ACADEMIC RESILIENCE OF ADOLESCENTS IN TOWNSHIP SCHOOL CONTEXTS OF POORLY IMPLEMENTED INCLUSIVE EDUCATION POLICY

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ABSTRACT

The study reports on the research conducted with adolescent learners from adverse township environment and schools where the implementation of inclusive education policy is poor. Implementation of the inclusive education policy in all schools is key in alleviating social-emotional, cognitive and behavioural adversities that learners are exposed to in their school and community environment. Since the promulgation of inclusive education policy, the education system struggles with the implementation of the policy because of lack of resources in schools. The aim of this study is to highlight the support provided by community organisations to learners through their inclusive strategies to enhance the academic resilience of learners and to increase their opportunity for academic success. This study used qualitative research methodology in the form of focus groups and in-depth interviews to collect data using two phases sequentially. Phase 1 was conducted with learners from a drop-in centre n=4 and Phase 2 with learners attending a Science Reading Centre n=4 leading to a sample size of N=8. Content analysis was used to analyse data. The findings indicate, firstly that, positive relationships with teachers create safety for learners and support their academic resilience; secondly, participants were able to identify strengths within themselves which they attributed to their ability to identify and utilise the resources accessible to them and finally, community social support programs support the educational resilience of learners where the schools are not able to do so. In conclusion, the study indicates that, inclusive education can facilitate academic resilience of learners.

Keywords: Academic resilience, learners, inclusive education, support, risk factors, township

INTRODUCTION

Academic resilience enhances the learners' ability to overcome various stressors encountered in the learning process. Martin (2002) contends that 'academic gains that students make can be lost if they are not resilient to setback, study pressure and stress in the school setting'. Resilience manifest in the context of both risk and protective factors that help bring about a positive outcome or reduce and avoid a negative outcome (Masten, 2001). Theron (2012:334) confirms that resilience is adjusting well to major challenges and 'cannot be conceptualised in contexts that are risk-free'. Schools play an important role in the lives of learners, parents and communities. Supportive school environment can provide the opportunity to learn in a safe and caring environment. Inclusive school environments offer protection that is essential for development of educational resilience of learners especially those living in adverse context like most township schools. Implementation of inclusive education policy in mainstream schools advocate for

inclusive teaching and learning strategies and values. Kourkoutas, Hart, Kassis and Graaf (2017), highlight, a poorly implemented inclusive education policy has a potential to create problems for teachers when they encounter learners presenting with challenging behavioural and socioemotional problems which they are not trained to manage. Poorly resourced schools will most likely fall into this category of presenting with poorly implemented inclusive education policy. Supporting academic resilience of learners within the school environment is significant in the improvement of academic outcomes of vulnerable learners (Waxman *et al* 2003:40).

The South African department of education, promulgated educational policies to drive the principles of inclusion and equality in line with the country's constitution. The promulgation of the White Paper on Education and Training (Department of Education, 1995) led to more research to enhance the policy, address concerns identified in the policy and to make recommendations for new education policies (Tibbitts & Keet, 2017; Christie, 2016). The White Paper (Department of Education, 1995) provided the impetus for the development of a policy on inclusive education in South Africa, namely, White Paper 6: Special Needs Education Building an Inclusive Education and Training System (Department of Education, 2001). Inclusive Education Policy is vital in promoting and enforcing equal and unified education system. Inclusive education policy promotes the rights of all learners to received appropriate education that caters to their specific learning needs (Engelbrecht, Nel, Smit & van Deventer, 2015). Education policies should be implemented by all schools, so that all learners can benefit. Equally, inclusive education policy should be fully implemented in all schools for all learners, different in their diversity to access equal opportunities to participate in the learning process. However, literature has shown that South African schools struggle in the implementation of inclusive education policy (Donahue & Bornman, 2014; Ntombela, 2011; Oswald & Swart, 2011; Walton, 2011).

Inclusive education literature agrees on the significance and purpose of inclusive education in schools, however, the debate on implementation strategies within the school system is diverse. A distinction between the schooling systems is made pertaining to inclusive education. Inclusion as educational support within mainstream schools is differentiated from special schools education which is seen as excluding learners from mainstream education based on their disability (Connor & Ferri, 2007; Donohue & Bornman, 2014; Obiakor, Harris, Mutua, Rotatori & Algozzine, 2012). The debate on how inclusive education should be implemented and what form of education support is considered to be inclusive has polarised literature on inclusive education in schools and special needs education leading to binary views on inclusion (Mampane, 2016; Zigmond, Kloo & Volonino, 2009).

Teachers are important role players in the implementation of inclusive education policy in schools. The environment and culture of the school can promote or inhibit the resilience learners. Accordingly, Martin (2002:42) recommends the following intervention strategies that teachers can apply in classrooms to enhance the academic resilience and motivation of learners e.g. improving learners' approach to their schoolwork; improving learners' beliefs about themselves; improving attitudes towards learning, achievement and school; improving study skills; improving teachers' messages to learners. These strategies that Martin (2002) proposes are aligned to the principles of inclusive education needed to enhance the educational resilience of learners in township schools. Literature indicates that exposure to multiple risk factors like low-socioeconomic, challenging behaviour, low academic behaviour and negative structural family factors can be predictors of school dropout in learners (Boon, 2008; Needham, Crosnoe & Muller, 2004). Schools that support

resilience of learners, ensure their safety, enable a culture of teaching and learning, enhance academic competence and excellence, enable learners to develop a sense of purpose, autonomy, and efficacy and promote a sense of belonging (Mampane & Bouwer, 2006).

There is a huge need for the successful implementation of inclusive education in township schools in South Africa. *White Paper 6 (2001)* is a key policy in the implementation of inclusive education. Access to educational resources like, infrastructure, qualified teachers and other professionals is key in the implementation of in the inclusive education policy. However, South African education system experiences many challenges in resourcing schools and this has affected the successful implementation of inclusive education in many township schools. Even in such context of multiple adversities, many township learners continue to thrive and achieve academic success. This is supported by Masten (2001) when she confirms that, even in the most difficult circumstances, there are some children who not only survive, but actually thrive. Learners who demonstrate the capacity to overcome and thrive in severe contextual stressors and risks to their development above others, demonstrate resilience and require attention to enhance access to additional support which is key to their success.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The promulgation of policy in most instances leads to its implementation. Literature has shown that, it is not the case with inclusive education policy as many schools in South Africa struggle with its implementation. In the absence of supportive structured envisioned by inclusive education policy, promoting resilience in learners and teachers can help to enhance the academic success of learners. The field of educational resilience is within the broader research area of resilience and aims to focus on the domain and context of schools and schooling. Martin (2002:35) defines academic resilience as 'students' ability to deal effectively with academic setbacks, stress and study pressure'. Wang et al. (1994:46) define educational resilience as the "highlighted likelihood of success in school and in other life accomplishments, despite environmental adversities, brought about by early traits, conditions, and experiences." The construct of academic resilience is promoted by multiple and alterable factors that can influence an individual's success in school (Waxman, Gray & Padron, 2003) and possibly leading to academic success.

Research on academic resilience aims to identify and promote protective factors which can enhance the academic success of learners and counteract the risk factors emanating from at-risk environment. Learners and children worldwide experience various adversities that have the potential to disrupt their development. Individuals who exhibit resilience in the face of adversity, tend to adjust well in their development. Resilience manifest in the context of adversity. Ungar, (2006:54) agrees that adversity (e.g. poverty, conflict at home, parental inattention) must be present before a child can be identified as resilient. The child's environment, ability and potential to make use of available protective resources and the continuous process of interaction between the child and the social environment determine the degree of positive outcomes (Ungar, 2006). In her seminal work on resilience, Masten (2001:235) confirms that "resilience does not come from rare special qualities, but from the everyday magic of ordinary, normative human resources in the minds, brains, and bodies of children, in their families and relationships, and in their communities".

Kourkoutas and Xavier (2010:1210), contend that risk factors that learners are exposed to in their developmental pathway like, 'learning, emotional, interpersonal and behaviour problems, affect their academic and social development' have potential to influence their development negatively. Exposure and access to protective factors offset the negative effects on development. The education system has the potential to resource schools with support programs to buffer the risk learners are exposed to especially in their learning environment. Inclusive education policy (Department of Education, 2001), assert that, the implementation of inclusive strategies is key to achieving full implementation. The department of basic education have adopted and implemented inclusive education strategies across all the nine provinces to enhance facilitate the implementation process of inclusive education policy (Mweli, 2017: np).

The following strategies are followed by the department of basic education to enhance full implementation of inclusive education (Mweli, 2017: np):

- Progressive designation of Full Service Schools (FSSs) following annual targets set by PEDs.
- Finalising the Draft Policy and Learning Programme for Children with Severe to Profound Intellectual Disability (CSPID).
- Implementing the Conditional Grant to realise the right to basic education for CSPID.
- Development of a National Strategy on Access to education for Learners with Autism.
- Intervention strategies to deal with Waiting Lists in Special Schools.
- Finalising draft norms and standards for resourcing Inclusive Education.
- Monitoring implementation of School Infrastructure Norms and Learner Transport Policy.
- Extending the memorandum of understanding with Department of Social Development (DSD), South Africa Social Security Agency (SASSA) and Department of Home Affairs (DHA) to track vulnerable learners including those with disabilities who are out of school

A progress report on Inclusive education presented to the portfolio committee in parliament of South Africa, by department of basic education director general, Mr Mweli (2017) shows that full inclusive education implementation is envisaged for 2021. However, following challenges are encountered by the department of basic education in the implementation process of inclusive education (Mweli, 2017: np):

- Provincial Education Departments' Vision of inclusive education is restricted and fragmented.
- Staffing at all levels is inadequate.
- Funding priorities continue to favour only special schools (mainstream schools are not sufficiently funded to fully implement inclusive education).
- Systemic funding required to strengthen support in the mainstream
- Inclusive education is not seen as a key transformational policy to improve quality of education for all

The progress achieved in the implementation of inclusive education is summarised in table 1 per province. Table 1 shows the scares and limited availability of specialist (support professionals) who are tasked with the responsibility to assists learners and teachers in the implementation of inclusive education, all provinces have a huge shortage of specialist. Again, the

number of full service schools that are meant to support mainstream schools in the province with specialised support to implement inclusive education are few confirming that, great strides still need to be achieved towards before the full implementation of inclusive education in 2021 can be realised. Ultimately, table 1 proves that, the implementation of inclusive education is poor in South African schools, marked by multiple challenges across all provinces and possibly will not be ready by the envisaged 2021 (which is in two years' time).

Table 1: Inclusive education policy implementation achievements and challenges

Province	Full-Service schools (FSS)	Special School (SS)	Waiting list in SS	Teachers trained	Schools trained-to implement policy	Specialist in servicing schools
Eastern Cape	30	19	2160	3169	2180	Provincial office: 1 Psychologist Districts: 3 psychologists 80 posts created at special schools – waiting to be filled
Free State	175	5	712	3270	772	Provincial Office: 1 Psychologist Districts: 12 social workers 3 occupational therapists 47 learning support facilitators (itinerant)
Gauteng	19	17	1160	4000	1095	Provincial Office: 1 social work manager 3 social work supervisors Districts: 27 social workers (including special schools) psychologists (including in special schools) 25 social workers from DSD seconded to districts
KwaZulu Natal	100	16	2769	8793		Provincial Office: 3 psychologists Districts: 38 psychologists, 25 social workers
Limpopo	17	5	439	1800		Provincial office:

Province	Full-Service schools (FSS)	Special School (SS)	Waiting list in SS	Teachers trained	Schools trained-to implement policy	Specialist in servicing schools
						1 B Psych (Guidance &Counselling; Remedial Education) 1 Educational Psychology 1 Career Guidance Districts: 1 career Guidance (Sekhukhune) 1 social worker ; 1 educational psychologist (Waterberg) 1 BA Honours Psychology (Capricorn) 1 Special needs (Mopani) 1 Learning Support (Vhembe)
Mpumalanga	140	8	2626	4268	1283	Provincial Office: 1 psychologist Districts: 4 social workers (1 per district), 1 counsellor in Ehlanzeni District
Northern Cape	12	5	222	1290		Provincial office: 1 Psychologist Districts: 5 psychologists, 4 social workers, 5 learning support specialists
North West	182	8	1143	1385	250	Provincial office: 1 social worker Districts: 2 psychologists
Western Cape	40	25	230	1414	274	Provincial office: 1 Senior Educational psychologist 1 social work manager Districts: 8 Senior educational psychologists – for 8 districts

Province	Full-Service schools (FSS)	Special School (SS)	Waiting list in SS	Teachers trained	Schools trained-to implement policy	Specialist in servicing schools
						49 educational psychologists for 8 districts 22 psychology posts for the multidisciplinary outreach teams 18 registered counsellors in schools of industry 50 social workers at district level 8 supervisors for the 8 districts
Total	**715**	**108**	**11461**	**29383**	**3424**	

Schools, especially teachers, have a responsibility to support the emotional, social and educational development of all learners. When learners cannot find nurturance and safety in their homes and families, schools can provide caring and nurturing supports that can change their lives of risk to resilience (Werner & Smith, 1982).

There is a dearth of literature on contextual factors that stimulate academic achievement in learners living in environments with limited economic and social resources (Richman, Bowen, & Woolley, 2004). Resilience literature has shown that, some learners living in adverse developmental context, circumstances and with some limited forms of support cope academically in school (Martin, 2002). Similarly, most teachers have reported (Mampane & Bouwer, 2006) how learners from safe, enriching neighbourhoods and stable families are able to succeed academically. Thus, access to resources and supportive learning and developmental environments are essential for learners to experience academic success. Considering that teachers have limited input on the development of a learner at a community and family level, their educational practices in the classroom need to be presented in such a way that they ensure that they provide safety for earners identified as being 'at risk' of academic failure. Educational processes can be responsive to the diverse learning challenges influenced by external social factors (Donald, Lazarus, & Lolwana, 2010). Resilience in learners can be fostered and promoted by establishing protective factors in their environments.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Qualitative research method guided this study to enable the understanding of participants' lives, definitions, descriptions and overall meanings they attach to events and other things (Berg & Lune, 2012). Furthermore, qualitative methodology purport to understand the meaning which people attach to their experiences while emphasising interpretation and meaning (Theron & Malindi,

2012). Accordingly, Yin (2011:7-8), confirms that, qualitative research method helps in highlighting the following research points: *(1) represent the views and perspectives of participants; (2) focus on real world conditions and how participants present meaning of their lives, (3) focus on contextual conditions (4) provide insights into existing or emerging concepts to explain human social behaviour and (5) use multiple sources of evidence rather than relying on a single source.* Semi-structured interviews were used to collect data. Semi-structured interviews comprised of open ended questions and discussions rooted from research questions. The objective of the semi-structured interview was to understand the participants' point of view (Willig, 2006).

The following research questions guided the study:

i. How can community programs support the academic resilience of learners in township schools?
ii. How can township schools collaborate with community support programs to facilitate the implementation of inclusive education policy?

The following research sites form the context of the study, *Mae* Jemison United States Program site and Mantimba Sinqobile Drop-in Centre.

i.   Mae Jemison United States Program site as a case study

The University of Pretoria's (UP) Mamelodi campus, host the Mae Jemison US Science Reading Room, which is a learning facility open for use by learners in Mamelodi. The centre is open to learners from 13:00–17:00, Monday to Friday and 8:00–13:00 on Saturdays. The Mae Jemison US Science Reading Room was established in 2009 as a partnership between the US Embassy in Pretoria and the University of Pretoria (Shole, 2018). The centre provides hands-on workshops and classes in Science, Mathematics, and Technology, Environmental Studies, and talks on careers in science by local and international experts (Shole, 2018). The purpose of the centre is to provide support services for learners from Mamelodi to use the facility for their homework, computers and the internet access and has a library. The facility is spacious, it can accommodate 60 people and is sectioned into, a reading room, computer room with internet access, an exhibition room for science experiments and demonstrations and an audio-visual auditorium for multimedia presentations (Shole, 2018). Table 2 learner participants who access and utilise Mae Jemison Centre for their academic support.

Table 2: Participants who access Mae Jamison centre for their academic support

Name	Case1=(C1) Participant1 = (P1)	C1P2	C1P3	C1P4
Age	13	13	13	14
Sex	Female	Female	Female	Female
Ethnicity	Black	Black	Black	Black
Grade	8	8	8	8

Grades repeated	None	None	None	None
Participate in free school lunch	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

ii.   Matimba-Sinqobile Integrated Social Development Centre (Drop-in Centre) as case study 2

This research setting, Matimba-Sinqobile Integrated Social Development Centre which houses the Centre for Orphaned and Vulnerable Children. Its main objective is to promote the development of individuals, families and communities towards a state of self-reliance; empower people and enterprises; raise awareness of job opportunities; mobilise critical stakeholders in support of the community and provide personal and professional development (Mtsweni, 2017). Some of the children who are affiliated with the centre are identified by teachers in the surrounding schools and referred to the centre, while others are identified by community care workers who are employed by the centre and have a responsibility to do home visits and offer support to destitute families (Mtsweni, 2017; Mampane, 2017). The centre provides social support to learners in the form of programmes by social workers, auxiliary social workers and care workers who are employed at the centre through the Department of Social Development e.g. nutritional meals each afternoon of the work week, and a lunch tin to take home for weekends; assistance with schoolwork and various life skill programs (Mtsweni, 2017; Mampane, 2017). The centre also runs a school holiday program which provides educational and entertainment activities aimed at keeping the children off the streets. Table 3 present participants from the Drop-in Centre.

Table 3: Participants who access the Drop-in Centre for their academic support

Participant	Age	Gender	Home Language	Grade
C2P1	14	Male	Sepedi	8
C2P2	14	Male	Sepedi	8
C2P3	15	Male	IsiNdebele	9
C2P4	16	Female	IsiNdebele	10

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethical clearance was granted to conduct research with minors from the two centres. Participation was voluntary. All participants were asked to fill in assent forms and permission of their parents was sought, all parents singed consent forms to give their minor children permission to participate in the research. Explanation was given to participants about their rights to: decline answering any questions if they felt uncomfortable and withdraw from the study at any time should they wish to do so (Maree, 2007). I explained how confidentiality and anonymity of all information would be maintained e.g. their names would not be used any reports and transcripts (Maree, 2012).

Participants were protected from harm and from undue intrusion, distress, physical discomfort or personal embarrassment (Sapsford & Jupp, 2006).

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Data triangulation was achieved through thematic analysis. The following themes were identified across the two case studies.

Table 4: Themes and sub-themes

Themes	Subthemes
Educational resilience enhanced through supportive relationships	• Ability to access support from school • Ability to access support from the community
Educational resilience enhanced through individual strengths	• Self-drive and internal locus of control • Sense of self-efficacy • Future goals
Poor implementation of inclusive education as a deterrent of educational resilience	• Experiences of risk within the school environment

i.   Ability to access support from school

Teachers who show interest in in learners have a positive influence on their learning (Marzano & Marzano, 2003). Participants viewed positive relationships with teachers at school as a necessary and needed platform to experience safety, being included and acknowledged in their school environment. They responded that, teachers contribute to their academic success.

> *C1P1, Lines 338–314: You know, I can say my teachers always motivate us to do better, like we should listen to them and other teachers.* CIPI further clarified why the teacher is seen as supportive; *Line 357: She is always open to us and she's welcoming.*

> C1P2 also agrees that supportive relations with teachers is a significant contributor to academic resilience and thus, an indication of a caring and inclusive school environment. The participant further indicate how the teacher encourage learners to approach him and thus provide access and motivation.

> *Lines 246-248: …. my class teacher, Mr M. He's always helping us with our work. He said if you want help, you can come to him. Lines 250–251: In the past it's been many teachers. Ma'am S. Lines 253–254: After school, actually in the morning, we come at school at seven o'clock*

> C1P3 confirms that the teacher is able to monitor her progress, identify areas of concern and involve parents to encourage access to needed additional support. In an inclusive education environment, assessment, identification, support and referral of the learner to available resources is key. This learner indicates that teacher uses inclusive education strategies to support the learner.

Lines 296-300: Like when my marks are getting lower, he sometimes gets concerned and asks me my problems about what's happening at home and sometimes calls my mother to come, and he tells her to help me on certain subjects.

C1P4, Lines 280–281: A teacher …Sir T, he contributes a lot to our schoolwork. He helps us with some Mathematics difficulties. Lines 287–288: Whenever we have any problem in any subject we can go to him. Lines 294–295: He uses our free periods and when he is free he tries to help. C2P3 the participant from Case study 2 however, looked at the value of education. Education to them is the panacea for poverty and key to accessing achieving academic success.

C2*P3* Line 90–97; *Education is the first one because I want to see myself succeed one day. So that's why I am putting education as my first priority because I know that it can take me places.* The advice of the teacher is valued by C2P4 L*ine 256–257: Our teachers give us a lot of advice and I would like to live a better life when I grow up.*

C2P3 Line 220–227: *The thing that makes my school so fantastic is the teaching, when they teach, they make you understand what they are teaching you.*

ii.   Ability to access support from the community

Several protective factors connected to the community were identified by learners, these included relationships with community members and engagement in community activities like those provided by other organisations. Participants were able to identify and access at a community member who is supporting them.

About organisations that are supportive to them, participants refered to the research site as indicated below:

C1P1, Lines 380–382: *Here at Mae Jemison centre there is a summer and winter programme. Lines 393–394: Like uhm, they teach us subjects like Mathematics, English, things like that, and ballet,*

C1P2, Line 279*: Here at the University of Pretoria [Mae Jemison US Science Reading Room (MJRR)]. Lines 276–277: Computer class, we do it every Friday and they teach about computers. Lines 282–285: and winter jam to help us with Mathematics, all those things during winter. When schools are closed in June they provide us with free internet and sometimes we come here for researching, photocopying and reading.*

C2P2, Line 136: *They help us to do our homework, spelling and we sometimes read*

C2P2, line 151: *It's that when I have difficult homework I get assistance*

Community members were also identified as supportive adults who are important in their lives.

C1P1, Line 369: Ja, it's K. Lines 371–372: She always helps me with Mathematics. When I need help, I go to her, she explains to me, and she is like a teacher to me sometimes.

C1P2, Lines 270–272: It's my coach (football coach). When I need, maybe I want to research, he does it at where he works. At his workplace he will search for me and make photocopies for me.

C1P4, Lines 327–328: T, he's a neighbour. He helps me with schoolwork and projects.

C2P4, Line 176–178: …. *people like sister Ntombi who always tells me that school is important and that when she was young she used to go to school to make sure that she can be where she is now.*

iii.   Educational resilience enhanced through individual strengths

Participants indicated that they were self-driven with internal locus of control. Individuals with internal locus of control that they have power to influence events in their environment and that, outcomes are internally driven by their behaviour, as opposed to fate, luck or external circumstances (Sagone & Caroli, 2014). The following quotes from participants indicate their individual strengths and internal locus of control.

> CIP1 *Lines 43–45: Extra effort into my work, I pay attention in class. If I don't understand I come to the library [MJRR] because they help us here.*
> CIP2 Lines 44–45: *Always listen in class and do all my work.*
> C1P3 Lines 32–33: *I attribute my success to paying attention and to going after what I want.*
> C2P3 Line 7: *Mostly I could just say that I am just a very young man who is ambitious, kind, intelligent and also exquisite*
> C2P2 Line 10–11: *I am an OK person, and I like to do nice things and those who don't treat me well … I leave them and continue with my life*

Another individual attribute that participants identified as key determinant of their academic resilience is self-efficacy, which is linked to one's determination and commitment to succeed. Greene (2017) view self-efficacy as a belief one has about the capability of successfully completing a given task. Participants are confident that they have the academic capability to succeed and to attain their future goals, thus they have academic self-efficacy. Academic self-efficacy occurs when an individual has the self-assurance to flourish and complete academic tasks, based on one's previous experiences and abilities (Mercer, Nellis, Martínez, & Kirk, 2011). C1PI

Participants have dreams about their future and goals and they see their hard work, motivation and commitment as vehicles that will help them to achieve these goals.

> C2P3 Line 126–136 *My dream is to see myself as an accountant. I also want to see myself as an inventor or that I just want to see the stuff that I have invented running around the world.* Line 270-273*: My goal for this year is earning a level 7 in Maths, I had a little bit of a complication when it came to Maths but now I just told myself that I want to earn a level 7 and passing Grade 9 is the next goal.* C2P2 Lines 100–104: *My goals are to finish school, go to university. This year I really like to be selected by HPC [High Performance Centre, Tuks Sport], so that I can attend their school playing soccer and play professional football, but if I don't get the opportunity, study medicine and become a successful doctor.* C1P3Lines 81: *My goal is to be an actor.* Line 83: *I just dream of having my own production.* Line 85: *and maybe an IT genius at the same time.*

iv.   Poor inclusive education policy implementation as a contributor to negative educational resilience

Participants in this study demonstrated additional need for educational support. When schools are not able to provide required support, learners were able to identify, access and utilise existing community resources to their advantage. They used community resource to augment and enhance their educational needs and support. Lack of stability and poor management in schools affect learners negatively as indicated below:

   C1P3, Lines 65–67: Until I came to Grade 8, I just started going down in marks and the reason why I'm like that, I think it's because I'm changing Mathematics teachers all the time.

   Learners from low socioeconomic background as lack financial resources to seek remedial support to help them with their learning problems, especially when access to specialist services in their schools is not provided due to poor implementation of inclusive education. of additional educational support. The main concern participants raised, is the lack of extra lessons to help those learners who experience learning barriers or backlog. Participants required more from their teachers and school in the form of additional classes and this was not provided. Instead, community organisations provided this service to learners, but it seems from learners they would have preferred that teachers could have assisted them. Participants' comments capture their feelings:

   C1P1, Lines 361–363: *Provide extra classes, because sometimes we don't understand and when we go to them [teachers], then they just don't have the time to help us.*

   C1P2, Lines 264–266: *They [teachers] can be more patient, and they must open maybe extra classes because we don't have any in high schools. We only had them in primary.*

   C1P3, Lines 317–319: *They should maybe be a little more patient with us, because they are sometimes impatient with us. Yes, and also … help children with work that they don't understand.*

   C1P4, Lines 299–300: *They can all listen to other opinions and help whenever a child need help.*

DISCUSSION

The study presented two case studies, of high school learners; those who attend a drop-in centre through their school networks and high school learners who, out of their own motivation sought out community support programs that can enhance their academic success. Both social and educational programs, the drop-in centre for primary school learners and the Science Reading Centre are community support programs geared at enhancing the academic success of learners. Learners who attend Mae Jemison program showed initiative in identifying, accessing and utilising the services provided for their own benefit. They showed motivation, commitment and resilience in navigating many obstacles in their schools and community to access resources they need to experience academic success and resilience. All participants in this study demonstrated the ability to source and utilise external resources (outside their school environment) for their own benefit.

   Based on this research, schools learners are attending have poor school support systems and inclusive education policy implementation. Elliott and Crosswell (2001) confirm that, when teachers are committed, they put learners first when executing their work. Indicators of teacher commitment are in line with inclusive education strategies and include, assisting all learners, including those with special needs, providing additional support and making use of varied and learner-engaging methodologies (Elliott & Crosswell, 2001). Ellis (2010), is of the opinion that, a supportive and positive school learning environment and additional educational support from teachers and possibly specialist in schools, create a school culture that positions learners to be resilient to adversity. The opposite however, (non-supportive) school environments place learners at risk of not experiencing academic resilient and that experiencing more adversity with little

support. Teachers are important stakeholders in both the implementation of inclusive education policy and supporting the academic resilience of learners. Participants, in this study alluded to receiving teacher support. Thus, participants confirmed that some teachers were easy to approach, showed personal interest in the learners' schoolwork and progress, and were willing to put in extra time towards the academic achievement of the learners. Supportive teacher-learner relationships promote learner engagement in learning activities and academic achievement (Split, Hughes, Wu, & Kwok, 2012). In addition, positive teacher-learner relationships promote feelings of security that allows children to interact with their environment confidently (Bergin & Bergin, 2009) and may decrease negative behavioural outcomes in children. Again, participants' confirmed that they are able to access within themselves strengths like, internal locus of control, self-efficacy, goal-setting and the positive use of time that enables them to succeed, persevere and commit fully to what they set their mind to do. These attributes enable them to be proactive, seek help and value education and classroom instruction (Karabenick, 2004) which indicate an important coping and self-regulatory strategy that have contributed positively to their studies.

CONCLUSION

Conclusion section is mandatory and contains advantages, disadvantages, review the main part of research paper and use of research work. In conclusion, participants in this study knew what to do to achieve success and where to go for such support. they were able to identify risk factors present in their environments overcame stressors, displayed confidence that they will achieve their goals, engaged in activities to improve their marks, and most importantly, they identified resources and negotiated with their environment as to which resources could assist them to overcome the adversities they experienced (Ungar, 2006). It should also be noted that the academic success of this group of learners should not be accepted as evidence that the township school environment offers quality education.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The sample size allowed for in-depth analysis but not sufficient to generalise to other settings. For future research the following recommendations are significant, a representative sample of learners possibly within the school setting to be used to allow in-depth understanding of how inclusive education implementation processes affect learners and possible those findings can enhance the generalisability of the study. Secondly, a comparative case study of social support programs offered in communities to support education of learners and support learner academic resilience and success, such a study may help to identify the strengths and weaknesses of such programs and possibly how best they can collaborate with schools to make such resource accessible to many learners. Finally examining the relationship between academic resilience and inclusive education can provide a body of literature that is needed to influence policy and curriculum in schools.

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