

**A visual participatory exploration of the resilience  
processes of Black African girls who have been  
sexually abused**

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Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree  
*Doctor of Philosophy in Psychology* at the Vaal Triangle Campus  
North-West University

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Graduation: May 2018

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## **Dedication**

Mum.

You epitomised courage, strength, humility, compassion, selflessness and perseverance.

This is for you - for all you were and all you taught me.

Till we meet again, InshaAllah

## Acknowledgements

Alhamdulillah, I am thankful for all the many, many blessings in my life and I wish to convey my sincere appreciation and thanks to the following people and institutions, without whom this dissertation may not have materialised.

To Fireball girl, Jessica, Keamo, Lumkah, Phindile, Precious and Twinky; thank you for trusting me with your stories, thank you for teaching me about courage and perseverance and thank you for inspiring me to do more and to do better.

To NWU, Optentia Research Focus as well as the Networks of Change and Well-being project for the financial support.

To Professor Linda Theron; firstly, for the opportunity to be a part of the Networks project and secondly, for everything since. From the very beginning of this journey, you created an environment that was challenging and stimulating yet supportive and encouraging. You made it seem effortless and so possible. I'm deeply grateful for your expert mentorship and the constant validating feedback that made this such a positive experience.

To Moira Simpson, for your commitment and unselfish support of the children of South Africa. Thank you for trusting me with your children, for understanding my intentions, for making resources available to me and for networking on my behalf. In spite of the many sombre conversations, the laughter and success of the children at the centre as well as your continued presence here, inspires hope.

To Riana Gaspar, Adele, Sam, Terri, Thiru, Ropa, Lulu and Annie thank you for your expertise, informed input and enthusiasm for this study.

To Tamlynn Jefferis for your generosity with your time and expertise. Thank you for co-coding and for all your encouragement throughout this process.

To friends and colleagues; new and old, thank you for your interest in my work, the many thought provoking discussions and the constant reassurance that this point would come.

To everyone on the home front; thank you for keeping me grounded. Our family, in spite of the many changes it has seen over the past few years, and our weekly rituals that centres on tea, food and too much cake, nurtures my body and spirit. To my dad; thank you for all the sacrifices that you made for us and for ensuring that I had the best you could offer. To my sisters and best friends; I'm deeply grateful to each of you for the friendship we share as we grow older and traverse life's new challenges. To my amazing nieces and nephews, Aasiyah, Raeesah, M. Zaakir, Zaheer, Mariam, Mikael, Saffiya and Zayyaan; thank you for the energy, laughter and warmth you bring; dream big always.

To Zayne; thank you for your love, the lightness and laughter that you bring and for allowing me the luxury of being the dreamer. To my babies; Zia and Adam; you are both my light, my joy, my reason. Your presence gives me strength. Thank you for tolerating my absences, for the many 'visits' to my office and for 'encouraging' me to take breaks and most importantly thank you for soft hugs and sweet kisses.

## Preface and declaration

I chose the article format for this study. I, Sadiyya Haffejee, conducted the research and wrote the manuscripts. Professor Linda Theron acted as promoter.

Four manuscripts were written and will be/were submitted for publication in the following journals:

Manuscript 1: South African Journal of Science

Manuscript 2: Journal of Adolescent Research

Manuscript 3: Journal of Black Psychology

Manuscript 4: Qualitative Research in Psychology

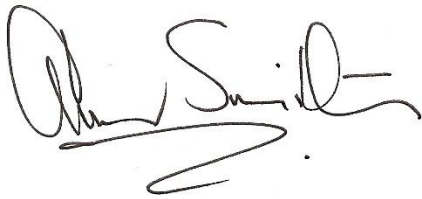
I declare that “*A Visual Participatory Exploriation of the Resilience Processes of black African girls who have been Sexually Abused*” is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted are indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references

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18 October 2017

I have edited Sadiyya Haffejee's PhD dissertation, '*A visual participatory exploration of the resilience processes of black African girls who have been sexually abused*', for appropriate expression, and for correct language use and grammatical structure.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ann Smith', with a large, sweeping flourish underneath.

## Abstract

**Background:** While much is written about childhood sexual abuse (CSA) in South Africa, most of this literature addresses the deleterious impact of CSA. There are limited international studies on resilience processes of adolescents who have experienced CSA and this is particularly so in South Africa. As a result of this paucity of information, little is understood of the resilience processes of those who survive sexual assault with few or no negative effects. The need for understanding resilience processes in the face of sexual assault in specific contexts speaks to the understanding that resilience processes are embedded in sociocultural ecologies; minority worldviews (that is, Euro-American) of resilience processes following sexual abuse cannot be adopted and used to understand the positive adaptation of African girls. Thus, the primary purpose of this exploratory PhD study was to understand what accounts for resilience processes of black African girls who have been sexually abused.

**Methods:** To address this purpose, four secondary questions were developed, each of which is addressed respectively in the 4 manuscripts that make up this doctoral study. Manuscript 1 reports on a scoping review of the available literature that was undertaken. Manuscripts 2 and 3 report on a multiple instrumental case study with 7 primary participants in which data was generated through the use of participatory visual methods (PVMs). Manuscript 4 reports on reflections from an audience that viewed visual outputs produced by primary participants.

**Findings:** In the first manuscript, the scoping review explores what is currently known about resilience processes of adolescent girls with CSA histories. The 11 studies included in this review highlight the reciprocal role of individual level factors as well as factors within the social ecology in the resilient trajectories of girls with CSA histories.

Manuscript 2 focuses on what enables resilience processes in black girls with a history of CSA. Findings highlight the complex relationship between individuals and the social ecology

in enabling resilience processes; in this study the participants' agency and resourcefulness was necessitated in part by unsupportive ecologies.

Manuscript 3 looks more specifically at which socio-cultural factors peculiar to South Africa limit and enable resilience processes of black girls with CSA histories. Drawing on two case studies that provide rich contextual data, this manuscript highlights that while the socio-cultural context may potentially buffer girls it also presents a number of risks and challenges to their adaptation.

Manuscript 4 explores the usefulness of PVMs in raising awareness of resilience processes as well as its efficacy in stimulating social change. Reflections from the facilitated discussion held with the audience immediately post screening and through follow-up a year later, are shared. Findings suggest that as an awareness raising method, PVMs has its uses but as a means of stimulating social change it requires additional input including defined guidelines.

**Conclusion:** This doctoral study furthers understandings of resilience processes of black girls with CSA. In highlighting the individual agency of the participants, it also emphasises both the failures and potential of the social ecology. It strongly advocates for greater accountability and involvement of the social ecology in supporting the resilience trajectories of girls with CSA.

*Keywords:* child sexual abuse, resilience, black girls, social ecology, South Africa, participatory visual methods, case study

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**Section A: Overview of the study**

You may write me down in history  
With your bitter, twisted lies,  
You may tread me in the very dirt  
But still, like dust, I'll rise.

Just like moons and like suns,  
With the certainty of tides,  
Just like hopes springing high,  
Still I'll rise.

Did you want to see me broken?  
Bowed head and lowered eyes?  
Shoulders falling down like teardrops.  
Weakened by my soulful cries.

You may shoot me with your words,  
You may cut me with your eyes,  
You may kill me with your hatefulness,  
But still, like air, I'll rise.

Out of the huts of history's shame  
I rise  
Up from a past that's rooted in pain  
I rise  
I'm a black ocean, leaping and wide,  
Welling and swelling I bear in the tide.  
Leaving behind nights of terror and fear  
I rise  
Into a daybreak that's wondrously clear  
I rise  
Bringing the gifts that my ancestors gave,  
I am the dream and the hope of the slave.  
I rise  
I rise  
I rise.

(Maya Angelou, 1978)

## Chapter 1

*My mission in life is not merely to survive, but to thrive; and to do so with some passion, some compassion, some humor, and some style* (Maya Angelou, 2011).

### 1. Introduction

Prolific author and civil rights activist, Maya Angelou, was sexually abused at the age of 8 by her mother's boyfriend. Following this experience, she describes years of selective mutism; cut off from the world she developed a keen interest in books and a remarkable ability to memorize information and, later, to learn languages. Angelou spoke openly about her early experience of sexual abuse as well as other adversities she experienced. The success she enjoyed in her life — with numerous awards along with her status as an influential figure in American society — is testament to her ability to thrive in spite of the hardships she endured.

In a similar attempt to rise above her experiences of child sexual abuse (CSA), South African author, Sixoxile Mballo, writes of her experiences in her novel *Dear Bullet* (2012). Here she describes her capture, her sexual assault, and being shot at the age of 13. In her retelling she describes the trauma of the rape, the shooting, and being left to die in a latrine, and her attempts to escape the memories. Her ordeal was further exacerbated by poverty, maternal neglect, and limited resources within a rural South African community. In spite of these adverse circumstances, Mballo is a rape activist and author.

What made it possible for women like Angelou and Mballo to thrive in spite of the trauma they had experienced? Their narratives highlight processes of positive adaptation in the face of adversity. Are their stories, however, an exception? What about the many voices that we do not hear or see depicted in a poem or a novel? Research suggests that there are many more such stories of resilience waiting to be told, heard, and seen. This is apparent in a cursory Google search that yielded a number of online sites (like [www.pandys.org](http://www.pandys.org);

www.burstingthebubble.com; www.heroproject.org; and www.experienceproject.com) that provide opportunities for sexual assault victims to share their experiences. These stories of positive adaptation are congruent with a body of international research that has shown that sexual abuse does not affect all individuals in the same way. In spite of overwhelming evidence that suggests that CSA is followed by negative consequences in both the short and long term, some research points to a survivor's positive adjustment in responding to the adversity, thus demonstrating a resilient trajectory (see Afifi & MacMillan, 2011; Browne & Finkelhor, 1986; Cicchetti, 2012; Collishaw et al., 2007; Finkelhor, 1994; Kendall-Tackett, Williams, & Finkelhor, 1993; McElheran et al., 2012; Phasha, 2010; Williams & Nelson-Gardell, 2012).

The availability of narratives that address adaptation also brings into focus the act of telling the story and appears to support research that suggests that telling one's story may represent a way of taking charge of it and is seen as a process of empowerment and personal transformation (Low, Brushwood Rose, Salvio, & Palacios, 2012). Perhaps, like Angelo and Mballo, documenting experiences of sexual abuse provides an opportunity to reclaim the experience and re-author the narrative, not as victims but as survivors. Participatory visual methods (PVMs) in particular have been credited with facilitating this process of agency and transformation. Advocates of PVMs associate the teller's participation as a "manifestation of her agency... participation is seen as both the evidence and the actualisation of the agentic self" (Low et al., 2012, p. 55).

This exploratory PhD study was premised on narratives such as those referred to above that suggest that adapting positively post CSA is possible. In this study I explore what enables this adaptation in a sample of black South African girls. To do so, I made use of a range of PVMs. The use of these methods leads to the secondary aim of this study — the consideration of the usefulness of PVMs in creating awareness about resilience processes and advancing social transformation.

This dissertation is structured into three sections. Section A is comprised of Chapter 1 in which I provide the background of, and motivation for, this PhD study, and in which I include a summary of relevant literature on CSA, resilience processes, and PVMs. I also highlight the purpose of the study and outline the methodology. I then provide a brief description of each of the Manuscripts that are included in Section B. I conclude this chapter with a discussion of the trustworthiness of this study and the ethics that guided me throughout this process and, finally, I provide a visual summary of the Manuscripts that make up Section B. Section B consists of chapters 2, 3, 4, and 5, each of which is an independent Manuscript, together offering a cohesive response to the research aims of this doctoral study. Each has been prepared according to the specific journal guidelines so the referencing style will vary. Given that Section A frames the entire study and Section B is made up of the scoping review and research reports of the empirical research, there may be some duplication of content between and among the various sections. In Section C, I revisit my research questions and consider whether these were addressed in the study, I share my reflections, and I consider the implications and limitations of this study.

## **2. Background and Motivation for this Study**

### **2.1. A Snapshot of CSA in South Africa**

CSA is a global issue and the magnitude is extensive with prevalence rates ranging from 8% to 31% (Barth, Bermetz, Heim, Trelle, & Tonia; 2013; Stoltenborgh, van IJzendoorn, Euser, & Bakermans-Kranenburg, 2011). In South Africa, disturbingly, prevalence rates for CSA at 35.4% are higher than these average global figures (Artz et al. 2016). Stoltenborgh et al. (2011) claim that South Africa has the highest rate of child sexual victimisation in the world. Although this finding has been subjected to criticism given that comparative statistics of CSA are imprecise and that there are differences in the ways in which CSA is defined and recorded,

statistics from South African studies still present an alarming picture. The most recent crime statistics released by the South African Police Services (SAPS) show that 51 cases of CSA were reported per day in the 2013-2014 period, with a total of 18 524 cases of CSA recorded per annum for this reporting period (Artz et al., 2016; Institute for Security Studies (ISS), 2014). Nationally representative data gathered from young people themselves provides a more realistic picture of prevalence rates in South Africa. The study by Artz et al. (2016) with youth at school and at home found that 1 in 3 people reported some form of sexual abuse prior to the age of 17. This is consistent with statistics from neighbouring Swaziland, where a national survey also found a prevalence of 1 in 3 for girls under 18 (Dartnell & Jewkes, 2013). A multi-country study including 10 southern African countries found a prevalence rate for forced or coerced sex of 28.8% in 16-year-old-female students (Dartnell & Jewkes, 2013).

In South Africa, the mean age for first experiences of child sexual victimisation has been recorded as 14 years for girls and 15 for boys with a 40% likelihood that such abuse is likely to occur two or more times (Artz et al., 2016). Reflecting global and African trends, Meinck, Cluver, Boyes, and Loening-Voysey (2016) found that girls are more likely to experience emotional and lifetime sexual abuse than boys. Data also suggests that children in South Africa are more likely to be sexually abused by people known to them — friends, acquaintances, and neighbours (Vetten et al., 2008) as well as peers and relatives (Meinck, Cluver, Boyes, & Mhlongo, 2015). Again, this finding is consistent with international literature that shows that in the majority of cases of sexual assault perpetrated against children, the perpetrator is known to the child (Finkelhor, 1994; Lalor, 2005; Lalor & McElvaney, 2010).

South Africa has a number of laws regulating sexual offences such as the *Criminal Law [Sexual Offences and Related Matters] Amendment Act No 32 of 2007*, the *Children's Act No 38 of 2005* and the *Children's Amendment Act No 41 of 2007*. The *Children's Act (Act 38 of*

2005) defines CSA broadly, including both contact and non-contact acts. CSA is thus defined as:

- a) sexually molesting or assaulting a child or allowing a child to be sexually molested or assaulted;
- b) encouraging, inducing or forcing a child to be used for the sexual gratification of another person;
- c) using a child in or deliberately exposing a child to sexual activities or pornography; or
- d) procuring or allowing a child to be procured for commercial sexual exploitation or in any way participating or assisting in the commercial sexual exploitation of a child. (p. 16)

In spite of these laws and the comprehensive definition, determining exact prevalence rates of sexual abuse continues to be challenging. Poor administration of national data sources results in imprecise data (Artz et al., 2016; Jewkes & Abrahams, 2002; Mathews & Benvenuti, 2014). In South Africa, research estimates suggest that only 1 in 9 or as few as 1 in 13 cases of CSA are being reported to the police (Artz et al., 2016; ISS, 2014). Under-reporting has been attributed to the shame and stigma associated with sexual abuse, limited supportive resources, fear of perpetrators, cultural and family practices that discourage speaking out, as well as lack of faith in judicial services (Artz et al., 2016). A recent study by the South African Medical Research Council found that there is a 1 in 10 possibility that a rapist will be convicted if charged (Malan, 2017).

The problem of sexual violence against women and girls in South Africa may be understood in the context of the very substantial gender power inequalities that pervade society. Unequal gender relations and hegemonic masculinities, enacted by some men over women and other men, which encourage male sexual entitlement over females, results in girls' and

women's vulnerability to CSA and other forms of gender-based violence (Lalor, 2005; Mathews, Loots, Sikweyiya, & Jewkes, 2012). Cultural practices and social norms in communities also contribute to children's vulnerability to sexual abuse (World Health Organization [WHO], 2010). Cultural practices including the practice of traditional leadership, the position accorded to girls in families, unquestioning regard for elders, and certain parenting practices render girls vulnerable to abuse (ISS, 2014; Jewkes, Sikweyiya, Morrell, & Dunkle, 2010; Mathews et al. 2012; Seedat, van Niekerk, Jewkes, Suffla, & Ratele, 2009). Contributing to these factors are social and familial issues like substance abuse, the age of the caregiver, AIDS orphanhood, any previous experience of assault, food insecurity, and school drop-out (Meinck, Cluver, Boyes, & Mhlongo, 2015). Being at risk of revictimisation as well as the difficulty experienced in recovery stems from structural factors, so, while South Africa has enabling legislation, policies, and guidelines as mentioned, there is a gap in the child protection strategy and limited resources to support its implementation (Mathews et al., 2012; Meinck et al., 2015). Inadequate legal systems, poor access to child-friendly services as well as poor or absent medico-legal and counselling services have been cited as factors that exacerbate the situation for South African children (Artz et al. 2016; Gevers & Abraham, 2015).

## **2.2. Impact of CSA**

Extensive literature suggests that the impact of CSA is overwhelmingly negative for the individual; researchers like Maniglio (2009) and Hillberg, Hamilton-Giachritsis, and Dixon (2011) suggest that it is a nonspecific risk factor for psychopathology. Indeed, significant links have been found between CSA and adverse mental health outcomes like depression, substance abuse, eating disorders, dissociation, somatisation, anxiety disorders, post-traumatic stress disorder, psychotic and schizophrenic disorders, and suicidal ideation (Boney-McCoy & Finkelhor, 1995; Cashmore & Shackel, 2013; Collishaw et al., 2007; Finkelhor, 1994, 2009; Kilpatrick & Acierno, 2003; Maniglio, 2009; Resnick, Guille, McCauley, & Kilpatrick, 2011;

Steel, Sanna, Hammond, Whipple, & Cross, 2004). Additionally, interpersonal difficulties have also been reported as a result of CSA and these involve difficulties in maintaining relationships, problems with intimacy, sexual dysfunction, and increased risk of revictimisation (Cashmore & Shackel, 2013; Davies & Petretic-Jackson, 2000; Lalor & McElveney, 2010; Maniglio, 2009) while increased risk for high risk sexual behaviours, prostitution, and sexual promiscuity has also been found (Lalor & McElveney, 2010; Maniglio, 2009; Miron & Orcutt, 2014).

While several models have been used to explain the negative impact of CSA on the individual, Finkelhor and Browne's (1985) Four Factor Traumagenics Model is the most established as Collin-Vezina, Daigneault and Herbert (2013) note. In this model, four traumagenic dynamics (trauma-causing factors) differentiate CSA from other types of trauma. These dynamics include:

- traumatic sexualisation: the child's sexuality is altered and shaped by the abuse, most often in an inappropriate and dysfunctional manner;
- betrayal that occurs when the child realises that someone she or he trusts and relies on wishes to hurt her or him;
- powerlessness: the child's will, desires, and sense of worth are continually being infringed upon; and
- stigmatisation, during which process the child internalises the negative meanings that are communicated about the experiences.

According to Finkelhor and Browne (1985), "these dynamics alter children's cognitive and emotional orientation to the world, and create trauma by distorting children's self-concept, worldview and affective capacities" (p. 531). Thus the view of self and the view of the world is altered in the child's mind as is the child's ability to express emotions appropriately. The four dynamics affect every aspect of the victim's life and are a way of categorising the effects

of CSA. This model suggests that the impact of the trauma is related to the extent to which any of the four dynamics are present and how they work in conjunction. Importantly, the model also makes room for variation in the manifestation of symptoms across survivors (Collin-Vezina et al., 2013; Finkelhor & Browne, 1985; SECASA, 2015).

### **2.3. CSA and Resilience**

In spite of the literature cited above, it is essential to note that evidence to the contrary exists, with some research showing that not all individuals who have experienced CSA develop symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder or other psychiatric and behavioural problems; some individuals cope with or thrive after experiencing such trauma (Afifi & MacMillan, 2011; Cicchetti, 2012; Collishaw et al., 2007; Domhardt, Munzer, Fegert, & Lutz, 2015; Marriot, Hamilton-Giachristsis, & Harrop, 2014; McElheran et al., 2012). Williams and Nelson-Gardell (2012) concur with the relevant points made in this literature, maintaining that sexual abuse does not necessarily suggest the presence of traumatic stress; they suggest that trauma is a normal human experience and humans have the ability to deal with it. Collings's (2003) study with South African female students found that 17.5% of victimised participants reported symptoms of pathology; this finding is consistent with an early study by Browne and Finkelhor (1986) who found that fewer than one fifth of victims show symptoms of serious psychopathology. Indeed, the community study of Collishaw et al. (2007) found that 44% (weighted rate) of CSA survivors reported no psychiatric problems in adulthood and showed positive adaptation in other areas in life.

The absence of negative symptoms apparent in some survivors may be attributed to the development of negative coping styles that mask symptoms, failure to detect symptoms, or the resilience of some survivors (Williams & Nelson-Gardell, 2012). Other mediating factors that may explain positive trajectories in the face of sexual abuse include biological or genetic factors that include the presence of coping strategies, higher self-esteem, internal locus of

control and intelligence (Collishaw et al., 2007; Mrazek & Mrazek, 1987). Also, the positive reaction of significant others, which refers to being given unconditional support, being believed, and receiving acknowledgment from significant others (Mrazek & Mrazek, 1987; Nelson-Gardell, 2001; Williams & Nelson-Gardell, 2012) is significant. The duration and chronicity of the abuse is the third of these factors. The more prolonged the abuse the more self-blaming occurs whereas isolated incidents may carry less ownership and blame (Steel et al., 2004).

Williams and Nelson-Gardell (2012) suggest that eco-systemic factors as well as other influential systems (e.g. teachers) may be vehicles for resilience. Gilligan, De Castro, Vanistendael, and Warburton's (2014) three country study (Nepal, Ethiopia, & Bulgaria) supports this, finding that resilience in young people in these contexts who have been sexually abused appears to lie in relationships they experience as being supportive and encouraging while a Malaysian study (Ping & Sumari, 2012) attributed healing to spirituality. In South Africa, Phasha (2010) found that the women in her study adapted positively by making sense of their experiences of sexual violence as temporary or as learning experiences. Similarly, Walker-Williams, van Eeden, and van der Merwe (2013) found that psychological wellness was achieved by looking for and finding the meaning and benefit of the trauma, building on individual strengths and sense of self, as well as drawing on spiritual and religious resources to cope. Meinck et al. (2015) found that potential protective factors include parental monitoring, and family and peer support. Collings (2003) found that the nature of the victims' abuse-related appraisals and negative appraisals of recent life stressors influenced resilience outcomes.

#### **2.4. An Overview of Resilience**

Resilience refers to the capacity to do well in spite of adversity (Masten, 2001). More specifically, Masten and Wright (2010) define it as the "processes or patterns of positive

adaptation and development in the context of significant threats to an individual's life or function" (p. 215). Inherent in definitions of resilience is the consideration of both the nature of the threat to adaptation and the quality of adaptation following exposure to a threat (Wright & Masten, 2015). Adversity or threat is therefore a precondition for resilience (Theron & Theron, 2013). Adversity or threat includes risk factors like poor or incapacitated parenting, illiteracy, violence, poverty, social injustices, oppression, neglect, and war and natural disasters (Theron, 2013a; Wright, Masten, & Narayan, 2013). Sexual abuse would be considered a risk factor. Positive adaptation or adjustment may be defined by the social ecology (individual, family, or community) at a point in time and may be evaluated in terms of the mental health, age appropriate development, academic success, subjective well-being, civic engagement, and relational competence of the person concerned (Masten, 2014; 2016; Wright & Masten, 2015).

Pioneering efforts in the 1970s saw researchers move away from deficit disease-orientated models that focused on the emergence and prediction of pathology to the recognition that understanding positive developmental pathways in the context of risk was essential for prevention and treatment for those at risk (Wright et al., 2013). Initial definitions of resilience saw it defined in terms of individual characteristics like personality traits, biological factors, and temperament (Masten, 2014; Theron & Theron, 2010; Ungar, 2010; Wright et al., 2013). This view was, however, expanded and later definitions included the influence of environmental factors (family and community) in contributing to resilience (Masten, 2014). Current conceptualisations have expanded this view even further, defining it as an ecosystemic process that acknowledges the role of context and culture in promoting functional outcomes (Ungar, 2011). From this viewpoint, resilience is not seen as a static trait or characteristic of an individual. Rather, resilience is conceptualised as a process that supports functional outcomes (Masten & Wright, 2010; Theron & Theron, 2010). Wright and Masten (2015) assert that this recognition of the multiple levels within the individual's ecology that impact on

resilience creates further avenues for interventions that have the potential to minimise risk, increase resources, and enable protective systems that can maximise resilient outcomes.

Masten and Wright (2010) identify a number of protective systems that promote resilience. These include adjustment and social support, problem solving abilities, self-regulation skills, opportunities for agency and mastery, meaning making, and culture and religion. While these processes are recognised as universal the way in which they operate is dependent on the cultural context (Theron & Theron, 2013).

This PhD study, while drawing on the history of resilience literature, is premised on the social-ecological model of resilience as delineated by Ungar (2011). From this perspective, positive adaptation is understood from within specific cultural contexts (Ungar, 2015). This model holds that the development of resilience happens in terms of, first, the nature of the individual's context; second, the interaction between the environment and the individual; and, third, the individual's specific traits. Ungar (2015) thus defines resilience "as the ability of individuals (on their own and collectively) to navigate to the culturally relevant resources they need to do well when confronting adversity, as well as their capacity to negotiate for these resources to be provided in ways that are meaningful" (p. 40).

Put simply, understanding resilience as a social ecological concept suggests that the individual is tasked with moving or navigating towards resilience promoting resources by asking for help, utilising systematic resources, and drawing on personal resources. The onus, however, is also on social ecologies to make these resources available in culturally meaningful ways, and to support the individual and advocate for life worlds that prioritise well-being (Theron & Donald, 2012; Ungar 2011).

Ungar (2011) describes four principles that define resilience within this view —  
decentrality, complexity, atypicality, and cultural relativity.

- **Decentrality.** This calls for a shift in focus from the individual to what is happening around her or him that facilitates processes of resilience. In essence, by taking the focus and onus off the child, the locus of change is not in the child or environment alone, but rather in the interaction between the two, in the ways in which the context provides resources for the individual to use (Ungar, 2011). The individual's own internal resources are of use only if the environment is open to them and facilitates their expression and application (Ungar, 2011). The focus is thus on the interaction between the person and the environment (Ungar, 2011; Wright & Masten, 2015).
- **Complexity.** As stated by Masten and Wright (2010), resilience is not a static process but rather a dynamic one subject to change across time. An individual may be resilient or function maladaptively in one context but this may differ in another context that is more enabling or, alternatively, disabling. Thus, as the context changes in terms of, for example, exposure to threat or the availability of resources etc., so do individual outcomes. (Masten & Wright, 2010; Wright & Masten, 2015).
- **Atypicality.** Ungar (2011) describes the process whereby populations that are exposed to increased risk develop alternative forms of coping. These ways of coping and adaptation may be regarded as counter indicative to resilience and positive adaptation in some contexts, hence atypical, but are regarded as functional in that particular context. Atypical behaviour patterns may be culturally and contextually relevant to positive adaptation when the benchmarks for adaptation/development are defined locally. So, what is seen as functional in one context or one community may not be regarded in that light in another (Theron & Malindi, 2010; Ungar, 2011).
- **Cultural relativity.** Positive growth is regarded as being embedded in culture. Ungar (2015) asserts that culture is essential to understanding and defining what is considered positive adaptation. Panter-Brick (2015) defines culture as "shared

knowledge or shared expectations — a shared understanding of the world” (p. 234). It is these shared cultural practices that inform the behaviour and interactions of individuals and that offer a way of understanding the world (Theron & Liebenberg, 2015). Thus, while universal or global indicators of resilience persist, the expression of these is influenced by the cultural context of the individual (Ungar, 2015). Panter-Brick (2015) explains that resilience cannot simply be connected with good health. For some individuals, given their different cultures, culturally specific goals such as the pursuit of justice, power, or respect may supersede those concerned with health or happiness at the individual level.

Based on a review of the history of resilience studies as well as a summary of innovative trends in this area, Ungar (2011) concludes that current understandings of resilience are progressing from the “perspective of positive development as the everyday miracle of the invulnerable child to [one based on] a broader focus on processes in complex environments that interact to foster good developmental outcomes of relevance to culturally diverse communities” (p. 4).

## **2.5. Resilience in South Africa**

In South Africa, the body of research that focuses on resilience processes is growing. There is, however, a paucity of data that is gender specific and that focuses on resilience processes in sexually traumatised individuals (Jefferis, 2016; Phasha, 2010; Theron, 2012). The awareness of the impact of the social ecology has also resulted in an increased focus on the ways in which socio-cultural contexts nuance the processes of resilience (Panter-Brick, 2015; Theron & Phasha, 2015; Theron & Theron, 2013; Theron, Theron, & Malindi, 2013; Ungar, 2015; Wright & Masten, 2015). South Africa, while confronted with an array of unequal and often violent gender practices has a rich, strong communal and cultural lineage that favours

interconnectedness and offers potential resilience-supporting protective resources (Theron & Donald, 2012; Theron & Phasha, 2015).

## **2.6. Researching CSA and Resilience**

Mitchell, De Lange, and Moletsane (2011) suggest that solutions to the problems encountered by girls rely on a greater understanding of their lived experiences. This suggestion is in line with growing calls in social science research and from youth advocates to allow and encourage young people to use their voices so as to be heard (Suffla, Seedat, & Bawa, 2015). There are, however, only a few studies that focus on sexual abuse from the perspectives of children (Phelan & Kinsella, 2013). Delaney (2005) states that opportunities should be created for exploited children to articulate their concerns and to suggest solutions that may lead to appropriate interventions. Gilligan et al. (2014) also note that research on sexual abuse with children as primary participants is rare and is particularly unusual in middle and low income countries where conducting such studies would provide greater insight into coping mechanisms in resource- and service-poor settings (Gilligan et al., 2014). This view is echoed by Nelson-Gardell (2001) who stated that existing literature on sexual abuse lacks personal accounts from child survivors about what helped them to cope. Phasha (2010) further points out that in South Africa the majority of studies investigating the impact of sexual abuse have overlooked issues pertaining to resilience. Theron and Theron's (2010) review of resilience studies from 1990 to 2008 identified three South African studies that looked specifically at resilience and sexual abuse — Collings (2003), Edwards, Sakasa, and Van Wyk (2005), and Van Rensburg and Barnard (2005). More recent studies by Phasha (2010), Buckley-Willemse (2011), and Clarke (2009) add to this limited area but the latter two studies, while considering resilience in sexual abuse survivors, have focused on adult experiences and not on those of girls.

## 2.7. Methodologies for Understanding Socio-Ecologically Facilitated Resilience

The adage that seeing is believing holds true according to Lampe (2014) who asserts that people are naturally inclined to respond to images. Visuals elicit emotions in a way that engagement of our rational minds may not; when we see pain we are inclined to feel pain (Lampe, 2014). To move people, we need to connect with their emotions and this is best done through visuals (Banse, 2014). Photojournalist and author, Mariella Furrer, as Rosenberg (2014) relates, in speaking of her journey capturing the images and stories of sexual abuse survivors, recalls how the photographs, in bringing an audience at a photojournalism festival to tears, made her realise the power that images hold. In providing visual images we can convey far more about the trauma and the resilient processes of the survivors than can statistics from hundreds of questionnaires. Similarly, Mitchell (2011a) makes mention of the “haunting” (p. 199) nature of some of the images to which she has been exposed through her work and she encourages researchers to make use of the evocative quality of images to begin to effect social change. While the value of quantitative studies cannot be underplayed and ignored, these do not allow for the richer, more nuanced understandings and insights that qualitative research and, more specifically, the use of visual methods, can provide.

Theron and Theron’s (2010) review of resilience studies between 1990 and 2008 in South Africa found that 5 of the 23 they reviewed employed qualitative techniques. In an extension of this review Theron (2012) found that qualitative, participatory approaches increased from 2009 onwards. In spite of this increase, however, qualitative studies focusing on resilience processes in the face of CSA are still limited. Qualitative research is appropriate for use in studies of youth resilience (Ungar, 2004a) because it allows the researcher to:

- discover unnamed processes, attend to the contextual specificity of health phenomena,
- increase the volume of marginalised voices, produce thick enough descriptions of lives lived to allow for the transfer of findings between contexts and to challenge the

researcher standpoint bias that orients findings toward an adult-centric perspective (p. 359).

The use of innovative and creative approaches, like PVMs, have been advocated for in resilience research and gender-based research, as well as in research with young people (Liebenberg, 2009; Mitchell, 2011a; Theron & Liebenberg, 2015). Advocates for the use of these methods suggest that PVMs allow for a more contextualised understanding of the resilience of youth in the majority world as compared with more traditional methods (Cameron et al., 2013). Unlike such traditional methods of data collection, PVMs are recognised as being more democratic, egalitarian, and collaborative in that they give the participant more control over the process (Buthelezi et al., 2007; Mitchell, De Lange, Stuart, Moletsane, & Buthelezi, 2007). It is this collaborative approach that makes it a suitable vehicle through which to engage girls exposed to CSA. It engages participants who have experienced substantial trauma in a more respectful, empathic manner that may be less overwhelming than using traditional data collection methods. By allowing more control over the research process, PVMs also enable a greater sense of agency and a means through which to address individual psychosocial needs (De Lange & Mitchell, 2014; Didkowsky, Ungar, & Liebenberg, 2010; Mahadev, 2015; Mitchell et al., 2007). In considering the impact of visual data, Moletsane and Mitchell (2007) suggest that the use of PVMs “evokes the notion of research as social change” (p. 137). They demonstrate the possibility of using visual data to begin a dialogue that might result in changes in attitudes, knowledge, and perceptions. In creating an opportunity for them, as young women, to be heard, participants are presented with opportunities for activism and social change (Mitchell et al., 2007). PVMs thus offer the potential of getting something out of the research process as well as out of the produced outcomes (Gubrium & Harper, 2013). This is in line with a growing number of researchers who assert that social science and, more specifically, resilience research needs to have useful applications. As researchers engaged in this area of

study, we have an ethical and moral obligation to use research to make a difference and to foster change (Gubrium & Harper, 2013; Hart et al., 2016; Pauwels, 2015; Mitchell, 2011a).

It is a fact that sexual violence is hugely problematic in South Africa and, while enabling legislation is in place that is meant to protect women and children, there is limited research into the different aspects (like resilience) of the problem as well as limited information and this makes intervention problematic. Increased insights into resilience processes potentiate an enhanced understanding of how to support girls who are at risk of negative outcomes because of exposure to CSA. As researchers, Mitchell, De Lange and Moletsane (2011) stress: arriving at possible solutions first requires a greater understanding of the problem; in this way making the necessity of this study explicit.

### **3. Purpose Statement**

Given the high incidence of sexual violence in South Africa coupled with limited understanding of resilience processes of sexually abused girls, the purpose of this exploratory phenomenological inquiry was to understand resilience processes and the positive adjustment of black African girls who have been sexually abused. Further, given the above mentioned potential of PVMs, the secondary purpose of this study was to consider whether the use of PVMs does indeed foster a greater understanding of resilience processes and if it does, what impact this understanding has.

### **4. Research Questions**

The study is guided by the following questions.

#### **4.1. Primary Research Question**

What accounts for the resilience processes of black adolescent African girls with CSA experiences?

## 4.2. Secondary Research Questions

- What is currently known about what promotes resilience in adolescent girls with CSA experiences?
- What enables and limits resilience processes of black girls with CSA experiences?
- How do socio-cultural factors in South Africa enable and constrain resilience processes of black adolescent girls with CSA experiences?
- Does the screening of visual outputs produced in a phenomenological study with girls with CSA experiences facilitate a greater understanding of what enables and constrains resilience processes for those viewing it, and if so, does this knowledge result in any action?

## 5. Objectives of the Study

Based on these research questions, the following objectives were formulated:

- To conduct a qualitative scoping review of the literature pertaining to resilience processes in adolescent girls with CSA experiences;
- To explore what enables and limits the resilience processes of black South African girls with CSA experiences;
- To explore how the specific socio-cultural context in South Africa enables or constrains resilience processes of black girls with CSA experiences; and
- To consider the potential of PVMs in fostering a greater understanding of resilience processes in black girls with CSA experiences and to explore whether this understating results in any tangible action.

## 6. Research Methodology

In the following section I situate my study within the broader project of which it is a part. I then provide an overview of the methodology that I used in the study. The chapters draw

on the same research paradigm, research design, and analysis. To avoid duplication I describe these prior to the discussion relevant to each of the Manuscripts.

### **6.1. Contextualising the Study**

This study formed part of the “Networks of Change and well-being – Girl led ‘from the ground up’ policy making to address sexual violence in Canada and South Africa” project which is a collaborative partnership between Canadian and South African institutions (see <http://girls4policychange.org/1075-2/>). The aim of this partnership is to “study and advance the use of innovative approaches in knowledge production, policy making and communication, in addressing sexual violence against indigenous girls and young women” (Mitchell & Moletsane, 2014, p.1) Of particular interest to this network of collaborators is what can be learned, through the use of PVMs, from indigenous girls about sexual violence, how the voices of these marginalised indigenous girls can be affirmed, and what impact findings from this work can have on changing the policy landscape for girls in relation to safety and security. My study responds to the interest in what can be learned, through PVMs, from indigenous girls about *resilience* in the face of sexual violence.

### **6.2. Procedures**

In this study I wanted to gain a thicker, more nuanced understanding of the resilience processes of black girls with CSA experiences so I chose to work in a collaborative, participatory manner and, following Creswell (2009), Stake (2005), and Yin (2012), I adopted a qualitative case study design. In line with Mash (2014), I drew on an emancipatory-critical worldview and employed a range of complementary PVMs to generate data and to profile the voice of the participants. Varying methods offered the participants discursive and innovative opportunities to give voice to, and visually document their experiences and also allowed for triangulation of data following Creswell (2009), Nowell, Norris, White, and Moules (2017), as

well as Theron et al. (2013). In the following sections, as advocated by Creswell (2009), I provide additional information on the philosophical worldview, research design and strategies for inquiry that guided my study. A common thread that binds these is the focus on social justice and transformation as well as a critical stance that questions and challenges traditional, taken-for-granted ways of knowing, understanding, and doing (see Creswell, 2009; Hook, 2004; Ponterotto, 2005).

### **6.3. Research Paradigm and Theoretical Perspective**

Creswell (2009) suggests that a worldview can be regarded as a “general orientation about the world” (p. 6). This orientation is also referred to as an epistemology or paradigm. The paradigm directs the research process by elucidating the intent, motivation, and expectations of the research (MacKenzie & Knipe, 2006). Guba and Lincoln (2005) maintain that over the last two decades the field of qualitative research has grown and in the process there has been a blurring of genres. This is apparent in the overlap in some of the terminology and the areas of confluence that the newer paradigms share. Creswell (2012) delineates four worldviews — post positivist, constructivist, transformative, and pragmatic. Elsewhere, these are either extended or merged into fewer categories (see Guba & Lincoln, 2005; Mash, 2014; Swart & Bowman, 2007). Mash (2014) describes three research paradigms — empirical-analytic, interpretive-hermeneutic, and emancipatory-critical. The emancipatory-critical paradigm falls under the umbrella of the transformative paradigm and is focused on creating new knowledge by transforming or changing the world and reflecting critically on what is learned in the process (Mash, 2014; Mertens, 2007). This approach holds that knowledge is bound to power structures within the social fabric; research is linked to politics and a political change agenda that seeks to challenge social oppression (Mertens, 2007; Swart & Bowman, 2007). Research within this paradigm contains an action agenda for social change; empowerment, inequality, oppression, suppression, and alienation are some issues that need to be addressed (Creswell, 2009). This

paradigm adopts a participatory approach in which people are neither the object to be measured nor the subject to be understood (Mash, 2014).

Theoretical perspectives like critical theory are situated within the emancipatory-critical philosophical paradigm (Creswell, 2009). In psychology, critical approaches challenge dominant societal values and question taken-for-granted assumptions about reality, human nature, and knowledge (Fox & Prilleltensky, 1997; Hook, 2004). Although diverse, the basic tenets of critical psychology are its critique of power relations and of Western models of knowing and understanding that generalise certain terms of human experience and marginalise traditional forms of knowledge (Hook, 2004). Critical approaches promote social transformation and emancipation that is more adequately responsive to the demands of a developing society (Hook, 2004).

In critical psychology, certain values are considered primary; these include “social justice, self-determination and participation, caring and compassion, health and human diversity” (Fox & Prilleltensky, 1997, p. 6). These values guide the work of the critical psychologists in their critique of existing structures and in the quest for a better society (Fox & Prilleltensky, 1997). In applying these values, critical psychology is cognisant that, first, values need to be advanced in a balanced way that does not foreground some at the expense of others; second, the selection of primary values is dependent on the needs of a particular society at a particular time, and, third, some values have greater potential in transforming society than others (Fox & Prilleltensky, 1997).

I adopted an emancipatory-critical paradigm and theoretical perspective that is influenced by critical theory. This paradigm was selected because it resonates with this study’s focus on creating new understandings of resilience processes in sexually abused girls in an African context, providing the space for their otherwise marginalised voices to be heard. Drawing on critical theory and participatory methods, in this study I add to a body of research

on resilience that traditionally favours Western models of knowing and I promote traditional, local forms of knowledge. Table 1 illustrates the philosophical assumptions of the emancipatory-critical paradigm and how this study was aligned to it.

*Table 1: Critical-emancipatory paradigm*

Philosophical assumptions	Emancipatory-critical	Alignment of research views
Ontology	Reality is mediated by power relations and is shaped by social, historical, political, cultural, and racial factors (Mertens, 2007; Ponterotto, 2005).	In this study, I was cognisant of the impact of the social ecology; issues of gender oppression, race, marginalisation, and poverty are acknowledged. I was also aware of my own position of power (as an adult, psychologist, and researcher) relative to that of the participants and ensured that their views were given primacy through the use of more democratic data generation methods.
Epistemology	Within this paradigm the relationship between the researcher and the participant is transactional, subjective, and dialectic in nature; the goal of research is empowerment and social change (Ponterotto, 2005).	The relationship between me, as the researcher, and the participants was collaborative. Data was gathered with respect for the knowledge and expertise that participants had, transcripts were shared and checked by participants, and findings were discussed.
Axiology	The role of the researcher is to empower participants and challenge existing social values (Ponterotto, 2005).	As indicated above, the research was conducted in a respectful, participatory manner, and with the best interests of the participants foregrounded at every point. Feedback from the participants suggested that the process of participation generated greater insight and was enjoyable.
Methodology	Draws attention to marginalised voices by employing participatory, naturalistic designs (Ponterotto, 2005; Swart & Bowman, 2007).	As is apparent in this chapter and in Manuscript 4, visual methods were specifically chosen to give participants greater control over the research process and to address power asymmetries.

#### **6.4. Research Design**

As mentioned above, I adopted a qualitative case study design. Qualitative research allows the researcher to explore and understand the meanings that are ascribed to specific problems by individuals and groups (Creswell, 2009). While there is a growing body of South African resilience studies, the majority of these are not qualitative in design; this points to a gap in this area (Theron, 2012; Theron & Theron, 2010). Further, there is a wider call in the social sciences for “socially just qualitative research” (Lyons et al., 2013, p. 11) that redresses research that historically under-represented, stereotyped, and ethically abused certain groups. As discussed previously, the central objective of the wider research project is to conduct research that gives voice to and affirms participants’ experiences, and generates dialogue between relevant stakeholders that may influence policy change; a research design that reflected this was therefore necessary. Lyons et al. (2013) maintain that qualitative research may contribute to social justice when principles of equity, access, participation, and harmony for culturally diverse populations are adhered to.

#### **6.5. The Case Study Method**

To understand what enables positive adjustment in black African girls in spite of the CSA trauma they experienced, I employed a multiple, instrumental case study design (see Creswell, 2009; Stake, 2005; Theron & Theron, 2013; Yin, 1994). Thus, black African girls who have experienced sexual violence were purposefully recruited and invited to participate and share their experiences. Following Creswell (2009), Stake (2005), Theron and Theron (2013), cases were then compared to better understand resilience processes in this group.

The case study method is a research approach that enables exploration of a phenomenon within its context using a variety of data sources (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Thus the resilience processes in girls with CSA experiences are not only explored through one lens, but through a

variety of lenses which allows for what Baxter (2003), Baxter and Jack (2008), and Bhana and Kanjee (2001) see as a multifaceted understanding of this process. Miles and Huberman (1994) define the case as “a phenomenon of some sort occurring in a bounded context” (p. 25). The case functions as the main unit of analysis (Yin, 2012) and may be an individual, an event, a community, an organisation, artefacts, or social interactions (Bhana & Kanjee, 2001; Gilligan et al., 2014; Trochim, 2006; Yin, 2012). In this PhD study, the unit of analysis was the resilience processes of girls with CSA histories; this understanding was facilitated through the use of PVMs with girls with CSA histories as in Manuscript 2; in Manuscript 3 through PVM with primary and secondary participants, and in Manuscript 4 through the audience.

Binding the case allows for a more focused approach. Cases can be bound by time, context, definition, and activity (Baxter, 2003; Creswell, 2003; Miles & Huberman, 1994). In this study, the case is bound by the setting — the child and youth care centres, the common experiences of CSA, as well as the observed characteristics of resilience (discussed in Manuscript 2).

Yin (2012) asserts that case studies are appropriate when the research seeks to address a descriptive question — what is happening — or an explanatory one that looks at how and why something happens. This PhD study is thus explanatory in that it seeks to account for the resilience processes of some sexual abuse survivors and what factors, if any, in the social ecology promote this process.

Stake (2005) describes three types of case studies — intrinsic, instrumental, and collective. This study made use of instrumental case studies since the intent was to gain insight into a particular phenomenon — in this case, resilience processes in sexually abused girls. Instrumental case studies are aimed at providing insight into a broader issue; the case itself is not of primary interest and, instead, plays a supportive role while facilitating an understanding of a larger process (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Rule & John, 2011; Stake, 2005). The case, however,

is not glossed over. Instead, it is looked at in depth and its contexts are examined since this helps to provide greater clarity on the larger issue (Stake, 2005).

Multiple case studies, as the name suggests, involve more than a single case and allow the researcher to explore differences within and between cases with a view of replicating and contrasting findings across cases (Yin, 1994). Multiple case studies allow for the development of greater insight about key concepts than in one case but also for the transferability of these insights to other cases (Sonn, Grossman, & Utomo, 2013). Yin (2012) notes that there is no formulaic solution to determine the number of cases to be included. Rule and John (2011) add that data gathered should be of adequate quality and quantity to fully answer the research questions and should allow for presentations of the case which are in-depth and holistic, and which portray a sense of being there. In this study, 7 case studies were included at which point data saturation occurred. Following Rule and John (2011), since no new insights were likely to emerge, no further cases were included.

## **6.6. Data Sources**

A key component of case study research is the inclusion of multiple sources of data (Yin, 1994). Baxter and Jack (2008) describes each data source as one piece of the “puzzle” (p. 554), with each contributing to the researcher’s understanding of the phenomenon under study. This enhances the credibility of the data and also adds strength to the findings since the various pieces fit together to promote a more detailed understanding of the case (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Yin, 2012). Similarly, Stake (2005) maintains that gaining insight into contexts presents prospects for understanding the complexities of relationships within which the case is situated. Thus, there is the need for secondary informants and document analysis (Rule & John, 2011).

In this study, I included key informants who were girls with CSA histories from two child and youth care centres (CYCCs) (see Manuscript 2 for a more detailed description); secondary informants who were adults identified by the girls and who were interviewed to

generate supplementary data (see Manuscript 3 for a more detailed description) as well as an audience (see Manuscript 4 for a more detailed description) who viewed a screening of the visual outputs produced by the primary informants. I also included key documents that were from the case files of each informant, with their consent (Manuscripts 2 and 3). A description of the processes involved in the selection of informants is given in the relevant Manuscripts. Case study research typically refers to *informants* rather than to *respondents* or *participants* (Baxter, 2003). In the following paragraphs and in the manuscripts, however, I make use of the term *participants*; in my use of PVMs for data generation, participants have greater control over the research process and as such they are active participants rather than informants.

### **6.7. Data Generation**

To gain insight into the resilience narratives of sexually abused girls, data was generated using various PVMs. As indicated above, PVMs offer a number of opportunities in terms of agency, advocacy, and social change. PVMs tie in with critical pedagogy in its emphasis on notions of transformation, social critique, social change, and conscientization (Low et al., 2012). In brief, PVMs work effectively with marginalised groups who previously may have been excluded from research endeavours because of language and cultural barriers. They are suitable for exploring difficult themes, they demystify the research process, and allow for new ways of engaging with the subject (Jackson, 2012; Kelly & van der Riet, 2001), making them an expedient choice for my study.

I conducted in-depth unstructured interviews with each participant, using participatory diagramming (timelines). Participants were asked to create a timeline of significant events they had experienced over the course of their lives, situating the CSA experience on the line (refer to Appendix A for prompt used). The use of timelines was judiciously selected based on their potential to foreground the girls' voices and access information in a more structured, ordered manner (Liebenberg & Theron, 2015). I probed girls' accounts of their timeline, using probes

such as, ‘Describe to me what you have drawn/written on the paper’ (refer to Appendix B for additional probes).

Participants were then invited to produce digital stories (refer to Manuscript 4 for more information). For this, participants were asked to summarise the narrative of their life histories discussed in relation to the timeline and encouraged to draw, write, or capture images that corresponded with their narratives and to identify or create music that could be included. I put all of this written material and the visual media produced by the participants together and edited it to create digital stories.

Following these individual processes, participants were invited to participate in a group process. Two group sessions were held (refer to Manuscript 2 for more information). The purpose and outcome of these sessions was a participatory video and group reflections on what enabled resilience processes. To assist in this process, participants were first engaged in a participatory visual activity — specifically, the Tree of Life activity which is a psychosocial tool based on principles from narrative therapy (Ncube, 2006) (refer to Appendix C for guidelines and prompts used to explain this activity). Following this activity and the discussion that followed, participants were invited to create a participatory video (refer to Appendix D for guidelines and prompts used to guide the participatory video production). Participatory video entails the participants’ constructing of their own video with only minimal assistance from the researcher (Mitchell & De Lange, 2011). It is participatory in that the researcher is with the participants throughout the process, discussing and reflecting together on emerging themes. Participatory video allows participants to externalise issues and, through the process of choosing a theme, to decide on images and construct the video so participants are actively engaged in the construction of knowledge (Mitchell & De Lange, 2011). This method also provides for greater reflexivity; Mitchell and De Lange (2011) note that it is particularly salient when addressing issues of gender violence where dominant patriarchal ideology needs to be

challenged. Essentially, producing the video itself becomes an intervention; the participants not only highlight the problem but suggest possible solutions and in this way empower themselves to become change agents. We drew on Mitchell's "no editing required" (2011a, p. 73) production process. This involved giving participants a specified amount of time to produce the video. If they were not satisfied with aspects of the video they had to start filming it again from the beginning (see, too, Mitchell & De Lange, 2011).

Concurrent with these processes, I reviewed each participant's case files, which I accessed with their permission (see 7.2.2. below and Manuscript 2). I also asked each of the participants to identify one care worker at the CYCC who knew them well and could be interviewed to provide supplementary data (see section 7.3.2. below and Manuscript 3). Of the 7 girls participating in the study, only 1 did not identify a care worker. This participant had not disclosed her experiences of CSA to any of the adult care workers at the CYCC.

As indicated above in Manuscript 4, participants also included an audience (see 7.4.2. below and Manuscript 4 for additional detail). Data was generated through a facilitated group discussion with this audience following viewing of the visual outputs produced by the primary participants. Details of the questions guiding this discussion are provided in manuscript 4.

## **6.8. Data Analysis**

Data was analysed using thematic analysis. More specifically, I adopted a contextualist approach, as described by Braun and Clarke (2006). Thematic analysis is a flexible, iterative approach to identifying, analysing, and presenting patterns or themes that relate to data (Alhojailan, 2012; Braun & Clarke, 2006; Clarke & Braun, 2013). Essentially, it is a method of pattern recognition within the data; emerging themes become the categories for analysis (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006) and it allows for detailed, rich descriptions of data (Boyatzis, 1998). Thematic analysis that is guided by a contextualist method acknowledges

both the ways in which individuals make meaning of experiences as well as the impact that the social context has on the meanings (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Themes can be identified both inductively and deductively in thematic analysis (Alhojailan, 2012, Braun & Clarke, 2006). Inductive thematic analysis is described as data-driven in that themes identified are linked to the data itself and not to a pre-existing coding frame (Braun & Clarke, 2006). By comparison, theoretical or deductive analysis is analyst-driven and is informed by theoretical or analytic interest in the area under study.

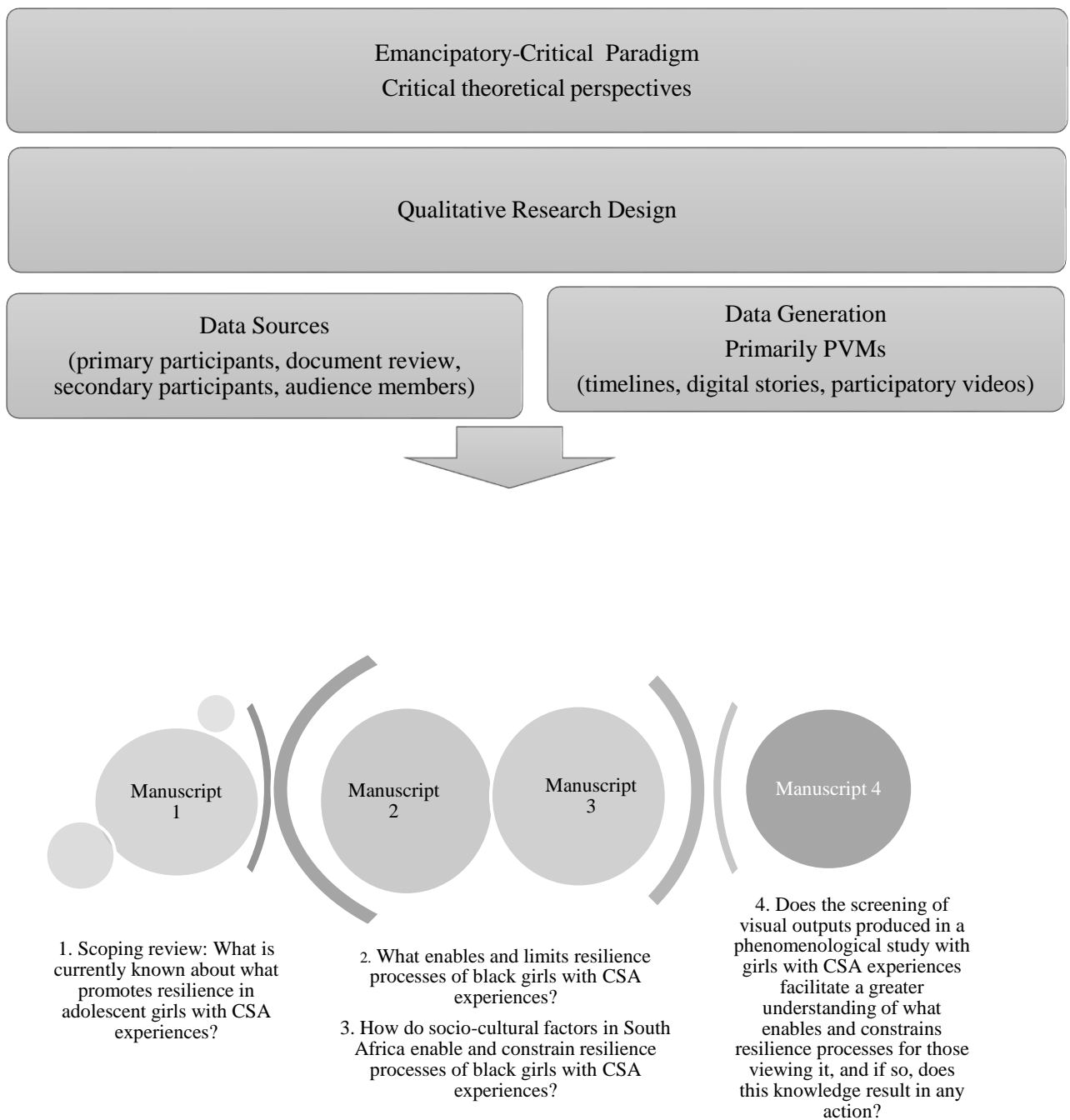
In this study, the literature included in the scoping review in Manuscript 1 was analysed deductively. Thus, in Manuscript 1, I drew on the universal mechanisms of resilience processes or the short list described by Masten (2006) to form a priori codes with which I coded the findings from each of the review articles. Data in Manuscripts 2, 3, and 4 was analysed inductively, each analysis guided by specific questions. Additional information pertaining to the questions that guided the analysis is provided in the description of each Manuscript below and can also be found in Section B. Here I provide a brief summary of the method as I used it.

With regard to the inductive thematic analysis used in Manuscripts 2, 3, and 4, I followed the 6 steps suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006). I familiarised myself with the data by repeatedly reading it all while searching for patterns. I worked through the data systematically and generated initial or open codes, using the computer software programme, Atlas ti. 7.0 (2012); I coded inclusively and widely, coding for many potential themes. After this I began sorting the different codes into possible themes and collated all the relevant coded data extracts within these themes. Through this process, I formed a number of candidate themes and sub-themes. Following this, I engaged in a process of refining candidate themes and formed a thematic map of the data sets. I then subjected my data to further reading to ensure that themes were appropriately assigned and to ensure that I did not miss any data. I then reviewed each

theme and structured them into a coherent and consistent story. This process was concluded when I had clearly defined themes and subthemes.

I engaged an independent co-coder to code data separately. The co-coder had recently completed a PhD study with black African girls. The co-coder followed the same process described above, thereafter we met to review themes and agreement was reached through consensus discussions (Saldana, 2009).

As indicated above, each of the 4 Manuscripts included in this doctoral study is an individual piece of work. However, there is a continuity across all of them and each is underpinned by the same design and theoretical perspective. Figure 1 provides a design map of the process I followed.



*Figure 1: Design Map*

I began this PhD study with a broad scoping review of resilience processes in adolescent girls as outlined in Manuscript 1. I then narrowed this focus by looking at what enables and constrains resilience processes of black African girls in Manuscript 2, and, in Manuscript 3, I was more specific in that I looked at how socio-cultural factors peculiar to South Africa enable or constrain resilience processes. In Manuscript 4 I look at whether the visual methods I used

increased understandings of resilience processes and whether this resulted in any tangible social action. In the following sections, I describe each of these Manuscripts, and offer the rationale as well as the strategies of inquiry, and information about the participants. I do not summarise the findings/implications since these form part of the Manuscripts found in Chapters 2 to 5. As part of the summary of each Manuscript I also do not comment on ethics or trustworthiness. Instead, I make summative comments about trustworthiness and ethics in sections 9 and 10 of this first chapter.

## **7. Outline of Manuscripts**

### **7.1. Manuscript 1**

Manuscript 1 was published in the South African Journal of Science, September/October 2017, Vol 113 (9-10), 1-9.

The question directing this Manuscript was: What is currently known about what promotes resilience in adolescent girls with CSA experiences?

This Manuscript addresses the first sub-question of this study.

#### **7.1.1. Rationale for manuscript 1**

Although CSA has frequently been associated with adverse outcomes for the survivor research exists that suggests that this is not a given and that some survivors adapt positively. A growing number of studies have begun to look at what enables this positive adaptation or resilience. This focus on adaptation is necessary since insight into what enables this allows for greater understanding on how best to support girls who have been exposed to sexual violence. This is particularly relevant in South Africa, a country that has very high rates of CSA. Although there are a few review articles focusing on positive adaptation following CSA, no review has focused specifically on the resilience processes of adolescent girls. My aim in this scoping review was thus to review empirical studies that focus specifically on the resilience of

adolescent girls who were exposed to CSA and to summarise the resilience enabling processes common across these studies.

### **7.1.2. Design and procedure**

To answer my research question, I conducted a scoping review of the relevant literature. A scoping review is a form of knowledge synthesis that involves mapping existing data sources to get a sense of the scope of the area under study. I followed Arksey and O'Malley's (2005) iterative five stage model to guide the review (see Table 1 in Manuscript 1). The review was undertaken in two phases; phase one was implemented between August 2015 and December 2015 and phase two was implemented between February 2016 and August 2016. A number of electronic databases were searched as well as university repositories, and reference lists as well as organisational reports. I established a number of inclusion criteria, which are detailed in Manuscript 1. A total of 11 studies were included in this scoping review (see Table 2 in Manuscript 1).

### **7.1.3. Data analysis**

I conducted a numerical analysis of the extent and nature of the studies included and using Masten's (2006) shortlist of universal resilience promoting factors, I deductively analysed the contents of the included studies. The shortlist formed the a priori codes with which I coded the finding of each of the included studies. I then summarised these findings into two broad domains — individual factors and resilience enabling ecologies.

## **7.2. Manuscript 2**

Manuscript 2 was prepared for the Journal of Adolescent Research and is currently under review. The question guiding this manuscript was: What enables and limits resilience processes of black girls with CSA experiences?

More specifically, I explored how individual expressions of agency are shaped by structural factors and exercised by black African girls with CSA histories as they navigate resilience pathways. In this Manuscript I address the second sub-question in this doctoral study.

In the following sections, I provide a summary of the rationale and methods used.

### **7.2.1. Rationale for manuscript 2**

In Manuscript 1, I looked at what is currently known about what enables resilience processes of adolescent girls with a history of CSA and noted that there is limited understanding of what informs this process in this group. In Manuscript 2, I therefore focused specifically on what enables resilience processes of adolescent black African girls. In situating this study in South Africa, I aimed to contribute to contextually specific understandings of resilience in African girls who have been sexually abused. As indicated in the rationale for this doctoral study, discussions on the impact of CSA have generally focused on the deleterious impact of sexual abuse, often framing girls and women as victims (Hockett, 2013). In this Manuscript, I reframe this discussion. Drawing on the socio-ecological theory of resilience (Ungar, 2008) as well as on ideas of bounded agency (Evans, 2007), I explore pathways to positive adjustment following CSA experiences. I consider the way in which agency, as a process of resilience, is exercised by adolescent black African girls as they traverse socio-structural contexts that are both challenging and accommodating.

### **7.2.2. Data sources**

Participants were purposefully recruited from two child and youth care centres (CYCC 1 and CYCC 2). Black African girls with a history of CSA were the primary participants; they were purposefully selected using a set of resilience indicators developed by an Advisory Panel (AP) that had been established at CYCC 1. The advisory panel (AP) is typically made up of

community representatives who provide contextual information and guide the research process (Theron, 2013b). In this study, there were 9 members on the AP. An additional 7 individuals were invited. However, 4 declined the invitation and 3 did not arrive on the scheduled meeting date. A number of benefits have been delineated in terms of including an AP in resilience studies (Theron, 2013b; Ungar & Liebenberg, 2011). In this study, the AP was provided with an overview of the study, the rationale, and the objectives as well as methods that were to be employed. They were then asked to consider characteristics that girls with CSA experiences are likely to exhibit that suggest positive adaptation. To guide them with this process, resilience indicators determined in previous studies on resilience (Theron et al., 2013) were shared with them. These indicators included that the girls in question:

- have a resilient personality; they are able to communicate, are assertive, are confident, are solution-focused and flexible, and have a positive self-image;
- have active support systems that may include immediate or extended family, friends, and social support services;
- have the capacity to be a dreamer; have goals, a vision, are focused, and have self-knowledge;
- are value driven; there is a presence of values that influence positive behaviours that could come from external sources;
- display educational progress; they attend school regularly, display academic progress, and are cooperative at school; and
- demonstrate acceptance; they exhibit tolerance of difficult circumstances

Added to this, the AP added context-specific factors which included:

- the ability to express appropriate emotions in response to the abuse experience rather than apathy;
- the absence of substance (drug and alcohol) use at the time of participation; and

- the absence of sexually inappropriate behaviour including frequent and changing sexual partners, sexual risk taking, and making sexual advances to staff and to other children.

Using this list, 4 girls were identified by social workers at CYCC 1 and 3 girls were identified by the social worker at CYCC 2. The girls were then approached by a child care worker not related to the study with details of it. Once they had expressed an interest in participation, the child care worker notified me and I then made contact with them and obtained written consent. Consent was also obtained from the directors at both CYCCs, who serve as guardian in loci parentis. (See Table 2 for a brief description of the participants).

*Table 2: Brief description of participants*

Name <sup>iii</sup>	Age at time of participation	Age of first CSA incidents	Number of disclosed CSA incidents	Type of CSA	Other childhood adversities
Lumkah	18	10	Chronic	Contact	Removal from caregiver Paternal neglect Death of both parents
Twinky	18	10	1	Contact	Death of primary caregiver – granny Death of Mother Child-headed household Poverty
Precious	17	11	3	Contact	Death of father Death of mother Physical violence Verbal violence Poverty
Fireball Girl	17	10	Chronic	Contact	Alcoholic, abusive mother Death of mother Death of aunt
Phindile	18	7	2 (1 x single perpetrator and 1 x multiple perpetrators)	Contact	Abandonment at birth Death of mother Father unknown Neglect
Jessica	18	16	1	Contact	Mother unknown Physical and verbal violence Isolated from extended family
Keamo	15	6	1	Contact	Death of father Death of mother Neglect and rejection by extended family

<sup>iii</sup> Pseudonyms selected by participants

In addition to primary participants, data sources in Manuscript 2 included a document review, in this case participant's institutional case files. Case files for each primary participant were accessed with their knowledge and permission. At CYCC 1 all legal documents as well as process notes from social workers and other care givers are captured on an online database. Thus, for participants from CYCC1, all information uploaded since their placement at the CYCC was accessible and reviewed. At CYCC 2, hard copies of participants' files were obtained but information here was less comprehensive. Case files typically included information regarding the reason for placement at a CYCC, health records, notes on scholastic progress, legal court documents, and process notes.

### **7.2.3. Methods of Data Generation**

As indicated in section 6.7. above, data was generated using a range of PVMs that included participatory diagramming using timelines, digital stories, group discussions, and participatory video. See Manuscript 2 for a more detailed discussion.

### **7.2.4. Data Analysis**

Data from individual interviews, the digital stories, the reflective discussions, the participatory video, as well as the file review constituted data for this Manuscript. I followed Braun and Clarke's (2006) guidelines for inductive thematic analysis (see 6.8. for a description of the process). The broad question guiding this analysis was: What enables and limits resilience processes of black girls with CSA experiences?

## **7.3. Manuscript 3**

Manuscript 3 was prepared for the Journal of Black Psychology. An attenuated version of this manuscript has been accepted as a chapter in the book: *Human strengths and resilience:*

*Developmental, cross-cultural, and international perspectives* (pp. 87-104), edited by R. Grant, & J. Sirikantraporn (2018).

The research question guiding this Manuscript is: How do socio-cultural factors in South Africa enable and constrain resilience processes of black adolescent girls with CSA experiences?

In this manuscript, I address the third sub-question of this study.

### **7.3.1. Rationale for manuscript 3**

South Africa has been described as having the highest rates of CSA worldwide (Stoltenborgh et al., 2011). While this assertion has been subjected to scrutiny, prevalence rates of 1 out of 3 girls for CSA before the age of 17 highlight the magnitude of the problem (Artz et al., 2016). The aetiology of such violence may be explained by drawing on a number of factors that include hegemonic masculinity that promotes violence against women, structural barriers, cultural practices, and political legacies of violence brought about by apartheid. This complexity, peculiar to South Africa, potentially results in both risk for CSA and resilience manifesting in context specific ways (Theron & Phasha, 2015). Cognisant of this complexity, in this Manuscript I sought to understand how socio-cultural factors enable and constrain the adaptive processes of black South African girls with a history of CSA. Current understandings of resilience processes acknowledge the role of cultural relativity, recognise that resilience processes are culturally embedded, and have iterated the need for scholarship to delve into how specific cultures and contexts impact on processes of resilience (Panter-Brick, 2015; Ungar, 2015). In line with this understanding and following Phasha (2010), and Theron and Theron (2013), I draw attention to the way in which traditional African paradigms impact on such processes. Consistent with previous studies on resilience processes of African youth, I also suggest that while traditional African culture may promote resilience post CSA, it also has the

potential, as Theron (2013) has pointed out, to be burdensome and not facilitative of resilience processes.

### **7.3.2. Data sources**

For the purposes of this Manuscript, I drew on two case studies, those of Lumkah and Precious (described above in Table 2). A description of the identification and recruitment of participants can be found in 6.6. above. I chose to focus on these two cases because they both illustrate the nuanced way in which socio-cultural factors impact on resilience processes for girls with CSA histories.

For this Manuscript, I also included data from secondary participants as well as the participants' case files. Secondary participants were identified by the primary participants as adults at the CYCCs with whom they had a close relationship and who would be able to provide contextual information and deeper insight into the ways in which the participants exhibited positive adaptation. The participants' permission was obtained prior to interviews with identified persons. Of the 7 participants, 6 consented and 1 did not; she had not disclosed the abuse she had suffered to any care worker at the CYCC and had been referred by a friend in the study. A total of 6 interviews were conducted with secondary participants. Of the 6 interviews, 5 were with social workers and 1 was with an intern psychologist.

### **7.3.3. Methods of data generation**

A description of the data generation procedures with primary participants has been provided in section 6.7. As indicated above, for this Manuscript I included data generated by interviews with the secondary participants as well as the participant's case files. Secondary participants were interviewed individually, using an unstructured interview guideline.

#### **7.3.4. Data analysis**

For the purposes of this Manuscript I conducted secondary data analysis (see Creswell, 2012). In the first analysis (reported in manuscript 2 and Haffejee & Theron, 2017b<sup>i</sup>), I did not focus specifically on the ways in which socio-cultural contextual factors enable and constrain resilience processes. In re-analysing the existing data set, the question that guided my enquiry was: How do socio-cultural factors enable and constrain resilience processes of black South African girls with CSA experiences? I looked at data that offered rich answers to the research question, discarding that which did not and created an integrated data set with the data from 2 case studies.

Data was transcribed verbatim and coded using Atlas.ti 7.0 (2012) and was then subjected to secondary inductive thematic analysis (see Braun & Clarke, 2006). Using the guidelines described by Braun and Clarke (2006) and described in section 6.8., I re-analysed the data to answer the question as stated above.

#### **7.4. Manuscript 4**

Manuscript 4 was prepared for the journal *Qualitative Research in Psychology*. The first research question guiding this article is: Does the screening of visual outputs produced in a phenomenological study with girls with CSA histories facilitate a greater understanding of what enables and constrains resilience processes for those viewing it? If the answer is yes, question 2 is this: Does this knowledge result in any action?

In this Manuscript I address the final sub-question in this study.

##### **7.4.1. Rationale for manuscript 4**

Resilience researchers have advocated for the use of creative data generation techniques, like PVMs in resilience research (Liebenberg, 2009). The suggestion is that such methods allow for more nuanced, contextualised understanding of resilience processes. This

assertion is bolstered by claims that PVM offers respectful ways of engaging with issues like CSA; unlike traditional methods of data collection, it is more egalitarian and in this way allows participants to have greater control over the research process (see Mitchell et al., 2007). In addition to this, PVMs have also been described as capable of fostering social change; the visual methods, like participatory video and digital stories are capable of raising awareness that can, at least potentially, result in social action. In this Manuscript I sought to scrutinise these assertions critically by drawing on reflections and follow-up reports from an audience that viewed the visual products produced by the primary participants. First, I scrutinised the efficacy of the visual products in fostering greater understandings of resilience processes of black girls with CSA histories and, second, I considered whether the increased understanding resulted in any tangible action.

#### **7.4.2. Data sources**

For the purposes of this Manuscript, participants are the audience members who viewed the digital stories produced by the primary participants. A total of 14 people who work closely with youth were invited to attend the screening; these included officials working at the Department of Social Development as well as staff at other child and youth care centres. Of this number, 8 attended. All 8 were from CYCC 1 and were comprised of service and mental health professionals.

#### **7.4.3. Methods of data generation**

Audience members were invited to a screening of the visual products —the 7 digital stories produced by the primary participants. Prior to screening, the audience was given a brief overview of the study, the rationale for the study, and a description of the methods used to generate data. Following the screening, the audience was guided through a facilitated reflective discussion. Questions that guided this discussion were based on Mitchell's (2011a) viewer

response form. The discussion was recorded and transcribed. Audience members were followed up via email approximately a year later. Of the 8 audience members emailed, 1 responded.

#### **7.4.4. Data analysis**

Findings from the facilitated reflective discussion with the audience and the follow-up answers provided by one of the audience members constituted the data for this manuscript. Two broad questions guided this analysis.

1. How did viewing the digital stories facilitate a greater understanding in the audience of what enables and what constrains resilience processes for black girls with CSA histories?
2. In what way/s did this understanding generate action by the audience?

As with the other data sets, this data was analysed using Braun and Clarke's (2006) guidelines for inductive thematic analysis (see section 6.8.).

### **8. Summary of Data Generated in this Doctoral Study**

All data collected in the course of this doctoral study is visually represented in Table 3.

*Table 3: Summary of data generated*

<b>Datasets</b>	<b>Research Activity</b>
<b>Dataset 1</b>	Individual interviews with primary participants using timelines
<b>Dataset 2</b>	Digital stories created by primary participants with editing support from me
<b>Dataset 3</b>	Case file review documents of primary participants
<b>Dataset 4</b>	Interviews with secondary participants
<b>Dataset 5</b>	Group session 1 with primary participants, resilience trees, and participatory video session 1
<b>Dataset 6</b>	Group session 2 with primary participants, participatory video session 2, and reflective discussions
<b>Dataset 7</b>	Audience reflections

## **9. Trustworthiness**

The trustworthiness of any study refers to the accuracy and consistency of the research methods and findings (Creswell, 2009). The criteria to ensure the trustworthiness of a qualitative study were applied; these include credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmability, and authenticity (Morrow, 2005). Credibility was ensured through an observance of critical reflexivity throughout the process; frequent discussions with the promotor, the use of multiple methods of data generation (individual interviews using timelines, digital stories, reflective group discussions, interviews with secondary informants, participatory video, and document analysis); and member checking. I invited participants to read through transcripts and to comment on emerging themes which I shared with them following Creswell (2009), and Birks and Mills (2011). I ensured transferability of the data by providing thick detailed descriptions of participants and their experiences as well as through dense descriptions of the research process and data generation procedures in each of the manuscripts (see Creswell, 2009; Ungar, 2004b). Dependability was ensured through explicit explanations about the research process, the criteria that guided the selection of participants, as

well as the use of a co-coder. Following Saldana (2009), confirmability was ensured through consensus discussions with both the co-coder and the promoter, and the strict application of reflexivity to guard against bias. The criterion of authenticity was added after the above four criteria were established and fits in with the transformative critical paradigm (see Morrow, 2005). The principle of authenticity emphasises the process of forming interpretations from the participant's point of view, giving primacy to their voice, diversity, their positioning, and advancement towards other participants and themselves (Johnson & Rasulova, 2017). The PVMs of data generation used in this study were geared to ensuring authenticity; levels of participation were negotiated, participants were ensured greater control of the process, and their voices were foregrounded. In line with Johnson and Rasulova (2017), and Morrow (2005), in being given opportunities for group reflections, participants were exposed to differing perspectives that resulted in an appreciation of their resources.

## **10. Ethical Considerations**

As indicated above, this study formed part of a larger project, a partnership between Canadian and South African institutes. The principal investigators and grant recipients are from McGill University and the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal. Thus ethical clearance was first obtained from McGill University's Research Ethics Board for this larger project (see Appendix E). A separate ethics application for this doctoral study was also made to and obtained from the Humanities and Health Research Ethics (HHREC) council of North-West University (see Appendix F, NWU-HS-2015-0149).

When conducting research with vulnerable populations it is imperative that the research not pose greater risk for the participant; participants must be treated with respect and informed of the details of the study (Creswell, 2009). In South Africa, research is regulated in terms of Section 71 of the National Health Act no 61, 2003 enacted on 1 March 2012 and further regulated in the *Government Gazette*, 10268 of 2014 (Notice on National Health Act, 2014).

In terms of this framework research with a minor can be conducted only if it is in the best interest of the minor, in the manner and conditions as prescribed, with the consent of the guardian or parent and, if the minor is capable of understanding, with her or his active written consent (Zuch, Mason-Jones, Mathews, & Henley, 2012). The participatory and emancipatory nature of this study sought to provide a space that was empowering to the minors and was designed to create avenues for self-reflection and greater agency. So, while recalling CSA experiences was painful for the participants, the potential benefit of engaging in the research was in their best interests.

I was also aware of the particular ethical considerations of using PVMs. Clark (2013) favours adopting a situated ethical position. This means situating ethical protocols within the context of the individual study, thus addressing ethical dilemmas as they emerge on a case by case basis. This, however, does not suggest abrogating responsibility as a researcher or disregarding the basic principle of doing no harm. In the following paragraphs, I describe how I addressed the ethical considerations pertinent when one is working with visual data as they emerged alongside the traditional ethical concerns.

In this study, an independent care worker at both CYCCs first approached participants with details of the study; potential participants were given a detailed information letter which explained in an easily understood manner what participation would entail, issues of confidentiality and anonymity, and how much time would be required. The voluntary nature of the study was emphasised and participants were informed that they could exit the study at any point. I made contact with the agreeable participants and reiterated information pertaining to their participation, and obtained written consent (see Appendix G). None of the participants chose to exit the study. Informed consent was also obtained from the directors at both CYCCs, acting in their capacity as legal guardians of the children in care (see Appendix H), from the AP (see Appendix I) and from secondary participants (see Appendix J).

In my first interaction with participants, I also specifically discussed limits posed by both participation in the group process as well as in the participatory video. With regard to the group session, I gave each participant an invitation letter to this session. The letter emphasised that participation and attendance was not obligatory. One participant arrived late for the first group session and did not attend the second group session because of scholastic demands. To ensure anonymity in the participatory video, I also made a number of face masks and wigs available to the primary participants and asked that they use these so that their faces were concealed. This was in line with methods used in previous studies where participatory video was used (see Clark, 2012; Wiles et al., 2008). While it is worth noting Clark's (2013) critique of the need to anonymise respondents, maintaining that it merely serves to "hide or silence the voices of individuals" for whom participation was meant to be an "emancipatory experience" (p. 71), the onus was on me as the researcher to ensure that the study did no harm. Given the CSA focus and the added vulnerability of the participants in care, I chose to ensure that participants were not identifiable. Throughout the process, pseudonyms, chosen by the participants were used and the masks and wigs were used in the participatory video.

Issues pertaining to ownership of materials produced and dissemination of products were also discussed with participants (see Mitchell & De Lange, 2011). In keeping with the participatory and emancipatory agenda of this study, I informed participants that they could access any of the outputs produced during the process. Two of the participants requested copies of their digital stories and the participatory video. During the screening of the digital stories, the pseudonyms chosen by the participants were used to ensure anonymity and no photos in the digital stories provided clues to their identity.

The principle of doing what is right for the informants and not causing harm was central to all decisions taken during the research (see Creswell, 2009). To this end, all participants were obliged to go for at least one debriefing session with a mental health professional whom

I engaged and who was not linked to the study. All the participants attended more than one session.

## 11. Chapter Division

Figure 2 provides an overview of the chapters included in this PhD study.

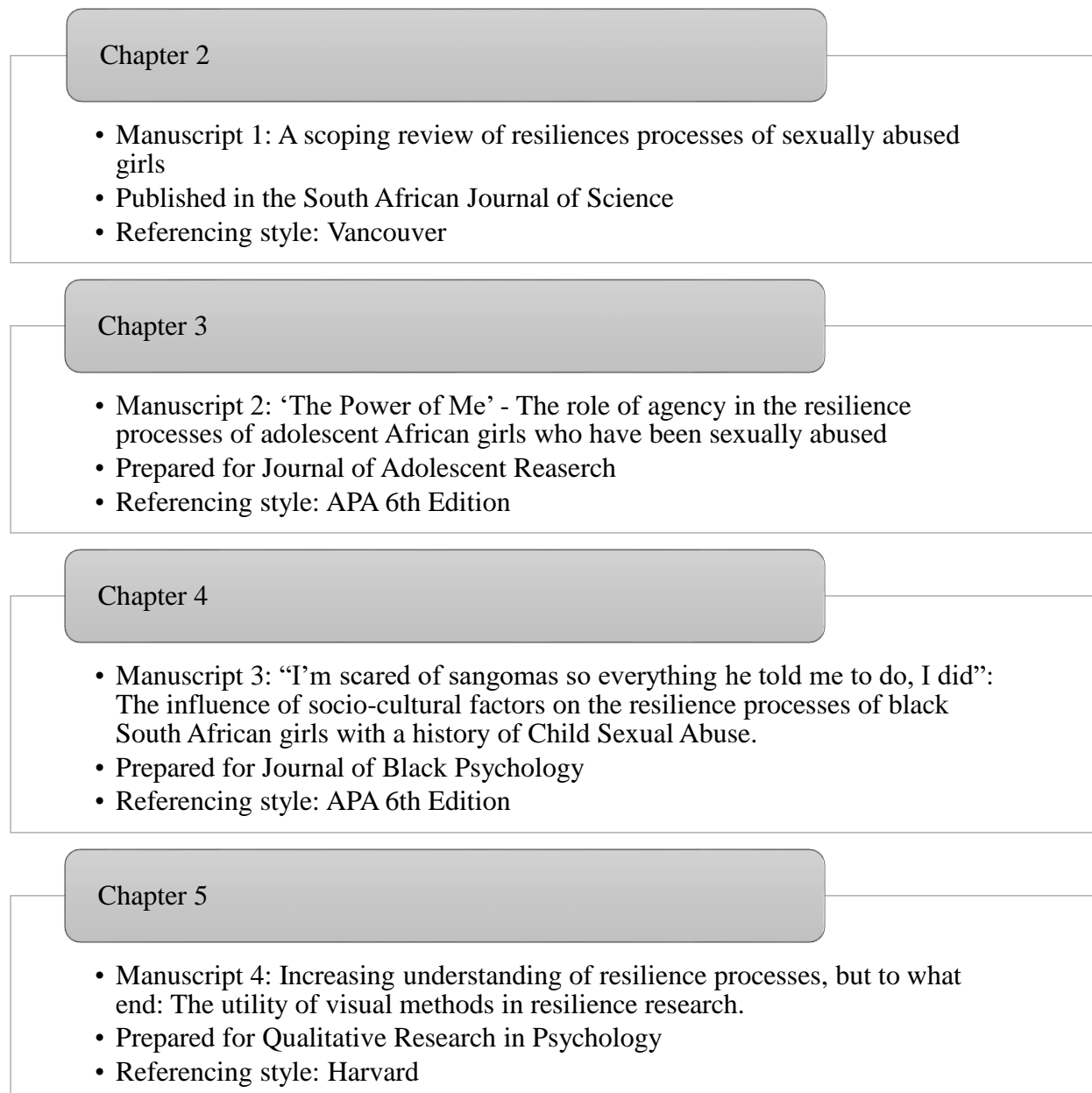


Figure 2: Chapter division

In Chapter 6, the concluding chapter, I revisit the questions that guided each of the manuscripts above, share my reflections on this process as well as the limitations of the study, and offer recommendations for future studies. This is followed by the references and appendices relevant to the content of this PhD study.

## **12. Conclusion**

In this chapter, I provided a rationale for this study and explained the methodology that guided the process. I briefly described each of the manuscripts that constitute this study and, as indicated above, the following chapters are devoted to each of these.

## Section B: Manuscripts

Everyday when the sun sets we will realise

We are not who we were yesterday

We are not who we will be tomorrow

But we are who we are today

Did we decide to wake up in this poverty

No

Did we decide to victimise

No

Did we decide to let our dreams drown in our minds

No

Not us

We will never choose any of these routes

We have the power to decide

About our career, our future and our lives

This is our life

We should make a right choice

Because we have the power to decide

And

We will decide

(Jessica [participant] 'The Power to Decide')

## Chapter 2

Manuscript 1 titled, *Resilience processes in sexually abused adolescent girls: A scoping review of the literature*, addresses the question, *what is currently known about what promotes resilience in adolescent girls with CSA experiences?*

Prepared for: South African Journal of Science (see Appendix K for author guidelines). This article has been published.

Haffejee, S., & Theron, L. (2017). Resilience processes in sexually abused adolescent girls: A scoping review of the literature. *South African Journal of Science*, *113*(9-10), 1–9.

doi:10.17159/sajs.2017/20160318

Authors: S. Haffejee and L.C. Theron<sup>iv</sup>

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<sup>iv</sup> Professor Linda Theron is the co-author of all of my research articles as it is the policy of the North-West University to give recognition to the promoters who assist in the development of doctoral studies

### **Abstract**

Childhood sexual abuse is often associated with a number of deleterious psychological and behavioural outcomes for survivors. However, some research suggests that this impact is variable and that some survivors adapt positively. An ability to do well in spite of adversity, under any circumstances, has been termed resilience. Drawing on a socio-ecological understanding of resilience, the aim of this scoping review was to comprehensively map existing empirical studies on resilience processes in sexually abused adolescent girls and to summarise emerging resilience-enabling factors. We also considered the implications of the findings for practice and research. A total of 11 articles met the criteria for inclusion in the review. Findings from these studies suggest that internal factors (meaning making, optimistic future orientation, agency and mastery) and contextual factors (supportive family, social and educational environments) function interdependently to enable resilience in sexually abused adolescent girls. Practitioners should leverage these complementary and interdependent resilience-enabling mechanisms by encouraging greater involvement of girls in the planning of interventions and by assisting girls in developing meaningful narratives about their abuse experiences. Interventions should also encourage greater involvement from supportive structures, while challenging social and cultural norms that inhibit resilience. Resilience researchers should be cognisant of the paucity of research focusing on resilience processes in sexually abused adolescent girls as well as the absence of innovative, participatory methods of data collection.

### **Significance:**

- The review adds to a body of literature on resilience processes with implications for resilience researchers.

- The findings have implications for a range of practitioners (psychologists, social workers, teachers etc.) who work with sexually abused girls.

## Resilience processes in Sexually Abused Adolescent Girls: A Scoping Review of the Literature

In August 2016 the hashtag #1in3 was trending in South Africa. This hashtag represents the pervasiveness of sexual abuse in South Africa (i.e. one in three South Africans has experienced sexual abuse). Following a silent protest at a political meeting, women from diverse backgrounds across South Africa took to social media to share experiences of sexual assault, bringing to the fore South Africa's violent rape statistics. One Twitter user tweeted the following<sup>1</sup>:

Actually let me just get this straight. In my immediate family – we are 3/3. My mom. My sister. Me. #1in3

Notwithstanding definitional issues as to what constitutes child sexual abuse (CSA), there is agreement on the pervasiveness of CSA in society, with data suggesting an average worldwide rate of 18% to 20%.<sup>2</sup> South African CSA data are more alarming: Artz et al.<sup>3</sup> found that one in three young people in South Africa have experienced some form of sexual abuse, suggesting that at least 784 967 young people, as of 2016, had been victims of sexual abuse by the time they reached 17 years.

Reading through a number of tweets bearing testimony to the high sexual violence levels in our society, one tweet stands out as most pertinent to this review<sup>4</sup>:

That little girl that was raped at 15 is doing well, I look myself in the mirror and smile, I've worked so hard to be where I am today. #1in3

This ability to adapt positively in the face of adversity has been the focus of resilience research for the past four decades.<sup>5</sup> Resilience researchers address the question of why and how some people do well in spite of significant adversity. This review begins with a similar

question, but is distinguished by its specific focus on adolescent girls who have experienced CSA.

Extant literature<sup>2,6,7</sup> suggests that CSA is associated with a number of adverse psychological and behavioural consequences for survivors throughout their lifetime. Depression, substance abuse, eating disorders, dissociation, somatisation, anxiety disorders, post-traumatic stress disorder, psychotic and schizophrenic disorders, and suicidal ideation are among the mental health sequelae linked to CSA.<sup>8-12</sup> CSA has also been correlated with interpersonal, relationship and sexual difficulties.<sup>6,9,13,14</sup> Despite this literature and as evidenced in the tweet above, the impact of CSA is variable; research shows that not all individuals who have experienced CSA develop post-traumatic stress disorder or other psychiatric and behavioural problems.<sup>9,15-17</sup> Some research suggests that less than one fifth of CSA survivors show symptoms of serious psychopathology.<sup>18,19</sup>

Given the high prevalence of sexual violence globally, augmented insights into the resilience processes that buffer the impacts of CSA are particularly relevant. Greater insight into resilience processes potentiates an enhanced understanding of how best to support youth who are at risk for negative developmental outcomes.<sup>20</sup> A cursory review of scholarly research suggests a profusion of studies on sexual violence, its determinants and its impact for survivors.<sup>2,3,6-9</sup> Although Phasha<sup>21</sup> and Resnick et al.<sup>12</sup> point out that much of this enquiry has overlooked issues pertaining to resilience, internationally there is a growing body of primary studies that focus on resilience in the aftermath of CSA<sup>16</sup>. This development is encouraging given the contribution that these insights can make to specialised clinical services and theoretically supported interventions with CSA survivors. This burgeoning interest has also resulted in a limited number of reviews.<sup>16,17,22</sup> None of these reviews has, however, focused specifically on resilience processes in adolescent girls who have survived

CSA. The reviews by Domhardt et al.<sup>17</sup> and Marriot et al.<sup>16</sup> included men and women of all ages, whilst Lekganya's<sup>22</sup> systematic review focused on studies with adult women. Masten and Wright<sup>23</sup> posit that a developmental perspective is necessary when understanding risk and resilience processes; exposure to risks varies with development, as does the individual's processing of the event. Similarly, Supkoff et al.<sup>24</sup> suggest that resilience is a developmental process. An individual may be resilient in one developmental period, but not in another. For example, DuMont et al.<sup>25</sup> found that resilience decreased by about 18% between adolescence and young adulthood, giving credence to the dynamic nature of resilience processes. Thus, an individual demonstrating resilience in adulthood may not necessarily confirm or explain resilience processes during adolescence.

The need to focus only on adolescent girls' experiences stems from research that talks to the role that gender plays in both increasing girls' vulnerability to sexual assault and the buffering effect it may have in enabling resilience. Research shows that while both girls and boys are at risk of sexual abuse, girls are more vulnerable.<sup>26</sup> Patriarchal constructions of masculinity, gender roles assigned to women, social inequality, cultural and parenting practices, and inadequate legal systems increase women's and girls' vulnerability to abuse and also impact their help-seeking behaviour and recovery processes.<sup>27-29</sup> Conversely, Jefferis<sup>30</sup> adds that while girls may be at higher risk, cultural and contextual factors may also enable strength uniquely for girls. Hirani et al.<sup>31</sup> assert that gendered understandings of resilience are necessary as gender roles interact with social and environmental factors to differentially influence how men and women experience and respond to adversity.

Our primary aims in this scoping review are thus to assess the breadth of empirical studies that focus on the resilience of adolescent girls who experienced CSA and to distil the resilience-enabling processes that are common across these studies. Consequently, we

consider how findings relating to what enables resilience may be used to inform interventions with adolescent survivors of CSA. We also consider how findings can be used to inform research practices (e.g. choice of research methodologies) within this field and population.

### **Understanding resilience processes**

Although the prevailing critiques of resilience studies often cite the lack of definitional consistency, resilience broadly refers to a process of positive adaptation in the context of severe adversity.<sup>23,32,33</sup> This definition infers that resilience is an interactive process, with two critical aspects present: significant adversity and positive adaptation following exposure to adversity.<sup>34,35</sup> Rutter<sup>36</sup> urges attention to understanding which resources and processes are crucial for adaptation in a given developmental period and/or particular context. This emphasis relates to resilience being a dynamic process. Put differently, resilience is not a single or static individual quality; instead resilience is a process that varies relative to the type of adversity, contextual variables and developmental phase.<sup>35,37</sup>

The reference to ‘dynamic’ processes also points to the current ecological systems (also called ‘social ecological’ – see Ungar<sup>38</sup>) understanding of resilience. A social ecological understanding of resilience frames the review that we report in this article. This understanding sees individuals as embedded in dynamic ecological systems that enable positive adaptation.<sup>30,38</sup> Resilience is, thus, defined as the mutually constructive relationship between an individual and his/her ecological system.<sup>38</sup> This reciprocity tasks the individual’s social environment to make resilience-enabling resources available, while the individual is simultaneously tasked with moving towards these resources and using them effectively.<sup>39</sup>

Four decades of research has identified universally occurring protective mechanisms that appear to inform resilience.<sup>23,40</sup> Masten<sup>41</sup> suggests that these mechanisms reflect adaptive

systems that have been influenced by biological and cultural evolution. They go beyond the individual into other social and cultural systems. This underscores the importance of the environment reiterated by other resilience researchers<sup>42-43</sup> and references the social ecological context to which Ungar<sup>44</sup> speaks.

Masten<sup>41(p.6)</sup> refers to these mechanisms as ‘the short list’. This list (itemised below) draws on qualities of the individual and the social ecology.<sup>23</sup> As summarised by Masten<sup>41,45</sup> and Masten and Wright<sup>23</sup>, fundamental adaptive systems include:

- attachment relationships and social support that provide capable, responsive caregiving (in adolescence, this support may take the form of close peer relationships);
- problem-solving and the presence of adequate cognitive abilities that allow adequate information processing (resilience does not require exceptional intelligence, but rather the ability to determine what is happening and what to do<sup>23</sup>);
- self-regulation skills that allow for the employment of effective emotional and behavioural regulation strategies;
- agency, mastery and self-efficacy, including a positive sense of self, the presence of self-confidence, the motivation to do something differently to succeed, and a sense of control of the environment;
- meaning making (the ability to find meaning or purpose in all experiences), and hope for a better future, justice or better afterlife;
- the influence of culture, traditions and religion as captured in the presence of protective factors such as faith and traditional and cultural belief systems that assign meaning to experiences. Affiliation with religious communities may also provide support and assistance.

Although the above recur in accounts of resilience, Rutter<sup>36</sup> cautions that the optimal

clinical facilitation of the above protective processes requires an understanding of how the type of adversity, context and/or developmental stage alters their impact and meaningfulness. Thus, to address what is known and not known about how the above resilience processes inform the resilience of adolescent girls who have experienced CSA, we opted for a scoping review of the current literature. We used the above shortlist to structure the findings.

## **Methodology**

### **The scoping review**

Scoping reviews have gained increasing popularity as a way of synthesising research findings<sup>46,47</sup> and are broadly a way of determining the research available on a specific topic<sup>48</sup>. Specifically, they are a form of knowledge synthesis that involves mapping existing literature to get a sense of the breadth and depth of a particular research area.<sup>47,49-51</sup> Scoping reviews are typically undertaken to examine the extent, range and nature of the research activity; determine the feasibility of undertaking a full systematic review; summarise and disseminate research findings; and identify gaps in the existing literature.<sup>49</sup> As detailed in the introduction, our review matches the aforementioned given the intention to synthesise what is currently known about the resilience processes of adolescent girls who have experienced CSA. This type of scoping review does not stop at the point of summarisation and dissemination of findings, but goes further to try and draw intervention- and research-related conclusions from the existing literature.<sup>49</sup>

In keeping with the iterative nature of scoping reviews<sup>49</sup>, our scoping review took place in two phases. Whereas scoping reviews generally begin with a broader, less focused research question which may then be refined, ours began with too narrow a research question. Initially, the focus was only on qualitative and mixed-methods studies of resilience processes in sexually abused adolescent girls. This first phase was implemented between August 2015

and December 2015. However, after recognising the relative dearth of qualitative studies, we expanded the study scope to include a wider range of study designs, leading to Phase Two (February 2016 to August 2016). Phase Two included qualitative, quantitative and mixed-methods studies of resilience processes in sexually abused adolescent girls. In both phases, the same search terms and search engines were used. Keywords entered and included in the title and abstract were: (1) resilience OR resilient OR resiliency OR functional outcomes OR positive adjustment OR protective factors AND (2) sexual violence OR rape OR child sexual abuse OR sexual molestation OR sexual assault AND (3) adolescent girls OR girls OR young women. While this inverted process was time-consuming, it allowed for a more comprehensive sense of the existing literature.

Arksey and O'Malley's<sup>49</sup> iterative five-stage model guided this review (Table 1). Where appropriate, the recommendations made by Levac et al.<sup>47</sup> were included. The sections below offer a description of these stages as incorporated in this review.

*Table 1:* Arksey and O'Malley's<sup>49</sup> five stage model

<b>Step</b>	<b>Description of step</b>
1. Identify the research question	Identify the research question to guide the next stages.  Important facets or aspects of the question must be clearly defined, as they have implications for the search strategy used.
2. Identify relevant studies	Identify relevant studies by determining search terms, sources, and language. Levac et al. <sup>47</sup> assert that comprehensiveness and breadth are important in this process. Sources may include electronic databases, university repositories, reference lists and organisational reports.

3. Select studies	Identify <i>post hoc</i> inclusion and exclusion criteria, which can be determined by increased familiarity with the literature.
4. Chart data	Develop a mechanism, such as a data charting form, to sort through material according to key issues and themes. A descriptive analytical method or narrative review may be used to obtain process-oriented or contextual information.
5. Collate, report and summarise data	Provide a literature overview, for which an analytic framework or thematic construction is needed. Often, a numerical analysis of the extent and nature of studies and a thematic analysis are presented.
6. Consult with stakeholders (optional)	Invite key stakeholders to suggest additional resources/references and provide additional insights that may not be accessible through the literature review.

### Identifying the research question

This scoping activity sought to explore factors promoting resilience in adolescent girls who had experienced CSA. The research question thus focuses on adolescents as opposed to adults or young children, on girls as opposed to women or men, and on sexual abuse and not on other forms of abuse.

### Identifying relevant studies

Scoping studies requires transparency and rigour, which are ensured through the comprehensiveness of the data search.<sup>49</sup> To achieve this comprehensiveness, we searched a number of different sources: electronic databases, reference lists, university repositories, an online social networking research site, and organisational reports. To ensure access to the

correct search engine, we consulted a librarian at North-West University, who provided suggestions regarding keyword combinations and the most comprehensive database to access.

Levac et al.<sup>47</sup> suggest that while comprehensiveness and rigour are important, researchers must be cognisant of practicalities such as time, personnel, and budget constraints. Given the reality of these constraints in our review, we established the following inclusion criteria:

- The study was reported in English.
- The study was a primary study. Theoretical overviews, literature syntheses and studies describing therapeutic interventions were excluded.
- The study population comprised only adolescent girls between the ages of 13 and 19 or where the mean age of the sample was below 20 years. The rationale for limiting the review to adolescent girls' resilience processes has been discussed above. Essentially, we concur that gender adds a layer of complexity to resilience processes<sup>30</sup> and as a dynamic process, resilience is subject to change over an individual's lifespan<sup>25,52,53</sup>.
- The study focused on resilience processes in girls who had experienced one or more incidents of CSA. We assumed that the authors of each study had adhered to the expectation that resilience studies include only participants who experience a negative event (such as CSA) as adverse and who maintain/regain functional outcomes despite the experience of adversity.<sup>54</sup> Studies covering broader incidents of maltreatment, such as neglect or physical and verbal abuse, were excluded. Some researchers<sup>55</sup> suggest that it is important to separate different types of childhood adversity, as the association between the exposure and outcome may vary, with different maltreatment types likely to predict different outcomes.
- The study referred to resilience processes or protective factors (individual strengths *as well as* social-ecological supports found in families, communities, cultural heritage and so

forth). As indicated above, resilience was conceptualised as a social-ecological process informed by the universally occurring processes suggested by Masten and Wright<sup>23</sup>.

Studies that addressed one or more of these cardinal processes were included.

- The study was conducted between 1995 and 2016.

### **Search strategy**

Using the keywords and inclusion criteria referred to above, we identified relevant studies via OneSearch, which is a comprehensive electronic search platform that accesses multiple resources, including online resources, journals and books, in one search. Databases in OneSearch that we selected were ERIC, JSTOR, MEDLINE, PsychINFO, PsychARTICLES, ScienceDirect, Academic Search Premier and CINHAL. We also ran separate searches in Scopus, ScienceDirect, JSTOR and Web of Science.

In addition to searching electronic databases, we conducted a search of South African university repositories, including those of the Universities of Stellenbosch, Pretoria, the Western Cape, the Witwatersrand and Johannesburg. Through this process, we identified six South African dissertations. One dissertation met the inclusion criteria.

We then conducted a manual search of selected articles and literature syntheses that focused on resilience processes and were recommended by resilience researchers or emerged from the electronic search.<sup>16,17,22,30</sup> Through this process, we identified five studies; saturation was reached when no new studies were identified.<sup>49</sup>

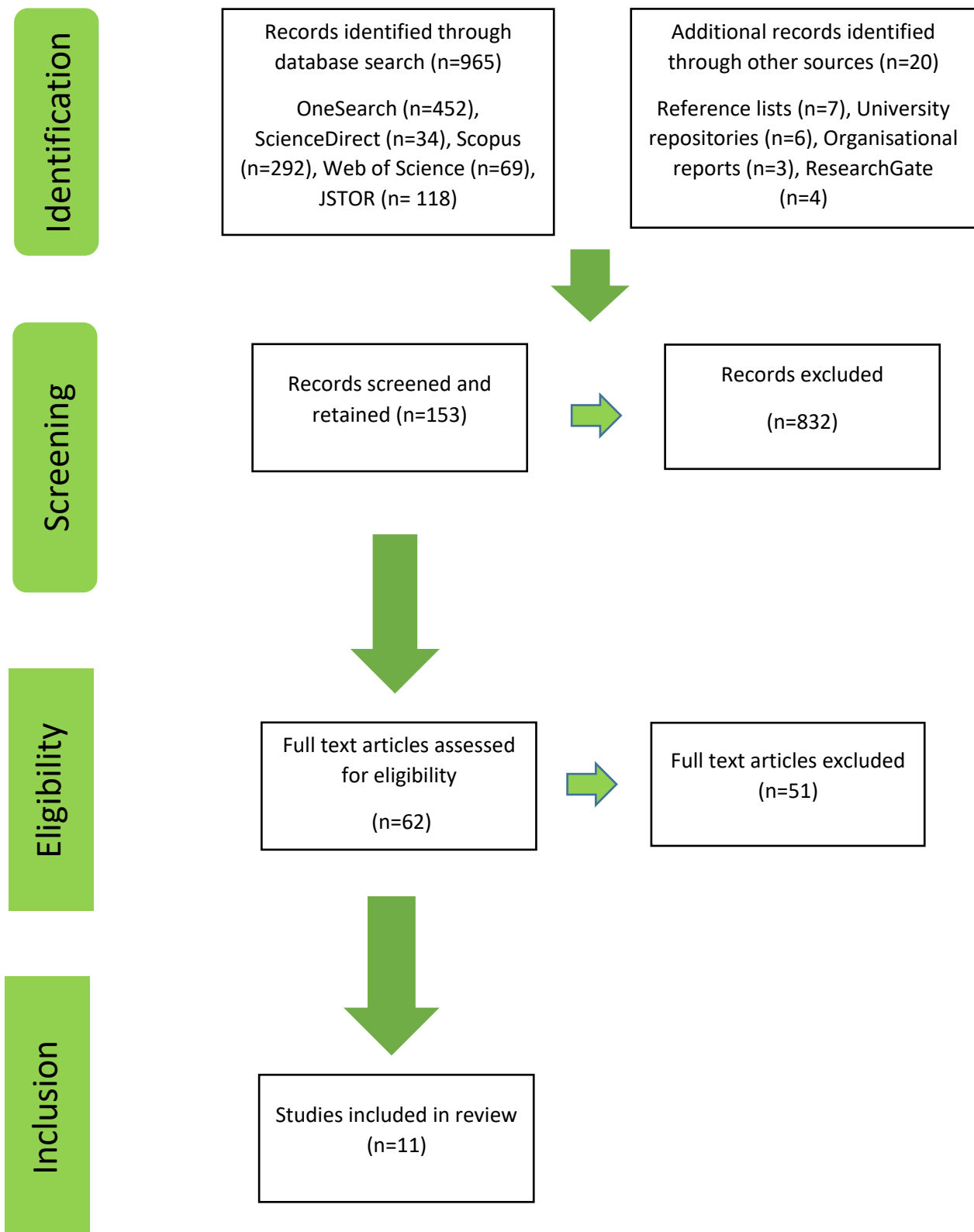
We conducted a broad Google search on sexual violence and/or resilience and identified organisations locally and internationally that conducted related research. We then looked through the organisations' outputs, identifying three studies from one organisation, none of which met the inclusion criteria.

Lastly, we accessed an online social networking research site, ResearchGate, to search for specific authors who had previously published on CSA and resilience. In this manner, we accessed two conference papers and two articles. All of these were excluded because of their inclusion of mixed gender samples.

### **Study selection**

The search generated 985 studies. Titles and abstracts were first screened against the inclusion criteria. In this process, 832 were excluded, and 153 were selected for full-text screening, of which 11 were included in this review. Articles were typically excluded because they did not report girl-specific findings. Figure 1 provides a description of the selection process.

Figure 1: Description of the selection process of studies for review



The eligibility of only a small number of studies is not surprising, given the focused nature of this review and the nature of the enquiry. As reported by Daigneault et al.<sup>56</sup>, a limited number of studies focus on resilience processes in adolescents who have experienced sexual abuse. Other more inclusive reviews of resilience processes in individuals who experienced CSA yielded more studies. For example, Marriot et al.'s<sup>16</sup> narrative literature review of resilient outcomes for people (of all ages and genders) who had experienced CSA included 50 studies, and Domhardt et al.'s<sup>17</sup> systematic review of resilience processes in survivors (men, women, all age groups) yielded 37 studies.

### **Charting the data**

On completion of the selection process, we adopted a descriptive-analytic approach to chart the data, which involved applying a standardised analytical framework to all included studies.<sup>49</sup> We recorded the following information from each of the studies:

- Author(s), year of publication and location (country) of the study
- Source type
- Study population
- Study design/methodology
- Aim of the study
- Results/findings

Table 2 in the supplementary material offers a summary of the studies included.

### **Collating, summarising and reporting the results**

We conducted a numerical analysis of the extent and nature of the studies included. Of the 11 studies, 4 adopted a research qualitative design, 1 made use of mixed methods, and 6

were quantitative. Only one study employed a participatory approach. Studies were somewhat evenly distributed among low- and middle-income (South Africa, Sierra Leone and Uganda) and high-income (USA and Canada) countries, with five in the former<sup>18,21,57-59</sup> and six in the latter<sup>56,60-64</sup>.

In addition to the above, we used the shortlist summarised by Masten and Wright<sup>23</sup> and Masten<sup>41</sup> to deductively analyse the contents of the included studies. This shortlist (described above) formed the a priori codes with which we coded the findings sections of the studies. We summarised these findings into two broad domains for ease of understanding: individual factors and resilience-enabling ecologies. In this way, the scope of available literature, as well as key themes across the 11 studies, is summatively presented. Nevertheless, the reader is cautioned that these resilience-enabling factors function interdependently.

### **Individual Factors**

Individual factors encompass the ways in which girls contributed to their resilience trajectories by drawing on personal strengths and capabilities. Factors included their capacity to make meaning of and or reappraise the abusive event, displays of agency and self-motivation, self-efficacy, future-oriented beliefs and self-reliance.

Self-reliance and individual resources were perhaps necessary for the participants in some of the reviewed studies. For example, two studies included participants residing in a foster home/care facility<sup>57,62</sup>, two included girls who were referred to child protection services, indicating multiple risks in the family<sup>56,61</sup>, and two included African girls in post-war contexts<sup>58,59</sup>, again suggesting multiple risk factors and disrupted family and community structures, with traditionally supportive environments (such as families) absent.

**Opportunities for meaning making, self-regulation and self-efficacy.**

Included studies suggested that when girls were able to find meaning, they had less negative appraisals and thought about the abuse experiences differently, thereby minimising their significance and consequently adjusting in more positive ways.<sup>18,21,56,64</sup>

Collings's<sup>18</sup> findings associated resilience processes with appraisal of the sexual abuse as either positive or negative, with negative appraisals suggestive of greater psychopathology. In Daigneault et al.'s<sup>56</sup> study, the ability to make meaning and to integrate memory and affect was a protective factor linked to disclosure; thus, girls who chose to disclose abuse experiences to a greater number of people had higher scores on meaning making and integration. Their study<sup>56</sup> highlights the significance of disclosure for positive reframing and meaning making in the context of supportive relationships; girls were able to form and maintain relationships with people to whom they had disclosed. At follow-up with a sample of participants in this study<sup>56</sup>, symptom relief and improved resilience were found to be associated with participants' ability to feel and think about the incident differently<sup>61</sup>. Also apparent were higher scores in the domains of self-esteem.

Phasha<sup>21</sup>, exploring educational resilience in the aftermath of CSA, found that the young women in her study adapted positively by making sense of their experiences of sexual violence as temporary or learning experiences devoid of self-blame. The absence of self-blaming attitudes meant that the participants were not hampered by thoughts of guilt and helplessness:

I accepted that it's in the past. I mustn't put it in my mind because it will condemn my mind.... I know I have a future even though I did go through that bad stuff ...<sup>21</sup>

Similarly, participants in Himelein and McElrath's<sup>63</sup> study also made use of positive

reframing and sought to view the incident as a learning experience or vehicle for change. This belief resulted in new feelings of strength and maturity. As in Phasha's<sup>21</sup> study, this attempt to find meaning in the adversity conveyed a sense of hope and optimism for the participants: 'Once I was able to put it aside ... it made a huge difference.'<sup>63</sup>

Self-regulation was apparent in Archer's<sup>57</sup> study; for the 16-year-old participant in her study, placement at a residential facility following sexual abuse contributed to greater independence, expressions of agency, and regulation of her behaviour. Through careful observation and interaction with the care system, she understood what actions she needed to take to manoeuvre successfully and made active choices in controlling her emotions and avoiding trouble. This ability to self-regulate translated into greater ownership of her behaviour and a less blaming attitude.

### **Optimistic future perspectives.**

Future orientated beliefs and the presence of goals and aspirations are associated with a positive perception of the world and efforts to adapt in contexts of adversity.<sup>65</sup> This factor appeared to play a role in studies of sexually abused girls as well. Edmond et al.<sup>62</sup> found the presence of optimism towards the future characteristic of the resilient girls in their study.

Likewise, participants in Phasha's<sup>21</sup> study were able to envision a future free from abuse and viewed the future positively rather than with hopelessness: 'My future is very important to me.'<sup>21</sup>

Archer<sup>57</sup> also found evidence of future planning and positive thoughts in her study. Optimistic future planning was evident in both short- and long-term plans. In the quote below, we see the ability to plan for the future, a demonstration of agency, as well as behavioural self-regulation, which highlights the interconnectedness of the various resilience-

promoting mechanisms: ‘I have a number of dreams for my future ... I must learn to control my temper better as well if I want to become an air hostess ...’<sup>57</sup>.

### **Agency and motivational mastery.**

Jefferis<sup>30</sup> refers to ‘agentic women’ when referencing women’s and girls’ displays of resolve and decision-making in the face of adversity. This display of volition was apparent in the participants in Denov and MacLure’s<sup>58</sup> study, in which girls demonstrated resilience by exercising individual agency through personal choices to actively participate or subtly resist oppressive circumstances. This suggests that, in dealing with sexual violence, girls are not merely subservient victims, but rather exhibit a capacity for independent thought and action.<sup>58</sup> In much the same way, Archer<sup>57</sup> showed that agency extended towards accessing social and legal resources, even if such consequences might be to the detriment of maternal support or material circumstances. Gilligan et al.<sup>66</sup> refer to this display of assertion as a way of children retaining a sense of themselves as independent actors and actively seeking out resources that may be of use to them.

### **Resilience-enabling Ecologies**

An ecologically grounded understanding of resilience shifts the onus of responsibility for resilience away from the child and instead focuses on the environment to facilitate and make resources available to the child.<sup>44</sup> Resources take the form of supportive family environments, peer relationships, social and cultural communities and educational systems.

### **Attachment relationships.**

Luthar<sup>67</sup> maintains that relationships are central to resilience processes. The significance of relationships is corroborated in a qualitative synthesis of resilience mechanisms in girls:

Jefferis<sup>30</sup> found that, out of the 38 included studies, every study referred to the presence of a constructive relational context that included positive relationships with other people, spiritual beings or other animals. This finding is further evidenced in this review, with supportive attachment systems emerging as a resilience enabler in 7 of the 11 studies reviewed.

Aspelmeier et al.<sup>60</sup> caution that attachment does not completely ameliorate negative CSA outcomes, although it does offer some protection. Findings from Spaccerelli and Kim<sup>64</sup> corroborate this statement, with results showing that the presence of supportive parents was related to average or above average social competence and appeared to play an important role in maintaining school performance, activities and peer relationships after the abuse. Here parental support was associated with the ability to appraise the incident in a less negative way. In Archer<sup>57</sup>, maternal support was linked to the adolescent's sense of identity. Stark et al.<sup>59</sup> also found that maternal support was a protective factor against stigma associated with sexual abuse: 'My mother tells me not to worry. She comforts me.'<sup>59</sup>

These supportive relationships were not limited to parents, but also extended to peers and other sources of support. Denov and MacLure<sup>58</sup> found that the girls in their study often relied on other girls in similar situations or older women who had experienced similar difficulties and who were, thus, able to share information and guide them. This sense of solidarity eased the difficulties they encountered, and the older women created safe spaces and a sense of nurturance:

We ... started sharing our stories [of rape] ... I felt much better after this because I thought that I was the only one to have this happen ... the older women helped me.<sup>58</sup>

The significance of peer relationships during adolescence is widely accepted in

developmental literature. The studies included echo the importance of these relationships, with exposure to less negative peer behaviour associated with resilience.<sup>62</sup> Stark et al.<sup>59</sup> reported that girls drew on close friends to help mitigate stigma. Aspelmeier et al.<sup>60</sup> found that higher levels of secure peer attachment/relationships, determined by perceived quality of communication, were related to lower levels of self-related trauma symptoms among CSA survivors. In both Archer's<sup>57</sup> and Phasha's<sup>21</sup> studies, this circle of support was broadened, with participants seeking support and assistance from teachers, friends, social workers and police officers.

The role of supportive environments did not appear limited to offering nurturing and encouragement; in Stark et al.<sup>59</sup>, parents and other community members, such as officials and police officers, played a role in negotiating some form of justice. While this role may have implied that the participants might be 'powerless'<sup>59(p.222)</sup> in negotiating their own fate in certain circumstances, in other circumstances, it pointed to girls' agency in understanding how legal systems worked and how they could afford protection. For example, the participant in Archer's<sup>57</sup> study understood early on that reporting abuse would mean removal from her home. While separation from the non-offending parent was difficult, she also understood that such separation offered protection. Both scenarios highlight the possibilities that supportive ecologies hold in these contexts.

### **Cultural and religious traditions.**

Two of the South African studies included found evidence of the protective impact of religious beliefs on sexually abused adolescent girls. Phasha<sup>21</sup> found that African girls often made meaning of CSA by understanding it as God's will and not their personal responsibility. Phasha linked this belief, which acted as a source of strength and a way to acceptance, to African child-rearing practices being deeply entrenched in religious beliefs and

understandings.

In Archer's<sup>57</sup> study, the belief in a higher being allowed for greater meaning making and acceptance; the participant's belief in God and regular church and spiritual group attendance assisted her in forgiving those whom she perceived as complicit in the abuse.

Spiritual attributions or meaning making, which included beliefs in 'white magic' and 'spirits', were also noted in a Canadian sample<sup>61</sup>; however, this finding was specific to the Haitian youth in that sample. The researchers viewed this finding cautiously, given the test instrument's limited cultural sensitivity.

### **Social, community and educational systems.**

The importance of school contexts and education was highlighted in three studies.<sup>21,57,62</sup> Educational success, engagement in school systems, and certainty regarding educational futures were noted. Phasha<sup>21</sup> explained the desire for educational success and commitment to schooling for the girls in her study in terms of racial and ethnic identity. Phasha<sup>21</sup> maintains that self-knowledge and self-regard – processes that partially stemmed from a positive racial identity and a strong sense of ethnic identity – allowed African participants to overcome adversity. These beliefs grew, in part, because of apartheid policies of discrimination and, simultaneously, conveyed the importance of education as a vehicle to a better future. In Archer's<sup>57</sup> study, getting involved in educational and recreational activities provided a sense of belonging and success, bolstering feelings of confidence and self-esteem.

Edmond et al.<sup>62</sup> showed that girls with a resilient trajectory appeared to skip school less frequently, were less likely to get into fights at school, and appeared to have a greater sense of certainty regarding their educational futures than did the comparison sample of symptomatic girls. Approximately 88% of participants with resilient trajectories indicated

that they were very sure of their high school plans, with three out of four planning on going to college.<sup>62</sup> Findings in this study were reinforced in that participants also scored higher on the future orientation scale, suggesting a more positive view of their futures thereby associating education with a better future.

### **Discussion**

Our aim in conducting this scoping review was to examine and understand what was known globally about resilience processes in sexually abused adolescent girls as well as how this insight may be used to inform clinical practice, intervention and research. A review of the 11 studies included suggests a correlation with protective factors identified in the broader literature on resilience processes in youth. Furthermore, we note the presence of internal and contextual factors that function interdependently to enable resilience in sexually abused adolescent girls. What is novel about these findings is that they are the first to offer an overview of the resilience processes that support adolescent girls from Global South and North contexts to adjust well following CSA.

Taking heed of Levac et al.'s<sup>47</sup> counsel to reviewers to consider the implications of the results and what they may mean for 'research, policy and practice', we consider what the findings from this review imply for resilience researchers and practitioners working with sexually abused girls.

### **Implications for Practice**

Findings from the review highlight possible points at which practitioners (e.g. psychologists, social workers, child care workers and health workers) may act in order to leverage resilience-enabling practice. These actions include assisting girls in the development of meaningful narratives about their abuse experiences; greater consultation with, and

inclusion of, affected girls in planning of interventions; challenging of social and cultural norms; and eliciting and encouraging greater involvement from supportive structures.

The findings suggest that adolescent girls themselves are resourceful and display agency in responding to sexual abuse. Cognitive reappraisals and positive reframing of the incident impacted feelings of self-efficacy and allowed some to minimise the impact CSA had on them and their futures; these girls were, thus, able to view the future optimistically. Opportunities for intervention in fostering resilience are thus apparent: without minimising the experience, girls can be assisted to develop a meaningful narrative of the abuse and to envisage a future.<sup>56</sup> Collings<sup>18</sup> suggests that cognitive appraisals can be altered; thus, employing cognitive change strategies holds promise in interventions with this group.

Denov and MacLure<sup>58</sup> also draw on their findings of agency demonstrated by participants to recommend that interventions acknowledge the volition of adolescent girls and intervene in ways whereby the voices and perspectives of youth are elicited and incorporated in intervention programmes. Interventions should provide opportunities for girls' 'demonstrable capacity of thought and action' to be acknowledged.<sup>58(p.82)</sup>

We found strong evidence of the role of attachment relationships in enabling resilience trajectories, beginning with supportive parents and extending to enabling community members, highlighting the importance of these structures. In contrast, Stark et al.<sup>59</sup> reported that while social networks appeared to be vital in offering support and promoting psychosocial recovery in the aftermath of abuse, such networks did not consistently respond positively to the needs of the adolescent girls. In some instances, girls were stigmatised, blamed or socially excluded by family and community members because of the sexual abuse; in these instances, social ecologies impeded recovery processes.<sup>59</sup> Jefferis<sup>30</sup> also notes that social, cultural and community norms around gender roles – which value women's and girls'

submissiveness and prioritise roles of caretaking – sometimes act to the detriment of resilience processes for girls and women. Stark et al.<sup>59</sup>, speaking to their findings on the role of stigma and shame, recommend that interventions address destructive social norms that perpetuate stigma. Thus, interventions aimed at adolescent girls who have experienced CSA should take cognisance of the potential and risks that social ecologies, such as families and communities, present.

### **Implications for Future Research**

What is apparent from this review is the paucity of research focusing on resilience processes in sexually abused adolescent girls. After a thorough search strategy using multiple databases, only 11 exclusive studies were identified. To date, studies on resilience processes in youth have usually incorporated different forms of adversity, seldom focusing on only one risk factor. Furthermore, resilience studies with children and youth often include both male and female participants. As discussed earlier, gender adds a layer of complexity to resilience processes; gender roles, societal norms and contextual factors impact how men and women experience and respond to stressors.<sup>67</sup> Where resilience processes were examined specifically in relation to sexual abuse, participants were often adult women and not adolescent girls. This finding suggests a need for further explorations of resilience processes specific to sexually abused adolescent girls. Limited understanding of resilience processes in this group may result in interventions that are not gender and/or developmentally sensitive, lack coherence for adolescent girls, and may be ineffective.

Although our review revealed a complementary mix of both qualitative and quantitative studies, there was an absence of child-centred participatory approaches. Only one of the included studies<sup>58</sup> engaged girls as co-researchers. This decision was motivated by their belief that the inclusion of girls as co-researchers would enhance the richness of the

discussion and thus the quality of data. Additionally, for the researchers<sup>58</sup>, participatory methods also held the potential of involving the girls in an educational, empowering and purposeful activity. While there is value in all empirical studies on CSA and resilience processes, regardless of methodology, we add to a growing call for the inclusion of youth in research about them.<sup>62,68</sup> Alderson<sup>68</sup> asserts that youth are key sources of information about their own experiences and inclusivity results in more insightful research. Participatory methods position youth as knowledge producers. Engaging youth as knowledge producers in research has been successfully implemented in projects focused on finding solutions to social challenges, like HIV, sexual vulnerability and teenage pregnancy.<sup>69</sup> Moreover, participatory methods are youth friendly, allowing for greater accessibility and the redress of power imbalances between the researcher and the participants.<sup>70</sup> Such methods have been recommended for use in studies on both gender violence and youth resilience. Mitchell<sup>71</sup> suggests that studies focused on gender violence require methods that allow for engagement and disengagement of participants, so that participants themselves can structure the pace. Participatory approaches allow for this control. Similarly, Theron<sup>72</sup> suggests that qualitative approaches that embrace creative, innovative data collection techniques result in more comprehensive understandings of youth resilience processes.

What the discussion above has reinforced is that CSA survivors are not passive victims acting without agency; they are capable of reflecting on and negotiating change and solutions to the difficulties they encounter.<sup>73</sup> Participatory methods in particular hold the potential for enhancing this process; a participatory approach creates avenues for youth voices to be heard, encourages displays of agency and provides a platform for empowerment.<sup>74</sup>

Given the possibilities that participatory approaches present in terms of richer, more in-depth understandings generated by engaged youth themselves and their suitability for use

specifically with sexually abused girls in terms of potentiating agency, it appears that researchers need to consider these approaches when exploring resilience processes.

### **Conclusion**

This scoping review closely mirrored the first five steps outlined by Arksey and O'Malley<sup>49</sup>, and while constrained by the limited number of studies available, it provided valuable insight into the resilience processes of sexually abused adolescent girls. The omission of the optional final step (consultation with key stakeholders to provide additional information and insight) described by Arksey and O'Malley<sup>49</sup> presents a limitation. It is possible that such a dialogue could have provided further knowledge regarding enabling processes and added insight into how this knowledge could be disseminated and translated into practice. Notwithstanding this possibility, the coherence of these findings with the shortlist summarised by Masten and Wright<sup>23</sup> is compelling and, following Rutter<sup>36</sup>, adds developmental- and risk-specific knowledge to the body of literature on resilience processes. The greater contribution of the findings is in the possibilities they offer for practitioners and researchers to exact change in adolescent girls' recovery processes and enhance the field of resilience studies in youth.

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Table 2: Summary of included studies

Table 2: Summary of selected studies

Author/study	Source type	Country	Study population: • Number of participants • Gender and age • Ethnicity	Aim	Methodology: Type of design	Resilience-enabling process/protective systems
Archer <sup>1</sup>	MA dissertation	South Africa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <math>n = 1</math></li> <li>• Girl; 16 years old</li> <li>• White South African</li> </ul>	To explore resilience phenomenon with a South African child survivor of sexual abuse.	Qualitative □ In-depth narrative interviews	Belief in self/agency Spirituality and faith, belief in God Future planning Education Engaging in activities, like sports
Aspelmeier et al. <sup>2</sup>	Journal article	USA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <math>n = 324</math></li> <li>• Young women; 18–21 years old</li> <li>• Mixed ethnicity</li> </ul>	To examine if attachment serves as a moderator in child sexual abuse (CSA) for psychopathology.	Quantitative □ Standardised questionnaires	Attachment security in adult, peer and parental relationships
Collings <sup>3</sup>	Journal article	South Africa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <math>n = 223</math></li> <li>• Young women; mean age = 19.9 years</li> <li>• Mixed ethnicity</li> </ul>	To examine resilience in longterm effects of child sexual abuse.	Quantitative □ Standardised questionnaires	Meaning making: cognitive appraisal of the abuse

Daigneault et al. <sup>4</sup>	Journal article	Canada	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>n</i> = 30</li> <li>• Girls; 13–17 years old</li> <li>• Mixed ethnicity</li> </ul>	To describe the multiple expressions of resilience and trauma in a sample of sexually abused adolescents and to look at the relationship between a number of risk and protective factors and the differences in CSA outcome as measured by a standardised instrument.	Quantitative <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clinical interviews using standardised tests, including the MTRR-99</li> <li>• Document review</li> </ul>	Presence of symptoms as well as resilience High meaning making and high integration of memory and affect associated with disclosure and associated with the ability to maintain relationships
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Author/study	Source type	Country	Study population: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of participants</li> <li>• Gender and age</li> <li>• Ethnicity</li> </ul>	Aim	Methodology: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Type of design</li> </ul>	Resilience-enabling process/protective systems
Daigneault et al. <sup>5</sup>	Journal article	Canada	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>n</i> = 16</li> <li>• Girls; 13–17 years old</li> <li>• Mixed ethnicity</li> </ul>	To investigate ways to assess complex traumatic adaptations to CSA and explore recovery status and symptomology in a 1-year follow up of sexually abused girls in child protection services (follow up to Daigneault et al.)	Quantitative 1-year follow-up study <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clinical interviews using standardised tests</li> <li>• Document review</li> </ul>	Greater integration of meaning at follow up. Increase in domains of self-esteem and self-cohesion at follow up.  Presence of spiritual/cultural attributions (among group of Haitian participants)
Denov and MacLure <sup>6</sup>	Journal article	Sierra Leone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>n</i> = 40</li> <li>• Girls; 14–21years old</li> <li>• Black African</li> </ul>	To examine the experiences of girls involved in the Sierra Leone conflict.	Qualitative <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual interviews</li> <li>• Focus groups</li> </ul>	Supportive female relationships Individual agency

Edmond et al. <sup>7</sup>	Journal article	USA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <math>n = 99</math></li> <li>• Girls; 15–18 years old</li> <li>• 58% youth of colour; 42% white</li> </ul>	To examine differences between girls in the foster care system who are identified as having resilient profiles with those who are experiencing problems.	Quantitative □ Individual structured interviews using standardised tests	Future educational plans Future orientation Peers
Himelein and McElrath <sup>8</sup>	Journal article	USA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <math>n = 20</math></li> <li>• Young women; mean age = 18.2 years</li> <li>• Mixed ethnicity (95% white)</li> </ul>	To examine cognitive strategies associated with resilience in a sample of CSA survivors.	Mixed methods • Standardised questionnaires • Face to face interviews	Cognitive illusion and reappraisals; these include disclosure and discussing, minimising impact of CSA, positive reframing and decision to move forward Support of others when disclosing
Phasha <sup>9</sup>	Journal article	South Africa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <math>n = 3</math></li> <li>• Girls; 16–23 years old</li> <li>• Black African</li> </ul>	To investigate educational resilience of black African girls who have experienced child sexual abuse.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Qualitative</li> <li>• Case studies</li> <li>• In-depth interviews</li> <li>• Focus groups</li> </ul>	Meaning making; experience viewed as temporary Lack of feelings of self-blame Importance of education and future aspirations Understanding event in terms of religion/belief in something Supportive others
Author/study	Source type	Country	Study population: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of participants</li> <li>• Gender and age</li> <li>• Ethnicity</li> </ul>	Aim	Methodology: Type of design	Resilience-enabling process/protective systems

Spaccarelli and Kim <sup>10</sup>	Journal article	USA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>n</i> = 43</li> <li>• Girls; 10–17 years old</li> <li>• Mixed ethnicity</li> </ul>	To examine correlates of resiliency.	Quantitative <input type="checkbox"/> Self-administered standardised tests	Level of abuse stressors  Parental support (specifically of nonoffending parent)
Stark et al. <sup>11</sup>	Journal article	Uganda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>n</i> = 12</li> <li>• Girls; 13–17 years old</li> </ul>	To understand experiences of a sample of adolescent survivors of sexual violence to explore the role of informal networks in contributing to healing and recovery.	Qualitative  Longitudinal <input type="checkbox"/> Interviews	Supportive family and friends in mediating against stigma and providing emotional support and fostering recovery

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### Chapter 3

Manuscript 2 titled, *'The Power of Me' - The role of agency in the resilience processes of adolescent African girls who have been sexually abused*, addresses the question, *what enables and limits resilience processes of black girls with CSA experiences?*

Prepared for: Journal of Adolescent Research (see Appendix L for author guidelines). This paper has been accepted for review.

Authors: Haffejee, S. and Theron, L.C.

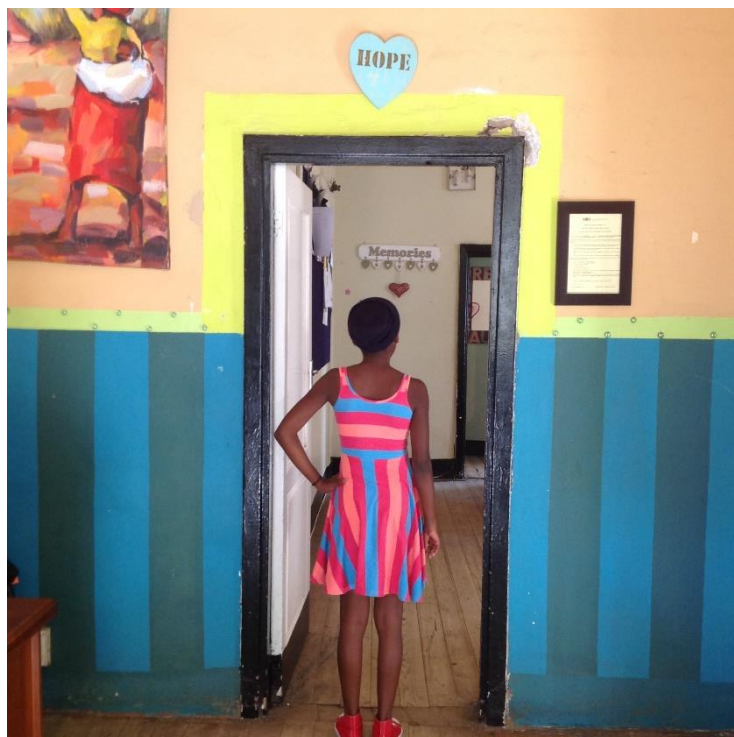


Image by participant

### Abstract

**Aims:** In this article we explore how individual expressions of agency are shaped by structural factors and exercised by black African girls with child sexual abuse (CSA) histories as they navigate resilience pathways.

**Demographics and setting:** Seven black African girls, between the ages of 15 and 18 years, with a history of child sexual abuse were purposefully recruited from two child and youth care centres in Gauteng, South Africa. Ethical clearance was obtained from the institutional review board prior to data collection.

**Methodology:** We draw on an emancipatory-critical paradigm, adopting a qualitative multiple instrumental case study design. Participants were engaged in a range of participatory methods that included participatory diagramming (timelines), digital stories, and participatory videos.

**Analysis:** Data was analysed using inductive thematic analysis.

**Findings:** Findings highlight the resourceful agentic capacity of girls with CSA experiences as well as the potential of structural contexts to be both constraining and enabling of girls' agency.

**Implications:** Multi-level interventions are essential to support and facilitate resilience enabling processes in girls with CSA experiences.

*Keywords:* Resilience, child sexual abuse, agency, visual, participatory

‘The Power of Me’ - The Role of Agency in the Resilience Processes of Adolescent African Girls who have been Sexually Abused

To date, discussions on the impact of child sexual abuse (CSA) have been dominated by the negative sequelae of sexual abuse including the framing of women and girls who have been sexually abused as victims (Hockett, 2013). From this deficit perspective, those who have experienced sexual abuse are considered passive, vulnerable, powerless, and at risk of short and long term behavioural, psychological, physical, interpersonal, sexual, and relational problems (Cashmore & Shackel, 2013; Cutajar, Mullen, Ogloff, Thomas, & Spataro, 2010; Davis & Petretic-Jackson, 2000; Irish, Kobayashi, & Delahanty, 2010; Lalor & McElvaney, 2010; Maniglio, 2009; Miron & Orcutt, 2014). In reframing this discussion, we look to research that suggests that adjusting positively after experiencing sexual abuse is possible, and we explore what enables this variability in a South African context. We contribute to scholarship that seeks to reframe the generally accepted narrative of the symptomatic victim by exploring pathways to positive adjustment navigated by adolescent African girls in the aftermath of CSA. We achieve this by drawing on the socio-ecological theory of resilience developed by Ungar (2008). From this perspective, resilience processes are activated by agentic individuals engaging with resource-giving ecologies (Ungar, 2011; Wright, Masten, & Narayan, 2013). Both the individual and the social context are tasked with this shared responsibility—the former to advocate for and accept the support of the ecology and the latter to reciprocate and/or initiate by making resources available in a culturally meaningful manner (Ungar, 2011, 2015). So, while the onus rests with the social ecology to provide resilience enabling resources to the individual, the individual is also tasked with exercising agency in navigating her way towards the resources (Ungar, 2008). Thus, of particular interest to us, given the aim of this study, is the way in which, agency, as a process of resilience, is

exercised by adolescent girls as they traverse socio-structural contexts that are both challenging and accommodating.

The concept of agency denotes an active rather than a submissive stance and refers to the capacity of individuals to act independently and shape their life circumstances and also relates to the power that an individual has at a micro level to exercise authority over her or himself and to influence her or his social ecologies (Van Breda, 2016). This conscious intentionality is pertinent to this article since we seek to shift the discourse that surrounds survivors of CSA. The ability of girls who have been sexually abused to act autonomously negates the commonly held depiction of girls as docile victims who are acted upon (Denov & MacLure, 2006; Hockett & Saucier, 2015; Schoon & Lyon-Amos, 2017). In situating this study in South Africa, we aim to contribute to contextually and culturally specific understandings of resilience in African girls who have been sexually abused. Current understandings of resilience processes acknowledge the role of cultural relativity, recognise that resilience processes are culturally embedded, and have iterated the need for scholarship to delve into how specific cultures and contexts impact on processes of resilience (Panter-Brick, 2015; Ungar, 2015). Previous studies with young Africans have demonstrated that the pathways to resilience among black African youth are strongly influenced by traditional African cultural practices as well as by historical and political realities (Theron & Donald, 2012; Theron & Phasha, 2015), so research conducted in the global North cannot serve as a frame of reference to understanding positive adaptation in African girls (Theron & Donald, 2012; Theron & Theron, 2013). However, studies that focus specifically on resilience processes in African girls with CSA experiences are limited (Phasha, 2010); a scoping review of qualitative studies on resilience in sexually abused adolescents identified only three studies from South Africa (Haffejee & Theron, 2017). In light of the above gaps and in line with current shifts in research with youth during which researchers working with young people are

encouraged to attend to, facilitate, and give voice to their (young people's) agency (Coffey & Farrugia, 2014); the necessity for this study is apparent.

### **CSA and Resilience**

While the bulk of sexual abuse literature addresses the negative impact of sexual abuse, literature refuting the inevitability of this outcome is available (Collishaw et al., 2007; McElheran et al., 2012). Studies suggest that between 10% to 53% of CSA survivor's exhibit normal levels of functioning (Domhardt, Münzer, Fegert, & Lutz, 2015). Resilience research has identified a number of factors that enable resilience processes in sexually abused adolescents. Suggested factors which may play a role in mediating the negative impact of abuse include biological, genetic, or personal factors such as the presence of coping strategies, higher self-esteem, internal locus of control, and intelligence (Collishaw et al., 2007; Mrazek & Mrazek, 1987; Nelson-Gardell, 2001; Steel, Sanna, Hammond, Whipple, & Cross, 2004; Williams & Nelson-Gardell, 2012). The systematic review of 37 articles on resilience in CSA survivors by Domhardt et al. (2015), found the presence of 8 empirically supported protective factors that facilitated positive adaptation. These included confidence with regard to academic pursuits, capacity for and increased engagement in educational activities, emotional intelligence and interpersonal competence, a greater sense of empowerment, active coping, and optimism for the future, externalisation of blame, supportive relationships with family and peers, and social attachments. In the narrative review of 50 articles by Marriot, Hamilton-Giachritsis, and Harrop (2014) the presence of internal resources that included adaptive coping skills, hardiness, attributional style, and the ability to make meaning of the incident as well as external support that included connected and supportive family relationships and friendships, along with positive educational experiences, a sense of spirituality as well as abuse-related factors like older age of onset all

had an impact on resilient outcomes. Reactions from significant others and the duration and chronicity of abuse have also been identified as contributory factors in the adjustment of survivors post CSA (Collishaw et al., 2007; Mrazek & Mrazek, 1987; Nelson-Gardell, 2001; Steel et al., 2004; Williams & Nelson-Gardell, 2012).

### **Resilience and Agency**

Emirbayer and Mische (1998) define human agency as:

“a temporally embedded process of social engagement informed by the past (in its habitual aspect), but also oriented towards the future (as a capacity to imagine alternative possibilities) and toward the present (as a capacity to contextualise past habits and future projects within the contingencies of the moment)”. (p. 963)

This definition reflects a temporal, dynamic process that makes room for changing expressions of agency across time and context where perpetual social interaction is guided by past experiences and future goals, and adequately matched to contextual circumstances (Silbereisen, Best, & Haase, 2007). Agency often emerges as an enabler of resilience (e.g., Denov & MacLure, 2006; Jefferis, 2016; Libório & Ungar, 2014). Masten (2007) describes agency as one of six universally occurring protective mechanisms, tying it in with mastery, self-efficacy, motivation, and self-confidence. These mechanisms are reflective of fundamental adaptive systems that are moulded by cultural and biological evolution and are supportive of human development (Masten, 2007, 2014; Wright et al., 2013). In Bandura’s (2005) social-cognitive theory, self-efficacy is also regarded as pivotal to personal agency. He suggests that if individuals do not believe that they have control over events that impact on them, they have little motivation to act or persevere under difficult circumstances (Bandura, 1989). Efficacious beliefs impact on individuals’ cognitive, motivational, affective,

and decisional processes and ultimately on their ability to set goals and motivate themselves as well as on how they view impediments (Bandura, 1989, 1999, 2005). Thus, individuals with high self-efficacy look at difficulties as surmountable; they do this through developing the self and through persistent resolve (Bandura, 2005).

In studies focused specifically on resilience and sexual abuse, agency also emerged as a factor that facilitated successful adaptation post sexual abuse (Gilligan, De Castro, Vanistendael, & Warburton, 2014; Phasha, 2010; Sano, 2012). Agency was exhibited in the resourceful capacity displayed by girls in the ways in which they responded to sexual abuse. This capacity to act independently appeared to be facilitated through cognitive reappraisals of the abuse experience which, in turn, impacted on self-efficacious beliefs and the ability to obtain helping relationships (Collings, 2003; Daigneault, Tourigny, & Cyr, 2004; Phasha, 2010). Gilligan et al. (2014) found that girls who are sexually abused were able to navigate challenging, and sometimes obstructive contexts to act independently; they did this by identifying and recruiting informal support networks of support such as employers or community members. In Sano's (2012) study, accounts from sexually exploited girls show that they did not passively comply with their circumstances but continually worked at taking control. Similarly, Denov and MacLure (2006) found that within the violent constraints of armed conflict where adolescent girls were subjected to sexual violence in addition to other forms of abuse, they demonstrated resilience through their capacity to act autonomously in resisting violence, and through female companionship.

While Denov and MacLure (2006, p. 81) assert that the girls' narratives "reveal a spirit of volition and a capacity for independence of action that counters a deterministic and commonly held depiction of girls as supine victims", Sano's (2012) cautions that focusing exclusively on agency obscures the impact of social structures on the options, decisions, and

actions taken by girls. Schoon (2007) echoes this by stating that while the ability of individuals to act recognises the role of individuals in shaping and forming their lives, seeing such agency as a solely individual act neglects to consider the important role of social structures.

Reflecting the significant role of structure on an individual's expression of agency is the idea of bounded agency introduced by Evans (2002). Like Emirbayer and Mische (1998), Evans (2002) also proposes that "agency is a socially situated process, shaped by experiences of the past, the chances present in the current moment and the perceptions of possible futures" (p. 262). Agency is thus considered as being bounded with constraints that are constantly present impacting on the extent to which personal goals may be accomplished (Evans, 2007; Silbereisen et al., 2007).

This concept of bounded agency has been used extensively to explain agentic processes of young people in transitional periods, specifically those seeking employment and those leaving care (Aaltonen, 2013; Evans, 2007; Munford & Sanders, 2015; Schoon, 2007; Titma, Tuma, & Roots, 2007). To our knowledge, however, this concept of bounded agency has not been used to explain agentic processes in girls with CSA experiences. Given, however, that bounded agency describes processes employed by youth in situations marked by extreme adversity and refers to the ways in which marginalised young people have voice and control over circumstances in which there are limited options and resources, it may be meaningfully employed as a frame to help understand resilience processes of girls in residential care who have been sexually abused (Munford & Sanders, 2015). Munford and Sanders (2015) suggest that for young people in foster care who have been exposed to considerable social and emotional problems, a lack of family support, responsibility to care for siblings, as well as engagement with social services, a sense of bounded agency is apparent.

## Methodology

To facilitate a more nuanced in-depth understanding of the reciprocal role of agency and socio-structural structures in enabling or disabling resilience processes we drew on an emancipatory-critical paradigm (Mash, 2014; Mertens, 2007; Swart & Bowman, 2007) and adopted a qualitative case study design (Creswell, 2009; Stake, 2005). This paradigm's assertion that knowledge and reality are bound to power structures within social ecologies resonates with our acknowledgment of the influence of structural factors on resilience processes. To gather data, following Jackson (2012) and Mitchell (2011a), we employed a range of complementary visual participatory methods that included participatory diagramming, digital stories, and participatory video.

Our decision to profile the voices of young people in a participatory, collaborative manner is based on a premise that youth are expert informers on their own processes and are able to contribute to the richness of the data. We recognised that participation would provide adolescent girls in our study with opportunities for self-reflection and meaning making that may be therapeutic, educational, and empowering (Denov & MacLure, 2006; Liebenberg, 2009; Mitchell, De Lange, Stuart, Moletsane, & Buthelezi, 2007)

### **Study Context: CSA in South Africa**

The extent of CSA in South Africa is pervasive (Mathews, Hendricks, & Abrahams, 2016). A review of African studies found a prevalence rate for CSA to be between 1.6% and 77.7% (Meink, Cluver, Boyes, & Mhlongo, 2015). Variations in prevalence rates may be attributed to the lack of definitional consistency, varying forms of reporting, and different measurement samples (Dartnell & Jewkes, 2013; Paolucci, Genuis, & Violato, 2001). In South Africa, as is the case globally, there appears to be a lack of congruence between official reported incidents of CSA and rates of CSA that are self-reported retrospectively by

youth (Collin-Vézina, Daigneault, & Hebert, 2013; Institute for Security Studies [ISS], 2014). In South Africa it is estimated that only one in nine cases of sexual abuse is reported (ISS, 2014).

While both girls and boys are vulnerable to CSA, girls appear to be at greater risk (Dartnell & Jewkes, 2013). Perpetrators are primarily male and frequently known to the victims, either a trusted family member or community member (Dartnell & Jewkes, 2013; Delaney, 2005; Lalor & McElvaney, 2010; Vetten et al., 2008). Meinck et al. (2015) found that in African countries CSA is strongly correlated with single parent households, living with step-parents, domestic violence, substance abuse in families, and poor mental health. Research suggests that in South Africa vulnerability to CSA is heightened by patriarchal constructions of masculinity, poverty, social inequality, traditional leadership, cultural practices, parenting practices, normalisation of violence in homes, and inadequate legal systems (ISS, 2014; Jewkes, Sikweyiya, Morrell, & Dunkle, 2010; Mathews, Loots, Sikweyiya, & Jewkes, 2012; Seedat, Van Niekerk, Jewkes, Suffla, & Ratele, 2009).

### **Participants**

Participants, aged between 13 and 19 were purposefully recruited by the first author from two child and youth care centres (CYCC). The first of these, CYCC 1, is based in the Eastern suburbs of Gauteng, South Africa, and was established in 1992 by a social worker. This CYCC currently accommodates about 160 children, both boys and girls, aged from 5 to 21 years. Children enter this CYCC through formal legal processes or voluntarily. According to this CYCC's 2014 AGM report, sexual abuse is common among girls admitted to the centre.

The second organisation (CYCC 2), was accessed on the recommendation from CYCC 1 and is situated in the greater Johannesburg district; it accommodates up to 33 girls, aged 12 to

18 years. The primary reason for referral and placement in this centre is sexual abuse. We identified these CYCC facilities as participating sites for their convenience as well as their supportive structures. The first author is a consultant therapist at CYCC 1 and this allows for ease of accessibility.<sup>v</sup> Also, because girls at these sites had access to therapeutic support and to social workers and were in a contained environment, we could ensure adequate debriefing and support.

Placement in a CYCC, while allowing for a reprieve from sexual abuse and other forms of adversity and violence, also results in separation from family and community contexts (Edmond, Auslander, Elze, & Bowland, 2006). These vulnerable young people who occupy marginal positions in society and endure sustained exposure to harmful contexts but also have engagement with social services display a form of bounded agency and tend to seek out opportunities to assert agency in different ways than do less marginalised youth (Aaltonen, 2013; Evans, 2007; Munford & Sanders, 2015). While we do not explicitly explore how placement at a CYCC impacted on the girls, we are mindful that it adds an additional layer of complexity and that placement and the events prior to placement most likely impacted on the way in which the girls exercised agency and demonstrated resilience processes.

Emulating previous studies on resilience processes and following Theron (2013), we established and consulted with an advisory panel (AP) to identify adolescent girls who were deemed resilient. The AP was made up of key role players from CYCC 1 and included social workers and child care workers. As a starting point, following Theron, Theron, and Malindi, (2013), indicators of resilience that had been established in prior studies were reviewed and adopted or adapted as was deemed applicable by the AP. Established indicators included a resilient personality which refers to an ability to communicate needs, show assertiveness and

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<sup>v</sup> None of the participants included in the study had a prior therapeutic relationship with the first author.

confidence, the ability to tolerate hardships, and a solution focused orientation; the presence of active support systems; a positive value system that is exhibited through positive behaviours and being future oriented; and an interest in education along with cognitive aptitude. These indicators were accepted by the AP but additional indicators were also suggested. These included the ability to express appropriate emotions in response to the abuse experience rather than apathy; the absence of substance (drug and alcohol) use at the time of participation; as well as demonstrating no sexually inappropriate behaviour including frequent and changing sexual partners, sexual risk taking, and making sexual advances to staff and to other children.

Using these indicators, potential participants were invited by either an independent child care worker at CYCC 1 or a social worker at CYCC 2. If they expressed an interest in the study, they were approached by the first author who once again explained the nature of the study as well as what would be required of them. If they were still willing to participate, voluntary informed consent was obtained. The first author also obtained consent from the directors at the CYCCs who were acting as legal guardians of the girls. Of the seven girls included in the final sample, four were from CYCC 1 and three from CYCC 2. One of the girls in the CYCC 1 group was referred by another participant and not by the AP because she had not disclosed her experience of sexual abuse to any staff members. All participants were in care because they have lost one or both parents and because extended family members are unable or unwilling to provide care (see Table 1 for profile of participants).

*Table 1: Profile of Participants*

Name and age of participants	History of sexual abuse and background information
Lumkah (18)	Lumkah did not know her biological mother and spent the first six years of her life with a caring step-mother. From the age of 6 until she was 16 when she left, she lived with her paternal grandparents and a stepmother. Her father died during this time. She was 10 years old when she was first abused by a cousin. The abuse was on-going and stopped only when she left. During that period she was also sexually assaulted by her grandfather and later by her uncle. She requested entry into the CYCC.
Twinky (18)	Twinky lived with her mother and siblings. Her mother was HIV positive, and died of AIDs when Twinky was approximately 11 years old. During her mother's illness and following her death she cared for three younger siblings while attending school. Twinky was raped when she was 10 years old by an unknown perpetrator and, at the time, did not disclose the incident to anyone. She requested to be moved to the CYCC.
Precious (17)	Precious's father died when she was 6. She lived with her biological mother and younger siblings. She was first raped by a known perpetrator when she was 11 years old. Though reported, the perpetrator was not charged. Her mother died when she was 13 years old and she was taken in by her maternal grandparents and extended family. Here she was physically abused by her uncle and sexually abused again on two separate occasions. She requested placement at the CYCC.
FireBall girl (17)	Fireball girl grew up with her biological mother and step-father. Her father is unknown. She describes her mother as abusive and as an alcoholic. She was sexually abused for approximately 3 months by her step-father when she was 9. Prior to her mother's death when she was 11, she was fostered by a family in the community. Later she chose to live with an aunt who later died of AIDS. She then requested that she be moved into a CYCC.
Phindile (18)	Phindile was fostered when she was a baby. The whereabouts of her mother are not known and it is believed that she has died. She has no information about her biological father. Phindile was first raped when she was 7 years old and later, when she was 11 years old, she was raped by multiple perpetrators. She requested that she be removed from her foster placement and placed in a CYCC.
Jessica (18)	Jessica lived with her biological father. She has no knowledge of her biological mother. While living with her father she was physically and verbally abused. Later when she was 16 years old she was sexually abused by him. She requested that she be placed at the CYCC.
Keamo (15)	Keamo lived with her father and step-mother. She was raped when she was 6 years old by her step-mother's father. Her father died and she was placed with extended family. However they requested that she placed in care.

## **Data Collection Procedures**

### **Step 1: Individual interviews using participatory diagramming (time lines)**

All seven participants were invited by the first author to create a timeline of significant events that they had experienced over the course of their lives and to situate the sexual abuse on this timeline. They were also encouraged to think about what or who had helped them do well during these events. The use of timelines provides a structured, non-invasive way for participants to access memories and experiences (Liebenberg & Theron, 2015). Although loose guidelines were provided, participants were encouraged to describe events, using either images or text.

### **Step 2: Summaries of narratives produced by participants and the creation of digital stories**

Digital storytelling combines traditional oral storytelling with video and computer production technology (Treffry-Goatley et al., 2016). For the digital stories, the first author invited participants to write or narrate a short story summarising key events and resilience processes discussed in step 1. Participants were also asked to include visuals like drawings, photographs, and other images to go with the narratives.

### **Step 3: Review of case files**

Case files were reviewed by the first author; this entailed perusal and analysis of case notes and documented information about the primary informant following the girls' permission to do so. At CYCC 1 all legal documents as well as process notes from social workers and other care givers are captured on an online database. Thus, for participants from this CYCC, all information uploaded since their placement there was accessible and

reviewed. At CYCC 2, hard copies of participants' files were obtained but information here was less comprehensive. Case files typically included information regarding the reason for placement at a CYCC, health records, notes on scholastic progress, legal court documents, and process notes.

#### **Step 4: Group meetings and production of participatory video (PV)**

Participants were invited by the first author to participate in a group process in which participation was voluntary. Two group sessions were held with participants. The output of these group sessions was the production of a participatory video. To assist in this process, participants were engaged in a participatory visual activity. We used the *Tree of Life* activity, which is a psychosocial tool based on principles from narrative therapy. In this activity the tree is used as a metaphor that allows participants to tell a story of their lives in a way that is not retraumatising (Ncube, 2006). The tree, along with its different components like the roots, leaves, fruit, and so on represents the individual's life and the various elements it is made up of—the past, the present, and the future (Denborough, 2008). This provided an opportunity for participants to identify strengths and enabling resources within themselves and the environment.

Drawing on the *Tree of Life* activity and the discussion that followed, participants were asked to create and film a story about how they have been able to do well in spite of the sexual abuse they have suffered. For the PV, we followed the no-editing-required (NER) process detailed by Mitchell and De Lange (2011). This uncomplicated process, easily accessible to young people, requires minimal assistance from the researcher. Participants are given a specified amount of time in which to produce the video and no editing is done. If they wish to change any aspects of the video, they need to start filming from the beginning again.

Participants were invited to reflect on the research process, as well as their outputs, upon completion of the PV.

### **Data Analysis**

Data from individual interviews, digital stories, case files, and group sessions, including visual data constituted our data set. All data was transcribed in full and subjected to multiple readings. Guiding this process was the following broad research question: What enables and limits resilience processes in girls with CSA experiences? The first author used inductive thematic analysis, as outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006) to assign codes. These initial codes were then grouped to form candidate themes and sub-themes. These were interrogated again until main themes were identified. The second author reviewed the candidate and subsequent themes and critically reviewed interpretation of the findings. An external independent coder also reviewed codes; in instances where differences were noted, these were discussed until consensus was reached.

Following Creswell (2009) trustworthiness was ensured through triangulation of data, the use of an independent co-coder as well as member checking by participants.

### **Ethics**

To proceed with our study, we first obtained ethical clearance from the university's institutional review board. Following this we gave detailed consent letters to directors at both CYCCs; as legal guardians of the participants their consent was required. Once participants were identified, they, too, were provided with detailed information and asked to sign consent letters. That participation was voluntary was verbally reiterated and participants were advised about the potential for limited anonymity, given the group process and visual activities. Following data collection all participants were required to have at least one debriefing session

with a registered mental health care professional. Participants were given copies of the transcripts to review and were also informed that they could have access to all materials produced in the study.

### **Findings**

In exploring what enables resilience processes in adolescent girls who have been sexually abused, we share findings that highlight how agency, as a process of resilience, manifests in the present. We also unpack how these agentic expressions were activated, bound, and later reciprocated and sustained by the surrounding social structures. To do so we report three themes: limiting ecologies; expressions of agency; and sustaining ecologies.

#### **Limiting Ecologies**

Accounts from all seven participants show that the sexual victimisation occurred in contexts of adversity which included, poverty, neglect, abandonment, bereavement, and other forms of abuse. Often these difficulties were magnified by structural constraints enforced by individuals in the immediate system and by larger systems.

Within these contexts, sexual abuse, when witnessed or disclosed, appeared to be minimised or completely ignored. In the cases of both Lumkah and Phindile, their sexual abuse was witnessed by family members and both incidents were ignored. Speaking of the complicity of her aunt in witnessing the sexual abuse and ignoring it, Lumkah says, “She saw everything but she defended my cousin ... then I decided to keep this to myself”. Similarly, Phindile’s foster grandmother failed to assist her when they witnessed the sexual abuse and, instead, blamed and shamed her. “One of my friend’s brother raped me and my Granny saw him and she never said anything, she said ‘mos [well] you like it’”.

In Precious's case, action following the first incident of sexual abuse was initiated after a teacher reported it. However, her mother asked her to forgive the perpetrator. The police also failed to pursue the matter and the perpetrator was released. She recalls:

After maybe one week my Mother said to me I must – I must talk to that man again then I didn't want to talk to him I hated him. Then my Mother say I must forgive him, I must forgive him.

This failure to have anyone act on her behalf resulted in Precious's decision not to disclose further incidents of abuse.

In addition to the complicity of close structural systems, additional constraints included lack of financial resources, placement at a CYCC, and separation from family. Lumkah, suffering from both physical and psychosomatic symptoms as a result of the chronic sexual abuse she endured, was referred to a psychologist. However, her uncle refused to pay so the therapy was stopped.

Six of the seven participants requested placement at a care centre although this meant moving away from the only family they had known. For Twinky, this was particularly difficult since her decision meant that she had to leave her three younger siblings whom she had cared for since her mother's death. Understanding that her siblings are at risk she has persistently tried to have them placed with her but continual delays with social services has resulted in their separation for over three years. The following excerpt from Twinky's case files reflects the way in which structural factors impact on her ability to act: "She [siblings' care giver] refused for the siblings to be moved to [shelter where Twinky is], yet her shelter is not registered. She promised to fight with any social worker who will attempt to remove the children" (Twinky, case file, dated 2015/10). A process note from her file a few months later,

highlights her continual desire to be reunited with her siblings: “She informed the social worker that she wanted her siblings to come and visit her” (Twinky case file, dated 2016/02).

### **Expressions of Agency**

In this section we present findings that show how agency is activated in part by the failures of the ecology. Inadequate responses by family members and justice systems initially resulted in an unwillingness and inability to disclose sexual abuse but later propelled all the girls into acting autonomously to deal with the abuse. Their assertions of agentic action were exercised by activating internal resilience enabling resources like belief in the self, cognitive reappraisal of the experience, and a future oriented focus.

#### **‘The Power of me’**

The title of the participatory video, “Believing in yourself” produced by the participants captures the central theme of self-efficacy and belief in oneself. For many of the girls, the constraining ecologies described previously meant that there were very few external resources that encouraged a sense of self. Instead, as Keamo said, they had to put themselves first: “I – I thought about myself ... I thought that I have to change my life and be a different person”. The girls’ own recognition of themselves as valuable fuelled a tenacious willingness to resist giving up. For instance, belief in herself helped Precious to continue persevering:

Since I grew up I never grew up in a good environment and my situation was very bad... and guys I tried, it’s been maybe it’s been two years trying to get help from the social workers from the non - organisations whatever ... it was so difficult you know sometimes I feel like taking my own life cos...when you like when you need help and people don’t help you, you feel like no one is there for you, you are all alone and all this stuff, but guys everything takes time you know...what I learnt is

you need to be patient, you need to be patient stay strong, and never give up, believe in yourself ... that's what kept me going.

Similarly, Jessica acknowledged her power and used this to persevere:

Everyone is strong in something, we all have our weaknesses and our strength, you can't say that you don't have a strength and you can't say that you don't have a weakness so use that strength of yours and come out of something. That's where we get our strength from deep within.

The image (see Figure 1) from her diary shared by Lumkah also speaks to the perseverance to move forward. Lumkah did not disclose the on-going sexual abuse perpetrated by a male cousin and then her grandfather which began when she was 10 years old, and so she chose to remove herself from the first abusive environment and later to enter a CYCC to remove herself from another abusive situation. Her belief in herself supports Lumkah's acting autonomously instead of waiting for permission to do so, thus independently deciding on the course of her life.

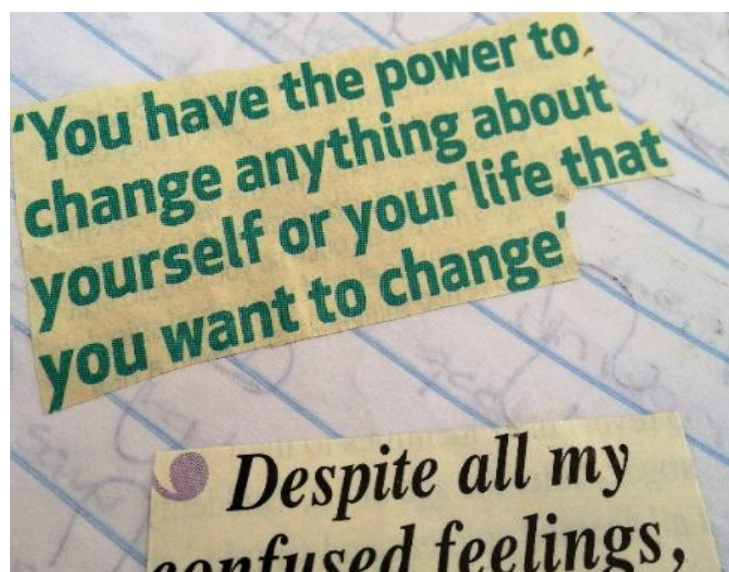


Figure 1: Image from Lumkah's diary

Like Lumkah, autonomous decisions to leave abusive and or unsafe environments was common for the majority of the participants (six of the seven girls). At approximately 12 years of age FireBall girl left the care of a foster family she perceived as unwelcoming and by herself sought out an aunt she remembered in another town. When her aunt died from AIDS she made a decision to enter a CYCC. When she did so, understanding that she had to deal with the trauma of her past and knowing that support in the form of social services as well as therapeutic services was available to her, she asked for it:

I just asked the social workers to take me to a place that would be safe for me so that I can focus on my studies and get more educated ... then I started like ... wanting to know more about myself, trying to remove that thing that I had in my heart.

#### **‘It all happened for a reason’**

The ability to cognitively reappraise the sexual abuse was present in all the girls’ attempts at making sense and understanding CSA and other adversities. FireBall girl, orphaned by an alcoholic mother and left with a step-father who sexually abused her in the months preceding her mother’s death, aptly describes her process of trying to understand and appraise the situation in which she found herself through the following internal dialogue she recounted:

I accepted that, you know I couldn’t accept that my Mother was gone at first but then I came to a point whereby I got to say ... your Mother is no more here, you’re a big girl now you have to do what’s right you know. ...So ...it also gave me that courage that okay I have to accept that my Mother is gone she won’t be there for me so I just have to carry on with life I don’t have to be stuck back ... I just had to

accept that okay this journey I'm going to take it, no matter how hard it may be for me but I just have to pick up my ... socks and just go on.

Most typically, the girls used faith-based explanations to make meaning of their experiences. Lumkah said, "I like to think that this all happened for a reason. Maybe it's a test from God, maybe it's part of my journey". For Phindile, passing such tests, as she saw them, affirmed and augmented strength. She said:

This is a challenge that God is giving us to see how strong my child is out there for the next big thing that he or she is going to pass. So you just can't have strength if God is not there you'll always be weak...

Similarly, Twinky's belief in a higher purpose sustained her. Of her experiences of sexual abuse, poverty, and death she said, "Kunesisho esithi unkulunkulu lapho athathe khona uphinde anikele futhi" (God takes but gives you more.)

### **'Rainbow after the storm'**

"Rainbow after the storm" is the title of Jessica's digital story. It captures the optimism that each of the participants displayed when thinking of their futures. All seven participants appeared to be focused on obtaining an education in order to achieve their goals. To quote Precious, "All I can say is having goals and dreams that can also help, know what you want and know what you want to achieve". In general, the girls' pursuit of success was non-negotiable, aptly illustrated by Phindile, who said, "When things go wrong I need to stand up and pick up myself I shouldn't just drag my feet". For Phindile, self-motivation is less about a choice and more about survival. Having been in foster care since she was a toddler and now in a CYCC, she suggests she learned self-reliance and self-motivation early on and that it is a

necessity. Her perseverance, and her dreams of a better future in the face of this reality is testament to this ability.

Determination to succeed appeared to serve many functions. Success would prove naysayers and abusers wrong. For instance, Jessica's motivation to succeed and her future oriented focus stems in part from her desire to prove her father wrong:

Right now I'm focusing on my studies, and it's going very well. I saw that thinking about him [father] is useless, he won't take that pride and that talent that I have. He can't take anything, not even my dignity. He only took a little bit of love that I had for him. I am motivated because I want to show him how far I came. I want him to see my prosperity. ... So ... I let my own glory shine ... making it on myself, just deciding what is it that I want in life, that's why I said what I want is just to grow up go to varsity and then I'll come around to my situation.

Success would mean greater ability to care for younger siblings and protect them from similar experiences. Twinky explained it like this:

For me to overcome all of this I was believing in myself, I have a future and a dream and I have to be an example in the community and I have to support my siblings and make my mum proud wherever she is.

### **Sustaining Ecologies**

Here we present findings that illustrate how self-initiated expressions of agency were facilitated by supportive social ecologies.

**‘She was nice... She loved me’.**

The girls’ self-reliance did not mean that they were not receptive to external support. For example, the group agreed with FireBall girl’s argument that although personal agency was important, it was not enough. She said:

Like if you don’t talk to people or try to get help it’s like you are in a dark, dark room something like that in in a in a dark corner, so if you start talking to people that’s whereby you’ll start seeing the light shining through that dark place that you are in.

All the girls could recall at least one experience of support. This included someone siding with them once they had disclosed the abuse. Lumkah’s step-mother’s positive response to her disclosure of sexual abuse and continued positive attachment appeared to keep her hopeful. She said, “My stepmom last year December she came to ... (CYCC 1), she’s the only person who’s been so supportive to me”. Similarly Twinky’s disclosure to her brother and his encouragement of her has been a positive enabling experience in that it encouraged her to persevere and his positive response also allowed her to disclose the incident to social workers and friends at the CYCC:

My brother told me that you can’t say “I am nothing without a Mum ... from now I don’t have a life; I was raped”. My brother told me that you can’t just say that. “Just pick up yourself and dust yourself and tell yourself that you know, what you can do it” and like I took those words from my brother.

For participants who did not find any support in family members, support from peers appeared to reinforce their expressions of agency by assisting them in making sense of their

abuse experiences. For them, friends provided succour from the abuse in offering emotional support and physical refuge.

For Phindile, there was "... a friend ... she was the only person I could tell my story everytime when we meet".

For Precious, while friends outside offered shelter, friends inside the CYCC assisted in her coming to terms with her abuse experience:

My close friends and they told me their stories last year. They used to talk about what happened to them ... you know so I thought that I was the only one but only to find that I'm not the only one. There are also people who been through the same thing but they still coping and they still healthy and nice. So I thought that I could forget about this thing.

All seven of the participants mentioned at least one incident where a teacher stepped in and provided practical or emotional support. For example, in offering pragmatic assistance by purchasing school stationery for her and helping her with her school work, Phindile's teacher showed an interest in her which motivated her to continue with school: "My foster parents wouldn't buy me school stuff and she was the one who'd buy me school stuff and she would help me with my work before I go home and she would drop me at home and go".

For Keamo, a school teacher provided emotional relief by introducing her to journaling through a school project; she provided Keamo with an opportunity to share some of her difficulties and make sense of her experiences (see figure 2). Keamo has continued to journal and sees it as a therapeutic resource. She says, "She was a nice teacher for me ... I was angry I would go to her and talk to her".

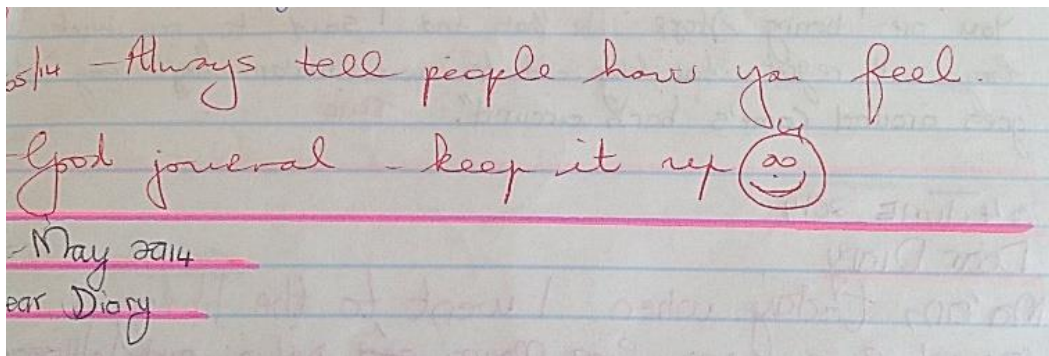


Figure 2: Extract from Keamo's journal

For FireBall girl, it was a teacher who first acknowledged her singing abilities and encouraged her to perform in front of an audience; this belief in herself led FireBall girl to audition for a music scholarship at the CYCC and has helped her to view herself positively. She recalled, "My school choir teacher used to tell me that you can, you can sing you know".

In addition to teachers, the CYCC's appear to have provided protection and, through the services and support, have facilitated positive adaptation. Case files as well as individual interviews note attendance at life-skills sessions as well as access to formal therapeutic services, like psychotherapy. These services, mostly facilitated by social workers, aimed at creating greater self-awareness, reinforce participant's attempts at meaning making and the development of self-confidence, free of shame. FireBall girl said, "Psychologist they help me to realise that everything is possible no matter how hard it is".

### Discussion

In this paper we draw on a socio-ecological understanding of resilience and, following Ungar (2011), look at the reciprocal role of agency and socio-structural resources in enabling or disabling resilience processes in adolescent girls who have been sexually abused. Our exploration of agentic processes is framed by the idea of bounded agency, a middle ground approach to understanding agency that recognises the impact of both the individual as well as

structural determinants on the capacity to take action (Coffey & Farrugia, 2014; Evans, 2007). In discussing our findings, we suggest that while both socio-ecological resilience theory and the idea of bounded agency provide a useful explanatory framework, our findings, do not fit neatly into either.

Corroborating findings from research in the area which shows young people to be “resourceful activists” (Gilligan et al., 2014, p. 23) our findings also consistently reveal that girls were not passive victims or recipients of inputs from the social ecology. Rather, they are active agents. Their activism, however, appeared to emerge partly as a result of constraining, unsupportive ecologies thus lending credence to the presumption of Silbereisen et al. (2007) that challenging times provide a “window of opportunity” (p. 75) for agentic individuals. In this finding we deviate from Ungar’s social ecological resilience theory (SERT); while locating resilience resources in the person-context interaction, in SERT the social ecology is tasked with a greater role. Ungar (2011, 2015) maintains that the individual’s own internal resources are useful only if the ecology is amenable to them and facilitates their expression and application. Ungar (2015) asserts that in contexts of greater adversity, ecological factors may be more important to resilience than individual factors. Our findings, however, suggest that in instances of great adversity, like poverty, parental death, physical abuse and neglect, and CSA, individual agentic expressions were more important to enabling resilience processes. As a response to ecologies that intentionally withheld and/or impeded access to resources (for example by ignoring evidence of abuse or failing to access justice), participants activated agentic processes through their self-efficacious beliefs, the choices they made for themselves, their capacity to cognitively reappraise the situation and make meaning, as well as their optimism for the future.

Similarly, in the context of these constraints, agency was not bound but, rather, galvanised in its deviating slightly from Evan's (2007) notion of bounded agency. While Evans (2007) holds that the persistent nature of structural constraints means that expressions of agency are bounded, allowing either fewer or more personal goals to be accomplished, our findings suggests that these constraints initially activated agency by motivating the girls to action. Constraining structures initially cut participants off from certain resources and had the potential to derail their resilience pathways. However, our participants created different opportunities for themselves in spite of these constraints by, for example, accessing alternative support from friends and their families when the primary system was unresponsive.

Once activated, these expressions were met with support from at least one person from their environment, like a believing family member, social worker or a teacher. While displays of perseverance in the face of impediments highlight how agency was championed by the participants it also highlights the role of supportive ecologies in co-facilitating this agency. In all the cases presented in this study the presence of at least one responsive individual in the social ecology who supported the girls and encouraged their agency is revealed. Without siblings who provide emotional support as with Twinky, friends who provide pragmatic and emotional support as in the cases of Phindile and Precious, teachers who encourage as with Keamo and FireBall girl, or social workers who responded as they did in all these cases resilience may not have been promoted to the extent that it was. These examples also highlight the many ways in which both formal and informal supportive structures are accessed and the importance of these in enabling resilience processes. Kumpulainen, Lipponen, Hilppo, and Mikkola (2013) suggest that supportive relationships scaffold youth's expressions of agency and Mathews et al. (2016) found that support from the social environment following sexual abuse is critical to positive adaptation. In our study, supportive

relationships were not confined to traditional nuclear families or structures but included wider networks of support (peers and teachers). Teachers appeared to play a significant role in facilitating expressions of agency in the girls by being attuned to their needs, offering pragmatic and emotional support, and by motivating them. All of the above fits with research which shows that when the immediate ecology fails to respond, girls actively seek out other support which may take the form of friends, community members, and teachers (Gilligan et al., 2014; Stark, Landis, Thomson, & Potts, 2016).

### **Conclusion and Implications**

In this article we highlight how agency as an expression of resilience was not completely bound or dependent on the social ecology and we note how girls with a CSA history selectively drew on it to support and facilitate their resilience processes. Here, individual agentic resourcefulness of girls faced with extreme adversity was more rather than less significant when compared to the resources available in the ecology.

However, while the capacity for autonomous action of girls with CSA experiences should be acknowledged and indeed celebrated, this does not pardon the structural factors that create difficulties and impede adjustment. The agentic capacity displayed by the girls was in large part a result of their being abandoned to their own fate with unjust structural factors demanding resilience of them (Hart et al., 2016). Social justice necessitates greater accountability from structural sources and there is a growing call in resilience research to challenge structures that create disadvantages (Bottrell, 2013; Hart et al., 2016; Ungar, Ghazinour, & Richter, 2013). We echo this call and, in line with Hart et al. (2016), suggest that while our study found that girls with CSA experiences display strength, resourcefulness, and capability which may be leveraged to foster positive adjustment, social structures should also be targeted for interventions. Here we concur with Ungar et al. (2013) that child focused

interventions should not be the first or only intervention option but that ideally a closer look at the multiple systems influencing the child should be considered. Luthar and Eisenberg (2017) caution that interventions should take into account “pragmatic, real-world considerations” (p. 346). We add that in these considerations, practitioners and policy makers be cognisant of the resources available across different contexts. For example, low and middle income contexts may have limited access to resources (Patel et al., 2013). In line with these considerations and based on our findings we offer the following pragmatic leverage points for initiating meaningful resilience enabling interventions with girls with a history of CSA targeting multiple systems.

At the individual level, seeing girls as resourceful and capable of independent action allows for greater engagement with and inclusion of them in the development of intervention programmes. In our study, efficacious beliefs, meaning making, and future focused orientation were pivotal internal resilience enabling resources. Efficacious beliefs impact on the individual’s cognitive, motivational, affective, and decisional processes and ultimately on their ability to set goals and motivate themselves as well as on how they view impediments (Bandura, 1989, 1999, 2005). Thus individuals with high self- efficacy look at difficulties as surmountable; they do this through developing the self and through persistent resolve (Bandura, 2005). Similarly, when girls are able to cognitively reappraise the abuse, they are able to minimise the impact it has on their lives and, if they can think of a better future, they can work towards it (Collings, 2003; Daigneault et al., 2004; Edmond et al., 2006; Phasha, 2010; Spaccarelli & Kim, 1995). Given this, intervention efforts aimed at this level should include psycho-educational and therapeutic programmes that foster a positive sense of self, and facilitate meaning making and future planning.

At a family level, our findings suggest that family systems need to be strengthened to provide adequate support for girls who are sexually abused and to ensure that disclosure is not met with apathy, blame, and disbelief. Research shows that children do not disclose to caregivers if they fear their reactions that could include rejection, disbelief, anticipated blame, or a failure to respond (Mathews et al., 2016). Family systems can be strengthened through parenting programmes, psycho-educational programmes, and family supportive counselling (Luthar & Eisenberg, 2017; Mathews & Collin-Vézina, 2016). Given the importance of the family system, Luthar and Eisenberg (2017) add that caregiver well-being should also be attended to.

Multiple leverage points exist at the institutional level; justice systems, educational systems, and social welfare systems all have a role to play. Mathews and Collin-Vézina (2016) suggest that as a starting point greater awareness and knowledge capacitation is needed about CSA—what it is, how it presents, the impact, and how to intervene. They emphasise the legal and ethical responsibility of professionals and institutional leaders to report incidences of CSA and suggest that greater public awareness of this should be facilitated through media campaigns. Additionally, based on our findings, we add that greater monitoring of the justice system is needed to ensure greater follow-through of reported cases of CSA. Social welfare systems need to be equipped with sufficient resources to ensure that children in foster care are safe from sexual abuse. The potential of the educational system, specifically teachers, in enabling resilience was apparent and has also been demonstrated in previous studies on girls' resilience (Jefferis, 2016; Jefferis & Theron, 2017). Effectively utilising this resource is necessary; teachers can be educated and supported to identify and report incidences of CSA. Within low and middle income countries, like South Africa, teachers can be equipped with basic counselling skills to better enable them to attend to the emotional needs of girls. Through pragmatic, emotional, therapeutic, and financial support,

CYCCs can also facilitate resilience processes. For girls living in care facilities, this is perhaps one of the most significant relationships and, as such, CYCCs need to be capacitated and supported financially so that they can continue to deliver much needed support.

Thus, in conclusion, findings reported in this article ask that resilience theorists, mental health practitioners and service providers acknowledge and value agency and accordingly enable and sustain agentic processes in girls with CSA experiences. They also suggest that these same stakeholders work with social ecologies to amplify meaningful supports for girls with CSA experiences. In so doing, the ‘power’ of these girls’ accounts may be expanded.

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## Chapter 4

Manuscript 3 titled, *"I'm scared of sangoma's so everything he told me to do, I did": The influence of socio-cultural factors on the resilience processes of black South African girls with a history of Child Sexual Abuse*, answers the question, *How do socio-cultural factors in South Africa enable and constrain resilience processes of black adolescent girls with CSA experiences?*

Prepared for: Journal of Black Psychology (see Appendix M for author guidelines).

An attenuated version of this manuscript has been accepted as a chapter.

Haffejee, S. & Theron. L. (2018). Contextual risk and resilience enablers in South Africa: The case of Precious. In R. Grant, & J. Sirikantraporn (Eds), *Human strengths and resilience: Developmental, cross-cultural, and international perspectives* (pp. 87-104).

London: Lexington Books

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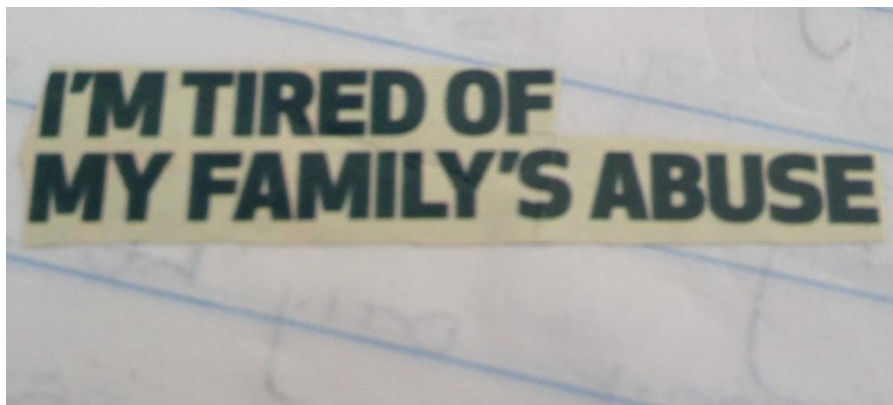


Image from participant's diary

### **Abstract**

Socio-cultural factors have an impact on resilience processes in complex ways; they are capable of both supporting such processes as well as disabling them. In this article, we explore how socio-cultural factors in South Africa enable and constrain the adaptive processes of black African girls with a history of CSA. To do this we report on the experiences of two girls, Precious and Lumkah. These cases were drawn from a qualitative, multiple, instrumental case study that included 7 participants from 2 child and youth care centres. Data was analysed using inductive thematic analysis. Findings show the ways in which traditional African traditions, encompassed by ideas of Ubuntu and respect for elders, are subverted by individual actors and used to constrain rather than enable positive adaptation in girls with CSA experiences. Findings, however, also illustrate how other systems within the social ecology, like schools and child and youth care centres, nurture resilience.

*Keywords:* socio-cultural, resilience, sexual abuse, girls

“I’m scared of sangoma’s so everything he told me to do, I did”: The Influence of Socio-Cultural Factors on the Resilience Processes of Black South African Girls with a History of Child Sexual Abuse

“Many child rapes in Diepsloot don’t get reported because children — and often adults too — think this is the way that men are meant to treat kids. Rape is a normal part of life here”, Brown Lekekela (rape counsellor), (Mapumulo, 2017)

This normalisation of child sexual abuse (CSA) in South Africa is reflected in the prevalence rate of 35.4%, deemed by Stoltenborgh, van IJzendoorn, Euser, and Bakermans-Kranenburg (2011) to be the highest in the world. However, sexual abuse is not peculiar to South Africa. CSA is a global phenomenon; general consensus holds that it presents a significant public health concern that requires urgent intervention (Dubowitz, 2017; Jewkes & Abrahams, 2002; Meinck, Cluver, & Boyes, 2015; Wekerle & Black, 2017). In spite of some universal similarities, socio-economic, cultural, and contextual factors result in differences in the way that CSA is conceptualised, accounted for, and managed. Dubowitz (2017) concurs, stating that what is and what is not considered CSA is dependent on country specific laws, cultural context as well local thresholds of acceptability. For example, in some contexts child marriages, female genital mutilation, and child trafficking are not considered as CSA in spite of the use of coercion whereas in contexts that have more encapsulating definitions of CSA, these acts are included in definitions of CSA (Wekerle & Black, 2017). Differences also extend to the ways in which individual survivors respond to CSA with some showing marked negative effects in both the short and long term, and others demonstrating the ability to adjust positively and be symptom-free. Contextual factors may determine risk factors for CSA and, equally, may also provide protective resources that mitigates against negative outcomes.

Cognisant of this complexity, we sought, in this article, to understand the adaptive processes of black South African girls with a history of CSA. Drawing on two case studies, we focus specifically on how socio-cultural factors enable and constrain resilience processes. In line with Phasha (2010) and Theron and Theron (2013), we focus on the way in which traditional African paradigms impact on such processes. In line with Theron (2013) we suggest that while traditional African culture may promote resilience post CSA, it also has the potential to be burdensome and not facilitative of resilience processes.

A review of studies focused on resilience processes in sexually abused adolescents identified only three South African studies, only one of which, Haffejee and Theron (2017a), focused specifically on black, African adolescent girls. Although a small number of international studies have focused attention on the positive adaptive processes of sexually abused adolescents, the particular political, cultural, and social landscape relevant to South Africa results, potentially, in resilience manifesting in different, more context specific ways (Theron & Phasha, 2015). By focusing on the resilience processes of black South African adolescent girls, we add to this nascent field of enquiry.

### **CSA in South Africa**

As indicated above, South Africa has alarmingly high CSA prevalence rates. While this number may be congruent with CSA rates in other sub-Saharan countries according to Meinck, Cluver, Boyes, and Loening-Voysey (2016), it is higher than international prevalence rates which range from between 8% to 31% for girls (Barth, Bermetz, Heim, Trelle & Tonia, 2013). A number of social, cultural, structural, and economic factors render girls in South Africa particularly vulnerable to sexual abuse. While the perpetration of sexual violence against women has been attributed globally to patriarchal constructions of masculinity and gendered power relations, the particular cultural and social contexts found in

South Africa means that the ways in which such patriarchy manifests may be different (Dartnell & Jewkes, 2013; Seedat, van Niekerk, Jewkes, Suffla, & Ratele, 2009).

Constructions of gender are informed by cultural and social contexts and are thus subject to differences in expression (Buiten & Naidoo, 2016; Morrell, Jewkes, Lindgegger, & Hamlall, 2013). In South Africa, the current scholarship on sexual violence has adopted a nuanced view of the role of patriarchy with an appreciation of the impact that racial and economic marginalisation, first under colonialism, then under apartheid, and now under a democratic constitution that espouses gender equality, has on the way that patriarchy manifests (Buiten & Naidoo, 2016). The concept of hegemonic masculinity, which refers to hierarchies of masculine power over both women and other men, has been used in South Africa to explain the high levels of violence resulting from these structural changes (Morrell et al., 2013). Ratele and Suffla (2011) note that in contexts where individual and social upliftment is curtailed or where masculine identity is challenged, violence becomes central to men’s desire to be seen as successful and is used to maintain male dominance over women. While hegemonic masculinity does not necessarily result in violence, such violence is legitimated when it is viewed as a tolerable or desirable sign of masculinity (Morrell et al., 2013). Not surprisingly then, Jewkes, Sekweyiya, Morrell, and Dunkle (2010) found that in South Africa prevalent motivations for sexual violence against women stem from a sense of sexual entitlement and hierarchies of gendered power; boys and men are socialised into believing in their right to assert their dominance and power through sexual coercion. Further, cultural issues that have been associated with increased risk include traditional leadership as well as the position of elders in a community (Mathews, Loots, Sikweyiya, and Jewkes, 2012; Seedat et al., 2009).

In addition to the above, social issues prevalent in South Africa add to the vulnerability of girls. In Meinck, Cluver, Boyes, and Mhlongo’s (2015) systematic review of risk factors

for CSA victimisation, a number of factors that appeared to heighten risk for CSA were identified at the level of the household, the caregiver, and the child. These included emotional and physical abuse, living with a step-parent or in a single parent household, substance abuse, mental health problems, disability, and illness. Yahaya, Uthman, Soares, and Macassa (2013) found that in Sub-Saharan Africa, levels of family disruption and family instability were associated with higher risk for CSA. Similarly, in a community based sample of children from rural and urban area, Meink, Cluver, and Boyes (2015) identified a number of longitudinal predictors for sexual victimisation which included the age of the caregiver, AIDS orphanhood, food insecurity, and school dropout. They concluded that in South Africa the most vulnerable girls, those who have been previously victimised and are not attending school, are at the greatest risk of CSA.

Structural factors in South Africa pose further risks for revictimisation as well as the failure to recover from sexual assault. A review conducted by The African Child Policy Forum (2008) found that African countries suffer from insufficient legal resources, inadequate access to child friendly services, and poor implementation of existing resources. South African research suggests that there are limited or absent medico-legal, police, and child protection services as well as post trauma assistance to aid girls post sexual abuse (Phasha, 2010). Gevers and Abraham (2015) found that mental health services following sexual abuse are limited in South Africa, particularly for rural girls and women. Limited understanding of mental health and limited capacity to deliver appropriate services as well as poor linkages to on-going mental health care compromise the support of girls who have been sexually abused.

## **Explaining Resilience**

Simply put, resilience refers to processes of positive adjustment in the context of severe adversity (Masten & Wright, 2010). Resilience as a concept is best understood as an interactive process that requires both the presence of an adversity, such as CSA, as well as evidence of positive psychological outcomes in spite of this adversity (Rutter, 2006; Wright & Masten, 2015).

Since its inception in the 1970s the notion of resilience has seen many evolutions (Masten, 2014). Conceptualisations of the construct as a static, fixed, internal trait have progressed to an understanding of resilience as dynamic and contextually embedded. Contemporary conceptualisations now adopt a more ecological perspective, with an understanding that resilience is a systemic process (Hart et al., 2016; Jefferis, 2016; Masten, 2014). This systemic approach, which considers wider cultural and contextual factors, recognises that the individual and his or her ecology interact to produce and construct outcomes (Hart et al., 2016). This shift in perspective has resulted in a growing number of studies that focus on the role of contextual factors on resilience processes (Wright & Masten, 2015).

Ungar’s (2011, 2012, 2015) social ecological theory of resilience (SERT) has paid particular attention to the role of context and culture in resilience processes. From this perspective, resilience is considered through observation, examination, and analysis of the wider socio-ecological environment within specific cultural contexts (Ungar, 2011). Resilience is thus understood to be the ability of individuals, in partnership with their social ecologies, to move towards culturally relevant resources that they need to thrive, along with the ability of individuals and their social ecologies to collectively negotiate for these resources to be made available in a meaningful way (Ungar, 2015).

Ungar (2011) identifies four principles that define resilience processes. These include decentrality, complexity, atypicality, and cultural relativity. Complexity and cultural relativity are particularly salient when we are considering the impact of socio-cultural factors on resilience processes. These principles emphasise contextual factors as antecedents of positive adaptation; resilience is considered to be a culturally embedded, dynamic process that is subject to change across time and dependent on context (Ungar, 2012). Consequently what may promote resilience at one point in time in a specific context, may not at another nor in a different social context (Jefferis, 2016). That resilience is regarded as entrenched in culture is apparent in the influence that culture has over these processes. Culture is understood to denote “socially constructed and socially shared ways of being and doing” (Theron & Liebenberg, 2015, p. 32). It determines how positive adaptation is defined, what resources are made available to individuals, as well as the meaning that individuals attach to resources (Ungar, 2011). Culture, is not static but temporal, dependent on prevailing socio-economic and political conditions (Ungar, 2015). Resilience processes are thus influenced by culture and the ways in which cultural practices are expressed at a given time.

In a mixed methods study conducted by Ungar and colleagues (2007) in eleven countries, seven protective factors were identified that were common, to varying degrees, across all of them. These factors included, as Ungar (2015) later indicated, meaningful relationships; a sense of identity; personal control and efficacy; experiences of social justice; access to material resources like education, food and clothing; a sense of belonging; and cultural adherence. Expressions of these factors differed across contexts; for example, for Russian youth cultural adherence was expressed in nationalism whereas for Aboriginal youth in Canada it meant engagement with the cultural practices of elders (Ungar, 2015).

### **Resilience in South Africa**

The increased awareness of the ways in which complex environments interact to nurture positive adaptation in culturally diverse contexts has resulted in a growing body of resilience studies in South Africa (Malindi, 2014; Phasha, 2010; Theron & Malindi, 2010; Theron & Theron, 2013; Ungar, 2011; Van Rensburg, Theron, & Rothman, 2015). A handful of these studies has focused on girls’ pathways of resilience. In a study that explored the resilience promoting mechanisms of rural Sesotho-speaking girls, Jefferis (2016) noted the salience of supportive relationships with other women and girls, pragmatic support from communities, future oriented beliefs, and individual agency, as well as faith. Similarly, in Malindi’s (2014) exploration of resilience processes in female street youth in South Africa, faith, self-regulation, and active support systems, as well as access to community based support facilitated positive adaptation. In her exploration of educational resilience in sexually abused African girls, Phasha (2010) found that meaning making, determination to succeed together with faith and supportive networks nurtured the resilience of her participants and allowed them to focus on their education.

Theron and Phasha (2015) noted that in South Africa, processes of resilience may be influenced by traditional African values of interdependence, spiritual beliefs, and responsibility to family. This traditional way of being is captured in the philosophy of Ubuntu. Ubuntu refers broadly to the African philosophical way of being which favours “humanness, personhood and morality” (Letseka, 2012, p. 48). Within this worldview an individual’s ability to flourish and reach her or his full potential and eventual well-being is dependent on how she or he treats others (Manda, 2007; Murove, 2009). Values such as kindness, empathy, benevolence, compassion, a sense of responsibility towards others, respect, and care are expected and promoted (Letseka, 2012; Manda, 2007; Murove, 2009).

These values also extend to demonstrating forgiveness to those who have transgressed, with the belief that people have the ability to improve if they are supported (Phasha, 2010). In resilience studies these values of relationality and interdependence are seen to be manifested in the presence of supportive extended family networks and pragmatically supportive community members (Jefferis, 2016). Theron, Theron, and Malindi (2013) found that for black youth from rural backgrounds, attachment to extended networks, respect, and adherence to traditional ancestral values are indicative of resilience.

### **Sexual Violence and Resilience**

The impact that CSA has on the individual has been studied extensively. Typically, the focus of these studies has been on the negative impact of such abuse with a range of adverse psychiatric, behavioural, physiological, and interpersonal problems noted (Cashmore & Shackel, 2013; Collishaw et al., 2007; Irish, Kobayashi, & Delahanty, 2009; Kilpatrick & Acierno, 2003; Maniglio, 2009; Resnick, Guille, McCauley, & Kilpatrick, 2011; Steel, Sanna, Hammond, Whipple, & Cross, 2004). Psychiatric problems associated with a history of CSA include depression, anxiety, suicidal ideation, post-traumatic stress disorder, personality disorders, and increased psychosomatic complaints (Lindert et al., 2014; Oshodi, Macharia, Lachman, & Seedat, 2016). Behavioural problems may include high risk sexual behaviour, inappropriate sexualised behaviours, and conduct disorders as well as substance abuse (Danielson et al., 2010; Lalor & McElvaney, 2010; Maniglio, 2009; Miron & Orcutt, 2014.) Physiological problems include the risk of pregnancy as well as HIV infection, particularly in high risk areas like South Africa (Jewkes, Dunkle, Nduna, Jama, & Puren, 2010) and interpersonal problems include those related to maintaining relationships as well as to intimacy (Easton, Coohey, O’Leary, Zhang, & Hua, 2011).

However, such negative outcomes are not necessarily a given with some survivors of CSA who display healthy asymptomatic functioning. Some protective factors found to mitigate the impact of CSA include parental support (Godbout, Briere, Sabourin, & Lussier, 2014), greater family cohesion (Meyerson, Long, Miranda, & Marx, 2002) and peer support (Meinck et al., 2015). In Domhardt, Münzer, Fegert, and Lutz’s (2014) systematic review of resilience in CSA survivors, a variation of between 10 and 53% of survivors not exhibiting any harmful symptoms was noted. A review of studies with adolescent girls (Haffejee & Theron, 2017a) found that resilience enabling factors in this group were closely aligned to universal protective systems described by Masten and Wright (2010). These include agency and motivational mastery, opportunities for meaning making, self-regulation and self-efficacy, optimistic future perspectives, attachment relationships, cultural and religious traditions, and social, community, and educational systems (Haffejee & Theron, 2017a; Masten & Wright, 2010). Phasha’s (2010) study on sexual violence and resilience conducted with black South African girls closely parallel the findings described above. However, in her study, Phasha (2010) also references the protective value of traditional African ways of being which include extended networks of support, duty of care to others, and a greater focus on education. In doing so, Phasha (2010) echoes Theron and Theron’s (2013) reminder that while resilience processes are universal, the way they operate is dependent on the cultural context. In summary, the limitations in the extant literature point to the following question which underpins this article: How do socio-cultural factors in South Africa enable and constrain resilience processes of black adolescent girls with CSA experiences?

### **Methodology**

To illustrate the impact of socio-cultural influences on the resilience processes of adolescent African girls, we report on the cases of Precious and Lumkah (pseudonyms). These cases were drawn from a qualitative, multiple, instrumental case study that included 7

participants from 2 urban child and youth care centres (CYCCs). All 7 participants were already legally placed in care at the time of the study.

### **Selection of Participants for the Study**

Participants were purposefully selected through the assistance of an advisory panel (AP) that had been established to guide the execution of the multiple case study. The benefits of having an AP have been discussed in previous resilience studies (see Theron et al., 2013). In this study the AP provided advisory oversight and offered advice in terms of selection and identification of participants as well as feedback on the findings. The AP consisted of social workers and child care workers. Their daily interaction with vulnerable young people and their professional training supported their effectiveness as AP members.

As mentioned above, a total of 7 primary participants were identified and included in the study. Of the 7 participants, 3 reported single episodes of sexual abuse with a single perpetrator. Of the remaining participants, 1 experienced chronic sexual abuse over an extended period of time (approximately 5 years), 1 experienced sexual abuse over a three month period and sexual abuse was perpetrated against all 4 of them multiple times. In 6 of the 7 cases, the perpetrator was a known male and in 4 of these 6 cases the perpetrator was a family member.

All primary participants experienced other forms of adversity that included the death of one or both parents, the death of other caregivers, abandonment by their mother, physical and verbal abuse, neglect, and poverty. The summary of risk factors that all participants in our study were exposed to is consistent with other studies conducted in South Africa, which suggests that sexual violence does not happen in isolation and is often accompanied by other forms of violence (Artz et al., 2016; Meinck et al., 2015). However, the age of first sexual

abuse reported by our participants was lower than that reported in the national survey carried out by Artz et al., (2016) who suggested an average age of 14 years. Similar to what was found in this survey, perpetrators were, in most cases, known males.

### **Methods of Data Generation**

In this multiple case study, we adhered to calls from both gender and resilience researchers who advocate for the use of creative, innovative research methods (Cameron et al., 2013; Mitchell, 2011; Theron, 2012). To this end, we made use of a range of participatory approaches that included participatory diagramming, digital stories, and participatory video. Visual participatory approaches with youth have been credited with democratising the research process and privileging youth voices, creating opportunities for participant reflexivity and psychosocial growth, activism, and social change (Didkowsky, Ungar, & Liebenberg, 2010; Liebenberg, 2009; Mitchell, De Lange, Stuart, Moletsane, & Buthelezi, 2007; Theron, 2016).

The first author engaged with the primary participants described above (i.e., girls who had experiences of CSA and whom were identified as resilient to the potentially negative impacts of these experiences) in this participatory process, meeting each a minimum of 3 times individually and 2 times as a group. Relevant to the data informing this article, primary participants were first engaged in unstructured individual interviews using timelines. Primary participants were asked to note down on the timeline significant events in their lives. As Liebenberg and Theron, (2015) have noted, timelines aid in structuring discussions, making the process less overwhelming and giving greater control of the process to the participants. Primary participants had the freedom to choose whether they wanted to draw or write about significant events. Once this process was complete, primary participants were invited to write a short summary of their life narratives, focusing on what enabled them to adapt well in spite

of CSA experiences. They were encouraged to draw images, take photographs, or use images from journals or magazines. These summarised narratives were then turned into digital stories by the first author.

With the consent of primary participants, the first author included secondary sources of information. She reviewed their institutional case files and documents. Primary participants were also asked to identify one caregiver at the CYCC who knew of their experiences of CSA and with whom they had a relationship. This process occurred concurrently with individual interviews and was used to provide supplementary contextual information and as a means of triangulating data. Of the 7 girls, 6 identified a care worker as a secondary participant who was then interviewed. The one girl who did not do so had not disclosed her experiences of CSA.

### **Data Analysis**

As noted earlier, the question that guided our enquiry was this: How do socio-cultural factors in South Africa enable and constrain resilience processes of black adolescent girls with CSA experiences? We looked at data that best fit with this question and discarded all other data thus creating an integrated data set. Data from two case studies that of Lumkah and Precious, which included the individual interviews using timelines and the digital stories, as well as the interviews with the secondary participants and the case files, offered rich answers to the research question for this article and so constituted our data set. This was subjected to a secondary data analysis as the data was previously reported (Haffejee & Theron, 2017b). Following, Braun and Clarke (2006), data was analysed using inductive thematic analysis. Using the guidelines described by these scholars, the first author immersed herself in the data and this resulted in the identification of initial codes which were then grouped to form candidate themes and sub-themes. These themes were then reviewed again and refined and

two main themes defined (i.e., disabling socio-cultural environments, and enabling socio-cultural environments). Following Creswell (2009), trustworthiness was ensured through member checking as well as through the use of an independent coder. The second author critically evaluated the analysis and interpretation of the findings.

### **Ethical Considerations**

Sexually abused minors are considered a particularly vulnerable group and, given this, we were very aware of our responsibility to conduct the study in an ethical manner that ensured no harm would accrue to the participants. We obtained ethical clearance from the institutional review board after a rigorous process. Detailed consent letters were given to directors at both CYCCs in their capacity as legal guardians. Potential primary participants were approached with details of the study by an independent care worker and not by the first author. The voluntary nature of the study was emphasised. Only if participants expressed an interest and agreed to participate in the study were they approached by the first author who then obtained their formal written assent. Primary and secondary participants were assured of anonymity and were informed that participation in the research processes was voluntary. The first author took special care to ensure that primary participants understood the potential ethical pitfalls (e.g., reduced confidentiality; no guarantee of anonymity) of group and visual participatory work. Following the data collection, primary participants were required to attend at least one debriefing session with an external mental health practitioner. Primary and secondary participants were able to review transcripts following the interviews and were also given access to all materials produced in the study.

### **Findings**

In this section, we present findings from the case studies of Precious and Lumkah that illustrate how socio-cultural influences shape young women’s risk and resilience. The

findings, presented as each girl’s story, draw on data generated by the girls and the secondary sources of information (interviews with secondary participants and institutional case files and documents).

### **Precious’s Story: My Innocence Has Been Taken Away From Me**

At the time of telling her story, Precious was 17 years of age, and together with her 2 younger siblings, had been in a CYCC for 2 years. Her mother died when she was 11 years old. Her parents were not married and the man she regarded as her father died shortly before her mother did. After her mother’s death she lived with her maternal family but, after reporting the physical abuse, she was legally placed in a CYCC.

This is her story.

“When I was 11 years old I was raped and I didn’t get justice. That man lived until he died on his own. I told my mother first and a teacher found out. She called the police. They came to ask me questions. They told me they will take me to a doctor to do a check-up but they never came back. The one who did it told the police he didn’t know what he was doing, he wasn’t thinking straight. Nothing happened to him. I hated him.

In 2014, another man did the same thing again. He just disappeared.

A third one did the same thing, he also disappeared. They always threaten that they will kill me or that I will die.

I keep these things a secret because with the first case no one did anything and no one believed me, nothing happened. So I didn’t feel like talking about the other times because nothing will happen.

This thing used to hurt me. It still hurts me. When other people talk about being a virgin I don’t like to talk about it. Sometimes I even say I am while I’m not. But I know it’s not my fault because I didn’t ask for it.

I accepted that it passed. I don’t know how I became ok. I think talking about it helps me. Getting advice from other people, like my friends and other adults. It makes me stronger. I am learning not to be ashamed about what happened and not to blame myself.

I’m living my own life. I’m progressing at school. I believe in myself and I have confidence. I feel like I can achieve anything I want to.”

### **Disabling socio-cultural contexts**

In the opening line of Precious’s narrative, we hear her legitimate anger at a system that failed her. She mentions a teacher who takes action by calling the police. Although the police take a statement from her they do not follow up and there appears to be no case. Later she recounts her mother’s asking her to forgive the perpetrator with whom they shared a living space and, although she complied, she describes her intense anger at the perpetrator and the situation in which she was placed. After this initial failure of the legal system to act on her behalf, Precious did not disclose any of the other incidents of sexual abuse. Her distrust of formal systems also meant that she had chosen not to disclose the sexual abuse formally to her current social worker at the CYCC.

After her mother died, Precious was sent to live with her maternal family. The second incident of sexual abuse that Precious mentioned in her narrative was perpetrated by a *sangoma* (traditional healer). Precious was taken to the *sangoma* by her physically abusive and mentally ill uncle because the family believed that she was cursed.



Figure 1: Image of *sangoma* drawn by Precious

So, after the *sangoma* told my uncle to wait outside ... then he asked me questions about my Mother. I told him that my Mother died and all this stuff. Then ... after that he then closed the door then he said I must take off all my clothes then I did see he took a razor ... there's small cuts here and even ... here [indicating cuts on her arm] and near my womb. After that ... he said I must turnaround and lay... then I was so scared that um ... after then he wanted to sleep with me then I cried I asked him why then he said my Mother is talking to him I must do this thing ... I'm scared of *sangomas* so everything he told me to do I did it after then after doing it he said mustn't tell anyone because if I tell anyone I will die.

(Precious, 2016)

### **Enabling socio-cultural contexts**

Precious, unable to trust her physically abusive family, and without any other support, turned to her informal support networks that included friends and their families and school teachers. As in her first experience of sexual abuse, it was a teacher who assisted her by accessing help for her.

... there was this teacher ... I told her what happened. I used to tell her about the beating ... she took me to another teacher ...the teacher called .... a social worker.

Friends and their families offered pragmatic support to Precious in the form of shelter, this is confirmed in the following statement noted by Precious’ social worker in her case file.

Fikile [a friend] used to offer her a place to hide from her uncles’ attacks.

Later, at the CYCC Precious also relied on peer support to help her come to terms with the abuse and address her feelings of self-blame.

My close friends ... they told me their stories last year. They used to talk about what happened to them, sometimes you know, so I thought I was the only one but only to find out I’m not the only one.

In spite of little formal support or previous therapeutic support, Precious displays a capacity for reflexivity, ascribing previous risk-taking behaviours to the trauma she experienced.

I didn’t grow up in a good environment maybe that’s why I get angry very, very fast because I’m angry at everything that happened. In everything that is still happening.

Precious credits her positive adaptation to the fact that she has not allowed the abuse to alter the way she thinks and the fact that she is still hopeful about her future. She says,

It didn’t affect me like here in my mind I’m doing well at school, I’m passing well and ... I join programs if there are programs and if there’s drama I join in.

In addition to looking to peers for support, Precious has a strong sense of responsibility to her siblings and is motivated to do well so that she can care for them. Currently, she and her siblings have access to other family networks. Paternal family members have expressed an interest in caring for her.

### **Lumkah’s Story: It All Happened for a Reason**

Lumkah was 18 years old at the time of the interview and in her final year at school. She had been in the CYCC for less than a year. Her father had died when she was 10 years old. Her biological mother, whom Lumkah had met only once since being removed from her care when she was a baby, died shortly thereafter. As a child she grew up with her father’s second wife. Lumkah thought that this was her biological mother and describes her as loving and kind. Amidst allegations that her step-mother had bewitched her father she was removed from her care when she was about 7 years old. Her father married again and Lumkah lived with this second stepmother and her paternal family. The sexual abuse began after her father died. She was sexually abused over a period of time by an older cousin, by her grandfather, and later by her uncle. She entered the CYCC voluntarily.

This is her story.

“I grew up with first step-mum. She was nice. She made me feel special. I never knew she wasn’t my real mother. When I was about 7 things changed, my dad met another woman and I had to go live with my grandmother and then later my second step-mum. This step-mum was not good to me. I only met my real mother a year after my dad died, I only saw her once in hospital and then she passed away. I never knew her.

This is when my cousin started abusing me. I never told anyone because I thought they wouldn’t believe me. Later I decided to move to live with my uncle. After a short while he also began abusing me. Again I told no one. I got sick and went to hospital. I had to see a psychologist but I didn’t say anything. Again I decided to leave and came to stay at the centre.

A relative I call my brother believed me and supported me. He gave me advice and told me to get help and speak about it all. I told my first step-mum and she supported me. She visits me now and believes me.

I’m still very angry at all those people that hurt me. Sometimes this anger pushes me forward but sometimes it brings me down. I like to think that this all happened for a reason. Maybe it’s a test from God, maybe it’s part of my journey. I believe and I know I am strong. I want to be successful, I want to achieve a lot of things.”

### **Disabling socio-cultural contexts**

Lumkah’s anger, sadness, and sense of betrayal was palpable during her narrative. Also evident were her attempts at making sense of and understanding the abuse. The abrupt removal from a loving maternal figure and home signalled the beginning of increasing adversity. Her disappointment in the aunt who witnessed the sexual abuse and did not stop it, was clear and prevented her from speaking out about the ongoing abuse. The betrayal was repeated a few years later when she left her uncle’s home and reported the sexual abuse to social workers at the CYCC. Then, family members approached her not to find out how she was but to ask her not to report her uncle to the police. Her uncle was well-liked and respected in the family and community.

Another uncle of mine came to [CYCC 1] to tell me not to open a case. He didn’t even ask me if I was fine, he just said not to open a case.

In her narrative she omits the sexual abuse perpetrated by her grandfather. During the interview she indicated that she had never mentioned it to anyone previously; she held him in high regard and respected him so his sexual abuse of her was therefore disturbing.

My Grandfather ... always touched me in my private parts. I never tell anyone not even my social worker ... because I respected my Grandfather. I never thought he would do this to me ... so when my uncle start to abuse me it’s first like I deserve it.

Recalling the negative impact of the sexual abuse on her health, she indicated that she was sent to a traditional healer but does not recall what the outcome of that process was.

### **Enabling socio-cultural contexts**

In Lumkah’s saying, “A relative I call my brother believed me” we hear about the first experience of support she received after she was sexually abused. The person she spoke of as a brother was in fact a relative of the aunt with whom she lived. He appeared to recognise the difficulties she was experiencing and encouraged her to seek help. This positive response propelled her into finding a pastor in whom she confided and who directed her to the CYCC.

Supportive relationships prior to the sexual abuse were limited to her first step-mother, who appeared to instil in her faith and trust in God. This belief remained with her even after she was removed from this woman’s care and also enabled her adjustment. Her recall of her early childhood suggests that she was well cared for by her step-mother who treated her as her own child, so much so that Lumkah never suspected that she was not her real mother.

When I was young my step-mother used to say everything that happens, happens for a reason ... I had faith that God will help me. May not be ... today but one day.

In spite of pressure from her paternal family, Lumkah was not able to sever her relationship with this step-mother. Her grandfather accused her step-mother of killing her father, telling Lumkah to stay away from her.

My Grandfather ... he told me not to visit my stepmother because she is the one who killed my Father ... to me it was painful ... because I know my Mum wouldn’t do that ... he said they went to a traditional healer he said my stepmum did that.

Disclosing the sexual abuse to her step-mother appeared to bring much relief to Lumkah because she believed her. Her social worker suggested that disclosing the abuse experiences to her step-mother had a positive impact on Lumkah; the positive, supportive manner in which the step-mother reacted enabled Lumkah to begin talking about the experiences, whereas previously she was unable to. Her step-mother has also maintained contact, visiting her at the CYCC. Lumkah says, “She’s the only person who’s been so supportive to me.”

Describing other resources in the social ecology that have been enabling, Lumkah talks of her placement at the CYCC, stating, “I feel safe ... I feel like I’m home ...”. Later she indicated that the relationships she formed with her social worker and psychologist at the CYCC had also helped her to cope with her experiences.

In spite of the difficulties Lumkah experienced and the distant relationship she described with her father, she displayed a strong sense of responsibility towards her younger siblings, stating that before her father died, he told her to care for them. Notwithstanding limited but strong connections with external supportive resources, Lumkah also credited her positive adaption to her own determination to succeed. This determination was also noted by her

social worker, who mentioned her strong wish to pursue her education, who said “she wants to be educated, she wants to be an accountant.”

### **Discussion**

These narratives give credence to research that speaks to the complex ways in which socio-cultural factors impact on an individual’s resilience processes. In this discussion we explore how values encompassed by the philosophy of Ubuntu, which promotes family allegiance, forgiveness, interconnectedness, and respect for elders are subverted by individual actors and used to subjugate rather than protect. At the same time though, we complicate our discussion by pointing out instances in which other systems within the ecology nurture resilience in drawing on the same traditional values that previously were used to cause harm and we point to the active engagement of both girls with contextual variables.

The adverse potential that cultural systems hold has been mentioned previously by Panter-Brick and Eggerman (2012). Theron and Theron (2013) add that in a South African context the changes that are apparent because of processes of acculturation as well as changes brought about by the HIV epidemic and AIDS are likely to impact the ways in which traditional African culture continues to scaffold youth. As mentioned above, forgiveness and respect for elders are encapsulated in the African practice of Ubuntu because of which transgressors are not necessarily shunned, and duty to those older than oneself is valued (Theron, 2015). Allegiance to these values could account for Precious’s mother’s counsel to her to forgive the perpetrator as well as her own acquiescence to her mother, in spite of her own anger. Similarly, Lumkah’s family’s protection of her uncle and her inability to disclose the abuse perpetrated by her grandfather may be considered in the light of these values. Protection of male family members is not uncommon; Artz et al. (2016) found that failure to act against perpetrating male family members is related to pragmatic concerns — since the

perpetrator may be a breadwinner in the family reporting him could result in financial difficulties — as well as to the cultural beliefs about men’s role in society. Interviews with social workers across South Africa suggest that if abuse occurs within families, members may be more inclined to deal with the matter internally than report it to the police. In more rural communities, cases of sexual abuse may be referred to traditional authorities and payment of damages may be used to settle the matter (Artz et al., 2016). While this may appease the family, it may not aid the recovery of the survivor.

The placement of both Lumkah and Precious in the home of extended family members follows common practice in traditional African communities. Typically, young people may be cared for by “family communities” (Mkhize, 2006, p. 187), with extended family members including grandparents, aunts, and uncles assuming responsibility for the children, even when parental figures are present, but we need to remember that Artz et al., (2016) found that household density increases risk for CSA. Although previous studies have reported that these networks scaffold resilience processes in youth (Theron & Theron, 2013), in this case, this potentially protective practice exposed both girls to abuse. For Lumkah it signalled the beginning of years of both sexual abuse by male family members and verbal and emotional abuse from female family members and the extended family set-up exposed Precious to a mentally unstable but authoritative male family member who physically and verbally abused her.

The impact of unequal gender roles operating in the South African context is apparent in both these narratives. In spite of Precious’s family’s awareness of her uncle’s mental condition, her grandfather, the head of the household, supported her uncle and she, Precious, was seen to be the problem. In this instance, it is not a cultural practice, but, rather, patriarchy that defines a young girl as supposedly delinquent and renders her voiceless. The

marginal position of women in certain cultural contexts is also evident in the limited voice that both Lumkah’s biological and first step-mother had. Lumkah’s removal from her childhood home to another appeared to be made at the discretion of her father even though he did not live with her. As discussed above, in traditional patriarchal societies, hegemonic masculinities are legitimized. Within such contexts, girls and women are marginalised and vulnerable to abuse.

The subversion of culture is noted in a broader system in the abuse perpetrated against Precious by a traditional healer. Traditional healers are widely acknowledged in South Africa and are seen to be credible allies in addressing public health issues, such as HIV and AIDS and male circumcision, as well as viable alternatives to the treatment of a range of health and social issues. Within traditional African culture, there are different types of traditional healers, many of whom have different areas of training and expertise, and who perform different functions. *Sangomas*, or diviners, are seen as most senior in the traditional healer hierarchical structure (Truter, 2007). A *sangoma*’s sphere is divination; they operate within a traditional religious supernatural context and serve as a medium with ancestral spirits (Thornton, 2009). Traditionally, they are called on to heal individuals or communities, resolve conflicts, offer solutions to problems, and provide leadership (Thornton, 2009). Belief in traditional healers and ancestral spirits is central to an Africentric worldview, which favours interconnectedness with both living and ancestral spirits. For Precious, her family’s trust and belief in the healing and problem solving ability of *sangomas* as well as her fear of them and of ancestral spirits resulted in her being placed in a compromising situation which resulted in sexual abuse. Artz et al., (2016) found that reliance on traditional healers could be at the expense of adequate care of the survivor as well, and could result in a subversion of justice. This was apparent in Lumkah’s case; the ill health she suffered as a result of the sexual abuse was referred to a traditional healer rather than to a medical or judicial system.

In her brief narrative, Precious mentions her shame at not being a virgin and the pride with which other girls talk about being a virgin. Feelings of shame have been associated with negative outcomes for sexual abuse survivors. In traditional African culture, chastity is viewed positively with the practice of virginity testing seeing a revival in the 1990s, primarily as a response to the HIV epidemic in South Africa (Leclerc-Madlala, 2001). Virginity testing is the practice of inspecting girls to ascertain if they are still virgins; public and private functions are held, where girls are tested and given a certificate if found to be virgins. Virginity testing is regarded as a culturally appropriate way to reinforce cultural values like chastity before marriage, modesty, self-respect, and pride and thus as a way to halt the increase in teenage pregnancy, STIs, and HIV and AIDS (Leclerc-Madlala, 2001). This practice however, is contested, and the Children’s Act No. 38 of 2005 prohibits the testing of children under 16 although it permits testing of 16- to 18-year-olds (Behrens, 2014). While traditionalists support the practice, opposing views suggest that this practice is inherently discriminatory, entrenching patriarchal privilege, and is another form of violence against women (Behrens, 2014). Within this context, a traditional practice touted by some as being protective may result in stigmatization, further abuse, and a sense of shame and guilt, thus hindering resilience.

Though much of the discussion has looked at practices that could have, potentially, a negative impact, enabling structures were not wholly absent. Access to social workers and placement at a CYCC, while resulting from a failure of certain contextual actors to offer protection and support resilience, created opportunities for other actors, like the state and civil society, to step in and support positive adaptation. For Lumkah, placement at a CYCC provided a reprieve from years of sexual abuse and allowed her to reconnect with a supportive figure. For Precious, supportive teachers intervened after the first experience of sexual abuse and again when they noticed the on-going physical abuse. In both instances their

intervention was in the form of accessing help and offering pragmatic support to Precious. Teachers have been credited with playing an essential role in enabling resilience processes in youth (Jefferis, 2016). Jefferis (2016) found that empathetic teachers in rural African communities recognised girls were who experiencing difficulties, such as sexual abuse, and guided them through such difficulties. In the context of the CYCC, Precious realised that she was not the only one who had been through such circumstances; this realisation alleviated her feelings of shame and guilt. Here, other girls directly support her adaptation. The role that supportive women play in facilitating resilience processes has been established in previous South African studies, with non-family members like teachers and girlfriends identified as enablers of this process (see Jefferis, 2016; Theron & Phasha, 2015; Theron & Theron, 2010).

On the one hand, the subversion of traditional values and the resultant shallow adherence to these values was seen to have led to a poor outcome, but, on the other, pragmatically and emotionally supportive friends, family of friends, and teachers enabled positive adjustment for both Lumkah and Precious thus embodying the spirit of Ubuntu. Phasha (2010) explains this value in terms of “the more we are, the stronger we become” (p. 1250); this allows individuals to reach out to a receptive community creating in them a sense of belonging and security that promotes resilience in times of adversity.

The complex way in which socio-cultural context impacts resilience processes is also captured in the manner in which both girls navigate towards resilience enabling resources. In their expressions of anger and in their decisions to defy authoritative figures in their family, both reject traditional cultural prescriptions. Instead, their choices may be demonstrative of atypical resilience processes; while their adaptive behaviour may be viewed as counter indicative to resilience in some contexts, in a context of abuse and an absence of control, their assertion of agency is functional as Ungar (2011) has pointed out elsewhere. At the same

time, though, they are not wholly rejecting these traditional values; this indicates a more nuanced approach. In both girls’ support of and sense of responsibility towards younger siblings, in spite of their own difficulties, as well as in their commitment to gaining an education, Lumkah and Precious choose aspects of a traditional value system that are meaningful to them. This sense of duty to a collective is consistent with the findings of Theron and Phasha (2015) that the young people provided both financial and motivational support to family members, and those of Theron and Theron (2013) who found that in South Africa cultural expectations are that young people should become role models for younger siblings.

### **Conclusion and Future Directions**

According to a Tunisian human rights lawyer,

“You can have the most beautiful laws but if you don’t change the culture, then nothing will change”, Khadija Moalla (El Feki, 2017)

Within traditional African structures, respect for elders, having extended family networks, and belief in the supernatural have all been credited with buffering against adversity (Theron & Phasha, 2015). However, in the cases presented here, these structures are guilty of not only failing to respond to the needs of young girls, but also of perpetuating further abuse and harm. While the potential that these systems hold cannot be negated, we concur with resilience researchers who caution that slavish, shallow allegiance and one-dimensional interpretations of the ways in which such contexts enable resilience should be guarded against (Panter-Brick & Eggerman, 2012; Theron & Phasha, 2015). So while we are not advocating that all cultural practices be changed, we are suggesting, following Ungar (2015), that if interventions, like laws, are to be meaningful and effective, we need to be conscious of both the protective value of adherence to cultural values as well as the ways in

which it may disadvantage positive adaptation. Thus, practitioners seeking to facilitate resilience in sexually abused girls in culturally meaningful ways should be mindful that resilience is embedded within specific socio-cultural and historical contexts and that these processes are impacted by changes in these systems (Ungar, 2011). In South Africa, and other westernising African contexts, there is a need to be particularly attentive to the ways in which increasing westernisation has impacted traditional African ways of living (Rampele, 2012). Similarly, it is important to consider the ways in which difficult colonial and other disabling histories (such as apartheid) have impacted gender roles and resultant assertions of power. Automatic reliance on traditional systems to buffer sexually abused girls should thus be avoided.

Pertinent as well is a recognition that atypical expressions of resilience may be found in contexts of severe adversity. What may seem maladaptive in one context could be functional in another, and practitioners working with a specific population should seek to understand the usefulness of behaviour within the given cultural context (Ungar, 2011). Diverse expressions of resilience should be acknowledged and encouraged and should not be altered to fit in with mainstream ideas on what resilience looks like.

Finally, practitioners championing resilience are encouraged to be creative when seeking potential supportive structures. Supportive external resources, as we have discussed, may take the form of social services, community networks, or teachers. Engaging with systems at a wider level may provide access to other untapped sources of support for sexually abused girls.

Resilience processes are subject to change across developmental periods and how the socio-cultural context may continue to support or challenge girls as they mature cannot be predicted. The exploration reported in this study is thus constrained by its limited (i.e., year-

long) engagement with the participants. Future studies should thus adopt a longitudinal life history approach so that the full impact of the ecology may be understood.

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## Chapter 5

Manuscript 4 titled: *Increasing understanding of resilience processes, but to what end? The utility of visual methods in resilience research.* Answered the following research questions: *Does the screening of visual outputs produced in a phenomenological study with girls with child sexual abuse histories facilitate a greater understanding of what enables and constrains resilience processes for those viewing it? If the answer is in the affirmative, question 2 is this: Does this knowledge result in any action?*

Prepared for: Qualitative Research in Psychology (see Appendix N for author guidelines).

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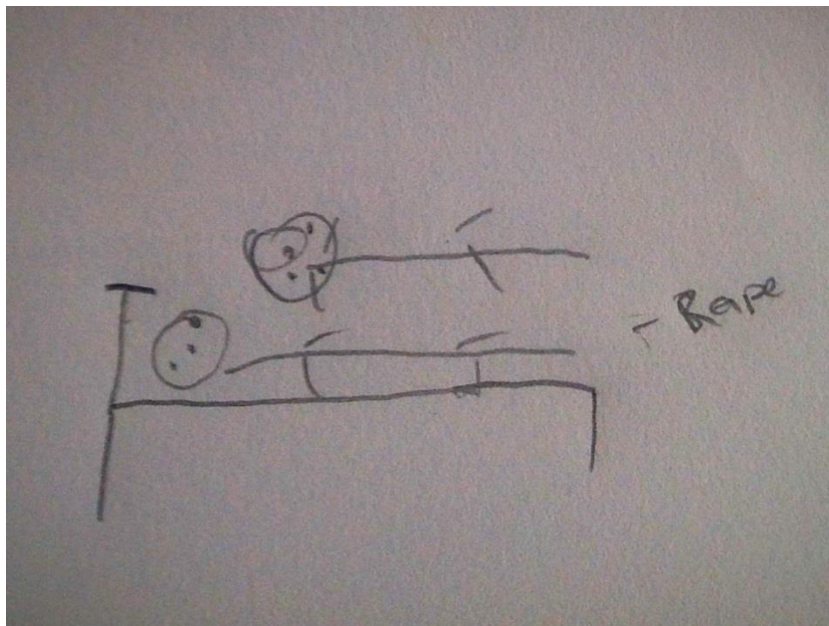


Image produced by participant

### **Abstract**

Images and videos linger in our consciousness. They have the potential to provoke us, to captivate us, to move us as onlookers, and to stimulate deeper levels of human consciousness than words alone might do. This potential of the visual image to foster reflection and to mobilise individuals and communities into action coupled with its capacity to bridge language and cultural divides has made the inclusion of visual methods (VMs) increasingly popular in resilience research as well as in research on sexual violence. In spite of this popularity, VMs are not beyond criticism and there have been calls to scrutinise the efficacy of VMs in research. Our aim, in this article, is to reflect critically on the usefulness of VMs to increase understandings of resilience processes in girls with child sexual abuse histories. We consider the effectiveness of VMs in initiating social change by following up on audience members who viewed a screening of digital stories that dealt with the CSA experiences of girls. Our findings suggest that VMs are effective in increasing understandings of resilience processes but as far as initiating social change is concerned, VMs are in need of refinement that includes clearer guidelines.

*Keywords:* Visual methods, resilience processes, child sexual abuse

Increasing Understanding of Resilience Processes, but to what end? The Utility of Visual Methods in Resilience Research.

Expressionless, she draws herself, a stick figure, lying on a bed. On top of her is a smiling man, raping her. At the edge of the bed, she draws 3 more men waiting in a line for their turn.

The simplicity of this drawing, the coldness and the harshness of it, captivates. It immediately captures the trauma 18-year-old Phindile experienced when she was sexually violated by multiple perpetrators. She was 11 and this was not the first time she had been raped. In spite of this, she has moved on and has adapted. In this article we draw on similar images and narratives captured in digital stories produced by participants in a study that sought to understand resilience processes in black African girls with a history of child sexual abuse (CSA); we consider the potential that visual methods (VMs) have of raising awareness on what enables and disables resilience processes for the audiences that view these stories. We also reflect critically on the capacity of VMs, like digital stories, to prompt advocacy aimed at bringing about social change to prevent sexual abuse, and to guide interventions that could assist those who have been sexually abused to adjust positively. We argue that the artefacts resulting from the use of visual methodology are central to our better understanding of the resilience processes of girls who experience CSA and to our facilitation of the application of this understanding to better support the resilience processes of these and similarly abused girls.

The use of visuals in research through activities such as engaging in drama, photovoice, collage-making, drawing, mapping, sculpting, making music, and creating videos and stories has been referred to variously as image-based methods, visual methods, visual arts-based methods, and participatory visual methodologies (Enright & O'Sullivan, 2012; Mitchell, 2008). Using VMs makes room for participants to engage in the production of the

images as well as in their interpretation and, possibly, in the dissemination of the findings resulting from such use in research. In this way the power dynamic between the researcher and the participant is shifted and this then, in turn, leads to a greater sense of participant ownership of the research process (Burles & Thomas, 2014). The products of VMs not only reflect participants' experiences of specific phenomena, like CSA, but may also have the added intent of stimulating greater awareness and of provoking related social change (Burles & Thomas, 2014; Pauwels, 2015); whether or not this is realised is the point of this article.

Resilience researchers, calling for the inclusion of creative and innovative data generation techniques, have advocated for the inclusion of VMs in research (see, for example, Theron, 2012). Similarly, researchers engaged in work on gender-based violence and CSA lend support to the use of VMs, asserting that this affords greater control to the participant, thus engaging survivors in ways that are more respectful, empathic, and less overwhelming (De Lange & Mitchell, 2014; Mahadev, 2015; Mitchell, 2008)

However, in spite of the increasing number of studies extolling the benefits of using VMs, these methods are not without their limitations and there has been a call by researchers to interrogate critically the use and effectiveness of VMs in research (Koen, 2017; Mitchell, 2011a; Packard, 2008; Pauwels, 2010). VMs have, for example, been criticised for romanticising the notion of giving voice to children without considered interrogation of whether this voice is actually being heard, and, if it is being heard, by whom and to what end (Mitchell, 2011a; Mitchell & Sommer, 2016). Pauwels (2015) concurs, stating that the many laudable claims of personal and social transformation attributed to the use of VMs refers more to possible and desired effects than to automatic outcomes. While VMs provide exciting and inclusive ways of engaging with participants and may provide different media through which to get messages across to an audience (Frith, Riley, Archer, & Gleeson, 2005;

Koen, 2017) there is nothing intrinsically empowering in the creation and use of images (Pauwel, 2015). What is needed are critical considerations rather than idealistic accounts; Pauwel (2015) goes on to suggest that the visual product, as well as the impact on both the participants and the recipients of the visual product (i.e. the viewer or audience) should be scrutinised, documented, and examined critically.

As indicated earlier in this article, we heed this call to use VMs in the light of critical reflection on their transformative potential by scrutinising the efficacy of visual methods in creating audience awareness of resilience processes in girls with CSA experiences, as well as interrogating the power VMs have to foster institutional change. We consider Mitchell's (2011b) critique of VMs and voice, questioning whether by facilitating a process of giving voice to the girls in our study, they are actually being heard about what enables and what constrains their ability to do well. We look at who is hearing the voice of these girls and what they do with the information they have heard. To do this, we share reflections from an audience to whom the visual outputs from our exploratory visual study were screened.

### **The Promise of VM: Research for Social Change**

Much of the appeal of using VMs in social science research stems from the potential it has to connect researchers on a more egalitarian level with participants (Frith et al., 2005; Mitchell, 2008). Unlike more traditional qualitative research during which the participant is regarded as the object of interrogation subject to the whims of the researcher, in VMs research, the participant is recognised as holding knowledge, and capable of steering the process as she or he feels appropriate (Enright & O'Sullivan, 2012; Mayfield-Johnson & Butler, 2017). Pauwels (2015) asserts that "the attraction of the visual interviewing for both researcher and researched can be explained by the polysemic character and engaging nature of the stimulus, and the mitigation or even reversal of the researcher/researched hierarchy

whereby the respondent gets to fulfil the role of the ‘knowledgeable’ informant or even expert rather than a mere ‘object of interrogation’” (p. 98). Through this medium then, participants are repositioned as co-researchers and knowledge producers (Gubrium & Harper, 2013). The collaborative stance heightens the engagement of participants and evokes spontaneous responses thus enabling empowered self-expression and an awareness of individual agency (De Lange, 2012; Haysom, 2015).

VMs have also been touted as particularly relevant for research with youth. It capitalises on children’s and youths’ strengths, their awareness of their ecologies, their attention to detail, and their verbal and visual skills (D’Amico, Denov, Khan, Linds, & Akesson, 2016). In addition to this, VMs have been used to help youth build capacity, raise consciousness, and mobilise for active citizenship (Mahadev, 2015). By integrating the voices of young people in various aspects of the research process, VMs ensure greater relevance and reach of research findings as well as, at least potentially, increased likelihood of the implementation of recommendations (Jacquez, Vaughn, & Wagner, 2013).

VMs have also proven useful when engaging youth on difficult, sensitive topics. For example, photovoice has been used with young women suffering from serious illness (Burles & Thomas, 2014) and visual storytelling has been used with adolescents with chronic illness (Drew, Duncan, & Sawyer, 2010). VMs do not rely exclusively on verbal exchanges in the production of knowledge thus giving opportunities to those traditionally without voice an opportunity to be heard (Milne, Mitchell, & De Lange, 2011). This is particularly relevant when we are working with black South African girls with CSA histories who are usually not first language speakers of English and who are typically inadequately represented in research. Understanding what supports young women from majority world contexts (such as Africa) to do well and what places them at risk is essential (Jefferis, 2016) but may well be limited.

VMs and the outputs produced represent a complex meeting of the contexts of the depicted and of the depicter, making VMs ideally suited to explaining the relationship between individual adaptation and the context under adverse conditions (Pauwels, 2010). Given this, it enjoys much support amongst resilience researchers (Cameron et al., 2013; Liebenberg & Ungar, 2009). Resilience, the capacity to do well in spite of adversity, is best understood in relation to the context in which it emerges (Masten, 2011; Masten & Wright, 2010). Contemporary understandings of resilience see it as a dynamic, shared process between the individual and his or her social ecology (Ungar, 2011). Individuals are tasked with navigating towards resources in the social ecology, while the social ecology is tasked with making resources available in contextually meaningful ways (Ungar, 2015). Much resilience work has been motivated by the idea of informing practice and policy and contributing to practical applications in terms of interventions, education, and policy (Masten & Wright, 2010). Resilience research is thus premised on the idea of transformation — actively collaborating and engaging with at-risk marginalised communities to design, implement, and evaluate programmes and policy that can change negative trajectories (Theron, 2012). This objective is closely aligned to those of VMs. In much the same way, VMs seek to facilitate processes aimed at ownership, collective responsibility, the practicality of solutions, supportive contexts, and individual capacity building (De Lange, 2008). For example, in a study on HIV and AIDs and resilience processes conducted with teachers, Theron (2012) found that through the process of generating and interpreting drawings and thinking of the social impact of such drawings, participants were able to make meaning, develop a sense of mastery, experience agency, and self-regulate, all of which reference universal protective mechanisms found to buffer individuals at risk of negative outcomes. This and other similar accounts suggest that the use of VMs serves as an intervention in itself. In representing the lived realities of participants and engaging them in the translation or

meaning making as well as the dissemination of the findings, research becomes an intervention (D'Amico et al., 2016).

Acknowledged as experts, participants may also have a greater say in the ways in which research outcomes are produced and received by academic and lay audiences (De Lange, 2012; Gubrium & Harper, 2013). For their part, researchers and audiences are provided with opportunities to broaden their experience, understanding, and representation of the topic being explored (Frith et al., 2005). As an advocacy tool for social action, VMs like community-based participatory video, photovoice, and digital stories have been used to raise awareness of particular problems and to influence policy makers to improve conditions (Pauwels, 2015). Mitchell (2011a) notes that VMs are not only about participation and engagement on an individual level but can be conceptualised as an advocacy tool that provides a means of contesting prevailing gender discourses about girls, sexuality, and gender-based violence. Mahadev (2015) found that the use of participatory video with South African Indian girls was an empowering process that enabled girls to produce knowledge about sexual violence collectively, build their confidence, and consider ways in which they could address sexual violence. Similarly, digital stories have been included in gender studies, with the stories used as illustrative case studies in learning activities and have also been used in media campaigns (see Sonke Gender Justice Network). Findings suggest that this has proved effective in challenging and overturning cultural stereotypes and mobilising young women into action (Gubrium, Hill, & Flicker, 2014; Hlalele & Brexa, 2015). In a multi-country participatory video project, Gurman et al. (2014) found that the use of participatory video resulted in increased awareness, changed attitudes, and a reduction in behaviours related to gender-based violence and harmful cultural practices. The efficacious use of VMs in research on CSA and gender-based violence is essential in a context like South Africa, a country that suffers from disturbingly high rates of such violence. The most recent statistics

from a national population survey suggests that 1 in 3 children in South Africa is likely to experience some form of sexual abuse (Artz et al., 2016).

However, as raised in the introduction, VMs are not without limitations and their effectiveness should be considered critically. This criticism prompted the research questions that inform this article.

### **Research Questions**

The first research question guiding this article is this: Does the screening of visual outputs produced in a phenomenological study with girls with CSA experiences facilitate a greater understanding of what enables and constrains resilience processes for those viewing it? If the answer is in the affirmative, question 2 is this: Does this knowledge result in any action?

### **Method**

In the following section, we provide a brief description of our study, its rationale, and its research design. Although we provide a brief description of our primary participants —black adolescent girls with a history of CSA — and the process of their participation, we focus our description on the research process as it pertains to the secondary participants who viewed the visual products and who are, for the purposes of this article, referred to as the audience. We then share findings from the facilitated discussion with members of the audience.

### **Rationale for our study: A visual exploration of resilience processes in black adolescent girls who have experienced CSA**

Our exploration of resilience processes in sexually abused black African girls with a history of CSA was guided by three factors. The first of these is the pervasiveness of CSA in

South Africa that necessitates further study and intervention (see Artz et al., 2016; Mathews, Hendricks, & Abrahams, 2016). The second is that scholarship suggests that resilience post CSA is possible (see Collishaw et al., 2007; Domhardt, Münzer, Fegert, & Lutz, 2015; Haffejee & Theron, 2017; McElheran et al., 2012;), and the third is the limited number of studies specifically focused on African girls' resilience processes (see Jefferis & Theron, 2017; Phasha, 2010; Theron & Donald, 2012; Theron & Theron, 2013). Our decision to employ participatory VMs was influenced by the literature presented above that indicates that VMs generate rich textured accounts of issues like CSA through a democratic, respectful, potentially empowering method of engaging with adolescent girls while at the same time providing avenues for awareness-raising and the prevention of CSA.

### **Research Design**

The paradigm guides the research process and clarifies the intent, motivation, and expectations of the research (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006). Our focus on change and transformation together with an awareness of the marginal position of black African girls in society dictated our adoption of an emancipatory critical paradigm that falls under the umbrella of the transformative paradigm and, as such, holds, as Ponterotto (2005) and Mertens (2007) make clear, that because reality is shaped and mediated by social, historical, political, and cultural factors, the aim of research is to foster social change and contribute towards empowerment. Research for social action and social justice provides a means through which marginalised voices like those of black girls may be heard so that these girls might be empowered and encouraged to action (Mertens, 2015). This purpose ties in with the social justice agenda of our research and our inclusion of audience reflections in that the research aim is not only to generate data but, following Mertens (2015) is also to view research as a means of furthering this agenda. In order to draw attention to marginalised voices this paradigm suggests using participatory, naturalistic designs (like VMs) as Swart

and Bowman (2007) suggest. In the use of VMs levels of participation may differ; participants may be involved in all or one of the many research processes from conceptualisation to participation, and from analysis to dissemination (Burles & Thomas, 2014; Mitchell & Sommer, 2016; Mitchell, 2008). The dissemination phase sees the inclusion of the recipient into the research process. Participants may identify possible avenues where the knowledge they co-produced that includes visual outputs, is disseminated to relevant audiences/recipients who are perceived as having the necessary capacity and influence to work with participants to generate social change (Mitchell, 2008).

### **Research Participants and Process**

To explore resilience processes in adolescent black girls with a history of CSA, we purposefully recruited 7 girls from 2 child and youth care facilities (CYCC 1 and CYCC 2). To contextualise the reflections of the audience, we provide a brief description of our primary participants, their age at the time of the interview, the age at which they were first abused as well as other childhood adversities suffered, along with a brief discussion on the process we followed with them. Table 1 below provides a brief description of the primary participants.

*Table 1: Description of primary participants*

Name*	Age	Age of first sexual abuse	Number of perpetrators	Number of disclosed sexual abuse incidents	Other childhood adversities
Lumkah	18	10	3	On-going	Removal from caregiver Paternal neglect Death of both parents
Twinky	18	10	1	1	Death of primary caregiver – granny Death of Mother Child-headed household Poverty
Precious	17	11	3	3	Death of father Death of mother Physical violence Verbal violence Poverty
Fireball Girl	17	10	1	On-going	Alcoholic, abusive mother Death of mother Death of aunt
Phindile	18	7	2+	2+ (1 single perpetrator incident, 1 multiple perpetrator incident)	Abandonment at birth Death of mother Father unknown Neglect
Jessica	18	16	1	1	Mother unknown Physical and verbal violence Isolated from extended family
Keamo	15	6	1	1	Death of father Death of mother Neglect and rejection by extended family

\*Pseudonyms chosen by participants

Upon receiving ethical approval for the study from the Humanities and Health Research Ethics (HHREC) council of North-West University and after obtaining informed consent from both girls and directors at the CYCCs, the first author began data collection with the participants. A number of visual methods were used to collect data. For the purposes of this article, we focus on the production of the digital stories and the screening of these digital stories to the audience (described below). Digital stories were selected because they offer a

range of possibilities for research and practice (Gubrium et al., 2014). These digital stories have been described as a modern version of the ancient oral storytelling traditions in their weaving in of images, video, animation, sound, music, text, and often a narrative voice (Digital Storytelling Association, 2011). Guse et al. (2013) suggest that the researcher/facilitator in the digital storytelling process assists participants in reflecting on their lives, situating individual experiences, like that of CSA, into broader contextual circumstances. In this way, these stories (of CSA experiences), may be contextualised not as individual problems but, instead, as a product of the complex interplay between individuals and ecological systems (Guse et al., 2013). These stories weave together nuanced accounts of risk and resilience factors.

In our study, primary participants were invited to write brief narratives of their lives in which they highlighted the risks to which they had been exposed, including the CSA experiences, as well as what enabled them to adjust positively following the experience/s. Participants were also encouraged to draw, capture, or share images related to their narratives and to identify or create music that fit these stories. Because the participants were unfamiliar with digital editing software and had strenuous school-related demands on their time, the first author, using digital editing software, put together the stories, images, and music produced by the participants. The first author then showed the digitalised story to each participant individually. The participants were encouraged to comment, criticise, and suggest changes if necessary. Upon approval from the participants, the digital stories were finalised and no further changes were made to them. After completion of the data collection process, the first author asked participants to identify relevant audiences who should view their digital stories. Participants indicated that their stories should be shared with girls with CSA experiences, those working with such girls (e.g., social workers and psychologists), and perpetrators.

Using some of the participants' suggestions of potential audiences for their digital stories and with their verbal consent, the first author identified a number of individuals who work with girls with CSA experiences and sent out an email to them inviting them to attend the screening. The invitation specified that findings from the visual exploratory study with girls on what enabled their resilience following CSA would be shared. Of the 14 people invited, 8 attended. The first author endeavoured to find a date and time that would suit both the primary participants and the audience but competing scholastic demands meant that the primary participants were unable to attend at a time when the audience was available. As a result, the primary participants were not present at the screening which was held in August 2016 at CYCC 1. The first author, however, met with the primary participants after the screening (over a weekend) and provided feedback from the screening and the discussion with the audience.

Table 2 provides information on the members of the audience that was made up of service and mental health professionals. All 8 audience members were from CYCC 1 and, as is apparent from the table, all audience members had significant experience working with youth subjected to adverse circumstances.

*Table 2: Description of audience members*

Audience member	Profession/Position at CYCC-	No. of years working in child care
MS	Founding member of CYCC/Director/Social worker	25
TH	In-care Manager/Educator	25
SM	Assistant director	17
AP	Youth skills and staff wellness facility	20
AM	Manager shelter/4th year student social worker	17
RF	Social worker	7
LM	Senior Social worker	20
TG	Senior Social worker	20

After a brief introduction, the first author presented an overview of the study explaining the purpose and the significance of the study and the way in which it was carried out. Audience members understood what the purpose of the screening was and consented verbally to their inclusion in the study. Following this, the first author began the screening of the composite video of the visual outputs that included the 7 digital stories, created by the primary participants. The digital stories produced by the participants presented a powerful description of their experience of CSA as well as their resilience. The screening lasted approximately an hour and was followed by a facilitated discussion of the findings. The first author posed a number of questions to guide the discussion. The discussion was audio

recorded. Questions used were based on Mitchell's (2011b) viewer response form and included the following:

1. Describe your immediate impressions of the digital stories produced.
2. What do you understand about resilience processes:
  - a. What enables the girl's resilience processes?
  - b. What constrains the girl's resilience processes?
3. How should/can outputs be used?

Drawing on Walsh (2012) who suggests that longitudinal approaches may provide greater insight into the impact of research for social change, the first author followed up with audience members almost a year later, via email. The first author posed the following questions to them:

1. Did the digital stories you saw make an impression on you, as a service provider? If so, in what way?
2. What do you recall about the stories?
3. Has watching the digital video stories resulted in any changes in the way you do or think about things, like CSA, girls, and their resilience? If yes, what are these changes?
4. After watching the video stories, did you take any action to address sexual violence?

In other words, did you use the information in any way? If yes, please explain how.

Of the 8 audience members emailed, 1 responded. No additional follow-up was made with the other audience members. Although the use of email interviewing allows for easy access to busy, difficult-to-reach participants, participants may overlook or forget to respond to emails (Meho, 2006). The low response rate may also be attributed to the challenges inherent in sustaining the engagement of participants in a research study over a period of

time; competing commitments, waning of interest and other constraints may impact on participation (Suleiman, Soleimanpour & London, 2006; Theron, 2016; Thimasarn-Anwar, Sanders, Munford, Jones & Liebenberg, 2014).

### **Data Analysis**

Data was analysed by the first author using Braun and Clarke's (2006) guidelines for conducting inductive thematic analysis. Data recorded during the facilitated group discussion with the audience was transcribed verbatim and coded by the first author using Atlas.ti 7.0 (2012). The research questions as well as questions posed to the audience in the facilitated discussion (above) were summarised into 2 broad questions, which were used to guide the analysis. The questions used were these:

1. How did viewing the digital stories facilitate a greater understanding in the audience of what enables and what constrains resilience processes for black girls with CSA histories?
2. In what way/s did this understanding generate action by the audience?

To ensure the trustworthiness of a qualitative study, Guba (1981) suggests that the study attend to the issues of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

Notwithstanding the context-dependent nature of qualitative studies (Shenton, 2004), the in-depth methodological descriptions provided above ensure that the researchers were mindful of issues with regard to the transferability, dependability, and confirmability of the research.

To ensure greater credibility of data, a reflective diary was kept by the first author for the duration of the study. Dependability of the findings was ensured through regular discussions between the first and second authors with both evaluating the process, the emerging themes and findings critically (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Transferability was achieved through dense

detailed descriptions of the research process and the participants (see Creswell, 2009; Koen, 2017).

### **‘Snapshots’ of the Visual Product Screened**

Before sharing findings from the audience reflections, we present an overview of the digital stories that were screened to the audience members and highlight emerging themes emanating from these. As indicated above, 7 digital stories were produced by the participants with the assistance of the first author. The stories provided a brief description of the events preceding the sexual abuse and in some instances touched on the actual abuse. Participants then highlighted what and who helped enabled them to adjust well (i.e., they focused on the process of their resilience).

In Lumkah’s story, *It All Happened for a Reason*, she describes her hurt and anger at the sexual abuse perpetrated against her by family members as well as her ongoing attempts at making sense of the abuse. Her narrative highlights her own agency in removing herself from abusive situations, her recognition of her own strength, *‘I believe and I know I am strong. I want to be successful’* as well as her acknowledgment of external resources that enabled her internal mechanisms, *‘I told my first step-mum and she supported me. She visits me now and believes me’*.

In Jessica’s narrative, *‘Rainbow after a Storm’*, she included a powerful, hauntingly beautiful song she wrote and sang. It resonates with the words of her narrative that describes her sense of betrayal at the sexual abuse perpetrated by her father. She says in her narrative, *‘That day he took me, he asked me to get on his bed. That day I realised the love is not a fatherly love but as sexual partner and a wife love. That day, I was screaming inside but then my screams were useless because no one could hear them. It was only me bleeding inside.’*

For her, moving forward and getting an education is both a means of triumphing over this negative experience, proving her father wrong, and is the means to a better life. She said, *'I am a strong girl. People tell me this. Sometimes I can't believe it but I am strong. I won't be stuck, I will focus on my dreams.'*

In Fireball girl's narrative, 'There is a Race I Must Run', she captures the impact of the sexual abuse in the opening lines, stating that *'My stepfather was the one who brought the pain that I have been going through.'* She goes on to describe the adversities she endured but focuses on her decision to move forward in accessing help at the CYCC and using programmes and services offered to self-regulate and reappraise her experiences. She says, *'When I came to this place I saw many opportunities that I could grab that would make me a better person tomorrow. Being here I realised I am actually strong.'* In her narrative we see how she reached out to an ecology that was supportive and that made resources available.

In Twinky's narrative, entitled, "Believe in Yourself", she describes the multiple adversities she experienced in addition to the sexual abuse. She highlights how she drew on her belief in herself and a sense of responsibility towards younger siblings which ensured that she did not lose focus. She said, *'For me to overcome all of this I was believing in myself, I have a future and a dream and I have to be an example in the community and I have to support my siblings and make my mum proud wherever she is.'* In her narrative she also highlights how, through support from her brother and from friends and through attendance at social skills programmes at the CYCC, she has been able to address her feelings of isolation and self-blame.

In Keamo's narrative, 'Never Settle for Less than Your Best', she briefly mentions the sexual abuse and the numerous disappointments she experienced and also speaks of her previous reliance on substances to deal with her pain. In moving forward, she recalls

supportive people in her environment who motivated her. Highlighting the potential that teachers have in enabling adaptation, she said, *'I had a teacher that I loved the most, she was the best teacher in the world.'* The frequent disruptions in her life, however, necessitated internal mechanisms of coping which, for her, included writing in a journal, reading motivational stories, and watching television. Keamo says, *'I have a journal where I write everything that makes me angry and hurt.'*

In Precious's narrative, entitled "My Innocence has been Taken from Me" she begins by highlighting the failure of the social ecology in helping her after she was raped, saying, *'When I was 11 years old I was raped and I didn't get justice'*. This first experience of having been failed by her ecology was reaffirmed in later experiences and resulted in her taking a decision not to disclose any of the further incidents of sexual abuse she suffered. For her, entering into a CYCC provided a reprieve from abuse and also provided her with an opportunity to meet other girls with similar experiences; the support she received from peers allowed her to begin talking about her abuse experiences and making sense of the abuse.

In Phindile's narrative, entitled, 'Circumstances that you Face in Life', she sets the scene of an innocent girl who was abandoned at birth, neglected and uncared for by a foster mother, and sexually abused by neighbourhood boys. For her, support from friends outside of the CYCC as well as an unwavering belief in God and God's purpose, enables her to move forward focusing on her future. This is reflected in the following excerpt from her narrative: *'In God there is peace and success. When you ask for God's help he will give you strength. Things happen for a reason, if you want to get somewhere you have to pass certain stages. Everyone is faced with problems'*.

## Findings

In the section that follows, findings from the group session are presented, clustered in five themes, each of which reflects the questions that guided the discussion. The first theme, immediate impressions and reflections on the digital stories viewed, focuses on the audience's first impressions of the digital stories produced by the primary participants. This discussion centred primarily on their interest in the medium that resulted in the powerful stories and the way the participants articulated these stories, and their immediate reactions. In the second theme, the audience reflects on what they understood about how the girls in the study adjusted positively and the resources they drew on. The third theme is about what constrains resilience. In the fourth theme, we consider the impact that the digital stories had on the audience, looking at their immediate response to the digital stories about how outputs could be used. We juxtapose these in the last theme, sharing findings on if and how outputs were actually used.

### **'Powerful processes': Immediate Impressions and Reflections on the Digital Stories Viewed**

Audience members expressed surprise that participants were able to articulate their points in the way they did; the narratives produced by the girls powerfully expressed their hurt but also showed their resourcefulness and highlighted their strength. Audience members' surprise at this capacity of the girls appeared to stem from prior experiences of working with girls who typically find it difficult to talk about sexual abuse and often choose not to disclose these incidents. They appeared moved by the strength displayed by the girls in talking about the difficult experience, AP commented on this saying,

the strength they showed... telling that story because that's not an easy story to tell.

Speaking about a primary participant's previous inability to disclose sexual abuse, another audience member, AM, also noted,

And from not talking to being so expressive, that's quite amazing it's like I didn't tell anyone, I didn't tell and when you listen to them now the way they express their feelings they are — it's just amazing.

Reflecting on the richness of the data produced, as well as the opportunity the methods used created in engaging with the girls, allowing them to tell their story fully and to be heard, MS commented,

I think the time given to them the, actual attention to detail... there's so much just time and... listening and hearing, is what is going to be healing them. You don't have to have a huge program full of intensive things... just that little bit of, of availability and listening and sharing.

This sense that the research method may be useful in connecting with and engaging participants was iterated by other audience members who suggested that the success of the stories was a result of 'Just believing in exactly what they're saying', 'being there with them' and 'giving them space'. The ability of the girls' digital stories to convey both the devastating severity of sexual abuse as well as their ability to adapt is captured in AP's response,

I think there was sacredness to the kids telling their story, you know so often you hear of rape survivors telling their stories, and somehow you don't get into their story. I don't know if it's because they have almost...worked through it and maybe it's just at an intellectual level but from the first time the girls started speaking [in the digital stories] that held our attention or that held my attention you know. And for me that was such a powerful process because it felt to a certain degree that they

had healed... you know that there was something in them... that was almost okay and I'm just hopeful that they will become quite healthy in who they are'

### **'The Thread of Hope': What Enables Resilience Processes**

For members of the audience the agency exhibited by the girls through their stories was immediately apparent. Commenting on their agentic expressions, AM stated,

I think it's taking responsibility of their lives, they are not waiting for somebody to come and do something for them you know, somebody should change this in order for me to be like this, they are actually changing their own lives and moving forward.

They noted the individual resources the girls appeared to possess such as future- oriented beliefs and hopefulness, as well as the ability to make meaning and take responsibility for their lives. Tied to their observation on the future-focused nature of the girl's stories, audience members also commented on the importance of education for participants that emerged from their stories. This is reflected in a comment made by RF,

The fact that they are so determined about school. You can see all of them... they want to go to school... they want to learn, they want to have a future and... it is true that they are very hopeful...so something positive.

For two participants, the sense of hope exhibited by the girls in spite of their difficulties was particularly inspiring; AP stated,

The thread of hope for me was they... could see a lesson you know and that's quite remarkable considering that they're quite young to have seen that... such uh... tragic thing could have something good in it.

AM referenced the role of hope but also the importance of the social ecology that enabled their expression of hope. She stated,

As soon as they changed the environment and moved into an environment that wanted to believe in their story and believe what has happened to them, they opened up and there was a lot of hope... somehow it pulled them through because they had hope, and I think with some girls who don't make it are the ones who just stop dreaming, and with these girls they were still dreaming and they were just looking for somebody to believe in them and believe what has happened and their story.

This statement and the one that follows points to the reciprocal role of the individual and the social ecology that is available, resourceful, and enabling. The social ecology in the form of the CYCC appeared to provide a safe space for the girls, providing respite from adverse conditions and enabling them to access resources. This is reflected in SM's contribution,

I think I also noticed ... how critical the ecological environment is because they... they came to the centre and they were believed and at the same time their environment was actually protected and that in itself facilitated you know change and development in them.

Resilience theory suggests that individuals are responsible for reaching out to the social ecology and accessing help that is made available in culturally appropriate ways (Ungar, 2011). That the girls did this is reflected in an observation made by RF, who said of their resilience that,

their ability not to settle on what happened to them... but to use every opportunity that comes their way.

The acknowledgement by the girls of the role played by the child and youth care centres, was received well by the audience, with LM stating that this recognition was encouraging,

From my side I am still shocked that we are making a difference ... because sometimes you feel like giving up... it's like all of them they appreciate the homes where they are living.

This positive feedback appeared to motivate them and affirm their efforts with girls. Members of the audience also picked up on other external sources of support that the girls spoke of in their digital stories, which included friends and other supportive adults.

#### **‘Almost Like So Much Vulnerability’: What Disables Resilience Processes**

As apparent as the strength displayed by the girls was what was absent and what contributed to their vulnerability. The fact that the girls experienced CSA and also endured multiple traumas like the fact that CSA is likely not to happen only once but repeatedly, was noted by the audience, TH stated,

It doesn't only happen once but again and again by different people.

For the audience, a considerable risk factor for the girls and what could potentially disable their resilience processes, was the relationships, or lack of relationships, with maternal figures and within families, as well as the factor of absent or toxic fathers. Noting the impact of an absent mother, AP stated,

Having a very bad relationship with their mums or losing their mums... not feeling safe and then encountering bad men.

The disintegration of the family system as well as the complexities involved in reporting CSA perpetrated by a family member was also discussed by the participants who suggested that families sometimes had the difficult choice of reporting a sexually abusive father and consequently having no source of income versus not reporting and being assured of some support. Breaking this down further, SM spoke about complex, intergenerational trauma to account for the lack of care which resulted in the vulnerability of these girls, asking,

What actually happened to this significant other who is raising this child... if you hear what the children are saying, children do not actually matter, and did they matter themselves to someone else when they were small?

Extending this, the audience also spoke of the wider context that is disabling. The audience reflected on the limited number of adults to whom participants had access, and to whom they were able to speak, and who believed them. They suggested that reaching out to community members was often difficult because it results in stigma. RF stated,

Do you know the stigma stays with you, you can't shake it off, every time they see you, the girl was raped, when they describe you... the one that was raped.

Further complicating their ability to do well was the lack of justice reflected in inadequate support from the police, and cultural systems that influence how children are parented, the access girls have to education, and the absence of parental figures, all of which renders girls more vulnerable to CSA. AM noted,

Parenting is culture based... can impact negatively on the child's resilience or assertiveness, because when you are a child you do not have a say.

### **‘We Can Only Start Here’: How Can the Outputs and Findings be Used?**

For the audience, the stories activated thoughts on addressing sexual violence in terms of both prevention and intervention. Members of the audience suggested that the stories be shown to families of sexual abuse survivors, social workers, and students studying social work, the justice department, and organisations working with men and perpetrators to highlight the devastating impact of abuse. They also suggested that it be included in parenting skills programmes so that parents are better informed on how to protect children and prevent abuse. The following excerpts outline their recommendations,

The justice department needs to hear how they failing the girls, and I think the clinics is a good platform because mother they come every day.

They also expressed the need for them, as an organisation, to begin working with boys and girls to affect change, with TH noting that,

If we want to keep our girls safe we need to start working with our boys.

They also appeared to take ownership for beginning such a process, saying,

Well we can only start here... we can't go out there, and we need to make a difference.

### **How Were Findings Used?**

Given that only one audience member provided written feedback on the impact that viewing the digital stories had had on her, data was insufficient to formulate themes. However, for the one audience member, the digital stories screened gave her insight into what the CSA experience really was like for the individual girls. She wrote,

Even though we know the children and youth come to us with deep pain, we rarely get their first hand experiences... So the way it was done was very powerful.

The message she took away, and that she still recalls, is about the need to provide a sense of safety for the girls, more specifically, having the right person engaging with the girl at the right time to help her move forward. She said,

That if all we do on a daily basis is provide a safe space then when the time is right the person with the purest intention can assist the children put down that pain and hopefully pick up a new start with faith in adults again.

Her responses to the impact that viewing the digital stories had on her as well as the actions she initiated afterwards suggest that the screening highlighted the need to empower girls, to question normalised gender roles, and to encourage girls to redefine themselves. As a result of this awareness, she reported including some of this learning into life skills programmes that she facilitates with young girls.

### **Discussion**

In this paper we sought to interrogate assertions that speak to the utility of VMs to foster awareness of the resilience processes of girls and operate to initiate social change. In spite of a groundswell of support for the use of VMs in social science research (Mitchell, 2011a), its utility and efficacy have not been fully explored. Advocates of the approach suggest that VMs present a powerful tool that engages participants and audience alike, that it is capable of fostering transformational change for participants who engage in the process as well as spurring receptive audiences into acting to address social problems. However, there is limited evidence that confirms this.

The analytical focus of VM research may extend to detailed analysis of the visual product, the process of making the products, the reception generated by the visual artefacts, as well as the verbal reactions of an audience following exposure to the visuals (Pauwels, 2010). With its potential to foster both individual and social change, VMs can and may render both the research process as well as the produced outcomes meaningful (Gubrium & Harper, 2013). As we will go on to discuss, no significant tangible changes resulted from this screening. The participant-generated visuals combined with the richly textured narratives enabled the audience to gain greater insight into the lives of the participants. Audience member's reactions to the combination of visual data and narratives were particularly striking given their professions and experience. As child care workers actively involved with youth from disadvantaged circumstances they are not unfamiliar with the range of difficulties these young people encounter on a daily basis and they have heard numerous accounts of CSA. From the follow-up feedback, it appeared that this impact was not lost almost a year later. The reactions of the audience lends supports to studies that show that visual methods add depth and texture to research data, allowing for an accurate representation of the lived realities of participants (Burles & Thomas, 2014; D'Amico et al., 2016) and that this can result in meaningful change. That these audience members were moved is testament to the power of images combined with narratives; this visual medium produced a more tangible awareness in them of the experiences of these girls.

In addition to their appreciation of the digital stories produced, audience members were pleasantly surprised at the participants' ability to engage with the researcher in retelling their stories so powerfully. They reflected on the opportunities that the research process presented in skilfully and empathetically engaging with girls with CSA experiences. This finding supports De Lange and Mitchell's (2014) assertion that visual methods offer a sensitive, respectful way of engaging with survivors of sexual violence. While these findings are

positive and lend support to the efficacy of visual methods in eliciting rich data and engaging with participants in a democratic manner, to what extent did the method facilitate understandings of resilience processes of girls with CSA histories? And more importantly what, if any changes, did it result in?

In terms of the former question, our findings are consistent with those made by resilience researchers (see Cameron, Theron, Ungar, & Liebenberg, 2011; Jefferis & Theron, 2017; Liebenberg, 2009; Theron, 2012) that VMs provides an adequate tool that successfully enhances understandings of resilience processes in highlighting the co-constructed nature of resilience. While the audience immediately picked up on the individual agency that emerged from the girls' stories, the responsibility the girls assumed towards ensuring that they were no longer in danger by reaching out to friends and supportive resources, in gaining an education, and in maintaining hope for the future, the audience also observed the influential role that the social ecology had had. Echoing assertions by Ungar (2015) and Masten and Wright (2010) on the fundamental role of the social ecology, the audience also observed the potential that a caring, nurturing environment had, acknowledging their role in aiding the girls and making resources available.

Reflections regarding the enabling potential of external structures were, however, tempered by an awareness of the many ways in which the social ecology failed the girls and challenged their resilience. The audience highlighted the challenges presented by poor or absent parents and broken family networks, unsupportive communities, disabling cultural practices, and inefficient government systems. So while the audience appeared proud of the girl's resourcefulness they were not unaware that this was a necessity in the context of their lives. In highlighting the potential risks and scarcity of resources, the audience's reflections contextualised the dominance of agency in the girls' narratives; it was a result of need rather

than choice. Ungar (2011) holds that if we do not decentre the individual, the social ecology celebrates the magnificence of the resilient individual. The danger is that vulnerable individuals are blamed for their inability to adapt and the failure of the social ecology, like the parents, families, schools and police officers in our study, to prevent and limit risks is exonerated. There was, however, no evidence that the audience sought to exonerate the social ecology, and, in fact, they acknowledged that to change the status quo the work needed to begin at the CYCC. Did this however happen? Evidence suggests that it did not. So while the audience was highly receptive of the outputs and clearly moved by the narratives depicted in the digital stories, and appeared to understand the reciprocal process of resilience, follow-up observations and queries suggest that it did not result in any broad, tangible advocacy efforts. In scrutinising why the initial positive interest and momentum fizzled into efforts by only one individual, we suggest that the lack of action is less about interest and more about know-how, or the lack thereof. How does viewing the digital stories translate into action? Here we interrogate our role and limitation based on research that examines the social change potential of VMs in that we assumed that the audience would act. However, we did not make this clear, neither did we suggest ways in which this could be done. Perhaps the audience felt that in making suggestions of possible points of dissemination, they had acted and that the onus was on us as the researchers to take the findings forward? While the process appeared democratic and empowering for the participants, perhaps it was less so for the audience, who did not feel the same sense of ownership over the process? Drawing on Pauwels (2015) who asserted that exposure to visual research is not intrinsically empowering, we add that neither is it naturally activating. Social change and the ability to foster social change does not just happen, but seems to require translation of visual outputs and its significance into achievable, doable actions (High, Singh, Petheram, & Nemes, 2011).

Dissemination is a process in and of itself, requiring focused time and resources (Pauwels, 2010). Our obligation as resilience researchers to use research to make a difference necessitates further engagement with this data (Hart et al., 2016). The end of an academic study should not necessarily signal an end to such a process. Mitchell (2011b) asserts that “the work is never done” (p. 57) when we are using VMs, particularly in relation to gender-based violence, and recommends that visual data can and should be revisited and reinterpreted. Mitchell (2011a) proposes that we use participatory digital archiving as a means of going forward because archiving makes visual artefacts available to communities and to participants themselves beyond the research process. This presents opportunities for us to adopt some of the suggestions made by both the participants and audience members and make the visual data available in youth advocacy communities as well as within the CYCCs. In this way we are able to meet our ethical and moral imperatives to make research more meaningful and to use it as a way of initiating social change (Pauwels, 2015; Mitchell, 2011b).

### **Conclusion**

The aim of this article was to critically consider the efficacy of VMs in creating awareness of resilience processes in girls with CSA experiences as well as to consider the usefulness that VMs have in fostering social change. Our findings suggest that in terms of the former aim, VMs live up to their promise but in terms of the latter it is in need of refinement. In order to ensure social change, the use of VMs requires additional research and realistic critique and perhaps more explicit guidelines for both researchers and audiences on how to use the visual outputs so as to effect social change.

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## Section C

### Summary and conclusions

#### *I See*

1 girl, 2 girls, 7 girls, many girls

#### *I hear*

Fathers, step-fathers, grandfathers, uncles, cousins, neighbours, strangers, healers

Hurting, beating, breaking, abusing, mistreating

#### *I hear*

Mothers, aunts, grannies, police officers

Ignoring, protecting, defending

Complicit

#### *I witness*

Hurt girls, sad girls, confused girls, raging girls, silent girls, powerful girls

#### *I hear*

Silence, anger, ambivalence, hope, sadness, triumph

#### *I notice*

Teachers, neighbours, friends, siblings, preachers

Reaching out

#### *I observe*

Girls writing, reading, listening, running, looking, seeking, reaching, talking, surviving

#### *I feel*

Drained, angry, sad, complicit, responsible, hopeful

#### *I DO?*

(Sadiyya Haffejee, 2016)

## **Chapter 6**

### **1. Introduction**

This dissertation began with references to and narratives of triumphant women thriving in spite of early experiences of CSA. This established my interest and need to understand how this is achieved. What contributes, accounts for, or enables such resilience in the face of CSA? This need was articulated in this PhD study in which I sought to understand this process of positive adaption in black African girls with a history of CSA. Findings from my study fill an important gap in the existing resilience research literature. As I have indicated in other parts of this study, resilience research to date has been dominated by perspectives from developed countries (Theron & Donald, 2012; Theron & Theron, 2013; Theron et al., 2013). Context-specific majority worldview perspectives (such as those of South African girls) are limited but essential (Theron & Phasha, 2015). Given the distressingly high rates of sexual violence in South Africa, urgent and effective intervention and prevention is essential (Artz et al., 2016; Jamieson, Mathews, & Berry, 2017). In providing insight into what accounts for the resilience processes of black African girls with CSA experiences, this PhD study suggests multiple points at which those working with girls may intervene and act to influence resilience-enabling practice.

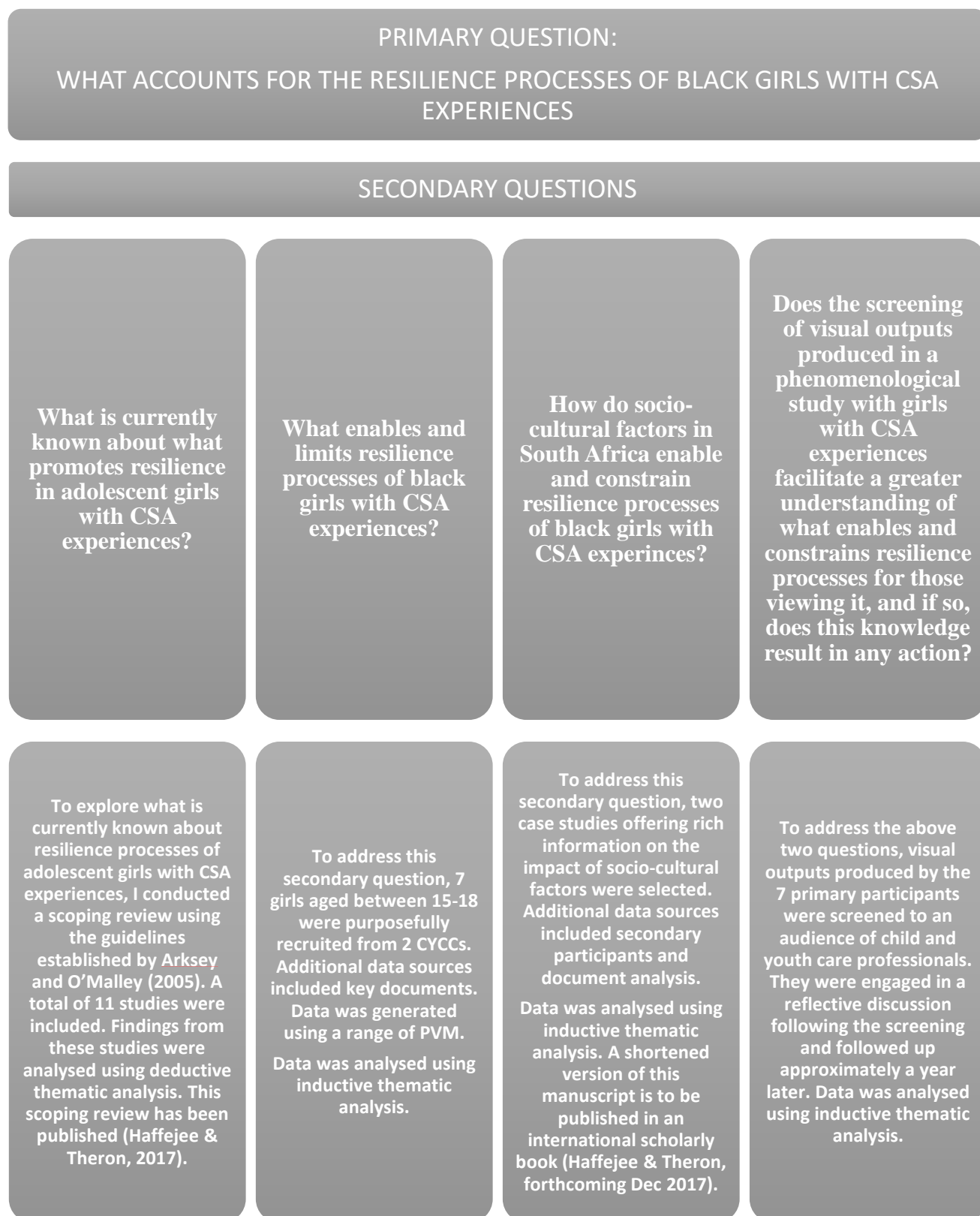
In this chapter, I revisit and summarise the process of this PhD research and consider the limitations of this study as well as its implications.

### **2. Questions Revisited**

This PhD study was guided by one primary question and four secondary questions. The primary question focused on what accounts for the resilience processes of black African girls with CSA experiences. This primary research question was addressed by attending to the following secondary questions:

- What is currently known about what promotes resilience in adolescent girls with CSA experiences?
- What enables and limits resilience processes of black girls with CSA experiences?
- How do socio-cultural factors in South Africa enable and constrain resilience processes of black adolescent girls with CSA experiences?
- Does the screening of visual outputs produced in a phenomenological study with girls with CSA experiences facilitate a greater understanding of what enables and constrains resilience processes for those viewing it, and if so, does this knowledge result in any action?

See Figure 3 for a schematic representation of these research questions and the actions taken to address them.



*Figure 3: A schematic representation of how research questions were explored*

In manuscript 1, I reported on a scoping review, the aim of which was to understand what is known globally about resilience processes of adolescent girls with experiences of

sexual abuse and to consider how this understanding may be used to inform clinical practice and research. A total of 11 studies were included in the review and findings point to a correlation with resilience-enabling factors mentioned in prior resilience research. The findings highlight how enabling resources at the level of the individual operate alongside contextually available resources from the social ecology to enable resilience processes in girls with CSA experiences. Enabling resources at the level of the individual encompass the ways in which adolescent girls contributed to their resilience trajectories by drawing on personal strengths and resources. These included the ability to cognitively reappraise the experience and make meaning out of it, the presence of future orientated beliefs, as well as displays of individual agency and self-efficacy. Enabling socio-ecological resources included the presence of supportive family environments as well as peer relationships, cultural traditions, and religious beliefs that acted to protect the girls and help them make meaning of the experiences and educational systems that provided a sense of belonging and that nurtured optimism for a better future.

In manuscript 2, I drew on a socio-ecological understanding of resilience processes to explore what enables and limits resilience processes of black African girls. I engaged 7 purposefully recruited black girls with CSA histories from 2 child and youth care centres in a range of participatory visual method activities and also analysed key documents from their institutional case files. Findings highlighted the complex relationship between the individual and the social ecology in enabling resilience processes. Corroborating findings from previous research with girls with CSA experiences, the findings from this study also highlighted the fact that girls are not passive victims. Rather, they are active agents. Their activism is in part galvanised by unsupportive, sometime culpable social ecologies. So girls with CSA experiences were in some ways forced to act agentially, reaching out to the social ecology where these agentic endeavours were partially reciprocated. Thus, agency as an expression of

resilience was not completely dependent on the social ecology. Instead, girls with CSA histories drew on the social ecology selectively to support and facilitate their resilience processes. Although these findings suggest that individual agentic resourcefulness of girls with CSA experiences was more important in these cases than socio-ecological resources, it does not suggest that the social ecology should be absolved of its responsibility to prevent CSA or to make resources available and to intervene to support girls with CSA histories.

In manuscript 3, I narrowed my focus and looked more specifically at how socio-cultural factors in South Africa enable and constrain resilience processes of black girls with CSA experiences. This relates to growing acknowledgement that risk and resilience processes are shaped by sociocultural factors (Masten, 2014; Ungar, 2015, 2017). Again I drew on the socio-ecological understanding of resilience (Ungar, 2011) and referenced research in South African studies that suggests that for young black people cultural influences, given their greater emphasis on local history, indigenous practices, and beliefs, allow for different pathways to resilience from those reported for youth in North America and Europe (Theron & Donald, 2012). I conducted a secondary analysis of two cases (originally analysed for manuscript 2) that illustrated richly the complex ways in which cultural and contextual factors impact on the individual's resilience processes. Findings show how traditional African traditions, encompassed by ideas of Ubuntu and respect for elders, are subverted by individual actors and are used to hinder and hurt girls rather than protect them. At the same time, however, the findings also highlight how other systems within the social ecology, like schools and child and youth care centres, nurture resilience. The complex manner in which socio-cultural systems impact on resilience processes lends credence to resilience researchers who suggest that a more critical, nuanced approach to understanding the ways in which socio-ecological contexts enable resilience is needed (Panter-Brick & Eggerman, 2012).

In manuscript 4, I amplified my focus to reflect critically on methodologies used to understand social ecologically facilitated resilience. Here I referenced resilience researchers as well as researchers working with girls and with problems related to sexual violence who have suggested that using PVMs is an ideal way to foster greater awareness of issues like resilience and gender-based violence, and that PVMs may result in social activism (De Lange & Mitchell, 2014; Liebenberg, Didkowsky, & Ungar, 2012). Through screening visual outputs produced by primary participants to an audience, and engaging the audience in a reflective discussion immediately post screening, and following up a year later via email, I explored, critically, the usefulness of this particular aspect of PVMs in fostering an awareness of resilience processes related to the experience of CSA as well as the possibility of its activating social action. Findings suggest that PVMs is a powerful, impactful medium through which to foster awareness of such processes but, as far as activating social action is concerned, such screening, discussion, and follow-up as part of PVMs may require additional guidelines and refinement.

In summary, the above indicates that this study generated answers to the secondary questions informing this doctoral study. In the section that follows, I summarise these answers to address the primary question that guided this study.

### **3. Conclusions Drawn from this Study**

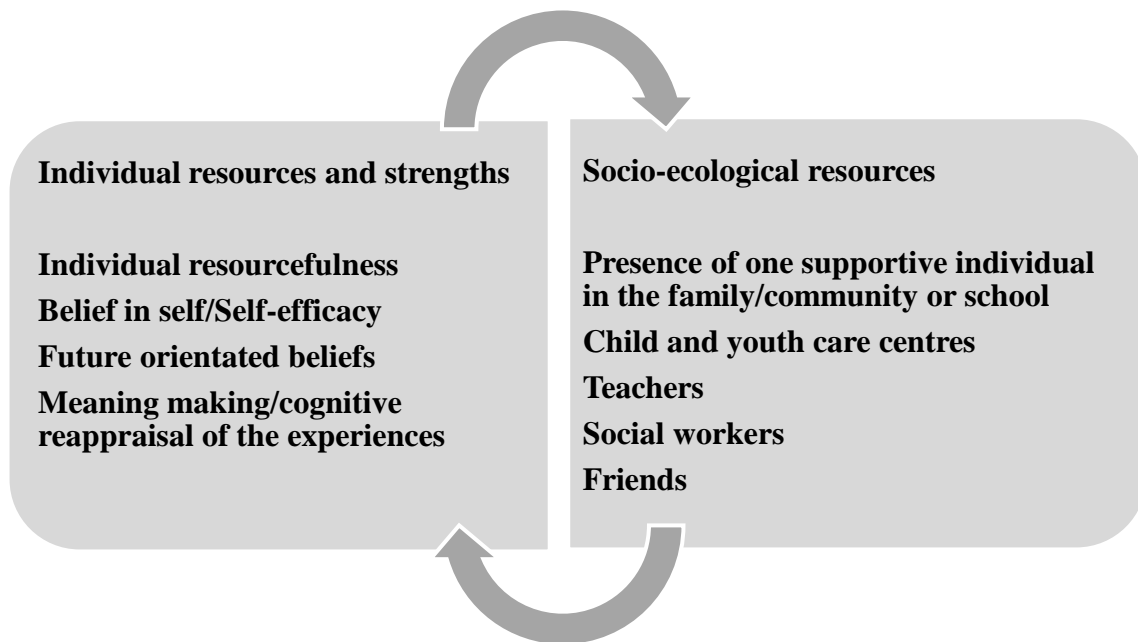
In this study, I explored what accounts for the resilience processes of black African girls with CSA experiences. To do this, drawing on multiple sources to generate data, I conducted qualitative instrumental case study research. Primary participants were purposefully recruited from two child and youth care centres in Gauteng, South Africa, and were engaged in a number of PVMs over a period of approximately a year.

In response to my primary research question, *What accounts for resilience processes of black girls with CSA experiences?*, explanations may be found at the level of the individual girl (manuscript 2), at the level of the social ecology (manuscript 3) and at the level of intervention

(manuscript 4). A common thread that runs through manuscripts 1, 2, and 3, from a global level (manuscript 1) to a more focused sociocultural contextual level (manuscript 2 and 3) is the role that individual factors *and* socio-ecological factors play in enabling resilience processes in girls with CSA histories. Ungar's (2012) social-ecological resilience theory on which I drew in this study suggests that resilience is a bidirectional relationship between the individual and the social ecology. However, while findings from this study highlight this reciprocity, it differs from Ungar's (2015) assertion that individual resources are useful only if the ecology is amenable to them and when it facilitates their expression and application. In his emphasis on the important role of the social ecology, Ungar (2015) states further that in contexts of significant adversity and trauma, ecological factors are more important to resilience processes than are individual factors. This was not borne out in this study. As demonstrated in manuscript 2 and 3, for participants in this study individual resources were more rather than less important. Social ecologies, in turn, proved at times disabling rather than enabling of resilience processes. For example, traditional cultural contexts (e.g., extended family networks) that some (see Theron, 2013) have posited as buffering individuals faced by adversity was not a buffer for participants in this study and, instead, placed the participants at increased risk of CSA. In the context of unsupportive — often even culpable — social ecologies, participants had to be resourceful. This expression of individual agency was a necessity rather than a preference. Girls could not and did not passively wait for help to come to them. Instead, they reached out to the social ecology when they were ready and able to do so. It should also be noted, though, that the social ecology was not wholly absent; when galvanised by the participants, resources within the social ecology stepped up to support the girls in their resilience trajectories. For example, empathetic friends who fully understood the CSA experience enabled girls to constructively make meaning of it and, in some instances, teachers encouraged girls to speak out and accessed help on their behalf. This process highlights the *potential* of the social

ecology. Social ecologies can do better to support girls, so while the social ecology may not have functioned optimally, for the most part in this study, to support these girls it can and should be challenged and strengthened to do so.

See figure 4 for a visual representation of key enablers of resilience processes for participants in this study.



*Figure 4:* Visual representation of enablers of resilience processes

This PhD study argues for a more balanced, critical view of the role of the wider social ecology as well as that of culture in what accounts for the resilience of girls with CSA experiences and contributes to a contextually relevant understanding of resilience processes as advocated by Masten (2014, 2016) and Ungar (2015). By flagging the above issues, this PhD study also makes a contribution in its recognition of the potential of these systems to constrain rather than enable resilience processes. Social justice, however, demands greater accountability from these structures and the call to challenge disabling structures is gaining traction (Hart et al., 2016; Bottrell, 2013). Findings from this PhD research support these calls, suggesting that while agentic resourcefulness is laudable and essential, societal structures that fail these girls

need to be challenged and transformed. One way of beginning this process is through education and raising awareness. In manuscript 4, I demonstrate that this can, in part, be done through the use of suitable mediums. In this manuscript, I explain how increased understanding of CSA and of resilience processes was enabled through the use of PVMs. My aim was twofold; I wanted to create awareness and initiate a process of structural change through the screening of visual outputs produced by participants. As mentioned above, the former aim was met but the latter was not. This points to the need for further research on the usefulness of PVMs to effect these aims as well as the necessity for clearer guidelines.

#### **4. Implications for Leveraging Resilience**

Through the purposeful adoption of the critical-emancipatory worldview, the critical theoretical perspective, as well as its use of PVMs used to generate data, this PhD study is bound by its focus on social justice and transformation. This focus is coherent with the purpose of the broader project (Networks of Change and Well-being: Girl led ‘from the ground up’ policy making to address sexual violence in Canada and South Africa) of which this study is a part, and it is further aligned with the transformative aim of resilience research. With regard to the latter, I concur with calls made by eminent resilience researchers Masten (2014), Hart et al. (2016), Bottrell (2013), and Ungar (2015) that resilience research should be meaningful and make a contribution to improving the circumstances of youth facing adversities like CSA. Screening of visual products described in manuscript 4 was the first attempt to use data generated in this study to raise awareness of resilience-enabling resources with those working with youth. In the following paragraphs I consider further avenues through which learnings from this research may be translated into meaningful interventions that can support vulnerable, marginalised girls (see Aranda & Hart, 2014). Following Luthar and Eisenberg (2017) I am, however, mindful that interventions need to be pragmatic and contextually feasible.

This PhD study highlighted the resourcefulness of girls with CSA experiences and shows that they are not passive victims acting without agency. Rather, they negotiate actively with their contexts to elicit needed resources on which they draw to support their positive adaptation. This resourcefulness needs to be acknowledged and used in intervention efforts. Intervention programmes should include psycho-educational and therapeutic programmes that foster self-efficacy, enable meaning making, and nurture future orientated beliefs. As PVMs offer a suitable powerful medium through which to raise awareness of the resilience processes of girls with CSA experiences; this medium should be incorporated into intervention efforts.

In the sections above, I have indicated the need for the social ecology to be held accountable for its complicity in girls' experience of CSA as well as its failure to support girls in the aftermath of the CSA experience. Data from all the manuscripts highlights the potential that such systems hold for implementing meaningful resilience-enabling interventions with girls with CSA histories. Drawing on a holistic, systematic approach, I suggest that leverage points exist across the familial, institutional, legal, and social welfare systems.

Beginning at the level of the family, I think that this system should be strengthened to better protect girls and support them in the aftermath of CSA. This can be done through parenting programmes, psycho-educational programmes, and supportive family counselling. In the African context in which extended family members often double as significant caregivers (Kidman & Thurman, 2014), it is important to include these people along with community-based caregivers in parenting programmes.

Extending to wider systems, I believe that girls can be supported by members of society who have an increased level of understanding of the risks faced by girls and the impact of CSA as well as greater awareness about how to support and protect girls. One way of raising awareness is through media campaigns. More targeted interventions could, however, include a sustained focus on CSA by both government and civil society in South Africa. In line with the

suggestions made by Mathews and Collin-Vezina (2016), greater efforts should be made to find solutions to the CSA epidemic, to better implement existing laws and to monitor closely and continually the justice system to ensure follow-through of reported cases of CSA, and to equip social welfare systems to attend to girls in need in good time and ensure that they are provided with adequate medical, legal, and psychological assistance.

Findings highlight the essential role that CYCCs played in providing a safe therapeutic space for the girls in this study. Given this, CYCCs should be supported financially and pragmatically by government so that they are able to continue offering these services. Recognising the active role that CYCCs play in supporting girls and enabling positive adaptation is especially important given that research shows that child protection services and social services for children are under-resourced (Jamieson et al., 2017; Skhosana, Schenk, & Botha, 2014). Vetten (2017) and Skhosana et al. (2014) have found that funding to NGOs is insufficient, and Vetten (2017) notes the pattern in South Africa of no or below-inflation annual increases in subsidies to NGOs between 2012/2013 and 2016/2017.

Last, as in previous resilience research in which teachers have been identified as enabling resilience processes (Jefferis, 2016; Jefferis & Theron, 2017), in this study, too, teachers appeared to play a role in pragmatically and emotionally supporting the girls, (for example, by reporting CSA and by encouraging the girls to develop their talents). In a resource poor context like South Africa, effectively using this resource is vital and can be done through equipping teachers with information on how to identify girls who have been abused, and training teachers on how to offer basic support and giving them counselling skills that will allow them to meet the emotional needs of girls.

## 5. Reflexivity

In participatory research as well as research aimed at social transformation and awareness raising, researcher reflexivity is regarded as a necessity (Suffla, Seedat, & Bawa, 2015), with Mitchell (2011a) asserting that it is a cornerstone of PVMs. Reflexivity is “the use of a critical, self-aware lens to interrogate the research process” (Finlay, 2016, p. 120). It highlights the practice and construction of knowledge within research; providing a space for researchers to evaluate how their background, position, subjectivity and behaviour impacts on the research process and vice versa (Finlay, 2016; Pillow, 2003). Reflexivity differs from reflections, in that reflexivity, is a broader concept that demands a more self-aware evaluation of the impact of the researcher on the research (Finlay, 2002; Hofmann & Barker, 2016). In the following paragraphs, I engage in this process of reflexivity, examining my role in this PhD research process.

### 5.1 Theoretical Reflexivity

Qualitative research is an interpretative process and, as such, the researcher is involved in prolonged and close interaction with participants so researcher subjectivity cannot be removed from the process (Creswell, 2012). As a researcher, I was cognisant that my own subjectivity in terms of my own values, biases, and assumptions might colour my interactions and interpretations. In addition to this, in being employed as a psychologist at one of the CYCCs, I was, and continue to be, closely involved with children who have backgrounds of trauma, abuse, and neglect. Here, my position as well as my experience impacted on the research process. My position allowed for relative ease of access into the research setting and a degree of trust from both child and youth care givers as well as participants. My knowledge of the setting and experience working with the children with trauma meant that I was unsurprised by the girls’ exhibition of resilience and the atypical way it could manifest. Ungar

(2011) references this atypicality as one of the four principles in SERT. Consistent with previous research with African youth, atypical expressions of resilience appear to emerge in contexts of multiple adversity (Malindi & Theron, 2010). So, while participants' decisions not to disclose abuse may be seen as maladaptive in some contexts, I was aware and completely understood that in the context of their lives, it served a functional purpose. In SERT, Ungar (2011, 2015) maintains that the social ecology has the primary role in enabling resilience promoting resources, and may in fact be more important than individual resources. This was not borne out in this study; what struck me during my interactions with participants was their self-reliance, which, in the absence of supportive ecologies, was a necessity. This, however, is not to suggest that the participants did not want or need the social ecology to be more supportive. My impressions (and perhaps anger) at the failure of the ecology were echoed by the audience members (see manuscript 4) who, as child and youth care workers, were keenly aware of the ways in which the environment can fail the child.

## **5.2 Methodological Reflexivity**

Generating data through PVMs allowed me to appreciate the suitability of using these methods in research on sensitive subjects (such as CSA). Through non-directive, visual methods that created opportunities for the participants to guide the process, powerful narratives were shared with me. That the participants were, to a large extent, in control of the research process was apparent in the group sessions; participants were at times oblivious to my presence. They engaged with each other freely, debating and reflecting on their experiences. This ease exhibited by the participants was reassuring for me and affirming of the decision to use PVMs.

During this research process, I also had pause to consider my ambitiousness in wanting to initiate a process of social action. Although PVMs has been lauded as having such a benefit, my engagement with this method suggested that it is not a simple endeavour. As a researcher, employing such methods requires a thorough understanding of the various processes as well as

an appreciation of the time required to initiate social change. Given the time constraints that come with a PhD study, I was not at luxury to share the visual outputs at different forums or follow up rigorously on how the audience had acted on what they had been exposed to. While I was disappointed that, through this research, I was not able to foster greater change, I was also reminded that communities and institutions, like researchers, may require an understanding of how to advocate for change and may require specific guidelines as well as much more time. My immediate disappointment is tempered by suggestions made by Mitchell (2011b) that visual data can and should be revisited and reinterpreted. This provides an avenue to me for future engagement.

### **5.3 Ethical Reflexivity**

Throughout the research process I was however keenly aware of the vulnerability of the participants. The poem on the opening page of this section highlights my struggle during this process. As a psychologist I was acutely aware of the depth of hurt that the participants had experienced and I was constantly torn between my role as a researcher needing information and that of a therapist wanting to counsel. Both roles, however, demanded of me an ethical perspective that emphasises acting in the best interest of the individual. With this in mind, I allowed the research process to unfold naturally, giving participants the opportunity to guide the process and to share as much or as little as they were comfortable doing. Research suggests that for survivors of sexual assault, engaging in research may be a positive experience (Campbell & Ahren, 2010). With this in mind, I was hopeful that the research process would be beneficial for the participants and that like researchers, such as D'Amico et al. (2016) and Theron (2012) (see manuscript 4) had indicated, research could be an intervention. Some prior studies, had in fact, noted the serendipitous therapeutic value of participatory qualitative research (see Biddle et al., 2013; Jefferis & Theron, 2017). To some extent, the PVMs provided a space for the participants to share experiences that they had not previously shared and,

through the use of multiple methods that required frequent engagement between me and the participants, the research process served as an intervention. I also met with each girl individually after data generation was completed, the purpose of this meeting was to give feedback to the participants by summarising for each of them the strengths and resources I had observed in them during the research process. During this meeting, all the participants reported that participation had been a positive and pleasant experience.

Research such as this PhD study, framed in a participatory manner that elicits deeply personal information, fosters a relationship between the researcher and the participant. Although it has been almost a year since data generation was concluded, I continue to have a relationship with the participants. Although 3 of the 7 participants have moved away from the CYCCs, we maintain contact via text messages and social media. This raises questions about how and when to disengage from the research process respectfully. Morrison, Gregory, and Thibodeau (2012) suggest that in qualitative research, particularly on sensitive subjects, exit strategies need to be considered thoughtfully and should ideally be a negotiated process between the participant and the researcher rather than a unilateral decision taken by the researcher. Although this process does require closure, and I did facilitate a meaningful closing session, at this point I have chosen to leave the relationships as they are.

## **6. Limitations of the Study**

I identified the following limitations in my study.

I included a limited number of studies in the scoping review. Exclusion of studies as a result of language bias, for example, may have resulted in my missing studies that may have provided an alternative explanation of what enables resilience processes in girls with CSA histories.

Understanding resilience processes warrants a developmental approach; exposure to risk may vary according to development and the manner in which the individual processes it may also vary (Masten & Wright, 2010). Given this, a longitudinal approach to understanding resilience processes in girls with CSA histories is required.

Although the use of PVM enables greater participation of the participant in the research process, failure to include the participants in every stage of the process has been critiqued and is seen as a limitation (Mitchell & Sommer, 2016). So, while participants were actively involved in the production of data they were less involved in the analytic process. I engaged girls as co-analysts in the research process insofar as they reflected on their visual outputs and, through this, rich data was yielded. Had I, however, included them in the analysis of the data, I may have had access to more nuanced understandings of resilience processes (see Jefferis, 2016).

An additional limitation of this study was the inclusion of a very specific audience for the screening of the visual outputs. Although I invited individuals from other organisations, only individuals from CYCC 1 arrived. This may have been because they were more invested in the study or because, as a staff member, I had more buy-in from staff. A more diverse audience might have provided a different perspective on the ways in which resilience processes are enabled and disabled and may have had a different response in terms of advocacy.

## **7. Recommendations for Future Studies**

As documented in the scoping review (Haffejee & Theron, 2017), the limited number of relevant studies (i.e. studies that specifically explore resilience processes in adolescent girls with CSA experiences), suggest a need for additional studies which seek to better understand the resilience of girls with CSA experiences. This PhD study is a step in that direction, but

additional studies would deepen an understanding of resilience in the face of CSA and provide a richer evidence-informed foundation for leveraging resilience.

Research with a similar focus on resilience processes following sexual abuse should be conducted with girls and boys from different socio-cultural contexts in South Africa (Wekerle & Kerig, 2017). Given the understanding that resilience is shaped by sociocultural contextual determinants (Masten, 2014; Ungar, 2011, 2017), multiple studies across varied South (and other) African contexts are important if we are to provide deeper insight into the resilience processes of populations previously marginalised in resilience research (Theron, 2015; Theron & Phasha, 2015).

As indicated above because resilience processes are subject to changes across the life-course (Masten & Wright, 2010), a longitudinal life history approach should be undertaken so that the impact of the social-ecology may be understood over a period of time.

Studies focusing on the usefulness of PVM as an intervention in research on CSA should be explored. As demonstrated in manuscript 4 and as mentioned above, while many benefits have been attributed to PVMs, as a method it is not without criticism. Given this, additional research should be undertaken that examines how PVMs can be refined so that it may be used more effectively as an advocacy tool in resilience research.

## **8. Conclusion**

My purpose in undertaking this doctoral study was to understand what accounts for the resilience processes of girls with CSA experiences. In this chapter and in the four manuscripts that each speak to a secondary question, I attempted to highlight how this purpose was achieved. Theoretically, this study makes a contribution to contextually relevant resilience research; it offers insights into resilience processes of black girls with CSA experiences, an area hitherto insufficiently explored. In its adoption of PVM, it adds to methodological

knowledge, highlighting both the usefulness and the shortcomings of such methods. In this closing paragraph, I reiterate the need for social ecologies, represented by parents, family members, police officers, teachers, social workers, researchers, and academics to step up to ensure that the violence perpetrated against girls like Keamo, Phindile, Jessica, Lumkah, Twinky, Precious, and Fireball girl is prevented and when it is not, girls like these are better supported to adapt positively.

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<sup>vi</sup> In manuscript 4, Mitchell, C. (2011a) refers to the journal article What's participation got to do with it? Visual methodologies in 'girl-method' to address gender-based violence in the time of AIDS, and Mitchell, C. (2011b) refers the book, *Doing visual research*.

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## **Appendices**

Appendix A: Prompt for timelines

Appendix B: Questions for individual interviews following timelines

Appendix C: Prompt for Tree of Life activity

Appendix D: Prompt for participatory video activity

Appendix E: Ethics certificate McGill University

Appendix F: Ethics certificate NWU

Appendix G: Primary participant information and consent

Appendix H: Legal guardian caregiver information and consent

Appendix I: Advisory panel information and consent

Appendix J: Secondary participants' information and consent

Appendix K: SAJS guidelines for authors

Appendix L: Author guidelines for Journal of Adolescent Research

Appendix M: Author guidelines for Journal of Black Psychology

Appendix N: Author guidelines for Qualitative Research in Psychology

## Appendix A

### Prompt for Timelines

The following prompt was given at the beginning of the interview to guide the process:

“I would like to understand the story of your life. To do this, I am going to give you a piece of paper with a line drawn on it. This line will represent your life. I’d like you to use this line and fill in the important things in your life that you can remember for example, when you were born, when you started school, when you came to stay at the centre. I will also like you to think about the time when you were abused, when it happened, where you were living at that time, how old were you, etc. You can make notes on the line or draw pictures. After you’ve done that, we will discuss these events.”

## Appendix B

### Questions that guided participant interviews

Example of questions that guided the interview with participants (once the timelines were completed)

- Describe to me what you have drawn and/or written on the paper?
- Where would you like to begin in talking about the important events that you have experienced?
  - How old were you when that happened?
  - What do recall most of that incident?
  - Who was with you during that time?
  - What made it easier for you to cope with this event?
    - Did you talk to anyone about it?
    - Did you get help from anyone or from a place (clinic, counsellor)?

## Appendix C

### Guideline for Tree of life activity

Participants were invited to think about the different parts of a tree, i.e. the roots, ground, trunk, branches, leaves and fruit and how each part contributes to the overall growth and well-being of the tree. (A visual example was provided)

Prompt: 'I would like you think of yourself as a tree and what it would be like to think of your life as parts of a tree. The different parts represent different parts of you and what you needed/need in order to grow – for example;

***Roots of the tree: This is where you came from. It could be your family, your village, the community where you first lived and grew up.***

- Who/what made a positive impact on you? Who/what helped you? What aspect of your history has helped you do well?

***The ground: this is where you are at, at the moment; your present circumstances.***

- What/who in your present circumstances is helpful, assists you in doing well?

***Trunk of the tree: this represents your skills.***

- What do you think you are good at, what talents do you have, special skills (kindness) – how does this skill help you to do well?

***Branches: this represents your hopes Individuals hopes.***

- What hopes do you have for your future? Where/when did you start thinking about these hopes, what nurtures it, what do you need to realise them, what sustains it and what has allowed you to hang onto to it)

***Leaves: people who are important.***

- Why are they important? How have they helped/do they help you?

***Fruits: gifts the individual has been given. Need not be material. This could include gifts like kindness, care, support.***

- How have these fruits helped you to do well?

Participants will be invited to draw a tree (an example will be available to show the girls what is meant)

## Appendix D

### Prompts for video production and video production interview guide.

“Now that I have shared what I learnt from each of you about what supports girls to do well in life despite going through a difficulty, like sexual abuse, I would like you to think about telling this as a ‘story’ that you will act out and film. The story should explain how black African girls, like yourself, cope with abuse and do well even though abuse could be devastating.

You can tell this story in any way that you want; you can tell your story in the form of a drama or play, a poem, a song, a dance or an interview. The focus of the story is on how you have and are doing well and not on the abuse.

Once you have some idea of how you want to tell this story, you can use the storyboard document which I have given you. You will see that the storyboard is a one page document that has 8 blocks on it. The first block is for the title of your story. The next block is for the first part or ‘scene’ of your story – you can draw/sketch/cartoon what that part is about, or write short sentences. Each block that follows is for the next ‘scene’/part of your story. The last block will be about how your story ends. Your story should not be too long because in a little while I am going to ask you to act out the story and video this. Ideally, your video should be only 5 minutes long.”

“Now I am going to ask you to act out your story and then to film it. You can do this anywhere in this room or we can go outside. The first time round you act it out without video-taping – kind of like a practice round so you can get a feel for your story. The second time you video-record it, using the video-cameras I brought with. I will show you how to use them – in a different project we asked children to use the video-cameras; I’m telling you this so that you will understand how easy it is to use the video-cameras. You film a scene and

then stop the video-camera. Then you film the next one (your storyboard will guide you).

This helps in two ways: it means that if you want to re-film a scene you can without having to redo the whole video, and it means that you can take turns filming/acting if that is what your group prefers. We use what is called a no-editing required approach: this means that when you have filmed all 8 scenes of your storyboard and bring them to us, we believe they are perfect and require no editing. We just put them together to form your video. Have fun!”

“We are now going to look at the videos you made and talk about what they mean.” Once videos are screened, the following questions guided the discussion:

- a. What are you saying in this video, that is, what message does it have?
  - i. What does your video say about how girls do well even though they have been abused?
- b. What are the main points you would like people who see this video to understand?
- c. What part did you enjoy most in making the video?
  - i. What do you really like about your video?
- d. How do you think this video can help us to better help girls that have been through difficult experiences, such as sexual abused?
- e. Who do you think needs to see a video like this?
  - i. How can I as a researcher, help you to show your video to the people you think need to see it?
- f. If you were to make another video, what would you focus on? Why?

(Mitchell & de Lange, 2011).

## Appendix E

## Ethics Certificate from McGill University



**Research Ethics Board Office**  
James Administration Bldg.  
845 Sherbrooke Street West, Rm 429  
Montreal, QC H3A 0G4

Tel: (514) 398-6831  
Fax: (514) 398-4644  
Website: [www.mcgill.ca/research/researchers/compliance/human/](http://www.mcgill.ca/research/researchers/compliance/human/)

**Research Ethics Board II**  
**Certificate of Ethical Acceptability of Research Involving Humans**

**REB File #:** 267-0115

**Project Title:** Networks for Change and Well-being: Girl-led 'from the ground up' policy-making: Addressing sexual violence (adults)

**Principal Investigator:** Prof. Claudia Mitchell

**Department:** Integrated Studies in Education

**Co-investigators/ Other Researchers:** Dr. Ann C. Macaulay, McGill University; Dr. Carrie A. Rentschler, McGill University; Dr. Linda C. Theron, North-West University; Dr. Linda Liebenberg, Dalhousie University; Dr. Marnina Gonick, Mount Saint Vincent University; Dr. Myriam S. Denov, McGill University; Dr. Sandrina S. De Finney, University of Victoria; Dr. Sarah E. Flicker, York University; Dr. Shaheen Shariff, McGill University; Dr. Steven S. Jordan, McGill University; Ms. Jessica Danforth, Native Youth Sexual Health Network; Ms. Saman Ahsan, Girls' Action Foundation; Dr. Eun G. Park, McGill University; Professor Naydene De Lange, Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University; Professor Relebohile T. Moletsane, University of Kwa-Zulu Natal

**Funding Agency/Title:** SSHRC (IDRC)

**Approval Period:** Mav 15, 2015 – Mav 14, 2016

The REB-II reviewed and approved this project by delegated review in accordance with the requirements of the McGill University Policy on the Ethical Conduct of Research Involving Human Participants and the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans.

Deanna Collin  
Research Ethics Administrator

- 
- \* All research involving human participants requires review on at least an annual basis. A Request for Renewal form should be submitted 2-3 weeks before the above expiry date.
  - \* When a project has been completed or terminated a Study Closure form must be submitted.
  - \* Should any modification or other unanticipated development occur before the next required review, the REB must be informed and any modification can't be initiated until approval is received.

## Appendix F

## Ethics Certificate from NWU



Private Bag X8001, Potchefstroom  
 South Africa 2520

Tel: (018) 299-4900  
 Faks: (018) 299-4910  
 Web: <http://www.nwu.ac.za>

**Institutional Research Ethics Regulatory  
 Committee**

Tel +27 18 299 4849  
 Email [Ethics@nwu.ac.za](mailto:Ethics@nwu.ac.za)

**ETHICS APPROVAL CERTIFICATE OF PROJECT**

Based on approval by Humanities and Health Research Ethics Committee (HHREC), the North-West University Institutional Research Ethics Regulatory Committee (NWU-IRERC) hereby approves your project as indicated below. This implies that the NWU-IRERC grants its permission that, provided the special conditions specified below are met and pending any other authorisation that may be necessary, the project may be initiated, using the ethics number below.

<b>Project title:</b> Exploring Resilience in Sexually Abused Black African Girls from Rural Areas through the use of Visual Participatory Methods.																																	
<b>Project Leader:</b>	Prof LC Theron																																
<b>Student:</b>	S Haffejee																																
<b>Ethics number:</b>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>N</td><td>W</td><td>U</td><td>-</td><td>H</td><td>S</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>0</td><td>1</td><td>5</td><td>-</td><td>0</td><td>1</td><td>4</td><td>9</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="4">Institution</td> <td colspan="4">Project Number</td> <td colspan="4">Year</td> <td colspan="4">Status</td> </tr> </table>	N	W	U	-	H	S	-	2	0	1	5	-	0	1	4	9	Institution				Project Number				Year				Status			
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Institution				Project Number				Year				Status																					
<b>Approval date:</b> 2015-11-04	<b>Expiry date:</b> 2018-11-04																																
<b>Category:</b>	<b>N/A</b>																																

Special conditions of the approval (if any): None

**General conditions:**

While this ethics approval is subject to all declarations, undertakings and agreements incorporated and signed in the application form, please note the following:

- The project leader (principle investigator) must report in the prescribed format to the NWU-IRERC:
  - annually (or as otherwise requested) on the progress of the project,
  - without any delay in case of any adverse event (or any matter that interrupts sound ethical principles) during the course of the project.
- The approval applies strictly to the protocol as stipulated in the application form. Would any changes to the protocol be deemed necessary during the course of the project, the project leader must apply for approval of these changes at the NWU-IRERC. Would there be deviation from the project protocol without the necessary approval of such changes, the ethics approval is immediately and automatically forfeited.
- The date of approval indicates the first date that the project may be started. Would the project have to continue after the expiry date, a new application must be made to the NWU-IRERC and new approval received before or on the expiry date.
- In the interest of ethical responsibility the NWU-IRERC retains the right to:
  - request access to any information or data at any time during the course or after completion of the project;
  - withdraw or postpone approval if:
    - any unethical principles or practices of the project are revealed or suspected,
    - it becomes apparent that any relevant information was withheld from the NWU-IRERC or that information has been false or misrepresented,
    - the required annual report and reporting of adverse events was not done timely and accurately,
    - new institutional rules, national legislation or international conventions deem it necessary.

The IRERC would like to remain at your service as scientist and researcher, and wishes you well with your project. Please do not hesitate to contact the IRERC for any further enquiries or requests for assistance.

Yours sincerely

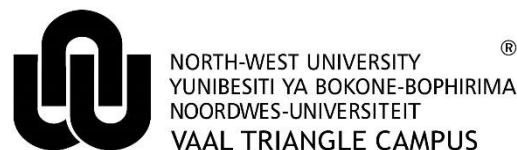
**Linda du Plessis**  
 Digitally signed by Linda du Plessis  
 DN: cn=Linda du Plessis, o=NWU,  
 ou=Vaal Triangle Campus,  
 email=Linda.duplessis@nwu.ac.za,  
 c=ZA  
 Date: 2015.11.24 18:56:47 +0200

**Prof Linda du Plessis**

Chair NWU Institutional Research Ethics Regulatory Committee (IRERC)

## Appendix G

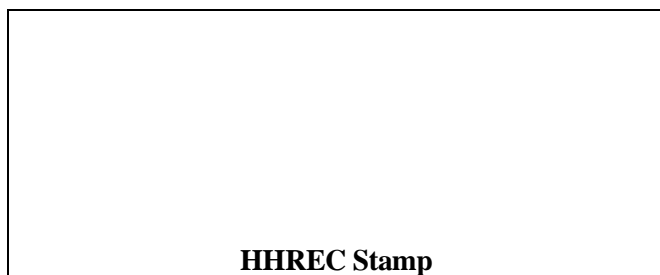
## Primary participant information and consent



PO Box 1174, Vanderbijlpark  
South Africa, 1900

Web: <http://www.nwu.ac.za>

**DATE: 2015-11-04**



## PARTICIPANT INFORMATION LEAFLET AND CONSENT FORM FOR ADOLESCENT PARTICIPANTS

**TITLE OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT:** Exploring Resilience Processes in Sexually Abused Black African Girls through the use of Visual Participatory Methods.

**REFERENCE NUMBERS:** 267-0115

**PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:**

**Canada:** Claudia Mitchell

**South Africa:** Lebo Moletsane

Co-investigator, South Africa: Linda Theron

**ADDRESS:** North-West University PO Box 1174, Vanderbijlpark, South Africa, 1900

**CONTACT NUMBER:** 016 910 3076 / 082 783 1728 (for Linda Theron)

My name is Sadiyya Haffejee. I am a researcher and I would like to invite you to take part in my PhD study that looks at how young black African girls do well in life in spite of difficult circumstances (in particular, girls who have been sexually abused). This study is part of a bigger study called Networks of Change and Well-being project; which is a partnership between universities in South Africa and Canada.

This letter will explain to you what the study is about and what you will be asked to do if you choose to participate. Please feel free to ask me any questions about any part of this project that you do not

fully understand. It is very important that you are fully satisfied that you clearly understand what this research is about and how you could be involved. Also, your participation is **entirely voluntary**, this means that you are free to decide whether you want to take part in the study. If you decide to say no you don't want to participate, no one will force you to take part and you won't be affected in a negative way whatsoever. You are also free to withdraw from the study at any point, and have your information removed from the study, even if you do agree to take part.

This study has been approved by the **Humanities and Health Research Ethics Committee (HHREC) of the Faculty of Humanities of the North-West University (NWU-HS-2015-0149)** and will be conducted according to the ethical guidelines and principles of the international Declaration of Helsinki and the ethical guidelines of the National Health Research Ethics Council. It might be necessary for the research ethics committee members or relevant authorities to inspect the research records to make sure that we (the researchers) are conducting research in an ethical manner.

### **What is this research study all about?**

- This study is interested in understanding how adolescent, black African girls are able to do well in life in spite of having experienced sexual abuse.
- I am interested in finding out and understanding:
  - How black African girls who have been sexually abused make sense of what happened to them.
  - What it is that black African girls do to be strong when facing these difficulties in life.
  - How community members, parents and other significant people support or hamper the way these young black African girls adjust.
- I am also interested in finding out if using stories and videos made by the girls will help others understand how black African girls do well in life in spite of the sexual abuse.
- In order to do this, I will be speaking with you and a few girls. We will meet about four times alone and after that, if you are comfortable with the idea, I will ask you and some of the other girls (about 4) to get together in a group.
- When we meet alone for the first time, I will ask you some questions about your life; some of the difficult times you had and also about some of the people and things that helped you. To help you to remember your experiences, I will ask you to draw a timeline. A timeline is a line that is drawn on a piece of paper. On this line, you will write down dates and all the things that happened to you that you think are important, like when you were born, when you started school and also when some of the difficult things happened.
- The second time we meet I will ask you to make sure that what I captured in the first meeting was correct. I will show you what a digital story is and I will ask you to write what you told me into a story of about 300-400 words. (A digital story is a story told by a person which may be about real life experiences or a made up story that is then turned into a video using technology). I will guide you so that you know what I need you to do.
- We will meet for a third time where I will show you again what the digital story is and show you how a digital story is made. I will also ask you to make some pictures either by drawing, taking pictures or making a collage that goes with the story you wrote. We will make an outline using your pictures (this is called a storyboard and helps you plan your story). I will then show

you how to put the story and the pictures together using an Ipad. You may choose to write your story out or say it. You will be able to see your story as soon as we make it.

- We will meet again where I will share with you what I learnt from you and about you about how you do well.
- After this, you will be invited to join a group of other girls.
- In the group I will ask you and the other girls (about 4) to discuss some of what I found about how girls do well from the conversations we had. Together you will then be asked to make a short video (around 5 minutes) and to talk about it afterwards. To make the video, you will first have to make an outline (called a storyboard (as above); it helps you plan your story and what must be in each part or 'scene' of the video). This will help you to think about how you want the video to be.
- I will show you how to make the storyboard and the video.
- I will also lend you a video-camera and props (e.g., masks, wigs).
- I am a psychologist and I have been trained on how to interview you.

### **Why have you been invited to participate?**

- You have been invited to take part in this study because staff at (Khulisa, SophiaTown, Kids Haven, Ithemba, TeddyBear Clinic) chose you because they believe that you are doing well in life even though you were sexually abused.
- Because my study is looking at how black African girls do well after experiencing sexual abuse, I needed to invite only black, teenage girls who have had such an experience.
- I may not invite anyone who is involved in a legal case as this may jeopardise the case. If you are involved in a court case please let me know.
- Also, I will not be able to include girls in the study whom I have worked with in therapy. The staff who chose the girls know this, and so you have been invited because you have not worked with me in therapy.

### **What will your responsibilities be?**

#### **You will be expected to:**

- Meet with me alone about four times. The first time we will meet for about an hour or two where I will ask about some of your life experiences. To help the discussion I will ask you to write down all the important things that you can remember using a timeline. This is a line drawn on a blank piece of paper. I will give you pencils and the blank piece of paper and show you what I would like you to do. On the timeline, I will ask you to write down dates that you remember and what happened on that date (as I explained above). I will audio-record this activity. I will ask to keep the drawing of your timeline, but if you prefer to keep it, then I will ask permission to take a photo of your timeline.
- The second time we will meet for about an hour where I will ask you to check to see if I captured everything correctly at the first meeting. I will show you what a digital story is (explained above). I will also ask you to begin writing a story of about 300-400 words about what you told me; that is, how you have done well even though you were abused.
- The third time we meet I will show you again what a digital story is and I will explain to you how to do it. I will also ask you to make some pictures either by drawing, taking pictures or making a collage that goes with the story you wrote. I will ask you to make an outline using

your pictures (this is called a storyboard and helps you plan your story). I will then show you how to put the story and the pictures together using an Ipad. You may choose to write your story out or say it.

- I will ask to meet with you one more time alone where I will share with you what I have learnt from you and about you about how you have been able to do well. This will be like a ‘toolbox’ of all your strengths.
- A few weeks (about 4 weeks) after our conversation (only if you are comfortable with meeting in a group with other girls) I will ask to meet with you and some of the other girls (about 4) that are also part of the study in a group. I will share with you what I learnt about how girls do well from all the interviews and I will ask you to all tell me what you think about it. I will not discuss the abuse or any details that will identify you.
- You will work together as a group with these same girls to think of a story that you would like to tell about how you have done well in spite of your difficult experiences (especially being sexually abused). I will ask you to plan how you will tell this story as a short video (5 minutes). The focus of the story is on doing well and not the abuse. In the planning you will make a story-board (like an outline or a little cartoon of your story) and I will ask your permission to keep this.
- After this I will ask you to act the story out and film it.
- I will lend you a video-camera and show you how to use them. I will also give you props, like wigs, masks, scarves and boxes that you will use in the video to cover your face or whole body.
- We will then watch the video that your group made. I will ask that you explain the story to us. I will also ask you a few questions about the video. I will ask you what your story means and what message your video has about how black African girls do well in spite of difficulties, like sexual abuse.
- After we talk about the video, I will ask you to write down all the important points from your video that you would like others that see the video to know and understand. We will then take these points and make a poster or hand-out. I will also ask you to think about who you would like to invite to watch the video that you had made. I will help you to find ways to get these people to see your video. If you want to, you can also be there when they watch it. The poster that you make will be given to these people after they watch the video. The reason for doing this, is so that your message is shared. The people working with me in the bigger study are hoping that by sharing your message many more people will begin to understand why and how girls can do well in life after they have been abused. We are hoping that understanding this will lead to people making it possible for more girls who have been abused to do well in life.
- The digital story that you make will be uploaded onto the project’s restricted website where the other people working on the project will be able to see it. I will ask you for permission to do this.
- Same as with the digital story, the video that you make will be uploaded onto the project’s restricted website where the other people working on the project will be able to see it. I will ask you for permission to do that. I will give you with a copy of the video for your own use.  
*Note: if the content of your video could put you or other group members at risk, then I will not upload it or make copies. In that case, I will also not show your video to others.*
- Every time that we meet, I will use a voice recorder to audio-record all of our conversations.
- After the interviews, the digital story and the video, I would like you to meet with a therapist that I will make available for you. I will make arrangements with the therapist to meet you at

a time and at a place that is good for you. During this meeting you can discuss with her how taking part in the study made you feel. You can decide if you want to go for just one session or if you would like to go more times.

- A month after we make the video, I will ask to meet with the group. The group will get together for a workshop where we will learn about skills that could help you do well in life. All the girls that took part in the study will be invited to the workshop. You don't have to attend the workshop if you don't want to.
- If you would like to be a part of this project, it means that you will need to be available for about 1 hours for the first conversation, an hour for the second conversation, 2 hours for the third interview and an hour for the fourth individual interview. When we meet as a group you will need to be available for a full day for the group discussion and the video making (probably from 09h00-15h30 on a weekend). I will ask you what times and days suits you best.
- During the day there will be a morning and afternoon snack and a lunch. I will provide the refreshments.
- Lastly, if you are younger than 18 you cannot be part of this project unless your parent/legal guardian agrees. If you are younger than 18 years, I will need to ask the person who has been looking after you for permission. I will give them a set of forms to read and to sign as well. I will only ask your parent or legal guardian for permission if you want to take part in the study.

#### **Will you benefit from taking part in this research?**

- The direct benefits for you as a participant is that you will have a chance to talk and think about some of the difficult experiences, like the sexual abuse, in your life. You will also have a chance to hear about how other girls have done well dealing with similar experiences.
- You will also learn about making digital stories and videos and will have an opportunity to have other people hear what you have to say about your experiences. You will be able to see the digital story as soon as you make it and I will make a copy of it for you to keep.
- Through the discussion with me after the process, you will be able to reflect on and be made aware of the strengths and capabilities that you show and that others see in you. This 'toolbox' of strengths will help to reinforce the ability you already show to adapt and function well.
- You will be also be part of a workshop where you will be able to learn some skills on how to deal with difficult experiences and how you can do well in life.
- You taking part in the study will also help others understand how black African girls do well after sexual abuse. This could help people who work with girls going through this kind of experience understand better how to help these girls.

#### **Are there risks involved in your taking part in this research and how will these be managed?**

The risks in this study, and how these will be managed, are summarised in the table below:

<b>Probable/possible risks/discomforts</b>	<b>Strategies to minimize risk/discomfort</b>
Because you will be asked to meet with me a few times, it is possible that you will become tired.	I knows that this research is asking for a lot of your time; I will discuss with you the best possible times to meet and will set up meetings at times that suit you. I will also

	ensure that during all interviews and the group discussions and when developing the storyboard and the video that you and the other participants have regular breaks with some refreshment (a morning and afternoon snack and a lunch).
Because I will ask you questions about what has been hard for you in your life, you will need to think about difficult times in your life. This could make you feel uncomfortable.	I have made arrangements with a registered clinical social worker to meet with you after this study. She knows what this study is about and will be available to see you for one or more counselling sessions.
Because you will be asked to participate in activities like the timeline activity, digital story, storyboard and video production that you may not be familiar with, you may be slightly nervous.	I will make sure that you understand what you need to do and I will show you how to use the iPad and video camera.
Because some of the activities will be in a group setting (if you are comfortable being in a group), others will know that you have participated and some of what you have said. The other girls taking part may also know that you have been abused.	I will ask all the participants to agree on some group rules (like, respecting each other, not talking about what is in the group to anyone outside the group). The focus of the group discussions will be on how you have done well. We will not discuss the abuse or any details of the abuse. If, when you arrive for the group discussion, there is someone whom you would not be comfortable being in a group with, then please tell me. I will then arrange to work with you on your own for the group activities or for you to join another group.
Because you will be participating in a video that will be shared with the other researchers working on the project and at conferences you may feel embarrassed.	I will talk to you about ways that we can hide some or all of your identity; that is, we can look at wearing masks or big glasses and scarves or hats to cover your face or boxes over your body. I will have all of these things with me and you can choose what will be best for you.
The digital story and video we make may be shared with the other researchers on the team (via the projects restricted website) or with other people at conferences and so you could be recognized.	Your identity will not be shared with anyone and your face or entire body may be hidden. No one in the audience will be able to identify you. However, if you are uncomfortable with other people seeing parts of you in a video, then you do not have to be videotaped (e.g. you can choose to be the person who will do the filming). If I feel that the video, if shown to others, will place you in any harm, I will not do it. I will

	talk to you about this so that you understand my thinking.
If we choose to have the interviews, group discussions and make the video at the organisation that refers you, other staff or children, may be curious about what we are doing and may ask you questions.	I will suggest meeting at times when the organisation is not very busy, like on the weekend or in an office that is private.

- However, I do believe that the benefits to you and to science may be greater than the risks we have listed above. If you disagree, then you do not have to take part in this study.
- If during the research, I learn that someone is harming you, or that you are intending to harm someone, then I must tell someone who can help you (e.g., a social worker)/warn the person you are intending to harm.

### **Who will have access to the data?**

- The information (or data) that I get from you will include information from the conversation I have with you alone using the timeline, the digital story, the video outline or storyboard, the video and all the voice recordings from all of our discussions in the groups before, during and after the video.
- Being a part of this project means that you will make a digital story and act in a short video. I ask for your permission to share the timeline, the digital story, the storyboards (outline you make) and videos that you will make with other researchers in the project and in meetings, conferences or on the projects restricted (closed) website. To make sure that you remain anonymous (that is, no one will be able to identify you and what you say won't be linked to you) we will discuss ways in which you will be able to 'hide' your identity in the videos (as discussed above). Or if you would prefer you can chose not to be in the video. Please know however that we may not be able to completely hide your identity, that is, your voice may still be heard.
- All the voice recordings will be given to someone to type out (a transcriber). The transcriber will sign a letter saying she will not discuss any part of the study with anyone. Also, when I give her the recordings, aside from hearing your voice and a name, no other information about you be included, that is, you surname, where you lives, how old you are.
- As soon as the audio recordings have been typed up, I will delete it from the recorders.
- The timeline, the pictures and the story outline, will be scanned onto a computer. It will then be stored in a locked cabinet in a locked office.
- The audio-recordings and their transcripts, and the video will also be stored on a computer. As soon as the information from the video has been stored on the computer, I will be delete it from the video cameras.
- All the information stored on the computer will be kept in a way that no one, other than myself, can access it. It will put into code and kept on a computer that has a password and uses a safe network.
- All the information will be stored as anonymously as possible. This means that your name will not be linked to any of the information. Instead we will ask you to choose a name (e.g., Beyoncé or Batgirl) by which your information will be labelled. Alternatively the information can be

labelled Participant 1, 2, etc. If you participate in the video, some or parts of you will be seen (depending on how you choose to hide your identity) and you will be heard, but your name will not appear on the video.

- Your contact information (as provided in this form) will be kept separately from the information we get in the study.
- I will have access to your information and Linda Theron who is helping me and one of the main researchers on this project, will also have access to the information but not your contact information.

### **What will happen to the data?**

- What I learn from this study will be written up and shared with other researchers and other people that are interested in this topic. I will write articles and reports. I will also talk about what I learnt at conferences. The digital story and the video that you make in the group could be shown to people at a conference and will be shared with the international research team via the project's restricted website. It will also be shown to people that you chooses (as I explained above). In all of this sharing of information, you will not be personally identified. This means that when I share what I learnt, I will not include your name or details that will help others to know that you participated (e.g., your name, address, age or the name of your school).
- You should know that because this study is part of a bigger project (as I explained above), the team from Canada and other South African team members that are also working on the project will have access to the data you produce (e.g., interview transcripts, timelines, storyboards, videos and handouts) and it may be used for multiple cross country publications. They will not have access to any information that can identify you. It is possible that this team will re-analyse this data as new theories of why young people do well in life emerge.

### **Will you be paid/compensated to take part in this study and are there any costs involved?**

- You will be invited to attend a session with me where I will discuss findings that are specific to you that emerged during the research process. This will be a like a personal 'toolbox' of your strengths.
- You will be invited to a workshop about a month after we are done making the video. This workshop is a way for me to say thank you to you for your time and for taking part. During the workshop we will we will learn skills that could help you do well in life.
- I will also provide a morning and afternoon snack and a lunch on the day that we are meeting as a group and making the video.
- You will not have to pay for anything.

### **How will you know about the findings?**

- All the information I get and how I try and understand it will be shown to you. Together we will look at the information from our conversation, the digital story, the group meetings, the video you make as well as what the people who you choose to look at the video have to say about it. I will put all information I get from this study together and take out the main ideas which I will write up into a little book. You will get a copy of this.

- We will watch the video together as a group. But if I feel that watching the video together with other people, or putting it up on the project's restricted website, or making copies will put you or any of the other girls at risk, then I will not share it with anyone or make any copies of it.
- I will make copies for you of the digital story and storyboard that you make.

**Is there anything else that you should know or do?**

- You can call or WhatsApp me, Sadiyya Haffejee at 083 450 5987, if you have any further queries or encounter any problems.
- You can contact the co-chair of the Humanities and Health Research Ethics Committee, Prof Tumi Khumalo (016 910 3397 or Tumi.khumalo@nwu.ac.za) if you have any concerns or complaints that have not been adequately addressed by the researcher. You can leave a message for Tumi with Ms Daleen Claasens (016 910 30441).
- You will receive a copy of this information and consent form for you to keep.

**Declaration by participant**

By signing below, I ..... agree to take part in a research study entitled: Exploring Resilience Processes in Sexually Abused black African Girls from Aural areas through the use of Visual Participatory Methods.

I declare that:

- I have read and understood this information and consent form and it is written in a language with which I am fluent and comfortable.
- I have had a chance to ask questions to both the person obtaining consent, as well as the researcher (if this is a different person), and all my questions have been adequately answered.
- I understand that taking part in this study is **voluntary** and I have not been pressurised to take part.
- I understand that what I contribute (what I say//draw/produce visually) could be reproduced publically and/or quoted, but without reference to my personal identity.
- I understand that being part of the group by limit the confidentiality.
- I understand that in taking part in a video, that others will see, I cannot remain completely anonymous.
- I may choose to leave the study at any time and will not be penalised or prejudiced in any way.
- I may be asked to leave the study before it has finished, if the researcher feels it is in my best interests, or if I do not follow the study plan, as agreed to.

Signed at (place) ..... On (date) ..... 20....

.....  
**Signature of participant**

.....  
**Signature of witness**

- You may contact me again  **Yes**  **No**
- I would like a summary of the findings of this research  **Yes**  **No**

The best way to reach me is:

Name & Surname: \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

In case the above details change, please contact the following person who knows me well and who does not live with me and who will help you to contact me:

Name & Surname: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone/ Cell Phone Number /Email: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Declaration by person obtaining consent**

I (name) ..... declare that:

- I explained the information in this document to .....
- I encouraged him/her to ask questions and took adequate time to answer them.
- I am satisfied that he/she adequately understands all aspects of the research, as discussed above
- I did/did not use an interpreter.

Signed at (place) ..... On (date) ..... 20....

.....  
**Signature of person obtaining consent**

.....  
**Signature of witness**

**Declaration by researcher**

I (name) ..... declare that:

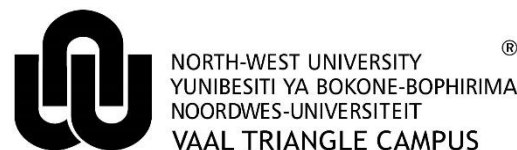
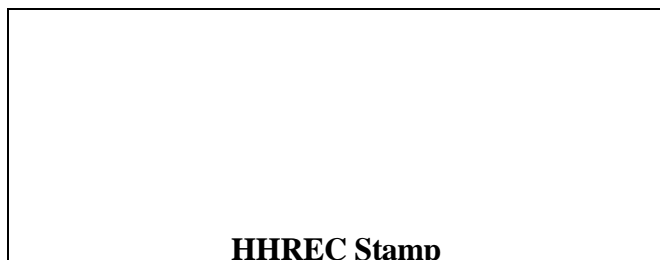
- I explained the information in this document to .....
- I encouraged him/her to ask questions and took adequate time to answer them.
- I am satisfied that he/she adequately understands all aspects of the research, as discussed above
- I did/did not use an interpreter.

Signed at (place) ..... On (date) ..... 20....

.....  
**Signature of researcher**

.....  
**Signature of witness**

## Legal guardian/caregiver information and consent



PO Box 1174, Vanderbijlpark  
South Africa, 1900

Web: <http://www.nwu.ac.za>

**DATE: 2015-11-04**

**PARTICIPANT INFORMATION  
LEAFLET AND CONSENT FORM FOR LEGAL  
GUARDIANS/CAREGIVERS**

**TITLE OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT:** Exploring Resilience Processes in Sexually Abused Black African Girls through the use of Visual Participatory Methods.

**REFERENCE NUMBERS:** 267-0115

**PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:**

**Canada:** Claudia Mitchell

**South Africa:** Lebo Moletsane

Co-investigator, South Africa: Linda Theron

**ADDRESS:** North-West University PO Box 1174, Vanderbijlpark, South Africa, 1900

**CONTACT NUMBER:** 016 910 3076 / 082 783 1728 (for Linda Theron)

My name is Sadiyya Haffejee. I am a researcher and I would like to invite your child (i.e., your biological child who is younger than 18, or the child who is younger than 18 whom you care for as legally appointed guardian) to take part in my PhD study that looks at how young black African girls areas do well in life in spite of difficult circumstances (in particular, girls who have been sexually abused). This study is part of a bigger study called Networks of Change and Well-being project; which is a partnership between universities in South Africa and Canada.

This letter will explain to you what the study is about and what your child will be asked to do if they choose to participate and if you give your consent. Please feel free to ask me any questions about any part of this project that you do not fully understand. It is very important that you are fully satisfied that you clearly understand what this research is about and how your child could be involved. Also, your child's participation is **entirely voluntary**, this means that she is free to choose not to

participate, even if you do agree to her participating. If she chooses to participate, then she is free to leave the study at any time and does not have to participate further if she doesn't want to. She may also have her information removed from the study, even if she agreed to take part.

This study has been approved by the **Humanities and Health Research Ethics Committee (HHREC) of the Faculty of Humanities of the North-West University (NWU-HS-2015-0149)** and will be conducted according to the ethical guidelines and principles of the international Declaration of Helsinki and the ethical guidelines of the National Health Research Ethics Council. It might be necessary for the research ethics committee members or relevant authorities to inspect the research records to make sure that we (the researchers) are conducting research in an ethical manner.

#### **What is this research study all about?**

- This study is interested in understanding how young, black African girls are able to do well in life in spite of having experienced sexual abuse.
- I am interested in finding out and understanding:
  - How black African girls who are sexually abused make sense of what happened to them.
  - What it is that black African girls do to be strong when facing these difficulties in life.
  - How community members, parents and other significant people support or hamper the way these young black African girls adjust.
- I am also interested in finding out if using stories and videos made by the girls will help others understand how black African girls do well in life in spite of the sexual abuse.
- In order to do this, I will be speaking with your child and a few girls from Kids Haven. We will meet twice alone and after that I will ask your child and some of the other girls to get together in a group. What your child will be expected to do is described below, in the section 'What will her responsibilities be'.
- I am a psychologist and I have been trained on how to interview participants.

#### **Why has your child been invited to participate?**

Your child has been invited to take part in this study because staff at Kids Haven nominated your child as they believe that she is doing well in life even though she was sexually abused.

- Because my study is looking at how black African girls do well after experiencing sexual abuse, I needed to invite only black, teenage girls who have had such an experience.
- I will not be able to include girls in the study whom I have worked with in therapy. The staff who nominated the girls know this, and so your child has been invited because she has not worked with me in therapy.
- I can not include any girls that are involved in a legal case or court process as this may jeopardise the case. If your child is involved in any legal proceedings, please inform me.

#### **What will your child's responsibilities be?**

##### **Your child will be expected to:**

- Meet with me alone for about an hour or two where I will ask her about some of her life experiences. To help the discussion I will ask her to write down all the important things that she can remember using a timeline. This is a line drawn on a blank piece of paper. I will give

her pencils and the blank piece of paper and show her what I would like her to do. On the timeline, I will ask her to write down dates that she remembers and what happened on that date, for example, when she was born, started school, when the abusive incident occurred, etcetera. I will audio-record this activity. I will ask to keep the drawing of her timeline, but if she prefers to keep it, then I will ask permission to take a photo of the timeline.

- After this interview, I will meet with her again to show her the write-up (transcripts) of the interview I had with her so that she can see if I captured everything correctly and I will also share with her what I have learnt from her and about her of her strengths during the process.
- A few weeks (about 4 weeks) after our conversation, I will ask to meet with her and some of the other girls (about 4 other girls) that are also part of the study in a group. I will share with them what I learnt from their resilience processes and I will ask them to all tell me what they think about it.
- Your child will work together as a group with these same girls to think of a story that they would like to tell about how they have done well in spite of their difficult experiences (especially being sexually abused). I will ask them to plan how they will tell this story as a short video (5 minutes). In the planning they will make a story-board (like an outline or a little cartoon of their story) and I will ask their permission to keep this.
- After this I will ask them to act the story out and film it.
- I will lend them a video-camera and show them how to use it. I will also give them props, like wigs, masks, scarves and boxes that they will use in the video to keep their identity private.
- We will then watch the video that they make. I will ask them to explain the story. I will also ask them a few questions about the video. For example, I will ask them what their story means and what message their video has about how black African girls do well in spite of difficulties, like sexual abuse.
- After we talk about the video, I will ask them to write down all the important points from their video that they would like others that see the video to know and understand. We will then take these points and make a poster or hand-out. I will also ask them to think about who they would like to invite to watch the video that they had made. I will support the girls to invite these people and encourage the girls to join in this screening (if they want to). The poster that they make will be given to these people after they watch the video. The reason for doing this, is so that the girls' message (including your child's) is shared. The people working with me in the bigger study are hoping that by sharing the girls' message, many more people will begin to understand why and how girls can do well in life after they have been abused. We are hoping that understanding this will lead to people making it possible for more girls who have been abused to do well in life.
- The video will be uploaded onto the project's restricted website so that other researchers working on this project may be able to see what your daughter and the other girls have to say. I will ask your child's for permission to do this. I will provide her with a copy of the video for her own use. *Note: if the content of the video could put your child or other group members at risk, then I will not upload it or make copies. In that case, I will also not arrange to screen the video to others.*
- Every time that we meet, I will use a voice recorder to audio-record all of our conversations.
- After the interviews and the video, I will ask your child to meet with a therapist at Kids Haven. During this meeting she can discuss how taking part in the study made her feel.
- A month after we make the video, I will ask to meet with your child and the other girls that took part for a workshop where they will learn skills that could help them do well in life. Your child does not have to attend the workshop if she doesn't want to.

- You should also know that if you give permission for your child to take part in the study I will ask to have a look at her file that is kept at Kids Haven and I will also speak to her social worker and house mother as well as other staff that are close to her (as identified by her). I need to do this to understand the environment in which she lived and now lives and how she is doing well. If you and she do not want me to speak to these people, or look at her file, I will not.
- If your child would like to be a part of this project, it means that she will need to be available for about 2 hours for the first conversation, an hour for the second conversation where I give her individual feedback and for a full day for the group discussion and the video making (probably from 09h00-15h30 on a weekend). I will ask what times and days suits her best. We can meet at Kids Haven or at my office, which is in Benoni (50 Southy Rd, Farrarmere).
- During the day there will be a morning snack, a lunch and afternoon tea break. I will provide the refreshments.

### **Will your child benefit from taking part in this research?**

- The direct benefits for your child as a participant is that she will have a chance to talk and think about some of the difficult experiences, like the sexual abuse, in her life. Your child will also have a chance to hear about how other girls have done well dealing with similar experiences.
- Your child will also learn about making videos and will have an opportunity to have other people hear what she has to say about her experiences. Previous studies have shown that girls find this empowering.
- Through the discussion with me after the individual interview, your child will be able to reflect on and be made aware of the strengths and capabilities that she shows and that others see in her. This ‘toolbox’ of strengths will reinforce the ability she already shows to adapt.
- Your child will be also be part of a workshop where she will be able to learn some skills on how to deal with difficult experiences and how she can do well in life.
- Your child taking part in the study will also help others understand how black African girls do well after sexual abuse. This could help people who work with girls going through this kind of experience understand better how to help these girls.

### **Are there risks involved in your child taking part in this research and how will these be managed?**

- The risks in this study, and how these will be managed, are summarised in the table below:

<b>Probable/possible risks/discomforts</b>	<b>Strategies to minimize risk/discomfort</b>
Because your child will be asked to meet with me a few times, it is possible that she will become tired.	I knows that this research is asking for a lot of your child’s time; I will discuss with her the best possible times to meet and will set up meetings at times that suit her. I will also ensure that during group discussions and when developing the storyboard and the video that your child and the other participants have regular breaks with some

	refreshment (a morning and afternoon snack and a lunch).
Because I will ask your child questions about what has been hard for her in her life, she will need to think about difficult times in her life. This could make her feel uncomfortable.	I have made arrangements with three intern psychologists working at Kids Haven to meet with your child after this study. All three have been told what this study is about and will be available to see your child for one or more counselling sessions at no cost to you.
Because your child will be asked to participate in activities like the timeline activity, storyboard and video production that she may not be familiar with, she may be slightly nervous.	I will make sure that your child understands what she needs to do and I will show her how to use the video camera.
Because some of the activities will be in a group setting, others will know that your child has participated and some of what she has said. In doing so, the other girls taking part may also learn that your child has been abused.	I will ask all the participants to agree on some group rules (like, respecting each other, not talking about what is said in the group to anyone outside the group). The focus of the group discussions will be on how the girls have done well. We will not discuss the abuse or any details of the abuse. If, when your child arrives for the group discussion, there is someone whom she would not be comfortable being in a group with, then I will ask her to tell me. I will then arrange to work with her on her own for the group activities or have her join in one of the other groups.
Because your child will be participating in a video that will be shared via the project's restricted website or at conferences -she may feel embarrassed.	All the girls will be asked to wear masks so that their identity is hidden. I will have different mask, glasses, boxes, hats and materials on the day we are making the video and she can choose what will be best for her.
The video we make may be shared with researchers in the international project team (via the project's restricted website) or with other people at conferences and so your child could be recognized.	If you are uncomfortable with other people seeing your child in a video, then she does not have to be videotaped (e.g. she can choose to be the person who will do the filming). If I feel that the video, if shown to others, will place your child at risk of harm, I will not do it. I will talk to you and your child about this so that you both understand my thinking.
If we choose to have the group discussions and make the video at Kids Haven, other staff or children, may be	I will suggest meeting at times when Kids Haven is not very busy, like on the weekend, or working from another place,

curious about what we are doing and may ask your child questions.	like my office, which is also in Benoni (50 Southy Rd, Farrarmere). If your child choses to work at my office, I will pick her up from and take her back to Kids Haven.
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- However, I do believe that the benefits to your child and to science may be greater than the risks we have listed above. If you disagree, then you do not have to agree to have your child take part in this study.
- If during the research, I learn that someone is harming your child, or that she is intending to harm someone, then I must tell someone who can help her (e.g., a social worker)/warn the person she is intending to harm.

### **Who will have access to the data?**

- The information (or data) that I get from your child will include information from the conversation I have with her alone using the timeline, the video outline or storyboard, the video and all the voice recordings from all of our discussions in the groups before, during and after the video. To this I will add the information I get from the files at Kids Haven and the information from the interviews I have with the staff (as mentioned above).
- I ask for your and your child's permission to share the timeline, the storyboards and videos that she will make with other researchers in the project (via the project's restricted website) and in meetings, conferences. To ensure that your child remains anonymous (that is, no one will be able to identify her and what she say won't be linked to her) we will discuss ways in which your child will be able to 'hide' her identity in the videos (as discussed above). Or if you would prefer you can chose to have her not be in the video. Please know however that we may not be able to completely hide your child's identity, that is, her voice may still be heard.
- All the voice recordings will be given to someone to type out (a transcriber). The transcriber will sign a letter saying she will not discuss any part of the study with anyone. Also, when I give her the recordings, aside from hearing your child's voice and a name, no other information about your child's identity will be included, that is, her surname, where she lives, how old she is.
- As soon as the audio recordings have been typed up, I will delete them from the recorders.
- The timeline and the story outline will be scanned onto a computer. They will then be stored in a locked cabinet within a locked office.
- The audio-recordings and their transcripts, and the video will also be stored on a computer. As soon as the information from the video has been stored on the computer, I will be delete it from the video cameras.
- All the information stored on the computer will be kept in a way that no one, other than myself, can access it. It will be put into code and kept on a computer that has a password and uses a safe network.
- All the information will be stored as anonymously as possible. This means that your child's name will not be linked to any of the information. Instead we will ask her to choose a name (e.g., Beyoncé or Batgirl) by which her information will be labelled. Alternatively the information can be labelled Participant 1, 2, etc. If your child participates in the video, some or parts of her will be seen (depending on how she chooses to hide her identity) and she will be heard, but your child's name will not appear on the video.

- Yours and your child's contact information (as provided in this form) will be kept separately from the information we get in the study.
- I will have access to your child's information and Linda Theron who is helping me and one of the main researchers on this project, will also have access to the information but not your contact information.

#### **What will happen to the data?**

- What I learn from this study will be written up and shared with other researchers and other people that are interested in this topic. I will write articles and reports. I will also talk about what I learnt at conferences. The video that your child makes in the group could be shown to people at a conference and will be shared with the international research team via the project's restricted website. It will also be shown to people that your child chooses (as I explained above). In all of this sharing of information, your child will not be personally identified. This means that when I share what I learnt, I will not include your child's name or details that will help others to know that she participated (e.g., her name, her address, her age or the name of her school).
- You should know that because this study is part of a bigger project (as I explained above), the team from Canada and other South African team members that are also working on the project will have access to the data your child produced (e.g., interview transcripts, timelines, storyboards, videos and handouts) and the data may be used for multiple cross-country publications. They will not have access to any information that can identify your child. It is possible that this team will re-analyse this data as new theories of why young people do well in life emerge.

#### **Will your child be paid/compensated to take part in this study and are there any costs involved?**

- Your child will be invited to attend a session with me where I will discuss findings that are specific to her that emerged during the research process. This will be a like a personal 'toolbox' of her strengths.
- Your child will also be invited to a workshop about a month after we are done making the video. This workshop is a way for me to say thank you to your child for her time and for taking part. During the workshop we will learn skills that could help your child do well in life.
- I will also provide a morning and afternoon snack and lunch on the day that we are meeting as a group and making the video.
- You or your child will not have to pay for anything related to this research.

#### **How will you know about the findings?**

- All the information I get and how I try and understand it will be shown to your child. Together we will look at the information from our conversation, the group meetings, the video they make as well as what the people whom they choose to have look at the video have to say about it. I will put all information I get from this study together and take out the main ideas which I will write up into a little book. Your child will get a copy of this.
- The participants and I will watch the video together as a group. If I feel that the video places your child or another child at risk, then I will not share the video with anyone in terms of public screenings, at conferences and no copies will be made and distributed.

- Copies of the storyboard will be made and shared.

**Is there anything else that you should know or do?**

- You can call or WhatsApp me, Sadiyya Haffejee at 083 450 5987, if you have any further queries or encounter any problems. You can also leave a message for me with Moira Simpson, at Kids Haven and I will contact you.
- You can contact the co-chair of the Humanities and Health Research Ethics Committee, Prof Tumi Khumalo (016 910 3397 or Tumi.khumalo@nwu.ac.za) if you have any concerns or complaints that have not been adequately addressed by the researcher. You can leave a message for Tumi with Ms Daleen Claasens (016 910 30441).
- You will receive a copy of this information and consent form for your own records.

**Declaration by Caregiver**

By signing below, I .....(full name of parent or guardian)  
agree to have my child take part in a research study entitled: Exploring Resilience Processes in  
Sexually Abused black African Girls from Aural areas through the use of Visual Participatory  
Methods.

I declare that:

- I have read and understood this information and consent form and it is written in a language with which I am fluent and comfortable.
- I have had a chance to ask questions to both the person obtaining consent, as well as the researcher (if this is a different person), and all my questions have been adequately answered.
- I understand that taking part in this study is **voluntary** and I and my child have not been pressurised to take part.
- I understand that what my child contributes (what she says/draws/produces visually) could be reproduced publically and/or quoted, but without reference to her personal identity.
- I understand that being part of the group may limit the confidentiality.
- I understand that in taking part in a video that others will see, my child cannot remain completely anonymous.
- My child may choose to leave the study at any time and will not be penalised or prejudiced in any way.
- My child may be asked to leave the study before it has finished, if the researcher feels it is in her best interests.

Signed at (place) ..... On (date) ..... 20....

.....  
**Signature of parent/guardian**

.....  
**Signature of witness**

- You may contact me again  **Yes**  **No**
- I would like a summary of the findings of this research  **Yes**  **No**

The best way to reach me is:

Name & Surname: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Postal Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Cell Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

In case the above details change, please contact the following person who knows me well and who does not live with me and who will help you to contact me:

Name & Surname:

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone/ Cell Phone Number /Email:

\_\_\_\_\_

**Declaration by researcher**

I (name) ..... declare that:

- I explained the information in this document to .....
- I encouraged him/her to ask questions and took adequate time to answer them.
- I am satisfied that he/she adequately understands all aspects of the research, as discussed above
- I did/did not use an interpreter.

Signed at (place) ..... On (date) ..... 20....

.....  
**Signature of researcher**

.....  
**Signature of witness**

**Appendix I**

**Advisory Panel information and consent**



NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY<sup>®</sup>  
YUNIBESITI YA BOKONE-BOPHIRIMA  
NOORDWES-UNIVERSITEIT  
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PO Box 1174, Vanderbijlpark  
South Africa, 1900

Web: <http://www.nwu.ac.za>

**DATE: 2015-11-04**

**HHREC Stamp**

## **PARTICIPANT INFORMATION LEAFLET AND CONSENT FORM FOR THE ADVISORY PANEL**

**TITLE OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT:** Exploring Resilience Processes in Sexually Abused Black African Girls through the use of Visual Participatory Methods

**REFERENCE NUMBERS:** 267-0115

**PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:**

**Canada:** Claudia Mitchell

**South Africa:** Lebo Moletsane

**Co-investigator, South Africa:** Linda Theron

**ADDRESS:** North-West University PO Box 1174, Vanderbijlpark, South Africa, 1900

**CONTACT NUMBER:** 016 910 3076 / 082 783 1728 (for Linda Theron)

My name is Sadiyya Haffejee. I am a researcher and I would like to invite you to take part in my PhD study that looks at how young black African girls do well in life in spite of difficult circumstances (in particular, girls who have been sexually abused). This study is part of a bigger study called Networks of Change and Well-being project; which is a partnership between universities in South Africa and Canada.

This letter will explain to you what the study is about and what you will be asked to do if you choose to participate. Please feel free to ask me any questions about any part of this project that you do not fully understand. It is very important that you are fully satisfied that you clearly understand what this research is about and how you could be involved. Also, your participation is **entirely voluntary**, this means that you are free to decide whether you want to take part in the study. If you decide to say no you don't want to participate, no one will force you to take part and you won't be affected in a negative way whatsoever. You are also free to withdraw from the study at any point, and have your information removed from the study, even if you do agree to take part.

This study has been approved by the **Humanities and Health Research Ethics Committee (HHREC) of the Faculty of Humanities of the North-West University (NWU-HS-2015-0149)** and will be conducted according to the ethical guidelines and principles of the international Declaration of Helsinki and the ethical guidelines of the National Health Research Ethics Council. It might be necessary for the research ethics committee members or relevant authorities to inspect the research records to make sure that we (the researchers) are conducting research in an ethical manner.

### **What is this research study all about?**

- This study is interested in understanding how adolescent, black African girls are able to do well in life in spite of having experienced sexual abuse.
- I am interested in finding out and understanding:
  - How black African girls who are sexually abused make sense of what happened to them.
  - What it is that black African girls do to be strong when facing these difficulties in life.
  - How community members, parents and other significant people support or hamper the way these young black African girls adjust.
- I am also interested in finding out if using stories and videos made by the girls will help others understand how black African girls do well in life in spite of the sexual abuse.
- In order to do this, I will ask you to be part of an Advisory Panel (AP). The AP will be responsible for identifying girls that have adjusted well in spite of the difficulties and sexual abuse they experienced. (What is required of you will be explained in more detail below under ‘What will your responsibilities be’)
- Approximately 10 people will be asked to part of the AP.

### **Why have you been invited to participate?**

- You have been invited to take part in this study because you know the girls that reside at Kids Haven, in that, you have worked closely with them, have access to information on their past, their current status and how they are adjusting.
- You have experience working with children in care as well as with children that have experienced traumatic events.

### **What will your responsibilities be?**

#### **You will be expected to:**

- Act in an advisory capacity to ensure that the research process is mindful of the best interest of the girls participating, ensure that I am not biased in my reporting of findings and am accurately portraying the results.
- Meet with me as part of a group (i.e., with other adults invited to be part of the AP) for about 2 – 3 hours, where I will ask you to consider what contributes to the resilience of girls, aged between 13-19 years that have experienced sexual abuse and that exhibit resilience. You will be asked to exclude any girls that are involved in legal proceedings.

- To assist you I will give you a list of resilience indicators that have been developed from previous studies on resilience in South Africa. This will guide you in nominating girls but you will be encouraged to think of other criteria that suggests resilience.
- I will then ask you to nominate girls who fit the criteria via email (i.e., prospective participants will not be discussed in a group setting). To be eligible, girls should be aged between 13-19 years, have experienced sexual abuse and exhibit resilience. You will be asked to exclude any girls that are involved in legal proceedings and girls who have been in a therapeutic relationship with me.
- I will ask you not to divulge the names of girls nominated with anyone outside of the AP. To ensure that the participants are protected, you will be asked to sign a confidentiality clause.
- I will collate lists from all members of the AP and the most frequently nominated girls will be invited to participate in the study. However, I will not invite the girls to participate in the study; the list of names will be shared with a staff member selected and trained by me on how to inform the girls about the study and invite participation, without coercing them in any way. The girls will be approached individually and the purpose and objectives of the study, what is required of them as well as risks and benefits will be explained in detail. The girls will then be given an opportunity to consider if they'd like to take part. If they agree to take part they will be asked to sign the consent form.
- Moira Simpson, the Director of Kids Haven, will also be given a full explanation of the study and what it entails. Moira Simpson as legal guardian, in loci parentis, may grant consent for girls placed legally at Kids Haven. For girls not placed at Kids Haven legally, parental consent is required. In this case, if selected girls consent to participation, I will make contact with parents or caregivers, and request consent.
- I will ask you to meet with me, as a group, mid-way through the research process for about 1-2 hours, where I will share with you emerging findings. This will probably be about 4 weeks after our initial meeting to identify girls.
- I will ask you to meet with me for a third time as a group, once we have completed data collection, for an hour, to view and comment on, the video production that the participants make. This will probably be about 8 – 10 weeks after our initial meeting.
- I will ask to audio-record all our conversations.
- We can meet at Kids Haven at times and on days that are convenient for you.

**Will you or Kids Haven benefit from taking part in this research?**

- The direct benefits for you is that you will have a chance to talk and think about how experiences of sexual abuse impact on black African girls that you work with and how they adjust well in spite of it. This may be useful to you in your work at Kids Haven with girls that have been sexually abused.
- You taking part in the study should also help others understand how black African girls do well after sexual abuse. This could help others who work with girls and those in decision making positions to understand what is needed to help other girls like this.

**Are there risks involved in your taking part in this research and how will these be managed?**

- The risks in this study, and how these will be managed, are summarised in the table below:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Probable/possible risks/discomforts</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Strategies to minimize risk/discomfort</b></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Because you will be asked to meet with me for between 1 -3 hours, this may be an inconvenience or may delay completion of your other duties.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I will discuss with you the best possible times to meet and will set up meetings at times that are convenient. I will serve refreshments during the meetings.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Because we will talk about things that are difficult and painful (i.e., girls who have been abused), this may be emotionally uncomfortable for you.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If you feel emotionally uncomfortable, please tell me. I am a psychologist and can talk to you immediately to help you to feel more comfortable. If you would like, I can also arrange for you to see one of the therapists at Kids Haven.</li> </ul>

- However, I do believe that the benefits to you and to science may be greater than the risks we have listed above. If you disagree, then you do not have to take part in this study.

#### **Who will have access to the data?**

- All the audio recordings will be given to someone to type out (a transcriber). The transcriber will sign a letter saying she will not discuss any part of the study with anyone. Also, when I give her the recordings, aside from hearing your name mentioned, any other information about your identity will not be included, that is, your surname, your place of work, your profession. As soon as the recorded AP sessions have been typed up, I will delete them from the recorders.
- The audio recordings and their transcripts will be stored on a computer, in an electronic format. All electronic data will be encrypted and kept on a password-protected computer operating on a secured network.
- All the information will be stored as anonymously as possible. This means that your name will not be linked to any of the information. Instead we will ask you to choose a name by which your information will be labelled. Alternatively the data can be labelled AP 1, 2, etc.
- Your contact information (as provided in this form) will be kept separately from the information we get in the study.
- I will have access to your information and Linda Theron who is my supervisor and one of the main researchers on this project, will also have access to the information but not your contact information.

#### **What will happen to the data?**

- The information from this study will be shared or reported in the following ways: It will be written up as articles, book chapters, research reports and spoken about at conferences.

- In all of this reporting, you will not be personally identified. This means that the reporting will not include your name or details that will help others to know that you participated (e.g., your name, your address, the name of the shelter or the name of your school).
- You should know that because this study is part of a bigger project (as I explained above), the international team as well as the South African team working on the project will have access to the information produced and the data may be used or multiple cross country publications. They will not have access to any information that can identify you.

**Will you be paid/compensated to take part in this study and are there any costs involved?**

- No, you will not be paid/compensated to take part in the study, but refreshments will be served.
- You will not have to pay for anything related to this research.

**How will you know about the findings?**

- The information that I get from our discussion will be transcribed and typed up. I will show you the transcriptions and you will be able to see if it is an accurate reflection of our meeting.
- Once the study is completed you will also be invited to a session, together with other members of the AP, where all the findings will be presented.
- I will also make copies of my final report available if you would like to have one.

**Is there anything else that you should know or do?**

- You can call or WhatsApp me, Sadiyya Haffejee at 083 450 5987, or email me at [Sadiyya.haffejee@gmail.com](mailto:Sadiyya.haffejee@gmail.com), if you have any further queries or encounter any problems. You can also leave a message for me with Sharon, at Kids Haven reception and I will contact you.
- You can contact the co-chair of the Humanities and Health Research Ethics Committee, Prof Tumi Khumalo (016 910 3397 or [Tumi.khumalo@nwu.ac.za](mailto:Tumi.khumalo@nwu.ac.za)) if you have any concerns or complaints that have not been adequately addressed by the researcher. You can leave a message for Tumi with Ms Daleen Claasens (016 910 30441).
- You will receive a copy of this information and consent form for your own records.

**Declaration by participant**

By signing below, I ..... agree to take part in a research study entitled: Exploring Resilience Processes in Sexually Abused Black African Girls from Aural areas through the use of Visual Participatory Methods.

I declare that:

- I have read and understood this information and consent form and it is written in a language with which I am fluent and comfortable.
- I have had a chance to ask questions to both the person obtaining consent, as well as the researcher (if this is a different person), and all my questions have been adequately answered.
- I understand that taking part in this study is **voluntary** and I have not been pressurised to take part.
- I understand that what I contribute (what I say) could be reproduced publically and/or quoted, but without reference to my personal identity.
- I may choose to leave the study at any time and will not be penalised or prejudiced in any way.
- I may be asked to leave the study before it has finished, if the researcher feels it is in my best interests.
- Signed at (place) ..... on (date) .....  
20....

.....  
**Signature of participant**

.....  
**Signature of witness**

- You may contact me again  **Yes**  **No**
- I would like a summary of the findings of this research  **Yes**  **No**
- The best way to reach me is:
- Name & Surname: \_\_\_\_\_
- Postal Address: \_\_\_\_\_
- Email: \_\_\_\_\_
- Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_
- Cell Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_
- In case the above details change, please contact the following person who knows me well and who does not live with me and who will help you to contact me:
- Name & Surname: \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- Phone/ Cell Phone Number /Email: \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Declaration by researcher**

- I (name) ..... declare that:

- I explained the information in this document to .....
- I encouraged him/her to ask questions and took adequate time to answer them.
- I am satisfied that he/she adequately understands all aspects of the research, as discussed above
- I did/did not use an interpreter.
- Signed at (place) ..... on (date) .....  
20....

.....

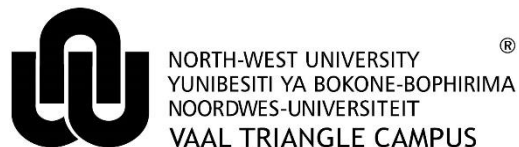
**Signature of researcher**

.....

**Signature of witness**

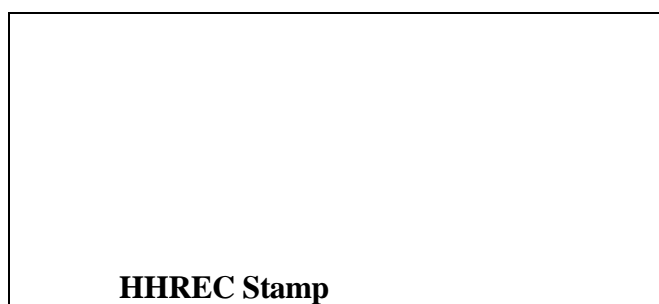
## Appendix J

## Secondary participants information and consent



PO Box 1174, Vanderbijlpark  
South Africa, 1900

Web: <http://www.nwu.ac.za>



**DATE: 2015-11-04**

## **PARTICIPANT INFORMATION LEAFLET AND CONSENT FORM FOR SECONDARY PARTICIPANTS**

**TITLE OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT:** Exploring Resilience Processes in Sexually Abused Black African Girls through the use of Visual Participatory Methods

**REFERENCE NUMBERS:** 267-0115

**PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:**

**Canada:** Claudia Mitchell

**South Africa:** Lebo Moletsane

Co-investigator, South Africa: Linda Theron

**ADDRESS:** North-West University PO Box 1174, Vanderbijlpark, South Africa, 1900

**CONTACT NUMBER:** 016 910 3076 / 082 783 1728

My name is Sadiyya Haffejee. I am a researcher and I would like to invite you to take part in my PhD study that looks at how young black African girls do well in life in spite of difficult circumstances (in particular, girls who have been sexually abused). This study is part of a bigger study called Networks of Change and Well-being project; which is a partnership between universities in South Africa and Canada.

This letter will explain to you what the study is about and what you will be asked to do if you choose to participate. Please feel free to ask me any questions about any part of this project that you do not fully understand. It is very important that you are fully satisfied that you clearly understand what this research is about and how you could be involved. Also, your participation is **entirely voluntary**, this means that you are free to decide whether you want to take part in the study. If you decide to say no you don't want to participate, no one will force you to take part and you won't be affected in a negative way whatsoever. You are also free to withdraw from the study at any point, and have your information removed from the study, even if you do agree to take part.

This study has been approved by the **Humanities and Health Research Ethics Committee (HHREC) of the Faculty of Humanities of the North-West University (NWU – HS- 2015-0149)** and will be conducted according to the ethical guidelines and principles of the international Declaration of Helsinki and the ethical guidelines of the National Health Research Ethics Council. It might be necessary for the research ethics committee members or relevant authorities to inspect the research records to make sure that we (the researchers) are conducting research in an ethical manner.

### **What is this research study all about?**

- This study is interested in understanding how young, black African girls are able to do well in life in spite of having experienced sexual abuse.
- I am interested in finding out and understanding:
  - How black African girls who are sexually abused make sense of what happened to them.
  - What it is that black African girls do to be strong when facing these difficulties in life.
  - How community members, parents and other significant people support or hamper the way these young black African girls adjust.
- I am also interested in finding out if using stories and videos made by the girls will help others understand how black African girls do well in life in spite of the sexual abuse.
- In order to do this, I will be speaking to you about some of the girls in care that were nominated by the Advisory panel (AP) to take part in the study.
- I have asked the girls for permission to talk to you and they have agreed.
- I will need to meet with you for about 1 to 2 hours to talk about the girl chosen. I will specifically be asking about your knowledge about their past and their present life.
- I am a psychologist and I have been trained on how to interview you.

### **Why have you been invited to participate?**

- You have been invited to take part in this study because you have a relationship with one of the girls participating in the study (that is, you either work with her therapeutically, are her house mother or she has identified you as someone she has a relationship with). You have information on her background, her experiences and how she has and is adjusting after the abuse.

### What will your responsibilities be?

#### You will be expected to:

- Meet with me alone for about an hour or two where I will ask you about your experiences interacting and working with the girl participant, for example, how she is currently doing, how do you think her past experiences have impacted on her, what has helped her to do well, what resources does she draw on to help her through difficult times.
- I will ask to audio-record our conversation.
- We can meet at Kids Haven at a time and on a day that is convenient for you.

### Will you benefit from taking part in this research?

- The direct benefits for you is that you will have a chance to talk and think about how experiences of sexual abuse impact on the black African girls that you work with and how they adjust well in spite of it. This may be useful to you in your work with girls that have been sexually abused.
- You taking part in the study will also help others understand how black African girls do well after sexual abuse. This could help others who work with girls and those in decision making positions to understand what is needed to help other girls like this.

### Are there risks involved in your taking part in this research and how will these be managed?

- The risks in this study, and how these will be managed, are summarised in the table below:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Probable/possible risks/discomforts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategies to minimize risk/discomfort</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Because you will be asked to meet with me for 1-2 hours, this may be an inconvenience or may be delayed in your other duties.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I will discuss with you the best possible times to meet and will set up meetings at times that are convenient. I will also ensure that supervisors and management at Kids Haven are aware of your participation in the study and that you are excused from activities for the duration of your participation.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Because we will talk about things that are difficult and painful, this may be emotionally uncomfortable for you.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If you feel emotionally uncomfortable, please tell me. I am a psychologist and can talk to you immediately to help you to feel more comfortable. If you would like, I can also arrange for you to see one of the therapists at Kids Haven.</li> </ul>

- However, I do believe that the benefits to you and to science may be greater than the risks we have listed above. If you disagree, then you do not have to take part in this study.

#### **Who will have access to the data?**

- All the audio recordings will be given to someone to type out (a transcriber). The transcriber will sign a letter saying she will not discuss any part of the study with anyone. Also, when I give her the recordings, aside from hearing your name mentioned, any other information about your identity will not be included, that is, your surname, your place of work, your profession. As soon as the recorded AP sessions have been typed up, I will delete them from the recorders.
- The audio recordings and their transcripts will also be stored on a computer, in an electronic format. All electronic data will be encrypted and kept on a password-protected computer operating on a secured network.
- All the information will be stored as anonymously as possible. This means that your name will not be linked to any of the information. Instead we will ask you to choose a name by which your information will be labelled. Alternatively the data can be labelled Staff 1, 2, etc.
- Your contact information (as provided in this form) will be kept separately from the information we get in the study.
- I will have access to your information and Linda Theron who is my supervisor and one of the main researchers on this project, will also have access to the information but not your contact information.

#### **What will happen to the data?**

- The information from this study will be shared or reported in the following ways: It will be written up as articles, book chapters, research reports and spoken about at conferences.
- In all of this reporting, you will not be personally identified. This means that the reporting will not include your name or details that will help others to know that you participated (e.g., your name, your address, the name of the shelter or the name of your school).
- You should know that because this study is part of a bigger project (as I explained above), the international team working on the project will have access to the data produced and it may be used for multiple cross country publications. They will not have access to any information that can identify you.

#### **Will you be paid/compensated to take part in this study and are there any costs involved?**

- No, you will not be paid/compensated to take part in the study, but refreshments will be served. There will be no costs for you to be involved.

#### **How will you know about the findings?**

- The information that I get from our discussion will be transcribed and typed up. I will show you the transcriptions and you will be able to see if it is an accurate reflection of our meeting.
- Once the study is completed you will also be invited to a session, together with other staff that has participated, where all the findings will be presented.
- I will also make copies of my final report available if you would like to have one.

**Is there anything else that you should know or do?**

- You can call or WhatsApp me, Sadiyya Haffejee at 083 450 5987, or email me [Sadiyya.haffejee@gmail.com](mailto:Sadiyya.haffejee@gmail.com), if you have any further queries or encounter any problems. You can also leave a message for me with Sharon, at Kids Haven reception and I will contact you.
- You can contact the co-chair of the Humanities and Health Research Ethics Committee, Prof Tumi Khumalo (016 910 3397 or Tumi.khumalo@nwu.ac.za) if you have any concerns or complaints that have not been adequately addressed by the researcher. You can leave a message for Tumi with Ms Daleen Claasens (016 910 30441).
- You will receive a copy of this information and consent form for your own records.

### Declaration by secondary participant

By signing below, I ..... agree to take part in a research study entitled: Exploring Resilience Processes in Sexually Abused Black African Girls from Aural areas through the use of Visual Participatory Methods.

I declare that:

- I have read and understood this information and consent form and it is written in a language with which I am fluent and comfortable.
- I have had a chance to ask questions to both the person obtaining consent, as well as the researcher (if this is a different person), and all my questions have been adequately answered.
- I understand that taking part in this study is **voluntary** and I have not been pressurised to take part.
- I understand that what I contribute (what I say) could be reproduced publically and/or quoted, but without reference to my personal identity.
- I may choose to leave the study at any time and will not be penalised or prejudiced in any way.
- I may be asked to leave the study before it has finished, if the researcher feels it is in my best interests.
- Signed at (place) ..... On (date) .....  
20....

### Signature of participant

### Signature of witness

- You may contact me again  Yes  No
- I would like a summary of the findings of this research  Yes  No
- The best way to reach me is:
- Name & Surname: \_\_\_\_\_
- Postal Address: \_\_\_\_\_
- Email: \_\_\_\_\_
- Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_
- Cell Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_
- In case the above details change, please contact the following person who knows me well and who does not live with me and who will help you to contact me:
- Name & Surname: \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- Phone/ Cell Phone Number /Email: \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Declaration by person obtaining consent**

- I (name) ..... declare that:
- I explained the information in this document to .....
- I encouraged him/her to ask questions and took adequate time to answer them.
- I am satisfied that he/she adequately understands all aspects of the research, as discussed above
- I did/did not use an interpreter.

Signed at (place) ..... On (date) ..... 20....

.....  
**Signature of person obtaining consent**

.....  
**Signature of witness**

**Declaration by researcher**

- I (name) ..... declare that:
- I explained the information in this document to .....
- I encouraged him/her to ask questions and took adequate time to answer them.
- I am satisfied that he/she adequately understands all aspects of the research, as discussed above
- I did/did not use an interpreter.
- Signed at (place) ..... On (date) .....  
20....

.....  
**Signature of researcher**

.....  
**Signature of witness**

## Appendix K

### Author guidelines for South African Journal of Science

The *South African Journal of Science* considers articles from any field on the understanding that they are the original work of the authors named, that they are being offered only to the *South African Journal of Science* and that the content is relevant to and for Africa.

#### **Article types**

Various kinds and categories of article are welcome.

**Front-section:** Items for consideration for publication in the front section of the journal, such as Book Reviews and Scientific Correspondence, must be submitted directly to the Editor-in-Chief and NOT via the online submission site. Material considered for the front section is subject to the normal representations and warranties, that is, inter alia, that the material must be original and must conform to the specifications for manuscripts provided in the formatting guidelines. Submissions must be accompanied by a signed Publishing Agreement. The names, affiliations and full contact details of all authors must be provided together with the material submitted for consideration. Manuscripts submitted for consideration as frontsection items are reviewed by the Editor-in-Chief who decides what should be included and in which issue of the journal. Although the Editor-in-Chief may solicit an external review at his discretion, items published in the front section of the journal are not subject to peer review and therefore do not qualify for the Department of Higher Education and Training subsidy. For guidelines on specific front-section article types see Guidelines for Front-section Items.

**Peer-reviewed research communications** are of three kinds: Research Letters, Research Articles and Review Articles. Research Letters are short reports (no longer than 2000 words) and should be up-to-date accounts of interesting and noteworthy scientific developments.

Although these reports may be concerned with very particular advances, they should be of wider than specialist interest. Research Letters are given priority in terms of rapid publication after acceptance. Research Articles are longer papers (no more than 6000 words). Here the criteria of intelligibility and wider interest are strictly applied. Review Articles (up to 6000 words) should be up-to-date surveys of important current developments in science. Research and Review Articles that receive a high priority rating from at least two reviewers are given preference in terms of rapid publication after acceptance.

#### Pre-submission enquiries

If you wish to enquire whether your submission might be suitable for consideration by the *South African*

*Journal of Science*, please email the [Editor-in-Chief](#). All pre-submission enquiries must include a summary and a cover letter outlining the article's interest to a broad scientific readership.

#### Submission of manuscripts for consideration

Manuscripts for peer review must be [submitted online](#). Please ensure that you have complied with the [guidelines](#) and completed the [Publishing Agreement](#) before you start the submission process. Submissions that are incomplete or do not comply with the instructions will be returned.

**Fees:** There are no submission fees or article-processing charges.

**Readability:** As the journal has a multidisciplinary focus, manuscripts must be written in a manner and style that is intelligible to specialists and non-specialists alike. Articles are judged by reviewers at the discretion of the editors. Contributions should therefore be written

clearly and simply so that they are accessible to readers in other disciplines and those for whom English is not a first language.

**Plagiarism:** Plagiarism is when you use someone else's work (book, article, website, etc.) or idea without acknowledging them as the source, whether it be copied verbatim or paraphrased. Manuscripts submitted online will be screened for potential plagiarism before peer review using similarity detection software. All cases of suspected or alleged plagiarism are considered very seriously in accordance with the journal's [Plagiarism Policy](#).

**Permissions:** Permission must be obtained from the copyright owner for the use of quotations, illustrations, tables and other materials taken from previously published works that are not in the public domain. The author is responsible for the payment of any copyright fee(s) if these have not been waived. The letters of permission must accompany the manuscript. The original source(s) must be mentioned in the figure legend or as a footnote to a table.

**Ethical guidelines:** Submissions involving research conducted on human or non-human vertebrates must meet the highest standards regarding both the ethical consideration given and reporting of the procedures followed. Full details are necessary so that a non-specialist reader can appreciate the need for the research undertaken.

All reported research involving humans or other animals must be approved prior to commencement of the study by an institutional ethics committee. The name of the approving body and a reference number (if provided) must be included in the Methods section of the manuscript.

In addition, all manuscripts describing research involving human subjects, tissue or data must also indicate that informed consent was obtained and that the [principles of the Declaration of Helsinki](#)) were adhered to. All manuscripts describing research involving non-human animals must also indicate that the [ARRIVE guidelines](#)) for reporting in vivo animal

experiments were adhered to. Proper reporting should include the number, sex, age, weight, health status and source of the individuals used, as well as full details of anaesthesia and surgical procedures. The Declaration of Helsinki and the ARRIVE guidelines are also available from the [Editorial Office](#). Manuscripts failing to adhere to these instructions will not be considered for publication.

**Deposition of new sequences and structures:** The reporting of new or not previously reported structures or sequences (such as chemical and crystallographic structures, synthetic compounds, genes and proteins) must include the accession numbers of the relevant database in which they have been deposited. Details of the synthesis of new structures and compounds must also be given. See [Data sets](#) for deposition of other data.

**Authorship:** Authorship of a manuscript should be agreed upon by authors prior to submission. Generally, a person attributed as an author should have contributed to (1) the conception and design of the study and data collection or data analysis; (2) writing or revising the manuscript; and (3) final approval of the version to be published. The corresponding author is responsible for ensuring that all listed authors have agreed to: (1) the authorship as listed and in the order given by the submitting author; (2) the content of the manuscript; and (3) its submission to the journal. All authors are required to sign the [Publishing Agreement](#) before submission. Any requests for changes in authorship prior to publication should be accompanied by a new Publishing Agreement.

**Author contributions** will be requested during the submission process and will appear in published articles. The submitting author will be required to indicate the contribution of each author along the lines of: conceptualisation; methodology; data collection; sample analysis; data analysis; validation; data curation; writing – the initial draft; writing – revisions; student

supervision; project leadership; project management; and funding acquisition. For a brief description of each contribution please [click here](#).

**Reviewers:** Authors will be required during submission to suggest three potential reviewers to evaluate their work. The names and full contact details (including email) of the suggested reviewers must be provided. Suggested reviewers should not be people with whom the authors have recently collaborated or published. Authors may also indicate if they oppose any potential reviewers. The final selection of reviewers is, however, at the discretion of the editors. Please see [Peer-review Process](#) for more information on the peer-review process.

**Cover letter:** The cover letter should outline the study and the article's relevance to the broad readership of the *South African Journal of Science*. The cover letter should identify the author to whom all correspondence should be addressed and detail any [conflicts of interest](#). Details of the significance of the findings can also be provided.

The **significance of the main findings** or conclusions should be summarised and listed in a required step during the submission process [a minimum of two and maximum of five should be given]. The significance of the findings should not be a summary of the results, but should reflect the contribution the results make to the field, and how the results are applicable in their respective field and in other fields. The points of significance should start with general contributions and proceed with more specific contributions. The significance of the findings will be published with the aim of promoting greater interest not only from readers in the field but also from a wider readership. The points of significance should therefore be written for a non-specialist.

**Title page:** The title page must include the title of the article (a maximum of 95 characters including spaces); a running head (a shortened version of the title, 65 characters or less); five keywords; the authors' names, affiliations and [ORCID](#)s; and the name and email of the corresponding author. The title page must be submitted as a separate document during the

submission process [select Title Page as the file format when uploading the file during submission].

**Acknowledgements:** Any significant help received in conceiving, designing or carrying out the work, as well as provision of a service or material must be acknowledged. Authors should always acknowledge outside reviewers of their drafts. The Acknowledgements must be submitted as a separate document during the submission process [select Acknowledgements as the file format when uploading the file during submission].

**Funding:** Authors should acknowledge all sources of funding that supported their research. In addition to including funding sources in their Acknowledgements, authors will be able to select or add funding bodies under the Funding field during the submission process.

**Abstract/summary paragraph:** Articles and letters must begin with a summary paragraph (of up to 250 words) aimed at readers in other disciplines. The paragraph should start with 2–3 sentences that provide an introduction to the field and the particular problem investigated, followed by a one-sentence statement of your main findings (or conclusions, in the case of a Review Article), and a further 2–3 sentences placing these findings/conclusions in a general context so that readers are made aware of the implications of the findings. Summary paragraphs typically do not include references, but if a reference is essential, the full reference must be given.

**References:** The reference list should begin on a separate page. The number of references is limited to 30 for Research Letters, 60 for Research Articles and 80 for Review Articles. The *South African Journal of Science* uses the Vancouver referencing style; no other style will be permitted. [Click here](#) for examples.

To expedite the publication process, the reference list should include a DOI (digital object identifier) for each applicable reference. The DOIs can be retrieved easily using [CrossRef's](#)

[Simple Text Query tool](#). The tool is user friendly and free to access once you have registered for a free account.

**Online supplementary material:** Online supplementary material is material additional to but directly relevant to your article that cannot be included within the article for reasons of space or medium (such as videos). Various formats are allowed (e.g. Word documents, Excel spreadsheets, video files). The material is peer reviewed in conjunction with the article and must be submitted as supplementary material during online submission. Supplementary material must be numbered separately when referred to in the article (e.g. Supplementary table 1) and must conform with the journal's [formatting guidelines](#). Online supplementary material undergoes copy-editing but not layout and is published separately on the article page. As it is published separately, any references must be given in a self-contained reference list. Supplementary material should be limited to 10 figures/tables and 2000 words.

**Data sets:** Although only the deposition of some data – specifically new sequences and structures – is compulsory, we welcome and encourage the publication of the data set on which an article is based. Wherever possible, access to such data sets must be open.

The publication of data sets serves several objectives and these objectives should be kept in mind when depositing and referring to data. These objectives broadly follow the FAIR Guiding Principles of Findability, Accessibility, Interoperability and Reusability.

Data sets can take the form of computational or curated data or those produced through experimental or observational procedures and should be provided in the 'rawest' form that will permit reuse. Raw data should be treated as a data set and not as supplementary material.

Data sets are citable sources. Published data sets must be cited within the manuscript (numbered as for figures and tables, e.g. Data set 1) and the citations must appear in the reference list. A description of the data set must be provided in the manuscript, which must include the format of the data and details of any software that is required to view the data.

Authors choosing to publish their data sets after acceptance of a manuscript, must deposit their data in a reputable repository that follows the principles of data management and citation. The persistent link to the data set in the repository must be provided to the Editorial Office before publication of the article and will be published on the article landing page on the Journal website, ensuring that the data set is visible and accessible to readers.

The repository selected must: be actively managed; include quality control measures; enable unrestricted access to the data set (except for reasons of privacy); enable searching and retrieval of data sets; include a globally unique persistent ID (or DOI) which resolves to a publicly accessible landing page which is maintained even if the data are retracted; appropriately describe the data and include metadata; ensure data set persistence; include version control and ensure data set stability (which means that the specific version cited can be retrieved). If for good reason the data are removed from the repository after publication, the Editorial Office must be informed. The following is a list of recognised repositories for general data (please confirm suitability for your data type and adherence to best practice before choosing a repository): [Dataverse](#); [Dryad](#); [Figshare](#); [Open Science Framework](#) (for open data); and [Zenodo](#).

### **General specifications of manuscripts**

**Format of text:** Manuscripts should be typed in Arial font 11 point with one and a half line spacing. Please save manuscripts for upload in .DOC (not .DOCX) format. Please ensure authors' names and affiliations and any acknowledgements are omitted [and provided on the title page] to facilitate the double-blind review process.

**Unique fonts:** If these are necessary, they should be embedded in the .DOC file in order to ensure they display correctly.

**Layout:** Start each paragraph at the margin (no tabs to indent first line). Include a line space between paragraphs to separate. Numbered paragraphs/sections are not permitted.

**Heading styles:** First level headings: boldface, normal case, centred, on a separate line, 14pt. Second level headings: boldface, normal case, justified at left margin, on a separate line, 14pt. Third level headings: boldface, normal case, justified at left margin, on a separate line, 12pt. Fourth-level headings: underlined, not bold, normal case, justified at left margin, on a separate line, 12pt.

**Spelling:** Please use UK spelling and not US spelling. Use IUPAC nomenclature recommendations for chemical elements and compounds.

**Quotations in the text:** Single quotation marks are used for all quotations; to highlight a quote within a quote, please use double quotation marks. If citations are longer than 30 words, please do not use single quotation marks; rather indent the quotation and italicise it.

**Footnotes** may not be used in the text but may be used for Tables and Figures.

**Tables and figures:** There should be no more than 10 figures and tables in total per article. All **captions** must be provided together on a separate page at the end of the manuscript. Abbreviations/acronyms used in figures and tables must be explained in the heading/legend or footnote.

Figures must be provided as high-resolution images in TIFF format (avoid compressed formats like GIFF and JPEG). Ensure that your figures will be clear and legible when reduced in size.

Tables must be submitted in editable format in Word or Excel and not as image files. Excel files should be uploaded as individual sheets, not the entire workbook.

**Equations:** Use English Equation Editor if you have equations in your manuscript; other versions will not convert correctly.

**Acronyms:** If a phrase with an established acronym or abbreviation is used, and appears more than five times in your article, please include the acronym/abbreviation in brackets after first mention of the phrase, then use the acronym/abbreviation only. Please note that you should not define acronyms or abbreviations in any of your headings. If either has been used in your abstract/summary, you need to define them again on their first use within the main text. Abbreviations/acronyms used in figures and tables must be explained in the heading/legend or footnote.

**Units:** The use of units should conform to the SI convention and be abbreviated accordingly. Metric units and their international symbols are used throughout, as is the decimal point (not the decimal comma), and the 24-hour clock.

**Spacing and punctuation:** There should be one space (not two) between sentences; one space before unit terms (e.g. 5 kg, 5 mm, 5 mmol, 5 days, 5 °C); but no space before %. Thousands/millions are marked with a space, not a comma, from 10 000 (e.g. 10 000, 1 000 000 but 1000). Ranges are expressed with an extended hyphen, not with a short hyphen (e.g. 1990–2000).

**Dates:** Dates must be written as: 12 July 2012.

### **Submission of revised manuscripts**

Revisions to the text should be indicated using the track changes mode in MS Word or by using coloured font. If you use track changes, please ensure that your name does not appear in the comment box.

Your revised manuscript must be submitted [online](#). Log in to your ‘Author Center’, where you will find your original submission listed under ‘Manuscripts with Decisions’. Under ‘Actions’, click on ‘Create a Revision’. Your original files will be available to you when you upload your revised manuscript – please delete any redundant files before completing the

submission. You will not be able to access your manuscript to resubmit if the deadline has expired (the deadline expires at 12:00 SAST/GMT+2). If you need a few extra days to resubmit, please request the Editorial Office to extend the deadline on the submission site.

During the submission process, you will be required to respond to the comments made by the reviewers in the space provided as well as to upload your responses as a separate (blinded) document [select Response to Reviewers as the file format when uploading the file during submission]. Your responses should be as specific as possible.

Manuscripts requiring major revisions should be resubmitted within 60 days following the decision and those requiring minor revisions should be resubmitted within 30 days.

Resubmissions not received within these deadlines may be considered as new submissions.

In order to expedite publication should your revised manuscript be accepted, it is important to ensure that you have complied with the [guidelines](#), specifically that your figures are of appropriate size and resolution and have been uploaded individually as TIFF files and that your references have been numbered and formatted correctly and include DOIs where applicable.

### **Post-acceptance**

The corresponding author will be notified as soon as possible as to which issue their manuscript has been assigned for publication. Authors who have manuscripts awaiting publication should please notify the Editorial Office if they plan to be out of email reach for a length of time or assign another author as corresponding author.

Corresponding authors can provide feedback on the publication process of their manuscript at two stages: (1) after copy-editing of the Word document and (2) on the PDF proof after layout. Revisions and corrections must be received promptly (within 48 hours) to avoid

delays in publication. Substantial changes made at PDF proof stage will be charged to the author.

Corresponding authors will be notified as soon as the article is published online. The journal is openly accessible and you can freely download and share your article. You can view your article's metrics (views, downloads, altmetrics) on the article's landing page.

See [Production Process and Publication](#) for more information.

### **Copyright**

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You may archive the final published version of your article in personal or institutional repositories immediately after publication. Self-archiving prior to publication is not permitted and may result in the withdrawal of a submission or accepted manuscript. See [Digital Archiving and Preservation Policy](#) for more information.

## Appendix L

### Author guidelines for Journal of Adolescent Research

#### **Author guidelines Journal of Adolescent Research**

The aim of the Journal of Adolescent Research is to publish informative and dynamic articles from a variety of disciplines that focus on development during adolescence (ages 10 to 18) and early emerging adulthood (18-22). We are particularly interested in papers that use mixed-methods, systematically combining qualitative and quantitative data and analyses. We also seek rigorous qualitative research using a variety of strategies including ethnography, in-depth interviews, case studies, photo elicitation, and the like. Our goal is to expand upon the understanding of a diverse range of experiences of adolescents and emerging adults across a variety of contexts.

[This journal is a member of the Committee on Publication Ethics \(COPE\)](#)

#### Manuscript Preparation

Manuscripts should be prepared using the *APA Style Guide* (Sixth Edition). All pages must be typed, double-spaced (including references, footnotes, and endnotes). Text must be in 12-point Times Roman. Block quotes may be single-spaced. Must include margins of 1 inch on all the four sides and number all pages sequentially. *All research submitted must adhere with guidelines for the protection of human subjects. Please indicate in your cover letter and in your manuscript how you met this standard (e.g., following protocols approved by an institutional review board).*

The manuscript should include four major sections(in this order): Title Page, Abstract, Main Body, and References.

Sections in a manuscript may include the following (in this order): (1) Title page, (2) Abstract, (3) Keywords, (4) Text, (5) Notes, (6) References, (7) Tables, (8) Figures, and (9) Appendices.

**1. Title page.** Please include the following:

- Full article title
- Acknowledgments and credits
- Each author's complete name and institutional affiliation(s) and biosketch (2-3 sentences about each author)
- Grant numbers and/or funding information
- Corresponding author (name, address, phone/fax, e-mail)

We strongly encourage authors to include the following key points in their Abstract. Feel free to use this as a template. *Note.* The Abstract should not exceed 200 words.

**2. Abstract.** Print the abstract on a separate page headed by the full article title. Omit author(s)'s names.

- **Aims.** Describe the aims of your study.
- **Demographics.** Provide information about your sample of participants, including age, gender, race/ethnicity, socioeconomic status, immigrant generational status, etc.
- **Settings.** Describe the site or context from which your sample was drawn.
- **Methodology.** Describe the specific qualitative or mixed-method strategy employed for the study (in-depth interviews, case studies, photo elicitation, etc.) *Note.* We do NOT accept manuscripts that use only quantitative methods. *Please include in your methodology a statement about how your research ensured the protection of human subjects (i.e., following protocols that have been approved by an Institutional Review Board).*

- **Analysis.** Describe the type of analysis you used (inductive analysis, deductive analysis, chi sq.; logistic regression, etc.)
- **Findings.** Briefly describe key findings.
- **Implications.** Include a concluding sentence regarding implications of study.

**3. Text.** Begin article text on a new page headed by the full article title.

a. Headings and subheadings. Subheadings should indicate the organization of the content of the manuscript. Generally, three heading levels are sufficient to organize text. Level 1 heading should be Centered, Boldface, Upper & Lowercase, Level 2 heading should be Flush Left, Boldface, Upper & Lowercase, Level 3 heading should be Indented, boldface, lowercase paragraph heading that ends with a period, Level 4 heading should be Indented, boldface, italicized, lowercase paragraph heading that ends with a period, and Level 5 heading should be Indented, italicized, lowercase paragraph heading that ends with a period.

b. Citations. For each text citation there must be a corresponding citation in the reference list and for each reference list citation there must be a corresponding text citation. Each corresponding citation must have identical spelling and year. Each text citation must include at least two pieces of information, author(s) and year of publication. Following are some examples of text citations:

(i) *Unknown Author:* To cite work that do not have an author, cite the source by its title in the signal phrase or use the first word or two in the parentheses. Eg. The findings are based on the study was done of students learning to format research papers ("Using XXX," 2001)

(ii) *Authors with the Same Last Name:* use first initials with the last names to prevent confusion. Eg.(L. Hughes, 2001; P. Hughes, 1998)

(iii) *Two or More Works by the Same Author in the Same Year*: For two sources by the same author in the same year, use lower-case letters (a, b, c) with the year to order the entries in the reference list. The lower-case letters should follow the year in the in-text citation. Eg. Research by Freud (1981a) illustrated that...

(iv) *Personal Communication*: For letters, e-mails, interviews, and other person-to-person communication, citation should include the communicator's name, the fact that it was personal communication, and the date of the communication. Do not include personal communication in the reference list. Eg. (E. Clark, personal communication, January 4, 2009).

(v) *Unknown Author and Unknown Date*: For citations with no author or date, use the title in the signal phrase or the first word or two of the title in the parentheses and use the abbreviation "n.d." (for "no date"). Eg. The study conducted by of students and research division discovered that students succeeded with tutoring ("Tutoring and APA," n.d.).

**5. Notes.** If explanatory notes are required for your manuscript, insert a number formatted in superscript following almost any punctuation mark. Footnote numbers should not follow dashes ( — ), and if they appear in a sentence in parentheses, the footnote number should be inserted within the parentheses. The Footnotes should be added at the bottom of the page after the references. The word “Footnotes” should be centered at the top of the page.

**6. References.** Basic rules for the reference list:

- The reference list should be arranged in alphabetical order according to the authors' last names.
- If there is more than one work by the same author, order them according to their publication date – oldest to newest (therefore a 2008 publication would appear before a 2009 publication).

- When listing multiple authors of a source use “&” instead of “and”.
- Capitalize only the first word of the title and of the subtitle, if there are one, and any proper names – i. e. only those words that are normally capitalized.
- Italicize the title of the book, the title of the journal/serial and the title of the web document.
- Manuscripts submitted to *JAR* should strictly follow the *APA Style Guide* (Sixth Edition).
- Every citation in text must have the detailed reference in the Reference section.
- Every reference listed in the Reference section must be cited in text.
- Do not use “et al.” in the Reference list at the end; names of all authors of a publication should be listed there.
- Include the DOI number in the References.

Here are a few examples of commonly found references. For more examples please check *APA*(6<sup>th</sup> Ed).

Books:

*Book with place of publication*--Airey, D. (2010). *Logo design love: A guide to creating iconic brand identities*. Berkeley, CA: New Riders.

*Book with editors & edition*--Collins, C., & Jackson, S. (Eds.). (2007). *Sport in Aotearoa/New Zealand society*. South Melbourne, Australia: Thomson.

*Book with author & publisher are the same*--MidCentral District Health Board. (2008). *District annual plan 2008/09*. Palmerston North, New Zealand: Author.

*Chapter in an edited book*--Dear, J., & Underwood, M. (2007). What is the role of exercise in the prevention of back pain? In D. MacAuley & T. Best (Eds.), *Evidence-based sports medicine* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed., pp. 257-280). Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Periodicals:

*Journal article with more than one author (print)*--Gabbett, T., Jenkins, D., & Abernethy, B. (2010). Physical collisions and injury during professional rugby league skills training. *Journal of Science and Medicine in Sport*, 13(6), 578-583.

*Journal article – 8 or more authors*-- Crooks, C., Ameratunga, R., Brewerton, M., Torok, M., Buetow, S., Brothers, S., ... Jorgensen, P. (2010). Adverse reactions to food in New Zealand children aged 0-5 years. *New Zealand Medical Journal*, 123(1327). Retrieved from <http://www.nzma.org.nz/journal/123-1327/4469/>

Internet Sources:

*Internet – no author, no date*--Pet therapy. (n.d.). Retrieved from [http://www.holisticonline.com/stress/stress\\_pet-therapy.htm](http://www.holisticonline.com/stress/stress_pet-therapy.htm)

*Internet – Organisation / Corporate author*-- SPCA New Zealand. (2011). *Your dog may be dying from the heat [Press release]*. Retrieved from <http://www.rnzspca.org.nz/news/press-releases/360-your-dog-may-be-dying-...>

- Examples of various types of information sources:

*Act (statute / legislation)*--Copyright Act 1994. (2011, October 7). Retrieved from <http://www.legislation.govt.nz>

*Blog post*-- Liz and Ellory. (2011, January 19). The day of dread(s) [Web log post]. Retrieved from

<http://www.travelblog.org/Oceania/Australia/Victoria/Melbourne/St-Kilda/...>

*Brochure / pamphlet (no author)*--*Ageing well: How to be the best you can be* [Brochure]. (2009). Wellington, New Zealand: Ministry of Health.

*Conference Paper*--Williams, J., &Seary, K. (2010). Bridging the divide: Scaffolding the learning experiences of the mature age student. In J. Terrell (Ed.), *Making the links: Learning, teaching and high quality student outcomes*. Proceedings of the 9th Conference of the New Zealand Association of Bridging Educators (pp. 104-116). Wellington, New Zealand.

*DVD / Video / Motion Picture (including Clickview&Youtube)*--Gardiner, A., Curtis, C., & Michael, E. (Producers), &Waititi, T. (Director). (2010). *Boy: Welcome to my interesting world* [DVD]. New Zealand: Transmission.

*Magazine*--Ng, A. (2011, October-December). Brush with history. *Habitus*, 13, 83-87.

*Newspaper article (no author)*--Little blue penguins homeward bound. (2011, November 23). *Manawatu Standard*, p. 5

*Podcast (audio or video)*--Rozaieski, B. (2011). *Logan cabinet shoppe: Episode 37: Entertainment center molding* [Video podcast]. Retrieved from <http://blip.tv/xxx>

*Software (including apps)*--UBM Medica.(2010). iMIMS (Version1.2.0) [Mobile application software].Retrieved from <http://itunes.apple.com>

*Television programme*--Flanagan, A., & Philipson, A. (Series producers & directors).(2011).  
*24 hours in A & E* [Television series]. Belfast, Ireland: Channel 4.

*Thesis (print)*--Smith, T. L. (2008). *Change, choice and difference: The case of RN to BN degree programmes for registered nurses* (Master's thesis). Victoria University of Wellington, Wellington, New Zealand.

*Thesis (online)*--Mann, D. L. (2010). *Vision and expertise for interceptive actions in sport* (Doctoral dissertation, The University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia). Retrieved from <http://handle.unsw.edu.au/1959.4/44704>

Non-English reference book, title translated in English

Real Academia Espanola. (2001). *Diccionario de la lengua espanola* [Dictionary of the Spanish Language] (22<sup>nd</sup>ed.). Madrid, Spain: Author

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** To encourage a faster production process of your article, you are requested to closely adhere to the points above for references. Otherwise, it will entail a long process of solving copyeditor's queries and may directly affect the publication time of your article. In case of any question, please contact the journal editor at

[NDeutschJAR@gmail.com](mailto:NDeutschJAR@gmail.com).

**7. Tables.** They should be structured properly. Each table must have a clear and concise title. When appropriate, use the title to explain an abbreviation parenthetically. Eg. *Comparison of Median Income of Adopted Children (AC) v. Foster Children (FC)*. Headings should be clear and brief.

**8. Figures.** They should be numbered consecutively in the order in which they appear in the text and must include figure captions. Figures will appear in the published article in the order

in which they are numbered initially. The figure resolution should be 300dpi at the time of submission.

**IMPORTANT: PERMISSION** - *The author(s) are responsible for securing permission to reproduce all copyrighted figures or materials before they are published in JAR. A copy of the written permission must be included with the manuscript submission.*

**9. Appendices.** They should be lettered to distinguish from numbered tables and figures. Include a descriptive title for each appendix (e.g., “Appendix A. Variable Names and Definitions”). Cross-check text for accuracy against appendices.

In addition, all articles must show an awareness of the cultural context of the research questions asked, the population studied, and the results of the study. **Each paper submitted MUST include a cover letter indicating how the paper meets at least one of these criteria and the cultural requirement.**

For more on the standards for publication in the *JOURNAL OF ADOLESCENT RESEARCH*, please see:

Arnett, J. J. (2005). [\*The Vitality Criterion: A new standard of publication for Journal of Adolescent Research. Journal of Adolescent Research, 20, 3-7.\*](#)

Suárez-Orozco, C. (2015). [\*Transitional statement from the new Journal of Adolescent Research team. Journal of Adolescent Research, 30\(1\), 3-6.\*](#)

Some essays may provide a thoughtful critique of a research area while making constructive suggestions for new ways of approaching it. Other essays could analyze a recent event, commenting on the developmental context when adolescents or emerging adults are in the news for involvement in something widely discussed. Policy discussions and advocacy also

are welcome in the essays. Scholars interested in writing and submitting an Editorial Essay should query the editor first to confirm the appropriateness of the proposed topic.

The journal accepts **ELECTRONIC SUBMISSIONS ONLY**. Manuscripts should be submitted online at <http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/jar>. The editor (or associate editor) will review all manuscripts within 1 month and then inform the lead author whether or not the paper has met the *JOURNAL OF ADOLESCENT RESEARCH* criteria. The manuscript then will be sent out for peer review.

Submission of a manuscript implies commitment to publish in the journal. Authors submitting manuscripts to the journal should not simultaneously submit them to another journal, nor should manuscripts have been published elsewhere in substantially similar form or with substantially similar content. Authors in doubt about what constitutes prior publication should consult the editor.

In general, manuscripts should not exceed 30 typed, double-spaced pages, including references, tables, and figures. Figures and tables should be included as part of the manuscript, not as separate files. Five to six keywords, to be used in archival retrieval systems, should be indicated on the title page. The title page should also include contact information for the lead author, including affiliation, mailing address, e-mail address, and phone and fax numbers. Manuscripts should include three- to four-sentence biographical paragraphs of each author at the bottom of the title page. Following the title page, an abstract of no more than 200 words should be included. Text and references must conform to American Psychological Association style, as stated in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (Sixth Edition)*. Permission for use of the copyrighted material is the responsibility of the author. All artwork must be camera ready.

## **SAGE Choice**

If you or your funder wish your article to be freely available online to nonsubscribers immediately upon publication (gold open access), you can opt for it to be included in SAGE Choice, subject to the payment of a publication fee. The manuscript submission and peer review procedure is unchanged. On acceptance of your article, you will be asked to let SAGE know directly if you are choosing SAGE Choice. To check journal eligibility and the publication fee, please visit [SAGE Choice](#). For more information on open access options and compliance at SAGE, including self/author archiving deposits (green open access) visit [SAGE Publishing Policies](#) on our Journal Author Gateway.

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## Appendix M

### Author Guidelines for Journal of Black Psychology

The **Journal of Black Psychology** publishes scholarly contributions within the field of psychology toward the understanding of the experience and behavior of Black populations. This includes reports of empirical research and discussions of the current literature and of original theoretical analyses of data from research studies or programs. Therefore, the Journal publishes work in any of the areas of cognition, personality, social behavior, physiological functioning, child development, education, and clinical application, in addition to empirical research and original theoretical formulations outside traditional boundaries, all integrated by a focus on the domain of Black populations and the objective of scholarly contributions.

#### **Submission guidelines**

Manuscripts should be submitted at <http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/jbp>, where authors will be required to set up an online account in the SAGE Track system powered by ScholarOne.

Prospective authors may also wish to download the [Editor's Statement](#), published in the May 2009 issue.

#### **Manuscript Length**

##### **Full-Length Manuscripts**

Full-length manuscripts reporting results of a single **quantitative** study generally should not exceed 35 pages total (including cover page, abstract, text, references, tables, and figures), with margins of at least 1 inch on all sides and a standard font (e.g., Times New Roman) of 12 points (no smaller). The entire paper (text, references, tables, etc.) must be double spaced.

Reports of **qualitative** studies generally should not exceed 45 pages. For papers that exceed these page limits, authors must provide a rationale to justify the extended length in their cover letter (e.g., multiple studies are reported). Papers that do not conform to these guidelines may be returned with instructions to revise before a peer review is invited.

Literature reviews generally should not exceed 40 pages, including references.

Papers that do not conform to these guidelines may be returned with instructions to revise before a peer review is invited.

### **Brief Reports**

In addition to full-length manuscripts, the journal will consider brief reports. The brief reports format may be appropriate for empirically sound studies that are limited in scope, reports of preliminary findings that need further replication, or replications and extensions of prior published work.

Authors should indicate in the cover letter that they wish to have their manuscript considered as a brief report, and they must agree not to submit the full report to another journal. The brief report should give a clear, condensed summary of the procedure of the study and as full an account of the results as space permits.

Brief reports should not exceed 15 pages in total length (including cover page, abstract, text, references, tables, and figures) and must follow the same format requirements as full length manuscripts. Brief reports that exceed 15 pages will not be considered.

### **Manuscript Submission Instructions**

Please submit electronic files using MS Word (Windows Vista users, please save your files as an earlier ".doc" filetype). Each submission should consist of a cover file and manuscript file.

The cover file should contain a request for review of the manuscript and a statement of the purpose and focus of the submitted paper. Cover files should also include the following information:

- manuscript title and all author names, affiliations, mailing addresses, and e-mail addresses
- short biographical paragraphs of each author and any acknowledgments
- manuscript submission date

Every effort should be made by the author to see that the manuscript file contains no clues as to the author's identity. Footnotes containing information pertaining to the identity of the author or institutional affiliation should be on separate pages. Manuscripts, including references, must be double spaced throughout and must conform to guidelines given in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA)*, 6th ed., 2010.

The manuscript file should begin with a title page, omitting the author's name and affiliation but including the title and the date submitted. Following the title page should be a 100-175 word abstract and 4-5 keywords. The introduction section should follow and precede, in order, the Method, Results, and Discussion sections for empirical reports. Following in order should be note pages, references (entries double spaced and alphabetically listed), appendixes, tables, and figures. Table and figure locations should be indicated in text by callouts (e.g., "[insert Table 1 here]") inserted after the respective paragraphs. Figures must be camera ready.

## Appendix N

### Author guidelines for Qualitative Research in Psychology

*Qualitative Research in Psychology* is a leading forum for qualitative researchers in all areas of psychology and seeks innovative and pioneering work that moves the field forward. The journal has published state-of-the-art debates on specific research approaches, methods and analytic techniques, such as discourse analysis, interpretative phenomenological analysis, visual analyses and online research, the role of qualitative research in specific fields such as psychosocial studies and feminist psychology, and the teaching of qualitative methods in the undergraduate curriculum and on clinical psychology training programs. The journal has also published informative articles on specific aspects of qualitative research processes such as ethics, transcription, and interviewee recruitment, and helped to promote innovative research techniques such as photovoice, autoethnography, template analysis, and psychogeography. Our audience consists of psychology professionals using qualitative methods of inquiry in research in academic, clinical, or occupational settings. While the majority of readers will have an interest in psychology as a discipline, *Qualitative Research in Psychology* is strongly interdisciplinary in focus and aims to increase awareness of psychology as a social science that embraces a variety of qualitative approaches.

By representing the full range of qualitative approaches to psychological research,

*Qualitative Research in Psychology* continues to:

- stimulate discussion of the relative merits of different qualitative methods in psychology by hosting key debates in the field by leading authors;

- provide a showcase for exemplary and innovative qualitative research projects in psychology, with regular special issues highlighting developments in the methodological literature;
- maintain high standards for the conduct and reporting of qualitative research with a rigorous review and editorial policy;
- strengthen the relationship between psychology and other social and human sciences where qualitative inquiry has a long track record and;
- place qualitative psychological inquiry appropriately within the scientific, paradigmatic, and philosophical issues that it raises.

Peer Review Policy: All research articles in this journal have undergone rigorous peer review, based on initial editor screening and anonymous double-blind review.

Please note that *Qualitative Research in Psychology* uses [CrossCheck™](#) software to screen papers for unoriginal material. By submitting your paper to *Qualitative Research in Psychology* you are agreeing to any necessary originality checks your paper may have to undergo during the peer review and production processes.

**Types of Manuscripts.** *Qualitative Research in Psychology* will publish the following types of paper:

- 1) Theoretical papers that address conceptual issues underlying qualitative research, that integrate findings from qualitative research on a substantive topic in psychology, that explore the novel contribution of qualitative research to a topic of psychological interest, or that contribute to debates concerning qualitative research across the disciplines but with special significance for psychology
- 2) Empirical papers that report psychological research using qualitative methods and

techniques, those that illustrate qualitative methodology in an exemplary manner, or that use a qualitative approach in unusual or innovative ways

3) Debates

4) Book reviews

Submissions for special issues will normally be announced via an advertisement in the journal, although suggestions for topics are always welcome. Book reviews will normally be suggested by the Reviews Editor, although unsolicited reviews will be considered. The journal will also review other relevant media as well as qualitative research software.

All papers are refereed by, and must be to the satisfaction of, at least two authorities in the topic. All material submitted for publication is assumed to be exclusively for *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, and not to have been submitted for publication elsewhere. Priority and time of publication are decided by the editors, who maintain the customary right to edit material accepted for publication if necessary.

**Submission of Manuscripts.** *Qualitative Research in Psychology* receives all manuscript submissions electronically via its ScholarOne Manuscripts site located at <http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/uqrp>. ScholarOne Manuscripts allows for rapid submission of original and revised manuscripts, and facilitates the review process and internal communication between authors, editors, and reviewers via a web-based platform. ScholarOne technical support can be accessed at <http://scholarone.com/services/support>. Authors should upload three files in total: a separate title page with author names and institutional affiliations, a blinded main document, and a separate document for any tables and figures. The editorial office accepts papers in either UK or US page size formats.

Manuscripts should be double-spaced throughout, especially the references. Pages should be numbered

in order. The following items must be provided in the order given:

1) Title Page .

*Authors and affiliations:* Authors should include their full name and the establishment where the work was carried out (if the author has left this establishment, his/her present address should be given as a footnote). For papers with several contributors, the order of authorship should be made clear and the corresponding author (to whom proofs will be sent) named with their telephone/fax/e-mail contact information listed.

*Abstract:* Please provide an abstract of approximately 150 words. This should be readable without reference to the article and should indicate the scope of the contribution, including the main conclusions and essential original content.

*Keywords:* Please provide at least 5–10 key words.

*About the author:* Please provide a brief biography to appear at the end of your paper.

2) Text.

Subheadings should appear on separate lines. The use of more than three levels of heading should be avoided. Format as follows:

1 Heading

1.1 Subheading

1.1.1 Subsubheading

Footnotes should be avoided. If necessary, they should be supplied as end notes before the references.

### 3) References.

The Harvard style of references should be used. The reference is referred to in the text by the author and date (Smith, 1997) and then listed in alphabetical order at the end of the article applying the following style:

For a book: Hollway, W & Jefferson, T 2000, *Doing qualitative research differently: free association, narrative and the interview method*, Sage, London.

For an edited book: Brown, LM 2001, 'Adolescent girls, class, and the cultures of femininity', in MJ Packer & MB Tappan (eds.), *Cultural and critical perspectives on human development*, SUNY Press, Albany, NY, pp. 219–240.

For a journal article: Madill, A, Jordan, A and Shirley, C 2000, 'Objectivity and reliability in qualitative analysis: realist, contextualist and radical constructionist epistemologies', *British Journal of Psychology*, vol. 91, pp. 1–20.

### 4) Acknowledgements.

Authors should acknowledge any financial or practical assistance.

### 5) Tables.

These should be provided in a separate file from the text and should be numbered in sequence. Each table should have a title stating concisely the nature of information given. Units should be in brackets at the head of columns. The same information should not be included in both tables and figures.

### 6) Figure captions.

These should be provided together on a page following the tables.

#### 7) Figures.

Figures should ideally be sized to reproduce at the same size. All figures should be numbered consecutively in the order in which they are referred to in the text. Qualifications (A), (B), etc., can only be used when the separate illustrations can be grouped together with one caption. Please provide figures at the end of your paper on a separate page for each figure. Once accepted, you will be required to provide a best quality electronic file for each figure, preferably in either TIFF or EPS format.

**Illustrations.** Illustrations submitted (line drawings, halftones, photos, photomicrographs, etc.) should be clean

originals or digital files. Digital files are recommended for highest quality reproduction and should follow these guidelines:

- 300 dpi or higher
- Sized to fit on journal page
- EPS, TIFF, or PSD format only
- Submitted as separate files, not embedded in text files

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<sup>i</sup> This paper, which I presented at a large international conference, summarizes manuscript 2.