



Exploring the Roots of Resilience among Female Street-involved Children in South Africa

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KEYWORDS Resilience. Street Child. Streetism. Street-involved. Positive Psychology. Vulnerable

ABSTRACT This paper reports the findings of a qualitative South African study that unearthed the roots of resilience among female, Black street-involved children, who are classified as children on the street. The researcher sampled purposefully in order to obtain 30 girls who were aged between 12 and 17. Using the Draw-and-write technique as a data collection strategy, the researcher asked the participants to make symbolic drawings of what enabled them to cope resiliently when life was hard. The drawings were accompanied by short narratives in which they explained their drawings. The drawings as well as the narratives were subjected to inductive content analysis. The findings showed that the girls coped by combining intrapersonal resilience resources, such as listening to music and having faith, with interpersonal resilience resources, such as having lively support systems, and having access to community-based care and support. The implication is that although female street-involved girls can be vulnerable, researchers and mental health practitioners will do well not to be blind to mechanisms that promoted buoyancy in the girls in the context of streetism.