

**Using Visual and Participatory Research Methods to
Describe Processes of Educational Resilience in
Returners to Education**

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Abstract

Around 20,000 people per year return to education via HE Access qualifications. For many, this offers the opportunity to enter university and unlock the potential for social mobility. This study aimed to identify the processes leading to educational resilience which contributed to a successful return to education for this group. Twenty students from two Social Mobility Cold Spots (SMCSp) in the East of England acted as co-researchers. The research utilised a participatory method. Participation in the research included refining research questions, collecting and analysing data. Co-researchers gave their views visually through producing collages which described factors throughout the lifespan facilitating a return to education. Co-researchers were taught how to conduct a thematic analysis which they completed. The thematic maps produced demonstrated how these factors interacted throughout their lifespan to form educational resilience processes.

Co-researchers identified 11 master themes; these were synthesised into three major processes of educational resilience in this group of returners to education: Support, connectedness and adversarial growth gained through reflection. Co-researchers described transformative change which led to a return to education and the motivation to succeed.

The participatory and visual approach to the study highlighted a number of advantages and challenges for use. A critique of the methodology is provided alongside suggestions for improvement and critical reflections for other psychologists considering employing participatory research. The findings from this study suggest the potential for development of a new

narrative tool. Several implications are proposed which include how EPs and other stakeholders can support returners to education after taking a break, the importance of work experience and relationships, the role of the EP working with FE and ensuring learners feel supported in high school.

Keywords: Educational resilience, participatory, visual methods, returners to education, protective factors, adversarial growth, social mobility cold spots, HE Access students.

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List of Abbreviations

AEP	Association of Educational Psychologists
BPS	British Psychological Society
CR	Co-researcher
DECP	Division of Educational and Child Psychology
EP	Educational Psychologist
ER	Educational Resilience
EST	Ecological Systems Theory
FE	Further Education
FG	Focus Group
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
HE	Higher Education
HCPC	Health Care Professionals Council
LA	Local Authority
NCOP	National Collaborative Outreach Programme
NEET	Not in Employment Education or Training
PCP	Person Centred Practice
PP	Positive Psychology
PR	Participatory Research
RTE	Returners to Education
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disability
SES	Socio-economic Status
SMC	Social Mobility Commission
SMCSp	Social Mobility Cold Spots
SMI	Social Mobility Index
TEP	Trainee Educational Psychologist
YP	Young Person

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“The human capacity for burden is like bamboo- far more flexible than you'd ever believe at first glance.” — Jodi Picoult ‘

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Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Chapter Overview

This thesis aims to explore the process of educational resilience (ER) in returners to education (RTE). It is anticipated that the research will give a voice to RTE to inform professionals about the aspects of their lives that facilitate a successful return. The study aims to achieve this by using participatory and visual approaches to research.

This chapter will begin with a rationale for the topic and a definition of ER in order to understand the context in which this term will be employed throughout the thesis. The chapter will explore why research in this area is important within the national and local context. An overview of the current socio-political context of this particular group of learners will be presented to help the reader understand the importance of conducting research with this group. Next, key theoretical frameworks underpinning the research will be summarised and the purpose and aim of this research will be outlined. To conclude this chapter, the relevance and impact of the current research will be explored to determine its value in regard to current theoretical understanding of ER .

1.2 Rationale for Topic Selection

Every year, young people (YP) return to education via Higher Education (HE) Access qualifications. Around 36% of this cohort come from socioeconomic

deprived areas (The Quality Assurance Agency for HE, 2017). For many, this offers the opportunity to enter university and unlock the potential for social mobility. Having taught HE access the researcher became aware that RTE appear to benefit from improved financial outcomes and increased social mobility despite the risk and adversity associated with socioeconomic deprivation. The HE Access programme is¹ a course equivalent to 'A' levels, which is designed to give students the qualifications needed to progress to HE. HE Access students generally have little or no formal qualifications. Learners need to be 19 + years-old and because of the way the funding is set up; this is usually the first time they have studied at this level. These students would be considered at risk of not gaining further qualifications, given their low GCSE profile².

Returning to education following dropping out of formal education has been studied in specific cohorts of American students (Wayman, 2002; Dillon, Liem & Gore, 2003; Schilling, 2008) and UK students (Sacker & Schoon, 2007). However, there is often disparity over what is considered a return to education, with some researchers stating as little as four months constituting a 'return'. Research with RTE is often retrospective, and little is known about HE Access students. This group have not been studied in regard to examining the processes of ER.

¹ 1 year full-time but 2 years part-time

² Entry to HE is dependent on obtaining a level 3 qualification. Most level 3 courses require at least 4 GCSE passes.

1.3 What is Educational Resilience?

1.3.1 Resilience

The concept of resilience has been defined as the ability to adapt successfully despite adversity (Garmezy & Masten, 1991). There are two elements to resilience: the exposure to significant threat, risk or adversity and the achievement of positive adaptation, despite these threats (Luthar, Cicchetti & Becker, 2000). Original studies investigating resilience aimed to establish the concepts, traits and characteristics of 'resilient' individuals (Masten, 2001). These individuals were perceived as being invulnerable to situations of adversity (Wright & Masten, 2005)³. While these early studies succeeded to highlight the phenomenon of resilience and establish basic concepts, they were deterministic, attributing resilience to the individual and ignoring the systems around them. Accordingly, they implied resilience was either something you have, or don't have. Research into resilience progressed to exploring the protective factors that might contribute to resilience. Influenced by Bronfenbrenner's (1977) Ecological Systems Theory (EST), researchers began to consider the process of resilience originating from the systems surrounding the person (Masten, 2001) and began to concentrate on protective factors available to individuals to establish what makes them 'resilient' (Zimmerman, Bingenheimer, & Notaro., 2002). EST sees the process of resilience as transactional between the individual and its varying systems (e.g. family, school and community).

³ For example, early studies looked at children growing up in homes where parents were diagnosed with mental health problems or other determining risk factors, such as poverty, and who did not grow up to display maladaptive behaviours (Garmezy & Tellegen, 1984; 1991; Rutter, 1989; Werner, 1993)

Factors within the individual, such as temperament, may interact with aspects of the individual's system; e.g. availability of role models. These factors combine to contribute towards resilience. Thus, resilience can be seen as an amalgamation of these interactions that enable the individual to adapt with adversity (Van Breda, 2001). Within the theory, individual characteristics are considered but, on their own, they do not constitute resilience. This is because the likelihood of the individual being able to employ these characteristics will depend largely on the roles, norms and rules of the system. Thus, resilience is not considered a trait. Consequently, researchers began to observe that resilience in one context (e.g. school) does not always mean resilience in another (e.g. mental well-being). Thus, they began to hypothesise that resilience might be domain specific (Masten, 2001).

1.3.2 Educational resilience

Researchers have begun to investigate specific areas of resilience. One such area is ER, which is defined as the *“heightened likelihood of success in school despite environmental adversities brought about by early traits, conditions, and experiences”* (Wang, Haertel, & Walberg, 1994).

Commensurate to general definitions of resilience, Wang et al (1994) highlights the ability to 'succeed'. What is missing from these definitions is an operationalisation of what 'success' looks like. Therefore, the notion of success might be given as attendance in one study and achievement based on qualifications in another. Consequently, definitions require further refinement to clarify 'success' and whether this can comprehensively determine ER has been demonstrated.

Research within the domain of ER remains dominated by Bronfenbrenner's (1977) EST. Researchers aim to identify the protective aspects of the child's family, school and community, that modify outcomes of risk (Wang et al., 1994; Waxman, Gray & Padron, 2003). The aim of this type of research is to isolate risk and protective factors, to identify those at risk and to inform intervention (Reyes, Elias, Parker, & Rosenblatt, 2013). Hence, there has been a tendency to concentrate on modification of educational environments to produce more 'resilient' individuals in the classroom. Much like general resilience theory, the foundations of ER are in developmental theory which assume developmental trajectories and, to a certain degree, ignore individual perceptions of risk and resilience (Wang et al., 1994). Hence, the theoretical basis of ER tends to be rooted in general resilience theory and concepts pertaining to it have been, to a certain degree, assumed to cross over. Consequently, much of the research examining ER has tended to be explanatory based on the original assumptions of general resilience theory and key concepts which may have emerged from taking an exploratory stance may have been overlooked. When reviewing more contemporary ER literature, on the other hand, there appears to be a move towards a subjective, qualitative approach to understanding ER (Hargrove, 2014; Johnson-Olamiju, 2013; Montalvo-Balbed, 2011; Shelton, 2014; Williams & Bryan, 2013). According to this view, in order to understand ER, we must understand how risk is constructed in the mind of those considered to be resilient. The reliance on explanatory methods to understand ER, may leave key concepts overlooked. Subsequently, future research might need to

employ exploratory methods in order to highlight the full range of constructs that can inform understanding of ER.

1.3.3 Theoretical frameworks informing the research

Resilience is multidimensional and can be developed from the systems that surround the individual (Luthar et al., 2000). Early research into resilience tended to view the individual as 'resilient' or not (Jacelon, 1997). However, many have proposed that resilience is not an innate quality but, is derived from interactions and relations within an individual's environment (Bernard, 1991). Four frameworks drive the understanding of ER presented within this research: Bronfenbrenner's (1977) EST, the life-course approach (Elder, 1998; Sacker and Schoon, 2007), positive psychology (PP) (Peterson and Seligman, 2000) and Bourdieu's (1996) theory of cultural capital and habitus.

1.3.3.1 Ecological systems theory approach

The principle that interactions between the individual and its environment are crucial for understanding resilience, means that this study takes an EST approach. This approach has its origins in Bronfenbrenner's (1977) theory, where optimal development is seen as the result of positive interactions within a child's environments and includes both internal and external influences. This EST view of resilience has been extended further (Luthar & Suchman, 1999; Luthar & Zigler, 1991; Zimmerman & Arunkumar, 1994) to examine how factors within the individual, family and community can interact to form different developmental pathways (Hines, Meridinger & Wyatt, 2005). The approach has been criticised because it fails to acknowledge a proposed fifth level, the international level (Drackenberg, 2004) and it has been argued

that there is not enough focus on the individual before considering aspects of the system (Paquette & Ryan, 2001). Proponents of this view suggest that rather than applying ecological system approaches to resilience, resilience should be integral to Bronfenbrenner's model. Indeed, Engler (2007) suggests that resilience offers a positive perspective to why one individual might be able to cope with adversity brought about by systemic issues. Despite the criticisms, the model is seen as a more holistic approach that places the individual in an ever-changing context rather than seeing ER as an innate characteristic.

1.3.3.2 Life-course approach

A further framework used within this study is that of a life-course approach which originated in the 1960's as a bridge between psychological and sociological discourse on development (Elder, 1998). It views development, from one life-stage to the next, in terms of actions between the changing individual and context. A life-course approach considers both historical context and social structures (Elder, 1998). The life-course approach has five key principles:

1. Development is a lifelong process.
2. Individuals have human agency.
3. An individual's life-course is shaped by social and historical events.
4. The behavioural outcome of these experiences is determined by the timing of when they are experienced.
5. Lives are lived interdependently (Elder, 1998).

The main advocates of this approach within ER are Sacker and Schoon (2007) who propose that protective factors culminate from early points in the lifespan to produce protective processes which can be utilised within the individual's current time and context. The focus on both social and historical context offers greater insight into heterogeneous groups who demonstrate resilience outcomes despite any adversities (Sacker and Schoon, 2007). However, evidence is often provided through large scale longitudinal studies. Given that the conceptual understanding of ER is debated, and measures of resilience require more validation (Windle, 2011), evidence for the approach may suffer from issues of construct validity. Nonetheless, the approach offers a further understanding to the interdependence of the individual and their relationships in supporting ER.

1.3.3.3 Bourdieu and habitus

Bourdieu (1996) proposed that education is a mediational link between original and ultimate class membership (Sullivan, 2002). Education is a form of cultural capital which can come to represent an individual's position in the social order. From Bourdieu's (1996) perspective, educational credentials are a valuable source for unlocking potential to move into a different social stratum. Contained within this is the concept of habitus. Habitus is the habits, skills, and dispositions that an individual has due to their experiences (Bourdieu, 1990). Thus, habitus dictates how an individual navigates their social world. Mills (2008) argues that students can inhabit either a reproductive or transformative habitus. Those with a reproductive habitus recognise the constraints of their social world and interpret their future accordingly. From a psychological perspective, this concept has parallels

with learned helplessness (Seligman, 1972); reproductive habitus individuals identifying themselves as for example, working class, perceive that there is little chance that they will enter the middle class (Nolan & Anyon, 2004). Those in a transformative habitus recognise possibilities and see constraints as opportunities for self-enhancement (Jordan, James, Kay & Redley, 1992). Bourdieu's theory has been applied to resilience because it suggests that there is something transformative about the individual who transcends from their original or primary habitus to succeed in a different habitus. Since university education is seen as dominated by the middle classes (Reay, Crozier, & Clayton, 2010), a working-class student making their way to university is, therefore, viewed as transformative. Indeed, it has been argued that this transcendence is synonymous with resilience (Hernandez-Martinez & Williams, 2013).

1.3.3.4 Positive Psychology

This research adopts Petersons and Seligman's (2004) proposals that researchers in psychology should value the way strengths can be promoted by social systems and institutions. Hence, this research adopts a PP lens by asking RTE about success, rather than focussing on failure (Morales, 2010). This is commensurate with adopting a positive lens and is reflective of the paradigm shift within resilience research from deficits to strengths (Fergus and Zimmerman, 2005). One criticism often yielded at PP, is that the focus on positive experiences means a tendency to neglect negative human experiences such as pain or anguish (Ehrenreich, 2010). This narrow description of human experience often leaves PP open to scepticism by the wider field of psychology (Bohart & Greening, 2001). However, second wave

PP acknowledges that the negative aspects of life often necessitate growth (Ivtzan, Lomas, Hefferon & Worth, 2016). This approach enables researchers to acknowledge negative aspects of life whilst recognising positive outcomes.

Therefore, the frameworks utilised lead to a definition of ER in this thesis being that ER is a process derived from the interactions between the individual and its systems across the life-course that lead to positive adaptations in education despite earlier risk or adversity. For the purpose of this study success/positive adaptations are defined as acquiring academic qualification and progressing to the next stage of education.

1.4 The National and Local Context

1.4.1 SEND Code of Practice and working with older young people

The Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) code of practice (Department of Education & Department for Health, 2015) introduced changes in the statutory duty of Local Authorities (LAs) to extend provision from birth to 25 years. The Division of Educational and Child Psychology (DECP) issued a statement in which they claimed there would be issues pertinent to the older age group which Educational Psychologists (EPs) should consider. They noted that EPs would need knowledge of further education (FE), and of students re-engaging with education and training (BPS, 2014). Furthermore, a pathfinder programme set up to investigate how LAs are managing the change in legislation, found that LAs had put less thought into supporting older YP (19-25) because they assumed that

systems developed for younger age groups would carry across (Thom & Agur, 2014). Atkinson, Dunsmuir, Lang and Wright (2015) conducted research which aimed to develop a curriculum for Trainee EPs (TEPs) which would identify key competencies needed when working with 19-25-year-olds. The competencies suggest that TEPs need to know how to assess risk and resilience and understand issues which result from other life transitions. By taking a life-course approach, it is anticipated that this research will contribute to a deeper understanding of how life transitions influence ER. Findings from this research will contribute to EP understanding of ER and address the competencies proposed by Atkinson et al. (2015).

1.4.2 Local context

The LA where the research was conducted places emphasis on improving outcomes for YP as part of their children and young people's plan. The plan aims to improve educational attainment through its 'raising the bar' and 'developing resilience' agenda. The needs of YP in the area are of national concern in terms of the government's social mobility agenda (Department of Education, 2017b). Areas within the LA have been identified as social mobility cold spots (SMCSp) because of the poor outcomes associated with YP in the area.

Researching this group contributes to the understanding of YP in SMCSp and it develops an awareness of what works for YP, which is important for EP practice and other stakeholders such as FE establishments.

1.5 Defining Key Terms

1.5.1 Returners to education

RTE are defined as those who drop-out of school at 16 and return, following a gap in education. Sacker and Schoon (2007) argue that these gaps need to be filled with full-time employment and be at least four months in length. YP who drop-out of education are found to have economic, psychological and social difficulties that are more prevalent than their peers who stay on in education (Arnett, 2000). The reasons that individuals leave education at 16 and return later are influenced by governmental drives and policy (Bradley & Lenton, 2007), economic models of investment and return (Becker, 1964), peer group, family and schooling influences (Bradley & Lenton, 2007), and prior-educational attainment (McElroy, 1996). Gallacher, Crossan, Field and Merrill (2010) argue that the learning career of RTE is far more fluid than the unidirectional or fixed path of some adult learners. Indeed, it has been found that YP from more wealthy backgrounds follow the fixed route of education by staying in school after 16 years old, whereas YP from poorer backgrounds do not (Crawford, Gregg, Macmillan, Vignoles & Wyness, 2016). When making assessments of ER in RTE, Schoon (2006) suggests “sleeper effects”. This is where academic attainment in early education predicts later attainment. Schoon’s (2006) research indicates that, when examining resilience mechanisms in RTE, the full educational experience from early years to present day is essential to develop understanding.

1.5.2 Social Mobility, Cold Spots and Opportunity Areas

Social mobility is defined as the movement of individuals within or between the different social strata or groups that exist within a society (Simandan, 2018). Social mobility can be directed upwards or downwards. However, in terms of governmental drives, the term social mobility is often taken to be the upward movement of people to a different layer of stratification from which they were born. Hence, this definition of social mobility represents 'social progress' (Social Mobility Commission, 2017). The Social Mobility Commission (SMC) found that 20 years of governmental policies have done little to close the gap between the richest and poorest children and there has been little success in upward social mobility amongst intergenerations⁴ (SMC, 2017a). The SMC called upon the Government to invest in a ten-year plan with clear targets to monitor (Blandford, 2017).

Education is seen as a form of institutionalised cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1996) that can be transformative in terms of origins and destinations (Brown, Reay & Vincent, 2013). The concept of cultural capital is important to the definition of social mobility because, within British culture social progress is seen as synonymous with increased educational outcomes (Blandford, 2017). Hence, attainment of cultural capital is perceived to be gained when intergenerations obtain HE qualifications; an educational measure of social mobility frequently used is being the first person within a family to obtain HE qualifications.

⁴ The term intergenerational social mobility applies to the relationship between the socioeconomic status of parents and the status that their children will reach as adults (OECD, 2010)

The SMC paper 'State of the Nation' (2017) suggested that there are links between educational disadvantage and geographical location. Furthermore, where post-16 outcomes are concerned, YP receiving free-school meals were less likely to study 'A' levels than more affluent peers within the same geographical area and with the same GCSEs (Allen, Parameshwaran & Thomson, 2016). The research carried out by the SMC suggests that the chances of being successful, if you come from a disadvantaged background, are limited to where you live (SMC, 2017). Thus, the term social mobility cold spot (SMCSp) is used. The Social Mobility Index (SMI) is a ranking system which tracks life outcomes for people in different areas and determines whether an area is a cold spot. It uses the income of adults who grew up in disadvantaged circumstances, within different local areas, as a measure social mobility (SMC, 2017). The concept is an important one because it suggests that deprivation, on its own, does not dictate life chances. In fact, the report found that school children in London do better than in any other region despite having the highest levels of deprivation. Therefore, the cold spots tend to be former manufacturing towns, coastal and rural areas with minimal resources. The reasons for the reduced outcomes in these areas is proposed to be due to a lack of accessibility to good and outstanding schools, high numbers of unqualified teachers and higher levels of teacher turn-over (Shaw, Baars, Menzies, Paramesshwaran & Allen, 2017; DoE, 2017b). In contrast to urban areas, where schools have greater opportunity to work with nearby outstanding schools, coastal and rural schools are lacking in support. As a result, the government announced its plans to tackle social mobility in these cold spot areas (DoE, 2017b) and

named 12 opportunity areas. These opportunity areas receive increased resources, knowledge and energy to improve social mobility and to help YP in these areas achieve to their full potential. (DoE, 2017b)

1.6 Research Rationale

1.6.1 Relevance and impact of the research

Cairns and Rodkin (1998) suggest that exploring the non-normative developmental pathways of a homogenous group of students can explain some developmental outcomes. In exploring what is working for students from SMCSp we can analyse how protective processes operate and further contribute to the governmental focus on social mobility.

This research aims to increase knowledge for EPs and other stakeholders in supporting YP. The DECP guidance for working with this age group suggests that EPs need to gain knowledge in raising aspirations, improving post-16 support, and supporting this age group in achieving outcomes (BPS, 2014). Dent and Cameron (2003) suggest that EPs have a key role assisting teachers and other professionals in identifying and enhancing resilience in students. Thus, if researchers can identify the processes of ER that enable success, EPs can begin to focus on these alterable factors to produce interventions and address gaps in achievement between the richest and poorest students (Waxman et al., 2003).

This research seeks to increase knowledge of ER within post-16 and impact on local policy by establishing what is working for this group of learners.

1.6.2 The distinctive contribution of the research

The purpose of this research is to explore the processes that facilitate ER in RTE in SMCSp areas. The research aims to contribute to the existing body of research by offering a participatory and visual exploration of RTE views. This piece of research can be considered as providing a unique contribution for the following reasons:

- The research represents the voice of young adults which is under-represented within the literature.
- It addresses gaps in literature by looking at the views of RTE within the UK. It, therefore, contributes new knowledge to the field.
- The research utilises a different methodological approach to understanding ER; participatory and visual methodologies have not been used to explore participant's views on ER .
- The research addresses current political agenda by investigating those in SMCSp. Furthermore, it contributes to practice by conducting research with a group of participants not considered within EP literature.

1.6.3 Research question

“What views do RTE have on what helps them to be resilient in education second time around?”

1.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter outlines the construct of ER, which is seen as emerging because of the processes between an individual and its system. A life-

course, EST and PP approach to ER is used to examine an under researched group. This study aims to contribute further to both local and national policy and to the EP understanding of working with the 16-25-year-old age group. It seeks to explore the processes that facilitate ER in RTE in SMCSp areas. The next chapter explores the theoretical understanding of ER applied to RTE by way of a systematic literature review.

Chapter Two: Systematic Literature Review

2.1 Chapter Overview

Chapter One provided an overview of the theoretical perspectives of the current study and terminology relating to the construct of ER. It established the relevance of exploring the concept of ER in RTE in terms of the governmental policy on social mobility and for the implications to EP practice. The current chapter explores the theoretical understanding of ER by way of a systematic literature review. It starts with a detailed account of the process of the systematic literature review, before going on to outline the findings of this. There is also a critical examination of the literature concerning the processes underlying ER in adult learners who return to education.

2.2 Systematic Search Process

As described in the previous chapter, the concept of resilience has been argued to be context specific (Luthar et al., 2000). Therefore, in establishing what has been done and what needs to be done (Hart, 1998), this systematic literature review has been restricted to papers containing ER. The purpose of the literature review is to examine relevant variables, gain new perspectives, explore relationships, themes, and examine context (Gough, Oliver & Thomas, 2017; Hart, 1998).

Databases were accessed via the University of East London (UEL) library portal. EBSCO host was utilised to access literature from Academic Search Complete, British Education Index, Child Development and Adolescent Studies, Education Abstracts, Educational Administration Abstracts, ERIC, PsychInfo, PsychArticles and Teacher Reference Center. For clarity, questions were divided into sub-review searches to encompass different perspectives and to examine the assumptions underpinning the research into ER. It was assumed that this would improve the return of relevant literature. Developing questions prior to undertaking the review meant a reduction in bias (Gough et al., 2017). The problem question ‘what facilitates ER in RTE?’ contained three sub-review questions:

- What is known about ER in students of this age range?
- What is known about the underlying mechanisms and protective factors of ER?
- What is known about ER in RTE?

The questions were kept open so as not to conceal areas of knowledge and because key concepts were expected to emerge from the review. The purpose of conducting the review in this way was to consider emergent theoretical concepts that follow the lead of the data rather than making a priori assumptions (Gough et al., 2017). Full details of the search terms can be found in Appendix 1. A flow diagram, illustrating the process of searching within the literature review is presented in Figure 2.1. There were 52 potential articles for inclusion resulting from keyword and title searches. A further full document screening and a quality assessment was conducted. Qualitative research was assessed using Critical Appraisal Skills Programme

(CASP) and quantitative research was reviewed using JBI Critical Appraisal Checklist for Analytical Cross-Sectional Studies (Moola, Munn, Tufanaru, Aromataris, Sears et al., 2017) (Appendices: 2 & 3). This stage of the review excluded 20 papers (Appendix: 4) which were not on topic.

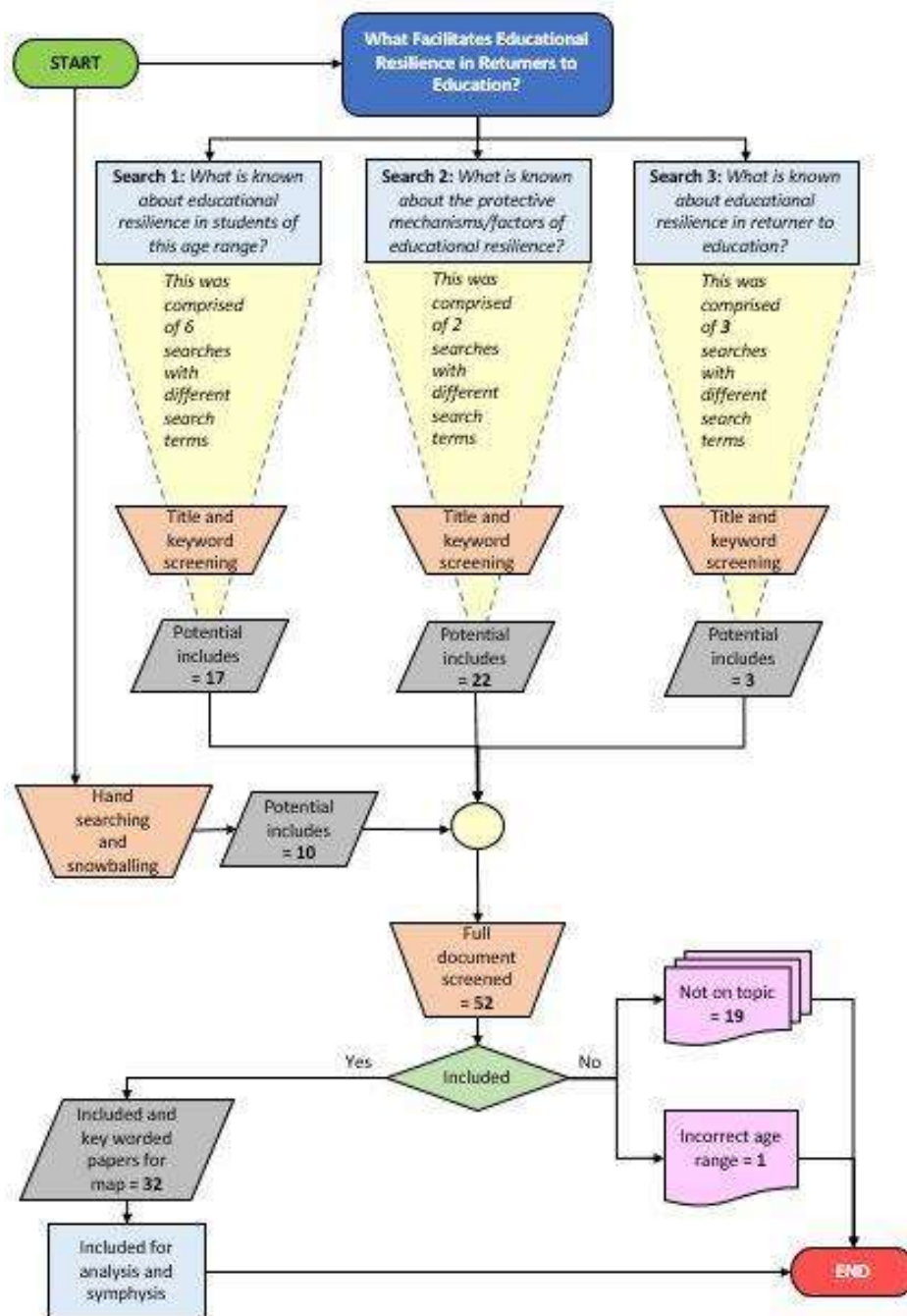


Figure. 2.1: Flow diagram of systematic literature review search process

Additional references were gained via snowballing of relevant papers from the literature identified in the systematic search, google searches, and by the suggestion of practitioners and academics within the field. In total, 32 articles were included in the final review.

2.3 Conceptualising the Systematic Review

The epistemological position taken by the current research maintains that knowledge and views of the participants are paramount. Thus, the literature review aimed to address how ER is understood both conceptually and methodologically, and, as a consequence, all methods of research were considered valuable (Gough et al., 2017). Accordingly, the review is mixed method, multi-staged and multicomponent (Figure 2.2).

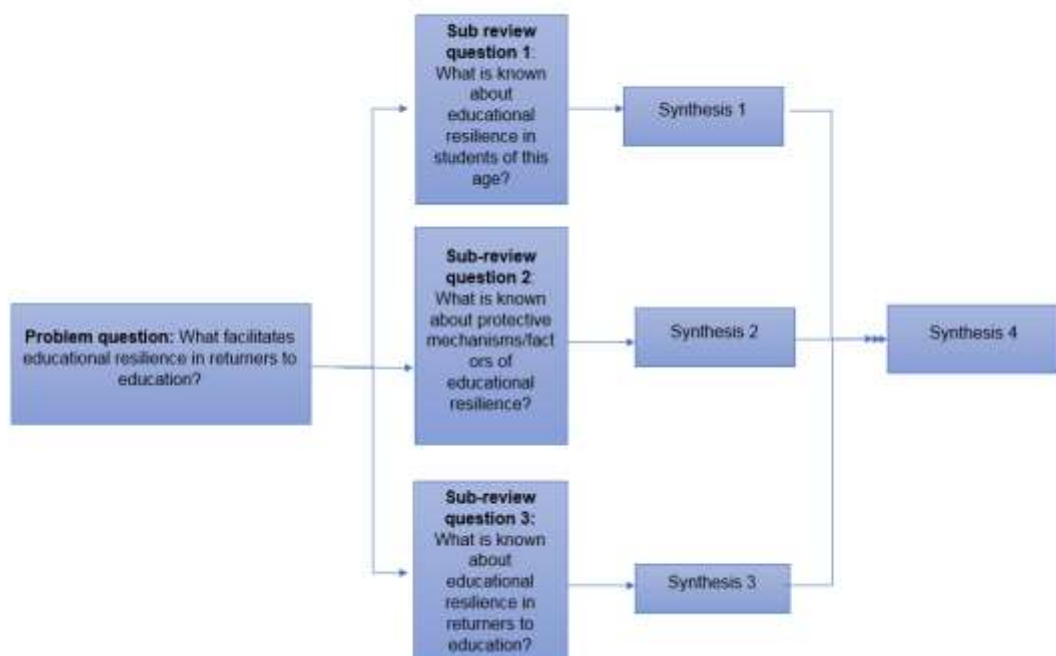


Figure. 2.2 *Process diagram showing stages of synthesis in the systematic review*

Synthesis of the data followed a configuration model. The aim was to generate new theory relating to RTE. To enable this process, salient aspects from general research on ER were first analysed and then compared systematically with salient aspects from research with young adults and RTE. Gough et al., (2017) argue that configuration of findings is most useful with open questions and an inductive approach. Data was extracted from both qualitative and quantitative research and transformed into text which identified key themes to form a convergent synthesis. Working in this way enabled findings from a breadth of studies on ER to be considered and formed a final in-depth and coherent explanation of the process of ER in RTE.

2.4 Findings from the Systematic Literature Review

Of the 32 articles, 13 of the studies utilised qualitative methods and 15 used quantitative; a further four were literature reviews. Quantitative methodologies used regression analysis based on longitudinal data. The purpose of regression analysis is to predict an outcome based on historical data. Therefore, resilient individuals were identified through data on academic attainment and compared using measures of protective factors. For example, researchers used measures of psychological characteristics of the individual and its systems (Cassidy, 2015; Dillon et al., 2003; Finn & Rock, 1997; Johnson, 2011; Schoon & Duckworth, 2010; Wayman, 2002). The aim was to isolate variables contributing to ER. In some of the research, the participant's voice was not central (Cassidy, 2015), or was non-existent (Sacker & Schoon, 2007; Schoon & Bynner, 2003; Schoon & Duckworth, 2010). Additionally, the statistical models used in these studies predicted

which protective factors were related to ER but could not unambiguously explain how. The methods were often over simplified and did not consider covariates and in some cases “approaching significant” findings were reported on (Cunningham & Swanson, 2010). Subsequently, any conclusions made about the processes of ER had predictive function but did not produce an in-depth understanding of the individuals in question.

Qualitative research found within the review aimed to explore individual perspectives further by asking participants about the processes of ER. Research was conducted using interviews with participants who had demonstrated ER through academic attainment. Therefore, qualitative research in this area was retrospective and tended to focus on specific groups e.g. foster care leavers (Hines et al., 2005), African-Americans (Williams & Portman, 2013), and American-Indians (Montgomery, Miville, Winterowd, Jeffries & Baysden, 2000). None of the studies found were emancipatory in their approach and the participant’s voice was sometimes obscured by the use of semi-structured interviews with pre-determined questions (Downey, 2014; Hargrove, 2014; Lessard, Butler-Kisber, Fortin & Marcotte, 2014). Consequently, researchers missed the opportunity to explore any additional factors, which may have restricted findings.

The findings were dominated by research from the USA (n = 25), followed by the UK (n = 5), with Australia and Canada contributing one paper each. US dominance might suggest cultural specificity of the construct ‘ER’; however, it could be explained by governmental drives. The 2001 Act of Congress ‘No Child Left Behind’ (No Child Left Behind [NCLB], 2002) is similar to the current UK incentive to promote equality of outcomes for disadvantaged

students. 'No Child Left Behind' may explain the increased number of studies originating from the US at this time. Indeed, 90% of the papers coming from the USA were published after this Act of Congress was passed.

To facilitate the process of analysis and to synthesise the findings, information was extracted from the papers. Several themes were identified, and the list of potential protective factors were extensive (Appendix: 5) and ranged from characteristics of the individual through to different aspects of the individual's system. To aid exploration of the themes and to understand the ER process, identified papers were first reviewed for their theoretical understanding of ER which is detailed in the following four sections (2.5-2.8).

2.5 The Conceptual Emergence of Educational Resilience

As noted in Chapter One, the notion of resilience being both content and context specific has led to more domain specific accounts of resilience (Fergus & Zimmerman, 2005). This is supported by research that has found that individuals may show resilience in one area of their life that is not met in other areas (Masten, 2001). Within the literature the accepted definition of ER is *'the heightened likelihood of success in school despite environmental adversities brought about by early traits, conditions, and experiences'* (Wang et al., 1994).

2.6 The Evidence for Socioeconomic Disadvantage as a Risk Factor

There was a general acceptance of socioeconomic disadvantage as a risk factor within the literature. Studies tended to concentrate on the

achievement gap between low and high-socioeconomic students using social class as an indicator for this (Hernandez-Martinez & Williams, 2013; Schoon & Duckworth, 2010). There was also consideration of the underlying factors which result in socioeconomic disadvantage. For example, several of the studies proposed this disadvantage stems from being academically marginalised because of being an ethnic minority or having a migrant status (Cunningham & Swanson, 2010; Hargrove, 2014; Milville, Winterowd, Jefferies & Baysden, 2010; Morales, 2008, 2010; Williams & Bryan, 2013; Williams & Portman, 2013). Socioeconomic disadvantage was often researched using African-American students from urban areas because these students tended to experience greater financial and social barriers than their suburban peers (Williams & Bryan, 2013). This is in contrast to UK's SMI findings outlined earlier, which suggest children in deprived inner-city areas outperform disadvantaged peers in rural or coastal areas (Shaw et al., 2017; DoE, 2017b).

UK research considered social class as a determining factor to perceived gaps in achievement. These studies used both measures of parental social class (determined by occupation) and entitlement to free school meals (Hernandez-Martinez et al., 2013; Schoon et al., 2010; Schoon et al., 2003). However, class measurements often used father's occupation to determine their social status. This bias towards males being the main earner within the household seems antiquated, given that more women than ever are working (Catalyst, 2018) and given the changing pattern of family dynamics such as lone parenting, cohabitation, same sex parenting and blended families

(Knipe, 2017). Therefore, current valid assessments of socioeconomic disadvantage are lacking within the UK literature.

Schoon and Duckworth (2010) found that early school leaving is linked to a less privileged family background. Early school leavers tend to have lower social status, reduced income, poorer mental health and less financial independence than their peers who continue within education (Schoon & Duckworth, 2010). However, there are arguments that dropping out is just one part of the educational continuum for some learners (Wayman, 2002) and more consideration should be made to the concept of lifelong learning (Cunningham & Swanson, 2010; Schoon & Duckworth, 2010).

In summary, there was evidence contained in the literature review that both socioeconomic disadvantage and dropping out of education constituted a risk to the developmental trajectory of learners. However, none of the studies used the SMCSp, identified by the SMI, as a measure of socioeconomic disadvantage.

2.7 The Process of Educational Resilience

Research detailed in the previous paragraph provided evidence that children born into families with reduced income may accumulate risk over time. Yet, some children seem to be better able to cope with this risk (Daniel & Wassell, 2002). Therefore, to understand how risk can be modified, the research reviewed attempts to identify protective factors. Daniel and Wassell (2002) propose that levels of resilience are seen to emerge from both the individual's characteristics and the protection offered by the environment.

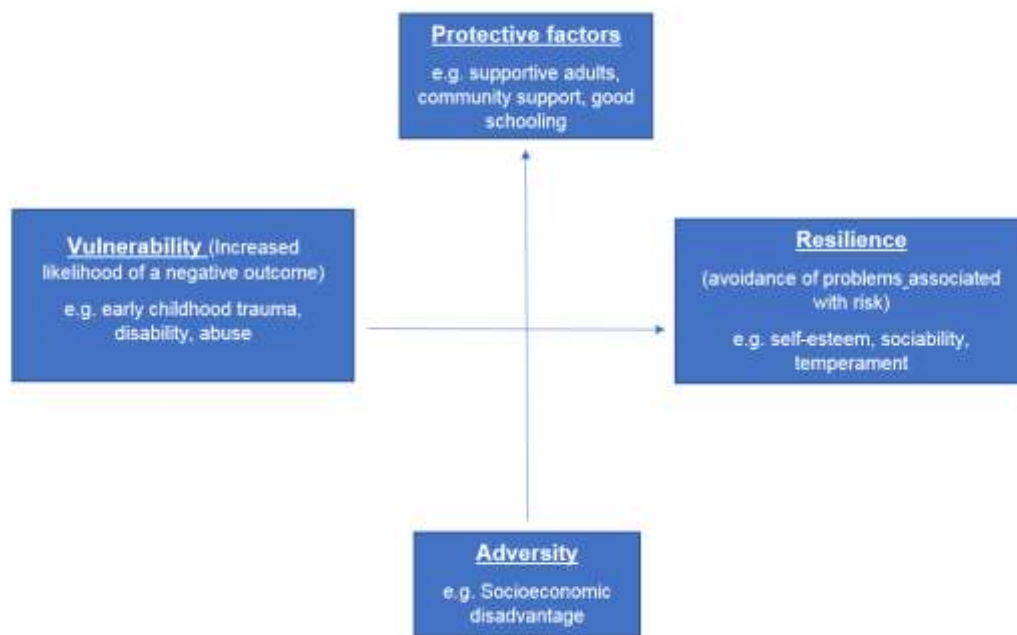


Figure. 2.3 *Resilience framework (Daniel and Wassell, 2002) demonstrating how protective factors contribute to resilience.*

Daniel and Wassell's (2002) model demonstrates the complex interaction between individual assets such as sociability on one continuum, and environmental resources, such as parental support on the other continuum. Factors can behave as risk, assets or resources; these are conditional on how much exposure the individual has to them and how threatening they perceive that exposure to be (Fergus & Zimmerman, 2005). Hence, adversity/risk can be moderated by both the intrinsic aspects of the individual and extrinsic aspects of their environment (Daniel & Wassell, 2002).

32 studies were analysed within this literature review. Protective factors (that is aspects of the individual and system that are seen to counteract against risk) from the literature reviewed were condensed into an eco-systemic model (Figure 2.4).

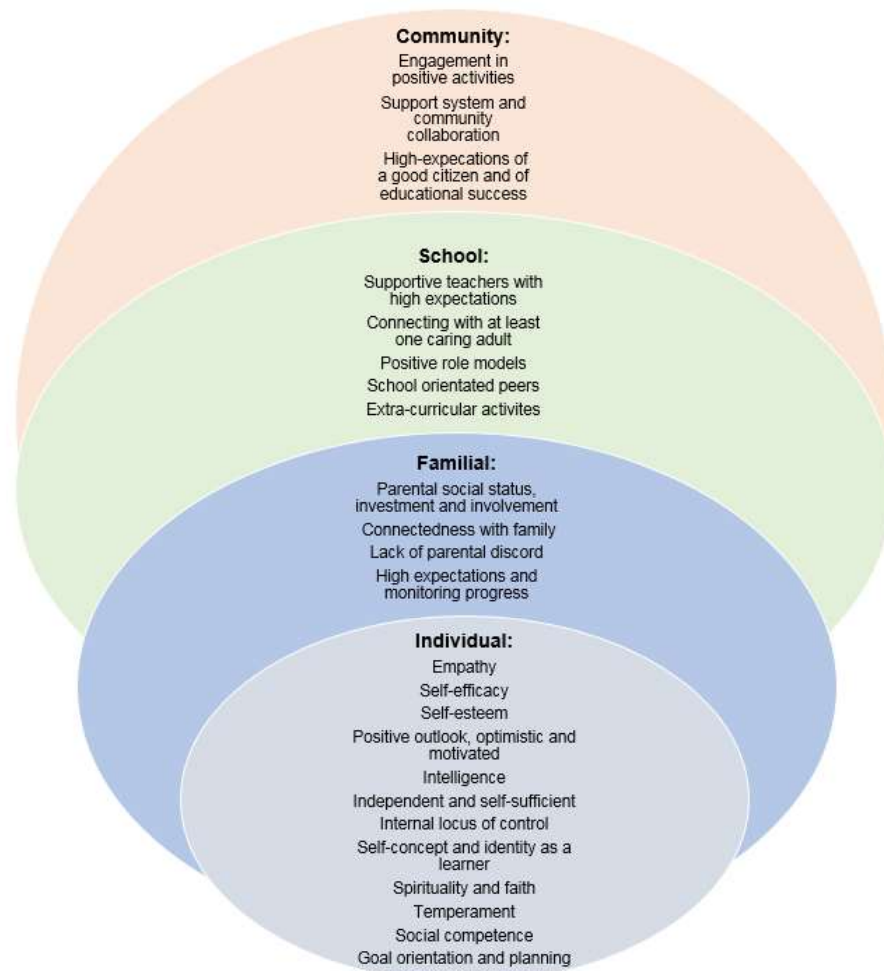


Figure. 2.4: Summary diagram from literature review showing protective factors within the individual and its system⁵.

2.8 Models of Resilience

Rutter (1989) proposed that researchers begin to investigate the processes of resilience leading to models of protection. To date, three models have been suggested: The compensatory, protective, and challenge models. The **compensatory model** (Figure 2.5) suggests that protective factors can counteract risk factors so that the opposite effect to the risk factor is

⁵ A full list of authors relating to the factors is given in appendix 5.

observed. Within this model, risk and compensatory factors operate independently. (Zimmerman & Arunkumar, 1994).

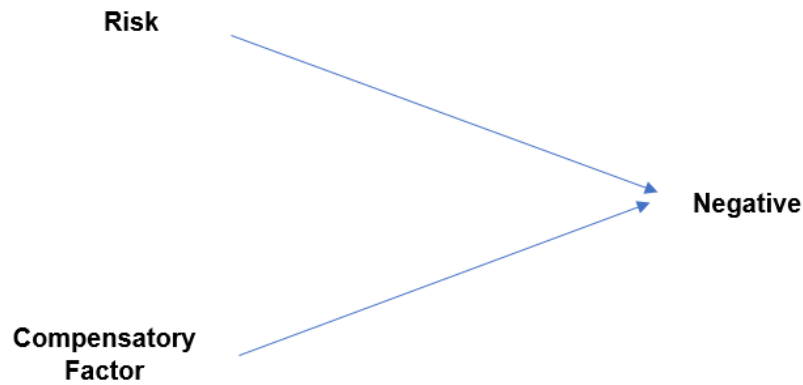


Figure. 2.5 *Compensatory Model (adapted from Fergus & Zimmerman, 2005)*

The **protective factor model** (Figure 2.6) assumes that resources available to the individual, reduce the effect of risk producing negative outcomes (Fergus & Zimmerman, 2005). These protective factors can either be stabilising (cancelling out the effect) (Figure 2.6.1) or reactive for the individual (meaning that the protective factor reduces the effect of risk) (Figure 2.6.2).

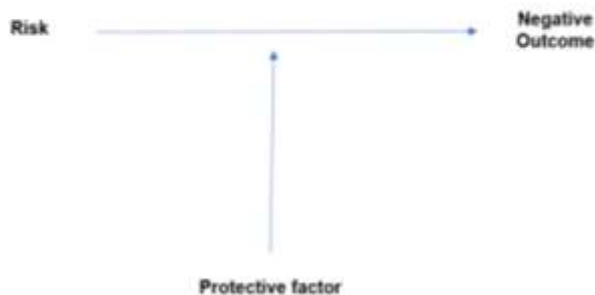


Figure. 2.6 *Protective Factor Model (adapted from Fergus & Zimmerman, 2005)*

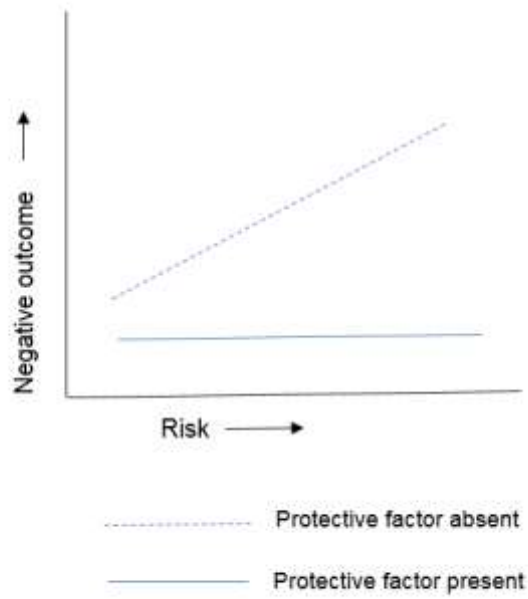


Figure. 2.6.1 *Protective-Stabilising Model (Adapted from Fergus & Zimmerman, 2005)*

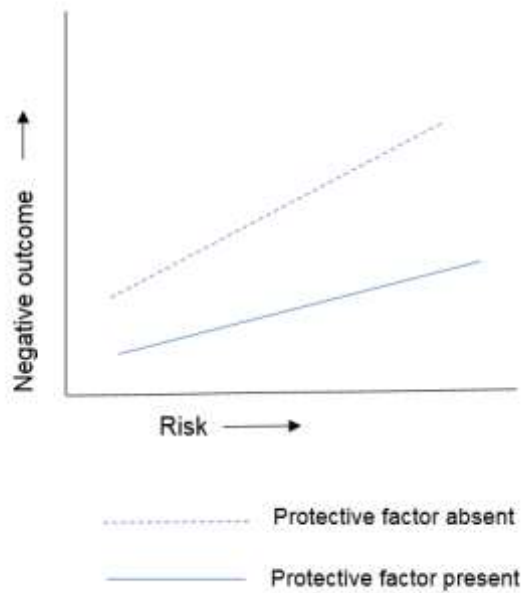


Figure. 2.6.2 *Protective-Reactive Model (adapted from Fergus & Zimmerman, 2005)*

Garmezy, Masten and Tellegen (1984) suggest a **challenge model** (Figure 2.7) where the association between risk and resilience is curvilinear.

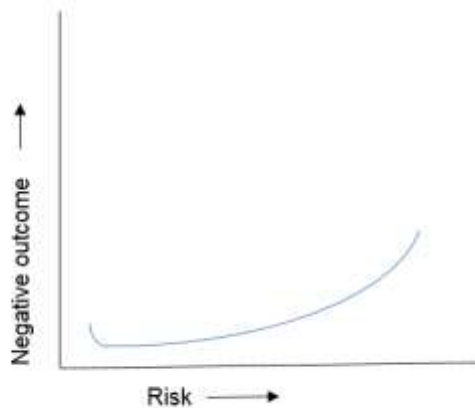


Figure. 2.7 *Challenge Model (adapted from Fergus and Zimmerman, 2005)*

In this model, moderate risk can lead to positive outcomes. High and low levels of risk are associated with negative outcomes. However, experiencing moderate levels of risk, which are challenging but not overwhelming, produces coping strategies so that the individual learns they are capable and produces positive outcomes. Thus, the model indicates that how an individual processes their ability to cope with the potential adverse situation will influence positive, or negative outcomes.

The first two models ignore the confounding effect of an individual's perception of adversity, which is seen as being integral within the challenge model for individual outcomes. The challenge model would suggest that research must establish, from the participants, what constitutes as a risk or adversity. To understand why some individuals might demonstrate ER in the face of risk and adversity, Luthar et al. (2000) propose that researchers

should aim not to isolate variables but to understand the process underlying the development of resilience. Factors are seen to change, shift and adapt with developmentally related changes in an individual's cognition, emotional and social environment.

One criticism levied at these models of resilience is that resilience as a concept begins to be construed as growth. The notion has led to further developments where the energy to drive observed changes in behaviour is subjected to enquiry. Richardson (2002) describes this energy as a capacity or source of strength that can encounter adversity and lead to a variety of outcomes (Figure 2.8) which include both resilience and growth.

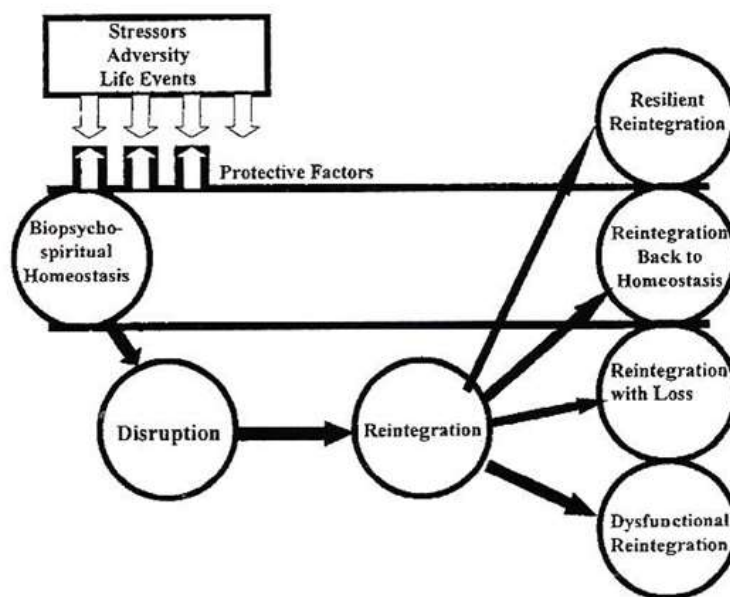


Figure. 2.8 Richardson's (2002) Model of Resiliency and Resilient Reintegration

2.9 The Continuum of Individual Response to Risk and Adversity

In support of Richardson's model (2002) (Figure 2.8), research found within this systematic literature review referred to the outcomes of overcoming

adversity. For example, Hernandez-Martinez and Williams (2013) focussed on how students can turn adversity into an academic strength. Resilience is seen as positive 'adaption' to adversity (Cassen, Feinstein & Graham, 2008), whereas adversarial growth is seen as positive 'change' (Borawski, 2011). Some of the research identified in the systematic literature review, discussed transformational moments (Hernandez-Martinez & Williams, 2013), benefits (Morales, 2010) and positive change (Morales, 2008). These concepts are interwoven with labels that describe adversarial growth. For example, Linley and Joseph (2004) argue that labels given to the concept of growing from adversity include:

- Adversarial growth
- Posttraumatic growth
- Stress-related growth
- Benefit finding
- Thriving
- Blessings
- Positive-by-products
- Positive adjustment and positive adaption

Whilst the first three labels describe growth from adversity, the remaining labels define outcomes resulting from this growth. Linley and Joseph (2004) argue that the concepts (benefit finding, thriving, blessings, positive-by-products, positive adjustment) may not be exclusive to adversarial growth. Thus, it may be plausible that, when exploring processes of ER, positive outcomes resulting from adversity may be described.

The perception of adversity is subjective to the individual (Joseph & Linley, 2008) and when asking participants about the processes of resilience, subjective interpretation may lead to 'stories' about the experience of adversity. Joseph and Linley (2004) take a social cognitive perspective (Bandura, 2001) that greater levels of perceived threat are associated with higher levels of adversarial growth. Accordingly, when asking individuals about processes of ER we may activate cognitive appraisal of life-events perceived as a threat. Meichenbaum (2006) take a constructive narrative perspective and suggests that individuals need to tell "stories" to others and reflect on the impact of adversity to better establish a sense of self. These stories are pathways to activate coping; stories that are constructed to have positive meaning such as being a survivor (e.g. "I am no longer willing to be a victim") will engage aspects such as hopefulness which in itself leads to growth. According to Meichenbaum (2006), individuals who demonstrate growth engage in a self-narrative that seeks to find benefit for themselves and others (e.g. "I am wiser from the experience" and "this bought us all together"). Individuals may also engage in downward comparison or future orientation (e.g. "I think of others and how it could have been worse" and "I see new possibilities to work on"). The design of the current study, which asks individuals about their views on ER, may activate cognitive appraisal because of the views which are constructed about experiences.

Borawski (2011) reviewed the literature on adversarial growth. She suggests that the psychological aspects underpinning adversarial growth are emotions, virtues, self-perception and relationships. Growth from adversity is seen as changes to the individual's assumptions about themselves and the world

(Joseph & Linley, 2008). There is concordance with some of the processes of resilience identified within this literature review (e.g. relationships, positive emotions, self-perception) that suggest that the constructs of resilience and adversarial growth may be linked. Later in the chapter, the notion of reflection is discussed as underlying the process of ER. Indeed, reflection is seen as key to ER in Hernandez-Martinez and Williams' (2013) study. It is possible that reflection activates cognitive appraisal required for adversarial growth to emerge. Joseph and Linley (2008) argue that, when conducting research of this type, psychologists should consider the continuum of reactions to adversity from psychopathology through to resilience and adversarial growth (Figure 2.9).

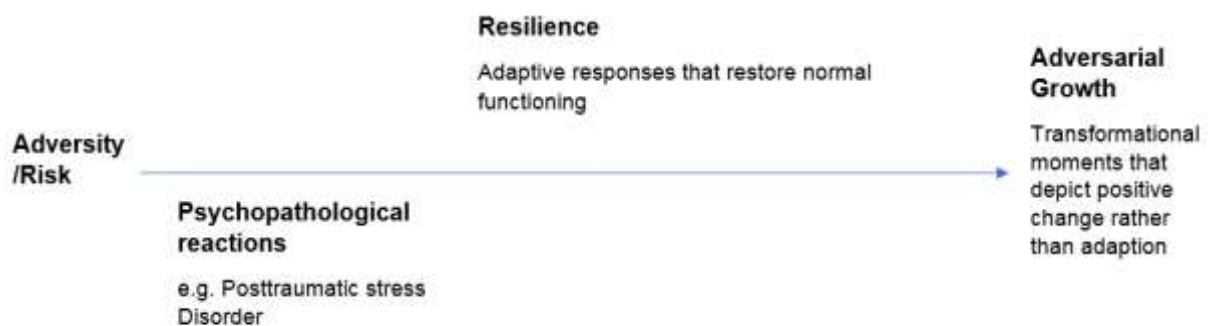


Figure. 2.9 *The Continuum of individual reaction to risk and adversity*

Adversity is defined as the events that lead to increased levels of stress which is proposed to have long-term effects on health and well-being (Felitti et al., 1998). Whilst research findings indicate that a build-up of adverse experiences within childhood contribute to poor health (Felitti et al., 1998),

the individual continuum highlights the importance of the individual's processing of that adversity modifying the effects . Within the continuum the adversity must challenge the individual (Janoff-Bulman, 2004) so that their assumptive world is interrupted, and they experience painful realisations of reality (Ivtzan et al., 2016). Resultant growth from this processing works in a curvilinear fashion; too much stress impairs functioning and results in PTSD too little and no growth will occur. Thus, the individual may adapt to the stress (resilience) or, if processing of the event activates resources/benefits, growth may occur (Ivtzan et al., 2016)

One criticism of the concept of adversarial growth is that studies exploring positive change following adverse experience are retrospective. Studies tend to use quasi-experimental methods issuing post-event measures of posttraumatic reaction (Linley & Joseph, 2004). Given that one of the determinants that separates resilience from adversarial growth is positive change, one questions the ability of quasi-experimental design in being able to achieve this. For example, how can we be clear that these characteristics did not exist in the individual before the adversity and this is not restoration of normal functioning? Consideration needs to be made about the power of viewing the adversity from a place of retrospect. Individuals need to be in a position where they can look at the event with an increased maturity (Milam, Ritt-Olson & Unger, 2004) and they may construe circumstances leading from the event as more positive because they are coming from a place of growth.

The research reviewed indicates that psychological growth can occur from exposure to adversity; the process of struggling with an adverse event may

initiate changes that lead to a higher level of functioning than before (Linley & Joseph, 2004). This concept of higher functioning has been applied to educational outcomes (Hernandez-Martinez & Williams, 2013). Growth requires a degree of cognitive appraisal from the individual to determine whether an adverse event is threatening, and this requires a degree of cognitive maturity (Milam et al, 2004) and reflection (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2006). Whether there is tangible evidence that growth has occurred is debateable (Nolen-Hoeksema & Davis, 2004) because the researchers have examined the individual's construction of growth from a retrospective position where the growth has already occurred. Given this position, individuals may view their present self more positively and hold negative constructions of themselves prior to adverse events (McFarland & Alvaro, 2000) However, given that increased self-perception may occur through asking individuals to tell stories (Meichenbaum, 2006), constructions of adversarial growth may occur with views on ER.

2.10 Educational Resilience: Evidence in Young Adults

The previous paragraphs have outlined the theoretical assumptions relating to ER found within the literature review. The following sections outline the findings from the literature relating to young adults and RTE. Amongst the research addressing ER in learners within the young adult age group, the dominant method of research was qualitative (9 of the 11 papers) (Appendix: 2). There was as an agreement in these papers that qualitative analysis affords an in-depth understanding that goes beyond identifying factors to

exploring resilience processes (Hernandez-Martinez & Williams, 2013; Hines et al., 2005; Morales, 2000; 2010). Furthermore, several of the studies focussed on exploring ER in academically marginalised groups⁶ and used qualitative methodologies because there was little pre-existing knowledge on these groups (Montgomery et al, 2000; Williams & Bryan, 2013; Williams & Portman, 2013). Qualitative methods represent the lived experiences of participants, which serves as a counter narrative to deficit identification explored in quantitative methods (Hargrove, 2014). Within the literature focusing on young adults, three key concepts emerged from this review. These are the role of reflection, a desire for social-mobility and connectedness; these concepts will be reviewed in the following three sections.

2.10.1 Concept 1: The Role of Reflection

One emerging theme from the literature on young adults was the role of reflection as a promotive aspect of ER. Resilient students tend to reflect on moments of adversity and this reflection helps them form an identity as a capable learner (Hernandez & Williams, 2013; Hines et al, 2005). For example, for students demonstrating ER in Hernandez-Martinez and Williams (2013) research, reflection on adversity was seen as advantageous to educational study. Hence, students demonstrating ER recognise that overcoming adversity affords them a form of capital (Bourdieu, 1996) which is perceived by the individual as having an advantage over other students.

⁶ defined as those left behind by national educational policies (UNESCO, 2017)

This is supported by the findings of Hines et al. (2005) who looked at students from foster care demonstrating ER. They found that students who had an awareness of being different often reflected on this to make a conscious change and used this as a motivator. Montgomery et al. (2000) found that American-Indians recognised and celebrated difference to enable adaption to their new academic identity without losing their sense of self. Therefore, moments of misalignment within the developmental trajectory, (Hernandez-Martinez & Williams, 2013) can act as a switch that encourages autonomy and self-sufficiency for some students (Dillon et al., 2003; Johnson, 2011; Lessard et al., 2014; Morrison et al., 2006; Waxman et al., 2003). Indeed, recognition and reflection featured amongst the literature and included: Recognising hardship as a drive for self-improvement (Williams & Bryan, 2013), conflict with parents as an instigator for change (Hines et al., 2005), conflict between family and social obligations driving values for education (Morales, 2008) and community disadvantage as a motivator for change (Hargrove, 2014). For adult students, it seems that acknowledging hardship and learning to grow from it produces valuable and transferable assets that can be utilised, for example, within education. Therefore, it is argued that factors within the individual or their context do not work in isolation (Hernandez-Martinez & Williams, 2013). Indeed, the process of ER may stem from the relationships that individuals are able to make from their context and supports life-course approaches (Elder, 1998). For example, the process of feeling socioeconomically disadvantaged may activate academic coping as long as the individual has reflected on successful coping in other areas of their life. So, the process of coping occurs when the individual is

self-reflective of their situation. It is important to note here that coping is one aspect of ER and does not, on its own, constitute resilience.

To be self-reflective requires a certain level of cognitive monitoring (Nelson & Narens, 1990) which appears to emerge in early adolescence (Schneider, 2008) and may not develop in all individuals (Kayashima & Inaba, 2003).

The notion of reflection provides an adequate explanation of resilience processes in adult learners. However, it does not explain the complexity of ER because it cannot be applied to children. Younger learners may not have developed metacognitive skills but could still demonstrate ER. One way to determine the significance of self-reflection as a protective mechanism might be to move away from the need to be retrospective in research. Studying participants in the moment of resilience, focusing on the 'now' and prompting them to make sense of the relationship between them and their current context, may help to identify whether reflection is important to developing ER in RTE.

2.10.2 Concept 2: Desire for Social Mobility and Transformation

The findings detailed above suggest that self-reflection may be promotive for ER in adult learners. This concept is also important within the next theme emerging from the literature; students' desire for social mobility and transformation. To understand the process underlying this, the literature in the review draws upon the work of Bourdieu (1996) and concepts of transformative habitus discussed in Chapter One. Within the literature on young adults there is evidence of a transformative element underlying ER.

Young adults were seen to have a sense of agency which developed through conscious awareness of their circumstances (Hernandez-Martinez & Williams, 2013). There is evidence that students actively seek to escape the expected outcomes of social disadvantage (Hernandez-Martinez & Williams, 2013), particularly at points of economic recession or poverty (Schoon & Duckworth, 2010). Those who have transformative habitus feel they have the power to succeed despite reduced circumstances (Williams & Portman, 2014) and are future orientated given that they express a willingness and desire to 'class jump' (Morales, 2008). These students demonstrated high levels of persistence, self-esteem and internal locus of control (Morales, 2010). It is argued these students have adopted the standpoint that the academic field is appropriate for them and have acculturated the norms of that environment (Wayman, 2002); they resolve the position that succeeding in the academic field does not betray their cultural or social class affiliations (Montgomery et al., 2000; Morales, 2010).

Educationalists and sociologists may have contributed toward evidence of a desire for social mobility because Bourdieu (1990) is influential to understanding within this field (Sullivan, 2002). However, Bourdieu's (1996) concepts are debated within the fields of sociological and educational research, with some arguing that dispositions of habitus are deterministic given that they are based within the unconscious (Sullivan, 2002).

Nonetheless, the reflective element of transformation found in the ER literature means that these findings are less deterministic than Bourdieu's (1990) proposals because a degree of introspection needs to take place.

Thus, to understand student perspectives on a desire to class jump, it could

be argued that it would be beneficial to employ techniques that better ascertain their view.

2.10.3 Concept 3: Connectedness: Differences in Young Adults and Children

When examining the major themes from this review on young adults, connectedness was an important concept. In just over half of the papers considered on ER in young adults, connectedness and the importance of relationships was cited as a promotive factor of ER. This is also reflected in the general literature on ER in which connectedness and the significance of relationships were reported in 83% of the papers. However, the nature of connections differed dependent on the individual's point in their lifespan. For example, in younger learners, connectedness to school and relationships with adults within the school were prominent protective factors (Banatao, 2011; Cunningham & Swanson, 2010; Downey, 2014; Johnson-Olamiju, 2013; Lessard et al., 2014; Morrison et al., 2006; Reis et al., 2005). Indeed, Banatao (2011) reports that school connectedness is a powerful predictor of academic performance. However, there was also some conflicting evidence coming from research on individuals who have experienced discord within the family; for these individuals, adults within school who appeared to be nurturing but had high expectations, further exacerbated risk. Subsequently, peers served as a more supportive arena and added more value as a protective factor for these individuals (Crosnoe & Elder, 2004). Conversely, Hines et al. (2005) found that conflict within families meant that school was often an alternative to an individual's troubles so connectedness in the school context then acted as a protective factor.

Within the literature looking at connectedness in young adults, significant relationships within the educational establishment were not reported on as often. Instead, participants tended to report drawing upon the significance of relationships with friends (Williams & Portman, 2013), family (Montgomery et al., 2000; Williams & Bryan, 2013) and spouses (Hargrove, 2014). Crosnoe and Elder (2004) suggest that connections need to be formed with significant others that reflect both the individual's current context and point in lifespan. This life-course perspective maintains that behavioural trajectories are linked with relationship trajectories. This position prioritises the connections individuals make within the specific context they inhabit and highlights how they act as a source of support. According to Crosnoe (2000), context and timing are important to the understanding of connectedness because, as children develop, they begin to emotionally distance themselves from parents in a bid for more autonomous functioning. This explains the finding that connections with parents are less essential in adolescents than in younger children. Furthermore, it also explains the finding that parental discord was seen as promoting agency in some young adults (Dillon et al., 2003; Hines et al., 2005). Indeed, when reviewing the literature, it seems that disconnection with family in adolescence may act as a promotive factor for ER by increasing both self-agency and autonomy, making peers instrumental as a source of support (Hines et al., 2005; Johnson, 2011). However, for some young adults, who have overcome any familial conflict (Hargrove, 2014; Williams & Bryan, 2013), both connections with family members and the formation of adult relationships become important promotive aspects to

ER. Subsequently, connectedness with family, moves in a circular fashion to re-establish the bonds disrupted by adolescence.

Connectedness enables access to greater levels of support; this can be met by different people, at different points in the lifespan. Access to support comes from all parts of an individual's system (home, school and community) and was important for the academically marginalised groups (Montgomery et al., 2000; Morales, 2008; 2010; Williams & Bryan, 2013; Williams & Portman, 2013). Whilst access to support is important for all students, it is especially important for those originating from areas of deprivation. There is evidence in the literature that students coming from areas of deprivation often encountered a backlash from their social groups in regard to wanting to pursue academia (Hernandez-Martinez & Williams, 2013, Morales, 2008; 2010). Advancement in education was viewed as a betrayal to their class or culture (Montgomery et al., 2000; Morales, 2010). Kirk (1991) argues that working classes are collectivist and class-conscious meaning that they take an 'us versus them' mentality in regard to their social group. Thus, any effort perceived as class desertion may result in group friction, which should be avoided if access to resources are to be maintained. Morales (2010) argues that to overcome this, the student needs to make a meaningful connection with a mentor, or another adult, who comes from the same habitus as the individual. This person must be seen to have achieved despite their circumstances and may be a gatekeeper for valuable knowledge about educational advancement (Morales, 2010). This notion is important because it suggests that young adults need role models who they perceive to be similar to them.

In summary, where young adults are concerned, processes of ER appear to operate in a curvilinear fashion (Figure 2.6) which supports a challenge model of resilience (Garmezy et al., 1984). The activation of protective factors (connectedness and relationships) seems to shift with changing context, cognitive maturity and the individual's view of adversity. Therefore, young adults become more aware of their situation and any adversity it produces. So much so, that they reflect on challenges, seeing them as an asset to help them become agents of change in their own lives. However, change cannot be achieved without access to resources which are gained through supportive relationships and making valuable connections.

2.11 Educational Resilience in RTE

The previous sections highlighted key concepts from the literature on ER in young adults. The following section will outline what was gathered from the review with specific focus on RTE. Findings were more limited than the previous search results and contained six studies (Appendix: 1):

- Dillon, Liem and Gore (2003)
- Sacker and Schoon (2007)
- Schilling (2008)
- Schoon and Bynner (2003)
- Schoon and Duckworth (2010)
- Wayman (2002).

Of these six studies, half came from the UK but they did not use HE Access students as participants. From the six studies, a number of protective factors were identified (Figure 2.10). These protective factors, found with RTE,

resemble the more general protective factors identified with younger learners. However, in comparison to studies focussing on younger learners, research reviewed here was limited in identifying community factors. Studies either failed to investigate community factors (Schilling, 2008; Wayman, 2002) or considered social context without identifying specifics relating to community (Schoon et al., 2003; 2007; 2010). However, Dillon et al. (2003) identified that connectedness with adults in work roles is one community factor contributing to ER. Another interesting finding in RTE was that five of the six papers identified that aspirations at school leaving age were a predictor of a successful return at a later date (Dillon et al., 2003; Sacker & Schoon, 2007; Schoon & Bynner, 2003; Schoon & Duckworth, 2010; Wayman, 2002).

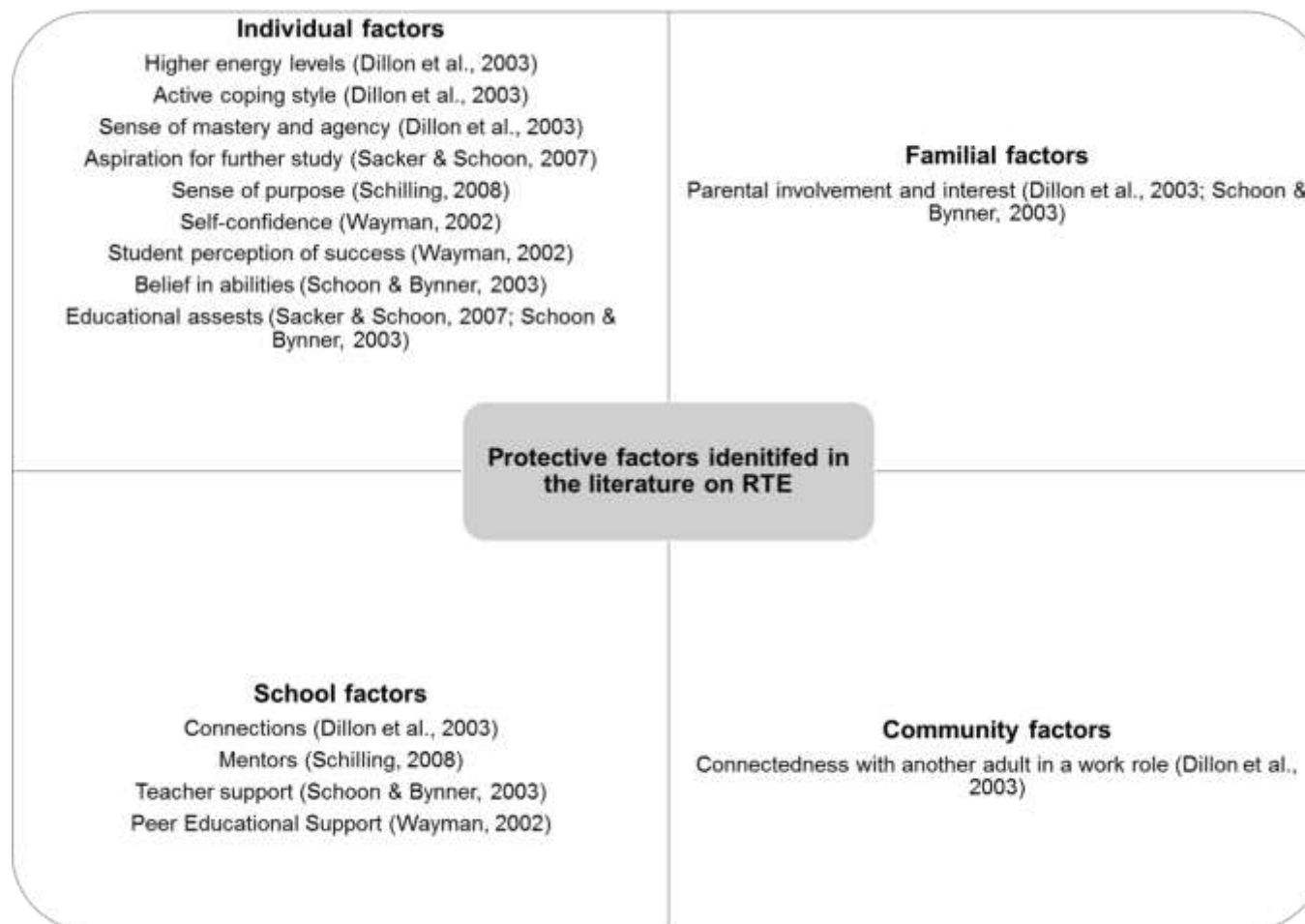


Figure. 2.10 *Identified protective factors in RTE based on the literature review*

2.11.1 The work of Ingrid Schoon and “Sleeper Effects”

Schoon and colleagues explored ER in UK cohorts. Taking an EST approach to risk and resilience, using large scale, retrospective, longitudinal analysis. Schoon & Bynner (2003) aimed to examine the processes that explain how protective factors influence development throughout the life-course. Using the longitudinal data from two British cohorts, Schoon and her colleagues (2003; 2006; 2010) discovered that academic attainment, at one point, is a strong predictor of academic attainment at a later point. The research aimed to test whether family resources can keep an individual within education at 16 and also identify what resources predict a return to education (Sacker & Schoon, 2007). The study used longitudinal data from the 1958 National Child Development Study (NCDS) and applied a number of different measures including: socioeconomic risk factors (father’s occupation), family resources (parental support for education), personal assets (school motivation, confidence in abilities, educational aspirations and expectations), educational assets (achievement of ‘O’ Levels, general ability and ability at maths) and individual outcomes (left at 16 years, returned to education and highest qualification achieved). Sacker and Schoon (2007) found that, whilst personal and family assets were essential to help YP stay in education after 16-years-old, the greatest predictor of a successful return were the individual’s educational assets. Moreover, they proposed that achievement at any stage acts as a reserve for later achievement, which Schoon (2006) calls “sleeper effects”.

For Schoon (2006), socio-historical context such as economic recession, can act as a switch for resilient integration in which the individual draws upon previous reserves of resilience to navigate their current situation. This contrasts with the previous explanations suggesting that periods of misalignment and change in social field are switches which activate resilience reserves (Hernandez-Martinez & Williams, 2013; Montgomery et al., 2000). Whilst Sacker and Schoon (2007) make conclusions about factors that facilitate RTE, they do not say how this process works. It is not clear how educational assets interact with other protective factors at the time to ensure that any return to education is successful. Thus, the research is focussed on activation of a return and not the process of staying in education the second time around.

Large-scale, retrospective, longitudinal studies can be useful in predicting certain conditions for ER. Firstly, because repeated measurements are taken over time, they can identify change and further indicate the stability of constructs. Additionally, when assessing the socio-historical context, these methods can detect any change influenced by an individual's context or environment at different points in time (Schoon & Bynner 2003), for example, periods of economic recession. However, retrospective studies can also suffer a degree of bias because patterns of behaviour are considered through a contemporary lens of what protective factors might be. Therefore, retrospective longitudinal studies tend to be confirmatory rather than exploratory. Sacker and Schoon (2007) analysed data collected 50 years ago and, in doing so, were confined to the research practices of that time. For example, social status was recorded by father's occupation as less

women entered the workplace. All the measures employed were used to produce statistical data, there were no measures taken to obtain opinion. Consequently, the only research on RTE originating from the UK is quantitative and does not explore participant views. Therefore, qualitative research that explores Sacker and Schoon's (2007) suggestions is needed. Nonetheless, the use of large-scale longitudinal data that captures RTE following a significant length of time, contributes much to the understanding of ER in RTE, within the UK.

2.11.2 Longitudinal research from the USA

Wayman (2002) also used longitudinal data to assess which factors contribute to ER in RTE. He maintained that little research exists on what he calls 'drop-outs' who return in terms of ER (Wayman, 2002). In his own research, Wayman (2002) made conclusions on protective factors but did not attempt to explain how these function within the process of ER. He surveyed 519 participants and followed them up four years later to see if they had graduated from high school, defining 'drop-out' as a period of absence of 30 days or more. This should be considered a brief period of absence in comparison to Sacker and Schoon (2007) whose life-course approach looked at gaps longer than four months and with a full-time work history after the period of leaving education. Wayman (2002) employed several, two-item questions to assess variables associated with ER. Similar to Sacker and Schoon's (2007) findings, Wayman (2002) found that academic attainment at an earlier stage was a predictor of graduation from school. Additionally, perceptions of school success, peer educational support, self-esteem, intent

to graduate, and self-identification as a student, were also significant predictors of finishing high school. However, Wayman's (2002) study has issues with reliability; the use of two item questions meant that the internal consistency of constructs is not assured. Wayman (2002) employed the use of Likert scale questions which were subjective in the responses they elicited. For example, when measuring socioeconomic status (SES), he asked participants: "Do your parents have good jobs?" Participants would likely give subjective responses that are socially desirable. Furthermore, it seems imprudent that Wayman (2002) applied explanatory methods when the study was the first of its type. With so little being known, it would have been judicious to explore possible concepts first.

2.11.3 Qualitative research from the USA

The two remaining studies used qualitative methods. Dillon et al. (2003) applied EST to conduct both semi-structured and more in-depth interviews with 182 RTE. Using pre-determined themes, Dillon et al. (2003) found that connectedness and coping styles were protective factors. However, Dillon et al (2003) did not provide an explanation of the processes of ER. The combination of qualitative (in-depth questions) and quantitative (regression analyses from semi-structured questions) analysis provides a comprehensive list of protective factors. However, the use of pre-determined themes means that the authors were not able to identify any new protective factors (Figure 2.4). All four studies so far have used confirmatory explanations to ascertain

what makes RTE resilient second-time around. As a result, there is limited exploratory research pertaining to this unique group.

One study, of the six, identified used exploratory concepts to examine what promotive aspects could explain ER in a single learner. This seven-year, longitudinal case study explored the narratives of one African-American student and took an EST approach to ER (Schilling, 2008). The study found that connectedness, having a strong sense of self, being resourceful, and having support figures were all significant protective factors. It provides a detailed account of ER processes within this case. The participant in the case had a range of life-experiences which could be considered highly adverse. It is possible that this case represents a very unique example of return to education which makes it difficult to generalise to other learners. Furthermore, there were missed opportunities to explore new factors not already identified within ER literature. The narrative analysis used was deductive so the author may have interpreted data to fit what is already known. The researcher also missed the opportunity to engage the participant in an emancipatory way and prominence of others' (the participant's counsellor and mother) views are considered to form conclusions.

In summary, research within the areas of RTE is orientated towards identifying protective factors. These are extracted from the data using pre-existing theory on ER developed from younger learners. Hence, there are construct validity issues when applying it to an older group of learners. Therefore, the specific experiences of this unique group may not yet be sufficiently represented in current research.

2.12 Chapter Summary

Within the last 30 years, the concept of ER has grown in momentum demonstrating heuristic value as a theory. There has been some cohesion amongst researchers who recognised value in taking an EST stance and by moving away from ER being considered as an innate trait. Taking an EST viewpoint enabled researchers to consider a number of different aspects of the individual's system (Figure 2.4). For the most part, researchers have moved beyond identification of protective factors to explore how these contribute to the process of ER. Three theoretical concepts emerged from the data which provided an explanation for underlying processes of ER within young adults and these included: reflection, desire for social mobility, and connectedness. Furthermore, the research was consistent in determining that socioeconomic disadvantage constitutes risk for these learners. However, measures of socioeconomic disadvantage were not consistent and, in some cases, were outdated. None of the studies utilised specific measures of socioeconomic disadvantage like the SMI available in the UK. Research using a life-course approach tended to generate more in-depth information on ER processes and produced clearer explanations of context dependent mechanisms. Within the research focussing on RTE, there was a bias towards providing explanatory concepts. As a consequence, resilience processes within this group may not yet have been adequately explored. Moreover, the dominant use of longitudinal studies in the field meant that research was often conducted 'on' students, rather than 'with' them.

This chapter described the systematic literature review and its findings and outlined the theoretical understanding of ER in RTE. The next chapter describes the methodologies used for this doctoral thesis.

Chapter Three: Methodology

3.1 Chapter Overview

The previous chapter outlined the theoretical understanding of ER in RTE by providing a summary of the literature gathered in a systematic review. The literature discussed in the previous chapter set the scene and provided a rationale for the current research. This chapter provides a description of the methodology employed within the current research. The chapter provides information on the research paradigm and how the researcher's worldview informed the methodology and design of the current research; it outlines instruments used, the co-researcher sample, procedures and researcher roles and ethical considerations. Lastly, the chapter ends with a review establishing the quality of the research.

3.2 Research Paradigm

3.2.1 The ontological and epistemological position

In the attempt to describe the processes of ER, the influence of others and the systems they inhabit on individuals, and the outcomes that develop as a result of these relations, requires an epistemological position that aims to be all encompassing. The epistemology must give significant attention to the agent, structures, relations, cultures, context (Bhaskar, 2008) and time (Archer, 1995). Thus, to understand how all the different aspects of an individual's system interact across the life-course to produce ER, the method selected to investigate these must be sensitive enough to allow for each element of the individual and its system to be illustrated. Thus, we assume

that by investigating all these elements we can concur something about the individual's reality. In assuming this viewpoint, we take a critical view of reality because we presume that the individual's reality is complex and there are multiple generative mechanisms that interact to produce ER. The current research takes a critical realist view in that it assumes knowledge is both a social and historical product accumulated over the life-course. For critical realists any formulation about reality is nothing more than fallible interpretations (Cruikshank, 2004). Individual interpretations can shift with time, context and culture, so reality cannot be viewed in a vacuum.

Taking a critical realist viewpoint enables the researcher to comprehend the richness of social experiences and attention can be given to power and domination of social contexts. This acknowledgement of power relations means that the critical realist perspective aligns with values of social justice. Furthermore, critical realism contrasts with relativist assumptions that presumes language forms reality. For critical realists, language is only part of our reality (Archer, 1995). Therefore, it moves beyond deciding phenomena to become a theory of action. For critical realists, reflection and action are what sets human beings apart from other beings (Bhaskar, 2008). Hence, critical realism subscribes to the idea that we must move beyond understanding the social world so that research also acts to change that world to further well-being. This epistemological understanding means that the researcher, taking a social justice orientation, does not just talk about emancipation but sets out to do something about injustice. For this reason, critical realism aligns itself with emancipatory research methods.

3.2.2 Axiology and critical reflexivity

Axiology is concerned with how the researcher's values may impact on the research, guide the way in which it is developed, and what outcomes might result from the research (Given, 2008). Within critical realism, researchers views of reality are seen through windows of experience (Howitt & Cramer, 2005). When we engage in research, we bring with us expectations, perspectives, culture and interests. In order for this view to be transparent, within critical realism, the researcher has a duty to make these expectations known so that they can be open to investigation by others.

The researcher acknowledges the parallels between her own life circumstances and that of the CRs involved in the study; she was the first in her family to attend university, returned to study after a gap in education and grew-up in an area of deprivation. These experiences no doubt impact on the researcher's values for social justice and further impact on the design of the study. Moreover, it was important for the researcher to be aware of her own beliefs in regard to RTE. The researcher had spent ten years in her previous role as a teacher within FE, teaching those on HE Access courses, so the belief that this group demonstrate ER may have contributed to the design of the study and the nature of the questions asked. Having attended university, the researcher is aware that her values of education adding cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1996) may have influenced an interest in the research question.

In summary, the researcher's axiology, values of social justice, rights and voice, determined the research design. To lessen any bias stemming from

the researcher's experiences, and to prioritise the knowledge of participants, the researcher perceived that participation of the research group in the project would lessen any bias.

3.2.3 Methodology

The previous sections have demonstrated the ontological, epistemological and axiological position of the research. Namely, that reality can be best understood through multiple perspectives and by employing a variety of measures we can begin to come closer to this reality which represents a critical realist position. In order to know how CRs view the world we have to inhabit as many forms of knowing as possible through the use of co-operative inquiry. This values the CRs' knowledge which can be accessed through both language and imagery. Furthermore, the researcher acknowledges that she is not a neutral party in this process of co-creation of knowledge. When we connect with human experience through dialogue we address the knower not as an object but as a presence (Buber, 2000). Thus, the purpose of this study is valuing the experiences of CRs and not to objectify or examine their knowledge in a way that separates it from experience. Consequently, the methodology is qualitative. Qualitative research aims to uncover how meaning is interpreted, what stories participants tell of their lives and examine what we communicate to others (Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2008).

Qualitative research was selected as a method because it aligns better with the epistemological position of this research and it values the participants' experiences and voice. Furthermore, taking this emic perspective allows for

in-depth contextual information (Guba & Lincoln, 1994) and assists in achieving understanding through the process of collaboration (Biggs, 1989). As a result, qualitative research, overcomes the criticisms of quantitative methods because, rather than identifying what the protective factors of ER are, it seeks to understand what value CRs give to these and the way in which they are perceived to work. Thus, the research does not seek to test out specific hypotheses by isolating variables (Flick, 2014). Rather, it acknowledges that we can access co-created realities by qualitatively gathering and assessing symbolic, linguistic-cultural and experiential shared meanings (Reason, 1998)

The preceding analysis of the research paradigm led to the researcher developing a conceptual framework for the research (Figure 3.1).

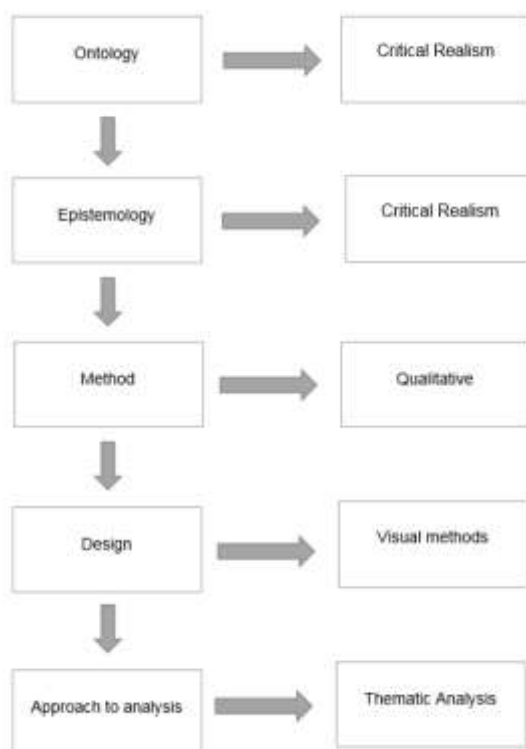


Figure. 3.1 *The conceptual framework for the research*

3.3 Participatory Research (PR) and the Role of the Researcher

Somekh (2002) posits that knowledge constructed without active participation of those being researched can only be partial knowledge. Thus, researchers following a participatory paradigm aim to conduct research 'with', rather than 'on' participants. Minkler (2004) argues that PR should not be seen as method of research but as an approach which represents the researcher's value to engage in the research process in a collaborative way (Minkler & Wallerstein, 2003; Minkler, 2004).

Researchers undertaking PR are concerned with issues of voice, inclusivity and social justice (Nind, 2011). There has been an increase in the number of papers using PR, especially within the health professions (Freeman & Mathison, 2009; Mantoura & Potvin, 2012; Titterton and Smart, 2006) this is demonstrable of the changing world view of individual rights and voice.

Several terms have been used to describe research 'with' rather than 'on' participants these include; Participatory Action Research (PAR), co-operative inquiry (Heron, 1996), community, user-led, emancipatory, and democratic research (Clark, 2016). Therefore, the term PR is a *'broad term for a wide range of approaches to empowering community members to engage in research that increases citizen power and voice in communities'* (Taylor, Jason, Keys, Suarez-Balcazar, Davis, Durlak et al., 2004, p.4).

Within PR, the ethos is to plan and design research so that it abides by the aims of participation. Hence, the decision to treat participants as partners drives the objectives of the research process (Aldridge, 2016). Buber (2000)

suggests that we can operate in a 'I-thou' or 'I-it frame'. In the 'I-thou' frame the 'other' is treated as a human being with rights and dignity, in 'I-it' we see the other as an object. PR aims to value the 'other' thereby removing the notion that the participants are 'the subject' and in doing so close the distance between the researcher and the researched (Clark, 2016).

Cornwall and Jewkes (1995) argue that many studies have been described as PR but, there is not always clarity to what extent these studies encourage participation. Freire (1996) discusses the notion of 'false generosity' which he believes contributes to oppression; this is where the person deemed to be in a position of power engages in an act of generosity which maintains a level of injustice for the oppressed group (Freire, 1996). Freire's liberation pedagogy suggests that within the participatory framework the researcher should impart their knowledge and skills to provide those that are oppressed with the tools for analysing their life (Greene & Hogan, 2005). For Freire (1996), liberation does not occur until the oppressed recognise their oppression. A consultative model would, in Freire's (1996) view, not be participatory and would do little to humanise because it both represents false generosity and does not enable those being researched with the tools to analyse their life. Therefore, any researcher engaged in PR needs to be mindful that engagement in the research is not tokenistic and is done to recognise the humanity of the group. Furthermore, Freire (1996) points out that the system of oppression continues because individuals do not desire freedom but instead seek to gain power through the act of ownership. Freire's (1996) view gives us an understanding of the theoretical purposes of PR whereby ownership of research should be shared. Therefore, for Freire

(1996) a participatory approach would generate knowledge rather than extract it. With this in mind, the notion of PR is defined within this research as: The process and outcome of active participation of RTE which involves the mutual exchange of skills and knowledge between researcher and the identified group (Titterton & Smart, 2006). This definition allows for a range of methods and practices to be utilised. Hence, within PR the participant is seen as the expert in their world and the researcher is seen as facilitating that expertise (Clark, 2016). To this end, the notion of being a participant moves to being one of a CR. Thus, all reference to participation in the current research shall now be referred to as co-research and those engaged in it are CRs.

Cornwall and Jewkes (1995) proposed a continuum of participation in research projects within which they saw CRs engaged in different ways within the research (Table 3.1). In principle, PR should aim to engage CRs at collegiate level. At this level, ownership of the project is devolved and researcher and researched are engaged in a mutual exchange of skills.


Level of Participation	Description	
Contractual	Participants are contracted into the research to perform the function of participating in the research to collect data from them.	Shallow Researcher controlled  Deep Ownership devolved
Consultative	Participants are consulted with in regard to the project before it starts.	
Collaborative	CRs and researchers work together in the process of research, but the design is often managed by the researcher.	
Collegiate	Design, planning, management and ownership is jointly shared between CRs and researcher	

Table 3.1. *Continuum of participation in research. Adapted from Cornwall and Jewkes (1995)*

The current research was designed and initiated by the researcher but aimed to be participatory from the point of initiation. The researcher deemed it necessary to the project that research met the requirements of a doctoral thesis and maintained PR aims. Thus, research was designed to engage participants at the collaborative level so that the timings and constraints of conducting research during a professional doctorate could be met. CRs engaged during several phases of the research to ensure the collaborative ethos of the research would be met (Figure 3.2). This included: Defining the research question and generating prompts, completing data collection and analysis, selecting evidence for themes, member checks and triangulation of data.

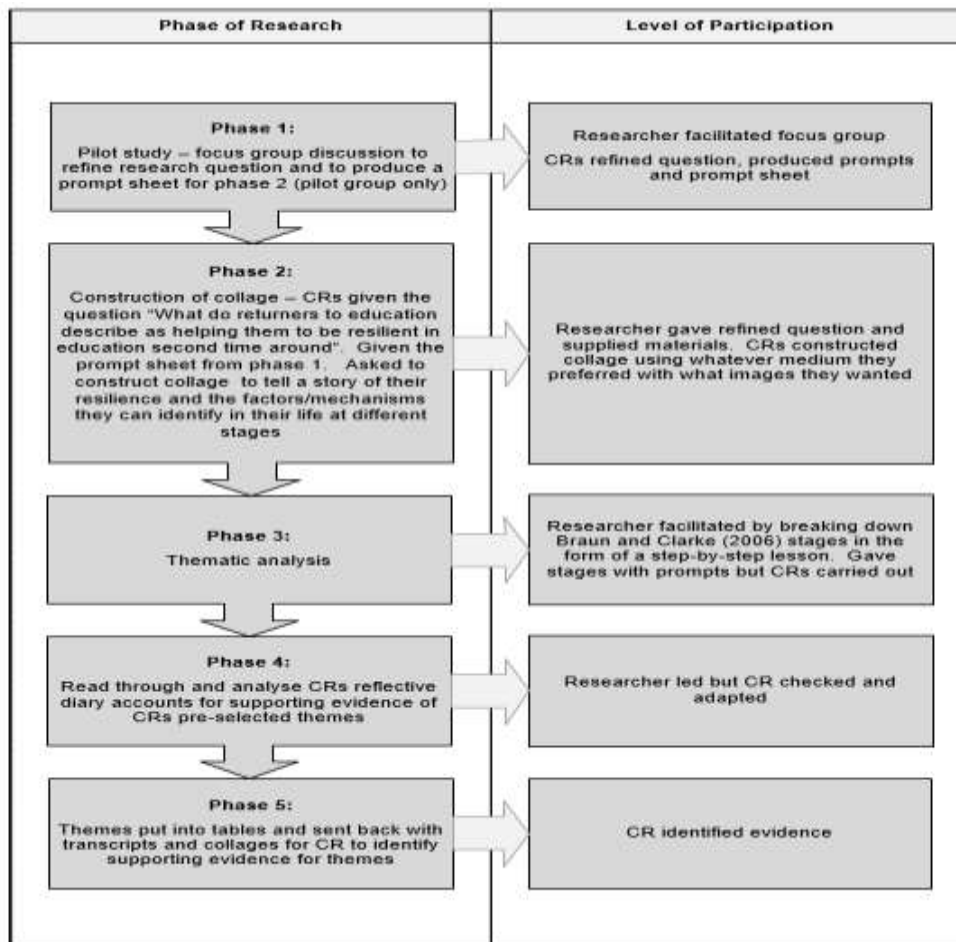


Figure 3.2 Phases of research with levels of participation

Figure 3.2 demonstrates the role of both the researcher and CR in this project which aimed for doing research 'with', rather than 'on' the group (Bradbury & Reason, 2003). Furthermore, engaging the CRs in the process of data analysis assisted in avoiding third-party interpretation of data and engaged CR in transformative and emancipatory processes of meaning making (Aldridge, 2016).

3.4 Visual Methodologies

Visuals have been used as a method for participants to express their knowledge, experience and ideas, in the fields of anthropology and sociology (Glaw, Inder, Kable & Hazelton, 2017). However, the emergence as a method in psychology is new in comparison (Reavey, 2011). When images are used in research, participants view the image as reflecting something about their lives so much so that, images elicit participant responses that pure language-based methods might overlook (Thompson, 2008) and allow us to better understand views on reality. Furthermore, it has been argued that using a multi-modal approach, which combines visual and verbal data, produces an even more detailed picture of CR's experiences (Reavey, 2011). A number of visual methodologies have been applied to educational psychology research including autophotography where participants take photos of their educational environment (Hill, Croydon, Greathead, Kenny, Yates & Pellicano, 2016). In addition to asking participants to take photos to capture data, researchers have also used pre-existing images, a technique known as photo-elicitation (Rose, 2016). Within photo-elicitation images are

employed to generate verbal discussion. It is argued that photo elicitation enables different levels of knowledge to be uncovered because, in addition to eliciting experiences, images have the ability to stimulate emotions, memories and ideas (Glaw et al., 2017). There has been an emergence within psychology of asking participants to produce images prior to interview which has been suggested to help participants structure their thoughts (Reavey, 2011), reflect on topics (Gauntlett, 2007) and is '*generally seen to be less directive and not filtered through the researcher's expectations*' (Reavey, 2011, p.8).

Visual and participatory methods are effective methods to combine because participants having autonomy over the creation and selection of images are easier to enrol in the project (Rose, 2016). Handing over control of image selection to CRs adds to the participatory nature of the project (Richards, 2011). The research took a Freirean perspective (Rose, 2016) by assuming that CRs are the experts in their own world and their expertise can be realised by giving them tools such as visual methodologies. The method used in the current research is based on photo-elicitation but uses existing images, from magazines, a technique known as image-elicitation (Rose, 2016). CRs selected images to construct a collage and completed interpretive text to accompany the pictures.

The collage technique is seen to be advantageous with adolescents and young adults who may be resistant to drawing tasks. Lark-Horovitz, Lewis and Luca (1967) identified an adolescent plateau in artistic development and as a result, using collage lessens any concerns about artistic ability (Leitch, 2008). We have already seen that the use of images elicits information

about a wide range of experiences, emotions and memories. It has also been argued that images are more efficient in terms of being able to carry a great deal of information (Snyder, 2003). When this efficiency is combined with verbal prompts to memory, given by written descriptors, the combined visual and verbal data create a richer picture of the topic under study. Consequently, this research asked those engaged in the research to construct a collage. Materials for the collage were supplied by the researcher and these consisted of magazines, brochures and newspapers. CRs were asked to write descriptions of images to act as prompts to memory. These helped them with subsequent discussion with their peers. Using the collage in this way meant that any later discussion was richer, generated by CRs and enabled CRs to interpret their world within their own cultural frames and enabled a greater understanding of their view on reality (Fals-Borda, 2001).

3.5 Focus Groups

Focus groups (FGs) have been used within psychology since the 1940s (O'Nyumba, Wilson, Derrick & Mukherjee, 2018) and are often used to gather in-depth information about topics. Morgan (2002) proposes that FGs can be seen as a form of active experimentation in which a purposively selected group engages with the researcher to generate knowledge. FGs are used within PR because they are seen as being a tool which can bridge the understanding between scientific and local knowledge (Cornwall & Jewkes, 1995).

Barbour (2007) defines a FG as a group discussion in which *'the researcher is actively encouraging of, and attentive to, the group interaction'* (p.2).

Thus, there is distinction between FG and group interview which lies with the role of the researcher; in interviews the researcher's role is to extract knowledge by investigating phenomena. Whereas in FG the researcher's role is to facilitate the discussion in terms of participants talking to each other rather than the researcher (Barbour, 2007; Smithson, 2000). Johnson (1996) proposed, that FGs can stimulate significant change and to help redefine the group's problems. FGs align with Freirean principles because they assist groups to recognise the world they inhabit, shift the balance of power from researcher to researched, and promote ownership of ideas within the group being studied (Freire, 1996).

Within this study, FGs were used in two separate phases; in the preliminary phase of the research to refine research questions and develop the prompts for subsequent phases of the research (Figure 3.4). Using FGs in the preliminary phases of research is not an unusual technique and has been utilised by a number of researchers (Barbour, 2007). Employing FGs within the first phase of the research both informs the development of the study and engages CRs so that they can become more involved in the planning, management and ownership of the project (Cornwall & Jewkes, 1995). Thus, FG use in phase one contributed to the participatory nature of the research.

A further FG was employed in phase three of the research. This FG was to clarify and conceptualise themes identified by CRs which ensured that

'collective sense was made, meanings negotiated, and identities elaborated through the process of social interaction between the group' (Wilkinson, 1999, p.225). Hence, CRs were able to reflect on issues salient to them rather than follow any agenda, this was pertinent given that the semi-structured nature of discussions was generated by CRs' collages rather than topic guides determined by the researcher (Barbour, 2007). Working in this way meant CRs' voice remained central to the discussion of the findings and assisted in the continuous engagement and description of the data as to increase credibility of the research. At phase three of the research, the FGs were mediated and recorded by a team of two people with the first acting as the FG facilitator and the second as a note taker. Because of the visual approach to the study, the notes were taken by an Assistant EP trained in graphic facilitation.

The FGs followed a semi-structured format. In the first phase CRs were led through topics as part of a PowerPoint (Appendix: 6) and in the third phase the CRs were led through discussion by systematically discussing each theme they had identified. The FG was audiotaped, and tapes were transcribed (Appendices: 7, 8 & 9) verbatim to ensure that themes discussed had been captured on the graphic produced.

3.6 Phases of the Research Process and Procedures

The research was conducted in phases (Figure 3.3). These phases were carried out in the form of lessons (Appendices: 6, 10 & 11). Group one acted as the pilot group and received three lessons, the first lesson was the FG discussion refining questions and producing prompts for the following lesson

(Appendix: 12). Group two did not have this first lesson and went straight to lesson two. Following the collage construction lesson CRs were instructed how to conduct a thematic analysis. The thematic analysis was instructed by the researcher in the form of a lesson and followed Braun and Clarke's (2013) phases. This lesson contained FG discussion to illuminate and clarify the themes identified. In total, group one received three lessons over three successive weeks, and group two received two lessons over a two-week period, each lesson lasted three hours with a break of 20 minutes in the middle.

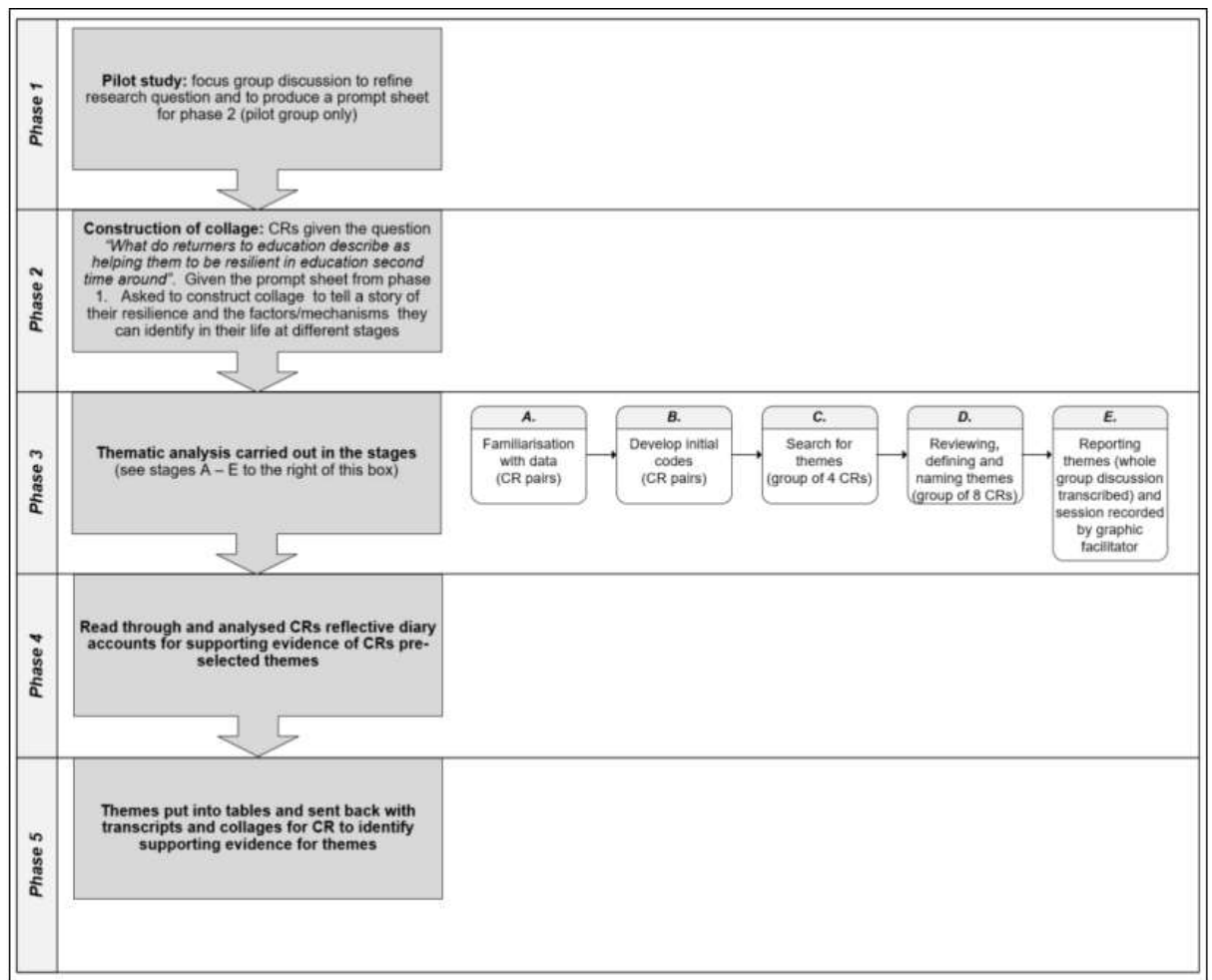


Figure. 3.3 Flow diagram to show the research design at different phases of research

At the end of each lesson, CRs were required to fill in reflective research diaries and accounts within these diaries were also used for data collection purposes. After lesson three had finished, the researcher transcribed the FG audio and sent these transcriptions with a blank table of themes to CRs (Appendix: 12 & 13). CRs were also sent extracts from the diaries in order for them to select as further evidence of their themes. Once CRs had reviewed evidence and added this to the table of themes, they sent back the completed tables to the researcher in order to write the findings (Appendices: 15 & 16). Findings were produced and sent to CRs to check to make sure that they represented concepts generated in phase two and three of research. The summarised procedure (Tables 3.2 and 3.3) specifies exact steps taken in the research by each group.

Research Phase	Procedure Followed
Phase One	1. Initial FG discussion with CRs. This stated the aims and research question; the FG facilitated CRs to further add/refine sub-questions and produce prompts.
Phase Two	2. Pilot of collage construction CRs were given prompts (produced in phase one).
Phase Three	3. Pilot exploring how to facilitate the groups to conduct their own thematic analysis and construct the group map. Thematic analysis was achieved in step-by-step instruction following Braun and Clarke (2006) stages (figure 3.13) 4. CRs, facilitated as a FG, explored their themes and clarified their experiences. 5. Note taking and audio recording of FG produced a thematic map and transcript of the discussion.
Phase Four	6. CRs write reflective diaries at the end of each lesson these are sent through for review to CRs for further supporting evidence of themes/potential new themes.
Phase Five	7. FG audios are transcribed and sent back to CRs along with a table with the themes (Appendix: 9 & 14) they identified in phase three of the research. CRs are asked to supply evidence of themes (Appendix: 16)

Table 3.2 *Phases of the research procedure followed with group one (pilot group)*

Research Phase	Procedure Followed
Phase Two	1. Collage construction and interpretive text. CRs were given prompts (produced in phase one, group one).
Phase Three	2. Lesson on thematic analysis and construction of the group map. Thematic analysis was achieved in step-by-step instruction following Braun and Clarke (2006) stages (Figure 3.13.) 3. Co-researchers, facilitated as a FG, will explore their themes and clarify their experiences. 4. Note taking and audio recording of FG produces a thematic map and transcript of the discussion.
Phase Four	5. CRs write reflective diaries at the end of each stage these are sent through for review for further supporting evidence of themes/new themes.
Phase Five	6. FG audios are transcribed and sent back to CRs along with a table with the themes (Appendix: 10 & 15) they identified in phase three of the research. CRs are asked to supply the evidence for themes(Appendix: 17).

Table 3.3 *Phases of the research procedure followed by group two*

3.6.1 Pilot group study

According to Van Teijlingen and Hundley (2001) the term pilot study can be viewed in two different ways; a small-scale study which looks to investigate feasibility or a trial of a research instrument (Baker, 1994). Pilot studies can be seen as valuable to PR because, in addition to assessing feasibility and potential issues, they enable the researcher to gain experience of the group being studied. This 'real world' experience can assist in enhancing the research design (Kezar, 2000) and increase the participatory nature of the project, if CRs engage in a joint review of the project (Wethington et al., 2007). Pilot studies are conducted for a number of reasons. This includes identifying practical problems, checking whether data analysis procedures

reveal potential issues, development of research questions, checking for ambiguity within methods and highlighting any issues for training researchers (Van Teijlingen & Hindley, 2001).

A pilot study was conducted with the first group of CRs which aimed to determine feasibility of the study procedure, review research questions, check for ambiguity, test out the data collection instrument (collage construction) and check data analysis procedures (Figure 3.4).

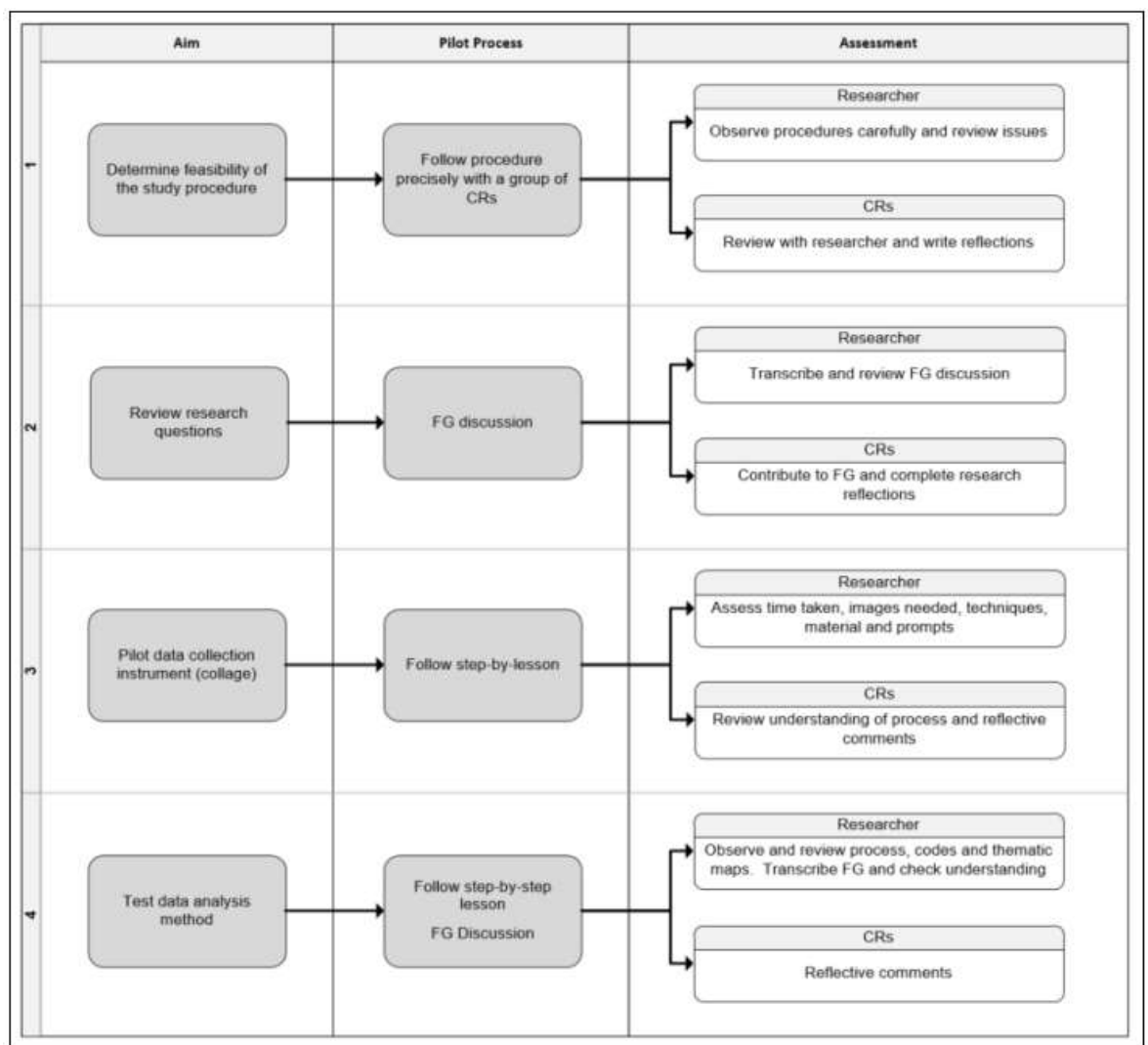


Figure. 3.4 Flow chart of pilot study processes and assessment

3.6.1.1 Feasibility of the study

To determine the feasibility of the study procedures, the researcher followed the procedures for the research and observed to see if changes should be made. CRs reflected in research diaries at every stage to ensure that revision of any part of the study was collaborative. It was determined that the procedures of the study were adequate. CRs agreed that they had clear instructions, understood aims and objectives and felt that they had enough time to complete the research stages. As a result, no changes were made to the procedure and the study was deemed feasible.

3.6.1.2 Review of research questions

To determine whether the research questions represented the views of CRs and were clear and unambiguous, a FG discussion took place. Originally the research question was: “What are the views of RTE on the protective elements that help them to be resilient in education second time around?” During this discussion CRs identified that they felt the use of the term ‘protective’ was ambiguous and commented that the term did not represent their construction of their reality. CRs discussed that for them adversity was just as important to their resilience as protection. CRs adjusted questions so that the concept of ‘help’ was used. Therefore, in collaboration with the CRs, the research question was revised to:

“What views do RTE have on what helps them to be resilient in education second time around?”

All CRs agreed that this was concisely framed, was unambiguous and met the aims of the study. Additionally, CRs produced a list of prompts

(Appendix: 12) which they felt would enable participants to complete the collage phase of the research.

3.6.1.3 Pilot of data collection instrument (Collage and FG)

The pilot group completed constructing the collage which served as the instrument for collecting data. Several questions were asked during this stage which centred around rules for making the collage. Such as, 'Can we use our own picture?' 'Can we draw instead of using pictures?' Given the participatory values of the study, the researcher asked the CRs what they felt would work best for them. It was decided that, given that the group had different preferences over drawing, CRs were given freedom to decide the mechanics of how they constructed the collage. The decision to allow freedom of choice over construction of the collage was then conveyed to group two so that they followed the same procedure.

FG discussions were able to generate information that was useful for both the development of the research process and for triangulation of data. However, the researcher did note that following transcription of the audio from the FG in phase one, that she must step back from her theoretical understanding by probing CRs and take a more facilitatory role. In the phase three FGs, questions were adapted to adjust for this.

3.6.1.4 Testing the data analysis method

CRs worked through the exact steps given in the lesson on thematic analysis and produced sheets containing codes which generated themes (Appendices: 22 & 23). Following the pilot phase, a thematic map was constructed, and the FG discussion was transcribed from audio recording.

CRs reflected that they found that the step-by-step process worked well and that they were able to understand the process so much so, that no further guidance was deemed necessary. One CR did comment that she would have liked an opportunity to present her collage to others so that she could explain all her pictures but there was no unanimous agreement on this. No changes were made to the data analysis phase of the research.

3.6.1.5 Conclusions from the pilot study

Van Teijlingen and Hundley (2007) argue that one problem that arises from the use of pilot studies is that, if the findings from the pilot group are included in the main findings, this can lead to a contamination of the data. This is because any revisions made following the pilot phase could make findings inaccurate. Contamination of data would be detrimental if using deductive and quantitative methods to test out specific hypotheses. However, in qualitative research, investigators often use data from the pilot study in the main findings because the issue of contamination is less of a concern (Van Teijlingen & Hundley, 2007). The data from the pilot group was reviewed and it was deemed that any changes made to procedures did not lead to significant changes to the data collected. Thus, data from the pilot study was included within the main findings of the research.

3.7 Context and Location of the Study

The research took place in two FE colleges in coastal towns from two counties within the East of England. Both these areas have been highlighted by the government as being in SMCSp as identified by the SMI (DfE, 2017).

The SMI indicates that YP within these areas, from disadvantaged backgrounds, confront greater obstacles to improving their social mobility than YP in cities. According to government statistics, around 14% of YP from disadvantaged backgrounds in SMCSp progress to university. Within these two coastal towns, there are higher rates of low paid jobs and economic growth is weak (DfE, 2017). There are also higher percentages of unqualified teachers and the LA performance is within the lowest 10-20% of the country on SMI (DfE, 2017).

Both colleges occupied positions close to the town centre and had just received a significant investment to update their facilities. The colleges offered courses from entry to degree level.

3.8 Recruitment of CRs and Sampling Frame

The inclusion criteria for the research was that CRs were enrolled on an HE Access programme⁷ and possessed less than five GCSE passes⁸. CRs must be missing one or more of the core GCSEs (English, Science or Maths). They must have passed the course half-way point (January) and have completed UCAS applications and intend to start university in Autumn 2018. CRs must have experienced a gap in educational phases of at least a year and they must reside in an identified SMCSp.

A recruitment information email was sent to a total of six colleges within SMCSp offering HE Access course. This outlined the study and requested that the email be forwarded to any YP who would be interested in taking part.

⁷ The HE Access course was chosen because it is specifically designed for returners to education to gain qualifications to go onto study at university.

⁸ A GCSE pass on the old system would be above C and on the new system, a 5 and above

Two of the colleges contacted, indicated an interest in taking part in the research, and a meeting was set up with departmental heads to arrange the research. The department heads identified HE Access groups based on a number of determining factors.

1. The group had research methods as part of their timetable, this meant that CRs had some prior knowledge of research methods and would gain some benefit in taking part in the exercise.
2. The group timetable was sufficient to allow for the time required to conduct the study.
3. The group had tutors who were willing to hand over some of their timetable so that the research could be conducted.
4. All members of the group, once fully informed of the study and its purpose, were willing to take part.

Thus, the research utilised purposive sampling, this is because the research aimed to explore the phenomenon 'ER in RTE' with identified groups; CRs were chosen for their characteristics and for meeting the objectives of the study.

3.8.1 CR Sample

There were two groups of CRs, one from each college. The first group started with 12 CRs taking part in the pilot FG discussion. However, one CR was unable to attend the second and third lesson. This left 11 CRs in group one of the study. All 11 CRs were female and studying Health Science. The

average age of the group was 21.7 years and the average gap between educational phases was 4.5 years.

The second group were all studying a HE Access qualification in Social Science there were eight females and one male, and the average age of the group was 22.8 years. The average gap between phases of education was 6.7 years. All CRs completed both lessons.

3.9 Data Collection Methods

Data was collected at four points in the research for group one (pilot group) and three points during the research for group two. The data collected at different phases comprised of visual, written and verbal data (Figure 3.4).

Phase one consisted of verbal data from the transcription of the FG discussion. The purpose of this discussion was to review the research question and gather CRs ideas before the main study was conducted. The FG discussion clarified a number of concepts that related to CRs understanding of ER and therefore data from this stage was retained.

Phase two was construction of a collage. CRs were given the question: "What views do RTE have on what helps them to be resilient in education second time around?" This question was kept displayed on a board and prompt sheets (Appendix: 12). An explanation of how these lessons were structured is given (Appendix: 25); data was also collected from phase three discussion and phase four, CRs reflective diaries (Appendix: 25)

3.9.1 Data analysis

A thematic analysis was utilised because it offered flexibility and provided a rich, detailed account of the data (Braun & Clarke, 2013). The exploratory and emancipatory nature of the research aimed to avoid any method that was theoretically determined. Furthermore, CRs had no theoretical knowledge of ER, so, they needed to be inductive in their approach to the analysis. Consequently, because thematic analysis is not espoused to any theoretical framework (Braun & Clarke, 2013), it could be applied to both visual and text data. Thematic analysis was conducted in the form of a step-by-step lesson (Appendix: 25), under instruction of the researcher, and followed the stages of thematic analysis proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006).

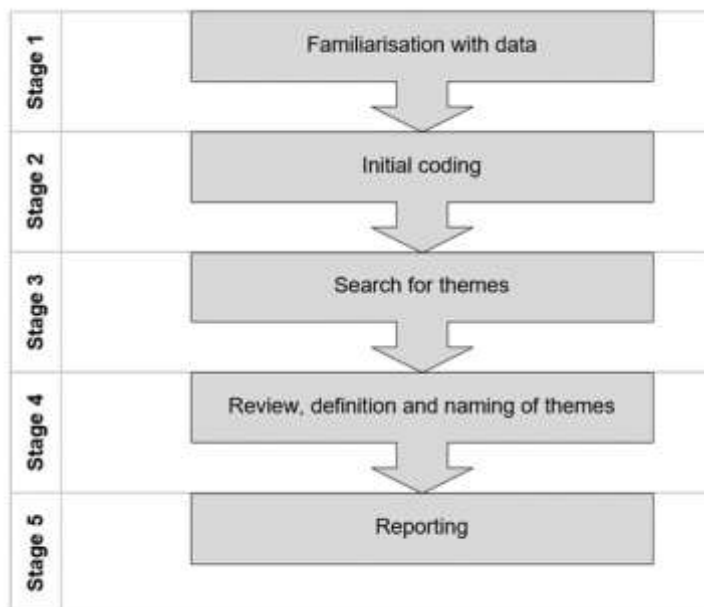


Figure. 3.5 *Braun and Clarke process of thematic analysis. Adapted from Huth, Füssl, Risser (2014)*

Since the analysis was conducted by CRs, they determined the parameters of what constituted a theme. Using CRs in analysis of their own data has been employed within educational psychology by Turner-Forbes (2017). Taking this approach to thematic analysis allied with the critical realist epistemology of the research because it avoided any theory laden assumptions being made by the researcher and enabled the different views of the CRs to be central to the findings of the research. Grover (2004) argues that engaging CRs at the data analysis stage facilitates more authentic knowledge and researchers can gain greater insight into the CRs' world which enhances the validity of the research (Thomas & O'Kane, 1998). Nind (2011) conducted a review of PR and concluded that very few studies had changed the dynamic between researcher and researched by including CRs within the analysis phase (Nind, 2014). Nind (2008) argues that when using visual methods, the data gathered requires a certain amount of interpretation, so much so, that authenticity of data can sometimes be lost in a bid to extract theory. Nind (2008) proposes that in visual methods it is essential to involve CRs at the analysis stage. Kellett (2004; 2005) argues that one reason why CRs are often not involved in the data analysis stage of the research, is because the researcher often perceives data analysis to be something better left in the hands of the more knowledgeable other. Kellett (2004; 2005) suggests that when CRs lack the skills to conduct data analysis they can be taught these, and adaptations can be made to utilise more simplistic ways of coding data. Data analysis with CRs has been conducted through the processes of joint analysis (Kellett, 2011; Stevenson, 2014; Thomas & O'Kane, 1998) and through training of CRs (Bradbury-Jones &

Taylor, 2015; Byrne et al. 2009; Kellett et al., 2004; Kellett, 2005; 2009; 2011). Hence, involving CRs in analysis increases the credibility of the research and better supports participatory aims.

3.10 Ethical Issues

3.10.1 Protection from harm

Ethical approval for this research was granted by the UEL School of Psychology on 06/02/2018. Ethical considerations were directed by The British Psychological Society Code of Ethics and Conduct (BPS, 2018) and HCPC Standards of Proficiency (HCPC, 2015). The researcher completed a research proposal and risk assessment (Appendix: 19) which was scrutinised and checked by the UEL Ethics Committee (Appendix: 20) in order to ensure protection from harm and maintain the psychological well-being of the CRs.

3.10.2 Informed consent

Permissions were given by the LA following a research proposal presentation in Spring 2018. After receiving information sheets (Appendix: 21), two colleges registered their interest and signed to demonstrate their consent then a discussion took place to identify groups. Once groups were identified the researcher presented the research aims and handed out information sheets and informed consent sheets (Appendix: 18). CRs signed a consent sheet at the start of each session to ensure they continued to give consent for participation (Appendix: 18). All CRs were over the age of 18 so consent was sought from them. Information sheets (Appendix: 18) gave specific

details on their right to withdraw, confidentiality, anonymity, risk and benefits, and data protection.

3.10.3 Confidentiality and anonymity

PR aims to involve CRs in all stages of the research including disseminating findings (Nind, 2011; Leitch & Mitchell, 2014). This produces ethical concerns over anonymity and confidentiality. All CRs were given a number which anonymised their data and, therefore, made sure that any information they gave remained confidential. However, to enable CRs to stay involved with the research and to make sure they could continue to be involved with the dissemination of the findings they were asked if they wanted to waive their right to anonymity should there be an opportunity to co-publish in the future and to share contact details with the researcher. Thus, although CRs data is anonymised, CRs could be named for their contribution to the project if needed in the future. All CRs understood and signed the consent form (Appendix: 18).

Rose (2016) suggests that, when using visual methodologies, there are other ethical considerations. One consideration is identifiable material, research that uses photo elicitation can mean that participants produce pictures where others can be identifiable. CRs were told not to use photographs and were encouraged to create the collage from magazines/newspapers to avoid this ethical issue. Lastly, CRs images were not named and therefore, the collage could not be associated to them.

3.10.4 Risk

The research proposal was reviewed and risk of emotional, physical or psychological harm to researcher and CRs was deemed to be low (Appendix: 19). Additionally, the researcher also had regular access and supervisory contact with a director of studies at UEL. This ensured that any further ethical considerations could be discussed. Furthermore, the researcher, being a TEP, also had regular supervision from a qualified EP working within the LA and the researcher adhered to the duty of care and safe guarding procedures outlined by the HCPC (HCPC, 2015).

3.10.5 Data protection

All collages and reflective diaries were anonymised using a continuous numbering system. Data was retained for the duration of the study in a lockable filing cabinet where it will remain for six months, after which time, it will be destroyed. FGs were recorded using a smartphone which was unlocked by entering two passwords, this phone was stored securely at all times. Transcription of the audio took place immediately after the event. Within the transcription CRs were assigned the same CR number as their collages for anonymity. Upon transcription, all audio data was destroyed. Transcripts remained on a password protected laptop.

3.10.6 Right to withdraw

Colleges and CRs were provided with information sheets (Appendices: 17 & 21) which detailed their right to withdraw from the study. CRs also had this explained to them in all lessons and were told that, should they withdraw

their permission, any data produced would be destroyed. CRs were not paid for their involvement and all CRs were debriefed and signposted to further services if needed

3.11 Assessing the Quality of the Research

According to Hannes (2011), there is debate as to whether concepts such as validity and reliability are applicable to qualitative research. Some have argued that within qualitative research, researchers should seek an equilibrium between methodological flaws and relevance of findings (Edwards et al., 2000). Yardley (2000) suggests that qualitative methodologies need to agree on how to assess the quality of research using specified criteria. In line with the criteria used to evaluate literature within the systematic review, Guba and Lincoln's (1985) principles to evaluate the trustworthiness of findings was applied. Thus, the following sections review the credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability of the current study.

3.11.1 Credibility

In assessing the credibility of visual research, Mathison (2012) proposes four considerations should be made: Quality of design, attention to context, adequacy of image from multiple perspectives, and contributions to new knowledge. Mathison (2012) suggests that a design which uses participant-generated images, with interpretative text, establishes context which enhances both credibility and reliability. In this sense, asking CRs to select, narrate and analyse the images, produces rich data, from multiple sources

so that the data is triangulated. Involving the participants as CRs means that member checks and prolonged engagement are weaved into the process of the research and further enhance credibility. In this sense, meaning comes from the CRs themselves and contributes new knowledge because CRs take the reader on a journey of understanding (Mathison, 2012). Themes were not reviewed by an additional researcher for inter-rater reliability; because of the participatory nature of the research, CRs were involved in member checking at phase three, four and five. Therefore, the addition of a researcher who had not experienced the research process, was not felt necessary as they would not be able to add anything further (Ponterotto, 2005). All audio from FG discussion was transcribed and sent to CRs for member checks. CRs were reminded to check for negative cases in phase three and four of the research. Therefore, working in collaboration with the CRs enhanced the credibility of the research.

3.11.2 Transferability

Transferability pertains to how much the findings can be applied to other settings (Hannes, 2011). In order for the reader to evaluate whether findings can be transferred to their own research, a thick description of the study is supplied (Guba & Lincoln, 1985) which contains both CR demographics and information relating to CR context. Furthermore, CRs were selected through purposive sampling based on ER outcomes. Therefore, characteristics of individuals are transparent. Thus, the reader can infer to what level these findings can be transferred.

3.11.3 Dependability

Dependability refers to the logical process of the research being traceable and documented (Hannes, 2011). The researcher provided clarity over the choice of methodology and design applied to participatory-visual approaches. The processes of the research have been described as phases (Figure 3.3). All materials utilised in the design of the research have been appended so that methods are transparent and open to replication. In addition, the researcher has documented her role and interests in this area to enable critical reflection. Reflexivity was further ensured by the researcher maintaining a reflective log. CRs were invited to reflect upon their experience of the research process which further improves dependability and transferability of the study.

3.11.4 Confirmability

CRs completing the data analysis meant that the researcher's judgement over themes was nullified. CRs, of course, could have applied their own judgement in the process of establishing themes. To address this, CRs went through the process of inter-coder agreement by first working on coding in pairs and then in groups of four. This reduced researcher judgements having an effect on the themes extracted. CRs engaged in constant comparison collapsing data further with each step-by-step activity in order for the themes to emerge. CR demographics were recorded and background information relating to the researcher, including her parallels with the current

research group have been explained. Reflexivity was ensured at each stage by CRs and researcher through reflexive logs.

3.12 Chapter Summary

Within this chapter, the research paradigm has been explained and justified. The ontological and epistemological view taken by the current research validated the theoretical concepts which led to the use of visual and PR methods. Instruments used within the study were explained and demographics of CRs were included alongside information relating to the procedures within each phase. Subsequently, any ethical considerations were highlighted before evaluating the quality of the study's design. The next chapter presents the findings of the research.

Chapter Four: Findings

4.1 Chapter Overview

Chapter Three provided an overview of the methodology along with the ontological and epistemological position taken by the current research. The current chapter aims to outline the main findings from two groups of CRs in order to answer the following exploratory question:

“What views do RTE have on what helps them to be resilient in education second time around?”

To enable this process CRs were given the following instructions in the lesson to construct a collage:

“Think about the factors that surround you that protect you so that you can achieve this time e.g. family”.

“Think about these time periods in your life 1. Early years 2. Primary years 3. High school years 4. In-between high school and returning to study 5. Now (return to study).”

“You can divide your page however you feel and stick the images in the time period that you think these factors occurred e.g. family support in primary school”.

CRs were also given a prompt sheet (Appendix: 12).

This chapter begins with an explanation of the participatory approach to the data analysis which was undertaken with CRs. This includes details of how CRs analysed data, the emergent themes including the stages of thematic

analysis and an explanation of the type of data collected at each phase of the research. The themes identified within each group of CRs are presented alongside visual and text extracts from CR collages. These were selected by members to demonstrate the themes. For further clarity,⁹ excerpts from FG discussions about the emerging themes are also presented alongside visual and text extracts from CR collages. Master themes are presented as described by the two groups of CRs. These are presented in one thematic map before going onto explore the thematic maps produced by each group. Once thematic maps have been presented, explanations of each of the eleven master themes and their sub-themes are described. The chapter concludes with a summary of the main findings.

4.2 Participatory Approach to Data Analysis and Quality Assurance of Themes

In the current research, CRs were trained in conducting a thematic analysis which followed the guidelines outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006) and took the form of a lesson (Appendix: 11 & 25).

Selenger (1997) argues that in order for PR to provide a truthful analysis of the reality of CRs, full and active participation at all stages of the research process is required. The thematic analysis conducted by CRs was carried out using a five-stage process developed from Braun and Clarke (2006). In

⁹ and to make sure that the CRs' view remains central to research

the current research, stages four and five of their model were combined so that CRs reviewed, defined and named themes.

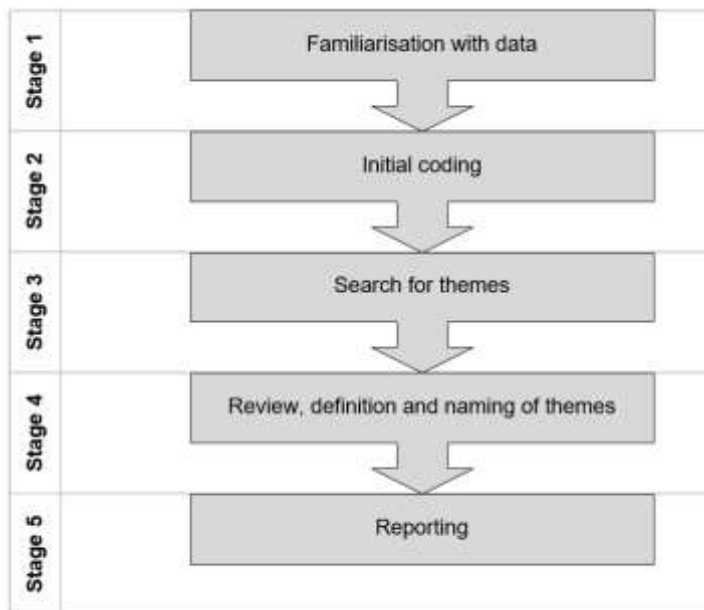


Fig 4.1 *Braun and Clarke process of thematic analysis. Adapted from Huth, Füssl, Risser (2014)*

A flow chart showing the process of data production and analysis taken by CRs is given below. Data was collected at four points within the process (phase one, two, three and four). Phase one consisted of a FG discussion designed to refine the research question and develop prompts this produced verbal data. Phase two consisted of constructing the collages which produced written and visual data, phase three was the thematic analysis, discussion of which was recorded and transcribed; this produced further verbal data. Phase four consisted of reviewing CRs' reflective diaries and extracting supporting evidence of their pre-determined themes, phase five was a member checking stage to make sure the evidence presented was selected by CRs.

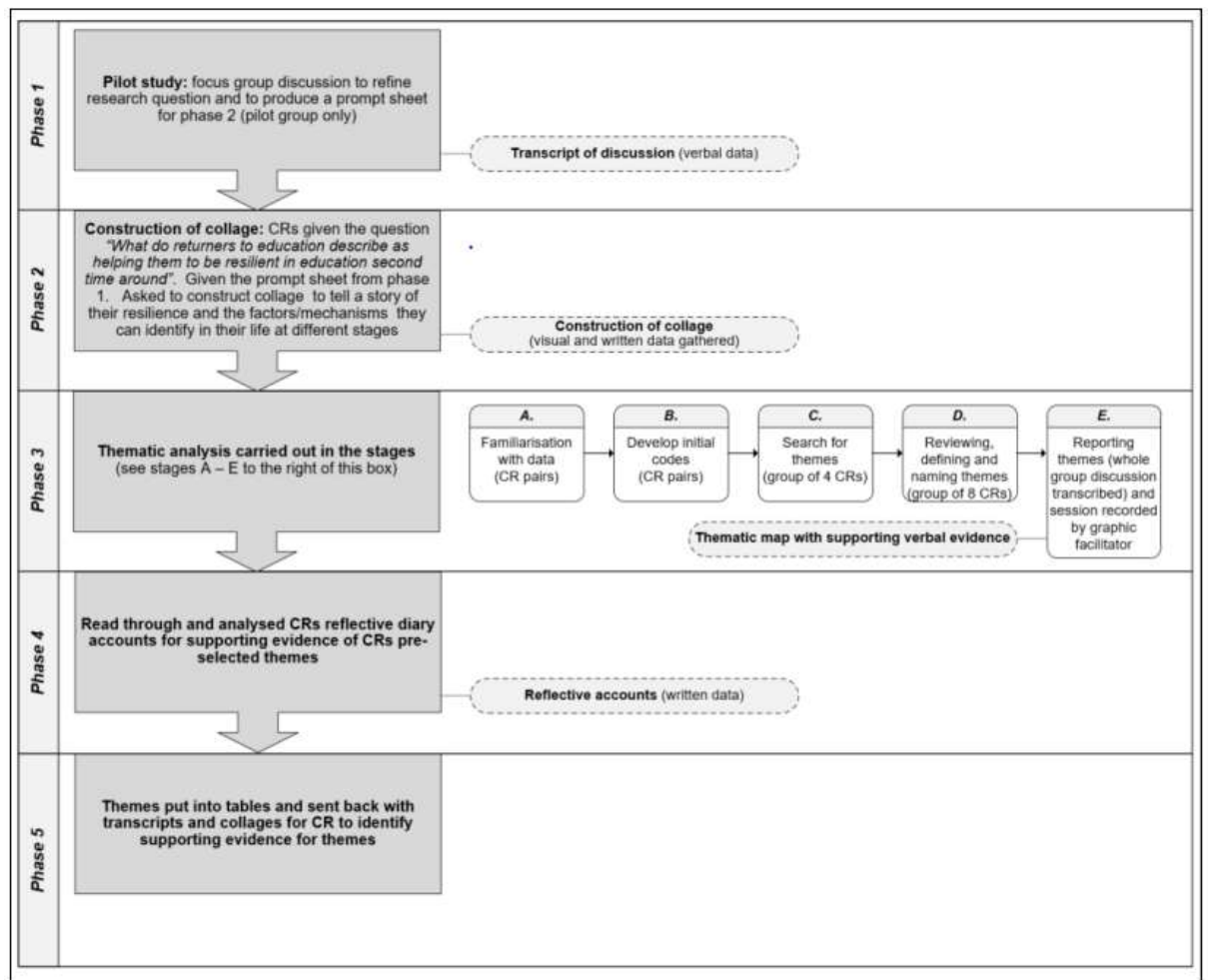


Figure. 4.2 Flow chart to demonstrate the phases of data collection and analysis with each group.

CRs used open coding and a process of constant comparison, they worked as pairs, then groups of four and eight before discussing as a group (Appendix: 22 & 23) . This process enabled inductive analysis; accumulation of similarities were coded and repeated observations between CRs were addressed as themes. Once themes and sub-themes were identified, a FG discussion took place which aimed to clarify the themes and check for accuracy of the CRs' experience (Birt, Scott, Cavers, Campbell, & Walter, 2016). A written transcript of this discussion was produced (Appendices: 8 & 10). CRs selected quotes from this to demonstrate the meaning of thematic

categories. In doing so, CRs selected images and text to support the themes they had identified which provided an explicit level of analysis (Russo-Zimet, 2016). Lastly, notes from the CRs' reflections that were identified as supporting the themes were extracted by the researcher which allowed for further triangulation of the data. These were then further checked with CR. Thus, the CRs' reality, knowledge and experiences remained central to the analysis of the findings. Transcripts and photographs of the analysis conducted with CR are provided (Appendices: 9, 10, 23 & 24).

4.3 Main Themes Illustrating Protective Factors and Mechanisms by Group

The next section outlines the themes identified by CRs in each of the two groups; these were identified and discussed by CRs in phase three of the research.

Master themes from both group one and group two are presented (Figure 4.3) which demonstrates that between the two groups of CRs, 11 master themes were identified.

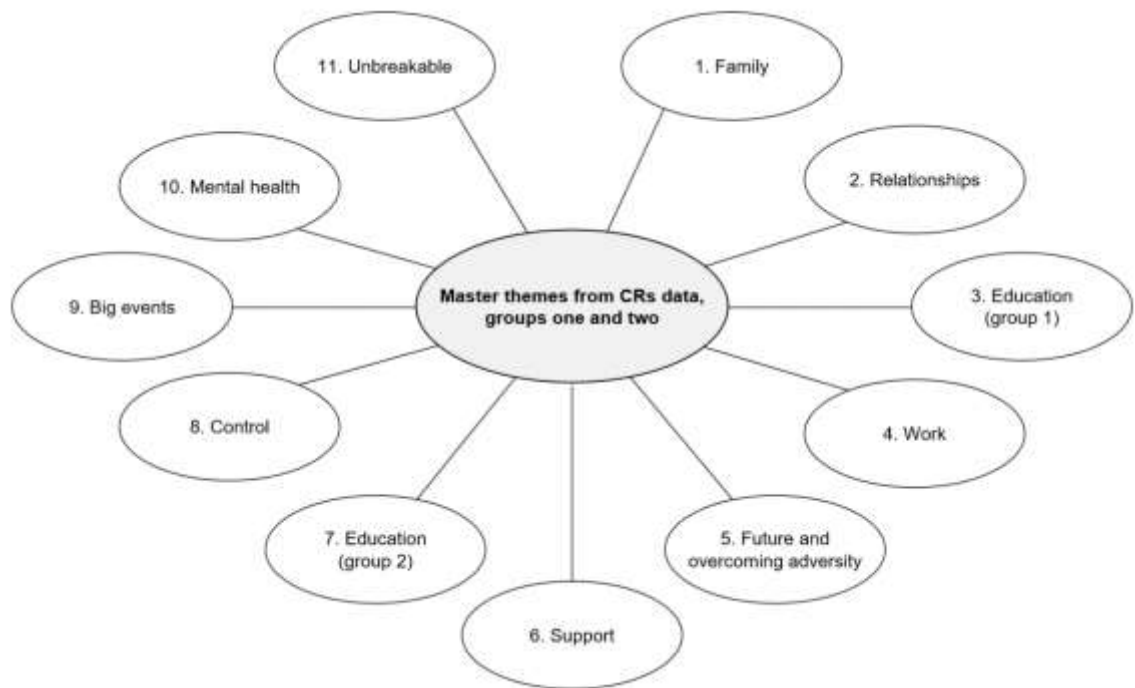


Figure. 4.3 *Thematic map illustrating the eleven master themes emerging from CRs' data from groups one and two.*

Both groups completed a FG discussion of the themes after conducting their thematic analysis, themes (and evidence for them) were discussed. A graphic facilitator recorded this to produce the thematic map. Supporting evidence for each theme comes from phase one (pilot FG), phase two (visual and written accounts from collages), phase three (FG discussion on themes) and phase four (reflective diaries). For simplicity, the originating source of the supporting evidence is given as phase one, two, three or four. Themes and sub-themes are explored by group.

4.3.1 Main Themes from Group One

Group one produced five master themes (Figures 4.4 & 4.5), these highlight the aspects that CRs identified within their life they felt helped them with ER. Weighting of data was varied for each theme with themes one, two and five

containing the most data (Appendix: 15). The following sections detail each master theme and the sub-themes contained within it. CRs selected data from all three phases which they felt best expressed their understanding of the theme. This data is presented within each theme.

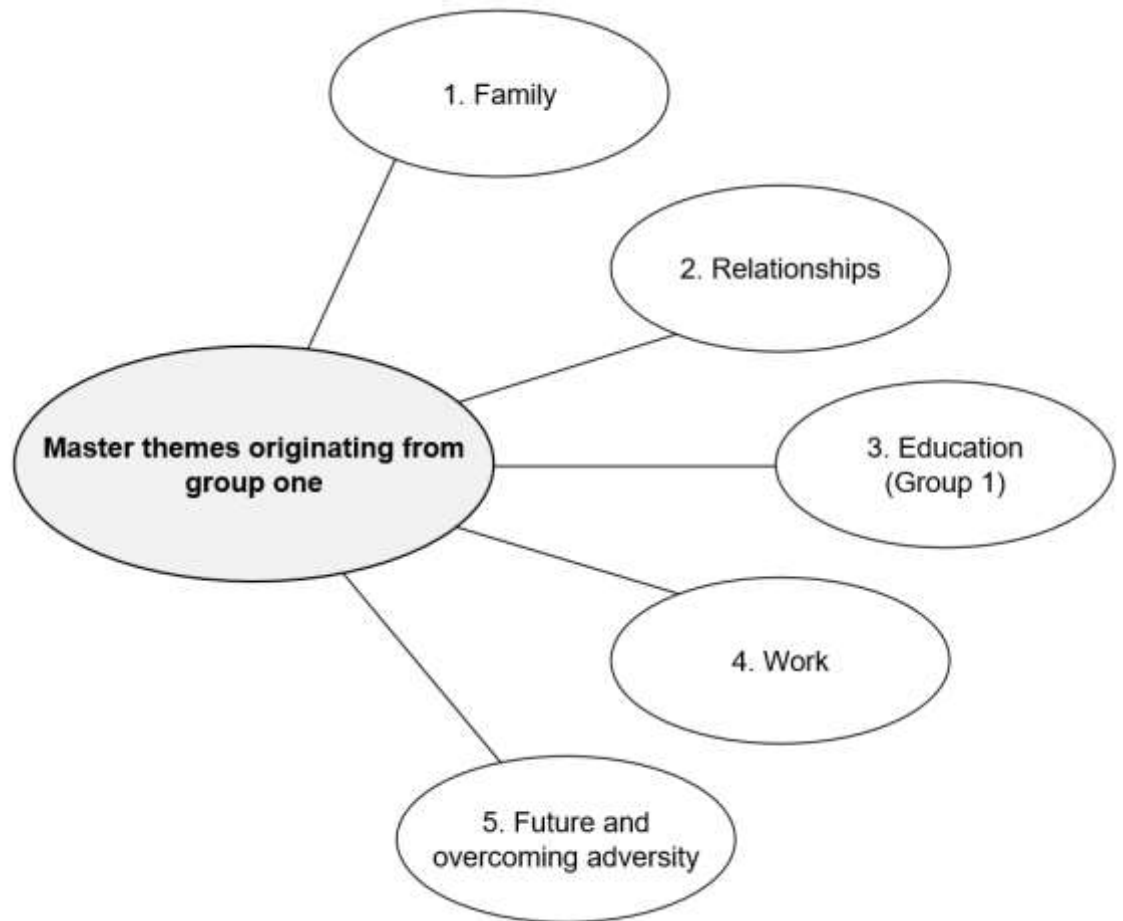


Fig 4.4 *Thematic map illustrating the five master themes emerging from the data from Group One*



Fig 4.5 *Thematic map produced by group one in phase three*

CRs within this group felt family was a supportive factor throughout their life but identified that the way that family helped them to be resilient changed as they got older.

CR2: Well, it's, the...family is really support. We had it going through from early years right through.

R: Ok.

CR2: But I guess, looking at it, it changes. In the early years we had stuff on support. You know, guidance and most of us had mums that, well were there for us. (Lines 1-11 phase three, group one)

CRs identified that the theme extended across the lifespan because pictures and text depicting family and support coded within their thematic analysis were identified in all parts of their collage, not just early years. When CR2 refers to 'stuff on support' she is referring to the pictures and accompanying text on the collages that represent family and support. This excerpt from the phase three discussion of themes demonstrates, for example, that the theme

of family could be identified in different developmental sections of CRs' collages. However, the meaning behind what family offered them as a resource at different life stages changed, as CR2 states 'but I guess it changes'. CR2 is referring to the nature of what is offered at this time compared to at other points in their life. For this group of CRs, separating themes into developmental sections did not work for them because the theme presented continued throughout life, changing only in the way it operated.

4.3.1.1 Master Theme One: Family

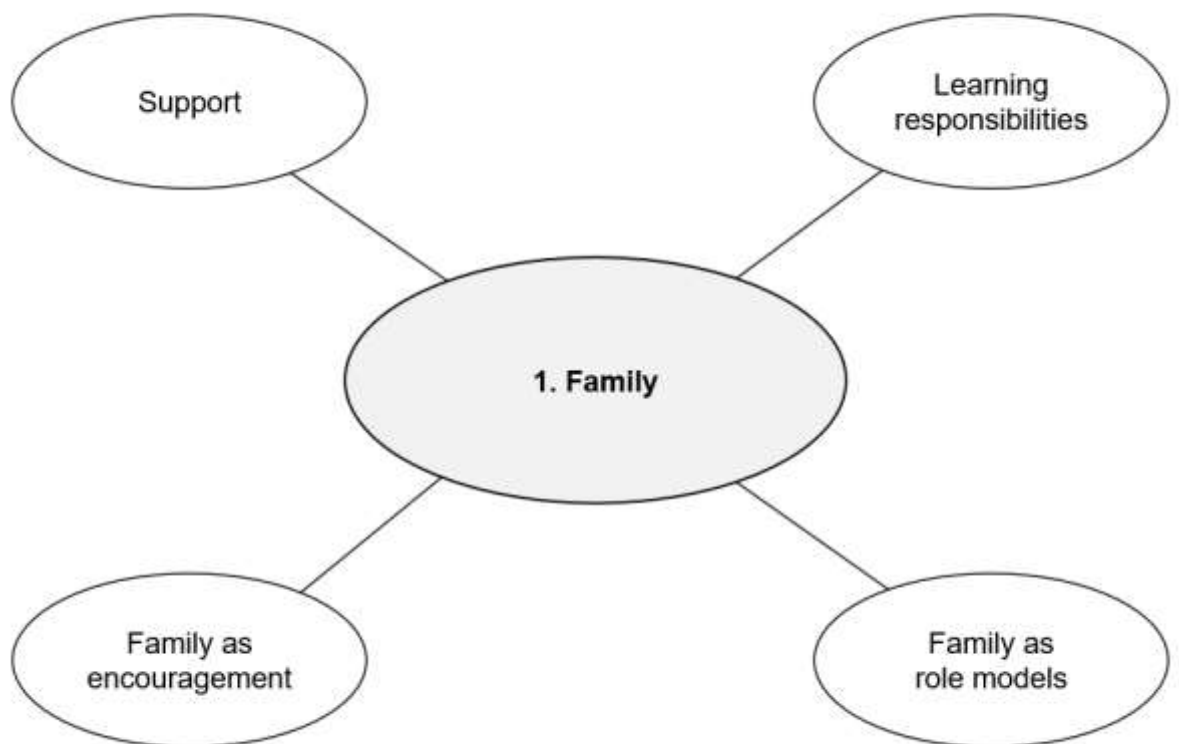


Figure. 4.6 *Thematic map for Group Ones' data illustrating the master theme of Family and its four sub-themes*

The master theme of 'Family' was seen in the majority of the CRs' collages - often appearing more than once. In many of the collages created by CRs in group one, 'Family' was depicted by a close group of smiling people (Figure 4.7 & 4.8).



Figure. 4.7 A picture taken from the collage of CR1 which represents family.



Figure. 4.8 A picture taken from CR2's collage a picture to represent family.

The majority of CRs in group One put an image of family as the first element of their collage.

During phase three of the research CR3 describes a range of family members and reports feeling loved as can be seen in the following excerpt.

CR3: But we had family, there was a lot of love. And we were always with our cousins and stuff and having grandparents. This is part of it

isn't it? Being part of family and having those memories, that keeps you going. (Lines 37-39, phase three, group one)

4.3.1.1.1 Sub-Theme: Learning Responsibilities

In this all-female group, the notion of 'Learning Responsibility' emerged as a sub-theme. CRs gave examples of responsibility from a female viewpoint. For example, CR2 spoke about caring for the family and becoming the 'mum' as can be seen from this excerpt taken from her collage during phase three of the research .

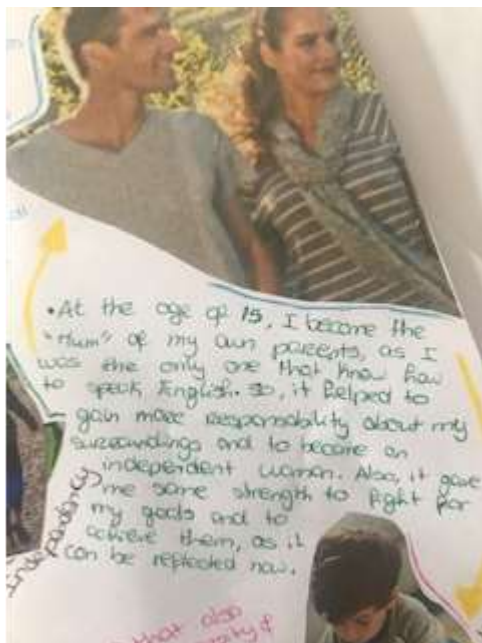


Fig 4.9 A picture detailing how CR2 learnt responsibilities from being part of a non-English speaking family

The written excerpt reads:

At the age of 15, I became the "mum" of my own parents, as I was the only one that knew how to speak English. So, it helped to gain more responsibility about my surroundings and to become an independent woman. Also, it gave me some strength to fight for my goals and to achieve them, as it can be reflected now.

CR2 notes how she grew to be responsible when her family could not communicate in English. She also notes how this made her independent.

Whereas CR2's circumstances led to her having to be responsible for her family. CR4 was taught responsibility by her mother as can be seen in the following text taken from her collage produced in phase three of the research.

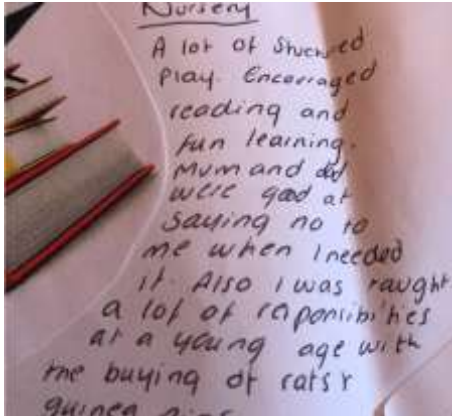


Figure. 4.10 A picture showing how CR4 includes in her collage that being bought animals to care for taught her responsibility.

The written text reads: Nursery.

A lot of structured play. Encouraged reading and fun learning. Mum and dad were good at saying no to me when I needed it. Also, I was taught a lot of responsibilities at a young age with the buying of rats and Guinea pigs.

4.3.1.1.2 Sub-Theme: Family as Role Models

Most members of the CRs' families were represented within collages, including brothers, sisters and grandparents as well as parents. Mothers featured as role models more often than any other family member. However, there was disagreement amongst CRs as to how family members performed as role models. Disagreement centred around employment, study choices and whether the behaviours modelled may have led to positive or negative outcomes. Some of the group recognised that having positive role models inspired them to do more, others felt that watching family members work hard for little benefit could also act as a source of motivation for them not to

replicate the behaviour, these individuals felt further study would benefit them and help them avoid repeating the experiences of their parents.



Figure. 4.11 CR5 includes a picture of her mother graduating from university in her collage during phase three of the research.

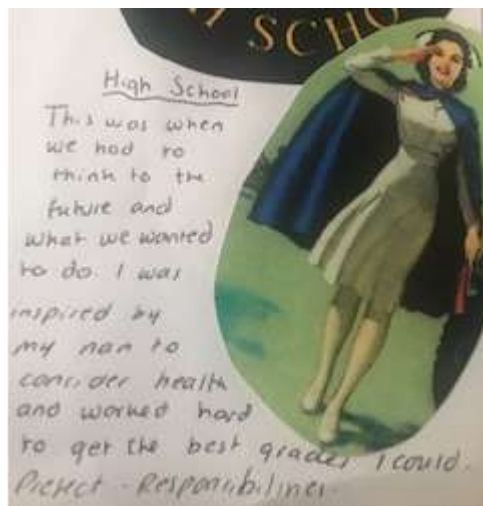


Figure. 4.12 A picture selected by CR4 to illustrate that the CR felt her grandmother was an inspiration for career choice

Written text reads:

This was when we had to think to the future and what we wanted to do. I was inspired by my nan to consider health and worked hard to get the best grades I could. I could.

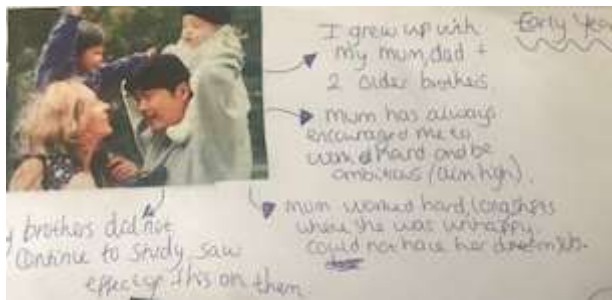


Figure. 4.13 A picture from CR11's collage illustrating a mother working hard but being unhappy and observing siblings who did not study.

Written text reads:

- I grew up with my mum dad and two older brothers.
- Mum always encouraged me to work hard and be ambitious (aim high).
- Mum worked hard, long shifts where she was unhappy she could not have her dream job.
- My brothers did not continue to study, saw effect of this on them.

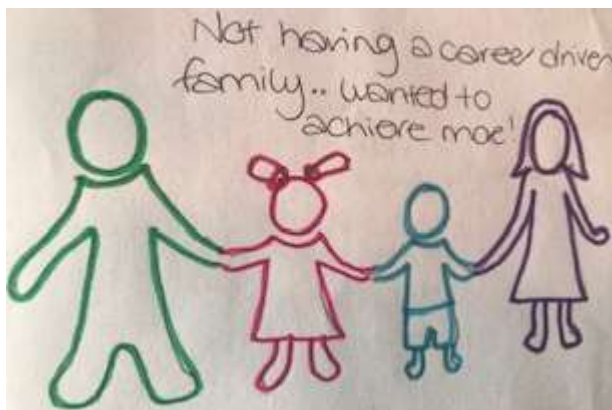


Figure. 4.14 A picture from CR8's collage demonstrating how she wanted more than her family had achieved

The first two images (Figures 4.11 & 4.12) show females achieving and being a source of inspiration; as CR5 states 'I was inspired by my nan'. The last two images (Figures 4.13 & 4.14) show families that were not so driven

to achieve or who expressed the importance of achievement because this is something they did not do themselves (as is the case with CR8's mother).

The notion of observing family members, and wanting more than they had achieved, featured in the phase three discussion of themes:

CR2: Yeah role models are important, but I think, like, you always think about what your family are like and you know that you maybe want more than that. Especially if you have kids and that. I think you really think about it and go wow I need to do that. I think at the end of primary school I became more aware. (Lines 51-54, phase three transcript, group one)

These findings suggest that motivation to reproduce parents' behaviour toward further study or employment, reflected observations made of the role model's circumstance; CRs who observed parents to be time-poor were dissuaded from following in their footsteps, as this daughter of a teacher demonstrated:

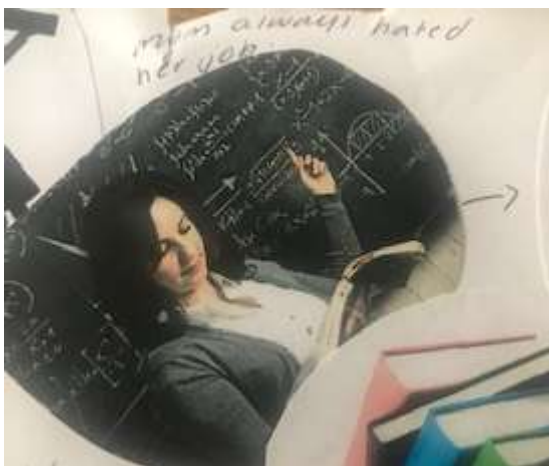


Figure. 4.15 A picture in CR4s collage where she recalls how her mother hated her job as a teacher.

Observing parents work hard for little financial reward produced non-imitative behaviour as did observing those who were time poor because of their jobs. Attending to family member's experience of work/study, was demonstrated in both images and text. During the phase three discussion on themes CRs reflected that their parents worked hard and experienced financial struggles.

CR8: For me it was all about not having those role models. You know my family were not worried about careers and my mum was just like doing three or four jobs and I could see how hard she worked, and we never had any money and like, I thought, well you don't want that do you?

CR7: Yeah but, you see I thought my mum working hard was all about showing me you need to work. So that's why like, now you know, here, I think I can work hard.

CR1: Yeah but that's not when you were little though that's now.

CR7: Yeah but I think it starts when you are little. You are aware that you have no money

CR3: We were always aware (Lines 27-35, phase three transcript, group one)

'Parents working hard' appeared in CRs' collages in the section depicting early years, suggesting an enduring memory for the CRs. Some CRs observed that hard work with little reward as prohibiting, whilst others applied this knowledge of a family work ethic to their studies. This is demonstrated

by CR7 when she says 'I thought my mum working hard was all about showing me you need to work'

Parents were not the only role models, as CR6 illustrates in her collage and discussion of the themes, siblings can also be role models too.



Fig 4.16 CR6's picture identifies her sister as someone she looks up to within her collage.

Written text reads:

Sister is the favourite, been to uni, a lot to look up to.

CR6: But family can be the reason you want to do more. I mean I hated my sister growing up she was always getting all the attention and stuff. That's why I said I was jealous. It was obvious she was their favourite. When she went to uni and I was just like working and stuff it really made me feel worse. And I thought nah I can do that. So, I think you look at what they have done, and you think nah or yeah, I can do that and that's what makes you try. (Lines 41-45, phase three discussion, group one)

4.3.1.1.3 Sub-Theme: Family as Encouragement

CRs identified their families as a source of encouragement which could have involved a family member telling them to 'aim high':

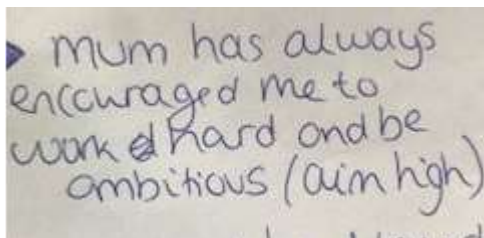


Figure. 4.17 Excerpt from CR11 collage on aiming high

Written text reads:

Mum has always encouraged me to work hard and be ambitious (aim high).

Encouragement could be seen as being connected to role modelling; CRs who identified in their collages that their role models 'worked hard' or 'hated their job' also stated that their parents made explicit statements that encouraged the pursuit of academia.

Encouragement could have come from more implicit sources such as encouraging learning through play as CR4 illustrates:

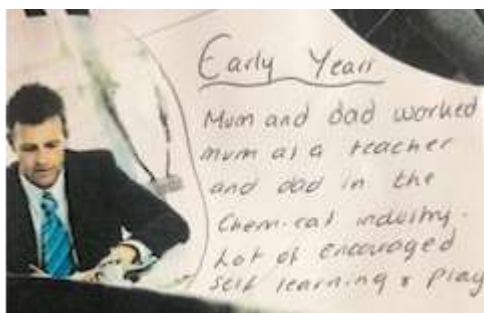


Figure. 4.18 CR4 writes in her collage that her parents encouraged self learning and play.

Written text reads:

Mum and dad worked, mum as a teacher and dad in the chemical industry.

Lot of encouraged self learning and play.

Family were seen as sources of encouragement.

4.3.1.1.4 Sub-theme: Support

CRs often used the word 'Support' and applied it to family. Images depicted groups of people close together. CRs identified that support spanned from early years to the present day. However, the focus of this support changed; in childhood, support was seen as 'family being there' or spending time with them. Whereas in adulthood, support came from partners who were seen as giving the other partner strength. As was true of the master theme of 'Family', the notion of support was often presented first on collages and in discussion.



Figure. 4.19 *The first picture on CR8s collage is of a family group.*

Written text reads:

Family support throughout my life.

Indeed, in the phase three discussion of themes CRs clarified that family and support could be seen as interchangeable:

CR2: Family is really support. (Line 7, phase three, group one)

Images of family depicted mothers, father, brothers, sisters and grandparents. However, for older CRs, support from family altered to include partners, spouses and children. In childhood, when family meant ‘the ones that raised you’, support was often far more generalised to mean advice, guidance, spending time and ‘being there’. In the present timeframe support tended to relate to the CRs’ pursuit of academic study, ambition and drive. Images relating to support in childhood versus adulthood reflected the changing nature of what support means to the CRs’.

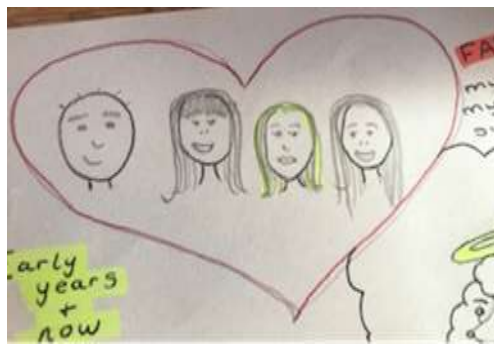


Figure. 4.20 CR3's picture of family support presented as the first image on her collage.



Figure. 4.21 CR10's picture of her with her husband and children.

Support in childhood often meant family members ‘being there’ or spending time with the CRs but it also meant providing advice/guidance:

CR9: Yeah, my mum stayed at home, but she always said she wanted more for me. So, she was supportive like but, erm she always spent time and we had a big family but, she was always like wanting me to do stuff. It's important that parents encourage you, I think. (Lines 13-15, phase three, group one)

CR2: In the early years we had stuff on support. You know guidance and most of us had mums that well, were there for us. (Lines 10-11, phase three, group one)

For CRs, advice and guidance were also accompanied by encouragement. Only one CR gave an example of practical support in childhood and this could be seen as an extreme example of what family support meant:

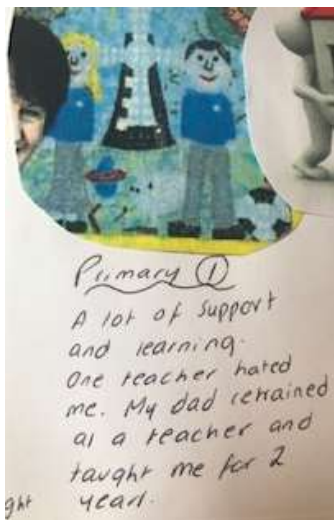


Figure. 4.22 CR4's picture demonstrates how her father offered her practical support within her collage.

Written text reads:

Primary: A lot of support and learning. One teacher hated me. My dad retained as a teacher and taught me for two years.

In adulthood, support from spouses/partners focussed on academia. Support was seen both as a motivating factor to continue with studies and a source of continued strength:

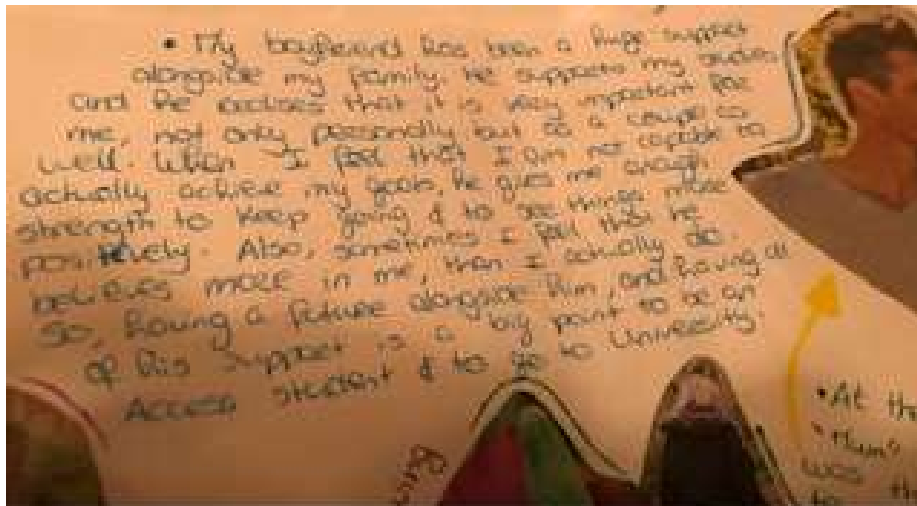


Figure. 4.23 Picture from CR2 where she describes her boyfriend is a valuable source of support for studying within her collage.

Written text reads:

My boyfriend has been a huge support alongside my family. He supports my studies and he realises that it is very important for me, not only personally but as a couple as well. When I feel that I am not capable to actually achieve my goals he gives me enough strength to keep me going and to see things more positively. Also, sometimes I feel that he believes more in me than I actually do. So, having a future alongside him, and having all of his support is a big point to me being an Access student and to go to university.

Support is a contributing factor to continued perseverance with academia. CRs identified that, in its present form, support was likely to be gained from spouses or partners but built upon early childhood models of supportive family. Support in childhood was the first factor that students identified helped them with ER. However, pictures depicting support from spouses were often centrally placed procuring significant amounts of space in the collage. The amount of space and location of these pictures could indicate the level of importance given to the concept of spousal support in their current pursuit of studying.

CRs identified the theme of Family as helping them to be resilient in education second time around. The way in which family operates appears to be that these CRs had emotionally supportive families whom they observed to work hard. Having hard-working family members could be used as a source of self-belief in their own ability to work hard. This acted as a motivator to pursue academic study from either watching and observing their parents or by being given specific direction by their parents. CRs followed their parents' guidance if they had reflected on their family circumstances, specifically they looked at what lack of education meant for their parents working circumstances. When CRs perceived their parent's employment circumstances as negative (time or money poor), they listened to parental advice to study.

4.3.1.2 Master Theme 2: Relationships

'Relationships' featured in the majority of the collages. Images replicated the close connections depicted within the theme of 'Family'; two people were often presented side-by-side. The master theme 'Relationships' was divided into two sub-themes:

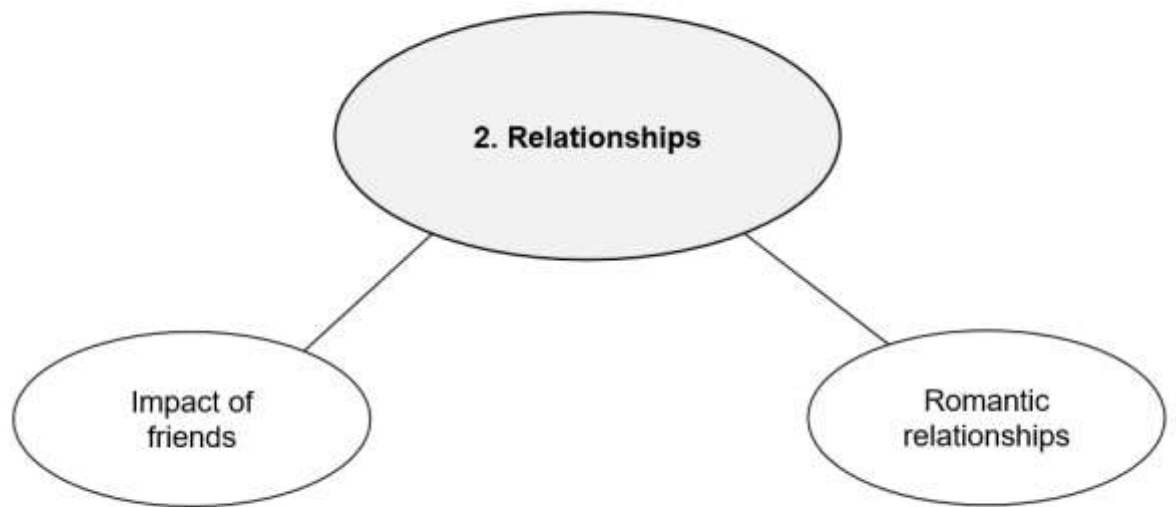


Figure. 4.24 *Thematic map for CRs data illustrating the master theme of Relationships and its two sub-themes*

4.3.1.2.1 Sub-theme 1: The Impact of Friends

Having or not having friends was deemed as significant by the CRs for helping with ER at different points through education. CRs identified not having friends was detrimental to study which contributed to feeling unsuccessful in high school. At the CRs' current stage of study, they viewed having friends as helpful to resilience levels.



Figure. 4.25 *CR5s illustration within her collage depicting not having friends.*

Issues with friends was seen by the CRs as having a significant impact on resilience. Friends were seen by CRs as able to substitute family in terms of what they contribute in terms of support at school.

CR1: Yeah, I think it starts off that you need to make friends, but it doesn't matter cos you can't just see them when you like. When you are younger you're not with your friends at weekends you're with your family but as you get older that changes. Friends, oh well I mean, yeah friends do become more like your family cos you see them all the time. So, I guess a few of us said that when we didn't have friends at school and that, that made it hard. (Lines 190-195, phase three, group one)

For one CR, not having friends appeared to be a significant memory (Figure 4.26) this image was the largest on her collage.



Figure. 4.26 CR7's image on her collage demonstrates events after she moved school.

Written text reads:

Had a birthday party that no one came to.

Loss of friends or inability to make connections appeared to contribute to a lack of focus in education first time around.

CR5: Yeah cos, like, I had a bad experience at sixth form because like, I left my school and was in this new place. But everyone had friends and I didn't have any and I was lost. You need to have friends around you and when you haven't got that then you can't concentrate on the other stuff...Learning and that. (Lines 150-155, phase three, group one)

In addition to identifying that a lack of friends impacts on educational performance, CRs also identified that having friends is a positive aspect to their current studies, facilitating ER.

CR6: Yeah, like we don't all get on all the time but you gotta feel like you wanna be there with people. Sometimes I just come in to see my friends or I will call them up and stuff to say, 'I can't do it'.

CR5: Yeah, and we tell you, you can.

CR6: Yeah. (Lines 156 -161, phase three, group one)

Therefore, friends are seen by CRs to be a source of support. CRs explored differences between support in school and in college. They identified that staying together in one group helped them to feel closer.

CR6: I think it's because we are always all together and stuff and like we have all got close.

R: and that makes a difference?

CR6: Yeah and...

CR3: Others around you, in the class, they are more nurturing and supportive. It's more non-judgemental. We try to understand each other more. That doesn't happen in school. (Lines 106 -114, phase three discussion, group one)

CRs identified that being together as one group for every timetabled lesson has enabled them to form relationships which means they are able support each other. Therefore, having friends was seen by CRs as being helpful to ER. This appears to be because of the levels of support friends can offer.

4.3.1.2.2 Sub-theme 2: Romantic Relationships

Romantic relationships featured in most of the collages CRs produced working in one of three ways:

- Supplied CRs with support
- It gave CRs confidence
- It helped CRs to become future orientated

CRs identified that support gained from relationships could replace family support; they referred to relationships providing them with confidence and motivation:



Figure. 4.27 CR3 writes in her collage ,about how her romantic partner has motivated her.

Written text reads:

Now. Relationships. The past year and a half Alfie has driven me to do something I can make a career from, through support and encouragement and being able to treat him when I am qualified.

Lastly, CRs identified that being in a romantic relationship led to shared dreams with their partner which helped them to focus on the future.

CR3: Yeah for us we put down that that relationships give you confidence. You need a good partner who thinks the same way as you do about things. I guess you share your dreams together and that.

CR2: Yeah relationships need to be positive and you don't always get that in high school or even after you leave. A few of us said that once you have that relationship it makes you think about the future and what you want.

CR1: Yeah but it's that support they give you too. All the encouragement when you feel like you can't do it. A bit like friends.

(Lines 175-182, phase three, group one)

Relationships appeared to provide CRs with a feeling of connectedness to others. CRs are able to draw upon connections to access support.

Relationships also appear to enhance confidence and motivation. It seems that having a relationship and sharing dreams with another person enabled CRs to focus on the future.

4.3.1.3 Master Theme 3: Education

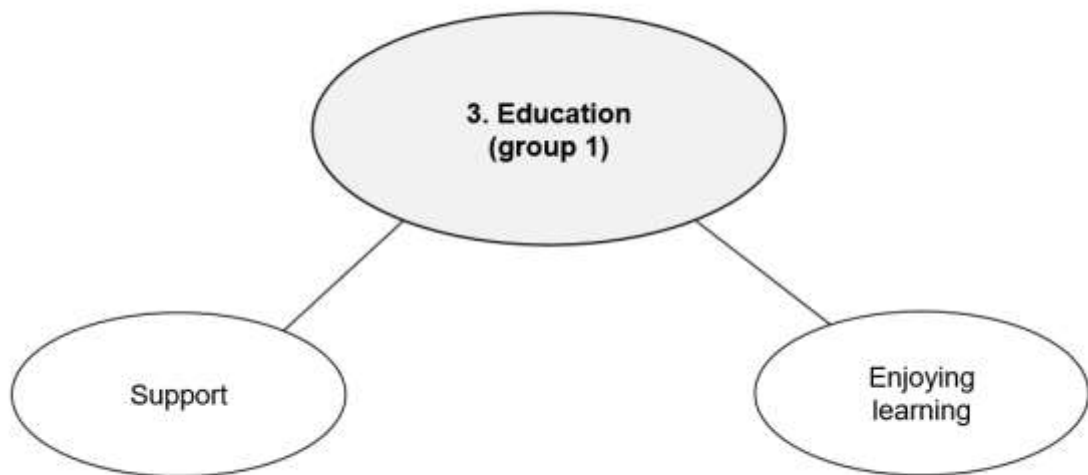


Figure. 4.28 *Thematic map for CRs data illustrating the master theme of Education and its two sub-themes*

Pictorial reference to education appeared on just over half of the collages.

The majority of the images were of school buildings or practical resources (such as books or pencils). However, two of the CRs used images of a person teaching. Within the broader theme of education, CRs identified two sub-themes.

4.3.1.3.1 Sub-theme: Support

CRs referred to primary education as nurturing, high school being less supportive and punitive, and college being nurturing. They also made comparisons between teaching in secondary and primary school: CRs identified that systems to motivate/manage their behaviour operated differently within the primary and secondary schools which they reported they found hard.

CR1: And primary was fun too.

CR4: Yeah, I remember lots of creative learning, sand pits, paint, growing stuff, school trips they were all fun. And it was about the teachers too, they were good teachers...They were mothering and nurturing, you never really felt they were harsh. It's not like high school, you were motivated to do stuff, not told off when you didn't.

CR3: Well you're motivated by rewards.

CR1: We had house points

CR3: Yeah and stuff like golden time...but secondary school was hard long hours tiring. It can be a real drain trying to do it all. I had zero confidence it was just like; all that motivation was lost and there was just too much pressure. It was a shock after primary school. (Lines 79-94, phase three, group one)

One CR recalls her high school experience:

CR11: I Just found it a really emotional time. There's just not enough support in secondary school, I mean yes you feel more independent

and that's good but oh my god the pressure (Lines 95-96, phase three, group one)

Another reflects on the differences between high school and college:

CR3: This is just a good college there's far more support when you are learning. (Lines 116-117, phase three, group one)

It would appear that in the primary system methods for supporting individuals were seen as being more beneficial than the secondary system. Whereas in college, CRs reported perceived benefits of staying in one group, being treated as an adult and good teaching.

Lack of support in high school appeared to stem from the system and not individual teachers. Indeed, reference to individual teachers providing support was evident.

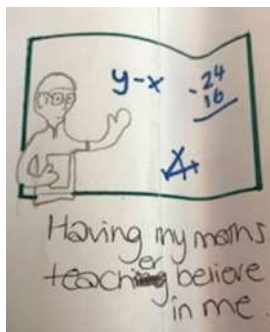


Figure. 4.29 CR3 refers to the supportive maths teacher that believed in her in a picture in her collage.

Written text reads:

Having my maths teacher believe in me.

Support has now featured in three key areas of the CRs' lives; within the theme of 'Family', 'Relationships' and 'Education'. For CRs, it appears that connections made in these different areas may supplement each other when

needed. In their current stage, most CRs identified all three aspects being in place; support from family, partner/spouse and the college itself.

4.3.1.3.2 Sub-theme: Enjoying Learning

Enjoyment of learning featured within the CRs collages. Some CRs mentioned how they enjoyed learning throughout their academic career. Whereas others felt the level of enjoyment was reflective of the stage of education; CRs viewed early education as enjoyable and secondary school less so. When positive experiences were spoken about in high school, they often referred to extra-curricular activities or school trips.



Figure. 4.30 CR7's picture showing how school trips were important within her collage

CRs felt learning in early years focussed on fun/creativity. Images selected were often colourful and depicted children playing (Figure 4.31)

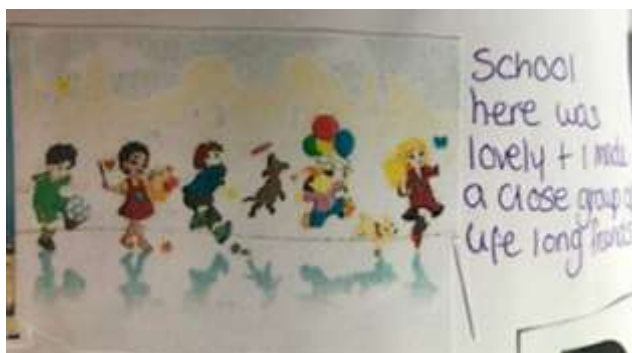


Figure. 4.31 CR1 selected an image of children skipping happily in her collage.

Written text reads:

School here was lovely and I made a close group of life long friends.

CRs saw early experiences in education as more fun than in high school this was seen as helpful to ER; these experiences gave them an early belief that learning could be fun which was lost in high school but could be rejuvenated in college.

4.3.1.4 Master Theme: Work

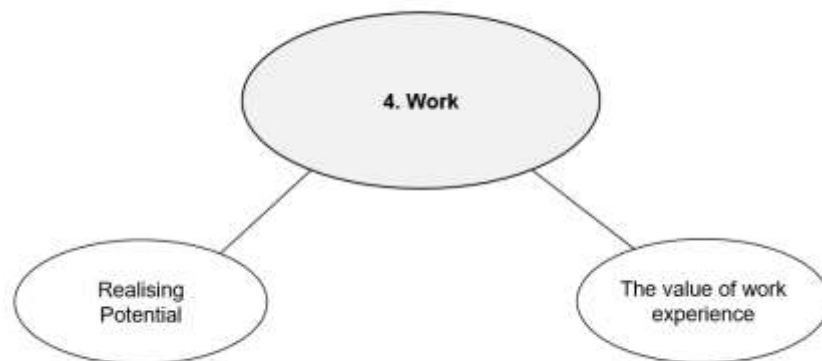


Figure. 4.32 *Thematic map for CRs data showing the master theme of Work and its two Sub-themes*

For CRs the gap between school and their present level of study was important. CRs stated that they might be the type of individuals who need life experience to push them to go on further.

CR1: It could be where that resilience comes from as well, like, because we've got like, maybe that kind of personality. So, we are the type of people who did go out and learn for ourselves rather than someone telling us that this is what you do, and we believe them.

(Phase one, group one, lines 84-88)

For CRS, the gap between educational phases presented them with work experiences which CRs saw as being valuable. The concept of work was identified as operating in one of two ways:

1. By helping them to realise their potential
2. Giving them valuable experience in their field of study

4.3.1.4.1 Sub-theme: Realising their Potential and the Value of Work Experience in the Field of Study

The two sub-themes (realising potential and value of work experience) are presented together due to their interconnectedness; it was through working in the area, which they would later go on to study, that CRs realised their own potential.

Images in this theme were dominated by pictures of the kind of work they had been engaged in during the gap between educational phases (Figures 4.33, 4.34, 4.35 & 4.36)



Figure. 4.33 CR6's image in her collage used to represent her time spent as a medical centre receptionist.

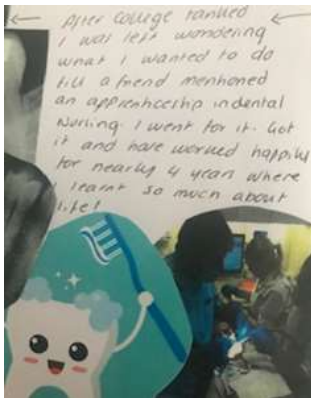


Figure. 4.34 CR4's picture on her collage that represent her experiences as a dental nurse.

Written text reads:

After college tanked (failed) I was left wandering what I wanted to do, till a friend mentioned an apprenticeship in dental nursing. I went for it. Got it and have worked happily for nearly four years where I learnt so much about life.



Figure. 4.35 CR5's picture on her collage to represent working in a doctor's surgery

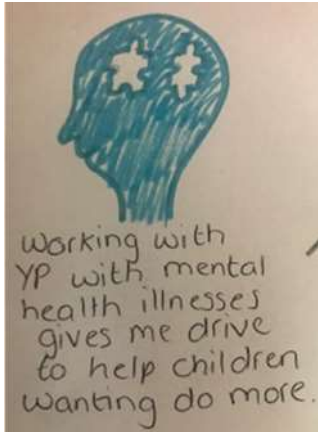


Figure. 4.36 CR6's image on her collage shows her working in mental health

Written text reads:

Working with mental health illnesses gives me drive to help children wanting to do more.

Thus, experiences gained prior to taking the course were identified on CRs collages as being valuable. The pictures were of practical aspects and they showed tools of the job or people working, which reflected the hands-on experience gained. Being good at the practical aspect of the job was viewed by CRs as helping them to realise potential (Figures 4.37 & 4.38).



Figure. 4.37 On her collage CR3 places a picture of a toothbrush next to an explanation of how her seniors made her realise her potential

Written text reads:

The past three years my dentist and my senior nurse have made me realise my true potential and pushed me on to something that I wish to do. I found my interest at work and I am now going on to pursue this at uni.

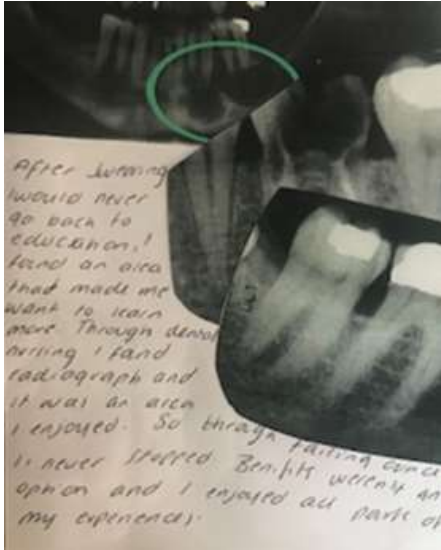


Figure. 4.38 On her collage CR4 places pictures of dental x-rays

Written text Reads:

After swearing I would never go back to education. I found an area that made me want to learn more. Through dental nursing I found radiography is an area I enjoyed.

In gaining experience in the field and seeing themselves as succeeding in that field, CRs felt motivated to persevere with study.

CR5: I was working in the doctor's surgery and I thought I want to do more of this. It looked like such a good job.

CR3: Yeah, I was doing dentistry and I thought I want to go further and that was the same for you right?

CR4: Yes

CR9: Yeah, I was working in the hospital (Lines 205- 210, phase three, group one)

In addition to the identification that work in the field of study could help them to realise potential, some of CRs also identified that working helped them to appreciate the value of gaining qualifications.

CR1: Sometimes though it's about doing crap jobs too, I mean I went straight from school into my job and didn't need school to do it. And yeah, the money was ok. I kind of didn't see the problem. And then having my son I thought there is more to this and I want to help people. That was after I had my miscarriage though. I just wanted to help others. That's when I started working at the hospital...You need to realise it's not easy, you don't get by without GCSEs you just end up earning less. I had to work to realise that. I feel jealous of those people who know that early on, I mean in school some of them seemed to have it all mapped out. You need that, and I didn't, well you know, I didn't have a clue. Working helps you to map it out. (Lines 213 -223, phase three, group one)

4.3.1.5 Master Theme 5: The Future and Overcoming Adversity

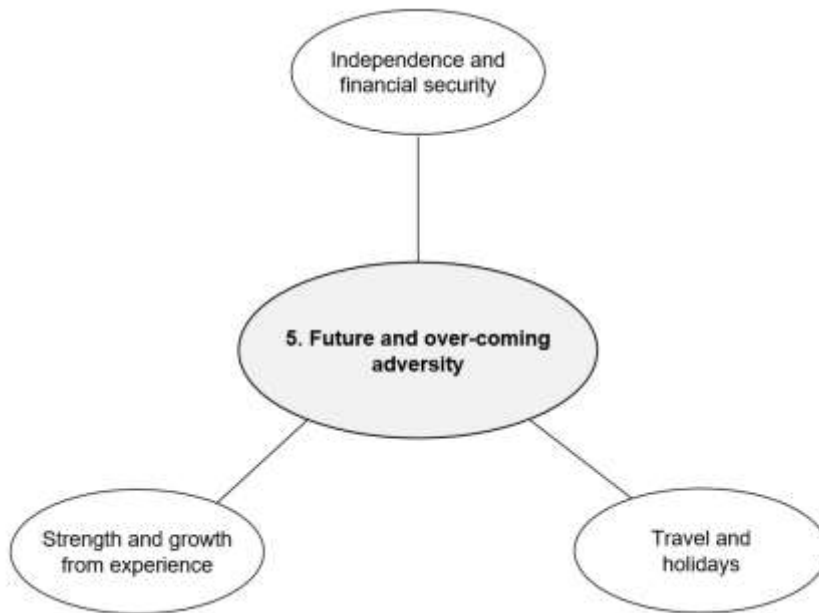


Figure. 4.39 *Thematic map for CRs data showing master theme of Future and Overcoming Adversity and its two sub-themes*

The final theme identified by group one was more prevalent amongst the data than any other of the other master themes. There was agreement amongst all CRs that this master theme represented an important element for them. The theme of 'Future and Overcoming Adversity' focussed on the CRs current position and their aspirations for the future. This theme provided CRs a space in which to reflect on what adversity meant to them, which appeared to have a therapeutic effect (Figure 4.40).

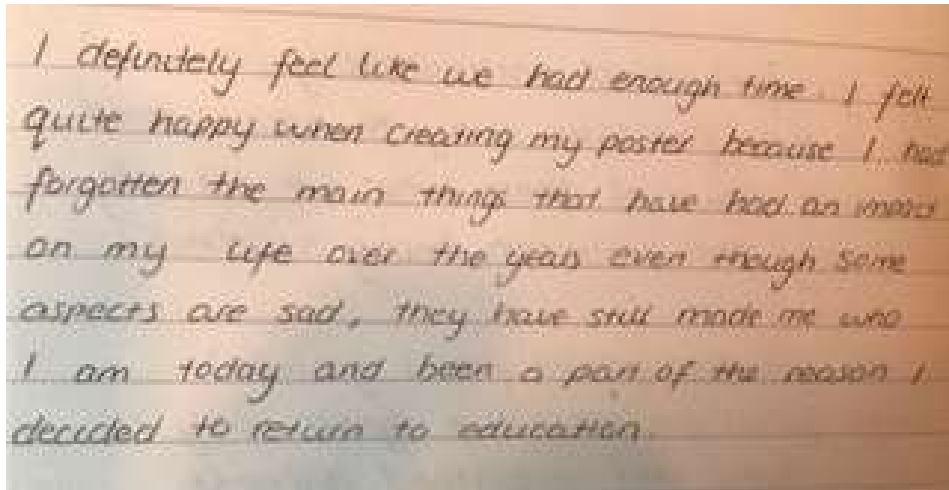


Figure. 4.40 Picture from CR6 diary which she completed at the end of phase two (the collage construction session)

Written text reads:

I definitely feel like we had enough time. I felt quite happy when creating my poster because I had forgotten the main things that have had an impact on my life over the years even though some aspects are sad, they have still made me who I am today and been a part of the reason I decided to return to education.

Within their collages, CRs made specific reference to being future orientated.

For example, CR10 writes that having a better future for her family is her main focus. It is noticeable how she draws around the words, this was the only aspect of her collage to be highlighted in this way.



Figure. 4.41 CR10 includes in her collage a drawing where she focuses on the future for her family

Written text reads:

Better future for my family, my main focus.

CRs found three sub-themes that underpinned the theme of the 'Future and Overcoming Adversity'.

1. Strength and growth from experiences
2. Independence and financial stability
3. Travel and holidays

4.3.1.5.1 Sub-theme: Strength and Growth from Experiences



Figure 4.42 CR2 has a picture of a flower in bloom to represent 'self-growing' in her collage



Figure 4.43 CR11 has a picture of lion to signify strength in her collage.

CR11 uses the lion as an image which represents strength. As she explains in the text accompanying the image:

I failed my exams and felt lost in life (...) Process made me stronger (lion) – overcoming.

CR11 also refers to strength when taking part in the phase three discussion of the themes. Here, she reflects on how failure at one stage in her academic career facilitated her getting stronger.

CR11: For me it was about failure in school too. I didn't do very well, I mean I failed and that made me really down. I mean, I was depressed and that. But this made me strong and I thought I'm not gonna let it hold me back. It's funny though, you look back and you do love some of school (...) . Well you know, you think I got through this. You remember when you felt bad and thought you would never do anything, and you look back and think I got through that and that's who I am. When you know, that you can take on anything.

Depression is tough like that because at times you can look back and almost feel, I don't know feel you can do it but, at other times you feel you can't.

R: How do you deal with that?

CR11: You have to keep remembering who you are. (Lines 162-165 and lines 298-304, phase three, group one)

CR11 identified strength came from reflecting on previous challenges and coping with these and this enabled her to approach a return to study. For CRs the gap between educational phases was significant to the process of growing stronger because it allowed a period of reflection:

CR3: It's almost like you learn from experience in that gap, you need it to happen so that you can learn from the bad experiences. It's about finding yourself in the gap. (Lines 114-116, phase three, group one)

For some CRs, this gap between educational phases meant having time to find out who they are.

CR2: For me it was about leaving school and stopping everything to have a job, it gives you a break from study. I think everyone should have that. I think the gap makes you who you are. (Lines 120-122, phase three, group one)

Indeed, rather than letting their past experiences define their circumstances, CRs appeared to use experiences as a source of strength. CRs viewed adversity as valuable to the pursuit of current goals:

CR3: I think that comes from the experiences. I feel sorry for those that have it easy because when they have bad experiences, how are they gonna cope? I know, well, I know I can. (Lines 305 -307, phase three, group one)

Experiencing adversity appeared to demonstrate to CRs that they could overcome challenges; this was instrumental to their confidence in returning to education.

CRs' identified within their collages and discussion that they have grown from adverse experiences; growth is symbolised by use of a flower by CR2 (Figure 4.42) which is accompanied by the text "self-growing". CR2 selected a picture of a flower in full bloom which suggests that she feels transformation is taking place. Indeed, CRs shared stories in their collages of growing in motivation and self-belief following traumatic experiences:

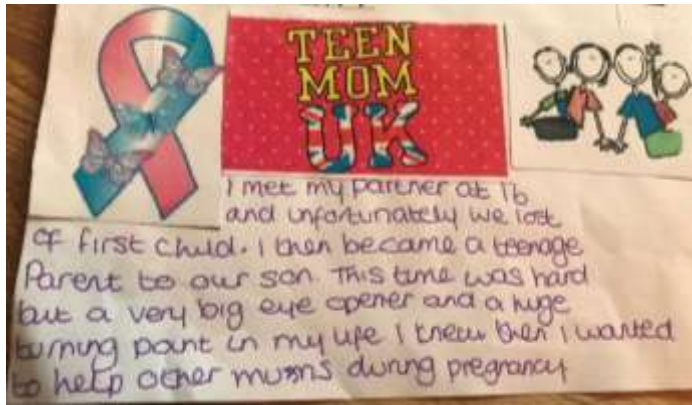


Figure. 4.44 CR1's image and description of it in her collage which says her miscarriage prompted her to help others

The written text reads:

I met my partner at 16 and unfortunately we lost our first child. I then became a teenage parent to our son. This time was hard but a very big eye opener and a huge turning point in my life. I knew I wanted to help other mums during pregnancy.

In summary, CRs' experiences of adversity were reflected upon within the gap between phases of education. For CRs, the time for reflection enabled them to approach a return to study with increased motivation and commitment.

4.3.1.5.2 Sub-Theme: Independence and Financial Stability

There were more images selected to portray the concept of 'Independence' and 'Financial Stability' than in any other sub-theme. In total, seven CRs provided eight images which were less metaphorical and represented material objects e.g. cars/houses.



Figure 4.45 CR9's representation of independence and financial stability in her collage



Figure 4.46 CR11's representation of independence and financial stability in her collage

CRs referred to the term 'independence'. Given the emphasis in the images on finances, CRs often applied the term independence so that it meant not relying on others for financial help. Earlier in the theme of 'Family' we saw that CRs identified that support is important. CRs used independence as a term to mean financial rather than emotional independence. The images selected here demonstrate how the CRs strive for financial security. The objects selected may be a tangible demonstration that this has been achieved. For example, when referring to financial stability CRs used images which could be seen as indicative of gaining independent status (homes/holidays).

Independence could have been fuelled by experiencing a degree of financial security during the gap in between phases of education; some of the CRs had gone travelling and others became used to a certain level of income:

CR3: When you take that gap that's when you get independence and you realise what you want and don't want but, to keep it up you have to want it in the future to and, you think how I am going to keep being independent. Sometimes you realise you can't do that without a good job. (Lines 234-237, phase three, group one)

However, for others, experiencing financial hardship as adults drives a desire for stability.

CR9: I also want things like the nice house. I look in magazines and that and I think I want that. I just want to not have to worry about money or have that struggle.

CR1: Yeah, we all thought lifestyle was important.

R: What do you mean by lifestyle?

CR10: For me having my kids, I realise how hard it can be if you don't have the money, I want more for them.

CR1: Yeah it's like that for me to. It's about not worrying.

CR3: I want a nice house, and holidays. Those things are important.

CR11: It's those things that keep me going, I like looking in the magazines too. At houses and that. I see that as my ambition to have holidays with my family and come home to a nice house. That's my dream that's what keeps me going. (Lines 250 -261, phase three, group one).

4.3.1.5.3 Sub-theme: Travel and Holidays

Another common image used in CR collages was linked to financial stability; 'Travel and Holidays'. This sub-theme occurred in six of the CRs' collages and was often depicted as exotic holidays featuring elements such as aeroplanes and palm trees:



Figure 4.47 CR10 uses a picture of aeroplane to denote family holidays on her collage



Figure 4.48 CR8 uses both pictures of an aeroplane and palm tree to represent travelling on her collage



Figure 4.49 CR6 uses pictures of a palm tree and Disney characters to signify holidays in her collage



Figure 4.50 CR9 uses a photograph of an apartment complex with lots of palm trees in her collage

Images of foreign travel were more common than images of holidaying in the UK, which may indicate that increased finances are linked to this sub-theme. CRs identified that holidays symbolise an end to financial struggle as CR9 notes in both her collage and discussion :

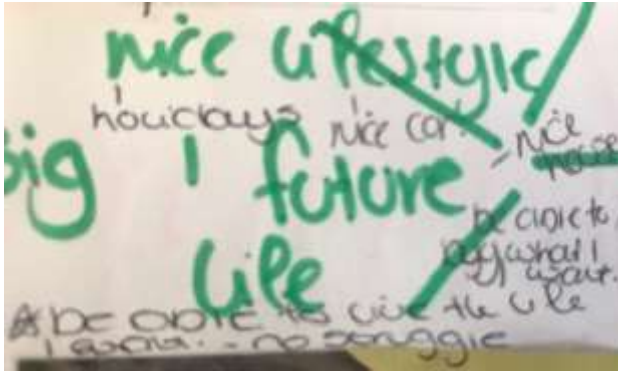


Figure. 4.51 CR9s collage where she pairs holidays with not struggling

Written text reads:

Nice life, future, lifestyle. Holidays, nice car, nice house, be able to buy what I want in life. Be able to live the life I want no struggle.

In the discussion of the themes at phase three of research, CR9 reiterates her point about struggling.

CR9: I just want to not have to worry about money or have that struggle. (Line 252, phase three, group one)

However, within their phase three discussion of the themes CRs' identified that there are further reasons for the selection of pictures of holidays that extends beyond symbols of reduced financial struggle; several of the CRs spoke about 'family' holidays and one CR stated that she wanted to replicate holidays she had as a child. CRs commented on how they want holidays for their own family:

CR9: Yeah, I had travel. I really want to keep holidaying like we did when we were kids. Over the last few years I haven't been able to do that. I miss it. (Lines 247-249, phase three, group one)

CR11: I see that as my ambition to have holidays with my family and come home to a nice house. That's my dream that's what keeps me going. (Lines 260-262, phase three, group one)

If we also look back at CR6's image (Figure 4.48), we see the use of Disney characters to represent holidays. It is plausible that holidays represent memories of their own childhood. For some this meant they wanted similar experiences for their own children. The sub-theme of 'Travel and Holidays' could further reflect connections, which are strengthened during family holidays by having shared memories.

R: Why are holidays so important?

CR9: It's about making memories. (Lines 249-250, phase three, group one)

CRs appeared to use images of holidays in their collages to represent financial security, an end to financial hardship, building memories and strengthening family bonds. Having these ambitions for their own family seem to function as a motivating factor for self-improvement.

4.3.2 Master Themes Group Two

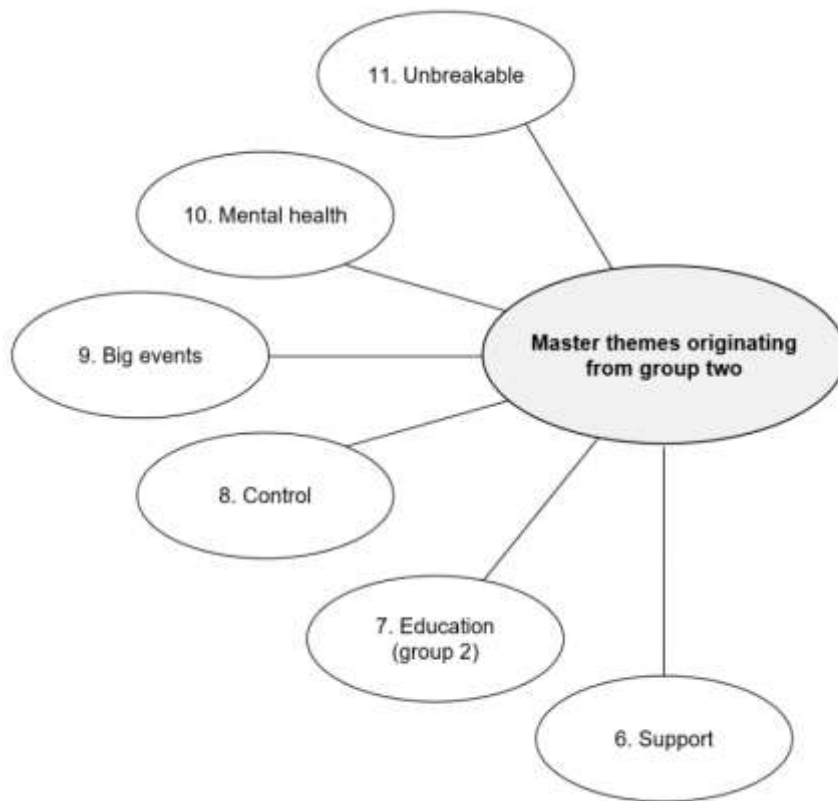


Figure. 4.52 *Thematic Map Showing the Six Master Themes Emerging from the Data from Group Two*



Figure. 4.53 *Thematic map produced during focus group discussion: Group two*

CRs in this group found seven master themes indicating some of the aspects that helped them with ER. Unlike the last group, who saw these themes as working across the lifespan, the second group felt some themes took precedence at different stages. The next section will address the main themes produced by this group and illuminates possible processes for the way that these protective factors work.

4.3.2.1. Master Theme 6: Support

The identification of 'Support' as a theme was consistent across CRs collages. 'Support' was represented within CR collages by the name of the person or group they felt most supported by. CRs often identified the mother within their collages as fundamental to feeling supported, but brothers were also identified. CRs expressed that there were two forms of support within early and primary school years:

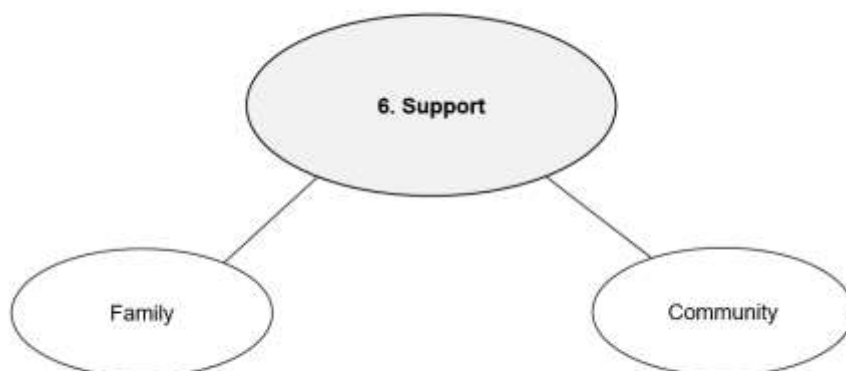


Figure. 4.54 *Thematic map for CRs data showing master theme of Support and its two sub-themes*

4.3.2.1.1 Sub-Theme: Family Support

Just as the first group had done, this group identified the theme of 'Family Support' as important to ER. However, unlike the first group of CRs, images in this theme did not feature groups of people together but identified specific people (Figures 4.55, 4.56 & 4.57).

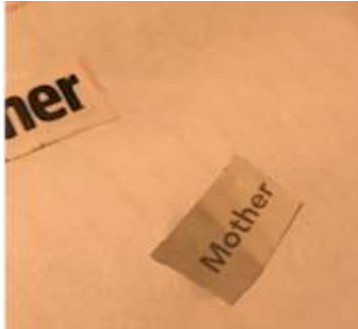


Fig 4.55 CR17's picture identifies her mother as a source of support in her collage



Figure 4.56 CR13 picture identifies her brother as a source of support in her collage



Figure 4.57 CR14 pictures identifies her mother as an important source of support in her collage

Mothers were referred to far more than any other person and for one CR a mother's support featured twice on the same collage:



Figure. 4.58 *CR17 mentions mother twice in the same collage.*

CRs in this group did not elaborate on what support mothers offered but general discussion focussed on a mother 'being there':

CR19: My brothers were good like that, but I think the most important person in terms of support is your mum

All: Yeah

CR19: I would be lost without her, everything I have been through and she has been solid ,never let me down. (Lines 4-8, phase three, group two)

It is pertinent that CR19 expresses that her mother 'never let her down'.

Several of the CRs referred to divorced families or loss of a father.

CR13: I mean quite a lot of us have parents that have split up and divorced but your mum is still there being a rock. I know that's how I have tried to be for my kids, and me, I see her, and I think I want to be there for my kids like you are for me.

CR17: My mum fought so hard for me when I was younger and even now, she's my best mate, you know? (Lines 11-15, phase three, group two).

Thus, mothers may have been referred to because there was lack of a father figure to offer support. CRs who did not have a father figure used images identifying the importance of their brothers:



Figure 4.59 *CR14's picture representing her brother*

The importance of brothers was also discussed within the phase three discussion.

CR13: The first theme we had was family, for me it was my brother. I have lots of brothers but, the one who is closest to me meant the most in terms of support. I think it's because we were always together. We would fight but, he would always help me especially at school. (Lines 1-3, phase three, group two)

These CRs tended to focus on individuals rather than reach a group agreement that all family members are important which contrasted with some of the findings from the first group

4.3.2.1.2 Sub-theme: Community Support

CRs in group two paid attention to the support offered by the community.

CRs raised the importance of being raised in the UK. They focussed on the county and in particular residential estates:



Figure 4.60 CR17 reflects on being raised in the UK within her collage.

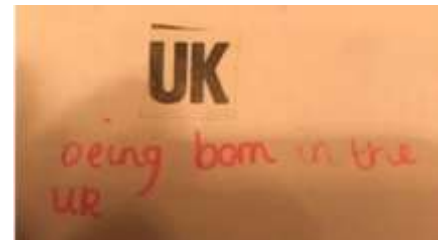


Figure 4.61 CR15 Also identified with being born in the UK in their collage.



Figure 4.62 CR14 picture depicting her community (Place name is hidden to retain anonymity)

CRs felt that community helped them to feel settled and this helped with their resilience. So much so, that growing up in their community allowed them freedom and they felt a sense of belonging:

CR13: That's why we put community support, a lot of us run rogue and you can't do that in some places. Where we grew up there was a real sense of looking out for each other. (Lines 33-35, phase three, group two)

This sense of belonging to the community where they lived was evident.

CR13: Council estate that's where you wanna be, everyone loved each other. (Line 26, phase three, group two)

Hence, CRs in this group looked back and reflected on a childhood where they felt safe to explore and were afforded a certain amount of freedom. It is noticeable that in this dialogue and in the images that CRs do not refer to adults, community groups or organised activities. Rather it was the connections they made with other children in the community that meant the most to them.

4.3.2.2 Master Theme 7: Education

Education was referred to in high school years demonstrating its significance at this age. Whilst some of the CRs remarked that high school was enjoyable, others reflected on their difficulties. CRs in this group felt support from one key person is essential. Also, at this stage, CRs included accomplishments in sports and identified these accomplishments as contributing to resilience levels. Therefore, CRs identified two sub-themes in the area of education.

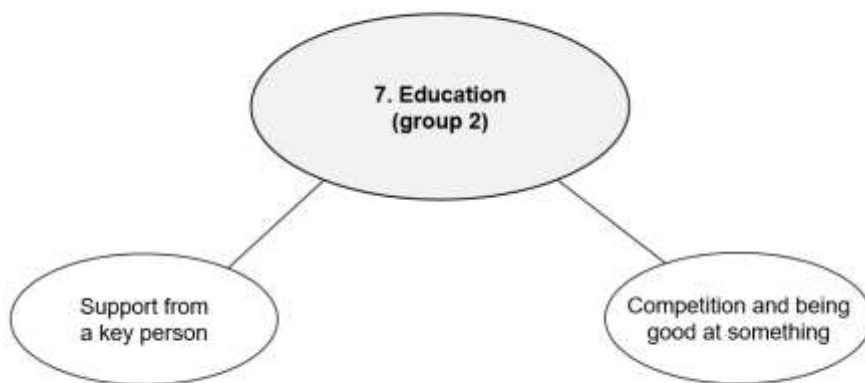


Figure. 4.63 *Thematic map for CRs data showing master theme of Education and its two sub-themes*

4.3.2.2.1 Sub-Theme: Support from a Key Person

Just as they had identified that support within the family comes from one person being there for them, CRs felt key people offer support in education.



Figure 4.64 *CR13 identifies one teacher in her collage.*

This person was often viewed as a supporter in the sense that they would help them along:

CR13: But then you always have, I always had like one tutor that was really supportive of me and he really rooted for me. (Lines 154-156, phase three, group two)

Furthermore, in contrast to the first group who stipulated that supportive teachers were nurturing, this group also identified that strict teachers:

CR14: We had the best headmaster. He was so fucking strict, I swear to god. I had anxiety when (inaudible)... I don't mind in class, but I'd go, and I would be like "I got to see the headmaster". It used to be like that I would be like, I don't want to go. I used to fear it and that's how it should be, you should be fearing being naughty, the consequences of (inaudible) they never used to shout at ya. He used to be like "I'm disappointed, you are better than that". Yeah but "I so am" (CR mimics crying) and he would be like "good". (laughter).
(Lines 218 -224, phase three, group two)

As a result, it seems that, regardless of the teacher being deemed as nurturing or strict, what matters in terms of ER is the student's teacher was perceived to have believed in them. CR13 recalls how her teacher 'rooted for her' and CR14 recalls how the headteacher told her she was 'better than that'.



Figure. 4.65 CR13 mentions the tutors that are supportive to her in college within her collage.

4.3.2.2.3 Sub-Theme: Competition and Being Good at Something

Images within this theme depicted interests and hobbies. CRs selected photos of individuals wearing medals or team shirts and reflected being good at rugby, hockey, and football. Indeed, CRs stated that some of them were very competitive by nature:

CR13: Oh yeah high school, don't know about you guys but we were saying we were highly competitive sports people, and like for me, even though in primary, middle and high I did still move. But, my consistency was always my sport. And I always knew I could get on a team and I always knew that I would be winning, and X was exactly the same. I was highly competitive. (Lines 282 – 286, phase three, group two)



Figure. 4.66 CR14 images reflects on achievements in hockey and rugby within her collage.



Figure. 4.67 CR13 Has an image of a young girl receiving a medal within her collage.

Enthusiasm for sport promoted a ‘winning’ attitude. As CR14 states, in her collage, she ‘played to win’. Achievement in sport allowed them to have an increased belief in their abilities and encouraged a competitive nature. Furthermore, it appears that it provided CRs with a degree of routine and stability.

CR15: Yeah, yeah in middle school and in high school, I was like the captain of bloody everything... Literally any sport, even if it was like five days a week, I would be in there.

CR13: Me too (Lines 293-297, phase three, group two)

Commitment to training and playing sport demonstrated to individuals that they could dedicate themselves to something in order to succeed. Hence, achieving in sport, developed skills that could be seen as beneficial to the pursuit of academic study such as a sense of achievement, competitive nature and dedication.

4.3.2.3 Master Theme 8: Control

CRs identified the master theme of 'Control', this began for them in the gap between educational phases and appeared to symbolise regaining control for the CRs. There were two sub-themes associated with the master theme of 'Control'.

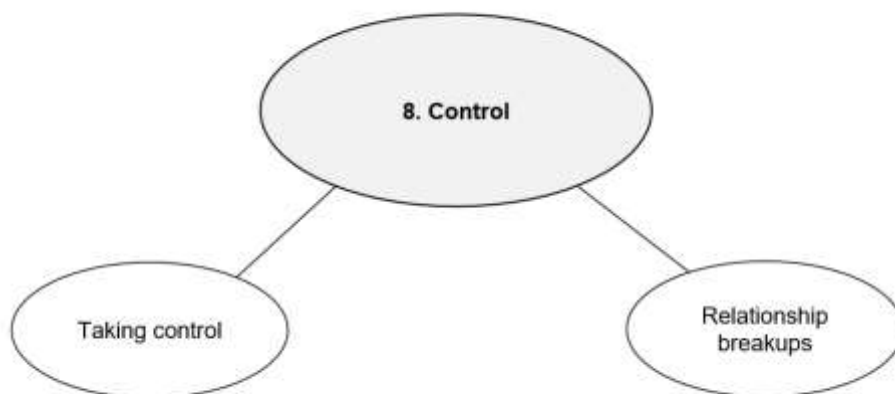


Figure. 4.68 *Thematic map for CRs data showing master theme of Control and its two sub-themes*

4.3.2.3.1 Sub-theme: Taking Control

CRs identified life events that led up to their gap in education and how these continued to take effect in the gap between educational phases. There was agreement that a return to education was symbolic of regaining control within their life .

CR13: It's about control its linked straight onto number eight where you get control of your life. You start to sort of, sort things out. Get your own car, open to more opportunities. Get into politics, do the things that you love. You start to think like, for me I was like, I do wanna get back into education. I want to do something for me, something for me to meet people and then we go down that way.

(Lines 415-419, phase three, group two)

CRs expressed a number of situations that could be considered as adverse that they had managed to gain a sense of control over including drug addiction, housing and involving themselves in political campaigns.

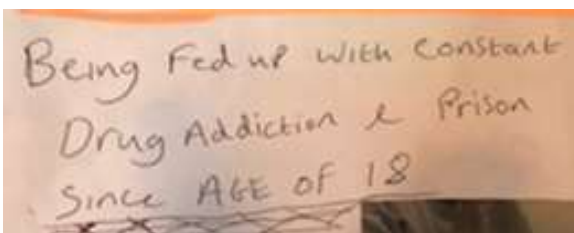


Figure. 4.69 CR20 identifies drug addiction and prison as experiences within the pictures on their collage.

Written text reads:

Being fed up with constant drug addiction and prison since age of 18.



Figure. 4.70 CR19 identifies that control came from becoming involved in political campaigns within their collage.

Written text reads:

I campaigned for years against the conservatives.

Thus, for CRs taking control over other factors in their life seems to have increased feelings of a belief in their own abilities in order to make a return to education.

CR19: I thought ‘fuck it, I’m not gonna let you dictate my path now’.

Signed up to college, completed English last year, said ‘I am not gonna stop there’. Here I am! (Lines 430 – 432, phase three, group two)

Indeed, taking control in other aspects of their lives was also mentioned by CRs as important to ER and this notion of control was often seen with positive statements of ability.



Figure. 4.71 CR16’s picture identifies being successful in a job during her gap in education on her collage

Written text reads:

After A 'levels flopped, I started an Apprenticeship in Care. Had a passion for Dementia care. I am now a Dementia lead. A Dementia champion. Have specialised in Dementia care for four year. Gained qualifications.

In addition to feeling like they had taken some control over other life events, CRs appeared to utilise the gap between educational phases as a time of reflection and discovery.

CR14: Because you felt, do you know what I have got over all of this and I am a strong person. It is almost like you needed to reflect. (Lines 371- 372, phase three, group two).

Gaining a sense of control over their life led to an increased belief in their abilities. This could take place within the gap between educational phases where reflection on control facilitated a successful return to education.

4.3.2.3.2 Sub-theme: Relationship Break-up

For some of the CRs, the two sub-themes (Taking Control and Relationship Break-Up) within 'Control' appeared to be interlinked; CRs identified that taking control following relationship break-up was key to taking control in other areas of their life. CRs reflected on the nature of the break-up, recovery from this and how CRs had a sense of purpose in life following these events.

CR14: But I think relationships here goes in with that control part. Because we all felt more in control once we got out of them. (Lines 345 -346, phase three, group two)

It may have been important for CRs to feel that they had gained a sense of control from leaving relationships because some CRs identified that they had experienced domestic abuse.

CR13: Well we got relationships and big events, that's the biggest section for us and then mental health and other issues. This is sort of where we met, we have relationships, we have break downs of relationships umm domestic abuse. (lines 341 -344, phase three, group two)

Indeed, CRs referred to domestic abuse within their collages.

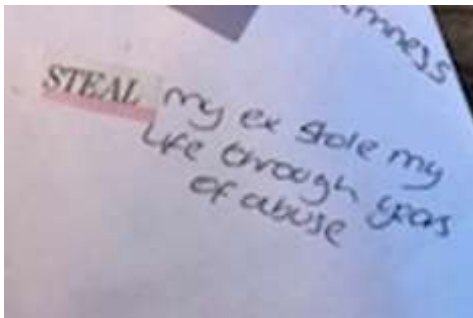


Figure. 4.72 CR19's picture identifies abuse within their collage.

Written text reads:

My ex stole my life through years of abuse.

CR19 also referred to taking control after the break-down of her relationship within the phase three discussion.

CR19: I think just leaving high school, I had a two-month-old baby. I done my GCSEs, but I mean my first exam was three days after giving birth. Yeah, I , I done em all, but I didn't pass any. Umm straight after that getting into this awful relationship that was based on coercion and

just sheer abuse from the outset. You don't see that because it was disguised, and you know, I was forever being told, 'your thick, your stupid, you can't do this'. 'If you go get a job it will be over my dead body, you can't go to college because I need you to be here and I know where you are' and then when he, you know I managed to get him out, lost two boys through it, but I got him out umm I had that recovery period. (lines 420-428, phase three, group two).

Thus, for those who had experienced relationship break-up taking control was synonymous with a feeling of being able to cope. In addition to identifying that relationship break-up was linked to taking control CRs also discussed elements of this sub-theme within the master theme of mental health as part of their phase three discussion.



Figure. 4.73 CR18's picture; depression, not studying and an older boyfriend in her collage.

Written text reads:

Depression and I did not study hard. I met my boyfriend at 15 with a five-year age gap. He encouraged the reckless behaviour, I never attended school.

4.3.2.4 Master Theme 9: Big Events

CRs next master theme of 'Big Events' was an identification of the life events that they had experienced, and these were given space within their collages.

CRs identified that studying subjects such as sociology and psychology as part of their Access course, allowed them to reflect on these events further and helped them gain some understanding and perspective.

CR13: Like I said when you look back on things. X probably looks back on his environment and thinks I am lucky to live here. Through being on this course thinking about things there and then (points to collage). This course makes you look at things differently. It's made me look at things differently.

CR14: Yeah definitely, especially sociology... Definitely gives a different take and you think oh actually I didn't realise but oh its true more. Knowing these helps you take control.

CR19: Helps you to gain some perspective and some understanding. (Lines 435 – 445, phase three, group two).

CRs agreed that the master theme of 'Big Events' was made up of two sub-themes.

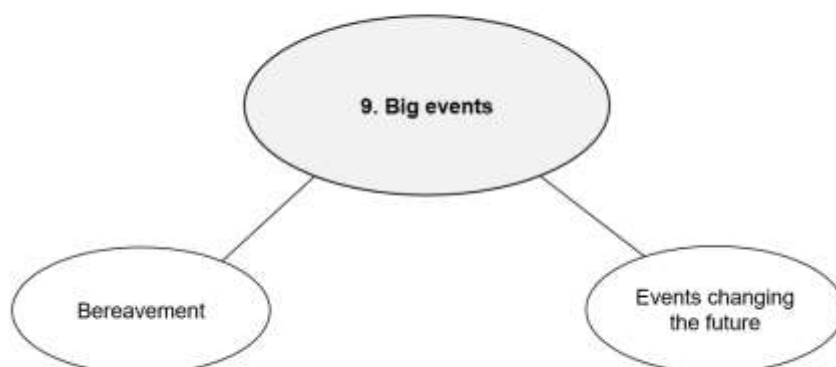


Figure. 4.74 *Thematic map for CRs data showing master theme of Big Events and its two sub-themes*

4.3.2.4.1 Sub-Theme: Bereavement

CRs identified bereavement as one of the 'Big Events' which they had experienced. 'Bereavement' included the loss of family members, friends and family pets.

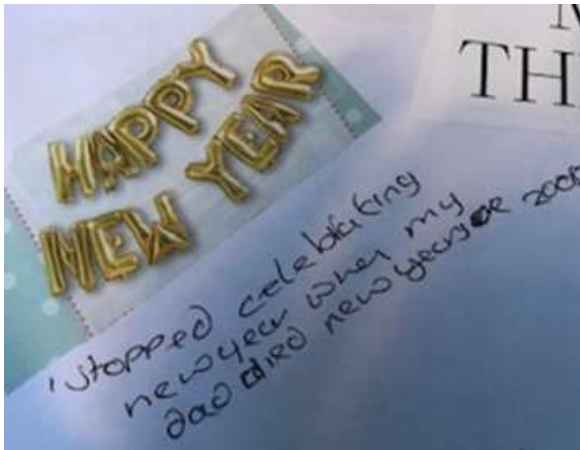


Figure. 4.75 CR19 places a picture of New Year next to her memory of their father passing away in their collage.

Written text reads:

I stopped celebrating New Year when my Dad died New Year's Eve, 2008.



Figure. 4.76 CR14 talks of the loss of grandparents.

Written text reads:

After my Nan and Grandads sudden death it affected me in ways that I struggled to deal with emotions. I needed help.



Figure. 4.77 CR17 places a picture of a dog in their collage alongside the drawing of a teardrop.

Written text reads:

Archie, RIP, the list is endless. You never get over grief you just learn to live with it.

CRs identified that they had 'learned to live with grief' and 'struggled with emotions'. They also felt that losing someone close to them 'spurred them on' and motivated them to pursue their studies.

CR13: Yeah and the bereavement of a friend I reckon that does motivate you in some way, makes you think that life's too short. (lines 385-386, phase three, group two)

Indeed, they referred in collages to feeling spurred on.

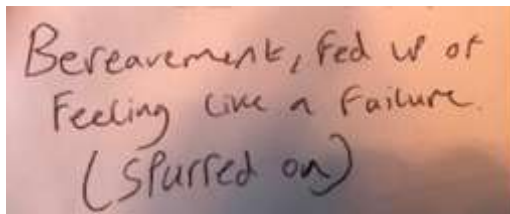


Figure. 4.78 CR20 relates bereavement a feeling of failure and being spurred on in their collage.

Written text reads:

Bereavement fed up of feeling a failure (spurred on).

The feeling on being spurred on from a life event such as bereavement continued into the next sub-theme of Big Events Changing the Future.

4.3.2.4.2 Sub-Theme: Big Events Changing the Future

Once CRs had identified the major life events within their collages they also began identifying the role that these events played in shaping them. CRs noted in their discussion during phase three of the research that big events could be the start of the process of change.

CR13: I look back and I think it is all of this that contributed to now. This was it, we had gone through all of this and I thought, and I did, I went through all of this...I think it was my daughter having her operation at X. I thought she's gonna be alright soon, I'm not gonna have to keep coming back here, I can just get on with it and do something for me. I have gone through all of this I can do it. And I think, it was all this that's definitely done that, and now I sit here now, and I look back and I think bloody hell there's been loads, not just this. (Lines 361-368, phase three, group two).

The most common life events that featured in CRs collages were meeting new partners and having children. Starting a family was often reflected upon as a motivator for further study.

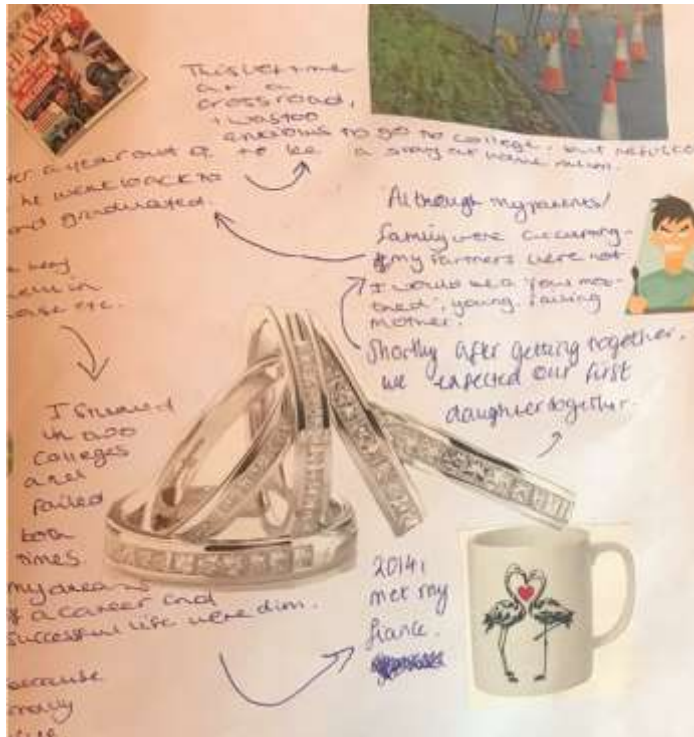


Figure. 4.79 CR18 maps out meeting her partner and having her first child on her collage.



Figure. 4.80 CR18 continues with mapping out the influence of her partner a child on her successful return to education with her collage.

Written text from both excerpts reads:

I studied in two colleges and failed both times. My dreams of a career and a successful life were dim. 2014 I met my fiancé. Shortly after getting together we expected our daughter together. Although my parents/family were (unreadable) my partners were not. I would be a 'foul mouthed', 'young', 'failing' mother. After a year out of uni he went back to uni and graduated. This left me at a crossroad, I was too anxious to go to college, but refused to be a stay at home mum. Despite the nerves, stress and dread, I went back to college. Instead of my original goal of being successful, having a child gave me a new purpose to do well to provide experiences and to travel the road and do the things I was lucky enough to do as a child but too naïve to realise.

CRs identified that these life-events (good or bad) were influential in them pursuing FE and in enhancing determination once there. Indeed, CR18 states in her collage (Figures 4.79 and 4.80) that having a child gave her a new purpose. Therefore, CRs gained a sense of purpose from some of the major life events they encountered in the gap between educational phases. CRs identified having children at a young age as integral to their sense of purpose and gave them a sense of responsibility to do well. So, feeling responsible and doing well was linked to feeling that they wanted to provide more for their children.

CR8: Trying to make a better life for my little one. (Line 383, phase three, group two)



Figure. 4.81 CR14 identifies having a child and responsibilities in her collage.



Figure. 4.82 CR13 identifies having six children in her collage.

Written text reads:

Six children, three marriages, living apart. Life choices to be made.

Although some of the CRs identified life events as being positive, others also identified that negative life events could change their future. In addition to discussion around bereavement, there was also discussion around changing paths and expectations.



Figure. 4.83 CR14 identifies that being injured for her England trials was an event that changed her future within her collage.

For this CR it was thinking about what could have been that helped her current feelings.

CR14: Yeah, I guess knowing I could have had trials helped, even if I was injured.(line 339, phase three, group two)

Therefore, for CRs having major life events (negative or positive) seemed to encourage CRs to think about the future, increased their feelings of responsibility and gave them a sense of purpose.

4.3.2.5 Master Theme 10: Mental Health.

CRs identified a further master theme which they defined as Mental Health, this theme was made up of evidence which CRs identified as learning from mental health difficulties. CRs selected this as a theme as most of the group had at some point had identified mental health difficulties. However, as in previous themes identified CRs drew upon this theme as a demonstration of growth. As CRs discussion (phase three) of this theme demonstrates they had a feeling of learning to manage mental health difficulties.

CR15: I wouldn't say I have overcome it, but I think you learn to manage it better... and to live with it

CR13: It never goes away it is a bit like bereavement, it just gets, it gets easy to cope with each day. It's still there.

CR19: And the more you talk about it the easier it is to deal with it. You know, if you have got it all inside here and you are only dealing with it by yourself, that's then gonna make you even worse and sink

even lower and lower and lower. (Lines 405 -412, phase three, group two).

Indeed, when working through their coding CRs labelled the concept of mental health as 'succeeding despite mental health difficulties and providing them with valuable experience'. The notion that mental health difficulties are seen as valuable experiences appeared to be important to the CRs.



Figure. 4.84 CR19 reflects in their collage that mental health gave them experience.

CR18: Some parts of the collage were hard to bring up, e.g. depression and disputes...However, all of these negatives have served a purpose in my life and educational success now and in the past. Therefore, the experiences have been influential and meaningful... (Phase four reflective diary account)

CRs went back over identified evidence such as drug addiction, domestic abuse and bereavement. They also added further events such as parental separation and pregnancy from their collage to this theme. CRs identified that for them, learning to manage mental health difficulties helped them be resilient in education second time around.

CR13: But we also put in with that mental health issues, people getting mental abuse. Obviously, depression anything like that coming up from this. I mean obviously bereavement cause you to go

downhill. It did for me, umm but my children kept me going at that point. Yeah all of that just coincides together. (lines 388-390, phase three, group two)

For CRs learning to manage their mental health difficulties was important to feeling like they had regained control.

CRs identified that managing mental health difficulties was part of who they are, the difficulties they faced appeared to give them experiences they could use in the current context.

4.3.2.6 Master Theme 11: Unbreakable

The last master theme which was identified by group two is 'Unbreakable'.

This theme could be seen to draw parallels with the last master theme from the first group because it contained stories of adversity and overcoming it.

CRs discussed how the theme of 'Unbreakable' could be seen as containing elements from previous master themes identified by this group of CRs.

CR13: Everything here we have spoken about the control and the stuff we went through. It all comes together and makes you think.

(Lines 464 -465, phase three, group two)

CRs identified that the notion of being 'Unbreakable' comes from a sense of overcoming previous difficulties and managing to cope.

CR15: I think you said it, what was it you said about it not breaking you?

CR13: Yeah, you just look at it and you think all this crap, all these experiences and we are still here, doing it. This made us really. (lines 466-468, phase three, group two)

CRs identified two sub-themes that made up the master theme of Unbreakable.

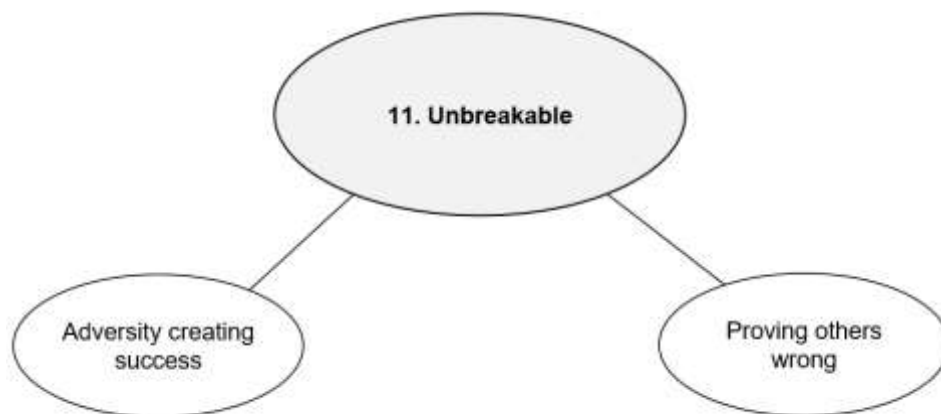


Figure. 4.85 *Thematic map for CRs data showing master theme of Unbreakable and its two sub-themes*

4.3.2.6.1 Sub-Theme: Adversity Creating Success

The sub-theme of 'Adversity Creating Success' created a large amount of data from collages, discussion (phase three) and CRs reflective diaries. CRs described this theme as the ability to reflect upon the challenges experienced and to see them as a sign that they can overcome obstacles. For many, this gave them a renewed belief in their abilities which led them back into education.

CR19: Adversity that's created our success to motivate our path to continue in the future. When I weigh up my life the negative

outweighs the positive and it was mostly negatives I focussed on.

Many people in this group have common ground, mainly adversity but it's that adversity that created our success. To motivate our path to continuing our future. (Phase four reflective diary account)

Even though CRs had used images and text within their collages that were seen as negative events, they were able to use these to see that they could be successful. For some, this reflected the feeling of being unbreakable or as CR14 states "unstoppable".



Figure. 4.86 CR14 adds the text 'Unstoppable Mum' to her collage.

Over the image of the word unstoppable, CR14 writes 'I want a career!'

There was a sense that CRs managed to cope with adverse events and saw these as shaping who they are and contributing to their drive for the future.

CR14: I felt a sense of pride and happiness of what my past is and how I see it has formed me. The process made me reflect on the past and how it has shaped me and my future. (Phase four reflective diary account)

Indeed, reflecting in this way appeared to make the CRs have a sense of pride and happiness in their accomplishments so far.

CR13: Made me feel happy and sad thinking about everything that's happened in my life that's brought me to this point. Enforced my belief that uni is the next step for me. Makes me feel proud of the adversities. This reminds me why I am on the course and I can do it. (Phase four reflective diary account)

CR21: ...Bought back a sense of satisfaction to realise how far I have come in my life and the obstacles I have conquered. (Phase four, reflective diary account).

There was a sense that the adversity had become part of their story and part of who they are.



Figure. 4.87 CR17 mentions their life with Cerebral Palsy alongside the words 'life' and 'improve' within their collage.

CRs stated that these experiences made-up who they are as people.

Overall, for this group of CRs adversity was spoken about in terms of what it added to them rather than what it took away from them. CRs also appeared to be able to identify that they could have also responded differently to these adverse situations.

[Adversity] CR13: This made us really.

CR14: Certainly, makes me think differently having done this.

CR13: Yeah and we, it, could be so different. (Lines 468 – 470, phase three, group two).

4.3.2.6.2 Sub-Theme: Proving Others Wrong

In addition to reflecting on what they had achieved for themselves, CRs identified that overcoming challenges was also about proving to others that they could achieve. The 'others' in CRs collages included family members, teachers and employers.



Figure. 4.88 CR16 Identifies an employer telling her she was not clever enough on her collage.

Written text and images read:

My manager told me I was not clever enough. But, I had big ideas. However, I was still stuck on what I wanted to do. I did not think I was clever enough to do social work. So, I thought, try me. It took a while, but it was worth the wait.

Proving others wrong was also tied into major life events, especially having children at a young age and wanting to prove other family members wrong.

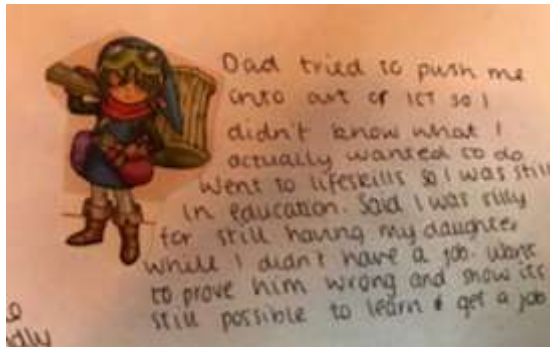


Figure. 4.89 CR21 identifies that she wanted to prove her father wrong in her text and image on her collage.

Written text reads:

Dad tried to push me into art or ICT, so I didn't know what I actually wanted to do. Went to Life skills so I was still in education. Said I was silly for having my daughter while I didn't have a job. Want to prove him wrong and show it's possible to learn and get a job.

Proving others wrong, in regard to children, was also accompanied by labels CRs had been given for doing so; CR18 referred to being a 'foul mouthed, young, failing mother' (Figure 4.79). Other labels were also attributed to young mothers (Figure 4.90).



Figure. 4.90 CR14 uses the word 'waster' in her collage.

Written text reads:

Always a waster.

During phase three, CRs discussed the importance of proving others wrong.

CR15: and I think it's important about using it and showing others we can do it.

CR13: Umm yeah, I bet you wish you could go and tell X (Lines 471 - 473, phase three, group two).

The importance of being able to prove others wrong extended beyond immediate family and was also applied to teachers. Whilst this group of CRs noted that it was important to have supportive teachers, it was also a source of motivation to demonstrate to those teachers that did not believe in them that they could achieve.

CR15: I don't know, I think supportive ones. It's good cos it sort of does spur you on a bit but, at the same time, the ones that were unsupportive and the ones that were nasty to you, you kind of want to do it to show them you can do it. Like if they were to call you stupid or something like that, you kind of want to be able to do it and it motivates you to think, no I'm not stupid. I want to be able to do it. To kind of not get back at them but to prove a point, kind of thing and also to yourself. (Lines 275-280, phase three, group two)

Accordingly, in addition to recognising that some of the major events they had experienced counted as being adverse, CRs also identified that not fitting with others labels and over-coming these situations was a way of proving others wrong.

4.4 Chapter Summary

This chapter presented the data produced by CRs during phases (phase one pilot group discussion, phase two CR collages, phase three discussion of themes, phase four reflective diaries) of the research. Data gathered from phases one to four were presented within the findings section. CRs followed the stages of thematic analysis proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006) to identify eleven master themes these represent the eleven major findings of the research.

In order to answer the question: “What views do RTE have on what helps them to be resilient in education second time around?”, the findings presented here will be discussed in Chapter Five, alongside alternative explanations and consideration of theory identified in Chapter Two. Lastly, the strengths, limitations and implications of the research will also be discussed.

Chapter Five: Discussion

5.1 Overview of Chapter

This chapter reconsiders the aims and research question presented in earlier chapters and examines how the themes revealed by CRs in Chapter Four address these. The chapter presents a consolidation of these themes so that the processes leading to ER emerge. These will be considered before a discussion of the strengths and limitations of this research, along with suggestions for future research. The chapter finishes with dissemination of findings and implications for practice. Finally, the chapter closes with the concluding statements.

5.2 Reconsidering the Aims and Research Questions

The research took a PP lens by asking ‘what works’ and aimed to highlight the aspects of CRs’ life that culminate in success rather than failure. The research used the concept of ER to determine what factors had contributed to CRs being successful in education second time around. The researcher aimed to illuminate CR views through the process of participatory and visual methods. The aim of working in this way was to make explicit how aspects of CRs’ lives interacted at different points to contribute to their current levels of ER. The research aimed to add to the existing body of knowledge but did so with a specific group of learners who had experienced a gap in education.

The research question set out to discover: “What views do RTE have on what helps them to be resilient in education second time around?”

5.3 Summary of the Main Findings

Following a thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) conducted by CRs in both group one and two, 11 master themes emerged. Each master theme incorporated sub-themes. Because the groups of CRs worked separately at different time points, themes found in each group were presented separately within the findings. However, within the bounds of this thesis it is not possible to discuss all of the findings presented in Chapter Four separately. For the purpose of this discussion themes from the two groups will be synthesised. In order to understand the large amount of data produced by the two groups, and to be able to apply the findings to the current theoretical understanding of ER, themes from the two groups were compared for similarities and differences. These were placed in a table so that corresponding aspects of processes of ER from the two groups could be compared. For ease, these emerging similarities were regrouped so that reference to theory could be made (Table 5.1). To maintain the participatory nature of the research, the synthesis was sent back to CRs so that they could check and edit as necessary. Critical realist epistemology maintains that there are multiple perspectives of reality and producing a synthesis of CRs views is therefore another window from which to view the reality of CRs. This last window or view of the data considers CRs social and historical context but also adds a theoretical lens by which to view the findings. As a

result, the presentation of the findings within this discussion include some interpretation of the CRs views which is grounded in psychological theory.

5.3.1 Synthesis of the findings from groups one and two

Group 1 Findings	Group 2 Findings
Family <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsibilities • Role models • Encouragement • Support 	Support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family • Community
Relationships <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friends • Romantic 	Education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support from key person • Being good at something
Education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support • Enjoyment 	Control <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking control • Relationship Break-ups Big events <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bereavement • Events changing future Mental health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing experience • Success despite Unbreakable <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adversity creating success • Proving others wrong
Work <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Realising potential • Experience in the field of study 	
Future and Overcoming Adversity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growth • Independence • Travel 	

**similarities between the two groups are highlighted in corresponding colours*

Table 5.1 Main themes Identified by CRs in the two groups.

CRs reported similar findings in the themes 'Family' and 'Education'. Group one also highlighted 'Work Experience'. Although group two had spent more time away from education, work was not highlighted by the second group. Both groups raised 'Growth from Adversity' as a theme and identified the different events that had prompted this growth. Group one identified that motivation and thinking positively about the future was behind this growth. Synthesis informed three processes leading to ER: 'Support', 'Connectedness' and the 'Role of Reflection in Overcoming Adversity'. These will be discussed in relation to the findings in Chapter Four and the theoretical knowledge presented in Chapter Two.

5.3.2 Support and ER in RTE

The notion of 'Support' contributing to ER appeared as a master theme for group two and as a sub-theme for group one, where it appeared in both 'Family' and 'Education'. 'Support' also appeared as a sub-theme in 'Education' for group two (Table 5.1).

CRs referred to family, community, friends, educators and partners as being sources of support (Figure 5.1)



Figure. 5.1 Sources of Support identified by two groups of CRs

5.3.2.1 Sources of support throughout the life-course

Support was identified at all stages of the educational career and was noted by CRs as contributing to current levels of ER. Support appeared to operate so that it provided the CRs with an initial model, originating with the family. Family were identified as offering guidance, advice and 'being there'. Dillon et al.,(2003) argue that family factors are seen as the most influential aspects of a child's success or failure at school. Indeed, family is listed as a protective factor by a number of researchers (Dillon et al., 2003; Hargrove, 2014; Montgomery et al., 2000; Williams & Portman, 2013), and a variety of suggestions have been made that propose that family operates as a protective factor by providing role models (Dillon et al, 2003; Montgomery et al., 2000) and by giving encouragement and support (Hargrove, 2014; Montgomery et al., 2000; Williams and Portman, 2013). Findings from the two groups of CRs confirm that family offer support, role models and encouragement. However, the CRs provide a further interpretation that family supports individuals by offering them opportunities to learn responsibilities as can be seen in the sub-theme from group one (Figure 4.6).

Having a strong family support system appeared to buffer against potential adverse experiences in early education and was further joined by community and school support in primary school years. For CRs, it appeared that feeling supported enabled exploration which helped them to make connections outside the family as demonstrated by their recollections of 'running rogue'. CRs in group two often referred to one individual as providing support, whereas group one identified a range of family members. Group two tended to name one key person in education. For this group, it

appears that having one teacher who believes in you can function as protection for CRs. Having one person believe in your abilities at any point during the academic career can increase a belief in your own abilities. Hence, between the two groups there was some disparities over the number of people who could offer support . All-in-all, CRs seemed to feel more supported when they were encouraged and felt able to build relationships with others.

Findings from this study suggest that ER can be impacted by a lack of a continuous support group. CRs reported feeling better supported in primary and college settings than in high school; where support was perceived to diminish. There was reference made by CRs to primary school being more nurturing and feeling more supported in college. One explanation for this could be the use of ability sets in high school where students have both change of teachers and friendship groups for each lesson (Table 5.2).

Setting	Number of teachers	Number of class groups	Seen as supportive by CRs?
Primary School	One teacher	One class group	Yes
High school	Many teachers	Many class groups	No
College	Many teachers	One class group	Yes

Table 5.2 *Number of class groups and teachers at each educational phase*

Table 5.2 demonstrates that the common element between primary school and college appears to be the number of class groups the CRs were assigned to. This was reflected in CR statements of feeling close to others in primary and college education. CRs noted that they didn't attend all lessons together in high school, which gave opportunities for peer support to be lost. Losing friends at this point was viewed by some CRs as detrimental to ER. Contrastingly, CRs expressed that there were some supportive teachers in high school. However, some is not all, the combination of change of class groups and inconsistency of teachers may have added to a feeling of lack of support. Given that school connectedness is a highlighted component of ER (Cunningham & Swanson, 2010; Williams & Bryan, 2012) the current findings suggest that connectedness comes from attending classes as one group and confirms previous findings that peers are important for support (Crosnoe & Elder, 2004; Lessard et al., 2014; Reis et al., 2005; Wayman, 2002; Williams & Bryan, 2013). However, it could be argued that this finding applies when learners feel at odds with the wider system because further differences between primary and high school were also noted. CRs pointed to whole school systems such as behaviour management and demand for high results as being unsupportive.

Although the effects of 'Support' as a resource are not seen until a much later stage in the educational career of this group, CRs identified that support had always been present. Sacker and Schoon (2007) have suggested resilient reintegration can take place in RTE because students build on a reserve capacity made up of assets and resources which they call 'sleepers effects'. CRs identified that the support resources are identifiable throughout

the life-course but are time and context specific (Figure 5.2). This is a novel finding which has emerged mainly through asking about the life-course rather than focussing on specific time points. In their research Sacker and Schoon (2007) highlighted the most significant sleeper effect for ER being educational attainment at an earlier stage. CRs in this study tended not to highlight academic attainment at an earlier stage but did emphasise supportive relationships both in and out of school. This finding would suggest that support is important for resilient reintegration within ER.



Figure. 5.2 *Emphasis of where support can be gained from changes over time*

5.3.2.2 ER outcomes resulting from 'Support'

Through their discussion CRs highlighted a number of different outcomes that could be considered as contributing to processes of ER. CRs felt that support from families tended to result in feelings of love and belonging which was strengthened through shared memories. Perceived freedom and safety offered by communities appeared to give CRs a sense of belonging and autonomy. Within education, support from a key person helped CRs to develop a belief in their own abilities. Interestingly, in education the source of support did not need to be seen as nurturing and those acting in a disciplinary role could instil this belief. Lastly, support from adult

relationships had perceived effects of increasing confidence, motivation and were a source of emotional strength.

Thus, sources of support change over time and offered CRs a range of outcomes which can be viewed as contributing to processes of ER (Figure 5.3)



Figure. 5.3 *How 'Support' contributes to ER in RTE*

Sense of belonging has been explored as a protective factor of ER. Indeed, Hargrove (2014) and Schilling (2008) suggested that individuals who have a sense of belonging with their school tend to demonstrate ER. The current findings also suggest that sense of belonging can be derived from family and community and can be transferred to education. Downey (2014) found that community connections, specifically, help from non-familial adults were important for ER. In contrast to Downey's (2014) findings, CRs did not highlight adults in the community but focussed on other children; suggesting that it is imperative to have a sense of belonging to groups of children within the community. A finding that is new to the understanding of ER.

Autonomy has been highlighted by a number of researchers (Dillon et al., 2003; Hernandez-Martinez & Williams, 2013; Hines et al., 2005; Johnson, 2011; Morrison et al., 2006; Schilling, 2008; Waxman et al., 2003). Dillon et al. (2003) and Hines et al. (2005) found that students demonstrating ER had an autonomous coping style and were independent in their approach to studying (Hernandez-Martinez & Williams, 2013; Morrison et al., 2006).

What is interesting from the current study is that independence was mentioned by CRs when they were at such a young age, with some CRs identifying 'running rogue' within early childhood. Furthermore, CRs perceived this to be a positive experience which added to ER. It could be considered that it is important to ER that YP are free to explore at a young age. However, the sample used in this study felt they were able to explore because of their geographical location. Both coastal towns are surrounded by large expanses of countryside. Therefore, the findings may represent specific experiences of this group.

Self-belief and self-efficacy have been proposed to be a characteristic of individuals high in ER (Banatao, 2011; Cassidy, 2015; Hargrove, 2014; Hernandez-Martinez & Williams, 2013; Johnson, 2011; Martin & Marsh, 2006). Researchers proposing self-belief as being important to ER attributed it as something the individual has/does not have in terms of an individual's 'assets' (Banatao, 2011; Cassidy, 2015; Hargrove, 2014; Johnson, 2011; Martin & Marsh, 2006). Findings from the current study demonstrate that self-belief can be nurtured by others; teachers can be instrumental in instilling this belief. The findings have implications for the concept of

strength building and suggest that teachers can be instrumental in assisting students to realise strengths.

Lastly, CRs identified that partners were a source of support for their current studies, because they enhance confidence and motivation which are seen as being protective factors of ER (Hines et al.,2005; Morales, 2010; Schoon & Duckworth, 2010; Waxman et al., 2003; Williams & Bryan, 2013). With the exception of Schoon and Duckworth (2010) studies tend to see motivation as an innate trait an individual possesses. The current research suggests partners are integral for developing motivation in RTE.

Existing studies have highlighted Support as a factor of ER. However, these studies were less illuminative on how support worked because they focus on innate characteristics and consider specific time points. The current study goes further by suggesting that sources of support can operate in ways to enhance characteristics in individuals. The findings highlight the role of supporters instilling belief, confidence, motivation and independence in these two groups, a point that is continued into the next synthesis of CRs themes.

5.3.3 Connectedness and ER

Linked with the notion of support is the importance of connections. A number of connections were highlighted within the findings.



Figure. 5.4 *Connections described by CRs as important to ER*

Connection to others was highlighted by CRs and featured within the first groups' theme of 'Relationships'. Connections appeared to operate by providing individuals with support, but they also increased feelings of belonging which in turn had positive effects on school attendance and enjoyment of learning.

5.3.3.1 ER outcomes resulting from 'Connections'

CRs sought opportunities to strengthen their connections as can be seen in the theme 'Travel and Holidays'. Strengthening connections provided a direct route to further support. It also provided another layer of protection for psychological health by providing CRs with happy memories to promote a more positive perspective in times of adversity. Thus, making connections with others provided both practical resources and helped CRs manage emotions; by concentrating on good times experienced with others they were able to cope with bad. Hence, connections enabled CRs to activate either emotion or problem-focused coping when needed. Having a range of connections increased access to support and its resulting advantages (love and belonging, autonomy, self-belief, confidence and motivation).

Connections also provided an additional set of benefits for ER (increased school attendance, enjoyment of learning, emotion and problem focussed coping strategies and being future orientated).

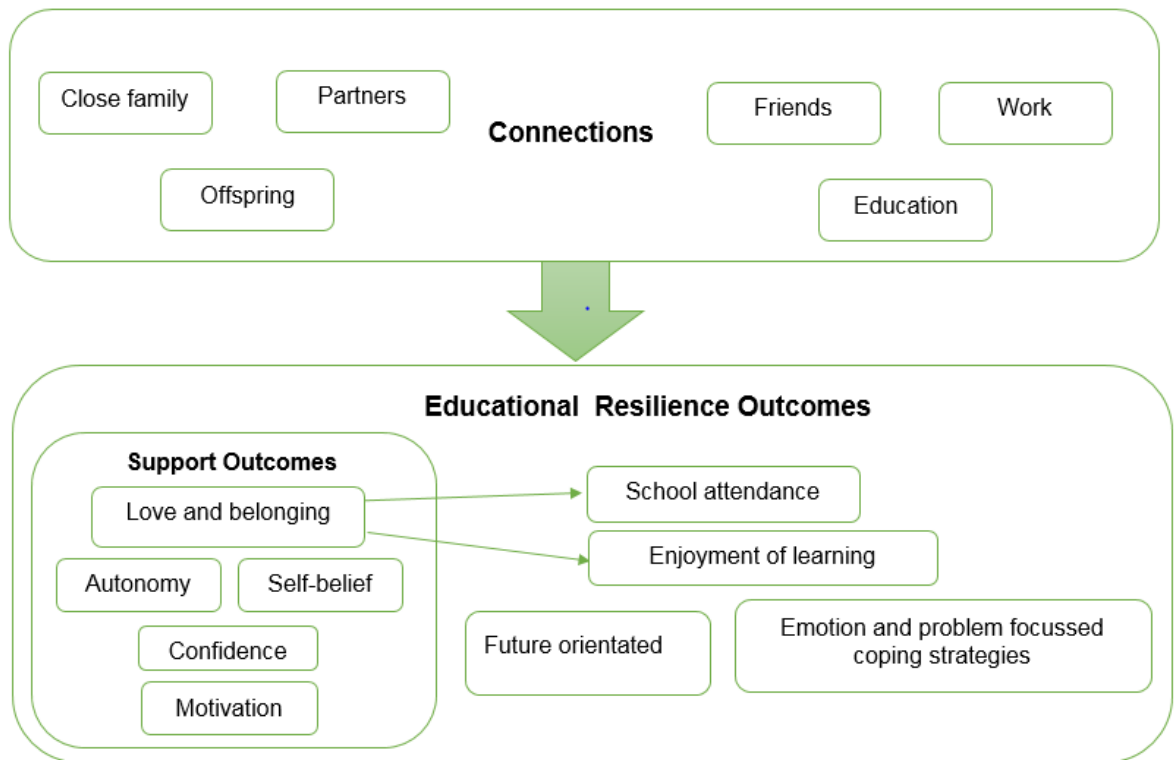


Figure. 5.5 ER outcomes resulting from connections

5.3.3.2 The importance of making connections at work for RTE

The notion of connectedness has been explored within ER literature this has included:

- Connectedness to family (Dillon et al., 2003; Hargrove, 2014; Montgomery et al., 2000; Williams & Portman, 2013)
- Connectedness to spouses and children (Hargrove, 2014; Montgomery et al., 2000)

- Connectedness to school (Banatao, 2011; Dillon et al., 2003; Reis et al., 2005; Schilling, 2008; Wayman, 2002; Williams & Bryan, 2013; Williams & Portman, 2013)

However, the literature review carried out suggested that little has been done to explore the concept that connections made at work are important for RTE. 'Work' appeared as a master theme for group one and contained the sub-theme 'Realising Potential' (Figure 4.32). Comparable to earlier concepts of teachers instilling a sense of self-belief, RTE also emphasised that work connections increased a belief in their own abilities. Connections at work provided CRs with valuable feedback on their potential in real world circumstances and provided them with a contrast to any failure in school. CRs who had reported lack of achievement and enjoyment in high school felt connections at work could inspire them to pursue academia. For RTE from deprived areas, work experience appeared to be instrumental to further study.

Several researchers have identified the importance of connections for academically marginalised groups (Montgomery et al., 2000; Morales, 2008; 2010; Williams & Bryan, 2013; Williams & Portman, 2013). Morales (2010) noted that for students from deprived areas, a meaningful connection with a mentor who comes from the same habitus or social class can have a beneficial effect for ER. CRs in this study identified that connections made at work, which happened between educational phases, helped them realise their abilities and were key to a successful return to study. It could be considered that working with others resulted in a more transformative habitus for CRs (Mills, 2008).

5.3.3.3 Connections within families

The findings from the current study tended to agree with previous studies that discord in families results in individuals strengthening connections with friends and increases access to support, whilst also enhancing autonomy (Dillon et al., 2003; Hines et al., 2005). In terms of harmonious family connections, CRs highlighted the role of female family members. Williams and Bryan (2013) suggest that in terms of ER, positive mother-child relationships are key. In contrast, the findings from the current study also suggest that other female family members (e.g. grandmothers) can be just as instrumental for CRs in terms of providing a positive role model. However, there was one male in the study leaving the findings dominated by females who tend to identify with a same sex model (Bussey & Bandura, 1984). Notably, females lacking in a father figure were far more likely to identify positive connections with male siblings.

CRs highlighted the importance of making connections with individuals.

These connections enabled CRs to access support and also enhanced the use of a range of coping mechanisms.

5.3.4 The role of reflection and overcoming adversity

For the two groups of RTE, resilient reintegration might not have taken place without a period of reflection. In their discussion, CRs produced more details related to post-adversity than pre-adversity and these views were future

orientated. As a result, CRs may have needed psychological distance from adverse experiences. When CRs reflected on the challenges, they were able to activate a number of theoretically determined personal characteristics of ER such as; motivation, self-belief, confidence and self-efficacy. CRs viewed the gap between educational phases as enabling the process of ER because it allowed psychological distance from events to reach a more resilient level of functioning.

5.3.4.1 Views on adverse experiences

There were similarities between the two groups in the way they viewed the gap between educational phases. Group one identified 'Strength and Growth from Experiences' as a sub-theme of 'Future and Overcoming Adversity' (Figure 4.39). However, group two appeared to list all the adverse situations they had faced before including a theme that identified adversity as creating success. Therefore, the last master theme provided by group two appears to correspond with group one's 'Growth from Adversity'. Like group one, group two also identified that having time to reflect enabled success in FE. Accounts of experiences within this section include adopting different views on life and changing priorities. The most common view held by CRs was that adversity can highlight individual capabilities. Both groups felt that through adversity they had been transformed.

5.3.4.1.1 Recollections of adversity

CRs in both groups recalled a number of adverse experiences these included: Financial instability, major life-events (e.g. relationship breakdown, birth of a child), trauma (e.g. being a victim of domestic abuse), mental

health difficulties (e.g. depression, eating disorders and drug addiction), awareness of social circumstances and difficulties arising from this. These findings support Schoon and Duckworth's (2010) suggestions that early school leavers from deprived backgrounds experience lower social status, reduced income, poorer mental health and have less financial independence than their peers who continue with education. Furthermore, the findings of the current study suggest that socioeconomic disadvantage in SMCSp areas is instrumental in contributing a risk to the developmental trajectory of learners. Of particular interest within the current findings is that RTE demonstrated a distinct awareness of these circumstances and provided a dialogue about their differences compared to other learners. Thus, supporting the findings that awareness of difference can act as a motivator for change (Hines et al., 2005; Montgomery et al., 2000). Furthermore, RTE in this study demonstrated, that for them, education is seen as cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1996) because academic attainment was seen as a route out of their current economic circumstances; academia was viewed as a way of gaining financial independence (seen in group one's sub-themes of 'Independence and Financial Security' and 'Travel and Holidays'). CRs aimed to leave social disadvantage behind them by pursuing education (Hernandez-Martinez & Williams, 2013). Furthermore, the findings support that of Schoon and Duckworth (2010) that resilient reintegration occurs during economic recession. The last recession in the UK was 2008-2013 (Pettinger, 2017) when CRs were 15-16-years-old. So, leaving school early may have resulted in reduced employment opportunities and early leavers may have experienced further economic disadvantage. Therefore, CRs

appeared to inhabit a transformative habitus (Mills, 2008). Whether this was a pre-existing characteristic of these individuals or brought about from experiences is not clear from the current findings but does provide questions



for future research. CRs within this study highlighted key experiences of adversity (Figure 5.6)

Figure. 5.6 *Documented adversity from two groups of CRs*

5.3.4.1.2 Strength activation from adversity

As far as adverse experiences were concerned, CRs perceived overcoming these as demonstrable of their strengths. Their experiences appeared to highlight coping mechanisms and may have initiated strength activation. These findings support the suggestion by Hernandez-Martinez and Williams (2013) that students can turn adversity into academic strength. The difference between the current study and Hernandez-Martinez and William's (2013) is that individuals could activate strengths even after a significant break from education. CRs' stories of adverse experiences extended across the life-course but it was the more recent events that happened which were mentioned most often. In particular, recency of the adversity seemed to provide the most powerful views about strengths/coping. Consequently, to

activate strengths, CRs needed to perceive their experiences as different and notice their resourcefulness in managing them (Figure 5.7)



Figure. 5.7 *Strength activation from adversity*

5.3.4.1.3 Reflection and cognitive appraisal of adversity in the gap between educational phases

The findings suggest that, during the time between educational phases, CRs went through a period of cognitive appraisal (Tedsechi & Calhoun, 2006). Butler et al. (2005) suggest that greater growth comes from greater adversity up to a certain point. In Butler et al's. (2005) model, the relationship between growth and stress is curvilinear. Low levels of adversity result in the individual being minimally affected so there is minimal growth. Moderate levels of stress from adversity mean that the individual's normality has been challenged so they experience interfering thoughts. However, the stress is not enough to challenge their cognitive abilities so the individual can engage in enough processing to activate coping. With the highest levels of perceived stress, the individual's intrusive thoughts are such that they no longer possess the cognitive functioning to be able to cope. The current findings support a model of cognitive appraisal. Further, it suggests that for RTE in

this study, reflection activates appraisal of their ability to cope with adverse experiences. For these learners who have experienced adversity, the gap between educational phases may assist them to reflect on previous challenges and activate resources. Indeed, CRs in both groups perceived their experiences as advantageous and suggested that others who have not had to cope with adversity may be at a disadvantage. This supports a challenge model (Garmezy et al., 1984) because it suggests individuals have transformed their ability to cope into positive outcomes. In particular, downward comparison to 'others' highlights their ability to cope which may activate growth (Meichenbaum, 2006). For CRs, adversity was perceived to afford them a form of capital (Bourdieu, 1996) which is understood by the individual as having an advantage over other students (Hernandez-Martinez & Williams, 2013; Hines et al., 2005; Montgomery et al, 2000).

Adversarial growth appeared to enhance characteristics which further enhanced the process of ER. Some characteristics tended to be expressed following adversity whilst others were evident from being supported and making connections (Figure 5.7)

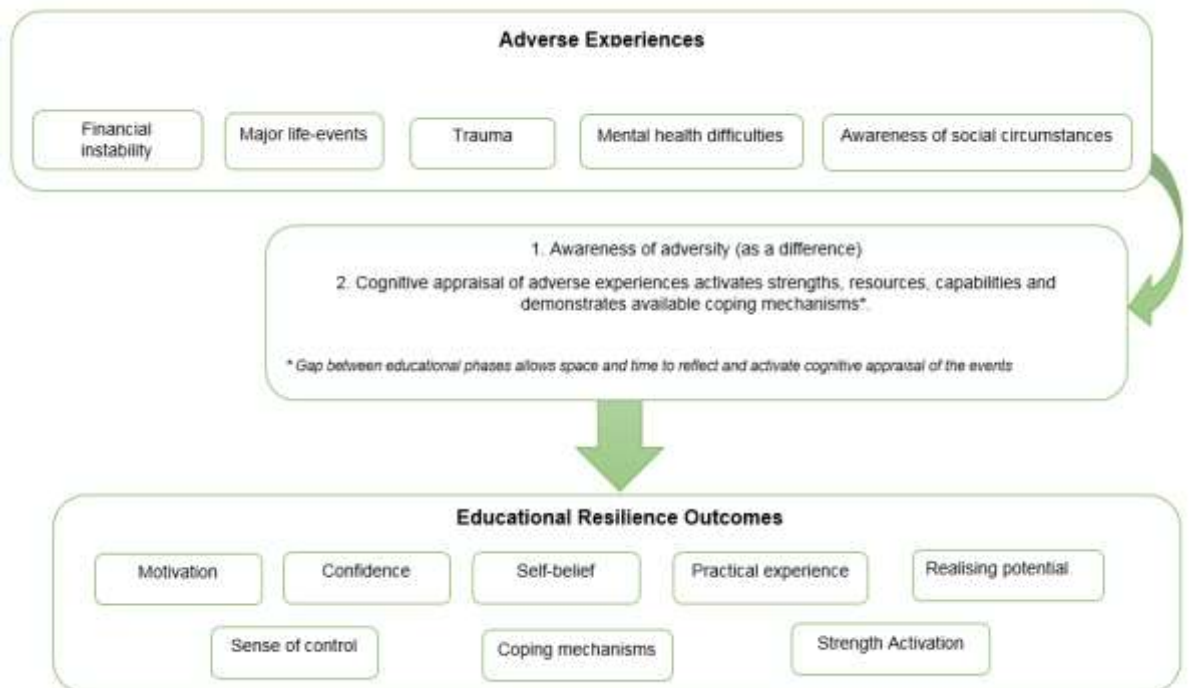


Figure. 5.8 ER outcomes resulting from adversarial growth.

CRs identified that adversarial growth was a motivating factor for returning to education and for sustained perseverance once there. Factors contributing to this included taking control, independence and financial stability.

Nevertheless, growth appears to not have been possible without a period of reflection taken in the gap between educational phases. Furthermore, the identified factors appeared to be interconnected and did not operate in isolation. For example, reflection tended to take place when CRs had firm connections and felt supported.

5.4 Summary of Research Question

The research question “What views do RTE have on what helps them to be resilient in education second time around?” appeared to identify three potential processes involved in ER in RTE from SMCSp. These were

support, connectedness and growth from adversity which was gained following a period of reflection. There were some similarities amongst the two groups of CRs and data gathered within the four phases of research confirmed the potential of these processes for enhancing ER. These two groups of RTE could be successful in academia second time around because of support offered at different stages which was accessed through a range of connections. Levels of adversity experienced seem to be moderate enough to engage cognitive appraisal of events and promote growth. However, this appeared not to be achievable without a period of reflection and without support from connections.

5.5 Alternative Explanations of the Findings

Instrumental to the understanding of resilience is the concept of threats to the 'developmental process' which assumes that the identified behaviour is something that should be expected to be observed in 'normal' functioning. (Luthar et al., 2000). When this concept is applied to ER, it means success in school despite adversity (Wang et al., 1994). Thus, the cultural expectation that educational success follows a 'norm' timeline is socially constructed and ever changing considering the shifting history of compulsory school leaving age. From this viewpoint, educational success at a later time point from the norm may represent the normal course of maturational development for some individuals. RTE may represent a deviation from the norms expected by society but are following their own maturational course. Maturation may have been a contributing factor to a successful return, a further element may have also been the opportunity to gain life experience.

CRs in group one noted the importance of work experience and commented how they might be 'the type of people who did go out and learn for themselves'. However, it could be argued that life experience is another protective factor for RTE rather than an alternative explanation. It would be interesting to explore CRs ideas that some people need to learn about life through experience and consider whether the concept of 'readiness' for FE is tied into this.

5.6 Strengths and Limitations of the Methodological Approach

5.6.1 Implementing participatory approaches

As discussed in the methodology (Chapter Three), a participatory approach was selected because of researcher concerns over voice, power and social justice. The aims of this study were to explore the views and experiences of RTE from SMCSps so that their social reality would count and make a difference. Capturing the voice of RTE in this way meant any recommendations for practice incorporate local knowledge and represent what CRs perceive to be working for them already.

A further advantage for investigating ER in this way was that CRs views shaped the research. One example of this, is that the researcher, with knowledge of resilience theory, had framed the original research question around protective factors. After some deliberation in FG discussion (phase one), CRs suggested that the notion of being 'protected' didn't fit in with their reality. Engaging the CRs in this way meant that the researcher, with existing knowledge of these types of learners and having theoretical

knowledge of ER, was less influential in the findings that emerged. However, the removal of the term protective may have influenced the large volume of data produced on adversarial growth. Although, adversarial growth has been highlighted in ER studies (Hernandez-Martinez & Williams, 2013) it does not seem to have been so pivotal to previous findings as it is in this research. Engaging CRs in this way strengthened the understanding of the complexities that face RTE but does leave this study open to methodological criticisms over the credibility of the concept of ER within the study. This last point is what remains both a challenge and criticism of PR (Couto, 1987) with many arguing that PR is often criticised for the perceived value of data where it has been both produced and analysed by the participants themselves (Aldridge, 2016). Nonetheless, the potential for engagement with CRs to steer research in new directions in order to understand different views should not be overlooked here.

It could be argued that, despite a change in the research question, CRs still had adequate knowledge about the concept of ER. Indeed, CRs were observed to use the language of resilience (e.g. talking about factors) whilst they were completing their collages which suggests this change of language may have limited impact on the findings. Furthermore, data gathered through different sources triangulated from two groups enhances the dependability

Throughout the process of engaging with CRs the researcher was mindful of Freire's (1996) principles. If the CRs question was not retained, this would be an act of false generosity. Therefore, inadequate in shifting the balance of power from the researcher to the researched.

In Chapter Three, the researcher made the argument that true participation involves CRs in the analysis of their data. To enable this the researcher trained CRs to conduct a thematic analysis. CRs progressed through steps in coding and extracting themes but would seem to have overlooked negative case analyses which may have implications for the findings. Attempts to address this issue were made by re-engaging with CRs and asking them to review transcripts, collages and reflective journals. At this stage it was reiterated to CRs that they should try to examine the evidence so that any data that does not support the findings is highlighted, returns of negative cases were not identified at this stage. Whilst training CRs to analyse their data has been employed successfully by other researchers (Kellet, 2009) consideration should be given as to how this continues to place the researcher in a position of power and whether there is any bias in leading the research in this way. For example, this researcher instructed the CRs in a data analysis lesson. One possible alternative might be to ask someone blind to the study to train the researchers or to have one CR trained so that they can pass on this training to the others. This would reduce the researcher having an effect on the data analysis.

Lack of continuous engagement with CRs may have limited findings further. At the point in the process where findings were being written, CRs had progressed to HE and were in the first year of their undergraduate study. CR engagement seemed to reduce at this point because only four CRs continued their contact with the researcher. Further analysis may not have been representative of all CR views. Couto (1987) argues that issues over

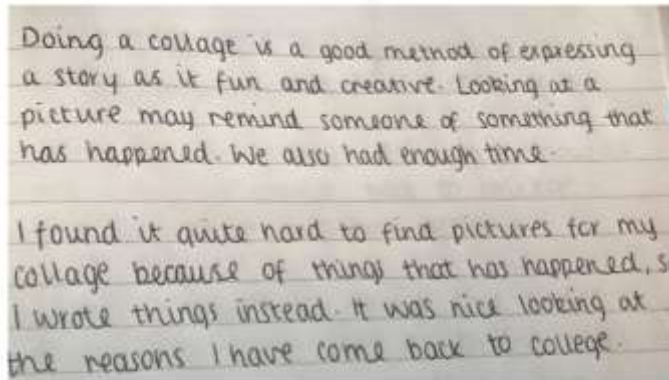
ensuring continuous engagement with the research is sometimes a limitation of PR.

5.6.1.2 PR and the purposive sample

PR requires that all CRs are willing to engage in the research. CRs were selected based on a criterion discussed in Chapter Three. CRs were chosen for their suitability by heads of department from each of the colleges. One disadvantage of selecting students in this way meant that only one male featured in the sample of RTE. Within the UK, 73% of students that study HE Access courses are female and 27% are male (The Quality Assurance Agency for HE, 2017). This 22% difference in the current study may have impacted the findings. Therefore, future research should consider selecting a more representative sample.

5.6.2 Visual methodologies and the use of collages

The multi-modal approach to collage had clear advantages in that it generated sufficient data, encouraged verbal discussion and stimulated memories, emotions and ideas. CRs reflections on the collage method demonstrate that the method was a valuable way for them to express their views and prompted them to think deeply about their experiences (Figure 5.9).

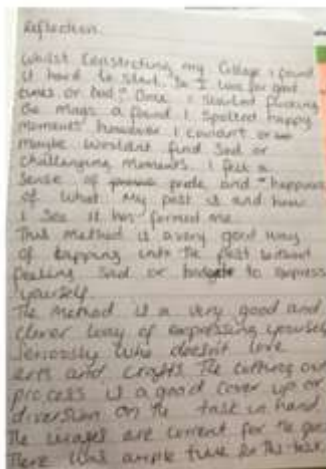


CR17 Reflective Journal reads: Doing a collage is a good method of expressing a story as it is fun and creative. Looking at a picture may remind someone of something that has happened. We also had enough time.

I found it hard to find pictures for my collage because of things that has happened, so I wrote things instead. It was nice looking at the reasons I have come back to collage.

Figure. 5.9 CR17's reflective journal account on collage construction

Indeed, CRs wrote that the collage method prompted them to remember more about their life and to reflect on events both good and bad (Figure 5.9)



CR14 Reflective diary reads: Whilst constructing my collage I found it hard to start. Do I look for the good times or the bad? Once I had started flicking through the mags I found I spotted happy moments. However, I couldn't or maybe wouldn't find sad or challenging moments. I felt a sense of pride and happiness of what the past is and how I see it has formed me.

This method is a very good way of tapping into the past without feeling sad or bad to express yourself.

The method is a very good and clever way of expressing yourself. Seriously who doesn't love arts and crafts. The cutting up process is a good cover up or diversion on the task in hand. The images are current for the question, there was ample time for the task.

Figure. 5.10 CR14's Reflective account of collage construction.

It appears that, in constructing collages, CRs were prompted to think more deeply about their views on ER. Furthermore, CRs noted that the method

enabled them to have psychological distance from events without feeling emotionally overwhelmed (Figure 5.10). The ability to psychologically distance themselves may provide an alternative explanation for the large volume of data on adversarial growth. This would support Meichenbaum's (2006) hypothesis that stories enable individuals to reflect on the impact of adversity and gain a better sense of self, and individuals feel they need to express these stories. Thus, providing an explanation why CRs felt that the process of constructing their collage was therapeutic (Figure 5.11). Consequently, the collage method may have had an impact on the tendency of the findings to illustrate 'adversarial growth'

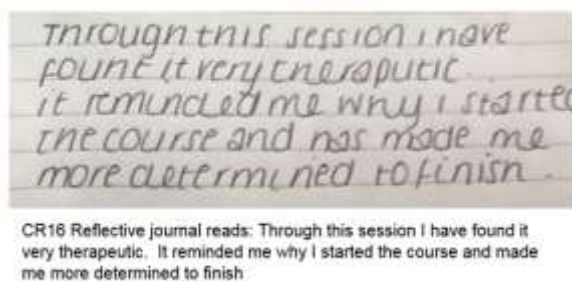
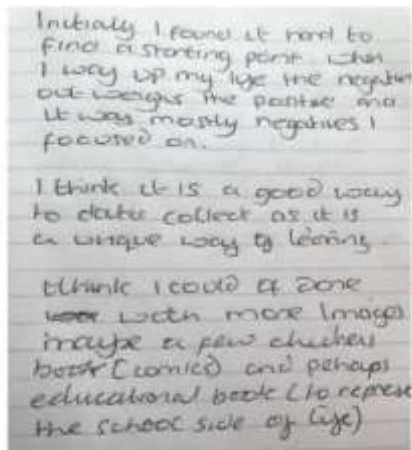


Figure. 5.11 *CR16's reflective account of the collage process.*

Nonetheless, there were some limitations to using collages. CRs commented that they would like more of a range of pictures and gave suggestions of additional materials that could be used (Figure 5.12). All materials for the collage were provided by the researcher. Whilst care was taken to ensure a broad range of pictures was available this may have limited images chosen which might have impacted on the concepts the CRs chose to highlight. The research, if repeated, could be improved further by

adding an extra planning stage to enable CR to source and select their own materials to complete the collage with.



CR19 Reflective journal reads: Initially I found it hard to find a starting point. When I way up my life the negative outweighs the positive and it was mostly negatives I focussed on.

I think it's a good way to data collect as it is a unique way of learning.

I think I could of done with more images, maybe a few children's books (comics) and perhaps educational book (to represent the school side of life)

Figure. 5.12 CR19's reflective account on collage construction

Only one CR felt that the method was not the best way of eliciting views (Figure 5.13). This reflective account came from the only male in the study and, therefore, it is worth considering whether enthusiasm for method might be affected by the gender of the CR.



CR20 Reflective journal reads: When constructing the collage, I would have rather simply written the information. However, I did manage to use a couple of pictures as other info I simply wrote next to the pictures. Probably 90% of the info I wanted to use I could not find in picture form.

I do not feel it was a good method for me personally. However, I can see the value within it for other people.

I could have done with more time to come up with ideas using this particular method especially trying to find pics to correspond with feelings, aspirations, motivation, determination.

Figure. 5.13 CR20's Reflective account of collage construction.

5.7 Reflexivity of Researchers

As suggested in Chapter Three, researchers should be aware of how their own values, knowledge and experiences may influence research. PR approaches aim to elicit the experiences and knowledge of the research group so that their perspectives remain the dominant feature of the research. For CRs without theoretical knowledge of resilience, an inductive approach to analysis was appropriate. One advantage of working in this way is that it reduces any bias when it comes to framing the data in terms of theoretical knowledge; ensuring the perspectives of the group are retained. However, it could be argued that this means that data analysis represents the researchers own analytic interest (Braun and Clarke, 2006). CR's interests shaped both the design and the findings of the research so it could be argued that credibility of the findings is enhanced by including CR's interests. Nonetheless, to establish transferability, and to ensure transparency in

regard to researcher interest, CRs completed reflective journals. Furthermore, by negating the need for third party analysis of the data, the reader is left to make their own interpretations of the data selected by CRs as being indicative of their thinking (Aldridge, 2016). This degree of transparency enables the reader to make their own assumptions but also ensures that CR's views remain unchanged. To this end, reflection from CRs who have taken an active role in the research is necessary because, reflexivity aims to democratise the participant-researcher relationship, address power imbalances and reduce the effect of the researcher's voice dominating the research (Aldridge, 2016). In PR, the aim is to turn down the volume of the researcher's voice and increase the volume of the CR's, reflexive accounts can assist with this process. Consequently, reflexive activities in qualitative research such as recognition of self and other, reflexivity of truth and transcendence (Pillow, 2003) are less important than reflexivity of research methods when engaging in PR. Hence, the researcher concentrated on reviewing the methods of engaging with CRs so that CR's voice remained central to the study.

The reduction in analysis by a third party also ensured that the analysis remained grounded in the data. FG discussion of themes confirmed this further and enabled a clear audit trail on CR's views on both analysis and description of themes. These processes helped the confirmability of the findings and the reflexive account of the researcher background, education and axiology assisted further. It could be argued that confirmability within the current study is decreased by the synthesis of the findings presented here. The boundaries of a doctoral thesis meant that discussion of the findings

needed to be synthesised further by researcher in order to cover the breadth of CR's views and apply them to psychological theory. In terms of PR approaches, this reduced the volume on the CRs voice but was necessary for qualification as a doctoral thesis. The researcher took time deliberating and justifying just how much synthesis was needed without the CR's voice being reduced. Any future studies taken by the researcher will aim to turn up the volume of the CR's voice at the discussion stage by working with CRs to write the discussion. Previously stated issues with continuous engagement of CRs affected this and would need to be planned in at the start of the project in future.

5.8 Dissemination of Findings

One of the aims of PR is to gather local knowledge so that it informs policy and practice. As such, PR aims to engage CRs in the process of dissemination. This year, the focus of the AEP annual conference was on resilience, and after submitting an abstract, the researcher was accepted to lead a seminar presenting the findings of this research. The researcher produced a presentation which was constructed with the help of one of the CRs after the researcher asked for volunteers to help disseminate the findings. Unfortunately, this CR was not able to attend the event but did circulate copies of the PowerPoint to other CRs so that revisions could be made. The researcher aims to collaborate on any future dissemination of findings including inviting CRs to co-publish. This includes co-presenting the findings to a collaboration of colleges working together on projects to support students from SMCSps to access HE. The presentation has been shown to

the LA's project and research day which was run with the University of Suffolk and attended by their psychology department. It will also be presented at the end of year conference at UEL where CRs have agreed to produce a video to assist with the dissemination of the findings.

Presenting findings at the AEP conference has proved to be a beneficial method for disseminating information and the researcher has been contacted by other EPs in different services requesting to share the findings with their own service.

5.9 Implications for EPs and other Stakeholders

The SEND code of Practice (DoE and DoH, 2015) has meant that EPs now have more contact with young adults up to the age of 25 years-old. The DECP have suggested that, as a consequence, EPs will need knowledge of FE and students re-engaging with education. In terms of understanding RTE, there are five implications arising from the research.

5.9.1 Implication One: The significance of taking a break

EPs will need to consider the relevance for some students in taking a gap within educational phases and how this might form an essential part of self-discovery for some students. EPs may want to acknowledge that returning to education represents part of an educational continuum for some learners. Individuals experiencing a gap in their education may be exposed to more adverse experiences than their peers who stay in education. EPs will need to be mindful of the impact of these experiences and how to support students with these. CRs perceived the collage method to be therapeutic and it

appeared to activate strengths and resources. The notion that the collage process might have been therapeutic for CRs to engage in has implications for practice; the method may be a useful part of an EPs narrative therapy toolkit. EPs might like to consider working with RTE using strength-based approaches which highlight the capabilities of the student for overcoming these adversities and further build on these tools.

5.9.2 Implication Two: The importance of work experience

Findings from this study demonstrate that for RTE, from deprived areas, work experience is valuable for instilling a sense of self-belief, can offer them valuable feedback on their potential and provide them with role models. Work was highlighted as being instrumental for some RTE in activating a belief in their capabilities outside the academic context. Furthermore, work mentors appeared to broaden the horizons of RTE from socioeconomic deprived areas. This finding suggests that in areas of deprivation work experience should be seen as a valuable encounter for inspiring and motivating students. EPs might want to ensure that schools and colleges are made aware of the importance of work experience for these students and the benefits that can be gained.

5.9.3 Implication Three: The importance of relationships

The findings suggest that for young-adults, relationships are focal to self-development and can be a source of confidence and motivation for some students. Within previous research little attention is made to the source of motivation and researchers may have overlooked the benefit of a supportive partner for RTE. FE establishments might need to involve students'

partners, as much as their parents, and may have implications for EPs working in post-16 when thinking about consultations, reviews and person-centred meetings. EPs might like to consider how they engage with YP to recognise the value of these relationships. For example, YP may want to invite partners to consultations and planning meetings.

5.9.4 Implication Four: Support in high school

RTE pointed out that perceived levels of support diminished in high school. The researcher has proposed that an explanation for this might be a combination of having both many teachers and many class groups thus, reducing the ability to make meaningful connections that can provide support. On an individual level, it might be worth exploring a student's perception of support and connectedness to school and whether there are contrasts in different class groups. This might be a way of targeting intervention for individual sessions such as supporting teachers to find ways to encourage collaborative working between students. On a more systemic level, EPs might need to work with secondary providers to help students to build a sense of belonging to their school, especially when pupils have timetables that require numerous changes in groups throughout the day. Given that RTE highlighted feeling unsupported, it would also be worth considering what support mechanisms are available to secondary school students. EPs should work with schools to assess whether they utilise support systems such as peer mentors.

5.9.5 Implication Five: Working with FE colleges

One outcome that has arisen from research has been that FE colleges in the area are now much more aware of the breadth of the EP role. Engaging in research with this age group has led to the researcher supporting three colleges with developing programmes to assist their National Collaborative Outreach Programme (NCOP). This programme aims to reduce the gap in HE participation between the most and least represented groups and targets young people from disadvantaged backgrounds (Office for Students, 2019). So far, the research has fed into a psychoeducation intervention that aims to develop ER in Level 3 students so that they feel better equipped to progress to HE. Since its conception, there have been seven cohorts that have been through the intervention. Furthermore, the intervention received interest from an HE establishment looking to fund further research into its efficacy.

5.10 The Unique Contribution of the Research

This research has highlighted that there are implications for EPs working with RTE and suggests that EPs do have a role to play in supporting students to feel more connected with their school and community. The research has also highlighted a possible tool for supporting RTE who have had a gap between educational phases. It suggests that strength activation is important for those who have experienced adversity. This is the first time that HE Access students have been employed as CRs to establish their views on what helps them to be successful in education second time around. Consequently, the research considers what is working for these students in their current context and the challenges that meant they followed a non-normative path through education. As a result, it suggests that due

consideration should be given to those who do not stay on in education at 16 and that any cultural perception of this being a failure on their part needs to be revised. The research has also demonstrated that working with this group in a participatory way provides unique, rich in-depth information about how these students have responded to adversity. This is important considering the disadvantage they have experienced from their socioeconomic circumstances.

5.11 Suggestions for Future Research

5.11.1 Investigating the gap in educational phases

Whilst these findings raise interesting discussions about the existence of adversarial growth, there are broader questions about what this means for students from deprived areas. It is important not to assume that these findings in anyway advocate adversity as positive experience for these students. However, what should be considered is the process by which these students used their experiences of adversity as a strength. Whilst the findings appear to advocate that a gap in education is instrumental to this process, it would be more beneficial to find ways that enable students to reflect on adversity without the need for space and time. In terms of future research, further exploration of this gap between education needs to gauge how instrumental it is for resilient reintegration. If we can discover the process by which the cognitive appraisal and resilient reintegration takes place within the gap, we may begin to discover interventions that reduce the need for students from SMCSps taking a gap. Furthermore, this might

increase our understanding of why there are high number of YP NEET in SMCSps.

The current study took a PP perspective by asking what works, and it was exploratory given that much of the research on RTE tended to be based on concepts of ER originating from younger learners. For these reasons the current research did not include those who do not RTE or those that RTE but do not complete the course. It would be interesting to engage with these groups in a similar way to see if there are any contrasts which highlight aspects of ER that are lacking. Therefore, a PP perspective was proficient at highlighting strengths but only provides a narrow view of the issues faced by YP in SMCSp.

Resilient reintegration and cognitive appraisal of events may have been more evident in the study because of the method used. Future research is needed to investigate the therapeutic effects of constructing collages with students to consider how past events can indicate their strengths. CRs often commented that they felt more determined to finish their course following the session. The researcher plans to carry out further investigation using pre and post measures alongside the collage construction with these groups of learners.

5.11.2 Further research stimulated by methodological findings

There are some methodological issues that need to be considered when planning future research in this area. Researchers may want to consider the change in language suggested by CRs, from 'protected' to 'helpful' and evaluate whether this change makes the current study applicable to their

own research. Furthermore, they may wish to review the training material and retain the original question to establish whether the results are replicable. This last option was not deemed appropriate by the current researcher because of the principles of PR outlined within this thesis. If the study was to be repeated a plan that incorporates further meetings with CRs to review the analysis would be needed. Although CRs reported in their reflections that they had sufficient time to complete the thematic analysis, further sessions may be needed to address the limitations of continuous engagement. Toward the end, member checking represented a smaller number of CRs due to some drop-out.

Nonetheless, participation of CRs in data analysis meant that researcher bias was reduced, and the reality of the groups remained dominant. A further consideration that should be made is ensuring that CRs understand and implement concepts of negative case analysis, CRs tended to demonstrate confirmation bias (Nickerson, 1998) when following the process of thematic analysis and future studies may wish to address this aspect of the study.

In terms of sampling the overrepresentation of females within the study may have contributed to the finding that suggested that female family member is a significant source of support. Future studies should consider selecting more males in order to investigate whether the dominance of females in this purposive sample confounded the findings and whether males are also seen as valuable sources of support. Representation of males was also pertinent given that the collage was noted as being less effective. Thus, any research

wanting to establish the usefulness of the tool should also investigate whether the method is equally as good for both males and females.

5.12 Conclusions

Synthesis of CRs data indicates that support, connectedness and being able to reflect on their experiences were factors contributing to their resilience in education second time around. These factors were derived from CRs own analysis of visual data produced in collages. CRs identified 11 master themes which originated from different points in their lifespan. Thinking about the life-course meant that CRs were able to elaborate on how factors interacted and operated throughout their life and illuminated some new findings. Both the PR and visual method, for exploring RTE experiences, has not been utilised within ER research before. This research demonstrates that valuable knowledge can be gathered in this way. RTE from SMCSps identified that re-engaging with education signified an important first step in a journey toward financial stability and recognised the value of education for changing their circumstances.

The research generated a number of possible implications for EP practice which included ways to help RTE re-engage with education, highlighting the value of work experience and relationships, and the significance of activating support for students feeling disconnected from school. Furthermore, this research demonstrates that there are a variety of ways that EPs can support YP in FE. The findings suggest that, as professionals, we should be investigating further ways to engage with YP that go beyond statutory assessment. PR was a valuable method for engaging YP on aspects

important to them and could be a useful way for EPs to further investigate the role of the EP in post-compulsory education.

This study confirms that learners from areas of SMCSps face a number of challenges that require space and time for reflection. In the future, we must look at ways to oppose the policies that lead to these challenges occurring for our YP. EPs have an important role in promoting social changes that are needed to support YP to reach their potential.

EPs have a unique insight into the challenges brought about by socioeconomic deprivation. Furthermore, as a profession, we value YPs voice. This research suggests that PR is a useful approach for engaging YP on a journey to shared understanding. Specifically, we need to encourage the development of tools and skills for YP to analyse their own life circumstances. Valuing this knowledge as a profession enables us to recognise humanity.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Literature Review Searches and Search Terms

Search – what is known about educational resilience in students of this age range? .

Exclusion codes:

1. Duplicate
2. Not on topic
3. Not in English
4. Not young adult age group
5. Unobtainable paper

Table 1 – search 1

Search 1	
Search Mode	Boolean phrase and search within text
Search date	02/08/2018
Data base	Academic Search Complete British Education Index Child Development and Adolescent Studies Education Abstracts Educational Administration Abstracts ERIC PsychInfo

	PsychArticles Teacher Reference Center
Keywords entered	“Educational Resilience” AND “Post-compulsory”
Inclusion criteria	Full text English References available Peer reviewed Years 1990 -2018
Total number of papers	0 Initial results but SmartText Searching, results were found 758 based on keywords
Exclusion codes and number removed upon screening of titles and key words	3= 29 4= 6 5= 1 2= 722
Title and keyword screening result	9 (6moved to search 6 for relevance)

Table 1a – corresponding results from search 1

	Author, Date, Title, Location and brief summary (Tick indicates that paper was included in the full document screening)	
√	Hernandez-Martinez and Williams(2013). Against the Odds: Resilience in Mathematics Students in Transition. UK <i>Narratives of resilience from maths students transitioning from school to sixth form and sixth form to university.</i>	
√	Russell, Rosenthal and Thomson (2010) The international student experience: three styles of adaptation. Melbourne. <i>Well-being and different ways of adapting to being an international student.</i>	
√	Schoon and Duckworth (2010) Leaving School Early – and Making It! Evidence from Two British Birth Cohorts. UK. <i>Two British cohorts of early leavers examining return to education later.</i>	
		Potential number of includes
		3

*Downey (2008) Connell et al (1994), Sharkey et al (2008), Morrison et al (2006) and Bailey and Challen (2012) were moved to search 6 because they were more relevant there

Table 2 – Search 2

Search 2	
Search Mode	Boolean/phrase and search within text
Search date	02/08/2018

Data base	<p>Academic Search Complete</p> <p>British Education Index</p> <p>Child Development and Adolescent Studies</p> <p>Education Abstracts</p> <p>Educational Administration Abstracts</p> <p>ERIC</p> <p>PsychInfo</p> <p>PsychArticles</p> <p>Teacher Reference Center</p>
Keywords entered	“Educational Resilience”
Inclusion criteria	<p>Full text</p> <p>English</p> <p>References available</p> <p>Peer reviewed</p> <p>Years 1990 -2018</p> <p>Young adult</p>
Total number of papers	18

Exclusion codes and number removed upon screening of titles and key words	2= 7
Title and keyword screening results	11 (1 moved to search 9 and 2 moved to search 8)

Table 2a – Corresponding results from search 2

	Author, Date, Title, Location and brief summary (Tick indicates that paper was included in the full document screening)
√	Hines, Merdinger and Wyatt (2005) Former Foster Youth Attending College: Resilience and the Transition to Young Adulthood. USA . <i>Resilience and transition to adulthood in former foster care.</i>
√	Keith, Byerly, Floerchinger, Pence and Thornberg (2006) DEFICIT AND RESILIENCE PERSPECTIVES ON PERFORMANCE AND CAMPUS COMFORT OF ADULT STUDENTS. USA . <i>Testing deficit and resilience models in adult students.</i>
√	Tempski, Santos, Mayer, Enns, Perotta, Paro, Gannam, Peleias, Garcia, Baldassin, Guimaraes, Silva, Nilson , Emirene Tofoli, Silveira and Martins (2015) Relationship among Medical Student Resilience, Educational Environment and Quality of Life. Brazil . <i>Compared resilience scores of medical students to see if they had perception of the education environment and quality of life.</i>
√	Williams and Portman (2014) “No One Ever Asked Me”: Urban African American Students’ Perceptions of Educational Resilience. USA . <i>Qualitative retrospective study examining resilience factors in African American students.</i>

√	Williams and Bryan (2013) Overcoming Adversity: High-Achieving African American Youth's Perspectives on Educational Resilience. USA . <i>Qualitative study identifying factors in African American students from low-income backgrounds.</i>
√	Archana, Kumar and Singh (2014) Resilience and Spirituality as Predictors of Psychological Well-Being among University Students. Haryana . <i>Examined the relationship between spirituality, resilience and well-being in university students.</i>
√	Montgomery, Miville, Winterowd, Jeffries and Baysden (2000) American Indian College Students: An Exploration into Resiliency Factors Revealed Through Personal Stories. USA . <i>Qualitative study exploring resiliency factors in American Indian Students.</i>
	Potential number of includes
	7

*Wayman (2002) and O'Neil-Dillon et al (2003) were added to search 9 for relevance

*Cunningham and Swanson (2010) and Peck et al (2008) were removed from this search and added to search 8 where they are more relevant

Table 3 – Search 3

Search 3	
Search Mode	Boolean/phrase and search within text
Search date	03/08/2018
Data base	Academic Search Complete British Education Index Child Development and Adolescent Studies Education Abstracts Educational Administration Abstracts ERIC PsychInfo PsychArticles Teacher Reference Center
Keywords entered	"Educational Resilience" AND "College Students"
Inclusion criteria	Full text English References available Peer reviewed

	Years 1990 -2018
Total number of papers	74.
Exclusion codes and number removed upon screening of titles and key words	1 =1 2= 62 3= 3
Title and keyword screening results	8

Table 3a – corresponding results from search 3

	Author, Date, Title, Location and brief summary (Tick indicates that paper was included in the full document screening)
√	<i>Morgan Consoli, Llamas and Consoli (2016) What's Values Got to Do with It? Thriving Among Mexican/Mexican American College Students. USA. Cultural values in relation to educational resilience which the authors defined as thriving.</i>
√	Huang and Lin (2013) Development of the Inventory of College Students' Resilience and evaluating the measurement invariance. China. Results from the design of a measure for college students' levels of resilience.

√	Morales (2008). <i>Exceptional Female Students of Color: Academic Resilience and Gender in Higher Education</i> . USA . <i>Female African and Hispanic American accounts of achievement related to academic resilience</i> .
√	Allan, McKenna and Dominey (2014) <i>Degrees of resilience: profiling psychological resilience and prospective academic achievement in university inductees</i> . UK . <i>Used Connors-Davidson rating scale to profile resilience of university starters and map with outcomes</i> .
√	Morales (2010). <i>Linking Strengths: Identifying and Exploring Protective Factor Clusters in Academically Resilient Low-Socioeconomic Urban Students of Color</i> . USA . <i>Protective factors of 50 high achieving students from low socio-economic backgrounds</i> .
Potential number of includes	
5	

*Yeager and Dweck (2012), Narayanan (2017), McMahon et al (2013) were moved to search 8 because they are more relevant there.

Table 4 – search 4

Search 4	
Search Mode	Boolean/phrase and search within text
Search date	03/08/2018
Data base	Academic Search Complete British Education Index Child Development and Adolescent Studies Education Abstracts Educational Administration Abstracts ERIC PsychInfo PsychArticles Teacher Reference Center
Keywords entered	“Educational Resilience” AND “Further Education”
Inclusion criteria	Full text English References available

	Peer reviewed Years 1990 -2018
Total number of papers	13
Exclusion codes and number removed upon screening of titles and key words	1 = 1 2= 9
Title and keyword screening results	3 (1 moved to search 8)

Table 4a – Corresponding results from search 4

	Author, Date, Title, Location and brief summary (Tick indicates that paper was included in the full document screening)	
√	Stirling (2010) Learning for resilience, or the resilient learner? Towards a necessary reconciliation in a paradigm of sustainable education. Plymouth UK . <i>Exploratory paper exploring discourse on resilient learners</i> .	
√	Lumby (2012) Disengaged and disaffected young people: surviving the system. UK. Resilience linked to successful navigation of college and school.	
		Potential number of includes

*Martin and Marsh (2006) was moved to search 8 for relevance

Table 5 – Search 5

Search 5	
Search Mode	Boolean/phrase and search within text
Search date	03/08/2018
Data base	Academic Search Complete British Education Index Child Development and Adolescent Studies Education Abstracts Educational Administration Abstracts ERIC PsychInfo PsychArticles Teacher Reference Center
Keywords entered	“Educational Resilience” AND “Adults”
Inclusion criteria	Full text

	English References available Peer reviewed Years 1990 -2018
Total number of papers	177
Exclusion codes and number removed upon screening of titles and key words	1= 13 2= 159 3= 3
Title and keyword screening results	(2 moved to search 6) 0

*Lessard et al (2014) and Samel et al (2014) were found in this search but moved to search 8 for relevance.

Table 6 – search 6

Search 6	
Search Mode	Boolean/phrase and search within text
Search date	03/08/2018
Data base	Academic Search Complete

	<p>British Education Index</p> <p>Child Development and Adolescent Studies</p> <p>Education Abstracts</p> <p>Educational Administration Abstracts</p> <p>ERIC</p> <p>PsychInfo</p> <p>PsychArticles</p> <p>Teacher Reference Center</p>
Keywords entered	“Educational Resilience” AND “Andragogy”
Inclusion criteria	<p>Full text</p> <p>English</p> <p>References available</p> <p>Peer reviewed</p> <p>Years 1990 -2018</p> <p>Young adulthood (18-29 years)</p>
Total number of papers	. 1

Exclusion codes and number removed upon screening of titles and key words	2= 1
Title and keyword screening results	0

Search – what is known about the protective mechanisms/factors of educational resilience?

Table 7 – search 7

Search 7	
Search Mode	Boolean/phrase and search within text
Search date	03/08/2018
Data base	Academic Search Complete British Education Index Child Development and Adolescent Studies Education Abstracts Educational Administration Abstracts ERIC PsychInfo PsychArticles

	Teacher Reference Center
Keywords entered	“Educational Resilience” AND “Protective Mechanisms”
Inclusion criteria	Full text English References available Peer reviewed Years 1990 -2018
Total number of papers	28
Exclusion codes and number removed upon screening of titles and key words	1= 1 2= 22
Title and keyword screening results	5

Table 7a – Corresponding results for search 7

	Author, Date, Title, Location and brief summary (Tick indicates that paper was included in the full document screening)	
√	Downey (2014). Indispensable Insight: Children’s Perspectives on Factors and Mechanisms That Promote Educational Resilience. USA . <i>Asked children age 2-12 what factors promote academic achievement.</i>	
√	Reis, Colbert and Hébert (2005) Understanding Resilience in Diverse, Talented Students in an Urban High School. USA . <i>Summarises findings from a 3-year study of 35 economically disadvantaged, ethnically diverse, academically talented high school students who either achieved or underachieved in their urban high school. The resilience of these two groups of high ability students is explored.</i>	
√	Murray (2011) Risk Factors, Protective Factors, Vulnerability, and Resilience A Framework for Understanding and Supporting the Adult Transitions of Youth with High-Incidence Disabilities. USA . <i>Risk and protective factors for youths with disabilities.</i>	
√	Hauser (1999) Understanding Resilient Outcomes: adolescent lives across time and generations. USA . <i>A longitudinal study of high and low risk adolescents.</i>	
√	Finn and Rock (1997). Academic Success Among Students at Risk for School Failure. USA . <i>Psychological characteristics of resilient students.</i>	
Potential number of includes		5

Table 8 – search 8

Search 8	
Search Mode	Boolean/phrase and search within text
Search date	03/08/2018
Data base	Academic Search Complete British Education Index Child Development and Adolescent Studies Education Abstracts Educational Administration Abstracts ERIC PsychInfo PsychArticles Teacher Reference Center
Keywords entered	“Educational Resilience” AND “Protective Factors ”
Inclusion criteria	Full text English References available

	Peer reviewed Years 1990 -2018
Total number of papers	113
Exclusion codes and number removed upon screening of titles and key words	1= 15 2= 92 3= 2
Title and keyword screening results	5

Table 8a – Corresponding results from search 8

	Author, Date, Title, Location and brief summary (Tick indicates that paper was included in the full document screening)
√	Clayton (2017) Context-Linked Influences on the Achievement Outcomes of African American Female High School Seniors. USA. <i>Study of support and risk factors for achievement.</i>
√	Travis and Leech (2014). Empowerment-Based Positive Youth Development: A New Understanding of Healthy Development for African American Youth. USA. <i>Developmental assets of community and engagement for resilience.</i>

✓	Collie, Martin, Malmberg, Hall and Ginns, (2015). Academic buoyancy, student's achievement, and the linking role of control: A cross-lagged analysis of high school students. UK and Australia . <i>Study on academic buoyancy (everyday) v's resilience which they argue as a trait.</i>	
✓	Wu, Tsang and Ming (2014) Social Capital, Family Support, Resilience and Educational Outcomes of Chinese Migrant Children. Hong Kong . <i>How community social capital, family social support, and children's resilience influenced educational outcomes in Chinese migrants.</i>	
		Potential number of includes
✓	Downey (2008) Recommendations for Fostering Educational Resilience in the Classroom. USA . <i>Specific recommendations for classroom practice.</i>	
✓	Bailey and Challen (2012). The UK Penn Resilience Programme: A summary of research and implementation. UK. A description of the programme, its evidence and how it is used.	
✓	Connell, Beale-Spencer and Aber(1994) Educational Risk and Resilience in African-American Youth: Context, Self, Action, and Outcomes in School . USA . <i>Model of motivation in school success and failure in 16-year olds.</i>	
✓	Sharkey, Sukkyung and Schnoebelen (2008) RELATIONS AMONG SCHOOL ASSETS, INDIVIDUAL RESILIENCE, AND STUDENT ENGAGEMENT FOR YOUTH GROUPED BY LEVEL OF FAMILY FUNCTIONING. USA . <i>Looks at findings on resilience and student engagement based on school and family assets.</i>	

4

√	Lessard, Butler-Kisber Fortin and Marcotte (2014) Analyzing the Discourse of Dropouts and Resilient Students. Canada. <i>Analysis of factors for 80 drop-outs and 60 resilient students.</i>
√	Samel, Sondergeld, Fischer and Patterson (2011). The Secondary School Pipeline: Longitudinal Indicators of Resilience and Resistance in Urban Schools Under Reform. USA. <i>Longitudinal study exploring internal and external factors of resistance and resilience.</i>
√	Morrison, Brown, D'Incau, O'Farrell, Larson and Furlong (2006) UNDERSTANDING RESILIENCE IN EDUCATIONAL TRAJECTORIES: IMPLICATIONS FOR PROTECTIVE POSSIBILITIES. USA. <i>Developmental trajectories of resilience a guide for school psychologists.</i>
√	Cunningham and Swanson (2010) Educational Resilience in African American Adolescents. USA. <i>Factors of educational resilience amongst African American students; self-esteem, connectedness and mothers work pattern.</i>
√	Peck, Roeser, Zarrett and Eccles (2008) Exploring the Roles of Extracurricular Activity Quantity and Quality in the Educational Resilience of Vulnerable Adolescents: Variable- and Pattern-Centred Approaches. USA. <i>Extra-curricular activity contributing to educational resilience.</i>
√	Yeager and Dweck (2012) Mindsets That Promote Resilience: When Students Believe That Personal Characteristics Can Be Developed. USA. Review of research that consider growth vs fixed mindsets as a mechanism for student resilience.

√	Narayanan (2017). Predictors of resilience among adolescents of low socio-economic status in India. India. Predictors of resilience amongst low SES girls in India age up to 19
√	McMahon, Kenyon and Carter (2013) “My Culture, My Family, My School, Me”: Identifying Strengths and Challenges in the Lives and Communities of American Indian Youth. USA. <i>Strengths based approach to understanding resilience in American Indian students.</i>
√	Martin and Marsh (2006) ACADEMIC RESILIENCE AND ITS PSYCHOLOGICAL AND EDUCATIONAL CORRELATES: A CONSTRUCT VALIDITY APPROACH. Australia. <i>Educational and psychological correlates of academic resilience.</i>
New potential number of includes: 17	

*Lessard et al (2014) and Samel et al (2014) were added from search 5 for more relevant findings.

*Cunningham and Swanson (2010) and Peck et al (2008) were added from search 2 for relevance

*Yeager and Dweck (2012), Narayanan (2017) and McMahon (2013) were added from search 3 for relevance.

*Martin and Marsh (2006) was moved from search 4 for relevance.

*Downey (2008), Connell et al (1994), Sharkey et al (2008), Morrison et al (2006) and Bailey and Challen (2012) were moved from search 1 because they were more relevant here

Schilling (2008) was moved from this search to search 9 for relevance

Search - What is known about educational resilience in returners to education?

Table 9 – search 9

Search 9	
Search Mode	Boolean/phrase and search within text
Search date	03/08/2018
Data base	Academic Search Complete British Education Index Child Development and Adolescent Studies Education Abstracts Educational Administration Abstracts ERIC PsychInfo PsychArticles Teacher Reference Center
Keywords entered	“Educational Resilience” AND “Returners to Education”
Inclusion criteria	Full text English

	References available Peer reviewed Years 1990 -2018	
Total number of papers	0 initial results but SmartText Searching found 243 results based on keywords	
Exclusion codes and number removed upon screening of titles and key words	1= 1 2= 242	
Title and keyword screening results	0	
	Author, Date, Title, Location and brief summary (Tick indicates that paper was included in the full document screening)	
√	Wayman (2002) The Utility of Educational Resilience for Studying Degree Attainment in School Dropouts. USA. Educational resilience in drop-outs who return to school	3
√	Dillon, Liem and Gore (2003) Navigating Disrupted Transitions: Getting Back on Track After Dropping Out of High School. USA. Uses a resilience framework to look at factors that establish school pathways for drop outs.	
	Schilling (2008). An Examination of Resilience Processes in Context: The Case of Tasha. USA. Case study of an African-American who grew up in poverty and her return to education.	

***Wayman (2002) and O’Neil-Dillon et al (2003) were added from search 2 for relevance to this area.**

***Schilling (2008) was moved from search 8 for relevance**

Table 10 – Search 10

Search 10	
Search Mode	Boolean/phrase and search within text
Search date	03/08/2018
Data base	Academic Search Complete British Education Index Child Development and Adolescent Studies Education Abstracts Educational Administration Abstracts ERIC PsychInfo PsychArticles Teacher Reference Center
Keywords entered	“Educational Resilience” AND “lifelong learning”
Inclusion criteria	Full text English References available

	Peer reviewed Years 1990 -2018
Total number of papers	7
Exclusion codes and number removed upon screening of titles and key words	1=1 2= 5 3=1
Title and keyword screening results	0

Table 11 – results from snowballing

Search 11	
Inclusion criteria	Full text English References available Peer reviewed Years 1990 -2018

Total number of papers identified through snowballing	4
Exclusion codes and number removed upon screening of titles and key words	2 papers were not available 1 paper requested from research gate 4 papers not on topic
Title and keyword screening results	1 (need to add Garmezy & Masten, 1994; Garmezy, Masten, & Tellegen, 1984; Gordon, 1995; Rutter, 1985; Werner & Smith, 1982)

Table 11a – Corresponding results from snowballing

	Author, Date, Title, Location and brief summary (Tick indicates that paper was included in the full document screening)	
√	Wang, Haertel and Walberg (1997). Fostering Resilience in Inner-City Schools.	
		Potential number of includes
		1

Table 12 – Handsearching relevant journals, Google scholar and unpublished Doctoral research

Search 12	
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Inclusion criteria	Full text English References available Years 1990 -2018
Total number of papers identified	18
Exclusion codes and number removed upon screening of titles and key words	1= 2 2 = 8
Title and keyword screening results	8

Table 12a – Corresponding results from search 12

	Author, Date, Title, Location and brief summary (Tick indicates that paper was included in the full document screening)
√	Johnson-Olamiju (2013) An Examination of At-Risk High School Students' Perceptions of the Factors that Foster Resiliency in Their Suburban High School. USA. <i>Unpublished Doctoral research.</i>
√	Hargrove (2014) This is How We Did It: A Study of Black Male Resilience and Attainment at a Hispanic Serving Institution

	Through the Lenses of Critical Race Theory. USA. <i>Unpublished Doctoral research.</i>
√	Johnson (2011). PROTECTIVE FACTORS AND LEVELS OF RESILIENCE AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS. USA. <i>Unpublished Doctoral research.</i>
√	Banatao (2011). Educational Resilience: The Relationship Between School Protective Factors and Student Achievement. USA. <i>Unpublished Doctoral research.</i>
√	Cassidy (2015). Resilience Building in Students: The Role of Academic Self-Efficacy. UK. <i>Empirical study using vignettes of adversity comparing with self-efficacy.</i>
√	Waxman, Gray and Padron (2003). REVIEW OF RESEARCH ON EDUCATIONAL RESILIENCE. USA. <i>Review of Educational resilience mainly reflecting on studies from the 90's.</i>
√	Crosnoe and Elder (2004). Family Dynamics, Supportive Relationships, and Educational Resilience During Adolescence. USA. <i>Looks at how family dynamics contribute to support patterns and then resilience within academia.</i>
√	Sacker and Schoon (2006). Educational resilience in later life: Resources and assets in adolescence and return to education after leaving school at age 16. UK. <i>Looks at assessing compensatory and protective models of staying within education and returning.</i>
√	Schoon and Byner (2003). Risk and Resilience in the Life Course: Implications for Interventions and Social Policies . UK. <i>Looked at risk and resiliency as trajectory through the lifespan by conducting a longitudinal study.</i>
Potential number of includes	
9	

Appendix 2: Critical Appraisal Skills Programme Data on Systematic Literature Review

CASP Question	Hernandez, Martinez and Williams (2013)	Hines Merdinger and Wyatt (2005)	Williams and Portman (2014)	Williams and Bryan (2012)	Montgomery, Millville, Winterowd, Jeffries and Baysden (2000)
Validity					
1. Clear statement of aims	1. No	1. Yes	1. Yes	1. Yes, but how it relates	1. Yes
2. Evaluation method appropriate	2. Yes	2. Yes	2. Yes	specifically to	2. Yes
3. Design appropriate for aims	3. Aims not clear enough to decide	3. Yes	3. Yes	educational resilience is unclear	3. No
4. Recruitment strategy appropriate	4. No	4. Yes	4. Yes	2. Yes	4. Strategy unclear - personal contact in classes therefore opportunity but not clear.
5. Data addresses research issue	5. Yes	5. Yes	5. Yes	3. Yes	5. Unclear whether structure or not. Coded for thematic content. Saturation is specified
6. Relationship considered	6. No	6. No	6. No	4. Yes	6. Yes
				5. Yes	
				6. Yes	
Results					

7. Ethical issues considered	7. Not given	7. Yes	7. Yes	7. Yes	7. Yes
8. Data analysis rigorous	8. Not explained and no reflection	8. Yes	8. no reflection from the researcher	8. Yes	8. Yes
9. Clear statement of findings	9. No	9. Yes	9. Yes	9. Yes	9. Yes
Results help locally 10. How valuable is research	No conclusions offered some brief advice for teachers not grounded in findings	Good for knowledge on specific group (foster care), suggestions for implications with interventions and policies. New areas not really identified	Several recommendations for practice Not really reflected on issues or made suggestions for future research	Consistency with other studies. no recommendations made. There are implications for counsellors' practice.	Conclusions given, suggestions for the future, implications for practice are given.

CASP Question	Morales (2008)	Morales (2010)	Hargrove (2014)	Downey (2014)	Reis, Colbert and Herbert (2005)
Validity					
1. Clear statement of aims	1. Yes	1. yes	1. Yes	1. Can't tell	1. Yes
	2. Yes	2. no	2. Yes	2. Can't tell	2. Can't tell

2. Evaluation method appropriate	3. Yes	3. yes	3. Yes	3. Yes	3. Yes
3. Design appropriate for aims	4. Yes	4. yes	4. Yes	4. Can't tell	4. Yes
4. Recruitment strategy appropriate	5. Yes	5. yes	5. Yes	5. Yes	5. No
5. Data addresses research issue	6. researcher's reflection not included	6. yes	6. Yes	6. Can't tell	6. No
6. Relationship considered					
Results	7. Yes	7. yes	7. Yes	7. Can't tell	7. Yes
7. Ethical issues considered	8. Yes	8. no	8. Yes	8. Can't tell	8. Can't tell
8. Data analysis rigorous	9. yes	9. yes	9. Can't tell	9. Can't tell	9. Can't tell
9. Clear statement of findings					
Results help locally					
10. How valuable is research	suggestions for further research given, implications and application suggested	suggestions for further research given, implications and application suggested	Little transferable justification but there are suggestions for future research.	Addressed in terms of usefulness of method. Suggestions for IEPs. More caring learning experiences. Frequent checks of learner understanding.	Yes, in terms of school counselling

CASP Question	Johnson-Olamiju (2013)	Schilling (2008)
Validity		
1. Clear statement of aims	1. Yes	1. Yes
2. Evaluation method appropriate	2. Yes	2. Yes
3. Design appropriate for aims	3. Yes	3. Yes
4. Recruitment strategy appropriate	4. Yes	4. Yes
5. Data addresses research issue	5. Yes	5. Yes
6. Relationship considered	6. Yes	6. Yes
Results		
7. Ethical issues considered	7. Yes	7. Yes
8. Data analysis rigorous	8. Yes	8. Yes
9. Clear statement of findings	9. Yes	9. Yes
Results help locally		
10. How valuable is research	strategies for teachers, presentation of a model and	Suggestions for further research

	suggestions for further research	
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Appendix 3: JBI Critical Appraisal Checklist for Analytical Cross-Sectional Studies

JBI Question	Schoon and Duckworth (2010)	Johnson (2011)	Cassidy (2015)	Cunningham and Swanson (2010)	Peck, Roeser, Zarrett and Eccles (2008)
Were the criteria for inclusion in the sample clearly defined?	No – utilised existing sample	Convenience sample	No convenience sample	Yes	Utilised existing sample
Were the study subjects and the setting described in detail?	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No
Was the exposure measured in a valid and reliable way?	Some outdated measures and some unvalidated Likert scales	Yes	Yes	Yes, all validated measures	Not clearly described
Were objective, standard criteria used for measurement of the condition?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Some standardised measures but not all
Were confounding factors identified?	Did not consider nature of employment in the gap	Yes	No	Yes, SES and measured	No

Were strategies to deal with confounding factors stated?	Yes, but not the above	Yes	Not considered	See above	See above
Were the outcomes measured in a valid and reliable way?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Lacked standardised measures
Was appropriate statistical analysis used?	Regression analysis of correlates	Yes	Yes	Regression analysis – aim was to examine correlates	Yes

JB1 Question	Finn and rock (1997)	Sharkey, Sukkung and Schnobelen (2008)	Samel, Sondergeld, Fischer and Petterson (2011)	Martin and Marsh (2006)	Banatao (2011)
Were the criteria for inclusion in the sample clearly defined?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Convenience sample	Convenience sample from existing data
Were the study subjects and the setting described in	Yes	Yes	Yes - lots of detail of context	No	No

detail?					
Was the exposure measured in a valid and reliable way?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Were objective, standard criteria used for measurement of the condition?	Yes	Yes	Some unvalidated Likert	Some but not all were validated	Yes
Were confounding factors identified?	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Were strategies to deal with confounding factors stated?	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Were the outcomes measured in a valid and reliable way?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Was appropriate statistical analysis used?	Yes - MANOVA	Yes – factor and structural analyses	Yes	Yes	Yes

JBI Question	Crosnoe and Elder (2004)	Wayman (2002)	Dillon, Liem and Gore (2003)	Sacker and Schoon (2006)	Schoon and Sacker (2003)
Were the criteria for inclusion in the sample clearly defined?	Yes	Yes	Convenience sample pre-existing data	Longitudinal	Longitudinal
Were the study subjects and the setting described in detail?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Was the exposure measured in a valid and reliable way?	Yes	DV – graduation (no indicator of level) unvalidated measures for IV	Yes	Yes	Yes
Were objective, standard criteria used for measurement of the condition?	Yes	See above	Yes	Yes	Yes
Were confounding factors identified?	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Were strategies to deal with confounding factors	Yes	Not given	Yes	Yes	Yes

stated?					
Were the outcomes measured in a valid and reliable way?	Yes	Yes – but lacking detail	Yes	Yes	Yes
Was appropriate statistical analysis used?	Yes	Yes	Yes	yes	Yes

Appendix 4: Full Document Exclusions - Excluded papers upon full document screening

Author, Date, Title, Location and brief summary	Reasons for excluding
<p>Russell, Rosenthal and Thomson (2010) The international student experience: three styles of adaptation. Melbourne.</p> <p><i>Well-being and different ways of adapting to being an international student.</i></p>	<p>Not on topic</p>
<p>Keith, Byerly, Floerchinger, Pence and Thornberg (2006) DEFICIT AND RESILIENCE PERSPECTIVES ON PERFORMANCE AND CAMPUS COMFORT OF ADULT STUDENTS. USA. <i>Testing deficit and resilience models in adult students.</i></p>	<p>Age range to high students were 25 years and over.</p>
<p>Tempski, Santos, Mayer, Enns, Perotta, Paro, Gannam, Peleias, Garcia, Baldassin, Guimaraes, Silva, Nilson, Emirene Tofoli, Silveira and Martins (2015) Relationship among Medical Student Resilience, Educational Environment and Quality of Life. Brazil. <i>Compared resilience scores of medical students to see if they had perception of the education environment and quality of life.</i></p>	<p>Looks at the effect of resilience on aspects rather than identifying what resilience factors and mechanisms are.</p>
<p>Archana, Kumar and Singh (2014) Resilience and Spirituality as Predictors of Psychological Well-Being among University Students. Haryana. <i>Examined the relationship between spirituality, resilience and well-being in university students.</i></p>	<p>Excluded as not on topic. Paper looks at how resilience contributes to student well-being and not what contributes to resilience.</p>
<p>Morgan Consoli, Llamas and Consoli (2016) What's Values Got to Do with It? Thriving Among Mexican/Mexican American College Students.</p>	<p>Authors make the distinction that resilience and thriving are two different concepts and therefore this paper is not on topic.</p>

<p>USA. Cultural values in relation to educational resilience which the authors defined as thriving</p>	
<p>Huang and Lin (2013) Development of the Inventory of College Students' Resilience and evaluating the measurement invariance. China. <i>Results from the design of a measure for college students' levels of resilience.</i></p>	<p>Confirmatory factor analysis of a measure of resilience and therefore is not on topic.</p>
<p>Allan, McKenna and Dominey (2014) Degrees of resilience: profiling psychological resilience and prospective academic achievement in university inductees. UK. Used Connors-Davidson rating scale to profile resilience of university starters and map with outcomes.</p>	<p>Assessment of psychological profiling and therefore not on topic.</p>
<p>Stirling (2010) Learning for resilience, or the resilient learner? Towards a necessary reconciliation in a paradigm of sustainable education. Plymouth UK. <i>Exploratory paper exploring discourse on resilient learners.</i></p>	<p>Not on topic</p>
<p>Lumby (2012) Disengaged and disaffected young people: surviving the system. UK. <i>Resilience linked to successful navigation of college and school.</i></p>	<p>Too risk orientated not really on resilience therefore is not on topic.</p>
<p>Murray (2011) Risk Factors, Protective Factors, Vulnerability, and Resilience A Framework for Understanding and Supporting the Adult Transitions of Youth with High-Incidence Disabilities. USA . <i>Risk and protective factors for youths with disabilities.</i></p>	<p>Deemed too specific to those with disabilities to generalise to returners to education/adult learners.</p>

Hauser (1999) Understanding Resilient Outcomes: adolescent lives across time and generations. USA . <i>A longitudinal study of high and low risk adolescents</i> .	Not specific to educational resilience and therefore not on topic.
Clayton (2017) Context-Linked Influences on the Achievement Outcomes of African American Female High School Seniors. USA . <i>Study of support and risk factors for achievement</i> .	Educational resilience is not the core focus of the research
Travis and Leech (2014). Empowerment-Based Positive Youth Development: A New Understanding of Healthy Development for African American Youth. USA . <i>Developmental assets of community and engagement for resilience</i> .	Not specific to educational resilience
Collie, Martin, Malmberg, Hall and Ginns, (2015). Academic buoyancy, student's achievement, and the linking role of control: A cross-lagged analysis of high school students. UK and Australia . <i>Study on academic buoyancy (everyday) v's resilience which they argue as a trait</i> .	Emphasis on bouncy and therefore not on topic
Wu, Tsang and Ming (2014) Social Capital, Family Support, Resilience and Educational Outcomes of Chinese Migrant Children. Hong Kong . <i>How community social capital, family social support, and children's resilience influenced educational outcomes in Chinese migrants</i> .	General resilience and not on topic
Bailey and Challen (2012). The UK Penn Resilience Programme: A summary of research and implementation. UK . <i>A description of the programme, its evidence and how it is used</i> .	Intervention and not exploration of factors therefore not on topic

<p>Connell, Beale-Spencer and Aber(1994) Educational Risk and Resilience in African-American Youth: Context, Self, Action, and Outcomes in School</p> <p>. USA. <i>Model of motivation in school success and failure in 16-year olds.</i></p>	<p>Motivation orientated and therefore not on topic</p>
<p>McMahon, Kenyon and Carter (2013) “My Culture, My Family, My School, Me”: Identifying Strengths and Challenges in the Lives and Communities of American Indian Youth.</p> <p>USA. <i>Strengths based approach to understanding resilience in American Indian students.</i></p>	<p>Not specific to educational resilience.</p>
<p>Narayanan (2017). Predictors of resilience among adolescents of low socio-economic status in India. India. Predictors of resilience amongst low SES girls in India age up to 19</p>	<p>Too culturally specific to be generalised to present study.</p>
<p>Yeager and Dweck (2012) Mindsets That Promote Resilience: When Students Believe That Personal Characteristics Can Be Developed. USA. Review of research that consider growth vs fixed mindsets as a mechanism for student resilience.</p>	<p>Too focussed on mindset therefore not on topic.</p>

Appendix 5: Table of Authors Relating to Factors

Factor identified	Authors and date
Individual factors	
Empathy	Banatao (2001)
Self-efficacy	Banatao (2011); Cassidy (2015); Hargrove (2014); Hernandez-Martinez and Williams (2013); Johnson (2011); Martin and Marsh (2006)
Self-esteem	Cunningham and Swanson (2010); Finn and Rock (1997); Hernandez-Martinez and Williams (2013); Morales (2010); Martin and Marsh (2006)
Positive outlook/ optimism	Hernandez-Martinez and Williams (2013); Hines, Merdinger and Wyatt (2005); Johnson (2011)
Academic ability and intelligence	Downey (2014); Schoon and Byner (2003); Schoon and Duckworth (2010)
Aspirations for future / sense of purpose	Samel, Sondergeld, Fischer and Patterson (2011); Schilling (2008); Schoon and Duckworth (2010); Morales (2008); Morales (2010); Wang, Haertel and Walberg (1997); Waxman, Gray and Padron (2003); Wayman (2002); Williams and Bryan (2012)
Motivation	Hines, Merdinger and Wyatt (2005); Dillon, Liem and Gore (2003); Morales (2010); Schoon and Duckworth (2010);

	Waxman, Gray and Padron (2003); Wayman (2002); Williams and Bryan (2012)
Steady disposition/temperament/ emotionality	Hines, Merdinger and Wyatt (2005);Johnson-Olamilj (2013); Martin and Marsh (2006); Morrison, Brown, D’Incau, O’Farrell, Larson and Furlong (2006)
Resourcefulness/ initiative	Hines, Merdinger and Wyatt (2005); Lessard, Butler-Kisber Fortin and Marcotte (2014); Schilling (2008)
Delayed gratification	Hines, Merdinger and Wyatt (2005)
Independence, self-sufficiency/agency and autonomy	Dillon, Liem and Gore (2003); Hernandez-Martinez and Williams (2013); Hines, Merdinger and Wyatt (2005);Johnson (2011); Morrison, Brown, D’Incau, O’Farrell Larson and Furlong (2006); Schilling (2008); Waxman, Gray and Padron (2003)
Goal orientation, planning and problem solving	Hines, Merdinger and Wyatt (2005); Lessard, Butler-Kisban, Fortin and Marcotte (2014); Morales (2008); Martin and Marsh (2006); Morrison, Brown, D’Incau, O’Farrell, Larson and Furlong (2006); Waxman, Gray and Padron (2003);
Internal Locus of Control	Finn and Rock (1997); Hines, Merdinger and Wyatt (2005); Martin and Marsh (2006); Morales (2010)
Willingness and desire for social mobility	Hargrove (2014); Hernandez-Martinez and Williams (2013); Morales (2008); Morales (2010); Schoon and Byner (2003)
Spirituality and faith	Hargrove (2014); Montgomery, Milville, Winterowd, Jefferies and Baysden (2000)

Proactive help seeking	Hargrove (2014); Lessard, Butler-Kisber, Fortin and Marcotte (2014)
Social competence	Morrison, Brown, D'Incau, O'Farrell, Larson and Furlong (2006); Waxman, Gray and Padron (2003)
Self-concept and identity as a capable learner	Hernandez-Martinez and Williams (2013); Montgomery, Milville, Winterowd, Jefferies and Baysden (2000); Reis, Colbert and Herbert (2005); Wayman (2010);
Family	
Parental social status	Sacker and Schoon (2006); Sharkey, Sukkyung and Schnoebelen (2008); Schoon and Byner (2003); Schoon and Duckworth (2010)
Parental involvement, investment and support	Dillon, Liem and Gore (2003); Downey (2014); Hargrove (2014); Montgomery, Milville, Winterowd, Jefferies and Baysden (2000); Sacker and Schoon (2006); Schoon and Duckworth (2010); Sharkey, Sukkyung and Schnoebelen (2008); Williams and Portman (2013); Wang, Haertel and Walberg (1997); Waxman, Gray and Padron (2003); Wayman (2002);
Connectedness to family	Dillon, Liem and Gore (2003); Hargrove (2014); Montgomery, Milville, Winterowd, Jeffries and Baysden (2000); Williams and Portman (2013);
High and realistic expectations	Morales (2010); Hargrove (2014); Sacker and Schoon (2006); Williams and Bryan (2012)

Monitoring progress and praising good grades	Cunningham and Swanson (2010); Williams and Bryan (2012)
Positive mother child relationships, including mother that reads to them	Williams and Bryan (2012)
Understanding traditions, cultural values and habitus	Hargrove (2014); Hernandez-Martinez and Williams (2013); Montgomery, Milville, Winterowd, Jeffries and Baysden (2000); Morales (2010)
Parents modelling strong work ethic	Dillon, Liem and Gore (2003); Morales (2010); Morales (2008);
Spouses and children	Hargrove (2014); Montgomery, Milville, Winterowd, Jeffries and Baysden (2000)
Lack of parental discord	Dillon, Liem and Gore (2003); Hargrove (2014);
School	
Supportive teachers	Cunningham and Swanson (2010); Downey (2008); Lessard, Butler-Kisben, Fortin and Marcotte (2014); Schoon and Duckworth (2010); Sharkey, Sukkyung and Schnoebelen (2008)
Connections and relationships with adults in school	Banatao (2011); Dillon, Liem and Gore (2003); Reis, Colbert and Hebert (2005); Schilling (2008); Wayman (2002); Williams and Bryan (2012); Williams and Portman (2013)
Feeling connected to the school	Hargrove (2014); Schilling (2008)
Social support network	Cunningham and Swanson (2010); Williams and Bryan (2012)

Positive role models and mentors	Hernandez-Martinez and Williams (2013); Morales (2008); Morales (2010); Williams and Bryan (2012)
Relationships with peers	Crosnoe and Elder (2004); Lessard, Butler-Kisben, Fortin and Marcotte (2014); Reis, Colbert and Hebert (2005); Wayman (2002); Williams and Bryan (2012)
Good teaching with curriculum lined to interests	Downey (2008); Wang, Haertel and Walberg (1997); Williams and Bryan (2012)
Extracurricular/ positive activities	Peck, Roeser, Zarrett and Eccles (2008); Reis, Colbert and Hebert (2005); Samel, Sondergeld, Fischer and Patterson (2011); Waxman, Gray and Padron (2003); Williams and Bryan (2012)
Teacher expectations	Wang, Haertel and Walberg (1997)
School wide policies	Wang, Haertel and Walberg (1997)
Unconditional and consistent empathy and care	Cunningham and Swanson (2010); Johnson-Olamiju (2013); Morales (2008); Morales (2010); Wang, Haertel and Walberg (1997);
Engagement	Finn and Rock (1997); Johnson-Olamiju (2013)
Community	
Engagement in positive activities	Peck, Roeser, Zarrett and Eccles (2008); Williams and Bryan (2012)
Support systems and community collaboration and connection	Downey (2014)

Community organisations and resources	Hargrove (2014); Williams and Portman (2013)
High expectations of being a good citizen and an educational success.	Wang, Haertel and Walberg (1997);

Appendix 6: PowerPoint lesson 1 (phase one)

Session 1: Participatory Research and Focus Groups

Esther Borrett: Trainee Educational Psychologist

1


Aims of today's session:

Please hand in your informed consent forms before we can begin

- Describe participatory methods and focus groups
- Engage in a focus group discussion
- Review research objectives and questions

2

What is Participatory Research?

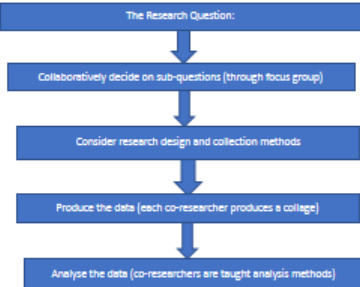


- Participatory research aims to:
 - Equalise the researcher-participant relationship – address the 'power balance' in research – research objectives are made clear
 - Facilitate the participant 'voice'
 - Collaboration between researcher and participants, so that participants become co-researchers
- More inclusive
- Aims to bring about 'social change' – has its roots in promoting autonomy with vulnerable groups
- Allows for more creative ways of research
- Emphasises participant understanding on matters – 'telling 'your' stories'
- Helps to close the 'gap' between what is KNOWN and what is DONE

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=maci0pAFT80>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3u0m0dF3o>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9r1cUHR18d8>


3

Stages in Our Participatory Design



4

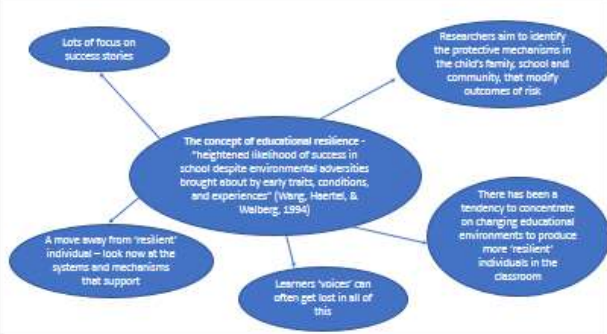
What is a focus group and why are they used?




- A way of generating and analysing interaction between groups of participants
- Facilitator encourages, discussion, looks for different perspectives
- The purpose of our focus group will be to discuss the research question, consider sub-questions, consider the mechanics of data collection
- Because the research method is participatory having the focus group means that you can discuss the research question and the research objectives before we start the research process

5

The concept of educational resilience - 'heightened likelihood of success in school despite environmental adversities brought about by early traumas, conditions and experiences' (Wang, Haertel, & Walberg, 1994)



6




What are the research objectives?

- What helps returners to education second time around?
- Can we describe the mechanisms of educational resilience for returners to education? What are they?
- What protective factors/mechanisms are described?
- Discuss – What other objectives could we have? What would our research look like if we included these? Is there value in including other objectives?
- How are certain groups of people able to go back and achieve in education following adversity?

30 mins

7




What is the research question?

- The research question is what we keep in mind when we collect and analyze the data, it keeps us focused on what we want to explore and helps avoid distractions.
- The research question for this project is: "What protective mechanisms do returners to education describe as helping them to achieve in education second time around?"
- When we analyze the data we will keep this question in mind – it will help us to keep focused and notice patterns and themes in the data. Sometimes to help us stay focused we think of sub-questions – these are mini questions which help us look for the bigger picture.

30 mins

- Discuss – what possible sub-questions might there be?
- Discuss – what questions would we like to be explored?
- Discuss – what do we like about the research question, what do we not like?

8



How will we collect the data?


Making a collage – divided into early years, primary, high school, in-between and now

The collage consists of images that represent thoughts – below will be a brief description

Consider the research question and objectives what questions, prompts (if any) should we give to construct the collage. Remember what we want to discover from doing this.

These points helped me when I tried to do it – think about the qualities, beliefs, events, people, skills and values that help you now to continue with education. Where did they come from what part of your life helped to develop these?

Discuss these in your focus group



9

Reflecting on research:

To ensure that your voice, journey and story is reported accurately in the research you will be writing reflections by after each session.

Today I want you to reflect upon participatory research and focus groups. Please consider the following things:

- How you feel about participatory research
- How you feel about focus groups
- What your experience of the focus group was

Remember that your reflection will be anonymised and kept confidential



10

Appendix 7: Transcript from phase one (group one focus group discussion)

R: The first question that we really want to think about, is what possible sub questions might there be? So, as I was coming around I was saying things like 'how' 'how do you know that?'. 'where' 'where did that come from?' So, the main question is what protective mechanisms do returners to education describe as helping them achieve in education second time around? What are the possible sub questions, you might want to ask people? PAUSE. Was here one question I helped you with, as I walked around, where you thought ok, that got me going.

P1: where did your ambition come from?

R; Do you all like that one?

P's: yeah

R: Yeah? Ok

R: is there another way that we could perhaps describe ambition?

P4: Drive

R: Drive?

P4: Motivation

R; Motivation?

P1: determination

R: so, we have a good idea here about it – but where does it come? So, what if they turned around and said, 'oh it comes from my mum'? How are you going to then...?

P3: Why

P1: What does your mum do to, to make you think that way? What kind of examples do they set maybe?

P6: how did they push you?

P7: what support they give you

R: I find it interesting that you are all immediately jumping to home, when I have talked about educational resilience. Have any of you thought about school at all? Since we have been sat through this, or college?

P6: I thought about work (and one another inaudible)

R: you thought about work?

P6: work pushed me

R: so, is it important to explore what went on in school?

P6: I think schools are important to give you the head start and sort of the kick you need just to actually understand what you need to do to further your education but, if we were going for my own experience I would never have thought that I would be sat here when I was at school, not in a million years. Because it's just, everything I did at high school, it's not irrelevant but, it had no impact on what I've chosen to, to do now.

P3: I think, from my experience my school, my school was really bad. Like I didn't get much support at all and I think that did show in my grades. Whereas here like, I've surprised myself so much.

R: Ok

P3: Because the schooling here, or the teaching here, is so much better.

P4: My school was rated quite alright, OFSTED said it was outstanding. But, it didn't, it gave you only one set way of doing things and if you didn't do it that way you obviously failed at life. And it was like you had to go to high school, go to college, get you're A' levels, go to uni, it was like there's no other option. You gotta do it that way and if you don't do it that way

P6: my...

P4: you gotta like,

P6: sorry

P4: they didn't really tell you about like access courses or like apprenticeships or BTEC's or anything like that, that now kind of on to now.

R: so, something around, people's expectations, are people's expectations of you now different?

P6: I don't think expectations are different

R: No?

P3: I think our priorities are different, aren't they?

P3: I think we all now know exactly what we want to do, whereas at school we didn't

P5: Yeah, you're a bit too young to know at 16 what it is you want to do for the rest of your life.

P4: your forced to make your mind up there and, then aren't you? What do you know you want to be in like three years' time? You're like well, I don't know I haven't done anything yet so.

R: so, are we saying that there is something about that break?

P's nod and yeahs

R: something about that in-between stage

P1: it's about life experience I think.

R: Ok

P1: it gets you to a point where you think, it's all clicked, and you just think, hang on this is what I wanna do and you get the drive to go out and get it. Whereas I think that, when you're so young, although its drummed into you how important school is you never quite understand that. Like I am now doing my GCSE maths at the same time and I wish I had just listened to those people who told me how important it was but, at that age you just don't realise that you just think your gonna fly through life and it's gonna be easy.

R: so, something around actually being the type of people that must learn for yourself, what life is like

P1: yeah

R: to give you the boost to succeed (NODS), whereas other people seem to have it clearly mapped out?

P3: mmm

P1: It could be where that resilience comes from as well, like because we've got like maybe that kind of personality

R: ok

P1: So, we are the type of people who did go out and learn for ourselves rather than someone telling us that this is what you do, and we believe them

P3: mmm

R: Ok, so what questions do you think we need to explore then? Looking at what you've said, what, what really needs to be explored? What are the themes coming out of this?

P6: I think priorities is a really good one,

R: Ok. So, we could say something about how your priorities have changed over your....

P6: Between leaving school and now

R: yeah? Something about that in-between part?

P6: NODS

R: Ok

P5: Life experiences

R: ok, how would we set a question for that one?

P5: hmm what has, what has life shown you now that you can do it?

R; What is it about it now that makes you think you can do it compared to what was happening for you before – that sets a really clear what’s different, what’s working.

P6; Or how have your life experiences influenced your choices,

R: yeah, in regard to?

P6: Education

R: how would you get this ambition drive motivation determination? Are you happy with where does your ambition come from? Or do you think we need to narrow it down a bit?

P4: you could have it like, has it changed since you left, like school

R; and then there is something around here (points to board) isn’t there about support and I think when you were talking about support you were talking about family. Which I found really interesting ummm what kinda question would you like around that?

P1: that one’s hard because it’s not always like umm like a good example like you could have a family member like a mum or dad who didn’t do well for themselves and you think I don’t want to be that person. Whereas you could have a family member who has done really well for themselves and really pushed you and that’s why you’ve got such drive, so...

R: and that was a theme that came out... a lot of you were saying, actually I’m doing this because I don’t want to be like X umm or I don’t want this to happen.

P3: I think it’s how sorta society has changed as well, obviously in our parent’s day and age the dad was the bread winner and the mother did stay at home. Whereas I think now it’s changed so much with equality.

R: ok so now let’s look at the original research question, what do you like about this? And what do you not like about it? And you can be honest with me PAUSE so do we like the word ... protective?

P6: I’m not sure

P4: no

P6: because were going back to, going to the whole family thing and talking about negative things that are pushing us to do it I wouldn’t necessarily say I feel quite protected

R: so, would you say what mechanisms do returners to education

P1, P3, P4, P6: Yeah

P1: that's a lot better

R: yeah? So, we could get rid of the word protective. What about helping them to achieve, do you feel like you are being helped to achieve? Or resilience you on your own?

P6: I think a lot of it is us doing it by ourselves I wouldn't really say that anything is helping us to do it. I think it's all just we are here because we want to be here.

P3: I think it all comes back to that ambition and determination question as well

R: so, what mechanisms do returners to education describe as blank them achieve, what can we put in there?

P4: motivating

R: as motivating them to achieve in education second time around? Do you prefer that

P's nod and yeahs

R: so, what kind things did you discuss, what did you think would be good prompts for somebody to get things down on the collage. So, I thought about beliefs, events, what other things did you think might prompt people?

P6: Work because although there is the in-between bit some people might because obviously we vary in age some people might have sorta like left college and had a gap year or something like that and just gone travelling and done something along the lines ummm whereas others of us would have gone to work and actually sort of experienced that side of things.

R: so 'tell me about work?'

P6: yeah so just make it a bit more specific of what you have actually done, in that gap period.

R: If we are thinking along the lines of specifics then what kind of things would you want to prompt them with so early years, primary, secondary and now. What other kind of specific prompts can you think of?

LONG PAUSE

R: or do you that actually saying tell me about beliefs the events, the people, the skills the values you picked up in those specific areas is ok?

P1, P2: mmm

P6: I just think maybe the pressures

R: so, what would you expect then if you said tell me about the pressures you've experienced?

P6: So, like, when you're doing your GCSE's for example there's a lot of pressure put on you there. To do well

R: so, are you looking at the pressure or are you looking at their reaction to the pressure?

P6: ummm the reaction to the pressure as such because obviously for a lot of us it would have been quite a long time ago that we did the GCSEs and kids do get a lot of pressure put on them and I think it's even worse now than when I did it and ummm it's just sort of how you reacted to the pressure then compared to how you are reacting to the pressure now.

R; So, the comparison, so what

P6: You can deal with it

R; so, what you want to make them do, you want them to get, to make comparisons

P6: yeah

R: 'so as you're going through this think about the different pressures and the comparison to how you were reacting at that stage compared to how you are reacting now

P6: and maybe just how seriously you took it.

P5: the pressure hasn't changed but it's just like (inaudible)

R: Ok, anything else, anything that came about from your discussions?

LONG PAUSE

R: So, if I said to you now I'm going to give you an A3 piece of paper loads of magazines, loads of newspapers do you feel like you would be able to recreate something do you?

P's nod and yeahs

Appendix 8: Transcript 2 (Phase three discussion of themes, group one)

1. R: Tell me about the themes that you found, what is the first one that you found.
2. P1: Erm do you mean this bit here?
3. R: Yes
4. P1: Well, erm
5. P1: We found what most people had was family.
6. R: And what sort of things did you find about family?
7. P2: well, it's, the. Family is really support. We had it going through from early years right
8. through.
9. R: Ok
10. P2: But I guess, looking at it, it changes. In the early years we had stuff on support.
11. You know guidance and most of us had mums that, well were there for us.
12. Like I don't know who put this?
13. P9: that was mine, yeah, my mum stayed at home, but she always said she wanted more for
14. me. So, she was supportive like but erm she always spent time and we had a big family but
15. she always like wanting me to do stuff. It's important that parents encourage you, I think.
16. R: and what sort of stuff would that be?
17. P9: You know, like going to get a job and not being just a wife or mum. She used to tell me
18. she wanted me to do more than that.
19. P1: Yeah, we had that didn't we
20. P2: yeah like not feminist or anything but just wanting more for her daughter.
21. P9: Yeah that's right. But she never liked forced any of it just being supportive about
22. needing to do more.
23. P8: But I think that's how it is now don't you?
24. P9: Yeah
25. P8: I mean, girls don't want to be just at home any more. Things have changed and that.
26. P1,P3: Yeah
27. P8: For me it was all about not having those role models you know my family were not
28. worried about careers and my mum was just like doing three or four jobs and I could see
29. how hard she worked, and we never had any money and like, I thought, well you don't want
30. that do you?
31. P7: Yeah but you see I thought my mum working hard was all about showing me you need to
32. work so that's why like now you know, here, I think I can work hard.
33. P1: yeah but that's not when you were little though is it that's now.
34. P7: Yeah but I think it's starts when you are little. You are aware that you have no money

35. P3: We were always aware
36. P11: yeah me too
37. P3: But we had family there was a lot of love. And we were always with our cousins and
38. stuff and having grandparents. This part of it isn't it being part of family and having those
39. memories. That keeps you going. But I didn't want to be like my parents just doing jobs I
40. wanted a professional career. I don't want to hate going to work.
41. P6: But family can be the reason you want to do more. I mean I hated my sister growing up
42. she was always getting all the attention and stuff. That's why I said I was jealous. It was
43. obvious she was their favourite. When she went to uni and I was just like working n stuff it
44. really made me feel worse. And I thought nah I can do that. So, I think you look at what
45. they have done, and you think nah or yeah, I can do that and that's what makes you try.
46. R: so, for some of you having family helped through support but for others looking at family
47. meant you felt motivated
48. P8, P6: Yeah
49. P6: and well you know she is an inspiration now cos she is just like me, but she has been to
50. uni and that. I just thought well maybe I can to.
51. P2: Yeah role models are important, but I think like you always think about what your family
52. are like and you know that you maybe want more for that. Especially if you have kids and
53. that. I think you really think about it and go wow I need to do that. I think at the end of
54. primary school I became more aware.
55. P1: And I guess that is where relationships come in then
56. P5: Yeah but not always, I mean I was an only child and my parents worked a lot. I felt quite
57. lonely at times. And...
58. P1: So how do you think that affected you then?
59. P5: Well, erm you know it makes me feel stronger. Like I can do this. I don't need to rely on
60. people, this is me and I can make things work cos I have done you know?
61. P1: What about school though did you still feel lonely? Yeah, well I guess like I just got used
62. to it and that and well you know I really liked learning.
63. R: Did you all feel that way? I noticed you have a theme education
64. P1: Yeah, we have.
65. R: what was it about education?
66. P1: Well it was kind of different depending.

67. R: depending on what?
68. P5: well for me like, I enjoyed learning all the way through. Even now, but you were saying...
69. P3: Yeah, I found it hard, erm primary school and stuff
70. R: You found primary school hard
71. P3: Yeah and my dad worried and he got me a tutor because I couldn't do some of the stuff.
72. R: Like what?
73. P3: Like maths and that and like...
74. R: The tutor helped with maths?
75. P3: Yeah but I just felt like I couldn't do it like the others. But when I came to college I
76. started getting some good grades and thought, yeah, I can do this you know?
77. P1: The early years though they were not hard.
78. P3: No, they were fun, you need it to be fun. I had good experiences in the early years.
79. P1: and primary was fun too.
80. P4: Yeah, I remember lots of creative learning, sand pits, paint, growing stuff, school trips
81. they were all fun. And it was about the teachers too, they were good teachers.
82. R: What made them good?
83. P4: They were mothering and nurturing, you never really felt they were harsh. It's not like
84. high school you were motivated to do stuff not told off when you didn't.
85. R: what do you mean?
86. P3: Well your motivated by rewards.
87. R: what sort of rewards?
88. P1: We had house points
89. P3: Yeah and stuff like golden time
90. P2: I always like the school pets and looking after them. If you felt sad or whatever they
91. would cheer you up.
92. P3: but secondary school was hard long hours tiring. It can be a real drain trying to do it all. I
93. had zero confidence it was just like; all that motivation was lost and there was just too much
94. pressure. It was a shock after primary school.
95. P11: I Just found it a really emotional time. There's just not enough support in secondary
96. school, I mean yes you feel more independent and that's good but oh my god the pressure.
97. And teachers would only pick the good students to do things.
98. R: what do you mean?
99. P11: like going on trips, I didn't get to, I wasn't good. That sticks with you.
100. R: Ok
101. P6: Yeah that was the same for me too. I remember as well falling out a lot with

102. friends it was really difficult. Teachers put a lot of responsibility and stress on you
103. about results, it was all about results. I just felt stuck. I only started getting good
104. grades when I came to college.
105. R: And what's different now?
106. P6: I think it's because we are always all together and stuff and like we have all got
107. close.
108. R: and that makes a difference?
109. P6: yeah and...
110. P3: and it's something you wanna do. You're not forced into learning stuff you don't
111. want to. Like there's a choice. We chose this, so you know you enjoy it. I think as
112. well, having that gap means you are treated as more equal. Others around you, in
113. the class, they are more nurturing and supportive. It's more non-judgemental. We
114. try to understand each other more. That doesn't happen in school. It's almost like
115. you learn from experience in that gap, you need it to happen so that you can learn
116. from the bad experiences. It's about finding yourself in the gap. This is just a good
117. college there's far more support when you are learning.
118. P1: Yeah, I mean having children means I had responsibility. I am more mature. I
119. learnt form that.
120. P2: For me it was about leaving school and stopping everything to have a job, it gives
121. you a break from study. I think everyone should have that. I think the gap makes
122. you who you are. And it helps that when you come back you are treated like an
123. adult, they speak to you like and adult and just the teaching and stuff.
124. P6: Yeah
125. P1: and its different to school
126. R: Different how do you think?
127. P1: erm...
128. P3: At secondary school there's just not enough options. I mean we were not taught
129. about any of this stuff. I mean I hate some of the subjects but even they are more
130. interesting than what you do at school. School just not relevant to life. College is
131. about making your own choices.

132. P1: and like we are more independent and like we don't have to call them
Miss or
133. whatever its more respectful. It's like you feel you are only letting yourself
down if
134. you don't do it. There's no hassle and that
135. P6: Yeah, the tutor team are really good. Like they know it and make it
enjoyable
136. R: what do they know
137. P6: They know that we are trying hard this time and we wanna do it and if
138. something happens they don't go in hard they are more like how can help
you?
139. P1: Yeah xxx is cool like that.
140. P3: Yeah, I had a really bad time at school, and I came back and done some
like GCSE
141. type stuff an got some good grades. I think at college they just treat you
like a
142. person and they know that it isn't easy for you. At school they just think ah
she's
143. rubbish and don't care about you. They focus on the others you know?
144. R: So, some of you had bad experiences, what made you come back to
education?
145. P2: I think like, looking at your mum and that and then you come and see
what
146. college is like and it's not like school and you start to think about it
differently and
147. that.
148. R: Differently about what?
149. P2: I guess about what you can do, and you want to change and stuff.
150. P5: yeah cos like I had a bad experience at sixth form because like I left my
school
151. and was in this new place, but everyone had friends and didn't have any
and I
152. was lost. You need to have friends around you and when you haven't got
that then
153. you can't concentrate on the other stuff.
154. R: Other stuff?
155. P5: Learning and that
156. R: So, friends are important?
157. P6: Yeah, like we don't all get on all the time but you gotta feel like you
wanna be
158. there with people. Sometimes I just come in to see my friends or I will call
them up
159. and stuff to say I can't do it
160. P5: Yeah, and we tell you can
161. P6: Yeah
162. P11: for me it was about failure in school too. I didn't do very well, I mean I
failed

163. and that made me really down. I mean I was depressed and that. But this made me
164. strong and I thought I'm not gonna let it hold me back. It funny though you look
165. back and you do love some of school.
166. R: right
167. P11: yeah but it was also having others around me like boyfriends and that.
168. R: Ok, so I can see relationships is a theme, tell me about that
169. P3: I thought relationships were really important.
170. P1: yeah a few of us did
171. P3: Yeah like for me it's about meeting someone and them making you believe you
172. can do. My boyfriend supports me and motivates me.
173. P11: Yeah, we put down confidence.
174. R: Confidence?
175. P3: yeah for us we put down that that relationships give you confidence. You need a
176. good partner who thinks the same way as you do about things. I guess you share
177. your dreams together and that.
178. P2: yeah relationships need to be positive and you don't always get that in high
179. school or even after you leave. A few of us said that once you have that relationship
180. it makes you think about the future and what you want.
181. P1: Yeah but it's that support they give you too. All the encouragement when you
182. feel like you can't do it. A bit like friends.
183. P11: But friends are really important too.
184. P1: Yeah
185. P11: I made new friends, good friends and started going out more. That made me
186. feel more confident.
187. P3: Yeah friends are important. They keep you going. My friends here and my
188. friends when I am out and that. It's important to have supportive friends.
189. R: IS that the same throughout?
190. P1: Yeah, I think it starts off that you need to make friends, but it doesn't matter cos
191. you can't just see them when you like. When you are younger you're not with your
192. friends at weekends you're with your family but as you get older that changes.
193. Friends, oh well I mean, yeah friends do become more like your family cos you see
194. them all the time. So, I guess a few of us said that when we didn't have friends at
195. school and that, that made it hard.

196. R: Ok, what else could you find?
197. P3: Quite a lot of us thought work was important?
198. R: Work is that in the gap?
199. P3: Yeah
200. P7: Yeah, I mean I worked and done other things like going out a lot. It made me
201. realise you need money and stuff. I think you get this self-realisation about it all
202. when you work.
203. P5: I mean I started working and doing the job and I thought I can do this.
204. R: Where were you working?
205. P5: I was working in the doctor's surgery and I thought I want to do more of this. It
206. looked like such a good job.
207. P3: yeah, I was doing dentistry and I thought I want to go further and that was the
208. same for you right?
209. P4: Yes
210. P9: Yeah, I was working in the hospital
211. R: So, was it about finding what you loved, trying it?
212. P4 and P9: yes
213. P1: Sometimes though it's about doing crap jobs too, I mean I went straight from
214. school into my job and didn't need school to do it. And yeah, the money was ok. I
215. kind of didn't see the problem. And then having my son I thought there is more to
216. this and I want to help people. That was after I had my miscarriage though. I just
217. wanted to help others. That's when I started working at the hospital.
218. R: and what about bad jobs?
219. P1: you need to realise it's not easy, you don't get by without GCSEs you just end up
220. earning less. I had to work to realise that. I feel jealous of those people who know
221. that early on, I mean in school some of them seemed to have it all mapped out. You
222. need that, and I didn't, well you know, I didn't have a clue. Working helps you to
223. map it out.
224. P4: Yeah, you have to experience it to know and that doesn't happen in school. It
225. doesn't matter if teachers tell you, it's about finding it out.
226. P7 and P1: Yeah
227. P1: Its independence as well though. You can't learn that you need to have
228. experienced that.
229. P3: yeah, you shouldn't have to rely on anybody. We were talking about that and

230. how it's changed. My mum relied on my dad and I didn't want that. That's why I
231. knew I needed a good job.
232. P4: Yeah it's very different women know they need to be independent I don't think it
233. was like that when our mums were young.
234. P3: When you take that gap that's when you get independence and you realise what
235. you want and don't want but to keep it up you have to want it in the future to and
236. you think how I am going to keep me independent. Sometimes you realise you can't
237. do that without a good job.
238. R: So, maintain independence is a motivator?
239. P3: yes
240. P1: yeah, we put that here
241. R: Where?
242. P1: in our theme the future
243. R: Ok, tell me about that
244. P1: Well there is several things really but its thinking about the future you want.
245. R: and what did you put?
246. P8: For me it was about doing stuff you can't do without money like travel.
247. P9: Yeah, I had travel. I really want to keep holidaying like we did when we were
248. kids. Over the last few years I haven't been able to do that. I miss it.
249. R: Why are holidays so important?
250. P9: It's about making memories. They keep you going. I also want things like the
251. nice house. I look in magazines and that and I think I want that. I just want to not
252. have to worry about money or have that struggle.
253. P1; yeah, we all thought lifestyle was important.
254. R: What do you mean by lifestyle?
255. P10: For me having my kids, I realise how hard it can be if you don't have the money,
256. I want more for them.
257. P1: yeah it's like that for me to. It's about not worrying.
258. P3: I want a nice house, and holidays. Those things are important.
259. P11: It's those things that keep me going, I like looking in the magazines too. At
260. houses and that. I see that as my ambition to have holidays with my family and
261. come home to a nice house. That's my dream that's what keeps me going.
262. P1 and P3: Yeah,
263. P1: Do you do that thing on Rightmove where you pretend you have your job and
264. you look at houses?

265. P3: Yeah sometimes but it's more holidays
266. P11: For me its holidays and furniture.
267. P1 and P3: Laugh
268. P11: No, I love it. I can look at it all for hours.
269. P1: we couldn't holiday when I was working not even if I done loads of hours. You
270. need a good job for that. For me it's all about the lifestyle and being comfortable
271. enough to do what you want to do. Seeing parents struggle is hard and you don't
272. want that for your kids. The other thing is not wanting to be stereotyped. You know
273. like as a young mum and that, people just expect you go on benefits and don't want
274. to work and that's not what I'm about. I want my kids to feel proud of their mum
275. and was she has achieved, even though I was young.
276. R: what else is important when you think about the future?
277. P1: It's about helping others too. I think if you can change your lifestyle but still help
278. others then that's perfect.
279. P3: I agree
280. R: so, what is the theme I can see there?
281. P1: Well a few of us had things that were important that we thought described
282. emotions
283. R: Such as ?
284. P1: well there was some of us who have had like depression and stuff.
285. P7: yeah for me it was early on but for others it was around secondary school and
286. that gap.
287. P11: Yeah, for me that was a big part of who I am. I couldn't do anything until I got
288. better.
289. R: Better?
290. P11: Yeah, I found exercise and that really helped. It shaped who I am and what I
291. want to be.
292. P2: But you need those experiences they shape you and I don't think at school you
293. really get those experiences. Work experience is really important.
294. P2: Some of us put down about the bad experiences we had like losing people and
295. feeling lonely.
296. R: How do they make you resilient?
297. P2: erm
298. P11: Well you know, you think I got through this. You remember when you felt bad

299. and thought you would never do anything, and you look back and think I
 got through
300. that and that's who I am. When you know that you can take on anything.
301. Depression is tough like that because at times you can look back an almost
 feel, I
302. don't know feel you can do it but at other times you feel you can't.
303. R: How do you deal with that?
304. P11: you have to keep remembering who you are.
305. P3: Yeah, I don't think you can do that when you are young though. I think
 that
306. comes from the experiences. I feel sorry for those that have it easy
 because when
307. they have bad experiences, how are they gonna cope? I know, well, I know
 I can.

Appendix 9: Transcript 3 (Phase three discussion of themes, group two)

1. P13: The first theme we had was family, for me it was my brother, I have lots of brothers but
2. the one who is closet to me meant the most in terms of support. I think it's because we
3. were always together. We would fight but he would always help me especially at school.
4. P19: My brothers were good like that, but I think the most important person in terms of
5. support is your mum
6. All: Yeah
7. P19: I would be lost without her, everything I have been through and she has been solid,
8. never let me down.
9. P13: and that's important
10. P19: yeah
11. P13: I mean quite a lot of us have parents that have split up and divorced but your mum is
12. still there being a rock. I know that's how I have tried to be for my kids.
13. P13: and me, I see her, and I think I want to be there for my kids like you are for me.
14. P17: My mum fought so hard for me when I was younger and even now, she's my best mate
15. you know?
16. P4: I was a bit rogue when I was younger though and we didn't see eye to eye. I was just out
17. doing stuff. I was with my dad lots because of sport and that. But also, I spent time with the
18. kids on our estate.
19. P14: it's all about the area you lived and the kids you hung out with.
20. P13: They used to beat us up
21. R: they used to what?
22. P13: Beat us up, we lived in a bad area.
23. P14: we used to love it, we used to like...
24. P13: you should have come to the council estate where I was living (laughter)
25. P3: I lived on a council estate
26. P13: council estate that's where you wanna be, everyone loves each other.
27. P4: there were a couple of council houses down there and there was this little boy, and I
28. must have only been about 9 at the time but he was easily about 6 and he used to beat us at
29. as well
30. P13: Yeah, but earlier than that. We are talking about the early, early years, where you were
31. allowed to play out – where you were like 4,5 and 6 I was allowed to run rogue.

32. P3: Yeah, I was.
33. P13: There's some class A parenting there. That's why we put community support a lot of us
34. run rogue and you can't do that in some places. Where we grew up there was a real sense
35. of looking out for each other.
36. P14: I remember my 4th birthday the early memory in my life and I got a mini mouse buggy
37. and I was 4 I remember it. I was in reception. I got a mini mouse buggy and I'm just out
38. playing.
39. P13: yeah
40. P14: parking up my mini mouse buggy in one of the car park spaces near my house
41. P13: yeah
42. P3: and you couldn't do that now
43. P13: you get a cup you put berries in it, that's what one of my stupid mates told me to do and
44. I was about 5. My mum would come in "what you done? Ooh you've really cut your leg", I've
45. got berries in it. That's alright my mate sorted it. So, I didn't need to come home (laughs)
46. P14: You just can't do that now it's sad.
47. P13: no
48. R: so, you are all talking fondly and nostalgic about your childhood and how...
49. P13: it's not like that anymore
50. R: you looked out for one another and do you feel it is different for today's children?
51. P3: Oh yeah without a doubt, yeah
52. R: and is the feeling a feeling of being supported not only by your family but by people
53. around you and by friends? Does that make you resilient?
54. P14: yeah culture and environment are definitely key, to be able to have freedom, you
55. couldn't do that now.
56. P4: Yeah
57. R: So, something about freedom as well?
58. P13: yeah, yeah I was running all over the place, you know on X road before they done all X
59. Crescent and everything, that was all a field. That's where I used to play and then they
60. made it X Crescent. Near the the special needs school. Up there, that was lovely. I'm
61. still friends with some of them kids, it's crazy. You still see them and you like ahhhhh
62. R: support from family, you've got holidays, which we talked about it was
63. probably more about making memories. The idea of community and freedom. What else
64. have you got going on in the early years?

65. P14: ummmmm
66. R: any other themes or have you gone onto the next bit.
67. P13: I have just realised one of these is in the wrong place, sorry. No that's basically it – ooh
68. someone has put about being grounded and settled.
69. P4: that was wasn't it?
70. P13: and being happy about being born in the UK.
71. R: ok so a cultural...
72. P13: I mean I pretty much don't think he was thinking about that when he was five but....
73. R: when he was discussing it with me he said it was about being afforded more opportunity
74. in this country than we give credit for, the fact that we have an NHS
75. P13: but its Waffling on. Can we take that off?
76. P5: but he has got a good point there.
77. P13: yeah, he has, but can we just take it off because it's not about my early years. I didn't
78. care – do you see what I mean.
79. R: is it something that you care about now though?
80. P13: Yeah, I will put that with control and politics and how we've...I'll put that with now
81. because I don't think that particularly goes with early years – do you agree?
82. Others: Yep but I think it needs to be in community support too
83. P13: I don't particularly fondly remember appreciating being born in the UK
84. R; It's not something you recognise
85. P13: when I was younger I took everything for granted, awful child. But I agree community.
86. R: so now we are moving into primary education – anything going on there?
87. P13: constantly moving, who else put constantly moving?? Love that
88. P14: no, I wrote that for you
89. P13: Oh ok, that was just me. I was constantly moving. My mum could never stay settled for
90. nothing.
91. R: something about stability in primary education
92. P13: someone else put something about moving in your one
93. P15: Yeah that was on ours
94. P13: was that in primary years
95. P15: ummm we moved to a new house from, we went from to
96. P13: that's a big move
97. P15: and we lived above a pastry shop cos my mum worked in it and then we moved from the
98. pasty shop to which is where I still live now. Ummmm
99. P13: that big int it, it's a big move to come from a city...
100. P15: yeah but beforehand, cos mum had, mum had paid off whatever she needed to
101. on the flat me and her had. It was only me and mum, right up until I was three or

102. four and then we just went travelling for a bit. It was her meeting my step-dad and
103. we moved to err ummm to So, before that we didn't have many friends
104. whatever because it was just me and my mum. We would just be up and travelling
105. about.
106. P14: yeah
107. P15: we were in Australia, Singapore, all over the shop.
108. P13: so that wasn't just moving that would be travelling as well.
109. P15: yeah
110. P13: travelling
111. P15: I think that's why I probably appreciate holidays a lot more as well they give you good memories
112. P13: and travelling you can hold onto that when things are bad
113. R: ok
114. P13: and mine was... I have happy memories of moving because I was so excited by moving
115. and meeting new friends, but I also had that hint of sadness cos I had to leave my friends.
116. But, I always loved going to new schools that was the thing for me. It really was, I loved it, I
117. loved being the new kid.
118. R: right, so something about meeting new people but also losing people
119. P13: Yeah, Yep that's a big thing.
120. R: and I think what we were talking about earlier about maybe that making it easier for you
121. to make friends. Because your contrast was that you didn't find it easier to make
122. friends.
123. P15: Its more finding someone that will tolerate me, and my attitudes and stuff like
124. that.
125. P13: this really effected my older brother badly because he's not one for making
126. friends it's my personality that got me to adapt better. I can go into a room and
127. speak to anybody, doesn't mean that... do you see what I mean
128. P14: Yeah
129. 13:but if you speak to anybody you do that...and he, he really struggled with this my
130. brother
131. and it affected him actually in a negative way for the rest of his life.
132. R: Are we saying then, that there is something about your personalities?
133. P13: Yeah, I do
134. R: that there is a difference between you in terms of personality as well?
135. P13: Yeah
136. P14: Yeah

137. R: anything else in the primary part?
138. P2 and 3: No
139. P14: but I think these two here – early years and primary they are kind of together.
140. R: you think they are together
141. P13: yeah most definitely, the one and the two they are kind of together
int they. I
142. don't know about you but if you count like 1-10 as that area
143. P2, P3,P4: Yeah
144. R: ok so I will adjust that in the research to put that actually early years and primary
145. they felt
146. that... because I think the other group couldn't remember their early years
147. P13: Oh really. Ahh I loved it, loved it
148. P14: yeah, best days, easy
149. P14: Yeah this is where things start getting a bit pants (laughter)
150. R: it's interesting that you say that "high school is where things start getting a little
151. bit pants".
152. P14: yeah it does
153. P13: it does, this is where you are getting ya, your own independence, teachers talk
154. to you, you've got loads of teachers that put you down. But then you always have, I
155. always had like one tutor that was really supportive of me and he really rooted for
156. me and likesaid she would go in a room and the teacher would be like oh, what
157. did he say to ya?
158. P14: You ruined my day or like em, you will always be a waster and even on a one to
159. one with me and my mum and the principal and erm he sat there, and he was just
160. like ... do you like Mr X and I was like no. And he was like Mr X do you like X and he
161. was just like no. And then we were separated.
162. P13: In your high school years did you have tutors that you got along with and tutors
163. that put you down?
164. P4, 5 and 6: Yeah
165. P13: that's how I felt, and I think that the way the tutors spoke to us. I would be
166. mortified if I spoke to my kids like that now...
167. P13: my son went to high school
168. P14: yeah, they couldn't now to be fair,
169. P13: no, no but if they did speak to my son like the way they...you would just walk in
170. and they would be like, just get out "what I looked at ya" (laughter)

171. P14: literally I used to walk in
172. P13: "get out of the room"
173. P14: I used to walk in, and someone was teaching, and she'd just go, not today. Just
174. put her hand up and go not today
175. P13: did you have...
176. P14: I wouldn't have even said anything just walked in, not late, "just not today".
177. I'd be like oh, I'm a product of your bad morning
178. P13: Yeah
179. P14: so, you feel like you just can't be bothered with me today, so you feel like I will
180. shove you into the dinner hall and leave you
181. P19: I had a teacher like that at
182. P14: yeah
183. P19: Leaving primary school, starting at middle school it just went down. He err, he
184. spent more time going outside for a quick puff of his fag. He didn't give a damn that
185. half of his kids were like rioting. On one particular, one took great pleasure in
186. punching people. I remember when... do you... you must remember that like that in
187. middle school doing the Tudor days.
188. SEVERAL P's Together: yeah, yeah, I used to love that
189. P14: Yeah, Yeah, yeah
190. P19: I can remember that on this particular day my dad took me into the school, I
191. was in uniform and he walked up to my teacher and he said right, seeing as you are
192. quite happy for my daughter to get punched, whilst she is in school and do nothing
193. about, then she's not taking part in this and she won't be coming back to this school
194. ever again. After Easter holidays I was atBest school I have ever been to.
195. P14: best school, I went there. Amazing
196. R: I'm interested in this, what does the best school look like?
197. P14: It was in the middle of fields down by fields, always smelt like cow pats or shit.
198. It always stunk, it used to make me gag.
199. P19: Yeah
200. P13: but that was middle school
201. P14: It was middle school
202. P19: lunchtime discos
203. P14: the difference, what the children don't have now, is that they don't have middle

204. school. Middle school is a real defining moment in a young person because, because
205. they're not in primary school for too long like they are now, and they go to this
206. middle school where they meet new people. They have that early adjustment.
207. Whereas now its primary, high and it's that oh my god I have been with these
208. people for the last 8 years of my life, and now I have got to go into this massive huge
209. new school with new teachers, and my best friends not gonna be in this class
210. P13: they prepared you didn't they for high school
211. P14: yeah, they prepared you to make new friends, adjust
212. P13: I've put that
213. P14: and go to new places and develop. They don't have that no more. That was
214. amazing
215. P13: I have put that in between 2 and 3, yeah, I have put that in-between.
216. P13: that was age 10 to 13
217. P14: that was amazing, and I was so sad they have now shut. I just thought my
218. daughters not gonna have that. We had the best headmaster. He was so fucking
219. strict, I swear to god. I had anxiety when (inaudible) I don't mind in class, but I'd go,
220. and I would be like (whispered) "I got to see the headmaster". It used to be like that
221. I would be like, I don't want to go. I used to fear it and that's how it should be, you
222. should be fearing being naughty, the consequences of... they never used to shout at
223. ya. He used to be like I'm disappointed, you are better than that. Yeah but "I so
224. am" (fake cry) and he would be like "good". (laughter) ummm oh I don't know I left
225. 2003 so. It was the best school ever.
226. P13: yeah middle school was good.
227. P14: supportive and anti-bullying, there was not bullying.
228. P13: no, you didn't get it did ya
229. P14: No if there was one I would be amazed to see who it was because, it just wasn't
230. the case. It just didn't get that.
231. P13: I liked middle school because my friends, but I was a horrible kid and I was a
232. bully and I did get pulled in a lot and I was going sort of waywood so yeah not proud
233. of them years.

234. P14: no
235. P13: but I did enjoy high school, I did enjoy middle school for my friends but looking
236. back I was a horrible kid pwoah. I would hate my daughter if she was like that.
237. P19: Do you know what, I always wonder, why you know there is less bullying in some
238. schools an increase in other schools. What goes wrong with the levels there?
239. P13: it's got to be the teachers, got be the teaching. The teacher's not intervening or
240. they're not tackling it properly...
241. P19: Or the head is not allowing the teachers to do the you know...
242. P13: Kids don't care anymore, though do they?
243. P19: they get to know the system
244. P13: yeah
245. P19: they know the teacher touches em, they broke the law there and then.
246. P13: yeah
247. P14: well I had to go to my daughter's school the other day, to put some sun cream
248. on her and when I got there at break time, I thought god they're where are all the
249. teachers. I couldn't believe all these children were running around on the
250. playground and the fields and all I could see was 4 or 5 teachers. I thought that's
251. odd. Cos, I remember my break time at X it was swarming with teachers, you didn't
252. care. When you were doing something wrong you had to look over your shoulder
253. mate, "it's clear, it's clear" because they were everywhere. You know but it's not
254. there. I don't know my daughter gets so anxious about break time. She's like "
255. who's gonna protect me at break time?" and I'm like ah it's a free-for-all darling,
256. grow some thick skin, you got to get out there. (laughter). Oh, I don't know I find it
257. quite difficult that we had such a, I had such an easy ride with school, and I can see
258. other children don't. I think it's quite sad. Cos its defining.
259. R: so, you felt school was an easier ride
260. P14: yeah 100%
261. R: you have also spoken about teachers, there is a contrast here between there
262. being supportive teachers and not supportive teachers. In terms of what makes you
263. resilient today, which one is more important?

264. P14: unsupportive
265. P13: for you, for me I don't, I always think Mr X would be so proud of me.
He always
266. thought I'd do this
267. 14: Oh yeah, there is plenty of teachers who would be proud of me but for
me today
268. it's ha
269. P13: they motivate you, see they don't motivate me. I see them as
irrelevant.
270. R: so, for some of you unsupportive teachers is one in the eye is kind of a, I
have
271. done it anyway regardless of you
272. P2 and P19: yeah
273. R: is there anybody else who sits with that opinion is that opinion reflecting
their
274. experience? Or is it largely being supportive?
275. P15: I don't know I think supportive ones its good cos it sort of does spur
you on a bit
276. but at the same time the ones that were unsupportive and the ones that
were nasty
277. you kind of want to do to it to show them you can do it. Like if they were
to call you
278. stupid or something like that you kind of want to be able to do it and it
motivates
279. you to think, no I'm not stupid. I want to be able to do it. To kind of not get
back at
280. them but to prove a point, kind of thing and also to yourself.
281. R: and is that tied into that competitive nature we were discussing earlier?
282. P13: Oh yeah high school, don't know about you guys but we were saying
we were
283. highly competitive sports people and like for me even though, even
through
284. primary, middle and high I did still move but my consistency was always my
sport.
285. And I always knew I could get on a team and I always knew that I would be
winning,
286. and X was exactly the same. I was highly competitive, I don't know about I
don't
287. know what you guys were like in high school.
288. P5: I was exactly the same
289. P14: I used to drive them mad cos I was off, you know gone
290. P13: Did you have anything where you were like anything in high school
291. P19: No
292. P13: No? X? Were you?
293. P15: Yeah, yeah in middle school and in high school, I was like the captain
of bloody
294. everything.
295. P14: Yeah

296. P15: literally any sport, even if it was like five days a week, I would be in there.
297. P13: me too
298. R: For those who said they weren't competitive at school. I'm interested, like you
299. said you were. We were talking about comparison of grades. Were you competitive?
300. with your friends
301. P19: Shakes head
302. R: No? None of that?
303. P19: Not at high school
304. P13: I just fluked it and luckily got some GCSES and I barely attended. I was more
305. shocked than my teacher. (laughter)
306. P14: I struggled academically, really struggled
307. P13: I just done it, I done what I did but my teacher said what if you did attend? You
308. would have got A's, you're an idiot for not coming. I went I'm done now, I'm off. I
309. didn't even blink when I was going I was like ciao. Picked up my GCSE results and I
310. was gone.
311. P14: see I had to re-sit mine this year. Last year
312. P13: I was out of there. Don't think I could get out of there quick enough.
313. P14: I struggled, and I felt that every lesson I went to I had to try. I had to really try
314. and to get to, just average and I, the moment I stopped trying I just slipped way back
315. down. Because I was so, I don't know, I just didn't have no focus on me to maybe
316. get additional help. I don't know
317. P13: there was no additional help
318. R: I'm interested in that you would try, you obviously tried really hard to get
319. excepted for England
320. P14: I went for trials
321. R: what's the difference between trying at sport and trying academically. Why did
322. you feel it was more of an effort?
323. P14: I just found it more of a challenge, the fact that sport was natural to me. My
324. whole family are sport orientated and I, it was my mid-week and weekend normality
325. for me. I didn't ever have
326. P13: my dad was really sporty
327. 14:like when the Olympics were on, commonwealth, anything, even if it started at 4

328. in the morning I would be there sitting up with my dad. Waiting for cycling to start.
329. Or like, I would be cheering on triathlons, where most kids in my school didn't even
330. know what a triathlon was. So, it was just second nature. However, academically I
331. did try, it just didn't come natural to me.
332. R: so, were the rewards different? Did you see the success academically?
333. 14: well I knew I needed it because I always wanted to be a P.E teacher or a coach or
334. umm, you know like a sport coach really. I always knew I needed... and that really
335. did hit home quite hard, that when I didn't get my C in English or in science. It was
336. just I needed them, and I didn't get em. And I was gutted, absolutely gutted.
337. R: but something happened that made you think, I am gonna do it. Something
338. afterwards gave you that push.
339. P14: yeah I guess knowing I could have had trials helped even if I was injured.
340. R: so now we are going onto the gap between high school and now.
341. P13: well we got relationships and big events, that's the biggest section for us and
342. then mental health and other issues. This is sort of where we met...
343. P13: we have relationships, we have break downs of relationships umm domestic
344. Abuse
345. P14: But I think relationships here goes in with that control part. Because we all felt
346. more in control once we got out of them.
347. R: So, let's explore what that is. Is it about having a relationship? Is it about feeling?
348. supported or is it about...
349. P13: it's that first, I don't know about anyone else, but was this your first proper
350. relationship in this? Yeah, first proper relationship in here. Even if it didn't go so
351. well. First proper relationships. Which we then, I put an arrow here to cross these,
352. cos these all kind of go together. We sort of thought it was between the high school
353. to mid-twenties where we put having children and marriages and separations, to
354. marriages. We had family bereavement, parents splitting up umm
355. R: and tell me what you told me earlier about...

356. 13: Pets die, the pets are a big thing, that comes in with bereavement. I had to leave

357. college because I was pregnant to have my children ummm

358. R: tell me what you told me earlier about life events and adversity what that then

359. taught you. Do you remember that point?

360. P13: umm yeah, yeah, I was gonna say it when we got up here actually. I was gonna

361. say about now it all just, for that now, I look back and I think it is all of this, that

362. contributed to now. This was it, we had gone through all of this and I thought, and I

363. did I went through all of this and I can't, I think it was my daughter having her

364. operation at X I thought. She's gonna be alright soon, I'm not gonna have to keep

365. coming back here, I can just get on with it and do something for me. I have gone

366. through all of this I can do it. And I think it was all this that's definitely done that,

367. and now I sit here now, and I look back and I think; bloody hell. There's been loads,

368. not just this. When I first applied for the course I thought it was just all this middle

369. bit. But, actually I think it is 1,2,3 and 4 or all of it together is what made me come

370. back.

371. P14: because you felt, do you know what I have got over all of this and I am strong

372. person. It is almost like you needed to reflect

373. P13: It didn't break me, it didn't break me

374. R: is there something about experiencing that breakage?

375. P13: to another P8 you didn't break, did you not have that?

376. P8: I don't know

377. P13: cos you have had your little one, so you obviously had the birth, did you have

378. any bereavement

379. P8: Yeah, my friend

380. P13: did it kind of say to you, did it kind of motivate you to come here?

381. P8: no

382. P13: what was your motivation to come?

383. P8: trying to make a better life for my little one

384. P13: but it was having her in your big event in the before that made you come back?

385. P13: yeah and the bereavement of a friend I reckon that does motivate you in some

386. way makes you think that life's too short.

387. P13: but we also put in with that mental health issues, people getting mental abuse.
388. Obviously, depression anything like that coming up from this. I mean obviously
389. bereavement cause you to go downhill. It did for me, ummm but my children kept
390. me going at that point. Yeah all of that just coincides together.
391. R: How are they coinciding, how Are mental health...
392. P13: well because relationships I think the mental health, abuse came from the
393. relationships. Is that right?
394. P's : Yeah
395. P14: and family was mine
396. P13: so, they came into together and then from the relationships I had children.
397. Ummm parents separating that's obviously linked in with the mental health issues
398. and that caused that. You got your pregnancy that caused me to have metal health
399. issues definitely. Umm, yeah.
400. R: so are we saying when we think about adversity are we saying that we are looking
401. back and saying actually I can overcome mental health issues and if I can overcome
402. mental health issues I can overcome doing an exam
403. P14: or doing...
404. P13: well there your big things
405. P15: I wouldn't say I have overcome it, but I think you learn to manage it better
406. R: ok, so what does that look like? Learning to manage it?
407. P15: and to live with it
408. P13: It never goes away it is a bit like bereavement, it just gets, it gets easy to cope
409. with each day. It's still there.
410. P19: and the more you talk about it the easier it is to deal with it. You know if you
411. have got it all inside here and you are only dealing with it by yourself that's then
412. gonna make you even worse and sink even lower and lower and lower.
413. R: so are we getting back to this connectedness thing that you were talking about
414. earlier.
415. P13:it's about control its linked straight onto number 8 where you get control of your
416. life. You start to sort of sort things out. Get your own car open to more
417. opportunities. Get into politics, do the things that you love. You start to think like f

418. or me I was like I do wanna get back into education. I want to do something for me,
419. something for me to meet people and then we go down that way.
420. P19: I think just leaving high school, I had a two-month-old baby. I done my GCSEs but
421. I mean my first exam was three days after giving birth. Yeah, I, I done em all but I
422. didn't pass any. umm straight after that getting into this awful relationship that was
423. based on coercion and just sheer abuse from the outset You don't see that because
424. it was disguised and you know, I was forever being told, your thick, your stupid, you
425. can't do this. If you go get a job it will be over my dead body, you can't go to college
426. because I need you to be here and I know where you are and then when he, you
427. know I managed to get him out. Lost two boys through it, but I got him out umm I
428. had that recovery period. Then I thought do you know what can I be blunt?
429. R: Of course, you can
430. P19: really blunt, I thought fuck it, I'm not gonna let you dictate my path now. Signed
431. up to college, completed English last year. Said I am not gonna stop there. Here I
432. am
433. P13: yeah you took control, that where we put that, that then links in now.
434. Umm and it's about proving them wrong, but that's here in this bit,
435. like obviously and like I said when you look back on things. X probably looks back on
436. his environment and thinks I am lucky to live here through being on this course
437. thinking about things there and then. This course makes you look at things
438. differently. It's made me look at things differently
439. P14: Yeah definitely, especially sociology.
440. P13: Yeah
441. P14: I mean cos you're definitely gives a different take and you think oh actually I
442. didn't realise but oh its true more. Knowing these helps you take control
443. R: So, learning sociology, psychology, learning about people
444. P13: Yeah
445. P19: helps you to gain some perspective and some understanding
446. P13: definitely, I was, I wasn't very judgemental I was privately judgemental to
447. people, now I am not.
448. P19: Internally I think we all were to be fair.

449. P13: but we have always said we are a very good group, we are not all best buds, but
450. we all get along. Umm I think we are lucky cos we could of, I don't, I don't think I
451. would have stayed the course had I not made friends and stuff. We have said that
452. from day one haven't we?
453. P14: yeah
454. P19: It's been testing at times though innit?
455. P13: yeah, yeah
456. P14: But again, all our little paths
457. P13: and we have all had different perspectives on things and we're like you can sort
458. it. We have helped one another. I mean the next six weeks we are all gonna have to
459. help each other cos by god we have so much to do it's unreal.
460. P19: yeah, Monday is an exam. We got maths
461. P13: you'll be fine
462. P14: So, I guess that brings us to the last theme that we had. Unbreakable
463. R: And what does unbreakable mean to you? Tell me about it
464. P13: well I guess, well its all of this. Everything here we have spoken about the
465. Control and the stuff we went through. It all comes together and makes you think.
466. P15: I think you said it, what was it you said about it not breaking you?
467. P13: Yeah, you just look at it and you think all this crap, all these experiences and we
468. Are still here, doing it. This made us really.
469. P14: certainly, makes me think differently having done this.
470. P13: Yeah and we, it, could be so different.
471. P15: and I think it's important about using it and showing others we can do it.
472. P13: Ummm yeah, I bet you wish you could go and tell X
473. P14: Yeah
474. R: OK do you feel like you have told us enough about the themes?
475. P14, P15, P13: Yeah

Appendix 10: PowerPoint lesson two (phase two)

Session 2: Data Collection (Pilot study)

Esther Borrett Trainee Educational Psychologist

1



What do we mean by data collection?

- Data collection is the systematic approach to gathering information – it could be collected in the form of numerical information (quantitative) or through text, pictures and spoken word (qualitative)
- The purpose of collecting data is to answer questions, evaluate outcomes and make predictions about the future.
- In our study we are going to collect qualitative data this is because:
- We want to develop a deeper understanding of how you see your experiences and because we want your voice to be central to the information we collect
- In this sense we can get a real sense of your understanding of the situation.

Key Features of qualitative research:

- Understanding is better achieved in context, more naturalistic
- Qualitative research is interactive, I want you to teach me about your lives
- Design of the research can evolve
- Theory can emerge from the research process

2



What are visual methods?

- Visual research is a qualitative research methodology that relies on the use of artistic mediums to "produce and represent knowledge."
- Visual research methods are those that incorporate some kind of imagery into the research process
- It's argued that images can encourage talk about things that would not otherwise be achieved.
- The visual method we are going to use to answer the question "What protective mechanisms do returners to education describe as helping them to achieve in education second time around?" is collage construction
- You will make a collage by selecting images that you feel represent the things, events, peoples, skills, values, experiences, places and times that have helped you to reach the point that you are today with your education
- The collage will demonstrate your story of resilience and will be a visual representation of what has helped you to achieve in education second time around

3



How do we do it?



- You will each be given an A1 piece of paper
- There is a selection of magazines, newspapers, travel brochures and shop brochures you can use for images (glue and scissors are provided)
- Your collage will answer the question "What views do RTE have on what helps them to be resilient in education second time around?" — to do this think about the factors that surround you so that you can achieve this time e.g. family
- Think about these time periods in your life 1. Early years 2. Primary years 3. High school years 4. In-between high school and returning to study 5. Now (return to study)
- You can divide your page however you feel and stick the images in the time period that you think these factors occurred e.g. family support in primary school

4

Completed collages

You will be given a number to put on the back of the collage. You must remember your number



15 mins

Hand your collage in – it will be locked away where no-one can see it. I will bring it back next week.

Reflections for this week:
This week reflections will be written in class. I would like you to reflect on the following: How did it feel when you were constructing your collage, were there any parts you found hard? What did you think of this method of expressing your story? Do you think it's a good or bad method and why? Do you feel you had enough time? How do you feel the images you used answer the research question? Do not put your name on your reflection but add the number you were just given.

5

Thank You

6

Appendix 11: PowerPoint lesson two (phase three thematic analysis)

Session 3: Doing Thematic Analysis

Esther Borrett: Trainee Educational Psychologist

1

Aims of today's session:

- To complete a thematic analysis

2



How do researchers' analyse data?

Qualitative:

- In-depth information
- Gain insight
- Can generate ideas and hypotheses
- Can provide a rationale for future decisions
- Exploratory

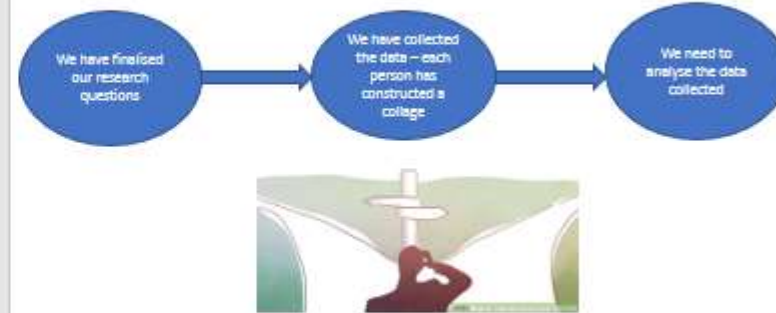
VS

Quantitative:

- Objective is to 'count up' the data
- Make generalizations from a sample of people to the population we are interested in studying
- Test out hypotheses
- Statistical analyses
- Explanatory

3

At what point are we in our research?



4



Why qualitative?

Interested in accessing experiences

Specificity – we want to find out specific information about a phenomena. We don't want to replicate or make generalisations

We want to acknowledge our role in the research – unique insight into the issue

Inductive – we want to generate new theories rather than test out existing ones

Iterative – we want to refine our thinking about a theory

5



How do we analyse data that is visual?

- One way to analyse visual data is called **thematic analysis**
- If we use a thematic analysis we can:
- Provide a description and develop understanding of the collages you constructed
- Identify, analyse and report patterns in our data (these patterns are called themes)
- It's a way of taking lots of detailed, rich information and minimising it
- It can go further than minimising it though, it can help you to interpret the data that you have collected

6

Identifying the Themes – which do we use

Inductive

- Little or no predetermined theory
- Data itself determines the themes
- Themes emerge from the data
- Can be time consuming

There are general theories of resilience?!

VS

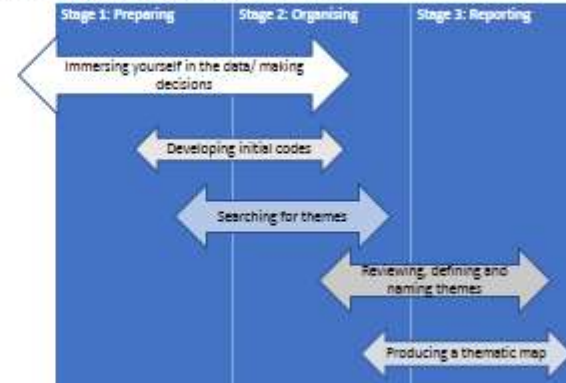
Deductive

- Predetermined structure or framework – impose own theories on the data and use them to analyse it
- Themes are already identified – testing them out
- Can be inflexible
- Can bias and limit interpretation

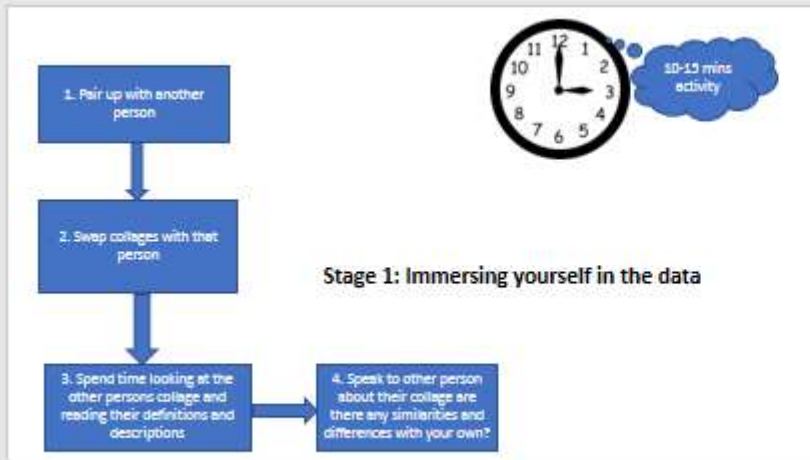
The research is participatory and therefore reflects your thinking – not the theories of others?!

7

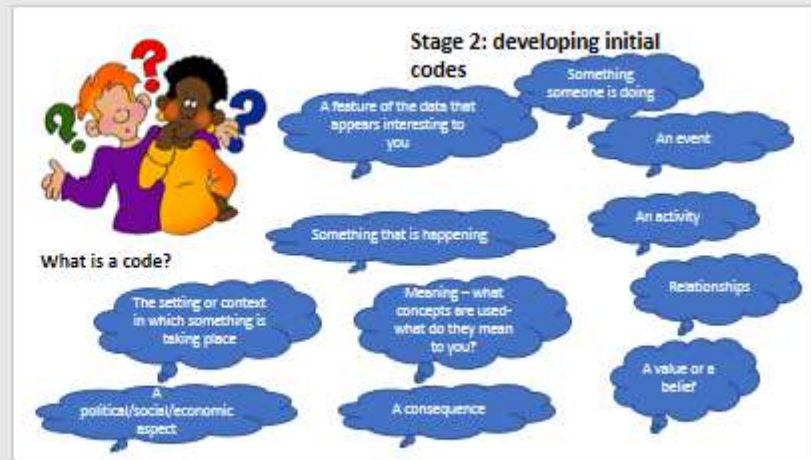
Inductive Thematic Analysis Stages:



8

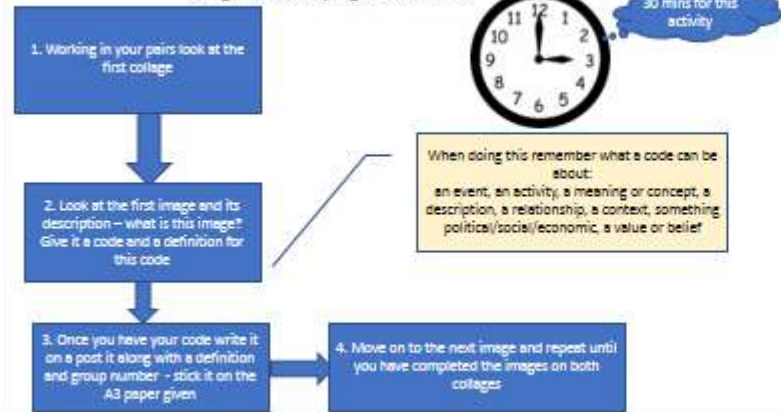


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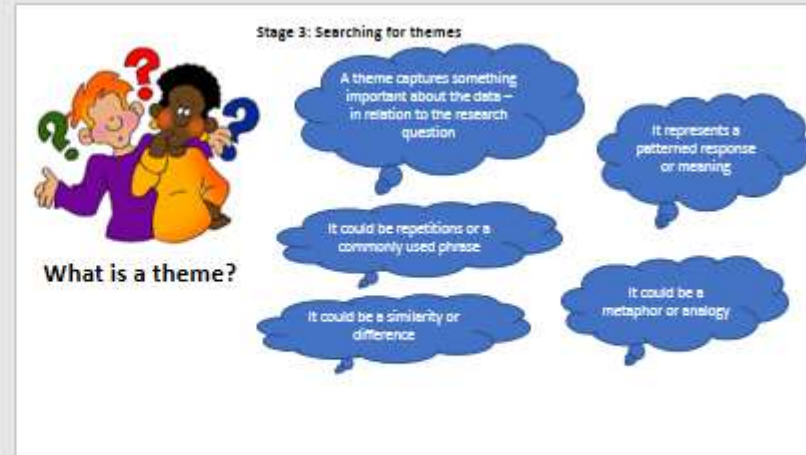
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Stage 2: Developing initial codes



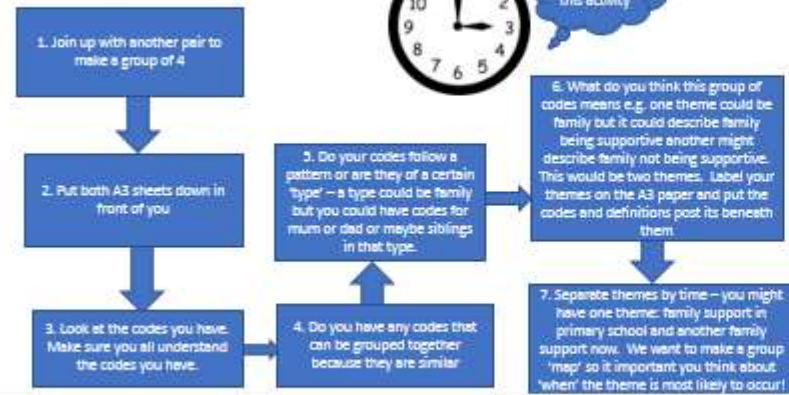
11

Stage 3: Searching for themes



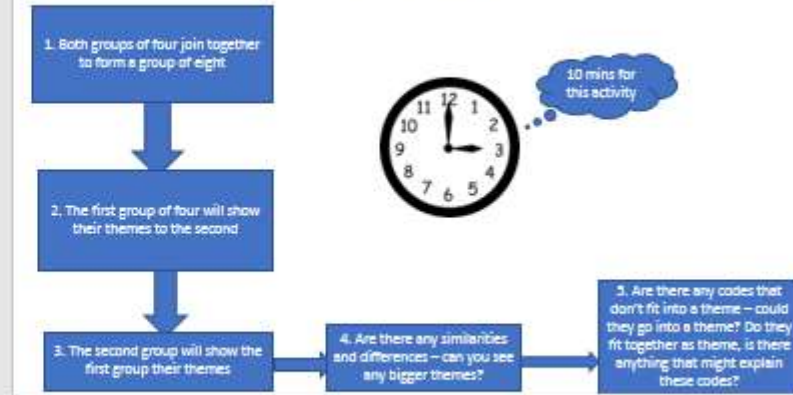
12

Stage 3: Searching for themes



13

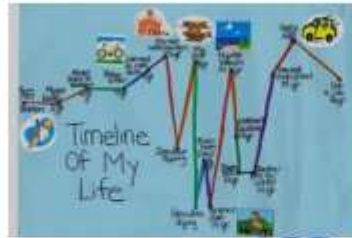
Stage 4: Reviewing, defining and naming a theme



14

Stage 5: Producing a thematic map

- We want to represent the themes throughout your educational journey
 - The graphic facilitator is going to draw graphics for each theme you have found
 - To do so we need to get the themes in order
 - Label all the themes as follows:
 - Early education themes with a 1
 - Primary education themes with a 2
 - High school with a 3
 - Time in-between leaving high school and now as a 4
 - Themes from the current time period with a 5
- The graphic facilitator will start with the number ones



Activity 30 mins

Remember we are interested in whether factors are linked – does anything in early years relate to later years? Are there links, repeating patterns, contrasts? Is one theme more prominent in one age group but not so in another? Look at the map and discuss then we can mark on any links.

15

Thank You

- Please reflect on:
- the method used (thematic analysis)
 - the process of making your collage (what did it mean to you, did it highlight anything?)
 - Working with others to develop codes and themes

16

Appendix 12: Prompt list generated in phase one

Where did your drive/ambition/motivation/determination come from?

What did your family do to support you? Did they push you and if so how?

What was your experience of the gap between education and now? Have your priorities changed and if so, how?

What has life shown you that now you can do it?

Or how have your life experiences influenced your choices

What were your reactions to any pressures you may have experienced?

Appendix 13: Blank table for themes group one

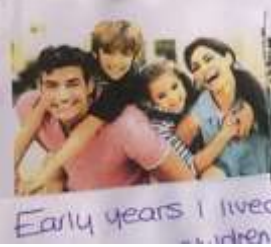

Theme	Subtheme	Source	Quote/Pic
Family			
Relationships			
Education			
Work			
Future and overcoming adversity			


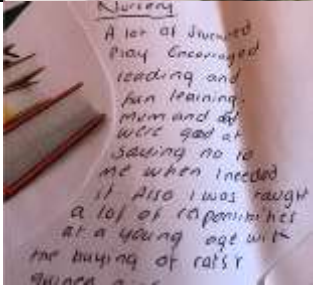
Appendix 14: Blank table for themes (group two)



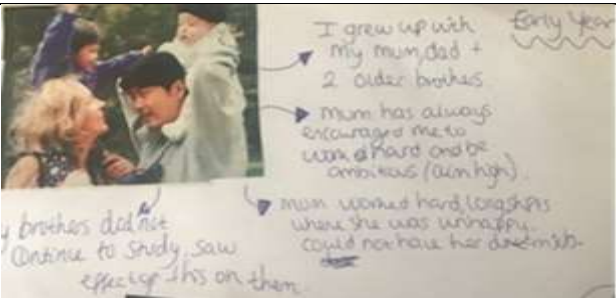
Theme	Subtheme	Source	Quote/Picture
Support			
Control			
Big events			
Mental health			
Unbreakable			



Appendix 15: Completed themes table (phase three group one)


Group 1 themes member checked

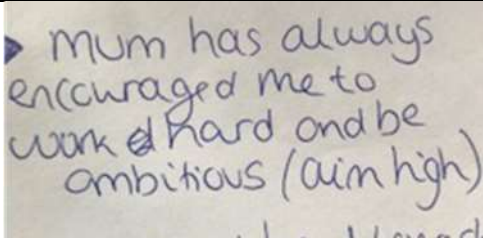
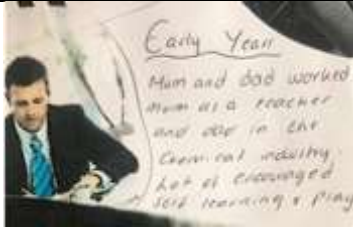

Theme	Sub-theme	Source	Quote/Picture
Family		CR1 Collage	
Family		CR2 Collage	
Family		Transcript 2 Lines 37-39	<p>CR3: But we had family, there was a lot of love. And we were always with our cousins and stuff and having grandparents. This is part of it isn't it? Being part of</p>

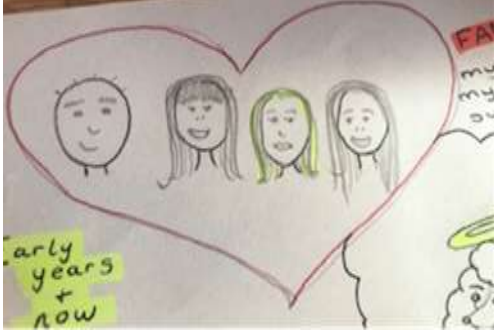

			family and having those memories, that keeps you going.
Family	Learning responsibilities	CR2 Collage	 <p>At the age of 18, I became the "man" of my own program, as I was the only one that knew how to speak English. It helped to give more responsibility about my responsibilities and to become an independent learner. Also, it gave me some strength to fight for my goals and to tell them to I can be helped now.</p>
Family	Learning responsibilities	CR4 Collage	 <p><u>Nursing</u> A lot of fun and play encouraged reading and fun learning. Mum and dad were good at saying no to me when I needed it. Also I was taught a lot of responsibilities at a young age with the buying of cat's r...</p>


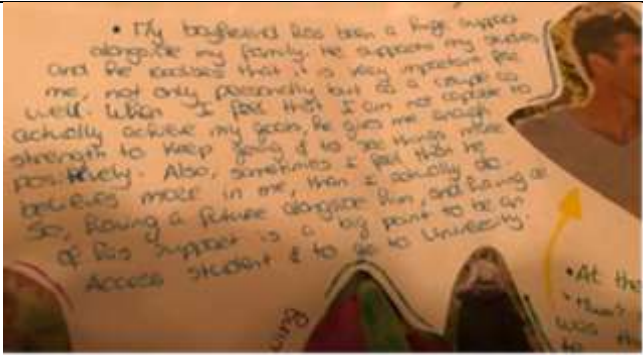

Family	Family as role models	CR5 Collage	
Family	Family as role models	CR4 collage	
Family	Family as role models	CR11 collage	


Family	Family as role models	CR8 collage	
Family	Family as role models	Transcript 2 lines 51-54	<p>CR2: Yeah role models are important, but I think, like, you always think about what your family are like and you know that you maybe want more than that. Especially if you have kids and that. I think you really think about it and go wow I need to do that. I think at the end of primary school I became more aware.</p>
Family	Family as role models	CR4 collage	
Family	Family as role models	Transcript 2, lines 27-35	<p>CR8: For me it was all about not having those role models. You know my family were not worried about careers and my mum was just like doing three or four jobs and I could see how hard she worked, and we</p>

			<p>never had any money and like, I thought, well you don't want that do you?</p> <p>CR7: Yeah but, you see I thought my mum working hard was all about showing me you need to work. So that's why like, now you know, here, I think I can work hard.</p> <p>CR1: Yeah but that's not when you were little though that's now.</p> <p>CR7: Yeah but I think its starts when you are little. You are aware that you have no money</p> <p>CR3: We were always aware.</p>
Family	Family as role models	CR6 Collage	
Family	Family as role models	Transcript 2, lines 41-45	<p>CR6: But family can be the reason you want to do more. I mean I hated my sister growing up she was always getting all the attention and stuff. That's why I said I was jealous. It was obvious she was their favourite. When she went to uni and I was just like working and stuff it really made me feel worse. And I thought nah I can do that. So, I think you look at what</p>


			they have done, and you think nah or yeah, I can do that and that's what makes you try.
Family	Family as encouragement	CR11 Collage	
Family	Family as encouragement	CR4 Collage	
Family	Family as support	CR8 Collage	
Family	Family as support	Transcript 2, line 7	CR2: Family is really support.

Family	Family as support	CR3 Collage	
Family	Family as support	CR10 Collage	
Family	Family as support	Transcript 2, lines 13-15	<p>CR9: Yeah, my mum stayed at home, but she always said she wanted more for me. So, she was supportive like but, erm she always spent time and we had a big family but, she was always like wanting me to do stuff. It's important that parents encourage you, I think.</p>
Family	Family as support	Transcript 2, lines 10-11	<p>CR2: In the early years we had stuff on support. You know guidance and most of us had mums that well, were there for us.</p>




Family	Family as support	CR4 Collage	
Family	Family as support	CR2 Collage	
Relationships	Impact of friends	CR5 Collage	

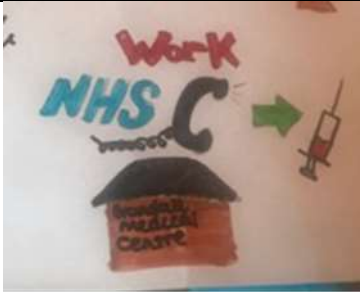

Relationships	Impact of friends	Transcript 2, lines 190-195	CR1: Yeah, I think it starts off that you need to make friends, but it doesn't matter cos you can't just see them when you like. When you are younger you're not with your friends at weekends you're with your family but as you get older that changes. Friends, oh well I mean, yeah friends do become more like your family cos you see them all the time. So, I guess a few of us said that when we didn't have friends at school and that, that made it hard.
Relationships	Impact of friends	CR7 Collage	
Relationships	Impact of friends	Transcript 2, lines 150-155	CR5: Yeah cos, like, I had a bad experience at sixth form because like, I left my school and was in this new place. But everyone had friends and I didn't have any and I was lost. You need to have friends around you and when you haven't got that then you can't concentrate on the other stuff...Learning and that.
Relationships	Impact of friends	Transcript 2, lines 156-161	R: So, friends are important? CR6: Yeah, like we don't all get on all the time but you gotta feel like you wanna be there with people.




			<p>Sometimes I just come in to see my friends or I will call them up and stuff to say, 'I can't do it'.</p> <p>CR5: Yeah, and we tell you, you can.</p> <p>CR6: Yeah.</p>
Relationships	Impact of friends	Transcript 2, lines 106-114	<p>CR6: I think it's because we are always all together and stuff and like we have all got close.</p> <p>R: and that makes a difference?</p> <p>CR6: yeah and...</p> <p>CR3: and it's something you wanna do. You're not forced into learning stuff you don't want to. Like there's a choice. We chose this, so you know you enjoy it. I think as well, having that gap means you are treated as more equal. Others around you, in the class, they are more nurturing and supportive. Its more non-judgemental. We try to understand each other more. That doesn't happen in school.</p>


Relationships	Romantic relationships	CR3 Collage	
Relationships	Romantic relationships	Transcript 2, lines 175-182	<p>CR3: Yeah for us we put down that that relationships give you confidence. You need a good partner who thinks the same way as you do about things. I guess you share your dreams together and that.</p> <p>CR2: Yeah relationships need to be positive and you don't always get that in high school or even after you leave. A few of us said that once you have that relationship it makes you think about the future and what you want.</p> <p>CR1: Yeah but it's that support they give you too. All the encouragement when you feel like you can't do it. A bit like friends.</p>
Education	Support	Transcript 2, lines 79-94	CR1: and primary was fun too.

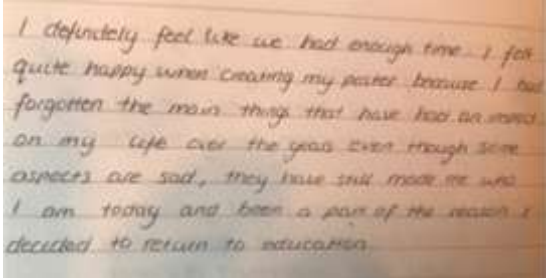

			<p>CR4: Yeah, I remember lots of creative learning, sand pits, paint, growing stuff, school trips they were all fun. And it was about the teachers too, they were good teachers...They were mothering and nurturing, you never really felt they were harsh. It's not like high school, you were motivated to do stuff, not told off when you didn't.</p> <p>CR3: Well your motivated by rewards.</p> <p>CR1: We had house points</p> <p>CR3: Yeah and stuff like golden time...but secondary school was hard long hours tiring. It can be a real drain trying to do it all. I had zero confidence it was just like; all that motivation was lost and there was just too much pressure. It was a shock after primary school.</p>
Education	Support	Transcript 2, lines 95-96	<p>CR11: I Just found it a really emotional time. There's just not enough support in secondary school, I mean yes you feel more independent and that's good but oh my god the pressure.</p>
Education	Support	Transcript 2, Lines 116-117	<p>CR3: This is just a good college there's far more support when you are learning</p>



Education	Support	CR3 Collage	
Education	Enjoying learning	CR7 Collage	
Education	Enjoying learning	CR1 Collage	
Work		Transcript 1, lines 84-88	CR1: It could be where that resilience comes from as well, like, because we've got like, maybe that kind of personality. So, we are the type of people who did go


			out and learn for ourselves rather than someone telling us that this is what you do, and we believe them
Work	Work experience in the field	CR6 Collage	
Work	Work experience in the field	CR4 Collage	 <p>After college finished I was left wondering what I wanted to do till a friend mentioned an apprenticeship in dental writing I went for it. Got it and have worked happily for nearly 4 years where I learn so much about life!</p>


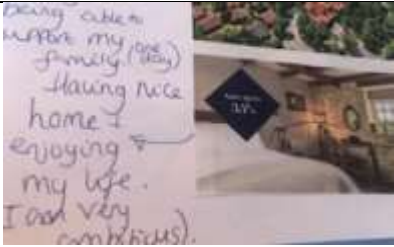
Work	Work experience in the field	CR5 Collage	
Work	Work experience in the field	CR6 Collage	
Work	Realising potential	CR3 Collage	


Work	Realising potential	CR4 Collage	
Work	Realising potential	Transcript 2, lines 205-210	<p>CR5: I was working in the doctor's surgery and I thought I want to do more of this. It looked like such a good job.</p> <p>CR3: Yeah, I was doing dentistry and I thought I want to go further and that was the same for you right?</p> <p>CR4: Yes</p> <p>CR9: Yeah, I was working in the hospital.</p>
Work	Realising potential	Transcript 2, lines 213-223	<p>CR1: Sometimes though it's about doing crap jobs too, I mean I went straight from school into my job and didn't need school to do it. And yeah, the money was ok. I kind of didn't see the problem. And then having my son I thought there is more to this and I want to help people. That was after I had my miscarriage though. I just wanted to help others. That's when I started working at the hospital...You need to realise it's not easy, you don't get by without GCSEs you just end</p>



			up earning less. I had to work to realise that. I feel jealous of those people who know that early on, I mean in school some of them seemed to have it all mapped out. You need that, and I didn't, well you know, I didn't have a clue. Working helps you to map it out.
Future and overcoming adversity		CR6 Reflective diary	 <p>I definitely feel like we had enough time. I feel quite happy when creating my poster because I had forgotten the main things that have had an impact on my life over the years even though some aspects are sad, they have still made me who I am today and been a part of the reason I decided to return to education.</p>
The future and overcoming adversity		CR10 Collage	 <p>My children think of a parent!</p> <p>Family support better future for my family this year!</p> <p>Over to you</p> <p>My time to shine is something for me</p>

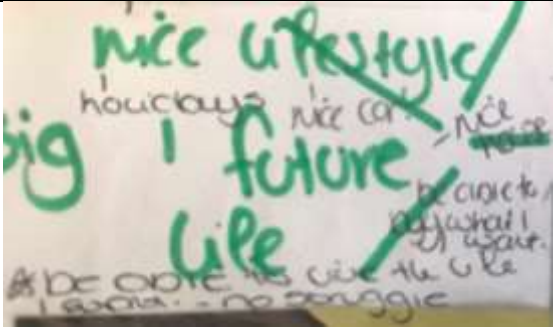
<p>The future and overcoming adversity</p>	<p>Strength and growth from experiences</p>	<p>CR2 Collage</p>	
<p>The future and overcoming adversity</p>	<p>Strength and growth from experiences</p>	<p>CR11 Collage</p>	
<p>The future and overcoming adversity</p>	<p>Strength and growth from experiences</p>	<p>Transcript 2, lines 162-165 and 298-304</p>	<p>CR11: for me it was about failure in school too. I didn't do very well, I mean I failed and that made me really down. I mean, I was depressed and that. But this made me strong and I thought I'm not gonna let it hold me back. It's funny though, you look back and you do love some of school. Well you know, you think I got through this. You remember when you felt bad and thought you would never do anything, and you look back and think I got through that and that's who I am. When you know, that you can take on anything. Depression is tough like that because at times you can look back and almost feel, I don't know feel you can do it but, at other times you feel you can't.</p>

			<p>R: How do you deal with that?</p> <p>CR11: you have to keep remembering who you are.</p>
The future and overcoming adversity	Strength and growth from experiences	Transcript 2, lines 114-116	CR3: It's almost like you learn from experience in that gap, you need it to happen so that you can learn from the bad experiences. It's about finding yourself in the gap.
The future and overcoming adversity	Strength and growth from experiences	Transcript 2, lines 120-122	CR2: For me it was about leaving school and stopping everything to have a job, it gives you a break from study. I think everyone should have that. I think the gap makes you who you are.
The future and overcoming adversity	Strength and growth from experience	Transcript 2, lines 305-307	CR3: I think that comes from the experiences. I feel sorry for those that have it easy because when they have bad experiences, how are they gonna cope? I know, well, I know I can.
The future and overcoming adversity	Strength and growth from experience	CR1 Collage	 <p>I met my partner at 16 and unfortunately we had our first child. I then became a teenage parent to our son. This time was hard but a very big eye opener and a huge turning point in my life. I know then I wanted to help other mums during pregnancy.</p>

<p>The future and overcoming adversity</p>	<p>Independence and financial stability</p>	<p>CR9 collage</p>	
<p>The future and overcoming adversity</p>	<p>Independence and financial stability</p>	<p>CR11 Collage</p>	
<p>The future overcoming adversity</p>	<p>Independence and financial stability</p>	<p>Transcript 2, lines 234-237</p>	<p>CR3: When you take that gap that's when you get independence and you realise what you want and don't want but to keep it up you have to want it in the future to and you think how I am going to keep me independent. Sometimes you realise you can't do that without a good job.</p>
<p>The future and overcoming adversity</p>	<p>Independence and financial stability</p>	<p>Transcript 2, lines 250-261</p>	<p>CR9: I also want things like the nice house. I look in magazines and that and I think I want that. I just want to not have to worry about money or have that struggle.</p>




			<p>CR1: Yeah, we all thought lifestyle was important.</p> <p>R: What do you mean by lifestyle?</p> <p>CR10: For me having my kids, I realise how hard it can be if you don't have the money, I want more for them.</p> <p>CR1: Yeah it's like that for me to. It's about not worrying.</p> <p>CR3: I want a nice house, and holidays. Those things are important.</p> <p>CR11: It's those things that keep me going, I like looking in the magazines too. At houses and that. I see that as my ambition to have holidays with my family and come home to a nice house. That's my dream that's what keeps me going.</p>
<p>Future and overcoming adversity</p>	<p>Travel and holidays</p>	<p>CR10 Collage</p>	


<p>Future and overcoming adversity</p>	<p>Travel and holidays</p>	<p>CR8 Collage</p>	
<p>Future and overcoming adversity</p>	<p>Travel and holidays</p>	<p>CR6 Collage</p>	
<p>Future and overcoming adversity</p>	<p>Travel and holidays</p>	<p>CR9 Collage</p>	



Future and overcoming adversity	Travel and holidays	CR9 Collage	
Future and overcoming adversity	Travel and holidays	Transcript 2, line 252	CR9: I just want to not have to worry about money or have that struggle.
Future and overcoming adversity	Travel and holidays	Transcript 2, 247-249	CR9: Yeah, I had travel. I really want to keep holidaying like we did when we were kids. Over the last few years I haven't been able to do that. I miss it.
Future and overcoming	Travel and holidays	Transcript 2, lines 260-262	CR11: I see that as my ambition to have holidays with my family and come home to a nice house. That's my dream that's what keeps me going.
Future and overcoming adversity	Travel and holiday	Transcript 2, lines 249-250	R: Why are holidays so important? CR9: It's about making memories.

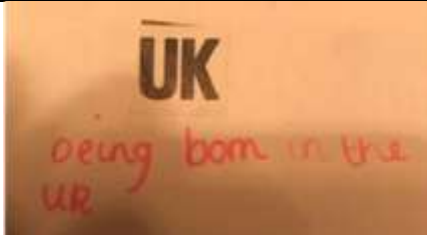


Appendix 16: Completed themes table (phase three, group two)


Group 2 themes member checked



Themes	Sub-theme	Source	Quote/Picture
Support	Family support	CR17 Collage	
Support	Family support	CR13 Collage	
Support	Family support	CR14 Collage	

Support	Family support	CR17 Collage	
Support	Family support	Transcript 3, lines 4-8	<p>CR19: My brothers were good like that, but I think the most important person in terms of support is your mum</p> <p>All: Yeah</p> <p>CR19: I would be lost without her, everything I have been through and she has been solid ,never let me down.</p>
Support	Family support	Transcript 3, lines 11-15	<p>CR13: I mean quite a lot of us have parents that have split up and divorced but your mum is still there being a rock. I know that's how I have tried to be for my kids, and me, I see her, and I think I want to be there for my kids like you are for me.</p> <p>CR17: My mum fought so hard for me when I was younger and even now, she's my best mate, you know?</p>


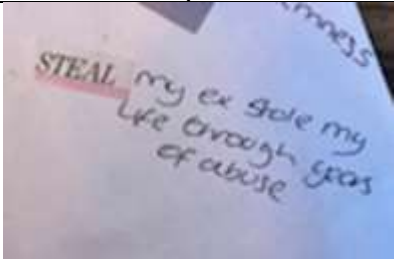
Support	Family support	CR14 Collage	
Support	Family support	Transcript 3, lines 1-3	CR13: The first theme we had was family, for me it was my brother. I have lots of brothers but, the one who is closest to me meant the most in terms of support. I think it's because we were always together. We would fight but, he would always help me especially at school.
Support	Community support	CR17 Collage	


Support	Community support	CR15 Collage	
Support	Community support	CR14 Collage	
Support	Community support	Transcript 3, lines 33-35	CR13: That's why we put community support, a lot of us run rogue and you can't do that in some places. Where we grew up there was a real sense of looking out for each other.
Support	Community support	Transcript 3, line 26	CR13: Council estate that's where you wanna be, everyone loved each other.
Support	Support from a key person	CR13 Collage	




Support	Support from a key person	Transcript 3, lines 154-156	CR13: But then you always have, I always had like one tutor that was really supportive of me and he really rooted for me.
Support	Support from a key person	Transcript 3, lines 218-224	CR14: We had the best headmaster. He was so fucking strict, I swear to god. I had anxiety when (inaudible)... I don't mind in class, but I'd go, and I would be like "I got to see the headmaster". It used to be like that I would be like, I don't want to go. I used to fear it and that's how it should be, you should be fearing being naughty, the consequences of (inaudible) they never used to shout at ya. He used to be like I'm disappointed, you are better than that. Yeah but "I so am" (CR mimics crying) and he would be like "good". (laughter).
Support	Support from a key person	CR13 Collage	
Support	Competition and being good at something	Transcript 3, lines 282-286	CR13: Oh yeah high school, don't know about you guys but we were saying we were highly competitive sports people, and like for me, even though in primary, middle and high I did still move. But, my consistency was always my sport. And I always knew I could get on a team and I

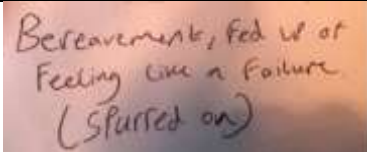

			always knew that I would be winning, and X was exactly the same. I was highly competitive.
Support	Competition and being good at something	CR14 Collage	
Support	Competition and being good at something	CR13 Collage	
Support	Competition and being good at something	Transcript 3, lines 293-297	CR15: Yeah, yeah in middle school and in high school, I was like the captain of bloody everything... Literally any sport, even if it was like five days a week, I would be in there. CR13: me too.
Control	Taking control	Transcript 3, lines 415-419	CR13: It's about control its linked straight onto number 8 where you get control of your life. You start to sort of sort things out. Get your own car, open to more opportunities. Get into politics, do




			the things that you love. You start to think like, for me I was like, I do wanna get back into education. I want to do something for me, something for me to meet people and then we go down that way.
Control	Taking control	CR20 Collage	
Control	Taking control	CR19 Collage	
Control	Taking control	Transcript 3, lines 430-432	CR19: I thought 'fuck it, I'm not gonna let you dictate my path now'. Signed up to college, completed English last year, said 'I am not gonna stop there'. Here I am!



Control	Taking control	CR16 Collage	
Control	Taking control	Transcript 3, lines 371-372	CR14: because you felt, do you know what I have got over all of this and I am strong person. It is almost like you needed to reflect. (Lines 371-372)
Control	Relationship break-ups	Transcript 3, lines 345-346	CR14: But I think relationships here goes in with that control part. Because we all felt more in control once we got out of them.
Control	Relationship break-ups	Transcript 3, lines 341-344	CR13: well we got relationships and big events, that's the biggest section for us and then mental health and other issues. This is sort of where we met, we have relationships, we have break downs of relationships umm domestic abuse.
Control	Relationship break-ups	CR19 Collage	

Control	Relationship break-ups	Transcript 3, lines 420-428	CR19: I think just leaving high school, I had a two-month-old baby. I done my GCSEs, but I mean my first exam was three days after giving birth. Yeah, I , I done em all, but I didn't pass any. umm straight after that getting into this awful relationship that was based on coercion and just sheer abuse from the outset You don't see that because it was disguised, and you know, I was forever being told, 'your thick, your stupid, you can't do this. If you go get a job it will be over my dead body, you can't go to college because I need you to be here and I know where you are' and then when he, you know I managed to get him out, lost two boys through it, but I got him out umm I had that recovery period.
Control	Relationship break-ups	CR18 Collage	
Big events		Transcript 3, lines 435-445	CR13: Like I said when you look back on things. X probably looks back on his environment and thinks I am lucky to live here through being on this course thinking about things there and then (points to collage). This course makes you look at things differently. It's made me look at things differently.



			<p>CR14: Yeah definitely, especially sociology... Definitely gives a different take and you think oh actually I didn't realise but oh its true more. Knowing these helps you take control.</p> <p>CR19: Helps you to gain some perspective and some understanding.</p>
Big events	Bereavement	CR19 Collage	
Big events	Bereavement	CR14 Collage	
Big events	Bereavement	CR17 Collage	




Big events	Bereavement	Transcript 3, lines 385-386	CR13: Yeah and the bereavement of a friend I reckon that does motivate you in some way, makes you think that life's too short.
Big events	Bereavement	CR20 Collage	
Big events	Big events changing the future	Transcript 3, lines 361-368	CR13: I look back and I think it is all of this that contributed to now. This was it, we had gone through all of this and I thought, and I did, I went through all of this...I think it was my daughter having her operation at X. I thought she's gonna be alright soon, I'm not gonna have to keep coming back here, I can just get on with it and do something for me. I have gone through all of this I can do it. And I think, it was all this that's definitely done that, and now I sit here now, and I look back and I think bloody hell there's been loads, not just this.
Big events	Big events changing the future	CR18 Collage	

Big events	Big events changing the future	CR18 Collage	
Big events	Big events changing the future	Transcript 3, line 383	CR8: Trying to make a better life for my little one.
Big events	Big events changing the future	CR14 Collage	
Big events	Big events changing the future	CR13 Collage	

Big events	Big events changing the future	CR14 Collage	
Big events	Big events changing the future	Transcript 3, line 339	CR14: Yeah, I guess knowing I could have had trials helped, even if I was injured.(line 339
Mental Health		Transcript 3, lines 405-412	<p>CR15: I wouldn't say I have overcome it, but I think you learn to manage it better... and to live with it</p> <p>CR13: It never goes away it is a bit like bereavement, it just gets, it gets easy to cope with each day. It's still there.</p> <p>CR19: And the more you talk about it the easier it is to deal with it. You know, if you have got it all inside here and you are only dealing with it by yourself, that's then gonna make you even worse and sink even lower and lower and lower.</p>
Mental Health		CR19 Collage	

Mental health		CR18 reflective diary account	Some parts of the collage were hard to bring up, e.g. depression and disputes...However, all of these negatives have served a purpose in my life and educational success now and in the past. Therefore, the experiences have been influential and meaningful...
Mental health		Transcript 3, lines 388-390	CR13: But we also put in with that mental health issues, people getting mental abuse. Obviously, depression anything like that coming up from this. I mean obviously bereavement cause you to go downhill. It did for me, umm but my children kept me going at that point. Yeah all of that just coincides together.
Unbreakable		Transcript 3, lines 464-465	CR13: Everything here we have spoken about the control and the stuff we went through. It all comes together and makes you think.
Unbreakable		Transcript 3, lines 466-468	CR15: I think you said it, what was it you said about it not breaking you? CR13: Yeah, you just look at it and you think all this crap, all these experiences and we are still here, doing it. This made us really.
Unbreakable	Adversity creating success	CR19 Reflective diary account	Adversity that's created our success to motivate our path to continue in the future. When I weigh up my life the negative outweighs the positive and it was mostly negatives I focussed on. Many people in this group have common ground, mainly adversity but it's that adversity that created our success. To motivate our path to continuing our future.

Unbreakable	Adversity creating success	CR14 Collage	
Unbreakable	Adversity creating success	CR14 Reflective diary account	I felt a sense of pride and happiness of what my past is and how I see it has formed me. The process made me reflect on the past and how it has shaped me and my future
Unbreakable	Adversity creating success	CR13 Reflective diary account	Made me feel happy and sad thinking about everything that's happened in my life that's brought me to this point. Enforced my belief that uni is the next step for me. Makes me feel proud of the adversities. This reminds me why I am on the course and I can do it.
Unbreakable	Adversity creating success	CR21 Reflective diary account	...brought back a sense of satisfaction to realise how far I have come in my life and the obstacles I have conquered.
Unbreakable	Adversity creating success	CR17 Collage	

Unbreakable	Adversity creating success	Transcript 3, lines 468-470	CR13: This made us really. CR14: Certainly, makes me think differently having done this. CR13: Yeah and we, it, could be so different.
Unbreakable	Proving others wrong	CR16 Collage	
Unbreakable	Proving others wrong	CR21 Collage	
Unbreakable	Proving others wrong	CR14 Collage	
Unbreakable	Proving others wrong	Transcript 3, lines 471-473	CR15: and I think it's important about using it and showing others we can do it. CR13: Umm yeah, I bet you wish you could go and tell X
Unbreakable	Proving others wrong	Transcript 3, lines 275-280	CR15: I don't know, I think supportive ones. Its good cos it sort of does spur you on a bit but, at

			the same time, the ones that were unsupportive and the ones that were nasty you, kind of want to do to it to show them you can do it. Like if they were to call you stupid or something like that, you kind of want to be able to do it and it motivates you to think, no I'm not stupid. I want to be able to do it. To kind of not get back at them but to prove a point, kind of thing and also to yourself.
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Appendix 17: CR Information sheets

Using Visual Methods to Describe Protective Mechanisms of Educational Resilience in Returners to Education.

Participant information sheet

Please put your participant number given to you by the researcher

.....

Please state your age

Please list your highest levels of qualification (e.g. if GCSE's list them like so English D etc.)

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

How long is it since you last attended full time education?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Do you intend to go onto further study following this course? (Please circle appropriate answer) YES/ NO

If yes, what do you intend to study?.....

.....
.....
.....

Thank you – the data you give will remain anonymised.

Appendix 18: Participant Information sheets, consent form and weekly consent

Participant information sheet

Research title:

Using Visual Methods to Describe the Protective Mechanisms of Educational Resilience in Returners to Education.

My name is Esther Borrett and I am a trainee Educational Psychologist studying at the University of East London. I am conducting a piece of research which is investigating the experiences of returners to education, to find out what helps them to succeed in education second time around. We would like to invite you to take part in a research study. Before you decide whether you would like to take part it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it would involve for you. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Please feel free to ask if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information.

My research has been approved by the School of Psychology Research Ethics Committee. This means that my research follows the standard of research ethics set by the British Psychological Society.

What is the purpose of the study?

The government social mobility agenda has highlighted areas where outcomes for young people are reduced. Your college is in one of these areas. Each year students, like yourself, demonstrate achievement by going on to study at university following a successful return to education. In this way these students improve their outcomes and increase opportunities for social mobility.

There has been lots of research concentrating on what doesn't work when students return to education but research investigating what does work is more limited. Furthermore, when trying to understand what works many researchers propose ideas and test them out to see if they are correct. Research directly engaging with and listening to students is rare. The aims of the research are to work with returners to education, to investigate what works and why. It is hoped that the knowledge gained from this study will inform professionals, contribute to policy and increase awareness of what works for students in this age range.

Why have I been invited to take part in this study?

You have been invited to take part because:

- you are a student on an HE Access course
- You have demonstrated a successful return to education by passing the half-way point of the course (January)
- Have experienced schooling in 'mobility cold spot' as identified by the government's social mobility index.

I emphasise that I am not looking for 'experts' on the topic I am studying. You will not be judged or personally analysed in any way and you will be treated with respect.

You are quite free to decide whether to participate and should not feel coerced.

Do I have to take part?

Participation in the project is voluntary, this means that you can choose not to participate project. If you do decide to take part in the study, you can withdraw at any stage of the project without being penalised or disadvantaged in any way. It is important to note that your taking/not taking part in the study does not affect your current course of study and you will neither obtain or lose grades on your course if you do/do not take part in this research.

If you decide whether to take part in the research, you will be asked to sign an informed consent sheet. If after this point you decide you would not like to take part (withdraw from the study) you can do so at any time and do not have to give a reason. However, once data has been collected, anonymised and published it cannot be withdrawn.

What will be involved if I take part?

The type of research you are being asked to become involved with is called participatory research. The aim of this type of research is to engage participants as early in the research process as possible to conduct research with them. Participants then become involved in the research process as co-researchers. This means that you help to set research questions, produce and analyse data, reflect on the research process and help to feedback on results. There are several proposed steps to achieving this that would require your commitment:

1. **Session 1:** Producing visual data – you will be asked to produce a collage that reflects all things the things that have helped you from early education to present day. The images you select will need to have a piece of writing to go with them that explains why you chose the image you did, what the image represents for you and why you think it has helped you succeed in education this time around. (1hr 30 mins)
2. **Session 3:** Being taught how to conduct a thematic analysis – because you will be working together as co-researchers you will need to know how research is analysed. You will be taught how to use the thematic method before conducting a thematic analysis as a group. You will work together going through each other's collages until you have decided whether there are any 'key themes' emerging from your pictures. Once you have the themes identified the group will work together to produce an overall picture which details the themes. (2-hour session). You will be supported to do this by a trainee educational psychologist and visual recording will be made by an assistant Educational Psychologist. This session will be videotaped.
3. Writing reflections – you will write a quick reflection on your role in the research, what has doing the research meant for you? How did you find the process? What ideas, thoughts, experiences did you have whilst doing the research? Reflections being written in the session and you will be given a book for these. Do not put your

names on them you will be given a participant number, so your information remains confidential.

4. Sharing the findings – part of being a researcher is sharing your findings afterwards and others may be interested to hear your thoughts. You may be asked to share findings with your college or other EPs. (possible on-going commitment)

Your privacy and safety will be respected always.

You do not have to answer all questions asked of you and can stop your participation at any time.

I will not be able to pay you for participating in my research, but your participation would be very valuable in helping to develop knowledge and understanding of resilience in returners to education.

What are the advantages and disadvantages of taking part in the research?

One of the benefits of doing participatory research is the opportunity to get your voice heard and to have an opinion on the things that really matter to you. Also, because you will be looking at the data yourself you will receive instruction on how to do this. This is a skill that students are often taught at university and because you are applying to university this year this might give you the skills beforehand. The aim of participatory research is to fully involve participants in the research process and so this will give you an understanding of how research is designed and carried out. Furthermore, engaging in the research may help you identify the skills, values and resources you have available. Identifying these skills may help you realise the resources you can use if you are confronted with an issue in the future.

One disadvantage of doing research of this kind is that the expected commitment in terms of your time is greater than if you were just a participant being interviewed or answering a questionnaire. You should think about whether you are prepared to commit this amount of time to the process. Furthermore, you should also think about whether you are willing to share your personal stories of success in front of fellow students. You should be aware that when you conduct the analysis you will be looking at each other's pictures to identify themes. Some students may find that they do not want to share this information and therefore should think whether the research is right for them.

What will happen when the research is over?

The visuals produced during the research process (both as individuals and groups) will be used within a research report. This report will be seen by other academics and professionals and may be put forward for publication in research journals. However, any visuals produced will not be directly linked you and will be used anonymously. Additionally, the verbal information you supply via interpretive text and reflections will also be anonymised by way of a participant numbering system. Whilst the data is being analysed it will be kept secure and locked away and only I will have access to it. After the research has finished it will be destroyed. Anonymised data will be available to the research supervisor, examiners and publishers. A copy of the research will be made available to participants upon request. Any video recordings will be transcribed keeping

participants anonymous in the process and may be referred to in the research report to demonstrate opinions of the participants. These transcripts will be held in a locked failing cabinet and destroyed once the research is over.

What if I have any questions?

If you have any problems, concerns or questions about this research you can contact me

Email: u1622741@uel.ac.uk

If you are not satisfied with the response you can contact the Director of Studies, Janet Rowley, j.e.rowley@uel.ac.uk or at the address below:

University of East London

Stratford Campus

Arthur Edwards Building

Water Lane

Stratford

London E15 4LZ

If your issue is still not satisfactorily resolved, you can contact The Chair of the School of Psychology Research Ethics Sub-committee: Dr Mark Finn, School of Psychology, University of East London, Water Lane, London E15 4LZ. (Email: m.finn@uel.ac.uk) informing them that the title of the research is:

Using Visual Methods to Describe the Protective Mechanisms of Educational Resilience in Returners to Education.

UNIVERSITY OF EAST LONDON

Consent to participate in a research study

Using Visual Methods to Describe Protective Mechanisms of Educational Resilience in Returners to Education.

I have read the information sheet relating to the above research study and have been given a copy to keep. The nature and purposes of the research have been explained to me, and I have had the opportunity to discuss the details and ask questions about this information. I understand what is being proposed and the procedures in which I will be involved have been explained to me.

I understand that my involvement in this study, and particular data from this research, will remain strictly confidential. Only the researcher(s) involved in the

study will have access to identifying data. It has been explained to me what will happen once the research study has been completed.

I hereby freely and fully consent to participate in the study which has been fully explained to me. Having given this consent I understand that I have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without disadvantage to myself and without being obliged to give any reason. I also understand that should I withdraw; the researcher reserves the right to use my anonymous data after analysis of the data has begun.

In particular, I consent to being video recorded and contacted by email in between sessions.

Participant's Name (BLOCK CAPITALS)

.....

Participant's Signature

.....

Researcher's Name (BLOCK CAPITALS)

.....

Researcher's Signature

.....

Date:

Using Visual Methods to Describe Protective Mechanisms of Educational Resilience in Returners to Education

The purpose of today's session has been explained to me and I have been reminded of my right to withdraw should I wish to. I sign to show that I have been fully informed of this and continue to give my consent to take part in this study. I also consent to sending reflections to the researcher via email and for email contact in-between sessions.

Appendix 19: Risk Assessment



UEL Risk Assessment Form

Name of Assessor:	Esther Borrett	Date of Assessment	03/02/2018
Event title:	Field work for doctoral research: Using Visual Methods to Describe the Protective Mechanisms of Educational Resilience in Returners to Education.	Date, time and location of activity:	Date and time TBC following ethical approval, but proposed date is 02/03/18 Location: >>>>>>>>>>
Signed off by Manager (Print Name)			

Please describe the activity in as much detail as possible (include nature of activity, estimated number of participants, etc)
If the activity to be assessed is part of a fieldtrip or event please add an overview of this below:

The field work involves visiting 24 participants at >>>>>>> which is approximately >>>> miles from the researcher's home. When at the college the participants will take part in focus groups on three separate occasions. Each focus group is preceded by a teaching session. On sessions one and two the researcher will be alone with participants and on session 3 the researcher will be accompanied by a graphic facilitator who is an assistant educational Psychologist.

The sessions will be carried out in a classroom with tables and chairs organised in a horse shoe shape.

Overview of FIELD TRIP or EVENT:

Session 1 is a participatory session with 8 participants where they are briefly introduced to aims and theory of the research after which they work together to formulate questions.

In session 2 the participants use magazines, newspapers and brochures and cut out images to construct a collage.

In session 3 the participants conduct a thematic analysis of the collages they have produced. This session is video recorded and will be attended by an assistant.

Guide to risk ratings:

a) Likelihood of Risk	b) Hazard Severity	c) Risk Rating (a x b = c)
1 = Low (Unlikely)	1 = Slight (Minor / less than 3 days off work)	1-2 = Minor (No further action required)
2 = Moderate (Quite likely)	2= Serious (Over 3 days off work)	3-5 = Medium (May require further control measures)

Appendix 20: Ethical approval

School of Psychology Research Ethics Committee

NOTICE OF ETHICS REVIEW DECISION

For research involving human participants
BSc/MSc/MA/Professional Doctorates in Clinical, Counselling and Educational
Psychology

REVIEWER: Mary-Jane Budd

SUPERVISOR: Janet Rowley

STUDENT: Esther Borrett

Course: Professional Doctorate in Education Psychology

Title of proposed study: What protective mechanisms do returners to education describe as helping them to achieve in education second time around?

DECISION OPTIONS:

1. **APPROVED:** Ethics approval for the above-named research study has been granted from the date of approval (see end of this notice) to the date it is submitted for assessment/examination.
2. **APPROVED, BUT MINOR AMENDMENTS ARE REQUIRED BEFORE THE RESEARCH COMMENCES** (see Minor Amendments box below): In this circumstance, re-submission of an ethics application is not required but the student must confirm with their supervisor that all minor amendments have been made before the research commences. Students are to do this by filling in the confirmation box below when all amendments have been attended to and emailing a copy of this decision notice to her/his supervisor for their records. The supervisor will then forward the student's confirmation to the School for its records.
3. **NOT APPROVED, MAJOR AMENDMENTS AND RE-SUBMISSION REQUIRED** (see Major Amendments box below): In this circumstance, a revised ethics application must be submitted and approved before any research takes place. The revised application will be reviewed by the same reviewer. If in doubt, students should ask their supervisor for support in revising their ethics application.

DECISION ON THE ABOVE-NAMED PROPOSED RESEARCH STUDY

(Please indicate the decision according to one of the 3 options above)

APPROVED, BUT MINOR AMENDMENTS ARE REQUIRED BEFORE THE RESEARCH COMMENCES

Minor amendments required (for reviewer):

Permission from the second college must be confirmed to the supervisor before data collection from this second college takes place.

Major amendments required (for reviewer):

Confirmation of making the above minor amendments (for students):

I have noted and made all the required minor amendments, as stated above, before starting my research and collecting data.

Student's name *Esther C Borrett*
Student number: U1622741

Date: 08/02/2019

(Please submit a copy of this decision letter to your supervisor with this box completed, if minor amendments to your ethics application are required)

ASSESSMENT OF RISK TO RESEACHER (for reviewer)

Has an adequate risk assessment been offered in the application form?

YES / NO

Please request resubmission with an adequate risk assessment

If the proposed research could expose the researcher to any of kind of emotional, physical or health and safety hazard? Please rate the degree of risk:

HIGH

Please do not approve a high-risk application and refer to the Chair of Ethics. Travel to countries/provinces/areas deemed to be high risk should not be permitted and an application not approved on this basis. If unsure please refer to the Chair of Ethics.

MEDIUM (Please approve but with appropriate recommendations)

x LOW

Reviewer comments in relation to researcher risk (if any).

Reviewer (*Typed name to act as signature*): Mary-Jane Budd

Date: 06/02/18

This reviewer has assessed the ethics application for the named research study on behalf of the School of Psychology Research Ethics Committee

RESEARCHER PLEASE NOTE:

For the researcher and participants involved in the above-named study to be covered by UEL's Insurance, prior ethics approval from the School of Psychology (acting on behalf of the UEL Research Ethics Committee), and confirmation from students where minor amendments were required, must be obtained before any research takes place.

For a copy of UEL's Personal Accident & Travel Insurance Policy, please see the Ethics Folder in the Psychology Noticeboard

Appendix 21: College information sheets

Information sheet for colleges

Research title:

Using Visual Methods to Describe Protective Mechanisms of Educational Resilience in Returners to Education.

My name is Esther Borrett and I am a trainee Educational Psychologist studying at the University of East London. I am conducting a piece of research which is investigating the experiences of returners to education, to find out what helps them to succeed in education second time around. I would like to recruit some of your students studying on HE Access courses to take part in this. Before you decide please take time to read the following information carefully and feel free to ask if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information.

Please be aware that my research has been approved by the School of Psychology Research Ethics Committee. This means that my research follows the standard of research ethics set by the British Psychological Society.

What is the purpose of the study?

The government social mobility agenda has highlighted areas where outcomes for young people are reduced. Your college is in one of these areas. I am sure you are aware that HE Access students appear to reverse this trend by achieving at college and progressing onto university and achieving better outcomes for themselves. However, there is little research in this area that investigates what helps these students to be successful second time around. Current research concentrates on what doesn't work when students return to education and research investigating what does work is more limited. It is hoped that the knowledge gained from this study will inform professionals, contribute to policy and increase awareness of what works for students in this age range.

Why has the college been invited to take part in this study?

Your college has been invited to take part because:

- You offer an HE Access course
- Your college is situated in a social mobility 'cold spot' as identified by the government's social mobility index.

Do students have to take part?

Participation in the project is voluntary, this means that they can choose not to participate in the project. If they do decide to take part in the study, they can withdraw at any stage of the project without being penalised or disadvantaged in any way.

If students do decide to take part, they will be asked to sign an informed consent sheet. Students can withdraw from the study at any point. However, once data has been collected, anonymised and published it cannot be withdrawn.

How many students will take part?

Participants will take part in focus groups of 8 participants per group. One group from each college. Therefore, only 8 students will be required from your college.

What do participants have to do if they take part?

This is a participatory piece of research. The aim of this type of research is to engage participants as in the research process as co-researchers. This means that they help to set research questions, produce and analyse data, reflect on the research process and help to feedback on results. There are several proposed steps to achieving this that would require commitment:

1. **Session 1:** Focus group meeting – students will receive a quick presentation of the concept of resilience. The aim of this is to discuss as a group what questions they think should be asked and how we should ask them. The group have a chance to influence the method and refine the process. (1hr 50 mins commitment) N.B: This session will be tape recorded. ***(Please see the attached lesson plan and session PowerPoint for session 1)***
2. **Session 2:** Producing visual data – students will be asked to produce a collage that reflects all things the things that have helped them from early education to present day. The images they select will need to have a piece of writing to go with them that explains why they chose the image they did, what the image represents for them and why they think it has helped them succeed in education this time around. (1hr 30 mins) ***(please see attached lesson plan and PowerPoint for session 2)***
3. **Session 3:** Being taught how to conduct a thematic analysis – because students will be working together as co-researchers they will need to know how research is analysed. They will be taught how to use the thematic method before conducting a thematic analysis as a group. Students will work together going through each other's collages until they have decided whether there are any 'key themes' emerging from their pictures. Once they have the themes identified the group will work together to produce an overall picture which details the themes. (2-hour session). They will be supported to do this by a trainee educational psychologist and visual recording will be made by an assistant Educational Psychologist. This session will be videotaped. ***(please see attached lesson plan and PowerPoint for session 3)***
4. Writing reflections – Students will write a quick reflection on your role in the research, what has doing the research meant for them? How did they find the process? What ideas, thoughts, experiences did they have whilst doing the research? Session 2 will involve the reflections being written in the session. After session 1 and 3 they will write the reflections from home and email them through to the researcher.
5. Sharing the findings – part of being a researcher is sharing your findings afterwards and others may be interested to hear your thoughts. Students may be asked to share findings with the college or other EPs. (possible on-going commitment)

Participants privacy and safety will be respected always.

I will not be able to pay students for participating in my research.

What are the advantages and disadvantages of taking part in the research?

One of the benefits of doing participatory research is the opportunity for participants voice to be heard. Also, because students will be analysing data they will receive instruction on how to do this, giving them valuable skills before they go to university. Furthermore, because they identify the skills, values and resources they have available, this may be useful if they confront an issue in the future. You will see that each research session is set up to combine both the research and explanation of how the research process works. This is to enable the participatory nature of the study but also means that students will gain further knowledge and skills from taking part.

One disadvantage of doing research of this kind is that because participants are asked to be co-researchers the commitment in terms of time is greater. Students should think about whether they are prepared to commit this amount of time to the process. They should also think about whether they are willing to share your personal stories in front of fellow students. It will be greatly appreciated if colleges are able to offer support in making sure that attendance is maintained throughout the research sessions by emailing to remind students and by following up to ensure students are writing and emailing their reflections each week.

What will happen when the research is over?

The visuals produced during the research process (both as individuals and groups) will be used within a research report. This report will be seen by other academics and professionals and may be put forward for publication in research journals. However, any visuals produced will be used anonymously. Additionally, the verbal information supplied via interpretive text and reflections will also be anonymised by way of a participant numbering system. Whilst the data is being analysed it will be kept secure and locked away and only I will have access to it. After the research has finished it will be destroyed. Anonymised data will be available to the research supervisor, examiners and publishers. A copy of the research will be made available to participants upon request. All tape and video recordings will be anonymised and transcribed in case the information in them is needed to support student's opinions, experiences and views. These will be kept in a locked cupboard and destroyed when the research is finished.

What if I have any questions?

If you have any problems, concerns or questions about this research you can contact me

Email: u1622741@uel.ac.uk

If you are not satisfied with the response you can contact the Director of Studies, Janet Rowley, j.e.rowley@uel.ac.uk or at the address below:

University of East London

Stratford Campus

Arthur Edwards Building

Water Lane

Stratford


London E15 4LZ

If your issue is still not satisfactorily resolved, you can contact The Chair of the School of Psychology Research Ethics Sub-committee: Dr Mark Finn, School of Psychology, University of East London, Water Lane, London E15 4LZ. (Email: m.finn@uel.ac.uk) informing them that the title of the research is: **Using Visual Methods to Describe Protective Mechanisms of Educational Resilience in Returners to Education.**

Appendix 22, 23 and 24 submitted as hard copies

Appendix 25: Data collection method and lesson

CRs were shown a slide with the requirements for completion of the collage (Figure 6.1)



How do we do it?

- You will each be given an A1 piece of paper
- There is a selection of magazines, newspapers, travel brochures and shop brochures you can use for images (glue and scissors are provided)
- Your collage will answer the question “What views do RTE have on what helps them to be resilient in education second time around?” – to do this think about the factors that surround you so that you can achieve this time e.g. family
- Think about these time periods in your life 1. Early years 2. Primary years 3. High school years 4. In-between high school and returning to study 5. Now (return to study)
- You can divide your page however you feel and stick the images in the time period that you think these factors occurred e.g. family support in primary school

Figure. 6.1 Slide shown to CR to help them construct collages

CRs were told that they could add written description to their images if they wanted to explain any of the images further. They were also instructed to think about when the factor occurred and at what stage in their life. As per the pilot study, CRs were not instructed on what method or materials to use and were given freedom to construct their collages. CRs were given a large bag of materials which included felt tip pens, highlighters, glue and scissors. Collage materials were also supplied these included national and local newspapers, magazines and brochures.

Phase three was a FG discussion concentrating on the themes found within CRs' collages. To enable this phase CRs followed a step-by-step lesson on conducting thematic analysis (Figures 6.2 - 6.7) which was based on Braun

and Clarke's (2013) stages. FG discussion was audio-recorded and transcribed (Appendices: 8 & 10) to provide CRs of further evidence and clarification of their themes later.

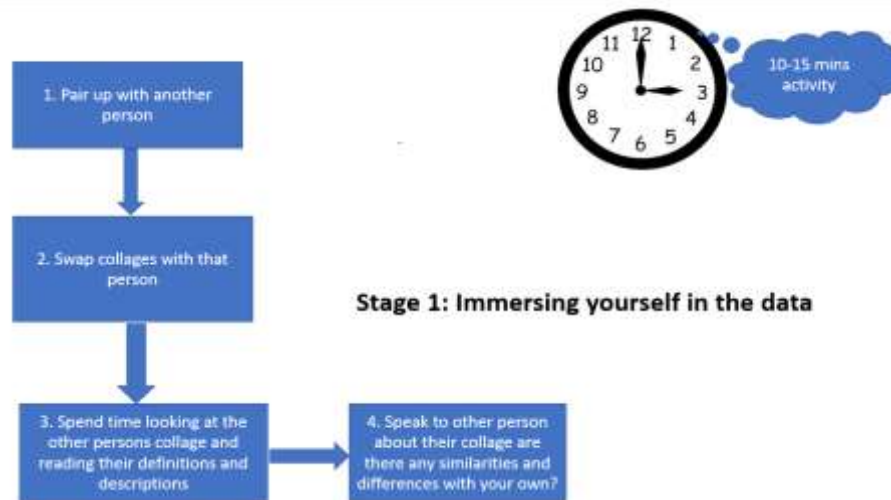


Figure. 6.2 Copy of slide showing step one of the thematic analysis lesson for CRs

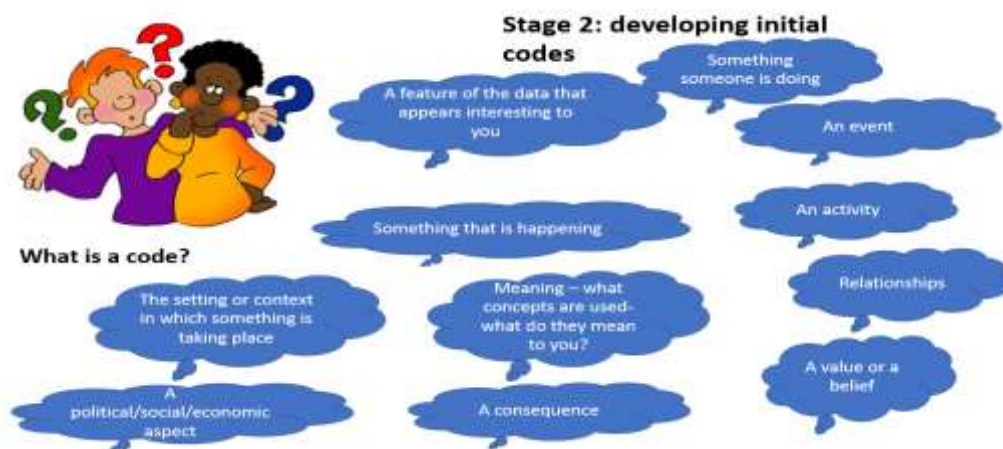


Figure. 6.3 Slide demonstrating coding shown to CRs

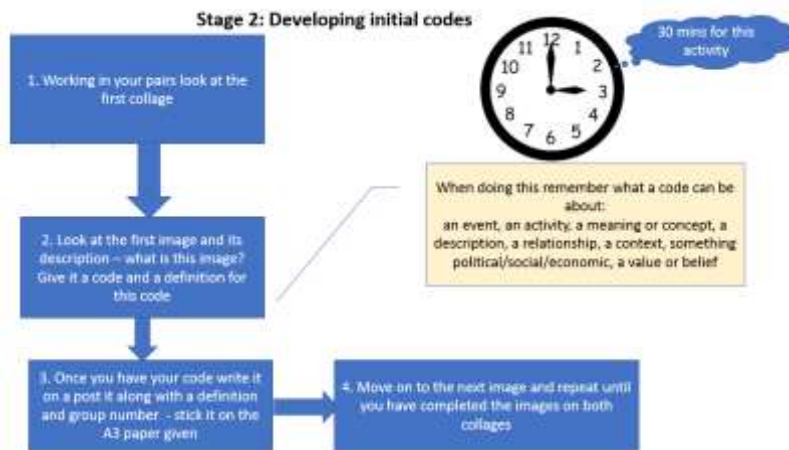


Figure. 6.4 Slide shown to CRs for coding stage of the thematic analysis



Figure. 6.5 Slide shown to CRs showing the definition of themes

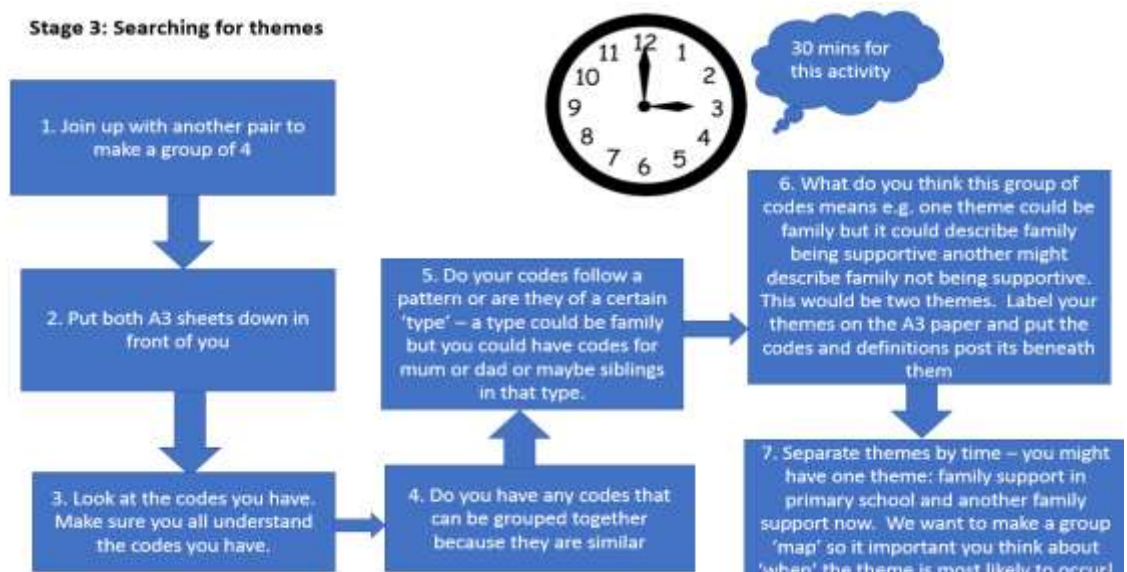


Figure. 6.6 Slide shown to CRs to help them search for themes within their collages

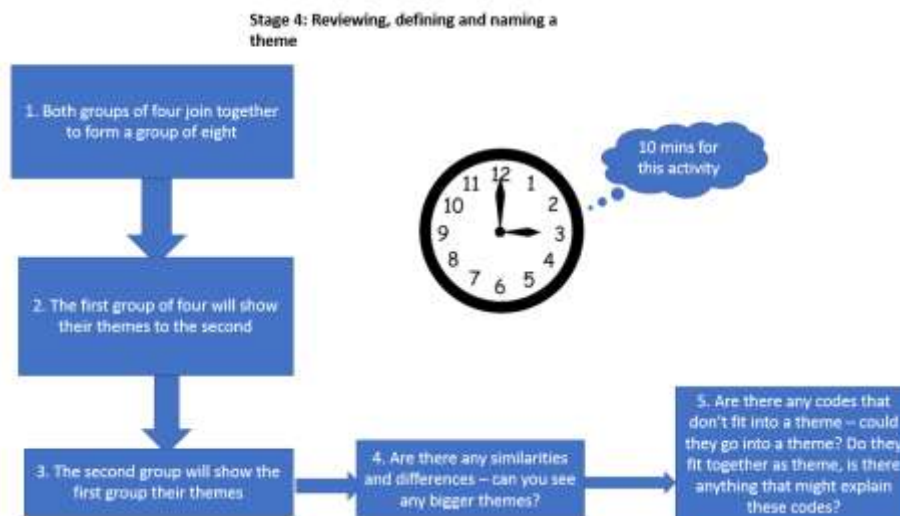


Figure. 6.7 Slide shown to CRs to help them review, define and name the themes

After each session CRs completed a reflective diary which focussed on both the methods of research and their thoughts and feelings raised during the research process. Dialogue within these logs provided additional evidence which was photographed and sent back to CRs. CRs then decided if they wanted to use the reflections as evidence for the themes they identified or whether they could see any new, emerging themes or negative cases. Once reviewed, they were added to a table of supporting evidence. This process meant data was collected at a fourth phase of the study.

Lastly, each group of CRs was sent a blank table (Appendices: 13 & 14) with the heading of each theme and sub-theme which they had identified in phase three of the research. They were also sent copies of all data collected which included transcripts from FGs, collages and photos of reflective diary pages. CRs then selected evidence they felt best represented their construction of the concepts within the themes and were prompted to consider negative

cases. Once this was completed it was sent back to the researcher to present the findings.