa, mohlala, ditshwanelo tse ntle tsa ka hare ho motho tse kang ditumelo tsa ho ikemela, ho itshepa, dipuisano tsa boithati, tshabo ya ho hloleha, le bokgoni ba ho sebedisa maemo a ho qhelelwa ka thoko e le tshusumetso e ka hare ya ho intlafatsa le ho hola ha motho. Mabaka a mang a kahisano ke ditho tsa malapa a bona, matitjhere, mesuwehlooho, sehlopha se laolang sekolo (SGB), Ofisi ya Setereke ya DBE le Lefapha la Thuto. Diphuputso di bontshitse hape hore, ntle le disebediswa tse fanweng ke ditsi tsa setjhaba, baahisani le metswalle, tshebediso ya theknoloji ya dijithale le yona e nolofeditse ho mamella dithutong. Ho na le tlhokahalo ya dithuto tse eketsehileng tsa ho hlahloba hore na dithupelo tsa poraefete, matitjhere a baemedi le tumelo ya matla a phahametseng tlhaho di ka matlafatsang botsitso ba thuto, ka hona, katleho dithutong. Ho boetse ho hloka hlahala dipatlisiso tse eketsehileng ho fumana hore na Lefapha la Thuto, Diofisi tsa Setereke tsa DBE, di-SGB le dihloho tsa dikolo tshebediso ya disebediswa tsa elektronike le mehlodi ya ditjhelete di ka kgothalletsa ho tiya ha thuto jwang le katleho ya thuto ya baithuti. Qetellong, mokgwa o mong wa dithuto tse tswelang pele o mabapi le karolo e phethwang ke meetlo ya meetlo le setjhaba, hammoho le bohale e le karolo ya baeloji boitokisetsong ba kelello, setjhabeng le tikolohong, le mabapi le hore na sena se ka kgothalletsa botsitso ba thuto le katleho ya thuto jwang.

MANTSWE A SEHLOOHO: ho tiya thutong, katleho ya thuto, kotsi ya ho mamella,
mabaka a tshireletso

OKUCASHUNIWE

Kunesikhalo emhlabeni jikelele maqondana nokungenzi kahle kwabafundi ezifundweni zabo, ikakhulu labo bafundi abahlala ezindaweni ezintulayo njengalaba abangaphansi kweSifunda saseThabo Mofutsanyane. Nakuba kunjalo, bakhona-ke abafundi kulesi Sifunda saseThabo Mofutsanyane abenza kahle ezifundweni zabo, nanoma bebhakene nezinsalelo ezithile. Ngakho-ke, bekubalulekile ukuba kwenziwe uphenyo ukuze kutholakale ukuthi kungani abanye abafundi bephumelela ezifundweni zabo, nanoma ngabe bahlangabezana nezinsalelo. Lapha umcwaningi usebenzise ucwaningo lokuxoxisana nabantu ngokwehlukahlukana kwabo ukuhlola lesi simo waphinda waqoqa ulwazi ngokuxoxisana nabantu ngabodwana nangamaqoqo kanye nangemibiko yezemfundo. Kuye kwahlaziywa ingqikithi ukuze kucwaningwe ulwazi olutholakale kubafundi, kothisha, nabazali/abaqaphi bezingane. Kusetshenziswe uhlelo lokucacisa inhloso, kwaqokwa ababambiqhaza abangamashumi amabili abatonyulwe ezikoleni ezimbili. Kulolu cwaningo, umcwaningi uthole izinto ezimbalwa ezenza abafundi abasuka ezindaweni ezintulayo babe nempokophelo, baphinde baphumelele ezifundweni abazenzayo. Kwezinye zezizathu, kubalwa lokhu, ukuzimisela komuntu siqu njengokuthi akholelwe kwakwenzayo, ukuzethemba, ukuzibuza-uziphendula, ukwesaba ukwehluleka, kanye nekhono lokusebenzisa ukwentula izinsiza njengento ekugqugquzelayo ukwazi ukwenza kangcono nokuzikhulisa siqu. Ezinye izinto ezidala lokhu kuba amalungu emindeni, othisha, othishanhloko, isigungu esilawula isikole (i-SGB), iHhovisi Lesifunda i-DBE kanye noMnyango Wezemfundo. Imiphumela iphinde yaveza ukuthi, ngaphandle kwezinsiza ezihlinzekwa yizikhungo zomphakathi, omakhelwane kanye nabangani, kanjalo nokusetshenziswa kobuchwepheshe bedijithali nakho kuyasiza ekubeni nempokophelo yokufunda. Kusan sidingo sokuqhubeka nocwaningo lokuthola ukuthi ukufundisa kwabazimele, othisha abangabameleli kanye nokukholelwa emandleni angaphezu kwalawo onawo kungabathuthukisa kanjani abafundi ukuze benze ngcono, baphinde, babe nempokophelo yempumelelo ezifundweni abazenzayo. Kudingeka nocwaningo olwengeziwe ukuze kutholakale ukuthi kulekelela kangakanani ukuba uMnyango Wezemfundo, amaHhovisi Ezifunda i-DBE, ama-SGB kanye nothishanhloko bezikole basebenzisa izinsiza zikagesi kanye nosizo lwezezimali ukuze kusimame ukufundisa kanye nempumelelo yabafundi. Okokugcina, enye indlela yokuqhubeka nocwaningo imaqondana neqhaza elibanjwa ezamasiko nomphakathi, kanye nobuhlakani njengengxenye yesayensi lezempilo ekuzilungiseleleni kwabafundi ngokwengqondo, kwezenhlalo nezemvelo, nokuthi lokhu kungazisimamisa kanjani

ezemfundo nempumelelo ezifundweni.

AMAGAMA AMQOKA: ukuphokophela kwezemfundo, impumelelo yezemfundo, ingozi yokuphokophela, izimo zokuzivikela

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ANA	ANA Annual National Assessment
CoGTA	Department of Cooperative Governance and the Department of Traditional Affairs
EELC	Equal Education Law Centre
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PIRLS	Progress in International Reading Literacy Study
PPCT	Processes, Person, Context, and Time
PPFPs	Promotive and Protective Factors and Processes
PPP	Purchasing Power Parity for private consumption uses
SACMEQ	Southern and East Africa Consortium for Monitoring Education Quality
SADEC	Southern African Development Community
SIAS	Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support Strategy
TIMS	Trends in International Mathematics and Science Studies
USD	United States Dollar

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I deliberate on the background and context of the study and present the problem statement, purpose and research questions. Furthermore, I discuss the aim and objectives of the study and the rationale for the study on resilience as a component of academic success among selected Grade 10 and 11 learners. I discuss the choices made about the research design and methodology and paradigmatic assumptions, how participants were selected for this study, and the data collection and analysis strategies employed. Additionally, I consider the study's trustworthiness, ethical considerations, and limitations. Lastly, I discuss the conceptual framework, clarify the concepts and summarise the chapter.

1.2 Background and context

Throughout the world, poor academic performance has several unfavourable effects on learners as individuals and schools. For instance, poor academic performance results in school dropout (Selvarajan & Vasanthagumar, 2022) and a high level of stress (Pascoe et al., 2020). Ahmed et al. (2021) indicated that the weak performance of learners results in the amalgamation and/or closure of some academic institutions (Lamola, 2022).

Academic success is a crucial aspect of education, with significant implications for individuals, communities, and societies at large. In South Africa, researchers have identified disparities in academic performance among different ethnic groups, particularly noting the underperformance of Black South African learners compared to their white counterparts (Moller et al., 2013; Spaull, 2012). This has prompted the need for focused research that examines the cultural protective factors specific to ethnic groups within their respective contexts (Mbindyo, 2011; Theron & Theron, 2010).

As examples, South African learners performed poorly in reading, mathematics and science in 2019; South African school learners performed weakly on international benchmarking tests for the competency of learners in mathematics and science, where learners reached the minimal level of the target (Mullis et al., 2020); and they

performed inadequately in the Progress in International Reading Literacy (PIRLS) study of 2019 where South Africa was at the last position out of 43 countries (Mullis et al., 2023).

However, it has been observed that within disadvantaged communities, there are Black secondary school learners who excel academically despite facing various difficulties in their school and community environments (Thabane & Selesho, 2012). Marsh et al. (2012) support this notion by stating that certain Black learners demonstrate academic resilience, irrespective of the challenges they encounter in their educational institutions or their socio-economic backgrounds.

Socioeconomic status means the expertise, financial and educational qualifications, and position of the family or community (Abenawe, 2022). According to Igbo et al. (2014), their research indicates that the socio-economic background of learners contributes to academic performance. Furthermore, many studies indicated that socioeconomic status affects the academic life of learners because families with high economic status can afford to purchase resources that are needed for their children's academic needs more than low- and middle-class families (Naushad, 2022). In addition, Naushad (2022) stated that children from low- and middle-class families experience inadequate resources, which might impact their academic success unfavourably. Additionally, inadequate assets and a deteriorating pass rate are features of a disadvantaged context (Abenawe, 2022). Besides inadequate assets, low- and middle-class families are not inspirational to their children's academic success (Naushad, 2022).

An acute state of destitution is the characteristic of a disadvantaged economic background, resulting in an unfavourable academic context that leads to weak academic success (Selvarajan & Vasanthagumar, 2022). Furthermore, Betthäuser et al. (2022) state that many research investigations found that weak academic performance is mostly experienced by learners from a destitute context.

Theron and Theron (2010) and Mbindyo (2011), South African researchers, emphasise the importance of conducting targeted research that examines the cultural protective factors of specific ethnic groups within a particular context. Additionally, Yang and Wang (2022) highlight the significance of investigating protective factors to support

academic success in challenging circumstances. Protective factors refer to the external and internal elements that buffer individuals from the negative impacts of risk factors, enabling them to thrive despite challenging circumstances (Yang & Wang, 2022).

This study focused on external protective factors, including the role of school principals, support from stakeholders, technology, and the community. Research has shown that external protective factors can play a significant role in enhancing academic outcomes (Yang & Wang, 2022). School principals, as educational leaders, have the potential to create a conducive learning environment, establish supportive policies, and foster positive relationships with students. Support from stakeholders, including parents, teachers, and community members, can contribute to students' educational experiences and provide valuable resources and guidance.

Furthermore, technological advancements have opened up new avenues for learning and accessing educational resources, potentially bridging the educational gap between advantaged and disadvantaged communities. The community itself can also serve as a protective factor by providing a supportive and nurturing environment that values education and fosters positive attitudes towards learning.

In addition to external protective factors, internal protective factors are critical in promoting academic resilience. These include factors such as motivation, self-efficacy, self-confidence, and positivity. Internal protective factors influence learners' attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions about their abilities, empowering them to overcome obstacles and persevere in their academic pursuits. For instance, internal protective factors such as positivity. Positivity entails the persons' optimistic way of evaluating themselves, their expectancy, and previous occurrences (Mashoush et al., 2023). Thus, enhancing learners' well-being and their academic endeavours (Rist et al., 2022). Therefore, it means positivity can assist learners in being resilient, so it is advisable to discover aspects that make learners optimistic (Iqbal et al., 2022), such as confidence.

Confidence is a concept that is affected by different aspects and conditions that a person can be exposed to, for example, person's personality, incidents, and background (Gottlieb et al., 2022). Furthermore, Mukherjee (2022) stated that self-confidence has the ability to enhance the academic success of learners who

experience adversity. Learners' self-confidence of their capability to execute academic tasks effectively is regarded as self-efficacy (Soruç et al., 2022). Moreover, other studies view self-efficacy as a protective factor for academic success (Al-Abyadh et al., 2022; Ahmed et al., 2021). The other issue is that self-efficacy is crucial to enhancing the motivation of learners to succeed academically (Lei et al., 2022). In addition, Hadwin et al. (2022) maintain that self-efficacy is another motivational aspect related to academic success. Affuso et al. (2023) agree with the above authors and further mention that self-efficacy and motivation are individual characteristics that affect academic success. Furthermore, Calvin et al. (2022) alluded that intrinsic motivation is essential for academic success.

Since I discussed internal protective factors, I will also focus on external protective factors such as technology and community, family, and school. The school has the capacity to assist learners in experiencing academic success (Copp et al., 2022). Attention will be given to stakeholders such as school governing bodies (SGBs), parents, school principals, teachers, and learners. Furthermore, Freitas et al. (2022) argued that learners view teachers' assistance, positive interrelationships between teachers and learners, and supportive peers as protecting components. However, learners experience an insufficiency of assets which can assist them in their school activities (Mampane, 2023).

Teachers can assist learners to be academically successful when they establish self-help groups among learners and inspire them to strive academically (Cui et al., 2022). Teachers achieve the abovementioned aspect when they demonstrate a positive attitude towards learners and believe in them (Affuso et al., 2023). Nonetheless, teachers and school principals are expected to promote the academic resilience of learners (Mahmoodimehr et al., 2022).

On the other hand, school principals are encouraged to arrange seminars where learners can be exposed to inspiring people to stimulate their interest towards their academic venture (Ahmed et al., 2021). Moreover, most school principals engage members of society and families to assist learners (Mukherjee, 2022) and to help them to be academically resilient (Yang & Wang, 2022). Nonetheless, principals face challenges, such as limited dedication, contextual adversity, and monetary limitations (Garan, 2022).

Sometimes, other SGBs are incompetent due to their incapability to administer school finances properly (Bayat et al., 2014). However, governing body members are expected to coordinate their activities to achieve better provision of education services to learners (Xaba, 2011). Therefore, it implies that all the abovementioned stakeholders are significant assets to develop learners' academic resilience (Copp et al., 2022). Furthermore, it was found that collaboration among school stakeholders, including private organisations, encourages resilience (Fontanilla, 2022). Additionally, societal assistance is significant for the academic success of learners (Ruochen, 2022).

Individual support from community members, peers, relatives, siblings and parents plays a crucial role in the life of school children. This is because parents comfort children and are optimistic about their children's academic success (Gaspar et al., 2022). As a result, favourable relations between parents and children are established, which has a good effect on the children's learning process (Shao & Kang, 2022). To confirm Shao and Kang's views, Cui et al. (2022) stated that their findings in relation to other studies revealed that positive relations between parents and children are significant for the academic endeavours of the children.

However, there are disadvantages associated with this interrelationship, such as the children's inability to develop 'their own personal identity' (Gaspar et al., 2022), and Iqbal et al. (2022) add that tension among children and parents results in a lack of inspiration from parents to their children which impacts unfavourably towards the children's academic endeavours.

Other external protective factors originate from technology and community; for example, Shukia (2022) stated that members of the neighbourhood could assist school managers in maintaining the school, and it is the school's responsibility to urge members of the neighbourhood to provide support using good proclamations (Shukia, 2022). The purpose of doing all these aspects is to advance the development of academic resilience among learners from a disadvantaged background (Rich et al., 2022). However, other neighbourhood members do not want to assist the school financially because they believe that the government is entirely financially responsible for non-paying fee schools (Shukia, 2022). The other factor is that neighbourhoods are becoming more technologically inclined, and educational institutions are becoming

extra stressful and technologically taxing, which makes collaboration highly significant (Lamola, 2022).

To execute blended teaching and learning methods successfully, which includes e-learning, requires technological devices to be available in schools (Handayani & Sulastri, 2022). For example, utilising a constructivist approach in the classroom using technology requires teachers to interact with learners and learners to interact with other learners using technology (Wu et al., 2022). However, Sub-Saharan African countries experience technological challenges such as a lack of technological devices, and in developed countries, the challenge is teachers' negative perception of e-learning (Schmitz et al., 2022). Mampane (2023, p. 63) found that in one of the Sub-Saharan African countries, they do not view the ability to utilise technology and the development of it as neither an asset or a barrier. So, there is a need to investigate the correlation among 'resilience, academic resilience, career aspirations and the role of technology in education' (Mampane, 2023, p. 63). According to Goldstein and Brooks (2013) scientific investigation on resilience has fast-tracked and it is still relevant even after 10 years because young people experience more adversity due to technological difficulty, and it is significant to assist them to be resilient and comprehend the protective and risk factors (Goldstein & Brooks, 2013). In support of this statement, Dwiastuti et al. (2021) argue that scientific investigation on protective and risk issues is essential due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

I discussed protective factors in the above statements and now my focus will be on risk factors. Risk factors are issues that have unfavourable effects on learners' academic success (Yang & Wang, 2022). For example, the world experiences different challenges responsible for various unhealthy conditions (Bharat et al., 2022). For example, the destitution communities experience a deficiency of assets that can assist them in prospering (Garan, 2022). At the family level, it was found that inadequate support from parents is a risk factor (Mampane, 2023), such as a lack of resources for parents to support their children in academic endeavours (Garan, 2022; Shao & Kang, 2022) due to lack of employment (Mampane, 2023).

This study explored resilience in enhancing academic achievement among Black South African learners who encounter numerous challenges. By examining the role of resilience as a contributing factor, this research seeks to expand the current

understanding of the factors that lead to academic success in adverse contexts. In this context, resilience is viewed as a product of various resources, including internal and external protective factors, which play a crucial role in fostering academic excellence among these learners.

1.3 The problem statement

The problem at hand revolves around the persistent academic disparities observed between learners from disadvantaged backgrounds and those from more privileged communities. Prior research consistently reveals that learners from adverse contexts generally exhibit weak academic performance compared to their counterparts from affluent communities (Wang et al., 2022). Moreover, studies indicate that South African school learners tend to underperform academically when compared to students from international communities (De Villiers & Ntshoe, 2014; Mouton et al., 2012). Furthermore, the consequences of weak academic performance encompass various negative outcomes, such as school discontinuation (Lamola, 2022), high dropout rates (Selvarajan & Vasanthagumar, 2022) and increased stress levels (Pascoe et al., 2020).

However, it is crucial to acknowledge that despite the challenging circumstances experienced by learners from disadvantaged communities, there exist instances where certain Black secondary school learners excel academically (Marsh et al., 2012; Thabane & Selesho, 2012). Understanding the factors contributing to these resilient learners' academic success is paramount. Therefore, it is imperative to investigate the factors that foster academic resilience and success among socio-economically disadvantaged learners to foster resilience among all learners.

1.4 Purpose of the study

Considering the above statements, this study made every effort to explore components that contribute to academic success among selected Grade 10 and 11 learners in Thabo Mofutsanyane district, Eastern Free State. In order to address the aforementioned objective, the researcher must evaluate the perspectives of the participants through the utilisation of a qualitative case study research method to delve into and comprehend the phenomenon (Kekeya, 2021). In order to uncover and comprehend the participants' experiences, the researcher employed semi-structured face-to-face interviews with open-ended questions, focus group discussions, and documentation to collect participant data (Hancock et al., 2007). Furthermore, I

analysed data collected from 12 learners, four teachers and four parents using a thematic content analysis technique to explore and understand the participants' experiences and views regarding academic resilience in the Thabo Mofutsanyane district, Eastern Free State. This study aimed to contribute to the body of knowledge on academic resilience which leads to the success of disadvantaged learners.

1.5 The research questions

This study was guided by a primary research question and secondary research questions.

1.5.1 Primary research question

The main research question in this study is as follows:

What factors determine academic resilience as a component of academic success among selected Grade 10 and 11 learners in the Thabo Mofutsanyane district, Eastern Free State?

1.5.2 Secondary research questions

The secondary research questions for this study were:

- How do learners, teachers and parents / guardians view academic success and academic resilience?
- What are the challenges encountered by learners and how do their personal characteristics contribute to developing their academic resilience despite their challenges?
- How do families support the academic resilience and success of learners?
- What strategies do school communities employ to facilitate the achievement of learners' academic resilience and success?
- What guidelines can be formulated to support learners in attaining academic resilience and consequently, academic success?

1.6 The aim and objectives of the study

The aim of this investigation is to explore the determinants of academic resilience as a component of academic success among selected Grade 10 and 11 learners in the Thabo Mofutsanyane district, Eastern Free State.

The objectives of the study are as follows:

- To explore how learners, teachers and parents / guardians view academic success and academic resilience.
- To examine challenges encountered by learners and their personal characteristics that contribute to the development of their academic resilience despite their challenges.
- To explore how families support the academic resilience and success of learners.
- To explore strategies employed by school communities to facilitate the achievement of learners' academic resilience and success.
- To formulate guidelines to support learners in attaining academic resilience and consequently, academic success.

1.7 Rationale for the study

I lived in a disadvantaged family and community background, and academic success was the most important aspect to consider during the early years of my secondary schooling. The reason was that I had the passion to succeed, and I believed in myself that I would strive academically. I noticed that teachers were not taking the academic performance of learners seriously during that time because most of us were pushed to the subsequent grade, which led to my self-reflection and interrogation of how that could be possible to be moved to the next class because we did not deserve to be progressed. I realised that my passion for succeeding academically and pride in being a high school learner faded because of the bad academic environment at that time. However, I accomplished my Grade 12 and succeeded in graduating at the university level.

During my career as a teacher, I worked at one of the best-performing schools in a semi-rural area. I noticed that all learners in that school were from disadvantaged

communities,, but most did well academically. Nonetheless, it was found that learners from a disadvantaged background experience weak academic performance (Naushad, 2022; Wang et al., 2022). I kept wondering why most learners from other high schools were failing academically because they faced the same adversities as those from Thabo Mofutsanyane district in QwaQwa.

I also experienced that some Black secondary school learners perform well academically despite environmental challenges, but others find it difficult to succeed. In this district, almost all secondary schools were attended by Black learners and it is significant to be investigated to be able to assist learners to succeed academically in adverse contexts. The above statement correlates with the study objective, which is to develop guidelines to support learners to achieve academic resilience and, thereby, academic success.

Some Black secondary school learners in the Eastern Free State (QwaQwa) attended extra classes on weekends to reach the academic performance target set by Thabo Mofutsanyane district, which is influenced by the provincial Department of Basic Education. The implication is that learners might experience fatigue and weak academic self-esteem for those who may perhaps perform poorly academically. This situation could lead to an increased level of dropout, as indicated by Kudzai (2014) that exhaustion and low self-esteem lead to school dropout. Hence, another objective of the study is to examine the challenges that learners face.

Besides learners, I recognised that some educational stakeholders such as district officials provided support to schools. They emphasise the importance of the academic success of learners and stressed that it is the responsibility of teachers and school principals. Interestingly, teachers highlight that it is also the responsibility of learners, SGB and parents. Therefore, this study explores learners, teachers and parents / guardians' views on academic success and academic resilience. Furthermore, I noticed a funny matter where other educational stakeholders shift the blame of weak academic performance to others. For example, the politicians demand that the national department of education be held to account; while the national department of education blames the provincial departments; provinces view the districts as culprits; and districts complain that the school principals need to account; while principals see teachers as guilty for the weak academic performance of learners. Additionally, some academics

with an interest in the academic performance of learners view this challenge as a global phenomenon because they compared the South African education system with other systems in the world, such as Mouton et al. (2012), and De Villiers and Ntshoe (2014). As result, one of the study objectives is to explore how school communities support learners to achieve academic resilience and success.

Various researchers found that personality aspects can assist learners to be resilient so it is advisable to discover the correlation between school academic success and positivity (Gran, 2022). It was noted that there is less scientific consideration of the function of self-efficacy on academic success (Al-Abyadh et al., 2022), and the need to investigate extrinsic motivation and academic success because Cui et al. (2022) found that external motivation is unimportant for academic success. So, one of the objectives of this study is to discover how learner's personal and individual characteristics contribute to their academic resilience.

1.8 Research approach, design, and methodology

Methodology consists of various research aspects such as the research design, sample and sampling techniques, research instruments, data gathering procedures, data examination, and code of ethics (Tabuena et al., 2021) and the research paradigms. In consideration of the above statement, I used a qualitative approach to address the research questions stated in sections 1.5.1 to 1.5.2. I subsequently presented the research design and data gathering techniques to collect and analyse data. I underscore procedures on how I commenced dealing with the matter of research ethics to ensure that the quality of the investigation is trustworthy.

1.8.1 Paradigmatic assumptions

Research paradigms assist with the rationale for what is regarded as applicable and truthful information (Sharp, 2012). In addition, Elshafie (2013) points out that there are various paradigms such as the positive, interpretive, and critical paradigm. For this study, I decided to use the interpretive paradigm. The reason is that Arghode (2012) reveals that in this paradigm the researcher wants a massive number of reasons and to scrutinise participants' answers using various ways to reveal the reality.

1.8.2 The research design

Research design postulates an explicit focus on techniques to be involved in the research study (Creswell, 2014). For example, a qualitative design is a case study research design. According to Leedy and Ormrod (2010), in this design, the focus point of the study is on the phenomenon under investigation. I wanted to understand resilience as a component of academic success using a case study design. A case study design requires a detailed exploration of the circumstances of the people subjected to the investigation (Creswell, 2014).

The reason for the use of a case study design is to carefully choose the participants due to their capability to interject in the exploration of the phenomenon and to comprehend it (Pearson et al., 2015). The reason is that I paid more attention to resilience as a component of academic success than to learners, teachers, and parents/guardians in this study. As Creswell (2012) mentioned, the reason is that in case studies, interest is on the specific issue rather than on the case itself. Furthermore, it is crucial in this kind of research study to gather adequate information to achieve deep understanding through the use of various data collection techniques (Rashid et al., 2019). I used face-to-face interviews with learners, teachers, parents/guardians, and focus groups for learners. I reviewed their second-term academic records and took field notes to explore resilience as a component of academic success for Grade 10 and 11 learners.

1.8.3 Metatheoretical assumptions

The researcher's consideration of ontology, epistemology and methodology of an interpretative paradigm, according to Arghode (2012), the ontology of this paradigm is that reality is regarded as incomprehensible, produced and affected by people's interactions. Researchers search for reality from participants' understanding by examining their perceptions, opinions, beliefs and values. Given that predominantly, participants' knowledge is the base of data creation in qualitative research.

Its epistemology is that the researchers believe in the existence of multiple truths. Creation of knowledge is a focal point, open-ended and it originates from participants' comprehension, meanings, views, explanations. Researchers do not give participants structure for knowledge creation, and they use inductive reasoning because of working with little participant sample (Arghode, 2012).

The researcher aimed to explore the determinants of academic resilience and thereby, academic success among selected Grade 10 and 11 learners in the Thabo Mofutsanyane district, Eastern Free State. A qualitative research approach was used to create data in the form of qualitative methodology of an interpretative paradigm.

1.8.4 Methodological assumptions

Educational research entails three important paradigms: quantitative, qualitative, and mixed research (Johnson & Christensen, 2012). I decided to use the qualitative research approach because, according to Arghode (2012), a qualitative research method is the correct approach to understand educational issues that need to be investigated. For example, I wanted to understand resilience as a component of academic success under investigation. Therefore, I view a literature review as essential to accomplish the abovementioned aspect and others.

A literature review assists in presenting current information about the phenomenon (Ary et al., 2014). It also assisted me in being knowledgeable about the source of difficulties, provided strategies to deal with academic challenges globally and locally, and provided recent information on protective and risk factors. Furthermore, I was equipped with current information on various concepts such as resilience, academic resilience, positive psychology, appreciative inquiry, constructivism, and bio-ecological systems. In qualitative research, the literature review helps to investigate factors causing some Black secondary school learners from disadvantaged backgrounds to be academically resilient. Creswell (2014) suggested that reviewing the work of other scholars can aid individuals in determining the importance of the subject under investigation and provide the researcher with insights into where to establish boundaries.

1.9 Population for the study

Population is the features of the people, the particular people needed to participate in the study population is the subgroup of the population because they are drawn from the same population (Banerjee & Chaudhury, 2010). The population of this study was secondary school learners ($n = \text{approx. } 2111$), their teachers, and parents/guardians of Thabo Mofutsanyane district from Eastern Free State. Specific people required to take part in this study were Grade 10 and 11 learners who have not repeated any grade to date, their teachers, and parents/guardians.

1.10 Sample

1.10.1 Sampling criteria

Sampling criteria is used to achieve comprehension of a phenomenon and it consists of inclusion and elimination criteria (Suri, 2011). I included well-performing schools and learners with their parents / guardians within adverse contexts. For example, I selected secondary schools from disadvantaged backgrounds in the QwaQwa area with predominantly African people who speak Sesotho (vernacular language). Further criterion was schools which consistently achieved more than 75% academically, Grade 10 and 11 learners who achieved an average of 50% and were on the top ten list, and teachers who taught these learners and lived in the QwaQwa area. Furthermore, parents / guardians who lived with these learners. I excluded all schools, learners and parents / guardians who did not match the inclusion criteria.

1.10.2 Sample size

According to Bekele and Ago (2022), the sample size of a qualitative research study is to be determined by funds, the aim and question of the study, the field of the study, etc. However, 'specific to number 20–60 is the most frequently observed range of sample size in qualitative research' (Bekele & Ago, 2022, p. 42). I selected 20 participants with 12 Grade 10 and 11 learners, their teacher ($n=4$) and parents/guardians ($n=4$) because I wanted to explore the views of the abovementioned participants on academic success and academic resilience. Furthermore, the study explored how the school and family assist Grade 10 and 11 learners in academic success, thereby achieving academic resilience and enabling less academically resilient learners to succeed academically.

I used purposeful sampling because I selected 12 Black secondary school learners who can provide rich and comprehensive information about factors impacting positively on their academic success. Learners were selected from two secondary schools in Thabo Mofutsanyane district (Schools A and B). Lodico et al. (2010) support the above statement by stating that purposeful sampling aims to choose individuals who can provide detailed information to answer the research questions. Furthermore, Lodico et al. (2010) indicated that there are various kinds of purposeful sampling. For example, extreme-case sampling is one type of sampling. It consists of extreme individuals who are different. I used extreme sampling because, in the pilot study, ten of the participants

were the top ten Black secondary school learners who performed well academically. I requested academic records from the school principal to identify the abovementioned learners.

1.11 Locations for the study

The location for the research was at QwaQwa, Thabo Mofutsanyane district which is regarded as a poverty-stricken area. Furthermore, School A is situated in Maboleta village, and School B is in Phuthaditjaba township, about one kilometre from Maboleta village. Schools A and B are the best-performing schools in this district. For a case study, the researcher needs to select a site or sites to study (Creswell, 2013).

1.12 Data collection strategy

In qualitative research, Renjith et al. (2021) indicated that the researcher can collect data through various methods such as documents, recordings, interviews, observations and motion pictures or pictures, and Denny and Weckesser (2022) add descriptive records. I reviewed the learners' academic records, took field notes, and used focus groups and face-to-face interviews. Furthermore, Saarijärvi and Bratt (2021) stated that the researcher works together with participants, there are no technological interruptions, participants' gestures are recognisable, and a positive environment can be created. Nonetheless, interviews can be tardy, costly, and risky (Saarijärvi & Bratt, 2021). I collected data through open-ended questions in face-to-face interviews with all participants and focus group discussions for only learner participants.

Focus group deliberations encourage cooperation among participants (Tümen-Akyıldız & Ahmed, 2021) and the researcher enables the deliberations, it is accommodative and elucidates information gathered from other methods (Denny & Weckesser, 2022). However, it is not a suitable data collection technique to discover complicated views to use for huge numbers of participants and careful consideration is needed when assessing the study results (Tümen-Akyıldız & Ahmed, 2021).

However, before recording, I requested consent from all participants and the relevant authorities, such as their parents and the school principals, to record learners. As Renjith et al. (2021) stated, authorisation should be requested to record participants' views that are significant to the study.

Besides focus groups and face-to-face interviews, I used learners' academic records. Since Wood et al. (2020) argued that documents can divulge complications in a person's life and offer an indication of peoples' historical and forthcoming possible events, they reveal communal trends and produce social matter. Therefore, documents are an appropriate source of information for the phenomenon (Wood et al., 2020). As a result, I reviewed learners' academic records to find out about their academic performance by reviewing their grade average of term 2 results, age, and gender.

Again, I took photographs and made field notes to corroborate data from academic records, face-to-face interviews and focus group discussions. I took notes from the beginning of requesting approval to conduct research from the Free State Department of Education, Thabo Mofutsanyane district, while communicating with the circuit manager and school principals during the interview process. I recorded information that I thought was relevant to the aspects related to academic success and/or resilience. McMillan and Schumacher (2006) state that field notes can enhance comprehension and authenticate participants' views from other data collection methods. As well as photographs because, according to Slavin (2007), they can reveal more information about the participants. I, therefore, took two pictures to indicate the location of Schools A and B. However, after data collection, the researcher should employ a technique to analyse the data before formally dispensing it (Ary et al., 2014; Drew et al., 2008).

1.13 Data analysis

Interpretative phenomenological analysis, grounded theory, and content analysis are commonly utilised in psychology studies but 'discourse analyses' is not used that much and 'thematic analysis' is regarded as the greatest (Braun & Clarke, 2020, p. 1). Content analysis is dissimilar to thematic analysis because the latter method does not require a certain theoretical framework (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 9). Braun and Clarke further alluded that the thematic analysis technique scrutinises or gives details on occurrences and connotations of participants' real life and stipulates the essence of participants' views on the matter at hand, and it caters for face-to-face and group interviews but not to questionnaires (Braun & Clarke, 2006). I used the thematic analysis technique because I did not use questionnaires in this study. I also wanted to capture the connotations of the participants' views about resilience as a component of academic success. According to Braun and Clarke (2006), thematic analysis can be used to uncover the truth. I analysed the face-to-face and focus group interviews and learners' academic records using thematic analysis. To discover repetitions of words

or phrases throughout participants' transcriptions, I listened several times to the recordings and read the transcriptions more than once to familiarise myself.

Coding is the process of creating ideas. Ary et al. (2014) indicated that 'coding is about developing concepts from the raw data' (p. 516). I coded the data, and consequently, I developed concepts from semi-structured, open-ended face-to-face interviews, focus group discussions and field notes with information from the learner, teacher and parent/guardian participants of secondary Schools A and B. As stipulated by McMillan and Schumacher (2006), the researcher needs to sort data into phrases, sentences, behaviour patterns and important events and then organise it into themes, sub-themes and categories.

1.14 Ethical considerations

Research ethics are steered by three ideas: to request permission, respect participants' rights such as privacy and confidentiality, and choose them fairly (Fujii, 2012). During this study, I started by completing an ethical application form from the University of South Africa to ensure that I get permission to continue with the research and that the participants' rights are considered. I ensured that participants were not harmed while conducting the research. To fulfil the abovementioned aspects, I provided further details about approval, informed consent and assent, confidentiality and anonymity, protection from harm, right to privacy and trustworthiness.

1.14.1 Permission

I requested and obtained an ethical clearance certificate from the University of South Africa to continue with the research study. I also requested and obtained permission to conduct research from the Free State Education Department. I further submitted a letter from the Free State Department of Education, which allowed me to conduct research for the Thabo Mofutsanyane district director and circuit manager. Furthermore, I issued the letter to request permission to conduct research on the principals of Schools A and B, their learners, teachers, and parents/guardians.

1.14.2 Informed consent

The procedure was followed to inform participants about the hazards, advantages, and options of participating in the research study. According to Lodico et al. (2010),

obtaining informed consent from participants, protecting them from harm and ensuring participants' confidentiality are important factors to consider in research ethics. I requested permission from the Free State Department of Basic Education and the district director to conduct the research. Permission was requested from the participants (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006). In addition, Slavin (2007) affirms that permission should be requested from adult participants because children are minors. However, Mertens (2010) maintains that they were required to provide their informed assent to participate in the study.

1.14.3 Informed assent

Informed assents were obtained from learners who participated in this investigation because they were minor participants (adolescent learners). I consulted parents / guardians because, according to Mertens (2015), they have the legal authority to allow children below 18 years old to take part in the study. In this research study, learner participants were minors (adolescent learners) aged 12 to 18 years. Therefore, I sought authority from the elders responsible for the prospective participants. I clarified the study's relevance and asked the participants to volunteer to take part without inducing any fear in them to ensure that their rights were respected (Mertens, 2015).

1.14.4 Confidentiality and anonymity

The researcher must ensure the confidentiality and anonymity of participants (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). I informed participants that their identities would not be disclosed to anyone, and data would be collected anonymously, as alluded to by Mertens (2010). I gave participants a code number to tag their records with to ensure anonymity.

1.14.5 Protection from harm

Research should not endanger participants in any form (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). I ensured that participants were not exposed to danger in the research because they were not exposed to peculiar stress, humiliation, or loss of self-respect. For fear that the study might expose participants to minor psychological discomfort, I arranged for an educational psychologist to be on standby for any occurrence that might need psychological intervention in the study so that counselling could be done urgently.

The research results will not be presented in a manner that reveals each participant's

identity to maintain the right of participants to be treated with privacy (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). I did not disclose how particular participants behaved or responded in the interviews, and no participants requested in writing to present their views in the report in such a way that others could identify them.

1.14.6 Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness is essential in qualitative studies, and it entails significant aspects of the research, such as dependability, confirmability, transferability, and credibility (Chowdhury, 2015, p. 159). Furthermore, Gunawan (2015) asserts that credibility can be achieved by lessening the influence of researchers' bias. Chenail (2011) argued that piloting the study can assist in addressing the issue of bias and establishing the correct instrument to gather information from participants. I established the content of semi-structured open-ended interviews from the literature review and piloted the study content trustworthiness of the interviews. I requested two teacher participants to review and critique their transcripts to enhance credibility. As Ary et al. (2014) indicated, member checks are needed for correctness and connotation to improve the truthfulness of the results.

For transferability, the provision of complete clarification of the study and purposeful selection of participants is needed (Anney, 2014). I used a purposeful sampling technique to select participants because Thabo Mofutsanyane district is situated in a disadvantaged area. The two secondary schools involved in this study are the most well-performing schools in this district for a period of more than ten consecutive years. Furthermore, I decided to focus on learners who were part of the top ten in the abovementioned schools and their teachers and parents/guardians to explore resilience as a component of academic success for these learners.

To ensure the results and interpretations of this study were conformable, I used a peer review strategy. I gave my supervisor the participants' transcripts and the interpretation of their information to check whether I provided an accurate understanding of what the participants said. In support of this view, Ary et al. (2012) mentioned that the researcher needs to offer a peer the primary data to cross-check the correctness of the interpretation (Ary et al., 2012).

The aim of providing this information is openness to make it easy for the results of this study to be conveyed in other similar circumstances (Pratt et al., 2020). Furthermore,

Pratt et al. (2020) stated that a description of all procedures that were utilised in the study is crucial for other scholars to be able to find the same results or to replicate the study and to allow other scholars to judge whether the research questions, theoretical framework and research method are linked to each other. The main intention is to ensure the results are trusted and can be relied on. Cross-checking various data sources and collection measures to examine the degree to which the entire proof comes together is called triangulation in qualitative research. This process includes scrutiny of texts frequently added up with other sources of information to comply with the principle of triangulation and encourage trustworthiness in the authenticity of the research conclusions (Suter, 2012).

I used various data collection techniques such as face-to-face and focus group interviews, academic records of learners, and field notes to achieve the dependability of this study. I further involved different participants, such as learners, teachers and parents/guardians and exposed them to the same questions. Guion et al. (2011) alluded that there are different triangulation methods such as information, researcher, theory, context, and methodology. I used data as a way to triangulate with the aim of obtaining the dependability of the results of this study.

1.15 Limitations of the study

The focus of the study was on Black secondary school learners from a disadvantaged background in Thabo Mofutsanyane district. Learners involved in this study all performed well in grades 10 and 11. They were from two schools, one of which was situated in the township and the other in a semi-rural area. Only learners were involved in focus group discussions. Four teachers and four parents/guardians from both schools participated in this study. All parents/guardians were females. This study did not include other educational stakeholders, such as principals, SGB members, district officials, and personnel from the provincial level. The study used an instrumental case study design, and 20 participants were purposefully selected. In the next section, I briefly discuss the conceptual framework that guided this study.

1.16 Conceptual framework

In this study, I used main concepts such as academic resilience, positive psychology, constructivism, and bio-ecological systems to explore resilience as a component of academic success. Farrow et al. (2021) support this view and state that a conceptual

framework consists of a variety of theories which are part of the investigation. I used a conceptual framework because I realised that I could explore the aspects that are determinants of some Black secondary school learners from disadvantaged communities to succeed academically even though they are exposed to various challenges from their context. Furthermore, it will focus on individual characteristics and contextual aspects that enable these learners to strive academically under such difficult situations and, lastly, discover the relationship between the aspects that are responsible for enabling learners to thrive academically. As Grant and Osanloo (2014) and Mensah et al. (2020) indicated, the choice of a conceptual framework is based on the comprehension of the researcher on how best to discover solutions for the research study and which path is suitable and to establish the correlation among the changeable aspects.

Academic resilience, positive psychology, constructivism, and bio-ecological systems are concepts that serve as the foundation for this study. They are interrelated with each other because academic resilience is achieved when learners succeed academically while faced with predicaments. Further, it requires learners to use internal assets such as positivity or confidence related to positive psychology. Additionally, external assets can include family and the school, part of bio-ecological systems. Lastly, when a learner is actively involved, for example, a learner taking the initiative to seek assistance from others and interacting with them to find the solution, it means the constructivism principle is applied. In agreement with this paragraph, Mensah et al. (2020) and Adom et al. (2018) argued that a conceptual framework illustrates how fundamental ideas in the study connect with each other.

1.17 Clarification of the concepts

The undermentioned concepts are explained, recognised, and used in this study.

- **Resilience**

Resilience implies to depend on individual, family, society or collective protecting factors (Theron & Theron, 2010). Resilience is not the non-existence of mental and emotional challenges of the individual but rather the existence of the capability to interconnect and relate with others despite adversity (Cortina et al., 2016). Furthermore, Mhongera and Lombard (2020) view resilience as a procedure of adjusting to hardships, gaining understanding from previous occurrences, and initiating coping tactics to handle yet to come hardships (p. 3). Moreover, Theron (2020) views resilience as a procedure which leads to favourable results for individuals who are faced with hardships). Ungar et al. (2021) add that resilience is the procedure to sustain individual bio-psychosocial and contextual protecting and promoting aspects.

- **Academic resilience**

Academic resilience is the situation where learners attain academic success irrespective of the adversities they are faced with (Wills & Hofmeyr, 2019). Furthermore, Thomas et al. (2023) stated that academic resilience means putting into force and improving through supportive peers, confidence and attaining objectives which are to succeed academically. A comprehensive analysis of this concept will be given in Chapter 3.

- **Academic success**

The definition of academic success is general, multifaceted and contains various elements such as gratification (York et al., 2015); they further alluded that it is subjected to ill-use in the education sphere because it is summarised and acknowledged as anything required to produce favourable results.

In this study, academic success infers the successful attainment of required expectations to qualify for the subsequent grade or level. The subsequent chapter will explicitly elaborate on this concept.

- **Self-confidence**

Various individuals provide general and different explanations of self-confidence. Greenacre et al. (2014), and Oney and Oksuzoglu-guven (2015) explain it in such a manner that it is appropriate to their investigation or field of the study; they further suggested that it should be limited to the individual (Oney & Oksuzoglu-guven, 2015). There is a situation where self-confidence is defined as a universal concept and implies our ideas and values about ourselves which is hypothetically different from the individual form of self-confidence (Greenacre et al., 2014). Lastly, 'self-confidence' is associated with 'self-efficacy' (Perry, 2011, p. 219).

For this study, self-confidence implies learners' confidence in their ability to strive academically. I will fully address self-confidence in Chapter 3.

- **Self-efficacy**

According to the systematic study of human behaviour, self-efficacy is defined as an individual's confidence in their capability (Ahmed et al., 2011). Self-efficacy is about individuals' actions that assist them to persevere in hard conditions (Graham, 2022). Additionally, learners' confidence in their capabilities to study and strive academically (Al-Abyadh et al., 2022). I reckoned self-efficacy as a learner's ability to believe in their capability to execute academic tasks successfully. An elaboration of self-efficacy will be given in Chapter 3.

- **Risk and protective factors**

Protective factors are positive qualities or capabilities from within individuals which minimise aspects that can affect individuals unfavourably (Theron, 2006). Furthermore, these positive qualities regulate disappointment and shield from adversity (Theron, 2006). Additionally, they support individuals in being resilient (Theron & Theron, 2010). Besides, protective factors can be found in school, home, friends and the community (Theron et al., 2022).

Ungar and Theron (2019) stated that risk factors are occurrences or situations which correlate with and are associated with unacceptable actions, dysfunctional mental

or emotional states and distressing occurrences. Moreover, these can be found within the person or the environment (Theron & Theron, 2010). In addition, Van Breda and Theron (2018) indicated that a risk factor is an environment with adverse contexts, such as poor neighbourhoods.

1.18 Preliminary chapter outline

Chapter 1: Orientation to the study

Chapter 1 outlines and delineates the study by providing the background, rationale, research questions, and aims. Furthermore, it explains the conceptual framework and paradigmatic and metatheoretical assumptions. I indicate the research methodology, research design, and methods used to collect and analyse data. Lastly, I discuss the ethical considerations and limitations of the study and clarify the main concepts of this study.

Chapter 2: Review of the literature

In Chapter 2, I discuss the general academic challenges and strategies. Thereafter, I deliberate on the academic challenges and experiences in South Africa with special emphasis on the Thabo Mofutsanyane district. In addition, I contemplate different kinds of resilience, characteristics of academically resilient learners, academic success, and resilience in South Africa. I focus on school, family, and community and how they affect the academic success and resilience of learners in South Africa, and I discuss protective and risk aspects and adolescent developmental stages.

Chapter 3: Conceptual framework

Chapter 3 discusses the conceptual framework, which includes the concepts of academic resilience, positive psychology, constructivism, and bio-ecological systems. I elaborate on academic resilience and the two aspects of positive psychology, which are an asset-based approach and appreciative inquiry.

Chapter 4: Research design and methodology

Chapter 4 consists of the epistemological and ontological assumptions, interpretivism and methodological paradigms. I explain the case study research design, sampling, data collection, and analysis techniques used in this study. Lastly, I state the ethical

considerations.

Chapter 5: Presentation of results and discussion of findings

In Chapter 5, I used thematic content analysis to analyse the data. I produced four themes, which were interpreted and discussed to generate answers to the postulated research questions.

Chapter 6: Synthesising the findings, drawing conclusions, and making recommendations

In Chapter 6, I present the findings according to the research questions to address the primary research question. I provide the reflections and recommendations for policy, practice and research.

1.19 Summary of the chapter

In this chapter, I presented a synopsis of the study. I also outlined the choice of the research design and methodology and considered ethical and quality criteria issues to ensure the study's credibility. I highlighted a brief overview of the study's potential limitations and delimitations. I also discussed the study's conceptual framework and expanded on key terminologies.

In the next chapter, I focus on conceptualising salient notions based on the main themes of a review of the related literature.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, I provided the introduction and context to the study. I explained the rationale for conducting this study and briefly addressed academic resilience as the underpinning conceptual framework. Furthermore, I sketched the problem statement, research questions, aim and objectives, paradigmatic assumptions and introduced the methodology and research design. I briefly addressed the trustworthiness, quality assurance matters and ethical considerations.

In this chapter, I explore aspects that influence learner academic performance worldwide, such as learner personal and environmental characteristics. I also focus on the experiences of South African learners, the South African standard of education and the academic performance of selected learners in the Thabo Mofutsanyane district, Free State province of South Africa.

This chapter also delves into the notion of resilience, different forms of resilience, and resilience in schools worldwide. In the context of South Africa, I concentrate on learner personal characteristics and socio-demographic determinants of school resilience. I describe in depth the features of academically resilient learners and the ways by which learners become academically resilient.

In this chapter, I discuss academic performance and the protective and risk variables for academic success. Finally, this chapter discusses teenage development, focusing on the identity versus confusion stage of psychological development.

2.2 Contextualising academic challenges and academic achievements

- **International**

Academic challenges and achievement are complex and multifaceted issues with global implications. Understanding these issues, as well as the factors that influence academic achievement, is critical for improving educational systems and fostering learner success across the world.

Access to high-quality education is one of the most pressing worldwide academic concerns. Many locations worldwide fail to offer equitable opportunities for all children, resulting in discrepancies in academic success. Students' capacity to flourish academically is hampered by a lack of access to educational resources such as schools, textbooks, and suitably qualified and experienced teachers (Ahmad & Razia, 2015; Chena, 2015; Shaw et al., 2015).

Socio-economic factors also play a significant role in academic achievement. Learners from a background of poverty and few opportunities appear to be the most vulnerable (Ayllón et al., 2023). According to Kryst et al. (2015) and Moore (2015), learners from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds experience home, school and community hardships. Examples of hardships experienced by these learners are the inability to get admitted in schools, lack of being present in school or receiving extra academic assistance, lack of parental participation in their academic endeavours due to destitution and poor psychological state (Tufail et al., 2023). In many countries, learners from disadvantaged backgrounds face additional obstacles, such as poverty, inadequate nutrition, and limited access to healthcare, which can negatively impact their learning outcomes (Steward, 2023). It is essential to take a holistic approach that considers educational and socio-economic factors (Tufail et al., 2023, p. 10).

In most education systems, the possibility of improving the academic resilience of disadvantaged learners is very weak, especially when learners are exposed to unfavourable conditions for teaching and learning (Agasisti et al., 2018). Additionally, the quality of teaching and learning environments is vital to academic success. Effective teaching methodologies, engaging learning materials, and supportive classroom environments positively impact students' motivation and engagement, ultimately leading to improved academic performance. However, Moore (2015) emphasises that these learners can be assisted to be academically resilient. The above statement signifies those aspects such as fair distribution of resources, teachers' salaries, high standard of learning and teachers' qualifications can contribute to academic resilience development.

In a better-performing education system, according to Volmari (2019), high education credentials are highly valued because teachers are required to have a 'masters'

certificate in Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden, except Denmark (p. 53), and learners are exposed to a high standard of learning (Wilk, 2017). They distribute educational resources fairly among economically advantaged and disadvantaged learners (Paine & Schleicher, 2011). Therefore, the unfair distribution of resources, such as teachers' salaries, may indirectly affect learners' academic performance.

Furthermore, there is a correlation between teachers' salaries and learners' academic performance. García and Han (2022) found that learners from schools where teachers earn better salaries outperformed learners from schools where teachers earn lower salaries. They further alluded that the correlation between teachers' salaries and learners' academic performance is more prevalent in advantageous communities than in disadvantageous contexts. Table 2.1 compares the annual starting salary of teachers in the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) with Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) for private consumption uses in United States dollars (USD) for developing and developed countries.

Table 2.1: Annual starting salary of teachers of OECD Purchasing Power Parity for private consumption (OECD, 2022, p. 345; Wilk, 2017, p. 108).

Countries	Annual starting salary of teachers in USD
South Africa	57 893
Denmark	50 653
Norway	50 216
Singapore	46 000
Sweden	44 258
Finland	42 089
Iceland	39 978
South Korea	34 185
Japan	29 820

On the other hand, developing countries such as South Africa, whose education systems are not better performing but teachers' initial salary is better than other performing education systems, such as Singapore (Wilk, 2017), Finland, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Japan, South Korea, and Iceland per annum is comparable to 'USD converted using PPPs for private consumption' (OECD, 2022, p. 345). South African

teachers earn more than teachers in Denmark with a difference of USD 7 240 per annum. Teachers in Denmark are paid more than teachers in other European and Asian countries.

It is important to recognise that academic challenges and achievement are not solely determined by individual students but also by the broader educational systems and societal factors within each country. For example, according to Pritchett (2014), there is a crisis in the education system of India and other South Asian countries because school systems produce learners who cannot cope effectively in the modern century. Not only in Asia but also in Africa, there are various school systems with weak academic performance. For example, Sub-Saharan African countries with French as their official language experience weak academic performance due to insufficient learning material, lack of electricity and competent teachers (Bietenbeck et al., 2023).

- **National**

Likewise, there are multifaceted problems in the South African education system (Bayat et al., 2014). The misfortune of the South African education system is that it has a high percentage of learners who leave school and perform weak academically (Mouton et al., 2013). South Africa's education system performs weakly and is the lowest out of the 15 education systems studied in South and East Africa (Van der Berg et al., 2011). The fact articulated by Spaull (2013), and De Villiers and Ntshoe (2014) is that the South African education system performance is weak. The South African education system is dysfunctional (Schirmer & Visser, 2023). The above statements imply that most learners in South Africa are underperforming academically in comparison with the curriculum requirements (Spaull, 2013). The aim of the curriculum in South African schools is to improve learners' mathematical language and computational skills (Department of Basic Education, 2012). Furthermore, South African learners showed an increase of 37 points in mathematics from 2011 to 2019 (Mullis et al., 2020).

2.2.1 Worldwide academic challenges

Education systems around the globe that are performing poorly academically is because the academic performance of the learners is lower than the minimum standard by which other countries are evaluated (Schirmer & Visser, 2023).

Furthermore, Asadullah et al. (2023) indicated that many education systems grappled with low academic achievement of learners prior to the Covid-19 pandemic. It is clear from the above statements that the academic success of learners is a concern in all global education systems (Lei et al., 2022). Furthermore, Khodadadi et al. (2022) stated that, at present, different nations are more focused on enhancing education systems, and they regard academic resilience as the essential aspect of this improvement. Therefore, it implies that strategies should be in place to deal with academic challenges.

Numerous strategies worldwide are implemented to address learners' academic performance. For instance, in the previous ten years, the United States of America developed several intervention programmes, such as Race to the Top and No Child Left Behind, to enhance learners' academic performance (Sloat et al., 2018). Furthermore, other intervention programmes were developed for learners who come from low socio-economic backgrounds, such as developing countries like Brazil and Albania in Europe, African countries and some Asian countries, to improve the academic performance of learners (Ansong et al., 2019).

Again, in Europe, from countries such as Cyprus, learners use the functional literacy programme at the beginning of their school years to assist them to perform well academically at later stages of schooling (Karagiorgi & Alexandra, 2019). There are many ways in which the literacy skills development of learners can be improved, such as group work, reading camps, school trips, community members, projects and videos (Edem et al., 2011) and 'digital learning games' (Pynnonen et al., 2022, p. 1). Other strategies for learners' literacy skills development are reading programme supplements (Cilliers & Bloch, 2018), the assistance of teachers to enhance literacy skills and the school library (Chetty, 2019).

The school library should have enough reading materials for learners and parents (Chetty, 2019). However, in poor communities where schools do not have a library or a library with inadequate reading materials, it might be difficult to develop literacy skills through a school library. As part of a literate environment, a library plays a crucial role in developing learners' literacy skills. Again, Koikkalainen et al. (2016) state that the creation of a literary atmosphere in school needs libraries in each classroom that are easily accessible for learners with different reading items, installation of

information and communication technology infrastructure, the cooperation of the school, public library and non-governmental organisations. Non-governmental organisations should assist with literacy development at schools and in the communities (Edem et al., 2011) because literacy development skills in disadvantaged schools are not adequately achieved because of the poor conditions in these schools (Cilliers & Bloch, 2018), such as inadequate reading resources and an inability to develop learners' literacy skills which puts learners at risk of weak academic performance (Mupa & Chinooneka, 2015). Additionally, Grotlüschen et al. (2020) indicate that the inability to develop learners' literacy skills affects academic performance and employment prospects. Furthermore, Igarashi and Suryadarma (2023) articulate that many learners have weak reading abilities. For example, Maluleke et al. (2022) stated that there is one country with more people with weak reading abilities among Sub-Saharan countries. From 2000 to 2007, learners from one of the Sub-Saharan countries showed no academic improvement in reading or mathematical ability (Spaull, 2013).

Globally, it is the responsibility of each education system to equip learners with the basics of literacy and mathematical abilities, but if the system cannot succeed in equipping its learners with these basics, it means there are some limitations in the system (Igarashi & Suryadarma, 2023). The inability to equip learners with the basics of literacy and mathematical capabilities due to limitations in the system has the potential to affect them unfavourably in academia and later in life (Conica et al., 2023). Bruine de Bruin and Slovic (2021) found that the lack of ability to provide learners with the basics of mathematical capabilities is universal in developing economies and can jeopardise their fiscal security. For example, Igarashi and Suryadarma (2023) found that one of the developing economies experienced a decline in the mathematical capabilities of learners. As a result, they suggested that it is due to the system's incapability to empower learners with basic skills worldwide.

2.3 The academic landscape in South Africa

Various forms of adversity contribute to the poor academic performance of learners in South Africa. Additionally, Noordien (2015) says South African learners grow up in a highly unequal society with different socio-economic statuses. It implies that learners from disadvantaged backgrounds are more vulnerable to various factors that can affect

their academic success in an unfavourable manner compared to their counterparts. The above statement means that learners from affluent communities are more likely to succeed academically than learners from townships and rural areas because of parental support and the availability of resources (Schuurman et al., 2023).

From the above statement, it becomes clear that South African society is unequal, and inequality impacts learners' academic performance. For this reason, the Department of Basic Education (2014) claims that the inequalities in the poor academic performance of South African learners correlate with socio-economic status, school locality, language, and province. Also, Spaul (2013) found that the South African education system is underperforming due to various factors, such as the inability of the government to take bold steps to improve it by distributing resources equitably, implementing expensive reforms and dealing with systemic inequalities that exist. The sad reality is that there is an inequality between people from middle and higher socio-economic status (Van & Thi, 2020) because learners from higher socio-economic status have access to tertiary education (Das & Das, 2021). Furthermore, Yung and Zeng (2022) mentioned that learners' academic success is progressively dependent on parents' wealth rather than children's ability. The reason is that they have more resources than their counterpart in low and middle socio-economic status (Kakumba, 2022).

The economic inequality is depicted in the education system by classifying schools as quintiles one to three for the poor and quintile 5 for the wealthy. Learners from schools in quintiles one, two and three do not pay school fees, and the government invests more capital in these schools (Frempong et al., 2016). Furthermore, Garan (2022) argued that inequities still prevail today, and it has an unfavourable influence on learners' academic success. The inequality in schools has effects on learners' academic performance. Schut et al. (2020) state that unequal power relations between teachers and learners affect learners' academic success; for example, teachers who dominate in the classroom make learners undermine themselves, which might lead to weak learning expectations. Again, schools from township areas with an absence of good resources due to inequality of distribution of resources impact the academic performance of learners negatively, but the schools with good financial support have adequate resources, such as well-equipped

laboratories and libraries (Du Plessis & Mestry, 2019). Additionally, schools with good financial support manage to improve learners' academic success (Omoniy, 2019). As a result, it is crucial to address inequalities to assist disadvantaged schools in being effective in helping learners succeed academically (Garan, 2022).

Inequality of distribution of resources leads to poor academic performance and a shortage of resources for teaching and learning (Bayat et al., 2014). Resources are essential for the academic success of learners because inadequate resources, such as a shortage of teachers and learning resources, have unfavourable effects on learners' academic success. Furthermore, García and Weiss (2019) say that a dearth of teachers is detrimental to learners' academic performance. The insufficiency of teachers aggravates the unfair allocation of skilled teachers from disadvantaged communities and Black learners (Sutcher et al., 2019).

Furthermore, a shortage of classroom materials makes it difficult for teachers to utilise different learning materials to enhance learners' understanding and improve the academic success of learners (Mupa & Chinooneka, 2015; Sutcher et al., 2019). Again, teachers with poor teaching skills affect the academic success of learners negatively (Mupa & Chinooneka, 2015). Due to the abovementioned conditions, teachers then resort to a teacher-centred teaching approach because it is not easy to use a learner-centred approach in such situations (Zenda, 2020). Teaching methods serve as a barrier for learners to succeed academically. Kyereko and Faas (2021) and Khasawneh (2022) indicate that teaching methods can be a barrier for learners to experience success. For example, teaching methods that have inadequate collaboration tasks to enhance learners' abilities and morals (Keogh et al. 2021) or teachers who regard teaching aids as less significant and not utilise teaching aids, (Khasawneh, 2022) and teachers who use minimum teaching tools because they do not have teaching resources (Alkhaldeh & Khasawneh, 2021). Not only lack of use of teaching tools but also teachers who rely on teacher-centred teaching methods (Omoniyi et al., 2022). However, teaching methods that enhance learners' abilities to succeed academically should stimulate learners. Eli (2021) noticed today's learners are not interested in teacher-centred teaching methods. The author further states that a learner-centred teaching method is far more accepted by learners. In support of this statement, Alkhaldeh and Khasawneh (2021) argue that a learner-centred

the teaching method is relevant and acceptable to learners nowadays. Additionally, a learner-centred teaching method is crucial and relevant to address the needs of learners because of the use of technology (Eli, 2021).

It becomes obvious that teachers who are not well trained to teach or if the school has fewer teachers are risk factors (Schirmer & Visser, 2023). With fewer teachers, you might find that teachers are requested to teach more learners because of a shortage of teaching staff. Moreover, schools with inadequate resources, such as a shortage of teaching staff, negatively affect learners' academic performance (Maringe et al., 2015). These kinds of conditions make teachers overloaded, and teaching and learning become ineffective.

Teachers are overloaded with work because they should give learners homework, implement the curriculum, prepare learners for examinations, set examination papers, invigilate learners, and mark examination papers, etc. (Özüdoğru, 2021). Furthermore, more teachers complain about their workload because they are expected to create an environment where learners are encouraged to learn (Nashir & Laili, 2021). On the other hand, teachers are expected to participate in school committees, which increases their workload and makes them annoyed (Mpanza & Govender, 2022). Workload also makes teachers tired and malfunctioning (Brady & Wilson, 2022) and manage time poorly (Gul et al., 2021). All these make teachers demoralised because they need to utilise their spare time to perform certain tasks (Rens, 2021), such as managerial tasks, for example, administering classwork books, class register and parental roles (Pratolo & Solikhati, 2021). These aspects escalate teachers' workload (Zhao & Song, 2021). As a result, their teaching process is unfavourably affected (Jomuad et al., 2021) and the authors further state that teachers' workload needs to be looked at to ensure that teachers offer an excellent teaching process in schools (Jomuad et al., 2021). The reason is that teachers can provide quality teaching because they can deal with 'working hours and workload regularly' (Gul et al., 2021, p. 819).

The South African government invests billions of rands in education, but this does not translate into good quality education, improved academic performance of economically disadvantaged learners and the redress of inequality that exists within the education system (De Villiers & Ntshoe, 2014). Even though it is apparent that South African learners did not show academic improvement, the government is implementing some

tests, such as the Annual National Assessment (ANA).

ANA as one intervention design by the Department of Basic Education has received criticism from teachers because it is not addressing problems effectively. However, Maphalala and Dhlamini (2017) state that in South Africa, ANA is a strategy employed to evaluate literacy and numeracy capability and enhance learners' academic performance. Furthermore, the lack of radical change to improve the education system resulted in the government being criticised for poor interventions to improve learners' academic performance. Bansilal (2017) argues that the ANA is an inadequately delicate instrument to differentiate the academic performance of learners who have not achieved an average level. Furthermore, Maphalala and Dhlamini (2017) state that teachers regard the ANA as an unhelpful instrument that does not assist them and learners in performing well academically.

In South Africa, there are various tests used to address the problems mentioned above to improve learners' academic performance, such as the Southern and East Africa Consortium for Monitoring Education Quality (SACMEQ), the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Studies (TIMSS), the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) and ANA. South Africa has participated in numerous international organisations, such as SACMEQ, TIMSS and PIRLS, to assess education systems, diagnose challenges, and develop instruments that can assist in improving learners' academic performance (Department of Basic Education, 2012). Table 2.2 illustrates the performance of fourth-grade learners in mathematics, which is correlated to a lack of resources.

Table 2.2: Performance of education systems in mathematics (fourth-grade students attended schools) (Mullis et al., 2020, p. 330)

Education systems performed above average in mathematics (fourth-grade students attended schools)				
Countries	Not Affected by lack of resources		Affected by lack of resources	
	Percent of Students	Average Achievement	Per cent of Students	Average Achievement

Denmark	38	3.9	2	0.8
Finland	38	4.3	0	0
Hong Kong SAR	22	3.0	6	2.5
Japan	25	3.5	1	0.7
Russian Federation	28	3.1	2	1.1
Education systems performed below average in mathematics (fourth-grade students attended schools)				
Albania	6	1.7	495	8.3
Azerbaijan	2	1.0	9	1.9
Turkey	5	1.7	513	10.9
Morocco	6	1.7	508	44.5
South Africa	8	1.7	376	18.9

Table 2.2 illustrates the performance of various education systems in mathematics of fourth-grade learners, which were affected or not affected by a lack of resources. Most learners are from the best-performing education systems, and their performance was unaffected by a lack of resources. Very few learners were affected by a lack of resources. Whereas in poor-performing education systems, very few learners indicated they were unaffected by a lack of resources. However, a lack of resources affected most learners in these education systems. Additionally, most learners affected by a lack of resources are from developing countries. Most learners who were not affected by a lack of resources were from developed countries, with the least number of learners affected by a lack of resources. Furthermore, Table 2.3 illustrates education systems performed above and below 500 PIRLS Scale Center Point.

Table 2.3: Education systems performed above and below 500 PIRLS Scale Center Point (Mullis et al., 2023, p. 23)

Education systems performed below 500 PIRLS Scale Center Point					
Average significantly higher than the Center Point of the PIRLS Scale.					
	Advanced International Benchmark (625)	High International Benchmark (550)	Above 500 PIRLS Scale Center Point	Intermediate International Benchmark (475)	Low International Benchmark (400)
Denmark			539 (2.2)		
Finland			549 (2.4)		
Hong Kong SAR		573 (2.7)			
Singapore		587 (3.1)			
Russian Federation		567 (3.6)			
Education systems performed below 500 PIRLS Scale Center Point					
Average significantly lower than the center point of the PIRLS scale					
Brazil				419 (5.3)	
Azerbaijan				440 (3.6)	
Turkey				496 (3.4)	
Egypt					378 (5.4)
South Africa					288 (4.4)

The four international benchmarks used were the advanced international benchmark (625), the high international benchmark (550), the intermediate international benchmark (475) and the low international benchmark (400). The South African education system performed below 500 points of the international benchmark. This means that the South African education system had a shortfall of 212 points in reaching the international benchmark. It performed below the low international benchmark of 400 points. Furthermore, Table 2.4. elucidates the reading achievement scores of Grades 4 and 6 South African learners per province.

Table 2.4: Reading achievement scores of Grades 4 and 6 learners per province (Department of Basic Education, 2023, p. 5)

South African Provinces	Reading achievement scores for Grade 4 learners	Reading achievement scores for Grade 6 learners
Eastern Cape	271	351
Free State	285	376
Gauteng	320	426
Kwazulu-Natal	297	363
Limpopo	244	353
Mpumalanga	264	390
Northwest	232	362
Northern Cape	284	416
Western Cape	363	460

Reading achievement scores of Grades 4 and 6 South African learners per province illuminates all grade 4 learners who scored below 400 points. The above statement means that most Grade 4 South African learners cannot read for comprehension. Only a few learners from Grade 4 are capable of reading for comprehension. However, in three provinces of South Africa (Gauteng, Northern Cape, and the Western Cape), Grade 6 learners scored above 400 points. It implies that learners from these three provinces can read for meaning, while learners from most of the country cannot read for comprehension. Therefore, a lack of reading for comprehension and the weak

academic performance of South African learners can be attributed to various factors such as overcrowded classes.

Overcrowded classrooms influence teaching and learning, teachers, learners and the academic success of learners. Chikoko et al. (2015) and Fatima et al. (2019) affirm that overcrowded classes affect teaching and learning in an unfavourable manner, for example, learners who finished their work first might interrupt those who are not finished with their work. It is possible that the effective participation of other learners can be compromised (Ayoub, 2019). Under such conditions, it is difficult for teachers to provide successful teaching and learning techniques and generate fruitful learning conditions (Zenda, 2020).

Again, teachers are also affected by overcrowded classrooms because it becomes a challenge for them to provide teaching and learning effectively in these classrooms (Zenda, 2020). Teachers face challenges such as the effective assessment of learners, to make learners concentrate, and a lack of adequate movement by the teacher in the classroom due to the sitting layout of learners (Fatima et al., 2019). These conditions make teachers exhausted (Ayoub, 2019). Teachers working in these classrooms and their capabilities to assist learners in being academically successful are compromised (Ayoub, 2019). All these unfavourable conditions originate from overcrowded classrooms, leading to learners' poor academic success (West & Meier, 2020). Consequently, to enhance learners' academic success, implementing small classrooms is the solution (Zenda, 2020). Furthermore, it was established that teachers and learners experience the same challenges, such as a lack of time.

Regarding the challenge of lack of time, as indicated by Lau and Ng (2019), learners and teachers encounter a lack of time as a barrier to learning. Specifically, lack of time is a major challenge for teachers (Park & Son, 2022). For example, teachers do not have adequate time to do other things, such as free time to engage in other programmes to enrich, according to Özüdoğru (2021), and to give struggling learners attention (Madiba, 2021). Furthermore, to equip themselves with the technological skills needed for the 21st century (Moyo, 2022), such as to arrange for lesson presentations electronically (Zhao & Song, 2021) and engaging in other electronic devices for teaching and learning (Pratolo & Solikhati 2021). In support of the above statement, Pratolo and Solikhati (2021) mention that inadequate time to empower teachers with the technological skills to implement e-learning successfully is the main challenge. The other factor that consumes teachers' time is their inability to shift from

traditional teaching methods to the e-learning method of teaching and learning (Moyo, 2022, p. 129).

Not only do teachers find a lack of time a challenge for them, but learners feel the same way. For example, Du Plessis and Mestry (2019) argue that academic work at schools is demanding. The issue of lack of time for learners is a familiar phenomenon (Chaabane et al., 2021). In agreement with this statement, Xavier and Menese (2022) state that this time issue is a concern because it obstructs learners' academic success. However, Du Plessis and Mestry (2019) comment that learners need to be equipped with time management skills to be able to prioritise. Learners are experiencing a lack of time, and English as a medium of instruction is a barrier to their academic success.

Learners from disadvantaged backgrounds have a challenge with English as the language of instruction at school because, at home, they use their mother tongue language (Frempong et al., 2016). English as a medium of instruction should not be a challenge for learners whose mother tongue is not English (Bhat et al., 2020). English as a medium of instruction is a challenge for teaching and learning when learners are delayed being exposed to it during their schooling years (Bhat et al. 2020). English is a challenge for learners who are not native speakers of English because they use their native language and English (Khasawneh, 2022). Jónsdóttir et al. (2021) found that non-native English speakers are hesitant to enrol in schools that use English as a 'first language' (p. 2). Therefore, it becomes clear that English can impede certain learners (Mampane & Huddle, 2017; Sailsman, 2021). Additionally, Mabena et al. (2021) state that the medium of school instruction can challenge learners. In other countries such as Morocco, they use vernacular language casually to make it possible for learners to understand the subject taught (Hammou & Kesbi, 2021).

A vernacular language is an option where learners find it difficult to cope with a foreign language as a medium of instruction (Hammou & Kesbi, 2021). For example, Khasawneh (2022) argues that teachers use vernacular language in the teaching and learning process because they think learners can comprehend the subject taught much better. However, using the mother tongue for teaching and learning affects learners' academic success unfavourably because they struggle to understand instructions written in English (Mabena et al., 2021). As a result, language plays a

crucial role in the academic success of learners (Mabena et al., 2021). Teaching learners with vernacular language means the language of instruction is vernacular (Evans & Acosta, 2021).

Apart from school factors such as English as a medium of teaching and learning, there is a shortage of classroom materials, inequality in schools and overloaded teachers. Community and family aspects have an influence as well, such as HIV and AIDS, single-parent and child-headed families are family factors that have effects on learners' academic success. Heath et al. (2014) state that many South African children under the age of 18 years have experienced the death of a parent or parents due to HIV and AIDS. These deaths have negatively affected the families' strength and sense of security. In addition, many single-parent and child-headed families are in the Western Cape (Chikoko et al., 2015). Regarding the family matter, Theron (2016) made an example that a child who comes from a poor environment and a single-parent family background will probably feel inferior at school. The situation can be worsened by crime, discrimination based on economic class or status and absences of the mother, the father or both parents.

Parental involvement in children's education is crucial because a lack of parental participation can affect a child's academic performance. Mosibudi (2012) agrees that inadequate motivation from children's parents has a negative effect on their academic performance. Lack of parental participation by Black parents due to numerous factors such as the incapacity to read or write, poor socio-economic background, lack of concern and parents as workers from other countries, inadequate interaction between the school and home, and teachers and families that deviate from normal social behaviour (Mogale, 2014); and furthermore, a lack of parental involvement in learners' schoolwork (Hemmerechts et al., 2017; Mampane & Huddle, 2017).

Poor communities such as rural areas experience challenges regarding the availability of water and electricity, taking care of orphans because of HIV and AIDS, substance abuse, teenage pregnancies and learners travelling long distances from home to school, with few teachers to teach them (Ebersöhn, 2017), and South African communities have a problem of a high dropout rate of learners and unemployment (Grossen et al., 2017). All these conditions lead to poor academic performance among learners.

Communities from low and middle socio-economic status experience similar adversity (Vanwesenbeeck et al., 2016 in Keogh et al., 2021). In support of this statement, Evans and Acosta (2021) argue that people from low and middle socio-economic status encounter comparable adversity. For example, individuals from a poor socio-economic status and a working-class family may be incapable of assisting their children with educational resources because of an inadequate salary (Du Plessis & Mestry, 2019). Furthermore, Kormos and Wisdom (2021) indicate that deprived communities experience adversity, and the other kind of adversity is destitution (Bear et al., 2021). Hence, Agaton and Cueto (2021) state that the government needs to consider the needs of learners from low and middle socio-economic status because they experience insignificant access to basic needs. In addition to basic needs, these families will experience difficulties in having enough money to provide digital technology for their children to take advantage of e-learning (Moyo, 2022). Again, these learners struggle with tertiary education access because of their socio-economic background (Chigbu & Nekhwevha, 2021). An unstable family organisation and poverty may result in the poor academic performance of learners (Mampane & Huddle. 2017). A dysfunctional family, for example, might consist of a parent and child who drink alcohol (Chikoko et al., 2015).

2.3.1 Addressing academic challenges in South Africa

Various strategies are used to assist learners in succeeding academically, such as digital learning, resource centres, different teams of support, screening, identification, assessment and support strategies, and teaching and learning strategies. Additionally, these strategies can directly and indirectly impact academic success.

2.3.1.1 Strategies that indirectly impact academic success

Some strategies are not directly affecting learner's academic success. Bojuwoye et al. (2014) express that nutrition programmes and emotional and transportation support strategies do not directly influence the academic success of learners. Das and Das (2021) and Canque et al. (2023) comment that the country's administration should provide learners with school transport. The reason is that the lack of transport for learners has unfavourable effects on their academia (Das & Das, 2021). For instance, unreliable learner transport is widespread and results in many learners losing out on learning and teaching time (Equal Education Law Centre, 2022). To avoid the abovementioned challenges, schools must provide transport for all those learners who require transport to be able to access the school (Department of Education, 2007). Not

only does transport influence learners' academics but their nutrition also plays a role in their school success. .

Food positively affects learners' academic success (Molinelli, 2022). Moreover, a variety of food positively affects learners' academic success (Bouchefra et al., 2023). Consequently, Davis et al. (2022) indicated that school food arrangements can positively affect learners' academic success. As a result, the provision of food programmes can be advantageous for educational institutions to assist learners from disadvantaged communities in experiencing academic success (Savoie-Roskos et al., 2022). Therefore, governments should establish food programmes to satisfy the basic needs of people from disadvantaged communities (Clark, 2021) to positively affect learners' learning (Malki, 2022).

The reason for the establishment of food programmes is that lack of enough food is prevalent in disadvantaged communities (Cohen et al., 2023) and it has unfavourable effects on learners' academic success (Molinelli, 2022; Bouchefra et al., 2023). For example, insufficient food intake leads to poor concentration because learners will concentrate on where to get food rather than on academic tasks (Molinelli, 2022). Not only insufficient food intake but also food with inadequate nutrients because it influences learners' mental development unfavourably and encourages learners to be absent from school and to experience fatigue (Molinelli, 2022).

Social support, emotional regulation, and social and emotional learning (SEL) skills are crucial strategies to assist learners who experience emotional difficulties. Kim et al. (2023) state that using social and emotional learning skills assists vulnerable learners to succeed academically and emotionally. Kim et al. (2023) commented that SEL includes brain building, emotion regulation, positive social skills, conflict resolution and perseverance. SEL in academic institutions is essential since it enables teachers to support, care and collaborate in a positive learning atmosphere (Light-Stevenson & Elder, 2023). SEL strategy is an approach that is intended to respond to the needs of learners who are faced with adverse circumstances where learners experience unfavourable emotions that hide their capability to manage the situation effectively (Light-Stevenson & Elder, 2023). It consists of five emotional control tactics, which are 'situation selection, situation modification, attentional deployment, cognitive change, and response modulation' (Kay, 2016), which can be grouped into three classifications, namely the exterior circumstances by altering the context, inner circumstance whereby individuals think about circumstances and the exterior reaction of expressive emotions

(Kay, 2016).

SEL includes emotion regulation skills, which have two techniques. The first technique is when individuals contemplate the situation. During the process, they are willing to learn and never get emotional, which is an effective way to deal with the situation at hand (Yu et al., 2022). In the second technique, Yu et al. (2022) indicated that this strategy is where individuals camouflage their disappointment, but it is ineffective in dealing with the situation. However, effective use of emotion regulation can enhance favourable emotions that positively affect resilience (Kay, 2016). Furthermore, emotion regulation correlates with the ability and process of handling unfavourable circumstances in a manner which results in a good outcome (Polizzi & Lynn, 2021). The reason is that individuals with a lofty inner emotional regulatory capability are more resilient than those with minimal emotional regulatory capacity (Kay, 2016).

Social support from parents and teachers is crucial to deal with learners' emotional challenges effectively because Xie and Guo (2022) alluded that social support is one of the aspects that could produce academic emotions. It implies that good or unfavourable emotions can be triggered by social context. For example, school background can make learners experience good or unfavourable emotions due to teachers' actions or utterances (Xie & Guo, 2022). However, Hu and Liu (2023) argued that to deal with the unfavourable emotions of learners, teachers need to concentrate on learners' emotions and utilise various techniques to enhance their academic success by enhancing learners' confidence and enthusiasm. Also, teamwork and classroom atmosphere are the most important factors in enhancing positive emotion and invention of behaviour. The above declarations can be achieved if teachers create classroom gatherings and offer them emotional advice and an opportunity to regulate their emotions (Hu & Liu, 2023). The reason is that emotional assistance can affect learners' confidence about their ability to do well academically, which will impact favourably on their academic success and self-efficacy by affecting academic support (Liu et al., 2023). Again, assistance from teachers and friends is essential to make learners encounter favourable emotions and thereby succeed academically (Xie & Guo, 2022). Teachers, friends, and parents need to support their children emotionally. For instance, parents need to reinforce their ability to go along with children to assist them in dealing with unfavourable emotions (Cheng & Zhou, 2023).

2.3.1.2 Strategies that directly impact on academic success

Alternative learning environments (Watkins, 2020), curriculum adaptation, differentiated instruction, universal design learning, district-based support teams, institutional-level support teams, and the establishment of special schools as resource centres are strategies that directly affect learners' academic success (Wevers, 2012).

A school resource centre is a place where people acquire knowledge intending to provide excellent sources (Shuhidan et al., 2020). Other aims of school resource centres are to offer resources, support and groom learners, expose learners to a variety of materials, inspire teachers to teach effectively and encourage collaboration among stakeholders (Majid & Shuhidan, 2017). For example, the Department of Education (2014) indicated that a resource centre is a place where teachers, learners and other non-governmental organisations can work together to advance the needs of learners from conventional schools and those who need special support. For instance, 'science resource centres' were developed to enhance teachers' capabilities and learners' academic success in South Africa (Danso, 2014) and to make resources available, such as teaching and learning items and technological apparatus (Department of Education, 2014). Furthermore, Shuhidan et al. (2020) argued that school resource centres are critical in this era of e-learning. However, there are some challenges with school resource centres, such as parents who are not fully knowledgeable about these centres and their general aim and insufficient knowledge of how they can function effectively (Helmer, 2020).

Teachers need to be supported to be able to support learners to succeed academically. Makhalemele and Payne-van Staden (2020) argue that a school-based support team is a strategic component of schools to assist both teachers and learners. The school-based support team can play a crucial role in assisting teachers and learners, but insufficient skills, inadequate management and a dearth of teamwork among school-based support team members make it unproductive (Mkhuma et al., 2014).

It means that if school-based support team members are not trained to deal with teachers' and learners' challenges, the support that should be given to them will be inadequate, and the academic success of learners will be unfavourably affected. For example, teachers who are members of this team cannot effectively address the emotional issues of learners and teachers due to their virtue of being teachers without

counselling and psychological skills.

Teachers can provide various types of support for learners to experience academic success. Teachers can achieve this goal through school-based support teams, district-based support teams, alternative learning environments and differentiated teaching. Mavuso (2014) indicates that differentiated teaching is a technique that assists learners in experiencing academic success. It includes using multifaceted teaching and learning strategies in lesson presentation; learners are exposed to various activities and evaluations. It can be used for a specific learner due to an individual's previous information, and it is crucial for a teacher to know the objective of a lesson (Wevers, 2012).

The support strategies that have a direct impact on a learner's academic success are resource centres and the Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (SIAS) strategy (Department of Basic Education, 2014). SIAS is a crucial technique for teachers because it enables them to gather learner information and execute relevant school support (Wevers, 2012). SIAS consists of four legs: the screening and development of learner profiles, determination of learner impediments, identification of relevant support for learners and implementation and scrutinising relevant support (Wevers, 2012). SIAS holistically tackles learners' challenges (Department of Basic Education, 2014). The effective functioning of SIAS is inundated by various problems, such as unclear procedures whereby teachers are expected to fill in the blank spaces on the provided sheet (Hess, 2020). The challenge of implementing SIAS effectively in schools ranges from the teachers' views about it, poor understanding of it, inadequate training of teachers and assistance towards teachers (Ntseto et al., 2021) and learners (Ntseto et al., 2021; Matolo & Rambuda, 2022). Teachers use 'learner profile' to check learners' learning difficulties and strengths (Matolo & Rambuda, 2022).

It is better to focus on learners' inner strengths and environmental factors that enhance learners' capabilities than on learners' impediments (Mavuso, 2014). It means that learners need to be assisted in using their inner capabilities and in mobilising environmental assets that are within their reach, such as individuals from their communities, public libraries and technology. Learners should not expect a teacher to decide which support is appropriate for them to succeed academically. The reason is that many learners from disadvantaged communities face many difficulties. The role of a teacher in deciding for each learner per class is devastating and demoralising. If learners take responsibility for their academic success with encouragement from the

teacher and parents, it can assist the learner in persevering. Learners should try different options or assets that can improve their academic success. This is preferable to having a teacher try to provide relevant support according to the teacher and observe whether the support works or not. A teacher can be effective by encouraging learners to realise assets such as other teachers and peers. Peer support strategy is the interaction among peers with the aim of supporting each other (Mavuso, 2014). Different types of support from peers and teachers positively affect learners' academic success (Bojuwoye et al., 2014).

An effective learning environment is necessary for learners' academic success. Watkins (2020) alluded that 'alternative learning environments' consist of school administration, relations, teaching and learning elements. Some examples of these environments are flipped learning and e-learning (Lo & Hew, 2020). Flipped learning is when learners are given information to comprehend and recall outside the classroom without teacher assistance. Teachers and peers aid learners in analysing and applying information in the classroom, and evaluation and creation are done by the individual learner alone (Eppard & Rochdi, 2017). Furthermore, in flipped learning, learners learn while not in school (Talan & Gulsecen, 2019) and flipped learning includes e-learning (Eppard & Rochdi, 2017).

E-learning means teaching and learning using information and communications technology, such as cell phones and the internet (Clark & Mayer, 2011). The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic was a driving force globally to make the world speedily consider digital technology. The education sector was also affected because stability was needed in all education systems. For example, digital technology was considered for learning to ensure stability in global education systems, and this led to a paradigm change from the usual way of teaching to digital learning (Börnert-Ringleb et al., 2021; Lapitan et al., 2021; Rajeh et al., 2021).

Furthermore, this shift might result in blended teaching and learning methods. To execute blended teaching and learning methods successfully, which includes e-learning, requires technological devices to be available in schools (Handayani & Sulastri, 2022). The above statements made it clear that digital technology is essential for learners and teachers (Du Plessis & Mestry, 2019) because of its advantages such as learners can be engaged in academic activities while they are at their homes, they can collaborate with each other and receive learning material rapidly and successfully

(Laksana, 2021).

To achieve the abovementioned advantages, teachers need to use social media platforms such as WhatsApp and Facebook, various gadgets (cell phone, laptop, etc.) and the internet. The reason for using the internet and gadgets is that they are major pillars of e-learning (Moran-Suarez, 2022). Various authors discovered that learners use cell phones (Mabena et al., 2021; Pratolo & Solikhati, 2021; Sophonhiranrak, 2021) and laptops (Pratolo & Solikhati, 2021), WhatsApp (Mabena et al., 2021, p. 462), and Facebook (Mabena et al., 2021, p. 462). Furthermore, Rajeh et al. (2021) indicate that these social media platforms and gadgets are simple to use, easily available and effective because they enhance learners' interest in participating in digital learning. A digital learning atmosphere can potentially encourage learners to work with their parents, peers, and teachers (Kassymova et al., 2020). Flipped learning (Talan & Gulsecen, 2019) and e-learning have favourable effects on learners' academic success (Piyaphanyamongkol & Nakdontee, 2020).

Despite all the good things mentioned above, there are challenges ranging from physical, social and psychological effects of the internet, social media, and gadgets. It implies that digital learning has disadvantages (Ramane et al., 2021). For example, Sophonhiranrak (2021) states that a mobile phone battery does not last for long and the inadequate ability to use mobile phones hinders the teaching and learning process; also forbidden use of mobile phones at school (Pratolo & Solikhati, 2021) and ill-use of mobile phones (Mabena et al., 2021).

Furthermore, Mabena et al. (2021) mention misuse of the internet for non-academic purposes, such as WhatsApp and Facebook chatting with friends about personal matters. Again, associated with the network, such as a weak connection of network (Ferri et al., 2020; Kapasia et al., 2020; Khan et al., 2021; Rotas & Cahapay, 2020). Furthermore, this poor network connection leads to inadequate access to the internet (Dube, 2020; Mahmud, 2021). Additionally, homes without the ability to use the internet (Agaton & Cueto, 2021; Bear et al., 2021; Kormos & Wisdom, 2021).

Digital learning has physical, psychological and social effects. Ferri et al. (2020), Mahmud (2021) and Ramane et al. (2021) mention that there is inadequate personal contact among teachers, learners, and friends. Regarding friends, Rotas and Cahapay (2020) stated that there is broken peer communication. Additionally, Ferri et al. (2020), Börnert-Ringleb et al. (2021) and Mahmud (2021) indicated poor parental

encouragement.

Physical challenges experienced by learners are 'eyes, headache, backache, shoulder pain and neck pain' (Ramane et al., 2021, p. 308) and fatigue (Ghani et al., 2022). Physical challenges mentioned above are health problems. Rotas and Cahapay (2020) add that there are physical health problems, and they further mention the psychological challenges. Moreover, Ramane et al. (2021) and Aloulou and Grati (2022) indicated that mental challenges experienced by learners are distress and insomnia. The other disadvantages are lack of concentration at home (Fălăuș et al., 2021; Ramane et al., 2021; Alhazmi & Jamaladdin, 2022) and learners' poor enthusiasm because of internet challenges (Das et al., 2022; Fălăuș et al., 2021; Ghani et al., 2022) and unenthusiastic views of learners on e-learning (Das et al., 2022), frustration (Ramane et al., 2021) and nervousness (Aloulou & Grati, 2022).

Sub-Saharan African countries experience technological challenges such as a lack of technological devices, and in developed countries, the challenge is teachers' negative perception of e-learning (Schmitz et al., 2022). Mampane (2023) found that one of the Sub-Saharan African countries does not view the ability to use technology and its development as neither an asset nor a barrier. So, there is a need to investigate the correlation among 'resilience, academic resilience, career aspirations and the role of technology in education' (Mampane, 2023, p. 63). According to Goldstein and Brooks (2013), scientific investigation of resilience has fast-tracked, and it is still relevant even after ten years because young people experience more adversity due to technological difficulty, and it is significant to assist them to be resilient and comprehend the protective and risk factors (Goldstein & Brooks, 2013). In support of this statement, Dwiastuti et al. (2021) argue that scientific investigation on protective and risk issues is essential due to the COVID-19 epidemic.

2.4 The educational context in Thabo Mofutsanyane district, Free State province

People of the Free State province experience problems of malnourishment, with children under the age of six years as the most affected population (Symington, 2018). Symington (2018) further alluded that there is an extremely high rate of people who are not employed with minimum education levels and more single-parent families.

The Free State Provincial Department of Basic Education consists of '990 schools, 706 269 learners and 22 686 teachers, with 81 private institutions that have 1181 teachers

and 20 444' learners (Böhmer & Gustafsson, 2023. p. 48). The Free State Department of Basic Education has four districts which were part of the top ten districts that performed well academically at the national level in 2022, where Motheo was in position one with (90,8), Fezile Dabi in position 2 (90,4), number six was Xhariep (87,5) followed by Thabo Mofutsanyane (87,3) at position seven (Department of Basic Education, 2022b, p.87). A summary of Free State secondary schools' performance is illustrated in Figure 2.1 below.

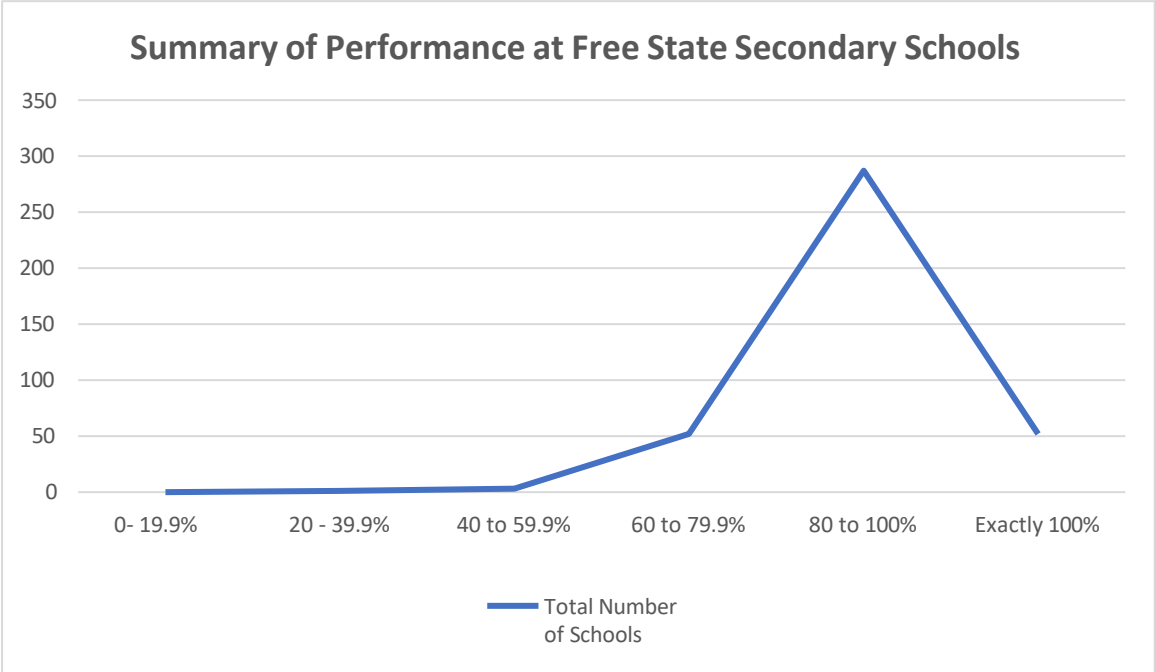


Figure 2.1: Summary of performance at Free State schools.

Source: Department of Basic Education (2022a, p. 5)

The above figure illustrates that more than 300 schools achieved above 59.9%, very few schools achieved below 60% and no schools obtained 19%. The majority of schools got 80% to 100% pass. It implies that most secondary schools in advantaged and disadvantaged backgrounds do well academically. Certain aspects enable these secondary schools to strive academically irrespective of the hardships they are faced with and some of these aspects are resources, the responsibility of other educational stakeholders such as parents and the Free State department of basic education. For instance, according to the Equal Education Law Centre (EELC) (2022), the Free State Department of Basic Education had two habitually underachieving schools in 2018, which increased the following year to eight schools. Additionally, the Department of Basic Education (2022b) at Free State ceased the operation of 179 schools with very low enrolments and were not feasible, and affected learners were placed in boarding

schools across the province. The Department of Basic Education (2017) alluded that most of the parents (61.5%) in the Free State financially support their children to attend private classes, accessibility of study material is above average, 50% of learners can use the library, more than 40% of learners work is constantly marked and electricity is available at home for more than 90% of Free State children to use for lights at home. As indicated by the Department of Basic Education (2017), apparently provision of electricity to many households had a positive impact on education. All the abovementioned aspects are enablers for Free State learners to perform well academically in schools.

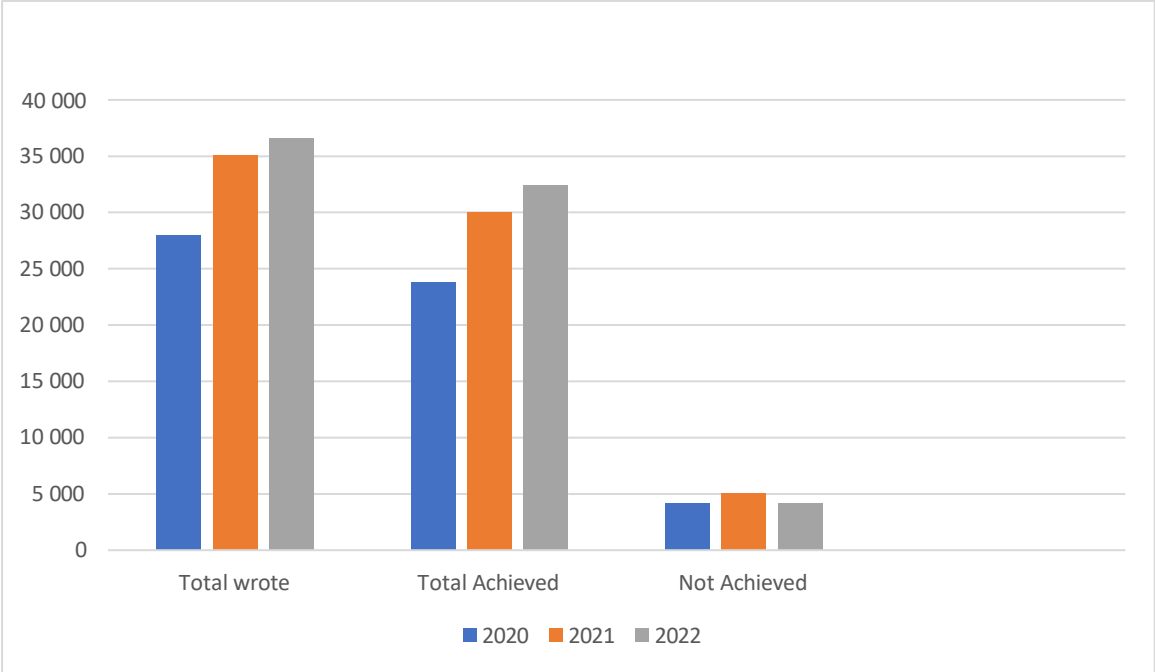


Figure 2.2: Overall academic performance of Grade 12 Free State learners

Source: Department of Basic Education (2022b, p. 37)

A total number of learners who wrote final examinations from 2020 to 2022 was more than 99,000. It kept increasing each year, with approximately 590 learners who wrote Grade 12 final examinations above 99,000, which increased by more than 8,000 between 2020 and 2022. The Free State Department of Education performed above 85% from 2020 to 2021. The total number of learners who succeeded academically in three years at the final examination was more than 86,000, and 11,000 learners never succeeded academically in the period from 2020 to 2022, approximately 15%.

The above academic performance of the Free State Department of Education can be associated with enabling aspects such as electricity, extra classes, financial assistance

from parents and the Free State Department of Basic Education interventions. In support of the above statement, Pillay (2023) states that the assets-based approach is used in the Free State to enable learners' resilience. Parents should provide their children with financial assistance to attend extra classes, with the aim of mastering the content and fostering learners' self-determination to attend extra classes.

Regarding the academic performance of Thabo Mofutsanyane district in the Eastern Free State, I will start with the district background. Thabo Mofutsanyane district, according to the Department of Cooperative Governance and the Department of Traditional Affairs (CoGTA, 2022), was named after Edwin Thabo Mofutsanyane, a stalwart of the communist party. The district is a typical rural district with 24 small towns. Thabo Mofutsanyane consists of six local municipal areas, namely 'Dihlabeng local municipality, Maluti-a-Phofung local municipality, Mantsopa local municipality, Nketoana local municipality, Phumelela local municipality and Setsoto local municipality' (CoGTA, 2022, p. 7). Maluti-a-Phofung local municipality incorporates largely what was previously known as the native land of Basotho (African ethnic group) which is QwaQwa that consists of three small towns such as 'Harrismith, Kestell, and Phuthaditjhaba' (CoGTA, 2022, p. 9).

Thabo Mofutsanyane district is a disadvantaged community because of housing, a low standard of education, a lack of opportunities to advance individuals' quality of life, inadequate means to satisfy human fundamental requirements, and poor sanitation systems (Nishimwe-Niyimbanira, 2016). Nishimwe-Niyimbanira (2016) indicates that 58% of all residents in Thabo Mofutsanyane district municipality (QwaQwa) did not have an acceptable sanitation system. It is evident that most secondary school learners from Thabo Mofutsanyane district come from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds.

It is significant to conduct a research study in Thabo Mofutsanyane due to several aspects, such as poverty, inequalities, poor quality of education and the influence of socio-economic conditions, learners' personal characteristics and the way schools improve learners' academic performance and the limitations of previously conducted studies. For instance, the limitations of the Snyman study are that the researcher used another person to collect information from Basotho participants, and the in-depth interview was not used. It means these participants were never requested to elaborate further on their responses for the sake of getting rich information and how they understood the concept of resilience. The only participants deemed resilient were from

rural areas, and only those were selected by researchers from the Pathways to Resilience project, which included nine local experts and seniors from the community of Thabo Mofutsanyane. The researcher was a white person from an urban area, which might limit the researcher's understanding of the participants' experiences (Snyman, 2012). As a result, there is a need for empirical studies to be conducted in areas such as Thabo Mofutsanyane district by a Black person to investigate the influence of socio-economic conditions on learners' academic performance (Motale, 2014). Investigations should be conducted to discover why learners from Thabo Mofutsanyane district regard personal factors such as cognitive ability and responsibility as less significant to encourage resilience (Snyman, 2012).

Snyman (2012) says that a person who speaks Sesotho should collect data so that the researcher can be able to interrelate with the participants to understand first-hand the participants' conditions, experiences and factors that develop their resilience. Researchers encourage the use of in-depth interviews to gain a full understanding of the aspects that encourage them to be resilient. The poor academic performance of South African learners originates from dependence on old-fashioned and simple paradigms to comprehend the procedures to enhance schools' and learners' academic performance. The empirical investigation on resilience, which includes home, school, community, social-emotional capability, and the individual's beliefs about their capacities, is a growing phenomenon (Nicoll, 2014).

Factors such as school, teachers, learners, and socio-economic factors are the sources of poor academic performance among learners in Thabo Mofutsanyane district. Also, Lekhu (2013) and Ramohapi et al. (2015) state that teachers have problems with poor assessment skills and insufficient knowledge of correct subject content. The worst part is teachers without knowledge of the subject content (Moloi et al., 2023). Other difficulties experienced by teachers of Thabo Mofutsanyane district are teaching numerous classes, school overpopulation, poor internet connection, purchasing data to browse the web (Ndabankulu et al., 2022), deficiency of resources (Mademabe et al., 2022; Ndabankulu et al., 2022), teachers not using learner-centred teaching methods (Mademabe et al., 2022), teachers being a bad example for learners and unfavourable teacher-learner interrelationship (Mabea, 2021).

Further problems are male learners putting their academic success at risk after attending traditional school because of their social and economic background

(Mukuna, 2022), misuse of drugs, and lack of motivation (Mabea, 2021; Mukuna, 2022). Mabea (2021) and Duby et al. (2022) alluded that the Thabo Mofutsanyane district has a high rate of female adolescents who are pregnant and more individuals with HIV infection (Duby et al., 2022) and children who act as parents in their families because parents are unavailable for various reasons (Mabea, 2021). According to Mabea (2021), Thabo Mofutsanyane district learners are lethargic, abuse social networking websites, are truancy, are unpunctual, do not complete their academic tasks and have gangsterism (Mabea, 2021). Other factors that hinder learners from doing well academically originate from learners themselves, such as low self-efficacy (Parsa et al., 2015). Learners’ problems in mathematics are learners’ negative attitudes and inadequate teaching methods (Sa’ad et al., 2014). The implication of the above statement is that many schools for disadvantaged learners are not performing well academically due to various negative socio-economic conditions at home, school, and teachers – see sections 2.2 and 2.3 (Banerjee, 2016). However, other schools performed better academically from advantaged and disadvantaged backgrounds. Figure 2.3 displays the performance of advantaged and disadvantaged secondary schools in Thabo Mofutsanyane district (2020–2022).

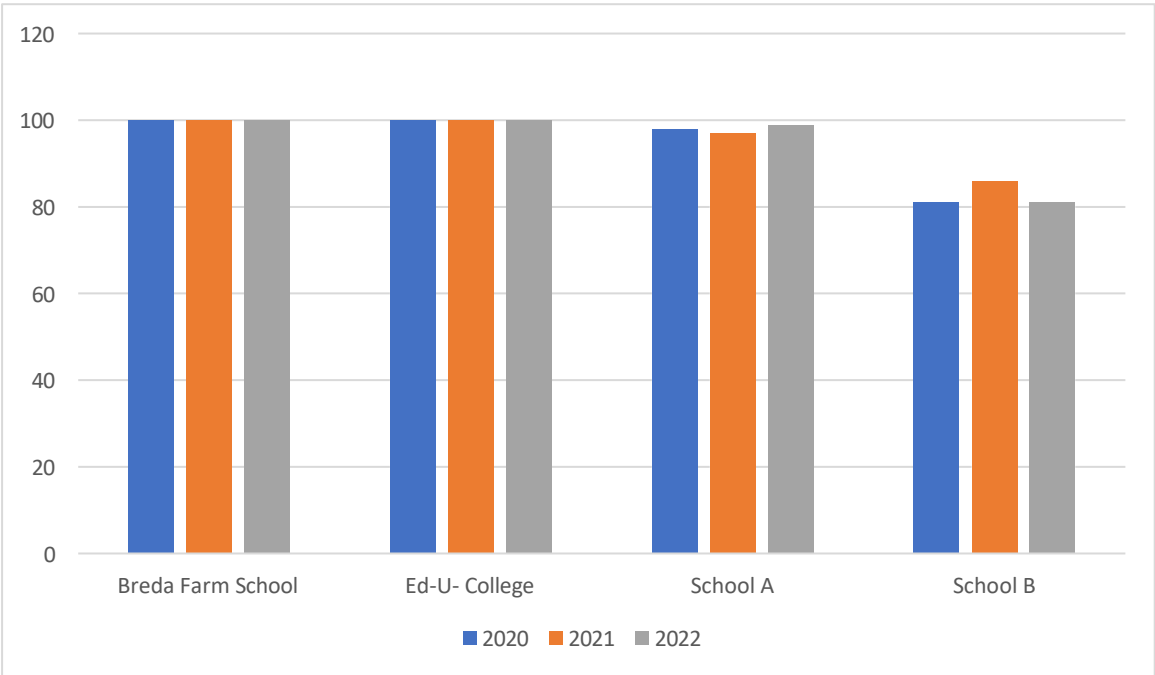


Figure 2.3: Performance of advantaged and disadvantaged secondary schools in Thabo Mofutsanyane district 2020–2022

Source: Department of Basic Education (2022a, p. 53)

The performance of two advantaged and two disadvantaged secondary schools in Thabo Mofutsanyane district (2020–2022) depicts that two advantaged schools had a 100% pass rate in three consecutive years. However, the other two schools from disadvantaged communities performed well academically in three successive years but they achieved below 100%. School A performed better than School B at the above 95%. Schools A and B are part of this study because the learner and teacher participants were from these schools.

Thabo Mofutsanyane district schools use technological gadgets (Ndabankulu et al., 2022), and teachers of the QwaQwa area in Thabo Mofutsanyane district have positive self-efficacy, which enables resilience (Ndabankulu et al., 2022). This means that resilient teachers and schools with technological devices stand a good chance of enhancing the academic resilience of learners. As van Rensburg et al. (2019) attest, educational institutions, family and society members of Thabo Mofutsanyane district can successfully enhance the academic resilience of learners when they cherish schooling. The author further added that the ability to interact and communicate with others, the ideas, customs, and social deeds of the Thabo Mofutsanyane district community and religious beliefs are enablers of academic resilience (van Rensburg et al., 2019).

Learners from Thabo Mofutsanyane use micro- and macro-systems (socio-economic status of learners' family), various individuals such as teachers, parents, peers and other individuals from the community as a foundation to deal with adversity. Snyman (2012) articulates those factors, such as the teacher, the belief in a superhuman power, friends, community, interacting with other individuals and events that people do not cause, assist Thabo Mofutsanyane district learners in dealing effectively with challenges. However, learners also regard self-esteem, cognitive competency, responsibility, siblings, nature, and pets as unimportant factors that help them deal effectively with their difficulties (Snyman, 2012). This implies that teachers, religion and school environment, friends, community members and relationships are crucial for Thabo Mofutsanyane learners because they play an important role in their lives. These learners utilise resources from micro-, meso-, exo- and macro-systems to be resilient. They find their source of resilience from within themselves, family, school, peers and pets, social interaction, community, religion and beliefs (Snyman, 2012).

2.5 Conceptualising resilience and its importance in the school context

The concept of resilience has many definitions because various scholars have defined it according to their research contexts (Chaudhry et al., 2016). In support of this statement, the origin of this concept of resilience is from examining children who manage to do well despite the challenges they are confronted with in their childhood upbringings (Van Breda, 2001). For example, Chaudhry et al. (2016) regard resilience as a way of taking an individual from distress and difficult situations. In addition, Al-Zain and Abdulsalam (2022) view resilience as the capability to strive out of adversity. Again, Parker (2020) indicates that the concept of resilience contains two elements: exposure to risk and effective adjustment. The concept of resilience can be helpful to teachers because it can provide them with ideas to comprehend how adolescents succeed regardless of the difficult conditions they are living in and how to use this information to reinforce and develop their positive traits (Zolkoski & Bullock, 2012).

Teachers can also recognise that these positive characteristics are crucial for adolescents who come from disadvantaged backgrounds. The concept of resilience is associated with exposure to risk and success. It is also comprehended as intrapersonal factors. However, Boon et al. (2012) define resilience as a process and trait because of the relationship between these aspects and the active cooperating character of resilience. Furthermore, Ang et al. (2022) agree with Boon et al. (2012) and add the word product of character and the process. In health and social sciences, resilience is the process of both internal and external protective factors (Aranda & Hart, 2014).

Resilience is a vibrant, multifaceted, collaborative, and diverse procedure that is the focus of many disciplines with an emphasis on capability development (Ungar, 2018). During this era of post-industrialisation, Viljoen (2015) explains the progression of resilience as the active interrelated procedure of inner and external assets, protecting and adverse aspects to enhance or dishearten resilience (Viljoen, 2015). In support of this idea, Morales (2014) commented that resilience accepts a variety of protective factors to act together and complement one another in making adolescents succeed. Therefore, resilience implies the procedure of various organisms interrelating with each other to assist individuals in recovering and overcoming adversity (Ungar & Theron, 2019). Furthermore, Ebersöhn et al. (2022) stated that resilience is the process of exploiting various assets from different organisms to protect individuals from adverse

consequences of hardships they face to strive. For this study, resilience is the process of succeeding through active participation using internal and external resources, such as personality characteristics, school, family, community and technology.

According to Boon et al. (2012), the advantage of resilience is that Bronfenbrenner's theory provides a means to measure resilience due to its micro-level to macro-social influence on building resilience. Therefore, it means intrapersonal factors such as individuals' characteristics (personal factors), home, community, school, and technology are environmental factors to which learners are exposed; for example, Ungar et al. (2021) alluded that resilience is exploited from a variety of organisms for improvement and to strive.

In Bronfenbrenner's model, individual adolescents work together with family members, objects, peers, and teachers in their microsystem (Boon et al., 2012). However, teachers' objects, such as gadgets and peers influence adolescents' resilience positively or negatively, and peers influence adolescents' resilience positively or negatively (Liebenberg et al., 2016). For example, if they disregard learners' views of including peers, parents or technological devices as protective factors, there is the possibility of unfavourable effects on academic resilience. However, a positive impact can happen when teachers respect learners, provide positive educational experiences, and encourage the use of protective factors outside the school environment, such as parents, peers, community, and technology. I conclude by saying that the above-mentioned protective factors have the potential to enhance resilience.

2.5.1 Types of resilience

There are different types of resilience, such as community, organisational, family, adolescent, and academic. A detailed discussion of academic resilience will be in the next chapter. This study focuses on adolescents who succeed academically despite their adversities. Furthermore, teachers, parents, and learners who succeeded academically despite the adversities they faced are part of this study. Since learners who participated in this study are adolescents, I will now focus on adolescent resilience.

According to Ahern (2006), adolescent resilience is more focused on adjusting to adversity, and it includes adolescent individuals' characteristics and support from people around the adolescents, such as members of the family, relatives and the neighbourhood capital (Ahern, 2006). Moreover, adolescent resilience consists of

three pillars: risk, protective factors and interventions. Risk factors are factors that might put an adolescent at risk of not succeeding, and these factors originate from adolescents, such as the use of drugs. However, other risk factors originate from the adolescents' environment, such as the poor socio-economic status of the adolescents' families.

Protective factors are internal and external, such as a caring attitude and attachment, that assist learners in being successful. Their function is to enhance adolescents' capability to function effectively. Therefore, the use of protective factors can be regarded as an intervention. Interventions are strategies that can be used to assist adolescents in coping effectively with the situation (Ahern, 2006).

The above statements imply that Grade 10 and Grade 11 learners' characteristics, such as optimism, determination and intrinsic motivation, will assist them in overcoming adversity. Moreover, their support from parents, teachers, other people from their community, and classmates or friends might help them be resilient. For this reason, external factors, such as positive relationships between adolescents, teachers, peers and parents, can also be included. However, the different family, community, and school strategies can make adolescents academically resilient and are crucial for their success.

From the above statement, it becomes clear that school as an organisation, community and family resilience can play a vital role in assisting Grade 10 and 11 learners to deal with adversity. Family resilience is the act of a family succeeding even if it is faced with adversity. For the family to be resilient, its members need to communicate effectively, have freedom of expression, use community resources, have cultural and spiritual beliefs, deal with challenges effectively, have high expectations, be humourous, be supportive of each other, have support from outside the family, be able to assist adolescents and be involved in extramural activities (Gardiner et al., 2019).

The authors signify that the role of family resilience to the adolescent is also essential. The family, even if it is in disadvantaged conditions, should create an environment where its members speak with the child freely and encourage the child to be open. They should encourage the child to have a goal or dream to realise. Provide advice to the child in a positive manner. The family should use their way of living and belief systems to deal with difficulties successfully. There should be time for humour, involvement in physical activities such as playing games together, and support of the child's schoolwork. They should help the child with any challenge they are faced with, by way of example, encouraging the child to use the community library for school

purposes if they see it will assist the child, or look for other services from the community that can be of help for the child to utilise.

It is obvious from the latter statement that community resources play a vital role in helping children deal with challenges effectively. Berkes and Ross (2013) see the community's capability to work as a unit to achieve a goal such as community resilience. The occurrence of community resilience is based on the attachment of individuals to their location, their main beliefs, understanding, abilities, judgement, biosystems, and inclusion of local authority and inventive neighbourhood infrastructure, management, optimism and being fully prepared to welcome change.

The school as an organisation should be resilient so that it can create an environment that will assist learners in being resilient. Seville et al. (2008) regard organisational resilience as a function of an organisation. They further indicate that organisational resilience consists of being aware of the school, managing the source of adversities, and being able to adjust. Resilient schools can comprehend risk factors. They are willing to provide effective interventions to deal with adversity (Gibson & Tarrant, 2010).

Gibson and Tarrant (2010) denote that schools should be able to manage their activities to yield effective outcomes. Irrespective of the adversity they are faced with, they should create positive school environments for learners and teachers and involve parents and other stakeholders. The schools should identify their weaknesses and strengths and create relevant interventions for their challenges. Schools should be able to assist learners in being academically successful, irrespective of the conditions that they come from. The reason is that the school can work with other stakeholders. The other factor that is crucial for school resilience is the ability to work with other institutions (Seville et al., 2008). The development of academic resilience does not depend on the individual only. Alternatively, it depends on individuals' relations with their environment, especially a positive environment, for developing resilience, where there are supportive and caring individuals (Van Breda, 2016).

2.6 Resilience in schools internationally and in South Africa

Teachers and schools correlate with the better academic performance of resilient learners, even though insufficient scientific studies focus on how schools can enhance the academic success and resilience of learners (Khodadadi et al., 2022). However, the fact is that schools have capabilities to develop learners' resilience and academic

success because they can engage learners directly with school activities (Ungar et al., 2014). Therefore, it signifies that teachers are crucial partners in helping learners overcome their adversity (Kalender, 2015).

Another factor that teachers can use to make learners academically resilient is to engage learners in academic activities. Engagement of learners in after-school academic programmes requires extra time and a proxy teacher. Assistance teachers can be a person or mechanical device. Broadbent et al. (2018) argue that learners are pleased to collaborate with a mechanical device as their assistance teachers because assistance teachers are capable of favourably influencing their academic success (Jacoby, 2021). The author further states that assistance teachers can enhance learners' interaction with others and positive feelings and assist with class management, teaching, and learning. However, assistant teachers do not have adequate experience (Smith, 2019; Jacoby, 2021) and are not as knowledgeable about the subject matter as the class teacher (Smith, 2019).

Extra time is the number of hours learners invest in the teaching and learning process that occurs outside the normal working hours of teachers (Chih-Hao, 2019) because teachers are the major service suppliers of extra classes (Černá, 2020). In this study, I use the word extra classes for extra time given to learners. Extra classes for learners are crucial and can be done through private tutoring or shadow education. Providing extra classes is a global phenomenon (Chih-Hao, 2019; Yahiaoui, 2020). Furthermore, Yahiaoui (2020) states that extra classes can be provided as individualistic, tiny, or huge grouping. Also, the author indicates that affluent families usually prefer one-on-one tutoring for their children, small class groupings are used by teachers in their schools, and large class groupings are utilised by non-governmental organisations.

The provision of extra classes is performed for various reasons, such as teachers' supplementing their income, shortcomings of the education system, incompetence of teachers and to establish a conducive learning environment, societal pressure on learners and parents (Yahiaoui, 2020), to address the needs of learners from poor performing schools (Yung, 2020), and to enhance academic success (Chih-Hao, 2019; Yahiaoui, 2020; Yung, 2020). However, Yahiaoui (2020) argues that extra classes are not advantageous for learners who perform poorly academically. In support of this statement, Chih-Hao (2019) indicates that learners can improve their academic success through independent learning rather than attending extra classes, and learners

from disadvantaged backgrounds who do not have the financial resources to attend extra classes will not gain from the provision of extra classes (Chih-Hao, 2019; Yung, 2020).

Academic success is considered essential for learners' active participation in school activities. However, contradictory views exist about the relationship between academic success and learner engagement in academic activities (Lei et al., 2018). Learners with more positive psychological well-being are more involved in school activities, and they have positive views about their school accomplishments (Rodríguez- Fernández et al., 2018). The rationale behind this is that behavioural engagement enhances learners' academic success, and, as a result, they experience positive emotions, such as satisfaction (Lei et al., 2018). Learners who are more engaged in school activities perceive their school's atmosphere positively; they have high self-esteem, and they succeed academically because they are always in school or they do not drop out; therefore, they are academically resilient, persistent and have feelings of school attachment (Virtanen et al., 2018).

Learners' engagement in school activities is another factor that positively impacts their academic success. McMahon (2015) and Weiss and García (2015) argue that the learner's engagement in school activities will make the learner perform better academically. Engaging learners in good learning programmes develops and maintains academic resilience (Ungar et al., 2014). Putting more emphasis on learners' strengths during teaching and learning, using activities that are relevant to the learners' culture, using cooperative learning and providing feedback promptly makes learners academically resilient (Gafoor & Kottalil, 2015).

Behavioural engagement and other factors such as teachers, economic conditions, family, community, and motivation are crucial for learners' academic success. Furthermore, Taştan et al. (2018) indicate that learners' academic success is also promoted by achievement motivation, teacher motivation and the teacher's self-efficacy. Again, learners who want to be academically successful are enthusiastic about changing their economic conditions and those of their parents and are encouraged to contribute positively to their community (Borjian, 2018). Learners believe that their hard work to succeed academically results from their social context (Brooms, 2019). Since schools can cultivate learners' resilience, which in turn will improve their academic success, schools in disadvantaged contexts need to organise extra classes to encourage learners to engage in school activities. They can institute extra classes for the whole class or target specific learners who need extra support. They can also

encourage parents and learners to use any available extra class from the community. However, they must be cautious that not all learners can benefit from extra classes. For example, those who are not resilient should be encouraged and assisted to work independently.

2.7 Characteristics of academically resilient learners

Academically resilient learners have an internal locus of control and positive self-belief (Astudillo, 2015). For the focus of this study, I will concentrate on self-belief. A positive personal belief motivates the individual to succeed in the task being done and makes the individual behave differently from others in the same conditions (Sian Rusli Ahmad et al., 2017). Positive personal belief encourages learners to perform well academically despite the difficulties they experience at home, in school and their community because they have self-respect, and individuals close to them also believe in them (Young et al., 2017). Personal belief improves learners' academic performance (Anagnostaki et al., 2016). However, personal belief does not contribute significantly to resilience (Berkers, 2016).

2.7.1 Academic resilience and socio-demographic factors

Various demographic factors have an effect on academic resilience and success such as educational programmes, finance, age, gender, education, race, school and family. According to Aryuwat et al. (2023), there is a difference in learners' academic resilience due to the different characteristics of individuals, such as the abovementioned, including the circumstances influencing how individuals survive. However, parents' education and socio-economic levels were not a forecaster of academic success (McCain, 2021). Also, Van Hoek et al. (2019) found that sexual characteristics, prior education, race, family support and the individuals between the ages of 15 and 24 years were not verified as forecasters of academic success. Furthermore, Lovette et al. (2022) concluded that individuals under 18 years of age and less than 25 regarded themselves as more resilient than those under 16 years old. Again, older muscular learners encounter academic success more due to participation in academic tasks than younger ones (Perez, 2021).

Besides age, Ludin (2018) found that education and sexual characteristics were associated with resilience. The study by Mwangi and Ireri (2017) reported that sexual characteristics were associated with academic resilience in different learners because

male learners were less academically resilient than female learners (p. 5). In contrast, Campbell-Sills et al. (2018) found that females have less resilience than males. In support of Campbell-Sills et al. (2018), McCain (2021) alluded that Black males have an academically resilient character, which is stimulated by their capability to carry on despite difficulty experienced, their cherishing of education, engagement with academic tasks and nurturing each other.

Nurturing each other signifies that family background and support are essential. Being a member of a certain group of people is related to academic success (Fehérvári & Varga, 2023). For instance, a family whom you can turn to when in need of assistance is related to academic triumph for learners irrespective of their socio-economic context but, more importantly, for disadvantaged learners (Cui et al., 2022).

The kind of family where learners come from serves as a forecaster of academic resilience (Ferrulli, 2022). For example, Huang and Dong (2023) mentioned that the employment of parents from adverse contexts and poor interrelations with family members could unfavourably influence learners' academic success. However, Cui et al. (2022) detailed that learners' academic achievement from disadvantaged and advantaged contexts correlates with favourable interrelations among parents and children, and minimal parental qualification correlates with their children's academic performance (Fehérvári & Varga, 2023). Furthermore, Ballesteros et al. (2023) commented that lofty educational status correlates with an ability to bounce back. Additionally, the participation of parents from adverse contexts in their children's schoolwork has good effects on academic success (Cui et al., 2022).

Not only family but also school background affects the academic performance of learners. Cui et al. (2022) indicate a significant correlation between educational institutions with a better socio-economic background and learners' academic performance because schools with a good financial status can afford good educational assets. Fehérvári and Varga (2023) concurred with Cui et al. (2022) and alluded that there is a relationship between monetary and academic performance. The opposite is also true because individuals without a lack of financial support experience lessened resilience (Tran, 2023). For instance, a lack of financial resources can disadvantage children from adverse contexts. Li and Lei (2023) indicated that such children have limited resources to attend educational programmes that enhance their ability to strive academically despite the odds. The reason is that there is a relationship between aiding programmes and academic success (Fehérvári & Varga, 2023). The above

statement implies that social-economic settings greatly affect learners' academia (Vadivel, 2023). However, not only the social-economic setting but also the relationship, Cui et al. (2022) commented that learners' relations with friends are crucial to making learners from disadvantaged contexts resilient more than learners' relations with teachers. In contrast, teacher-learner rapport substantially influences learners' weak academic performance (Huang & Dong, 2023). Not only school aspects such as teacher-learner rapport and academic aiding programmes, but race also affects academic resilience, thereby the learners' academic success.

On the other hand, there is a disparity in resilience because one race seems more resilient than another. Sabouripour and Roslan (2015) indicated that there is a difference in the level of resilience among races as well. For example, Africans' resilience was higher than those of other races, namely Asian and Middle Easterners. (Sabouripour & Roslan, 2015). Additionally, there is a difference between the racial groups of boys and girls (Holmes & Slate, 2017). African girls are more academically resilient than their counterparts, and boys receive less support and have inadequate academic resilience characteristics (Mwangi & Ireri, 2017).

Thus, this difference is due to socialisation. Young et al. (2017) suggest that African mothers encourage girls to be more academically resilient than boys. Socialisation, masculinity, and femininity impact the development of learners' academic resilience (Brogden, 2015). Furthermore, in socially disadvantaged African communities, not only mothers use socialisation; even teachers, sisters, and female friends encourage a girl child to be academically resilient (Jefferis & Theron, 2017).

2.8 Academic success

Performing well academically is part of academic success. York et al. (2015) state that academic success is more than performing well academically, and researchers should not limit academic success to academic performance. The reason is that academic success implies that learners invest more energy and time in the teaching and learning process to acquire comprehension of the subject to qualify to move to the next grade or level of education (Kelderman, 2021). However, Kelderman (2021) mentioned that this explanation of academic success is subjected to further investigation for verification. Again, there is a relationship between academic success and peoples' views on education.

People view education as an instrument for a better life in general. They regard a person who has succeeded academically as an individual who will have the ability to have better job opportunities and live a successful life. This attitude created the idea that learners should be academically successful in school (Amponsah et al., 2018). It is essential to define the concept of academic success. Academic success means a high success rate of learners / a pass rate of the school, or an increasing grade point average of learners (Murphy & Murphy, 2018). Grade point average is often and generally utilised as a gauge and is associated with academic success (Páramo et al., 2020).

Academic success is a general educational accomplishment, achievement of study goals, expertise, capabilities, determination and better academic performance (York et al., 2015). The definition of academic success consists of mental processes involved in knowing, learning, and understanding things. In addition, it is associated with immeasurable factors, such as creativity, critical thinking, motivation, perseverance, self-control, resilience, hard work, relevant to the existence of an individual, ability to keep learnt knowledge, exchange of ideas with other individuals, capacity to acquire information, comprehend, justifying your views and natural ability (Carter-Francique et al., 2013). The definition of academic success consists of cognitive and non-cognitive factors such as intelligence and gaining knowledge from peers (Can, 2019).

On the other hand, academic success considers learners' pass percentage or marks but is not limited to marks (Gutiérrez et al., 2018). However, academic achievement is classified as academic success, and academic achievement is doing well at a particular school task (Anakwe & Dikko, 2017). Therefore, in this study, *academic success* means passing with an average of 40% and above at the end of the academic term as proof that you have achieved the general goals of that specific term requirements or year and qualify to move to the next grade. However, the concept of *academic achievement* is about a particular subject or requirement that does not satisfy the general prerequisite. Therefore, it implies that academic achievement is not broader than academic success, which includes various factors.

Various factors contribute to learners' academic success, such as persistence, striving for success, efforts, expectations, emotional control, social competence, intelligence, and interest. Yu and Singh (2018) add that learners interested in their schoolwork succeed academically. Learners who spend more hours doing their schoolwork,

attending extra classes during the week, after school, on the weekends and during school holidays still do schoolwork on their own at home and have the determination to succeed; this implies that they are persistent and they put more effort to succeed academically (Murphy & Murphy, 2018). Learners who want to succeed academically are committed to their schoolwork and succeed academically (Datu, 2018). Additionally, for learners to succeed academically, they need to be socially competent. Learners need to have good relations and work with other people, such as peers, in the form of group work or visiting a friend to do schoolwork. In addition, learners should involve their parents and teachers to assist them or use community resources (Brooms, 2019). Consistency with expectations, emotional control and social competence contributed to academic success beyond effortful control and IQ (Lafavor, 2018). Consequently, the above-mentioned various aspects are protective, not risk factors for academic success.

2.8.1 Protective and risk factors for academic success

Protective and risk factors are factors that affect a learner's academic success, and these factors originate from the environment and the learner as an individual. Protective factors that are from within individuals, such as ambition, self-confidence (Heradstveit et al., 2023), motivation, self-efficacy and positivity (Yang & Wang, 2022), will be discussed in Chapter 3. However, the focus will be on external protective factors such as technology, community, family, and school. The school can assist learners in experiencing academic success (Copp et al., 2022). The reason is that there is a need to explore various stakeholders' views on the difficulties experienced by learners from adverse contexts and their academic success (Garan, 2022). For school, as an external protective factor, I will pay attention to learners, teachers, school principals, other stakeholders, and the classroom. Rivera et al. (2019) observed that protective factors, such as a school and a classroom, can sustain learners' academic success by creating a positive learning atmosphere. Classroom situations greatly encourage learners' success in secondary schools (Akomolafe & Adesua, 2015). The classroom atmosphere with a significant subject occurrence correlated with high academic performance. Learners who can access assets from their contexts have a high chance of using those assets as a protective factor because they utilise those assets to boost their academic success (Schmid & Haukedal, 2022). Additionally, Gaspar et al. (2022) stated that the ability to identify and access protective factors from the environment

leads to success. Except for learners, teachers are capable of enhancing learners' academic success. For example, Ahmad et al. (2022) indicated that teachers can boost learners' academic success if they can enhance their assistance by managing the situation before any hiccup occurs (Lei et al., 2022), present the lesson in such a way that it arouses learners' interest and involves them (Zhang, 2022). Teachers can encourage learners to network with other learners who are doing well academically from other schools (Cui et al., 2022).

Furthermore, Freitas et al. (2022) argue that learners view teachers' assistance, positive interrelationships between teachers and learners, and supportive peers as protecting components. However, learners are experiencing an insufficiency of assets that can assist them in school activities (Mampane, 2023).

Teachers can assist learners in being academically successful when they establish self-help groups among learners and inspire them to strive academically (Cui et al., 2022), which can be achieved when teachers believe in them and demonstrate a positive attitude towards learners (Affuso et al., 2023). However, Cui et al. (2022) found that the interrelationship between teachers and learners was insignificant in nurturing academic resilience. As a result, there is a need to authenticate this research study's capability to echo this finding for consistency in different contexts (Cui et al. 2022). Nonetheless, teachers and school principals are expected to promote the academic resilience of learners (Mahmoodimehr et al., 2022).

The school principal's role is crucial to help learners succeed academically. Garan (2022) states that principals should be accountable, and their intention should be to maintain the school's academic success by not reacting to the problems but to prevent them before they occur. They should enhance the teaching process for learners, inspire teachers, be committed and nurture the school teachers' management abilities (Maluleke et al., 2022). They should be positive; for example, demonstrate positive emotions towards parents and learners (Garan, 2022) and be hopeful and truthful when clarifying the occurrences in their contexts (Santaella, 2021). Moreover, most school principals engage members of society and families to assist learners (Mukherjee, 2022) and to help them to be academically resilient (Yang & Wang, 2022). On the other hand, school principals are encouraged to arrange seminars where learners can be exposed to inspiring people to stimulate learners' interest towards their academic venture (Ahmed et al., 2021). Principals face challenges such as poor dedication, contextual adversity, and monetary limitations (Garan, 2022).

They can effectively deal with the difficulties they experience, work collaboratively, and reinforce relations with others (Guiamalon et al., 2022). According to Lamola (2022), strengthening relationships with other stakeholders is the best approach because different participants in children's education have more advantages in handling major difficulties that influence learners' academic success.

The reason is that parents comfort children and are optimistic about their children's academic success (Gaspar et al., 2022). As a result, favourable relations between parents and children are established, which has good effects on the children's learning process (Shao & Kang, 2022). To confirm Shao and Kang's views, Cui et al. (2022) stated that their findings in relation to other studies revealed that positive relations between parents and children are significant for children's academic endeavours. In addition, Selvarajan and Vasanthagumar (2022) found that globally, learners' family context has more influence on academic success than teachers. Furthermore, learners' assistance from families is part of exterior protection, which is essential for learners from disadvantaged backgrounds (Heradstveit et al., 2023), which can enhance learners' academic resilience (Liu & Duan, 2023). However, there are disadvantages associated with this interrelationship, such as children's inability to develop 'their own personal identity' (Gaspar et al., 2022, p. 2382).

For example, Copp et al. (2022) noted that good parenting positively affects learners' academic outcomes. In support of the above statement, Shao and Kang (2022) alluded that when parents participate in their children's academic endeavours, it influences the learners' academic success positively. Therefore, it is essential for them to participate. This implies that cooperation between teachers and parents is crucial.

Cooperation among teachers and parents also drastically improves learners' academic success (Amponsah, et al., 2018). The participation of parents in learners' school activities, such as attending parents' meetings and talking about learners' experiences in school, positively influences learners' academic success (Amponsah et al., 2018). Cooperation among teachers and parents is a good strategy because it has good effects on learners' achievement (Bones et al., 2021; Damianidou, 2018) since the involvement of parents in their children's academic success is crucial for deprived neighbourhoods (Segoe & Bischoff, 2019). Furthermore, teachers and parents' roles are different, but they harmonise the efforts to assist learners in being academically resilient (Fuertes et al., 2018). For example, parents intend to convey a message about

their children's wishes (Lau & Ng, 2019) such as the wish for school to establish extra classes and extramural activities (Berkant et al., 2019). Additionally, Bones et al. (2021) state that cooperation between teachers and parents has strengths and weaknesses. Furthermore, a weakness such as lack of parental participation in their children's academic tasks (Berkant et al., 2019; Segoe & Bisschoff, 2019), poor exchange of ideas (Berkant et al., 2019) and lack of time, information, and capability of parents for the functionality of teacher and parent cooperation (Lau & Ng, 2019). Furthermore, Lau and Ng (2019) indicate that teachers should be equipped to convey messages effectively to parents from deprived contexts.

Communicating ideas successfully requires all stakeholders, such as the SGB, to be committed and help simplify communiqué networks and enhance synchronised activities (Fotheringham et al., 2021). I will focus on SGBs as another part of stakeholders because commitment and cooperation are essential for SGBs. School governing body members are nominated. They are selected from the members of the society where the school is situated (Simuyaba, 2022). The aim of selecting these members is to oversee the school's daily activities, such as creating procedures and administering the financial matters of the institution (Maluleke et al., 2022). Governing body members are expected to coordinate their activities to achieve better provision of education services to learners (Xaba, 2011). Maluleke et al. (2022) agree that the SGB has a crucial role to play in their children's education so that teaching staff can be more focused on their teaching part. Also, the SGB deals with the school finances and use of school assets, and the community needs to play a role in their children's education (Simuyaba, 2022). However, it was revealed that sometimes other SGBs are incompetent due to the incapability of administering school finances properly (Bayat et al., 2014).

Again, other structures such as peers, district-based support teams, institutional-level support teams, resource centres and technology are significant in enhancing learners' academic success (see section 2.3.1.2). Furthermore, Calvin et al. (2022) stated that there is a need for other role players to assist learners in being successful. Therefore, it implies that various structures are significant assets in developing learners' academic resilience (Copp et al., 2022). Furthermore, it was found that collaboration among school stakeholders, including private organisations, encourages resilience (Fontanilla, 2022). Additionally, societal assistance is significant for learners' academic success (Zhang et al., 2022). Moreover, Garan (2022) commented that empirical

investigation is required to enable learners from adverse contexts to be academically successful and resilient. I discussed external protective factors in the above statements and now my focus will be on risk factors.

Learners experience a variety of risks globally, from their country, homes, communities, and schools. Risk factors from school entailed scarcity of teachers, tools for teaching and learning, teaching strategies that encourage learners to be actively involved in the learning process, teachers burdened with work, inadequate time to do all job required aspects and use of foreign language for teaching and learning (see section 2.3). Other risks originate from home, for example, a family where members are constantly in dispute with each other, children are not taken care of, or parents encourage their children to get involved in illegal or morally unacceptable actions. Families, where parents are deceased due to various conditions, or only the mother or father, is alive to look after the children, and parent/s who do not engage with children about their schoolwork. Furthermore, the communities lack essential necessities such as water and other supplies such as electricity and abuse drugs (see sections 2.3 & 2.4). Again, other neighbourhood members do not want to assist the school financially because they believe that the government is entirely financially responsible for non-paying fee schools (Shukia, 2022). The other factor is that neighbourhoods are becoming more technologically inclined, and educational institutions are becoming extra stressful and technologically taxing, which makes collaboration highly significant (Lamola, 2022) and adverse effects from digital learning (see section 2.3.1.2). Again, the risk factors are not only experienced at the school, family, and community level; some occur globally and originate from destitution (see section 2.2) and weak literacy skills (see section 2.2.1). Ononye et al. (2022) support the above views because they commented that learners globally experience various challenges that negatively impact their academic success.

2.9 Adolescent development

There are various adolescent development theories with different emphases, such as handling challenges and conflict and emphasising the significance of background. Coleman (2011) mentioned three adolescent development theories: storm and stress viewpoint, developmental contextualism and the focal model. The focal model is when adolescents deal with a particular challenge at a time, and according to storm and stress theory, the adolescent often conflicts with their parents. In developmental contextualism, adolescent development is viewed broadly, such as a South African

socio-economic background, such as a Black learner living in a disadvantaged socio-economic environment, which negatively influences their cognitive developmental skills (Wild & Swartzs in Hardman, 2012).

Disadvantaged and advantaged communities affect adolescents' biological and psychological aspects and behaviour. Rachel et al. (2022) stated that there are many difficulties related to adolescents in various communities, and adolescents' actions easily degenerate into unacceptable deeds. Disadvantaged communities expose teenagers to psychological challenges (Mabrouk et al., 2022). In agreement with Mabrouk et al. (2022), Pinchak and Swisher (2022) stated that teenagers who are living in more disadvantaged communities are likely to be involved in antisocial behaviour. Again, Miller et al. (2022) articulated that teenagers from disadvantaged backgrounds 'have a thinner cortex according to global and regional measures' and lessened 'cortical thickness in the left hemisphere', which could suggest an augmented probability of a general depressive condition in puberty stage (p. 253). On the other hand, advantaged communities have a positive effect on learners, such as good biological processes for teenagers (Ugarte et al., 2022). Miller et al. (2022) add that the communities' economic conditions affect the normal functioning of the biological processes of teenagers.

Therefore, healthy adolescent development is vital for academic performance and the resilience of all learners, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds. In support of this statement, Mampane (2014) states that factors enhancing individuals' success capability are crucial for adolescents' development. Black learners from disadvantaged backgrounds who are in the mid-adolescent stage can develop well (Mampane, 2014). In support of the above statement, involving adolescents in community projects has a positive effect on their domain of development (Xu & Yang, 2018).

Community relationships are critical for healthy adolescent domain development (Purewal et al., 2017). Additionally, Williams et al. (2017) point out that adolescents from poor socio-economic environments can be academically resilient if they experience positive social relationships and draw inspiration from within themselves. Thus, social context and individual background have a good or bad influence on adolescent development (Li et al., 2017).

Biological, psychological states, pressure, and disorders are aspects that adolescents are exposed to during the adolescent stage. It is comprehended that during the

adolescence stage, vulnerability is present because of various factors such as the volatility of biological and psychological states of teenagers, and they struggle to adapt to unexpected alterations, which is an integral part of the adolescence developmental stage (Yusufovich & Khabibovna, 2022). Kokka et al. (2022) further argued that pressure and the adolescence stage are interconnected because biological and social aspects that influence them during the adolescence stage are unavoidable. Furthermore, Kokka et al. (2022) argued that persistent demands to succeed academically can result in an alteration in the functioning of individuals, which can be either positive or harmful. For example, teenagers can put pressure on themselves (Iroda et al., 2022). In addition, Gee et al. (2022) alluded that teenagers experience more pressure and a variety of disorders, such as bipolar and social anxiety disorders. The demands to succeed academically from teachers and families are related to disorders exhibited by children during the adolescence stage (Stearns et al., 2023). It signifies that home conditions significantly affect adolescents psychologically (Miller et al., 2022). However, pressure can be a condition that can encourage them to perform certain activities (Gee et al., 2022).

2.9.1 Developmental stage: Identity versus Confusion

Learners from this study are mostly at the middle adolescence stage at the age of 15 to 17 (Grade 10 and 11). Hence, I will mainly focus on the identity versus confusion part of Erikson's theory. Erikson's theory of psychoanalysis indicates that individuals go through eight stages of psychosocial development where adolescents who had meaningful experiences will come out of this stage with a positive feeling of autonomy and identity, but those who had inappropriate support will be puzzled by their identity (Erikson, 1992).

Identity is achieved through individuals' continuous endeavours and the collaboration of individuals with other people whom individuals regard as important. Peers play a crucial role in adolescents' identity formation by meeting the requirements of a particular peer group, and peers can have negative and positive effects on adolescents' development (Erikson, 1992). Erikson (1992) points out that if the individual adolescent is reluctant to put more effort into the development of their identity, this will lead to unfavourable situations such as confusion. Confusion will make a learner easily drawn to anti-social behaviour, substance abuse, delinquent behaviour and dropping out of school.

Subsequently, the individual learner who did not form their identity will be vulnerable to risk factors. When faced with challenges, a weak learner will be discouraged and unsuccessful in their endeavours. Anakwe and Dikko (2017) argue that learners' lack of academic success is the result of risk factors they experience, and they give up easily. The risk factors include drug abuse and not being willing to participate actively in school activities due to poor identity formation (Spoth et al., 2019).

The parental role in raising adolescents affects the adolescents' development of emotional control in a bad or good way (Meesters et al., 2017). Parents should be sympathetic to them, show care, support and be responsive to their emotions so that adolescents can be emotionally mature (Gouws, 2015). The capability to be resilient and to control emotions are crucial aspects during the adolescence stage, since during this era in life, adolescents are developing the ability to control their feelings (Silvers, 2022). However, some become effective in controlling their feelings, but others find it difficult to control their feelings which can result in certain disorders (Silvers, 2022). Subsequently, a persistent experience of amplified favourable and unfavourable feelings because of the inability to attain certain aims, such as academic success, leads to bad choices and a lack of improvement (Golan & Cohen-Asiag, 2022). So, Zhuo et al (2022) stated that enhancement of capability to strive against the odds or positive emotions can assist adolescents because positive emotions correlate with resilience (Dees, 2017; Golan & Cohen-Asiag, 2022; Roberts, 2017; Rodríguez-Fernández et al., 2018; Trigueros et al., 2019) and academic success (Lei et al., 2018; Liebenberg & Joubert, 2019). Therefore, adolescents' capability to properly adjust to harsh conditions is crucial for academic resilience (Tal-Saban & Zaguri-Vittenberg, 2022), and academic resilience is also crucial for nurturing adolescent development (Choi, 2019). Adolescents face various developmental outcomes; therefore, they need the abovementioned factors to be academically resilient (Punjani & Mevawala, 2019).

2.10 Gaps in the existing literature

The first identified gap is the poor academic performance of learners from poor education systems (Pritchett, 2015). Furthermore, there is a need to strengthen learners' academic resilience because, in many education systems, it is not possible to strengthen learners' academic resilience (Agasisti et al. 2018). Although many studies have examined the academic resilience and success of learners from disadvantaged backgrounds, there is a lack of research on how schools can develop

the academic success and resilience of learners (Khodadadi et al., 2022). Therefore, there is a need for an empirical study to investigate how to help learners from disadvantaged backgrounds experience success (Garan, 2022). Furthermore, while there is a focus on assisting learners who are exposed to adversity to strive academically, concentrating and exploring several stakeholders will be better. Given that, there is a need to explore several stakeholders' understandings of challenges encountered by learners from hardship environments and their academic success (Garan, 2022). The fact that scientific studies on resilience within learners' contexts such as home, school, community, and interpersonal aspects such as emotional capability and self-efficacy are developing means there are insufficient studies focused on the abovementioned aspects (Nicoll, 2014).

Moreover, it is significant to establish the relationship between resilience, academic resilience, and internal and external protective factors such as aspirations and electronic devices for educational purposes (Mampane, 2023). The reason is that there is a need to investigate the interrelation of protective, promotive factors and processes which are related to 'biological, psychological, social, and environmental systems' it was supposed to be done long ago and the depth of how conditions and cultural backgrounds touch such relationships (Theron et al., 2022, p. 1002–1003). For example, Theron (2019) argued that it is urgently important to have a study that will help to find out a limited list of aspects that can encourage Southern African Development Community (SADEC) learners, in particular the Basotho ethnic group, from disadvantaged contexts to strive against all odds. On the same note, Van Breda and Theron (2018) alluded that individuals who are licensed to practice (such as teachers) as professionals dealing with youth who are exposed to risk can add valuable benefit and support, intrapersonal and interpersonal aspects that develop resilience. They (2018) further add that interrelating aspects that encourage resilience are sporadic, and very limited investigations are described as 'structural or cultural' aspects (p. 241).

It is essential to investigate protective factors because most learners were exposed to the COVID-19 pandemic (Dwiastuti et al., 2021). Therefore, there are risks that learners have, such as the medium of instruction at school. Numerous studies have revealed that English as a language for teaching and learning in the classroom is a barrier for learners who speak English as their second language at school (Khasawneh, 2022; Mabena et al., 2021; Mampane & Huddle, 2017; Sailsman, 2021).

It is important to explore the determinants of academic resilience and, thereby, the academic success of learners from disadvantaged backgrounds so that learners who struggle to achieve academic success can be assisted. The study will contribute to the body of research on how learners from disadvantaged backgrounds can be assisted in developing academic success and resilience to experience academic resilience, thereby succeeding academically. All the above will be established by finding an additional conceptual framework and recent pragmatic facts about the development of academic resilience and academic success.

It has been shown that there is insufficient empirical investigation on the academic resilience and success of disadvantaged learners from the SADEC region. This study attempts to fill these gaps by addressing the abovementioned aspects, especially structural or cultural aspects related to learners' lives and living processes, psychological aspects, and collaboration between learners and their social institutions such as schools, homes, communities, and technology.

2.11 Summary of the chapter

Poor academic performance is a global concern because school systems produce learners who cannot cope effectively in the 21st century, such as Europe, America and Africa. The major sources of poor academic performance of learners universally originate from socio-economic conditions, learners' personal factors and the ecosystem.

However, the bio-network and the socio-economic background of learners not only have a negative impact but can also positively impact learners' academic performance and resilience. For example, the environment in which learners experience positive emotions can enhance their academic resilience and improve their academic success. Furthermore, learners indicated that they experience academic success and resilience due to the social support they receive. They receive social support from individuals such as teachers, parents, and peers. However, their personal factors also help them experience academic resilience and success.

Furthermore, various personal factors influencing academic success and learners' resilience are positivity, commitment, motivation, bond and ambition. To succeed academically, learners should be goal-orientated, motivated, and securely attached to significant individuals, such as peers, teachers, parents, and others from the

community. Other personal factors are optimism, commitment, engagement with their school activities, and positive emotions to be resilient.

2.12 Conclusion

In conclusion, poor academic performance is a global concern, and South Africa's education system is poor for several reasons. For example, Thabo Mofutsanyane district is a disadvantaged community because of poverty, poor standard of education and learners' demographics such as family background. However, various strategies are used to improve learners' poor academic performance and resilience globally and in South Africa. The different strategies employed to address the weak academic performance of learners include diverse demographic aspects. Some correlate with academic success.

The next chapter elaborates on the conceptual framework that serves as the bedrock of this study.

CHAPTER 3: THE UNDERLYING CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Introduction

In the preceding chapter, I explored the literature on academic success and resilience in the current study. I reviewed literature on the concept of resilience and considered different types of resilience and resilience in schools internationally and in South Africa. I discussed academic resilience and socio-demographic factors. I further elaborated on risk, protective factors and the adolescent developmental stage.

In seeking to understand academic resilience and academic success in a disadvantaged context, it is necessary to have an evidence base for approaching the process and possible intervention. The conceptual framework underpinning this research is derived from several related theories and models to provide a lens through which to view the findings of this study. In this chapter, I integrate key concepts related to academic resilience that form the basis of the underpinning conceptual framework from which the data was analysed. Additionally, I draw on Henderson and Milstein's (2003, p. 12) wheel of resiliency to understand external assets associated with academic resilience, such as the provision of care and reinforcement, establishing extraordinary prospects and providing possibilities for significant involvement.

3.2 Conceptual framework

Using a conceptual framework provides a lens for exploring and understanding the academic success of learners from disadvantaged backgrounds in this study (Adom et al., 2018). The framework shows the relationships between academic resilience, positive psychology, constructivism, and bio-ecological systems and how these concepts explain the academic success of selected Grade 10 and 11 learners in the study (Adom et al., 2018). I draw from key concepts such as constructivism and positive psychology, bio-ecological systems theory, the asset-based approach, and appreciative inquiry to understand participants' relationships with their actions, information, understanding and experiences (Svinicki, 2010). The conceptual framework elucidates five interrelated systems. Additionally, the asset-based approach and constructivism influence micro, meso, and macro systems, whereas appreciative inquiry impacts the micro-system. All resources accessible to learners are leveraged within the microsystem, interconnected through assistance from internal and external assets.

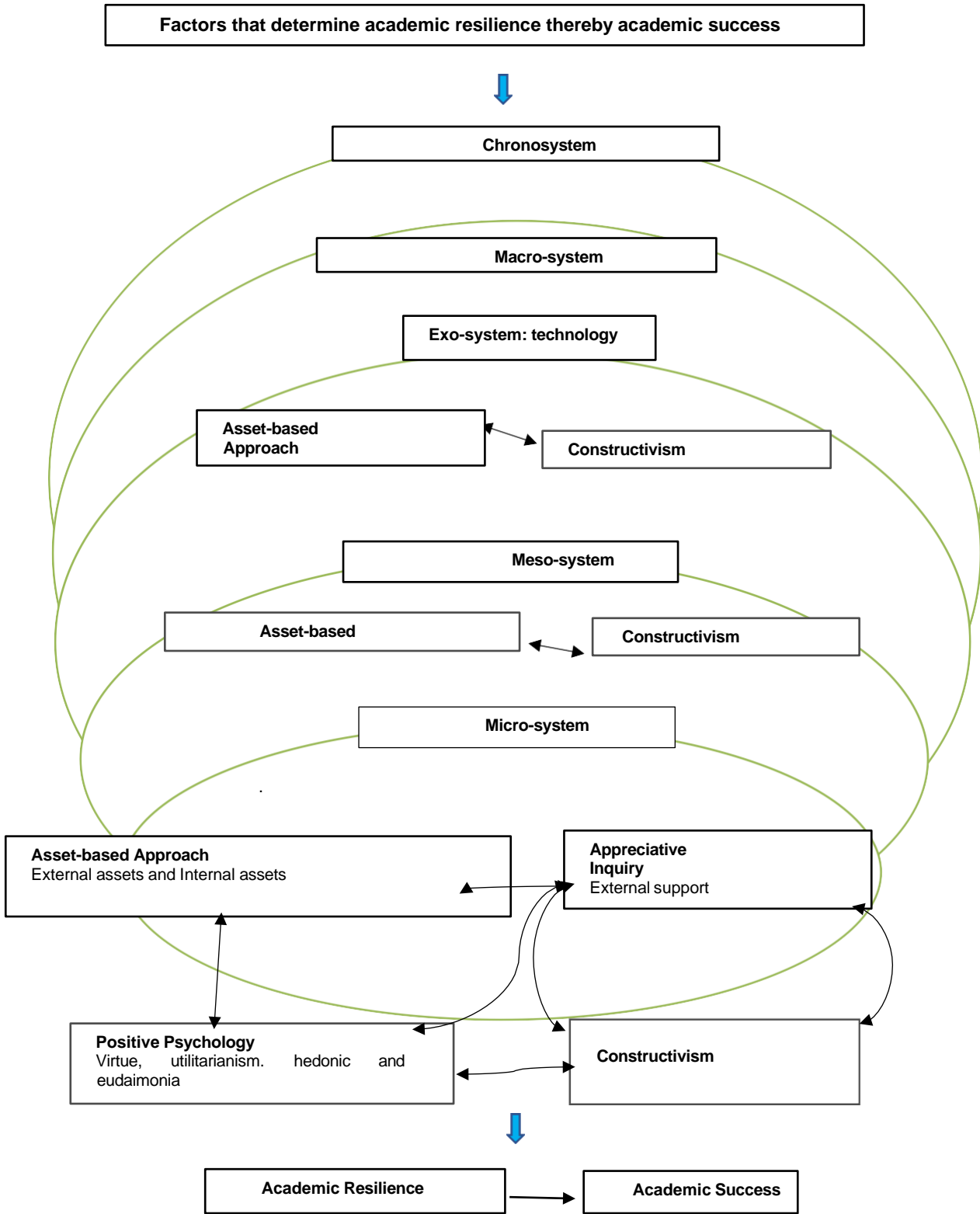


Figure 3.1: The interrelationship of key concepts

3.3 Academic resilience

In the previous chapter, the broad aspects of resilience were discussed. In this chapter, I focus on academic resilience. The concept of academic resilience was known in the 19th century (Gafoor & Kottalil, 2015), but even today, people define it in a different manner, including as a process (Gafoor & Kottalil, 2015), outcome (Choi, 2019), and capability (Martin, 2013). Furthermore, Dwiastuti et al. (2021) confirmed that there are various explanations for academic resilience because some scholars define it as a process and others as the capability of individuals. For example, different scholars define academic resilience as the ability of the learner to perform well academically while living in unfavourable life circumstances (Khodadadi et al., 2022). For instance, Hurley (2019) states that academic resilience means a learner should be capable of performing well academically despite hardships a learner may experience at school and home.

The above statement implies that learners need to use their personal capabilities to triumph over adversity that hinders their academic success (Martin & Marsh, 2009). For example, individual capability, such as enthusiasm, is important. Adeyemi (2015) regards academic resilience as the enthusiasm learners must have to succeed academically under the hardships they experience in school. Also, Martin (2013) agrees that academic resilience is explained as an ability to triumph over serious hardships that hinder learners' academic progress. In support of this statement, García-Crespo et al. (2021), Ye et al. (2021) and Lobo (2023) stated that a learner's capability to excel academically under adverse circumstances implies academic resilience. In other words, scholars believe academic resilience may be described as an individual's ability to flourish against the odds.

Therefore, it implies that a group of resilience researchers used the definition of academic resilience as a person's character earlier (Maurović et al., 2020). The above statement explains why some people define resilience as individual capabilities, but others view it as triumph while facing difficulties (Van Breda & Theron, 2018). Therefore, academic resilience can be defined and used as an ability and end result (Dwiastuti et al., 2021).

Academic resilience is not limited to high levels of marks but implies that a learner should be capable of recovering from hardships experienced in a school context and succeeding academically (Coronado-Hijón, 2017). As indicated by Choi (2019), academic resilience means a learner from a disadvantaged background obtains high levels of marks. According to Holdsworth et al. (2018), academic resilience is beyond recovering from adversity in a school context because learners must adjust to disadvantaged environments and succeed academically (Holdsworth et al., 2018). In addition, Nnaemeka (2019) agrees that academic resilience means that a learner succeeds academically, irrespective of poor economic conditions and other factors that might negatively influence the learner's academic performance. Therefore, the abovementioned definitions stress the end results, meaning they define academic resilience as an outcome despite adversity. However, other aspects such as characteristics, protective factors and the process are not mentioned as part of resilience in the above explanation.

On the other hand, some define academic resilience as the process. For instance, academic resilience is the process of performing well academically despite the adversity learners experience in school (Gafoor & Kottalil, 2015). The focal point of this interaction has shifted to the individual's assets from the person's weaknesses; it also considers the relationship among protective factors (Mwangi & Ireri, 2017). Furthermore, Maurović et al. (2020) describe this shift as the next continuous motion from the original group of resilience researchers because they view resilience as a process where assets from within and/or the individual context enable resilience since academic resilience is the product of individuals' relations with their situation (Shean, 2015). Moreover, Maurović et al. (2020) stated that after resilience was viewed as a process of interaction with assets, the next focus was on establishing strategies to make learners resilient.

However, there was a change from defining academic resilience as a process to a value of relations amongst various bioecological organisms and assets (Ungar et al., 2019). Moreover, Reyes et al. (2022) regard academic resilience as an energetic course of action and relationship between individuals and their continually contextual aspects, which entails inner and outer assets to yield success. As a result, the abovementioned statements indicate that for learners to develop academic resilience

there must be various promotive, protective factors and processes within the individual and the environment, from interacting with others to attaining favourable results (Theron et al., 2022). Maurović et al. (2020) argued that this is another shift where resilience is comprehended as a 'process at various levels from the individual level, which includes epigenetic processes, neurobiological processes, and brain development to family and larger social and physical environment' (p. 3).

Academic resilience, for this study, entails individual capability, processes, and the end results of the interaction of individual capability, external assets within adverse contexts, and academic success. Additionally, I will use the process of individual interaction within themselves and others, such as learners, teachers and parents or guardians, neighbours, and resources, as part of the definition of academic resilience.

Assets, risk, and environment are the three main factors that should be considered when developing academic resilience (Shean, 2015). Whereas assets are responsible for the alteration of learners' reactions toward difficulties they experience (Tudor et al. 2020), risk factors are learners' actions or aspects that hinder their capability to succeed academically (Adams, 2013). Risk factors originate from learners as individuals, schools, families, and communities (Forrest-Bank et al., 2013). The interaction of risk and assets from the learners' environment and the individuals' traits can diminish resilience (Shean, 2015).

Individual assets such as learners' school expectations and the period they take involved in school activities encourage academic resilience and success for learners from underprivileged backgrounds (Sandoval-Hernandez & Białowolski, 2016). Individual assets such as non-cognitive traits are crucial for developing academic resilience (Whitman, 2019). For example, non-cognitive traits such as socio-emotional skills correlate with the academic resilience of learners from disadvantaged backgrounds and schools with poor quality of service (Wills & Hofmeyr, 2019). Emotions and external assets such as household members, teachers, friends and household economic conditions have a good effect on academic resilience (Tudor et al., 2020). School, family and community environments and the relations between learners and people from the abovementioned environments are essential for the

growth of academic resilience (Lee, 2016). The above paragraph is more relevant to the section on the asset-based approach to academic resilience.

Focusing on academic resilience with an emphasis on learners' assets without including their environment and interaction is an ineffective exercise (Lee, 2016). The reason is that learners affect their situation, their context impacts them, and learners' actions are reinforced or not encouraged by their circumstances (Mwangi & Ireri, 2017). On the flip side, Boatman (2015) proposes that the resilience of one's identity within the learner's environment plays a crucial role in aiding academic resilience. For instance, when learners question their identity and realise they reside in a poverty-stricken community or household, they may become motivated to escape such circumstances by excelling academically. This motivation could lead them to pursue high marks, secure a scholarship for further education, and ultimately find stable employment (Sulong et al., 2019). This illustrates that academic resilience is valuable, rooted in assets, and contributes to academic achievement (Mwangi & Ireri, 2017).

3.4 Elements of positive psychology

It was established that psychology was mainly concentrated on the unfavourable aspects of the human being (Seligman, 2010). Hence, Seligman (2011), the founder of positive psychology, articulated that positive psychology is necessary to accelerate transformation in conventional psychology by revamping depraved aspects and developing the most excellent conditions or characteristics for success (Seligman, 2002). The reason is that Seligman dedicated his life to investigating the lack of success, the people's belief that they cannot regulate certain circumstances and the positive belief about upcoming events (Seligman, 2011). Seligman's (2010) positive psychology is an enhancement of conventional psychology because it focuses on creating strategies that build the enabling conditions of life (p. 233).

Positive psychology's main intention is people's success, which is based on four fundamental aspects: 'positive emotion and engagement, meaning and accomplishment' (Seligman, 2010, p. 234). Positive psychology is the concept that entails all aspects that investigate the positives of individuals and the context that assists people to thrive (Drigas et al., 2022; Kobau et al., 2011; Seligman et al., 2005) and the capabilities of individuals from their societies are features of positive psychology (Macintyre et al., 2019). Moreover, Drigas et al. (2022, p. 31) indicated that positive psychology reinforces the notion that what people regard as true influences

their feelings and behaviour. It also gives individuals a different outlook on investigating learners' mental and academic challenges (Liu & Han, 2022).

The foundation theory of positive psychology is rooted in various philosophies such as virtue, utilitarianism, hedonic and eudaimonic (Lambert et al., 2015). Virtue involves individual thoughts, feelings and good behaviour; it is inseparable from individual qualities; it is something that individuals can learn, and it is generally essential for individuals and groups of people (Newstead et al., 2016). Virtue is associated with 'character strengths' (Lambert et al., 2015). On the other hand, utilitarianism is more on whether a person's behaviour is acceptable and the individual's traits that can influence people to do good (Mudrack & Mason, 2019). It is also seen as a way of amplifying the cheerfulness of people (Lambert et al., 2015).

Hedonic and eudaimonia are part of the foundation of positive psychology. Hedonic is the state where individuals encounter personal positive emotions and gratification; it focuses on achieving gratification and evasion of discomfort; eudaimonia focuses on generating meaning and improving individual capabilities (Disabato et al., 2016). Eudaimonia consists of satisfaction, well-mannered behaviour and purpose for living; individuals who live their life using these three aspects experience true satisfaction in life, and eudaimonia has a godly aspect (Awaludin, 2017).

Positive psychology consists of six basic qualities of being morally correct: understanding, temperance, boldness, empathy, fairness and transcendence. And positive psychology relies on three towers of strength such as positive emotions, traits and institutions (Cramer, 2010). The six basic qualities of being morally correct and their strengths are as follows: '(a) wisdom and knowledge (creativity, curiosity, open-mindedness, love of learning, perspective); (b) courage (authenticity, bravery, persistence, zest); (c) humanity (kindness, love, social intelligence); (d) justice (fairness, leadership, teamwork); (e) temperance (forgiveness, modesty, prudence, self-regulation); and (f) transcendence (appreciation of beauty and excellence, gratitude, hope, humor, religiousness)' (Peterson & Seligman, 2004, quoted in Kim et al., 2012, p. 50). Positive psychology focuses on three levels of positive features: subjective, individual and group. The subjective level is more concerned with positive emotions such as joy, and the individual level is more about becoming a good individual (Kim et al., 2012).

As a result, positive psychology is concerned with individuals' strong points and

cultivating elements that enable people or societies to prosper (Kobau et al., 2011). At the institutional level, it focuses on supremacy and overall effectiveness; at the individual level, it focuses on their historical, present, and forthcoming behaviours, with an emphasis on positive attributes such as happy emotions and excellent relationships (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000).

The above paragraph purports that all individuals involved in assisting learners to succeed academically should do so ethically and concentrate on the strong points of the learners and other individuals or things that help learners succeed in their schoolwork. Being unethical in aiding a learner to succeed academically, for example, encouraging a learner to plagiarise while doing an assignment, is not part of positive psychology. Positive psychology aims to pay attention to the positive features of individuals (Snow, 2019). Positive features include improving people's capabilities to enjoy life, live a healthy life and experience positive emotions from their actions (Froh, 2004). Positive psychology gives people hope, and in general, it enhances people's life (Chodkiewicz, 2018). As Seligman (2002) indicated, positive psychology can create aspects that enable people, organisations and neighbourhoods to thrive (p. 9). Implementing positive psychology aims to enhance the power of individuals, capabilities, and assets to prevent psychological illness from developing and promote resilience so that individuals can thrive (Kern et al., 2019).

Positive psychology values resilience (Stoner et al., 2017). One of the concepts associated with positive psychology is resilience (Benada & Chowdhry, 2017). Resilience is not only a component of positive psychology but also an important protective element; a range of protective factors exist inside persons and their environments, and they help individuals be resilient (Anderson et al., 2020). Most positive psychology traits are talents that help people improve their lives, and these abilities come from people and their environments (MacIntyre et al., 2019).

Contextual factors rely more on the relationship between individuals and other people such as peers, parents, siblings, teachers or community members and individuals' ability to seek support from the abovementioned groups (Harms et al., 2018). Support from other people is a protective factor because it facilitates the process of making individuals resilient (Anderson et al., 2020). At the social level, positive psychology is concerned with the production of practices that make the group of people work effectively and organisation to improve individuals' capabilities (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000).

Individuals' capabilities can be improved when the personal protective factors are enhanced. For example, Hamby et al. (2018) indicate that personal protective factors that can be developed are emotional control, goal orientation, and optimism about the future to make individuals resilient. Other factors such as confidence, self-enhancement, experiencing gratification, and averting discomfort are crucial for individual resilience (Goubert & Trompetter, 2017). Positive psychology is concerned with appreciating individuals' mental encounters, such as satisfaction, hopefulness, ambition and excitement and the positive personal characteristics of individuals (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000).

I use positive psychology in this study to concentrate on the positives possessed by learners, parents, and teachers, which make learners who participated in this study academically resilient despite their disadvantaged backgrounds. All these factors mentioned above assist learners in dealing with challenges effectively and developing resilience (Vaccaro et al., 2019). The declaration above advocates that teachers and parents can assist learners in being academically resilient by utilising learners' internal assets, such as psychological abilities and emotional self-regulation, to be academically resilient. Therefore, this implies that the asset-based approach is one of many crucial approaches for the academic resilience of learners.

3.4.1 An asset-based approach to academic resilience

In this study, the asset-based approach was deemed similar to bio-ecological systems. Given that, both approaches emphasise circumstance and the relationship of individuals with others. In addition, Burgers (2017) indicates that assets are present within individuals and various systems. The asset-based approach includes mapping of assets, which is the procedure to comprehend the circumstances and the relationship between individuals and their systems, such as household, school, community and culture, with the aim of using available resources, establishing partnerships and active participation (Cassetti et al., 2020).

The academic success of learners from disadvantaged backgrounds is influenced by their ability to traverse the bio-ecological system (Mabhoyi & Seroto, 2019). Encouragement from parents, peers, community members, church members and the school are forms of external assets for learners (Matentjie, 2006). The abovementioned forms of support towards learners, which serve as external assets, are regarded as part

of the micro-system and meso-system, while the exo-system includes support from grandparents; the macro-system is the national department of basic education with their policy of feeding programmes in schools, and the chrono-system incorporates the abolishment of corporal punishment (Mabhoyi & Seroto, 2019). It implies that a learner's context plays a crucial role in learners' academic success and resilience in the asset-based approach and bio-ecological systems. The interrelations among learners and their families, school, community, and government and the influence of the abolishment of corporal punishment at school can influence learners' academic resilience and success in a favourable way as external assets or an unfavourable manner as risk factors.

The asset-based approach is the process of improving and encouraging individuals to be effective by making them aware of the resources at their disposal from within and around them (Kasonga, 2019). The asset-based approach is concerned with identifying positive assets from learners as individuals and their contexts (Missingham, 2017). The other crucial aspect of this approach is assets mapping, where the complete resources of the learner, school, family and community are uncovered, and the common correlation among the assets is brought to light (Myende & Chikoko, 2014). Furthermore, the asset-based approach concentrates on the positive characteristics that individuals and their environment possess. It encourages the involvement of members of the community to use their assets to enhance the academic success of learners (Myende, 2015).

The asset-based approach develops and enhances the ability to succeed. It is reliant on the learning environment, learners, teachers, parents and other people who are involved in assisting the learner to be academically successful (Ebersöhn & Eloff, 2006). It is also people-centred and concentrates on internal and external assets to make learners academically successful and resilient (Burnell, 2012). Features of the asset-based approach are 'reflecting, identifying, accessing, mobilizing / self-regulating and sustaining' (Ebersöhn & Eloff, 2006).

The reasons for using the asset-based approach differ; for example, you can use it to advance learners' social and personal abilities, address mental illness, and improve their academic success and resilience (Jalala et al., 2020). For this study, the latter approach is utilised. Learners should be able to look at themselves to decide on their assets and weaknesses or actions towards understanding certain academic tasks. In this way, they can establish how to overcome certain challenges to complete an activity

successfully by getting support from other individuals in school, such as peers, teachers, parents and community members. Learners should be able to organise their schoolwork activities in such a way that they can manage to succeed academically. Lastly, learners should be able to strengthen what they found working for them to be able to succeed academically throughout the year.

The asset-based approach is appropriate for improving learners' academic performance (Myende, 2015). The successful implementation of this approach relies on the role of the school principal, such as good managerial skills and valuable interaction with other educational stakeholders such as teachers, parents and learners (Myende & Chikoko, 2014). The approach can assist school principals, and teachers build a positive school and classroom environment. For example, teachers can help learners appreciate one another and realise the significance of collaborative work and the necessity of assisting each other (Missingham, 2017).

The above statement suggests that the attitude of school principals is essential for this approach because if the school principal is a person who is open, accommodative and has a positive relationship with learners, teachers, parents, and other people or organisations and consults with the people involved in matters that need solutions, the asset-based approach will be effectively implemented. Learners will be academically successful and resilient. However, in a case where the school principal is not consultative and has poor relations with learners, teachers, and parents, there is a high possibility that this approach will not be effective and learners will not benefit from it.

Exposing the learners' assets means the teacher can tap into learners' cultural issues (Burnell, 2012). The reason is that in this approach, the learner is not viewed as a psychological being only but as part of a certain group of people and a member of a family, school and community with social relationships with others (Missingham, 2017). Burnell (2012) pronounced that other assets that are not physical, which originate from the abovementioned aspects of a learner, represent essential human, cultural and social capital to develop resilience. Furthermore, Jongen et al. (2019) declare that the main concepts, such as positives for the resilience of high school learners, are associated with contextual aspects of their lives, cultural resilience and personal assets.

The above statement suggests the asset-based approach. However, paying attention to learner assets as individual and learner-social assets, Newman and Dantzler (2015,

p. 87) articulate that it means you are looking at the positives of both the learner and the environment to assist a learner to be academically successful and resilient (Benard, 2014). Therefore, for the next section, I will deal with learners' inner and external assets, such as collaborating with other individuals for personal success.

3.4.1.1 External assets

Assets are individuals' abilities to perform certain tasks and resources that are possessed by individuals, communities, educational institutions, and governmental and non-governmental institutions (Eloff, 2006). Therefore, this indicates that internal assets are learners' capabilities, characteristics that assist a learner in coping effectively with a demanding situation, and these factors are from within the learners. External assets help learners succeed academically, and these factors originate from the learners' environment such as school, family and community.

Various assets contribute constructively or unconstructively towards the academic resilience of learners. Carrillo (2018) argues that teachers, principals, parents, peers, and other significant individuals have the potential to impact learners' academic resilience positively or negatively. The abovementioned assets are external. However, external and internal assets and interactions among these assets contribute to the academic resilience procedure (Liebenberg & Joubert, 2019). Numerous assets contributing constructively or unconstructively towards academic resilience can be classified into resilience building and mitigating risk factors. In Figure 3.2, the resiliency wheel comprises a collection of protective factors and strategic approaches designed to foster resilience.

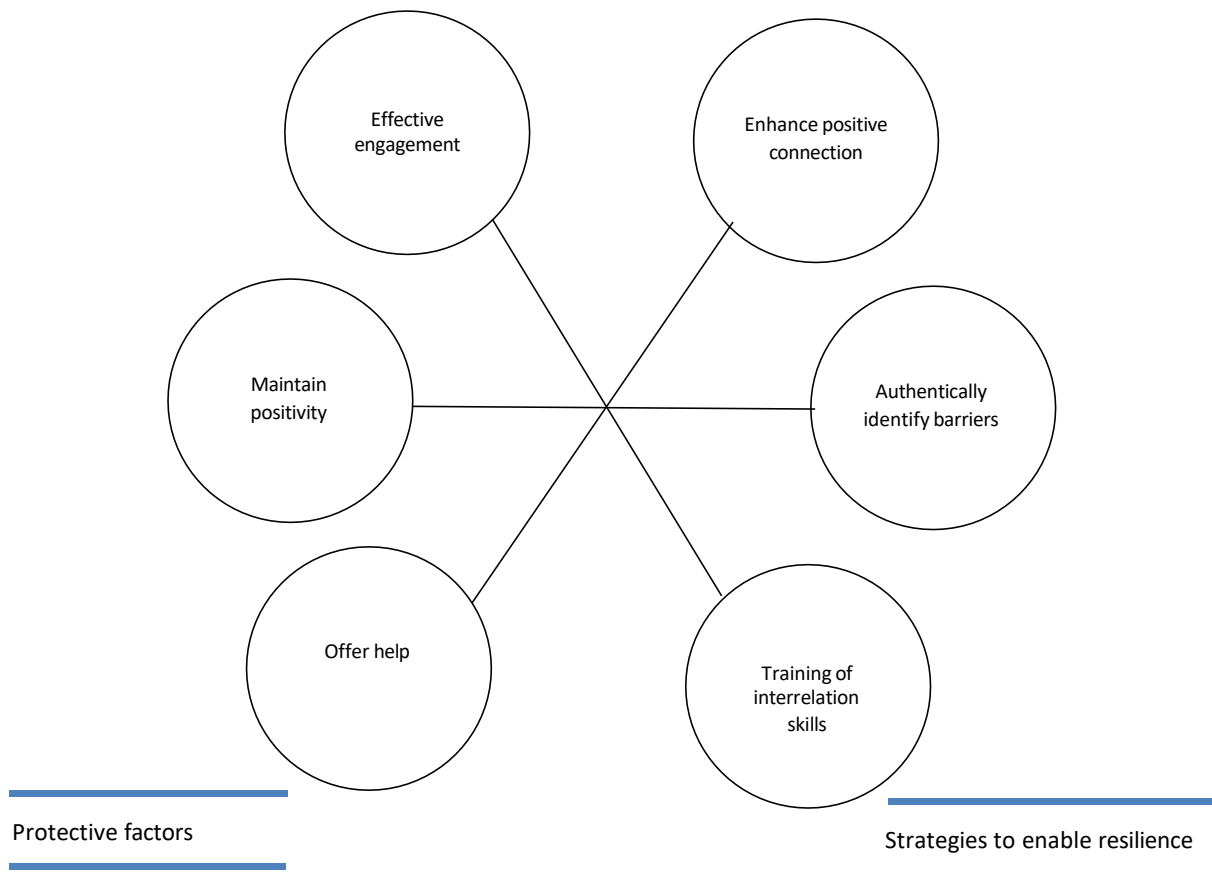


Figure 3.2: The resiliency wheel

Source: Henderson & Milstein (2003, p. 12)

Henderson and Milstein's resiliency wheel consists of protective factors and strategies for resilience. I used the resiliency wheel in this study because it can make teachers aware that they need to identify aspects that hinder learners' progress to assist learners to be academically resilient and successful. They can achieve the aforesaid goal if all teachers and learners use a positive mentality to view their context. Furthermore, they should realise that for learners to help each other, they need a favourable relationship to be created so that learners can effectively engage in academic activities. Additionally, teachers need to equip learners and themselves with skills on how to interact with others effectively. As a result, teachers and learners need to be aware of the internal and external protective factors that they are exposed to.

- **Protective factors**

The wheel of resiliency by Henderson and Milstein (2003) consists of external assets, which are three protective factors that are divided into effective engagement, maintaining positivity and provision of help. In addition, to minimise risk factors,

schools should lessen the possibility of adverse consequences by engaging learners effectively in school activities. For example, exposing them to the best academic activities which are authentic and related to the learner's context, concentrating on learners' strong points in the process of teaching and learning, exposing learners to the learner-centred teaching approach and extra academic activities (see section 2.6).

Positive school conditions assist Black learners in dealing with hardships effectively, and learners who cannot deal with challenges successfully cannot identify factors that can help them cope with this situation (Mampane, 2010). Furthermore, Mampane (2014) argues that reinforcement and identifying factors that enable Black learners from disadvantaged backgrounds to handle hardships successfully are essential. Some schools from disadvantaged backgrounds are not able to assist learners in coping with adversities and encouraging learners to be resilient is fundamental (Mampane & Bouwer, 2011). Encouraging a teaching and learning atmosphere where teachers show love and a caring attitude motivates and considers the learners' development process (Mampane, 2010).

The above statement implies that the school can improve learners' resilience by encouraging positivity in school by showing them love, giving them high hopes, and encouraging them to be actively involved in the learning process. Teachers can lessen the risk factors by being kind and trustworthy and assisting learners to deal effectively with their challenges. Furthermore, Agasisti et al. (2018) indicate that a positive school atmosphere lessens the possibility of adversities for poor academic performing learners from disadvantaged backgrounds. For example, a school with a positive school atmosphere develops academic resilience because learners are exposed to emotions such as joy and positivity (see section 3.4.1.2).

The school community can help assist learners. For instance, teachers, school principals, SGB and parents can offer to help learners. For example, teachers can help learners by establishing peer groups for study where learners are encouraged to help each other and present interesting and engaging lessons. Lastly, teachers and school principals should be proactive; the school principals can also help learners succeed academically through the sustained academic success of the school, improve teaching procedures, instigate teachers and involve other stakeholders to help learners, such as parents. Parents help their children succeed academically when they encourage them to participate in their children's schoolwork. Furthermore, the SGB helps learners by watching over learners' day-to-day school events and making an effort to provide

learners with the best facilities for the school to run smoothly. Again, the school can establish a working relationship with community members to use the community centre for learners and other non-government organisations to build learners' academic resilience (see section 2.8.1).

- **Strategies to enable resilience**

Strategies to enable resilience are also grouped into three categories: authentically identified barriers, enhanced positive connection, and training of interrelation skills. Learners need to be assisted with various social skills, such as collaboration and the ability to seek help to be academically resilient. Collaboration of school stakeholders and private organisations enhances academic resilience, thereby boosting academic success, for example, if teachers and parents work together to assist learners (see section 2.8.1). The reason is that collaboration with others assists learners in accessing available resources (see section 3.4.2), so it is essential, especially during this time of technological era (see section 2.3.1.2). For instance, peer collaboration in the classroom or outside the classroom is part of a learner-centred activity (see section 3.5).

Seeking help from others or objects is important and requires that learners be inspired. Learners should acquire the skill to request help from others in their context. The help-seeking process requires learners to be actively involved to uncover the problem. Furthermore, learners can seek assistance from electronic devices by searching the internet for answers. They can use their mobile phone to access different web services such as WhatsApp, Facebook, etc., to communicate with others or to google the possible solutions for their school activities (see section 3.4.1.2). Inspiring learners to seek help requires establishing relationships between learners and others.

The interrelation between learners and their context results in academic resilience (See section 3.3). The learners' background depends on their capabilities to request backup from teachers, friends, family, and society members (see section 3.4), and the relationship between learners and others is crucial because it is emphasised by various authors such as Missingham (2017) (see section 3.4.1). Furthermore, a positive interrelationship between learners and others can enhance academic resilience. Also, a positive correlation exists between positive relations and academic success and resilience (see section 3.4.1.2). Positive relationships are essential for learners from disadvantaged backgrounds because they assist them to be academically resilient and

are good for their health (see section 2.9). Therefore, developing positive relationships between learners and others is important due to its benefits for learners (see section 2.5.1). One of the benefits could be the ability to identify barriers because learners are subjected to risk factors authentically.

Learners are exposed to different risk factors worldwide (see section 2.2) and from their context. For example, risk factors originating from the school, home, communities (see section 2.8.1) and others stem from learners (see section 2.9.1). However, schools need to identify learners experiencing barriers to learning as early as possible and give the necessary support (Taylor et al., 2023). Therefore, training for identifying learners with challenges is needed to empower the schools to support them effectively through the use of SIAS (Msane et al., 2023). The general screening of factors that hinder learners' academic progress, such as psychosocial aspects, is essential for the purpose of support (Taylor et al., 2023). The reason is that it is crucial for the school to be proactive and identify learning barriers to effectively assist learners (Forsling & Tjernberg, 2023). As a result, the schools can gather the correct information and be able to use appropriate intermediation as part of the support for learners (Taylor et al., 2023). The school has the potential to expose learners to adversities and deal with this factor effectively; teachers must understand learners' backgrounds to assist them in being academically resilient. Mampane and Huddle (2017) state that the challenges that Black learners from disadvantaged backgrounds face require bio-network and information from a study that they gathered over a long period to comprehend learners and their environment and to be able to grasp resilience. The other school factors that contribute negatively towards learners' resilience are refusing them to use school assets, offering inadequate activities and ignoring large numbers of learners facing different hardships to perform poorly academically (Mampane & Bower, 2011).

The above statement indicates that teachers are crucial partners in promoting learners' resilience (Mwangi et al., 2015). Teachers must be resilient, involve learners in decision-making, and cater to their interests. Mwivanda and Kingi (2018) indicate that it is essential for teachers to demonstrate to learners that they can succeed despite their challenges. They must establish good relations with learners (Mampane, 2020). Teachers must create an environment where learners are influenced to make decisions and request that they provide reasons for their answers (Montero-Cretero & Cervelló, 2020).

The above external assets originate from the learners' environment, such as school and teachers' support, and internal assets are learners' capacities, such as motivation, school engagement, self-confidence, goal orientation, child's interest, optimism, hope, spirituality and culture, self-efficacy, empathy, learners' attitude toward learning, and positive emotions (Adams et al., 2018).

3.4.1.2 Individuals' internal assets that serve as protective factors

In this section, I elaborate on intrinsic factors that enable individuals to succeed, such as the motive for doing something, the intention, believing in yourself, your capabilities to attain success, your capability to avoid destructive thoughts, thinking about your thoughts, the effects of positive emotions, and being positive.

- **Positivity**

I discuss personal protective factors such as goal orientation, self-confidence, self-efficacy, motivation, mental toughness, and positivity. Positivity is a general idea which consists of different components (Hartanto et al., 2022), and this broad construct envisages an inclination to be optimistic about the situation; this attitude is the dominant well-being of the people and is prevalent in the psycho-social environment (Prinzing et al., 2022). Both of the above scholars alluded to the fact that individual positivity influences the development of resilience (Hartanto et al., 2022; Prinzing et al., 2022). As a result, positivity should be associated with practicality to make certain that positivity is useful to accelerate resilience because it assists individuals to be inventive and ready for imminent hardships (Hartanto et al., 2022). The above statement implies that positive emotions can hasten resilience. In support of this statement, Hartanto et al. (2022) confirmed that affirmative sentiments impact resilience favourably.

Positive emotions comprise advantageous, powerful feelings originating from the individual's context, which serve as a buffer (Bukchin-Peles & Ronen, 2022). Positive emotion plays a crucial role in learners' academic success because it makes them engaged, utilise their external and internal assets, and be positive about their school experiences. Individuals with a good attitude are prolific (Gran, 2022) since positivity is associated with excellence because positive people view their adverse circumstances and disappointments positively (Ghanizadeh, 2022). Kwok and Fang (2020) indicate that positive emotions lead to a positive worldview and identification of assets, making

learners actively involved in the learning process. Positive emotions are not well examined in children like negative emotions for learners; the significance of positive emotions has been investigated for health and well-being. It is crucial to scrutinise the effect of positive emotions on learners' academic success and resilience (Obeldobel & Kerns, 2019). The atmosphere where the provision of sufficient positive emotions occurs has the ability to minimise undesirable consequences and enhance learners' academic resilience (Paul et al., 2019).

Learners who experience positive emotions such as happiness, empathy, hope, optimism, satisfaction and thriving stand a good chance of being academically resilient (Kim et al., 2012). It implies that learners are happy with their teachers because they make learners enjoy the lesson in the classroom and believe in their capabilities. Teachers are willing to assist learners with the challenges they experience after school hours because teachers want to see learners succeed academically. Learners' sense of hope and ability to flourish is encouraged. As a result, learners' internal assets are mobilised, and the possibilities of academic success and resilience are promoted. Therefore, positivity can assist learners in being resilient (Iqbal, 2022). Sceptics perceive challenges as endless and fixed, but the person with optimism perceives challenges as momentary (Seligman, 2010).

Optimism means a person tends to take a broad view of anticipating favourable conditions during hardship (Icekson et al., 2019). Furthermore, Ramírez-Maestre et al. (2019) articulate that optimism correlates favourably with commitment, flexibility, and persistence and unfavourably relates with disengagement. Furthermore, Das and Arora (2020) stated that optimistic learners have a positive view of their character; their desire to strive is slightly affected by the challenges they face, but they are hopeful about their prospects and capable of soliciting support from others (Bradley & Hojjat, 2017).

However, if learners can be over-optimistic about their capabilities to perform a particular task, that might lead to a wrong perception of readiness, negatively influencing their academic performance (Stolp & Zabucky, 2009). Moreover, learners who are not optimistic are not expected to succeed academically (Barrett, 2019). It implies that learners with a negative view of their involvement in a particular school activity will not participate meaningfully. There is a high possibility that they will experience unsuccessful academic achievement. While those who are positive about their participation utilise various ways to complete their task successfully. For example,

they involve other individuals to assist them if the task is difficult for them as a way of being committed to their schoolwork. They are likely to succeed academically because they are determined and confident.

- **Self-confidence**

Self-confidence is essential to the teaching and learning process (Perry, 2011). It is also a psychological way of thinking about learner self-evaluation and things surrounding the learner to be able to perform certain activities successfully (Darmawan et al., 2020). In support of the above statement, Khairuddin (2022) argued that self-confidence can help learners to put more efforts on their academic tasks because they are determined and hopeful that they will succeed academically. Self-confidence is concerned with the learners' confidence about their capabilities to thrive and it is affected by the specific circumstance for certain activities (Perry, 2011).

For example, personal and environmental factors can influence learners' confidence constructively or unconstructively. According to Wills and Hofmeyr (2019), learners exposed to poor communities, family environments, and schools that provide poor teaching and learning but succeed academically have self-confidence in their ability to learn. Simayi and Lombard (2019) indicate that if teachers, parents and peers create an environment that encourages learners to have self-confidence about their schoolwork, it makes learners from disadvantaged backgrounds who are not doing well academically to be more involved in their schoolwork. However, it is also possible that an environment can have undesirable effects on individuals' lives, even though promoting self-confidence seems essential (Chesser-Smyth & Long, 2013). Furthermore, if learners are exposed to unfavourable contexts, their self-confidence can be adversely affected (Gottlieb et al., 2022).

Learners' environmental features can influence learners to be resilient or less resilient (Crespo et al., 2019). Subsequently, this statement implies that teachers can develop the academic resilience of learners by enhancing learners' confidence through providing a positive teaching and learning environment using a learner-centred teaching and learning approach in the form of providing tasks that need learners to work with each other and making lessons interesting for learners (Walsh et al., 2020). Enabling learners to have confidence by allowing them to express themselves in the classroom during the teaching and learning process (Salvo- Garrido et al., 2019), satisfying learners' mental needs such as making them feel secure and connected with

the teacher and school, treating them with dignity, promote learners' good personality characteristics such as optimism and confidence will assist learners to be academically resilient (Liang et al., 2019). Developing learners' confidence throughout their schooling years is crucial to make them academically resilient (Walsh et al., 2020). Learners' self-confidence and resilience can be developed through positive relationships between learners and people around them in adverse contexts (Fotheringham et al., 2021). Support from significant individuals such as teachers and peers, good personality characteristics, and suitable strategies such as developing learners' confidence can assist learners in being academically resilient (Alexopoulou et al., 2019). The above statements clearly show a relationship between academic resilience, self-confidence, and positivity (Liang et al., 2019).

Personal and environmental factors can be detrimental, but according to Alexopoulou et al. (2019), there are aspects that can also be beneficial to learners, such as confidence and self-efficacy, household strength, and encouragement from peers, teachers, parents, and significant individuals from the neighbourhood.

Personal factors that can impact learners' confidence are positive emotions, zeal, mental capability, hope, and assurance, but egoism, sadness, insecurity, disbelief, and lack of enthusiasm can adversely affect learners' confidence (Perry, 2011). Therefore, building learners' self-confidence can encouragingly enhance their academic resilience (Wills & Hofmeyr, 2019).

Academically resilient learners utilise their internal assets such as belief in their capabilities, desire to obtain a high GPA and rationally solve problems, social support mobilisation, and a positive attitude. Kalender (2015) indicates that academically resilient learners have good relations with teachers, and a positive view of their educators and school. They enjoy getting high marks and do not regard themselves as poor performers academically. Rather, they think that they do well at school if they want to, and they have high academic self-efficacy. Academically resilient learners have a positive attitude towards learning; they are independent, adaptable, and innovative. They acquire knowledge and skills through getting involved personally; they are analytic thinkers who foresee problems and deal with them logically. The positive behaviour of learners towards the learning process is an important internal asset that enhances academic resilience (Choi, 2019). They want to achieve high marks, surpass their teachers' expectations and request help from others (Peña et al., 2018). An academically resilient learner succeeds academically, and there is a positive

relationship between academic resilience and success in school (Allan et al., 2014; Astudillo, 2015).

- **Self-efficacy**

Self-efficacy is the individuals' confidence in their ability to execute activities effectively, which can be affected by inner and outer assets (Siddique et al., 2023). Efficacy belief is not a universal attribute but a collection of self-beliefs, and it correlates to different domains of operation, such as the academic environment (Bandura, 2006). Also, Gosselin and Maddux (2003) regard self-efficacy beliefs as a person's confidence regarding his/her ability to perform well in school. These beliefs are related to individuals' performance and their capabilities. They also involve the ability to match and arrange expertise and capability in difficult circumstances.

One way to understand self-efficacy is through social cognitive theory (Gosselin & Maddux, 2003). Bandura (2012) also indicates that self-efficacy is deeply rooted in this theory. Therefore, to understand self-efficacy, one needs a precise understanding of some of the most important aspects of social cognitive theory. Social cognitive theory consists of three prime aspects of self-efficacy: cognitive processes, affective processes, and locus of control (Zulkosky, 2009).

Regarding affective processes, anxiety disorder impacts negatively on learner's self-efficacy and academic performance. According to JoeT et al. (2011), learners with a high level of anxiety encounter constant worry, which in turn weakens their self-efficacy. As a result, they appear to be incompetent. For example, if these learners appear incapable, it is because a high level of anxiety and stress influences their understanding and assessment of their capability to perform a specific academic task to such an extent that they abandon the task and experience low self-efficacy (Zhang, 2018, p. 117). In support of this statement, elevated learners with high anxiety have low self-efficacy (Xu et al., 2017). In agreement with the above statement, elevated nervousness activates poor self-efficacy belief, but an average level of anxiety may positively impact learners' self-efficacy (Keşan & Kaya, 2018). Cook (2017, p. 108) found that people with high levels of anxiety experienced poor self-efficacy, and those with less anxiety have better self-efficacy. Furthermore, Huang and Mayer (2018, p. 27) claim that lessening learners' anxiety is crucial because their self-efficacy is improved, and it has a favourable effect on their academic performance. A high level of self-efficacy positively impacts learner performance (Thomas, 2019).

Moreover, a high level of self-efficacy is obtained when learners self-reflect and are provided with instant and constant comments about their academic activities (Affuso et al., 2023, p. 3). It also promotes perseverance among learners to be determined to succeed academically despite adversity (Graham, 2022.) As a result, self-efficacy makes learners academically resilient (Ahmad et al., 2022). It has been noted that there is less scientific consideration of the function of self-efficacy on academic success (Al-Abyadh et al., 2022).

Academic self-efficacy is a robust predictor of learner academic success, and there is a need to determine the connection between academic self-efficacy and learners' academic success (DeAngelis, 2014). Furthermore, there seems to be a connection between self-efficacy beliefs and the academic resilience of learners from a disadvantaged background (Mkhize, 2015). Mkhize (2015), Sturtevant (2014) and Kuyper (2014) argue that self-efficacy promotes resilience and school factors such as academic support and positive teacher-learner relationships help learners to be academically resilient. Self-efficacy is the learners' internal asset that assists them in being academically resilient in unfavourable contexts (Annalakshmi, 2019). Furthermore, self-efficacy is part of motivation (Kryshko et al., 2022), and both of the abovementioned aspects influence learners' academic success (Ahmed et al., 2021).

- **Motivation**

Motivation consists of the ability to trust your capability to succeed, willpower and aspiration (Hadwin et al., 2022), and motivation is the motive behind the individual's action (Lai, 2011). Motivation is the concern of various scholars and is a crucial aspect that predicts academic success (Shao et al., 2022). Therefore, the above statements signify that motivation is an important aspect of learners' lives (Whitman, 2019), and learners who have the desire to succeed academically are motivated (Adegboyega, 2018). Therefore, it is essential to look at motivation, according to Shao and Kang (2022, p. 2), motivation can be divided into three parts, that is, 'intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, and motivation'. Furthermore, Nishida and Takagi (2023, p. 5) explain that 'amotivation' is when learners are engaged in an academic activity for the sake of doing it, not because they see value in the activity. Additionally, learners behave in this manner because they are incapable of performing effectively or cannot regulate their behaviour's effects (İlter, 2023). Moreover, İlter (2023, p. 3) alluded that deficiency of aspiration to strive at school activities is the basis of amotivation and this

type of motivation has least altitude of independence and regulator of actions. Amotivation is associated with aspects of lack of motivation (Nishida & Takagi, 2023). For example, learners who believe they are incompetent to execute academic tasks successfully or that their actions do not result in academic success are subjected to amotivation (Howard et al., 2021).

However, an individual's ability to strive against the odds is capable of counteracting amotivation and enhancing extrinsic and intrinsic motivation (Leão et al., 2023). An innate drive is good for learners' prosperity, welfare, and development (Mamolo, 2022) and learners' desire to be engaged in the activity (Calvin et al., 2022). Furthermore, Calvin et al. (2022) alluded that intrinsic motivation is essential for academic success, and Kotera et al. (2022) further add that it is also related to resilience while doing an academic activity for the sake of impressing others (Shao & Kang, 2022) has unfavourable effects (Cui et al., 2022). Cui et al. (2022) further suggested that there should be an empirical investigation on 'external motivation and academic success' because they found that external motivation is unimportant for academic success.

Motivation for learners is grouped into innate, attainment and superficial motivation (Shao & Kang, 2022); they further indicated that the latter two types of motivation are part of extrinsic motivation (2022, p. 3). Additionally, Liu and Huang (2022, p. 4) stated that regulated motivation is also part of extrinsic motivation. The actions of individuals who are motivated by their context are to aspire to achieve predicted outcomes (Tsao et al., 2021).

Therefore, teachers, parents, and other educational stakeholders should motivate learners through career exhibitions to aspire to succeed academically. Activities such as career exhibitions are part of extrinsic motivation to encourage learners (Mnguni, 2019), and teachers' support is crucial for learners to acquire information about various careers and opportunities offered through these different careers (Mnguni, 2019) because other schools are distant from places where career exhibitions are organised (Mokodutlo, 2019). Various stakeholders can organise career exhibitions such as the Department of Basic Education, universities, the Department of Labour, the National Youth Development Agency and community libraries (Mnguni, 2019, p. 47). For example, career exhibitions at university present an opportunity for learners to interact personally with people who are knowledgeable about specific careers and can advise learners accordingly (Njoko, 2018). For instance, when an agriculturalist or civil engineer interacts with learners, they can motivate or demotivate learners to be civil

engineers (Mnguni, 2019, p. 36). Additionally, Mokodutlo (2019, p. 116) states that when learners are exposed to and interact with an agriculturalist, it will be easy for them to remember. However, inadequate exposure to career exhibitions and insufficient money for learners to travel to university for career exhibitions is a challenge (Mokodutlo, 2019), and disregarding life orientation teachers can adversely affect teachers' efforts to organise learners to attend career exhibitions (Mnguni, 2019, p. 119).

On the other hand, innate motivation is part of intrinsic motivation (Shao & Kang, 2022), and inner drive intends to experience pleasure from the tasks performed by these individuals (Tsao et al., 2021). Furthermore, innate drive is good for learners' prosperity, welfare, and development (Mamolo, 2022) and learners' desire to be engaged in the activity (Calvin et al., 2022). Intrinsically motivated learners partake in school activities for pleasure; their courage is from within, and their inner drive, such as aspiration, shapes their actions. There is a correlation between intrinsic motivation and resilience because the more learners are interested in knowing something, the more learners become resilient (Ramirez-Granizo et al., 2020). Furthermore, Calvin et al. (2022) alluded that intrinsic motivation is essential for academic success.

For this study, attention is given to two types of intrinsic motivation: self-imagination and self-talk. Self-talk is the strategy to motivate, control behaviour, and persevere in executing tasks successfully. Self-talk is talking to oneself to control one's thinking and behaviour to attain success (Clemons-Shaw, 2021), and it is a crucial strategy for assessment of incidents, obtaining insight, contemplating expectations and taking resolutions (Fagan, 2022). The above statement implies that self-talk makes learners perceive their endeavours in a positive light (Flanagan & Symonds, 2021), and it is a strategy that teachers can use to assist learners in realising their inner ability to persist (Cutton & Hochstetler, 2021). For example, learners use self-talk to inspire them to persevere (Lam & Zhou, 2021), and self-talk motivates learners to persevere academically (Fagan, 2022). Regarding the issue of motive, Flanagan and Symonds (2021, p. 1008) indicate that self-talk is fundamental for 'self-regulation and motivation'. Self-talk is categorised as motivation (Puddister et al., 2021) but Gregurić (2021, p. 25) found that self-talk is not that significant in motivation. However, an amalgamation of self-talk and motivation can assist learners in experiencing success because the effect of self-talk on the execution of a task without motivation is weak (Bingöl & Yildiz, 2021). Furthermore, James (2022, p. 137) found that talking to self positively is an intrinsic

aspect that inspires resilience. Therefore, talking to the self is part of the intrinsic motivation to achieve a desired objective (Lam & Zhou, 2021). In support of this statement, Ljubin-Golub (2021) states that self-talk is an intrinsic motivation for academic success. The reason is that learners who use 'goal-oriented self-talk' concentrate on succeeding academically (Fagan, 2022).

It was found that self-talk has a substantial favourable association with the execution of a task and incompletely facilitates the correlation between motivation and the execution of a task (Bingöl & Yildiz, 2021, p. 13). Additionally, Clemons-Shaw (2021, p. 70) indicates that self-talk influences the execution of a task through self-regulation behavioural patterns and achievement of the ability to execute tasks effectively. Self-talk affects self-regulation and execution of a task, and these are crucial aspects for learners to persevere in academia (Fagan, 2022). Self-talk helps learners to control their actions (Clemons-Shaw, 2021).

During the individual's mental process of inventing occurrences to be stimulated to succeed, the individual communicates with self (Alba et al., 2022). Therefore, the above statement implies that the person is engaged in self-imagination. Self-imagination is a mental procedure that originates from individuals' thoughts and consciousness to create and transform occurrences (Alba et al., 2022; Chen, 2022); this process is crucial for inspiration (Kim & Kim, 2018). Furthermore, Leopold et al. (2019) indicate that this individual mental procedure to generate experiences can assist learners to succeed academically because it arouses previous recollections and affects their expectations (Chen, 2022). As a result, learners' academic success can be favourably influenced (Chen, 2022), and it has an enormous effect on learners' academic success (Lakkala et al., 2020) because it activates academic achievement (Lasagabaster, 2018). Therefore, it implies that self-image development is essential for learners to strive at school (Simel, 2013). The reason is that individuals with good self-images are capable of realising aspects that can assist them to succeed from within themselves, their context and improving their lives in general (Odebode, 2020).

However, individuals with an adverse self-image concentrate on their limitations, which hinders their ability to strive (Odebode, 2020). Furthermore, Kyereko and Faas (2021) state that a 'negative image' can hinder academic success. A negative image affects academic success unfavourably because of learners' poor self-judgment, lack of belief in themselves and fearfulness, which prevents them from establishing positive interrelations with others (Odebode, 2020) and this phobia is detrimental to their

academic success because they tend to defer or indulge in inappropriate actions to cover their envisaged lack of academic success (Schwinger et al., 2021). Therefore, schools, families, and the state must avoid actions that adversely affect learners' or children's self-image development. For example, the use of aggressive discipline measures, such as lambasting and verbal abuse, are sources of adverse self-image (Odebode, 2020).

- **Goal**

A goal is something that a person wants to achieve (Lunenburg, 2011). Goals play an important role in learners' academic work. Chowdhury and Halder (2019) assert that learners must focus on the given task and their results because if learners do not see the significance of learning, they do not invest more time and energy to realise their goals. In support of this statement, learners who achieve something from learning crave to improve their understanding of a particular matter (Adegboyega, 2018). Again, for learners to perform well academically, irrespective of the adversities, they need to have a goal (Jajuri et al., 2019).

The goal theory is basically derived from the educational and social psychology disciplines and is well-known in organisational psychology (Vandewalle et al., 2019). There are various types of goals, according to Harnar (2019); these goals are frequently categorised into mastery or performance goals of achievement. Mastery goal of achievement is regarded as a need to acquire an ability to perform a particular task to master a specific capability (Alhadabi & Karpinski, 2020). Mastery and performance goals are related to various individual viewpoints regarding capability and attempt. In the mastery goal of achievement, there is a view that learners' capabilities can be cultivated, and the attempt to perform certain tasks successfully can be utilised as a technique to nurture the required capacity to succeed academically (Diaconu-Gherasim et al., 2018). Learners with mastering goals of achievement view their circumstances as a chance to develop by learning from their errors (Sideridis, 2005). These learners prefer to pay attention to the learning process and to master the particular aspect they are learning; they have an interest in learning, and they show positive emotions, perseverance, and a high level of self-efficacy and often utilise cognitive tactics to succeed academically (Pintrich, 2000). For these learners to be academically resilient, they should be supported and secure (Rusk & Rothbaum, 2010).

However, mastery avoidance and performance-avoidance goals lead to poor academic performance and a sense of belief about learners' capability to perform a task effectively and establish a goal (Radosevich et al., 2007). Learners might possess lofty performance and mastery goals. It means learners might want to show their peers or teachers that they can perform a particular task successfully to look for approval from peers or teachers. On the other hand, the learners want to build up their ability to master the learning task (Trinh, 2019). Performance goal achievement means the learner tries to appear as better than other learners by achieving more marks than peers, and performance-avoidance goals imply that the learner tries to succeed academically more than others to avoid performing poorly academically (Diaconu-Gherasim et al., 2018). Furthermore, Alhadabi and Karpinski (2020) found a correlation between these goals, whereby performance goals favourably influence avoidance goals, meaning learners who are faced with demanding academic contexts and extrinsically driven by factors, such as doing better academically than others have a higher chance to use avoidance goal. Learners with performance goals of achievement are expected to view challenging and demanding academic environments as intimidating and show signs of unfavourable emotions (Rusk & Rothbaum, 2010).

- **Mental strength**

The explanation of mental toughness has progressed to the stage where most scholars get along with the elementary notion of this concept as the capability to persist to succeed under difficult situations (Swanepoel, 2022). Mental toughness is a metaphysical concept that entails individuals' ideas, which they regard as a fact when confronted with difficulties and want to succeed, showing dedication, willpower, ability to adapt and self-regulation (Anyanwu et al., 2022). In agreement with Swanepoel (2022) and Anyanwu et al. (2022), Li (2022) further adds that mental toughness assists people to adjust in their context and can alter in accordance with objectives because it is a flexible notion which can grow gradually (Swanepoel, 2022).

Mental toughness consists of people's steadfast confidence in their capabilities to realise envisaged objectives (Reidelberger, 2023). This implies that mental toughness enables individuals to be confident about their capabilities (Denovan et al., 2022). As a result, mental toughness is extremely associated with individuals' confidence in their abilities to succeed in their tasks (Brace et al., 2020). Again, Chaudhari (2018, p. 114) and Li (2022) stated that people with mental toughness are confident they will succeed in their endeavours. Furthermore, Li (2022, p. 73) maintained that mental toughness is

associated with other psychological processes which can enhance the mental toughness of people such as 'self-confidence' and 'positivity'.

Individuals with superior mental toughness view the difficulties they experience as conditions that give them chances to succeed rather than barriers because such conditions strengthen them (Zhang et al., 2022). Additionally, Donovan et al. (2022) remind us that any condition with a positive influence on people has the possibility of facilitating individuals to strive. Furthermore, it becomes clear that positive thoughts are crucial for the development of mental toughness (Li, 2022, p. 73), and viewing difficulties that you are faced with positively or thinking positively about them has a favourable effect towards overcoming them (Anyanwu et al., 2022).

The crucial aspect of mental toughness is the capability to strive despite adversity (Denovan, et al., 2022). Mentally tough individuals can deal with hardships effectively because they manage to attain their objectives and excel (Swanepoel, 2022). Furthermore, Reidelberger (2023) commented that these individuals manage to handle adverse conditions because they concentrate on the current activity with the limitless aspiration to flourish which boosts their willpower to facilitate their power to pull through with devotion and vigour while confronted with difficult circumstances (Cooper et al., 2020). Therefore, it implies that mental toughness has helpful features because of their favourable impact during tough times (Li, 2022), and all of the abovementioned aspects indicate that mental toughness consists of protecting elements (Gameiro et al., 2023).

Therefore, it signifies that mental toughness can assist learners in excelling academically and enable them to be academically resilient. The reason is that mental toughness can help learners to excel academically by aiding learners to handle adversity effectively (Denovan et al., 2022) because it has the potential to enhance the action of carrying out academic activities (Cooper et al., 2020). Also, it encourages learners to pay attention to the teaching and learning process to enhance academic success (Li, 2022) and even to excel while faced with suffering (Swanepoel, 2022). It denotes that mental toughness correlates with academic success (Li, 2022), and as a result, school stakeholders must design tactics that will assist learners in developing mental toughness (Anyanwu et al., 2022). Nonetheless, there is no clear-cut effect that mental toughness can enhance academic success (Li, 2022).

- **Metacognitive skills**

Learners' capability to establish relationships with other individuals close to them and solicit assistance from them is crucial for independent learning (Quyen & Ha, 2022) and metacognitive ability (Broadbent & Lodge, 2021). Metacognitive skills are learners' capability to control and assess their learning process, and these skills can influence learners' academic success (Ismirawati et al., 2020); these skills are 'analysis, synthesis, and evaluation' (Muhlisin et al., 2018, p. 3). Furthermore, Dang et al. (2018, p. 7) support this idea by stating that good metacognitive skills are associated with academic excellence. Therefore, it means metacognitive skills are crucial for learners to thrive academically (Azizah et al., 2019; Astriani et al., 2020). However, poor metacognitive skills (Azizah et al., 2019), lack of metacognitive skills (Setiawati & Corebima, 2018), poor teaching and learning strategies that cannot enhance learners' metacognitive skills (Muhlisin et al., 2018) and over-optimism of learners with inadequate development of metacognitive skills (Dang et al., 2018) adversely affect the academic success of learners from adverse contexts.

Learners who can study independently can enhance their metacognitive learning outcomes (Ismirawati et al., 2020) because metacognitive abilities help attain academic success and can assist learners in regulating their thinking procedures (Schuster et al., 2020). For example, Peña et al. (2018) state that learners execute their capability to control situations around them for various reasons, such as to succeed academically, to go beyond teachers' expectancies, to be recognised as front runners and when they are confronted with difficult academic tasks (Ingebrand et al., 2021). Additionally, Giblin et al. (2021) commented that learners use other resources than individuals to comprehend the topic of interest and to persevere with their studies.

Independent learning necessitates that learners be actively involved in the learning process and intrinsically motivated (Umaralieva, 2021). Learning independently gives learners self-assurance, the capability to perform academic tasks individually and dedication towards their learning process (Azzajjad et al., 2021) and inspires learners to be innovative (Mashitoh et al., 2021). Independent learning positively influences learners' academic success (Sari & Zamroni, 2019). However, learners who cannot learn independently are nervous about studying independently (Scheel et al., 2022) and risk failing academically because of not engaging in academic activities and poor concentration on schoolwork (Sari & Zamroni, 2019).

Metacognitive skills and independent learning are crucial for learners to seek assistance. Chowdhury and Halder (2019) support the above statement by indicating that the procedure to seek assistance from other people in school entails a psychosomatic modus operandi, and inspiration is crucial. Help-seeking in the context of school means the capability of a learner to request assistance from other individuals such as friends, family members, school personnel and other people from the community after learners realise that they struggle with certain concepts or projects (Falco, 2019). Learners do not only solicit assistance from others but also from objects, such as gadgets and the internet (Giblin et al., 2021). Help-seeking behaviour is a learning technique where a learner is practically involved in discovering the answers or completing the project by asking questions from relevant individuals. It also assists learners to succeed academically (Chowdhury & Halder, 2019).

With regard to soliciting assistance from the Internet, Garcia et al. (2018) confirm that it is attainable, and Giblin et al. (2021) argues that learners utilise the Internet because it has reliable information like the information they obtain from other learners, teachers and parents. Likewise, soliciting assistance electronically means gathering information from electronic sources or other individuals electronically to deal with a challenging academic activity (Broadbent & Lodge, 2021). For example, learners can exploit a variety of programmes to interact with others such as WhatsApp video calls (Broadbent & Lodge, 2021) and Facebook (Quyen & Ha, 2022, p. 205). However, some individuals in the school are not enthusiastic about soliciting assistance from the Internet or other people (Broadbent & Lodge, 2021). Some learners avoid soliciting assistance from others because they do not want to feel humiliated. When they seek solutions for their academic task from a literature search, they risk consuming more time to be assisted (Giblin et al., 2021). Furthermore, Quyen and Ha (2022, p. 204) indicate that sometimes learners do not solicit assistance because they lack self-control, experience poor support from other individuals, are not self-reliant, use external locus of control and experience challenges when soliciting assistance from others.

From the above statement, the role of internal and external assets is significant for learners to succeed in school and be academically resilient. Various concepts correlate with academic success and resilience. Subsequently, I will focus specifically on appreciation inquiry, constructivism and a bio-ecological system.

The reason for using these three concepts is that they emphasise focus on the

individual and social assets with an aim of making individuals succeed. Therefore, it is vital to focus on appreciation inquiry because it has the capability of developing learners' academic resilience and success by focusing on their internal assets such as emotion regulation in particular through designing and destiny stages. It also relates to the asset-based approach and positive psychology because it enhances the self-efficacy of learners and their positive emotions such as hope and optimism (Verleypsen et al., 2015).

Teachers and principals should develop a system for appreciating the internal and external assets that correlate with learners' academic success. In the next section, I will discuss in detail the process of admiring the assets that can help learners succeed academically using the appreciative inquiry concept.

3.4.2 Appreciative inquiry

Appreciative inquiry is the technique to alter an organisation; it tries to create a communal vision and enhances success by discovering paramount assets for progress (Bushe, 1995). Some people view appreciative inquiry (AI) as an asset-based approach (Verleypsen et al., 2015). The above statements signify that schools can assist learners in being academically successful if they emphasise commitment towards schoolwork. This creates opportunities to succeed at the end of the academic year and supports learners through working on their strengths and the school's and family's positive assets.

The use of AI by teachers, schools, and families can make learners academically resilient. Grant and Humphries (2006) articulate that AI centres around four pillars, which are 4Ds: Discovery, Dream, Design, and Destiny. The 4Ds, as a procedure of appreciative inquiry, start by finding out the paramount assets by examining things from learners, teachers, and parents that they perceive as determinates of learners' academic success and resilience. The next stage is where the abovementioned individuals visualise their considerable inputs towards learners' academic success and resilience. During the third stage, the learner embraces the essential assets and positive prospects to create academic success and resilience tactics. In the last stage, learners develop a plan and objectives to be achieved and become dedicated to realising their objectives to be successful academically (Bushe, 1995).

The use of appreciative inquiry in the classroom has the possibility of improving

teachers' process of teaching and learning results in the academic success of learners (Eow et al., 2010). Application of this theory requires teachers to view learners' difficulties as a point of departure for identification of assets; through 4Ds teachers need to discover and acknowledge learners' experiences, guide them to express what they want, make it possible for learners to realise their capacity and help learners to visualise how they can sustain their capacity (Eow et al., 2010).

The above statements imply that if teachers need to assist learners to be academically resilient and successful, they must apply the appreciative inquiry theory in the classroom. Teachers ought to find out the things that learners are passionate about, and learners' strengths, and teachers need to create an environment that encourages learners to uncover assets from within and around learners' immediate surroundings. Teachers can also guide learners by asking questions, such as 'How would you like to see yourself in the future?'. Teachers need to create a classroom environment that encourages learners to enhance their ability to succeed academically and to make them successful academically. It is a prerequisite for teachers to encourage learners to imagine how they would preserve their uncovered assets to develop optimism and drive.

Teachers are expected to deal with learners in an acceptable manner. To assist them in being successful academically, teachers need to use appreciative inquiry as an idea and practice it in the classroom through the use of constructionist, simultaneity, poetic, anticipatory, positive, wholeness, enactment, and free choice principles (Eow et al., 2010).

Teachers are required to create an atmosphere that encourages learners to develop abilities and occurrences where they succeed academically so that learners can be resilient. Teachers must communicate positive information to learners, such as 'I believe you can be successful academically when you can invest more time and resources in your schoolwork'. Positive communication with learners can assist them in positive introspection and, at the same time, when they are thinking of their future after successful academic schooling. Teachers can also create a programme for learners to participate in, where they can write poems about what they used to be academically successful and share them with other learners in the classroom through the teachers' support. In the process of all the abovementioned issues, teachers need to ensure that learners are happy and for teachers to make learners feel entertained

through lesson presentations.

In appreciative inquiry, collaboration of individuals to find out school assets, the academic success of learners, and the well-being of the school are crucial aspects (Ludema et al., 2006). Appreciative inquiry is the technique to change relations among individuals and instruments to bring change in schools with more emphasis on school assets (Cram, 2010). The issue of relationships is important in appreciation inquiry because of its effects on school; the effects of relationships in school are that it makes positive communication to be used, develops good relations among all individuals in school, the school strengthens itself to excel academically, democracy is practised, the school effectively arranges its academic activities and the school uses its assets to make learners academically resilient (Ludema et al., 2006).

It implies that the school is required to create discussions that make the whole staff, learners, and parents pay attention to the school's assets and aspire for the best academic performance of the school. The school develops a positive attachment with other individuals and organisations from the community, provincial and national levels with the aim of strengthening school assets for better school academic achievement. The rights of every individual in school are respected and protected; the school is able to arrange its activities effectively, and there is harmony. In the time when learners are in need of support to prepare for their examinations, the school is able to organise or invite people to motivate learners and to assist them with techniques to answer question papers during examinations.

On the other hand, schools' assets are discovered when schools have good values such as freedom, goal-oriented, collaboration, positivism and a culture where they support and listen to others (Magzan et al., 2019). The above statement means that if teachers, learners, parents and other officials from the Department of Education know each other and understand the needs of the school, they have a good chance to contribute to the academic success of the school. The school needs to listen to the concerns of teachers, learners, parents and other stakeholders because if these people can realise that the school implements their suggestions, then their creativity and originality are encouraged. The school needs to encourage learners to have a dream, assist them in achieving their dreams, and promote freedom of choice. Learners need to be encouraged to make choices based on their zeal and abilities to be able to make the best of them and make them academically successful. Learners are encouraged to make their own choices regarding aspects that can assist them in being

academically successful. For learners to be academically successful, they need the school's support; the school can provide support such as good quality of service and learning materials. Schools need to encourage learners to be optimistic about themselves and to have hope that if they use assets from schools and the community, they stand a good chance of experiencing academic success.

Two factors that are essential to the transformation of schools are generative and positive; generative occurs when additional information suffices that makes learners and teachers in school behave in a particular manner and positive views for academic success (Zandee et al., 2010). This means that family members are required to find out and generate strategies that can make learners behave in a way that allows them to experience academic success. During this process, the relations between family members and children are crucial.

Appreciative inquiry is used to change family relationships through Discovery; Dream; Design; and Destiny (Botha-Verhage & Jacobs, 2017). The authors signify that good parent-child relationships can play a major role in supporting the child's academic resilience and success using AI theory in the family.

Parents can have an opportunity to identify things that the child loves and assets because they are paramount in making a child academically resilient and successful. Positive parent-child relationships are essential because parents can develop a positive family environment that encourages the child to discover assets from within and around the family and community environment. Parents can also lead children to think about their future by asking the child how they see themselves in the future.

Parents can enhance their children's resilience and academic success by creating a family environment that reinforces the children's improvement in their capability to succeed academically. Parents can achieve the abovementioned aim by supporting children in visualising how they can sustain factors that make them succeed academically, irrespective of the daily challenges they face in their situation. Parents can also develop children's confidence. There is a relation between AI and constructivism.

3.5 Constructivism

Constructivism is a system of ideas to explain how individuals acquire knowledge through a quest for meaning and understand the truth, and people should construct

the meaning by themselves (Bhattacharjee, 2015). In this study, parents, teachers, and Grade 10 and 11 learner-participants were allowed to search for and construct the truth about aspects that determine selected learners' academic success. I interviewed participants and requested them to narrate their experiences with the actions taken by learners, teachers, and parents to make these learners succeed academically. I went through learner school records such as academic and behavioural records to examine learners' academic performance and their behaviour at school and in classroom.

There are various types of constructivism such as personal construct psychology, cognitive constructivism, narrative constructivism, social constructivism and radical constructivism but not limited up to here (Lincoln & Hoffman, 2019). It means that the main idea of these different types of constructivism is the creation of reality. For example, learners, teachers and parents obtain knowledge and understanding of how selected learners succeed academically despite challenges they face through interaction with other people or things such as documents.

In this study, the concept of constructivism was used in different ways in various parts of this study. For example, I use it as a concept of learning where teachers engage with learners in group work or as a pedagogue when a teacher encourages learners to complete a research or project. As a concept of knowledge, I interact with participants to hear from them about the truth of the assets they used to make them academically successful and resilient. Lincoln and Hoffman (2019) articulates that constructivism is concerned with how the truth is produced and reality is recognised through discovery and/or creation. It means learners need to be encouraged to come up with solutions for the challenges they are faced with and give reasons to justify their answers as an activity. Learners are required to discover the solutions by themselves with the assistance of a teacher as facilitator in group discussions. It is when constructivism is used as pedagogue. In this study, I utilised constructivism as a concept of knowledge, through interaction with participants in interviews to hear their daily experiences in QwaQwa with an aim to unearth aspects that make them academically resilient and successful.

In social constructivism the issue of exchange of ideas is important particularly from a management point of view; it means school principals are significant individuals who have a strong influence on learners, parents and teachers and school materials

(Sisson, 2019). Social constructivism plays a crucial role in a school context. Chowdhury and Halder (2019) indicate that the teaching and learning procedure from the constructivism approach includes investigating information to comprehend the connotation. The learner-centred approach is a great gift from constructivism for both teachers and learners (Mvududu & Thiel-Burgess, 2012), and with the use of social constructivism views in the classroom, teachers encourage learners to work as a group of peers (Shawa, 2020).

In constructivism, the teacher facilitates learners when engaged in activities and encourages learners to do self-reflection, justify their decisions and participate in activities (Dhar & Wahlang, 2020). Teachers need to work together with learners to be actively involved in activities (Abiatat, 2019). Teachers can utilise various activities such as peer discussion and play-acting (Dhar & Wahlang, 2020). In this manner, learners find a way to collaborate in performing academic activities, and the abovementioned examples of activities are part of the learner-centred approach (Abiatat, 2019).

The learner-centred approach requires learners to work together in real situations to solve problems and deepen their thoughts (du Plessis, 2020). The focal point of this approach is the learners' learning process (Shah, 2019). Learners are collective participants in activities during the process of teaching and learning (du Plessis, 2020). However, this approach to teaching and learning can be challenging for teachers who prefer to use the teacher-centred approach because learners are not allowed to discuss and justify their decisions (Shah, 2019). As a result of the abovementioned reason for the lack of utilisation of a learner-centred approach, learners can fail to be academically successful and resilient (Shah, 2019).

The teacher-centred teaching method is not enough to assist learners in achieving academic success; according to Shajalilova (2020), this teaching method expects learners to be passive during the teaching and learning process, so the approach is ineffective in dealing with the challenges of today. Therefore, alternative teaching methods, such as authentic teaching, are essential (Shajalilova, 2020). The authentic method is grounded on the constructivist idea because it underscores learning through occurrence and deals with handling contextually related challenges (Gürgil, 2018, p. 2061). Furthermore, there are various types of authentic teaching methods, such as experiential and cooperative, cooperative and co-teaching approaches and lesson

study. Lesson study is the process where teachers work together to investigate how best they can offer a teaching process to improve learners' understanding of the subject (Ogegbo & Gaigher, 2019).

The above statement means that teachers need to work together to assist learners in succeeding academically by offering each other constructive feedback about the whole process of teaching (Ogegbo & Gaigher, 2019). It implies that teachers cooperate and teach together, and this approach is called cooperative and co-teaching, which is crucial for enhancing learners' strong points (Ghazzoul, 2018). Furthermore, the aspect of co-teaching requires learners to be at the centre of the learning process, and invention is encouraged (Ghazzoul, 2018). Additionally, Guerra et al. (2021) stated that the experiential and cooperative method requires teachers to teach learners through experiments where learners can generate practical solutions for the real challenges in their context. All the abovementioned types of authentic teaching methods encourage teachers to engage learners actively in the learning process whereby the teacher's role is to facilitate, and these types of school tasks have great potential to make learners from adverse contexts academically resilient (Gürgil, 2018). However, authentic teaching methods have challenges. For example, teachers are expected to do other activities besides teaching; lack of time, support from principals, teaching staff, and teachers' labour movements can adversely affect the lesson study method of teaching (Ogegbo & Gaigher, 2019).

For learners to benefit from the learner-centred approach, teachers are required to create a constructivist classroom learning environment that encourages learners to collaborate (Abiatal, 2019), be actively involved in problem-solving situations and encourage creative thinking (Dhar & Wahlang, 2020). It must be an environment that supports discovery learning, dramatisation, autonomy and self-regulation learning of learners (Abiatal, 2019). It must recognise and encourage learners to use their previous knowledge and occurrences (Booyse & Chetty, 2016).

Learning environments such as the abovementioned have the potential to make learners develop successful communication abilities, cognitive and socio-emotional skills, a good self-concept, positive emotions, and academic resilience (Dhar & Wahlang, 2020), enthusiasm, responsibility and academic success (Booyse & Chetty, 2016).

The aim of using the constructivist approach in school is to assist learners in being

academically successful. Teachers need to assist learners in being aware of their capabilities and assets that they can take advantage of from their school, families, and community. For example, learners who have access to the local library can use it to complete their project; if a member of the family has a particular skill that learners need, they can involve that person to assist them in writing an assignment. It is also necessary for the teacher to advise learners to work together with other learners from the same school or other schools in the project. The teacher needs to use a variety of learner-centred activities such as case studies and role-playing. In support of the above points, Dagar and Yadav (2016) indicate that learner-centred tasks, collaboration learning techniques and socio-emotional skills characterise a constructivist classroom. For socio-emotional skills, see section 2.3.1.1.

In school, teachers can use constructive learning strategies such as peer tactics so that learners can have a chance to reflect on their experiences and comprehend the concepts they are working on to enhance their knowledge (Mvududu & Thiel-Burgess, 2012). Constructive learning strategies are essential for learners' academic success, and learners who obtain high-level marks have self-control and use cognitive constructivist strategies effectively (Chowdhury & Halder, 2019). Therefore, teachers must encourage and assist learners to self-regulate their behaviour and use more constructivist strategies for learners to succeed academically, such as authentic activities.

The aim of linking school activities to the actual circumstances of learners is to enhance academic success by ensuring that learners' comprehension of the topic is enhanced within their background as part of the broader social background (Sulistiyono et al., 2021). Also, see section 2.3 for the use of vernacular language as part of contextualising the lesson. The author further stated that linking school activities to the actual circumstances of learners assists teachers in making their teaching authentic and inspires learners to make a relationship between the topic and their current situation (Sulistiyono et al., 2021). It means teachers need to encourage parents to be involved because they present the lesson in a manner that requires the learners' broader social background.

Parental collaboration (see section 2.8.1) is essential for their children's academic success because they are actively involved in assisting their children with school activities whereby, they take much of their time with children (Kiliç & Gürdal, 2010). Collaboration of family members and assistance serves as the basis and improves a

child's ability to acquire information (Muhideen et al., 2023). Collaboration with the family, the family's relationship with other people, and collaboration within the community where various associations and entities are established to assist each other are crucial for constructivist learning (Sterian & Mocanu, 2016). Since collaboration gives a person a sense of belonging, Qureshi et al. (2021) stated that collaboration offers an opportunity to interact with each other and 'interaction and opinion sharing provides a sense of community' (p. 15).

Encouragement from parents to use digital technology from home enhances children's collaborative skills (Muhideen et al., 2023). Also, see section 2.3.1.2 for the role of technology as a strategy, which is part of constructivism to enhance learners' chances to improve their academic success. Furthermore, not only the use of technology but also collaboration with others and the use of digital technology to share thoughts supports learners to be part of the team and successfully engage in activities, which increases the chance of attaining academic success (Qureshi et al., 2021). It signifies that collaboration between learners and parents, teachers, friends, members of the community, learners' background and the actual circumstances of learners and the use of digital technology are essential for learners' academic success.

3.6 Bronfenbrenner's bio-ecological systems theory

The bio-ecological systems theory is concerned with the learners' background, such as the relationship between learners and parents, teachers, friends, members of the community and Thabo Mofutsanyane district officials, the family's socio-economic status and the South African education system (Conway, 2017). From ecological systems theory, academic resilience is viewed as a transitional outcome due to interaction among individuals with other people within an individual context (Mwangi & Ileri, 2017). The above statement means that a bio-ecological system is an ideal theory to comprehend the role of the abovementioned individuals and other resources that determine or delay the learner's academic success and resilience.

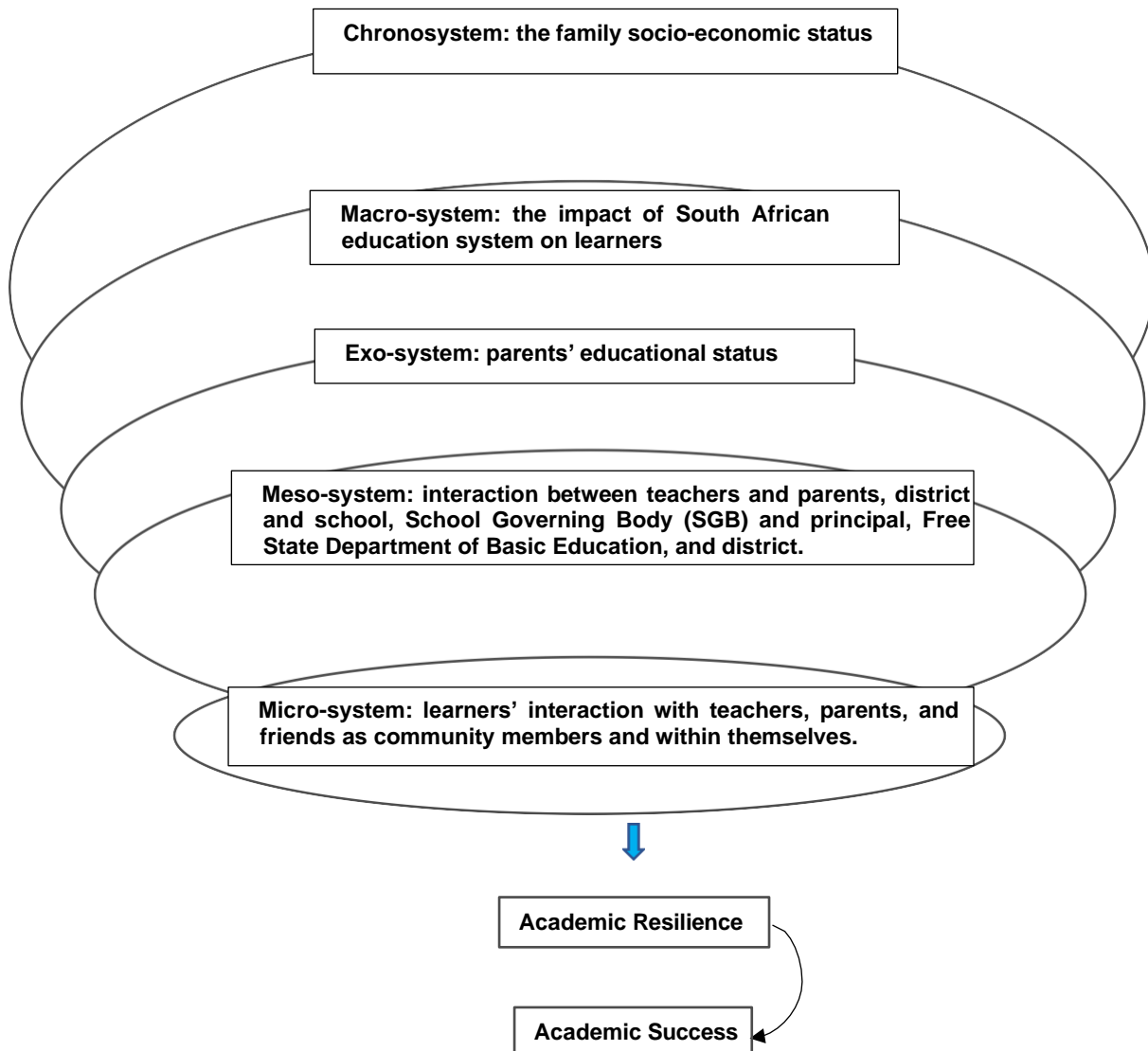


Figure 3.3: The bio-ecological systems theory

In the bio-ecological systems theory, the learner is regarded as an effective individual within a particular context in which he/she interacts with others and this interaction is based on three aspects such as functions, relations and the persistent action of the learner to achieve academic success (Capurso, 2015). It implies that the learner is a social person who relates with other individuals from different contexts such as school and family or community and can experience academic success irrespective of his/her contextual background. However, learners will be influenced constructively or unconstructively by their immediate and remote circumstances, such as classroom and Department of Education policies. Conway (2017) articulates that the crux of a bio-ecological system is the relationship between learners, their circumstances, and academic success, and resilience is the end product of these interrelations.

A biological system consists of various systems. Bronfenbrenner (1994) indicates that

these systems are chrono-system, macro-system, exo-system, meso-system, and micro-system. In a micro-system, learners interact personally with other individuals such as the teacher in school, parents at home and friend/s in school and/or at home. In a meso-system, teachers interact with parents, or a learner's friend interacts with the parent or the teacher of his/her friend. The other system encompasses district officials interacting with the school or the provincial department of education interacting with the district officials. In this context, the learner is not directly involved, but this interaction between the provincial Department of Basic Education and Thabo Mofutsanyane district officials will impact the learner; this system is called an eco-system. In addition, the South African education system is part of a macro system, and it influences learners' academic performance and resilience (Conway, 2017). Furthermore, Bronfenbrenner and Morris (2006, pp. 795–820) expanded this theory with the proximal processes, person, context, and time (PPCT) model because it frames the growth of individuals. They described time as the function that occurs for a certain period of time during the interaction between the person and other biological systems. For example, the continuousness or incoherence of experiences during the direct interaction with the learner. The interaction between school and family on a weekly or monthly basis or the exchange of cultural beliefs and this interaction among various biological systems is called proximal processes. They further indicated that this interaction also happens with non-living substances and images. Additionally, this interaction occurs within a learner context, such as school, home, community, and technology. PPCT explains the relations and collaboration among the adolescent, parent, teacher, neighbours, and the biological aspect of the adolescent (Adams-Ojugbele & Moletsane, 2019, p. 2).

Contextual and personal assets from various systems consist of proximal relations among individuals and their events in schools, home, and society and the unforeseen impact of community beliefs and technology towards people (Turner, 2019, p. 11). Regarding the component of a person, Bronfenbrenner and Morris (2006, p. 796) stated that this aspect consists of assets, demand, and characters. For example, individual characters can activate interaction among biological systems and regenerate this function. Furthermore, individual assets such as capability, understanding, and competence are needed to maintain this interaction process. On the other hand, demand can encourage or dishearten responses from other biological systems, which can nurture or interrupt the function of interaction of these systems.

Biological systems offer an essential basis for investigating academic resilience in schools, homes, and society (Turner, 2019, p. 95). It implies that teachers, parents, peers, neighbours, and other stakeholders and government are multiple systems that can support learners in achieving academic success and resilience. Furthermore, Ungar et al. (2021) stated that there is a change of concentration in multiple systems from persons dysfunctional to positivity of 'promotive and protective factors and processes (PPFPs) to enable resilience (p. 2). Multisystemic originates from the resilience idea, which cherished a variety of protective promotive factors found within individuals, schools, families, and communities, which serve as sources of resilience for adolescents from adverse contexts (Theron et al., 2022, p. 2). Again, these various systems are crucial to describe the multiplex of resilience (Crane, 2021), and there are assets inside these systems that can mutually affect the process (Holtge et al., 2022). Assets from these various systems are from within and/or exterior and relate to societal contemplations in dissimilar backgrounds, according to Ungar and Theron (2019), and can enhance people's resilience capabilities (Crane, 2021).

Moreover, we comprehend the interrelatedness of these systems only if there is adversity and process with protective factors that promote resilience (Ungar et al., 2021). Additionally, there is a need to develop strategies that consider various systems and the context of learners to enhance their academic success and resilience (Abbey et al., 2022). The reason is that Black learners (males) are resilient because of the different kinds of aid they receive from various systems (Turner, 2019). Therefore, there is a need to scrutinise the relationship between protective promotive factors related to biological, psychological, social, and environmental systems and the depth of how condition and cultural background touches such a relationship (Theron et al., 2022).

The above statements indicate that teachers, parents, and peers can play a crucial role in helping learners be academically successful and resilient because they are closely related to the learners. The interaction between teachers and parents is equally important for the abovementioned reason. Therefore, parents should attend school meetings and inform the teachers about anything that concerns the learner and school-related matters where necessary with the aim of helping a learner to be academically successful, and teachers should do the same as well. The provincial Department of Basic Education and Thabo Mofutsanyane district officials should be conscious of their decisions because they will affect learners. They should strive to make decisions that

will enhance the academic success and resilience of learners and do follow-ups to establish whether their decisions impact learners constructively or not so that if their decisions do not yield the expected results, they can make a review.

The policies that teachers implement at the school level come from the National Department of Education, the way of life of people in Thabo Mofutsanyane district and the culture of 100% pass rate of matriculates in high school (Capurso, 2015) are examples of a macro-system. A chronosystem is more focused on factors such as the organisation of the learner's immediate family over a long period of time. This system has an interrelationship with all other systems (Conway, 2017).

3.7 Summary of the chapter

Developing academic resilience is a process of discovery and learning to deal with adversity effectively by utilising assets at a person's disposal, such as support from others. During this process, learners need to view life positively. Focusing on the positive things, such as good relations with teachers, peers, and parents, and being optimistic is part of positive psychology because its emphasis is on the mobilisation of personal and environmental assets to enable a learner to succeed academically. It encourages learners to discover assets within themselves and their context, such as school, family and the community.

Positive psychology includes key approaches. Models and theories such as an asset-based approach and appreciative inquiry. The relationships among learners, teachers, and parents, as well as the identification of assets and positive thinking, are essential aspects of positive psychology. The asset-based approach's focal point is the identification and use of internal and external assets. It also considers the context of learners and their relationships with other people. The idea of relationships of individuals with other people and their environment plays a crucial role in bio-ecological systems theory. The bio-ecological systems theory consists of learners, teachers, parents, the community, officials from the district, the National Department of Education and the events that happened in the learner's life. Teachers need to create a classroom environment that uses constructivist ideas. Such a classroom is characterised by learner-centred tasks, collaboration learning techniques, and socio-emotional skills, which lead to academic resilience and success.

The common thread among these concepts is the use of internal and external assets,

relationships with other individuals and the environment to enhance learners' academic resilience and success. All the abovementioned issues explain how a learner can be academically resilient and successful despite a disadvantaged environment. Therefore, academic resilience correlates with positive psychology, appreciative inquiry, constructivism, bio-ecological system and an asset-based approach.

3.8 Conclusion

In conclusion, this study uses positive psychology, an asset-based approach, appreciative inquiry, constructivism, and bio-ecological systems as a conceptual framework. The wheel of resiliency consists of external assets with three aspects that promote resilience and provide possibilities for significant involvement. The common thread among positive psychology, constructivism, and bio-ecological systems is the use of internal and external assets, relationships with other individuals, and the environment to enhance the academic resilience and success of learners. These concepts correlate with academic success and resilience.

In the next chapter, the research design and methodology of the study are discussed.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

In Chapter 3, I outlined the key concepts underlying this study and presented the guiding conceptual framework. I discussed different aspects of academic success, such as external assets and individuals' internal assets, that could serve as protective factors associated with learner resilience. I expanded on the conceptual framework by including positive psychology features, an asset-based approach to academic resilience, appreciative inquiry, constructivism, and a bio-ecological system.

In Chapter 4, I present the methodology and the research design employed in this study. I begin this chapter by discussing the philosophical assumptions supporting the research. Thereafter, I address the paradigmatic perspectives and interpretivism. I also deliberated on the qualitative research approach, the case study design, and the non-probability sampling design, using purposive and convenient sampling strategies. A document review, semi-structured individual interviews, and focus group discussions were used to collect data for the study. A thematic content analysis approach was used to analyse the data. To attain quality assurance in this study, I discussed the four aspects of trustworthiness: transferability, conformability, credibility, and dependability. I also discussed how ethical issues were dealt with in the study. Lastly, I discuss my research role in the study.

4.2 Research questions

This study was guided by the following research questions:

4.2.1 Primary research question

What factors determine academic resilience as a component of academic success among selected Grade 10 and 11 learners in the Thabo Mofutsanyane district, Eastern Free State?

4.2.2 Secondary research questions

- How do learners, teachers and parents/guardians view academic success and academic resilience?

- What are the challenges encountered by learners and how do their personal characteristics contribute to developing their academic resilience despite their challenges?
- How do families support the academic resilience and success of learners?
- What strategies do school communities employ to facilitate the achievement of learners' academic resilience and success?
- What guidelines can be formulated to support learners in attaining academic resilience and consequently, academic success?

Table 4.1 provides an overview of the design and the methodology of this study.

Table 4.1: Overview of the design and the methodology of the research study

Philosophical presumptions	
Ontology	Epistemology
Methodology	
Methodological paradigm: Qualitative inquiry	
Advantages	Limitations
Meta-theoretical paradigm: Interpretivism	
Research design: Case study	
Advantages of case study design	Limitations of a case study design
The research process	
Selection of sites	
Inclusion criteria for site	Exclusion criteria for site
1. Maluti-A-Phofung Local Municipality	1. Dihlabeng Local Municipality 2. Mantsopa Local Municipality 3. Nketoana Local Municipality 4. Phumelela Local Municipality 5. Setsoto Local Municipality

Selection of participants					
Inclusion criteria for participants			Exclusion criteria for participants		
1.	Secondary schools		1.	Primary schools	
2.	Grade 10 and 11 learners		2.	Grade 1 to 9 and 12 learners	
Data collection and documentation					
Individual interviews		Focus group discussion		Document analysis	
Data management and analysis: Thematic content analysis					
Within-case analysis			Cross-case analysis		
Rigour of the study					
Credibility	Authenticity		Transferability	Dependability	Authenticity
Ethical considerations					
Informed consent	Informed assent	Trust	Safety in participation	Privacy and confidentiality	Anonymity

4.3 Paradigmatic perspectives

In this section, I discuss the paradigmatic perspectives I used to explore resilience as a component of academic success among selected Grade 10 and 11 learners. Mertens (2014) defines a paradigm as a personal worldview and as assumptions that guide the researcher's thoughts and actions.

The philosophical paradigms used in this study were ontology, epistemology, and methodology (Creswell, 2013). Ontology is how participants consider the reality of their situation. The ontological position in this study is constructivist, guided by the life experiences and traits of the participants. Social constructivists believe that reality is understood through human activity, and it cannot be discovered because it does not exist prior to its social construction (Hartas, 2010).

Participants had different personal experiences related to their context and shaped by their daily activities and views about factors contributing to academic resilience and academic success among selected Grade 10 and 11 learners in Thabo Mofutsanyane district, Eastern Free State. They contributed to a collective event, and the event's crux was scrutinised. Their experiences, and my opinion (as a researcher) about their experiences, were essential to what they regarded as reality in their context.

Wahyuni (2012) regards ontology as how people view reality in their context. For instance, learners, teachers, and parents/guardians in this study from Thabo Mofutsanyane district in QwaQwa. Furthermore, reality is created in interpretive ontology throughout the communication between the participants and the researcher. In the representation of interviews, the researcher submits participants' ideas as they are, and this reality is contextually influenced by their history and culture, as indicated by Scotland (2012). In this study, I explored factors that contributed to the academic resilience and, thereby, academic success of selected learners from low socio-economic backgrounds that allowed them to be regarded as academically resilient. I interacted with these learners individually, as a group, and with their parents/guardians and teachers to explore and understand their views and how they constructed their experiences.

The basis of how learners, teachers and parents/guardians know about the components of academic success among selected Grades 10 and 11 learners was affected by their way of thinking and constructed views. I created relationships with participants and worked together with them to explore factors that contributed to the academic resilience of these selected learners. In this process, each participant took an interview session of less than one hour and forty-five minutes (1:45 minutes). To understand participants' opinions and experiences, I spent much time with them until we reached data saturation.

The following Table 4.2 provides an overview and summary of the philosophical presumptions in this study.

Table 4.2: Philosophical presumptions

Philosophical presumptions	Ontology	Epistemology	Methodology
Characteristics	Ontology is relativism (Eslami, 2013). Learners individually and as a group, their parents/guardians and teachers had different views on factors that contributed to learners' academic success.	Participants' views about determinants of academic success were individually based. Creswell (2013) states that epistemology is subjective.	I used a case study design to explore factors that contributed to the academic success of selected Grade 10 and 11 learners. Creswell (2013) asserts that methodology is inductive and emerging.
Assumptions	There are numerous realities; reality is local and individual and is formed by means of practice, discussion, and symbols (Waller et al., 2016). I discussed with teachers, learners, and parents through face-to-face and group interviews to establish the truth from their context. Wahyuni (2012) indicates that people donate to social occurrences and examine all the essences of them (Cohen et al., 2007).	I established rapport with participants and worked with them to explore determinants of academic success. Waller et al. (2016) indicate that participants and the researcher establish the results. Research is a collaboration process, and the researcher decides to which extent participants should contribute. The researcher should establish rapport with participants (Creswell, 2013).	I collected data using open-ended semi-structured individual, focus group, and academic reports, a list of the top ten learners, and behavioural records of learners. Cohen et al. (2007) states that it is not nomothetic. It comprises open-ended personal, focus group interviews and observations and methodologies such as ethnography, phenomenology, hermeneutics, and case studies (Scotland, 2012).
Questions	Does it relate to what comprises reality? Is my	It is concerned with how reality can be	It has to do with why, what, from where, when

	view crucial on how events are and operate? (Scotland, 2012, p. 9).	produced, obtained and shared (Scotland, 2012, p. 9).	and how information is gathered and analysed (Scotland, 2012, p. 9).
Implications	The researcher should be prepared to come across fundamentally distinct reality from their world (Waller et al., 2016). I made field notes and recorded them in my diary for reflection on my opinion and research activity.	To comprehend participants as individuals, their views and experiences, the researcher needs spend more time with them (Creswell, 2013). I spent more than an hour with each participant in several days.	I provided detailed description of the research sites, process, and participants. I used various methods of analysis. Cohen et al. (2007) indicate that the researcher may partake in observations, provide detailed description, individual ideas and may not use fixed analysis strategies (Waller et al., 2016).

Source: Creswell (2013, p. 20-22)

4.3.1 Methodological paradigm: Qualitative inquiry

The methodological paradigm that I adopted for this study was the qualitative approach. According to Asif (2014), there are three research approaches with advantages and disadvantages: mixed-method, quantitative and qualitative (p. 27). I used a qualitative research approach, and all steps were taken to collect and analyse data. I made it to be clear, specific, and open to others. I wanted to understand how and why some learners perform well academically despite the difficult conditions they face in secondary schools. This research approach had the potential to uncover rich and clear descriptions and encourage further research (Asif, 2014). This qualitative research approach aimed to explore the determinants of academic resilience and success and required participants to describe their experiences. Creswell (2009) defines the qualitative approach as a way of exploring and comprehending the meaning people assign to their problems.

4.3.1.1 Advantages of using a qualitative inquiry

A qualitative inquiry has favourable aspects such as understanding the discussion about academic resilience and success, an in-depth description of participants' circumstances, rapid inquiries, gradual development of an opinion statement, and the significance of participants' context. I was conscious of my ideas regarding academic resilience; I examined 12 learners, four teachers, four parents/guardians independently, and two groups of learners in a focus group interview and used their academic records in this study. Slavin (2007) argues that the qualitative approach focused on clarifying participants' processes and situations in detail. There was no need to prove or disapprove of prescribed theoretical propositions.

I comprehended an exchange of ideas, vital individuals, small groups, and group dynamics. A qualitative research approach was useful to be used to reveal sources of the mostly unfamiliar problem (Remler & Van Ryzin, 2015). I utilised information that was essential in research to build theoretical propositions step by step. I investigated individual persons or group, recorded, verbal clues and informally tested theoretical assumptions. Individual meaning was crucial, and I was aware of my view regarding the issue at hand. I regarded any information as important no matter how small it was because it might have added value in understanding the academic success and resilience of learners. The actions of participants were regarded as influenced greatly by their circumstances and I was often expected to spend quite some time there (Slavin, 2007).

4.3.1.2 Limitations of using a qualitative inquiry

According to Flick (2011), the openness, flexibility and richness of qualitative research makes it hard for researcher to establish a contrast among information collected from participants. I interrupted the participants' right to privacy. This approach was inadequate to offer numerical verification of the factors that contributed to the problem experienced by learners to provide generalised findings over a huge group of people. It could not offer exact measurements of variables (Remler & Van Ryzin, 2015).

To create contrast between participants, I utilised several analysis techniques (see section 4.5.4.2). Numerical verification was not used in this study. However, Creswell (2013) suggests that the researcher spends more time with participants and employs triangulation, rich and thick description and external auditor to confirm the findings. I notified participants that they had the right to decline to be interviewed, treated them as anonymous, and ensured that their privacy was guaranteed (see section 4.7.5 & 4.7.6). In qualitative research, statistical generalisation is not important. Nonetheless, in the case study, the researcher uses analytical generalisation (Yin, 2012). Analytical generalisation implies that the researcher generalises the study's findings to the conceptual framework, not to the population of participants or a population with a similar context (Smith, 2018).

4.3.2 Meta-theoretical paradigm: Interpretivism

This section of the investigation deliberated the model embraced for this investigation. Since the focus of this study is on exploring participants' reality through their experiences, which are moulded by their contextual views on resilience as a component of academic success, I followed interpretivism as a meta-theoretical paradigm for this investigation.

4.3.2.1 Interpretivism

Philosophy implies using theoretical ideas and beliefs that explain the research project (Creswell, 2013, p. 16). The researcher's philosophy is influenced by the outcome of belief in the universal theoretical approach, which is a paradigm as declared by (Walliman, 2011). Wang and Zhu (2016) further elucidate that paradigm is associated with beliefs regarding social and natural reality. Paradigms are mainly utilised to describe people's views about reality in their lives. It gives the foundation to understand reality's nature and assists in how reality is created and understood (Bazeley, 2013). Also, Antwi and Hamza (2015) define a paradigm as a way of thinking about and carrying out a research project. The two paradigms used most often in social science research are interpretive and positivist (Burton & Bartlett, 2009).

Positivism preference is more on carrying out tests (Dieronitou, 2014). Furthermore, Hussain (2015) articulates that by using this paradigm, people can believe that the world is orderly, arranged and stable; their role in solving the problem is to measure data, process information, and suggest appropriate solutions. They accept that there

is only one acceptable, correct, and excellent answer to each and every problem. On the contrary, interpretivism is mainly utilised to comprehend people's life experiences in their real context to solve problems (Chowdhur, 2014). In this paradigm, I acknowledged that there was more than one acceptable and right answer to the problem (Thanh & Thanh, 2015).

I utilised the interpretive paradigm in this study because I regarded participants' version of events, views, connotations, and knowledge as the most important source of information as described by (Thanh & Thanh, 2015). Such a stance also allowed me to use focus groups and individual interviews to explore participants' knowledge, experiences and understanding of social norms. The interpretivism paradigm involves the exploration of the phenomenon under study through the personal interpretation of participants using interviews, bringing together their divergent views and utilising participants' personal viewpoints (Bhattacharjee, 2012).

Various interpretive frameworks can be utilised from qualitative research, such as post-positivism, transformative, post-modern perspectives, pragmatism, feminist theories, critical theory, queer theory, disability theory and social constructivism (Creswell, 2013, p. 23–34). However, Ranjbar (2015) declares that critical realism, constructivism, and pragmatism are the main philosophies of qualitative research. Individuals utilising a pragmatic approach often stay away from considering the appropriateness of methodology in association with philosophy. They rather robustly encourage pragmatism and consciousness of methodology suitability originating from the research needs. On the other hand, individuals using critical realists' philosophy emphasise the necessity of causation and causal language for telling social action while highlighting causal mechanisms that link social phenomena together. Lastly, in constructivist philosophy, attention is drawn to the social construction of knowledge and reflexivity in research. Constructivism and interpretivism make it possible to comprehend the multifaceted views of participants from various interrelationships occurring in their social context (Rashid et al., 2019).

Interpretivism was used as the interpretive framework in this study because participants were probed with universal open-ended semi-structured questions about factors determining the academic resilience and, thereby, the academic success of selected Grades 10 and 11 learners. To comprehend their social backgrounds, I asked them several questions about their community, family and school. I created circumstances where participants were involved in a social context to create meaning

about their experiences regarding their academic success through adversity they experienced in the Thabo Mofutsanyane district through discussions in focus group interviews. I listened attentively and facilitated their discussion. Lastly, I comprehended and interpreted the experiences of individual learners, their teachers, and their parents/guardians, as well as how they interpreted themselves. The abovementioned framework is mostly defined as a similar concept to social constructivism (Creswell, 2013, p. 24). On the other hand, the basis of how participants know the phenomenon is affected by their thoughts and views in interpretivism (Kumatongo & Muzata, 2021).

Ryan (2018, p. 9) indicates that 'interpretivism has a relativist ontological perspective'. The basis of a relativist idea is the starting point for understanding it. According to Merriam-Webster (n.d.), relativism means that reality is related and restricted by the individual's consciousness and circumstances. Walliman (2011) accentuates that relativism is based on the philosophical principles of idealism and humanism. Individuals' views about reality are their creation of the mind, meaning that the individual is not an impartial observer. However, it is a constituent of society and can achieve reality personally because their presuppositions, philosophy, and values affect their insightfulness. An individual is experiencing occurrence as an insider and uncovering the truth generated by people. As a result of this fact, there will be various viewpoints and explanations of a phenomenon (p. 21–22). In interpretivism, the researcher searches for reality from various participants' encounters (Thanh & Thanh, 2015, p. 25).

The above paragraph implies that the paradigms and methodology of the research need to be aligned. According to Tharsika and Pratheepkanth (2022), paradigmatic assumptions and perspectives greatly impact methodological choices, and there is a need to choose research methods carefully. For example, a positivistic paradigm typically assumes a quantitative methodology, while an interpretative paradigm typically utilises a qualitative methodology. Alharahsheh and Pius (2020) state that an interpretivism paradigm and the qualitative research approach can assist the researcher in gaining insight into a phenomenon from a specific participants' context (p. 43). In this study, I used the interpretivism paradigm because the researcher and participants socially constructed the factors that contributed to the academic success of these selected learners as participants through interactions. As a result, the interpretivist approach affects the methodology and procedure used to conduct the study (Alharahsheh & Piu, 2020).

In the interpretive paradigm, data gathered involves multiple methods and case research designs (Bhattacharjee, 2012). Various data collection and analysis methods were utilised because I regarded reality as subjective and socially constructed. I used individual and focus group interviews and document analysis instruments to collect data in this study. On that note, I used a non-probability sampling design with a purposeful sampling technique and a case study research design to explore participants' experiences and viewpoints. Furthermore, using various data collection techniques is the strength of the interpretivist paradigm. However, it has limitations like other paradigms.

- **Strengths of the interpretive paradigm**

The strengths of the interpretivist paradigm range from the researcher, data collection, and analysis to yield excellent results. Digits, pictures, and graphs accurately depict the occurrence being examined (Kumatongo & Muzata, 2012). Additionally, a variety of techniques can be used to gather data and provide opportunities to explore matters that are not observable, and various viewpoints of occurrence in actual situations can be described (Riyami, 2015). Therefore, the techniques used in interpretivism are appropriate for producing qualitative information, such as unrestricted interrogations (Kumatongo & Muzata, 2012). It is efficient to analyse data to capture significant individuals' behaviour directly and view it intensively for the researcher to enhance the significance of the study (Sultana 2020).

- **Limitations of the interpretive paradigm**

An interpretive paradigm has limitations like other paradigms, which are centred around collecting large amounts of data and involving participants and the researcher. For example, during the investigation, the researcher is inclined to request an instant response, which can be seen as threatening; participants may intentionally choose to provide verbal and non-verbal facts which are not precise with the real condition (Kumatongo & Muzata, 2012). So, being part of the investigation influences participants' views, and such interference hinders the researcher from capturing participants' real views (Riyami, 2015). Again, the fact that researchers can explain their understanding as researchers is problematic; there are no generalities and precise knowledge (Sultana, 2020). Also, there is a need to be skilled in using the interpretive paradigm because rearranging massive data for transcription into specific topics and relating them to the questions that the study seeks to answer can be overwhelming

(Riyami, 2015). Furthermore, there is a likely chance that crucial components can be skipped, which are a source of societal creations of the truth (Chipindi et al., 2020), and there is a lack of systematic processes of confirmation compared with other paradigms that use mathematical proof (Riyami, 2015).

4.4 Research methodology

According to Nieuwenhuis (2013), a research methodology is a strategy that moves from the underlying philosophical assumptions to the selected research design and specifies the selection of participants, the data collection strategies, and the data analysis.

4.4.1 Research design

A research design is a technique that guides researchers to gather, analyse and interpret data (Stangor, 2015). Flick (2009) asserts that research design is a way to accomplish the research aim and objectives to make a connection between conceptual structures, research questions, data collection, and data analysis methods. Researchers can categorise a research study according to objectives such as 'explanatory, interpretive and critical research design' (Biereenu-Nnabugwu, 2022, p. 106). Furthermore, Kumatongo and Muzata (2021) indicate that there are other types of research design based on the study's objective, such as phenomenology, hermeneutics, ethnography, grounded theory, historical or narrative and case study design (p. 23).

In addition to their disciplinary orientation, other types of case study designs are 'single or multiple' (Thomas, 2011, p. 517). Again, case study research designs may be classified as intrinsic, collective, or instrumental (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006, p. 32). This study investigated the factors influencing academic resilience, a crucial aspect of academic achievement, among Grades 10 and 11 learners within the Thabo Mofutsanyane district, Eastern Free State. Employing a case study approach, I delved into the participants' perspectives and understanding of the determinants of academic resilience and its implications for the academic success of learners from underprivileged backgrounds. This choice of methodology aligns with the recommendations of Hancock and Algozzine (2006) and Creswell (2013), who advocate for using case study designs to gain insight into how participants perceive and interpret phenomena.

Also, the researcher must be able to compare participants' views without using

statistical generalisation (Grandy, 2010). This study implied that there was no generalisation about the determinants of academic resilience and success among Grades 10 and 11 learners because random sampling of the representative sample was not used.

Grandy (2010) asserts that participants make it possible to explore the phenomenon. The focal point was the aim of the study, which was established beforehand and planned to create a conceptual framework.

Using a case study in the qualitative approach to explore participants' in-depth, real-life experiences is important. Creswell (2013, p. 97) suggests that a case study is a qualitative approach in which the researcher explores and compares participants' experiences and views in their actual lives by means of in-depth interviews as a way of data collection. The qualitative research approach involved the subjective evaluation of participants' views, actions, and attitudes. My researcher's insight and impression were crucial in this approach. The other aspect involves collection methods such as focus groups and in-depth interviews (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). As Rashid et al. (2019) specify, I was focused and interested in the connotation of words and actions of participants to comprehend their experiences about their academic success in a disadvantaged context. There were numerous continuous interactions between the participants throughout the research study. This approach assists in indicating the participants' experiences in the manner that they accept and mirror their realities (Thomas, 2017).

I used a case study design to explore factors that contribute to the phenomenon of thriving academically despite the challenges faced by these learners. Data were gathered through interviews and documents and inferences were made. I also developed strategies or guidelines to support learners. The case study in this research was a design grounded on a rigorous examination of learners, teachers, and parents/guardians to explore factors that contribute to academic resilience and, thereby, the learners' academic success. It permitted participants to articulate their answers to the questions posed to them in the study through individual and focus group interviews. The aim was to answer the main research question. I thoroughly explained factors contributing to academic resilience and the academic success of selected Grade 10 and 11 learners, their teachers and parents or guardians. I utilised thematic content analysis to analyse individual participants within and across cases to be able to provide answers to the research questions.

- **Advantages of a case study design**

Advantages and disadvantages of the case study design range from the research question, objectives for the study, sampling, method of data collection and analysis and interpretation of results. The case study research design is flexible and can allow exploration, explanation, description, evaluation, and speculation about the phenomenon in the setting (Harrison et al., 2017). Ellinger and McWhorter (2016) stated that a case study is accommodative because the researcher can use more than one data collection and analysis method. Information is examined within a real-life context; it assists in the provision of a detailed explanation of complicated contextual circumstances of real conditions that a survey study cannot do; it is suitable to give feasible answers where it is not functional for a large amount of sample, and it allows the researcher to scrutinise information at an individual level (Zainal, 2007). It can assist in an in-depth comprehension of the occurrence (Tumele, 2015).

Furthermore, in case studies, comprehension of occurrences and connections are indications for categorical combination with concentration on how occurrences happen among individuals (Ridder, 2017). Again, I needed to have a universal understanding of the factors that determine academic resilience and, thereby, the academic success among selected Grades 10 and 11 learners who are not participants (Creswell, 2013). Yet again, the researcher might need a case study to broaden and achieve an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under study and of individuals with the same conditions (Creswell, 2013). I utilised learners, teachers and parents/guardians of learners who have succeeded academically irrespective of their disadvantaged background from two selected schools.

- **Limitations of the case study design**

Regarding limitations, there is no generalisation of findings because of fewer participants, and there is an inadequate foundation for methodical generalisation in case studies (Zainal, 2007). I was not interested in generalising the findings but in understanding in-depth the determinants of academic success among learners. Furthermore, deciding the borderlines of the case study research is not easy (Creswell, 2013, p. 102). To deal with this weakness, the researcher needs to use inclusion and exclusion criteria (Baxter & Jack, 2008). It is time-consuming, rigour is inadequate, and the researcher can be biased in explaining information; large data sets need to be

organised and converted into expressive descriptions (Ellinger & McWhorter, 2016). To address ethics issues, I informed participants about the purpose of the investigation, that they didn't need to partake in the research, that their responses would be kept confidential, and that pseudonyms would be used. I created a good rapport with the participants. I encountered a regrettable situation during the research process. However, I informed my supervisor, who advised me to prevent such incidents from taking place. On the issue of organising huge amounts of information and transforming it into a meaningful explanation, I used four themes with sub-themes and categories, but themes one and four do not have sub-themes and categories. To address bias in explaining the information, I included two participants to verify data from transcripts, and furthermore, I involved my supervisor in examining the accuracy of the transcription and analysis of data from raw information to provide an unbiased assessment of this research study. On the issue of time, I ignored details that were not related towards the research. I used a convenience and purposeful sampling strategy to select teachers and parents/guardians as participants. I asked selected learners to inform their parents/guardians that they are welcome to participate in the study if they wish to.

4.5 The research process

The research process begins with developing an idea and data collection and provides findings and recommendations (Bourke, 2014). In this study, I started the research process by identifying the problem, reviewing the literature related to academic success and resilience of learners, formulating the research title, providing reasons for conducting this study, the problem statement, research objectives and questions, methods of research, selecting participants, and collecting data.

For example, I requested permission to conduct research from the ethics committee at the University of South Africa (Unisa). After I had received the ethical clearance certificate, I emailed a completed and signed research application form to the Free State Department of Education (FS DoE). I waited for them (FS DoE) to send me written approval to conduct research. After receiving their response, I met with the district director, circuit manager and principals to discuss the anticipated research study. I attained authorisation to conduct the research study in Schools A and B. After meeting these stakeholders, I invited parents and teachers to participate and sign consent letters. Learners were consulted after their parents permitted me, and they

also signed assent letters after they were informed about the study. Permission from their parents/guardians was granted.

I informed all participants that if they wished to withdraw from participation in this study, they could do so at any stage of the research, and there would be no consequence for their decision. In this study, I requested an academic report for the first term and a list of the top ten learners in Grades 10 and 11 from Schools A and B principals. Furthermore, I used semi-structured face-to-face interviews with four teachers, four parents/guardians, 12 learners and two focus group interviews with six learners per group. Open-ended questions were posed to participants during individual and focus group interviews. I was an active listener during these interviews.

I drafted a list of topics I wanted to discuss in the interview as part of my preparation for the semi-structured interviews, but this list did not limit the interviews. I had an interview script to avoid ignoring crucial information in the discussion, and informed consent was collected before the interviews started. The interview schedule was structured coherently, starting with the fundamental biographical data.

All interview sessions took a maximum of an hour, and at the end of each session, participants were given time to contribute any relevant information. The interviews were recorded using a voice recorder. I used a recording device, took short notes and sustained eye contact with the participants. Interviews took place in Schools A and B during the week after school hours and at weekends at the homes of other participants in a quiet and private place with no distractions. I showed a positive attitude towards participants and used counselling skills to make participants feel understood and heard. I was focused all the time and encouraged participants to discuss relevant issues with the aim of an interview. I avoided speaking excessively but listened to them most of the time. At the end of the interview, I informed participants about what they should expect after the interviews.

I conducted two focus group discussions at School A and established a homogeneous group of learners. However, regarding gender, they were heterogeneous because the group consisted of six male and six female learners (Grades 10 and 11) from Schools A and B. Each group consisted of three learners from School A and three other learners from School B. I guided the interviews, especially when learners were derailed from answering the questions. I used the questions in individual and focus group interviews to enhance the credibility of results through the exploration of learners' experiences.

Furthermore, I used focus group interviews to explore and identify major concerns for the research or evaluate the results of the research study. I led a small group of six learners in their discussions and found their feelings concerning the subject matter. I ensured that the content of the academic report and list of the top ten was significant in the academic resilience of Grade 10 and 11 learners. Lastly, I stated the contributions towards the study and made recommendations and conclusions. I documented the research process in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3: The research process

Purpose of the study	This investigation aims to explore the determinants of academic resilience as a component of academic success among selected Grade 10 and 11 learners in the Thabo Mofutsanyane district, Eastern Free State.
Research design	Case study design
Sampling design	Non-probability sampling
Sampling method	Purposive sampling

Research questions	<p>Primary research question:</p> <p>What factors determine academic resilience as a component of academic success among selected Grade 10 and 11 learners in the Thabo Mofutsanyane district, Eastern Free State?</p> <p>Secondary research questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. How do learners, teachers and parents/guardians view academic success and academic resilience?2. What are the challenges encountered by learners and how do their personal characteristics contribute to developing their academic resilience despite their challenges?3. How do families support the academic resilience and success of learners?4. What strategies do school communities employ to facilitate the achievement of learners' academic resilience and success?5. What guidelines can be formulated to support learners in attaining academic resilience and academic success?
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Research sites	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. School A: Situated at Maboolela village 2. School B: Situated in Phuthaditjhaba. <p>These two areas are part of QwaQwa in the Thabo Mofutsanyane district, Eastern Free State.</p>
Participants	<p>Twenty participants:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Twelve secondary school learners from two secondary schools (six males and six females) Four teachers ($n=2$ males and $n=2$ females) 2. Four parents/legal guardians of learners who were study participants ($n=4$ females)
Data collection	Focus groups, individual interviews, and document analysis
Data analyses techniques	The main data analysis approach used was the thematic analysis method.

4.5.1 Sampling of research sites

The research study had various stages that the researcher participated in, and establishing research sites is one of the important stages (Creswell, 2013). The sites for this research were selected with a purpose. The aim is to provide relevant information about the phenomenon under study in relation to the research question, participants' environment, and experiences within their context (Creswell, 2014). The two sites of this study were School A in a village and School B in a township. Most learners ($n=2111$) in these schools were between the ages of 14 and 18. Both schools were in Thabo Mofutsanyane district, QwaQwa. Below are the locations where School A (Maboolela) and B (Phuthaditjhaba) were situated in the QwaQwa area. The red icon on top of the two structures in these pictures indicates School A and B (Google Maps).



Figure 4.1 Location of School A



Figure 4.2 Location of School B

Thabo Mofutsanyane district had a majority White and Black population. The two schools were the best-performing schools in this district, with a history of above 75% matric pass rate for ten consecutive years up to 2019. In Thabo Mofutsanyane district, these schools were regarded as academically excellent.

The exclusion criterion stipulated sites which cannot be part of the investigation. On the other hand, the inclusion criterion identifies schools that participated in the research study (Robinson, 2014). I used homogeneity to sample these two schools to demarcate the participants of this study. I excluded schools which academically performed below 75% at the matric level for a period of ten years successively. Not all primary schools

were part of this research study. Secondary schools that consist of a multiracial population were excluded, and schools that were not in the QwaQwa community were excluded. In Table 4.4, I documented the characteristics of the schools in this study.

Table 4.4: Characteristics of the two research sites

Characteristics of the two research sites		
Characteristics	School A	School B
Geographical location	Situated in Maboletla, a village next to a middle-class community.	Situated in a township next to the main shopping complex of QwaQwa (Setsing).
School category	Public secondary school	Public secondary school
The semi-rural school (this school was in a community that had both rural and urban characteristics) Township school (the school that was in the community that was mainly occupied by Black people)	Semi-rural school	Township school
No-fee schools (schools where learners are not required to pay school fees)	No	Yes
Number of learners in school	960	1151
Grades in school	8–12	8–12
Number of teaching staff	32	38

Type of curriculum offered except compulsory learning areas such as South Sotho, first additional language: English, Mathematics, Mathematical literacy, Life sciences and Life Orientation.	Physical sciences Accountancy Economics	Business Economics Accountancy Economics Physical Geography
Race of learners, teachers, and parents.	Black	Black
Gender of the principal	Female	Male
Academic performance of school for the past 10 years	Above 80%	Above 80%
Performance of school for 2019	100%	98%

4.5.2 Sampling of participants

Sampling is the procedure of selecting participants for a research project that can give information about the phenomenon (Oppong, 2013). The overt procedure to select participants in the study that uses interviews, which incorporates supposition and procedure for the stipulation of reasons for addition and omission of participants, collection of information from participants, tactic, and proportion of number of participants is crucial for rationality, clarity and honesty for the study (Robinson, 2014).

Sampling is a systematic process wherein the researcher selects a smaller number of participants from the broader population, which serves as the study's focal point and shares similar characteristics (Sharma, 2017). This allows the researcher to make inferences about individuals in a comparable context (Taherdoost, 2016). In studies aimed at understanding and providing insight into real challenges, non-probability sampling from a subset of the entire population is preferred, as the goal is to comprehend the phenomenon (Staller, 2021).

Aguinis and Solarino (2019) stipulated that it is essential to be overt about the process

of choosing the participants that the researcher needs to collect data from the study. Furthermore, sampling is pivotal in qualitative interview-based research because to have individuals who are familiar with the phenomenon under the study and have a will to share personal information, so that the sample can have individuals who are accessible and agree to participate than the overall sample (Robinson, 2014) and this requires inclusion and exclusion criteria for possible participants to participate in this research. The high number of inclusion and exclusion criteria increases the chances of purposive sampling (Andrade, 2021). In Table 4.5, I depicted the inclusion and exclusion criteria for the selected participants.

Table 4.5: Inclusion and exclusion criteria for participants

Participants	Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
The sampling of Schools A and B	Secondary schools Schools from disadvantaged areas Government schools Predominantly Black-only schools	Primary schools Schools from affluent areas Non-government schools Predominantly white-only and multiracial schools
Sampling of learners	Grade 10 and 11 learners Learners academically performed above 50% on the grade average Black learners Learners in the top ten list Learners who did not fail any grade	Grade 1 to 9 and 12 learners Learners academically performed below 50% on the grade average. Non-Black learners Learners not in the top ten list Learners who failed grades

Sampling of teachers	Teachers who taught the selected learners Teachers who lived in the QwaQwa area	Teachers who did not teach selected learners Teachers who did not live in the QwaQwa area
Sampling of parents / guardians	Parents / Grandparents / Guardians of selected learners Any person who was more than 30 years old and stayed with selected learners. Any adult (30+ years old) who was selected to participate on behalf of parent/grandparents/guardian by mentioned individuals.	Parents or guardians of learners who were not selected were not part of this study. Any person not over 30 years old and did not stay with selected learners. Any adult who was not chosen to participate in this study on behalf of parents/grandparents/guardians by mentioned individuals

There are two sampling designs: non-probability and probability sampling. Probability sampling consists of sampling methods such as 'systematic random sampling, stratified types of sampling, cluster sampling, multi-stage sampling, area sampling', and non-probability sampling entails 'quota sampling, accidental sampling, judgmental sampling or purposive sampling, expert sampling, snowball sampling, modal instant sampling' (Etikan & Bala, 2017, p. 215–216). Furthermore, Acharya et al. (2013) argued that the latter method guarantees that specific attributes of participants are present, individuals are grouped into classes and participants are drawn from these classes for examination, but the second last, the researcher uses the information gathered from the first interviewee to select the next interviewee. Moreover, convenience is mostly utilised in quantitative and qualitative research, though purposive sampling is normally used in qualitative studies (Etikan et al., 2016). Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2007) argue that the individuals use a non-probability sampling design with a purposeful sampling technique (p. 242).

Therefore, I used a qualitative and interpretive research approach to understand and acquire learners', teachers', and parents'/guardians' insights into factors determining academic resilience and success. The researcher's impartiality and the choice of sampling strategy play a role in making the research translucent and reliable (Robinson, 2014). I used a purposeful sampling method to select two schools, learners,

teachers, and parents/guardians. All participants were from the QwaQwa area in Thabo Mofutsanyane district. I purposively selected four teachers who taught selected learners and four parents/guardians of learners who participated in this study. Teachers who did not teach these learners were not chosen, and parents/guardians whose children were not part of the study were not selected. Only 12 learners from Grades 10 and 11 who were part of the top ten were selected, and those with more than 50% aggregate average per grade. Learners who were not selected were from Grades 8, 9 and 12. Also, learners who were not among the top ten from Grades 10 and 11 were not selected. Parents/guardians, teachers and learners from Kestell, Bethlehem and Harrismith were not part of this study even though these towns were part of Thabo Mofutsanyane district. Individuals from the abovementioned towns were excluded because they were not part of QwaQwa.

Lastly, I purposefully selected parents/guardians and teachers of learners who had never repeated a grade since their school enrollment. In addition, purposeful sampling is generally used in qualitative research because of the choice of participants who have information about the problem (Oppong, 2013). Moreover, Creswell (2013) specifies that a purposeful sampling strategy includes an unusual case, maximum variation, or extreme case (p. 100, 148). Also, typical, deviant, critical case sampling, total population, expert and homogeneous sampling (Etikan et al., 2016, p. 3). However, for this study, I decided to use homogeneous sampling because participants lived in a disadvantaged area and aimed to achieve academic success. I wanted to comprehend their views and assist learners from a disadvantaged context. Homogeneous sampling concerns participants' comparable qualities such as backgrounds, efforts, hardships, and intentions (Etikan et al., 2016; Thomas, 2022). Shaheen et al. (2019) add that the aim is also deliberate on specific groups of individuals to acquire deep insight from them. Further, this specific group with common characteristics such as age and circumstances can converse about the research topic. Thomas (2022) adds that the study focus is peculiar to participants, and it is also good to produce strategies for this specific group of people.

The researcher creates categories under different variables, and the research needs a simple cross-tabulate table framework (Robinson, 2014). Therefore, the comparison of sub-groups can assist with the expansion of comprehension of the phenomenon (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2007, p. 249). Their context had impacted the meaning of learners' actions. However, I kept a balance between the attainment of a comparative

description from each participant and a thick description.

A thick description is when the researcher describes participants, the geographical context of the research site and themselves (Hiratsuka, 2014). The adequate description and background data of participants, researchers, and research sites are crucial to be offered so that comprehension of participants' behaviour within their context, experiences, and other things that influence them can be attained (Liamputtong, 2013). Participants who were included in this research were from Thabo Mofutsanyane district in QwaQwa. The area is a former homeland, and most of the people in this area are from the Basotho ethnic group. Schools A and B were two of the few well-performing schools in this area for a period of more than five years to date. The distance between these schools was approximately five kilometres. School A was situated in a village called Maboleta, and School B was in a township (Phuthaditjhaba). Moreover, learners who participated in this study had not failed any year during their schooling and were currently either in Grade 10 or 11. Both males and females were part of this research study.

Sampling sample size and data saturation are essential aspects of non-probability sampling. According to Guest et al. (2006), non-probability sampling has no formative guiding principles for sample size. The only aspect I depended on, especially for purposive sampling, was data saturation. Data saturation offered minor functional assistance in guessing sample size to improve the quality of research. Sample size, number of hours per interview session, and saturation are essential aspects that researchers need to consider (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2007).

It was crucial to ensure that theoretical saturation was achieved to authenticate the results. In addition, in the study, sample size is associated with purposive sampling, which might be established in accordance with theoretical saturation (Oppong, 2013). I reached the theoretical saturation of this study when new data collected did not produce extra information about the research problem. Fusch and Ness (2015) support the above statement and continue to say that if additional code is not possible, then saturation is obtained. I was aware that if saturation were not achieved, the validity of this study would be damaged.

In multiple cases, there is no exact number of cases to be included in the study, but generally, most individuals choose not more than five cases. The choice of more cases

might lead to generalisation, which is not that important or relevant in qualitative research (Creswell, 2013). Smaller samples are used in qualitative research because the main intention is to obtain helpful information (Gentles et al., 2015). As a result, I understood in-depth the dissimilarities, difficulties and conditions of participants about the academic resilience of selected Thabo Mofutsanyane district learners.

For example, the sample size can be from a minimum of four to a maximum of ten, while within the case, it can range from 25 to 50 data sources. To minimise the risk and consequence of a sampling problem, Oppong (2013) articulates that the qualitative research study might begin with a small number of participants. I started with participants ($n=20$), six female and six male learners from School A and School B, four parents ($n=2$ males and $n=2$ females) and four teachers (two males and two females). Oppong (2013) indicated that there is a need to include several participants until theoretical saturation is achieved. I started this research study with 20 participants, and I did not increase the number of participants because the saturation was achieved with these 20 participants.

A sample frame is a document that consists of participants' characteristics (Hancock et al., 2007). I selected participants of this study based on their characteristics such as age group, nationality, Grade 10 and 11, has never failed a grade before, took South Sotho as a home language at school, attended public secondary school, had an academic average of 50%, came from a disadvantaged socio-economic background, and lived in QwaQwa. For parents/guardians, it was those of learners who were chosen to participate in the study and teachers who worked in the schools where selected learners were enrolled and taught these learners. In support of the above statement, Bryman (2012) declares that the researcher might state the elements from which the participants are chosen in a sample frame.

4.5.3 Data collection and documentation

The data collection in case study research is typically extensive and draws on multiple sources of information, such as observations, interviews, documents, and audio-visual materials (Creswell, 2007). It is crucial to utilise various methods to collect data in each and every case study method to obtain an in-depth comprehension of the phenomenon (Rashid et al., 2019). In support of the above statement, Bloomberg and Volpe (2016) mention that the collection of data in case study research is usually a challenge, and it requires numerous methods of data collection such as document review, survey,

critical incidents, observation, interviews and focus groups.

I used data collection techniques in this study, document review, and individual and focus group interviews. Plummer-D'Amato (2008) indicates that the focus group technique effectively investigates participants' experiences, views and opinions about the phenomenon. The focus group method might be used to explore and identify major concerns for the research or to evaluate the research study results. This study used the focus group method to produce verbal information for in-depth textual analysis. This aim needs audio or video tape transcriptions for data analysis (Howitt & Cramer, 2008). However, Sim and Waterfield (2019) indicate that individual interviews differ from other types of interviews because it has fewer ethical problems compared to group interviews.

- **Focus group discussion**

A focus group method is an in-depth, open-ended group interview that can take approximately 30 minutes to a maximum of three hours per session (Gundumogula, 2020). This method aimed to explore the research questions about learners' academic resilience. Focus groups encourage participants to investigate each other's views about the phenomenon, and participants' reasons possibly describe their true thoughts (Bryman, 2012). I conducted two focus groups in the current study – six learners from School A and another six from School B. The two groups consisted of male and female Grades 10 and 11 learners. The two sessions, spanning approximately one to two hours each, facilitated discussions among learners to elicit narratives of resilience and success. Through these sessions, learners could share their insights and experiences.

- **Researcher as a facilitator in focus group interviews**

I explained to learners that the group discussions would be digitally recorded, and they needed to sign the assent form as proof that they granted assent for the records and that their privacy was protected. Their signature implied that they would not divulge any information that was shared in the group discussions to any person outside the group to maintain confidentiality. I explained the purpose of the study and that the research questions were based on academic success and resilience. I also told them that they were expected to discuss their experiences regarding their academic success in the group discussion, and the session would take roughly one to two hours. A facilitator might not say much ahead of the group interviews to participants while

providing subject matter and questions for discussions by the participants (Howitt & Cramer, 2008). I indicated to learners that they could state their views without any restriction. As the facilitator, the researcher permits participants to be free to speak their ideas and prohibits a participant from dominating the discussion to give others a chance to speak (Hancock et al., 2007).

I asked learners questions and gave them more time to discuss among themselves without disruption. I interfered with their discussions to allow other learners to state their views. A few learners wanted to dominate the discussion. I explained to them that listening to others was also important. I directed some questions to learners who did not participate. A focus group produces information that comes from participants as a group; it became evident that most information came from participants, and the researcher possibly never dominated the discussion (Howitt & Cramer, 2008).

- **Focus group size**

Several individuals in a focus group and the total number of focus groups are crucial in the study. Hancock et al. (2007) assert that fewer than six learners per group might negatively impact discussion efficiency. However, Krueger and Casey (2015) indicated that focus groups usually consist of five to eight persons; however, the size can be four to twelve groups, and these groups should not be big; they must be small enough for all participants to have an opportunity to communicate their knowledge. Also, participants from two groups might provide in-depth information (Guest et al., 2017).

I used two focus groups with six learners per group. One group was from School A, and the other was from School B. It is advantageous to have numerous groups because of their potential to provide a variety of perspectives with six to ten participants per group, which increases the effectiveness of the discussion (Howitt & Cramer, 2008).

Moreover, the purposeful selection of six to twelve homogeneous learners can yield valuable insights and foster meaningful discussion (Johnson & Christensen, 2014). Maintaining homogeneity within a focus group is recommended, regardless of participants' prior acquaintance (Hancock et al., 2007). Conversely, focus group participants may exhibit heterogeneity in their demographic characteristics and may be unfamiliar with each other (Howitt & Cramer, 2008).

In this study, I formed a homogeneous group of learners from the Basotho ethnic group attending secondary school. All learners were Black, academically successful in their respective schools, and came from disadvantaged backgrounds. However, there was

heterogeneity in terms of grade and gender, as the group comprised six male and six female learners from Grades 10 and 11.

- **Advantages and limitations of a focus group**

A focus group has various advantages, such as being inexpensive compared with individual interviews. The researcher gains in-depth knowledge of participants rapidly and discovers significant unknowable data for the study; it encourages trust and cooperation among participants in the group, the manifestation of common opinions promotes discussion among participants and decreases the possibility of misinterpretation of the research questions (Liamputtong, 2013). In addition, Howitt and Cramer (2008) argued that researchers motivate participants, and they motivate each other to participate in group discussions. More importantly, learners felt empowered and had an opportunity to discuss academic resilience with their peers.

The disadvantages of a focus group are that it takes more time and requires extra work to organise and transcribe, and the researcher has a very small role in the regulation of the research procedure and the sort of information gathered (Howitt & Cramer, 2008). Moreover, collected data merely shows participants' perceptions and cannot deal with their complicated beliefs. It results in partiality and not objectivity in the analysis and examination of the research (Liamputtong, 2013). I made sure that learners were free to speak to each other. On the other hand, I explained to them that no learner was allowed to dominate the discussion because they all had an equal chance to speak. I guided the interviews more, especially when learners diverted from the questions posed.

Recordings are useful because the researcher might remove background noise to improve sound and simply play back the interview several times, even on the computer, with the assistance of suitable software; a recording device is costly and digital audio files are vast, the layout of digital files is a challenge and voice to text software to convert voice to text might be compatibility difficulty (Bryman, 2012). In addition, I should ensure that various types of information are in the records, such as the behaviour of participants in the interviews (Cohen et al., 2011). However, recording participants' body language requires a video recorder, which might be a challenge because the ethics committee and consent from participants for approval might be difficult to get (Hancock et al., 2007). In the current study, I did not use video to record for the above

reasons.

- **Individual semi-structured interviews**

Research paradigms influenced the administration and procedure of interviews to improve authenticity. In a post-positivist paradigm, I posed all questions to address the research questions, questioning and follow-up questions were written down on the interview protocol utilised and introduction and conclusion were made available; while in a constructivism paradigm, an interview is run free without the rigid arrangement of steps to follow, and the researcher follows participants' lead and semi-structured arrangement is the general set-up among these two paradigms (Garrett, 2016).

The interview was an effective tool for data collection as it was not a rigid instrument and allowed me to use my ears and eyes to gather participant information. One of the disadvantages of an interview was that it was time-consuming. It was awkward for learners, and exhaustion might have impacted the interview negatively. The possibility of being partial is high, and participants' confidentiality in such circumstances might not be easy to achieve (Cohen et al., 2007).

Cohen et al. (2007) reveal that there are four major types of interviews: non-directive, focused, structured, and unstructured. In structured interviews, I organised questions and gave them to learners in the same order as they were to be answered. However, an unstructured interview encourages learners to discuss freely without any arrangement of order to follow (Hancock et al., 2007).

Participants who have common experiences with a phenomenon can be interviewed in an unstructured manner (Bryman, 2012). In addition, using unstructured interviews is suitable for exploring themes that may emerge from participants (Howitt & Cramer, 2008). Doody and Noonan (2013) declare that dealing with unstructured interview data is not easy; it takes more time to synthesise similar information from different individuals. If I had used unstructured interviews, I would have been expected to pose questions cautiously, investigate participants' responses, and be an effective communicator and facilitator. However, I did not use unstructured interviews.

In this study, I used semi-structured face-to-face interviews with twelve individual learners, four parents/guardians, four teachers and two focus group interviews with twelve learners. Open-ended questions were posed to all participants during individual and focus group interviews for learners. I was an active listener during these interviews. I provided a few examples of the types of questions that were posed.

- **The researcher's role in semi-structured and face-to-face in-depth interviews**

There is an expectation of how the researcher may behave before, during and at the end of a qualitative research interview (Jacob & Furgerson, 2012). I had an interview script to avoid ignoring crucial information in the discussion, and informed consent was obtained before the interview started. I used a recording device, took field notes, and maintained eye contact with participants during the interviews. The interviews took place in school during the week, at weekends and in the homes of other participants in a quiet and private place with no distractions. More importantly, I demonstrated a positive attitude towards participants, showed sincere care, and used counselling skills to help participants feel understood and heard. I was focused all the time and encouraged participants to discuss relevant issues with the aim of the interview. I avoided speaking excessively but listened to them most of the time. At the end of the interview, I inform participants about what they may expect after the interview (Jacob & Furgerson, 2012).

- **Semi-structured interviews**

Generally, the use of semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions based on the study are used in qualitative research. Open-ended questions describe the research topic and offer the participants and researcher a chance during interviews to discuss various aspects of the research project in detail (Hancock et al., 2007). Researchers draft a list of topics they want to discuss in the interview as part of the preparation for the semi-structured interview, which may not limit the interviews (Hancock et al., 2007). I introduced myself to the participants and explained the aim of the study. I told them they were invited to the study because they could provide valuable information about academic success. The duration of the interview was probably one hour, and participation was voluntary. They were under no obligation to participate and were free to withdraw at any time and without a reason. Their rights to privacy and confidentiality were protected, and their identity was mentioned.

There were various benefits offered by open-ended questions to the research. These include flexibility, promoting collaboration and assisting in building rapport; open-ended questions permitted me to check participants' limits of knowledge and evaluate participants' beliefs. The researcher has the courage to investigate more to get into the

depth of the matter and deal with misinterpretations (Cohen et al., 2007). The benefits of interviewing participants individually are that questions may be asked more than once, are simplified to understand, and may be used for children; it is suitable for complex circumstances, gathering in-depth data and enhancement of data by non-verbal observations during interviews (Kumar, 2011). The disadvantages of individual interviews are that the quality of communication influences the quality of data; the researcher may be biased, and interviews may be expensive and take a long period of time (Kumar, 2011).

The main aspect of in-depth interviews was their depth of focus on the participants. It offered a chance to investigate individual participants' viewpoints in detail so I could understand the individual context within the Thabo Mofutsanyane district in depth. It was the only significant method to collect information that made participants' perceptions to be heard within their personal experience. Cohen et al. (2007), and Howitt and Cramer (2008) state that a group interview can produce a broad variety of answers more than an individual interview. Nevertheless, the dissimilarity between individual and group interviews is that in a group interview, the researcher interviews a group of participants, and in an individual interview, it is an individual participant (Kumar, 2011).

The learner participants were in Grades 10 and 11 (six males and six females) from Schools A and B. The ages of these learners ranged from 15 to 17 years old and were from the Basotho ethnic group. There were two focus group sessions and 20 sessions for individual face-to-face interviews. Each session took 90 to 120 minutes. In addition, 12 individual interview sessions were carried out on two consecutive Saturdays, and the other four sessions were executed during the week after school and working hours. The last four sessions with parents were performed on two separate Saturdays. I offered adult participants the informed consent forms, and learners were given informed assent forms to be signed before proceeding with the interviews as an assurance that learners, teachers, and parents/guardians may stop at any time if they do not want to participate in the interview.

After collecting the informed consent and informed assent forms, I took out the interview script and placed it on the table to look at the script for questions. Learners were asked to discuss how they experience factors they attribute towards their academic resilience and, thereby, their academic success. These interviews for

learners were conducted at Schools A, B, and their homes on Saturdays because I requested permission to use these schools as a venue for interviews. During the week after working hours, the interviews were held with three teachers at their respective schools and one teacher at home where the teacher lived. Two parents/guardians were interviewed at School A, one parent/guardian at School B, and the other parent/guardian at their workplace at another school.

- **Field notes**

As indicated above, I used semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions in this study. Taguchi (2018) stated that information from question-and-answer sessions provides valuable information about individuals. Field notes can be made in many ways, such as a compilation of notes about any interesting aspects throughout and after the process of research (Deggs & Hernandez, 2018). In this study, I made field notes throughout and after collecting data from the participants and the study. Throughout the study, I recorded the process of applying for permission to conduct the study, the role I played as a researcher in the process of data gathering, my understanding of the issues they raised and their responses in the process. On the other hand, I recorded how participants acted throughout the research process, their needs, and how I responded to them, which affected my initial idea about the place where individual interviews could be conducted.

I also recorded the reasons that made me change my initial idea of the collection of data from individual interviews. For example, the original agreement about the place to conduct face-to-face interviews and the use of English in the interviews. I further recorded my preconceptions about the area of QwaQwa, my personal experiences from childhood until adulthood, and my beliefs about academic success. I further recorded my experiences as a teacher about learners, teachers, school principals, the SGB and district officials on the academic success of learners from disadvantaged backgrounds. I recorded the above information to provide rich background information on this study. As indicated by Phillippi and Lauderdale (2018), field notes provide a generally detailed and profuse background of the investigation. Additionally, other information from field notes was used as a direct quote to illustrate the existence of certain structural, emotional, and characteristic issues. Additionally, direct quotes should be inserted in their original form in the research study (Zahle, 2021). Implied

that direct quotes from field notes provide a detailed and profuse background of the study. Even though field notes can provide a comprehensive and prolific context of the study, they have disadvantages and advantages like any other data collection method.

- Advantages of field notes

There are several advantages of field notes. For example, field notes assist in deepening the thoughts about the researcher, participants, and research study with the intention of understanding the phenomenon (Deggs & Hernandez, 2018). Additionally, field notes enhance the quality of results, the context of the study in relation to the subject matter to be investigated, and the discovery of aspects that cannot be discovered through interviews (Phillippi & Lauderdale, 2018). Again, field notes offer excellent reports about the circumstances in which something happened (House, 2018).

- Limitations of field notes

Field notes have limitations such as poor memory, the need for more time and personal information. For instance, disclosure of individual life circumstances that an individual is not at liberty for others to know about (Phillippi & Lauderdale, 2018). Field notes take more time, and certain information can escape from the memory of the researcher (House, 2018).

- Document reviews

Document review was another way to gather data from participants. There are various types of document reviews, including school documents (Bretschneider et al., 2017). examined learners' academic reports as a source of information. Bretschneider et al. (2017) indicate that reviewing participants' documents leads to the confirmation and understanding of the research questions. They minimise the possibility of prejudice and enhance comprehension from dissimilar viewpoints. Document review is a useful instrument for collecting data because it gives the circumstances of participants and the research study additional information and assists participants in providing aspects of information they might not recall during interviews (Bowen, 2009). Furthermore, the participants' documents contain crucial information such as their viewpoints (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

- **The review of documents**

It was my responsibility and crucial to re-examine documents. Merriam and Tisdell (2016) indicated that a researcher's role in reviewing documents starts by ensuring that the content relates to the research topic.

In the current study, the academic report and list of top ten learners for Grades 10 and 11 were significant in assessing the academic resilience of Grade 10 and 11 learners, and these documents had a positive impact on the study. These documents are closely connected to the phenomenon under study, and the ideas articulated by participants correspond with the concept of the phenomenon (Bowen, 2009).

- **Advantages of document review**

The review of documents has strengths and weaknesses. Ahmed (2010) asserts that document review is less expensive than interviews or observations. Various documents are obtainable and noticeable, and valuable information may be gathered to respond to the study question. It is simple to classify, present and handle data. It consists of essential contextual data, makes the process of finding something easier, and minimises repetition of information, helping triangulate individual and focus group interviews. Document review might expose information that other methods cannot expose (Bretschneider et al., 2017).

- **Limitations of document review**

On the other hand, Bretschneider et al. (2017) state that document review has its own disadvantages, such as the possibility of misunderstood documents, biases in document selection, and the process of document review might take time; data is curtailed, incorrect, and not easy to comprehend and analyse. Table 4.6 outlines the documents reviewed and the reasons for their selection.

Table 4.6: Documents reviewed and reasons

Documents reviewed in the year 2020	Reasons for review
Academic report of the first term	I examined learners' academic performance
List of top ten learners for Grades 10 and 11 for the year 2020	I examined learners' positions in the list and aggregate.

4.5.4 Data analysis

The analysis of data in this study concerned various realities from various sources. Bazeley (2013) states that data analysis may be linked to the choice of ontology and epistemology of the research project. For example, the analysis methods for this study considered the fact that subjective reality was constructed by participants and the researcher during interviews.

Qualitative data analysis deals with the alteration of information from participants through investigation, assessment, write-in code, classification and development of different topics about the aspects of daily social occurrences in a comprehensive manner (Ngulube, 2015). The main objective of data analysis is to make a comprehensible summary and inductive theory from the participants' information (Johnson & Christensen, 2014). The data analysis method needed to be applied to achieve the abovementioned objective, and there were a variety of them, such as thematic analysis. I utilised the thematic analysis method in this study to create themes for cross-cases. A thematic analysis method consists of four stages during data analysis that the researcher needs to go through at the beginning, during production, reorganisation, and completion (Vaismoradi et al., 2016). I personally gathered data from learners, teachers, and parents/guardians through face-to-face interviews, focus group interviews for learners only and from their academic reports. I also transcribed the recordings of participants, but not all of them, because it took a long time to do that. Therefore, I requested assistance whereby a few transcriptions were conducted by another person.

The whole data collection, documentation and analysis process provided above,

according to Braun and Clarke (2006), is part of acquainting the researcher with the data. I compared the transcription made by another person with the actual participants' voice recording and found a match between the two. I listened and highlighted necessary items for codes. I continued to search for ideas from learners, teachers, and parents/guardians' explanations. Then, I categorised codes and compared them regarding similarities and differences. I assigned similar codes to relevant groupings. For example, keywords such as motivated and motivates under the code (motivation) related to the research question were colour-coded (Appendix S). Thereafter, I stopped the analysis process because I felt overwhelmed and unsure whether I was headed towards the right direction and sought advice from the supervisor. Furthermore, it was established that the data collected did not speak to the literature reviewed, which resulted in including another phase of the literature review.

Afterwards, I resumed the task and reorganised the data through four established themes that were modified. I found that all participants talked about extra classes, motivation, support, teachers, and learners, and others talked about parents or relatives. The identification of some common impressions from the information collection is the start of preliminary encryption creation (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

I examined various keywords to establish categories. After I concluded about the categories, I scrutinised them to create sub-themes. Thereafter, I grouped different sub-themes according to their similarity and relational aspects to form four themes. It is essential to scrutinise the keywords, and it brings together a variety of keywords to formulate concepts that affect all participants and the entire study (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In addition, these four themes were associated with the purpose of this investigation and the research questions.

The process of characterising the core importance of each central idea of the study is crucial (Braun & Clarke, 2006). I decided to use the four themes, each of which focused on a specific issue of the study: participants' comprehension of resilience, academic resilience and academic success, aspects that hinder and facilitate, and tactics for academic resilience, and thereby academic success. The abovementioned important issues were related to the determinants of academic resilience and academic success among selected Grades 10 and 11 learners in the Thabo Mofutsanyane district, Eastern Free State.

The information captured from participants was associated with each theme by a

distinct colour (Appendix S). The researcher explains the depth of the phenomenon under study and links it to the themes, develops typologies and the character of participants, and creates a report (Vaismoradi et al., 2016).

Certain issues, such as cognitions, sway the researcher's choice of bracketing methods (Tufford & Newman, 2010). There were various types of bracketing, such as descriptive, existential, pragmatic, analytic, and reflexive bracketing. Reflexive bracketing recognised multiple realities, and participants' experiences were explored and comprehended from various viewpoints. It was used in this study to lessen the effects of the researcher's belief on the phenomenon under study and divulge the researcher's biases (Habibullah et al., 2023).

4.6 Rigour of the study

Trustworthiness is a crucial measure of the quality of qualitative research, and it relies on various aspects such as credibility, transferability, dependability, conformability, authenticity, data compilation and dissection methods and ethics matters (Chowdhury, 2015). Qualitative research rigour is created through credibility strategies such as power, consistency among research methods, reflexivity, interview procedure, prolonged and diverse field experience, time sampling, peer examination, triangulation, and member checking (Anney, 2014). Liamputtong (2013) regards rigour as trustworthy, and scholars can depend on it. Rigour reveals a diverse method that deals with the meanings and interpretations of data. Rigour is the trustworthiness of the research project. In a qualitative study, rigour means using trustworthy methods to gather information from participants, as well as analysis techniques, debriefing, and triangulation to ensure that information and results are of good quality. To achieve this, the researcher needs to state the apparent research focal point, data collection and analysis methods and the results that lead to inferences about the quality of the research procedure (Goodell et al., 2016).

Trustworthiness and credibility are crucial in an interpretive paradigm, while positivism concerns validity, reliability, and objectivity (Antwi & Hamza, 2015). To minimise criticism, it is advisable to make qualitative research findings reliable using trustworthiness measures and techniques (Anney, 2014). Trustworthiness issues such as dependability, credibility, conformability, and transferability make study results trustworthy (Bryman, 2012).

4.6.1 Credibility

Credibility is an individual's trust in the research results, which mirror the authenticity of the phenomenon under investigation (Nassaji, 2020). The researcher takes more time to interact with participants, build positive relationships, witness a variety of aspects from their context, examine documents, conduct individual and focus group interviews with participants, and request them to verify the results to enhance qualitative research credibility and reflexivity (Creswell, 2009). According to Creswell (2013), reflexivity implies that the researcher may declare their background in the research project, how it may affect the interpretation of the research and the benefit the researcher gains from the study. Aspects I included in this study were field notes as evidence of my expression, behaviour, and observations made during the interviews. It also comprises impressions, frustrations, and beliefs as part of the interpretation of the research (Flick, 2006).

Triangulation uses various theories, methods and data sources in research (Liamputtong, 2013). Triangulation is a tactic for validity in qualitative research studies. It consists of the use of more than one of the sources of qualitative information to examine and compare conclusions from observations and individual and group interviews (Bazeley, 2013). In the same vein, Bryman (2012) declares that triangulation involves various methods of information in the research. However, in this case study, triangulation was essential to acquire an in-depth comprehension of determinants of academic resilience and academic success in the Thabo Mofutsanyane district and the rigour and extensiveness of this study. It offers corroborative evidence of participants' information collected from observations, individual and focused group interviews, member checks, and peer debriefing (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016).

Peer debriefing was essential in this qualitative study because it improved the correctness of the findings. It meant that I tracked down my peer, who re-examined and solicited questions about the academic resilience of Black learners from the Thabo Mofutsanyane district. The main aim is to echo findings by a person who is not part of the research project to ensure the correctness of the study results (Creswell, 2009). The process was done with a person who was not part of this study but of the same status as me.

Goodell et al. (2016) specify that in the member-checking method, during the data

collection stage, the researcher needs to verify and approve research findings. I verified the interview data with two participants to ensure I captured their views correctly. I requested participants to provide feedback at the end of an interview session and invited them to check the correctness of the interview transcripts. throughout the analysis stage, they were asked to confirm the synopsis of research findings to enhance the trustworthiness of the research results. Before applying these processes, I sought their consent for a follow-up session with them. Furthermore, the researcher may provide participants with information about follow-up interactions with them to get their endorsement to use citations and wherever assurance that confidentiality cannot be provided (Thomas, 2017).

4.6.2 Transferability

Transferability implies that the research study results can be useful to people from similar backgrounds (Daniel, 2019). Anney (2014) and Noble and Smith (2015) echo that researchers might fully explain the research study and purposeful sampling of participants to make the transferability of research findings possible. In addition, the objective of this case study was transferability, not to take a broad view. Transferability in the study may be achieved by providing full details of how and in which manner the results of the study can be transferable to other studies with the same background and location of participants (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016).

Audit trails were provided to assist auditors in verifying that results and recommendations were relevant to this research study. This may be achieved when the researcher includes aspects such as the reports on conducting the research, such as written field notes, audit trail notes, personal notes and notes from the pilot study (Carcary, 2020). A pilot study is crucial in qualitative research, according to Bazeley (2013), because it provides the records of steps the researcher takes to plan the research project. Despite this, I created an interview guide and used it to pilot the research study. The researcher needs to consider the location, equipment, and ethical features (Doody & Noonan, 2013).

4.6.3 Conformability

Regarding conformability, I ensured that I used satisfactory procedures to conduct this research study and allowed participants to confirm that I accurately comprehended their experiences and views and that I was transparent and provided a clear explanation of

the planned research procedure at the beginning of the project with methods used in data collection and analysis of participants involved in the study and reported the results as stipulated by (Bryman, 2012) about conformability. It also includes a research journal that when researcher records difficulties encountered during the research study and aspects that help researcher to sustain relevancy among the research objective and design (Noble & Smith, 2015).

While I took field notes during interviews, it was crucial to document participants' responses and data about the interview progress. I also recorded the context and circumstances of data gathered and took caution that research questions were pivotal in what I recorded as detailed by (Flick, 2006) in the interview process. In addition, Hancock et al. (2007) point out that it is crucial to save this information to be examined by other persons. Throughout the focus group interviews, it is a good idea to find a person who may take notes so that the researcher can focus on the facilitation of the interview (Goodell et al., 2016). In the context of this study, I was in an awkward situation because of the lack of a person who took notes on my behalf while I facilitated group interviews.

4.6.4 Dependability

Dependability relates to the collection, analysis, and interpretation of data. Bloomberg and Volpe (2016) explain dependability as a manner in which a person can follow the processes and techniques utilised to gather and interpret the findings. I provided a full description of how I gathered data and its analysis and publicly declared that the results of this study would be accessible for re-examination by any scholar who wished to do so. However, Creswell (2009) indicates that the researcher may improve the study's validity when requesting an independent researcher to scrutinise the correctness of the transcript, level of data analysis from raw information by means of questions, correlation among research questions and collected information. The independent researcher offered an unbiased evaluation of this research study and examined the exactness of the transcript, the relatedness of research questions, and the data gathered. Thereafter, the independent researcher suggested that I should realign the gathered data with a literature review, which I did.

4.6.5 Authenticity

Authenticity is more concerned with the impartiality of the study, and it involves the admiration of a variety of creations of realities, interpretation, and appreciation of

participants' experiences, and provides encouragement of participants' behaviour to a certain degree (Qazi, 2011). I treated participants fairly because I explained the research process, their rights, and their responsibilities in the study. I ensured they understood these aspects through questions; I asked them about what I said and repeated myself to them. Moreover, I respected their way of expressing and narrating their experiences from different perspectives. I supported them during interviews and requested them to provide more details about their experiences without being judgmental. I respected and encouraged participants at the beginning, throughout the process and up to the end of the interviews. I verified the interview data with two participants to ensure I captured their views correctly.

4.7 Ethical considerations

Ethical matters must be considered before the start of the study and throughout the collection and analysis of data, presentation, dissemination, and storage of data (Creswell, 2014). I stated the epistemology of this research, which was that the truth and values were considered interrelated during the creation of knowledge so that other people could understand which philosophy supported this research. Philosophy affects data collection and analysis to reduce concerns about ethical matters (Walliman, 2011). Ethical conduct is important because it spreads through data collection, analysis, presentation, and diffusion of data (Sekaran, 2003). Ethical codes were essential to manage the relationship with participants, such as respect and avoiding harm to participants (Flick, 2009).

For example, the research ethics committee from Unisa was responsible for watching over how this study was executed and whether it complied with fundamental ethical issues such as honesty, personal integrity, informed consent, confidentiality, anonymity, and courtesy, as they were important as (Walliman, 2011) stated about ethical considerations. All these ethical aspects should be agreed on between the researcher and those affected by the study before instigating the study (Cohen et al., 2007).

4.7.1 Informed consent

Participants are allowed to decide whether they participate or not (Utz et al., 2019). I did this because ethical procedures about informed consent needed to be researched, as indicated by (Dockett et al., 2012). I explained to teachers and parents/guardians

that their participation in this study was voluntary and that they were not obligated to participate. And to those who decided to participate, I gave them an information sheet and asked them to sign it. I told them their names would not be recorded, and their answers were given a code number.

I also explained to parents/guardians of learners who participated in this study that their children's right to privacy and confidentiality was protected and children's identity in the individual interviews would not be mentioned. However, children's rights were not guaranteed in the focus group because learners participated in the discussion. More importantly, I informed every learner involved in focus group interviews to respect the right to privacy and confidentiality of other learners and not disclose the information discussed in the focus group interviews. I told participants that this study received written approval from the Research Ethics Review Committee (RERC) of the College of Education at Unisa. A copy of the approval letter could be obtained if they wish.

The abovementioned information appeared on a consent form. Rubin and Babbie (2011) indicate that a consent form is a document that participants must sign before participating in research. It contained complete information about the description of the research, which might have had an impact on parents/guardians and learners about whether to participate or not. The consent form consisted of aspects such as relevant information for dependent individuals (parents/guardians) to make the right decision for the child regarding this research. Moreover, the consent form assures parents/guardians that their children are free to decide whether to participate or not in the study and gives them a guarantee that no risk will accrue due to participating in the study. Lastly, the consent form sought to inform parents/guardians and learners about everything regarding this study where possible (Cohen et al., 2007). Furthermore, all the above-stated issues were performed before the commencement of the study, and assent and consent forms for learners under the age of 18 were signed by learners, teachers and parents/guardians as alluded by Bhattacharjee (2012) regarding consent and informed assent.

4.7.2 Informed assent

On the contrary, informed assent is an additional document that requires informed consent from the parents/guardians of learners who are participants. Informed assent is required after parents/guardians' informed consent is signed to provide participants an opportunity to decide and respect their choice (Dockett et al., 2012; Weisleder, 2020).

The procedure to involve learners in this research was that I allowed them to decide whether to partake or not in the study, and I told them that they had the right to withdraw at any time in this study if they felt so. The reason is to enhance their understanding of the participation process in this study (Weisleder, 2020). I explained the nature, procedure, and potential benefits and anticipated the inconvenience of participation to the learners. Furthermore, I gave learners sufficient opportunity to ask questions and made them aware that their participation was voluntary, and they were free to withdraw from this study at any time without penalty. I told them that the findings of this study would be processed into a research report, journal publications and/or conference proceedings, but their participation would be kept confidential. I asked whether they agreed to be voice-recorded for individual and focus group interviews. Additionally, I gave them a copy of the informed assent to sign as a way of agreement to participate in the study.

4.7.3 Trust

In this research study, I made sure that I provided correct explanations of what happened about this study because it was significant to avoid misrepresentation of facts and plagiarism. As stated by Cohen et al. (2007), I avoided misrepresentation of the facts of this research or lying to participants. I refrained from allegations of plagiarism because I recognised the authors within this thesis by citations. I took responsibility for providing a correct explanation of what and how I did it, the data acquired, methods utilised, the analysis made, and the study results as alluded to by (Walliman, 2011). I told participants that I requested permission to conduct research in School A and School B from the Free State Department of Education, Thabo Mofutsanyane district and the principals of the respective schools.

I presented myself as a PhD student and explained to participants and relevant institutions that I conducted research as an academic activity without any political or government support. I reported and explained the biases that might occur during the research process and avoided violating research integrity. I also avoided being extremely choosy in the presentation of the research information. I also declared that the financial support was received from Unisa as financial assistance. This is an important disclosure (Walliman, 2011).

4.7.4 Safety in participation

I arranged with an educational psychologist to be available to counsel or debrief participants who might experience any form of emotional discomfort during the data collection process. Interviews took place in the homes of other participants, at school during the week after school hours and at weekends in a quiet and private place with no distractions and the presence of teachers in the school vicinity as part of safety measures for participants. Walliman (2011) indicates that it is the researcher's choice to use documents and interviews to gather data from participants, and these methods are not harmful, and the researcher may avoid the possibility of damage to the participant's dignity. I used an academic report from the first term to inspect learners' academic performance, age, grade, and the list of top ten for Grades 10 and 11 to examine learners' position in the list and aggregate. I utilised individual and focus group interviews to collect data from learners, teachers and parents/guardians. All the abovementioned data collection methods were safe for participants.

4.7.5 Privacy and confidentiality

Regarding the right to privacy, I informed participants that they had the right to refuse to be interviewed or answer any questions. The researcher may also avoid honouring participants' right to privacy before, during and after the completion of the research (Cohen et al., 2007). The risk of the learner being identified by other learners in the group or violation of other learners' right to privacy and confidentiality did not occur because of the focus group discussion by other learner/s. I made all learners aware that they should treat each other's information confidentially, and learners who felt their information was confidential were advised not to discuss it during the focus group discussion.

4.7.6 Anonymity

Anonymity made it impossible to associate information with participants. Bhattacharjee (2012) affirms that anonymity and confidentiality are important aspects of the research because the participants' identities, interests, and well-being are protected. Anonymity means that I cannot identify answers provided by a particular learner. The challenge was that anonymity was impossible in this study because of face-to-face and focus group interviews used to collect participant data. To deal with this matter, the researcher may assure participants of confidentiality, which means that their names or

identities are not revealed to anyone (Rubin & Babbie, 2011). The other way to ensure the confidentiality of participants is to make them aware that their right to privacy is protected (Cohen et al., 2007).

Anonymity is the condition that makes it unfeasible to associate any response with a specific participant (Rubin & Babbie, 2011). The information means that I could not associate stated information with a participant, which signified that participants were anonymous and that their privacy was guaranteed. However, the researcher avoids disclosing the information of participants, which was provided in confidence, because that may lead to a breach of trust and betrayal (Cohen et al., 2007). To achieve the abovementioned purpose, I used pseudonyms to associate information gathered with participants such as SAT2M, SAL1M and SBP1F.

4.8 Conclusion

In this chapter, I discussed the research design and methodology of the study. I followed an interpretive paradigm and the case study research design. Data were collected using document review, focus groups and individual semi-structured interviews. On the issue of data analysis, I employed thematic content analysis. Ethical issues considered for this study were informed consent, informed assent and trust, safety in participation, anonymity, privacy, and confidentiality. To ensure the trustworthiness of the findings, I used conformability, credibility, transferability, dependability, and authenticity. In Chapter 5, the results of the study are presented and discussed.

CHAPTER 5: PRESENTATION OF RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

In Chapter 4, I discussed the research methodology and design used to achieve this study's aims. I used a qualitative case study research design with an interpretive paradigm. I explained and elaborated on the data collection, documentation, analysis, and interpretation procedures, as well as the ethical considerations and quality assurance procedures.

In this chapter, I present the study's results after inductive thematic content analysis. I present four themes with inclusion and exclusion criteria, sub-themes, and categories. After discussing the results of each theme, I proceed with the discussion of the findings in accordance with the literature and the conceptual framework discussed in Chapters 2 and 3.

This study aimed to explore the determinants of academic resilience as a component of academic success among selected Grade 10 and 11 learners in the Thabo Mofutsanyane district, Eastern Free State.

The primary research question that guided this enquiry was:

What factors determine academic resilience as a component of academic success among selected Grade 10 and 11 learners in the Thabo Mofutsanyane district, Eastern Free State?

Secondary research questions were:

- How do learners, teachers and parents/guardians view academic success and academic resilience?
- What are the challenges encountered by learners and how do their personal characteristics contribute to developing their academic resilience despite their challenges?
- How do families support the academic resilience and success of learners?
- What strategies do school communities employ to facilitate the achievement of learners' academic resilience and success?
- What guidelines can be formulated to support learners in attaining academic resilience and, consequently, academic success?

In this chapter, I narrate the findings corresponding to the four themes that originated from this study's thematic content analysis and developed from an arrangement of the data analysis. Furthermore, to ensure the trustworthiness of this study, I inserted participants' actual words from individual and focus group interviews. In addition, I offer a short extract from my notes about participants, which I took while observing during the data-gathering process to corroborate and enhance the deliberations.

5.2 Data collection

In this section, I offer a synopsis of the data collection procedures performed in this study. Table 5.1 delineates the participant groups and data collection techniques exploited.

Table 5.1: Participant groups and data creation technique

Participant groups	Data creation techniques		
	Individual interviews	Focus group interviews	Documents reviewed
Learners	12	12	10
Teachers	4		
Parents/guardians	4		
Total number of participants	20	12	10

Twenty (20) participants were selected for this study.

Table 5.1 is a synopsis of the participant groups for the individual and focus group interviews. The 12 learner participants in the individual interviews were the same twelve learners who participated in the focus group interviews, while from the same group, ten learners' academic reports were scrutinised. Furthermore, four teachers and four parents/guardians were subjected to individual interviews. All these participants were from Schools A and B. Detailed discussions pertaining to the abovementioned techniques and participants were described in Chapter 4, section 4.4.3.

5.3 Identification coding for the individual and focus group discussions

In this segment, I outline the codes used to identify the participants. In Table 5.2, I

outline the codes and descriptions of codes that I attached to participants to protect their privacy and anonymity and ensure that their information is not linked to them directly.

Table 5.2: Participant description and code

Description	Codes
School A	SA
School B	SB
School A-Teacher 1-female	SAT1F
School A- Teacher 2-male	SAT2M
School B- Teacher 1-female	SBT1F
School B- Teacher 2- female	SBT2M
School A- Learner 1- male	SAL1M
School A- Learner 2- male	SAL2M
School A- learner 3- female	SAL3F
School A- learner 4- male	SAL4M
School A- Learner 5-female	SAL5F
School A- Learner 6-female	SAL6F
School B- Learner 1 male	SBL1M
School B- Learner 2 female	SBL2F
School B- Learner 3 female	SBL3F
School B- Learner 4 female	SBL4F
School B- Learner 5 male	SBL5M
School B- Learner 6 male	SBL6M
School A- Parent 1-female	SAP1F
School A- Grand-Parent 1-female	SAGP1F
School B-Parent 1-female	SBP1F
School B-Grand-Parent 1-Female	SBGP1F
School A- Focus Group	SAFG
School B- Focus Group	SBFG
Interview	int

Code labels such as SA and SB indicate schools that were part of this study, and other codes, for example, SAT1F, SAT2M, SBT1F, and SBT2F, specify teachers' number and gender. Also, for learner participants, codes SAL1M, SAL2M, and SAL3F show learners' number and gender. On the other hand, these codes SAP1F, SAGP1F, SBP1F and SBGP1F reveal parent/guardians' numbers with gender. Code labels such as SAFG and SBFG signified the school and focus group interview and the signal for individual

face-to-face interviews.

5.4 Results of the thematic content analysis

In this section, I present the themes, sub-themes, and categories developed from the thematic content analysis of the raw data.

Theme 1: Understanding resilience, academic resilience, and academic success

Theme 2: Resilience-enabling resources for academic success

Theme 3: Factors posing risks to academic resilience and school success

Theme 4: Multisystemic strategies to promote academic resilience and academic success

Table 5.3 presents an overview of the themes, sub-themes, and categories and explains the inclusion and exclusion criteria for each theme.

Table 5.3: Overview of the themes, inclusion and exclusion criteria, sub-themes and categories

THEME 1: Understanding resilience, academic resilience and academic success	
Description: This theme describes resilience, academic resilience, and academic success	
Inclusion criteria: All data that refers to participants' understanding of resilience, academic resilience, and academic success.	Exclusion criteria: All data that does not refer to participants' understanding of resilience, academic resilience and academic success.
THEME 2: Resilience-enabling resources for academic success	
Description: This theme describes the resources that are resilience-enabling	
Inclusion criteria: All data that refers to participants' views about resilience-enabling resources.	Exclusion criteria: All data do not refer to participants' views about resilience-enabling resources.

Sub-theme 1: Personal protective factors		Sub-theme 2: Family protective factors		Sub-theme 3: School protective factors		Sub-theme 4: Contextual protective factors	
Category 1: Beliefs	Category 2: Disadvantaged conditions can motivate learner	Category 1: Parents role	Category 2: Relationship with family members	Category 1: School principals' role	Category 2: Support from stakeholders	Category 1: Technology	Category 2: Community
<p>THEME 3:</p> <p>Factors posing risks to academic resilience and school success</p> <p>Description: This theme describes the factors that pose risks to learners' resilience and school success</p>							

Inclusion criteria: All data that refers to participants' views on factors that hinder academic resilience.		Exclusion criteria: All data that do not refers to participants' views on factors that hinder academic resilience.		
Sub-theme 1: Resources	Sub-theme 2: School		Sub-theme 3: Community	
Category 1: Water and Electricity	Category 1: Teachers	Category 2: Learners	Category 1: Families	Category 2: Drug abuse
THEME 4: Multisystemic strategies to promote academic resilience and academic success Description: This theme describes participants' views on the multisystemic strategies that could be put into place to promote academic resilience and academic success				
Inclusion criteria: All data that refers to participants' views on multisystemic strategies to promote academic resilience and academic success		Exclusion criteria: All data that do not refer to participants' views on multisystemic strategies to promote academic resilience and academic success		
Sub-theme 1: Individual learner	Sub-theme 2: Family microsystem	Sub-theme 3: School microsystem		Sub-theme 4: Community

In reporting the results, I include extracts of the participants' direct words. In other words, participants' verbatim quotations support and enhance the reporting of the results because they discover and understand certain issues differently (Throne, 2020).

5.4.1 Theme 1: Understanding resilience, academic resilience and academic success

Theme 1 encapsulated participants' understanding of resilience, academic resilience, and academic success, and there were no sub-themes.

During individual focus group interviews, participants articulated their viewpoints on resilience, academic resilience and academic success. The participants presented the same, similar or different understandings of resilience, academic resilience and success.

Figure 5.1 illustrates the overview of Theme 1.

Figure 5.1: Overview of Theme 1

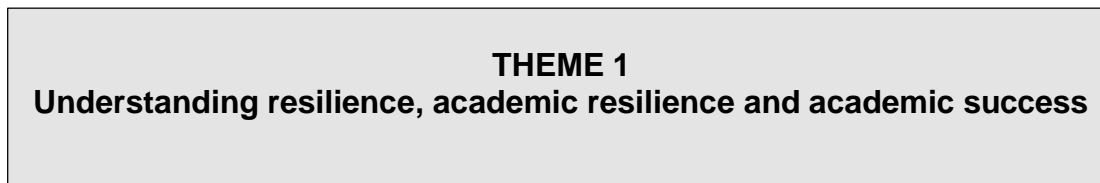


Table 5.4 describes Theme 1 and provides the inclusion and exclusion criteria.

Table 5.4: Description, inclusion and exclusion criteria for Theme 1

Description: Theme 1	This theme describes resilience, academic resilience, and academic success.
Inclusion criteria for theme 1	All data that refers to participants' understanding of resilience, academic resilience, and academic success.
Exclusion criteria for theme 1	All data that does not make reference to participants' understanding of resilience, academic resilience and academic success.

5.4.1.1 Learners' views

During semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions, learners expressed a common understanding that general resilience entailed the ability to succeed even though they experienced difficulties and were faced with adversities. Not only hardships, but learners also stressed that it is individuals' responsibility to try to succeed and to resist tough challenges. Indeed, resilience outcomes are achieved when faced with difficulties or confronted with adversity, and yet they achieve success. Participants' explanations highlighted that the element of adversity or extreme difficulties must be experienced first before success. To support this statement, during interviews, learner participants expressed their views as:

SAL3F (int): *being able to get up when you have been knocked down.*

SAL5F (int): *being able to pick yourself up after a traumatic experience.*

SAL1M (int): *when you fail, and you do not give up, but you manage to stand up.*

SAL6F (int): *despite the challenges you have you strive to perform at your level best.*

Furthermore, learners indicated that after going through difficulties, one must be able to 'come back' and 'persist'. To demonstrate the ability to continue, drive yourself and preserve the strength, one must attempt to succeed despite adversity. For example, during the SAFG and SBFG, participants explained:

SAFG: *resilience has persistent in it.*

SBFG: *coming back when you are facing tough challenges.*

SBFG: *come back out of those (problems).*

SBFG: *being able to maintain your position no matter the situation you are going through.*

SAFG: *overcome the challenges by pushing yourselves to become successful.*

SAFG: *striving for the best.*

Furthermore, another learner believed that resilience will enable one to *overcome the challenges you will face in future* (SAFG). In this sense, the learner implies that if one has the personal ability to strive, the individual will triumph over adversity. One's personal characteristics, such as seeing challenges in a positive light and having a positive attitude, also enable resilience. For instance, learners indicated that they take an unfortunate situation and use it to succeed. For example, SAFG stated:

SAFG: *you failed but to take it as another step to your process to success.*

SAFG: *seeing your challenges and obstacle in a positive life.*

SAFG: *something that made you not to reach whatever you need to be a lesson to you that you failed but to take it as another step to your process to success.*

With regard to academic resilience, learners from the focus group discussions understood that to be academically resilient, one cannot allow challenges to distract one. Certainly, you refuse to be influenced unfavourably by adversity. Learners explained that you need self-motivation to improve when you receive unsatisfactory marks. In other words, other individuals' internal assets that will promote resilience include positive emotions and individual capabilities. Truly, individual capabilities may lead to academic resilience, such as determination, self-drivenness, perseverance, and commitment to your studies. Also, to experience success, be an achiever make an effort to succeed and experience positive emotions such as to be fond of what you do and be happy about it. There was a common understanding that resilience generally applies to all facets of one's life. While academic resilience is specific to schooling and academic achievement, it includes general resilience. For example, participants during SAFG expressed their views as follows:

SAFG: *person's ability despite challenges and obstacles they are facing in life that distract them.*

SAFG: *If your marks do not satisfy you, you are able to use that to motivate yourself to do better.*

SAFG: *climbing a step and striving to be on top.*

SAFG: *academic resilience is to put yourself up after you have fallen academically and working hard and being persistent.*

SAFG: *be on the higher step.*

In SBFG, participants' views were similar to those in School A. Additionally, they included the following comments:

SBFG: *to work harder to pass.*

SBFG: *spend most of my time on my schoolbook.*

SBFG: *I am comfortable ...for an example in science subject because I love it.*

Learners' understanding of how to attain academic success

According to learners, academic success entails being able to work towards and achieve a goal. In fact, the interest in attaining achievement and being goal-oriented is significant for learners' academic success. Learners believe they must be interested and try to succeed academically to achieve their goals. Goals drive learners to put more effort into their schoolwork and arouse their interest, leading to academic success. There was a common understanding among participants that to be successful in school, one must work hard and be motivated. Learners are motivated to succeed academically by their goals. In short, goals appear to serve as intrinsic motivation. Furthermore, one must set a goal, and you need to work towards that goal, and then you will be successful. To illustrate the above, learner participants, during interviews, articulated these views:

SAL1M (int): *you will always do a thing [something] that works towards your goal of being academically successful.*

SBL6M (int): *I want to work hard and be able to go to university.*

SAL4M (int): *I need to study more and set a goal to be accepted to study chemical engineer.*

5.4.1.2 Teachers' views

Some teachers found it challenging to grasp or articulate the concept of 'resilience'. For instance, SAT1F (int) admitted to not comprehending and being unable to articulate resilience. Similarly, SBT1F (int) expressed uncertainty regarding the definition of resilience and expressed a desire to delve into its meaning. Additionally, SBT1F (int) attempted to define resilience, noting its connection to adversity and strength. Likewise, SAT2M (int) described resilience as overcoming difficulties and achieving success despite challenges. To illustrate SAT1F (int)'s lack of understanding of 'resilience', they defined academic resilience, equating it with experiencing difficulties and achieving academic success. SAT1F (int) demonstrated confusion between resilience and academic resilience. Furthermore, SBT2M (int) emphasised academic success while overlooking challenges. The following are verbatim comments from the teacher participants to support these perspectives:

SAT1F (int): *'I don't understand. To be persistent in your studies and to graduate no matter the challenges.*

SAT2M (int): *It is overcoming or achieving something against all odds.*

SBT1F (int): *I am not sure about the meaning (google the word resilient). It relates to difficulties and toughness.*

SBT2M (int): *It means you are academically excelling.*

Teachers' understanding of how learners attain academic success

Teacher participants view academic success as achieved through assistance from other people and learning independently. Therefore, individually, the learner has to take responsibility for succeeding academically. Including responsibility, such as finding solutions to the problems that the learner might encounter. For example, teacher participants expressed these ideas:

SAT1F (int): *certificates, graduation and doing doctorate all these are achieved by support from all stakeholders.*

SBT1F (int): *see it as to discover things on his/her own.*

5.4.1.3 Parents' views

Parent participants understood resilience as a person's ability and process. In this study, parent participants expressed that they are aware that resilience means to be successful even though you are faced with difficult times. In addition to that, they included characteristics such as excellence, willpower and to make every effort. For example, parent participants stated the following:

SBGP1F (int): *try my best to succeed despite of any obstacle.*

SAP1F (int): *not allow challenges to be an obstacle in his/her life.*

SAGP1F (int): *no matter the problem ahead of me, if I am determined about something I have to strive.*

Parent participants viewed academic resilience as an internal characteristic. A person with willpower, determination, enthusiasm, brilliance, and listening skills who works harder, has a purpose, and is self-motivated to succeed will be academically resilient. Additionally, they believed such learners would not allow challenges to hinder their progress. However, the challenges they face make learners persevere to succeed, provided that learners can control themselves and understand what others say to them, and they have a strong feeling of success because they do not want to suffer in the future. On the other hand, the difficulties they experience give them the reasons why they need to exert more effort to succeed academically. The abovementioned aspects appear to serve as a driving force that keeps them pushing, and they manage to view challenges positively because they are skilful. Hence, it seems they take their adversity from home as a source of academic resilience. For example, parent participants stated the following views:

SAP1F (int): *will power despite anything happening around. The child is self-motivated and has a purpose in life. He does not want to end up like his parents.*

SBP2F (int): *The child has a pain that makes him be determined to work harder to be academically successful. He does not want to live a life that his family is living currently.*

SBGP1F (int): *enthusiastic and brilliant irrespective of the challenges. I will listen to all advices ... you will overcome all these challenges. I will study very hard.*

SAGP1F (int): *graduated, passed and problems do not necessarily stop you.*

Parents' understanding of how learners attain academic success

Parents help children with their academic activities by organising private tutoring and talking with them about how to deal with academic activities. From the study, it seems that the reason for parents to talk with their children is to find out the challenges they face, and parents should be approachable. Above all, when parents realise that the children did well, they appreciate it, and in case they discover a matter that makes children uncomfortable at school, they report it to the school. Furthermore, they question children to determine whether they comprehend the academic work they are engaged with. Consequently, parents give an opinion such as when you are confronted with questions to answer, begin to answer simple questions and conclude your work with difficult ones. Parents not only discuss strategies to deal with schoolwork, but they also become actively involved in solving academic challenges children are confronted with and examining their written work. Moreover, parents persuade them to use technological devices and access learning programmes. Furthermore, parents offer children space to learn on their own. The following views support the preceding statements:

SBP2F (int): *I also assist with schoolwork; I will normally discuss with her on how to tackle the task. ...need support from the parent... I give her time that she needs to study... we will also do a bit of research until we get a solution. I was thinking of getting her a Mathematics tutor to assist her.*

SAGP1F (int): *I usually ask her if she understands what she is writing... I check her books, I find good things... I would hug her. I usually advise her to start with the questions that she understands and end with the one's she doesn't understands. I even encourage her to watch the educational channels on TV.*

SAP1F (int): *you need to talk to the child and understand her problems and you need to be open.... my husband always assists her with projects. You can also get your child a tutor.*

SBGP1F (int): *if you identify a problem like bully, parent need to inform the teacher.*

5.4.1.4 Discussion of theme 1: Understanding resilience, academic resilience and academic success

This theme discussed participants' views of resilience, academic resilience, and academic success. The general understanding among participants is that to be academically resilient, one must first demonstrate resilience in all other aspects of life. Academic success or academic achievement is the outcome of general resilience and academic resilience.

Resilience and academic resilience

Participants in this study understood that resilience means returning from difficult situations, refusing to give in to tough challenges, going through difficult times and experiencing success. Participants' understanding that resilience includes the element of adversity is similar to the findings of Arat (2014). Again, the understanding of participants that an outcome of resilience is success relates with the findings of Ahern (2006), Zolkoski and Bullock (2012), Morales (2014) and Chaudhry et al. (2016).

Furthermore, most learners, teachers, and parent participants viewed resilience as the ability to succeed even when you experience difficulties. On the contrary, other participants see resilience as a process, not a characteristic, and this finding correlates with Ungar's findings (2018). Aranda and Hart (2014) and Boon et al. (2012) contradict the earlier findings of Ahern (2006), stating that resilience is a process, and this process of adjusting includes people's characteristics. However, in the current study, only one teacher participant out of four explained general resilience as succeeding in the face of adversity. Another teacher associated academic resilience with having stamina. This reasoning may be faulty because it excludes relations with their context (Lee, 2016). Furthermore, participants, including learners, teachers, and parents, elucidated academic resilience as an individual's capacity to achieve academic success despite facing adversity or encountering adverse circumstances. This interpretation aligns closely with Coronado-Hijón's (2017) conceptualisation of academic resilience.

However, there exists a disparity in the understanding of academic resilience among participants compared to earlier scholars such as Choi (2019) and Hurley (2019), who prioritise academic excellence, and Holdsworth et al. (2018) and Nnaemeka (2019), who do not emphasise individual capability. Additionally, there is a divergence in the explanation of academic resilience between Shean (2015) and Ungar (2018), as these scholars regard it as a process intertwined with relational aspects. Nevertheless, the common thread across the interpretations of academic resilience by both scholars and participants lies in its association with overcoming adversity and achieving academic success. Consequently, resilience and academic resilience are intertwined with positive psychology and the asset-based approach, as many attributes of positive psychology foster internal and environmental competencies conducive to individuals' success (MacIntyre et al., 2019).

Academic success

Participants' perceptions of how learners achieve academic success vary. For instance, learner participants emphasised the importance of being goal-oriented, a notion supported by existing literature (Chowdhury & Halder, 2019; Diaconu-Gherasim et al., 2018), although this perspective contrasts with the findings of Radosevich et al. (2007). In contrast, teacher participants viewed academic success as the ability to thrive with assistance from others and to work autonomously, diverging from the conclusions drawn by other scholars such as Carter-Francique et al. (2013), York et al. (2015), Anakwe and Dikko (2017), Gutiérrez et al. (2018), Murphy and Murphy (2018), and Can (2019). Meanwhile, in the current study, parent participants stressed the importance of fostering a positive home environment to facilitate their children's academic success, aligning with the findings of Grossen et al. (2017), Garza et al. (2019), and Jalala et al. (2020).

All of the above are in line with the asset-based approach because it depends on a positive learning environment to cultivate and augment the capability to succeed academically (Ebersöhn & Eloff, 2006). For example, the asset-based approach focuses on assets from the environment to achieve academic success (Burnell, 2012).

5.4.2 Theme 2: Academic resilience-enabling resources

In this theme, I discuss results related to participants’ views on academic resilience-enabling resources. I anticipated to establish how the participants understand academic resilience-enabling resources. Additionally, I also wanted to explore their views on how academic resilience-enabling resources impact academic success. To develop this theme, I analysed the data acquired from the individual and focus group interviews carried out with the learners, teachers, and parents/guardians.

I classified the data on academic resilience-enabling resources into four sub-themes, namely (3.1) Learners’ personal protective factors, (3.2) Family protective factors, (3.3) School protective factors, and (3.4) Contextual factors. Figure 5.2 illustrates an overview of Theme 2 and its sub-themes

Figure 5.2: Overview of Theme 2 and its sub-themes

THEME 2 Resilience-enabling resources for academic success			
Sub-theme 1	Sub-theme 2	Sub-theme 3	Sub-theme 4
Learners’ personal protective factors	Family protective factors	School protective factors	Contextual factors

Table 5.5 describes Theme 2 and offers the inclusion and exclusion criteria.

Table 5.5: Description, inclusion and exclusion criteria for Theme 2

Description: Theme 2	This theme describes the resources that are resilience-enabling.
Inclusion criteria for Theme 2	All data that refers to participants’ views about resilience-enabling resources
Exclusion criteria for Theme 2	All data that do not refer to participants’ views about resilience-enabling resources

Table 5.6 outlines the sub-themes and categories.

Table 5.6: Sub-themes and categories

Sub-themes	Category 1	Category 2
Sub-theme 1 Learners' personal protective factors	Beliefs	Motivation
Sub-theme 2 Family protective factors	Parents' role	Learner relationships
Sub-theme 3 School protective factors	Principals' role	Support from external sources
Sub-theme 4 Contextual factors	Technology in the context of the study	The community context

5.4.2.1 Sub-theme 1: Learners' personal protective factors that enable resilience

This sub-theme focuses on understanding participants' views on the personal factors that enable their resilience. These factors included their self-efficacy beliefs and motivation.

5.4.2.1.1 Learners' self-efficacy beliefs

Learner participants in the study believed in their capabilities to succeed academically, and this belief was strengthened by other important individuals around them who believed in them too. They are confident about their way of thinking, and they concentrate on their schoolwork with the intention of achieving excellent academic outcomes. Again, they are not satisfied by moderate academic achievement because they always want exceptional results and believe they deserve extraordinary achievement. These statements are supported by participants' words:

SAL1M (int): I believe that if I put my mind into anything, I know I can excel in that thing. Principal believes in me. So, I believe that.

SBL5M (int): I told myself that I can do it. I succeeded because I believed in my mind.

SBL4F (int): I believe that I can achieve more than I have achieved already.

SAL1M (int): they believe that they can stand up and they can do more no matter.

All ten learners' grade averages for term two of 2018 were between 73% and 87%. See Table 5.7 and Appendix T for the learners' full academic report. All ten learners achieved above 70%, which confirms that a learner's belief in their ability to excel academically may contribute to their ability to thrive academically.

Table 5.7: Grade average of Term 2 results of 2019

Learners	Schools	Date of birth	Grade	Grade average
SAL1M	School A	2001/12/18	11	82
SAL2F	School A	2002/12/21	11	79
SAL3F	School A	2003/03/10	11	77
SAL4M	School A	2003/05/28	10	84
SAL5F	School A	2003/05/07	10	87
SAL6M	School A	2002/09/11	10	83
SBL1M	School B	N/A	10	N/A
SBL2F	School B	2003/07/21	10	73
SBL3F	School B	2002/11/17	11	73
SBL4F	School B	2002/10/29	11	77
SBL5M	School B	2001/12/29	11	78
SBL6F	School B	N/A	10	N/A

The data presented in Table 5.7 is important because it reveals that these learners hail from disadvantaged backgrounds yet rank among the top ten students in their respective schools. I sought out the academic reports for term two from parents, principals, and learners to assess their grade averages. Upon analysing these reports, it became evident that their academic performance in term two was remarkable. They exhibited heightened focus, garnered confidence from others in their abilities, and displayed self-assurance, collectively contributing to their academic excellence.

5.4.2.1.2 Category 2: Motivation

Learners' views about motivation

Learner participants are motivated externally by various individuals, objects, and conditions and internally by themselves. In addition, some learners are extrinsically motivated by more than one motivator. Furthermore, learner participants indicate that they are motivated by individuals such as teachers, religious persons, family members and peers. Furthermore, learners are motivated not only by individuals from school but also by religious persons and family members. Learners are motivated by people who are close to them. Others are motivated by people whom they have never met but, in fact, learned or heard about their positive lifestyles. These individuals are children of their age and adults; for example, the mother and these individuals' backgrounds are different. Learners are motivated to succeed academically by different individuals.

SAL3F (int): *they (teachers) motivate us.*

SBL3F (int): *... (Jesus) he used to be a leader of old people, so that motivates me.*

SBL3F (int): *the family should always motivate that person to work hard and excel at school.*

SAL1M (int): *(Mother) always motivates me to do better.*

SAL4M (int): *they (friends) always motivate you.*

SAL5F (int): *... (Another learner) is a hard worker who motivates me.*

SBL1M (int): *I listen to the Radio there are some motivators.*

Some learner participants demonstrate extrinsic motivation stemming from various non-living factors, including encountering challenges, seeking power, experiencing setbacks, and pursuing aspirations. These learners are motivated to excel academically due to their desire to achieve personal goals. Additionally, some learners are propelled by the aspiration to alter unfavourable circumstances for improved living conditions. While failure may motivate some, highlighting its occasional necessity, others may find inspiration in the pursuit of supremacy. The following direct quotations support these views:

SAL1M (int): *I get motivated by objects and by possession, entering at Harvard Law School.*

SBL5M (int): *Science motivates me, things that people say they are not able to reach that motivates me to do them.*

SBL2F and SAL5F (int): *be able to change my situation at home.*

SAL4M (int): *I don't easily become discouraged after I have failed to achieve what I want but I become motivated.*

Learner participants not only use extrinsic motivation but also intrinsic motivation. They indicated that they use self-talk and self-imagination to motivate themselves. For example, they imagine themselves flourishing. During the process of self-motivation, their focus is on themselves, and they reflect on things they managed to achieve in general. The reason for self-motivation is to succeed academically.

SAL1M (int): *motivate yourself so that you can do better.*

SAL1M (int): *when I motivate myself, I mostly talk to myself.*

SBL4F (int): *I motivate myself by picturing myself being successful and having everything that I wished to have.*

SAL1M (int): *Motivating yourself is ... it is looking up to yourself and looking how far you have come in life.*

Learner participants from focus group discussions maintained that they are motivated by non-living things, individuals who are not close to them, and a feeling of dissatisfaction. SBFG learners are motivated by discovering knowledge and feeling unhappy with marks obtained because learners want to excel academically. Except for the quest for understanding and being disgruntled, they appear to be more motivated by listening to others' positive ideas or life stories and watching an object that learners wish to accomplish.

SBFG2: *for me is science.*

SBFG3: *listening to the radio and hearing people motivate.*

SBFG4: *seeing my favorite car motivate, music also motivates.*

SBFG1: *not being satisfied motivates me.*

Teachers' views about motivation

Teacher participants stated that they motivate learners to be academically successful in different ways, such as by guiding them to make informed decisions about the occupation they prefer to pursue. Teachers also carry out authentic lessons and visually record the entire process. Furthermore, teachers present the lesson in such a way that learners become interested in joining the teaching profession. It seems that the abovementioned techniques are used to motivate learners who may not be flourishing academically. In addition, teacher participants affirmed that they noticed that learners who strive academically are motivated externally and internally.

SAT1F (int): *well performing learners are well motivated. Learners who are not performing well can also be motivated.*

SBT1F (int): *things that we do as teachers can motivate learners to become academically successful.*

SBT1F (int): *...they watch me teaching and ... want to become teachers like me. They were performing different experiment and videos were taken. That motivated learners.*

SAT2M (int): *motivates the ones that are weak... If you see learners excel, you must know that those are learners who are intrinsically motivated...*

SBT1F (int): *mathematics teacher always motivates learners. ... motivate learners by giving them advice on which career they must choose...*

Teacher participants also declared that they invite learners to work with other individuals, such as peers, university students, and professionals, to motivate them. The reason for teacher participants to use peers to motivate learners is that learners are easily motivated when they network with peers who are doing well academically.

Moreover, teacher participants emphasised the significance of collaboration among peers. It was discovered that teacher participants invite other people to motivate learners because they were motivated by other people.

SAT1F (int): *They will be able to meet people who are way far ahead in life using skills. I have connected with CA who worked for KPMG to interact with them.*

SBT1F (int): *...who are doing medicine from UCT & Wits and another learner is medical practitioner ... to motivate them.*

SAT1F (int): *you need to assist each other. You would watch other people that motivate you.*

SBT2M (int): *if a friend is academically successful, they tend to get motivated. My former principal motivated me.*

Teacher participants indicated that aside from individuals who motivate them, learners are motivated by other factors such as academic achievement, incentives, challenging circumstances, and following a structured approach to learning. For instance, teachers emphasised that the prospect of completing their education to secure employment and eventually marry motivates learners to succeed academically. Moreover, the opportunity to enhance their education through academic excellence presents a pathway to secure employment, motivating learners and enabling them to establish their own families. Additionally, the drive to overcome their disadvantaged backgrounds spurs learners to excel academically in pursuit of a better quality of life than their current circumstances afford. The following direct quotations support these statements.

SAT1F (int): *... when they perform well, they will get bursaries, motivational incentives. Poor background motivates them to work hard and so that they can change the situation at home.*

SBT2M (int): *... motivated when they pass and to progress to the next grade. Go to school, have a job and get married ... motivates you. Circumstance as they are, they motivate instead of demoralising my dreams.*

5.4.2.2 Sub-theme 2: Family support

This sub-theme explores participants' views about family support that boosts their pathways to resilience and achievement.

5.4.2.2.1 Category 1: Parents' role

Teachers' views about parents' role in learners' academic success

According to teacher participants, most parents are extremely dedicated to assisting their children to succeed academically. To show that parents are dedicated, they attend school meetings or find a proxy if they cannot attend school meetings; they search for community support structures such as private tutoring and encourage their children to attend extra lessons in schools. Parents also create conducive learning conditions at home. They do all the abovementioned aspects to inspire their children so that they can excel academically.

SAT2M (int): *their parents (are sources of inspiration). ... We normally call parents and they do come to school. If ... not ... they ... send a representative...*

SAT1F (int): *...set up a positive environment so that a child can do well... Mostly those who are performing well their parents are supportive.*

SBT2M (int): *parents have tutors. They normally encourage their children to learn and achieve good marks.*

SAT2M (int): *even if we do extra classes the father will always say that it doesn't matter... academic success comes from high commitment of parents...*

Learners' views about parents' role in learners' academic success

Learner participants commented that they receive support from their homes. They further indicated that their mothers play different roles in supporting them. For example, they teach children to read for understanding, give them individual attention, boost their confidence, and help them be on time for school. Mothers behave this way to create a strong support base to stimulate their children to succeed academically.

SBL3F (int), SBL4F (int), SAL5F (int) and SBL6M (int): *get support from my family.*

SAL3F (int): *my mother ... my source of inspiration.*

SAL1M (int): *she (mother) always tries to make me feel good about myself.*

SAL4M (int): *... she kept on giving me books and giving me timelines on when to finish reading the book and to tell her on what the book is all about.*

SBL2F (int): *she always has the time to listen to me.*

SBL4M (int) and SAL5F (int): *my mother wakes me up every day.*

SBL3F (int): *my mom does...*

Other learner participants also believed that fathers also play a critical role in inspiring their children to succeed academically. Fathers encourage children to be positive by emulating positive emotions and gratitude and modelling a passion for reading from childhood.

SAL4M (int): (Father) *he inspires me to read a lot ever since I was young.*

SAL1M (int): (father) *he reminds me that I should always love the people who are close to me and to appreciate the things that I have.*

SBL3F (int): *my ...does and sometimes my dad.*

Furthermore, other learner participants affirmed that their extended family members support them to succeed academically. They provide financial assistance, inspire children, and help them with academic work. For example, participants stated the following:

SBL2F (int): *my aunt buys data for me.*

SAL5F (int): *my uncle also assists me with some of the study units that I struggle with.*

SBL6M (int): *grandfather is mathematically literate and ... assist me with the subject.*

SAL3F (int): *... aunt ... my source of inspiration.*

5.4.2.2.2 Category 2: Relationship with family members

Teachers' views on learners' relationships with family members

Teacher participants stated that many academically excelling learners have positive relationships with family members. However, a few teacher participants were uncertain about whether there was a positive relationship between learners and their family members.

SBT1F and SAT2M (int): *they relate very well ...*

SAT1F (int): *I think it is their mother.*

SBT1F (int): *I am not quite sure because some of them, they do not have mothers. We have about 200 learners at school who stay with only their grandmother.*

Learners' views on their relationships with family members

Learner participants indicated that they relate very well with their family members.

LB3F (int), LB4F (int), LA4M (int), LA6M (int), LB6M (int), LB1M (int), LB5M (int): *we have good relations.*

Parents' views on learners' relationships with family members

Parent participants noticed that children have positive relationships with family members.

SBGP1F (int): *he relates very good with family and relatives. Mother and children their bond comes naturally, and the child gets along very well with his mom.*

SAP1F & SBP2F (int): *her mother comes first.*

5.4.2.3 Sub-theme 3: School

This sub-theme focuses on exploring participants' views about the school and community.

5.4.2.3.1 Category 1: School principal's role

Teachers' views about the school principal's role

Teacher participants were clear that principals encouraged teachers to assist learners by providing financial remuneration for teachers who offer private tutoring.

SBT1F (int): *...paying educators who are teaching learners extra classes.*

SAT2M (int): *She (Principal of School A) also supports educators.*

Learners' views about the school principal's role

Learner participants viewed principals as supportive directly and indirectly because they pay attention to learners' grievances and suggestions and execute an action plan to address learners' concerns. Furthermore, learner participants added that principals encourage learners individually, present lessons for learners and maintain discipline in school. Learner participants stated that principals are supportive and act in the manner stated above because they want all learners to pass the academic year. For example, participants stated the following:

SAL5F (int): *...encourages the learners so that they can have a 100% per cent pass rate.*

SAL1M (int), SBL1M (int), SBL3F (int) and SBL5M (int): *the principal encourages me*

SBL5M (int): *He seems to have an open mind. He listens to our ideas and implements them.*

SBL4F (int): *...teaches us by himself.*

SAL3F (int): *she is giving us support even if it is not direct.*

SAL1M (int): (Principal) *she tries to motivate me.*

SBL1M (int) and SBL2F (int): *The principal keeps the school in order.*

SBL6M (int): *He reprimands us not to engage in bad activities.*

Principals are supportive because they provide monetary assistance, maintain school discipline, and request individuals to inspire learners to strive academically.

In SBFG and SAFG, learners cited the following:

SAFG: *the principal support us financially.*

SAFG: *the principals normally invite motivators.*

SBFG: *I think my principal is very supportive.*

SBFG: *the principal by making sure that learners are well disciplined.*

SBFG: *our principal always tries to encourage.*

5.4.2.3.2 Category 2: Support from stakeholders

Teachers' views on support from stakeholders

Teacher participants pronounced that the school governing body (SGB), district officials, and the Free State Department of Education help all learners to strive academically despite their academic abilities. The abovementioned stakeholders indicate that they help learners by financing private tutoring through financial assistance to schools to remunerate teachers who provide services in private tutoring during weekends. Stakeholders also endorse teachers to support learners during vacation time, for subjects that require teachers such as physical sciences and organise educational games where learners can win a prize.

SBT2M (int): *There are extra classes to assist learners who are struggling in their studies, but we assist even those who are doing well. they pay teachers for working on Saturdays.*

SBT1F (int): *They support the school with finances. They will approve a teacher who is relevant to come and teach on holiday...Olympus competition.*

SAT2M (int): *They also assist in the areas of needs in the school like when needing extra teachers in sciences...*

Learners' views on support from outside school

According to learner participants in interviews and focus groups, the SGB, district officials, and the Free State provincial government are supportive of learners. However, other learner participants indicated that stakeholders provide incomplete assistance, and some learners argued that they do not know of the support they gave learners.

SBL4F (int): *They are always there when we need them.*

SBL2F (int): *They do support.*

SBL5M (int): *They partially support me. I have never heard anything about what they are doing.*

With regard to the SGB, learner participants mentioned the assistance they received from the SGB as overseeing the running of the school and concentrating on maintaining discipline in the school. For example, they stated the following:

SAL5F (int): *the SGB does monitor the school.*

SAL1M (int): *(SBG) they focus more on making sure that the discipline is enforced at school.*

SBL4F (int) and SBL3F (int): *I do think they support us.*

SAL1M (int): *The department, they always try to make sure that nothing obstructs my schoolwork.*

SBL4F (int): *I think they care about us and that they are always trying to think of new strategies to help us.*

SBL3F (int): *they often send textbooks to our school so that we can be able*

to read.

Learners from focus group discussions mentioned that stakeholders are supportive of learners and indicated that they provide financial assistance.

SAFG: all of them assist in terms of finances.

SAFG: they do support us.

Parents' views on support from outside school

Parent participants understood that stakeholders are helpful for learners and further stated that at the district level, they directly help teachers, and SGB focused on addressing the demands of learners.

SAGP1F (int): District Officials and Free State government, they do support.

SAP1F (int): Provincial government will always assist and support. District also assist teachers. SGB ... checking if learners are getting educated ... and what else they need.

5.4.2.4 Sub-theme 4: Contextual factors

5.4.2.4.1 Category 1: Technology

This category deals with the knowledge and understanding of participants' views on the role of technology in helping learners achieve academic success.

Learners' views on technology

Learner participants confirmed that they use different technological devices to access different software that enables them to succeed academically and thus, academically resilient. They access devices such as mobile phones and the television. For example, learner participants indicated that they watch television programmes related to school subjects on specific channels. They clarified that they watched these programmes on their mobile phones. They also use mobile phones to access the internet and search for answers to complete activities that are given to them. Learner participants added that they use applications such as YouTube and WhatsApp. They use WhatsApp to assist each other with schoolwork and examine videos from YouTube that deal with matters

that are related to their schoolwork. Some learner participants who do not have mobile phones to access the internet to view videos from YouTube and WhatsApp to solicit assistance, use school facilities to access the abovementioned services to enhance their academic performance. For example, participants stated the following:

SBL5M (int) and SAL1M (int): *We do the research at the school laboratory.*

SAL5F (int): *...uses the apps to get help for our work.*

SBL3F (int): *I google any topic I cannot understand at school.*

SALM1 (int) and LB4F (int): *uses phone to google things.*

SAL3F (int): *there are learning TV programmes that I watch.*

SBL2F (int): *educational channels at home on the smart phone.*

SBL2F (int) and SAL4M (int): *I also watch YouTube videos.*

SBL2F (int): *We have a WhatsApp group and I will ask for some assistance on the group.*

Parents' views on technology

Parent participants maintained that they encouraged children to watch learning programmes that present school subjects, assist learners in accessing the Internet through Wi-Fi, and use mobile phones to search for information.

SAGP1F (int): *I do ask my grandchild, if he does not want to watch the educational channel.*

SBP1F (int): *...use the hotspot and Wi-Fi.*

5.4.2.4.2 Category 2: Community

Teachers' views about the community of QwaQwa

Teacher participants stated that the community of QwaQwa consists of working-class families. These families are sociable and helpful, calm, unified, and kind. They are nonjudgmental because they accept other people with different cultures to take up top ranks at workplaces. Teacher participants further indicated that the community of QwaQwa has many educational institutions, ranging from primary to further education institutions. They stated the following:

SBT1F (int): *community consists of middle-class people.*

SAT2M (int): *... peaceful and accommodating. There are middle schools around.*

SBT2M (int): *they are peaceful people. They very welcoming. ... unite as one, they do allow anybody coming from other places to occupy any higher position without any discrimination.*

SAT1F (int): *the people are too nice. They very welcoming.*

SBT1F (int): *there are FET Colleges.*

Learners' views about the community of QwaQwa

Learner participants stated that the people of QwaQwa are helpful because they collaborate and create clusters to help themselves and others. Moreover, learner participants alluded to the fact that there are many educational institutions in this community, and schooling is regarded as significant by community members.

SAL1M (int): *mostly people in the community have support groups. They offered to help.*

SAL5F (int): *neighbours in the community can assist each.*

SBL3F (int): *I think the people here cooperates with each other.*

SBL2F (int): ... *there are many schools in QwaQwa.*

Learners from focus group discussions echo the same sentiments as learner participants from interviews because they revealed that members of the community of QwaQwa collectively deal with the challenges they face as a community. Further than that, they indicated that the community of QwaQwa has a lot of different educational institutions, which is a sign that they value schooling.

SAFG: *it has too many schools.*

SBFG: *people here take education as something very important.*

SBFG: *people work together...*

Parents' views about the community of QwaQwa

Parent participants emphasised that the people of QwaQwa have compassion. Furthermore, they pointed out that this community has many diverse educational institutions, from basic education to tertiary education. Interestingly, they revealed that learners can access schooling without the need for transport. Other parent participants stated that if there is a need for transport to travel to school, there is no hassle because transport is available to take children to school.

SAP1F (int): *people from QwaQwa have humanity. It has many schools. they (schools) are accessible without using any transport.*

SBGP1F (int): *In terms of schools, we have variety to choose from, FET's and Universities. We also have transport that takes children to schools.*

In this regard, the next extract from my field notes describes my discussion with the principal of School B about the request to conduct focus group discussions with learners.

'I do not have a problem with that only if you will be able to bring back learners at school by 16:00 they should be in the school. The reason is that some learners are using special taxis to pick them up from school to take them to their homes'. (Field notes, 5 August 2019).

5.4.2.5 Discussion of theme 2: Resilience-enabling resources for academic success

This theme discussed participants' understanding of resilience-enabling resources for academic success. Participants view individual characteristics, parents, relationships with family members, school principals, the SGB, district, the department of education, technology and the community as resources that enable learners to be academically resilient and successful. Subsequent focus will be on positive intrapersonal characteristics with special emphasis on belief and motivation.

Positive intrapersonal characteristics

In this study, participants believed that positive intrapersonal characteristics such as beliefs, self-confidence, positivity and motivation are good personality characteristics that can assist learners to be academically resilient. This finding aligns with the findings of Alexopoulou et al. (2019), Crespo et al. (2019), and Liang et al. (2019). Furthermore, positive personal characteristics (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000) include basic qualities of individuals with integrity, courage and humanity (Kim et al., 2012). These characteristics are a fraction of the asset-based approach, centred on inner assets to increase learners' chances of success amid challenges (Burnell, 2012).

Learners' beliefs in their abilities, self-confidence, positivity and self-motivation are critical characteristics that promote academic resilience and success. Learners in the study believed in their capabilities to obtain high marks and succeed academically. The learner participants' views correlate with Kalender's (2015) and Wills and Hofmeyr's (2019) findings. However, the findings of this study on learners' beliefs in their capabilities to obtain high marks and succeed academically do not collaborate with the findings of Berkers (2016) because the author said that learners' belief in their capabilities to do extremely well does not play a considerable part in the development of academic resilience. Striving for excellence in school is not the only attribute of learners who are faced with adversity (Veitch, 2014) but also the crucial mental aspect of academically resilient learners (Mestre et al., 2017).

Learners' beliefs in their abilities to excel correlate with the theory of positive psychology on three philosophies: utilitarianism, hedonics, and virtue (Lambert et al., 2015). For example, transcendence is part of virtue because learners appreciate excellence in academic success (Kim et al., 2012), and they experience satisfaction

when they excel academically and avoid being academically unsuccessful as part of hedonic (Disabato et al., 2016). Furthermore, the belief in their abilities is a characteristic that makes them succeed academically as part of utilitarianism (Mudrack & Mason, 2019).

Learner and teacher participants use other successful individuals to inspire confidence within learners so that they can be academically successful and resilient. This finding is similar to the findings of Perry (2011) because the author found that self-confidence is a significant aspect of schooling, and Darmawan et al. (2020) found that learners use self-confidence to succeed academically. Furthermore, results of this study is not similar with the findings of Rohlwink (2015) who stated that lack of confidence impacts adversely on the academic success of learners. The findings of this study are related to the findings of Liang et al. (2019) and Walsh et al. (2020) who found a correlation between academic resilience and self-confidence.

Participants in this study revealed that learners can be motivated by other people such as parents, teachers, and their deprived conditions. Findings from this study, such as destitute circumstances serve as motivation for learners and is comparable to the findings of Sian Rusli Ahmad et al. (2017) and Borjian (2018). However, the findings from this study on deprived conditions as motivation is different from the findings of other scholars who found that adverse situations are demotivating (Banerjee, 2016; Coetzee et al., 2015). Learner and teacher participants in the study established that external motivation, not only their adverse conditions, but also their teachers' motivation is important to them. This finding correlates with the findings from the literature such as that of Abrams-Terry (2014), Kalender (2015), and Fati et al. (2019).

Parents are also capable of motivating their children to succeed academically irrespective of the harsh conditions they are living under according to learner and teacher participants. This outcome is related with the findings of Adeyemi (2015), and Gafoor and Kottalil (2015). However, the finding that parents are also capable of motivating their children to succeed academically from this study is different from the findings of Mosibudi (2012), and Mampane and Huddle (2017) because they found that parents do not motivate their children.

Learner participants indicated that they motivate themselves through self-dialogue, self-imagination and by worrying about failing. The finding that worrying about failing motivates learners to succeed academically is similar with the findings of De Castella

et al. (2013), Govorova et al. (2020), and Lap and Thao (2021). The finding of worrying about failing as motivation to succeed academically is different to the findings of De Castella et al. (2013), and Edwards and Ashkanasy (2018) because they stated that worrying about failing does not make learners succeed academically. The results of this study with regard to worrying about failing is different with result of Engel et al. (2021) because these authors found that worrying about failing enhances the resilience of learners.

Learner participants use worrying about failing and self-talk to motivate themselves to be academically successful and resilient. Talking to oneself as motivation to succeed is similar to the findings of Sanga (2019), Clemons-Shaw (2021), Ljubin-Golub (2021) and Fagan (2022). However, the result of this study on self-talk as a motivation strategy is dissimilar to the findings of Cutton and Hochstetler (2021) who stated that self-talk assists to persevere, and other authors such as Flanagan and Symonds (2021) stated that it helps to think positively. Moreover, learner participants not only use self-talk and worrying about failing to motivate themselves but also self-imagination. Furthermore, findings from this study correlates with the findings of Kim and Kim (2018) that self-imagination is another way to motivate self. Besides the finding of this study on self-imagination as motivation to be academically successful and resilient is similar with the findings of Leopold et al. (2019) and Chen (2022) only on academic success but not to be resilient.

Support plays a crucial role to assist learners from adverse situations to be academically resilient. Participants agree that parents' role is to support children to be academically successful and this finding is comparable to the study of Amponsah et al. (2018) and Boonk et al. (2018). Conversely, there is a dissimilarity because the finding that parents' role is to support children to be academically successful differs with the finding of Mogale (2014), Kalenga and Samukelisiwe (2015), and Mampane and Huddle (2017) because they found that parents are not supportive.

Participants indicated that the mother is much closer to learners than other family members. This finding where the mother is closely attached to the child is not a surprise because the initial tie is developed towards the mother, although it rapidly expands to other specific individuals (Ainsworth, 1969). Furthermore, the current study revealed that some learners are closer to their grandmothers, aunts, and siblings than their mothers. This correlates with the attachment theory as indicated by Ainsworth (1969), who said that attachment swiftly develops to other specific people. Therefore, learners'

close relationships with grandmothers, aunts, siblings, and mothers are confirmed by learner and parent participants by indicating that there is a good relationship between learners and their family members, such as parents and siblings, which enables their resilience. This finding corresponds with the findings from Myrick et al. (2014), Berry (2014), Capurso (2015), Maltais et al. (2015), Blomgren et al. (2016), Kelly (2016) and Serin (2016) who detailed that secure attachment helps learners to develop academic resilience; and also findings from Williams et al. (2017) who stated that learners who have positive relationships within a context have a higher chance of developing academic resilience. The attachment between learners, mother, sibling, grandmother, and aunt relates to the bio-ecological systems theory. It is in relation to Bronfenbrenner's model, where a learner cooperates with family members, such as a parent or sibling, at the level of the microsystem (Boon et al., 2012).

Participants stated that the Department of Education, district, SGB, and school principals supported learners in being academically successful and resilient. This finding is similar to the findings of Seville et al. (2008), Masten et al. (2014), Mampane (2014), and Mampane and Huddle (2017) because they indicated that support makes learners academically resilient. However, other learner participants stated that support from the abovementioned education stakeholders is done only for popular learners, and the shy ones are not considered. Specifically, other learners and teacher participants stated that the district does not support them. Furthermore, learner participants stated that the SGB also does not support them to be academically successful. As a result, this finding correlates with the findings of Spaul (2013), who said that a lack of equitable support leads to an incapability to make other learners academically successful. Furthermore, Bayat et al. (2014) indicated that lack of support would not make other learners academically resilient. The abovementioned aspects of support from the Department of Education, district, and SGB correlate with Bronfenbrenner's theory and the asset-based approach.

Learner and parent participants support using technology to achieve academic success and resilience. This finding is comparable with the findings of others from the literature, such as Clark and Mayer (2011), Rajeh et al. (2021), and Börnert-Ringleb et al. (2021), on academic success, not resilience. However, the finding that there is a use of technology to support learners to achieve academic success and resilience is contrary to the findings of Du Plessis and Mestry (2019) and Moyo (2022), who said individuals from a poor socio-economic status and working-class family are incapable to

assist their children with educational resources. In correlation with the asset-based approach, learners are encouraged to use resources such as the internet, gadgets and social media to participate successfully in the learning process (Kasonga, 2019).

Participants indicated that people are willing to work together to help each other, and there are many schools in the community of QwaQwa. This finding correlates with Grossen et al.'s (2017), but not with Kalenga and Samukelisiwe's (2015) and Ebersöhn's (2017) findings, which found that there are other communities with a shortage of schools.

Learner participants stated that the people of QwaQwa value education, and this is similar to the findings of Matentjie (2006) and McMahon (2015) because they found that communities which experience adversity cherish education; this is in line with appreciative inquiry because of cooperation between learners and community members where they acknowledge the significance of education and work together with schools for the academic success of learners (Ludema et al., 2006).

Teacher participants stated that the community of QwaQwa consists mostly of middle-class people. This finding is similar to the finding of Vanwesenbeeck et al. (2016) in Keogh et al. (2021). Evans and Acosta (2021) stated that the working-class face similar challenges.

5.4.3 Theme 3: Factors associated with barriers to academic resilience

In this section, I narrate factors associated with academic resilience barriers. I envisioned exploring how the participants view barriers to academic resilience. To form this theme, I scrutinised the data obtained from the individual interviews and focus group discussions performed with the learners, teachers, parents/guardians and field notes.

I classified data on factors associated with barriers to academic resilience into four sub-themes: (3.1) Resources, (3.2) School, and (3.3) Community. Figure 5.3 illustrates the overview of Theme 3 and its sub-themes.

Figure 5.3: Overview of Theme 3 and its sub-themes

THEME 3		
Factors posing risks to academic resilience and school success		
Sub-theme 1	Sub-theme 2	Sub-theme 3
Resources	School	Community

The following Table 5.8 describes Theme 3 and gives the inclusion and exclusion criteria.

Table 5.8: Description, inclusion and exclusion criteria for Theme 3

Description: Theme 3	This theme describes the factors that pose risks to learners' resilience and school success.
Inclusion criteria for Theme 3	All data that refers to participants' views on factors that hinder academic resilience.
Exclusion criteria for Theme 3	All data that do not refer to participants' views on factors that hinder academic resilience.

Regarding participants' views on factors associated with barriers to academic resilience, in sub-theme 1, I discuss resources. The category was water and electricity.

In sub-theme 2, I discuss school. The categories were teacher and learner.

In sub-theme 3, I discuss community. The categories were families and drug abuse.

Table 5.9 gives the illustrative depiction of Theme 3, its sub-themes and categories.

Table. 5.9: Outlines the sub-themes and categories

Sub-themes	Category 1	Category 2
Sub-theme 1 Resources	Water and Electricity	No category 2
Sub-theme 2 School	Teachers	Learners
Sub-theme 3 Community	Families	Drugs

5.4.3.1 Sub-theme 1: Resources

This sub-theme focuses on resources which, when limited, are associated with barriers to academic resilience.

5.4.3.1.1 Category 1: Water and Electricity

Learners' views on water and electricity as a barrier to academic resilience

Learner participants stated that they experience a problem of water and electricity shortage. They receive an inadequate supply of water and electricity regularly because a constant supply of electricity is cut off weekly for various reasons. Learner participants indicated that this inadequate supply of water and electricity impact negatively affected their academic success; this is due to the reason that learner participants have to go and get water while they should be doing their schoolwork, and they use other means for lighting at night, so that they can study. For example, some learner participants have visual challenges, and using candlewax for light makes things difficult for them to learn at home.

SAL5F (int): *We do not have enough access to water and electricity.*

SBL2F (int): *Even this thing of load shedding. The only problem is water scarcity.*

SAL5F (int): *We end up not being able to study because of that. ... fetch water after school even though we have a lot of schoolwork to do. The challenge is electricity ... I find very hard using a candle since I have eye problems.*

Teachers' views on water and electricity as a barrier to academic resilience

Teacher participants stated that the problem of providing water and electricity services is regrettable and terrifying. The reason is that community members end up involved in industrial action. This situation leads to violent behaviour, which threatens learners' right to learn in a non-violent environment. As a result, learners are adversely affected.

SAT1F (int): *We are struggling with electricity and water supply. They might embark on a strike there and there.*

SBT2M (int): *It is worse and a nightmare, we have a problem with water and electricity. The community is not safe and if there are always strikes and violence that can affect the learner.*

Parents' views on water and electricity as a barrier to academic resilience

Parent participants were concerned about water and electricity challenges because they stated that there is a poor supply. For example, they indicated that there is a lack of water supply at schools and a shortage of electricity due to criminal activities.

SAP1F (int): *we have a serious problem with water, ..., we do not have water around the school. ...illegally connected, and the municipal is forced to cut their electricity to load shed...*

SBGP1F (int): *water operates like electricity, sometime is there and sometimes is off.*

5.4.3.2 Sub-theme 2: School

This sub-theme focuses on school factors that may be associated with barriers to academic resilience.

5.4.3.2.1 Category 1: Teachers

Teachers' views on teachers' role as a barrier to academic resilience

Teacher participants commented that their unhelpful actions towards learners, dealing with the misbehaviour of learners, their teaching methods, overload, use of vernacular language and a lack of adequate time for teaching hinder teachers' capability to enhance the academic resilience of learners. Teacher participants expressed that they are expected to teach learners while they have other responsibilities they should carry out, such as maintaining discipline in the classroom and class administration, which takes a lot of their teaching time and implies that their workload is a challenge. They further, the use of irrelevant teaching methods and vernacular language as a medium of instruction leads to a lack of understanding of key concepts of subjects such as physical sciences. Additionally, teacher participants declared that their actions towards learners include being unfriendly and giving unconstructive criticism.

SAT2M (int): *some educator goes to class and speak their mother tongue throughout. We have so much to do but with little time educators we spend time on disciplining these learners than educating them.*

SBT1F (int): *you are always discouraged to go to that class.*

SBT2M (int): *teachers teach in such a way that they make a topic difficult. ... developing attitude to the teacher and result in negative attitude to the learning area.*

SAT1F (int): *we have too many classes to teach.*

SBT2M (int): *He was not approachable if you are rude and making bad comments or funny remarks to the learner they act as barrier.*

Two teachers from School B echoed teacher participants' problem about lack of time; the following extract from my research field notes reveals this:

'we are willing to participate in the study, but we do not have enough time'
(Field notes, 7 August 2019).

Learners' views on teachers' role as a barrier to academic resilience

Learner participants pronounced that teachers lack assistance and are not attending classes for various reasons, which results in classroom disarray. Moreover, learner participants pronounced inadequate teaching time, discipline problems, and teachers

who demand learners excel academically, which creates pressure for learners.

SBL6M (int): *when the teacher does not spend much time teaching a topic. Some teachers do not support you. If I am not willing to engage at school, they will be unable to do anything.*

SBL2F(int): Sometimes, teachers tend not to come to classes when they are on sick leave, and there will be chaos in classes.

SAL5F (int): *They [teachers] want us to get 100% with no mistakes, and that thing puts more pressure on us.*

5.4.3.2.2 Category 2: Learners

Teachers' views on factors that serve as barriers to academic resilience for learners

Teacher participants spelt out that the adolescence stage, nervousness, discipline problems, lack of understanding and child-headed families are barriers to academic resilience. Child-headed families take on parents' responsibilities, such as looking after siblings, because both parents are not available to take on those responsibilities. It becomes worse when the children are adolescents because they are problematic and undependable. Furthermore, they experience good or bad peer pressure; children who experience bad peer pressure have difficulties such as discipline problems. The other aspect is nervousness; children who experience such emotions can have difficulty understanding at school.

SAT1F (int): *They are at the teenage stage and they are difficult, moody. those who are not performing well are sometimes scared to look for help. shy learners also are not asking questions in the classroom.*

`SBT1F (int): *the learner will always play during the lesson which results in disturbing other learners. If a learner is lacking understand in class.*

SAT2M (int): *If he is shy, he will not ask questions in the class.*

SBT1F (int): *Being parents at home, because parents are no more, and he/she automatically become the head of home and take care of the little ones.*

SBT2M (int): *Peer pressure, if the learner wants to study and other pressurized*

learner to go to party.

SAT2M (int) and SBT1F (int): ...*peer pressure.*

From my observations, before I commenced the interview with SAL4M at 15h01, I noticed that the learner was nervous as he trembled and made mistakes while speaking.

'He looked nervous because his hands were shivering little bite when talking with me and he made some few pronunciation errors. All this type of behaviour made me think that his confidence is not as high as of SAL1M. (Field notes, 15 September 2019)

Learners' views on factors that serve as barriers to academic resilience for learners

Learner participants disclosed that condemnation of the children affects them badly; for example, if a teacher condemns children, they will dislike that teacher extremely. On the other hand, if teachers' or parents' expectations are high, children might experience pressure. This pressure is not only from parents but also from fellow learners, and this makes learners experience severe pressure. Furthermore, learner participants discovered that a discipline problem of one learner can interrupt other learners in the classroom, and lack of private tutoring is a barrier to academic resilience.

SBL4F (int): *I think the criticism, everyone expects you to be the best learner. not pay attention to the subject because you do not like the teacher.*

SAL1M (int) and SAL5F(int): *the pressure is too much.*

SAL1M (int): *peer pressure.*

SBL5M (int): *noise is the challenge I face at school.*

SBL6M (int): *Not having extra classes.*

5.4.3.3 Sub-theme 3: Community

This sub-theme focuses on community factors associated with academic resilience barriers.

5.4.3.3.1 Category 1: Families

Teachers' views on families as a barrier to academic resilience

Teacher participants expressed that unfavourable family environments have undesirable effects on the academic resilience of learners. For example, in family environments where children experience hunger, parents are offensive towards children, and parents do not discipline children or get involved in their children's education.

SBT2M (int): *If the home environment is not conducive to the learner that can disturb the learner's performance.*

SAT2M (int) and SBT2M (int): *... I did not have food for days. ... there is a boy who have been abused by his father to the extent that he has to exit the high school.*

SAT1F (int): *parents are failing to reprimand their children. You don't ask them about their schoolwork.*

Learners' views on families as a barrier to academic resilience

Learner participants acknowledged that the illness of a family member can adversely influence learners' academic resilience because of a lack of attentiveness at school. In addition, other family aspects that hinder the academic success of learners from deprived contexts are pressure from parents to excel academically, lack of time and quiet areas to learn and a lack of available individuals to help children with schoolwork at home.

SBL6M (int): *it is very hurting to see your parents sick and that makes me to lose concentration. not having the time to study at home.*

SAL1M (int): *family also adds to the pressure that you are already facing.*

SBL3F (int): *I do not have a quiet place to read.*

SAFG: *I do not have anyone who can assist me.*

SBFG: *I would also say pressure from home.*

5.4.3.3.2 Category 2: Drug abuse

Teachers' views on drug abuse and crime as a barrier to academic resilience.

Teacher participants stated that secondary school learners use drugs which harm learners.

SBT2M (int): *Substance abuse (e.g., alcohol) can also affect the learner negatively.*

SBT1F (int): *learners from high school on Friday go there and buy alcohol and drink.*

Learners' views on drug abuse as a barrier to academic resilience

Learner participants affirmed that learners drink alcohol, especially on Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Additionally, individuals who use drugs in the community influence learners to use drugs.

SAL5F (int): *They go clubbing during the weekend.*

SBL6M (int): *It is the people who drink alcohol and smoke cigarettes.*

5.4.3.4 Discussion of theme 4: Factors posing risks to academic resilience and school success

Participants stated that water and electricity are barriers to learners' academic resilience and success. This finding is similar to the findings of Ebersöhn (2017), who found that this community experiences an insufficient supply of water and electricity, which poses learning barriers. Furthermore, this finding is similar with the findings of Bear et al. (2021) on both water and electricity. In addition, this finding correlates with the research results of Makhata et al. (2021) and Nkengbeza et al. (2021) on the lack of access to water and Makhata et al. (2021) on the lack of access to electricity. The above paragraph is in line with one of the characteristics of the asset-based approach, such as gaining access to resources to strive academically (Ebersöhn & Eloff, 2006).

Learner and teacher participants revealed that teacher aspects that act as barriers are teachers' attitudes, time and discipline problems. These findings are related to the research study conducted by Mampane and Bouwer (2011), Mogale (2014), Fatima et al. (2019) and Schut et al. (2020), who indicated that teachers' attitudes are barriers to achieving academic success. Teachers' attitudes and the teaching process are barriers

to achieving academic success. This result also corroborates the findings of Mampane and Bouwer (2011), Agasisti et al. (2018), Fatima et al. (2019) and Zenda (2020) on the teaching process as a barrier to learning.

Learner and teacher participants agreed that learners' behaviour and learners' personal aspects, such as psychological factors (peer pressure), are barriers to learning. There is a similar view with Prinstein and Giletta (2021) and OJO (2021) on peer pressure, and Wang et al. (2021) on teachers' pressure. However, there is no relation between the finding of this study and the study conducted by Sangma et al. (2018) who found that teachers' pressure has the ability to encourage learners to do well academically and OJO (2021) on peer pressure likewise.

Learner participants stated that lack of attentiveness is a barrier, which is similar to the findings of Du Plessis and Mestry (2019) and Omoniyi et al. (2022). Again, the findings of Blaker (2020), and Qamar and Nawaz (2021) corroborate the finding that the classroom situation is a barrier. Furthermore, this finding that extreme dislike is a barrier relates to the findings of Chere and Hlalele (2014) and Sa'ad et al. (2014). Nervousness is another aspect that serves as a barrier, according to Han et al. (2022), and it is related to the finding of this study on nervousness as a barrier. It correlates with the asset-based approach because it is person-centred, and the focus is on inner assets to make learners academically successful and resilient (Burnell, 2012).

Learners' views on factors that serve as barriers to academic resilience for themselves are expectations from others. This finding is contrary to the findings from Branca and Slusser (2022), Kyereko and Faas (2021), and Park and Byun (2021) when they commented that teachers' expectations will improve the academic success of learners. But the findings of this study on expectations are related to findings from the studies of Makhata et al. (2021) and Khanam et al. (2022) when they alluded that lofty expectations from parents will diminish learners' interest towards their schoolwork but not related to the idea that minimal expectations from parents can stimulate learners to thrive academically (Khanam et al., 2022). Regarding criticisms, the finding is related to the findings of Malik (2021) and Pabro-Maquidat (2021) because they found that unconstructive criticism is a barrier. Constructivism theory is associated with the above paragraph because of how teachers and learners uncover and acknowledge the facts (Lincoln & Hoffman, 2019).

Teacher participants view inadequate time as a barrier, and this is similar to the findings of

Madiba (2021) and Özüdoğru (2021). Additionally, time as a barrier to academic resilience is correlated with the findings of Al-Maskari et al. (2022) and Shareefa (2021). Furthermore, teacher participants indicated that workload is another barrier, which is comparable with the findings of Nashir and Laili (2021) and Mpanza and Govender (2022). All the above conditions are unfavourable in the classroom and act as barriers for learners to be academically resilient (West & Meier, 2020) because teachers become demoralised and the service they provide becomes adversely influenced (Jomuad et al., 2021).

Learner and teacher participants stated that learners use alcohol, and it is a barrier to academic resilience. This finding correlates with the Department of Education (2013), Parsa et al. (2015), Manu et al. (2016), and Mokwena et al. (2020) 's findings on the use of alcohol, which adversely affects the academic success of learners but not academic resilience.

Learner and teacher participants agreed that unfavourable family conditions hinder academic resilience. However, learner and teacher participants denoted dissimilar unfavourable family factors that are associated with barriers to academic resilience. For example, learner participants affirmed that discipline from parents relates to the findings of Yang and Zhao (2020) and Adeyinka et al. (2022). They further indicated child-headed households as a barrier, which collaborates with Diago's findings (2020). Abuse from the families is similar to the findings of Edinyang et al. (2019), and lack of food correlates with the studies of García and Weiss (2020), and Wolde and Belachew (2019). However, parent participants and field notes confirmed that School A does not offer learners food. This finding is not similar to the findings of Wolde and Belachew (2019), who indicated that schools that offer learners food are capable of assisting learners in succeeding academically.

Teacher participants stated insufficient physical space for studying which is related to the findings of Chungu (2018), Settersten et al. (2020), and Barrot et al. (2021). Teacher participants also stated household chores which are related to the findings of Chungu (2018), and disturbances from within the families are associated with the results of the studies from Park and Lee (2020), Barrot et al. (2021), and Islam and Tasnim (2021) on academic success, not resilience. All good and bad aspects of families towards children are associated with the bio-ecological system due to its interest in children's relations with parents and family conditions (Conway, 2017). On the other hand, teacher participants mentioned poor enthusiasm and the adolescent

developmental stage.

5.4.4 Theme 4: Multisystemic strategies to promote academic resilience and academic success

In this segment, I convey participants' viewpoints on the multisystemic strategies to promote academic resilience and academic success. To create the theme, I scrutinised the data acquired from the individual interviews with learners, teachers and parents / guardians. I classified data into four sub-themes: learners' personal protective factors social support (4.1); family protective factors (4.2); school protective factors (4.3); and contextual factors (4.4). Figure 5.4 is the graphic depiction of Theme 4 and its related sub-themes.

Figure 5.4: Overview of Theme 4 and its sub-themes

<p>THEME 4</p> <p>Multisystemic strategies to promote academic resilience and academic success</p>			
<p>Sub-theme 1</p> <p>Learners' personal protective factors</p>	<p>Sub-theme 2</p> <p>Family protective factors</p>	<p>Sub-theme 3</p> <p>School protective factors</p>	<p>Sub-theme 4</p> <p>Contextual factors</p>

Table 5.10 describes Theme 4 and presents the inclusion and exclusion criteria.

Table 5.10: Description, inclusion and exclusion criteria for Theme 4

<p>Description: Theme 4</p>	<p>This theme describes participants' views on the multisystemic strategies that could be put into place to promote academic resilience and academic success.</p>
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Inclusion criteria for Theme 4	All data that refers to participants' views on multisystemic strategies to promote academic resilience and academic success.
Exclusion criteria for Theme 4	All data that do not refer to participants' views on multisystemic strategies to promote academic resilience and academic success.

5.4.4.1 Sub-theme 1: The individual learner

Participants' views of strategies on a multisystemic level that can promote academic resilience and academic success: Teacher participants asserted that skills courses, exposure to the real working environment and excursions are essential strategies to help learners to be academically resilient. They alluded that teachers should organise excursions where learners can be exposed to the real working environment or career exhibitions for learners to be enthused by the awareness they obtain of diverse careers. Most importantly, teacher participants proclaimed that secondary schools should offer practical skills to promote accomplishment at schools regardless of adversative circumstances.

SBT2M (int): *I think will assist with the learner go and job shadow.*

SBT1F (int): *taking learners to educational trips.*

SAT1F (int): *if the department can introduce skills even at the lower levels.*

Learner participants stressed that to be strong mentally, soliciting assistance and private tutoring are good tactics to enhance academic resilience. Learner participants indicated that private tutoring should be organised at school and attended during vacation, as well as on Saturdays and Sundays. These private tutoring sessions can also be attended in other educational institutions. The reason for organising private tutoring is to encourage learners who are not doing well academically to be strong mentally, get assistance, and engage learners in their schoolwork most of the time.

SBL6M (int): *extra classes must be done introduced in the school to support*

struggling learners.

SBL4F (int): *... is for us to attend on holidays and weekends. stop undermining themselves and stand up for the challenges.*

SAL4M (int): *... spend more time on their schoolwork than on other things. Tell the teacher that they do not understand. ... go to their classmates and ask for help... join a study group... even if it is not a school based.*

The following extract is from a discussion on a Friday at about 11h05 with the deputy principal of School A about an arrangement with learners for a focus group interview the next day (Saturday).

'Some of these learners attend extra classes on Saturday between 07h00-15h00 and I should inform principal and the head of Saturday school [Kutlwanoong] about my intention to interview these learners' (Field notes, 23 August 2019).

This extract exposes my discussion with the mother of SAL1M at 11h00. The mother seems to attribute his success to private lessons:

'he attended extra classes at School B' (Field notes, 15 September 2019).

5.4.4.2 Sub-theme 2: The family microsystem

Parent participants stated the need for cooperation among parents and teachers, and parents must be approachable. Parent participants stressed that they should be approachable. You need to be peaceful and avoid negative emotions so that you do not scream at children and unconstructively criticise them. To be able to act with cognisance, you should ask for assistance from a supernatural being to deal with challenges effectively so that you can know the reasons why the child acts in that manner; otherwise, you cannot help the child effectively. They add that collaboration among teachers and parents should be about helping children with academic activities.

SBGP1F (int): *parents and teacher to work together in order to assist the child with his schoolwork.*

SAP1F (int): *you don't need to be angry and shout at the child and remind the child about his wrongdoing. As a parent you need to calm down and that's*

when you will get good reasons from the child.

SAP1F (int): you need to talk to your inner soul before you get upset ... you will be unable to assist the child anymore. You need to pray so that God can help you to handle the problems.

5.4.4.3 Sub-theme 3: The school microsystem

The teacher

Teacher participants specified that teachers should advance their teaching method. They should use learner-centred teaching strategies where learners are encouraged to collaborate and use individualised strategies to address learners' needs. In addition, teacher participants uttered that vernacular language should be used during the teaching and learning process. They further declared that lessons need to be presented authentically so that learners can simply comprehend the topic presented.

SAT2M (int): we should ... improve our learning and teaching methodology. ... giving them time to explain ... interact among themselves. we should use less of the mother tongue. giving individual attention...

SBT1F (int): some do not understand things theoretically but if it is practical it is easier to understand.

Learner participants acknowledged that individualised strategies, proxy teachers, involvement of flourishing individuals to inspire learners, and private tutoring are helpful strategies for dealing with learners' challenges. Learner participants declared that private tutoring is effective in enhancing learners' level of comprehension and proxy teachers are valuable in helping learners with their schoolwork. They further articulated that an individualised strategy is good for teachers to listen and act to help learners with their individual needs so that teachers can cooperate with flourishing individuals to encourage learners.

SBL1M (int): ...giving individual attention, etc to be supportive.

SAL4M (int): The teacher should provide extra classes for people who do not understand.

SBL5M (int) and SBL1M (int): opening and hearing our grievances and try to

solve.

SBL2F (int): *there should be a substitute to assist learners with their studies.*

SBL3F (int): *inviting successful people to the school to motivate them.*

The principal

Participants indicated that the principal should guide them so that teachers can not violate the school and request help from the district. Participants stated that the principal should further scrutinise any claim to develop the solution. Again, participants declared that the principal should ensure teachers perform their duties accordingly. To achieve all of the above, participants said the principal needs to be a front-runner, strong-minded and disciplined.

SBTF (int): *The principal advised that we should not do that because it is against the policy of the department.*

SBTF (int): *... learner was not performing very well and I notify the principal. The principals requested that the matter to be investigated*

SATF (int): *... again starts with discipline. It is not only for kids. It is also for the principal ...*

SAT2M (int): *The most important thing that she does is to lead ...*

SAL3F (int): *keeping the teachers on their jobs and telling them what to do regarding the work for that particular day. She tells the teachers to teach us.*

SAFG: *Our principal is very determined. When a teacher does not do his/her job, he always makes sure that the teacher does his/her job very well.*

SBGP1F (int): *The principal calls the district to assist with the problem ...*

School governing body

Learner and teacher participants stated that the school governing body plays a role in helping learners be academically successful and resilient. However, they indicated that the school governing body does exist in their schools even though it does not respond quickly to the school's needs. Furthermore, it is selective when it provides academic

opportunities to learners, and it should behave well.

SAT2M (int): *On the SGB side, they always delay when we need extra educator to assist. An educator will come at a later time... at the end of the day you cannot blame them, they are just there.*

SAFG: (SGB) *they should ask all learner who are interested to apply for Maths competition not to choose.*

SAT1F (int): *It again starts with discipline ... It is not only for kids. It is also for ... the SGB ...*

Digital technology

Teacher participants stated that e-learning should be used in schools because it thrills learners to learn through it. For example, teacher participants stated that they realised an improvement in learners' academic success after they used electronic devices for the teaching and learning process. In addition, other teacher participants alluded that using electronic devices for learning enhances learners' academic success. Moreover, teacher participants affirmed that learners should be provided with e-learning devices. They further indicated that learners are far smarter than teachers when it comes to the use of electronic devices. Therefore, teachers should be well organised because they are taught to utilise electronic devices for learning in the e-learning era.

SBT1F (int): *teaching them using technology because learners get excited when using technology. We are trained to teach our learners using technology.*

SBT1F (int): *These learners are very intelligent especially in terms of technology unlike we. I need to prepare considering the issue of technology so that we can be in the same level.*

SBT2M (int): *ICT to be introduced and provide laptop for learners to use in class. Let's introduce something new like laptops (ICT) and learner will be encouraged ... to learn and will see better results. As you know we are approaching the 4th Industrial Revolution, to arouse the learner's curiosity.*

SBT1F (int): *I connected my laptop to the projector and projected everything and they can see. The first time I did that they were very excited and performing better after that.*

5.4.4.4 Sub-theme 4: The community

Participants said that friendship and friends are helpful despite the fact that they do not reside in the immediate vicinity but in the same community because they support and aid each other. They provide valuable recommendations, such as being in control of your situation and making an application to request a bursary. Participants argued that some learners completed their studies successfully because of the influence of their friends. They further commented that friends affect each other's academic success because academically successful learners request help from their friends who are more academically thriving than them. Furthermore, participants alluded that people around their homes are also helpful because they help children retrieve information from the internet.

SBL2F (int): *I will normally seek assistance from my friends.*

SBFG (int): *I ask for help to those who get better marks than I do. even from other schools.*

SBFG (int): *I have some connection with some few students there. They live in my community.*

SBFG (int): *I am grateful to have friends like him who always tells me that it's always mind over matter. Which means that you should always control the situations and never let the situations control you.*

SBGP1F: *they help each even though they live far from each other ...*

SAT1F (int): *you must create that relationship of ... my friend and my everything.*

SBT1F (int): *the friends advised him to apply for NSFAS in order to study and they do encourage him. ... since he is Tebza's (pseudo name) friend he is encouraged to come to school and do schoolwork.*

SAT2M (int): *the friend that you keep have to do a lot with your performance. All the friend he (LA4M) keeps are very smart, focused and determined.*

SAT2M (int): *I was struggling, and I approached ... my friends, and they did assist me and I survived and finished my studies.*

SBGP2F (int): *... request neighbors to assist.*

SBGP1F (int): *Yes, she would go to the neighbours to access the internet and research.*

Learner and parent participants indicated that there is a facility that helps learners in their community. Learners go to this facility even during the weekends and they come back home in the evening. Learners view this facility as essential for their academic success because they gain knowledge which they could not acquire from fellow learners. Learner participants further indicated that learners from this facility share their newly acquired knowledge with others. Not only learners view this facility as crucial but also principals because they urge learners not to stop attending this facility because it enhances their academic success.

SBL3F (int): *he is always encouraging not to drop at Kutlwanong because it helps us achieve better marks.*

SAL1M (int): *I believe that the Kutlwanong centre is one those opportunities because it allows me resources and information that is not accessible to some of the students that I study with.*

SAL3F (int): *we have learners going to Kutlwanong and when they learned something new they will come and teach it to us.*

Grandparent (female) (int): *... on the weekends, she goes to a Centre and comes back home around 4 pm ...*

SAFG: *I normally use Kutlwanong centre ...*

SAFG: *... to attend Kutlwanong centre and sometimes we knock off at 17h00*

The principal of School A and one teacher from the community facility resonated with participants' view that there is a community facility known as Kutlwanong, and the following extract from my research field notes reveals this:

"I asked telephone numbers of the head of Kutlwanong. She told me that I should wait for somebody who will give me the numbers of the head of Kutlwanong and she took about 20-30 minutes to find his numbers" (Field notes, 23 August 2019).

'I went to Kutlwanong extra classes at about 11:00am and I requested the teacher who was in the class to allow me to speak with Sono and Thola' (pseudonyms (Field notes, 27 September 2019).

5.4.4.5 Discussion of theme 4: The multisystemic strategies to enhance academic resilience

There are seven strategies at the micro–system level. Learner and teacher participants stated that learners should be given individual attention. This finding is similar to the findings of Mendez and Bauman (2018), Zhang et al. (2020) and Cayubit (2022) when they indicated that individual attention enhanced learners' academic resilience. On the other hand, the findings of Zhang and Li (2019) that teachers who are not skilled to use individualised strategies will not address learners' personal needs are not similar with the finding of this study.

Learner participants stated that a proxy teacher is needed, and it is in collaboration with the research results of Jacoby (2021) and Shareefa (2021). Learner participants added that extra time is another strategy, and this finding is affirmed by Chih-Hao (2019), Yahiaoui (2020) and Yung (2020). However, the finding of this study on extra time contradicts the findings of Yahiaoui (2020), who claims that extra classes are not the solution for underperforming learners because Chih-Hao (2019) specifies that learners need a self-reliant learning strategy to strive academically, not extra classes. Further, learner participants stated that learners need to solicit assistance, and this finding is related to the findings of Broadbent and Lodge (2021), Giblin et al. (2021), Quyen and Ha (2022). The above views correlate with academic resilience theory because extra classes and self-reliance are protective aspects, and academic challenges are adversity and disadvantaged backgrounds as context, which are three major features of academic resilience (Shean, 2015).

Participants indicated that mental toughness encourages academic resilience and this finding is confirmed by the findings of Guillén and Santana (2018), Papageorgiou (2019), Chamrathirong et al. (2022). However, the finding of this study on mental toughness is dissimilar from the research findings of Guillén and Santana (2018), Cheung and Li (2019) and Papageorgiou (2019) because they indicated that learners who are not mentally tough are less academically successful and resilient.

Teacher participants stipulated that they should use progress teaching methods. This finding is similar with the findings of Mavuso (2014), Gafoor and Kottalil (2015), Mudadigwa and Msimanga (2019), Mudaly and Fletcher (2019), and Uleanya and Ke (2019) because they mentioned different teaching strategies that can assist learners to be academically successful and resilient. Furthermore, teacher participants were specific and mentioned learner-centred teaching strategies and this finding is similar with the findings of Yen and Halili (2015), Alkhawaldeh and Khasawneh (2021) and Eli (2021) and e-learning as the strategy which relates with the findings of Koikkalainen et al. (2016), Mampane and Huddle (2017), Kassymova et al. (2020), Piyaphanyamongkol and Nakdonte (2020). Lastly, they suggested the use of vernacular language throughout the learning process and this finding is comparable with the findings of Hammou and Kesbi (2021), and Khasawneh (2022). However, the finding of this study on the use of the mother tongue for teaching and learning is in contradiction with the research findings of Mabena et al. (2021), who found that the mother tongue for teaching and learning affects the academic success of learners unfavourably because they struggle to understand instructions written in English.

Teacher participants declared that lessons be presented authentically, and this finding is related with the findings of Gürgil (2018) and Shajalilova (2020) when they found out from their research that lessons presented authentically make learners academically successful and resilient. The findings of this study are not consistent with those of Ogegbo and Gaigher (2019), who found that academic resilience is adversely affected if teachers are not using authentic teaching strategies.

Teacher participants stated that learners should be exposed to career exhibitions and the introduction of skills courses. These findings are related to the findings of Gottfried and Plasman (2018) and Apriana et al. (2019) because they found that practical skills at schools can encourage academic resilience. However, there is no relation between this finding and the findings of Güngör (2020) who indicated that practical skills at school result in a lack of academic success. The introduction of skills education such as welding at the school level requires the National Department of Basic Education, which means it is in line with a macro-system. Moreover, the finding of this study on career exhibitions as a strategy to make learners academically resilient is similar to the study of Mnguni (2019) but not in collaboration with the findings of Mokodutlo (2019) and Mnguni (2019) on the issue of lack of career exhibitions which demotivate learners.

Parent participants stated that parents need to be sociable and that there should be cooperation among parents and teachers. These findings are similar to the findings of Damianidou (2018), Fuertes (2018) and Bones et al. (2021) because teacher-parent cooperation influences learners' academic success favourably, and it can enhance the academic resilience of learners from deprived communities. The finding of this study is not similar to the findings of Segoe and Bischoff (2019) and Berkant et al. (2019) when they say there is no effective communication between teachers and parents, and parents are not partaking in school activities of their children. It is in correlation with a bio-ecological system and specifically a meso-system because teachers are working together with parents.

5.5 Conclusion: Synthesis of the results across the themes

Participants in this study understood that resilience means being able to come back from difficult situations and experience success at the end. They understood that additional time and active participation of learners can assist learners to succeed academically. Participants believed that positive intrapersonal characteristics and motivation are good personality characteristics that can assist learners to be academically resilient and learners can be motivated by parents, teachers, and their deprived conditions.

Participants view support from parents, school principals, the SGB, the district, the Department of Education and Community, technology, and relationships with family members to enable learners to be academically resilient. Environmental aspects that act as barriers to developing academic resilience are community, school and digital

technology, and water and electricity. There are multisystemic strategies to enhance the academic resilience of learners from deprived communities. Furthermore, these strategies are centred on the use of technology in micro-systems, meso-systems, exo-systems, and macro-systems.

CHAPTER 6: SYNTHESISING THE FINDINGS, DRAWING CONCLUSIONS AND MAKING RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

In Chapter 5, I presented the results and discussed the findings of this study. I described the codes that I used to identify the participants with an aim to preserve their identity. I further depicted the themes, sub-themes, and categories that were developed from the thematic content analysis of the raw data.

This chapter provides a synopsis of the chapters in this study. Thereafter, I provide the findings according to the research questions that the study sought to answer, in answering the research questions (section 1.4) to address the primary research question. Then, the possible contributions of the study are made and afterwards, the limitations. Subsequently, there will be reflections and a discussion of certain aspects of the study. Furthermore, I recommend how personal characteristics, school, family members, community, and technology can be included within the policy, practice, and research to enhance academic success and resilience. Lastly, I conclude this chapter with closing reflections.

6.2 Overview of the study

I set out to find out how some learners managed to succeed academically under difficult situations. The study aimed to explore factors contributing to academic success among selected Grades 10 and 11 learners in the Thabo Mofutsanyane district, Eastern Free State.

Even though numerous studies on academic resilience and success were done in Africa and elsewhere, I discovered investigations in South Africa that explored how some learners from destitute contexts managed to excel academically. This means that these learners can flourish in school because they are academically resilient (see section 1.2). The investigation was performed with a focus on teachers parents/guardians, and Grade 10 and 11 learners. The scarcity of literature on the identified problem gave impetus to this study. Therefore, there is a need to discover aspects that help these learners to succeed academically under the hardships they experience.

In this study, I deliberated on paradigmatic views, utilised an interpretive paradigm (see section 4.3; 4.3.2 & 4.4.1), and used a case study research design, which required qualitative research methodology to answer research questions, tackle research aims, and answer the prepared research questions (section 1.5).

I elaborated on the reviewed literature on academic problems and techniques for dealing with these challenges globally and in South Africa, with special emphasis on the Thabo Mofutsanyane district (see section 2.2–2.4). I expounded on adolescent developmental stages and discussed the literature that emerged from a re-examination of resources such as journals, theses, and dissertations.

The conceptual framework that directed the investigation included the research questions and objectives specified in Chapter 1. The conceptual framework that directed this study comprised of academic resilience, two elements of positive psychology, constructivism and a bio-ecological system (see section 3.3–3.6). The above concepts were the fundamental bedrock of the conceptual framework.

I deliberated on the epistemological and ontological assumptions, the interpretivism paradigm and the qualitative research approach utilised in this study. I evaluated the appropriateness of pilot testing my interview questions before its use. I elaborated on the sampling methods used to select the participants and the hermeneutic methods of data collection and analysis. Likewise, I explained the non-probabilistic procedures used to sample learners, teachers, and parent/guardian participants. I discussed my reasons for using an instrumental case study research design. Furthermore, I highlighted how the data was triangulated and expanded on ethical concerns while ensuring quality research was conducted. I highlighted how the study could mitigate the difficulties I encountered.

Subsequently, I presented the results and discussed the findings. The analysis provided the four themes which were interpreted and discussed to generate the answers to the postulated research questions. The explanation and dialogue of the themes were managed according to the categories that appeared (Table 5.3). The four themes that emerged from the thematic analysis of data were:

- Understanding resilience, academic resilience, and academic success

- Resilience-enabling resources for academic success
- Factors posing risks to academic resilience and school success
- Multisystemic strategies to promote academic resilience and academic success

The participants' interpretations and statements were verified throughout specific excerpts from discussions with the participants and my recorded fieldwork notes and reflections on the research. While examining the transcripts, I reverted to the participants for member-checking. Member-checking ensured rigour and the study's credibility. The participants could access the transcribed data to clarify, approve, or disapprove the captured information (see section 4.6.1). To achieve the trustworthiness of the entire procedure, I kept a record of the changes that have been made in my field notes.

In the next section, I make conclusions based on the findings to further explain this study overview.

6.3 Findings according to the research questions

This study is based on one primary research question and five secondary research questions, as explained in Chapter 1.

I use the study's findings to answer the secondary research questions in subsections 6.3.1 to 6.3.5. Thereafter, I address the primary research question in Section 6.4.

6.3.1 Secondary Research Question 1: How do learners, teachers and parents/guardians view academic success and academic resilience?

Research objective: To explore how learners, teachers and parents/guardians view academic success and academic resilience.

6.3.1.1 Resilience and academic resilience

In this study, I explored how learners, teachers, and parents/guardians view resilience and academic resilience. The study found that resilience was viewed as a character, procedure, and success in the context of harsh conditions, meaning that harsh conditions should be present for individuals to experience resilience. Success is the

result of resilience because most learners, teachers, and parent/guardian participants understood resilience as the ability to succeed under harsh conditions. Quite the reverse, other participants understood resilience as a procedure. This suggests that for people to be resilient, they need to progress through difficult circumstances using their inner capabilities to succeed. The abovementioned statements imply that the person needs to take challenges as a learning process for an individual to succeed. During this process, the individual needs to do their utmost to excel.

However, this study revealed that some teacher participants do not understand the meaning of resilience. The reason is that two teacher participants could not define the word resilience, and others defined academic resilience as a character. It infers that they are confusing resilience and academic resilience, which means they do not understand the difference between these concepts. To support this idea, two teacher participants provided the meaning of academic resilience for resilience. In this study, it was found that academic resilience is defined as an individual's characteristics. It shows from participants' understanding that various individual characteristics trigger academic resilience, and it consists of individual character, adversity, and success within an educational context. As a result, participants regarded resilience and academic resilience as characteristics that enable individuals to prosper when faced with problems. Furthermore, participants agreed that resilience and academic resilience have three aspects: characteristics, challenges, and success.

6.3.1.2 Academic success

This study found that learners', teachers', and parents'/guardians' views of academic success differ. Learner participants revealed that to be academically successful, objective is a requisite. Therefore, the common immediate purpose is to succeed academically despite their different motives. On the other hand, teacher participants viewed learners' academic success as the effort of all educational stakeholders through encouragement, including learners. Their view implies that learners' academic success is a collective and individual effort because it depends on learners as individuals, people around them such as parents, teachers, principal, peers, officials from the Department of Education and community members, signifying that if neither collective nor individual effort is not provided, the chances of academic success are minimal. Then again, the study found that parent participants view conditions where there is hope, collaboration, security and support as key to attaining academic

success. Therefore, all stakeholders, including learners, are responsible for learners' academic success.

As a result, the study concludes that learners, teachers, and parents understand resilience and academic resilience similarly, and both entail individual capability, adversity, and triumph. However, learners and parents are more aware than teachers that academic resilience is more focused on school context than teachers. On the other hand, participants view learners' academic success as their responsibility, but teacher participants understand that it is the responsibility of all stakeholders. Therefore, learners, teachers and parents are responsible for learners' academic success.

6.3.2 Secondary Research Question 2: What are the challenges encountered by learners and how do their personal characteristics contribute to developing their academic resilience despite their challenges?

Research objective: To examine challenges encountered by learners and the personal characteristics that contribute to developing their academic resilience despite their challenges.

The study found that features that donate to the development of academic resilience and academic success are motivation, self-efficacy beliefs and confidence. It implies that learners believe they are capable to excel academically and trust themselves to thrive against all odds. Furthermore, their trust in themselves is boosted by people whom they value as significant because they do not harm their self-trust. It was found that only learner participants deliberated on confidence and their self-trust to perform academic tasks successfully. Teachers and parent participants are silent on these aspects. It signifies that they are not aware of the effects of children's confidence on their ability to be resilient.

The study revealed that learners are motivated by other people and their deprived conditions to be academically resilient, thereby succeeding academically. Therefore, it means learners are motivated by their underprivileged family context because this the condition does not discourage them from fulfilling their aspirations. It signifies that they view their situations as motivating. However, not only adverse contexts but also motivation from other individuals. The study found that teachers and parents/guardians continuously motivate learners, but their motivation is focused on

different aspects. For example, parents'/guardians' motivation focuses on learners' academic tasks, but teachers are more focused on learners' inner qualities. Besides the abovementioned extrinsic motivation aspects, there is internal motivation that learners utilise. The study found that learner participants motivate themselves using internal assets. It implies that academically successful and resilient learners spend time thinking and communicating with themselves and converting disappointment into a motivating force. So, it means disappointment may not be bad because it can encourage learners to succeed if they process it into an asset such as a motivating force.

This study reveals a multitude of challenges spanning cognitive, emotional, behavioural, mental, relational, and structural domains within both school and home environments, as well as broader community issues in QwaQwa, such as inadequate resource provision and a prevalent culture of intoxication. Factors like poor dietary habits and lack of focus at home compound these challenges. Within the classroom, concerns arise regarding the structural, relational, and behavioural dynamics among teachers and learners, significantly impacting both parties negatively. Unfriendly student attitudes and weak teacher-student connections exacerbate these issues, leading to disengagement and a reluctance to seek assistance, consequently resulting in academic underperformance. Moreover, external pressures such as high expectations and criticism contribute to a sense of overwhelm and discouragement among learners, impeding their academic resilience and hindering success development.

6.3.3 Secondary Research Question 3: How do families support the academic resilience and success of learners?

Research objective: To explore how families support the academic resilience and success of learners.

The study discovered that families support learners' academic resilience and success through establishing favourable interrelationships and access to digital infrastructures. The study found that parents/guardians and other individuals who are related to children by blood support them to use digital technology to engage in academic activities. Children use a variety of digital technologies to work together with other children. As a result, they support children to collaborate with others in their discovery of information on their own by assisting with the use of technological tools such as

software programmes through the provision of data to children.

The study revealed that parents/guardians provide technological assistance and academic, moral, and psychological support. It implies that parents/guardians encourage their children to use positive psychology because they encourage them to use positive emotions and help them access external assets. Further, they encourage them to be aware and use acceptable ways to interact with teachers, which leads to the development of good moral character. They make children feel that they belong to the school, enhancing school connectedness. Interestingly, the study unearthed that the learners are more connected with female parents/guardians. This implies that female parents/guardians are more easily connected with their children than males.

This study established that some teacher participants are uncertain about favourable interrelationships between learners and their family members because many learners live with their relatives. Furthermore, learner and parent participants know how learners relate with their family members because they live with them, rather than teacher participants who do not live with learners in their homes.

6.3.4 Secondary Research Question 4: What strategies do school communities employ to facilitate the achievement of learners' academic resilience and success?

Research objective: To explore strategies school communities employ to facilitate the achievement of learners' academic resilience and success. The study uncovered that the SGB, district, provincial government and principals assist learners to succeed in school despite adversity; for example, they assist financially, among other things. It connotes that they provide monetary aid to teaching staff payments. However, other learner participants do not share the same view about support from the abovementioned stakeholders. The reason is that learners are not aware of the support they provide because they are not directly dealing with them. Furthermore, principals and the SGB directly support teachers and learners. Hence, no other learner participants mentioned that they did not know whether they would get support from them.

The study found that parent and learner participants understood that district and provincial government support is focused on aspects that hinder academic success. All the above proves that the district and provincial governments help schools strive academically. Nevertheless, some learner participants are skeptical because they are

not certain about the assistance provided by the district and do not have any information about the help the district provides. This means that some learners are not aware of the role played by district personnel in supporting them in succeeding academically. Therefore, it implies that learners cannot understand the relationship between the provincial government and the district.

6.3.5 Secondary Research Question 5: What guidelines can be formulated to support learners in attaining academic resilience and, consequently, academic success?

Research objective: To formulate guidelines to support learners in attaining academic resilience and, consequently, academic success.

In formulating guidelines to support learners, the investigation found that technology, community, parents/guardians, schools and teachers support learners to attain academic resilience and, thus, academic success. Therefore, teachers use various teaching strategies that accommodate the diverse needs of learners, including technology. For example, learners from a younger age are exposed to work-related skills to develop an interest in technical skills. As a result, the school needs to provide a supportive school environment because learners spend more hours in school during the week. The school needs to create opportunities for learners to engage in extended educational programmes, have enough teaching staff and collaborate with community members and parents/guardians. Parents/guardians have an internal locus of control because they prefer to deal with their personal issues to interact with the school effectively. Furthermore, parents/guardians are community members. Effective collaboration of community members is needed, and the school needs collaborative community members. Therefore, community members need to collaborate with each other so that they can assist the school. The implication is that the community with an accessible transportation system, educational institutions and educational programmes, members with sociable characteristics, helpful neighbours, and friends can collaborate. For example, they can establish educational programmes where their children are assisted, in such a way that they can collaborate with schools to enroll their children in such programmes. Again, children in such a community can form friendships with peers who participate in these community educational programmes and who have similar views about the future so that they help each other.

6.4 Addressing the primary research question

What factors determine academic resilience as a component of academic success among selected Grade 10 and 11 learners in the Thabo Mofutsanyane district, Eastern Free State?

Factors that serve as determinants of academic resilience and academic success among selected Grade 10 and 11 learners in the Thabo Mofutsanyane district, Eastern Free State, are technology, social and personal aspects. For instance, positive intrapersonal characteristics include self-efficacy beliefs, confidence, self-dialogue, worry of failing, ability to use deprived conditions as intrinsic motivation and self-imagination. Other external factors include a positive relationship with their family members, particularly the mothers, assistance, and parental motivation. Furthermore, motivation from teachers, principals, and assistance from the SGB, district and the education department. Besides school factors, community aspects are the community centre, neighbours, and friends. Additionally, the use of mobile phones, television, and social media platforms.

6.5 Contributions of the study

The investigation aimed to contribute to the body of knowledge by addressing the gaps discovered and reviewed in Chapter 2. For instance, it is crucial to find features that can encourage disadvantaged Basotho (ethnic group) learners to succeed academically (Theron, 2019). The study's contribution is in line with the abovementioned gaps because the identified ten multisystemic items at the micro-system level are responsible for making learners from disadvantaged backgrounds academically resilient and consequently academically successful.

There is a dearth of research on conditions, cultural background and the interrelation of aspects that are related to living processes that occur in the body, mind, interrelations with others, and support from parents, teachers, parents and friends (Theron et al., 2022). The study contributed to the interrelation of protective and promotive factors and processes associated with learners' psychological aspects (motivation). The study found that extrinsic and intrinsic motivation are protective factors, and further self-talk, self-imagination, and viewing unfavourable situations as an opportunity are promotive factors that interrelate with goals. All these are psychological aspects of learners. The process is a series of actions learners take to attain academic success by talking and visualising themselves by comparing three

circumstances (the previous, current and the future) where they visualise themselves as academically successful individuals. The goal they set for themselves interrelates with intrinsic motivation because their goal is the result that they see mentally. All this makes learners academically resilient and academically successful.

Social context is a protective factor that promotes academic resilience, thereby making learners academically successful. The social context factor promotes academic resilience and success when teachers and principals support learners. At home, parents/guardians work together with teachers. Additionally, at the community level, community members, neighbours and friends with good individual characteristics collaborate and support children. The interaction among all individuals is the process which takes place within the social and environmental context of the learners with the people they live with.

Additionally, there is a lack of research on how schools can develop learners' academic success and resilience (Khodadadi et al., 2022). The study contributes to the body of knowledge by considering the support from the SGB, principals, and teachers to improve learners' academic success and resilience. The abovementioned aspects are interrelated, structural and/or cultural. Van Breda and Theron (2018) alluded that resilience-interrelated aspects are sporadic, and limited investigations describe 'structural or cultural' aspects (p. 241). For example, the principals' and the SGB's support for teachers is structural, and they succeed in supporting teachers because of their positive personal characteristics. Positive personal characteristics of principals and the SGB members correlate with their ability to provide support, thereby assisting teachers to use constructivist ideas in the classroom to develop learners' academic resilience and, as a result, attain academic success. Cultural aspects contribute to the use of non-physical entities and Sesotho (vernacular language). The interrelation is that using vernacular language helps teachers clarify the lesson so that learners' comprehension becomes enhanced. Also, the involvement of spirit assists parents with locus of control to interact effectively with their children. As a result, they are in control of supporting their children, and all the above aspects influence learners to be academically resilient, making them succeed academically.

It is important to establish the relationship between resilience, academic resilience, aspirations and electronic devices (Mampane, 2023, p. 63). The study contributes knowledge that internal (goals) and external (technology) protective factors relate to resilience and academic resilience because disadvantaged learners use technology

to realise their goals. Furthermore, goals influence learners to seek technological devices and software to utilise them, and access to devices and software is the promotive factor, while usage of these technologies is the process which results in resilience and, thereby, academic success.

The research studies conducted were empirical and theoretical investigations. Furthermore, others were conducted in South Africa. None of the above studies explored the determinants of academic resilience and, thereby, the academic success of selected high-functioning (resilient) learners using the qualitative research method. However, other studies from abroad and South Africa used the qualitative research approach. Nonetheless, all the studies did not use an instrumental case study design with individual interviews for teachers, parents/guardians, learners (focus group interviews) and academic reports to explore the determinants of academic resilience and, thereby, the academic success of Grades 10 and 11 learners from the Basotho ethnic group living in adverse conditions.

6.6 Limitations of the study

The study had some limitations, which I suggest that the upcoming investigations need to contemplate when doing the research. The study was qualitative research with limited participants ($N=20$). The research design employed in this study was a case study focused on only two schools in the Thabo Mofutsanyane district. The only document used to gather information from learners was academic records for term two, and only learners were interviewed individually face-to-face and participated in focus group discussions. The study was racially biased because only Africans were participants, and the views of Grades 8, 9 and 12 learners were not included.

Learners who experienced less academic success were not selected, and only secondary school learners, teachers, and parents/guardians participated in this study. Furthermore, parents/guardians who participated in this study were all females, and the views of principals, SGB members, district officials, and personnel from the provincial level were not included.

6.7 Reflections and discussion of certain aspects of the study

6.7.1 Main conclusions drawn from the study

The main factors contributing to the academic success among selected Grades 10 and

11 learners in the Thabo Mofutsanyane district, Eastern Free State, are the use of technology, as well as social and personal aspects. For example, these learners have self-confidence, and they are confident about their ability to succeed academically. They motivate themselves through self-dialogue and self-imagination. Furthermore, they are intrinsically motivated because they perceive their deprived conditions as encouraging not demoralising. Additionally, they are positive because mentally they managed to change the unfavourable state of their emotions into a positive one, such as turning worrying about failing into motivation.

The school community assisted them in succeeding academically through the support teachers and principals provided. Furthermore, other educational stakeholders, such as the SGB, district, and Department of Education, provided learners with resources to strive academically.

The positive role played by family members, such as parents, who establish positive relationships with their children, particularly the mothers, assists learners in striving academically. Parents also motivate their children in various ways to achieve academic success.

The community positively affected learners' academic success because they collaborated with friends to help each other. Also, neighbours were helpful towards these children, and the educational community centre they attended benefited them. Lastly, learners utilise various technological devices such as mobile phones and television to succeed academically. In addition, they use mobile phones to access different software such as WhatsApp, YouTube, and Google and to watch learning channels, if not on television.

6.7.2 Revisiting conceptual framework

In this study, I utilised a conceptual framework with theories such as academic resilience, positive psychology, and bio-ecological systems to facilitate the discovery and basis of academic success of learners from a deprived community and to establish relations amongst the abovementioned theoretical concepts on how they elucidate academic resilience and thereby the academic success of selected Grade 10 and 11 learners in the study.

Figure 6.1 depicts the relationship between bio-ecological systems, academic

resilience, academic success, and positive psychology, with two elements: the asset-based approach, appreciative inquiry, and constructivism. As a result of these interactions, learners were academically resilient and thereby succeeded academically. The study found that there is an interaction from a micro, meso- and exo-system. Furthermore, the asset-based approach and constructivism have an influence throughout these three systems while appreciative inquiry has an effect in a micro-system.

In a micro-system all assets at the disposal of learners are used and they are interrelated because support from teachers, parents, and friends is viewed as an external mechanism for the school to support learners. Moreover, teachers, as a supportive structure in the classroom, use the constructivist approach to support learners. They expose learners to the learner-centred teaching method whereby they present authentic lessons and engage them in extra classes and career exhibitions, while learners collaborate with friends in extra classes and during authentic lessons such as career exhibitions and in the community centre for private classes. Additionally, parents/guardians cooperate with their children to complete their school activities.

Again, learners use their internal characteristics (internal asset-based approach), which forms part of positive psychology, to construct the reality they face by talking to themselves and mentally visualising themselves reaching their goals. All the abovementioned aspects enable learners to be resilient, resulting in academic success. Furthermore, they also use their desire to do extremely well academically because they have self-confidence about themselves and their capability to excel academically. All these imply that they have a positive attitude towards life, which is one reason they have positive interrelationships with their teachers and parents/guardians.

In a meso-system, there is a relationship between the asset-based approach and constructivism because external assets enable learners to be academically resilient, thereby succeeding academically. For example, collaboration among teachers and parents where they discuss, agree and implement issues that can benefit school children, such as financial support for learners to attend extra classes and career exhibitions. Furthermore, the district and school collaborate to finance extra classes that learners should attend so that teachers who will teach these learners can be paid; they also give learners permission to travel to attend career exhibitions during the

weekend and normal school day. While the SGB and principal authorise excursions and inform the parents about such school trips. Also, the SGB and the principals organise and finance extra classes for learners, while the Free State Department of Basic Education and the district cooperate to make it feasible for the district, SGB, and principals to organise and finance extracurricular activities.

In an exo-system, all participants used technology; for example, teachers for teaching and learners used it to complete their academic tasks. Again, parents/guardians and neighbours encourage children to use mobile phones, television, WhatsApp, YouTube and Wi-Fi as external assets. All of the above made learners to be actively engaged in the process of attaining academic success. Alternately, in a chronosystem, learners lived with supportive members and in a macro-system was where the South African education system affected learners. Figure 6.1 depicts the interrelation of concepts from the theoretical conceptual framework, which results in learners' academic resilience and success.

Factors that determine academic resilience thereby academic success



Chronosystem: the family unit of learners where they live for long period of time.

Macro-system: the impact of South African education system on learners

Exo-system: technology

Asset-based Approach
 External assets: learners use mobile phones, television, WhatsApp, YouTube, and Wi-Fi. Teachers: teach using technology
 Grandparent: encourage use of television
 Neighbours: assist with access to cyberspace

Constructivism:
 Active participation of learners using technology

Meso-system: interaction between teachers and parents, district and school, School Governing Body (SGB) and principal, Free State Department of Basic Education, and district.

Asset-based Approach
 External assets: cooperation between teachers and parents, district and teachers, principal, and teachers, SGB

Constructivism
 cooperation between different stakeholders

Micro-system: learners' interaction with teachers, parents, and friends as community members and within themselves.

Asset-based Approach
 External assets: extrinsic motivation and support from teachers, parents, and friends.
 Internal assets: individual characteristics and

Appreciative Inquiry
 Positive learner, teacher, and parent relationships.
 School uses external support from teachers,

Positive Psychology
 Virtue: self-efficacy beliefs, confidence, and positivity
 Utilitarianism: positive self-talk and self-imagination.
 Hedonic: Avoidance of academic fail.
 Eudaimonia: desire to do extremely well academically.

Constructivism
 Learners: positive self-talk and self-imagination
 Teachers: Learner centred teaching method, authentic teaching method, extra classes, career exhibition.
 Friends: collaboration with friends
 Parents: collaboration with children in academic activities.
 Community centre for private classes

Academic Resilience

Academic Success

6.7.3 Researcher's reflections

My research project utilised case study methodology to discover thoroughly the life experiences of Grades 10 and 11 learners who succeed academically against all odds. SAT1F, who teaches some of the abovementioned learners in School A, during an interview indicated that parents do not manage how their children utilise mobile phones. I was touched and ashamed because I was one of those parents. During the discussion, I told myself that I must change my attitude toward my children's mobile phone usage because it impacts their academic success. Furthermore, SAT1F indicated that trying to be at learners' level by talking and acting like them affects their academic success. I thought about myself when I was a teacher that I did the same and believed in being at their level. I was deeply impressed because I know that when you do that, learners will be thrilled and fascinated by you and the things you say to them. Consequently, their understanding will improve, which will lead to good academic performance.

After the interview, SAT1F asked me how her responses were, and I replied that the interview went well. Furthermore, SAT1F indicated that she had thought the colleague I interviewed (SAT2M) before could have shared interview questions so that SAT1F could be prepared. Fortunately, SAT2M did not say anything and SAT1F was not brave to ask for interview questions. I felt relieved that they did not share the interview questions. I told SAT1F that it was correct for them not to share the interview questions. The reason is that SAT2M knew that I made it clear that everything we discussed is confidential. Furthermore, I indicated that there was no need because SAT1F would have stated untrue statements to impress me. Furthermore, SAT1F probed what learner participants said to me; I told SAT1F that it is not to be disclosed and generally, they said almost what SAT1F said to me. I further said to SAT1F that you said to me your teacher influenced you to love accountancy and to be a chartered account. You admired your teacher and that is exactly how your learners regard their teachers, the same as SAT1F when you were doing Grade 10. SAT1F was so excited, interested and happy about our discussions after the interview. SAT1F even asked me whether what I was doing was what SAT1F would do in her postgraduate study. I told SAT1F, yes; however, it will be determined by the research approach you take. Additionally, I stated to SAT1F that if you take a quantitative approach, you will surely employ questionnaires. I felt like she was motivated by the way we talked because it

encouraged her postgraduate study.

6.7.4 Methodological reflexivity

On the 31st of May 2019 at 11h18, I emailed a research application form and ethical certificate to the Free State Department of Education, and my email was acknowledged on the next day. On the 5th of August 2019, I submitted letters requesting permission to conduct research at the Thabo Mofutsanyane district director's office. Thereafter, I met with the circuit manager for both Schools A and B, and I explained myself and the intention of the meeting. We talked about permission to conduct research, and the circuit manager suggested that I should have started with the director before the Free State Department of Education because the director and the circuit managers are the ones responsible for those schools.

I understood that the district directors and the circuit managers could be consulted first and, thereafter, the provincial department. It implies that in the future, district directors and circuit managers should be given the power to acknowledge and authorise the research to be conducted in their district and schools. The reason is that they know the needs of the district, they are accountable, and they will feel appreciated and cooperative. Furthermore, they feel that they are more closely and directly responsible for learners and teachers at the district level than the provincial department, even though the provincial department is the only entity that can provide the final word to grant permission to conduct the research.

On the 6th of August 2019 at 11h33, I personally submitted a letter requesting psychological services at the district. I was requested to join the meeting with inclusive staff to explain my request, and in that meeting, there were four of us. I explained myself, the study, and its intention, and requested permission to conduct the research from the Free State Department of Education and consent forms for participants. They indicated they are willing to help because learners and teachers are involved, and a psychologist should be included. I understood that at the district level, they consider the well-being and protection of participants as very serious.

Moreover, they promised me a psychologist from the district, but the psychologist was unavailable. On the 21st of August at 16h23, I retrieved an email from a psychologist stating a condition such as visual impairment and the cannot drive, indicating a dependency on other colleagues for transport to schools and colleagues with whom they can travel and were mostly not authorised to do so; and, that I should use the

School Based Support Team (SBST) to refer learners for counselling. And the SBST should complete the SIAS documents with parental consent and be invited in writing to attend the cases. I realised that the lack of availability of a psychologist was the result of transport because the psychologist was visually impaired, and nothing was done by the cluster to facilitate the process. I made a private arrangement with an educational psychologist who was willing to assist if the need arose. Fortunately, there was no need for psychological intervention. In future, the district should facilitate the process of involving a district-based psychologist in the research if they want to address any psychological issues that might arise in the research as promised.

On the 12th of September 2019 at 14h53, two Grade 10 learners withdrew from the study the day I requested them to join the focus group interview. However, I met with four other learner participants, and we talked about their participation in a face-to-face interview. They agreed but insisted on using their mother tongue in the interview, and I agreed with them. In addition, participants were interviewed in English and Sesotho. For example, some learners and all parent participants were interviewed in Sesotho at their request. However, all teacher participants were interviewed in English. This means that participants who decided to be interviewed in Sesotho felt more comfortable and open about expressing their views in their mother tongue. Moreover, some learner and all teacher participants were more confident to be interviewed in English. For example, one teacher participant did not know Sesotho because she is a foreigner from a West African country, so it was better for this participant to communicate in English.

On the 13th of September 2019, I conducted interviews which were interrupted by teachers and the deputy principal of School A. The first interview with one learner participant who asked to be interviewed in Sesotho was interrupted by two teachers and the deputy principal of School A. I apologised to the interviewee, and thereafter, the deputy principal came in and interrupted the interview. I felt disrespected, unhappy, and uncomfortable because I informed the principal that I needed privacy. I thought that the deputy principal of School A disrespected us and infringed on the learners' right to privacy. I failed to display a friendly face towards the deputy principal. The next interview with a learner participant from School A was interrupted until I requested for privacy. Surprisingly, I was interrupted by the teacher who helped me to organise learners and the teacher knew very well that I emphasised privacy with participants. I intended to interview all participants at Schools A and B. Unfortunately, I had to change

and interview other participants at their homes because of a lack of privacy and availability of them at school and to avoid disturbances. For example, the parent gave us privacy and went out of the house until we finished the interview without disruptions. The above statement proves that interviews at home were not interrupted. Therefore, I realised that conducting interviews at school toward the end of the third term is not easy. Furthermore, I comprehended that conducting interviews at home is more effective than at school.

6.7.5 Researcher reflexivity

I am an African man who grew up in the township of Zamdela, Sasolburg, from Northern Free State in the district of Fezile Dabi from pre-school age until my early adulthood. I lived with my mother, stepfather, younger brother, my mother's younger sister and my grandmother from the maternal side of the family in the house. My mother and stepfather earned below minimum wage/salary. They both ended up unemployed and separated. As a result, I grew up living in a single-parent family because our extended family members had to find their own place to stay.

In 1990, I started to consider my academic success when I was doing standard six (Grade 8), and it was my first year at high school. I had a passion for succeeding, and I told myself that I would do well because I felt proud in a high school uniform. However, coincidentally, during this period, Nelson Mandela was released from Victor Verster prison, and beyond 1990, there was chaos in townships, including Zamdela. Additionally, I remember that it took almost two consecutive years of not wearing a uniform properly and bunking classes. Surprisingly, most learners during that time were promoted to the next grade, which made me question myself about how it is possible that we were promoted to the next grade.

I completed matric in 1995, and thereafter, I searched for employment and worked in a Sasolburg firm from 1996 to 1997. Subsequently, I was unemployed and started to search for information to further my studies. I obtained information about enrolling at the College of Education from one of the teachers who knew me and my family members, and this teacher was employed in another high school. As a result, in 1998, I enrolled in the College of Education at Sebokeng and stayed with my uncle until the end of 1998. Furthermore, I spent the remaining two years with my aunt in Sebokeng. However, sadly, my stepfather passed on in 1999, and I was told that my stepfather was proud of me. The reason might be that I was the first generation from his family to

be a prospective qualified teacher. Furthermore, I completed my Diploma in Education in 2000 and was employed as a qualified teacher 2002 in the Thabo Mofutsanyane district (QwaQwa).

I had a negative view of QwaQwa because people moved from this place to search for employment in Sasolburg and Gauteng. I never intended to find employment in this place because I heard that it is a rural area. Moreover, it was a former homeland of the Basotho (African ethnic group in South Africa). I knew this place as an economically disadvantaged area with no opportunities. However, QwaQwa was the only place that offered me an opportunity to be employed as a qualified teacher at Mamza H S (pseudo nym).

Mamza H S is situated in a rural area and has been one of the best academically performing schools for over a decade. Furthermore, Mamza H S was roughly 2 km away from Schools A and B. Additionally, Schools A and B were approximately 1 km apart, and School A was situated in the village, while School B is located in the township called Phuthaditjhaba. Moreover, Mamza H S competed with other best-performing schools, such as Schools A and B, which are part of this research study, implying that these three schools were the strength, hope and pride of the Thabo Mofutsanyane district. Besides the three schools mentioned above, most were not performing well academically in the Thabo Mofutsanyane district.

Furthermore, we knew that district officials would be visiting different schools and organising meetings and workshops with the single purpose of assisting poor-performing schools to succeed academically. Additionally, they stressed that all learners need to succeed academically, and it is the responsibility of teachers and school principals. On the other hand, teachers and school principals would indicate that it is also the responsibility of the learners, the SGB, and the parents. Amusingly, the provincial government would put pressure on the districts and claim that they were responsible, and in other instances, some directors were removed from their positions. Additionally, some politicians and academics commented that the poor academic

performance of learners originates from our education system. Furthermore, other academics even mentioned other countries with problems similar to those in South Africa. Therefore, I became concerned that all these matters implied that learners' academic success is a major concern in South Africa and globally. As a result, there is a need to assist poor-performing learners in being academically resilient and successful, particularly those who are from disadvantaged areas. However, some schools from disadvantaged areas are doing well academically, such as Schools A and B, from which participants for this study were selected.

I was not known by the principals of Schools A and B during my entire 15 years of teaching experience due to the fact that these schools during my time as a teacher in Mamza H S, the former principals were promoted to the district level and new ones were employed. However, a few teachers knew me personally in School B. The participants selected in this study were four teachers (two males and two females), 12 learners (six males and six females) and their parents/guardians (four females). I did not have personal relations with all the participants selected in this study, and we did not know each other before.

I established a trusting relationship with teacher participants. For example, I initially had an agreement to conduct interviews at School A, but the female teacher of School A decided to invite me to her residential area to conduct the interviews. After the interviews, we talked about learners because this female teacher (teacher at School A) asked me what learner participants said about her. However, I informed her that anything learners discussed with me is confidential and I will not disclose it to her. The reason is that I promised them that our discussion would be confidential and I do not want to betray them and you (female teacher) as well. Furthermore, the female teacher of School A told me about a fear of disclosing the views raised during face-to-face interviews with the district officials. In fact, I assured the female teacher that those views are confidential and the original names of all participants will not be utilised or given to any third party. The teacher expressed satisfaction after my response and further talked about her personal experiences that indicated how she struggled but persevered to be a qualified teacher.

I had a trust relationship with the other male teacher (School A) because the teacher requested me to come and conduct the interview after school working hours in the office of the teacher's choice and it was just both of us. After the interview session, the male teacher talked about his personal life from his country of origin. And also the teacher's life after he arrived in South Africa (QwaQwa) and the goals that the teacher wants to accomplish. The teacher revealed that he is not a South African, he comes from a West-African country. He further spoke about the suffering that the teachers endure back home. Furthermore, the teacher told me how his fiancée was badly treated by her family members, and that is the reason the teacher decided to marry that lady because she is mentally strong and resilient. The teacher alluded that they both went through very difficult times. On the other hand, the teacher appreciates the people of QwaQwa because they accommodated them very well. Furthermore, the teacher views this community as deprived.

The teacher further indicated that School A gave him the responsibility to keep the academic performance of learners at the same level as the previous teacher or to produce more than the previous teacher. According to this teacher, it was a challenging task but the teacher undertook it. Additionally, the teacher stated that currently the academic performance of learners that the teacher teaches is far better than that of the previous teacher. Moreover, the teacher commented that it is because the teacher spent more hours in teaching learners. Regarding more hours, the teacher alluded that they organise extra classes after normal working hours and during the weekends and holidays. However, the teacher raised a concern that some teachers in School A use their mother tongue throughout the teaching and learning process. In addition, the teacher saw that as a barrier to the academic success of learners. In relation with the teacher's goals, the teacher told me that he was enrolled with the University of South Africa and declared that one day he will collect data like I did because after completing the course he is doing he will enrol for a Master's degree. Other teachers from School B showed interest by telling me how they help learners to succeed academically after the interview sessions. For example, one male teacher from School B attested that they do their utmost to assist learners to succeed academically.

On the other hand, I managed to establish a good relationship with learner participants because they were open to me, but a few occurrences made me experience negative emotions. However, before I can elaborate on the good relationship I had with learners, there were a few events that happened which made me feel bad about myself and worried. Furthermore, the origin of these negative emotions was that I miscommunicated with one female learner. We had an agreement that I will come and pick her up after extra classes in the township called Phuthaditjhaba, QwaQwa on Saturday. Unfortunately I forgot to pick the child up after extra classes and the learner waited for me until late in the evening. I called the mother and she replied that the child had not arrived at home and it was around 19h20. I was panicking, thinking what if the child was kidnapped. My worst fear was what if she was raped. I called my supervisor and explained the situation; she told me that I need to avoid such incidences to happen in future. I felt relieve after calling the parent for the fourth time and she replied that the child had arrived safely. I learned that in future I need to write down the appointments in my dairy and do a follow up.

I felt that this learner and the parent are good people, and they had a positive mentality. For example the same learner participant welcomed me with a two litre cold drink and the child was respectful and humble. I felt pity because I felt that it was my mistake for the child to arrive home that late and asked for forgiveness. The mother of this learner was not at home during the interview session because of the funeral service attended by the mother in their village. However, the mother knew that I would conduct a face-to-face interview session that day with her child. As a result, I learned that both learner participant and the mother trusted me, even though they knew me for the first time. |At first glance, the socio-economic status of that family seemed like it was at the low level.

The second unfortunate situation was that I met other female learner participants while I was driving to attend an appointment for an interview session with another learner who was in an extra class. I stopped the car and I asked them where are they going. The learner participants replied that they are going home, and I decided to give the learners a ride. On our arrival at home, the learner participant requested me to proceed with the interview in the car outside the yard of the learner's home. We

proceeded with the interview and after the interview session, we went inside the learner's home. I met one of my former colleagues from Mamza HS at the shopping complex and they indicated to me that the learner participant told them about the research to be conducted. Due to the reason that I struggled to conduct interviews at school for other children because of extensive educational programmes they are subjected to, my former colleague invited me to their house to interview the other female learners. We agreed with the mother and grandmother of the child to visit them and conduct the face-to-face interview. I found the learner participant in the house with the grandmother, mother and former colleague. Then the grandmother gave us space in the dining room to conduct a face-to-face interview with the learner. From parent participants, I met the aunty of one of the learner participants at her workplace. The aunty told me that she will be glad to be interviewed on behalf of the biological parent of the learner. The reason was that the biological parent was busy at work and it will be difficult for the parent to be interviewed due to the parent's work condition. However, the aunty indicated that if I want to interview the biological parent I can do so and I agreed to continue the interview with the aunty. The interview was conducted at the aunt's workplace because she spoke and agreed with the school principal to attend the interview session at the school. The aunt requested me to conduct the interview in Sesotho (vernacular language), we proceeded with the interview and I realised that the aunt was so happy to speak about the learner participant. After the interview session, the aunt said that the reason for insisting to be part of the interview was that she is so concerned about the education of the learner participant.

6.8 Recommendations

Regarding this part of the study, I proposed the following recommendations for policy, practice, and research in the field of education. Considering the current academic performance trend, learners from a disadvantaged context need to be supported to attain academic resilience and thereby academic success.

6.8.1 Policy

The Department of Basic Education at national level is being encouraged to develop and adopt policies in secondary schools focusing on vernacular language and skills to enhance academic resilience and academic success. I proposed the

abovementioned fact because this study revealed that learners and teachers are aware of the use of vernacular language in the teaching and learning process and in technical skills/subjects at secondary schools. It is recommended that vernacular language be used for technical skills / subjects at all secondary schools to enhance academic resilience and thereby academic success.

The Department of Basic Education at national level should establish programmes on how parents can establish a positive environment, and in the Life Orientation curriculum they should add positive thinking, self-imagination and self-talking strategies for learners to enhance academic resilience and success. Again, they should make provision of e-learning devices towards learners' compulsory and teachers' workshops that deal with the effective use of electronic devices.

6.8.2 Practice

The subsequent recommendations are for practice in the school and home to develop learners' academic resilience which will lead to their academic success: The schools should use technology, organise extra classes and encourage learners to attend with an aim to stimulate them. On other hand, principals need to be front-runners, strong-minded and disciplined to guide, hold teachers accountable for their duties, investigate the matter before providing solutions and ask for help from the district.

Teachers should motivate learners in the classroom, invite successful individuals to motivate learners at schools and encourage parents to motivate their children. Again, teachers should enhance learners' positivity, self-efficacy and confidence by making certain that learners are convinced that they believe in them. Teachers should encourage learners to have goals and use an individualised strategy to promote academic success and resilience. Parents and teachers need to teach learners to be persistent, encourage them to seek assistance from other people and learners should establish constructive relationships with family members.

6.8.3 Research

It is recommended that future research study be conducted to find out how private tutoring, proxy teachers and supernatural powers enhance academic resilience, and thereby academic success. Also, research is needed to explore how the department

of education, district, the SGB and school principal promote the academic resilience and academic success of learners.

Research is needed to establish the relationship between the use of financial resources, teachers' motivation, private tutoring, academic resilience and the academic success of learners. Also, the use of electronic devices with academic resilience and academic success. In addition, investigation is needed to understand how intelligence as a biological aspect relates with psychological, social and environment aspects of the learners to make them to be academic resilient and successful. The research is needed to understand the interrelationship of cultural issues that exist from neighbours, the community centre and friends on how they relate to promote academic resilience and academic success. Lastly, a similar study is recommended to replicate the findings of this study with the same contextual background.

6.9 Closing reflections

I am an African in South Africa who lived in a township and was exposed to various adversities at school, home and in the community. In addition, despite adversity, I completed Grade 12 and a Diploma in Teaching through assistance from others. Furthermore, I was employed in one of the best-performing schools in the Thabo Mofutsanyane district and enrolled at various institutions for higher education. Additionally, I completed an MEd in the Psychology of Education and registered for a PhD (Psychology of Education) to research academic success and resilience. In the process of this research, I have come to understand the importance of nurturing learners' resilience so they can achieve and be successful in school and in future studies.

In conclusion, this thesis delved into the vital intersection of resilience and academic success among Grades 10 and 11 learners in the Thabo Mofutsanyane district of the Eastern Free State. Through rigorous exploration and analysis, it sheds light on the intricate dynamics at play, emphasising the importance of fostering resilience as a key component of achieving educational goals. As we navigate the complexities of the educational landscape, understanding and nurturing resilience in learners emerge as indispensable components for promoting their holistic development and ensuring their academic success.

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APPENDIX A: Ethical Clearance certificate from the University of South Africa



UNISA COLLEGE OF EDUCATION ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Date: 2019/05/15

Ref: **2019/05/15/43293158/16/MC**

Dear Mr Tshalala

Name: Mr SD Tshalala

Student: 43293158

Decision: Ethics Approval from
2019/05/15 to 2024/05/15

Researcher(s): Name: Mr SD Tshalala
E-mail address: tshalsd@unisa.ac.za
Telephone: +27 82 801 1996

Supervisor(s): Name: Prof K Mohangi
E-mail address: mohank@unisa.ac.za
Telephone: +27 83 779 1771

Title of research:

Exploring resilience as a component of academic success among selected grade 10 and 11 learners in Thabo Mafutsanyane District, Eastern Free State.

Qualification: PhD in Psychology of Education

Thank you for the application for research ethics clearance by the UNISA College of Education Ethics Review Committee for the above mentioned research. Ethics approval is granted for the period 2019/05/15 to 2024/05/15.

*The **medium risk** application was reviewed by the Ethics Review Committee on 2019/05/15 in compliance with the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics and the Standard Operating Procedure on Research Ethics Risk Assessment.*

The proposed research may now commence with the provisions that:

1. The researcher(s) will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and principles expressed in the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics.



University of South Africa
Pretter Street, Muckleneuk Ridge, City of Tshwane
PO Box 392 UNISA 0003 South Africa
Telephone: +27 12 429 3111 Facsimile: +27 12 429 4150
www.unisa.ac.za

2. Any adverse circumstance arising in the undertaking of the research project that is relevant to the ethicality of the study should be communicated in writing to the UNISA College of Education Ethics Review Committee.
3. The researcher(s) will conduct the study according to the methods and procedures set out in the approved application.
4. Any changes that can affect the study-related risks for the research participants, particularly in terms of assurances made with regards to the protection of participants' privacy and the confidentiality of the data, should be reported to the Committee in writing.
5. The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to any applicable national legislation, professional codes of conduct, institutional guidelines and scientific standards relevant to the specific field of study. Adherence to the following South African legislation is important, if applicable: Protection of Personal Information Act, no 4 of 2013; Children's act no 38 of 2005 and the National Health Act, no 61 of 2003.
6. Only de-identified research data may be used for secondary research purposes in future on condition that the research objectives are similar to those of the original research. Secondary use of identifiable human research data requires additional ethics clearance.
7. No field work activities may continue after the expiry date **2024/05/17**. Submission of a completed research ethics progress report will constitute an application for renewal of Ethics Research Committee approval.

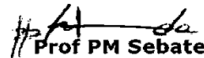
Note:

*The reference number **2019/05/15/43293158/16/MC** should be clearly indicated on all forms of communication with the intended research participants, as well as with the Committee.*

Kind regards,



Prof AT Motlhabane
CHAIRPERSON: CEDU RERC
motlhat@unisa.ac.za



Prof PM Sebate
ACTING EXECUTIVE DEAN
Sebatpm@unisa.ac.za

Approved - decision template – updated 16 Feb 2017

University of South Africa
Preller Street, Muckleneuk Ridge, City of Tshwane
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APPENDIX B: Turnitin report

EXPLORING RESILIENCE AS A COMPONENT OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS AMONG SELECTED GRADE 10 AND 11 LEARNERS IN THABO MOFUTSANYANEDISTRICT, EASTERN FREE STATE

ORIGINALITYREPORT

18%	11%	14%	
SIMILARITYINDEX	INTERNETSOURCES	PUBLICATIONS	STUDENT PAPERS

PRIMARYSOURCES

	uir.unisa.ac.za Internet Source	4%
	hdl.handle.net Internet Source	
	Submitted to University of South Africa Student Paper	<1%
	scholar.ufs.ac.za Internet Source	<1%
	Venter, Marie. "A teacher's experience of implementing the asset-based approach to teach Grade 7 learners.", Proquest, 2015. Publication	<1%
	Milagros-Guillen, Vanessa. "What Are the Lived Experiences of Frst-Generation Latinx College Students in Central Florida?How Do The'r Experiences Encourage the Development and Achievement of Academic	<1%

APPENDIX C: Language editing letter

20 November 2023

DECLARATION OF LANGUAGE EDITING

This serves to confirm that I have completed a language edit on the Philosophy Doctor in Psychology Education thesis titled:

‘EXPLORING RESILIENCE AS A COMPONENT OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS AMONG SELECTED GRADE 10 AND 11 LEARNERS IN THABO MOFUTSANYANE DISTRICT, EASTERN FREE STATE’ – by Sehloho Daniel Tshalala.

I declare that I have edited and proofread this thesis. My involvement was restricted to language usage, spelling and punctuation; completeness and consistency; referencing style; formatting of headings, tables, figures and the table of contents; and general document formatting.

I did no structural re-writing of the content.

Sincerely

Annie de Sá (Electronic signature withheld for security reasons)

Language Editor and Proofreader

Email: annidesa456@gmail.com

Telephone: 083 766 1190

APPENDIX D: Permission to conduct research in Thabo Mofutsanyane District

Enquiries: KK Motshumi
Ref: Notification of research: SD Tshalala
Tel. 051 404 9221 / 079 503 4943
Email: K. Motshumi@fseducation.gov.za



education
Department of
Education
FREE STATE PROVINCE

District Director
Thabo Mofutsanyane District

Dear Ms. Mabaso

NOTIFICATION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH PROJECT IN YOUR DISTRICT BY SD TSHALALA

The above mentioned candidate was granted permission to conduct research in your district as follows:

1. **Topic:** Exploring resilience as a component of academic success among selected Grade 10 and 11 learners in Thabo Mofutsanyane District, Eastern Free State

List of schools involved: Khola-Thuto and Beacon Secondary Schools in Thabo Mofutsanyane

Target Population: 12 learners who are living in disadvantaged background but performing well academically and are in grade 10 and 11. 4 teachers teaching learners who are living in disadvantaged background but performing well academically and 4 Parents of learners who are living in disadvantaged background but performing well academically.

2. **Period:** From date of signature of this letter until 30 September 2019. Please note the department does not allow any research to be conducted during the fourth term (quarter) of the academic year nor during normal school hours.
3. **Research benefits:** To assist learners who are not experiencing academic success to be academically successful by developing guidelines/framework to support less academically resilient learners from poor socio-economic background.
4. Logistical procedures were met, in particular ethical considerations for conducting research in the Free State Department of Education.
5. Strategic Planning, Policy and Research Directorate will make the necessary arrangements for the researchers to present the findings and recommendations to the relevant officials in the district.

Yours sincerely

DR JEM SEKOLANYANE
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

DATE: 26/07/2019

RESEARCH APPLICATION SD TSHALALA NOTIFICATION 19 JULY 2019 THABO MOFUTSANYANE DISTRICT

Strategic Planning, Research & Policy Directorate

Private Bag X20565, Bloemfontein, 9300 - Old CNA Building, Room 318, 3rd Floor, Charlotte Mexeke Street, Bloemfontein

Tel: (051) 404 9283 / 9221 Fax: (086) 6678 678

APPENDIX E: Letter to request for permission to conduct research in Thabo Mofutsanyane district

Title of the study: Exploring resilience as a component of academic success among selected Grade 10 and 11 learners in Thabo Mofutsanyane District, Eastern Free State

Ms Mabaso, FL

District director

Telephone numbers: 058 7136959

Cell number: 082 2025788

Email address: paso48@yahoo.com

Dear Ms Mabaso, FL

I, SD Tshalala am doing research under supervision of Mohangi K, a Professor in the Department of Psychology of Education towards a PhD at the University of South Africa. I have funding from Human Resource Department from University of South Africa for conducting the research because I am PhD student and I applied for that financial support. I am inviting you to participate in a study entitled 'Exploring resilience as a component of academic success among selected Grade 10 and 11 learners in the Thabo Mofutsanyane District, Eastern Free State'.

The aim of the study is to explore components that contribute to academic success among selected Grade 10 and 11 learners in Thabo-Mofutsanyane District, Eastern Free State.

The study will entail four educators, four parents of selected learners. Six Grade 10 and six Grade 11 learners from two secondary schools in Thabo-Mofutsanyane district. I will request school principal to provide me with list of top ten learners from Grade ten to 11. Thereafter, I will select the names of first top five learners. The reason for including secondary school learners is that they are vulnerable because they are living in a disadvantaged area with variety of adversities. However, some learners are able to succeed academically irrespective challenges they are faced with and those who are not performing well academically need to be assisted.

Data will be collected from these participants in the form of document review, individual and focus group interviews using digital recording during the weekends. Identity of participants and two schools involve will be treated confidentially and their right to privacy will be protected.

The benefits of this study are that the researcher will conduct workshops on how learners can enhance their academic resilience. The focus of the workshops will be on coping strategies learners can use that include using their micro-system such as teachers, parents, peers and school to be able to succeed academically, as well as their intrapersonal factors such as self-efficacy and academic self-efficacy. For educators, the researcher is also willing to induct teachers about strategies teachers play, their attitude

and the part that school should play to assist less resilient learners and those who are not performing well academically. Another purpose of the workshop will be to make teachers aware of the protective factors that encourage learners' resilience in the school and the characteristics of resilient learners so that teachers can incorporate them as one of their strategic role models for the less resilient learners. Potential benefits for parents are that the researcher will discuss with parents the strategies that they can utilize to help their children to be academically resilient such as being or finding a positive role model in the home or community for their children, creating secure attachment with them and encouraging children to develop positive academic self-efficacy.

Potential risks are that learners who will participate in focus groups might find themselves disclosing their personal information to each other and there is an additional risk of emotional discomfort. The researcher will inform all participants that what will be discussed in focus groups should never be mentioned outside focus group interview. Moreover, the researcher will make participants aware that if there is a sensitive issue that they want to disclose there is possibility that other members of the group discussion might disclose it outside the focus group. Under such conditions the researcher will not be able to offer confidentiality. To avoid emotional discomfort, the researcher will discuss with participants a variety of issues that are of concern to them regarding the research study. For an example, we might discuss the aim and results of the research, and provide participants with contact details of the person they might contact if they feel that they want to make a comment. The researcher will address misunderstandings of the participants and their concerns.

Although there will be no reimbursement for participation in the research, learners will be provided with a lunch box (Coca-Cola soft drink can of 300ml and toasted chicken mayo).

Feedback procedures will entail the presentation of results and recommendations to the staff, School Governing Bodies and parents involved in the study. Furthermore, the researcher is willing to be consulted by these two schools to assist them regarding the strategies to be used to help learners to perform better academically. In the case of individual learners participating in the study, the researcher will present summarized findings and recommendations to them as the strategies they can use to enhance their academic resilience and academic self-efficacy and the necessity of school connectedness for their academic success.

I can be contacted on: tshalalasd@gmail.com or 071 9838342

My supervisor can be contacted on : mohank@unisa.ac.za or 012 429 2126

Yours sincerely



Tshalala, Sehloho Daniel
PhD student

APPENDIX F: Letter of request to circuit manager for permission to conduct research in schools A and B

Title of the study: Exploring resilience as a component of academic success among selected Grade 10 and 11 learners in the Thabo Mofutsanyane District, Eastern Free State

Mr Zim, S

The circuit manager

Telephone numbers: not applicable

Cell numbers: 0835549012

Email address: zimprince111@gmail.com

Dear Mr Zim, S

I, SD Tshalala am doing research under the supervision of Mohangi K, a Professor in the Department of Psychology of Education towards a PhD at the University of South Africa. I have funding from Human Resource Department from University of South Africa for conducting the research because I am PhD student and I applied for that financial support. I am inviting you to participate in a study entitled 'Exploring resilience as a component of academic success among selected Grade 10 and 11 learners in the Thabo Mofutsanyane District, Eastern Free State'.

The aim of the study is to explore components that contribute to academic success among selected Grade 10 and 11 learners in Thabo-Mofutsanyane District, Eastern Free State.

Your school has been selected because it has been for a long period of time you perform well academically irrespective of disadvantaged environmental background.

The study will entail four educators, four parents of selected learners, six Grade 10 and six Grade 11 learners from two secondary schools in Thabo-Mofutsanyane district. I will request school principal to provide me with list of top ten learners from Grade ten to 11. Thereafter, I will select the names of first top five learners. The reason for including secondary school learners is that they are vulnerable because they are living in a disadvantaged area with variety of adversities. However, some learners are able to succeed academically irrespective challenges they are faced with and those who are not performing well academically need to be assisted.

Data will be collected from these participants in the form of document review, individual and focus group interviews using digital recording during the weekends. Identity of participants and two schools involve will be treated confidentially and their right to privacy will be protected.

The benefits of this study are that the researcher will conduct a workshop on how learners can enhance their academic resilience. The focus of workshop will be on coping strategies learners can use that include using their micro-system such as educators, parents, peers, the school and their intrapersonal factors such as self-efficacy and academic self-efficacy to be able to succeed academically. For teachers, the researcher also intends to discuss strategies they can use to assist learners to become academically resilient. These strategies will relate to the role teachers should play, their attitude and the part that the school should play to assist less resilient learners and those who are not performing well academically. The discussion should make teachers aware of the protective factors in the school that encourage learners' resilience and also of the characteristics of resilient learners so that teachers can incorporate such learners as role models for less resilient learners.

The potential benefit for parents is that the researcher will discuss with parents the strategies that they can utilize to help their children to be academically resilient such as providing them with a positive role model in the home or community, creating secure attachment with them and encouraging children to develop positive academic self-efficacy.

Potential risks are that learners who will participate in focus group interviews might find themselves disclosing personal information to each other, leading to an additional risk of emotional discomfort. The researcher will inform all participants that what is discussed in the focus group should never be mentioned outside the focus group interview. Moreover, the researcher will make participants aware that any sensitive issue that they may disclose in the group discussion is at risk of being disclosed by other members of the group to people outside the focus group. Under such conditions the researcher will not be able to guarantee confidentiality. To avoid emotional discomfort, the researcher will discuss with participants a variety of issues that might be of concern to them regarding the research study. For an example, we might discuss the aim and results of the research, and provide participants with contact details of the person they might contact they feel that they want to make a comment. The researcher will address any misunderstandings and concerns related to the research.

Although there will be no reimbursement for participation in the research, learners will be provided with a lunch box (Coca-Cola soft drink can of 300ml and toasted chicken mayo).

Feedback will entail the presentation of results and recommendations to the staff and School Governing Bodies concern and parents involved in the study. Furthermore, the researcher is available to be consulted by staff from these two schools to assist them regarding the strategies to be used to help learners to perform better academically. In the case of individual learners who participated in the study, the researcher will present summarized findings and recommendations to them as the strategies they can use to enhance their academic resilience and academic self-efficacy and to stress importance of school connectedness for their academic success.

I can be contacted on: tshalalasd@gmail.com or 071 9838342

My supervisor can be contacted on: mohank@unisa.ac.za or 012 429 2126

Yours sincerely



Tshalala, Sehloho Daniel

PhD student

APPENDIX G: Sample of request to school principals for permission to conduct research

Title of the study: Exploring resilience as a component of academic success among selected Grade 10 and 11 learners in the Thabo Mofutsanyane District, Eastern Free State

Dear Principal,

I, SD Tshalala doing research under the supervision of Mohangi K, a Professor in the Department of Psychology of Education towards a PhD at the University of South Africa. We have funding from Human Resource Department from University of South Africa for conducting the research because I am PhD student and I applied for that financial support. I am inviting you to participate in a study entitled 'Exploring resilience as a component of academic success among selected Grade 10 and 11 learners in the Thabo Mofutsanyane District, Eastern Free'.

The aim of the study is to explore components that contribute to academic success among selected Grade 10 and 11 learners in Thabo-Mofutsanyane District, Eastern Free State.

Your school has been selected because it has been for a long period of time you perform well academically irrespective of disadvantaged environmental background.

The study will entail four educators, four parents of selected learners, six Grade 10 and six Grade 11 learners from two secondary schools in Thabo-Mofutsanyane district. I will request school principal to provide me with list of top ten learners from Grade ten to 11. Thereafter, I will select the names of first top five learners. The reason for including secondary school learners is that they are vulnerable because they are living in a disadvantaged area with variety of adversities. However, some learners are able to succeed academically irrespective challenges they are faced with and those who are not performing well academically need to be assisted.

Data will be collected from these participants on weekends in the form of document review, individual and focus group interviews and audio digital recordings. Identity of school A and participants involve will be treated confidentially and their right to privacy will be protected.

The benefits of this study are that the researcher will conduct a workshop on how learners can enhance their academic resilience. The focus of the workshop will be on coping strategies learners can use that include using their micro-system such as educators, parents, peers, the school and their intrapersonal

factors such as self-efficacy and academic self-efficacy to be able to succeed academically. For teachers, the researcher also intends to discuss strategies they can use to assist learners to become academically resilient. These strategies will relate to the role teachers should play, their attitude and the part that the school should play to assist less resilient learners and those who are not performing well academically. The discussion should make educators aware of the protective factors in the school that encourage learners' resilience and also of the characteristics of resilient learners so that teachers can incorporate such learners as role models for the less resilient learners.

The potential benefit for parents is that the researcher will discuss with parents the strategies that they can utilize to help their children to be academically resilient such as providing them with a positive role model in the home or community, creating secure attachment with them and encouraging children to develop positive academic self-efficacy.

Potential risks are that learners who will participate in focus group interviews might find themselves disclosing personal information to each other, leading to an additional risk of emotional discomfort. The researcher will inform all participants that what is discussed in the focus group should never be mentioned outside the focus group interview. Moreover, the researcher will make participants aware that any sensitive issue that they may disclose in the group discussion is at risk of being disclosed by other members of the group to people outside the focus group. Under such conditions the researcher will not be able to guarantee confidentiality. To avoid emotional discomfort, the researcher will discuss with participants a variety of issues that might be of concern to them regarding the research study. For an example, we might discuss the aim and results of the research, and provide participants with contact details of the person they might contact they feel that they want to make a comment. The researcher will address any misunderstandings and concerns related to the research.

Although there will be no reimbursement for participation in the research, learners will be provided with a lunch box (Coca-Cola soft drink can of 300ml and toasted chicken mayo).

Feedback will entail the presentation of results and recommendations to the staff and School Governing Bodies concern and parents involved in the study. Furthermore, the researcher is available to be consulted by staff from these two schools to assist them regarding the strategies to be used to help learners to perform better academically. In the case of individual learners who participated in the study, the researcher will present summarized findings and recommendations to them as the strategies they can use to enhance their academic resilience and academic self-efficacy and to stress importance of school connectedness for their academic success.

I can be contacted on: tshalalasd@gmail.com or 071 9838342

My supervisor can be contacted on: mohank@unisa.ac.za or 012 429 2126

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tshalala', written over a horizontal line.

Tshalala, Sehloho Daniel

PhD student

APPENDIX H: The roles and responsibilities of participants and researcher

Title: Exploring resilience as a component of academic success among selected Grade 10 and 11 learners in the Thabo Mofutsanyane District, Eastern Free State

DEAR PROSPECTIVE PARTICIPANT

My name is Sehloho Daniel Tshalala and I am doing research under the supervision of Mohangi K, a Professor in the Department of Psychology of Education towards a PhD at the University of South Africa. I have funding from Human Resource Department from University of South Africa for conducting the research because I am PhD student and I applied for that financial support. I am inviting you to participate in a study entitled 'Exploring resilience as a component of academic success among selected Grade 10 and 11 learners in the Thabo Mofutsanyane District, Eastern Free'.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY?

The aim of the study is to explore components that contribute to academic success among selected Grade 10 and 11 learners in Thabo-Mofutsanyane District, Eastern Free State.

WHY AM I BEING INVITED TO PARTICIPATE?

You are invited because you are in position to provide valuable information regarding academic factors that impact on learner academic performance.

I obtained your contact details from your relevant school by means of asking the school principal to provide me with list of top ten learners from Grade ten to 11. Thereafter, I selected the names of first top five learners and request your contact details from the school principal and your parents. Number of learners expected for this study is six males and six females per school, four parents and four teachers per school.

Approximate number of participants is 20.

WHAT IS THE NATURE OF MY PARTICIPATION IN THIS STUDY?

Your role as participant will be to answer questions in an individual and /or focus group interviews. You will be expected to discuss and / or talk about your community, family members and teachers on how they support you. Also, to state your views about academic resilience and success and individual characteristics that enhances prospects of academic success and resilience. In the focus group

interviews, you will be expected to discuss about above-mentioned aspects and share your opinions. You will also be expected to give each other a chance to speak and respond if you want to. During individual interviews you will be expected to provide clear and sufficient responses to the questions and to be truthful.

CAN I WITHDRAW FROM THIS STUDY EVEN AFTER HAVING AGREED TO PARTICIPATE?

Participating in this study is voluntary and you are under no obligation to consent to participation. If you do decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a written consent form. You are free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason.

WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?

The potential benefit to the learner: the researcher will conduct workshop on how learners can enhance their academic resilience. Focus of workshop will be on coping strategies learners can use that include using their micro-system such as educators, parents, peers and school to be able to succeed academically and their intrapersonal factors such as self-efficacy and academic self-efficacy. There will be no direct material benefits for participants. However, learners will be served with lunch for spending more than three hours participating in focus group interviews.

ARE THERE ANY NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES FOR ME IF I PARTICIPATE IN THE RESEARCH PROJECT?

You might feel discomfort to talk about your certain personal experiences such as your relationship with your parents especially in the case where your parent(s) is or are deceased or you do not know the whereabouts of your parent/s. The risk of being identified by other learners in the group or violation of your right to privacy and confidentiality might occur because of focus group discussion by other learner/s. However, the researcher will make all learners aware that they should treat each other information confidential and if you feel your information is confidential you are advised not to talk about it during focus group discussion.

WILL THE INFORMATION THAT I CONVEY TO THE RESEARCHER AND MY IDENTITY BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL?

You have the right to insist that your name will not be recorded anywhere and that no one, apart from the researcher and identified members of the research team, will know about your involvement in this research **or** your name will not be recorded anywhere and no one will be able to connect you to the answers you give. Your answers will be given a code number or a pseudonym and you will be referred to in this way in the data, any publications, or other research reporting methods such as conference proceedings.

The researcher's supervisor will have access to the data and they will maintain confidentiality by not disclosing your information to other people without your concern. Your answers may be reviewed by people responsible for making sure that research is done properly, including the transcriber, external coder, and members of the Research Ethics Review Committee. Otherwise, records that identify you will be available only to people working on the study, unless you give permission for other people to see the records.

Your information may be used for other purposes such as a research report, journal articles and/or conference proceedings. However, your right to privacy and confidentiality will be protected by not mentioning your identity. These rights are not guaranteed in focus group because of learners who will be taking part in that discussion but the researcher will inform every learner involved in focus group interview to respect the right to privacy and confidentiality of other learners by not disclosing information discussed in focus group interview.

Focus group interview is where participants will be discussing in depth open-ended questions which can take approximate minimum of one to maximum of two hours per session. It encourages learners to investigate each other's views regarding academic resilience. The role of researcher will be to facilitate and guide learners throughout discussion. However, the researcher will make all the efforts to ensure that you will not be connected to the information that you share during the focus group, he cannot guarantee that other participants in the focus group will treat information confidentially. I shall, however, encourage all participants to do so. For this reason, I advise you not to disclose personally sensitive information in the focus group.

HOW WILL THE RESEARCHER(S) PROTECT THE SECURITY OF DATA?

Hard copies of your answers will be stored by the researcher for a period of five years in a locked cupboard/filing cabinet in the house of the researcher for future research or academic purposes; electronic information will be stored on a password protected computer. Future use of the stored data will be subject to further Research Ethics Review and approval if applicable. The hard copies from individual, focus group interviews, field notes and self-reported scales will be shredded. The electronic copies such as video recordings will be permanently deleted from video camera and the hard drive of the computer through the use of a relevant software program.

WILL I RECEIVE PAYMENT OR ANY INCENTIVES FOR PARTICIPATING IN THIS STUDY?

There will be no payment or reward offered but learners will be provided with a lunch box because the research will take place during the weekend.

HAS THE STUDY RECEIVED ETHICS APPROVAL?

This study has received written approval from the Research Ethics Review Committee of the (College of Education *ERC*), Unisa. A copy of the approval letter can be obtained from the researcher if you so wish.

HOW WILL I BE INFORMED OF THE FINDINGS/RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH?

If you would like to be informed of the final research findings, please contact Sehloho Daniel Tshalala on 0719838342 or tshalalasd@gmail.com. The findings are accessible for a period of three months. Should you have concerns about the way in which the research has been conducted, you may contact Prof Mohangi.

I can be contacted on: tshalalasd@gmail.com or 071 9838342

My supervisor can be contacted on: mohank@unisa.ac.za or 012 429 2126

Thank you for taking time to read this information sheet and for participating in this study.

Thank you.



Tshalala, SD

PhD Student

APPENDIX I: Letter of informed consent – Parent

Mr SD Tshalala
Unit 19 Oppie Koppie
Duiker Street
Zwartkop X 7
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24 April 2019

Title: Exploring resilience as a component of academic success among selected Grade 10 and 11 learners in the Thabo Mofutsanyane District, Eastern Free State

DEAR PROSPECTIVE PARTICIPANT

My name is Sehloho Daniel Tshalala and I am doing research under the supervision of Mohangi K, a Professor in the Department of Psychology of Education towards a PhD at the University of South Africa. We have funding from Human Resource Department from University of South Africa for conducting the research because I am PhD student and I applied for that financial support. We are inviting you to participate in a study entitled Exploring resilience as a component of academic success among selected Grade 10 and 11 learners in Thabo Mofutsanyane District, Eastern Free.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY?

The aim of the study is to explore components that contribute to academic success among selected Grade 10 and 11 learners in Thabo-Mofutsanyane District, Eastern Free State.

WHY AM I BEING INVITED TO PARTICIPATE?

You are invited because you are in position to provide valuable information regarding academic factors that impact positively on your child academic performance.

I obtained your contact details from your relevant school by means of asking the school principal to provide me with list of top ten learners from Grade ten. Thereafter I selected the names of first top five learners and request your contact details from the school principal and your parents. Number of learners expected for this study is six males and six females per school, four parents and four teachers per school.

Approximate number of participants is 20.

WHAT IS THE NATURE OF MY PARTICIPATION IN THIS STUDY?

Describe the participant's actual role in the study.

The study involves semi-structured opened ended individual and focus group interviews. Your role as a participant will be to answer questions in an individual interview and participate in group discussions with other learners. Interviews will consist of questions about the description of your feelings, experience, academic performance and people around you in school and at home and your understanding about the word resilience.

The expected duration of participating in this research study is four days (during weekend only) and the time needed to complete focus group discussion is one hour 30 minutes to two hours for one Saturday. Individual interviews per session will take probably one hour. Furthermore, individual interviews will consist of four sessions per Saturday.

CAN I WITHDRAW FROM THIS STUDY EVEN AFTER HAVING AGREED TO PARTICIPATE?

Participating in this study is voluntary and you are under no obligation to consent to participation. If you do decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a written consent form. You are free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason.

WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?

The potential benefit to the learner: the researcher will conduct workshop on how learners can enhance their academic resilience. Focus of workshop will be on copy strategies learners can use that include using their micro-system such as educators, parents, peers and school to be able to succeed academically and their intrapersonal factors such as self-efficacy and academic self-efficacy.

There will be no direct material benefits for participants. However, learners will be served with lunch for spending more than three hours participating in focus group interview.

ARE THERE ANY NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES FOR ME IF I PARTICIPATE IN THE RESEARCH PROJECT?

You might feel discomfort to talk about your certain personal experiences such as your relationship with your parents especially in the case where your parent(s) is or are deceased or you do not know the whereabouts of your parent/s. The risk of being identified by other learners in the group or violation of your right to privacy and confidentiality might occur because of focus group discussion by other learner/s. However, the researcher will make all learners aware that they should treat each other information confidential and if you feel your information is confidential you are advised not to talk about it during focus group discussion.

WILL THE INFORMATION THAT I CONVEY TO THE RESEARCHER AND MY IDENTITY BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL?

You have the right to insist that your name will not be recorded anywhere and that no one, apart from the researcher and identified members of the research team, will know about your involvement in this research or your name will not be recorded anywhere and no one will be able to connect you to the answers you give. Your answers will be given a code number or a pseudonym and you will be referred to in this way in the data, any publications, or other research reporting methods such as conference proceedings.

The researcher's supervisor and statistician will have access to the data and they will maintain confidentiality by not disclosing your information to other people without your concern. Your answers may be reviewed by people responsible for making sure that research is done properly, including the transcriber, external coder, and members of the Research Ethics Review Committee. Otherwise, records that identify you will be available only to people working on the study, unless you give permission for other people to see the records.

Your information may be used for other purposes such as a research report, journal articles and/or conference proceedings. However, your right to privacy and confidentiality will be protected by not mentioning your identity. These rights are not guaranteed in focus group because of learners who will be taking part in that discussion but the researcher will inform every learner involved in focus group interview to respect the right to privacy and confidentiality of other learners by not disclosing information discussed in focus group interview.

Focus group interview is where participants will be discussing in depth open-ended questions which can take approximate minimum of one to maximum of two hours per session. It encourages learners to investigate each other's views regarding academic resilience. The role of researcher will be to facilitate and guide learners throughout discussion. However, the researcher will make all the efforts to ensure that you will not be connected to the information that you share during the focus group, he cannot guarantee that other participants in the focus group will treat information confidentially. I shall, however, encourage all participants to do so. For this reason, I advise you not to disclose personally sensitive information in the focus group.

HOW WILL THE RESEARCHER(S) PROTECT THE SECURITY OF DATA?

Hard copies of your answers will be stored by the researcher for a period of five years in a locked cupboard/filing cabinet in the house of the researcher for future research or academic purposes; electronic information will be stored on a password protected computer. Future use of the stored data will be subject to further Research Ethics Review and approval if applicable. The hard copies from individual, focus group interviews, field notes will be shredded. The electronic copies such as voice recordings will be permanently deleted from voice recordings device and the hard drive of the computer through the use of a relevant software program.

WILL I RECEIVE PAYMENT OR ANY INCENTIVES FOR PARTICIPATING IN THIS STUDY?

There will be no payment or reward offered but learners will be provided with a lunch box because the research will take place during the weekend.

HAS THE STUDY RECEIVED ETHICS APPROVAL?

This study has received written approval from the Research Ethics Review Committee of the (College of Education *ERC*), Unisa. A copy of the approval letter can be obtained from the researcher if you so wish.

HOW WILL I BE INFORMED OF THE FINDINGS/RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH?

If you would like to be informed of the final research findings, please contact Sehloho Daniel Tshalala on 0719838342 or tshalalasd@gmail.com. The findings are accessible for a period of three months. Should you have concerns about the way in which the research has been conducted, you may contact Prof Mohangi.

I can be contacted on: tshalsd@unisa.ac.za or 071 9838342

My supervisor can be contacted on: mohank@unisa.ac.za or 012 429 2126

Thank you for taking time to read this information sheet and for participating in this study.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'SD Tshalala', written over a horizontal line.

SD Tshalala
PhD Student

APPENDIX J: Letter of informed consent – Learner

ASSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY (Return slip)

I, _____ (participant name), confirm that the person asking my consent to take part in this research has told me about the nature, procedure, potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience of participation.

I have read (or had explained to me) and understood the study as explained in the information sheet.

I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and am prepared to participate in the study.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty (if applicable).

I am aware that the findings of this study will be processed into a research report, journal publications and/or conference proceedings, but that my participation will be kept confidential unless otherwise specified.

I agree to the voice recording of the individual and focus group interviews.

I have received a signed copy of the informed consent agreement.

I can be contacted on: tshalsd@unisa.ac.za or 071 9838342

My supervisor can be contacted on: mohank@unisa.ac.za or 012 429 2126

Participant Name & Surname (please print) _____

Participant Signature

Date

Researcher's Name & Surname (please print) Sehloho Daniel Tshalala



Researcher's signature
PhD Student

Date

APPENDIX K: Letter of informed consent to parent for learner to participate in the study

Dear Parent

Your child is invited to participate in a study entitled: 'Exploring resilience as a component of academic success among selected Grade 10 learners in the Thabo Mofutsanyane District, Eastern Free State'

I am undertaking this study as part of my doctoral research at the University of South Africa. The purpose of the study is to explore components that contribute to academic success among selected Grade 10 and 11 learners in Thabo-Mofutsanyane District, Eastern Free State and the possible benefits of the study are the improvement of learner's academic resilience, self-efficacy and academic performance. I am asking permission to include your child in this study because he/she has shown good academic performance. I expect to have 11 other children participating in the study. I will request school principal to provide me with list of top ten learners from Grade ten to 11. Thereafter, I will select the names of first top five learners. The reason for including secondary school learners is that they are vulnerable because they are living in a disadvantaged area with variety of adversities. However, some learners are able to succeed academically irrespective challenges they are faced with and those who are not performing well academically need to be assisted.

If you allow your child to participate, I shall request him/her to:

- Take part in a face-to-face interview

The individual interview will take place at learners' school after working hours and on Saturday and the interview will take approximately one hour to one and half hour. He/she will be expected to answer questions related to his or her experience about academic performance, attachment, academic resilience and self-efficacy.

- Take part in a group interview

Your child will be part of a group of learners who will be discussing among themselves about their experiences regarding their academic performance, attachment, academic resilience and self-efficacy. This session will take roughly one hour to two hours and it will be conducted at school C on the Saturday and/or Sunday.

They will be no completion of a self-reported scale.

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and can be identified with your child will remain confidential and will only be disclosed with your permission. His/her responses will not be linked to his/her name or your name or the school's name in any written or verbal report based on this

study. Such a report will be used for research purposes only. There are no foreseeable risks to your child by participating in the study such as he/she might disclose the information he/she regards as confidential to other learners and / or be identified by other learners who are part of focus group discussion. Your child will receive no direct benefit from participating in the study; however, the possible benefits to education are that the researcher will explain the findings and recommendations to him/her as the strategies he/she can use to enhance their academic resilience and academic self-efficacy and the necessity of school connectedness for their academic success. Neither your child nor you will receive any type of payment for participating in this study.

Your child's participation in this study is voluntary. Your child may decline to participate or to withdraw from participation at any time. Withdrawal or refusal to participate will not affect him/her in any way. Similarly, you can agree to allow your child to be in the study now and change your mind later without any penalty.

The study will not take place during regular classroom activities as stated from above that it will be after working hours, on Saturdays and Sundays with the prior approval of the parent, school and your child's teacher. In addition to your permission, your child must agree to participate in the study and you and your child will also be asked to sign the assent form which accompanies this letter. If your child does not wish to participate in the study, he or she will not be included and there will be no penalty. The information gathered from the study and your child's participation in the study will be stored securely on a password locked computer in my locked office for five years after the study. Thereafter, records will be erased.

The benefits of this study are that your child if participated in the study; the researcher will conduct workshop on how learners can enhance their academic resilience. Focus of workshop will be on copy strategies learners can use that include using their micro-system such as educators, parents, peers and school to be able to succeed academically and their intrapersonal factors such as self-efficacy and academic self-efficacy.

Potential risks are that your child might disclose certain information he/she regards as confidential to other learners and/or be identified by other learners who are part of focus group discussion. There will be no reimbursement but your child will receive a lunch box.

If you have questions about this study, please ask me or my study supervisor see below contact details.

Permission for the study has already been given by Free State Department of Education, Thabo-Mofutsanyane district director, Circuit manager, School Principal and School Governing Body and the Ethics Committee of the College of Education, University of South Africa.

You are making a decision about allowing your child to participate in this study. Your signature below indicates that you have read the information provided above and have decided to allow him or her to participate in the study. You may keep a copy of this letter.

I can be contacted on: tshalsd@unisa.ac.za or 071 9838342

My supervisor can be contacted on: mohank@unisa.ac.za or 012 429 2126

Name of child:


Sincerely

Parent/guardian's name (print)

Parent/guardian's signature:

Date:

Sehloho Daniel Tshalala
Researcher's name (print)



Researcher's signature

Date:

PhD Student

APPENDIX L: Focus group confidentiality agreement

FOCUS GROUP – CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

I _____ agree that the information I share during the focus group may be used by Sehloho Daniel Tshalala for research purposes. I am aware that the group discussions will be digitally recorded and grant consent/assent for these recordings, provided that my privacy will be protected. I undertake not to divulge any information that is shared in the group discussions to any person outside the group in order to maintain confidentiality.


The researcher can be contacted on: tshalsd@unisa.ac.za or 071 9838342

The supervisor can be contacted on: mohank@unisa.ac.za or 012 429 212

Participant’s Name (Please print): _____

Participant Signature: _____

Researcher’s Name: (Please print): Sehloho Daniel Tshalala

Researcher’s Signature: 

Date: _____

APPENDIX M: Focus group questions for learners

Greetings to all learners, I am SD Tshalala. I will firstly explain the topic for discussion which is aspects that learners to be academic resilient and successful. You are requested to participate in this discussion to communicate and discuss about aspects that makes learners to be academic resilient and successful. I am also going to facilitate the discussion and this discussion will not take more than an hour.

1. Can you advise someone to work in QwaQwa industries and why? You place, resilience and academic success.

2. If you were asked to talk about your community, what will you say to a person who does not stay in your community?

What are the things you regard as strong points in your community and why?

What are the things you regard as weaknesses of your community and how can these weak points be improved?

3. What do you understand about the word resilience?

4. What is the meaning of the words academic resilience? Can you make an example of academically resilient learner?

5. What are your views on academic success?

What motivates you to be academically successful?

6. How does resilience assist you be academic successful?

Which opportunities do you use to succeed academically?

7. What challenges do you face in ensuring academic success?

In the school

At home

In the community

Other challenges?

What about peers? How do they view your success? How do they feel when you do well in a test or exam?

8. What personal and individual characteristics help you to be become academically resilience? By this I mean, how does your personality help you to be successful?

Which personal characteristics and how?

Which individual characteristics and how?

9. What helps you to succeed and how do you do?

What is your study schedule like?

Who helps you? How?

10. Who is an academically successful and resilient role model, and why you regard that person as your role model? What he/she does?

11. Who are the people you remember as your source of inspiration?

What did they say to you? How did you feel?

12. How do you feel about being engaged in a challenging academic task?

13. How do the school principal, peers, teachers, school base support team, school governing body, district officials and Free State Department of Education help or support you?

What are strong points?

What are obstacles?

What are aspects that require development?

What more can be done? How and what makes you to say that? Can you tell me more?

14. How do you relate with your family members, relatives or any other relationship as far as you can remember in promoting your academic success and resilience?

How do you relate with your mother? Father? Guardian/s?

APPENDIX N: Sample of face-to-face interview questions for learners

(I will explore participants answers in-depth than in the focus group)

1. Can you advise someone to work in QwaQwa industries and why?
2. If you were asked to talk about your community, what will you say to a person who does not stay in your community?

What are the things you regard as strong points in your community and why?

What are the things you regard as weaknesses of your community and how can these weak points be improved?

3. What do you understand about the word resilience?
4. What is the meaning of the words 'academic resilience'? Can you give an example of an academically resilient learner?
5. What are your views on academic success?

What motivates you to be academically successful?

6. How does resilience assist you be academic successful?

Which opportunities do you use to succeed academically?

7. What challenges do you face in ensuring academic success?

In the school

At home

In the community

Other challenges?

What about peers? How do they view your success? How do they feel when you do well in a test or exam?

8. What personal and individual characteristics help you to be become academically resilience? By this I mean, how does your personality help you to be successful?

Which personal characteristics and how?

Which individual characteristics and how?

9. What helps you to succeed and how do you do?

What is your study schedule like?

Who helps you? How?

10. Who is an academically successful and resilient role model, and why you regard that person as your role model? What he/she does?

11. Who are the people you remember as your source of inspiration?

What did they say to you? How did you feel?

12. How do you feel about being engaged in a challenging academic task?

13. How do the school principal, peers, teachers, school base support team, school governing body, district officials and Free State Department of Education help or support you?

What are strong points?

What are obstacles?

What are aspects that require development?

What more can be done? How and what makes you to say that? Can you tell me more?

14. How do you relate with your family members, relatives or any other relationship as far as you can remember in promoting your academic success and resilience?

How do you relate with your mother? Father? Guardian/s?

I can be contacted on: tshalsd@unisa.ac.za or 071 9838342

My supervisor can be contacted on: mohank@unisa.ac.za or 012 429 2126

APPENDIX O: Sample of face-to-face interview questions for teachers

1. Can you advise someone to work in QwaQwa industries and why?

2. If you were to be asked to talk about the community where your school is situated, what will you say to a person who does not stay in this community?

What are the things you regard as strong points of this community and why?

What are the things you regard as weaknesses of this community and how can these weak points be improved?

3. What do you understand about the word resilience?

4. What is the meaning of the words academic resilience? Can you make an example of academically resilient learner?

5. What are your views on academic success?

What motivates learners to be academically successful?

6. How does resilience assist learners to be academic successful?

Which opportunities do you provide for learners to succeed academically?

7. What challenges do learners face in ensuring academic success?

In the school

At home

In the community

Other challenges?

What about peers? How do they view your success? How do they feel when you do well in a test or exam?

8. What personal and individual characteristics that help learners to be become academically resilience? By this I mean, how does their personality help them to be successful?

Which personal characteristics and how?

Which individual characteristics and how?

9. What helps learners to succeed and how do they do?

What is their study schedule like?

Who helps them? How?

10. Who is an academically successful and resilient learners' role model, and why you regard that person as learners' role model? What he/she does?

11. Who are the people you remember as learners' source of inspiration?

What did they say to them? How did they felt?

12. How do learners feel about being engaged in a challenging academic task?

13. How do the school principal, peers, teachers, school base support team, school governing body, district officials and Free State Department of Education help or support learners?

What are strong points?

What are obstacles?

What are aspects that require development?

What more can be done? How and what makes you to say that? Can you tell me more?

14. How do learners relate with their family members, relatives or any other relationship as far as you can remember in promoting your academic success and resilience?

How do they relate with their mother? Father? Guardian/s?

I can be contacted on: tshalsd@unisa.ac.za or 071 9838342

My supervisor can be contacted on: mohank@unisa.ac.za or 012 429 2126

APPENDIX P: Sample of face-to-face interview questions for parents

Face to face semi-structured interview questions for parents

1. Can you advise someone to work in QwaQwa industries and why?

2. If you were asked to talk about your community, what will you say to a person who does not stay in your community?

What are the things you regard as strong points in your community and why?

What are the things you regard as weaknesses of your community and how can these weak points be improved?

3. What do you understand about the word resilience?

4. What is the meaning of the words academic resilience? Can you make an example of academically resilient child?

5. What are your views on academic success?

What motivates your child to be academically successful?

6. How does resilience assist you be academic successful?

Which opportunities does your child use to succeed academically?

7. What challenges do you face in ensuring academic success?

In the school

At home

In the community

Other challenges?

What about peers? How do they view your child's success? How do they feel when your child do well in a test or exam?

8. What personal and individual characteristics help your child to be become academically resilience?

By this I mean, how does your child's personality help him/her to be successful?

Which personal characteristics and how?

Which individual characteristics and how?

9. What helps your child to succeed and how do you do?

What is your child study schedule like?

Who helps your child? How?

10. Who is an academically successful and resilient role model for your child, and why you regard that person as role model of your child? What the role model does?

11. Who are the people you remember as your child source of inspiration?

What did they say to you? How did you feel?

12. How do you feel about your child being engaged in a challenging academic task?

13. How do the school principal, peers, teachers, school base support team, school governing body, district officials and Free State Department of Education help or support your child?

What are strong points?

What are obstacles?

What are aspects that require development?

What more can be done? How and what makes you to say that? Can you tell me more?

14. How does your child relate with family members, relatives or any other relationship as far as you can remember in promoting his/her academic success and resilience?

How do you relate with your mother? Father? Guardian/s?

APPENDIX Q: Kopano ya dipotso le dikarabo ya batswadi (Sotho- language)

1. O ka eletsa motho hore a tlo sebetsa difemeng tsa QwaQwa, hobaneng?
2. Ha o ka kopua hore o tlo bua ka tulo eo o dulang ho yona o kareng ho motho ya sa duleng sebakeng seo?
Ke eng dintho tseo o di tsebang tse ntle sebakeng se o o dulang ho sona. hobaneng o re di ntle?
Ke eng dintho tseo o di tsebang e le bofokodi ba sebakeng se o o dulang ho sona. Bofokodi boo bo ka ntlafatwsa jwang?
3. O utlwisisa eng ka polelo e na ho atleha le ha motho a tobane le mathata?
4. Polelo ena e bolela eng katleho dithutong le hao o kopana le mathata bophelo? Fana kamohlala wa ngwana a atlehang dithutong le ha a tobane le mathata.
5. Pono ya hao ke efe ka katleho dithutong?
6. Bokgoni ba ho a tleha le ha o tobane le mathata bo thusa ngwana wa hao jwang hore a atlehe dithutong tsa hae tsa sekolo?
Ke menyetla efe eo we etsetsang ngwana wa hao hore a tswelle dithutong tsa hae?
7. Ke mathata a feng ao ngwana wa hao a kopanang le ona ha a i kemeseditse ho a tleha dithutong tsa hae se sekolong?
Sekolong
Lapeng
Motseng o a dulang ho ona
Ao ko hlalose mathata a mang a o ngwana a kopanang le o na.
O reng ka metswalle ya hae? Metswalle ya hae e reng ka katleho ya hae? Ba i kutlwa jwang ha sebeditse hantle hlahlobong?
8. Mpolelle hore a na ngwana wa hao bo ena ba hae le tlhaho ya hae di e tsa hore a atlehe dithutong tsa hae le ha a tobane le mathata?
ke ding dintho tseo e leng tlhaho ya hae tse mothusang hore a atlehe dithutong tsa hae? ke kopa hore o hlalose hore di mo thusa jwang?
9. Ke eng ntho e thusang ngwana wa hao hore a atlehe? O e tsa jwang?
O etsa jwang kapa o kgona jwang?
Polane ya ngwana wa hao ya ho ithutha e jwang?
Ke mang a thusa ngwana wa hao? O mothusa jwang?
10. Ke mang ya atle hile dithutong le ha ana tobane le mathata e o ngwana wa hao a monkang e le mohla ho yena hape hobaneng ngwana wa hao a dumela hore motho eo ke mohlala ho yena? Motho o e tsa jwang?
11. Ke batho bafe bao o hopolang hore ke motheo wa tshutshumetso ngwaneng wa hao hore a e tse dintho tse ding?
Ba itseng ho yena? Ngwana wa hao yena o ile a ikutlo jwang?
12. Ngwana wa hao o ikutlwa jwang ha a tobane le mosebetsi wa sekolo o boima?
13. Mosuwe hlooho, metswalle, thaka tsa hae, matitjhene, lekgotla la sekolo le thusang bana le matithjere, bahlanka ba tswang disitiriking le lefapha la thuto la Free State ba thusa kapa ho sapota ngwana wa hao?
Ke difi dintho tseo o nahanang hore di ya etsuwa ke batho ba boletsweng moleng o ka hodimo?
Ke bofokodi bofe ba batho ba boletsweng moleng o ka hodimo ba keng sa ho thusa moithuti?
Ke dintho dife tse hlokang ho re di ntlafatswe molemong wa ho thusa moithuti?

O nahana hore ke eng se ka etsuwang hore ngwana a tswelle dithutong? di tla e tsuwa jwang hobaneng o bolela jwalo? O ka kgona hore o bolele tseng ngatanyana?

14. Ngwana wa hao o amana jwang le balelapa, direletifi le motho o mong le e mong fela ho ya ka moo o ka ho polang ho entlafatsa ngwana wa hao dithutong le hore a kgone ho a tleha le ha a tobane le mathata?

Di kamano pakeng tsa ngwana wa hao le mme wa ha e di jwang?

Ntate wa hae?

Molebedi wa hae?

I can be contacted on: tshalsd@unisa.ac.za or 071 9838342

My supervisor can be contacted on: mohank@unisa.ac.za or 012 429 2126

APPENDIX R: Sample of an interview transcript with male teacher from School A

Introduction

- Q: Sir, can you advise someone to work in Qwaqwa factories (at the place called information center)?
- A: Definitely, people don't have a choice once a person is desperately in need of a job they will settle for anything and there is nothing wrong working there. This is a small developing township and it is affordable for people who work there in terms of accommodation, whatever the person is going to earn it will accommodate their standard of living.
- Q: How much do you think they earn in these factories?
- A: I don't know, but when I arrive here un 2006/2007, when I asked people used to earn R200/R300 per week but I think they should be earning more now.
- Q: Those who said they earn R2000 and something, is it per fortnight or monthly?
- A: I don't know much about that, I used to run a business before coming to this position. And studies further, I used to go and sell in those areas
- Q: If you were to be asked to talk about this community of Qwaqwa, what will you say to the person who does not stay here?
- A: This place is very peaceful, I am a foreign national in this country and I came to stay here for a while and people are very peaceful and accommodating. You can come do your own things, people will never bother or cause any problem and you can survive. People will get to know you and get along with them and the crime rate is very low.
- Q: What kind of crime are usually committed here?
- A: It is burglary, theft and some can break into your car depending on where it is.
- Q: What are the things you regard as strong points of this community?
- A: Education, this community try to educate community.
- Q: Why do you say that?
- A: Because I am an educator here, this is a rural area but most of the learners who are successful and educated are coming from here. The community is making an effort to be provide education. Most of the school are here, and the parents are encouraging their children, it is like most of the community make sure that the youth move out of this environment and to better environments. The best weapon to achieve that is education.
- Q: Why do they want their youth/kids to move out of this place?
- A: Maybe to acquire more skills, you know cities have more advantage on skills like when the kids want to study engineering, IT and so forth. This place cannot provide those kinds of skills. I have seen a boy who once told me that he was a scholar at our school, he is now a successful engineer and he is proud that he studied here. He got a scholarship to study at the university, he always attributes his achievement to this locality. He does not hesitate to come often to see his mother because she stays here.

Q: What are things you regard as weaknesses of this community?

A: I have observed that, the social grant they depend too much on it.

Q: Lot of the people are depending on the social grant?

A: I wouldn't know but I am just trying to say and what I was told by one of the leaders from my church who is a chief around this area. He said some of the youth have access to assets like houses for accommodation and they are not obliged to go beyond their present situation to better their lives. They are content to what they have, they are industrial people. For example (will use a situation in ground route), a smart learner who is among learners who are weak may not bring out his best learners but if you move this smart learner to the environment where there are smart learners he will bring out his best which we have discovered. The environment does not prompt the youth to move further that makes the parents to want their kids to move out of this place. They move to more competitive environment.

Q: What do you understand about the word 'resilience'?

A: It is overcoming or achieving something against all odds, no matter how bad is the situation you always survive very difficult circumstances.

Q: Can you create a scenario or example of any person that you know who went through those hardships that you are talking about and become successful?

A: I will start with myself but I do not regard myself as successful. But I think I have walked through that path, that is the same attitude that I am trying to pass on to the learners that I teach and people who are around me. I do not come from an institutional home, I was not born with a silver spoon, there was a point when things were not fair and that is the time where I needed my father the most but I had to survive everything. I was not wearing good clothes but what mattered the most was I told myself that education is the only means that I can use to overcome my situation. Sometimes there was no food at home, sometimes you do not get money to buy things and don't have good clothes but I did not let this bother me. There was a particular time where things were fair with my father, things were better. Coming to tertiary I had no access to scholarship, not what these kids are having now, I just survive with God's grace. There were times where I did not have food for days but what I know was that this will not last forever. I have faced difficult situations at tertiary, come across modules that you do not understand but I am a kind of person who do not believe in complaining. I believe in making a plan always, going extra mile, I wish we had internet access like these kids have this nowadays. I will not rest until I get what I want.

Q: You keep on telling yourself that you will not rest until you get what you want irrespective?

A: Irrespective of all odds because if I put me on something I won't be able to sleep because I am not here as a contender.

Q: Do you still remember any incident where you told yourself that no matter what, I won't stop until I get what I want. How did you feel that time when you told yourself those words. Do you remember?

A: I remember very well, back in tertiary when I was going to get my first degree it was that way. Not that we were not having good teacher. The education we got it was not the same as the education of this days, now teacher make sure that they provide learners with the content and make sure that they cover the whole syllabus. But I wouldn't blame them for my future as I

have already said I do not stop until I get what I want. I was struggling with physical science, I had to go an extra mile and every cent that I got I had to save it to pay for my extra class. My father was very supportive and I am a kind of person who have no pride, to get anywhere in life you must let pride go. I always tell myself that if I die and 6 feet underground, people will only cry on that day and tomorrow they will be forgotten. If I struggle with something I will seek for assistance and ask people to help me even if you can go behind my back and talk about me, I do not care about that they only thing is that at the end of the day I will get what I want. I was struggling and I approached the church, lecturer and even my friends, and they did assist me and I survived and finished my studies. Even when I started my Honours degree with Unisa, it was the same thing. I struggled with my studies, and had a family to support. I went for a woman who is in the same line as me and am grateful to my wife who was in the same line as me, she was very supportive throughout.

Q: When you say, you were looking for a woman who is in the same line. What do you mean by same line?

A: Who understand what it takes to be an achiever. Someone who went through hardships, who went through pains in life but through survive despites all odds. Not those people who will say due to circumstances I consider myself a failure, those people who look beyond their circumstances to get what they want. My wife was treated like a mate after the death of her mother and she was abandoned by her father due to personal issue. My father in-law abandoned my wife and the whole family, she came to a family where she was sold as a slave. My wife told me that she didn't care on how long it is going to take her but she is determined to get her education, she was discipline and told herself that no man will go in between her legs unless a man who will marry her. Even people harass/tease and saying marry me but she always said I will rather end up walking on street without anything but to marry someone with conditions. The sad part is, she was even taken by her own elder brother and she treated her bad for over 19 years, treated like a maid but she never gave up she took it as a stepping stone and she studied to become a nurse. When I have an impression about her is that marriage is not about beauty, remember in marriage if you bring someone who is not in the same line, she can destroy you own empire.

Q: Now tell me, that kind of a person that went through hardships and survived it. Do you regard that person with what kind of characteristics/qualities does the person poses

A: Tolerance and forgiveness, my wife is very forgiving. Those are the people who will tell in a sport when they do not like what you did, they do not dwell on it or accumulate. They are people who can manage any situation, my wife does so many things that I do not even think of. She can even manage our finances very well, every cent I have I entrusted it to my wife

Q: What is the meaning of the word 'academic resilience'?

A: Achieving despite all circumstances or unconducive circumstances. All the years as a teacher I have seen a lot of academic resilience and I came to conclude that it does not matter the resources in your disposal or how good looking you are and what you have is part of you.

Q: Is there any leaners that you know and think that this one, he/she is academically resilience where you taught before?

A: There was a school that went on tour to Kenya and had the presentation because they wanted to understand their modus of operandi on why the school achieve better results but what

actually they said which turned me off, the school only admit smart learners that did not make sense to me. That was a worthless venture because the truth about education is that the school has smart learners and well resourced. I think the northern part of Nigeria, where people hear about all these Boko Haram, those people are not exposed to formal education they are predominately Muslims, few acquaintances. Islamic education is only their kind of education, it is of recent that they start to embrace their elite who have the opportunity to go to the western of Nigeria who got a little bit of western English education and now they feel like they want to pass it on. I was privileged in Nigeria when you are a graduate, you need to serve in government for a year. The main purpose of that service is they want to reintegrate the country because of the civil war they had in 1967 to 1970. It actually broke the country into different acting groups, and those groups hate each other. The country is trying to reintegrate and reconcile and I was privileged to go there. This is a rural area, some of the schools are not well resourced and some of the learners are not privileged, some they don't have TVs in their homes and there are shortages of books. In Nigeria kids in rural area they do not know if there are townships, they live within their means but you will be amused by their academic resilience. When you start to enquire you will hear things that will amaze you, they go around and use pictures to learn. Those learners during school holidays, they work at farmers with their father. When ask them on how they excel in their exams, they will tell you that they normally request breaks and go to the corner to study a bit. They use all the opportunity in their disposal to study and excel, those are the kind of academic resilience.

Q: Where you are working now (Is there any learners that you know and think that this one, he/she is academically resilience)?

A: These kids globally not looking at only the school I am working at, they don't have time for their studies. Technology add to their advantage to actually boost and increase the community liability or it has become another weapon of destruction. Kids spend more time with gadgets doing things that are not relevant to their studies. These internet gadgets consume much of their time. As grown up we also be honest with ourselves, the time we commit to these gadgets they consume most of our time but at least we are grown ups we can be able to manage ourselves but with kids it's a different story. This is a very difficult situation, even if we have made a rule that kids should not use cellphone at school but they still waste too much time on the gadgets. If you see learners excel, you must know that those are learners who are intrinsically motivated to achieve and commit themselves despite all the things that are around them. These learners you watch them in class and their level of consistency, and when you ask them they will tell you that we have a programme, we just discipline ourselves and not chat with our friend because chatting will not make me to do what I am doing now. Residents learners have high commitment in their studies, their attitude is good, they never complaint and they always improvise.

Q: When you say their attitude is good, what do you mean?

A: The attitude to work, attitude to school, attitude to teachers, they are very polite, you can never find them wanting anything. Yesterday we were busy with our routine and the rules that include cellphone not allowed at school and to make sure that learners come to school with their textbooks. All the learners we met with them, they had all those things in their disposal and the others will give complain. These learners make their school work a priority than complaining. The other learners do have time too but their priorities is to complain and they do not have control of themselves with the gadgets. These gadgets take most of their time and they are destroying the future of our future generation.

Q: What are your views on academic success?

A: Academic success on learners is the need for maximum support from their teachers. They need high commitment from educators. The kind of need that the kids expect from educators is a beyond authorized teaching hours and also mean self commitment from us as teachers. We have a big role to play in the lives of these learners but it is not going to be easy because of the level of commitment and reason for people to come to this profession. The learners need support from the main stakeholder to commit on supporting them.

Q: When you say a high level of commitment from teachers, what do you mean?

A: A high level of commitment, we need to know our level when we teach and we need to understand and to stop being judgemental. When a learner is not excelling, we need to check if it is teaching or something not by judging them firsts. We need to come up with the solution to address the situation. For example, the Reavaya classes, in these classes we put learners according to their capabilities (e.g smart, moderate & those who are struggling). When you have a privilege of teaching weak learners you will understand that even if you are teaching weak learners you will see in their eyes that the learners really need your assistance. Some they are afraid to admit but you can really see and realize that some they need one-on-one interaction which the world is not ready to provide because of financial constraints. Some families who can even manage to provide 2 tutors for their kids but they cannot but a teacher need to go an extra mile to assist the learners, that is my own feeling and in that way there will be great academic success. If a learner need more attention, teachers must be able to provide that for instance during the week there is time but if you work with them during the weekend you are able to assist them maybe for 3 hours working on the problems and assisting to solve them. You are also be able to assist those one who are weak or struggling rather than telling them how stupid/dumb they are because they are not able to understand quickly like the other smart learners. Motivates the ones that are weak, make they feel good about themselves and give them right attitude in class and once they realize that you are an educator who understand them they start putting effort in their work and doing good and give you the best that you want and that is an academic success (a high level of commitment from educators).

Q: You said these learners according to you they need support and you mention that a teacher must support. Do you think only teachers must support them?

A: Not only teacher, some parents also have a role to play but we do understand that parents are always occupied. It is not easy and some learners have more challenges but they try hard to make provision for them. Some parents are not trained teachers but they can support every plans that the school have for their children. Sometimes we able to achieve a lot because of the parents which is what the school can enjoy and they really support the school in too many ways.

Q: For example?

A: When a learners does not come with the textbook, you send the learner home and the parent will come to school and will reprimand the child in front of you even if a learner is not dressed properly the parent will reprimand. We also invite parents when we issue results and interact with them and parents will be able to talk to their children and question them about their school work. When we have issues with the learner we normally call parents and they do come to school. If parents are not available they will normally send a representative, and some of

the parents they work outside this province but they do make sure that they come to school if there is an issue with their children which shows that they take their children's education as a priority. We are really supported by parent and academic success comes from high commitment of parents and educators and the learners too. But you have to make learners feel good about themselves first if we want that commitment from them.

Q: Why do you think if we have make a learner feel good about themselves that part will make a learner to become academic successful. Why do you think like that?

A: Because this is going to motivate the child/learner, it is an informal instinct motivation to that learner. It will give a child a right attitude to work. There is a boy in grade 10, he told me he has a challenge with the First addition language which is English and the mother told right on time and I told them that this will not be a problem. I started by asking if he can speak English and he said yes, by just responding that means he do understand it. I know that there is a different between interpersonal communication and cognitive language which is basic English and academic English. I advice him to develop himself by interacting more often with other learners which will assist in understanding English. I have encourage him to do things on his own and when he still struggle then he is welcome to come to me for assistance. The mother was happy about my approach and since the beginning of the year the learners has improved and is doing well. When I come to the class he is always excited and he offers to take my book to the next class. He has the enthusiasm but not only in my class to the other classes as well, he said to me he is interacting with other learners who are doing good in English which helped him to improve and he can see that isolating himself did not assist at all.

Q: What do you think, except a teacher, other learners and parents who else must give support to the learner?

A: A society at large can do that.

Q: How?

A: Through educational programmes, educate the kids and try to encourage them. Department can do that by sending facilitators and motivational speakers from time to time to speak to the learners.

Q: Why do you think it is important to send motivational speakers time to time to speak with learners?

A: Motivational speakers should not be once off thing but regular so that leaners can always have the right attitude to work.

Q: And you think the best motivation can be what kind of a motivation (what should the department bring)?

A: They must bring people who are realistic and real motivational speakers, they should scrutinize and guaranteed that the kind of motivation that motivational speakers are going to communicate to the learners. Before they are allowed to approach the learners.

Q: Can you give me an example of a real motivation person/speaker?

A: In 2015, the former principal did invite a motivational speaker. When I was listening to what he told the learners. First, he told that the first thing that is problem to learners is to complain unnecessarily whereas there is no problem. Secondly, what are you complaining about

because you have a lot in your disposal and at the end of the day what do you really do with your time. Thirdly, he said something about the cellphone, you spend a lot of time on Facebook, how much of your time do you face your books. He said why do you spend more time on other people's things and making them more rich than facing your books and see how you can create your own book. That was a realistic motivational speaker who talked sense to the learners. There is another one who came and told the learners on their face that when you have too many friends, who are doing wrong who will direct to the correct path. He blindfolded one of the learners, and he said here is someone in front of you he wants to give you something that is something that you need at the end of the day. That was a certificate, he turned him around for several times and said here is your friend go and get that certificate. The boy started walking to the different direction, and he said when people bring many suggestions and you will be confused and you are the only person who is going to face that problem at the end of the day. Those motivations changed the learners and even if they want to complain they will hold it back when they remember the words of the motivational speakers. I always tell learners in my class that you will always say all of you took a decision but during exams you will be alone writing your paper you are not going to write as a union.

Q: How does resilience assist learners to become academically successful?

A: It enables the learners to maximise their time well, it also motivates the learners intrinsically. It also enables learners to manage their time very well to manage their activities very well

Q: If a learner manages time very well, can you give me an example of a learner who manages time very well?

A: It is Mswazi Tshabalala, he manages his time very well. He always does his things on time and even if he is under pressure he does not wait for the last minute. He can manage his academic and personal things very well. He is a clean learner, he washes his clothes and still has time for his parents and studies

Q: Which opportunities do you provide to learners to succeed academically as a teacher?

A: For grade 12 I use a lot of strategies. My strategies change as the year goes by, in one strategy I pick something and use another strategy. I used to give learners a lot of tests, I am not used to this one topic assessment. When I assess I use the previous and the current when assessing the learner. When you only assess on one they will forget the other one. The other problem is time/factor, we have too many classes to teach and learners are too many. You cannot assess and do marking at the same time, but I have a strategy. I give them assessment and when we mark I will tell them not to focus on writing answers they must read a question paper and see how they become wrong and to interpret the question so that if it comes in other form and they can be able to answer. I get very intense with learners, learners they know my modulus of operation, if you do not have a question paper you are not allowed in my class.

Q: When you say you get intense, explain to me when you do what?

A: For one particular question I can spend a lot of time, I will look for reasons and the why's for the question. If they don't have the reasons, we will go back and start from scratch everything so that I can build a level of understanding for the questions. Educators should discuss the questions and answers with the learners that is the most aspect. As an educator I always revise the question papers and make sure that I know different ways of answering so that I can be able to explain to learners in order for them too to understand. I always get past questions

papers and work with learners, scrutinize the question papers and make sure that we get answers according to their complexity because marks are allocated according to the complexity of the questions. I am a very patient teacher, I spent time with learners. Tomorrow learners will be here from 12:00 to 16:00 and they don't have a problem because they know they will enjoy themselves and learn more. We will be handling very complex questions.

Q: I heard you saying, they know they enjoy themselves. Tomorrow is Sunday and they are coming from 12:00 to 16:00. Why do you say they enjoy themselves?

A: Because learners are more comfortable when a particular question is explained in multiple ways to them whereby they will have options or alternative way of answering than using one thing. Learners are happy because when they get answers to this and they don't understand that some of the answers are usually summary answers they are not elaborated in details and things don't make sense to them. When they find an educator who can elaborate to them in details it will make them understand more. Some of the textbooks are not understandable, in physical science that I teach it use too many terminologies for the same thing. Some of textbooks don't use these terminologies so it brings a lot of confusion to learners which results to learners to fail. If they have an educator who is giving them all the terminologies, they will know that in any disposable time they always know the right thing to do. I always give them example on when the car is slowing down the car is accelerating but when a car is slowing down the speed is decreasing so the car is decelerating to retardance. Four things just meaning the same thing, you can take one of the things but can mean one thing.

Q: Besides those 2 strategies you have mentioned, because you said they are many what are the other ones?

A: The other strategies I always use in Life Science because I teach Physical Science and Life Science. In Life Science there many concepts which involves human body, when you start cramming learners on how do we breath, how the kidneys work and how do we maintain the body temperature, there are many processes and to explain all these processes to learners it will confuse them even as an educator. I always tell them that I need them to learn to say it loud or make a presentation on their own. When you make a presentation I will be there to control, when you don't say the right word I will add or correct. In the past I say write an essay or write a test and they will not get good marks, now I use presentation and I will browse the internet and use a voice call and send to them. Learners will keep on playing and playing the recorder and hearing my voice they master it and will keep that in their mind and will not forget.

Q: You send it to them via WhatsApp?

A: I have created a group for them but in all learning areas we have created a group, if they need clarification on a concept I communicate with them and explain including the grade 12. When I make presentations in the class I also make them over night and the following morning I will ask them randomly to present. You cannot believe when my learner wrote a comprehensive essay when they have to explain the 4 processes. Even the weakest learner you will not believe, she wrote excellently, this is the learner who failed dismally but she got high marks because of what presentations did to her.

Q: Meaning you just not rely on textbook, you use textbook and WhatsApp and what else?

A: I use textbook, WhatsApp and other learning materials. I use other sources like browsing the internet and look for other terminologies that will make learners to recall their studies in case they cannot remember they use this alternative that she can understand because what matters is for the learner to understand because you can use all the vocabulary but if they don't understand there is no use

Q: In terms of engaging them, you use WhatsApp?

A: WhatsApp is just a backup, the real activities are in class

Q: The real activities are in class and WhatsApp is backup, what are other ways except these two ways?

A: The other ones are routine, giving them tests. Give them full question paper whereby we go to the memorandum and do not select questions but we go through the question paper and will explain some of the concepts that needs to be explained. I take question papers and memorandum and elaborate the answers to them and sometimes I ask the learners to explain and forget about the examiners and the memorandum to give their own version of understanding. So that I can be able to see if they do understand the papers.

Q: What are challenges do learners face when they try to be academically successful from school (things that works as a barrier to learners)?

A: I wouldn't know but peer pressure and problematic learners or ill-disciplined learners. You need to teach all learners in class despite of all the challenges because the law stipulates that every learner is entitled to education you cannot chase a learner out of the class. That is a problem with the ill-disciplined learners, we educators we spend time on disciplining these learners than educating them. Financial issue is another challenge, because some learners struggles to pay extra classes. If they want to attend I always assist them financially and if they are able to pay they can pay but if not they cannot pay me. Time can also be another factor, we as educators we have so much that is taken from us. We have so much to do but with little time, tomorrow I am expected to teach learners and paperwork need to be done and on Monday they need you to submit things and if not you will get into trouble. Learners need more of our time and I am glad that this is my calling and in that way learners will be able to commit.

Q: They are spending more time on the learners?

A: Yes, because my desire and how I cherish this occupation. Because of passion even if I am not feeling well I still come to school. My learners know that I go all out for them just to get tuition because they need our time.

Q: What are other challenges from home that makes a learner not to be academically successful?

A: The non-supportive parents, non-achievers within the environment. People within the environment are not good role models (lack of good role models) that also have a bad impact on children.

Q: Why are you saying that?

A: Yes, it can affect a child, there is a boy who have been abused by his father to the extent that he has to exit the high school. That is been a challenge, despite the hardships he had to leave the house because the more he stays he can be violent towards his father because he cannot

stand what his mother is going through. Assault and house situation can also be challenge and too many friends.

Q: What do you mean by too many friends?

A: Learners will always try to waste more time on their friends.

Q: Anything that comes from the community that will make a learner to be not academically successful?

A: Taverns around the community, regular public functions and social gatherings and there are kids who are trying to study at home.

Q: What do you think must be done with those things for the sake of learner to be successful, what is your opinion?

A: This thing of drinking, drinking should be restricted and should not be allowed in residential areas. It should be away from homes that is what I am thinking. There should be a legislation for taverns and people must drink far from home.

Q: Are there other challenges that you think we should talk about that makes learners to be not academically successful?

A: Mother tongue also have a role to play, you see I am not a Sotho speaking man and when I came here I had an impression that I will not achieve. I know of a man who knows me said I will not understand but it turns out to be the opposite because for me to be in this environment for so long it is because of the results of the school which I have boosted. They took risk when the science teacher leaves the school and they call me and she had 3 distinctions, she was the best. When I took over there was this fear that am I going to make the down turn or what but it turns out that my first results came out high, I have blew it out of proportion. The results became out very outstanding, the distinctions increased. I said this people underestimated this learner on their ability to speak English because we educators are part of the problem. These learners write very well, on WhatsApp I tell them not to write in abbreviation and they stopped. These kids write fluently, a very sound English. I came from Nigeria, teacher who teach English I tend to understand more but those who speak mother tongue is for home language. The other challenge is pronunciation, exactly on how you say something the learners will write it like that. The other barrier is, let's stick to the language of teaching and learning which is English, some educator goes to class and speak their mother tongue throughout.

Q: For example, you mean like a teacher who is offering Life Science?

A: In mother tongue the whole period, and he will say something in English few times. Everything must be done in English, even myself I sometimes I try to use Sotho words to explain. Sometimes the learner will try to ask or explain in their mother tongue and other learners will shout and tell her/him to speak in English because they cannot understand.

Q: What can you say about the peers among learners?

A: Peer groups in learning they have an impact to the other learner's achievement.

Q: How?

- A: they say show me your friend and I will show you who you are. The friend that you keep have to do a lot with your performance. Mswazi, all the friend he keeps are very smart, focused and determined. Those ones who are weak look at the kind of friends they keep. I can tell you that there were learners who were smart but they have become weak because of the friends they keep. Even though we say do not blame your friend for your failure, you have to take control and you know who you should be. The friends you keep has a lot to do with ones performance.
- Q: What are personal or individual characteristics that a learner that help learner to become academically resilience?
- A: It is to be positive all the times. Firstly, having the right attitude to work it is not an introvert can interrupt people by not sharing information with people. Ready to assist other and always up-to-date with her work, have consistency in her work
- Q: What helps learners to succeed academically?
- A: The level of commitment should be high. They have to sweat to learn and give it all of their time. They are willing to go an extra mile.
- Q: What do you mean by extra mile?
- A: For example, there are learners who I teach those learners are in grade 12B, 12C & 12D. If a learner did not understand what I taught in his class, he will follow me to the other class and join that class. He will tell that he does not need just to learn the topic but to get a full understanding of the topic. After every effort the learner will be satisfied
- Q: Do you think these learners who are performing very well, do they have a plan at home for their academic activities?
- A: They do. Some of them when we do Saturday school or extra classes they stay at home. They do their homework while we are doing extra classes here. When they go home they start with their house chores and report to their parents when they are done. The parents will allow them to their homework after they will rest for a while, later they will start with their studies and their personal stuff.
- Q: Do you know any learners who has that kind of a plan at home?
- A: Mswazi Tshabalala, I know is one of them and they also have the video time. There is another girl by the name of Podumo Lebohang is the other learner who also does that. Once the school is over she stay and do her homework. I always take of this smart learner and I just observe to see where does this coming from and I get a lot of things from them. You come to the weak learners, you actually get the problem. They will start and say you are not doing this and complain and I know what to tell them. They will also say I cannot be like that person but you can try to become like that person.
- Q: Who is academically successful and resilience learner's role model (Learners who are performing very well, do you know their role model)?
- A: I know most of them, they look at their educators and some of them they look outside the world. They look at this role models and they want to be like those role models. They want to achieve and very ambitious.
- Q: Can you give an example of a learner who told you about a particular role model?

- A: I don't know, but I remember I think it was Thusa Kamogelo but he is know longer with us. He is at Wits University, he finished last year. He wanted to be Aeronautical Engineer. I think he saw someone on media who become a pilot. I don't remember the name but he is busy now with the programme for aeronautical engineering.
- Q: Who are the people you remember as a source of inspiration for these learners who are doing well?
- A: Their parents.
- Q: Why do you say their parents?
- A: The parents are highly supportive. There is a boy called Reitshepile Mothupi, he had a brother but his elder brother was down, he was not academically sound. He was just not serious, he is like an airy of hope to the family. He gets all the support, even if we do extra classes the father will always say that it doesn't matter how long you are keeping my son but I know you are doing this for a good course. I don't mind on what time you finish, I will leave my business and come to collect my son. There was also a girl who I taught in 2012 to 2014, she had a supportive father but the father past on. This father supported all his children equally but the girl is successful because of her father.
- Q: Tell me, these learners who are doing well how do they feel when engaging on a difficult or challenging activities?
- A: Those are the kind of things they want, something that will challenge them.
- Q: How do they feel when they are getting something that they want according to you when you are looking at them?
- A: The few buts, when they are not able to achieve. They will be so enthusiastic to see where they wrong and they will make sure that they do not repeat the mistake. I did once administer a test to my learners in class and I know the smartest of them all who was even the highest. I forgot that I did not assess her speech but she told me she observed that I did not do it and I felt so bad because I couldn't even eat and because I know she is the best of the best
- Q: How do the school principal, peers, teachers, School based support team, SGB, district officials of Free State Department of Basic Education have supported these learners
- A: The principal of the school is the best, she is very supportive to these learners.
- Q: By doing what?
- A: The most thing that she do is to lead, Mme Mmaphala always support and entertain any strategies that comes for the learners to succeed as long is going to part of the achievement. We always talk about it in the staff room, when a learner present anything to her, she will present it to us in the staff room and she will support it even if it does not sit well with everybody, Mme Mmaphala will support it. She also stay behind until late to support the learners. She also supports educators as long as everything we do is in the best interest of the learners she will support it. If we need anything or learning aids she will make provision of it. Every priority as long is academically related she support it.
- Q: What about the district?

- A: They also assist in the areas of needs in the school like when needing extra teachers in Sciences the district will assist. SGB also do the same thing too, any project in place as long is academic related. That is why the school has been excelling because there is a support from the Principal, Deputy Principal, SGB, district office and subject heads.
- Q: What about the School Based Support Team?
- A: They also play part and the educators too.
- Q: What are the weaknesses of all those stakeholders that you talked about?
- A: I don't see any weaknesses on the Principal. On the SGB side, they always delay when we need extra educator to assist. An educator will come at a later time, even the department they delay with the project like if we need the support for feeding scheme but at the end of the day you cannot blame them, they are just there. The people who are on one-on-one situation with the learner is the school itself. The SGB because they are parents and they are used to learners.
- Q: What are the aspects that require development according to you (in anything) or contribute to academic success?
- A: We should all improve our learning and teaching methodology should change as well. We should use less of the mother tongue.
- Q: Currently what teaching method are you using?
- A: We teach and assess the learners and I want to try teaching dimensions.
- Q: Which teaching dimensions
- A: Teaching learners and giving them time to explain beside written work and time to interact among themselves. Giving individual attention but the only challenge is time.
- Q: How do learner relate with their family members especially those ones who are performing very well?
- A: They relate very well with the parents.
- Q: What do you mean by saying they relate very well, give me an example of any learners?
- A: I know the one who relate very well with her mother. I mentioned one who the father is relating very well and understand the son's academic ability and the only thing is the father who cannot control his addiction but relate well with the mother.
- Q: Their relationship with other learners or peers, how do they relate?
- A: They relate well, you have those who interact well with all kinds of learners. There are those who restrict their interaction to a limited and very good learners.

APPENDIX S: Coded transcript of male teacher from School A

Sir, can you advise someone to work in Qwaqwa factories (at the place called information center)?

A: Definitely, people don't have a choice once a person is desperately in need of a job they will settle for anything and there is nothing wrong working there. This is a small developing township and it is affordable for people who work there in terms of accommodation, whatever the person is going to earn it will accommodate their standard of living.

Q: How much do you think they earn in these factories?

A: I don't know, but when I arrive here un 2006/2007, when I asked people used to earn R200/R300 per week but I think they should be earning more now.

Q: Those who said they earn R2000 and something, is it per fortnight or monthly?

A: I don't know much about that, I used to run a business before coming to this position. And studies further, I used to go and sell in those areas

Q: If you were to be asked to talk about this community of Qwaqwa, what will you say to the person who does not stay here?

A: This place is very peaceful, I am a foreign national in this country and I came to stay here for a while and people are **very peaceful and accommodating**. You can come do your own things, people will never bother or cause any problem and you can survive. People will get to know you and get along with them and the crime rate is very low.

Q: What kind of crime are usually committed here?

A: It is burglary, theft and some can break into your car depending on where it is.

Q: What are the things you regard as strong points of this community?

A: Education, this community try to educate community.

Q: Why do you say that?

A: Because I am an educator here, this is a rural area but most of the learners who are successful and educated are coming from here. The community is making an effort to be provide education. Most of the school are here, and the parents are encouraging their children, it is like most of the community make sure that the youth move out of this environment and to better environments. The best weapon to achieve that is education.

Q: Why do they want their youth/kids to move out of this place?

A: Maybe to acquire more skills, you know cities have more advantage on skills like when the kids want to study engineering, IT and so forth. This place cannot provide those kinds of skills. I have seen a boy who once told me that he was a scholar at our school, he is now a successful engineer and he is proud that he studied here. He got a scholarship to study at the university, he always attributes his achievement to this locality. He does not hesitate to come often to see his mother because she stays here.

Q: What are things you regard as weaknesses of this community?

- A: I have observed that, the social grant they depend too much on it.
- Q: Lot of the people are depending on the social grant?
- A: I wouldn't know but I am just trying to say and what I was told by one of the leaders from my church who is a chief around this area. He said some of the youth have access to assets like houses for accommodation and they are not obliged to go beyond their present situation to better their lives. They are content to what they have, they are industrial people. For example (will use a situation in ground route) , a smart learner who is among learners who are weak may not bring out his best learners but if you move this smart learner to the environment where there are smart learners he will bring out his best which we have discovered. The environment does not prompt the youth to move further that makes the parents to want their kids to move out of this place. They move to more competitive environment.
- Q: What do you understand about the word 'resilience'?
- A: [It is overcoming or achieving something against all odds, no matter how bad is the situation you always survive very difficult circumstances.](#)
- Q: Can you create a scenario or example of any person that you know who went through those hardships that you are talking about and become successful?
- A: I will start with myself but I do not regards myself as successful. But I think I have walked through that path, that is the same attitude that I am trying to pass on to the learners that I teach and people who are around me. I do not come from an institutional home, I was not born with a silver spoon, there was a point when things were not fair and that is the time where I needed my father the most but I had to survive everything. I was not wearing good clothes but what mattered the most was I told myself that education is the only means that I can use to overcome my situation. Sometimes there was no food at home, sometimes you do not get money to buy things and don't have good clothes but I did not led this to bother me. There was a particular time where things were fair with my father, things were better. Coming to tertiary I had no access to scholarship, not what these kids are having now, I just survive with God's grace. There were times where [I did not have food for days](#) but what I know was that this will not last forever. I have faced difficult situations at tertiary, come across modules that you do not understand but I am a kind of person who do not believe in complaining. I believe in making a plan always, going extra mile, I wish we had internet access like these kids have this nowadays. I will not rest until I get what I want.
- Q: You keep on telling yourself that you will not rest until you get what you want irrespective?
- A: Irrespective of all odds because if I put my on something I won't be able to sleep because I am not here as a contender.
- Q: Do you still remember any incident where you told yourself that no matter what, I won't stop until I get what I want. How did you feel that time when you told yourself those words. Do you remember?
- A: I remember very well, back in tertiary when I was going to get my first degree it was that way. Not that we were not having good teacher. The education we got it was not the same as the education of this days, now teacher make sure that they provide learners with the content and make sure that the cover the whole syllabus. But I wouldn't blame them for my future as I have already said I do not stop until I get what I want. I was struggling with physical science, I

had to go an extra mile and every cent that I got I had to save it to pay for my extra class. My father was very supportive and I am a kind of person who have no pride, to get anywhere in life you must let pride go. I always tell myself that if I die and 6 feet underground, people will only cry on that day and tomorrow they will be forgotten. If I struggle with something I will seek for assistance and ask people to help me even if you can go behind my back and talk about me I do not care about that they only thing is that at the end of the day I will get what I want. **I was struggling and I approached the church, lecturer and even my friends, and they did assist me and I survived and finished my studies.** Even when I started my Honours degree with Unisa, it was the same thing. I struggled with my studies, and had a family to support. I went for a women who is in the same line as me and am grateful to my wife who was in the same line as me, she was very supportive throughout.

Q: When you say, you were looking for a woman who is in the same line. What do you mean by same line?

A: Who understand what it takes to be an achiever. Someone who went through hardships, who went through pains in life but through survive despites all odds. Not those people who will say due to circumstances I consider myself a failure, those people who look beyond their circumstances to get what they want. My wife was treated like a mate after the death of her mother and she was abandoned by her father due to personal issue. My father in-law abandoned my wife and the whole family, she came to a family where she was sold as a slave. My wife told me that she didn't care on how long it is going to take her but she is determined to get her education, she was discipline and told herself that no man will go in between her legs unless a man who will marry her. Even people harass/tease and saying marry me but she always said I will rather end up walking on street without anything but to marry someone with conditions. The sad part is, she was even taken by her own elder brother and she treated her bad for over 19 years, treated like a maid but she never gave up she took it as a stepping stone and she studied to become a nurse. When I have an impression about her is that marriage is not about beauty, remember in marriage if you bring someone who is not in the same line, she can destroy you own empire.

Q: Now tell me, that kind of a person that went through hardships and survived it. Do you regard that person with what kind of characteristics/qualities does the person poses

A: Tolerance and forgiveness, my wife is very forgiving. Those are the people who will tell in a sport when they do not like what you did, they do not dwell on it or accumulate. They are people who can manage any situation, my wife does so many things that I do not even think of. She can even manage our finances very well, every cent I have I entrusted it to my wife

Q: What is the meaning of the word 'academic resilience'?

A: Achieving despite all circumstances or unconducive circumstances. All the years as a teacher I have seen a lot of academic resilience and I came to conclude that it does not matter the resources in your disposal or how good looking you are and what you have is part of you.

Q: Is there any leaners that you know and think that this one, he/she is academically resilience where you taught before?

A: There was a school that went on tour to Kenya and had the presentation because they wanted to understand their modus of operandi on why the school achieve better results but what actually they said which turned me off, the school only admit smart learners that did not make

sense to me. That was a worthless venture because the truth about education is that the school has smart learners and well resourced. I think the northern part of Nigeria, where people hear about all these Boko Haram, those people are not exposed to formal education they are predominately Muslims, few acquaintance. Islamic education is only their kind of education, it is of recent that they start to embrace their elite who have the opportunity to go to the western of Nigeria who got a little bit of western English education and now they feel like they want to pass it on. I was privileged in Nigeria when you are a graduate, you need to serve in government for a year. The main purpose of that service is they want to reintegrate the country because of the civil war they had in 1967 to 1970. It actually broke the country into different acting groups, and those groups hate each other. The country is trying to reintegrate and reconcile and I was privileged to go there. This is a rural area, some of the schools are not well resourced and some of the learners are not privileged, some they don't have TVs in their homes and there are shortages of books. In Nigeria kids in rural area they do not know if there are townships, they live within their means but you will be amused by their academic resilience. When you start to enquire you will hear things that will amaze you, they go around and use pictures to learn. Those learners during school holidays, they work at farmers with their father. When ask them on how they excel in their exams, they will tell you that they normally request breaks and go to the corner to study a bit. They use all the opportunity in their disposal to study and excel, those are the kind of academic resilience.

Q: Where you are working now (Is there any learners that you know and think that this one, he/she is academically resilience)?

A: These kids globally not looking at only the school I am working at, they don't have time for their studies. Technology add to their advantage to actually boost and increase the community liability or it has become another weapon of destruction. Kids spend more time with gadgets doing things that are not relevant to their studies. These internet gadgets consume much of their time. As grown up we also be honest with ourselves, the time we commit to these gadgets they consume most of our time but at least we are grown ups we can be able to manage ourselves but with kids it's a different story. This is a very difficult situation, even if we have made a rule that kids should not use cellphone at school but they still waste too much time on the gadgets. **If you see learners excel, you must know that those are learners who are intrinsically motivated** to achieve and commit themselves despite all the things that are around them. These learners you watch them in class and their level of consistency, and when you ask them they will tell you that we have a programme, we just discipline ourselves and not chat with our friend because chatting will not make me to do what I am doing now. Residents learners have high commitment in their studies, their attitude is good, they never complaint and they always improvise.

Q: When you say their attitude is good, what do you mean?

A: The attitude to work, attitude to school, attitude to teachers, they are very polite, you can never find them wanting anything. Yesterday we were busy with our routine and the rules that include cellphone not allowed at school and to make sure that learners come to school with their textbooks. All the learners we met with them, they had all those things in their disposal and the others will give complain. These learners make their school work a priority than complaining. The other learners do have time too but their priorities is to complain and they do not have control of themselves with the gadgets. These gadgets take most of their time and they are destroying the future of our future generation.

Q: What are your views on academic success?

A: Academic success on learners is the need for maximum support from their teachers. They need high commitment from educators. The kind of need that the kids expect from educators is a beyond authorized teaching hours and also mean self commitment from us as teachers. We have a big role to play in the lives of these learners but it is not going to be easy because of the level of commitment and reason for people to come to this profession. The learners need support from the main stakeholder to commit on supporting them.

Q: When you say a high level of commitment from teachers, what do you mean?

A: A high level of commitment, we need to know our level when we teach and we need to understand and to stop being judgemental. When a learner is not excelling, we need to check if it is teaching or something not by judging them first. We need to come up with the solution to address the situation. For example, the Reavaya classes, in these classes we put learners according to their capabilities (e.g. smart, moderate & those who are struggling). When you have a privilege of teaching weak learners you will understand that even if you are teaching weak learners you will see in their eyes that the learners really need your assistance. Some are afraid to admit but you can really see and realize that some need one-on-one interaction which the world is not ready to provide because of financial constraints. Some families who can even manage to provide 2 tutors for their kids but they cannot but a teacher needs to go an extra mile to assist the learners, that is my own feeling and in that way there will be great academic success. If a learner needs more attention, teachers must be able to provide that for instance during the week there is time but if you work with them during the weekend you are able to assist them maybe for 3 hours working on the problems and assisting to solve them. You are also able to assist those who are weak or struggling rather than telling them how stupid/dumb they are because they are not able to understand quickly like the other smart learners. *Motivates the ones that are weak*, make them feel good about themselves and give them the right attitude in class and once they realize that you are an educator who understands them they start putting effort in their work and doing good and give you the best that you want and that is an academic success (a high level of commitment from educators).

Q: You said these learners according to you they need support and you mention that a teacher must support. Do you think only teachers must support them?

A: Not only teacher, some parents also have a role to play but we do understand that parents are always occupied. It is not easy and some learners have more challenges but they try hard to make provision for them. Some parents are not trained teachers but they can support every plan that the school has for their children. Sometimes we are able to achieve a lot because of the parents which is what the school can enjoy and they really support the school in too many ways.

Q: For example?

A: When a learner does not come with the textbook, you send the learner home and the parent will come to school and will reprimand the child in front of you even if a learner is not dressed properly the parent will reprimand. We also invite parents when we issue results and interact with them and parents will be able to talk to their children and question them about their school work. When we have issues with the learner *we normally call parents and they do come to school. If parents are not available they will normally send a representative, and* some of

the parents they work outside this province but they do make sure that they come to school if there is an issue with their children which shows that they take their children's education as a priority. We are really supported by parent and **academic success comes from high commitment of parents** and educators and the learners too. But you have to make learners feel good about themselves first if we want that commitment from them.

Q: Why do you think if we have make a learner feel good about themselves that part will make a learner to become academic successful. Why do you think like that?

A: Because this is going to motivate the child/learner, it is an informal instinct motivation to that learner. It will give a child a right attitude to work. There is a boy in grade 10, he told me he has a challenge with the First addition language which is English and the mother told right on time and I told them that this will not be a problem. I started by asking if he can speak English and he said yes, by just responding that means he do understand it. I know that there is a different between interpersonal communication and cognitive language which is basic English and academic English. I advice him to develop himself by interacting more often with other learners which will assist in understanding English. I have encourage him to do things on his own and when he still struggle then he is welcome to come to me for assistance. The mother was happy about my approach and since the beginning of the year the learners has improved and is doing well. When I come to the class he is always excited and he offers to take my book to the next class. He has the enthusiasm but not only in my class to the other classes as well, he said to me he is interacting with other learners who are doing good in English which helped him to improve and he can see that isolating himself did not assist at all.

Q: What do you think, except a teacher, other learners and parents who else must give support to the learner?

A: A society at large can do that.

Q: How?

A: Through educational programmes, educate the kids and try to encourage them. Department can do that by sending facilitators and motivational speakers from time to time to speak to the learners.

Q: Why do you think it is important to send motivational speakers time to time to speak with learners?

A: Motivational speakers should not be once off thing but regular so that leaners can always have the right attitude to work.

Q: And you think the best motivation can be what kind of a motivation (what should the department bring)?

A: They must bring people who are realistic and real motivational speakers, they should scrutinize and guaranteed that the kind of motivation that motivational speakers are going to communicate to the learners. Before they are allowed to approach the learners.

Q: Can you give me an example of a real motivation person/speaker?

A: In 2015, the former principal did invite a motivational speaker. When I was listening to what he told the learners. First, he told that the first thing that is problem to learners is to complain unnecessarily whereas there is no problem. Secondly, what are you complaining about

because you have a lot in your disposal and at the end of the day what do you really do with your time. Thirdly, he said something about the cellphone, you spend a lot of time on Facebook, how much of your time do you face your books. He said why do you spend more time on other people's things and making them more rich than facing your books and see how you can create your own book. That was a realistic motivational speaker who talked sense to the learners. There is another one who came and told the learners on their face that when you have too many friends, who are doing wrong who will direct to the correct path. He blindfolded one of the learners, and he said here is someone in front of you he wants to give you something that is something that you need at the end of the day. That was a certificate, he turned him around for several times and said here is your friend go and get that certificate. The boy started walking to the different direction, and he said when people bring many suggestions and you will be confused and you are the only person who is going to face that problem at the end of the day. Those motivations changed the learners and even if they want to complain they will hold it back when they remember the words of the motivational speakers. I always tell learners in my class that you will always say all of you took a decision but during exams you will be alone writing your paper you are not going to write as a union.

Q: How does resilience assist learners to become academically successful?

A: It enables the learners to maximise their time well, it also motivates the learners intrinsically. It also enables learners to manage their time very well to manage their activities very well

Q: If a learner manages time very well, can you give me an example of a learner who manages time very well?

A: It is Mswazi Tshabalala, he manages his time very well. He always does his things on time and even if he is under pressure he does not wait for the last minute. He can manage his academic and personal things very well. He is a clean learner, he washes his clothes and still has time for his parents and studies

Q: Which opportunities do you provide to learners to succeed academically as a teacher?

A: For grade 12 I use a lot of strategies. My strategies change as the year goes by, in one strategy I pick something and use another strategy. I used to give learners a lot of tests, I am not used to this one topic assessment. When I assess I use the previous and the current when assessing the learner. When you only assess on one they will forget the other one. The other problem is time/factor, we have too many classes to teach and learners are too many. You cannot assess and do marking at the same time, but I have a strategy. I give them assessment and when we mark I will tell them not to focus on writing answers they must read a question paper and see how they become wrong and to interpret the question so that if it comes in other form and they can be able to answer. I get very intense with learners, learners they know my modulus of operation, if you do not have a question paper you are not allowed in my class.

Q: When you say you get intense, explain to me when you do what?

A: For one particular question I can spend a lot of time, I will look for reasons and the why's for the question. If they don't have the reasons, we will go back and start from scratch everything so that I can build a level of understanding for the questions. Educators should discuss the questions and answers with the learners that is the most aspect. As an educator I always revise the question papers and make sure that I know different ways of answering so that I can be able to explain to learners in order for them too to understand. I always get past questions

papers and work with learners, scrutinize the question papers and make sure that we get answers according to their complexity because marks are allocated according to the complexity of the questions. I am a very patient teacher, I spent time with learners. Tomorrow learners will be here from 12:00 to 16:00 and they don't have a problem because they know they will enjoy themselves and learn more. We will be handling very complex questions.

Q: I heard you saying, they know they enjoy themselves. Tomorrow is Sunday and they are coming from 12:00 to 16:00. Why do you say they enjoy themselves?

A: Because learners are more comfortable when a particular question is explained in multiple ways to them whereby they will have options or alternative way of answering than using one thing. Learners are happy because when they get answers to this and they don't understand that some of the answers are usually summary answers they are not elaborated in details and things don't make sense to them. When they find an educator who can elaborate to them in details it will make them understand more. Some of the textbooks are not understandable, in physical science that I teach it use too many terminologies for the same thing. Some of textbooks don't use these terminologies so it brings a lot of confusion to learners which results to learners to fail. If they have an educator who is giving them all the terminologies, they will know that in any disposable time they always know the right thing to do. I always give them example on when the car is slowing down the car is accelerating but when a car is slowing down the speed is decreasing so the car is decelerating to retardance. Four things just meaning the same thing, you can take one of the things but can mean one thing.

Q: Besides those 2 strategies you have mentioned, because you said they are many what are the other ones?

A: The other strategies I always use in Life Science because I teach Physical Science and Life Science. In Life Science there many concepts which involves human body, when you start cramming learners on how do we breath, how the kidneys work and how do we maintain the body temperature, there are many processes and to explain all these processes to learners it will confuse them even as an educator. I always tell them that I need them to learn to say it loud or make a presentation on their own. When you make a presentation I will be there to control, when you don't say the right word I will add or correct. In the past I say write an essay or write a test and they will not get good marks, now I use presentation and I will browse the internet and use a voice call and send to them. Learners will keep on playing and playing the recorder and hearing my voice they master it and will keep that in their mind and will not forget.

Q: You send it to them via WhatsApp?

A: I have created a group for them but in all learning areas we have created a group, if they need clarification on a concept I communicate with them and explain including the grade 12. When I make presentations in the class I also make them over night and the following morning I will ask them randomly to present. You cannot believe when my learner wrote a comprehensive essay when they have to explain the 4 processes. Even the weakest learner you will not believe, she wrote excellently, this is the learner who failed dismally but she got high marks because of what presentations did to her.

Q: Meaning you just not rely on textbook, you use textbook and WhatsApp and what else?

A: I use textbook, WhatsApp and other learning materials. I use other sources like browsing the internet and look for other terminologies that will make learners to recall their studies in case they cannot remember they use this alternative that she can understand because what matters is for the learner to understand because you can use all the vocabulary but if they don't understand there is no use.

Q: In terms of engaging them, you use WhatsApp?

A: WhatsApp is just a backup, the real activities are in class

Q: The real activities are in class and WhatsApp is backup, what are other ways except these two ways?

A: The other ones are routine, giving them tests. Give them full question paper whereby we go to the memorandum and do not select questions but we go through the question paper and will explain some of the concepts that needs to be explained. I take question papers and memorandum and elaborate the answers to them and sometimes I ask the learners to explain and forget about the examiners and the memorandum to give their own version of understanding. So that I can be able to see if they do understand the papers.

Q: What are challenges do learners face when they try to be academically successful from school (things that works as a barrier to learners)?

A: I wouldn't know but peer pressure and problematic learners or ill-disciplined learners. You need to teach all learners in class despite of all the challenges because the law stipulates that every learner is entitled to education you cannot chase a learner out of the class. That is a problem with the ill-disciplined learners, we educators we spend time on disciplining these learners than educating them. Financial issue is another challenge, because some learners struggles to pay extra classes. If they want to attend I always assist them financially and if they are able to pay they can pay but if not they cannot pay me. Time can also be another factor, we as educators we have so much that is taken from us. We have so much to do but with little time, tomorrow I am expected to teach learners and paperwork need to be done and on Monday they need you to submit things and if not you will get into trouble. Learners need more of our time and I am glad that this is my calling and in that way learners will be able to commit.

Q: They are spending more time on the learners?

A: Yes, because my desire and how I cherish this occupation. Because of passion even if I am not feeling well I still come to school. My learners know that I go all out for them just to get tuition because they need our time.

Q: What are other challenges from home that makes a learner not to be academically successful?

A: The non-supportive parents, non-achievers within the environment. People within the environment are not good role models (lack of good role models) that also have a bad impact on children.

Q: Why are you saying that?

A: Yes, it can affect a child, there is a boy who have been abused by his father to the extent that he has to exit the high school. That is been a challenge, despite the hardships he had to leave the house because the more he stays he can be violent towards his father because he cannot

stand what his mother is going through. Assault and house situation can also be challenge and too many friends.

Q: What do you mean by too many friends?

A: Learners will always try to waste more time on their friends.

Q: Anything that comes from the community that will make a learner to be not academically successful?

A: Taverns around the community, regular public functions and social gatherings and there are kids who are trying to study at home.

Q: What do you think must be done with those things for the sake of learner to be successful, what is your opinion?

A: This thing of drinking, drinking should be restricted and should not be allowed in residential areas. It should be away from homes that is what I am thinking. There should be a legislation for taverns and people must drink far from home.

Q: Are there other challenges that you think we should talk about that makes learners to be not academically successful?

A: Mother tongue also have a role to play, you see I am not a Sotho speaking man and when I came here I had an impression that I will not achieve. I know of a man who knows me said I will not understand but it turns out to be the opposite because for me to be in this environment for so long it is because of the results of the school which I have boosted. They took risk when the science teacher leaves the school and they call me and she had 3 distinctions, she was the best. When I took over there was this fear that am I going to make the down turn or what but it turns out that my first results came out high, I have blew it out of proportion. The results became out very outstanding, the distinctions increased. I said this people underestimated this learner on their ability to speak English because we educators are part of the problem. These learners write very well, on WhatsApp I tell them not to write in abbreviation and they stopped. These kids write fluently, a very sound English. I came from Nigeria, teacher who teach English I tend to understand more but those who speak mother tongue is for home language. The other challenge is pronunciation, exactly on how you say something the learners will write it like that. The other barrier is, let's stick to the language of teaching and learning which is English, *some educator goes to class and speak their mother tongue throughout.*

Q: For example, you mean like a teacher who is offering Life Science?

A: In mother tongue the whole period, and he will say something in English few times. Everything must be done in English, even myself I sometimes I try to use Sotho words to explain. Sometimes the learner will try to ask or explain in their mother tongue and other learners will shout and tell her/him to speak in English because they cannot understand.

Q: What can you say about the peers among learners?

A: Peer groups in learning they have an impact to the other learner's achievement.

Q: How?

- A: they say show me your friend and I will show you who you are. **The friend that you keep have to do a lot with your performance.** Mswazi, **all the friend he keeps are very smart, focused and determined.** Those ones who are weak look at the kind of friends they keep. I can tell you that there were learners who were smart but they have become weak because of the friends they keep. Even though we say do not blame your friend for your failure, you have to take control and you know who you should be. The friends you keep has a lot to do with ones performance.
- Q: What are personal or individual characteristics that a learner that help learner to become academically resilience?
- A: It is to be positive all the times. Firstly, having the right attitude to work it is not an introvert can interrupt people by not sharing information with people. Ready to assist other and always up-to-date with her work, have consistency in her work
- Q: What helps learners to succeed academically?
- A: The level of commitment should be high. They have to sweat to learn and give it all of their time. They are willing to go an extra mile.
- Q: What do you mean by extra mile?
- A: For example, there are learners who I teach those learners are in grade 12B, 12C & 12D. If a learner did not understand what I taught in his class, he will follow me to the other class and join that class. He will tell that he does not need just to learn the topic but to get a full understanding of the topic. After every effort the learner will be satisfied
- Q: Do you think these learners who are performing very well, do they have a plan at home for their academic activities?
- A: They do. Some of them when we do Saturday school or extra classes they stay at home. They do their homework while we are doing extra classes here. When they go home they start with their house chores and report to their parents when they are done. The parents will allow them to their homework after they will rest for a while, later they will start with their studies and their personal stuff.
- Q: Do you know any learners who has that kind of a plan at home?
- A: Mswazi Tshabalala, I know is one of them and they also have the video time. There is another girl by the name of Podumo Lebohang is the other learner who also does that. Once the school is over she stay and do her homework. I always take of this smart learner and I just observe to see where does this coming from and I get a lot of things from them. You come to the weak learners, you actually get the problem. They will start and say you are not doing this and complain and I know what to tell them. They will also say I cannot be like that person but you can try to become like that person.
- Q: Who is academically successful and resilience learner's role model (Learners who are performing very well, do you know their role model)?
- A: I know most of them, they look at their educators and some of them they look outside the world. They look at this role models and they want to be like those role models. They want to achieve and very ambitious.
- Q: Can you give an example of a learner who told you about a particular role model?

- A: I don't know, but I remember I think it was Thusa Kamogelo but he is know longer with us. He is at Wits University, he finished last year. He wanted to be Aeronautical Engineer. I think he saw someone on media who become a pilot. I don't remember the name but he is busy now with the programme for aeronautical engineering.
- Q: Who are the people you remember as a source of inspiration for these learners who are doing well?
- A: **Their parents.**
- Q: Why do you say their parents?
- A: The parents are highly supportive. There is a boy called Reitshepile Mothupi, he had a brother but his elder brother was down, he was not academically sound. He was just not serious, he is like an airy of hope to the family. He gets all the support, **even if we do extra classes the father will always say that it doesn't matter how long you are keeping my son but I know you are doing this for a good course.** I don't mind on what time you finish, I will leave my business and come to collect my son. There was also a girl who I taught in 2012 to 2014, she had a supportive father but the father past on. This father supported all his children equally but the girl is successful because of her father.
- Q: Tell me, these learners who are doing well how do they feel when engaging on a difficult or challenging activities?
- A: Those are the kind of things they want, something that will challenge them.
- Q: How do they feel when they are getting something that they want according to you when you are looking at them?
- A: The few buts, when they are not able to achieve. They will be so enthusiastic to see where they wrong and they will make sure that they do not repeat the mistake. I did once administer a test to my learners in class and I know the smartest of them all who was even the highest. I forgot that I did not assess her speech but she told me she observed that I did not do it and I felt so bad because I couldn't even eat and because I know she is the best of the best
- Q: How do the school principal, peers, teachers, School based support team, SGB, district officials of Free State Department of Basic Education have supported these learners
- A: The principal of the school is the best, she is very supportive to these learners.
- Q: By doing what?
- A: **The most thing that she do is to lead,** Mme Mmaphala always support and entertain any strategies that comes for the learners to succeed as long is going to part of the achievement. We always talk about it in the staff room, when a learner present anything to her, she will present it to us in the staff room and she will support it even if it does not sit well with everybody, Mme Mmaphala will support it. She also stay behind until late to support the learners. **She also supports educators** as long as everything we do is in the best interest of the learners she will support it. If we need anything or learning aids she will make provision of it. Every priority as long is academically related she support it.
- Q: What about the district?


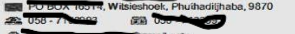

- A: They also assist in the areas of needs in the school like when needing extra teachers in Sciences the district will assist. SGB also do the same thing too, any project in place as long is academic related. That is why the school has been excelling because there is a support from the Principal, Deputy Principal, SGB, district office and subject heads.
- Q: What about the School Based Support Team?
- A: They also play part and the educators too.
- Q: What are the weaknesses of all those stakeholders that you talked about?
- A: I don't see any weaknesses on the Principal. On the SGB side, they always delay when we need extra educator to assist. An educator will come at a later time, even the department they delay with the project like if we need the support for feeding scheme but at the end of the day you cannot blame them, they are just there. The people who are on one-on-one situation with the learner is the school itself. The SGB because they are parents and they are used to learners.
- Q: What are the aspects that require development according to you (in anything) or contribute to academic success?
- A: We should all improve our learning and teaching methodology should change as well. We should use less of the mother tongue.
- Q: Currently what teaching method are you using?
- A: We teach and assess the learners and I want to try teaching dimensions.
- Q: Which teaching dimensions
- A: Teaching learners and giving them time to explain beside written work and time to interact among themselves. Giving individual attention but the only challenge is time.
- Q: How do learner relate with their family members especially those ones who are performing very well?
- A: They relate very well with the parents.
- Q: What do you mean by saying they relate very well, give me an example of any learners?
- A: I know the one who relate very well with her mother. I mentioned one who the father is relating very well and understand the son's academic ability and the only thing is the father who cannot control his addiction but relate well with the mother.
- Q: Their relationship with other learners or peers, how do they relate?
- A: They relate well, you have those who interact well with all kinds of learners. There are those who restrict their interaction to a limited and very good learners.


APPENDIX T: Themes, sub-themes, codes, categories, and sample of coded text from transcript of male teacher from School A

Themes	Sub-themes		Codes	Sample of coded text
Theme 1: Understanding resilience, academic resilience, and academic success			Overcome	It is overcoming or achieving something against all odds, no matter how bad is the situation you always survive very difficult circumstances.
THEME 2: Resilience-enabling resources for academic success	Sub-theme 1: Personal protective factors	Category 2: Motivation	Motivation	If you see learners excel, you must know that those are learners who are intrinsically motivated Motivates the ones that are weak
	Sub-theme 2: Family protective factors	Category 1: Parents'	Parent	we normally call parents and they do come to school. If parents are not available they will normally send a representative Their parents . academic success comes from high commitment of parents even if we do extra classes the father will always say that it doesn't matter how long you are keeping my son but I know you are doing this for a good course.
		Category 2: Relationship with family members	Relationship	relate very well
	Sub-theme 3: School protective factors	Category 1: School principals' role	Principal	She also supports educators
		Category 2: Support from stakeholders	District	They also assist in the areas of needs in the school like when needing extra teachers in Sciences the district will assist
		Category 2: Community	People	peaceful and accommodating
THEME 3: Factors posing risks to	Sub-theme 2: School	Category 1: Teachers	Mother tongue	some educator goes to class and speak their mother tongue throughout.

academic resilience and school success				
			Time	We have so much to do but with little time we educators we spend time on disciplining these learners than educating them.
		Category 2: Learners	Peer pressure	I wouldn't know but peer pressure
	Sub-theme 3: Community	Category 1: Families	Abuse Food	there is a boy who have been abused by his father to the extent that he has to exit the high school I did not have food for days
THEME 4: Multisystemic strategies to promote academic resilience and academic success	Sub-theme 3: School microsystem	Not applicable	Principal	The most thing that she do is to lead
		Not applicable	SGB	On the SGB side, they always delay when we need extra educator to assist.
		Not applicable	Department	An educator will come at a later time, even the department they delay with the project like if we need the support for feeding scheme but at the end of the day you cannot blame them, they are just there.
		Not applicable	Methodology	We should all improve our learning and teaching methodology should change as well.
		Not applicable	Mother tongue	We should use less of the mother tongue .
		Not applicable	Time	Teaching learners and giving them time to explain beside written work and time to interact among themselves.
		Not applicable	Attention	Giving individual attention
	Sub-theme 4: Community	Not applicable	Friends	I was struggling and I approached the church, lecturer and even my friends , and they did assist me and I survived and finished my studies The friend that you keep have to do a lot with your performance. ... all the friend he keeps are very smart, focused and determined.

APPENDIX U: Academic report of learner participants



 P.O. BOX 10077, Witsieshoek, Fhuthadithaba, 9870
 UOB - 7





Learner:  - 410085633
 Admission No: 0309115221082
 Birth Date: 2003/09/11


Grade + Class: 10D
 Date: 2019/08/08
 School Closes: 2019/06/14
 School Reopens: 2019/07/09

Subject	Comment	Term 1			Term 2			Term 3			Grade 10			Final for Year		
		Final %	Level	Grade Ave %	Final %	Level	Grade Ave %	Final %	Level	Grade Ave %	Final %	Level	Grade Ave %	Final %	Final Level	Grade Ave %
Computer Applications Technology (Gr 10)		82	7	53	73	6	46									
English First Additional Language (Gr 10)		95	7	74	91	7	73									
Life Orientation (Gr 10)		100	7	74	91	7	73									
Life Sciences (Gr 10)		88	7	86	86	7	53									
Mathematics (Gr 10)		100	7	50	85	7	37									
Physical Sciences (Gr 10)		90	7	57	91	7	52									
Sesotho Home Language (Gr 10)		75	6	72	72	6	69									
Learner Total / Average:		621 89			580 83											
Result:		Achieved			Achieved											
Days Absent:		0			0			0			0					

Extra Mural Participation:
 General Remarks:

Bacheler Pass: Good work!



 P.O. BOX 10077, Witsieshoek, Fhuthadithaba, 9870
 UOB - 7





Learner:  - 408300389
 Admission No: 0112185450080
 Birth Date: 2001/12/18


Grade + Class: 11E
 Date: 2019/08/08
 School Closes: 2019/06/14
 School Reopens: 2019/07/09

Subject	Comment	Term 1			Term 2			Term 3			Grade 11			Final for Year		
		Final %	Level	Grade Ave %	Final %	Level	Grade Ave %	Final %	Level	Grade Ave %	Final %	Level	Grade Ave %	Final %	Final Level	Grade Ave %
Computer Applications Technology (Gr 11)		88	7	64	76	6	50									
English First Additional Language (Gr 11)		89	7	72	81	7	59									
Life Orientation (Gr 11)		95	7	72	95	7	75									
Life Sciences (Gr 11)		96	7	76	82	7	58									
Mathematics (Gr 11)		81	7	52	78	6	37									
Physical Sciences (Gr 11)		82	7	49	89	7	50									
Sesotho Home Language (Gr 11)		74	6	68	72	6	64									
Learner Total / Average:		605 86			573 82											
Result:		Achieved			Achieved											
Days Absent:		1			0			0			1					

Extra Mural Participation:
 General Remarks:

Bacheler Pass: Good work!



 P.O. BOX 10077, Witsieshoek, Fhuthadithaba, 9870
 UOB - 7


Learner:  - 409226933
 Admission No: 0305070717080
 Birth Date: 2003/05/07

Grade + Class: 10A
 Date: 2019/08/08
 School Closes: 2019/06/14
 School Reopens: 2019/07/09

Subject	Comment	Term 1			Term 2			Term 3			Grade 10			Final for Year		
		Final %	Level	Grade Ave %	Final %	Level	Grade Ave %	Final %	Level	Grade Ave %	Final %	Level	Grade Ave %	Final %	Final Level	Grade Ave %
Accounting (Gr 10)		83	7	52	92	7	54									
Business Studies (Gr 10)		98	7	65	95	7	62									
Economics (Gr 10)		95	7	57	92	7	53									
English First Additional Language (Gr 10)		85	7	74	82	7	53									
Life Orientation (Gr 10)		98	7	74	97	7	73									
Mathematics (Gr 10)		94	7	50	66	5	37									
Sesotho Home Language (Gr 10)		86	7	72	87	7	69									
Learner Total / Average:		650 83			611 87											
Result:		Achieved			Achieved											
Days Absent:		1			0			0			1					

Extra Mural Participation:
 General Remarks:

Bacheler Pass: Good work!

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]



Learner: **[REDACTED]** - 409226992
 Admission No: 0305285297084
 Birth Date: 2003/05/26

Grade + Class: 10D
 Date: 2019/08/08
 School Closes: 2019/06/14
 School Reopens: 2019/07/09

Subject	Comment	Term 1			Term 2			Term 3			Grade 10			Final for Year		
		Final %	Level	Grade Ave %	Final %	Level	Grade Ave %	Final %	Level	Grade Ave %	Final %	Level	Grade Ave %	Final %	Level	Grade Ave %
Computer Applications Technology (Gr 10)		86	5	53	84	7	46									
English First Additional Language (Gr 10)		95	7	74	82	7	63									
Life Orientation (Gr 10)		98	7	74	88	7	73									
Life Sciences (Gr 10)		94	7	65	83	7	53									
Mathematics (Gr 10)		85	7	50	83	7	37									
Physical Sciences (Gr 10)		91	7	57	90	7	52									
Setsoto Home Language (Gr 10)		78	6	72	78	6	69									
Learner Total / Average:		609 87			588 84											
Result:		Achieved			Achieved											
Days Absent:		0			0			0			0					
Extra Mural Participation:																
General Remarks:																
<i>Bachelor Pan: Excellent</i>																

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]



Learner: **[REDACTED]** - 410032983
 Admission No: 0303100541083
 Birth Date: 2003/03/10

Grade + Class: 11E
 Date: 2019/06/08
 School Closes: 2019/06/14
 School Reopens: 2019/07/09

Subject	Comment	Term 1			Term 2			Term 3			Grade 11			Final for Year		
		Final %	Level	Grade Ave %	Final %	Level	Grade Ave %	Final %	Level	Grade Ave %	Final %	Level	Grade Ave %	Final %	Level	Grade Ave %
Computer Applications Technology (Gr 11)		72	6	64	62	5	50									
English First Additional Language (Gr 11)		78	6	72	76	6	61									
Life Orientation (Gr 11)		91	7	73	93	7	79									
Life Sciences (Gr 11)		99	7	76	89	7	58									
Mathematics (Gr 11)		54	4	52	69	5	37									
Physical Sciences (Gr 11)		74	6	49	79	6	50									
Setsoto Home Language (Gr 11)		74	6	68	73	6	64									
Learner Total / Average:		539 77			541 77											
Result:		Achieved			Achieved											
Days Absent:		0			0			0			0					
Extra Mural Participation:																
General Remarks:																
<i>Bachelor Pan: Good work</i>																

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]



Learner: **[REDACTED]** - 496004709
 Admission No: 0212210085081
 Birth Date: 2002/11/21

Grade + Class: 11B
 Date: 2019/06/06
 School Closes: 2019/06/14
 School Reopens: 2019/07/09

Subject	Comment	Term 1			Term 2			Term 3			Grade 11			Final for Year		
		Final %	Level	Grade Ave %	Final %	Level	Grade Ave %	Final %	Level	Grade Ave %	Final %	Level	Grade Ave %	Final %	Level	Grade Ave %
Accounting (Gr 11)		78	6	44	86	7	52									
Business Studies (Gr 11)		97	7	57	85	7	52									
Economics (Gr 11)		91	7	57	88	7	54									
English First Additional Language (Gr 11)		87	7	72	77	6	61									
Life Orientation (Gr 11)		86	7	73	98	7	79									
Mathematics (Gr 11)		51	4	52	40	3	37									
Setsoto Home Language (Gr 11)		85	7	68	78	6	64									
Learner Total / Average:		575 82			552 79											
Result:		Achieved			Achieved											
Days Absent:		1			1			0			2					
Extra Mural Participation:																
General Remarks:																
<i>Bachelor Pan: This best</i>																

[REDACTED]



Learner: **[REDACTED]** - 410081534
 Admission No: 217090908
 Birth Date: 20030721
 School Closes: 2019/06/14

Grade: Grade 10
 Class: 10D
 Date: 2019/08/20

School Reopens: 2019/07/09

Subject	Term 1			Term 2			Term 3			Gr 10-12		Final for Year				
	Final %	Level	Grade Ave %	Final %	Level	Grade Ave %	Final %	Level	Grade Ave %	SBA 25%	Exam Mark 75%	Final Mark	Final %	Level	Grade Ave %	
Accounting (Gr 10)	70	6	43	80	7	40										
Business Studies (Gr 10)	66	5	48	72	6	49										
Economics (Gr 10)	76	6	50	78	6	37										
English First Additional Language (Gr 10)	71	6	53	66	5	46										
Life Orientation (Gr 10)	65	5	54	66	5	56										
Mathematics (Gr 10)	78	6	25	73	6	20										
Sesotho Home Language (Gr 10)	60	5	59	75	6	60										
Learner Total / Average:	486	69		510	73											
Result:	Achieved			Achieved												
Days Absent:	0			1			0					1				
General Remarks:																
Signature:																
Class Educator			DPHOD			Principal			Parent							

[REDACTED]



Learner: **[REDACTED]** - 409096105
 Admission No: 218-263
 Birth Date: 20021117
 School Closes: 2019/06/14

Grade: Grade 11
 Class: 11F
 Date: 2019/08/20

School Reopens: 2019/07/09

Subject	Term 1			Term 2			Term 3			Gr 10-12		Final for Year				
	Final %	Level	Grade Ave %	Final %	Level	Grade Ave %	Final %	Level	Grade Ave %	SBA 25%	Exam Mark 75%	Final Mark	Final %	Level	Grade Ave %	
English First Additional Language (Gr 11)	85	7	59	69	5	51										
Geography (Gr 11)	64	5	49	68	5	43										
Life Orientation (Gr 11)	94	7	71	82	7	62										
Life Sciences (Gr 11)	85	7	58	71	6	44										
Mathematics (Gr 11)	76	6	44	70	6	26										
Physical Sciences (Gr 11)	63	5	41	74	6	42										
Sesotho Home Language (Gr 11)	71	6	69	77	6	61										
Learner Total / Average:	538	77		511	73											
Result:	Achieved			Achieved												
Days Absent:	0			0			0					0				
General Remarks:																
Signature:																

[REDACTED]



Learner: **[REDACTED]** - 408128771
 Admission No: 217-20004
 Birth Date: 20011229
 School Closes: 2019/06/14

Grade: Grade 11
 Class: 11B
 Date: 2019/08/20

School Reopens: 2019/07/09

Subject	Term 1			Term 2			Term 3			Gr 10-12		Final for Year				
	Final %	Level	Grade Ave %	Final %	Level	Grade Ave %	Final %	Level	Grade Ave %	SBA 25%	Exam Mark 75%	Final Mark	Final %	Level	Grade Ave %	
Computer Applications Technology (Gr 11)	50	4	49	61	5	50										
English First Additional Language (Gr 11)	70	6	59	68	5	51										
Life Orientation (Gr 11)	82	7	71	86	7	62										
Life Sciences (Gr 11)	92	7	58	81	7	44										
Mathematics (Gr 11)	85	7	44	86	7	26										
Physical Sciences (Gr 11)	76	6	41	90	7	42										
Sesotho Home Language (Gr 11)	69	5	69	77	6	61										
Learner Total / Average:	524	75		549	78											
Result:	Achieved			Achieved												
Days Absent:	0			0			0					0				
General Remarks:																
Signature:																

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Learner: ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ - 496003861
 Admission No: 218-258
 Birth Date: 20020129
 School Closes: 2019/06/14

Grade: Grade 11
 Class: 11A

School Reopens: 2019/07/09

Date: 2019/08/20

Subject	Term 1			Term 2			Term 3			Gr 10-12		Final for Year				
	Final %	Level	Grade Ave %	Final %	Level	Grade Ave %	Final %	Level	Grade Ave %	SSA 25%	Exam Mark 75%	Final Mark	Final %	Level	Grade Ave %	
Accounting (Gr 11)	77	6	41	84	7	48										
English First Additional Language (Gr 11)	81	7	59	74	6	51										
Life Orientation (Gr 11)	90	7	71	71	6	62										
Life Sciences (Gr 11)	82	7	58	69	5	44										
Mathematics (Gr 11)	96	7	44	70	6	26										
Physical Sciences (Gr 11)	63	5	41	81	7	42										
Sesotho Home Language (Gr 11)	91	7	69	89	7	61										
Learner Total / Average:	580 83			538 77												
Result:	Achieved			Achieved												
Days Absent:	0			0			0					0				

General Remarks:

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~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~
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Learner: ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ - 409070265
 Admission No: 217-009
 Birth Date: 20030119
 School Closes: 2019/06/14

Grade: Grade 10
 Class: 10A

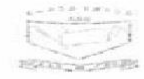
School Reopens: 2019/07/09

Date: 2019/08/20

Subject	Term 1			Term 2			Term 3			Gr 10-12		Final for Year				
	Final %	Level	Grade Ave %	Final %	Level	Grade Ave %	Final %	Level	Grade Ave %	SSA 25%	Exam Mark 75%	Final Mark	Final %	Level	Grade Ave %	
Accounting (Gr 10)	78	6	43	85	7	40										
English First Additional Language (Gr 10)	77	6	53	77	6	46										
Life Orientation (Gr 10)	63	5	54	64	5	56										
Life Sciences (Gr 10)	86	7	46	77	6	40										
Mathematics (Gr 10)	73	6	25	75	6	20										
Physical Sciences (Gr 10)	72	6	48	72	6	43										
Sesotho Home Language (Gr 10)	54	4	59	67	5	60										
Learner Total / Average:	503 72			517 74												
Result:	Achieved			Achieved												
Days Absent:	0			0			0					0				

General Remarks:

~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ **CONDARY SCHOOL**
~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ Puthadihaba, 9866
~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ PUTHADIHABA, 9866
~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ - 0500719
~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ schoolsportal.gov.za



Learner: ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ MAHELO - 416061534
 Admission No: 217090908
 Birth Date: 20030721
 School Closes: 2019/06/14

Grade: Grade 10
 Class: 10C

School Reopens: 2019/07/09

Date: 2019/08/20

Subject	Term 1			Term 2			Term 3			Gr 10-12		Final for Year				
	Final %	Level	Grade Ave %	Final %	Level	Grade Ave %	Final %	Level	Grade Ave %	SSA 25%	Exam Mark 75%	Final Mark	Final %	Level	Grade Ave %	
Accounting (Gr 10)	75	6	43	80	7	40										
Business Studies (Gr 10)	66	5	48	72	6	49										
Economics (Gr 10)	76	6	50	78	6	37										
English First Additional Language (Gr 10)	71	6	53	66	5	46										
Life Orientation (Gr 10)	65	5	54	66	5	56										
Mathematics (Gr 10)	78	6	25	73	6	20										
Sesotho Home Language (Gr 10)	60	5	59	75	6	60										
Learner Total / Average:	486 69			510 73												
Result:	Achieved			Achieved												
Days Absent:	0			1			0					1				

General Remarks:

Class Educator: DPHOOD Principal: Parent:

FEY Gr 10-12: The learner must achieve at least: Level 3 in all; Level 3 in any two (2) of the other required subjects; Level 2 in any other three (3) of the remaining

