

Swimming Upstream in the Midst of Adversity: Exploring Resilience-Enablers among Street Children

Macalane Junel Malindi

*University of Johannesburg, South Africa, Faculty of Education, Department of Educational
Psychology, P.O. Box 524 Auckland Park, Johannesburg 2006 South Africa
E-mail: mmalindi@uj.ac.za*

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ABSTRACT Street children are viewed from the medical perspective that focuses on what is wrong in them and the charity perspective that focuses on rescuing them from the hardships that characterise street life. These perspectives consider street children to be physically and psychosocially vulnerable to the development of psychopathology. The strengths and assets that enable street children to cope resiliently in the midst of adversity are often overlooked. This paper presents the results of a quantitative study that focused on unearthing the assets and strengths that enhance wellbeing among street children in spite of adversity. Twenty street children took part in this study and they completed the Child and Youth Resilience Measure (CYRM) that the researcher used to collect data. The results show that street children coped with their lives due to individual, relational, community and cultural processes. These results challenge researchers and mental health-care workers to be alert to resilience enablers in the context of streetism.