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A social-ecological perspective on the roles of YOLO facilitators

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Title: A social-ecological perspective on the roles of YOLO facilitators.

University of Witwatersrand: Master of Management: Governance (Public and Development Sector Monitoring and Evaluation)

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This is a mini dissertation report submitted to the Faculty of Management, University of the Witwatersrand, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree Master of Management Governance (Public and Development Sector Monitoring and Evaluation).

February 2024

Dedication

During my years of studying, I used to take my children to the university library with me over the weekends. I committed to keep studying as long as family members were studying in my house. I pursued several degrees to support my family as a fellow student. Over time, my wife completed her master's degree, my daughter achieved her master's degree, and finally, my youngest son completed his degree. This degree is dedicated to my wife Filicity, daughter Cleo, and son Clint.

I dedicate this to my entire family and community.

“I belong; therefore, I am.”

Declaration

I, Christofer van Rooyen, declare this Research Report is my own work. It is being submitted for the Master in Public and Development Management degree at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa.

It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at any other University.



Signature

Christofer van Rooyen **Date : 28 February 2024**

Acknowledgement

I want to thank God for giving me the dream and perseverance to start and finish the research project.

I want to thank the following institutions for contributing to the research's success.

The National Department of Social Development for the bursary and study leaves to complete the research.

The non-profit organisation permitted me to research their space of work.

Finally, to the YOLO facilitators who participated in the research without hesitation and total commitment.

I hope the research outcome contributes to promoting a more nuanced understanding of the lived experiences of YOLO facilitators.

Abstract

In South Africa, young people between the ages of 15 and 24 years face an elevated risk of contracting HIV due to various factors associated with high-risk practices such as engaging in unsafe sexual practices. The Department of Social Development implemented the “You Only Live Once” (YOLO) community-based HIV prevention programme. YOLO aims to reduce risky sexual behaviour among the youth. YOLO employs facilitators to render a structured programme with information on self-care, assertiveness, HIV treatment and adherence support, peer pressure and related content. The YOLO programme design subscribed to the social-ecological model focusing on children and youth. Several research studies used the social-ecological model to investigate YOLO participants (youth and children). However, the literature has limited exploration of how the interplay among individual, interpersonal and community levels influences the role of YOLO facilitators.

The study aims to explore the roles of the YOLO facilitators from the lens of the social-ecological model. the research allows Further, the research allows YOLO facilitators to describe their individual, interpersonal and community roles. The study explores the interplay between the multiple levels of the social-ecological model and the influences on the role of the YOLO facilitators.

The research site of the not-for-profit organisation (NPO) was in the City of Matlosana, previously known as Klerksdorp. According to the literature, the community in this area faces several challenges, including high levels of HIV, poor access to municipal health services, unprecedented high levels of youth unemployment and issues with violence and substance abuse. The YOLO facilitators who worked within the NPO reside in the area and have grown up in similar conditions, which gave them a unique perspective and understanding of the challenges faced by those whom they are trying to help. The research aimed to describe the YOLO facilitators from the perspective of the social-ecological model.

The research recruited participants through the non-probability sampling methods. The method limits the researcher's biases in the selection process. Ten YOLO facilitators participated in the research. The YOLO facilitators represented various age groups, races, genders, skill sets and experiences in the field.

The research used descriptive qualitative research methodology. The methodology employed a qualitative, semi-structured interview to collect data from 10 YOLO facilitators. The study employed the thematic data analysis method and identified several sub-themes and thesis themes from the data. The researcher used the social-ecological model to describe the micro, meso and micro-level themes. Further, the researcher followed a system approach and described the interactions between the micro, meso and macro systems.

The University of Witwatersrand granted ethical clearance to the research. The researcher adhered to the ethical standard as part of the study. The National Department of Social Development and the NPO Board granted permission to conduct the research. The researcher explained their positionality and the influences on the research outcome.

The study found that YOLO facilitators function as “wounded healers”. The researcher discussed the risk of being a wounded healer in the context of the study. The researcher recommends that it is essential to ensure that YOLO facilitators are aware of potential risks and that NPOs provide a safe and supportive environment to mitigate them. YOLO facilitators’ personal experiences can undoubtedly assist them in developing empathy and sympathy, but it was essential to strike a balance between personal growth and personal harm.

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CHAPTER 1: RESEARCH OVERVIEW

1.1 Introduction

Over the past decade, HIV prevention programmes have overlooked the critical importance of integrating behavioural HIV prevention programmes with multi-level approaches. These approaches include interventions to foster behavioural changes among individuals, groups and communities (Harrison et al., 2010; Kaufman et al., 2014; Zuma et al., 2022). This research focuses on the You Only Live Once (YOLO) HIV prevention programme and the roles of facilitators, exploring them through the lens of the social-ecological model. YOLO facilitators are child and youth care workers, social auxiliary workers and students with matric qualifications (YOLO Live Moya, 2018) who are considered social service professionals in South Africa.

1.2 Child and youth challenges in South Africa

South Africa is one of the most unequal countries in the world. Over 50% of the population lives in poverty and the situation seems to worsen daily (Francis & Webster, 2019; Iheonu & Oladipupo, 2023). Children and youth experience adverse conditions earmarked with high levels of poverty, violence and dysfunctional families (Kaiser & Delaney, 1996). This research focuses on the most significant challenges experienced by children and youth.

According to Stats SA (2020a), by 2020 more than 56% of South African children and youth were living in poverty. Of that group, 59% lived in households earning less than R1 183 per month and 30% lived in households where both adults were unemployed. The employment status of adults significantly influences poverty, as observed in households characterised by adult unemployment (Kaiser & Delaney, 1996; Makhalima, 2020). The *Social Profile of Youth Report* estimates that young people in South Africa face challenges such as elevated unemployment, limited engagement in the labour market and pervasive poverty, which includes instances of profound deprivation (Stats SA, 2020). The youth unemployment rate in South Africa indicated a 12.5% increase, rising from 36.8% in 2014 to 49.3% in 2021 (Stats SA, 2019). The increase implies that in 2014, over five million South African young individuals were unemployed; this number grew to 7.6 million in 2021. This paints a bleak outlook for youth employment in South Africa.

Additionally, South Africa has an estimated 2.7 million orphans, mainly those who lived without their fathers (paternal orphans), which places the responsibility of their care on the poorest household (Ward et al., 2012). Child and youth care is a challenging field characterised by intensive daily involvement with youth at risk. It belongs to the wider area of helping professions but has distinct attributes related to clients' characteristics and working environment (Yakhnich, 2022). This high number of orphans contributes to the overall emotional distress experienced by children in the country.

Children and young face daily high levels of violence and poverty. Ward et al. (2012) framed violence in the context of the social-ecological model. The ecological approach views young individuals as active environmental contributors (Crawford, 2020). The most impactful environments are those where they regularly interact with others, such as their families and peers (Ward et al., 2012). Violence in low-income families generates elevated levels of stress, anxiety and uncertainties about the

future (Ward et al., 2012). The high prevalence of violence leads to child fatalities and enduring physical and/or mental problems, creating permanent emotional scars (Makhalima, 2020). Childhood trauma can cause long-term dysfunctionalities for children in both physical and psychological domains Prioreschi (2020, as cited in South African Child Gauge, 2020). Young people faced with high levels of violence are more significantly at risk, which contributes to less safe and protective home and community surroundings.

Poverty contributes to school violence (Ward et al., 2012). Poverty alone does not directly lead to violence, but it can amplify the impact of other risk factors (Ward et al., 2012c); for example, the absence of material possessions that signify social inclusion may increase the likelihood of youth resorting to criminal activities to sustain their daily lives or address the feeling of exclusion. Young people often engage in criminal activities such as house robbery, theft and other offences to feel like they are part of a group (Van der Merwe et al., as cited in Ward, 2012). In addition to peer pressure and violent behaviour, the literature demonstrates an interconnectedness between poverty and violence.

Community poverty adversely affects children's educational outcomes (Eskandari et al., 2019). Kaiser and Delaney (1996) reveal a strong correlation between poverty and children's low emotional and educational outcomes. Impoverished children struggle to reach their full potential as individuals in the education system and society (Minas et al., 2020). Poverty negatively impacts the language development of poor children. This leads to consistent disparities between children from low-income and middle-class backgrounds (Kaiser & Delaney, 1996). Poor children exhibit limited vocalisation, resulting in lower educational outcomes (Eskandari et al., 2019). Underdeveloped language skills make it less likely for poor children to progress through the educational system (Eskandari et al., 2019).

Families run out of money to buy food, resulting in hunger (Iheonu & Oladipupo, 2023). Food insecurity negatively impacts a child's nutritional status (Dlamini et al., 2023; Iheonu & Oladipupo, 2023; Kaiser & Delaney, 1996). Sanders et al. (2019) emphasise that poverty is a primary cause of child hunger, leading to food insecurity with detrimental effects on a child's nutritional health (Dlamini et al., 2023). Poverty restricts poor households' ability to purchase food, resulting in malnutrition among children (Dlamini et al., 2023; Francis & Webster, 2019; Van Der Berg et al., 2022). The literature connects poverty with poor educational outcomes for children and the advancement of their full potential as human beings.

At the family level, poverty negatively affects parenting skills (Kaiser & Delaney, 1996; Makhalima, 2020). In a child's early years, parental interactions significantly shape their outside influences. Living in poverty and coping with associated stresses can make it challenging for parents to provide adequate support, impacting their mental well-being (Francis & Webster, 2019). Impoverished parents face increased challenges in fulfilling their children's fundamental needs, undermining their ability to ensure their well-being and intensifying the stress experienced by economically disadvantaged parents (Hodge & Raymond, 2023).

Authors highlight that the fundamental reasons for developmental issues originate from the economic framework of society, underscoring the need for prevention efforts (Kaiser & Delaney, 1996; Makhalima, 2020; Ward et al., 2012). In this context, YOLO facilitators respond to the plight of impoverished children in South Africa. Understanding how poverty affects people, particularly child development, may influence how YOLO facilitators experience their roles.

The multi-layered influence of violence and poverty on children and youth demands a clear understanding of YOLO facilitators. However, the literature notes a limited understanding of their role, adversely impacting services to vulnerable children and youth (Allsopp, 2021; Zondeka, 2021). Hence, this research offered YOLO facilitators a platform to articulate and define their roles within the social-ecological model, which comprises individual, interpersonal, community and societal levels. This research builds on the theoretical underpinning of the social-ecological model.

In 2016, the Department of Social Development (DSD) implemented the YOLO programme. The programme targets HIV high-burden provinces, including the Northwest province (Live Moyo, 2018). YOLO focuses on children and youth aged 10 to 24 years, aiming to reduce risky sexual behaviour among youth. Risk sexual behaviour refers to activities experienced by a person that result in HIV infections (Mbengo et al., 2023). Youth engage in transactional sex, multiple sex partners, unprotected sex, gender bases violence, sharing syringes during drug use, early sex debut and child marriage (Mbengo et al., 2022). Live Moyo's (2018) evaluation confirms the aim of the YOLO programme (DSD, 2018). The programme aims to reduce risky behaviour in children and youth who are more vulnerable to HIV (Zuma et al., 2022).

The YOLO programme employs the social-ecological theoretical framework, recognising that young people's surroundings influence their behaviour (Chinosengwa, 2020; Mbengo et al., 2023; Live Moyo, 2018). The social-ecological model contextualises HIV-risk behaviour in the daily surroundings of the youth (Ungar, 2002). Social-ecological model benchmarks as best practice around the world to develop sexual risk behaviour programmes for HIV (Mbengo et al., 2023). The government funds community-based organisations to implement such programmes Kgaphola & Jacob, 2020; Mbengo et al., 2022). The social-ecological perspective underscores the interplay between individuals and their physical and social surroundings, encompassing cultural and political contexts (Thumbadoo, 2008). YOLO consists of 12 well-structured sessions covering topics crucial to young individuals such as self-esteem building, self-awareness, essential HIV information, knowledge about human anatomy and decision-making skills.

Schools and churches receive the YOLO programme well. YOLO facilitators present YOLO sessions during Life Orientation classes, which are part of the school curriculum (Live Moyo, 2018). YOLO facilitators recruit young people for the YOLO programme, ensuring that young individuals engage willingly and actively in learning. They facilitate group discussions with children and youth that focus on the topic of sexuality (Live Moyo, 2018). In addition, YOLO facilitators provide youth with one meal as a snack pack as part of the nutritional support programme (Live Moyo, 2018).

According to Makeleni (2021), the YOLO programme demonstrates a positive impact on young girls' perceptions by increasing their understanding of risky sexual behaviour. YOLO boosts the participants' self-confidence and produces a positive connection towards communities (August, 2022; Walker, 2021). Furthermore, Mbengo et al. (2022) confirm that the YOLO programme provides valuable knowledge and skills to young people to protect themselves from HIV and make informed life choices, ultimately contributing to the overall health and well-being of the youth population in South Africa. Recent studies have found increased HIV knowledge among YOLO participants (August 2022; Kgaphola & Jacobs, 2020; Makeleni, 2021).

The discussion demonstrates how the YOLO programme uses the social-ecological framework to advance children's and youth's development. The research employs the same social-ecological framework to explore the YOLO facilitator's roles in communities.

1.3 Social-ecological model

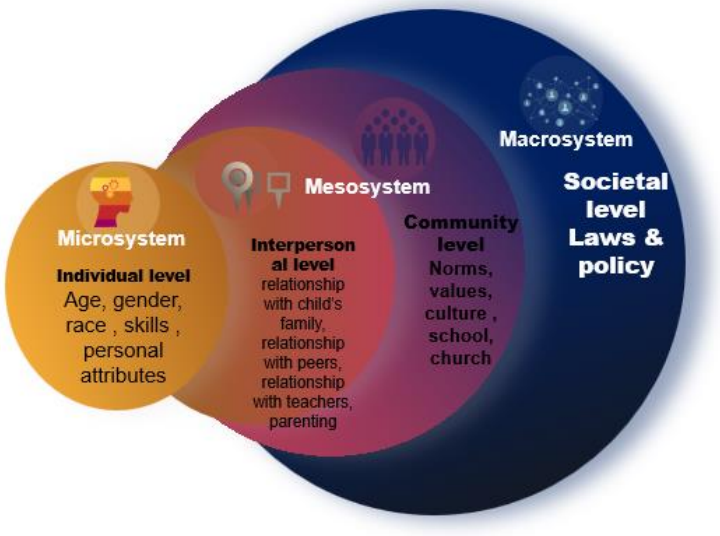


Figure 1: Social-Ecological Model Source: (Hodge & Raymond, 2023)

Figure 1 portrays four oval circles: individual, interpersonal and community levels and the societal level presents outcomes of regulation in societal lives (Baral et al., 2013; Hodge & Raymond, 2023). The overlapping of the circle indicates active interactions between these levels. The individual level encompasses personal attributes such as age, race, motivation, training and childhood experiences (Baral et al., 2013). Within the individual level, these attributes shape the characteristics of the person. The microsystem hosts the interactions at the individual level.

The next circle represents the interpersonal level. The interpersonal level refers to the relationships with family, friends and peers (Baral et al., 2013). The interpersonal level links with the community levels which hosts values, cultures norms and

religions (Baral et al., 2013). The community levels regulates the person`s social behaviour determines by communities (Baral et al., 2013). The mesosystem connects groups and individuals and hosts interaction inside and outside the system.

The societal level represents laws and policies. The macrosystem governs behaviour at the societal level. The interaction operates inside the levels and across systems. These systems influence the individual, interpersonal, community and macro levels (Hodge & Raymond, 2023; Baral et al., 2013). Indeed, the diagram does not provide an exhaustive list of all the elements influencing the role of YOLO facilitators, but instead focuses on those that significantly impact their roles.

The social-ecological model recognises the interconnectedness between individuals and their environment. It describes a person's development within interconnected environments (Bogardus et al., 2019; Gal, 2017). Previous research has used this model to explain how individuals interact and co-exist within social, economic and political surroundings (Crawford, 2020; Derksen, 2010; Gal, 2017). The model comprises of the individual, intrapersonal, community and societal levels (Derksen, 2010). Bogardus et al. (2019) agree that these levels influence a person's choices and behaviour. The micro level includes the person and their daily routine, responsibilities and environment, all of which subsequently contribute to and shape their characteristics, values and actions (Crawford, 2020). The intrapersonal level focuses on the individual's relationship with groups (Crawford, 2020). These groups include family members, teachers, peers, church members and associates (Gal, 2017). The community level consists of interactions between the individual and social structures; for example, the connection between the school and home (Crawford, 2020). The macro level constitutes the regulatory framework that influences the behaviour of communities; for example, laws, policies and violence. Derksen (2010) and Ungar (2002) agree that the socio-ecological approach forms a fundamental part of the social work practice.

1.4 YOLO facilitators in the context of the social-ecological model

The social-ecological model impacts how YOLO facilitators approach their work across the micro, meso and macro systems Thumbadoo (2021). Crawford (2020) postulates that individuals construct living systems. YOLO facilitators produce these living systems as active influencers within and between these systems (Chimphamba Gombachika et al., 2012; Elder et al., 2006; McLeroy et al., 1988). The microsystem comprises individuals as part of an open system (Crawford, 2020). Crawford (2020) characterises the individual system as absorbing change from the surroundings; the surroundings can change the individual but the individual can also be changed by their surroundings. The individual system cannot operate in a space because it needs to connect with other systems (Chimphamba & Gombachika et al., 2012). Systems construct each other hierarchically, implying that individual systems serve as the starting point connecting with the meso and microsystems. Derksen (2010) describes the system's relationship as reciprocal. For YOLO facilitators, their primary focus is on the microsystem, which comprises a child's immediate environment, including their personality, beliefs and temperament, as these factors play a crucial role in shaping their worldview.

The mesosystem constitutes the interactions between two or more settings that influence the individual's development (Bogardus et al., 2019; Derksen, 2010). Crawford (2020) emphasises that interactions within the mesosystem are critical in

maintaining the complex networks surrounding the YOLO facilitators. These interactions and contacts facilitate the interconnectedness between the microsystem and the meso systems. For instance, the microsystem constitutes an individual's personality, beliefs and temperament in their immediate environment and these factors influence their interactions with other people and systems. Consequently, YOLO facilitators need to understand and work within the microsystem to ensure the optimal development of the children they serve.

The macro system regulates the behaviour of the individual and groups in the meso systems (Chimphamba Gombachika et al., 2012; Derksen, n.d.; McLeroy et al., 1988). The individual has little or no influence on the regulatory mechanism in the macro system (McLeroy et al., 1988; Moore et al., 2013). Examples of regulatory mechanisms are policies, acts or laws. The macro system transforms YOLO facilitators through social development regulatory frameworks that depend on the situation, time and place. Situation refers to the role that the YOLO facilitator occupied. They may work as administrators at a residential care centre or a community-based programme. Crawford (2020) clarifies that the repetitiveness of the macro level sustains the influences between systems. Notable is that YOLO facilitators require a clear understanding of how multiple levels of interaction influence their work with children and youth. The following section ponders on the work of YOLO facilitators in the research.

1.5 YOLO facilitators address the issues that youth face

The South African Social Services Professions Council regulates CYCWs in the Social Services Practitioners Bill 2021. This group includes the YOLO facilitators, as previously defined in the research. The workforce promotes and safeguards the general welfare of needy children and youths (DSD, 2011b, 2018). YOLO facilitators are vital in working with children and young people in their daily surroundings, building relationships and providing care (Allsopp, 2021). Roles include prioritising the child's overall development in their care, recognising the interconnection between the child and others, fostering a caring environment, prioritising the child's needs and enhancing their overall well-being (Allsopp, 2021; Thumbadoo, 2021).

According to Vachon (2020), caregivers – which include YOLO facilitators – typically bear a crucial duty in managing their emotions, particularly in response to their well-being. In their interactions with young individuals, YOLO facilitators cultivate trust, enhance self-esteem and provide positive values (Allsopp, 2021; Thumbadoo, 2021). They establish positive connections with young people in addressing relationship challenges (Thumbadoo, 2021; Vachon, 2020).

YOLO facilitators place the child at the forefront of the YOLO sessions. This approach remains the primary focus throughout the intervention (Allsopp, 2021; Phelan, 2004 ; Zondeka, 2021). YOLO facilitators establish a relationship with the child at the micro-level (Crawford, 2020). This relationship constructs trust, respect, care, affection and honesty, essential for successful relationships between adults and children, especially for those children and teenagers facing significant mental and emotional challenges (International CYCN, 2018).

YOLO facilitators work with families to create supportive home environments and strengthen family dynamics (Thumbadoo, 2008). They play a pivotal role at the meso level by acting as intermediaries between schools, communities and children, ensuring that educational and community resources are accessible and used effectively (Thumbadoo, 2021). They further assist children and youth in accessing school uniforms and food (L. Molepo, 2013; L. P. Molepo, 2020a; Thumbadoo, 2021).

In addition, YOLO facilitators play an advocacy and resource mobilisation role in communities, which form part of the meso level. They address the needs of children and youths within and across these meso and macro levels (Molepo, 2013). In most cases, YOLO facilitators ease communication and cooperation between various stakeholders involved in a child's life, such as schools, social services and healthcare providers (Allsopp, 2021). They identify children needing school uniforms and food vouchers (Thumbadoo, 2021). During traumatic experiences, they provide lay counselling (Yakhnich, 2022). Additionally, YOLO facilitators prevent social ills by strengthening protective factors for children (Thumbadoo, 2021); for example, ensuring that children attend school is a safety protective measure. They provide educational support and supervision to children when their parents are still at work (Chimange & Bond, 2020).

Young people face an elevated risk of contracting HIV because of various factors associated with high-risk practices, like engaging in unsafe sexual practices (Kaufman et al., 2014). YOLO facilitators share information on HIV treatment adherence support, counselling and other services to children and youth living with HIV/AIDS (Thumbadoo, 2008). Recent studies confirm that unsafe sexual practices among young people, such as early initiation of sexual activity, multiple sexual partners and alcohol or drug use during sexual activities, increase the risk of HIV infection (Kaufman et al., 2014; Mbengo et al., 2023; Zuma et al., 2022). The government prioritises its HIV response to children and youth, which has led to numerous community-level HIV initiatives. However, YOLO facilitators experience various challenges at the community level.

1.6 YOLO facilitators' challenges

YOLO facilitators experience various challenges in the context of the communities. YOLO facilitators experience high numbers of demanding clients, volumes of paperwork, traumatic experiences, threats of bodily harm and lack of supervision (Molepo & Delport, 2015). Molepo (2020) explains that services to children and youth shifted from residential care to a community approach. Given the impact of HIV/AIDS and the impact of past inequalities, the services demand increases in communities (Molepo & Delport, 2015). The community-based approach reaches more children and youth not referred to residential care facilities (Gharabaghi & Phelan, 2011). Furthermore, Phelan (2011) argues that YOLO facilitators contribute to community development. Thus, YOLO facilitators shape communities and are shaped by community interactions.

Molepo (2020) describes how child and youth care workers experience psychological challenges at personal and community levels. Challenges range from personal trauma which originates in their live space. They describe experiences whereby children invade their private space and find themselves not participating in social activities due to stress (Molepo, 2020). Studies confirms that CYCWs experience high levels of burn out which may leads to high stress levels (Molepo & Delport, 2015;Molepo, 2020) Child and youth care workers can only help others if they have dealt with their own personal trauma (Molepo, 2013; Molepo,

2020). Molepo finds that child and youth care workers possess little or no coping strategies and some engage in sub-abuse as part of a coping mechanism (Molepo, 2020). Molepo (2020) cautious supervisors of child and youth care workers against burnout of the workforce. Child and youth care workers experience low levels of commitment and some do not comply with their annual register at the South African Social Services Professions.

By 2021, there were 12,613 registered child and youth care workers, including professionals, auxiliaries and students working in this field (South African Social Services Professions, 2021). Data from April 2021 to March 2022 revealed a concerning trend. Over 52% of the registered 12,613 child and youth care workers in South Africa faced the possibility of deregistration due to low morale attributed to the various challenges encountered by the political, social and economic systems (Allsopp, 2021).

1.7 Research site

The research site was a not-for-profit organisation (NPO) in the City of Matlosana, previously known as Klerksdorp in the Dr Kenneth Kaunda district municipality, which forms part of the Northwest province. According to the South African National Census of 2022, the population in the district had increased from 695 933 in 2011 to 734 202 in 2022. This represents a growth rate of 0.5%, which is higher than in other district municipalities in the province. The Census 2022 also revealed 175 380 school-going children between the ages of five and 24. However, the significant increase in the population has put a strain on the district's essential services(Mosenogi, 2020). Also, the Census 2022 showed that less than 20% of young people in the area obtained a national matric certificate, indicating that the general level of education was low and access to essential public services in the area was inadequate.

According to Zuma et al. (2022), the area witnessed a persistently high HIV prevalence rate of 22% among the youth-adult population between 2017 and 2022. However, the age range of the youth-adult population is not specified. Significant challenges of high teenage pregnancy and substance abuse accompanied this high rate of HIV prevalence (Simbayi et al., 2019). Variava, (2006) attributed this situation to the increased population mobility in the area. From the results of Census 2022, it was observed that people from deprived rural areas migrated to towns in search of work opportunities and better living conditions. The Matlosana district municipality has struggled with persistently high youth unemployment rates for years (Mosenogi, 2020).

Klerksdorp is located on the national road called N12. Thousands of trucks passed through the town, connecting the people with the Northern Cape, Botswana and Namibia. The city was a significant trading hub for the surrounding underdeveloped villages (Variava, 2006). The population comprises many migrants who moved between various provinces (Mosenogi, 2020). Klerksdorp serves as the district's economic hub. The town accounts for around 85% of the income-generating activities (Simbayi et al., 2019). This situation warranted robust HIV prevention programmes, particularly among young people.

By 2022, the area hosted approximately 130 000 households, of which 57% lived below the poverty line (Census, 2022). The municipality comprises several townships and extensions, including Maquassi, JB Marks, Tigane, Tlokwe, Kanana and Khuma.

The lack of job opportunities in the district has led to economic instability, leaving thousands of young people without any income (Stats SA, 2019). The high levels of unemployment have had a significant impact on the youth. In 2017, around 491 000 individuals lived in poverty within the district (Census, 2023). The high youth unemployment rates have compounded existing social and health problems, particularly concerning HIV infections (Variava, 2006). The government develops the YOLO programme as a countermeasure to support young people in gaining essential knowledge and skills about HIV (NPO, 2023). YOLO included other development aspects like self-esteem, social skills, human rights and gender-based violence sessions (Live Moyo, 2018).

At the time of the research, the NPO had a team of 35 facilitators, including qualified child and youth care workers, social auxiliary workers and students. The age range of YOLO facilitators was between 20 and 43; they were both Black and Coloured females and males. The YOLO programme was implemented in approximately 45 primary and secondary schools in Maquassi, JB Marks, Tigane and Tlokwe townships. YOLO enrolled over a thousand young people in the area from April 2021 to March 2022 (NPO, 2022). Over the previous five years, school principals in the areas where the YOLO programme was implemented had given positive feedback about the programme (NPO, 2022).

1.8 Problem statement

YOLO facilitators are not aware of how the social environment influences their daily roles. Their roles are influenced by the interactions with the social environments where they were born, live, and work. They are responsible for serving children and communities within complex and challenging environments (Zondeka, 2021). Crawford (2020) emphasizes that multiple forces significantly influence a person's interactions with others and the surrounding environment. These influences occur at various levels and are influenced by unique circumstances, timing, and geographical context over time. Crawford (2020) describes ecological change as the movements between multiple levels that influence a person's experience.

The current literature has not thoroughly explored how the interaction among individual, interpersonal, and community levels impacts the role of YOLO facilitators (Moalosi, 2019; Thumbadoo, 2021; Zondeka, 2021). YOLO facilitators need to understand how these dynamics influence their roles. There is a need to delve into the experiences of YOLO facilitators using the social-ecological model to address this gap in the literature. Furthermore, it is crucial to understand how the interplay between individual, interpersonal, and community levels shapes the roles of YOLO facilitators in providing services to children and youth.

Further, Thumbadoo (2021) identified gaps in understanding of YOLO facilitators' roles in the social profession, which led to confusion and negative consequences for the services provided to children and youth The literature had few research studies on the roles of YOLO facilitators, while the role of social workers was well developed over time (Allsopp, 2021; Phelan, 2004a). The limited literature informed the researcher’s intent in using the social-ecological lens to explore the role of children and youth in the context of the YOLO programme.

1.9 Purpose of the study

The study aims to explore the roles of YOLO facilitators from the social-ecological perspective.

1.10 Research question

How do YOLO facilitators describe their roles when viewed through the social-ecological perspective?

1.11 Study objectives

The research formulates the following objectives:

- The first objective is to describe the roles of YOLO facilitators at the individual, intrapersonal, community and societal levels.
- The second objective is to describe how YOLO facilitator's roles interact within and between the micro, meso and macro systems.
- The third objective is addressing the research gap suggests that YOLO facilitators do not understand their roles.
- The fourth objective is to provide recommendations on strengthening the YOLO facilitator's roles from a social-ecological perspective.

1.12 Chapter overviews

Chapter 1

Chapter 1 introduces the YOLO facilitators and the focus of the study. The researcher contextualises the discussion by highlighting various challenges faced by children and youth in South Africa. Further, it explains the roles of YOLO facilitators in addressing these challenges. It describes the research site and its population, particularly the impact of the HIV pandemic. The chapter introduces the social-ecological model and explains how it is applied in the research. It justifies the research and outlines the research purpose and objectives. It also describes the research site and its population, particularly the impact of the HIV pandemic. Using the social-By applying the social-ecological lens, the chapter formulates a research question related to the role of YOLO facilitators. The chapter concludes with a summary with a road map of the research.

Chapter 2

Chapter 2 provides an overview of youth HIV prevention approaches in recent years. The research recommends the use of the social-ecological model based on previous studies. The chapter explains how the researcher used this model and presents a diagram that described the roles of YOLO facilitators. This framework assisted the researcher in identifying how YOLO facilitators' roles are interconnected across the micro, meso and macro systems. These relationships are transactional and depend on the work of previous scholars. The chapter concludes that the social-ecological model is a valuable tool for exploring the complex systems that affect the work of YOLO facilitators.

Chapter 3

Chapter 3 discusses the use of the constructivist paradigm. The researcher explains why the qualitative approach was chosen as the most appropriate method for the study. The researcher outlines the purpose of the study and the rationale for the qualitative descriptive method. The chapter also discusses the research design, which was carefully constructed to achieve the study's aims and objectives.

The chapter narrates the pilot study's story and how it helped in finalising the research's semi-structured interviews. It then proceeds to the data collection at the research site, highlighting challenges experienced in the field and how they were overcome. The thematic data analysis about the study's objectives is unpacked in detail.

The chapter also explains the process used to ensure reliability, trustworthiness and fairness across the research. Finally, the chapter concludes with a discussion of the researcher's positionality and how the researcher's biases were managed in the study.

Chapter 4

Chapter 4 analyses the interviews conducted with the research participants. It presents the main themes and findings from the interview process and subsequent data analysis. The chapter starts with a discussion of the individual profiles of the research participants. It uses direct interview quotations to support the central and sub-themes identified. The following part interprets the data against the theoretical framework and literature. The four main themes identified are 1) wounded healer, 2) the critical roles of facilitators, 3) facilitators in communities and 4) the impact of the social environment on the roles of facilitators. The chapter concludes with the main findings, which will then be interpreted in the next chapter.

Chapter 5

Chapter 5 interprets and discusses the research findings that aim to explore the lived experiences of YOLO facilitators. It responds to the multifaceted role of YOLO facilitators. The research explores sub-themes within each of the four central themes, contributing to a comprehensive understanding of the YOLO facilitator's role. The discussion emphasises the YOLO facilitator's role within the individual, interpersonal relationships, community and societal contexts. It summarises the findings by explaining the connections, dependencies and influences between micro, meso and macro systems in the social-ecological model. Finally, the chapter concludes that the discussion formulates the thesis arguments. The chapter explains whether the research question was answered sufficiently and formulates practical recommendations to strengthen the role of YOLO facilitators' role facilitators in the YOLO programme.

1.13 Conclusion

According to the DSD, YOLO facilitators are essential in addressing the HIV problem among young people in South Africa. Although there has been progress in reducing HIV infections in young people, challenges remain. This is where YOLO facilitators play a significant role in the successful implementation and expansion of programmes like YOLO. The research was conducted in Klerksdorp, an area with high HIV prevalence. This highlights the importance of programmes like the YOLO

programme. The child and youth care workers in charge of YOLO face many challenges at various levels, from minor to significant. The study used a social-ecological approach to understand how YOLO facilitators responded to poverty and other social ills.

Chapter 1 contextualised the research within Klerksdorp and presented the prevailing socio-economic conditions in the area. It also highlighted the problem statement, which points to the need for more research on YOLO facilitators, as opposed to social workers who are seen as more “professional” or fill more “formal” roles. The chapter outlined the study’s purpose, research question and objectives. Chapter 2 will discuss the literature review of the research.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Over the past decade, the HIV approach employed various educational, motivational, peer-led and skill-building approaches and community normative strategies (Chattu, 2014; Zuma et al., 2022). There are several ways to prevent HIV transmission, including delaying one's loss of virginity, increasing HIV knowledge, reducing the number of sexual partners, consistently using condoms, receiving HIV counselling and testing, and practising sexual abstinence (Zuma et al., 2022). The research explores the YOLO programme in the context of HIV prevention discussions in the literature.

Government officials train YOLO facilitators on the curriculum, which contains information about HIV, self-esteem and aspects of gender-based violence (Live Moya, 2018). YOLO facilitators implement the person-to-person or small group interaction and exchange as the implementation method in the programme (Live Moya, 2018). They facilitate the process of knowledge transfer during the session debates and discussions (Live Moya, 2018). The YOLO programme extends beyond the classroom through visits to the participant's homes. The YOLO programme forms part of a behavioural HIV prevention intervention that aims to reduce HIV risky behaviour. Knowledge transfers from the YOLO facilitator to the programme participants seem to be the cornerstone of the intervention.

A meta-analysis confirms that a higher level of HIV knowledge increases the use of condoms (Chattu, 2014). It is argued that knowledge alone may not necessarily lead to change (Chattu, 2014; Gallant & Maticka-Tyndale, 2004). However, knowledge catalyses behavioural change among young people (Gallant & Maticka-Tyndale, 2004). Thus, the research explores literature related to the roles of YOLO facilitators as part of HIV prevention approaches.

The researcher conducted a thorough online search using various research databases, including EBSCO, Elsevier, PubMed and Social Science. Additionally, Google Scholar was used as a search engine to gather additional literature. The search was conducted using general terminology such as "facilitator", "social auxiliary worker", "social worker", "child and youth care workers", "social-ecological model", "YOLO programme", "system approaches", "South Africa challenges", "theoretical model" and "Bronfenbrenner (1979)". The results were organised using a step-by-step approach, with over 100 articles, books and reviews identified related to the guiding words. The researcher carefully read the abstracts and sorted the information based on the guiding words, prioritising the information about the study's purpose and research question. Each article was summarised and grouped according to the words used in the search based on its importance. The following discussion focuses on the different theories of HIV prevention.

Different theories contribute to HIV prevention, like the social cognitive theory, the theories of reasoned action and planned behaviour, the transtheoretical model, and the information, motivation and behavioural skills model (Kaufman et al., 2014; Kelly, 1999). Literature refers to the group of theories as individual frameworks focusing only on the individual in the human development process (Paquette & Ryan, 2001). These theories demonstrate success with groups like men who have sex with

men, adolescents, and people living with HIV in the general population (Kaufman et al., 2014). However, these theories fail to link a person's human development to the influences of their surroundings and external factors (Crawford, 2020).

Other theoretical models propose alternatives to individual theories (Paquette & Ryan, 2001). One response is the general system theory, which suggests that the whole system should be studied to change the person and the system (Crawford, 2020). However, this theory does not account for the multiple systems' influence on the individual's development.

The social action theory emphasises the interaction between contextual influences, personal transformation and actual behavioural patterns to promote transformative change. However, this model overlooks external factors significantly contributing to self-directed change and practical application. Similarly, the health belief theory places undue blame on individuals for their behavioural outcomes, ignoring external circumstances beyond their control. Therefore, there is a need for a comprehensive framework that accounts for the influences of various environmental factors and contributors on the development of individuals.

A meta-analysis from 1997 to 2011 delves into HIV prevention models, revealing the prevalent use of the social action theory and health belief theory within operational research practices (Protogerou & Johnson, 2014). The meta-analysis finds that HIV prevention programmes are more successful in cases where the environment is addressed as part of the programme (Protogerou & Johnson, 2014). These theoretical frameworks offer insights into understanding human growth's multifaceted dimensions, such as individuals' biological, social and structural aspects.

Literature explores the complex relationships between environmental influences and individuals over the past few decades (Colding & Barthel, 2019). To address the limitations of earlier theories, Russian-American psychologist Urie Bronfenbrenner developed the social-ecological model in the late-1970s (Colding & Barthel, 2019). However, studies have not examined the mutual relationship between children and parents in combinations from a system perspective (Protogerou & Johnson, 2014). The social-ecological model is widely used in research for several compelling reasons.

Crawford (2020) argues that the social-ecological model impacts the person and the person shapes and influences the environment. Crawford (2020) explains that the interaction between individuals and their surroundings drives human development. The social-ecological model aligns with social work values that prioritise the individual, implement policies and are culturally competent. Hence, the model is well-suited for the social services (Crawford, 2020).

The social-ecological framework shows a significant disparity in the impact of environments on individuals based on their socioeconomic status (Crawford, 2020). This highlights the need to consider economic factors when examining the influence of various environments on individuals. Moreover, Derksen (2010) contributes to the argument by demonstrating the interconnectedness of parent-child relationships with other adults, emphasising the importance of analysing social dynamics beyond immediate family structures (Protogerou & Johnson, 2014b). Literature confirms that the social-ecological frameworks

are well applied in research focused on health behaviour (Elder et al., 2006). This broader perspective aligns with the holistic approach of the social-ecological model.

Bronfenbrenner's (1994) emphasis on the pivotal role of neighbourhoods and communities as catalysts for children's development adds another layer of support for the social-ecological model. This acknowledgement grounds the model in the principles of social work practice, underscoring its relevance and applicability in understanding and addressing societal issues (Derksen, 2010).

Individuals who work in social services often assist people going through different experiences and dealing with changes in their lives. This approach deals with various systems that affect the individual's experiences (Derksen, 2010). The social-ecological model addresses broader issues like poverty (Elder et al., 2007). Additionally, social service practitioners advocate for changes at a structural level besides helping individuals and communities, as explained by Crawford (2020). This adaptable approach makes the social-ecological model a comprehensive framework to address unexpected challenges (McAlister et al., 2008a).

2.2 Individual level

The individual level represents the individual's immediate surroundings, encompassing a network of activities, roles and interpersonal connections experienced by a developing person within a specific physical and material context over time (Chimphamba Gombachika et al., 2012; Crawford, 2020; Duerden & Witt, 2010); Mkhize et al., 2022 ; Phelan, 2004). The individual level places the YOLO facilitator at the first layer in the social-ecological model (Baral et al., 2013; Bogardus et al., 2019; Protogerou & Johnson, 2014). However, change becomes weaker as it moves from the micro level to the outer layers (Crawford, 2020). The individual level includes motivation, general education, training, attitudes towards YOLO participants, personal beliefs and self-perceived personal norms (Kaufman et al., 2014) for example, the gender of YOLO facilitators influences their role in the YOLO programme.

Lochhead (2001), Phelan (2004a), Thumbadoo (2021) and Van Breda and Theron (2018) agree that the personal experiences, attitudes and facilitation skills of people are shaped at the micro level. Bronfenbrenner (1994) argues that changes at the individual level can potentially influence the responses from the micro level. For instance, adequate training programmes help equip YOLO facilitators to address children's needs effectively (Mkhize et al., 2022). Furthermore, self-awareness, empathy and emotional intelligence contributed to adequate care provision (Alghzawi & Ghanem, 2021); Allsopp, 2021; Zondeka, 2021). The interaction served as the mechanism for change between these different attributes of the person who operates in the microsystem.

2.3 Microsystem

The microsystem hosts an intricate network of interactions at the individual level (Bronfenbrenner, 1994; Derksen, 2010; Elder et al., 2007). According to this system-based understanding of human development, these interactions significantly shape an

individual's growth (McLeroy et al., 1988). Crawford (2020) emphasises the importance of the microsystem, asserting that it encompasses all the subtle interplays at the individual level. Within this microsystem, the dynamic exchanges not only influence the individual but also have the potential to bring about broader environmental changes. The interconnection between the individual and their immediate surroundings clarifies the symbiotic relationship between micro-level interactions and the overarching context in which human development occurs (Bronfenbrenner, 1994).

2.4 Interpersonal and community level

The interpersonal and community levels follow the individual layer. The interpersonal level refers to the relationship between the individual and other individuals or groups (Ungar, 2002). Interpersonal includes interactions with social support structures like family, peers, friends and other social groups (Ungar, 2002). These social groups operate within communities (Protogerou & Johnson, 2014).

The community level forms an integral part of the layers and their resources can significantly impact the ability of YOLO facilitators to provide adequate care (Crawford, 2020). However, limited resources, fragmented support systems and socio-economic disparities can hinder YOLO facilitators' efforts to meet the needs of children and youth (Met al., 2023; Molepo & Delport, 2015; Thumbadoo, 2021). Unfortunately, community members often have poor or no access to quality healthcare, safety and social services, which can compromise the effectiveness of YOLO facilitators (Siluma, 2010). Therefore, it is crucial to acknowledge the challenging working conditions faced by YOLO facilitators in communities and link their role with the need for improved access to resources and support systems (Crawford, 2020).

2.5 Meso system

Both interpersonal and community layers operate in the mesosystem. Crawford (2020), McLeroy et al. (1988) and Moore et al. (2013) concur that the meso system encompasses the connections among various micro attributes present in individuals' daily lives. These connections give rise to the community layer, wherein the value system interlinks the family, church, individual and community. It is important to note that multilayer levels are dynamic and constantly evolving, influenced by setting, time and actions (Crawford, 2020). This multilayer system is crucial in shaping service provision to children (Gal, 2017; McLeroy et al., 1988).

First, Lochhead (2001) employs the strength-based approach. The process stimulates child growth in the family context and recognises the community's influence. The child remains the focal point of the development (Allsopp, 2021). The strength-based theory employs a family-centred approach (Lochhead, 2001). YOLO facilitators work at the individual child and the family unit. However, the strength-based approach omits the linkage across and between the micro, meso and macro systems.

Secondly, the social competency perspective highlights the relationship with families (Gharabaghi & Phelan, 2011). Anglin (2001) argues that the therapeutic relationship includes the YOLO facilitators. Gharabaghi and Phelan (2011) provide valuable

insights into the interplay between the individual and intrapersonal systems. They emphasise the importance of social competency and therapeutic relationships with families operating within multiple system dynamics.

It is important to note that multiple system interactions can support or hinder individual development – youth transit through several influential systems daily with their peers. Children and youth influence the development trajectory of youth (Duerden & Witt, 2010). YOLO facilitators establish trust with the adolescent. Teacher, parent and peer involvement in the programme provides an environment to sustain the YOLO programme.

Both the strength-based and the social competency perspectives facilitate the opportunity to complement the process of human development. They sustained high levels of advancement after completing the YOLO programme (Kgaphola & Jacob, 2020). These approaches complement the social-ecological model (Chinosengwa, 2020).

Allsopp (2021) emphasises the significance of providing comprehensive care to children, which involves recognising and understanding the various interconnected factors that affect their well-being. YOLO facilitators address challenges across and within the interconnected systems to provide meaningful support to young people (Chinosengwa, 2020). For instance, young people often face high unemployment rates, hurting their development. Youth unemployment is an issue that is present within the mesosystem and directly affects the youth (Allsopp, 2021; Thumbadoo, 2021; Zondeka, 2021). The relationships between multiple systems are mutual and impact the work of YOLO facilitators. Therefore, they must understand the mutual influences that affect their work daily.

2.6 Societal level

The society level refers to the overarching structure that influences the larger context and society at a structural level, with an individual having little or no control over the layer (Crawford, 2020; McAlister et al., 2008a; McLeroy et al., 1988; Phelan, 2004b). Government laws and policies regulate the social behaviour of communities (Baral et al., 2013) – these laws and policies advance or disadvantage human development (Baral et al., 2013); for example, labour law controls working hours for the working class. Parent workplaces are an excellent example of how society influences the child's well-being. When parents work long hours and leave home early in the morning while the child is still sleeping and return late at night when the child is asleep again, they miss the opportunity to engage with their children, negatively impacting their well-being. The societal norm regulates this interaction in the societal layer, but the negative outcome emerges in the microsystem.

2.7 Macro system

The macro system acts as a regulatory mechanism that interacts across the micro, meso and macro systems (Bronfenbrenner, 1994; McCammon et al., 2020; McLeroy et al., 1988). The regulatory framework refers to government laws and policies which inform the person's behaviour in the community and society (Crawford, 2020). It plays a vital role in shaping the interactions in the meso and microsystems. Children's daily lives are often affected by multidimensional poverty, which programme facilitators must address (McLeroy et al., 1988). Poverty, violence, substance abuse and high HIV/AIDS prevalence can have

detrimental effects on individual well-being (Cluver et al., 2019). Educational policies aimed at providing minimum learning standards can be hampered by poor infrastructure, lack of resources and unqualified teachers (Cluver et al., 2019). The macrosystem is influenced by various factors that, in turn, can influence the meso and microsystems. To provide adequate services to vulnerable children and youth, YOLO facilitators must understand the interconnections and influences between the micro, meso and macro systems.

Understanding how multilayered systems affect services for vulnerable children and youth includes understanding how poverty impacts their lives (Ungar, 2002). YOLO facilitators need to identify the impact of changes and navigate the care process within and across these influences (Elder et al., 2007). Successful YOLO facilitators establish trust between the child and their family members or peers (Gal, 2017). The social-ecological model provides a comprehensive framework for research that aligns with the principles of social work practice and accommodates diverse socioeconomic contexts (Gal, 2017). It offers a multi-level perspective essential for understanding and addressing complex societal issues at individual, group and community levels.

2.8 Youth HIV prevention approaches

The individual intervention approach refers to the individual risk factors related to the biology or behaviour of young people (McAlister et al., 2008). The individual intervention approach recognises the influences in the surroundings which impact the person's behaviour (Elder et al., 2006). Crawford (2020) argues that an individual approach allows openness and adaptability to surrounding influences without routine patterns. "Individual" refers to the person's attitude, beliefs and personality type (Crawford, 2020). YOLO facilitators build personal trust and empathy with youth (Thumbadoo, 2021). Facilitators respond to the child's needs at the individual level through in-person counselling.

Youth HIV interventions typically involve face-to-face counselling sessions with individuals. This method has been used in clinics, community organisations, social services offices, schools and mental health support services (Chattu, 2014; Kelly, 1999; Pettifor et al., 2018). According to the literature, HIV field workers, including YOLO facilitators, use this approach to establish a connection with children and young people (Adekola, 2020; Harrison et al., 2010). A systematic programme review of youth HIV prevention programmes since 2000 found that identifying and changing individual HIV risk factors significantly contributes to the success of HIV prevention programmes (Harrison et al., 2010). Additionally, the literature also discusses the use of small group counselling sessions as an effective method for treating HIV in youth.

YOLO facilitators implement small group counselling through discussions and debates (Live Moya, 2018). YOLO participants engage in active learning through debate, role play, games, drama and stories (Live Moya, 2018). Dave et al. (2019) note that the YOLO programme encourages youth to make informed choices regarding HIV risk reduction and maintain these behaviours over the long term. However, despite these intentions, a systematic analytical assessment found that the approach was unsuccessful in reducing the HIV incident rate in youth, with only moderate behaviour change observed over time (Kelly, 1999). While one-on-one counselling and small group approaches effectively provided youth with the skills and knowledge to engage

in short-term risk reduction behaviours, a comprehensive approach to behaviour change was necessary for long-term success (Gallant & Maticka-Tyndale, 2004). The evaluation study confirms that YOLO HIV knowledge increases in the target group (Live Moya, 2018). However, it may not be enough to produce long-term changes in their behaviour. To broaden the reach of the programme, YOLO facilitators present the programme in local schools.

2.9 School-based HIV prevention approach

YOLO facilitators implement the YOLO programme as a school-based HIV prevention approach (Live Moya, 2018). The school-based approach finds expression in the meso system (McLeroy et al., 1988). School-based HIV prevention recognises the impact of societal values on schools (Gallant & Maticka-Tyndale, 2004; Harrison et al., 2010). The mesosystem refers to the interconnectedness between various systems where an individual participates daily (Gal, 2017; McLeroy et al., 1988). The mesosystem connects the school and the family (Operario et al., 2022).

Gallant and Maticka-Tyndale (2004) argue that school-based HIV prevention is a necessary approach to prevent HIV infections. School-based programmes hold advantages for implementing HIV prevention programmes because they have established procedures for introducing new programmes and reaching learners (Gallant & Maticka-Tyndale, 2004). Furthermore, schools are connected to communities through families and other community organisations, expanding their influence and strengthening local ownership of interventions (Operario et al., 2022).

2.10 Community-level HIV interventions

YOLO facilitators employ community-based HIV intervention to expand the programme in communities. Community-level HIV intervention focuses on changing community attitudes, norms, group cohesion and social practices to enhance HIV risk protection factors for youth (Kelly, 1999). Derksen (2010) acknowledges that defining the community level was a contested terrain in literature. He explains that the community operates not in isolation but co-exists in relationships with the individual, societal and macro systems. Community refers to an HIV-vulnerable group with one commonality; for example, communities of gay men, men who have sex with men, sex workers, inner-city dwellers and intravenous drug use. HIV prevention approaches aim to change the community and day-to-day operations' values to provide a conducive environment for the individual to sustain behavioural changes (Dave et al., 2019).

Community-level HIV interventions target social institutions, social structures, norms and values (Ruel et al., 2023; Zuma et al., 2022). Community HIV intervention shares the same goal of transforming the social fabric of society to accommodate behaviour change at the individual level. However, the literature frames HIV-vulnerable communities as part of the problem, which undermines the strength of communities. The history of HIV describes how gay men implemented the first HIV community-led intervention by training communities on basic HIV information (Dave et al., 2019; Kelly, 1999). The HIV community ensures that people living with HIV are not merely recipients of interventions but mutual partners in the interventions. Community-level HIV interventions and counselling find expression in the roles of YOLO facilitators.

2.11 Conclusion

The social-ecological model explores complex levels and systems that influence the work of YOLO facilitators. YOLO facilitators must understand how structural systems impact their lives. The literature demonstrates that both community-based and individual HIV interventions facilitate behaviour change in children and youth. The social-ecological model provides a framework for comprehending the roles of YOLO facilitators inside and between various systems from micro, meso and macro perspectives. This framework allows the research to unpack the complex connections within and between systems, revealing that these relationships are transactional.

Further, the chapter argues for the adaptability of YOLO facilitators to the multi-system environment. The literature refers to the relationship between and within multi-systems as the point of change, providing YOLO facilitators an opportunity to influence change in youth and children.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher discusses the research methodology used. The researcher argues for using the researcher paradigm and qualitative descriptive approach. The researcher navigates through the research methodology and the application thereof to link the research objectives. In the chapter, the research explains how the pilot study contributes to refining the questionnaire (Lincoln & Guba, 2000). The researcher shares his experiences as a data collector in the field and compares his positionality from the current study with a previous research study (Van Rooyen, 2017). In the conclusion, the researcher discusses the ethical considerations applied in the study and the field and the successes and learnings he encountered throughout the process. The chapter concludes with the importance of research participants and the ethical considerations.

3.2 Research paradigm

The study adopted a constructivist approach, which suggests that individuals shape their perceptions and understandings by engaging with their environments and personal experiences (Erciyes, 2020). This approach delved into the roles of YOLO facilitators, which were influenced by their micro, meso, and macro systems. Constructivism emphasizes the comprehensive comprehension of a person's role in surrounding realities (Jason & Glenwick, 2015a).The study was generated through the dynamic interaction between the researcher and the YOLO facilitators, thus constructing specific and focused realities for both parties (Lincoln & Guba, 2000).

3.3 Descriptive qualitative design

YOLO facilitators were studied in their natural settings at the schools of implementation (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The study provides a comprehensive account of the relationship between YOLO facilitators and their roles at individual, community and societal levels. Moreover, the descriptive design employed in this study allows for a more in-depth understanding of the perspectives of research participants (Akinyode & Khan, 2018), while also facilitating a rapport between the researcher and participants. This qualitative approach is considered most appropriate for ensuring research validity (Ross & Zaidi, 2019). Therefore, this study showcases the importance of using a descriptive qualitative research design to explore complex issues and provides a valuable contribution to the social work field.

3.4 Research sample

It is important to note that in most cases, qualitative research designs use non-probability sampling (Jason & Glenwick, 2015). Despite twenty YOLO facilitators showing interest in participating in the study, the researcher decided to use non-probability sampling methods. This decision was based on the researcher's judgement. The researcher collaborated with one of the YOLO supervisors and identified a list of potential respondents. The criteria selection included the availability of respondents at schools of implementation and a minimum of three years of facilitation experience. The resulting sample included YOLO facilitators from three implementing four schools, representing three primary and one high school. Participants were required to have

completed the standard YOLO facilitator training from the DSD and possess either a matric certificate, social service professional qualification, social auxiliary worker qualification, child and youth care worker qualification or social worker qualification (DSD, 2014). This criterion differed from the research proposal, which assumed that only child and youth care workers would be present in the YOLO programme based on the YOLO instruction manual from DSD. The researcher changed this to avoid excluding YOLO facilitators who were not child and youth care workers.

The researcher interviewed ten YOLO facilitators, including Black and Coloured respondents. Of these, six were female and four were male. The interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim in both English and Afrikaans, with Afrikaans interviews being translated during the transcription process.

3.5 Pilot study

The researcher carried out a preliminary study within a non-profit organization (NPO) to enhance the interview questionnaire and build rapport with potential research participants. The researcher explained the pilot's purpose to all supervisors and YOLO facilitators within the organization. Using a questionnaire, the researchers gathered feedback from six participants, which revealed that the interview questions were overly vague and lengthy, with an excessive number of questions. Additionally, it was discovered that YOLO facilitators included not only child and youth care workers but also high school graduates.

Despite encountering challenges such as the unavailability of some YOLO facilitators due to leave or illness, the pilot study successfully achieved its intended goals and was in line with the study's objectives. One of the main findings was that although child and youth care workers were willing to participate, they might not always be present at the NPO location. Consequently, the researcher adapted the interview schedule and planned to conduct interviews at the school where the YOLO program was being implemented.

3.6 Data collection

After completing a pilot study, the researcher provided a draft interview guide to a non-profit organization (NPO). Ethical compliance was a priority, so the researcher discussed the consent process upfront in the initial meeting with the NPO. Over five days, the researcher conducted ten semi-structured interviews at four rural schools that were implementing the YOLO programme. Each interview followed a semi-structured format, including predetermined open and guiding questions. The researcher reintroduced the study to participants and used prompts to delve deeper into discussions (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006).

The researcher interviewed YOLO facilitators in the morning while YOLO participants were at school. To ensure effective communication, interviews were conducted in English with Tshwane-speaking facilitators and in Afrikaans with Afrikaans-speaking facilitators. The Afrikaans interviews were later translated into English. All interviews were tagged with the date and facilitator’s number for easy reference and cross-tabulation. Throughout the interviewing process, the researcher refined the

probing methods using the constructivism paradigm, which advocates for simultaneous data collection and analysis (Mutepa, 2016b).

The participants willingly signed consent forms, and interviews lasted thirty to forty minutes. The interview questionnaire consisted of sixteen questions. The researcher initiated the interviews with simple introductory questions, gradually transitioning to more intricate queries about the participants' experiences in the YOLO programme (Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). The researcher found that modifying the questions enabled the narratives to extend beyond the initial structure. In the researcher's experience, the difficulty level of the interview process decreased progressively as more interviews were conducted.

Data analysis started during the data collection. Following the pilot study, the researcher approached an NPO with a draft interview guide. Ethical compliance was a priority, so the researcher addressed the consent process upfront in the first meeting with the NPO. Over five days, the researcher conducted ten semi-structured interviews at four rural schools implementing the YOLO programme.

Each interview adhered to the semi-structured format, incorporating predetermined, open and guiding questions (Denny & Weckesser, 2022). The researcher introduced the study again to participants and employed prompts to delve deeper into discussions (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006).

The researcher interviewed YOLO facilitators in the morning while YOLO participants attended school classes. The approach ensured effective communication, interviews were conducted in English with Tshwane-speaking facilitators and in Afrikaans with Afrikaans-speaking facilitators. The researcher translated the Afrikaans interviews into English. All interviews were tagged with the date and facilitator's number for easy reference and cross-tabulation. Throughout the interviewing process, the researcher refined the probing methods using the constructivism paradigm, which advocates for simultaneous data collection and analysis (Mutepa, 2016b).

The participants were willing to sign consent forms and interviews lasted thirty to forty minutes. The interview questionnaire consisted of sixteen questions. The researcher initiated the interviews with simple introductory questions, gradually transitioning to more intricate queries about the participants' experiences in the YOLO programme (Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). The researcher found that modifying the questions enabled the narratives to extend beyond the initial structure. In the researcher's experience, the difficulty level of the interview process decreased progressively as more interviews were conducted. The data analysis started during the data collection.

3.7 Thematic data analysis

The researcher read the interviews several times to formulate ideas from the data. The researcher conducted thematic data analysis by looking for repeated ideas in the data (Rigar & Sigurvinsdottir, as cited in (Jason & Glenwick, 2015a). The task aimed to detect patterns and trends in the dataset (Vaismoradi et al., 2013). The researcher read the interview transcriptions several times to establish the main ideas (Vaismoradi et al., 2013). The interview transcriptions were broken down into smaller

parts for analysis and the data was organised in MS Excel, creating a framework for individual, interpersonal, community and societal levels. The research focused on how YOLO facilitators make sense of their realities (Segurvindottir as cited in Jason & Glenwick, 2015b).

The researcher searched for relevant codes from the dataset. They employed the descriptive coding method to respond to the study's research question and objectives (Jameel et al., 2018). Quotes were recorded on index cards for easy manipulation and retrieval and index reference cards with interview numbers, unit or line numbers and field notes were created (Lincoln & Guba, 2000). Then, the researcher examined the codes using constant comparison techniques (Braun & Clarke, 2012).

The next step was to search for themes. The researcher carefully selected codes that formulated specific themes, such as training of YOLO facilitators and poverty (Barczak, 2015). Themes were used to build a complete narrative of the experience of YOLO facilitators. The researcher identified more than 24 themes that needed summaries against the micro, meso and macro systems. Throughout the study, the researcher kept their research purpose and question in mind (Vaismoradi et al., 2013). Using the research purpose and question as a guide, the analysis was conducted at micro, meso and macro levels (Guest et al., 2011). Interactions between themes were carefully considered, both within and between each other.

The analysis gave the researcher a deeper understanding of the YOLO facilitator's lived experiences. The researcher explored how interactions within different systems transform individuals and communities (Crawford, 2020). By carefully analysing data, the researcher identified essential trends and patterns. The analysis chapter, which used a social-ecological framework, provided valuable insights into the experiences of YOLO facilitators.

3.8 Criteria for rigorous data generating process

Reliability in research cannot be overstated, as it ensures that the findings accurately reflect the participants' views (Mutepa, 2016a). The researcher oriented all staff members on the study to ensure reliability. Then, the researcher engaged in discussions with participants to understand their expectations. Reliability served as internal validity of the research by correctly analysing and reporting the participants' worldviews (Brodsky et al., as cited in Jason & Glenwick, 2015). The research context and terminologies were derived from existing literature on HIV prevention, further ensuring its validity.

Trustworthiness was established by building a trustworthy relationship between the researcher and the participants through a piloted study. Additionally, the researcher maintained comfort by ensuring that the participants knew their role in the research and that their responses would be confidential. Finally, fairness was ensured by maintaining a balanced perspective and avoiding biases that could compromise the study's validity.

Fairness explains the inclusion of various views, understanding and world views in the analysis process and reporting (Mutepa, 2016a). Further, it was about the voice of the participants in the study (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Jameel et al., 2018; Mutepa, 2016b). The researcher ensured fairness by allowing participants to deviate from the interview questions; for example, by asking what motivated the participant to become a YOLO facilitator. Participants explained that they pursued the option because of

the high level of unemployment in their communities. Unemployment subsequently emerged as one of the sub-themes in the data analysis.

Based on the study, the researcher discovered that the constructivism paradigm was well-suited to adhere to reliability, trustworthiness and fairness criteria. This is because the production of constructivist knowledge is facilitated through active and dynamic conversations, which allows for a diverse range of perspectives to be considered and included in the knowledge formation process (Erciyes, 2020).

The researcher discovered that one should approach these criteria as interconnected units that are building on each other (Herzog et al., 2019). Further, the requirements discussed demonstrated a sense of dependency on each other during the research process (Herzog et al., 2019); for example, if trustworthiness flourishes, all other credibility criteria, comfortability and fairness, weaken in the research process. With this understanding, the researcher allowed ample time to establish and develop these criteria in the study.

Ross & Zaidi (2019) highlighted that the researcher should understand the limitations of their study. The researcher explained the constraints and suggested alternatives and action steps to manage any limitations encountered in the research. Study limitations were explained regarding the shortcomings in the results and research design, which impacted data collection and analysis. Study results could not be quantified because the researcher employed a qualitative approach to understand the YOLO facilitators' roles from their lived experiences (Queirós et al., 2017)). Qualitative research findings cannot be generalised to the general population (Queirós et al., 2017). The researcher used the constructivism approach, which posits that a person's created truth is based on their experiences in a specific context, space and location (Jason & Glenwick, 2015). YOLO facilitators' responses were subjected to context, time and location. The research employed recent studies to provide an accurate context, strengthening the study's validity (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

According to Jason & Glenwick (2015), qualitative data poses certain limitations as it cannot be easily replicated and is highly subject to changing contexts and conditions during the data collection. In their study, Brodsky et al. (as cited in Jason & Glenwick, 2015) found that the data collected was localised and not transferable to other non-profit organisations (NPOs), as the focus was on the experiences of YOLO facilitators, which are subject to change. Additionally, the researcher only interviewed 10 YOLO participants due to the time-consuming process, which may have restricted responses to the researcher's questions and caused the researcher not to enquire about other views and experiences (Queirós et al., 2017). Limitations such as these should be considered while interpreting the study's findings.

3.9 Ethical consideration

The research project was guided by ethical considerations from start to finish (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The University of Witwatersrand ethics committee approved the study; a copy of the approval letter is included in the annexure. The researcher also obtained permission from the DSD to conduct the survey in the Northwest province and within a DSD-funded NPO, with

the condition that the work of the NPO would not be negatively impacted. Additionally, the researcher sought approval from the NPO board, which granted permission with the stipulation that the researcher would cover all study expenses. A copy of this approval letter is also included in the annexure.

During the initial meeting, the researcher met with the NPO to discuss the ethical requirements of the study. The researcher emphasised the importance of protecting the confidentiality of both the NPO and research participants. Participants' names would not be used to ensure anonymity and their identities would be kept confidential. The study would reference facilitators using a simple number system and the focus was solely on the YOLO facilitators' roles, not the participants. No personal information of YOLO participants was required for the study.

The researcher stressed that participation was voluntary and participants could withdraw without explanation. After the meeting, prospective participants were allowed to ask questions. They suggested conducting interviews at schools of implementation instead of the NPO site due to facilitators' availability. Additionally, they expressed a desire for feedback after the study, as they had yet to receive it in previous studies. The researcher undertook to provide a summary report to the NPO with feedback after the survey. The following paragraph delves into the researcher's positionality in the survey.

The researcher worked at the DSD, responsible for the monitoring of HIV and AIDS programmes, which included the YOLO programme. The researcher identified as a South African 53-year-old male, middle class, Coloured (socialised in Western Cape), Christian, married and worked as a monitoring and evaluation officer in the field of HIV/AIDS. These factors shape how the researcher experiences the world and interprets the information on a daily basis (Berger, 2015; Jacobson & Mustafa, 2019; Olukiun et al., 2021; Shaw et al., 2020). The discussion focused on the researcher's position regarding the social position of the research participants (Jacobson & Mustafa, 2019).

3.10 Researcher's positionality

The concept of positionality pertains to the researcher's relationship with the subjects under study (Jacobson & Mustafa, 2019). Despite introducing himself as a researcher, the participants knew he was also a government official representing the state. This social identity as a government official overshadowed his position as a researcher and created a power dynamic between him and the participants. Consequently, the researcher controlled the knowledge production process and the participants were subject to it (Jacobson & Mustafa, 2019). During the interviews, some participants addressed the researcher as "mister or sir", acknowledging their power relationship. This left the researcher feeling like an outsider, as the initial introduction was neutral regarding his position. Jacobson & Mustafa (2019) argue that the researcher's social identity can impact the research process and participants' responses. The researcher needed help to ensure fairness in the participants' responses. The researcher assured the participants that their identities would remain confidential and explained his position as a researcher throughout the data collection process. However, the researcher felt that this situation may have compromised the depth of the data collection process.

Based on their experience and knowledge of the YOLO programme, the researcher had certain assumptions about the research participants. According to the YOLO programme manual, social workers and child and youth care workers were recommended as the ideal YOLO facilitators (YOLO et al., 2018). However, during their fieldwork, the researcher discovered that social workers were supervisors to the YOLO facilitators. In contrast, child and youth care workers, auxiliary social workers and students facilitated the programme. Once again, social workers were shown to hold positions of power as supervisors over YOLO facilitators. To ensure comprehensive data collection, the researcher framed the questions at the level of the YOLO facilitator to accommodate the auxiliary social workers and student auxiliary workers. The researcher also had to be mindful of their insider position, which posed the risk of blurring the line between policy and practice. To address this, the researcher took corrective action per the YOLO manual. However, they also learned that policy and reality may not always align and that misalignment can result from multiple factors in programme implementation.

YOLO facilitators bravely shared their life experiences, recounting stories of challenging upbringings filled with violence, dysfunction and struggles with alcohol and substance abuse. As the researcher listened to their narratives and analysed them later, the researcher reflected on his own life history. The researcher remembers detailing his life story in a previous master's thesis where he talked about growing up as a Coloured male in the Cape Flats during the eighties, the researcher experienced the same issues of violence and dysfunctional family dynamics (Van Rooyen, 2017). As the facilitators' stories unfolded, comparisons between their stories and the researcher's life history became apparent.

3.11 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the application of the constructivist paradigm and explained its suitability in the research context. Adopting a descriptive research design was justified by its alignment with the research purpose and questions. A brief reflection on the pilot study was presented, specifically the finalisation of study questionnaires. The primary focus of the research focused on YOLO facilitators from a social-ecological perspective, explored through a qualitative design. The chapter also explained the data collection process, highlighting the flexibility of the data collection tool to adapt to unforeseen situations during fieldwork.

Additionally, the chapter described the unfolding of the thematic analysis and the challenges experienced in interpreting the data. The discussion then transitioned to the rigorous data generation process through qualitative research, emphasising reliability, trustworthiness and fairness principles. The researcher openly shared insights gained as a data collector in the field, addressing his positionality and its influence on the research process.

Finally, the chapter provided a comprehensive overview of the ethical considerations applied in the field and an honest exploration of successes and challenges encountered throughout the research process. The next chapter presents the data from interviews conducted during the research.

CHAPTER 4: DATA PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a discussion of the research data analysis and interpretation. The research used the social-ecological lens to describe the YOLO facilitators' experiences. The discussion presents critical findings and explores sub-themes per finding. The chapter begins with a discussion of the individual profiles of the research participants. The chapter refers to YOLO facilitators as respondents which are numbered from 1 to 10. The discussion refers to the researcher as the interviewer. The data presentation focuses on the common themes to construct a clear discourse from the data (Akinyode & Khan, 2018). The chapter interprets the demographical details of the data. The data presentation consists of four themes that were interpreted, namely motivation for becoming a YOLO facilitator, critical roles of YOLO facilitators, facilitators in communities, and the social environment's impact on the roles of facilitators. The chapter explains the sub-themes, which build up the four main findings.

4.2 Demographics of respondents – Representation of marginalised South Africans

The respondents who took part in the study are representative of previously marginalised South Africans. Their profiles are as follows. The utmost care has been taken to hide and protect identities.

- Respondent 1 is a 36-year-old Black Christian female from a small township with high unemployment. She is employed as a YOLO facilitator on an annual contract basis. She worked for five years as a facilitator and a qualified child and youth care worker. Date, 14 August 2023.
- Respondent 2 is a Black female social auxiliary worker qualified in the YOLO programme. She is employed on an annual contract basis. Date, 14 August 2023.
- Respondent 3 is a 25-year-old Black male YOLO facilitator currently employed on a contract basis. He is a qualified child and youth care worker. Date, 15 August 2023.
- Respondent 4 is a 24-year-old Black female with a matric qualification. Date, 15 August 2023.
- Respondent 5 is a 36-year-old Coloured woman with a social work auxiliary qualification. She is employed as a facilitator on a contract basis. Date, 16 August 2023.
- Respondent 6 is a Coloured Muslim female with a matric qualification who works on a contract basis. Date, 16 August 2023.
- Respondent 7 is a 30-year-old male YOLO facilitator with a matric qualification. He is a qualified child and youth care worker. Date, 17 August 2023.
- Respondent 8 is a 28-year-old Coloured male YOLO facilitator with a child and youth care work qualification. He is employed on a contract basis. Date, 17 August 2023.
- Respondent 9 is a 31-year-old Black female from the Klerksdorp area, a YOLO facilitator with a matric qualification who works on a contract basis. Date, 18 August 2023.

- Respondent 10 is a 42-year-old male YOLO facilitator based in an extension residential area. He is a qualified child and youth care worker. Date, 18 August 2023.

The data interpretation delves into the demographic makeup of research respondents on an individual level which includes age, race, gender, employment status, qualification residential location. The average age range of participants falls between 24 and 42 years. It was found that respondents in the younger cohort (24 to 30 years) believed that being young accelerates the process of identifying with YOLO participants. Interestingly, the older cohort (31 to 42) years of respondents held the same view. The data indicates an explicit age difference of 18 years among the respondents, which may impact their exposure to education and training.

The research data emphasises that respondents represent marginalised races within the NPO. Out of the 10 respondents, six are women, including four Black women and two Coloured women. It is noteworthy that being Black and a woman account for double discrimination due to the previous apartheid system in South Africa. The data also shows that all the Coloured women have a social auxiliary worker qualification, while only two of the Black women have obtained a matric qualification. Moreover, all four male respondents qualified as child and youth care workers, while not all female participants hold such qualifications.

Data confirm that the respondents are employed, but at a contractual level, implying that they do not hold permanent employment. The data also reflects three categories of qualification levels among respondents, namely child and youth care workers, auxiliary social workers and respondents with only a matric qualification. Out of 10 respondents, five were qualified as child and youth care workers, two as auxiliary social workers and two only possessed a matric qualification. Data reveals that the majority are qualified and regulated by the Social Service Profession Board of South Africa. Data highlights that only two respondents declared information on their religion, but the data element may emerge in other data sets given the design of the interview questionnaire.

Segments confirm that respondents live in the same locality as the YOLO participants. They come from areas ranging from township, extension and town. The data explicitly maps the geographic locations of the respondents between urban and rural settings. Overall, this provides a unique opportunity to gain insights into the demographic data from a gender perspective in the microsystem.

4.3 Theme 1: Journey from adversity to a newfound purpose

4.3.1 Sub-themes: Motivation to work with poor children

The segments construct a clear storyline on what motivated individuals to become YOLO facilitators.

> I came from a house where things were messed up. I grew up in church, but when my grandmother passed away, I was trapped in alcohol and drug abuse for some time. So, I needed to change and radically change my life. I had to stick to my promise until today. – Respondent 7, August 2023

> What inspired me was that I started smoking cigarettes in Grade 9, from cigarettes to weed and drugs. Eventually, I became a serious drug addict, stealing and robbing, thieving and all that stuff. When I got to rehab, I figured, let me do this for myself because I believed that was the only way it was going to work for me. I learned a lot and fell in love with helping people in the same situation because some people are not as lucky as I am. – Respondent 8, August 2023

> I live in an underdeveloped plot, so most of the children's parents do not have transport. Most of those children usually come to me. I always have a lot of potato curry and roti. This is where I saw that children naturally open to me without me having to ask for anything. And I decided, I think that is my direction. – Respondent 6, August 2023

> I did volunteer work that involved door-to-door, which involved awareness raising, so we met a lot of young people with problems; behavioural problems. Also, I am a young person and grew up in a poor [home]. So that is what drove me. – Respondent 2, August 2023

> I am from a poor family and we are living in an area with so many social ills. I know what it is to be hungry because my house has no money or food. My own poor and desperate conditions motivated me to help other young people. I wish I could do more for our community – Respondent 5, August 2023

Respondents describe conditions which motivated them to help other struggling children. The description departs from the childhood experiences of respondents. The family as the unit immerses strongly across all the responses in the analysis. Respondents use codes like "house", "my house", "children", "young people", "parents", "mom", "grandmother" and "families". They use descriptive words like "mess", "poor", "hungry", "trapped", "do not have transport", "loss of grandmother" and "behavioural problems". Data provides a clear picture of the time, place and conditions in which the story happened. They expressed feelings of loss and were strapped from having any purpose in life. Their glooming description of the family makes life a struggle. After the family respondent narrates their own personal action in the family which they describe as "drug abuse", "robbing people" and "stealing and behavioural problems". Ultimately respondents end up being destitute with no hope for the future. At this point, respondents explore options to respondents to their gloomy conditions.

The next part of the analysis describes the turning point in respondents' lives. They employ words like "change", "promise", "figure out", "desperate" and "drive". All respondents indicate some conscious level of action at the individual level. Respondents demonstrated a sense of control over their circumstances. Respondents' descriptions follow through with descriptive words like "radically change", "do this for myself", "fell in love" and "I am young and I wish". These words indicate a level of change from unproductive to productiveness. Next, the respondent concluded with the descriptive words "promise until today", "the only way out", "helping people", "that is my direction" and "to help others". The story narrative across the code projected an ellipse end to the plot.

Respondents share their transformative journey, delving into the moments that moved them towards struggling families. Their narratives connect personal childhood experiences, with the family unit serving as a recurrent idea in their reflections. The data not only provided a clear snapshot of the time, place and circumstances surrounding these segments but also conveyed the profound impact on the respondents' emotional state. The family environment was described as a constant struggle and made them feel lost and purposeless.

Moving beyond family challenges, respondents recounted their own contributions to the hardships, admitting to actions such as drug abuse, robbery, stealing and behavioural problems. Ultimately, these self-destructive behaviours left them destitute, facing a future stripped of hope. Subsequently, the story cumulated into a turning point in the respondents' lives.

In the end, respondents expressed a commitment to help people in similar conditions. This marked a resolution to their stories, projecting an elliptical end to the plot. The theme emerges as a journey from adversity to a newfound purpose centred around assisting others.

4.3.2 Sub-theme: Employment leads to self-discovery

The segments build the narrative of unemployment as a push factor to become a facilitator.

> I finished school in 2018 and stayed home for about six months. I was shy in the beginning and was not very comfortable. I did not know that talking in front of people was so good. And seeing people smile is so nice. – Respondent 3, August 2023

> I finished school when I was 17 and as a child, not knowing what to do is a reality you are hit with. You are trying to find your way in life. I am learning and I want to see myself maybe one day sitting in an office. – Respondent 8, August 2023

> Before I became a facilitator uhm at the organisation I did volunteer. Work uhm that involved door-to-door, which involves awareness. – Respondent 2, August 2023

> So, with work being so scarce in the area, it was one of the jobs that I trait. I did not know that I would get it in the beginning. My employment status is that I am on a contract with the organisation. – Respondent 9, August 2023

> You need to know where you find yourself. I act as an employed facilitator. – Respondent 7, August 2023

The data presents some intriguing insights into the respondent's experiences in the YOLO programme. The analysis shows that before joining the programme, these individuals were struggling with unemployment and were at a loss to describe their

experiences. They used diverse segments such as “stayed home”, “find your way in life”, “reality”, “volunteer”, “scarce” and “yourself” to convey their situation.

Interestingly, the data also reveals that the respondents initially struggled with shyness and hesitated to take decisive actions. However, as they progressed in the programme, they made a conscious effort to become more involved and proactive, as evidenced by the action segments they employed such as “trying”, “involved”, “beginning” and “I act”.

Furthermore, the data confirms that the participants successfully transitioned from unemployment to gainful employment. They narrated their employment status, using phrases such as “seeing people smile”, “sitting in an office”, “I treat” and “find yourself” to describe the positive outcomes of being employed. Respondents expressed a sense of fulfilment in their work and how it positively impacts others. They also develop a deeper sense of purpose and identity through their employment.

Overall, the data sheds light on the experiences of the respondents, highlighting their journey from unemployment to employment and how they gained a sense of fulfilment and purpose through their efforts. Further, the plot expresses personal growth and proactive decision-making.

4.3.3 Sub-theme: Attributes of YOLO facilitators (individual level)

Respondents describe attributes of YOLO facilitators.

> You must be able to set an example in the community because there are people who look up to you. I want to say that if they see the change, you will handle other people with respect. – Respondent 7, August 2023

> You have to be a role model. If you tell a young person, you should not do it, the young person must see through your way of life. – Respondent 2, August 2023

> You have to be able to set an example in your workplace. You should be able to set an example ... a good example for the next person. – Respondent 3, August 2023

> Self-discipline and sympathy; you must sympathise with your participants do not be judge-like. – Respondent 4, August 2023

> So, you must listen to people and you must always be willing to go the extra mile. – Respondent 4, August 2023

> I have the right to intervene. Speak to the teacher and say [something]. – Respondent 6, August 2023

Respondents describe the first attributes as follows: “set an example”, “look up to you”, “see through your”, “self-discipline”, “sympathy”, “not be judge-like”, “not be judge-like”, “not be judge-like”, “right to intervene”. These phrases describe a set of attributes or qualities that respondents consider important. “Set an example” suggests a desire to be a positive role model for others. “Look up to you” implies a sense of admiration or respect from those who observe and seek guidance. “See through your” suggests transparency or authenticity in one’s actions. “Self-discipline” points to the importance of personal control and order. “Sympathy” indicates a capacity for understanding and compassion towards others.

The repetition of “not be judge-like” underscores the emphasis on avoiding judgmental attitudes, promoting an open and non-critical approach. Finally, “right to intervene” suggests a belief in the responsibility or authority to step in, when necessary, likely in a helpful or supportive manner. Collectively, these attributes paint a picture of someone who values positive influence, transparency, self-discipline, empathy and non-judgemental intervention for the well-being of others.

According to the data, the respondents narrate the interaction with people in need and provide some outcomes in the following phrases: “see the change”, “respect”, “for the next person” and “speak to the teacher”. Respondents recount their interactions with people in need and highlight specific outcomes within the context of the narrative. The phrases used provide insights into their perspectives and actions. The phrase “see the change” suggests that respondents witness positive transformations or improvements resulting from their interactions. It implies a sense of impact and the ability to bring about positive changes in the lives of those they engage with in the role of YOLO facilitators. The mention of “respect” indicates a fundamental value in the interactions. Respondents may emphasise treating individuals in need with dignity and consideration, fostering a respectful and empathetic approach. This next phrase “for the next person” implies a forward-looking perspective. Respondents may express a commitment to making a positive difference not only in the current situation but also with a broader intention to contribute positively to the well-being of others in the future. The action-oriented phrase “speak to the teacher” proposes a practical approach to addressing the needs of individuals. Seeking assistance or guidance from a teacher implies a collaborative effort to provide effective support and solutions.

In summary, the data portrays respondents as individuals engaged in meaningful interactions with those in need, leading to positive changes, emphasising respect and expressing a commitment to contributing to the well-being of others, both in the present and in the future. Additionally, the practical step of speaking to a teacher indicates a proactive approach to addressing the challenges faced by individuals in need.

4.3.4 Sub-theme: Experiences of YOLO training (individual level)

In the following segments, respondents elaborate on their experiences of YOLO training.

> The training was about the YOLO programme: what is your target group, who are you going to give the information you received, who are you going to pass it on to? So that is what we did in the training. – Respondent 2, August 2023

The training was well, it was very enlightening for me because it taught me how to help children with problems. They do not have goals, they do not have self-identity, they experience peer pressure, they have just a lot of problems. So, it was very encouraging. There is a lot of information in it. – Respondent 8, August 2023

YOLO has 12 sessions that you go through. YOLO is more about young people. Their daily lives are what we do daily. – Respondent 3, August 2023

We are trained to guide the children on risky behaviour. Dealing with emotions and social challenges. I feel the YOLO programme was put there to get the children changed. – Respondent 6, August 2023

I have also learned about self-esteem. I have learned about good behaviours and good attitudes about sex. And learned about how to behave in the community as a facilitator. – Respondent 9, August 2023

We were taught how to work with young people. How to motivate them to remain HIV-negative. Those who are also HIV-positive, to motivate and encourage them to take their medication. – Respondent 5, August 2023

Remember when you facilitate, participants will get tired. Some will zone out and stuff. I was trained on how to keep participants going. – Respondent 1, August 2023

According to the data, all respondents attend some form of training on the YOLO programme. Respondents use the following phrases to describe the content of the training: “your target group”, “young people”, “enlightening”, “children with problems”, “children on risky behaviour” and “the community and participants”. Phrases used by respondents provide insights into the content and focus of the training they are describing in the context of the research. The phrase “your target group” indicates that the training has a specific audience or demographic in mind. The term “target group” suggests a tailored approach to address the needs or concerns of a particular set of individuals. The use of “enlightening” proposes that the training is designed to provide knowledge, awareness or insights that go beyond the surface level. It implies that participants gain a deeper understanding or perspective through the training. The phrase “children with problems” specifies a subgroup within the target audience. It indicates that the training is geared towards addressing the needs and challenges faced by children who are experiencing difficulties or issues. The phrase “children on risky behaviour” further narrows down the focus to children engaging in behaviours that pose risks. The training likely aims to equip participants with the tools and knowledge to deal with and mitigate risky behaviours among children and youth.

The inclusion of both the community and participants suggests a holistic approach. The training may not only target individuals directly involved but also aims to have a broader impact on the community as a whole. It implies that the community plays a role in the training, either as recipients of the training's benefits or as active participants in the learning process. In sum, the data respondents' phrases indicate that the training is designed to be enlightening, with a focus on a specific target group – namely, children and youth with problems and those engaging in risky behaviour. The involvement of the community suggests a comprehensive and community-oriented approach to addressing challenges related to children's well-being and behaviour.

Respondents narrate some actual training instructions by using the following phrases: "encouraging", "a lot of information", "children changed", "remain HIV-negative", "HIV-positive take their medication" and "keep participants going". Respondents are describing actual training instructions with a focus on various aspects related to health and well-being, particularly in the context of HIV. The term "encouraging" suggests that the training involves providing positive support and motivation. It implies a focus on creating an environment that fosters encouragement, potentially aimed at motivating participants to actively engage with the training content. The phrase "lot of information" indicates that the training involves a substantial amount of information. Participants are likely exposed to a comprehensive understanding of various topics, related to HIV prevention, treatment and overall health. The mention of "children changed" suggests that the training aims to bring about positive transformations in the behaviour or well-being of children. This could include changes in attitudes, habits or practices that contribute to a healthier lifestyle.

The instruction "remain HIV-negative" highlights a key objective of the training to educate participants on measures and behaviours that help individuals, especially children, avoid contracting HIV. It likely includes information on preventive strategies and safe practices. The instruction "HIV-positive take their medication" emphasises the importance of adherence to medication for individuals who are already HIV-positive. It suggests that the training provides guidance on proper medication management to ensure the health and well-being of those living with HIV. The phrase "keep participants going" implies a strategy to maintain participants' engagement and motivation throughout the training. It suggests that the organisers or trainers aim to create an environment that sustains interest and active participation.

Figure 2: Roles of YOLO facilitators

In summary, the respondents are narrating training instructions that focus on encouraging and motivating YOLO participants, providing a wealth of information, fostering positive changes in children, promoting HIV prevention strategies, emphasising medication adherence for those with HIV and employing strategies to keep participants engaged throughout the training. The overall theme appears to be comprehensive health education with a specific emphasis on HIV-related topics. Figure two provides a summary of YOLO facilitators` roles.

4.4.5 Theme 2: Helping profession

When asked about their role as a facilitator concerning the YOLO programme, different opinions were expressed that the work offers a sense of self-worth and purpose to themselves and their communities. Table 1 shows the different roles outlined in the data. The helping/assistance profession emerges from the data as a theme.

Table 1: Roles of facilitator

Sub-themes	Key Phrases
Role model	- need to have a positive image. - people look up to you. - practice what you preach. - make an impact. - set yourself as an example for the people
Information disseminators	- empowering the community, - correcting misconceptions, - promoting health through both modern and traditional approaches - to help community members to get facts them the facts
Relationship builder	- building strong, - comfortable, - and confidential relationships, - particularly with children - follow up on school dropouts through home visits. - provide information about the YOLO programme to parents. - restore the relationship between youth and family members -

4.4.6 Sub-theme: Information shares

Phrases used by the respondents provide insights into their perceived roles, responsibilities and the nature of their involvement, particularly in the context of HIV awareness and community empowerment.

> The role we play as facilitators in the community is to empower the community and pass on information. So, we refer [people] instead of informing [people] just like that. So, we need to work a lot more hand in hand with others ... with other stakeholders so we can combat that. – Respondent 1, August 2023

> We got very little information about teen pregnancy. It was just a lot of parents who talked very little when it came to teen pregnancy even on sex-related matters. There was very little talk. – Respondent 2, August 2023

> What we spread among ourselves is that if you have HIV and you go to bed with a virgin then your HIV is cured. Or, you just have to eat healthy. Or, you go to the sangoma when all those untruths are to do that ... To come and tell the people the truth. – Respondent 4, August 2023

> Because our young people out here need someone who can also share information with them and motivate them to make a difference in their own lives. – Respondent 5, August 2023

> I meet with them to run the information sessions. It does not matter if he is small or big, they always want to talk. – Respondent 7, August 2023

> To create or get necessary programmes to bring in the community. And help these community members to get off this stuff. And to give them the facts, give them the consequences. – Respondent 8, August 2023

> I have been living in a community where that is full of alcoholism, substance abuse. And I am there with programmes in the community but knowing them, knowing them. – Respondent 9, August 2023

Respondents describe the role as follows, “pass on information”, “little information”, “to empower uhm the community”, “spread among ourselves about HIV”, “go to bed with a virgin then your HIV is cured”, “to eat healthy or go to the sangoma”, “information sessions”, “programmes to bring”, “community full of alcoholism” and “substance abuse and I am there with programmes”. The phrase “pass on information” suggests that one of the roles is to disseminate information, indicating a responsibility to share knowledge with others. The mention of “little information” implies a recognition of the need for more knowledge or awareness, possibly indicating a gap that the respondents aim to address. The statement “to empower the

community" highlights a broader goal of community empowerment. The respondents see their role as contributing to the community's overall well-being and development, likely through the provision of information and resources.

The next phrase "spread among ourselves about HIV" underscores the importance of community-driven efforts in spreading awareness about HIV. The use of "among ourselves" suggests a collective and inclusive approach to information dissemination. Further the statement "go to bed with a virgin then your HIV is cured" reflects a misconception or myth related to HIV. The respondents may be acknowledging the existence of misinformation within the community and expressing a need to correct such misconceptions. This expression "to eat healthy or go to the sangoma" suggests a dual approach to health, combining traditional practices (going to the sangoma) with modern health recommendations (eating healthy). It indicates a recognition of diverse understanding by YOLO facilitators.

The term "information sessions" implies a structured approach to sharing information, possibly through organised sessions or programmes designed to educate community members. The construct of "programmes to bring" indicates a proactive approach, suggesting that the respondents are involved in implementing initiatives aimed at addressing health issues within the community. The set phrases "community full of alcoholism", "substance abuse" and "I am there with programmes" highlight the challenges within the community, specifically mentioning alcoholism and substance abuse. Respondents express their commitment to addressing these issues by being actively involved in relevant programmes.

Respondents perceive their responsibility as being information sharers, empowering the community, correcting misconceptions and providing health support through both modern and traditional practices. Their work ranges from facilitation which includes issues such as alcoholism and substance abuse within the community. Their role showcases a commitment towards the well-being of the community and tackling health-related challenges, especially in the context of HIV.

4.4.7 Sub-theme: Relationship builders

Respondents describe their perceived experiences and relationships with YOLO facilitators.

> I also build a relationship or bond with other stakeholders because one person cannot do it alone. My relationship with young people is good. – Respondent 1, August 2023

> I first build the relationship by making them comfortable and telling them that everything we do here is confidential. And the other thing is that I am neutral. – Respondent 2, August 2023

> I have a very close relationship with children. I like to work with children. I was already a victim empowerment volunteer. – Respondent 5, August 2023

> There is a lot that struggles a bit to leave a cigarette, but I am there around the seed I planted to still water it every day … the people do not treat me. – Respondent 8, August 2023

> So, sometimes we try like we are doing our outmost best, like some of getting those people here by the organisation. We just need support. – Respondent 10, August 2023

> How do I strengthen my relationship with my child, because what I have found out that parents are a little very shabby about talking about sex-related matters. – Respondent 2, August 2023.

Respondents use the following words to explain their experiences of relationships: “bond with others”, “making them comfortable”, “confidential”, “close relationship with children”, “there around the seed I planted” and “strengthen my relationship”. Phrases used by respondents provide insights into their experiences and approaches to building relationships, particularly with children. The construct “bond with others” indicates a desire or effort to create strong connections or emotional ties with others. It implies a sense of building close and meaningful relationships. The expression “making them comfortable” emphasises making individuals comfortable and suggests a focus on creating a safe and welcoming environment. This approach aims to foster trust and ease in interpersonal relationships. The mention of “confidentiality” underscores the importance of trust and privacy in relationships. It suggests that respondents value keeping certain information private, enhancing the sense of security for those involved. The construct “close relationship with children” specifies the nature of the relationships being formed, emphasising proximity and emotional intimacy with children. It suggests a commitment to understanding and connecting with younger individuals. The metaphorical expression “there around the seed I planted” implies a sense of nurturing and growth in relationships. The use of “seed” suggests an initial effort or investment and being “there around” indicates ongoing support and presence as relationships develop. The frame of “strengthen my relationship” conveys a proactive stance in relationship-building. Respondents aim to enhance and solidify their connections with others, suggesting an ongoing commitment to growth and development in relationships.

In short, the respondents describe experiences centred around building strong, comfortable and confidential relationships, particularly with children. The metaphor of planting a seed and being present around it suggests a commitment to nurturing and supporting the growth of these relationships over time. The use of the word “strengthen” indicates an ongoing effort to deepen and solidify these connections. Overall, the respondents’ descriptions reflect a thoughtful and intentional approach to relationship-building, emphasising trust, comfort and the gradual development of meaningful relationships.

4.4.8 Relationships among YOLO facilitators

Respondents account for their relationship with each other in the following segments.

My relationship with my co-facilitator – it is … hey … it is so positive, it is so good that I remember [that] last December when my son tested positive for Covid, she was always there for me. – Respondent 1, August 2023

Yes, normally, I get support from my co-facilitator, that because I feel that it is much safer because she understands the work that I am doing. – Respondent 1, August 2023

So I co-facilitate for him and from the YOLO there is ... not everything is completely different ... as it still focuses on the “risky behaviour”. – Respondent 4, August 2023

I personally do not have a problem with the other facilitators because if maybe I have a referral, [I can] ask please go do a house visit there. – Respondent 6, August 2023

We are eight facilitators right now here in this area. Yes, if we ... if one has a need then we help him. – Respondent 5, August 2023

Can say that my relationship is very good with other facilitators. To improve it, I think we [need] communication skills, we are communicating because we are all … we are not actually united. If I do not know what you are going through, I am never going to understand you. – Respondent 7, August 2023

There is a colleague of mine here who is coming to stand by me because they know how it is in our communities. So, we have a good relationship we help one another. We build each other. – Respondent 8, August 2023

We are three facilitators in the area, I would call that team of mine; a family. I would receive calls asking me how am I feeling. – Respondent 10, August 2023

Based on the data, it appears that co-facilitators have a positive and supportive relationship with each other. They consider themselves equals and work collaboratively in school. They use phrases like “my co-facilitator” to indicate their partnership, which is harmonious and safe. Furthermore, they take turns supporting each other during sessions or activities and despite any differences or challenges, they stand by each other and work as a team. The phrase “team of mine a family” highlights a deep connection beyond professional collaboration, suggesting that they have a strong bond like a family.

Data suggest that facilitators work well together in a positive and supportive environment. They feel comfortable collaborating and consider themselves partners. They share a sense of ownership and work as a team to support one another.

4.4.9 Conclusion

In short, the respondents express a combination of positive intentions to change lives, concerns about high HIV rates, substance abuse, ignorance on sensitive topics, teenage pregnancy and a general acknowledgement of problems within the community. The use of language suggests a recognition of shared responsibilities and a desire to address these challenges collectively as a community.

4.5 Theme 3: Interaction with community structures

4.5.1 Sub-theme: The learner, family and school

The segments used by respondents provide insights into the characteristics and challenges associated with participants in the YOLO programme, focusing on school learners and their varied experiences to construct the connection between the learners, family and the school in the following segments.

> I also offer the Families Matter Programme for parents and guardians. When I am done with the learners at school, I do a background on who the parents are, so that I capture the parents in my Families Matter Programme. I do not pass on information from the learners, but I am also building that relationship because remember we are working with a family. – Respondent 2, August 2023

> There are programmes for the families as well. The YOLO programme we do with the learners or with the children. Our teachers are also putting in the Families Matter Programme because they are the first parents where the children do not get to their parents. – Respondent 2, August 2023

> There is a connection. Most children you see and their behaviour, is how things are at home. If they are chaotic or maybe they are bullying or they are smoking and stuff like that it goes back to how the household is being structured. You will find out that parents do not care about their kids. – Respondent 3, August 2023

> We only have about four or five houses that we did because these are children who attended school all the time and suddenly, they dropped out. Then I asked where the child was. The parents are very rude. They do not respect us; they did not want us to come in. They asked do you want to take my child. But their parents are very rude; they do not want to participate in anything. – Respondent 6, August 2023

> People would ask what are you doing? I would say I am facilitating. They would ask are you going to school? What are you doing because you are not even a teacher? Yes, I am not a teacher, but I am a YOLO facilitator. – Respondent 6, August 2023

> Remember that we are having a challenge of children dropping out of school; some are getting pregnant, some might contract HIV. We are trying to give the information so that they can be better people tomorrow of not contracting if they have already contracted the infections they should at least adhere to the treatment. We give

> support to them. So, the parents say “Oh that is good”, like at first they did not understand. – Respondent 1, August 2023

Respondents use the following segments to describe YOLO participants: “the learners at school”, “from the learners”, “children”, “attended school”, “they dropped out”, “children dropping out of school”, “bullying or they are smoking, some might contract HIV”, “some might contract HIV” and “least adhere to the treatment”. Respondents use the following segments to describe YOLO participants: “the learners at school”, “from the learners”, “children”, “attended school”, “they dropped out”, “children dropping out of school”, “bullying or they are smoking, some might contract HIV”, “some might contract HIV”, “least adhere to the treatment” and “getting pregnant”.

The segment “the learners at school” describes the target group of the YOLO programme, indicating that it is designed for students or learners within a school setting. The phrase “from the learners” suggests that the information or insights provided are derived directly from the participants themselves, emphasising a perspective that comes directly from the students involved. Further the use of the term “children” emphasises the youthfulness of the participants, indicating that the YOLO programme is likely tailored for adolescents or young individuals.

The segment “attended school” refers to the participants’ past engagement with formal education, suggesting that they were initially enrolled in school. The mention of participants dropping out of school implies a disruption in their formal education, highlighting a significant challenge that the YOLO programme may be addressing. The repetition of “children dropping out of school” reinforces the notion of students discontinuing their education, underscoring the importance of understanding and addressing this issue.

The segment “bullying or they are smoking, some might contract HIV” highlights the multifaceted challenges faced by the participants, including issues like bullying, smoking and the risk of contracting HIV. It suggests a holistic approach to addressing various aspects of the participants’ well-being. The next segment builds on the children living with HIV and treatment. This part emphasises the potential health risks, specifically the risk of contracting HIV and underscores the importance of treatment adherence. It suggests a focus on both prevention and health management within the YOLO programme.

In brief, segments collectively paint a picture of YOLO participants as school learners, some of whom have dropped out, facing challenges such as bullying, smoking and the risk of HIV contraction. The programme appears to address not only educational concerns but also broader issues related to the well-being and health of the participants.

In the next plot, respondents describe the relationship with the parents of YOLO participants. Respondents use the following illustrative words: “building that relationship”, “things are at home”, “parents are very rude”, “do not respect us”, “did not want us to come in”, “to give the information”, “they asked do you want to take my child”, “but they are parents are very rude” and

“they do not want to participate in anything”. The phrase “building that relationship” suggests an effort or intention to establish a positive and constructive relationship between the respondents and the parents of YOLO participants.

The next segment refers to the general atmosphere or conditions within the homes of the YOLO participants. The use of the term “rude” suggests a negative perception of the parents’ behaviour. It implies that there might be challenges in communication or cooperation with the parents. This phrase “do not respect us” emphasises a perceived lack of respect from the parents towards the respondents. It highlights a potential barrier to building a positive relationship.

The indication that parents did not want the respondents to enter their homes suggests a reluctance or resistance to engagement, possibly hindering the facilitation of the programme or the exchange of information. Respondents’ intention to provide information implies a proactive approach to communication. However, the earlier storyline described resistance from parents might impact the effectiveness of information dissemination.

The next statement by the parent: “They asked, do you want to take my child” suggests a concern or suspicion about the intentions or impact of the YOLO programme. It may reflect a need for clarification or reassurance to parents. The repetition of “but their parents are very rude” illustrates an observation regarding the parents being perceived as rude reinforcing the notion that there are challenges in the interactions and communication with parents.

In short, respondents describe efforts to build a relationship with parents, but they encounter challenges such as perceived rudeness, lack of respect and resistance to participation. The difficulties in communication and engagement with parents could potentially impact the effectiveness of the YOLO programme in addressing the needs of the participants.

4.5.2 Sub-theme: Community developers

The phrases used by the respondents convey their perceptions and concerns regarding their community.

> I did not know the impact that these programmes could do because changing people’s lives and behaviour change is not an easy thing, but when someone changes or someone wants to … to change it … it is an achievement. – Respondent 1, August 2023

> I have made an impact on somebody, at least somebody remembers me; and everywhere that... everywhere that I go even on Facebook some will ask “Are you still coming back to our schools”? I always aim to make an impact. – Respondent 9, August 2023

> I am seeing that you see all these problems that we are having in our community and as a country. As a whole, this HIV that is so high, the substance abuse and all that stuff. This is not the type of thing that is going to go away overnight if we are too realistic about it. – Respondent 7, August 2023

> We are here in the location, you pay so why are you telling us what to do? They are ignorant. So, that is what they are, and more great people, too ... if you are going to talk about HIV or about sex in front of adults then

> they feel that you are too young to talk about such things. (25-year-old African male). – Respondent 3, August 2023

> [One] of the challenges is teenage pregnancy. Teenage pregnancy is a problem in our community and also in relationships. – Respondent 9, August 2023

> So, when I say… I say we have those social ills. Remember the social ills form part of our lives. Everything at the moment is a challenge, so those are the social ills that we are facing as a community. – Respondent 10, August 2023

Respondents employ the following wording to describe their perceived view of the community: "changing people's lives", "this HIV that is so high", "substance abuse", "they are ignorant, talk about HIV", "or about sex in front of adults", "teenage pregnancy", "problem in our community", "mine closer", "facing as a community" and "changing people's lives". This phrase indicates a positive outlook and a desire to make a meaningful impact on the well-being and circumstances of community members. Respondents may see the potential for positive change through their actions or interventions.

The mention of high HIV rates suggests a notable concern within the community. The respondents are likely to acknowledge the prevalence of HIV as a significant health challenge that needs attention and intervention. The inclusion of substance abuse as a concern suggests that the community is grappling with issues related to drug or alcohol misuse. Respondents may perceive this as a pressing problem that requires addressing for community well-being. "They are ignorant, talk about HIV or about sex in front of adults" – this phrase highlights a perceived issue of ignorance or lack of awareness within the community, particularly regarding topics such as HIV and sex education. It suggests a need for education and open conversations to address these gaps.

The mention of teenage pregnancy indicates a specific challenge that the community is facing. Respondents likely view this as a significant issue impacting the well-being of young individuals in the community. The general reference to a "problem" in the community suggests an overarching concern or challenge that respondents feel compelled to address collectively. The phrase "mine closer" links with the context of the research site as discussed in previous chapters. The use of "facing as a community" emphasises a collective acknowledgement of challenges. Respondents perceive these issues as shared responsibilities that the community needs to address collaboratively.

4.5.3 Sub-theme: Community racial and cultural groupings

Phrases used by the respondents offer insights into the diverse cultural landscape and perspectives within the community.

> There are different cultural aspects for instance some are just Christian-based, the Coloured people, you will get your Tswana who speaks Setswana. It does influence as some cultures you cannot speak to their children about sex, so it influences my work. – Respondent 8, August 2023

> In the Coloured community or environment, we find that there is not a norm. I worked in African communities and found they only believe in tradition. So, there is a barrier and we cannot break through that barrier because they say the man can do with his wife what he does because it is his wife. – Respondent 2, August 2023

> With me as this young facilitator and then you get that group of older ... older men there are certain topics that you cannot just announce it, just like that. So, you better watch your tone and how you say and also with certain things with the parents, with the females. – Respondent 8 (African male), August 2023

> There are going to be different stakeholders in culture. So some of those barriers especially around the topic of sex you cannot just be coming into my house and then you talk about sex. – Respondent 10, August 2023

> This has to have its boundaries; you have to guide that role to talk around sex. You have to make them understand your consequences around sex; and that sex is only for grownups who are financially stable people, who are mature, who have developed to a fuller ... to the fuller stage. – Respondent 7, August 2023

Respondents used the following phrases to describe culture: “different cultural aspects”, “Coloured”, “Tswana”, “Setswana”, “Coloured community”, “there is not a norm”, “African communities” and “believe in tradition”. The phrase “different cultural aspects” highlights the existence of various cultural elements or practices within the community, indicating a rich diversity in traditions, customs and ways of life. The mention of “Coloured” suggests a specific cultural or ethnic group within the community. It may refer to people of mixed racial backgrounds, particularly in the context of South Africa. These two terms “Tswana” and “Setswana” refer to specific ethnic and linguistic identities, indicating the presence of individuals or groups within the community who identify with Tswana culture and speak the Setswana language. The acknowledgement that “there is not a norm” implies that cultural practices and norms within the community are diverse and varied. It suggests an acceptance of the plurality of cultural expressions. The term “African communities” amplifies the broader identity of the community as part of the African continent, emphasising a sense of connection to a larger cultural context. The statement “believe in tradition” indicates a collective adherence to traditional values and practices within the community. It suggests a recognition of the significance of cultural traditions in shaping the identity and beliefs of the community members.

The community described by the respondents is culturally diverse, with different cultural aspects and specific ethnic groups such as the Coloured and Tswana. There is no singular norm, which means that the community is open to diverse cultural expressions. The community places great value on tradition and there is a collective commitment to preserving cultural heritage, indicating a strong belief in the importance of cultural traditions that are passed down through generations.

In the same voice respondents describe how they view the impact of the programme by the following words: “young facilitator”, “group of older ... older men”, “topics that you cannot just announce”, “with the females”, “different stakeholders in culture”, “so some of those barriers”, “topic of sex”, “have its boundaries”, “sex is only for grownups” and “financially stable people and

who are maturely". The term "young facilitator" suggests that the age of the facilitator may influence the programme's impact. It could imply that a youthful facilitator might bring a different energy or relatability to the programme, potentially resonating well with the participants. They mentioned "older group of men" suggests that the age and gender composition of facilitators or participants may be seen as influential. The phrase indicates a view of a generational or gender gap that could impact the programme. The phrase "topics that you cannot just announce" highlights the importance of sensitivity and thoughtful consideration in addressing certain subjects within the programme. The next phrase "with the females" implies consideration for gender dynamics in programme implementation. It suggests that involving or addressing females specifically may be a relevant aspect of the programme's impact. The mention of "different stakeholders in culture" implies that cultural considerations and the involvement of various stakeholders play a role in shaping the programme's impact. This could include community leaders, elders or individuals with cultural influence.

Their reference to "barriers" suggests that there are challenges or obstacles that may hinder the programme's effectiveness. These barriers could be related to age, gender, cultural differences or other factors. They acknowledge the sensitivity of the "topic of sex", suggesting an awareness of the potential challenges in addressing this subject. It underscores the importance of approaching discussions about sex with care and consideration. The recognition that the programme "has its boundaries" implies that there are limits or parameters in place, possibly regarding the scope or depth of certain discussions within the programme. Further the phrase "sex is only for grownups" reflects a cultural or societal perspective on the appropriateness of discussing sex, indicating a belief that such discussions are reserved for adults. The reference to "financially stable people who are mature" suggests a societal perspective on the appropriateness of being sexually active. It implies that only financially active people with a level of maturity qualify to be sexually active.

In brief, respondents highlight considerations related to age, gender, cultural dynamics, sensitivity in discussing certain topics and the importance of boundaries and maturity in shaping the impact of the programme. The complexity of these factors suggests a nuanced approach required for effective programme implementation.

4.5.4 Sub-theme: Religions

Respondents describe the influence of religion in the following segments.

> First, I had to look at their background. They come from a Christian home. Do they come out of a house of abuse? Do they come out of a house of alcohol or like those drugs? – Respondent 7, August 2023

> I am a Christian, mine does not have a problem with sexuality and coming to the HIV/AIDS case; normally in our church, we normally emphasise the thing to stop the stigma, so if someone is HIV-positive support that person so that person can adhere and be well. So that is what we do in our church. – Respondent 1, August 2023

> The church should play a role because in most cases, people go to church for support. In most cases where people do have problems, have challenges … most of them run to church. – Respondent 1, August 2023

> I have adopted the Jewish faith but I am actually an Israelite; but I do not know my status. I am not circumcised after I know what the dangers of uncircumcision are. – Respondent 4, August 2023

> I am a Muslim, [the] majority of those children usually came to me. Now the fact that we do not eat meat I always have a lot of potato curry making with roeti. – Respondent 6, August 2023

> I am a Christian; I grew up in church. I am a man-person and I am a deacon in the church, which was the glue of the family, things started to get different. – Respondent 8, August 2023

Based on the data, respondents identify with different religious affiliations. Some describe their religion as "Christian home", which suggests that their religious background and upbringing are rooted in the Christian faith. Five of the seven respondents identify themselves as Christians, indicating a personal adherence to the Christian faith. They may turn to the church for support, both in a religious and potentially emotional or social context. Another respondent mentions "stop HIV stigma", which seems to focus on a social cause related to HIV stigma. Although this respondent does not explicitly mention a religious affiliation, it suggests a concern for social issues within the context of their beliefs. One out of the seven respondents identify with the Jewish faith, indicating a religious affiliation rooted in Judaism. Another respondent identifies as a Muslim, indicating their adherence to the Islamic faith. The phrase "Christian; I grew up church" emphasises their Christian background and suggests that they grew up attending church. The use of "uh" might indicate a pause or hesitation in their response.

In sum, these responses collectively illustrate a diverse range of religious affiliations and perspectives, including the Christian, Jewish and Muslim faiths. Additionally, the mention of seeking support from the church and addressing HIV stigma suggests a connection between religious beliefs and social or community engagement.

4.6 Theme 4: Social system influences on facilitators' role

4.6.1 Sub-theme: Poverty is a disease

Respondents describe the social environment in the next set of segments.

> Poverty makes people start smoking drugs because at home there may be the stress of "there is no food", now the people start young people start standing on the street. – Respondent 3, August 2023

> I met a girl. I would say she is not old because she is 23 or 24 and not working, struggling and has two children of her own, and does not know what to do … just waiting for the child's grant, but that is not enough at the end of the day. – Respondent 8, August 2023

> I have met a lot of those young people, at these young ages and their situations; it is awful if I have to say, that not most of us are fortunate. They have lost that sense of belonging and feeling loved – Respondent 8, August 2023

> Poverty at home ... as I said with the learner, whereby I think to say I have to walk, people at home they want to eat but, then again, we try to change their mentality. Poverty ... [silence] poverty... [deep breath] very important and poverty, communication. – Respondent 3, August 2023

> Extension ten in the location, yes…uhm…you know we have… do have many social ills, you know, poverty you know, like…[clearing throat]… what I would say…it…I'll start here… Respondent 10, August 2023

> YOLO participants are hungry and looking for the next meal. They are not going to listen to you, they are just going to go to the toilet soon they have got to go and see where they are going to get money for food ... for dinner, so that makes it heavy for me. Respondent 3, August 2023

Respondents use the following phrases to describe the social environments: "poverty", "there is no food", "I met a girl", "struggling", "waiting for the child's grant", "but that is not enough", "young people", "poverty at home" and "poverty ...[silence] poverty... [deep breath] very important and poverty". The recurring mention of poverty as a standalone term emphasises its prevalence and significance in the social context. It serves as a fundamental descriptor of the challenging conditions faced by individuals. The phrase "there is no food" directly conveys a critical aspect of poverty and lack of access to basic necessities, particularly food. It highlights the harsh reality of hunger within these social environments.

The segment "I met a girl" introduces a personal encounter, such as meeting a girl, and suggests that individual stories and experiences contribute to the broader narrative of the social environment. This signifies the interconnectedness of personal experiences within the larger context of poverty. The use of the term "struggling" encapsulates the overall difficulty and adversity experienced by individuals in these social environments. It suggests a constant effort to overcome challenges and hardships. The mention of "waiting for a child's grant" indicates a reliance on financial assistance or support from social programmes. It implies a dependency on external resources to cope with economic challenges. The phrase "but that is not enough" implies a recognition that existing support mechanisms, such as child grants, may not be enough to address the depth of the challenges faced in these social environments.

The reference to "young people" underscores that these challenges are affecting a demographic group that may be particularly vulnerable to the impacts of poverty. The repetition of the term "poverty" and its association with the home environment reinforces the idea that poverty is not just an external condition but deeply embedded within the fabric of individuals' lives. Respondents express an emotional state in the following segment: "Poverty ... [silence] poverty ... [deep breath] very important

and poverty". The use of ellipses, silence and a deep breath in between repetitions of the word "poverty" adds an emotional layer to the description. It conveys the weight and significance attached to the widespread issue of poverty.

Respondents paint a vivid picture of social environments characterised by poverty, food insecurity, struggles and a dependency on external support. The personal encounter with a girl and the emotional emphasis on the importance of poverty highlights the deeply human and impactful nature of these challenging circumstances.

4.6.2 Sub-theme: Safety of facilitators

Respondents use the following segments to illustrate various perspectives on the safety of the community.

> I can work and walk freely but it is not safe because of people who are using the substances So sometimes it is not safe even during the day at unoccupied shacks to go and do their things there. – Respondent 1, August 2023

> I do not think it is safe especially for the elderly, because most of the people that are using the substances are the young ones. – Respondent 1, August 2023

> Guys who terrorised the community and then walked around with knopkieries, pangas and guns, you know. Those… [clearing throat] …uhm weapons. – Respondent 8, August 2023

> Our young people are suffering from the drugs and smoking. Our drug figure is high. – Respondent 8, August 2023.

Respondents employ the following words to describe safety in the community: "work and walk freely but", "not safe", "I do not think it is safe", "for the elderlies", "guys who terrorised, the community", "walk around with knopkieries", "pangas and guns", "weapons", "young people are suffering" and "drugs and smoke dagga".

The segment "work and walk freely but" suggests a conditional sense of safety. The use of "but" implies that while there may be a degree of freedom to work and walk, there are likely concerns or conditions that restrict complete safety. Respondents perceive the community as unsafe, indicating a belief that specific reasons are contributing to this lack of safety. The phrase "I do not think it is safe" indicates a personal opinion rather than a definitive statement.

Further the segment "for the elderly" points out that safety concerns are particularly relevant or concerning for the elderly population in the community. The phrase "guys who terrorised the community" highlights a specific issue of individuals or groups causing fear and distress in the community, potentially through disruptive or harmful actions. The segment "walk around with knopkieries, pangas and guns" indicates a serious concern for the safety of the community. The presence of such weapons suggests a potential threat to the YOLO facilitators. The phrase "drugs and smoke dagga" suggests that substance abuse may be contributing to a perceived lack of safety in the community, potentially leading to other issues.

In short, these responses paint a complex picture of safety concerns in the community, involving a range of factors such as the presence of weapons, specific individuals causing fear, challenges faced by the youth and issues related to substance.

4.6.3 Sub-theme: Violence

Respondents use the following segments to describe how they perceive violence in the context of YOLO participants' environments.

> Someone might have seen … he might have seen his dad hit his mom, there was gender-based violence in their house, then he thought maybe he was right to do it. – Respondent 3, August 2023

> Uncle smoked drugs in the yard; he just saw that he was going to buy for his uncle … drugs for the uncle and later for himself. – Respondent 3, August 2023

> I stand as a testimony, a living testimony to tell you that to use drugs, to use alcohol, to do so is wrong; and this is my reason why I, look how many times I have ended up. – Respondent 6, August 2023

> Some of them go so far as to break into houses, the figure of robbery is very ... is very bad, so they rob around them ... So, they rob people to feed this habit of drugs. – Respondent 7, August 2023

> Yes, there is also a need for gender-based violence cases to be addressed, actually from a male's side it would be very good, it will be very helpful for us. – Respondent 3, August 2023

Respondents describe violence using the following segments: "his dad hit his mom", "gender-based violence in their house", "right to do it", "smoked drugs", "going to buy for his uncle", "later for himself", "I stand as a testimony", "to use drugs", "use alcohol", "is wrong", "to break into houses", "robbery", "rob people", "gender-based violence" and "addressed, from a male's side".

The segment "his dad hit his mom" confirms domestic violence within the family, where the father is physically abusive towards the mother. The segment "gender-based violence in their house" suggests that violence within the household is not limited to a single instance but is a broader issue affecting relationships within the family. The phrase "right to do it" suggests a problematic belief or attitude that someone in the household believes they have the right to engage in violent behaviour. This segment "smoked drugs" points to substance abuse within the household, specifically the use of drugs. Further, a connection between the individual's actions of purchasing drugs for a family member and subsequently engaging in substance abuse personally. The phrase "I stand as a testimony" implies that the respondent has personally witnessed or experienced the impact of violence or substance abuse and is willing to speak out about it. The segment "is wrong" concisely a moral judgment that violence, drug use and alcohol consumption are deemed inappropriate or morally unacceptable. The phrase "to break into houses, robbery, rob

people" points to criminal activities, including burglary and robbery, suggesting a connection between violence, substance abuse and criminal behaviour. These segments collectively portray a complex and concerning picture of violence, substance abuse and criminal behaviour within households. The issue extends beyond individual actions, indicating broader problems related to family dynamics, gender-based violence and criminal activities

These set of segments collectively portray a complex and concerning picture of violence, substance abuse and criminal behaviour within households. The issue extends beyond individual actions, indicating broader problems related to family dynamics, gender-based violence and criminal activities.

4.6.4 Conclusion

The chapter presents the respondents' demographic information, confirming that respondents are from the townships, the same locality as the YOLO participants. Throughout the chapter, various segments echo the voices of respondents that culminate into main themes. The first theme explores respondents' "journeys from adversity to a newfound purpose". This theme comprises sub-themes that weave a narrative of respondents engaging in meaningful interactions, fostering positive changes, emphasising respect and expressing a commitment to contribute to the well-being of others, both presently and in the future.

The second theme labelled "helping profession", delves into respondents' roles as facilitators. Respondents perceive three main roles namely information shares, relationship builders and community developers. They empower the community by correcting misconceptions, promoting health through modern and traditional approaches organising information sessions and programmes and actively addressing challenges like alcoholism and substance abuse. This involvement reflects a dedication to community well-being, especially concerning HIV-related issues.

The third theme surfaces during interactions with community structures, encompassing family, school, church, racial grouping, culture and religion. Respondents underscore considerations related to cultural dynamics, sensitivity in discussing certain topics and the importance of boundaries and maturity in shaping the impact of the programme.

The fourth and final theme explores systemic influences on facilitators' roles, with sub-themes unfolding against the backdrop of safety and security, poverty and violence. The data collectively depict a complex and concerning picture of violence, substance abuse and criminal behaviour within households. This issue extends beyond individual actions, indicating broader problems related to family dynamics, gender-based violence and criminal activities.

In conclusion, the analysis aims to provide the truth from the perspective of the researcher respondents. Further, the chapter provides a comprehensive exploration of the respondents' experiences and roles as YOLO facilitators. It highlights the challenges and opportunities present in addressing social issues, emphasising the interconnectedness of individual actions with broader systemic influences. The following chapter aims to integrate explicit and implicit analysis in the form of findings and discussions.

CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS, DISCUSSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter discussed the research findings and recommendations. The research explored YOLO facilitators' experiences from the perspective of the social-ecological model. The discussion revolved around the research question. The discussion was structured around the levels of the social-ecological model, namely individual, interpersonal, community and societal levels and focuses on how these levels influence the personal attributes of YOLO facilitators. The multilayer levels represented subthemes in the data which allows YOLO participants to construct their narratives in the model. The presentation used the social-ecological diagram to map the sub-themes across the levels. Further, the discussion focused on the interaction between sub-themes which produces the main themes.

The second part of the chapter explained how the main themes from the data analysis chapter interacted within and across micro, meso and macro systems. The research described how individuals interacted with interrelated systems which influenced them. The research discussed themes in relation to sub-themes and highlighted their connections to the literature review and the voice of research respondents. This created a broader narrative as told by the research respondents in Chapter 4. The discussion was not only linear, but it also moved to the non-linear dimension. This provided an expression to the multilayered dimension of the social-ecological model. In conclusion, the main theme formulated a central argument for the research in the context of the social-ecological model.

5.2 Data presentation in the social-ecological model

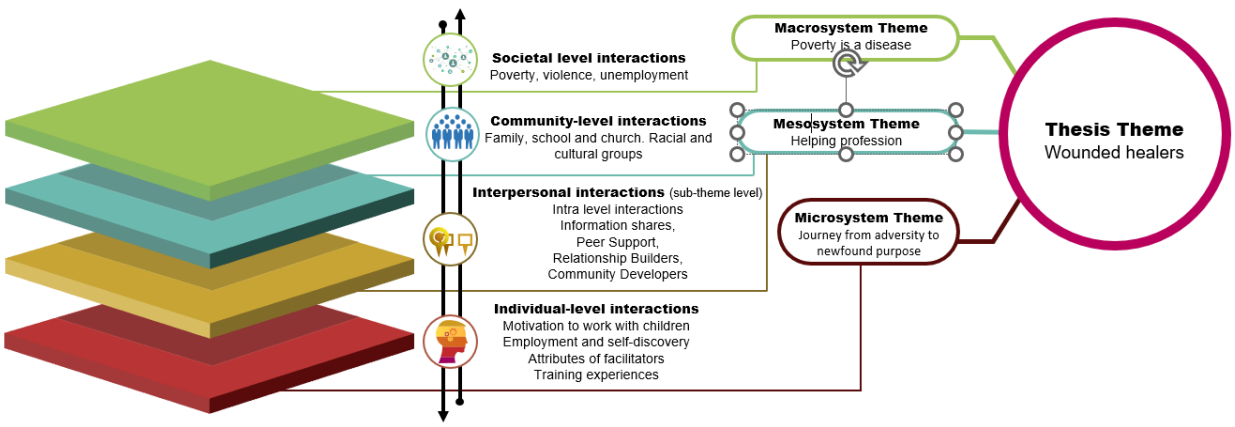


Figure 3: YOLO facilitators` themes in the social-ecological model

The diagram portrayed the research themes within the context of the social-ecological model, which was a comprehensive framework for understanding human behaviour and development. The model consisted of multiple layers that represented a person's interaction with various environments. At the foundation of the model was the individual level, which represented interactions of sub-themes. These sub-themes interacted with each other within the microsystem, creating a theme that bound them together. Moving up the layers, interpersonal and community-level interactions are mediated between the person and other individuals, including peers, communities, and other social structures. These components interacted with each other in the mesosystem, which combined the primary components of both interpersonal and community-level sub-themes and hosted the main theme of the helping profession. The societal level was regulated through government policy and economic strategies. Sub-themes affected society as a whole, directly or indirectly. The macro-system hosted the interactions of the sub-themes that translated into macro-level themes. The model represented one system with multiple operating systems that influenced the behaviour of the YOLO facilitators. Overall, the diagram illustrated a pyramid structure that signified strength and stability, emphasising the importance of a holistic approach to understanding human behaviour and development.

5.3 YOLO facilitators' experience at the individual

The YOLO facilitators constructed a progressive narrative of motivation to work with poor children employment which led to self-discovery, attributes and experiences of training Diagram 3 plots. Figure three plotted the sub-themes at the individual level of the model. Sub-theme in the individual level interact with the boundaries of the first level, which produced the perceived experiences of YOLO facilitators. Sub-theme interactions across the network connect across individual levels of the model.

The research found that the motivation to be YOLO facilitators stemmed from childhood experiences. The study revealed that when YOLO facilitators described their living conditions, it mirrored challenges faced by children and youth. Further, the study confirmed challenges faced by children in South Africa as discussed in Chapter 1. This finding concurred with Hall's (2019) assertion that childhood trauma can result in lasting dysfunction for specific individuals.

Further, Crawford (2020) argued that the micro level significantly shaped a person's attributes, values and actions. Ward et al. (2012a) emphasised that low-income families generated heightened levels of stress, anxiety and uncertainties about the future, which can adversely affect children's development within dysfunctional family structures. The sub-theme under interpersonal interactions connected the research literature review and the lived experiences of YOLO facilitators and confirmed the notion that YOLO facilitators' motivations are deeply rooted in their own challenging childhood experiences. In the case of the research, YOLO facilitators placed themselves in the frame of broken childhood milieu.

The study revealed that the YOLO programme acts as an employer to the previously unemployed respondents. The previous research site discussion indicated that the substantial unemployment rate negatively impacted the working group. Census (2022) estimated 491 000 people were living in poverty in the region (Variava, 2006). Unemployment among the youth worsened the present societal and health issues, specifically related to HIV infections (Variava, 2006). The numbers contextualised the sub-

theme of employment which led to self-discovery in the individual. The respondents gained a sense of fulfilment and a sense of purpose in their roles.

The research revealed that YOLO facilitators find the training overwhelming because of the high volumes of information. However, they responded positively to the training which created the possibility of employment. YOLO participants used explicit phrases which confirm that they believe information sharing translates into a change in HIV risk behaviours. In contrast, the study showed that information sharing does not automatically translate into HIV risk behaviour change in, but rather serves as an enabler of behaviour change (Kelly, 1999; Sanders et al., 2021).

YOLO facilitators' described attributes of positive influence transparency, self-discipline, empathy and non-judgmental intervention for the well-being of others. These attributes developed at the individual level of a person (Crawford, 2020). Attributes demonstrated a pattern of engagement between YOLO facilitators and the immediate surroundings. Further, attributes facilitated the interpersonal between the YOLO facilitators and the children (Crawford, 2020). YOLO facilitators interacted with children through face-to-face contact which embraced the children as part of the individual level (Crawford, 2020). Direct connection between YOLO facilitators and children sustained long-lasting effects for both the YOLO facilitators and children. The relationship held mutual benefits for both parties, which was reciprocal in nature (Elder et al., 2007).

These sub-themes give expression to Bronfenbrenner's (1994) argument that changes at the individual level can potentially influence the responses from inside a micro level. Additionally, Lochhead (2001), Phelan (2004a), Thumbadoo (2021) and Van Breda and Theron (2018) people are formed at the micro level. Sub-themes operate not in isolation but in the context of the microsystem, which refers to the context of the research site (Crawford, 2020). Ultimately, interactions between sub-themes accord in the microsystem.

5.4 YOLO facilitators' interaction in the microsystem

The microsystem refers to experiences that have a long-lasting impact on the person (Elder et al., 2006). The experiences of individual**s** are affected by their immediate surroundings, which make up their microsystem (Crawford, 2020). The main theme of the microsystem was the journey of facilitators from adversity to a new-found purpose. Sub-themes built up to the main theme. For instance, the motivation to work with poor children stemmed from the distressing childhood environments that are part of the social system. The research highlighted that the facilitators are still in the same social environment, which led to secondary stress (Conchar & Repper, 2014).

The demographic information showed how the political system produced and sustains marginalised Black and Coloured individuals in the research site. Black and Coloured women were less qualified for their roles compared to qualified males at a professional level (Allsopp, 2021). Employment facilitated the journey of self-discovery and contributed to self-realisation, which was influenced by the economic system surrounding the YOLO facilitators. The YOLO facilitators described how

systemic influences affect not only themselves but also the children and youth. The interactions between sub-themes formed the foundation of the main themes.

5.5 YOLO facilitators' experiences at an interpersonal level

The research identified three sub-themes at the interpersonal level**:** information sharers; relationship builders; and the relationship among YOLO facilitators. All these sub-themes revolved around elements of human development and they found expression in the interpersonal interactions between them. These sub-themes produced multi-systemic circles that influence the behaviour of YOLO facilitators in the ecosystem (Crawford, 2020).

At the interpersonal level, YOLO facilitators felt most valued. They are recognised by YOLO participants, their own families, friends and social networks. Information sharing emerged across social ills issues such as HIV, substance abuse and gender-based violence. The relationship between YOLO facilitators and YOLO participants seemed to be in a healthy stage.

YOLO facilitators served as social support among each other in problematic working environments. They expressed feeling of safety and comfortable in the presence of their peers. This description explained the energy exchange between sub-themes in the interpersonal level (Crawford, 2020). The relationship between sub-themes indicated that YOLO facilitators expressed a combination of positive intent to change lives in the complexities of HIV, substance abuse, violence and poverty. Notable, YOLO participants demonstrated a high level of motivation and purpose at the interpersonal level.

5.6 YOLO facilitators' experiences at a community level

Three sub-themes emerged under the heading of interactions with the school, church and community. These sub-themes combined to create predictors that promote human development at the community level (Crawford, 2020; Hodge & Raymond, 2023). The narrative showed that YOLO facilitators engaged with learners in school and identified challenges perceived by them. These challenges included dropping out of school, drug abuse, disconnection from family and a high risk of contracting HIV. YOLO facilitators reflected on their own childhood challenges, often without realising the impact of their actions.

Facilitators' religious background or affiliations to the church as social structure influenced their information-sharing sessions. Spirituality served as a protective factor for YOLO facilitators during their diverse childhood years and automatically formed part of the information sharing (Kang & Romo, 2011). Studies reported that youth with high levels of spirituality experience lower levels of stress when confronted with adverse environments (Kang & Romo, 2011). The individual level influenced the behaviour of the YOLO facilitator at the community level. Notably, the church operated at the community level which produced a mutually beneficial relationship with the person's world views at the individual level.

The combination of these sub-themes produced a level of protective factors interwoven into school, church and community. These factors promote human development and YOLO facilitators form an ecological niche (Crawford, 2020). The interpersonal and community interaction came together in the mesosystem.

5.7 YOLO facilitators' interactions in the mesosystem

The mesosystem facilitates interaction between groups and community structures, which affects the YOLO facilitators **(**Hodge & Raymond**,** 2023). The mesosystem also facilitated community links as part of the social change within the context of social work (Crawford, 2020). YOLO facilitators perceived the community as a broken unit that has abandoned the child's human development. The mesosystem has cascading effects throughout the interactions of all other levels. YOLO facilitators acknowledged that there are diverse racial, cultural and religious groups, which demonstrated that no single norm was dominant in the context of the research. However, the environment in which YOLO facilitators found themselves determined the interactions of the day.

5.8 YOLO facilitators' experiences at the societal level

The YOLO facilitators identified poverty, safety and violence as sub-themes which affected their lives. Policies and laws play a crucial role in regulating the outcomes of these macro-level factors (Dlamini et al., 2023). Poverty was a fundamental challenge faced by YOLO facilitators and they experienced it both in their personal lives and through connecting with YOLO participants. Unfortunately, they never graduated from their childhood poverty because they continue to live in the same social and economic conditions of joblessness, hunger and child distortion. They described a complex picture of safety concerns that cause fear and anxiety at the individual level. YOLO participants experienced the negative and devastating effects of these macro factors on themselves and their children. YOLO facilitators expressed gratitude for being employed and not being trapped in the poverty cycle.

5.9 YOLO facilitators' interactions in the macrosystem

The macrosystem served as a platform for interactions between the sub-themes at the macro level. According to Crawford (2020), the macro system provides a blueprint for the interactions between the micro, meso and macro systems, resulting in a mutually beneficial role among the various levels. YOLO facilitators described poverty as the catalyst for most of the social ills experienced by children. Hlongwane and Daw (2020) described marginalised groups in South Africa as being Black, poor and having a low level of education across the micro, meso and macro systems, which affects their employment prospects and financial prosperity. YOLO facilitators experienced inherited discrimination based on race and were economically disempowered due to their low level of education. This example demonstrates the interaction between the political, economic and educational systems in South Africa. Despite these challenges, YOLO facilitators remained highly committed to fulfilling their roles.

5.10 Findings and recommendations

YOLO facilitators viewed their role as a privilege to serve both themselves and the community. They found purpose in their work, especially in contexts where employment opportunities are limited. They played a vital role in shaping the experiences of YOLO participants in the microsystem. The study revealed that some YOLO facilitators can relate to the poor living conditions of YOLO participants because of their own childhood traumas.

This suggests that some YOLO facilitators may still be struggling with their own childhood traumas, which can affect their work. To mitigate this impact, it is essential to establish a robust supervision system which overs trauma counselling. Regular supervision sessions can provide a safe space for facilitators to discuss their challenges, seek guidance and ensure their mental and emotional well-being. Ultimately, this will enhance their capacity to assist programme participants. A study by Thurman et al. (2018) on the retention of child and youth workers supports this recommendation.

The next discussion was related to the research objective of exploring the roles of YOLO facilitators in communities, revealing a complex interconnection across micro and meso systems. YOLO programme focuses on learners' families at the micro level, which involves direct engagement with individuals and groups within the school context. While the programme concentrates on the school community, the facilitators acknowledged the school as a pivotal social institution, serving as a bridge to the broader community.

The Families Matter Programme serves as an extension of involvement beyond the school, which was designed for learners' parents and guardians and emphasises relationship-building as a crucial aspect. The research suggested that programme managers should be mindful of assigning the responsibility of the Families Matter Programme to YOLO facilitators, who are already overwhelmed. Such a situation could lead to burnout in the absence of functional supervision support. The research recommended that YOLO facilitators focus on the school programme to ensure programme sustainability. An additional group of community practitioners can serve as community connectors and present the Families Matter Programme in communities.

Moving to the meso level, the sub-theme of religion highlighted that most YOLO facilitators identify as Christians. Their non-judgmental stance towards sexuality and HIV/AIDS within the church community portrayed the church as a supportive social structure. The church became a link that provided understanding and assistance to its members dealing with health challenges. Religion and the church have the potential to support the YOLO facilitators in their roles. However, it is important to note that this should never be forced upon children or young people in care.

The following finding aimed to address the research gap surrounding YOLO facilitators and their level of comprehension regarding their roles. Contrary to previous suggestions, the research findings revealed that YOLO facilitators possess a deep understanding of the profound impact poverty had on the emotional well-being of YOLO participants. Notably, they recognise the complex interplay between economic struggles and coping mechanisms, such as substance abuse (Cluver et al., 2019; Hodge & Raymond, 2023).

The research also highlighted the detrimental effects of household violence on young YOLO participants, as it complicates efforts to restore trust and serves as a predictor of dysfunctional family dynamics (Shung-King et al., 2019, Ward et al., 2012). Multilayered interventions are necessary to address the psychological effects of violence.

Additionally, the subtheme of resistance and hostility from parents presented a significant challenge for YOLO facilitators in engaging with parents and addressing school dropout cases. The confrontational atmosphere during home visits pointed to a

broader societal issue that affects the effectiveness of facilitators in their roles. These findings underscored the interconnectedness of YOLO facilitators across and within micro, meso and macro systems (Baral et al., 2013).

The researcher identified a need to explore YOLO facilitators from a social-ecological perspective in greater depth, with a larger sample and broader coverage.

5.11 Conclusion

The research project concluded with an exploration of the YOLO facilitators' story. The narrative comprised of various chapters, with the first chapter setting the context by addressing the numerous challenges that children in South Africa face. This chapter describes the researcher's surroundings and the social interactions within the environment, introduces the social-ecological model explains its significance in the research, and presents the problem statement and the research question.

The second chapter provided an overview of the literature review which explored the work of child and youth care workers, auxiliary social workers and students who served as YOLO facilitators. The chapter delved into the HIV approach at individual, group and community levels, using literature to guide the exploration of the YOLO facilitators' lived experiences.

Chapter 3 presented the research methodology, which was a qualitative exploratory design. This chapter explored the researcher's positionality in the research and concluded by discussing the ethical considerations of the researcher.

Chapter 4 discussed the data and analysis of subthemes. The chapter focused on the social-ecological model and discussed the themes according to this model. Notably, the chapter included the voices of research respondents sharing their lived experiences. The discussion constructed a narrative of progressive YOLO facilitators, who reaffirm their commitment to serving the most vulnerable children and youth.

Chapter 5 contextualised the role of YOLO facilitators within the micro, meso and macro systems. It explained how the multifaceted approach underscores the interconnected nature of their roles across these systems, emphasising their influence within and between various components of the social-ecological model. The central focus of the chapter revolved around how the interdependencies among the micro, meso and macro systems shape the roles of YOLO facilitators. The researcher concluded with findings and recommendations for the YOLO programme.

The purpose of the study and finally, the submission of the study report. It delves into the roles of research to explore the YOLO facilitators' roles from the social-ecological model. By following the fundamental principle of social science, the research explores YOLO facilitators from a sociological perspective (Bhandari, 2023).

Using the social-ecological model. The social-ecological model provided an analytical lens to analyse social relationships within the research context while maintaining objectivity by avoiding personal biases (Bhandari, 2023). The application of tested interview protocols and a defined research design ensures the study's reliability and objectivity (Bhandari, 2023). The study

explored how social structures impacted both individuals and systems while ensuring ethical considerations were met to protect the confidentiality and privacy of the research participants (Bhandari, 2023). The research described how the multifaceted approach underscored the interconnected nature of their roles across these systems, emphasising their influence within and between various components of the social-ecological model. By following the fundamental principle of social science, the research explored YOLO facilitators from a sociological perspective (Bhandari, 2023).

The research question was how do YOLO facilitators describe their roles when viewed through the social-ecological perspective? The primary discourse that surfaced from the research was that YOLO facilitators functioned as wounded healers in their roles. The term "wounded healer" refers to practitioners who use their historical experiences in working with dysfunctional people both in the social and health sector (Karlsen et al., 2017; Manson, n.d.; Vachon, 2020). In the broader literature, authors agreed that many practitioners in child development ascribed to the phenomena (Allsopp, 2021; Gharabaghi & Phelan, 2011). The research argued that YOLO facilitators are wounded and require support to deal with childhood trauma to effectively fulfil their roles as YOLO facilitators. Interestingly, the debate in literature described two opposing views on the topic.

There are two opposing views on the topic of "wounded healer". Some argue that only those who have been personally wounded can truly heal others (Karlsen et al., 2017; Ramphele, 2008; Vachon, 2020). This implied that their own experiences can be beneficial in the healing process. In this view, the relationship between the healer and service receiver is based on sympathy or empathy (Karlsen et al., 2017; Vachon, 2020). Cain (2000) described sympathy as an emotional response to someone's suffering, while empathy involves understanding of circumstances they are going through (Cain, 2000).

Further, the debate around whether empathy can be learned is ongoing and while some believe that it is a key requirement that can be developed over time, others hold a different view (Davis, 2009; Karlsen et al., 2017b). While personal experiences developed empathy which relied solely on one's own wounds can be risky (Davis, 2009). Unfortunately, this risk is often overlooked and it can lead to the reopening of old wounds, which negatively impacts the mental health of YOLO facilitators.

Therefore, it was important to ensure that YOLO facilitators are informed about these potential risks and are provided with a safe and supportive environment to mitigate them. YOLO facilitators' personal experiences can certainly assist them in developing empathy and sympathy, but it was essential to strike a balance between personal growth and personal harm.

In light of these considerations, it was clear that understanding the role of YOLO facilitators from a social-ecological perspective was critical. Such an understanding provided a solid foundation for further studies and underscored the importance of fostering a safe and supportive environment for YOLO facilitators.

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Annexure A : Participants` Consent form

Title of project: A Social-Ecological Perspective on the Roles of YOLO Facilitators.

Name of researcher: Christofer van Rooyen, student 2293908, registers at Master of Management: Governance (Public and Development Sector Monitoring and Evaluation)

I…….. consent to participate in this research project. The research was explained to me, and I understand what my participation will involve. I agree to the following:

(Please circle the appropriate options below).

I agree that my participation will remain anonymous.	YES NO
I agree that the researcher may use anonymous quotes in their research report.	YES NO
I agree that the interview may be transcribed and audio recorded.	YES NO
I agree to discuss my views on the topic under investigation in a group.	YES NO
I agree that the information I provide may be used anonymously after this project has ended for academic purposes by other researchers, subject to their own ethics clearance being obtained.	YES NO

…… (name of participant)

…… (date)

…… (signature)

Annexure B : Interview Questionnaire

Annexure B: Interview Questions

Instruction: Please provide a detailed description in your responses.

Tell your story about experiences as a Child and Youth Care worker (CYCW) facilitating the youth YOLO HIV prevention programme.

Social environment: Individual

1. Tell me about your age, gender, race and employment status.
2. Are you a qualified CYCW? If yes, when did you complete your training?

If not, which part of your qualification still needs to be completed?

3. Did you complete any training related to CYCW in the last two years?
4. What were the reasons for you to become a CYCW? Tell your story.
5. What are the personal attributes of a good CYCW?

Social environment: Interpersonal relationship interactions

6. How will you describe your relationship with the youth in the YOLO program?
7. Can you describe the characteristics of the youth in the YOLO program?
8. How will you describe the relationship between the youth in the YOLO program and their direct family members?
9. Describe the role of the family in the YOLO program.
10. What are your relationships with your co-social workers? Do you experience the feeling of belonging in the group? Why?

Community environments

11. What is the role of the CYCW at the community level?
12. Can you describe the social conditions in the community?
13. In which way does the social environment influence the work in the YOLO program?
14. How do you handle the social environment influences on the YOLO program?
15. In which way does the local culture influence the YOLO program?
16. Are you effective in the role of a YOLO facilitator, given your training and personal attributes in the context of the community?

Annexure C: Ethical Clearance Certificate University of Witwatersrand.

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND JOHANNESBURG

SCHOOL OF GOVERNANCE ETHICS COMMITTEE

CONSTITUTED UNDER THE UNIVERSITY HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (NON-MEDICAL)

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE: **WSG-2023-102**

PROJECT TITLE: **Social environment influences social workers in a Klerksdorp youth HIV prevention programme.**

INVESTIGATOR	Christofer Van Rooyen
SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT OF INVESTIGATOR	School of Governance
DATE CONSIDERED	23 October 2023
DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE	Approved unconditionally
RISK LEVEL	Low Risk
EXPIRY DATE	Date of submission of the Research Report

ISSUE DATE OF CERTIFICATE 2 November 2023 **CHAIRPERSON** _____
Rekgotsofetse Chikane

cc: Supervisor: Murray Cairns

DECLARATION OF INVESTIGATOR

To be completed in duplicate and **ONE COPY** returned to the Chairperson of the School/Department ethics committee.

I fully understand the conditions under which I am are authorized to carry out the abovementioned research and I guarantee to ensure compliance with these conditions. Should any departure to be contemplated from the research procedure as approved I/we undertake to resubmit the protocol to the Committee.

_____ **Signature** **Date** 03 / 11 / 2023

PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER ON ALL ENQUIRIES

Annexure D: Approval Letter National Department of Social Development.

social development

Department
Social Development
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Private Bag X901, Pretoria, 0001, 134 Pretorius Street, HSRC Building, Pretoria Tel: +27 12 3127647/7833, www.dsd.gov.za
Private Bag X9250, Cape Town, 8000, Tel: +27 21 469 8632/8633, email: directorgeneral@dsd.gov.za

Office of the Director-General

Chris Van Rooyen
Department of Social Development
Room 638S HSRC Building
Pretoria
0001

Dear Mr Van Rooyen

RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH STUDY

The Department of Social Development wishes to inform you that your request for permission to conduct research towards fulfilment of your research study has been granted with the following conditions:

1. You must sign a confidentiality agreement with the Department to protect unauthorized sharing of Departmental information.

2. You must make the necessary appointment with the respective managers that are required to support you during your research to ensure that DSD officials are not disrupted in performing their duties.

3. Your conduct during the duration of your research at DSD must be one of a professional nature at all times.

4. The Department must be provided with a copy of your final research report.

I wish to inform you that the Department of Social Development will not bear any financial and legal liabilities that may arise from your research study.

I further wish to bring to your attention that research ethics must be considered and adhered to in this regard.

Lefapha le Tlhabololo ya Leago" Mohlahlo wa Jwa Mmatlaphenalo ya Vhuthu" Ubhe lePhuthiso beMbalo yeLeriko" uMnyango woseNdlulisiso yeBantu/" Kgoro ya Tlhabollo "ya Leago" Ridzenzelo ya Ritlukuxelo wa Vanhu" Litlhoo leTimdlulisiso yeBandla" Lefapha la Nkhetelopele ya Setjhaba" UmNyango weTuthuzo Kwezolu/Nkhaliwa Departement" van Maatskappilike Ontwikkeling"

Building a Caring Society. Together.

I wish you all the best in your research study. and look forward to your final research product.

Given the subject area of your research study, you must contact Dr Luzile Nziyane on 0123127110 and Mr Nkere Skosana on 0123127904 to facilitate assistance that you require during your research.

For more information you are welcome to contact Michael Machubeng: Director: Information and Knowledge Management on Tel: (012) 312-7839 or email: michaelm@dsd.gov.za.

Yours sincerely

Mr L Mchunu
Acting Director-General
Date: 01 September 2020

Annexure E: Data analysis table

Main themes	Sub-theme	Levels	Systems
Wounded healer	Motivation to become a YOLO facilitator	Individual	Micro
	Attributes of a good facilitator	Individual	Micro
	High unemployment/employment status	Individual	Micro
	YOLO training	Individual	Micro
	Social auxiliary worker	Individual	Micro
	Child and youth care worker	Individual	Micro
	Matric	Individual	Micro
Key roles as facilitators	Information sharer	Intrapersonal	Micro
	Programme facilitator	Intrapersonal	Micro
	Role models	Intrapersonal	Micro
	Relationship builder	Intrapersonal	Micro
	Caring for children and youth	Intrapersonal	Micro
	Culture norms	Community	Mesolevel
Facilitators in communities	Family linkage in the YOLO programme	Community	Mesolevel
	Religion	Community	Mesolevel
	Culture differs between Black and Coloured	Community	Mesolevel
Social environment impacts on the facilitators' role	Violence	Society	Macro
	Poverty	Society	Macro
	Parents do not value YOLO	Society	Macro
	Unemployment	Society	Macro
	Limited access to basic services	Society	Macro

Interview Questionnaire

Annexure B: Interview Questions

Instruction: Please provide a detailed description in your responses.

Tell your story about experiences as a Child and Youth Care worker (CYCW) facilitating the youth YOLO HIV prevention programme.

Social environment: Individual

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