Innovations in Resilience

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“You can’t stop the waves but you can learn to surf”
--John Kabat-Zinn

It’s easier to learn to surf if you have a surfboard, a coach, and a lifeguard
Resilience in theory...

- Resilience is the capacity of a dynamic system to adapt successfully to disturbances that threaten system function, viability, or development.

- The concept can be applied to systems of many kinds at many levels, both living and nonliving.

Resilience in practice...

In the context of exposure to significant adversity, resilience is our capacity, individually and in groups, to navigate our way to the psychological, social, cultural, and physical resources that sustain our wellbeing, and...

our capacity individually and in groups to negotiate for these resources to be provided in meaningful ways.

An Expression of Resilience

In the context of:
• above normal exposure to adversity (load=A) where $\Sigma A > \text{average A for a population}$,
• and with attention to the severity, chronicity and relevance of the adversity
• $R_{1, 2, 3...} = f(S_{CV}, E) \left( O_{Av}, O_{Ac} \right)(M)$
Two Hypotheses

1. Each system’s resilience influences the resilience of other co-occurring, supraordinate and subordinate systems.

2. There are common principles across systems that explain how each develops and sustains resilience.
Principles and Processes

1. Resilience occurs in contexts of adversity
2. Resilience is a systemic process
   1. Persistence
   2. Resistance
   3. Recovery
   4. Adaptation
   5. Transformation
Principles and Processes

1. Resilience occurs in contexts of adversity
2. Resilience is a systemic process
3. A resilient system is open, dynamic and complex
4. A resilient system promotes connectivity
5. Resilience requires experimentation and learning
6. A resilient system includes diversity, redundancy and participation.
Co-produced pathways of resilience: South African insights
Agency
- Future orientation
- Altruistic aspirations
- Investment in education

Relatedness
- Family system
- Flocking

Cultural belonging
- Cultural pride
- Ubuntu-values
- Spirituality

(E.g., Casale, 2011; Dass-Brailsford, 2005; Ebersöhn, 2012; Greeff & Lawrence, 2012; Malindi, 2014; Mampane, 2016; Theron, 2016; Van Breda, 2017)
Urban exemplar
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**Theron & van Rensburg, under review**
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Theron & van Rensburg, under review
Pro-education community

“At school we had preachers coming and telling us, “You are the answer to your family ... you might sleep with no food ... but you are the answer ... by going to school you might get a bursary, by working hard and then you’ll be educated and you’ll help your family”
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My drawing means to study and finish school and go to university and then after, I get a job \textbf{and my life goes far!} I want to be a social worker. I \textbf{want to help} other children that have no parents and to buy some food and clothes for them.
Rural exemplar
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<tr>
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<td>Traditional healers</td>
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Voluntary use of services

Physical and psychological caregiving
Van Rensburg, Theron, & Rothmann, in press

Physical and psychological caregiving

Mandatory services

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<tr>
<td>Substance abuse programs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mental health services</td>
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Connectivity

Adolescent <-> Social ecology

Parent-figure <-> Adolescent
‘I am living a peaceful life with my grandchildren. Nothing else.’ Stories of adversity and ‘resilience’ of older women caring for children in the context of HIV/AIDS and other stressors

MARISA CASALE

Ageing and Society / Volume 31 / Issue 08 / November 2011, pp 1265 - 1288
DOI: 10.1017/S0144686X10001303, Published online: 07 February 2011
Differential Impact Theory

A impact of a protective factor/process depends on a system’s level of risk exposure and the nature of the factor/process.
Figure 1a: Differential Impact of Protective and Promotive Factors and Processes (PPFP)—Model 1

- Optimal development
- Expected development--low risk
- Expected development--high risk

A: Change in resource or intervention
B: Time

Biopsychosocial Development
Figure 1b: Differential Impact of Protective and Promotive Factors and Processes (PPFP) — Model 2

- Optimal development
- Expected development—low risk
- Expected development—high risk

Time

Change in resource or intervention

Biopsychosocial Development
Figure 1c: Differential Impact of Protective and Promotive Factors and Processes (PPFP)—Model 3

- Optimal development
- Expected development--low risk
- Expected development--high risk

Time

Change in resource or intervention

Biopsychosocial Development
‘Mothers’ matter

My mother takes care of me. She feeds me and protects me and she *always* be with me.

My grandmother is like a mother to me. She is *always* there for me. ... one day is one day that I am going to [re]pay her for that.
‘I am OK because my mother is strong’
Thank you!

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