5   INDUCTIVE LOGIC: RESEARCH PART B

5.1   INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the research process and the research results of the qualitative research part B. Research part B aimed to inductively develop a theory about the relationship between the school environment and the resilience of urban middle-adolescents with a low SES background. In Chapter 4 it was discussed how the participants for the qualitative research part B were identified as resilient and not-resilient. In this chapter, the procedure of conducting the interviews is described, the participants are briefly introduced and the research process and results are discussed.

5.2   CONDUCTING THE INTERVIEWS

In order to plan the interviews during school-time the care co-ordinators for the schools created a roster for the interviews which was sent to the teachers who were to be teaching the students concerned at planned time points. This ensured that the pupils had a valid reason for being absent from class and also allowed a check to be made whether the pupil concerned was either at school or at the interview. The guideline for the maximum duration of the interview and the total time the pupil was allowed to be absent from school was two hours.

All interviews were conducted out of school with the exception of a single participant. The exception for the single participant arose due to confusion concerning the location of the community house where the interview was to take place. In order to complete the interview within the time available the researcher decided to conduct the interview at school. The pupil co-ordinator for the school made his office available for an unlimited amount of time.

All the other interviews took place outside school in three different community centres which were close to the school. Conditions in the community centres were easily controllable by the researcher. There were no disruptions to the interviews by others within the community centre with the exception of a single episode. There were no differences between the community centres in terms of organisation and facilities.

The organisation of the interview rooms consisted of a table with a number of chairs around it. The participants were offered tea, coffee or a soft drink.

It was noted that in the third research cycle, where more not-resilient pupils from School Site 3 had been planned for interviewing than in the first two cycles, that pupils did not turn up for the interview although they had volunteered to participate. This had not been an issue in the first two research cycles. The pupil co-ordinator of the school concerned revealed when questioned that the school was participating in a longitudinal study in addition to the study presented here, where participating pupils received 10 Euro. It appeared therefore that voluntary participation in this study was of no interest to these students. After consultation and deliberation of the consequences it was decided to pay each participant 10 Euro retrospectively for their participation in the study and to encourage those who had been selected for the planned interviews with 10 Euro. After the introduction of the 10 Euro payment all planned interviews, with the exception of one, could take place. A participant of the same gender and from the same school was chosen to replace the participant who was unable to take part in the interview. This participant's VVL score was approximately equivalent to the participant who had not appeared for interview.

5.3   THE PARTICIPANTS

The description of the participants takes place according to:

   i)   The code of the participant in the interviews;
   ii)   The score on the Resilience Scale;
   iii)   The specific school grade of the participant;
   iv)   The identification of the participant as resilient or not-resilient;
   v)   The gender of the participant;
   vi)   The age of the participant at the time of the interview;
   vii)   The research cycle in which the interview with the participant concerned took place.

Table 5.1 shows the description of the participants of the qualitative research.

Table 5.1 Description of the participants of the qualitative research according to The code of the participant in the interviews, The score on the Resilience Scale, School grade, Identification as Resilient or Not-Resilient, Gender of the participant, Age at the administration of the interview[9] and the Research Cycle in which the interview took place.

Code in the interviews	Score Resilience	Class	Identification R/NR	Gender	Age at time interview	Research Cycle
School Site 2						
301-S2-C1-M-R	4,78	B	R	M	15,4	Cycle 1
326-S2-C4-F-R	4,30	C	R	F	15,5	Cycle 4
327-S2-C1,C2/3-M-NR	2,77	C	NR	M	16,3 / 16,8	Cycle 1 Cycle 2/3
330-S2-C1-F-R	4,35	C	R	F	15,2	Cycle 1
331-S2-C4-F-NR	2,96	C	NR	F	15,11	Cycle 4
332-S2-C1-M-NR	2,87	C	NR	M	15,10	Cycle 1
341-S2-C4-F-NR	2,78	C	NR	F	15,4	Cycle 4
349-S2-C4-M-NR	2,87	A	NR	M	15,9	Cycle 4
School Site 3						
Code in the interviews	Score Resilience	Class	Identification R/NR	Gender	Age at time interview	Research Cycle
479-S3-C3-F-NR	2,87	D	NR	F	16,0	Cycle 3
482-S3-C3-F-NR	3,04	E	NR	F	16,2	Cycle 3
487-S3-C2-F-R	4,35	B	R	F	15,5	Cycle 2
488-S3-C2-F-R	4,78	D	R	F	16,2	Cycle 2
519-S3-C3-M-R	4,26	C	R	M	16,5	Cycle 3
522-S3-C1-F-R	4,70	C	R	F	16,0	Cycle 1
520-S3-C3-M-NR	2,96	C	NR	M	15,10	Cycle 3
528-S3-C3-M-NR	3,48	C	NR	M	16,0	Cycle 3
School Site 5						

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[9] Sometimes the interviews took place a year after filling out the questionnaire, thus the age of the participants in the qualitative research is higher than the average of the participants in the quantitative research.

Code in the interviews	Score Resilience	Class	Identification R/NR	Gender	Age at time interview	Research Cycle
547-S5-C2-F-R	4,57	B	R	F	14,9	Cycle 2
552-S5-C2-F-R	4,61	A	R	F	15,11	Cycle 2
555-S5-C4-M-R	4,13	A	R	M	16,3	Cycle 4
573-S5-C4-F-NR	3,13	C	NR	F	16,4	Cycle 4
593-S5-C2-M-NR	2,91	C	NR	M	16,1	Cycle 2

Discussion of the Table

The codes used for the participants in the discussion of the research results consist of: the number of the participant in the quantitative data file; the number of the School Site the participant comes from (S); the number of the Cycle in which the participant is interviewed (C); the gender of the participant (F/M) and the degree of resilience of the participant (Resilient/ Not-Resilient).

The interviews have been divided across School Sites and research cycles as follows below:

Cycle 1: four participants from School environment 2 and one participant from School environment 3;

Cycle 2: two participants from School environment 3 and three participants from School environment 5;

Cycle 3: five participants from School environment 3.

Cycle 4: two participants from School environment 5 and four participants from School environment 2.

This distribution of interviews across the schools has methodological and practical reasons.

Methodological rationale

Cycle 1: The development of a general idea about resilience

The methodological reasons were, in the first instance, that the researcher wanted to get a general idea of resilience by measuring how resilient and not-resilient middle-adolescents describe the same school environment and grant meaning to this

environment. By starting Cycle 1 with interviewing four participants from School environment 2, of which two were resilient and two were not-resilient participants, an initial general idea could be developed about the differences between resilient and not-resilient middle-adolescents within the same school environment. The fifth interview in Cycle 1 with a participant from School environment 3 served to verify the developed ideas about resilience in School environment 2 with another school environment.

Cycle 2: verifying the general idea

In Cycle 2 the researcher wanted to gain more insight into the way in which different school environments contribute to resilience. For this purpose two interviews with resilient participants from School environment 3 were planned; two interviews with resilient participants from School environment 5 and an interview with a not-resilient participant from School environment 5.

Cycle 3: deepening

After Cycles 1 and 2, the summer vacation followed. In the summer vacation the researcher developed a general theory on the differences between resilient and not-resilient participants and on the way in which different school environments contribute to resilience. This theory served as a sensitising concept in the interviews that followed. In Cycle 3 the researcher wanted to deepen the developed ideas. The central question was how the differences between resilient and not-resilient participants were related to differences in their experience of a contribution of their school environment to their successful development. Therefore, four not-resilient participants from School environment 3 were interviewed in Cycle 3 and one resilient participant from the same school environment.

Cycle 4: verifying deepening

In cycle 4, the researcher wanted to verify the ideas, which had been developed during the deepening in school environment 3, in other school environments. For this reason two interviews with participants from School environment 5 and four interviews with participants from School environment 2 were conducted.

> *Practical reasons*

The researcher would have preferred to have interviewed several participants from School environment 5 to verify the deepening. However, because of practical reasons, such as the approaching exams of the participants, the choice was made to limit the number of participants from School environment 5.

One participant (327-S2-C1,C2/3-M-NR) was interviewed twice: the first time in Cycle 1, the second time between Cycle 2 and Cycle 3, because the participant had by then left school prematurely. Participant 327-S2-C1,C2/3-M-NR was the only participant who had left school prematurely.

In total, nine boys (M) and 12 girls (F) participated in the interviews. In total, 10 resilient (R) and 11 not-resilient (NR) middle-adolescents were interviewed.

5.4 PROCEDURE

5.4.1 INTRODUCTION

The procedure of Grounded Theory in the present study can be divided into three processes which took place simultaneously: the development of themes and categories, the development of hypotheses on the relationship between themes and categories and the development of the concept of resilience. For this purpose, the interviews were recorded in their entirety on cassette tapes and were transcribed literally. During the three processes, coding of interview data, writing logbook notes, returning to literature and refining the research method were utilised.

Development of themes and categories
The coding of the interview data initially occurred in an open manner. The interviews in the first two cycles were printed, repeatedly reread and divided into themes the participants spoke about. On the basis of the themes found, categories were developed into which the themes were placed.

Development of hypotheses on the relationship between themes and categories
After the first two research cycles, an assessment was made of how the categories in the interview data of the participants were related and a provisional theory was developed. This theory functioned as a sensitising concept in the third research cycle.

The structure of the interviews remained open, whereby the sensitising concepts were used to follow up on themes raised by the participants.

Development of the resilience concept

On the basis of constant comparison during all research cycles between the content of the categories for resilient and not-resilient participants, differences and similarities between the groups were identified. A portion of the similarities and differences between resilient and not-resilient middle-adolescents was found *within the different school sites* by comparing resilient and not-resilient participants with each other per school site. Other differences and similarities were found by grouping and comparing resilient and not-resilient participants above school level. For the closer research of these similarities and differences in the fourth research cycle, feedback was derived from literature about symbolic interactionism. This feedback provided sensitising concepts for the fourth research cycle, which led to a final coding system for the entire qualitative data set. In the presentation of the results of the final analysis (paragraph 5.4), as many examples as possible will be provided per discussed theme of resilient and not-resilient participants of each school site. However, in some cases a finding has been made on an "above school level", and a specific theme can not be illustrated with the use of participants from *each* school site. In these cases, a short comment will be added to the presentation of the results.

The different processes that took place during the procedure of Grounded Theory in the present study will be illustrated in the following paragraphs using logbook notes and process outcomes in the form of themes, categories and codes.

5.4.2   DEVELOPMENT OF THEMES, CATEGORIES AND CODES

5.4.2.1   Context description

Logbook

The question "What do middle-adolescents talk about with regard to the concept "school"?" was central in the context description. Naming the themes during the open coding occurred as much in the language of the participants themselves as possible. This way, an abundance of themes followed. Some themes which were established in this "open way" are presented in logbook notes:

Logbook 25-05-2005:

First ordering of themes so far:

Participant 301

School in general; The theoretic subjects; Difference Theoretic Subjects and Subjects you use your hands with; The pupils; The class; Subjects you use your hands with; Green (as a subject at school); School really not fun, because…; Problems.

Participant 332

School general; Fellow pupils; Teachers (that go crazy, nice teachers, teachers who get calmer); Classmates; Other classes; Subjects; Arguing; Fun in class; Working with your hands; Future.

Outcomes

After the first two interviews, the earlier discussed themes were divided in very general categories, which formed sensitising concepts for the new interviews. The following interviews in Cycle 1 and 2 were still coded openly as well. Examples of themes that were brought up are:

Passing school; How are things going for me at school?; Shitty times; Feeling at home; The Teachers ("are crazy"); School counsellor; Contact with teachers, The teachers, "Cool teacher"; The children, Aggressiveness; Trouble; Used to be bullied; Arguing; Influence of the class; What is the use of going to school?; Dealing with work pressure; About oneself as a pupil in the school; Future; Skipping school; Parents.

Whether the themes addressed during the interviews fitted within the developed general categories, was constantly reviewed. When they did not fit, new categories were formed. This is how the following categories were developed after the interview and analysis cycles 1 and 2.

School; Subjects; Pupils; Class; Teachers; Activities; School team, Friends, School accomplishments, Future and Parents.

These categories were then, on a more abstract level, subdivided into final categories in regard to the context that middle-adolescents speak about in relation to "school". The categories are presented in Figure 5.1 by means of an explanation of the codes they received for the definite analysis process:

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Figure 5.1 Codes Context Description School, Background and Future

Context description: school, background and future		
SC_BS_ACT: The description of the school environment in terms of the people in this context (Actors).	AG_BS_GEZ: The description of the background of the participant in terms of his home environment.	TOEK_BS: The description of the participant's image and hope for the future.
SC_BS_SF: The description of the school environment in terms of the atmosphere in the school.	AG_BS_ FAM: The description of the background of the participant in terms of his family, outside the home environment.	
SC_BS_ORG: The description of the school environment in terms of organisation of the school.	AG_BS_OMG: The description of the background of the participant in terms of his environment outside the school.	
SC_BS_GEB: The description of the school environment in terms of the events that take place within the school environment.	AG_BS_GESCH: The description of the background of the participant in terms of his history.	
SC_BET: The meaning the participant grants to the school environment.		

It turned out that both resilient and not-resilient participants at all school sites spoke about their school in terms of a description of the people who are present at the school environment, the atmosphere in the school environment, the way in which the school environment is organised, such as the established rules and extracurricular activities, the events that take place in the school environment and in terms of the meaning they grant to the school and the people, the atmosphere, the organisation and the events in the school. In regard to the relationship their background has with their description of and meaning given to school, they spoke about their home environment, their family outside their home environment (e.g. grandfathers, grandmothers, aunts and uncles), the environment in which they live and about their history (e.g. their elementary school days, the history of their parents and events in the past) which relates to the present. Furthermore, both resilient and not-resilient participants spoke about their future in relation to their description of and meaning attachment to their school environment.

Above-mentioned descriptions of and the meaning given to the contexts in which the participant engages himself form the stage against which the participant describes "circumstances experienced as challenging".

5.4.2.2 Dealing with "Circumstances experienced as challenging"

Logbook

After the first two interviews, the researcher decided to ask more directly about the way in which the participants deal with "circumstances experienced as challenging". The themes the participants brought up at first were still very general. When the researcher asked for "challenging circumstances", the participants would indicate that they had no "problems". The researcher entered the following logbook notes about these findings in an early cycle:

Logbook 25-05-05

These first two interviews were still very general. After these interviews I decided to ask more specifically for "dealing with problems". This is delicate, because what the interviewer and the participant both think about with the concept of problems then needs to be established again. The same question arises ever again "What is it I want to know about them?"

Not only did the researcher and the participants have to agree about the concept "school" and the broader context in which "school" was mentioned, but also about the concept "circumstances experienced as challenging". That is why the researcher decided to ask the participants about their experiences with challenging situations, to subsequently explore how the participant dealt with that. In doing so, the researcher looked at the role the school played in relation to these challenging situations. This role was explored by asking what the school had to do with the challenging circumstances, if there was something in the school that could help in dealing with the challenging circumstances or what the school could have done differently so that the participant would find some things easier (see topic list Appendix 5). The school's role was further analysed regarding the needs of middle-adolescents for school factors which "make them stronger" when dealing with "circumstances experienced as challenging".

Outcomes "circumstances experienced as challenging"

After the first two interviews, the themes previously discussed in the area of "circumstances experienced as challenging" were divided in very general categories, which served as sensitising concepts for the new interviews. Examples of themes that were brought up:

Bullying, Stressful situations, Noisiness in class, Having to achieve good school accomplishments, Dealing with teachers, Challenges to fighting, Challenges to skipping school, Dealing with yourself (e.g. insecurity and behaviour), Dealing with problems in the family situation.

These themes were subsequently, on a more abstract level, subdivided into the final categories. Although the theme "dealing with yourself" resulted in interesting insights, the interview data did not warrant maintaining a category "dealing with yourself" as a category in the final coding system. Although the problems in the family situation were strongly related to his experience of the school environment with one participant, none of the other participants spoke about a similar impact of problems in the family situation. Therefore, this theme was not identified as a separate category, but was used to verify other findings about the family background. The final categories in which the themes were divided are presented in Figure 5.2.

Figure 5.2 Codes Behaviour and Meaning Making: "Academic Accomplishments", "Negative Influence of Peers" and "Creation and maintenance of constructive relationships with peers and adults".

"Academic accomplishments" (AP)	Negative influence of peers (PI-)	Creation and maintenance of constructive relationships with peers and adults in the school environment (PP)
IND_BS_GEDR_AP: The description of the participant of his/her behaviour in the area of having to accomplish good academic accomplishments.	IND_BS_GEDR_PI-: The description of the participant of his/her behaviour in the area of dealing with negative influence of peers.	IND_BS_GEDR_PP: The description of the participant of his/her behaviour in the area of the creation and maintenance of constructive relationships with fellow pupils and teachers.
IND_BS_BET_AP: The description of the participant of his/her meaning attachment to having to accomplish good academic accomplishments.	IND_BS_BET_PI-: The description of the participant of his/her meaning attachment to dealing with negative influence of peers.	IND_BS_BET_PP: The description of the participant of his/her meaning attachment to the creation and maintenance of constructive relationships with fellow pupils and teachers.

Figure 5.2 shows how the "circumstances experienced as challenging" are subdivided in the behaviour and the meaning attached by the participants in the area of

"circumstances experienced as challenging". Both resilient and not-resilient participants at each school site spoke about their behaviour in the area of school accomplishments, that is, what kind of marks they get, how they deal with homework and how they behave in class. Furthermore, they spoke about the meaning that accomplishing good school results has for them. They motivated their behaviour based on the meaning the achievement of good school results has for them.

Both resilient and not-resilient participants at each school site spoke about the presence of a negative influence of peers, such as bullying, fighting, being challenged and gossiping. They described their own behaviour in this area and they described the meaning the negative influence of peers has for their behaviour and development.

Both resilient and not-resilient participants at each school site spoke about their behaviour in relation to fellow pupils, to teachers and to other adults in the school environment and about the meaning these relationships have. They motivated their behaviour based on their meaning attachment to these relationships.

5.4.2.3 Needs of middle-adolescents in the school environment

Logbook

Analysis of the meaning attachment and the behaviour of both resilient and not-resilient participants at all school sites gave insight into their needs in the school environment. In the fourth research cycle, themes in the area of "needs of middle-adolescents in the school environment" for dealing with "circumstances experienced as challenging" were divided into very general categories that formed sensitising concepts for the interviews in the fourth research cycle. Examples of themes that were brought up are:

Good contact with teachers, Friends, Trust, Confidant pupils, Teacher and trust, Mentor and trust, Mentor/School Counsellor (school counsellor), Good teaching by teachers, Asking for help /cooperation, Feeling safe.

These themes were subsequently subdivided on a more abstract level across the final categories in regard to the needs of middle-adolescents in the school environment when dealing with "circumstances experienced as challenging". These are the

categories *Safety* and *Good education*. It turned out that both could be divided in *needs* for safety and good education and the *experience* of safety and good education such as presented in Figure 5.3:

Figure 5.3 Codes Needs "Safety" and "Good education"

Safety	Good education
Need for safety	Need for good education
Experience of safety	Experience of good education

The needs for safety and good education could be identified with all the participants at all school sites. However, resilient and not-resilient participants differ in the ways in which they experience the fulfilment of these needs and the different school sites also differ in meeting these needs. The discussion of the results will deal with this further.

5.4.3 DEVELOPMENT OF HYPOTHESES ABOUT RELATION BETWEEN THEMES AND CATEGORIES

Logbook

After the research cycles 2 and 3, no new categories were developed in the area of context description and the description of the dealing with circumstances experienced as challenging. However, more insight was gained in the relationship between the categories. As a result of the very detailed analysis of rich interviews, a first general theory was developed. This is rendered in logbook notes:

Logbook 10-4-2005

Home forms the lenses through which pupils view their environment and thus their school environment. The pupils also look at the teacher with these lenses. Pupils who experience a positive attitude from at least one of their parents in general, or with regard to them, will notice this attitude earlier with teachers than those pupils who are treated badly at home or grow up in confusing/ emotionally bad circumstances. They notice more negativity in the school environment and in the attitude of teachers because they view their school environment through different lenses.

I will henceforth ask more about the home situation and the relationship with parents, and about the involvement with the school as well. Also involve (the) education (level) and the occupational status of the parents. A "sensitising concept" is that pupils, who behave in a resilient way, have at least one involved parent who asks about school and/or who gives the child the idea that he/she can achieve anything that he/she wants. The education of the parents, whether they are of Dutch origin or not or

whether they have a job does not appear to matter in this. Consider hereby also logbook involvement parents:

Logbook involvement parents
R. (pupil-coordinator of one of the schools) asks me about what pupils talk about in general. I tell him the idea occured to me that the resilient pupils have at least one supporting parent who is involved with school. He asks me whether these parents are then also involved by appearing at parent meetings or showing up at school.

This is an interesting distinction. Teachers at school often complain about the lack of involvement, in particular that of parents of non-Dutch origin ("Many Dutch parents barge in here all the time") because they do not appear at school and that these parents do not appear at parent meetings. However, my interviews show that the resilient non-Dutch pupils do have parents who are very involved with school by asking each day how things are going (552-S5-C2-F-R & 547-S5-C2-F-R) and by telling their son or daughter that he/she can achieve anything if he/she wants it. It is very well possible that the parents of these two pupils do not visit school a lot. Involvement of parents therefore has to be well-defined.

I will ask more about the role of the home situation and the relationship of the middle-adolescent with parents(s)/caretakers and, thereby, about involvement of the parent(s) with school. Hereby, (I will) also look for the (level of) education and the occupational status of parents. To, this way, get to know more about the relationship between supporting parents and school/resilience. In general: I need to get to know more about the concept of "resilience". Not through theory, but as a result of what the pupils tell me.

Above-mentioned theory did not function as a hypothesis in the following interviews, but as sensitising concepts in regard to the involvement of parents in relation to the experience of the school environment by the participants. In the course of the research process, the theory developed itself further, such as is indicated in later logbook notes:

11-14-2005
Three main themes:

1. Background
The description of and meaning attachment to the home environment, the family, the neighbourhood and the environment.
In the description and meaning attachment of the participants the home environment, the family, the neighbourhood and the environment appear to be of influence on their motivation for the

accomplishment of certain school results and showing certain behaviour and for identifying and experiencing risk factors.

2. School

Meaning of the school for the middle-adolescent

The attitude of the participants in regard to the school and within the school environment is influenced by their background and by school factors. The school factors appear to consist of the *actors* within the school and the *atmosphere* in the class and the school. The atmosphere in the class is influenced by the teaching style of teachers.

3. Individual and resilience

The middle-adolescent's description of incidents is turning out to be rich data for me for the recognition of resilient behaviour. Incidents often appear to be: a fight; friends who want you to skip school; having to deal with set-backs.

The disposition (attitude/motivation/will and opportunity) of the participants is influenced by their background in terms of parents, family and environment, and is influenced by the school environment in terms of actors, by their teaching methods and by their attitude when incidents occur. With the accomplished/created disposition, the pupil looks at the school in terms of opportunities and resources, which are offered in the school environment, but also at incidents that occur. The participants research, so to say, the system in which they find themselves in terms of opportunities (resources) and in terms of how the system could work for them and what could be damaging for them when making use of these opportunities. These resources need to be present for them to recognise and utilise them. The presence of these resources is determined by the organisation of the school in terms of pupil assistance and by the school "ethos". The school "ethos" is made visible in the way the school deals with incidents, such as a fight.

In this formed theory I do not mention the influence of personality characteristics/factors because, since in the analysis of the interviews, I'm only able to find indications for what seems like a personality factor (by using words like "I believe") still being highly inflenced by background or school factors, such as the actors there. This becomes, for example, evident in the data of Participant 552-S5-C2-F-R, when she speaks about how your diploma helps guide you towards your future and what you have to do for that. In saying this, she appears to literally repeat what the school counsellor has told her. Furthermore, she repeats her parents (mother) when she says "Where there's a will, there is a way".

Outcome

On the basis of above-mentioned logbook notes in regard to relations between the categories, the researcher decided to inquire more about incidents that had actually occurred, about the behaviour of the participant in the incident, about the role of other

actors in the incident, about the motivation behind the behaviour of the participant in the incident and about the outcome of the incident. This way, a clearer image of the concept of resilience was achieved.

5.4.4 DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONCEPT OF RESILIENCE

Logbook

The central questions the development of the resilience concept brought up are "How can resilience in the school environment be recognised?" and "How do resilient middle-adolescents differ from not-resilient middle-adolescents?" In the interview data were constantly looked at for similarities and differences between resilient and not-resilient participants within the mentioned categories. The following logbook notes depict this process:

26/05/05

I am at least on to something. The R-pupils and NR-pupils differ a lot in their conversations, and therefore I differentiate at least something: the differences in their stories, their interests, and especially their behaviour at school. What is the direction of the relationship? Does the resilience of the pupils influence their behaviour at school, or does the school support the resilience of the pupils?

The resilience of the middle-adolescents appeared to be more of influence on their behaviour in the school environment than the school environment supporting the resilience of the middle-adolescents. This conclusion is depicted in the following logbook notes:

27/05/2005

Until now the difference between resilient and not resilient middle-adolescents appears to be: resilient middle-adolescents have no problems, have a supporting home (the resilient middle-adolescents talk about one of their parents asking about school or motivating them to go on, 301-S2-C1-M-R; 522-S3-C1-F-R), the resilient middle-adolescents see support and social contacts everywhere (especially 522-S3-C1-F-R and maybe 330-S2-C1-F-R); and resilient middle-adolescents show easy/accommodating/active/positive behaviour for teachers (301-S2-C1-M-R, 330-S2-C1-F-R, 522-S3-C1-F-R). Not-resilient middle-adolescents have problems at home (327-S2-C1,C2/3-M-NR); help in school does not come to them (327-S2-C1,C2/3-M-NR); they show challenging behaviour to the teachers (332-S2-C1-M-NR, 327-S2-C1,C2/3-M-NR); they show challenging behaviour as a distraction from negative thoughts (327-S2-C1,C2/3-M-NR) and to make the classes and the day go by faster (332-S2-C1-M-NR, 327-S2-C1,C2/3-M-NR).

Logbook: 10-06-05
There really is a difference between the R and NR-pupils. The R-pupils enjoy school (487-S3-C2-F-R, 522-S3-C1-F-R), have fun, want to get good marks, think about the future, have stimulating parents (487-S3-C2-F-R, 488-S3-C2-F-R).

The most noticeable differences turned out to be the ways in which both groups speak about their home environment situation in relation to the way in which they speak about "school" and the way in which they speak about their behaviour, thinking and the meaning they give to persons and events at school.

About this finding, the researcher wrote the following logbook entry:

Logbook: 13-10-2005
Redefinition:
This interview has brought me to an important redefinition of resilience of pupils. This redefinition came about, among others, because Participant 327-S2-C1,C2/3-M-R could be resilient in his story. He learns of what he sees and has thought carefully about his steps. Redefinition: "I have selected pupils who *behave* resiliently or not. NOT pupils who *are* resilient or not."

Resilient participants appeared to learn faster from circumstances they experienced as challenging than not-resilient participants. To gain more insight into the relationship between the home environment situation, their meaning attachment, their thinking and resilient and not-resilient behaviour in the school environment, these findings were compared to literature on Symbolic interactionism to direct the subsequent interviews and analyses. This literature is now summarised to show how the coding system was developed further under the influence of this literature:

Symbolic Interactionism
The theory of symbolic interactionism (Mead, 1934) provides insight into the role of meaning attachment by the individual to a situation for the implementation of his actions. Interaction, that is, that whereby the individual and other objects (e.g. persons, institutions and groups) interact with each other, each on the grounds of the meaning it has for them, is central to the theory of the symbolic interaction. The theory of symbolic interaction (Mead, 1934, Blumer, 1969; Zijderveld, 1973; Arts, Hilhorst and Wester, 1985) can be regarded as a counterpart of a lot of research within

psychology and the social sciences into factors in which human behaviour is treated as a product of factors that influence people (Blumer, 1969). The theory provides insight into how a middle-adolescent selects his action, as it were, on the basis of the meaning he attributes to a situation. This attributing of meaning is derived from the social interaction he has with his fellow men.

The world, and thereby the situations in which the middle-adolescent finds himself, gets its meaning by his personal experiences of his actions and the reactions to that. In daily life, the middle-adolescent encounters ever-recurring situations, he develops solutions and actions, tries these and he gets a reaction from others. On the basis of these recurring situations and the behaviour the middle-adolescent shows, he develops "recipe knowledge" in regard to situations he finds himself in. This "recipe knowledge" provides ready-made insights, on the grounds of which he organises his own behaviour. Besides the personal experience of the middle-adolescent, according to the theory of symbolic interactionism, society also influences the worldview of the individual through so-called secondary experiences (e.g. media, stories of others about their experiences). From this point of view, the home environment and the meaning the home environment attributes to the school or to interaction processes, could be of influence on the meaning which the middle-adolescent attaches to the school and to interaction processes. This meaning could influence the establishment of interaction processes between the middle-adolescent and his school environment.

The so-called selection of an action on the basis of the meaning a situation holds for a middle-adolescent, is performed by the "self": a feeling of identity and self-consciousness. The "self" functions thereby as the directing element. The middle-adolescent decides to use or not to use certain characteristics within himself in a certain situation on the basis of the meaning that the certain situation holds for him. The actions of a middle-adolescent in a certain situation get a "developing nature": each action is built up, delayed, suspended, left or rejected (Blumer, 1969).

Blumer (1969) describes the consequences of the theory of symbolic interactionism when studying "social action" in social scientific research. According to Blumer (1969), when one presumes that man designs, modifies and models his environment instead of reacting to factors, one needs to approach social action as a "process of

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becoming". One needs to see the actions of people as something that is created by the acting man himself and not as something that is only awakened in him. This is why one needs to describe the environment of the action on the grounds of the way in which the acting person perceives that environment. Swanborn (1981) is of the opinion that behaviours of individuals are understood in relation to the reactions of the other and in relation to characteristics of the situation. According to Swanborn (1981), the research objective should be determining the process of meaning attachment and the behaviour attuned to that. Symbolic interactionism is a research perspective that tries to describe, interpret and explain the social reality as the product of the interaction processes that occur between people (Arts, Hilhorst & Wester, 1985).

Outcome

It turned out that, on the basis of the theory of symbolic interactionism, behaviour fragments of the participants when dealing with circumstances experienced as challenging could be dissected in several actions that make up behaviour. These "behavioural fragments" could clearly be distinguished as resilient or not-resilient fragments and were named Resilience Processes and Not-Resilience Processes. The Resilience Processes contributed to learning and growth of the participants and the Not-Resilience Processes did not contribute at a much later stage, after a negative consequence. These "circumstances experienced as challenging" turned out to be developmental opportunities for both the resilient as well as the not-resilient participants. However, these were not recognised or transformed into development by both groups. In the analysis the sub actions in the Resilience and Not-Resilience Processes were subsequently interpreted and explained as the product of the interaction processes between the participants and the actors within and outside of the school environment.

Baarda, De Goede and Teunissen (2005) provide guidelines for coding processes. They recommend placing the codes of the different actions in a time sequence. This is how "code families" resulted for the description of a typical "Resilience Process" and for a typical "Not-Resilience Process". In the interview data attention was paid to the timing and the way in which the school environment acquires a prominent place in each Resilience and Not-Resilience Process and to other contexts and actors that have a prominent place in these processes. These processes were coded as proximal

interaction processes. Because the interview data showed that in certain fragments actors inside or outside the school environment sometimes were present, but that the participant was not *active* in interaction with these actors at the moment, a distinction was made in the codes between present and active proximal interaction processes. They are named *present* when there is an "availability", but this availability is not utilised for dealing with circumstances experienced as challenging. They are called *active* when the availability is utilised. The proximal interaction processes were analysed for content and compared with each other. The codes for analysing of the developmental opportunities are now presented. The codes in Figure 5.4 have been placed vertically in sequence of time:

Figure 5.4 Codes Developmental opportunities

Developmental opportunities		
Dealing with having to attain good Academic Accomplishments (AP).	**Dealing with negative influence of peers (PI-).**	**The creation and maintenance of constructive relationships with peers and adults (PP).**
OP_MOG_AP: A developmental opportunity in the area of dealing with having to accomplish good academic accomplishments.	OP_MOG_PI-: A developmental opportunity in the area of dealing with negative influence of peers.	OP_MOG_PP: A developmental opportunity in the area of the creation and maintenance of constructive relationships with peers and adults.
OP_MOG_AP_ACT_VERST: A disturbance takes place of the daily habits of the participant by a certain event in the area of academic accomplishments.	OP_MOG_PI-_ACT_VERST: A disturbance takes place of the daily habits of the participant by a certain event in the area of the dealing with negative influence of peers.	OP_MOG_PP_ACT_VERST: A disturbance takes place of the daily habits of the participant by a certain event in the area of the creation and maintenance of constructive relationships with peers and adults.
OP_MOG_AP_RIS: The participant does or doesn't identify a risk in the event in the area of academic accomplishments.	OP_MOG_PI-_RIS: The participant does or doesn't identify a risk in the event in the area of dealing with negative influence of peers.	OP_MOG_PP_RIS: The participant does or doesn't identify a risk in the event in the area of the creation and maintenance of constructive relationships with peers and adults.
OP_MOG_AP_REACT: The participant reacts to the event in the area of academic accomplishments.	OP_MOG_PI-_REACT: The participant reacts to the event in the area of the dealing with negative influence of peers.	OP_MOG_PP_REACT: The participant reacts to the event in the area of the creation and maintenance of constructive relationships with peers and adults.

OP_MOG_AP_ACT_MOT: The participant gives a motivation for his reaction in the area of academic accomplishments.	OP_MOG_PI-_ACT_MOT: The participant gives a motivation for his reaction in the area of the dealing with negative influence of peers.	OP_MOG_PP_ACT_MOT: The participant gives a motivation for his reaction in the area of the creation and maintenance of constructive relationships with peers and adults.
OP_MOG_AP_ACT_UITK: The reaction to the disturbance leads to a certain outcome of the developmental opportunity in the area of academic accomplishments.	OP_MOG_PI-_ACT_UITK: The reaction to the disturbance leads to a certain outcome of the developmental opportunity in the area of the dealing with negative influence of peers.	OP_MOG_PP_ACT_UITK: The reaction to the disturbance leads to a certain outcome of the developmental opportunity in the area of the creation and maintenance of constructive relationships with peers and adults.
Present and active proximal processes within and outside of the school environment by developmental opportunities of the earlier mentioned themes AP, PI- and PP.		
OP_MOG_AP_AANPP_SC: The presence of proximal interaction processes in the school environment when a developmental opportunity occurs in the area of academic accomplishments.	OP_MOG_PI-_AANPP_SC: The presence of proximal interaction processes in the school environment when a developmental opportunity occurs in the area of negative influence of peers.	OP_MOG_PP_AANPP_SC: The presence of proximal interaction processes in the school environment when a developmental opportunity occurs in the area of the creation and maintenance of constructive relationships with peers and adults.
OP_MOG_AP_ACTPP_SC: The activity of proximal interaction processes in the school environment when a developmental opportunity occurs in the area of academic accomplishments.	OP_MOG_PI-_ACTPP_SC: The activity of proximal interaction processes in the school environment when a developmental opportunity occurs in the area of negative influence of peers.	OP_MOG_PP_ACTPP_SC: The activity of proximal interaction processes in the school environment when a developmental opportunity occurs in the area of the creation and maintenance of constructive relationships with peers and adults.
OP_MOG_AP_AANPP_BSC: The presence of proximal interaction processes outside of the school environment when a developmental opportunity occurs in the area of academic accomplishments.	OP_MOG_PI-_AANPP_BSC: The presence of proximal interaction processes outside of the school environment when a developmental opportunity occurs in the area of negative influence of peers.	OP_MOG_PP_AANPP_BSC: The presence of proximal interaction processes outside of the school environment when a developmental opportunity occurs in the area of the creation and maintenance of constructive relationships with peers and adults.
OP_MOG_AP_ACTPP_BSC: The activity of proximal interaction processes outside of the school environment when a developmental opportunity occurs in the area of academic accomplishments.	OP_MOG_PI-_ACTPP_BSC: The activity of proximal interaction processes outside of the school environment when a developmental opportunity occurs in the area of negative influence of peers.	OP_MOG_PP_ACTPP_BSC: The activity of proximal interaction processes outside the school environment when a developmental opportunity occurs in the area of the creation and maintenance of constructive relationships with peers and adults.

The discussion of the results in paragraph 5.4 will elaborate on the Resilience and Not-Resilience processes.

The code families of Resilience and Not-Resilience Processes form hypotheses about the differences between resilient and not-resilient behaviour when dealing with circumstances experienced as challenging. After the completion of the coded system, the system was employed for the whole qualitative data set to find out whether the coded system covered everything and whether it was valid. This appeared to be the case.

Finally, the above-mentioned hypotheses on the different actions when dealing with circumstances experienced as challenging were validated in the final analysis by looking for confirming and falsifying examples with resilient and not-resilient participants. This validation took place by means of nine informative questions, which had been developed on the basis of the research cycles. These nine questions have informed the main question[10] and the sub questions[11] of the study:

1a. What are the needs of resilient middle-adolescents in the school environment?

1b. What are the needs of not-resilient middle-adolescents in the school environment?

2a. How can resilience in the development of middle-adolescents in the school environment be recognised?

2b. How can the lack of resilience or a limited degree of resilience in the development of middle-adolescents in the school environment be recognised?

3a. What is the nature of the effective proximal interaction processes which contribute to a competent development of resilient middle-adolescents in the school environment?

3b. What is the nature of the proximal interaction processes of not-resilient middle-adolescents and their school environment?

___

[10] How does the school context contribute to the resilience or middle-adolescent pupils?

[11] What are resilient middle-adolescents' perceptions or the contribution or the school environment to their resilience?

What are the perceptions or middle-adolescents, not defined as resilient, or the contribution or the school environment to their state or resilience?

How can the comparison between these two perceptions be explained?

3c. What is the nature of the effective proximal interaction processes which contribute to a competent development of not-resilient middle-adolescents in the school environment?

4a. What is the relationship between the perception of the home situation and the school environment for resilient middle-adolescents?

4b. What is the relationship between the perception of the home situation and the school environment of not-resilient middle-adolescents?

The answers to these questions provided material for the Grounded Theory, which was developed on the basis of the final coding system. Accountability was achieved through ongoing consultations with colleagues and supervisors. The results of the analysis and the Grounded Theory, which was developed on the basis of these results, are presented and discussed in Paragraph 5.5. The transcribed interview quotes in the text have been translated from Dutch into English and have been adapted for readability, not content.

5.5 RESULTS

5.5.1 INTRODUCTION

The results of the qualitative analysis can be divided into general results and results at the school-specific level (Stake, 2006). The discussion of the results had been divided as follows:

- In paragraph 5.5.2, the general similarities and differences in the *needs* for resilience promoting factors of resilient and not-resilient participants at all school sites are discussed. Thereby it is discussed how, at the school-specific level, the presence of resilience promoting factors are *experienced* by both groups of participants at the different school sites.
- In paragraph 5.5.3, the general differences in the experience of resilient and not-resilient participants are explained on the basis of their *differences in access* to resilience promoting factors in the school environment. At the school-specific level, examples are provided of these differences in access.
- In paragraph 5.5.4 it is generally discussed how the differences in access to resilience promoting factors pose *specific requirements* to the school environment for contributing to the resilience of both resilient and not-resilient participants. Furthermore, at the school-specific level it is discussed how the specific school sites *have contributed* to the resilience of both resilient and not-resilient participants by their interaction processes.
- In paragraph 5.5.5, the differences in access are explained by discussing the *relationship between the home environment and the school environment*.

The results first discuss, per theme, the interview data of resilient participants and then the interview data of not-resilient participants.

5.5.2 NEEDS FOR RESILIENCE PROMOTING FACTORS IN THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

5.5.2.1 Introduction

The needs of resilient and not-resilient participants for resilience promoting factors in the school environment to develop themselves competently do not differ in *content.*

This content can for both groups be divided into two categories: The need for *safety* and the need for *good education*.

Resilient and not-resilient participants do differ in the *degree in which* and *the ways in which* they *have a need* for safety and good education and in the degree in which and the ways in which they *experience safety* and *good education* in their school environment.

The three school environments differ in the *ways in which* and *the degree in which* they contribute to the *experience* of *safety* of both resilient as well as not-resilient middle-adolescents.

The three school environments do not differ in *the ways in which*, but do differ in *the degree in which* they contribute to the experience of *good education*. *Within* the three school environments, differences can be identified in the degree in which different teachers contribute to the experience of *good education*. The differences and similarities are described and explained in this paragraph.

5.5.2.2 Safety

Resilient participants provided more examples than not-resilient participants of the way in which they *experience* safety in their school environment. Not-resilient middle-adolescents provided more examples about how they *would want* the school to contribute to safety. The following categories in which the school environment *might contribute* to safety can be distinguished according to both resilient and not-resilient participants:

- Through the attitude and the behaviour of teachers;
- Through the attitude and the behaviour of the rest of the school team;
- Through the attitude and the behaviour of fellow pupils; and
- Through the relationship between the school environment and external organisations.

1) Safety and Resilient Participants

School environment 2

School environment 2 contributes to the feelings of safety of resilient participants:

- By being present immediately during a fight or a different "problematic situation";
- Because all teachers and the janitor know all the pupils' names;
- Because the janitor keeps a record of who is present and who is absent;
- Because the adults in the school environment keep an eye on how all the pupils are doing.

Participant 326-S2-C4-F-R:

> Yes, whenever there is something going on then they get right to it. They talk about it. For instance, when you are sick and you do not report it, they will call right away. (…) And a lot of schools don't do that. … And if you were to skip school they will know right away. (…) Yes, like the janitor, he knew everybody at school. It was insane. Each kid, who they hang out with, I thought that was just very, very smart. They know who is not there and who is there. And he just knows all the faces. (That is important) because you know where you can go. Because they know you. If there is something then you could tell what's going on to each teacher because they know you anyway. They know who you hang around with and I think that's just so smart! (…) And not just two teachers, no, everybody!

Participant 326-S2-C4-F-R also indicates *why* the attitude and the behaviour of the teachers and the janitor are so important: Then you know where you can go if you have a problem. "Being known" and "seen" is for the resilient participants in School environment 2 a resilience promoting factor because it gives them a feeling of safety.

School environment 3

In the analysis of the interview data it turned out that the resilient participants from School environment 3 could describe the most different ways in which they experience *safety* in their school environment:

- By setting clear rules;
- By checking on pupils;
- By expressing trust;
- By motivating the pupils;
- By letting all pupils cooperate;
- By knowing all the pupils;
- By intensive contact with external organisations such as community centres and police.

Examples of the ways in which School environment 3 contributes to the feeling of safety of the resilient Participant 522-S3-C1-F-R are: *teachers talk about themselves, the school environment sets and maintains clear rules, the school environment checks the pupils, adults in the school environment express trust in the pupils, adults in the school environment motivate the pupils and adults in the school environment let all pupils cooperate*:

We are not just only doing our own thing, they (the teachers) also talk about what they're doing and how they feel and what they always did and what they did at home. (…) And that is how you get to know more about a person (…). You find out what it is he is thinking, what has all happened. And then you also know what his weakness is. For example, when somebody is divorced then you know "Don't talk about divorce with him. That might hurt him". You feel really safe like "You have a weakness and I have a weakness, so yes, we are not all perfect".

(…)What they want is that everybody always feels at home and that there is no gossiping about a person. And then they say during mentor hours: "Tell us what's up". "How are the marks, how is work, how are the classes, how are the teachers, are there problems?" and then you think "Not only I am doing my best, but my mentor is too!" (…) The mentor says "You can always come to me; I'm your mentor, that's what I am here for".

(…) And they are constantly around us, during the breaks… For instance, when you are at break then you will always see three, four teachers walking around and then they come to your table and then they talk. There are also janitors walking around.

(…) They (the teachers) are also befriended with everyone, also with the janitors. (…). They have rules like 'not outside the gate' and 'don't bring anyone to school' because they want to keep it safe. We don't want any fights. (…) That works too, because every time you are near the gate (…) they will ask "In which class are you, what is it you need to do?" And then you say "I am in this class and I have to go to gym". And then they really remember and they will really check. And then you can go and when you return, they will ask "Where are you coming from?"

In each class you have a pupil confidant. That is, so to say, where you can go. And that is anonymous. For instance "I have a problem, then I will go to my pupil confidant, then we will talk together…" (…) If I need a pupil confidant, then I think "It is one of my classmates, I've known her for so long, so yes, I already trust her, so yes, why would I worry about it?". (…)

But, most of the times, they are also working on "Getting along with everybody". Because, before it was really like "Moroccans here, Turks there, the boys there". (…) Everybody their own corner. And they did not think that was good and then

they made sure that we all got along with each other and such. … They would give us assignments and they would mention names with that and with those you would cooperate. (…) The boys and girls together, different cultures together… You would think "Do I have to cooperate with you?!" But then you really learn to know each other. Then they are different than expected. And that is really going well now, because now we sit with Surinamers, boys, girls, Turks and we really sit together, having fun talking and such (…). And then are the teachers real happy, like "hey, we did it!"

The relationship between teachers and pupils, the clear rules, the maintenance of the rules, the involvement of the school team with the pupils and the friendly relationship between teachers and others in the school team ensure a feeling of safety by Participant 522-S3-C1-F-R. One of the reasons for this is that, according to Participant 522-S3-C1-F-R, in this manner pupils note that not only they are doing their best, but the mentor and the rest of the school team are as well. Because the school team gives fellow pupils the responsibility to help each other and connects the function of "pupil confidant" to this, a safe environment arises as well. Furthermore, Participant 522-S3-C1-F-R experiences that School environment 3 organises activities which require pupils to cooperate with fellow pupils whom they would not choose to cooperate with themselves. By having pupils experience "mixed" cooperation, pupils learn to get to know fellow pupils that they would not know "at their own initiative". This results in less of a division among the pupils in groups at school and causes a feeling of safety among the middle-adolescents in School environment 3.

The resilient Participant 519-S3-C3-M-R illustrates how School environment 3 contributes to his feeling of safety by knowing all the pupils and by intensive contact between community centres and police:

He (the pupil coordinator) also helps you with problems. Like "You can always come to see me". For example, if you had an argument. He knows us like no other; he just knows who provokes an argument and who is just the tough one; who always wants to beat up people. And if he, for example, hears my name, then he already knows what kind of person that is. If he, for example, hears: "Participant 519-S3-C3-M-R has done this, he broke something", then he knows that there has to be a reason or that it was an accident.

If someone has done something outside of the school, then he is picked up at school by the police the next day. Most of the times the pupil coordinator will be there too. (…) If something happens outside of school, then the school always finds out. (…) I know someone who was not in school for three months. He was in jail. And the school of course finds out right away, after three months. And

> school has helped with that as well. (…) By talking to the police and to investigate why it happened and whether it was within the school. (…) The director of the community centre really finds out everything. Whether it is in the neighbourhood, or in the school, he finds out everything. He was here yesterday. He goes to school twice a week. See how it is going. (…) I also work in a supermarket. (…) Because I was offered it via the community centre. Many pupils from the neighbourhood were offered that. He thought "I rather have them be outside less". (…) That you notice "It is going well with them, I hope that they do not go in the wrong direction".

For Participant 519-S3-C3-M-R, being "known and seen" also ensures a feeling of safety and of feeling "at home" in School environment 3. This "feeling at home" is mentioned by most of the resilient participants in School environment 3. Apparently, school environment 3 has intensive contact with the police and the community centre in the neighbourhood of the school. The feeling that one keeps an eye on the pupils and the feeling that the school and external organisations are aware of what is happening to the pupils, contribute to the feeling of safety of the resilient Participant 519-S3-C3-M-R. Furthermore, the contact between the school environment and the community centre offers extra chances for a competent development because pupils are offered jobs. Not only do the pupils earn money this way, they learn new responsibilities and they are less "outside" in the street so that they are less exposed to potential risks.

Analysis of the interview data led to the finding that one cannot speak in unambiguous terms about the way in which a specific school environment contributes to the safety of middle-adolescents. It does show that general school factors can be identified which middle-adolescents find important to be able to develop themselves competently in the school environment. However, per person, these factors turn out to be experienced to a different degree, in different ways in different schools. The resilient Participant 487-S3-C2-F-R from School environment 3 makes a distinction between her current and her previous mentor. Her previous mentor contributed to her experience of *safety* while her current mentor doesn't. Her current mentor deals very differently with the class than her previous mentor:

> My previous mentor you could simply trust. … He would involve you in everything. And he would also listen to you. Yes, you can not do that with my current mentor, because he would laugh at you or something like that, those sorts of things.

Participant 487-S3-C2-F-R believes her current mentor "can't be trusted". That is why she will not tell him anything. He would laugh at her.

School environment 5

School environment 5 appears to contribute to the safety of resilient participants:

- By the way in which teachers teach;

- By the presence of school counsellors;

- By the rules that the school uses when dealing with conflicts between pupils.

An example of the way in which School environment 5 contributes to the experience of safety by the resilient Participant 547-S5-C2-F-R is by the way in which teachers teach, resulting in a good atmosphere in the class. In response to the question why things are going well at school for her she answers:

> Simply, by having a good atmosphere in the class; that I can deal well with the children from my class and such. If I don't understand something that I can ask another pupil about it. (…) Yes, it depends on the class we are having. For example, when we have Dutch language class then the teacher is also very nice and then yes, if the teacher is nice, then, right away, the atmosphere in the class is also fun (…) If the teacher is, for example, angry then you can forget about it, then you are not even allowed to talk.

Because the teacher is nice, the atmosphere in the class is good and the children in the class get along better with each other than when the atmosphere is not good. If the atmosphere is good, then you can ask other pupils questions.

The resilient Participant 552-S5-C2-F-R illustrates how School environment 5 contributes to safety by the presence of a school counsellor:

> That is a mentor who stimulates you and assists you with certain things, for example, if you have problems at school. Then you can go there and she will help you with it… And when you have to get your report or marks, you have to go see her. Then she will discuss the bad marks and the good marks with you and she will also stimulate you to go take extra classes, and then she will make an appointment for you. And if it goes bad at school she will call up my parents and make an appointment to talk with them. That is, so to say, a school counsellor. You could say that she helps you when you are in trouble. Yes, I also believe that my school counsellor understands me better then other teachers. …(…) …. Yes, she listens carefully to me and she then agrees or disagrees; tells me whether I am wrong or whether I am not wrong. And then she will say "We will solve it together". Or we will go to the person and then we will offer our apologies. Then that is solved again.

A school counsellor contributes to the experience of safety by listening, stimulating, assisting pupils in solving problems, helping pupils and by regulating the behaviour of pupils through pointing out the things that they are doing right and wrong.

The resilient Participant 552-S5-C2-F-R illustrates furthermore how School environment 5 contributes to her experience of safety by the way in which she deals with conflicts:

> When a conflict happens during lunch break, you have to go to Mr. S. or Mrs. B. (…) For example, after a fight or an argument or whatever. What I like is that they come to you right away. They say "Stop it!" "That will get you nowhere". And then they say "I want to talk to you in the office". Then you have to go with her. Then we have to wait a while and then we have to come in and then we have to talk it out. She will ask you "Why are you doing this'?" So, why we are fighting and what the reasons really are. (…). And then we have to talk it out.

Immediately after a conflict, middle-adolescents in School environment 5 are put together to talk out the conflict. During that, they are asked for the reasons for their behaviour. They are encouraged to reflect on their own behaviour and are encouraged to show different, alternative behaviour by having to talk about the conflict until it is resolved.

2) Safety and not-resilient participants

Not-resilient participants express the same *need for safety* in the school environment, but express the way in which they *experience* this safety less. They express this need for safety especially in terms of what they are missing in the school environment:

- A Positive attitude towards pupils;
- Help to pupils with homework;
- Fairness;
- Mentioning what pupils are doing right besides what they are doing wrong;
- Teachers who remain calm;
- Noticing pupils who are not present and involving them with the school.

School environment 2

The not-resilient Participant 327-S2-C1,C2/3-M-NR illustrates this need after he quit school prematurely. He has not experienced the safety that the resilient Participant

326-S2-C4-F-R did experience in School environment 2. The not-resilient Participant 327-S2-C1,C2/3-M-R appears to have different or more needs than School environment 2 offers regarding safety. To the question as to what his school environment could have done to contribute to his completion of school education, he says:

> If it had been a somewhat friendlier school. And somewhat more positive. More helpful. Not so stingy. (…) That they would have helped me more with things.
>
> (…) Yes, not always so negative like "Yes, you always do that…" Also do positive things sometimes. (…) Make no distinction between kids, treat everyone the same. Pay close attention to who does what wrong instead of just punishing someone… (…)
>
> Not becoming so angry and punish way out of proportion. That does not help anyway. (…) Not start screaming. I just think that is one of the biggest mistakes a teacher can make. Scream. (…)
>
> And if someone does something right then you should also say, "That was right" you know. I do think you should reward someone for what he does. And not just punish (…) but also reward for what he does well. Because people do notice what they are doing wrong, but they do not notice what they are doing right. When someone is sitting quietly say: "You do that right". (…) That they won't say.
>
> I do think teachers should be able to notice children that need their help, need someone to talk to.

The aspects that the not-resilient Participant 327327-S2-C1,C2/3-M-R missed in School environment 2 can be interpreted as a need for safety. *The offering of help, fairness, not getting angry and screaming and giving useless punishments, mentioning what someone does well and noticing children who need someone to talk to.* The not-resilient Participant 327-S2-C1,C2/3-M-R has the same need for safety as resilient participants have. He has not experienced this safety in School environment 2. Therefore, he does not believe that School environment 2 has contributed to his competent development and, thus, to his "resilience".

School environment 3

The lack of a positive attitude by the teachers in School environment 3 experienced by the not-resilient Participant 479-S3-C3-F-NR contributes to her feeling of not wanting to go to school anymore lately. Her need for safety in the form of "Getting to hear

what you are doing right besides what you are doing wrong" appears not to have been fulfilled by School environment 3.

> Frankly, I do not feel like school at all lately. (…) It is just not going so well at school. (…) Because they are always negative about me every time there is a report consultation. Then I think "Then I rather not go to school".

The reason that Participant 479-S3-C3-F-NR has not felt like going to school anymore lately is because she experiences a negative attitude from the teachers towards her. Motivation to go to school is apparently related to the appreciation a pupil gets from teachers.

School environment 5

For her competent development, the not-resilient Participant 573-S5-C4-F-NR did have a need for teachers and adults in the school environment to notice that she was never present (aspect of safety) in School environment 5. However, they noticed this too late, after she had already missed too many classes to be able to pass. To the question whether the school could have done something to prevent her from having to repeat a grade she responds:

> I do not know what the school could have done. Because they also only found out late themselves of course. I think that, had they thought logically, they could have found out. If I had really been sick and if I really did stay home, then you would have heard that from the voice of my mother and from the voice of my friend. Those two voices are easy to distinguish. And they were too dumb for that. Or I would call myself and you should easily be able to hear that too.

The aspects the not-resilient Participant 573-S5-C4-F-NR missed in School environment 5 can be interpreted as a need for safety. Fact is, that Resilient Participants experience it as contributing to safety that all teachers know the names of all pupils, that they know who is and who is not present and that they know how the pupils are doing. Despite, or possibly because of her own behaviour Participant 573-S5-C4-F-NR had an extra need for the school environment to notice her absence and to involve her with "school".

Summary

An enumeration can be made of the ways in which "School" *can contribute* to the feeling of safety of middle-adolescents. Middle-adolescents experience safety in the school environment when:

- Adults in the school environment set clear rules;
- Adults in the school environment check on the pupils;
- Adults in the school environment express trust in the pupils;
- Adults in the school environment motivate the pupils;
- Adults in the school environment let all pupils cooperate;
- Adults in the school environment know all pupils by name;
- The school environment has intensive contact with external organisations, such as community centres and police;
- Adults in the school environment are positive towards pupils;
- Adults in the school environment are immediately present during a fight or a different "problematic" situation;
- Adults in the school environment keep track of who is present and who is absent;
- Absent pupils are being involved with school;
- Adults in the school environment keep an eye on how all the pupils are doing;
- Pupils are helped with homework;
- Adults in the school environment are fair towards the pupils;
- Adults in the school environment mention what pupils are doing right besides what they are doing wrong;
- Teachers remain calm when pupils misbehave;
- Teachers teach in a captivating way;
- Individual School Counsellors are present;
- The school sets clear rules for dealing with conflicts between pupils.

However, the actual *experience* of safety is partly dependent on the middle-adolescents themselves. A notion has been formed that resilient middle-adolescents *experience* safety in their school environment in more different ways and more often then not-resilient middle-adolescents. How these differences in *experience of safety* can be explained is discussed in Paragraph 5.5.3. Prior to Paragraph 5.5.3 it will be discussed how the need for good education by both resilient and not-resilient participants is worded and experienced in their school environment.

5.5.2.3   Good education

According to both resilient and not-resilient participants, the following categories in which the school environment *might contribute* to good education can be distinguished:

- By high expectations;
- By captivating education;
- By strict teachers;
- By clear consequences;
- By assisting;
- By helping;
- By being focused on learning.

The analysis of the interview data showed that the participants are of the opinion that the quality of education depends on the teachers. At each school, teachers could be identified who did not provide good education and teachers who did provide good education. The resilient participants showed to be less *dependent* on good education for their successful development than the not-resilient participants. For the not-resilient participants, the way in which a teacher teaches turned out to be the determining factor for their accomplishments and their behaviour. The actual *experience* of good education differs for resilient and not-resilient participants in different school environments with different teachers.

1) Good education and resilient participants

School environment 2

The ways in which some teachers in School environment 2 contribute to *good education* according to resilient participants are:

- By explaining everything well;
- By knowing much themselves;
- By telling a lot about themselves;
- By providing the elbow room for finding peace during the class.

Participant 326-S2-C4-F-R

> During the first two years we had a different teacher and then I did not understand anything. All she did was scream. And last year and this year we got a

new teacher. And she explains everything very well. And it is just very easy with her. She is very nice. She lives very much in our times, so to say. She knows how we feel. (…) She talks a lot. Not just about English, but also about what is happening in society. And how she feels about things. For example, she just had a baby and she is going to bring it to school one of these days and we are also allowed to do a lot of fun things. A while ago we played music of Jantje Smit, she does not like that at all, but still she let us do it. (…)Yes, you could say she knows everything. All teachers do, but with her it comes more to the surface I think. She, it just seems like she knows all dictionaries by memory.

Our math teacher. I think he explains well. (…) We learn a whole lot. He explains a lot verbally, in front of the and we are also allowed to watch movies in between, for finding peace within ourselves, he says. Simply, for us not to have to think about math for a while. At least that is how I see it. He says, so to say, "for fun".

Some teachers in School environment 2 contribute to the experience of *good education* and other teachers do not.

School environment 3

The analysis of the interview data shows that different teachers in the same School environment 3 contribute to a different degree to the experience of *good education.* According to resilient participants, the ways in which teachers in School environment 3 contribute to *good education* are:

- By setting high expectations;
- By making clear that marks are important;
- By explaining learning materials and exercises until a pupil understands it;
- By teaching pupils to plan;
- By letting pupils work self-sufficiently;
- By teaching pupils to cooperate;
- By providing pupils with an overview of the school tasks

The resilient Participant 487-S3-C2-F-R from School environment 3 makes a distinction between her current and her previous mentor. Her previous mentor contributed to her experience of *good education*, while her current mentor doesn't:

> (With my previous mentor) we were encouraged. In the second year, we could choose for BBL, KBL or TL direction[12]. So we, our class, went for TL because, yes, that is the highest. So then he said "You can do it and do your very best" and those sort of things.

Her previous mentor had high expectations of his mentor class and stimulated them "to achieve the highest". Her current mentor does not stimulate his class this way. Participant 487-S3-C2-F-R does not experience a contribution to good education from her current mentor.

The resilient Participant 522-S3-C1-F-R illustrates her experience of good education in School environment 3:

> The marks are of course important and the level. (…) And yes, the teachers are just teachers. They try to teach you something. They try to help you, try to get your attention. (…) And if you need something, then they come to you and they explain things and if you still do not understand it then again and again and again. (..) And then they really try to teach you something. Yes, that is good. And it not like they are talking about your future all the time. They work like: "Today I want to teach you this and then tomorrow you have to learn this and in a week we have a test". And they try to let us work more self-sufficiently and to let us plan ourselves and make groups ourselves. And they try to have us be around other people and have us work alone.

Participant 522-S3-C1-F-R experiences that teachers believe that marks are important, that they want to try to teach them something, that they help her and explain to her until she understands, that they do not talk much about the future, but are involved with today. That they teach them to work self-sufficiently, teach them planning and to work with others. The experience of *learning something* contributes to the experience of good education for the participants in School environment 3.

School environment 5
According to resilient participants, the ways in which teachers in School environment 5 contribute to *good education* are:

- Because teachers teach in a captivating way.

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[12] Different levels in the VMBO (preparatory middle-level vocational education), mounting level of theory: Basis Beroepsgerichte Leerweg (Basic profession-oriented learning path), Kader Beroepsgerichte leerweg (Middle management-oriented learning path) and Theoretische leerweg (Theoretical learning path).

The resilient Participant 547-S5-C2-F-R from School environment 5 illustrates how good teachers in this school environment contribute to good education in contrast to other teachers in the same school environment:

> It is really fun, when, if the teacher explains something, that he then also is involved with it. That you just feel like listening. Then you really enjoy the class. Then it also sticks with you. Yes, because then you will know it again during the tests. (…) I am talking about the Dutch language teacher…. For example, when he tells something, he will do it (in a) very strange tone, with a strange accent. Then you can laugh. (…) Not that he is sitting all boring in front of the class. When he talks with his hands crossed, half of the class does not listen.

It was revealed that teachers can contribute to the experience of good education by teaching in a captivating way. In School environment 5, the experience of "learning something" also contributes to the experience of good education.

2) Good education and not-resilient participants

Besides the need for captivating teaching and high expectations, not-resilient participants appear to have a need for strict and clear teachers. They appear more dependent than resilient participants on the skills of teachers to:
-   maintain order during the classes;
-   provide a clear explanation of the teaching materials;
-   provide assistance in working with the teaching materials;
-   connect clear consequences to not participating in the education or not doing the homework.

School environment 2

The not-resilient Participant 327-S2-C1,C2/3-M-NR had too little *good education* experience to be able to obtain his diploma in School environment 2. In his expressions about the way in which this school environment could have contributed to his successful development, the needs for assistance and structure can be recognised:

> They (the teachers) should provide for extra time for the homework. Or, for example, in each class, everybody has to (…) show what he has completed. And, for example, say "I think that this week you should have done this and that and this week this assignment" But they just say what you should do and on the day that it should be finished, it has to be finished whether you understand it or not…I think you should provide assistance. (…)

Participant 327-S2-C1,C2/3-M-NR has a need for clarity and structure. This need for structure is illustrative of the need of several not-resilient participants from the same school environment and from different school environments than School environment 2.

School environment 3

The not-resilient Participant 479-S3-C3-F-NR from School environment 3 illustrates her need for peace and strict teachers:

> (…) Well, teachers who are strict, just allow me to concentrate more. Those teachers with whom, if you open your mouth just once, you will have to get out of the class with a red card. Teachers who say "Next time you will have finished this and that and, if you have not finished it, then you will not get in".

School environment 5

The not-resilient Participant 573-S5-C4-F-NR from School environment 5 illustrates how she experiences good education with a teacher in her school environment by the structure and clarity in his classes. She compares this teacher with a teacher who does not provide this structure and clarity. To the question who she thinks is a good teacher, she answers:

> My math teacher. He is also the adjunct-principle. That will make you be quiet. (…) Yes. That look in his eyes tells you enough. So…. (…) He really looks in a certain way. Then you think "I guess I will stop this now". (…) He just explains everything very well. And especially with math that is important. (…). When he says something, most of the time, you understand it right away. I am really not all that good in math, but when he explains it, I understand it right away.
>
> And with the history teacher you have to ask two or three times "What is it you really mean?" Or "How is that?" Or "What am I supposed to do exactly?" And with (math) you do know. It also happens that you won't understand it, but after that, you'll understand it right away.

Not-resilient middle-adolescents appear to have more need for clarity and structure than resilient middle-adolescents. Although Participant 573-S5-C4-F-NR finds the subject of math more challenging than history, she learns more of the math classes because the math teacher explains more clearly and is clearer about what he expects of the pupils than the history teacher. His "strictness" also contributes to the

peacefulness during the class. Many not-resilient participants turn out to need this. They all indicate that they learn more with a strict teacher

Summary

Summarised, all participants have a need for good education. Resilient participants experience good education when *teachers teach in a captivating way* and when *they express high expectations of the class.* Besides teaching in a captivating way and high expectations, not-resilient participants also need a lot of *structure, clarity about the teaching materials* and *strict rules.* Although the not-resilient participants appear more *dependent* on structure, clarity and strictness, these characteristics of good education also contribute to the competent development of resilient participants. The resilient Participant 522-S3-C1-F-R from School environment 3 illustrates this in her vision of a "cool" (strakke) teacher:

> (…) A cool (strakke) teacher is (a teacher) with whom you really feel good and with whom you can really be yourself. (…) But it is also like "Hey, you are abiding by the rules, right?!" For example, "Not this and not that, but if you do it like this, that's O.K, as long as it is not turning into that". And then you start thinking "O.K., then I will really keep the rules".
>
> Then you think "That class was really fun!", "Next time I better show up again". And then never be sick (…) and then you are more often at school and then you learn better and you won't skip school, you really feel like school…. (…) Yes, you could say it is like "I am learning something, and it is fun".

A "cool" (strakke) teacher teaches well so that you learn something, can be trusted and sets clear rules regarding what is not, but also what is allowed. The clarity of the teacher about what is desirable and undesirable behaviour contributes to the quality of the education. Furthermore, a fun way of teaching and the experience of "learning something" contribute to the motivation to go to school.

The resilient Participant 555-S5-C4-F-NR from School environment 5 illustrates how his previous "cool" (strakke) teacher for English combined *safety* and *good education* in her teaching. His current teacher English does not make this combination and is merely strict:

> The fact that we were joking around and that the teacher sometimes addressed that we had to cut it out. And the classes. Those were just much more relaxed. When you were done with your assignments then you could just talk or work on a different subject. (…) The way in which she taught. Simply in a fun way by

making jokes in between. The joy she had in teaching us. By how she was with us. She dealt much better with us than the teachers now. By laughing with us, by letting us have the freedom to make jokes, by talking, so that we enjoyed it. The atmosphere she determined, really. By watching us, how we behaved… how we treated each other, the way in which we worked. That was how she set the atmosphere in the class. For example, if we were too noisy and wouldn't work, then the atmosphere was bad. (…) By just saying "Dead silence now or otherwise you can leave and write your detention work. And then everybody was quiet. (…) And if we were joking and at the same time did work, then the atmosphere was a lot of fun. (…)And if the atmosphere was good, (if we just worked) then she would do nothing, really, then she would just let you talk, as long as you were doing your assignment. Then she would just leave you alone.

The secret of fulfilling the needs of middle-adolescents in the school environment appears to be for teachers to teach in acaptivating way, to enjoy teaching, to have clear rules about what is and what is not allowed and, at the same, provide elbow room for creating good contact between teachers and pupils and allow pupils to quietly speak among themselves. Figure 5.5 presents a summary of the ways in which the school environment, according to both resilient and not-resilient participants, *might* contribute to their resilience by offering safety and good education. The figures 5.6, 5.7 and 5.8 present summaries of the ways in which the specific school environments, according to resilient and not-resilient participants, c*ontribute* or *do not contribute* to their resilience:

Figure 5.5 Ways in which the school environment can contribute to resilience of urban middle-adolescents with a low SES

Safety	Good education
There are clear rules in the school; The school team checks on the pupils; It is recorded who is present and who is absent; There is an immediate intervention with a fight or a different "problematic situation"; The school has intensive contact with external organisations, such as community centres and police.	Teachers are strict, Teachers are clear; Teachers connect consequences to not participating in the education; Teachers keep order during the classes.
The school team can be trusted and the school team expresses trust in the pupils; Pupils are known; The school team knows the names of the pupils; The school team has a positive attitude towards pupils; The adults in the school environment keep an eye on how all the pupils are doing; Teachers are fair towards pupils; Teachers mention what pupils are doing well besides what they are doing wrong; Teachers remain calm when pupils show wrong behaviour; Pupils have a personal school counsellor or mentor; Pupils learn to cooperate; The school team gets along well with each other; During the class, teachers offer elbow room for informal conversations between the pupils and between teachers and pupils.	Teachers and mentors have high expectations of the pupils; Teachers and mentors underline that good marks are important; Teachers teach in a captivating way. Pupils are assisted in doing homework and learning subject matter; Teachers offer room for asking questions about homework and subject matter; Teachers clearly explain the subject matter; Teachers offer extra time for homework; Teachers provide an overview of school tasks; During assignments, teachers regularly evaluate how the pupils are getting on and offer help towards their progress with the homework; The pupils learn to plan their work; The pupils learn to work self-sufficiently.
The school team motivates the pupils; The pupils are helped with homework; By teaching in a captivating way, the atmosphere in the class is good.	

Figure 5.6 The relationship between School Site 2 and the experience of resilience promoting factors

School Site 2		
	Safety	**Good education**
Resilient participants experience the following resilience promoting factors:	There is an immediate intervention with a fight or a different "problematic situation"; All teachers and the janitor know the names of the pupils; The janitor records who is present and who is absent; The adults in the school environment keep an eye on how all the pupils are doing.	Some teachers in School environment 2 contribute to the experience of *good education:* - By explaining everything well; - By knowing much themselves; - By telling a lot about themselves; - By providing the elbow room for finding peace during the class.
Not-resilient participants	Not-resilient participants in School environment 2 do not connect the factors mentioned by resilient participants to *safety.* They miss the following in School environment 2 to experience *safety:* Positive attitude of teachers; Help with homework; Fairness of teachers; Teachers who mention what pupils are doing well besides what they are doing wrong; Teachers who remain calm when pupils show wrong behaviour; Teachers that notice whether a pupil needs help.	Not-resilient participants in School environment 2 have too little *good education* experience to achieve their diploma in School environment 2 or are being placed at a lower level. They missed: Extra time for homework; Offering an overview of school tasks; Evaluation of the progress of the homework; Help with homework; Learning to plan. Clear explanation of the teaching materials; Assistance with working with the teaching materials; Order during the classes.

Figure 5.7 The relationship between School Site 3 and the experience of resilience promoting factors

School Site 3		
	Safety	**Good education**
Resilient participants experience the following resilience promoting factors	The school sets clear rules; The school offers control; The school team can be trusted; The school team expresses trust in the pupils; The school team motivates the pupils; Pupils learn to cooperate; Pupils are known; The school has intensive contact with external organisations such as community centres and police.	Teachers and mentors have high expectations of the pupils; Teachers and mentors indicate that good marks are important; Teachers explain the teaching materials until pupils understand them; Pupils learn to plan; Pupils learn to work self-sufficiently; Pupils learn to cooperate; Teachers provide pupils with an overview of the school tasks.
Not-resilient participants	Not-resilient participants in School environment 3 do not identify factors in the school environment that contribute to a sense of safety. Furthermore, they miss the following in School environment 3 to contribute to *safety:* Positive attitude of teachers.	Not-resilient participants in School environment 3 experience good education in School environment 3 when: Teachers are strict, Teachers are clear; Teachers connect consequences to not participating in the education;

Figure 5.8 The relationship between School Site 5 and the experience of resilience promoting factors

School Site 5		
	Safety	**Good education**
Resilient participants	By teaching in a captivating way the atmosphere in the class is good; Pupils have a personal school counsellor; There is immediate intervention with a fight or a different "problematic situations".	Teachers teach in a captivating way.
Not-resilient participants	Not-resilient participants in School environment 5 miss the following in School environment 5 to experience *safety*: Registration of who is and who isn't present and being actively involved with the school.	Not-resilient participants in School environment 5 experience *good education* when: Teachers are strict; Teachers are clear, Teachers connect consequences to not participating in education.

Concluding, it can be stated that resilient and not-resilient middle-adolescents have the same needs for the resilience promoting factors *safety* and *good education* in the school environment. However, not-resilient middle-adolescents are *more dependent* for their successful development on these resilience promoting factors than resilient middle-adolescents. It appears that resilient middle-adolescents are less dependent on their school environment, because they *experience safety* and *good education* in several ways.

"Learning something" is for both resilient and not-resilient participants in all school environments important for the experience of *safety* and *good education.* Not-resilient participants appear more dependent on their school environment for the experience of "learning something". They appear to get *access* to *learning* solely when a teacher is strict and clear and provides a lot of structure. The differences between resilient and not-resilient middle-adolescents in their dependency on the school environment appear to correlate with their differences in access to resilience promoting factors in the school environment. These are discussed in the following paragraph.

5.5.3   DIFFERENCES IN ACCESS TO RESILIENCE PROMOTING FACTORS IN THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

5.5.3.1   Introduction

Resilient and not-resilient participants both show the same needs regarding *content* for *safety* and *good education* in the school environment. At the same time, they do not experience the presence of these factors in a school environment the same way. Not-resilient participants are more *dependent* on the presence of these factors than resilient participants for their successful development.

The needs for safety and good education prove to be "relational needs". *Trust, fairness, getting help, being known* and *being seen* are a number of characteristics of the needs for safety of the participants in the school environment (See Paragraph 5.5.2). *Captivating classes, high expectations, structure, clarity and rules* are a number of characteristics of the needs for good education of the participants in the school environment. The relationship between a certain participant and the school

environment appears to determine whether the experience of *safety* and *good education* is established.

The comparison between the behaviour and the attaching of meaning of both groups of participants shows that they, with the meaning they attach to situations and persons, introduce different forms of behaviour in the school environment. With their behaviour, they do or they don't gain access to resilience promoting factors and thereby they do or they don't contribute to fulfilling their own needs.

In this paragraph it is discussed how the attachment of meaning and the behaviour of resilient and not-resilient participants differ. Firstly, internal resilience qualities will briefly be discussed, which appear to influence the meaning that adolescents attachment to situations and persons. Secondly, how the resilience qualities are expressed in their behaviour and how their behaviour is related to getting access to the resilience promoting factors *safety* and *good education* will be discussed.

5.5.3.2 Resilience Qualities in Middle-Adolescents

The analysis of the interview data led to identification of resilience qualities that can be divided into three "main qualities": *Having Overview, Having Insight* and *Having positive future expectations.*

Overview

The resilience quality of "having an overview" relates to the degree to which a participant "oversees" the school environment in terms of *school tasks, mechanisms and patterns in behaviour of people in that environment; expectations regarding one's own behaviour; situations that may arise in the school environment; risks for one's own development that may be present in the school environment; and the presence of potential resources to assist one's own development.*

Insight

The resilience quality of "having insight" relates to the degree in which a participant has insight into his or her own actual abilities and skills to deal with situations and possible problems or risks.

Positive future expectations

The resilience quality of "having positive future expectations" refers to the degree to which a participant trusts and has a "faith" in the improvement of a situation after a problem or risk has occurred, and of the benefits to be gained by making an effort to deal with a problem or risk.

The large degree in which resilient participants possess these resilience qualities provides them with a strategic approach to their school environment. This strategic approach can be distinguished from the less strategic approach of not-resilient participants as follows:

Resilient participants "play" with their school environment. The school environment "happens" to the not-resilient participants.

The way in which these resilience qualities are related to gaining *access* to the *experience* of *safety* and *good education* will be discussed in the following paragraph.

5.5.3.3 Assigning meaning to challenging events and actors based on various Resilience Qualities

The needs for *safety* and *good education* contribute to the experience of challenging events for both resilient as well as not-resilient participants. There are factors and events in the school environment which could limit the experience of *safety* and *good education*. Resilient and not-resilient participants differ in the ways in which they attach meaning to these factors and events. Their way of giving meaning differs in the degree in which it shows *overview, insight* and *positive future expectations*, such as discussed in the previous paragraph.

The differences in the way they attach meaning to situations and actors in their environment prove to contribute to differences in behaviour in the area of factors and events which could limit the experience of *safety* and *good education*. This meaning attachment and behaviour are illustrated by means of challenging events in the area of:

1) Gaining access to *safety*:

- Dealing with negative influence of peers: bullying and fighting;

- Choosing friends;

- Creating and maintaining constructive relationships with adults;

2). Gaining access to *good education:*

- Being present at school;

- Participating in the classes;

- Doing homework.

1) Gaining access to safety:

Gaining access to safety. Dealing with negative influence of peers: bullying and fighting

As discussed in paragraph 5.5.2, trust among fellow pupils and a good relationship with fellow pupils contribute to the experience of safety in the school environment. At each school and in each class, with both resilient and not-resilient participants, arguments between fellow pupils are observed. Furthermore, both resilient and not-resilient participants notice that pupils are bullied and that pupils are provoked to fight. Both resilient and not-resilient participants indicate that they have been bullied once or have fought at times. These situations turn out to contribute to the experience of unsafeness in the school environment. Therefore, the constructive dealing with this negative influence of peers forms a challenge for both resilient and not-resilient participants.

Dealing with bullying and fighting: Resilient participants

Resilient participants show *overview* of the mechanisms and patterns in the behaviour of fellow pupils in regard to bullying and fighting. They show *insight into* their own opportunities and skills to deal with bullying or fighting and they have *positive future expectations* of the "gains" of their own constructive behaviour in regard to bullying or fighting.

School environment 2

The meaning which the resilient Participant 330-S2-C1-F-R from School environment 2 attaches to the challenge of dealing with negative influence of peers, is illustrative for the meaning of several resilient participants. She looked at her bullying experience

from a distance, with the result that she started to recognise a pattern in the bullying. By recognising the pattern, she appears to be able to ignore the bullying:

> (…) Yes, I never really had a big reason for not wanting to go to school. One day they would bully me and the next day they had forgotten about it again and then it would not happen for another three weeks. (…) And then it would start again and that is how it kept going. In the course of time it has become less and less until it is normal now. (…) I started to think about it myself… In the first (class), you care what everybody thinks. But now I know everybody, I know everybody at school and I know what they are like. (…) And every now and then, something is still said about it (my appearance). But then I think: "Never mind, they have been whining to me for three years and now I don't give a shit anymore". (…) And yes, I just don't listen to it anymore; let them do it, whatever.

Participant 330-S2-C1-F-R shows having *overview* of the challenge of dealing with negative influence of peers. She sees in this challenge the mechanism of bullying: they bully me and the next day they will have forgotten about it. She now knows everybody at school and, as a result, she is able to estimate what they are like. She shows *insight* into the actual skills that she has in order to deal with the situation: by not reacting to the bullying, the bullying will slowly stop. Her *positive future expectation* is that, after a day of bullying, she will not have to deal with it for the next three weeks.

School environment 3

The meaning which resilient participants from School environment 3 attach to negative influence of peers, is also illustrative for the *overview* of the mechanisms of "looking for an argument" and bullying:

Participant 488-S3-C2-F-R:

> I do not pay too much attention to it, but I think in principle there is a doormat in each class. (…) Yes, those children are just teased about everything they can come up with, for example, pushing up against somebody. (…) But that happens in every school, whether you are in elementary or high school, even at work there will always be somebody who is a doormat. They are just looking for someone to blame. But I think it is also about jealousy. When one has something that the other also wants. (…) I guess there will be more reasons, but why somebody is bullying you will never know. (…)Their answer always is "I do not like that person". In principle it's always about something else. (…) I really think that they do like that person, but that they would like to be that person. That's what I think. (…)That's what I think, I do not know for sure, that's why I never bully. (…) Either I help, or I'm like "I'm not getting involved". (…)Most of the time I do not

> get involved, because then it is I who did it. I don't want that to happen. Then I will be next. But if you let that person tell their story then you are already helping that person. Then you often help this person more then if you are going to get involved. Because then that person might only be bullied more.

The resilient participants give the impression that they have *overview* of the mechanisms of bullying and looking for an argument. These mechanisms can be summarised as:

Pupils look for someone to blame or someone to bully without having a clear reason for it. They have a big mouth and they act very tough, but it really isn't all that bad. If you are affected by what other pupils think of you or say about you then you will get into an argument much faster. The risk of getting into arguments is that you don't achieve anything with it and that your positive relationships with people are disturbed because of it.

The skills and opportunities they identify within themselves (*insight*) to prevent these risks are "not getting involved with arguments and not being disturbed by what other people think of you", "focus on school", "focus on positive relationships with people" and "support pupils who are being bullied". Their *positive future expectations* of the gains of their efforts in dealing with negative influence of peers in the area of bullying and fighting are reaching the goals that they want to achieve in the future.

School environment 5

In the same way, the resilient participants from School environment 5 appear to have *overview* of the mechanisms of bullying and the provoking of arguments and appear to have *insight* in the ways in which they could be able to deal effectively with bullying and have *positive future expectations* of the gains ot their efforts in dealing with these mechanisms in a constructive way:

Participant 555-S5-C4-M-R:

> Someone who brags, bullies or whatever I do not respect (…) I think it was in the first grade when someone was being bullied. The only thing I did was not talking to him. As long as he doesn't have an audience, he will not do it anymore. The smaller the audience, the least bulling there will be. (…) I do not like fighting much. I mean, what are you going to achieve with that? That you are the

strongest or something…No, I do not like that. (…) Yes, for example, they start bullying somebody or dissing them, so that the other guy gets angry and then he will say "What's your Problem?! And yes, that is just provoking. But when there alone then they won't do that. Only if they are in a group. (…)They don't provoke me. They just know that I won't react. Yes, because they know me well and I know them. Then they won't do that sort of thing. (…) Yes, if someone doesn't react, why would you then bully someone? (…) The whole idea (for bullies and fighters) is to get attention and to get respect.

All resilient participants appear not to bully or to provoke others. The *overview* of the mechanisms of bullying and fighting seems to contribute to the resilient participants' *insight into* the right skills to ensure that they are not bullied and are not provoked to fight. Their insight appears to contribute to *positive future expectations* of the experience of safety in their school environment. Their *overview, insight* and *positive future expectations* appear to contribute to their access to the resilience promoting factor of *safety* in the school environment.

Dealing with bullying and fighting: Not-resilient participants

School environment 2

The meaning which the not-resilient Participant 327-S2-C1,C2/3-M-NR from School environment 2 gives to events and persons in the area of bullying and fighting is illustrative for a meaning, which shows little *overview, insight* and *positive future expectations*.

(…)Then (…) I was not sticking up for myself a lot. And then I knew that he wanted to hit me. And I thought "If he starts hitting me, then I will just close up again, so I have to find a solution so that he won't hit me". (…) In those days I was not doing all that well. Then I took a knife from the drawer and I put that in my bag. Then I went to school. Then he came to me (…) and then he said "Now what?" So I say "Fuck off!" Then he wanted to start hitting me and then I grabbed that knife from my bag and then I threatened him. Then he said: "If you stab me now then I will call all my friends and after school they will be standing there at the door with a 9mm". I said... that might just be a wild story, but suppose that it is really true?! So yes, I started calling right away, the whole phone list on my mobile. The only one who answered was a friend of mine. But I did not want to ask her to come. Yes, I wanted to call my stepbrother as a last resort, because I rather not call him when I have problems, because he has a "borderline"-condition. So that can really get crazy and then it will really get out of hand. But yes, the only one who answered then was my stepbrother…

Ultimately the threat of the fellow pupil turned out to be a false threat and his stepbrother showed up at school showing a lot of aggressiveness for no reason.

The not-resilient Participant 327-S2-C1,C2/3-M-NR estimated the threat of a peer as very serious. *Overview* of the situation as a whole, with the actual risks and resources visible, appeared to be lacking. The mechanism of "ignoring bullying", which was identified by many resilient participants is not recognised by Participant 327-S2-C1,C2/3-M-NR. He appears to have a *future expectation* of "closing up" and "being beaten", but not towards "gain" by not reacting to the challenge. Participant 327-S2-C1,C2/3-M-NR appears to have little *insight* into his own abilities and skills to deal with the challenge in a way that a certain "gain" might occurs. He seems dependent on an external "solution" to occur, and this is unfortunately coming from the person from whom he really does not want to get help.

Other not-resilient participants from the different school environments indicate reacting to the challenges of fighting, provoking others to fight, or bullying others in the school environment.

School environment 2

With regard to the above, the not-resilient Participant 331-S2-C4-F-NR from School environment 2 says:

> (…) Well on Wednesday last week I heard from a girl that another girl liked my friend. But I have been dating him for more than a year. But I just did not like it (…) so on Monday I went over to that girl. (…) I said "What did I hear, do you like my boyfriend?" She says, "No, no". So then she says "I got a boyfriend, you know". I say "I don't give a shit. If I see or notice something, I will beat your teeth backwards". (…)

School environment 3

This is how the not-resilient Participant 482-S3-C3-F-NR from School environment 3 puts it:

> And when I have been fighting, they say "Why did you fight?" Then I say "They were the ones provoking me! Of course I will fight! If I am not taking it anymore then I am not taking it anymore".

School environment 5

The not-resilient participants from School environment 5 did not bring up the themes of bullying and fighting.

The not-resilient participants from the School environments 2 and 3 appear to identify no risk in the provoking or bullying of fellow pupils. It appears as if, in the area of fighting and bullying, they do not have *overview* of the consequences of their behaviour for their development in the school environment or do not value these consequences.

Gaining access to safety: Choosing friends

Friends play an important role for all participants in their motivation to go to school. However, not all friendships contribute to resilience in terms of successful development. Resilient participants distinguish themselves from not-resilient participants in the way in which they express their selectiveness in choosing friends. Not-resilient participants express this selectiveness to a much lesser degree or select their friends on other grounds than their possible contribution to their successful development.

Choosing friends: Resilient participants

School environment 2

The resilient participants in School environment 2 illustrate how they do not engage with "tough types":

330-S2-C1-F-R

We have our little group; we are, you could say, the "teacher's pets". Not that we are all that sweet, but just, (…) in the three years we have been at this school, we never had a yellow card… (…) And those other girls who (…) think they are tougher than we are. (Those) girls are screaming at the principle of the school. (…) That is just irritating.

School environment 3

The resilient Participant 519-S3-C3-M-R from School environment 3 illustrates how he is often provoked to "break a window" and how he deals with this challenge by being selective in choosing friends:

> Yes, very often, then he says "Come, let's quickly go do a window". Break a car window. Then I withdraw. Then I say "You go do it. If that is what you want to do, then you go do it". Then you just say to that person "If that is what you want

to do, that does not mean that you should ask me to do that or whatever. If you want to remain friends, just hang with each other, do fun things, go swimming or playing soccer, in that case you can always come to me. But if you want to do something else, then you have to do it by yourself or you look for someone else". And when you then hear "He has been arrested" and the next day again, I think "Keep some distance". Maybe he will get me involved in something. (…) And I know also what that is like, to break a window. If I get caught now, then my father will start nagging me and then… for nothing. For those thirty, forty euros. (…) You do not need to look for the toughest friend, it'll get you nowhere.

Participant 519-S3-C3-M-R has *overview* of the risks that are connected to dealing with so-called "tough boys" and with participating in criminal activities. Furthermore, he identifies skills and opportunities in himself to deal with the challenge in such a way that the risk is prevented (*insight)*. Participant 519-S3-C3-M-R apparently has *positive future expectations* of reaching something that would be disturbed by the risks that so-called tough boys bring with them. By identifying these risks, he selects friends who have a positive influence on his development instead of a negative influence.

School environment 5

The resilient Participant 555-S5-C4-M-R from School environment 5 also illustrates a strategic selection attitude in choosing friends and peers. Because he has overview of the risks of dealing with so-called "noisy types", he decides to adjust his behaviour and to stay away from these types:

Some children I actually do not like and some children that I do like. For example, I do not like children who brag or children who bully. And I don't want to be friends with them. (…) I do not really like people who brag. (…) Once there was this guy who was talking about scooters and such. That the police was going to go after him and that he was going to do all kind of things, that he had shot pistols. I could not believe that, that was just simply bragging. You can brag a little, everybody does that. But not each day. He would do it almost every day. Once with a MP3-player, he says "Yes, I stole it from a guy" when he had really borrowed it. Those are all just strange little stories. (…) Yes, then I act like I am listening carefully while in the meanwhile I think "Yes, just quit it, you told me enough". Sometimes I do laugh with him and that kind of thing. I just act like I am in the story myself, but in reality that is not true. (…) I just see them, when they are in my class then I just see them as classmates with whom I sometimes hang if there is nobody else. (…) For example, by not hanging with him after school, talk little with him. He is just in your class, that's it. So not dealing with him. (…) For him it is just the same. I mean, he expects something else from me: just tough behaviour and such. (…) Then he will just remain a classmate. (…) That is exactly the same for him. (For him I am also) just a class mate. (…) I am more of a quiet type than a type who makes a lot of noise. (…) Just do your work and

> pay attention in class and also talk a little every now and then. That is what I
> think is more of the quiet type. A tough type really has a big mouth to the
> teacher. Act like a group leader for example, that is really also a tough type… I
> don't really want that. (…) I now have friends who support me.

Resilient participants keep their distance of so-called tough types. They are not
impressed by tough stories and take these stories "with a grain of salt". They have
overview of differences between people and of the risks the so-called "tough people"
bring with them. Furthermore, they have *insight* into their own skills and
opportunities to deal with these "tough types" in such a way that no negative
confrontations occur and that the safety is maintained. By their behaviour they
maintain *positive future expectations* of safety because they prevent potential
problems.

Choosing friends: Not-Resilient participants

School environment 2

In the selection of friends, not-resilient participants show a less strategic consideration
of friends that might have a positive or negative influence on their development than
resilient participants. The not-resilient Participant 327-S2-C1,C2/3-M-R illustrates
this not-selective attitude as following:

> (…) If someone does not like me, I will not like him. If someone does like me, I
> will like him. Does not matter what they are like, but I will like him.

In the creation of friendships, the not-resilient Participant 327-S2-C1,C2/3-M-R
appears dependent on others. His selection of friends is based on the choice others
make to befriend him or not. He does not show the identification of risks in dealing
with fellow pupils who might exercise a bad influence on his development.

Other not-resilient participants appear to actually choose friends who can help them in
provoking fellow pupils or with arguments with others.

School environment 3

The not-resilient Participant 479-S3-C3-F-NR from School environment 3 illustrates
these friendships by telling what her friends mean to her. She actually identifies the
positive consequences of "dealing with bullies". This gives her the safety she needs.

She indicates that she never has been bullied. In answer to the question why she never has been bullied, she replies:

> I think because I was hanging with the right people. I also hanged around the bullies. (…) When I have an argument with someone or something like that… then they stick up for me. The other day, I was walking in the hallway, and a guy pulled my hair. Only at that time I did not know who did. (…) And they, my friends walk right over to him to and said to him "I know that you pulled her hair… "If I will see that once more, I will hit you". And then the guy shut up right away (…)

The not-resilient Participant 479-S3-C3-F-NR links her friendship with bullies to the fact that she has never been bullied. As a result, she does not appear to have *insight* into her own skills and opportunities to ensure that she is not bullied. That way, she is more dependent on others for the experience of the resilience promoting factor *safety* than resilient participants.

School environment 5

The not-resilient participants in School environment 5 did not speak about the selection of friends.

Summarised, it appears that the way in which resilient participants "choose" their friendships is focused on the positive effect these friendships might have on their development in the future. Resilient participants are future-oriented (*positive future expectations*), have *overview* of the risks to the achievement of their goals for that future and identify risks in dealing with so-called tough, noisy types. They have *insight* into their own skills and opportunities to prevent these risks and, therefore, actively keep a distance from these types. The way in which not-resilient participants "choose" their friendships appears less focused on the positive effects they might have on their future development. They appear to be focused more on the present and it seems that they identify no risks in dealing with so-called tough noisy types.

Gaining access to safety: The creation and maintenance of constructive relationships with adults

As discussed in Paragraph 5.5.3.1, *trust*, *fairness*, *getting help*, *being known* and *being seen* are a number of characteristics of the relational needs for safety of the participants in the school environment. Although both resilient and not-resilient

participants express these needs, they have different ways in which they deal with the challenge of fulfilling these needs. The challenges can be summarised as *the creation and maintenance of constructive relationships with adults in the school environment*. Resilient and not-resilient participants differ in their degree of constructiveness in dealing with this challenge. Resilient middle-adolescents attach a strategic meaning to the creation and maintenance of constructive relationships with adults in the school environment. Once more, this meaning shows *overview, insight* and *positive future expectations*.

The creation and maintenance of constructive relationships with adults: Resilient participants

School environment 2

For the resilient participants from School environment 2 a school trip to England did a lot of good for their relationships with the teachers. The resilient participants take an active approach in the creation and maintenance of these relationships. They reason that good relationships with the teachers contribute to their enjoyment of lessons.. On the question what is important for her in School environment 2, Participant 330-S2-C1-F-R replies:

> I actually would say, the contact with the teachers. (…) I notice that, now that we are back from England. The relationship between teachers and pupils has changed. (…) With some teachers it is more fun now. You notice that you can say more things to a teacher you would not have dared before. You have those pupils who, when the teacher says "Now you will have to be quiet", they say "No!" And then I would argue about that, because if someone tells me to be quiet then I am simply quiet. (…) And our group gets along better with the teachers. Other pupils then say "Oh, so you are talking with the teacher, are you?!" (…) And we just don't give a shit, we just talk to them. (…) Sometimes we are standing around and then a teacher joins us and most pupils will walk away until one remains who then will have to talk with him. We just all keep standing there…

School environment 3

Resilient participants in School environment 3 indicate that they feel at home at school. Their contact with teachers and janitors in the school contributes to this feeling. The way in which they contribute to this contact themselves is illustrated by Participant 522-S3-C1-F-R:

For example, if your locker is broken you go to the janitor. Then he really will start talking to you. He'll make a joke '"Hey, what did you do to it?" and (…) then you will start talking to each other more and more just like you do with other people and then you get ever more contact. And then it will be more and more then just "Hello". Then it also becomes "Hello, everything all right?" and then ever more. That is fun.

School environment 5

The resilient participants from School environment 5 give strategic reasons for why a good *relationship with teachers* is important and why it is important that teachers know their names:

Participant 547-S5-C2-F-R:

> (…) It is just fun, but at the same time, for example, when you have not done a test, they give you a hard time about it. But if you are (able to get along with the teacher) well and you have not done it, then you can negotiate. That they still give you another chance. That is why I also think it is a good thing to have a good relationship with your teachers.

> (…) Yes, you basically have a School Pupil Counsellor[13]. But when, for example, you do not get along well with your school counsellor, then you need other teachers with whom you do get along. So, if you have a problem with a different teacher, and you have to go to your school Counsellor with whom you can't talk at all, then it is important that you have another teacher with whom you can talk.

> (I think it is important that the teachers know my name) because when they, for example, have filled out a mark incorrectly and I tell them to change that mark, then they might accidentally change the mark of someone else because they got my name wrong (…).

Good contact with teachers is important because this good relationship helps you if you want to get an extra chance for a test or if you do not get along with your school counsellor. It is important that teachers know your name because that could work to your advantage. These reasons show an image of *overview* the participant has of the situations and the risks that might occur in the school environment and of *positive future expectations* of a positive outcome when she makes an effort to create and maintain a good relationship with teachers. Furthermore, Participant 547-S5-C2-F-R shows *insight* into the way in which she can achieve a good relationship with teachers:

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[13] A personal mentor.

> I just listen. (…) Yes, that way you also get a good relationship right away. And also between classes when I run into them, then I just say "Hi!" Then we will just talk some. Yes, then you'll basically get a good relationship with your teacher I think.
>
> Or you make a joke, then I give a different name and then they'll get all confused. Then I say "Yes, if you do not know my name, I will make it extra challenging for you". … So now it is going better and better. They do know my name now.

On the basis of strategic considerations, Participant 547-S5-C2-F-R finds it important that the teachers know her name. She directs the situation by making jokes to the teachers during the class about the fact that they do not know her name. This way, the situation she has in mind becomes possible: the teachers learn her name and she maintains a good relationship with the teachers. This way, she provides herself *access* to safety in the form of potential resources in case she needs them when she experiences problems.

The creation and maintenance of constructive relationships with adults: Not-resilient participants

School environment 2

The not-resilient Participant 327-S2-C1,C2/3-M-NR from School environment 2 illustrates a less strategic approach to the creation and maintenance of a *good relationship with teachers*. He has problems at home. His school counsellor has offered to talk together once a week. After a few uncomfortable meetings, he starts to trust this school counsellor more and feels comfortable enough to tell more. At some point, this school counsellor suggests to end the conversations. According to Participant 327-S2-C1,C2/3-M-NR, he was not doing well at all at that moment. He actually needed these conversations. There was nobody else in his environment with whom he could talk. Participant 327-S2-C1,C2/3-M-NR however, did not mention this wish and he has lost trust in his school counsellor. The meaning, which Participant 327-S2-C1,C2/3-M-NR attaches to this situation, shows little evidence of having overview. He sees no other opportunities or resources to deal with this challenging situation. In response to the question what Participant 327-S2-C1,C2/3-M-NR did when the school counsellor suggested ending the conversations, he says:

> Nothing. How do you mean what did you do? No, I did nothing.

In regard to this event, participant 327-S2-C1,C2/3-M-NR later remarks what his *insight* is in the abilities and actual skills he thinks he has for dealing with a challenge:

> I don't remember anymore, but definitely let me down. And then I am not going to say to him "It is not going very well with me right now" of course. That is not how I am. I think that when you start talking with someone, then you should do it well too. Don't start talking with someone if you don't know what is going on. (…) I am not going to someone like "Yes, I am not doing very well, I want to talk to you" or something like that. That is not how I am. I am more someone who keeps something to myself.

At the moment when the school counsellor of Participant 327-S2-C1,C2/3-M-NR ended the conversations and did not indicate why, he did not identify other teachers in his environment to talk to about his problems:

> Yes, and the rest of the teachers is also just crap, just like my mentor. He is just really loony tunes. You do the slightest thing and he would totally flip out. Then he would start screaming at you!

For Participant 327-S2-C1,C2/3-M-NR, there do not appear to be any "assets" in the school that could help him. Because of that, he appears to have little *access* to help in the school environment. Furthermore, he does not easily ask for help. Because of that he *provides himself with no access* to potential "assets" present in the school environment. It might be that the nature of his problems is too serious to talk about with others than his school counsellor. In any case, he does have a need for constructive relationships with adults in the school environment. However, these are only created and maintained to a limited degree, if at all.

Not-resilient middle-adolescents appear to have a strong need for good relationships with adults in the school environment. At the same time, they appear to have little *insight* into the abilities and skills necessary to create and maintain constructive relationships.

School environment 2
The not-resilient Participant 331-S2-C4-F-NR from School environment 2 illustrates how she did not get around to building a good relationship with teachers because of

her behaviour and how she regrets this afterwards, now that she almost had to repeat her grade.

> They plainly told me that I would not pass and I really did not like that. I simply did not want that. I was quite upset about it. (…) Because we are now quiet in the class, the teachers are also nice. (…) Yes, frankly, (…) the teachers, (…) I do think are (…) important. (…) Well, because they do teach. But then I just did not see it, because if we were pestering then they would also fire back. So then, I did not really see it. (…) Frankly, I was very annoying those years. …

School environment 3

Not-resilient participants from School environment 3 have not explicitly expressed their constructive contact with teachers.

School environment 5

The not-resilient Participant 573-S5-C4-F-NR does not contribute to fulfilling her own need for constructive relationships with adults in School environment 5 by systematically avoiding her school counsellor:

> Yes, a school counsellor is (…) something like a mentor. When she needs you, she will tell you to come and see her and that sort of thing. And since I was never there, she could not call me in either. (…) Yes, she would call or send letters. My mother never got to see those letters either. (…) I did save them. They said I was absent too often. And that if I would go on (this way), I would get the school inspector going after me. (…) And yes, I would run into her in the hallway sometimes. Then she would be coming my way and then I would turn around and I would quickly get out of there. I would just walk away from her. And then I would quickly go outside. Then I would jump on my bike and get out of there.

The not-resilient Participant 573-S5-C4-F-NR recognised the risks of her behaviour *after* she had to repeat a grade. The gaining of *overview* of the risks of behaviour *after* a negative consequence occurs can be recognised in the interview data of various not-resilient participants. Because of their behaviour, they limit themselves in the gaining of *access* to constructive relationships with adults.

Summarised, not-resilient participants do not appear to oversee the risks of their behaviour until they experience a negative consequence of their behaviour (*overview*). They appear to have no *insight* into their skills or opportunities to create and maintain constructive relationships or do not appear to see the gain (*positive future expectations*) of different behaviour (such as constructive relationships with teachers).

Their own behaviour appears to lessen the *access* that they could have to safety in the school environment.

2) Gaining access to good education

As discussed in paragraph 5.5.3.1, the experience *of captivating classes, of high expectations, of structure, of clarity* and *of rules* are a number of characteristics of the needs for good education of the participants in the school environment. Although both resilient and not-resilient participants express these needs, they have different degrees of access to the experience of *good education.*

Gaining access to good education: Resilient participants School environment 2

The resilient Participant 326-S2-C4-F-R illustrates how she gets access to the experience of *good education* despite noisiness in the class and her own concentration problems:

> Well, I am really, I can not concentrate well. Sometimes I think that I might be having a concentration problem. I see, I hear and I know everything. In the class too. Most of the times I do not know what the class is about. Then I will ask the teacher sixty times "I do not understand". (…) Then she will explain it (…) and at a certain moment she will say "Yes, well, you do have to pay attention". And then I tell her "Yes, I do pay attention". Then she says "No, you do not pay attention". And then I want to go against it. I can't do that. I just think it is too difficult. (…) (It was very noisy in our class). At a certain moment it did get quiet, well, it wasn't really quiet, but I focused only on the teacher so that I would not hear the rest. That did work. If the teacher explained something, she would go with a marker, she would go across the blackboard, tapping and such and I would always follow that marker and then I would hear what the teacher said. And the rest I did no hear at all. (…) My friend has a lot of difficulties with math and I always help her with that (…) Most of the times she also sits next to me with math. Because when I sit there she understands. And she helps me again with economy. Because she understands that well.

Participant 326-S2-C4-F-R identifies in herself a risk for the *experience* of *good education*. She has difficulty concentrating. As a result, she has little access to the *experience of good education* and the school environment does not appear to contribute to this experience by saying that she should pay attention when she does not understand. She does remain active by trying to understand the teaching materials and she eventually finds help with fellow pupils to help her.

School environment 3

The way in which resilient participants in School environment 3 have access to good education is by having *overview* of school tasks and of resources to accomplish the school tasks and *insight* into the ways in which they can utilise these resources.

Participant 488-S3-C2-F-R from School environment 3 highly values achieving good school results. The school environment plays a big role in her life as a place to learn.

> Every two, three weeks I make a schedule of what I still have to do. (…) Yes, especially with history. I want to finish it up now, because I am now in the third grade, but I am also almost done for the fourth. (…) Then I will just have study hour, where you can decide yourself what you will do. I will do English, because I am very bad at that…(…) I simply want to first finish school and during the summer holiday I will have enough time to do fun things.

Participant 488-S3-C2-F-R shows *overview* of the tasks that lie ahead of her, *insight into* the opportunities that she, to a more or lesser degree, has for the successful accomplishment of those tasks and *positive future expectations* of the reward of a summer vacation. Because she quickly finishes the subjects she finds easy, much time is left for the subjects she finds difficult. With those subjects she can get extra assistance in the form of "study classes". She provides herself, so to say, with *access* to good education.

School environment 5

Resilient participants from School environment 5 illustrate how they get access to good education by how they deal with challenges of *skipping school*, by how they deal with *homework* and *by how they participate in the classes*.

The resilient Participant 552-S5-C2-F-R from School environment 5 illustrates how she deals with the challenge of skipping school.

> Yes, most people do not finish their school. (…) Yes, they no longer want to learn. Or they have problems at home or they ended up on the wrong path. And once they take that path, they can no longer go back. That is also why there are many people who have not done their work: because they have problems at home, or because of friends that live in the street and such…. …One guy. He was hanging around with the wrong people who were also no longer going to school. He was still in school himself and he had good results at school. But because he was hanging with wrong people, he ended up on the wrong path. He would also not go to school anymore, starting hanging in the street, skipping school, from one

cigarette to the other…. That is how he ruined the school results. Then he would not go to school anymore. No, he does not come anymore.

By understanding the mechanisms whereby people "take the wrong path" (*overview*), Participant 552-S5-C2-F-R is able to hold on to her decision to get her diploma:

> Look, I want to achieve something. And if someone says to me "Come on, don't go to school for these last two hours!", then I will not listen to that. (…) Because if I go skipping school with friends those last two hours, I will not get anyhere. And yes, that guy apparently felt differently. For him, friends would go first. He wanted, I think, to fit in with his friends. And with me that is not important. I mean, you have to take me as I am (…) I mean, if they do not accept me as I am, then I'll just end the ties. Just like that. Just need to be a little tough for this day and age.

Participant 552-S5-C2-F-R has the *positive future expectation* of obtaining her diploma. She has *insight* into her own opportunities and skills to deal with the pressure of peers to skip school: by being herself, with her decision to get her diploma and to sever ties if others do not accept her the way she is.

Participant 552-S5-C2-F-R also illustrates how she provides herself with access to the experience of *good education* as a result of how she behaves in the classes:

> By going to school and by studying and doing tests well and listening to the teachers and by doing what they ask of you, I believe that I can easily achieve getting my diploma. Yes, those study materials come back in the exam.

Participant 552-S5-C2-F-R has *overview* of the school system: the content of what the teachers teach and the study material of the tests will come back during the exams. This *overview* gives her *insight* into the ways to reach her goal: by listening to the teachers, by doing what they ask and by making homework, you can achieve getting your diploma. She has *positive future expectations* of obtaining her diploma because she is capable of utilising the right skills to reach her goal.

Participant 555-S5-C4-M-R

> Half of the class last year with whom we were joking around have left. One repeated his/her grade and some went to other schools. Because of their marks really. Half of the boys did not pass. Skipping school, marks and other things. (…) But it was the most fun class I had so far. (…) They often did not go to school, never studied for their tests. That is why they are now at a different one. (…) I

did hang with them, but when it came down to doing homework and studying, I would just do it. They never did that and, if they would, it would really be an exception. If the test was very important for their final grade, they would do it. But not otherwise. They would hang outside and I would just go home. They would go home for a while, but after that they would just stay outside. Not me, I did not do that. (They did not think that was weird) and they did respect me and that was mutual. They were just relaxed with me, they laughed about my jokes. And we talked about things that interest us. And that made them respect me. (…) Frankly, I was the only one. I just thought "Third class counts towards fourth class and in the fourth class you have to do your exams". Yes, just thinking about your future. You can make jokes, but you do have to think about your future.

They did not think about their future. They really just had a fun life. They really did not care. But I just think, in their thoughts, they really did care. They would say "What do I care whether my marks are bad", but I would think "They do care" (…) sometimes, if they were by themselves and they would hear their marks, then it was one of those sad stories. Just like "Shit, I have not been studying", or 'My father is going to say this and that'.

555-S5-C4-M-R has overview of the mechanism of skipping school. By realising to which negative consequences skipping school leads, he has *insight* into the ways to prevent these negative consequences: by not skipping school and doing the homework. He is also able to utilise skills that help him to not skip school and do his homework, despite being the only one in his group who does this. His *insight* into these skills contributes to his *positive future expectations* of achieving his goal.

Resilient participants value asking for help, giving help and cooperating in regard to homework. The meaning the resilient Participant 547-S5-C2-F-R attaches to this is a meaningful example:

Things (in my homework) I do not know I mark. (…) And when I get to school, I go to the pupils from my class or from a different class. Then I ask who understands it and that person will explain it. If nobody understands, I will eventually go to the teacher. He will explain it to me and then I will remember again. (…) If, for example, we are off the first hour, then the pupils from our class want to sleep in. But if we have a test then we (me and my friends) will always come early. Even if we have the first hour off, then we agree how late to come to school and then we will study, here at school. Together, because when you study together, you think more about questions… Yes, because when you study, for example, in a workbook, when you are alone, then it is easy to say "I don't know". But when you are with someone, then you will know the answer. Because, when you do it together, then the other one will say something and then you think "I never thought about that". Then you know the answer right away. Together you can learn faster, I believe.

The example of Participant 547-S5-C2-F-R shows *overview, insight* and *positive future expectations*. She knows that if she studies by herself, she will not know many answers. She identifies a risk. She has *insight into* opportunities and actual skills to deal with the challenge of delivering good school results. By cooperating with others and coming to school early, she provides herself with *access* to good education. Furthermore, she shows *positive future expectations* of the success of the chosen way by the confidence that she expresses in "being able to learn faster together".

Gaining access to good education: not-resilient participants

School environment 2

Not-resilient participants from School environment 2 indicate how their own restlessness in the class and not doing their homework limits them in gaining access to good education.

Participant 327-S2-C1,C2/3-M-NR forgets to write down homework and if he does study the homework, he will have forgotten it the next morning.

> (…) When I, for example, study something in the evening, then it is gone from my memory in the morning. Yes, or I'll know in the morning, but when I make that test, it is just all gone (…). And making homework, most of the times, I forget to write it down in my diary. But I do try to do it most of the times.

Participant 327-S2-C1,C2/3-M-NR does identify a risk in his behaviour. He does not have much confidence or *positive future expectations* that he will pass this year. He has *tried* to study longer and *tried* to do his homework and *tried* to make some more effort in the class. But most of the time it does not work. He has little *insight* into his opportunities and actual skills to deal with this challenge. Maybe he does not have these opportunities and skills. It could be that Participant 327-S2-C1,C2/3-M-NR has learning problems or concentration problems. It appears as if this has not been identified by Participant 327-S2-C1,C2/3-M-NR himself or by his school environment. He has little *overview* of the tasks that lie ahead of him, because he often forgets to write down his homework and he does not identify resources in his environment that help him deal with his potential learning problems.

School environment 3

The not-resilient participants in School environment 3 primarily indicate how their own restlessness limits them in their access to good education.

Participant 479-S3-C3-F-NR:

> It is just not going all that well at school. (…) Too much talking in the class and such. Yes, I am distracted easily….I am not involved with my work. (…) Yes, and I am very loud, I have heard…. (…) Yes, especially talking; class after class. And then it is peaceful in class, then it is me again… (…) and then the whole class is unruly because of me…Because each week there is a (teachers) meeting and then they (the teachers) say "Every time your name is mentioned again; that you are too loud"…. (…) It have really always been that way, but lately (…) they say it more often, that I should become serious etc.

School environment 5

The not-resilient Participant 573-S5-C4-F-NR from School environment 5 showed no *overview, insight,* or *future expectations* over the consequences of her skipping school behaviour until she had to repeat a grade. Participant 573-S5-C4-F-NR skipped school extremely often. About the role of the school environment in regard to her skipping school she says:

> Yes, my school mentor did believe me, that I was always sick. Until the end of the year. Then she believed it no longer. Then the list became only longer. Yes, those were about the last four months of the year. Then the absence list became somewhat too long. (…) And then she did not believe it at all anymore. So then she called my mother. (…) She told her that I would have to repeat the grade because of my behaviour. Yes, and I did not want that because I did want to finish my school. (…) (I learned) that I should not be absent that often, that you then have to work way too hard. Because I would have to do that whole year over again. (…) And then I did think "Boy, I am in my last year of school and now you are not going to pass". "Yes, what use is that?" I wish I could rewind it! I would now have been finished with school. Yes. If I could do it over again, then I would never have done it. (…) Because I am now doing an extra year, while I could have been done in four years (of school). And now I am doing an extra year. And if I do not pass for my exams this time, then I have another problem because then I am not allowed to remain at that school. Then I have to leave that school.

The lack of *overview* that Participant 573-S5-C4-F-NR had of the risks of her behaviour has apparently contributed to maintaining the behaviour of skipping school and to the limitation of her access to the experience of *good education.*

The lack of *overview* of the expectations in the school environment, of desirable and undesirable behaviour and of the consequences of behaviour appears to be a decisive negative influence on the development of many not-resilient participants. As a result, they limit their own access to the gaining of *insight* into skills and opportunities to deal with challenging circumstances. Their own *insight* into dealing with circumstances experienced as challenging appears very limited. They seem dependent on their school environment. The not-resilient participants 327-S2-C1,C2/3-M-NR and 331-S2-C4-F-NR from School environment 2 illustrate this dependency as follows:

Participant 327-S2-C1,C2/3-M-NR:
> Then I was told that I would probably not pass, so then I thought "Oh, I better make it." (…). Yes, at that point, at least, I started trying (…) just trying harder during the class. But most of the time it did not work. Other people start fooling around and then, most of the time, I get pulled in and then I will start fooling around as well.

Participant 331-S2-C4-F-NR:
> Yes. (…) that I would probably not pass with those marks. So we did feel pretty bad when we heard that. Because only then I realised that I have been acting pretty badly. (…). Yes, but then I thought "Then I will start working". But yes, that was not possible, because I couldn't make up for those bad marks anymore. And that class did not help either. If the class is that loud, I can't work in it. So then I continued (fooling around) in that class.

Not-resilient middle-adolescents participate in and enjoy the restlessness in the class, but are at the same time bothered by this restlessness. They are "pulled in". They are hardly able to direct their behaviour in the unruly class situation themselves. Up until the negative consequence of their behaviour (not passing the grade) they have no *overview* of the possible consequences and risks of their behaviour. Once the consequence becomes apparent they will have *overview,* but no *insight* into the ways to adjust the behaviour and no *positive future expectations* of them actually being able to create a beneficial situation. As a result of their behaviour they limit themselves in getting *access* to good education.

Extra finding

In School environment 2 a remarkable finding was made. With their behaviour, not-resilient participants limit not only their own access to *safety* and *good education* in

School environment 2. This school environment distinguishes itself from the other environments in the many arguments between pupils themselves and between teachers and pupils. The resilient participants in the research mentioned the behaviour of a few not-resilient participants in the research as limiting for their access to *safety* and *good education*.

For instance, resilient Participant 330-S2-C1-F-R in School environment 2 is bothered by the behaviour of not-resilient participants (Participant 330-S2-C1-F-R literally mentions the names of not-resilient participants in her description of the events). Their behaviour limits her access to the experience of *good education*:

> Yes, 60% of our group will not pass. Yes, bad marks. But it is also so loud in our class! And she (the teacher) runs around the class screaming and giving away yellow cards and nobody listens to it. Things are thrown around in class, everybody screams through one another. (…) And I really can't work like that.
>
> And, just like today, everybody is screaming at each other. And then I will be doing something wrong and then I have to go sit down again and then I will have to wait for a long time. And just now, when I was telling her that I had to go to this interview, she just doesn't listen because somebody else is screaming at her. Yes, that just won't work. And yes, that is also mostly why it's not going well. (…) It is also because nobody is listening to her, I believe she has even once been called a stupid bitch. They really curse at her a lot.
>
> And my teacher was supposed to help with an assignment. He had said "If it is not right, we will look at what's wrong with it…" He was supposed to give me those hand-outs today. But again, he is too busy with the other children in the class, to get them to work. So today again, it didn't happen for him to help me ….
>
> The other day we wanted to make a test. (…) We had two school hours. A school hour takes 50 minutes, so together we had 100 minutes. Anyway, what it came down to was that there was so much damn noise that we only had 20 minutes to make that test. And I wasn't finished with that test. So we said (to the teacher) "I guess now I am getting a failing mark because I did not finish it in time?" Then she said "No, you get a failing mark because you made so much noise".

The behaviour of not-resilient participants apparently demands a lot of attention from the teachers in School environment 2. The access to good education of all pupils in the class appears to be limited as a result of the behaviour of not-resilient pupils. School environment 2 is apparently not able to maintain the order and strictness all the participants appear to have a need for. School environment 2 does not appear to be able to get to *offering* good education.

The behaviour of not-resilient participants in School environment 2 limits the resilient participants not only in their access to *good education,* but also in their *access* to safety. The teacher from the above-mentioned quote does not realise Participant 330-S2-C1-F-R is absent to participate in an interview with the researcher. She was too busy with the rowdy behaviour of not-resilient participants to notice Participant 330-S2-C1-F-R. Furthermore, the behaviour of not-resilient participants in School environment 2 limits the access to safety of resilient participants because they limit the creation and maintenance of constructive relationships with adults as a result of their commotion. According to resilient Participant 330-S2-C1-F-R, good contact between her and teachers is established because she, at her own initiative, likes to start conversations with the teachers when she is in class. However, these conversations often do not come about because of the commotion in class:

> (…) And if it is a fun class, then the teacher is also relaxed and then you can just talk to her and then it is fun. (…) Yes, it doesn't need to be a serious conversation, but simply that you can tell a joke without her getting angry or starting to scream to someone out of nowhere. (…) Because yes, if there is such noise in class, if you talk to her then, she will likely tell you to get back to your work. (…) And if it is quiet, then you can just have a conversation with her. And that's what I will do most of the time, then the four of us will sit in a row and then she will stand in front of us and then we can talk to her. (…) But (…) she does not want to be our mentor anymore… and so she isn't our mentor anymore. A stricter teacher now is.

Participant 330-S2-C1-F-R, despite the commotion, looks for moments to still enter into a conversation with her mentor in that way to establish a good relationship. However, as a result of the commotion in the class, this mentor disappears and is replaced by a stricter teacher.

These findings were only made in School environment 2. In the other school environments, not-resilient participants appear to mainly limit their own access to *good education* and *safety* and to a lesser degree that of the resilient participants. In the School environments 3 and 5, enough other factors seem to be present to grant resilient participants access to *safety* and *good education*. How resilient participants in School environment 2 appear to still be able to develop themselves competently despite the limited access to *good education* and *safety* in this school environment will

be discussed in Paragraph 5.5.5, in which the relationship between the home environment and the school environment will be the main focus of attention.

Based on the findings from School environment 2, the researcher wrote the following logbook notes:

Logbook: 13-10-2005
As a result of what participants say about maintaining order by teachers, I realise that pupils (probably particularly not-resilient pupils) individually have a need for the teacher to have control over "the class as a whole". The individual pupils go along with the group process of the class, but also have an individual need for order. Teachers and pupils are not on opposite ends regarding this matter.

In the following paragraphs it will be discussed whether and how resilient and not-resilient middle-adolescents *can* get access to resilience promoting factors in the school environment.

5.5.4 THE IMPLICATIONS OF DIFFERENCES IN ACCESS TO RESILIENCE PROMOTING FACTORS FOR REQUIREMENTS ON THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

5.5.4.1 Specific requirements on the school environment

It appears that middle-adolescents who develop themselves *in the school environment* in a resilient way, act in "risky" situations in such a way that a problematic situation (negative consequence of their own behaviour) is prevented. Their actions appear to correlate with their *overview, insight* and *positive future expectations*.

Middle-adolescents who develop themselves in a not-resilient way *in the school environment*, appear to act in such a way in "risky" situations that eventually a problematic situation (negative consequence of the own behaviour) will occur. Their actions appear to correlate with a lack of *overview, insight* and *positive future expectations*.

As a result of their different command of *overview, insight* and *positive future expectations* and the different behavioural characteristics that relate to these, their school environment has to meet different requirements for them to gain access to

resilience promoting factors in their school environment. These different requirements will be discussed and illustrated in the following paragraph.

5.5.4.2   Gaining access to resilience promoting factors in the school environment: Resilient middle-adolescents

In regard to the establishment of *overview, insight* and *positive future expectations,* it can be stated that resilient middle-adolescents either *have these* and act accordingly in provoking situations, which they deal with successfully as a result, or *gain* these by being confronted with provoking situations. Gaining (more) *overview, insight* and *positive future expectations* is an outcome of the developmental process which characterises resilient middle-adolescents. In the developmental process, the *overview, insight* and *positive future expectations* that has been gained, can also be applied to other, new situations (transfer). In *having or gaining overview, insight* and *positive future expectations,* relationships between the resilient middle-adolescents and others inside and outside of the school environment play a role. In these relationships, the risk is sometimes addressed and sometimes the relationships offer help in solving the problem or dealing with the challenge in a constructive manner.

Resilient participants mention the following relationships in the school environment as contributing to their resilience: Friends, Teachers and Mentors.

Friends

School environment 2

Participant 326-S2-C4-F-R:

> I was not the Participant 326-S2-C4-F-R I was supposed to be. I was so afraid of everything. If something happened I would look up. I would only look a little and as soon as (the tough girls in the class) looked at me I would get to my work right away, as if I did not see a thing. (…) They just had power over me. (…) Then my friend and I started to think about solutions. Especially not reacting and trying to be yourself. Just showing that you can be fun too and can act normal. (…) "Stupid bitch!" a boy said in the back of the class. (…) I really just started laughing. I was like "Go ahead. I am not going to say anything about it, I just laugh and then I will see what happens". Yes, he looked quite silly. I looked at my friend and I started to laugh really loudly. Then it was school holiday the next day and I never saw them again and I laughed. We simply had a lot of fun then. (…)Maybe that has also been the step for me to feel more confident really. (…) Yes, I do think it played a role. (…) Frankly, I got much more confidence. I felt stronger as a person. Especially, during the summer holiday, between last year

> and this year, I got a lot more self-confidence because I follow up on things now. I was always afraid, somewhat withdrawn. And now I am like "It is better to do what you want yourself". "You do not have to be ashamed of anything". And I used to always do that, just out of fear. It has been a very big victory for me to become like that.

The resilient Participant 326-S2-C4-F-R identifies "being afraid" as a risk because she has *positive future expectations* of the goal of "Being yourself" that she wants to reach. Her fear limits her being herself. She looks for skills in others in her environment to deal with the challenge constructively. She reacts to this challenge by acting constructively herself and by asking for help from others. The outcome of the *developmental process* is not merely that she is no longer afraid, but also that she has more self-confidence and new convictions that help her take on new challenges (transfer).

Teachers

School environment 3

Participant 522-S3-C1-F-R:

> I have also gotten low marks. I have started working harder because that did freak me out a bit. Yes, I do have to do a little better now… (…) Then those teachers say "Do you understand now why we gave you those low marks? Yes, that did scare you, didn't it!?" So yes, you will start doing your very best. Yes, I did get low marks, but because, for example, I would get a failing mark then you do feel kind of bad like "Hey, I did not try hard enough".

The teachers of Participant 522-S3-C1-F-R give her *overview* of the consequences of her behaviour by giving her low marks. They give her *insight* into preventing negative consequences by explaining to her *why* she received these low marks. She apparently has enough *insight* into her skills and opportunities to "try harder" and enough trust and *positive future expectations* that she will also achieve it.

Mentors

School environment 5

Participant 552-S5-C2-F-R

> At the start of the third year I got her as my mentor. She asked me whether I wanted to get my diploma. I said "I would very much like to get my diploma". They had told me "Your third year counts as half of your national exams". "Look,

> if you start doing well in the third year, let's say, if you start well, you will end well, with good marks, and if your behaviour is in order then you have sufficiently scored on 50% of your exams. And I followed that advice up to this day.

The mentor of Participant 552-S5-C2-F-R gives her *overview* of the school system at the beginning of her third year. She also gives her *insight* into the skills she has to reach her goal. Furthermore, she expresses trust in her by telling her she can achieve getting her diploma *(positive future expectations)*.

5.5.4.3 Gaining access to resilience promoting factors in the school environment: Not-Resilient middle-adolescents

Not-resilient middle-adolescents show little *overview, insight,* and *positive future expectations*. In regard to the establishment of *overview, insight,* and *positive future expectations,* it can be stated that not-resilient middle-adolescents either *do not have* these and, because of that, act without *overview, insight* and *positive future expectations* in the school environment, or *do not obtain these by themselves* when they are confronted with provoking situations.

The lack of *overview* prior to the negative consequence is what is first noticed with not-resilient youngsters. The lacking *overview* is confirmed by the fact that various not-resilient youngsters speak of a big change or a learning moment for them when they have to repeat a class. Because of the negative consequence, it becomes clear to them what the consequences of certain behaviour are and what the risks of certain behaviour apparently are. This is how the youngsters begin to develop a certain degree of *overview* of the situation.

For gaining *overview,* not-resilient middle-adolescents are more dependent on their school environment than resilient middle-adolescents. However, as a result of their low level of activity in constructive relationships with adults in the school environment, they appear to value warnings of these adults about the risks of their behaviour less. Because of this, they do not experience the presence of help when constructively dealing with the risks as swiftly.. They have little *insight* into their own skills and opportunities to prevent risks or to solve problematic situations. Because they have little *insight* into own opportunities, they have few *positive future expectations* of a positive outcome of their efforts.

The dependency of the not-resilient participants on their school environment for gaining *overview* and for changing their behaviour elicits different "demands" on their school environment than those of resilient participants. Not-resilient participants appear to change their behaviour when the school environment provides them with *overview* and when the school environment changes the circumstances in which the not-resilient participants receive education.

School environment 2

The not-resilient Participant 327-S2-C1,C2/3-M-NR has quit school prematurely. He has not experienced enough contribution from School environment 2 to his successful development to finish his education. It appears that for him School environment 2 provided him with too little *overview*. School environment 2 appears to have changed little in the environment to create an environment for Participant 327-S2-C1,C2/3-M-NR in which he gains *access* to *good education*. For other not-resilient participants in the research the school was able to change their school environment in such a way that the environment suited these participants more properly *for getting access to good education*. Some examples of that will follow:

Because of her lack of *overview* of what the school expects of her and what she needs to do for her school subjects, the not-resilient Participant 331-S2-C4-F-NR did not have a fun time at school. Her school results were very poor. When she eventually was not supposed to pass her grade, School environment 2 placed her back to a lower level and provided her with a contract in which clear *overview* was given of desirable and undesirable behaviour, of the way in which the marking system at school operates and of the consequences of undesirable behaviour. As a result of this *overview,* Participant 331-S2-C4-F-NR changed her behaviour. Subsequently, she understood the teaching materials better, she had more fun being at school, her marks were higher and she received more positive feedback of teachers. On the question what the school has contributed to her change and how the school could have contributed to this change earlier, she replies:

> Address us more one on one. That we should really do our exams. Yes, I have now had many more conversations about fourth grade and how that will be and that I should start doing my best. (…) There were also conversations about that contract, about the work at hand in the fourth. And about how I will succeed.

> How to get your marks. That is very hard. When I, for example, would get a five out of ten, I had to get a seven out of ten, because then I would have gained a point. Very strange how that went. I already received my report card. They included a letter with it: if I receive (…) a five, then (for) the rest I need a six and, if I receive a five twice, then I need a seven for the rest and if I have a four then I need an eight and a seven. (…) And if I am doing like I am doing right now, then I will pass, they say.
>
> Because now we have this measure with 4B, that when you are thrown out of the class you have to stay till half past four for two days. (…) And because of that, we are also a lot quieter.

Firstly, these interview data show that School environment 2 transfers *overview* to Participant 331-S2-C4-F-NR: which consequences her behaviour has, what the risks of certain behaviour are and which marks are needed for the achievement of her goal. By telling her she will achieve her goal as a result of how she is behaving now, they give her *insight* into her opportunities and skills to reach a goal. They provide her with *positive future expectations* in the form of trust that she can also achieve her goal.

The effect of the intervention of the School environment 2 on the behaviour of the not-resilient Participant 331-S2-C4-F-NR is the following:

> Now I do pay attention and I do make my work. Now it also much more fun and I enjoy school a lot more. If you know more…. (…) And if you receive higher marks, then it is just so much more fun. It was fun in the first, second, third (grade) as well, but now the work is just fun: the classes. Because now I know. I now know how I should do it. For example, last year I did not know how I was supposed to do math, because I didn't study for it. And I did not know how it worked. So now I also study for it and I am just cooperating well. And I also pay attention now. That way, I remember it again.

Participant 331-S2-C4-F-NR literally describes how gaining *insight* into how she "should do" math gives her more pleasure in the classes. Because of that she now participates in the classes and receives higher marks. In School environment 2 there always was a supply of *insight* into how you "should do", but, because of her own behaviour, the not-resilient Participant 331-S2-C4-F-NR had no *access* to getting this *insight*. Her behaviour only changed when she got *overview* of the consequences of her behaviour. The change in her behaviour takes place under continuous supervision by the school environment. The strict consequence "sitting until half past four for two days" ensures that the class is more peaceful, resulting in Participant 331-S2-C4-F-

NR also being able to behave peacefully. By behaving more peacefully, she gets *access* to *insight* into the skills and opportunities she has in order to achieve a goal. By behaving more peacefully, she also gets *access* to constructive relationships with adults in the school environment that can provide her with *positive future expectations* in the form of *trust in* her achieving her goal. However, for changing her behaviour, Participant 331-S2-C4-F-NR remains dependent on the strict consequences of undesirable behaviour and of the peace within the class.

School environment 3

School environment 3 has contributed to the competent development of the not-resilient Participant 479-S3-C3-F-NR by drawing up a kind of contract regarding her behaviour in the class. The dependency on the school environment for adjusting behaviour of not-resilient participants is illustrated with this example. She has been hearing for years from teachers that she is too loud in class and that she really should get more serious to be able to pass the year. Lately, Participant 479-S3-C3-F-NR no longer enjoyed school, because the teachers are always negative about her during pupil meetings. She is not able to adjust her behaviour and the negativity of the teachers causes her to not be motivated at all to go to school. She does not appear to be able to have *insight* into the skills and opportunities to change her behaviour. When the school environment takes action by placing her separately in class, Participant 479-S3-C3-F-NR finally gets *access* to *good education* and to constructive relationships with adults in the school environment. Because her behaviour in the class changes, she gets access to achieving good marks and to positive feedback of teachers. As a result she gets more *insight* into her own abilities and skills to achieve a goal and to gain more *positive future expectations* of the achievement of this goal.

Together with the aunt of Participant 479-S3-C3-F-NR, School environment 3 eventually thought of a way in which Participant 479-S3-C3-F-NR would be able to concentrate better without her having to learn a different kind of behaviour for it. They give her a different spot in the classroom:

> Well, last week my mother came to school and then it was all very negative. (…) The whole class had to go get the reports. It was the first report of this year and afterwards all parents have to come. And then they said "It really is not going well with Participant 479-S3-C3-F-NR ". "She talks too much during the

> class, loud and she doesn't do her work". And then we have looked at the cause. That I'm sitting with my friends too often.
>
> We have (…) made an agreement that I will no longer sit next to them during the class. They are in front and I am in the back. Yes, then she said "If you abide by that, we will see again, and if you still don't manage, then we will have to think of something else". Then my mother said "You are just going to have to keep to that" and then I said "Yes, OK". (…) And I am just keeping to it. Yes, it does go better. I am able to better concentrate on my work. Yes, since I had a conversation with my mother I keep to that. Yes, that was last week.

Until the environment changes, Participant 479-S3-C3-F-NR has no *insight* into her own skills and opportunities to change her behaviour. When the environment changes, her behaviour changes too. She does not appear to *develop* new skills this way. A transfer of new skills to new situations of a different or a similar nature is not possible because of this. However, school environment 3 did contribute to her successful development this way. By realising that Participant 479-S3-C3-F-NR cannot (yet) change her behaviour and by changing the environment, Participant 479-S3-C3-F-NR is better able to be quiet during the class. That way she gains more *access* to the experience of *good education.*.

Thirdly, School environment 3 offers Participant 479-S3-C3-F-NR *positive future expectations* of achieving the set goal of a diploma and they offer her trust. By changing the behaviour of Participant 479-S3-C3-F-NR, she obtains *access* to constructive relationships with adults at the school environment and to positive feedback on her behaviour:

> And past week it has been going well again…. Yes, they (the teachers) do tell you that too (…) told me it was going well. Something like "It is going in the right direction, keep it up"… (…) There is this teacher, who is sweet, I think. Yes. She often talks to me about it. (…) Almost every day. (…). Especially if I am not doing well in the class. And we always have conversations, always, really. Then she will say, "I only mean well for you and if you want to get your diploma, then you should really start doing your best now, because you are not going to make it like this…" (…) Yes, almost every day. I really hear the same story every day. Every now and then I think "I know this by now, all right?" (…) Just during the class, but often also outside of the class. If the day went well, I will go right over to her and say "It really went well today!" (…) She never says "Yes, you are a nuisance". She says "Just get started on your work, the rest can wait". Yes, she does not think I am a nuisance and she keeps saying "I know that you can do it, so start doing it".

That the change does not immediately contribute to an internal learning process is illustrated by Participant 479-S3-C3-F-NR in her answer to the question whether the positive reinforcement of her mentor helps her in changing her behaviour:

> No, I am like "just cut it out…" Because she has said it so many times. And then I am like "I know this by now". Whether it helps, not really, no.

Not-resilient middle-adolescents appear less "teachable" than resilient middle-adolescents.

School environment 5

Another example of how the school environment might contribute to the successful development of not-resilient participants is the way in which School environment 5 has contributed to the change in behaviour of Participant 573-S5-C4-F-NR.

> Then, at some point I talked to a teacher at school. (…) That was my teacher English at the time. *(…)*. She is my mentor. (…) At some point she came to me and then she wanted to talk to me. (…) About my behaviour, about math and those sorts of things. (…) That I really should change my behaviour. That I otherwise might not pass because of my behaviour (instead of because of my marks). Yes, and I did not want that because I did want to finish my school. So yes, then I decided to change my behaviour…

Firstly, the mentor of Participant 573-S5-C4-F-NR in School environment 5 provides *overview* of the school system (you might also have to repeat a class as a result of your behaviour instead of your marks) and *overview* of the immediate consequences of her behaviour (if you go on like this, you will not pass).

Secondly, the math teacher at School environment 5 reminds Participant 573-S5-C4-F-NR repeatedly of the consequences of her behaviour. For instance, on the question what has helped Participant 573-S5-C4-F-NR in changing her behaviour, she replies:

> Being sent out often enough during math class. Simply each class. At some point I thought "Enough already".

By constantly and consistently reminding Participant 573-S5-C4-F-NR of the consequences of her undesirable behaviour, eventually Participant 573-S5-C4-F-NR acquires *overview* of the risks that are the result of her behaviour.

After Participant 573-S5-C4-F-NR acquired *overview, insight* was needed in her own opportunities and skills to adjust her behaviour. Eventually, the teachers in School environment 5, together with Participant 573-S5-C4-F-NR, have acquired this *insight* by allowing Participant 573-S5-C4-F-NR to listen to music during tests. This way she is able to concentrate and make her tests better:

> Listening to music. (…) Yes, everybody was allowed to listen to music. Not during a test. I was the only one who could listen to music during a test. (…) With almost all teachers. (…) Because, when I am making a test, at some point, I just can't concentrate anymore. I can't concentrate that long.… And then I will just start looking around me. And then it looks like (…) you are looking at someone else's test paper. By (listening to) music, I do not hear anything else. This was, I can concentrate on the questions. (The teachers have found out) because each class I would just be listening to music and I would not let anything get to me because I wouldn't hear anything anyway. The teachers noticed that. (…) They just noticed that I was much quieter during the class and that I was not being so irritating. Then they said "You might as well try it with the test as well".

To arrive at *insight* into the skills and opportunities that Participant 573-S5-C4-F-NR has to adjust her behaviour and to develop successfully, *overview* of her biggest risk factors needs to be acquired first. With Participant 573-S5-C4-F-NR, her lack of concentration, in combination with the noisiness of the class, form the greatest risk factor.

It appears that a positive change in the behaviour occurs with most not-resilient youngsters when *overview* and *positive future expectations* are eventually provided to the youngster by others in the school environment. However, for many not-resilient youngsters this *overview* and *positive future expectations* are acquired at a late stage, *after* an undesirable consequence of their behaviour, such as having to repeat a grade or even leaving school, has occurred. The school environment appears not to be able to contribute much to sharpening *insight* into the skills and opportunities not-resilient youngsters have for constructively dealing with challenging circumstances. Not-resilient middle-adolescents need external changes to take place, so that they can adjust their behaviour to the changing external circumstances.

Once the *overview* has been achieved in terms of consequences for certain behaviour, then not-resilient middle-adolescents have a lasting need for being reminded of the

consequences of their behaviour and for a strict direction by teachers and for external supervision of their behaviour. This direction and supervision consist of making clear which consequences (mainly having to leave school or being put back a grade) go with which behaviour.

A noteworthy difference between the content of the relationship with the school environment of the resilient and not-resilient youngsters is the degree in which the school environment needs to be adjusted in order to meet the youngsters' needs. A lasting dependency on the school environment can be observed with not-resilient youngsters. To change the behaviour of not-resilient youngsters, lasting direction is needed, whereas an internal learning process takes place with the resilient youngsters. It is apparent that much less of an internal learning process takes place with not-resilient middle-adolescents: a change in behaviour does not seem to lead to the opportunity for applying this change to different situations (transfer).

The basis for the differences in constructive relationships between middle-adolescents and supervisors, such as mentors, teachers or friends, in regard to the establishment of resilience processes will be discussed in the following paragraphs.

5.5.5   THE HOME ENVIRONMENT IN RELATION TO THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

5.5.5.1   Introduction

Resilient middle-adolescents are active in interaction with adults and/or have constructive friendships which have either *prepared* them for "risky situations" before the "risky situation" occurs or which *assist with* constructively dealing with this situation. Both during the *preparation for* "risky situations", as well as during the *assistance* with "risky situations", the adults or the friends facilitate the youngsters' *overview, insight* and *positive future expectations*.

With resilient middle-adolescents, this facilitation takes place in at least the home environment. The facilitation is established by actual initiatives of the parents or one of the parents. The parents suggest actual behavioral norms (or tips) to the middle-adolescent, resulting in *insight* with the middle-adolescent into different ways of

acting in occurring situations. Furthermore, they express trust in the opportunities of the middle-adolescent (*positive future expectations*).

The facilitation especially takes place by repeating conversations with one of the parents who asks them how things are going at school. One of the parents provides actual examples of possible situations and the desired behaviour that should follow. The acknowledgment by the parent of the possible challenges the middle-adolescent will meet on his path, such as the challenge to steal, boredom in the street, distraction from homework and the possible negative effect of these challenges on the important set goals, seems crucial to the applicability of the tips. The acknowledgment and realisation of potential situations that could present themselves to a middle-adolescent shows *overview* of the situation by the parent. In the relationship with the middle-adolescent, this *overview* is facilitated.

5.5.5.2 The home environment in relation to the school environment: Resilient participants

The home environment in relation to School environment 2: resilient participants

The resilient Participant 326-S2-C4-F-R from School environment 2 indicates the difference between her relationship with her mother and the one a friend has with her mother:

> She has very little contact. I have a lot of contact with my mother and she hardly ever talks. I always talk with my mother about everything. Really kind of stupid. I sometimes talk about what has happened at school, and I never heard her mother ask that either. (…) My mother even calls from work when I come from school, like "Are you going to do your homework now?" And in the bathroom we have this paper hanging and all my homework is on that. Everybody from the class has a paper like that. My mother did not allow me to keep that with me; it had to go in the bathroom. Then she could see when I had homework. (…) She sure pays attention to that. I also think it is very important that she does that because sometimes I forget. You got children in my class who don't even know we have homework and I know because my mother will tell me. So it is very important, especially for my concentration, because I don't have that at all. I do not pay attention to anything. (…) Yes, actually, my mother plays a very big role with my school. Yes. She helps me very well, actually with everything and that is what she is mother for, but with school especially. With economy. (…) She explains a lot of assignments. Especially accounting. (…) She will explain and when I do not understand right away, she will explain again and then I will understand and then she will show me an example of how you could do it too and how you can remember it.

The mother of Participant 326-S2-C4-F-R facilitates *overview* of school tasks of the participant and checks her steps. She also offers help in achieving good results. Earlier it has been discussed how School environment 2 only contributes to the experience of *good education* in a very limited degree. The reason that Participant 326-S2-C4-F-R, despite this limited contribution, still develops successfully in School environment 2 appears to be linked to the strong facilitation of *overview, insight* and *positive future expectations* by her mother.

The home environment in relation to School environment 3: resilient participants

The resilient Participant 519-S3-C3-F-NR from School environment 3 illustrates the role his home situation plays in his development as follows:

> I just think it also depends on how the parents raise you. If they don't give you attention and never sit with you around the table, then you start thinking "They don't care". Whether you won't come home for ten days or are gone forever or whether each day the police is at the door (…) (They have to) keep an eye on you. They also have to know what is happening. (…) Ask questions, pay attention and, for example, when you say "I am going to a friend" they then ask "Can I have the number of that friend?" Just to be sure. For example, when you say "I will be home at nine", and at half past ten you are still not home, then they will make a call. And maybe you are not going to that friend at all. (…) Also pay attention who you hang out with. Most of the times, they also know what kind of children they are. Also through the parents. Through here and there, they will hear stuff. (…) Most of the times in the mosque, or just in the neighbourhood.

> Most of the times I will just sit at the table with my father. Then I will just talk. Then he will give me some advice, put good things in my head. (…) Most of the times in the evening, before I go to sleep. Then he says "Come sit over here. After I just ate or something. (…) I will come to the table and then he wants to talk to me. Then he will ask "How are things going at school?". And "How are things outside of school, did you do something?" "How are things with your friends?"? And "Hang out with the right friends and not with the bad ones".

> And yes, most of the times he says "Those children who wear expensive clothes or who have money in their pocket, you should also think about how they got that money. If you want to become a thief, you will end up regretting it (…) if you have a record and no diploma (…) then you can just forget about it". And "use your time". "Don't come home, throw your bag in a corner and go back outside. You should also stay home a while, go over everything, you need to do this, need to do that". (…) No arguments, good marks, behaviour, never be too late. (…) I got a letter at home and then he will address it with me "Go to bed early, wake up".

My father always says: "Try to avoid arguing." He says "You do have to always fight for your right". "Just with words. " Someone wants to do something you do not want, you just say "I do not want that, that's it". (…) He does understand though. He knows how it is to be 15 years old, adolescent. He has been there. He knows that you sometimes argue and steal something sometimes. That happens to everybody.

The father of the resilient Participant 519-S3-C3-F-NR has *overview* of the risks the participant might encounter in the school environment. He facilitates this *overview* to the participant and also presents *insight* into the skills the participant has to constructively deal with the risks.

The mother of the resilient Participant 488-S3-C2-F-R from School environment 3 relates the difficulties she experiences to the chances she gets to go to school:

I also just have to go to school because of my mother. (…) I really can not stay home! Other children stay home sometimes, but I really am not allowed to stay home, then I get into an argument. She will just put me out on the street, you know! "To school!" "And don't let me hear that you weren't there!" I also bet that, if she puts me outside and I wouldn't go to school, that she would just call the school…or she would bring me to school. I really have to go to school. I really am not allowed to stay home. If I am sick, then I can only stay home if I have a fever. Or I have to have a really bad stomach ache or headache, but I am not allowed to stay home just like that.

That is because my mother is also somewhat of an asthma patient. So, she has many medicines. Because of that she is actually like "There you go, start walking!" "You can do a lot!" "Enjoy for now!" "Now you can still do fun things and later you might no longer be able to".

(…) "And it is for later", she always says. If I do not go to school, I will not really have a good future. If you don't have a diploma, then you also can not work. My mother says "Then you can only be a cleaning lady". She says "Then you have to go clean restrooms, that's fun!" "You better go to school first and get diplomas and then later you can just have a fun job". And that is true. Because when you get diplomas now you can just choose what you want to do yourself.

The resilient Participant 487-S3-C2-F-R from School environment 3 relates her motivation to achieve well to the way in which her parents deal with her in regard to school:

(…) Yes, especially my parents and such, I do not want to disappoint them. That is also what I do it for. "We can do fun things", my parents say, "but you are going to have to do your best at school". So they do want something in return. Yes, like "We will go on a holiday, but then I also want you to have done your very best and

that you pass so that we can keep going with our minds at ease". I do have to do my best at school, but then, at the end of the year, we will do fun things.

(…) Yes, when I, for example, have received low marks again then I do feel somewhat guilty. Like "I have disappointed them". Because of course my parents are not going to be happy about it…

The parents of Participant 487-S3-C2-F-R facilitate *overview* and *positive future expectations*.

The parents of the resilient Participant 522-S3-C1-F-R from School environment 3 encourage her to reflect on her behaviour and decisions:

They (my parents) will say "How was school, what did you do, what have you learned? And how were the teachers, did something happen?" (…) My parents also ask me about my future: "What do you want to become?" and "What for?", "Why?" (…) And then they will say "Do you think that is hard or not?", "Why don't you want to pursue this?" "Oh, for that reason, but you could always try, right?!"

The home environment in relation to School environment 5: resilient participants

The parents of the resilient Participant 552-S5-C2-F-R from School environment 5 supply her with *overview*, *insight* and *positive future expectations* and make the connection between their own challenging circumstances and the opportunities Participant 552-S5-C2-F-R receives in the school environment.

I do not want to end up like my parents, having it be that challenging to achieve something. (…) Where there's a will, there's a way. You could end up everywhere. And it is easier to get there with a diploma than without. One evening I sat in the train with my mother and I asked my mother whether or not she was going to get that license. And then she said to me "Girl, I will do everything I can to get that license. This is what I want and I am going for it". And that thought always remained with me. (…) (My mother) told me about her youth, what had happened to her and about that time. Things are very challenging in the Netherlands right now. …Also to get a job I think. My mother also says "Finish your school, because you should not take me as an example, that I did not finish my school, because those were different times than now". Because in her time, at least, even though she had not finished her school, she did have a job. She could earn money and in these times you can't. They demand a diploma and yes, you do have to be experienced. (…) Yes, and more people are unemployed at this moment and that makes me strong to still continue to studying. And the confidence and encouragement that my father and my mother give me. (…) "You will get your diploma. You should not be afraid that you are not going to make it because of the nerves, you will make it. Just do the best you can". (…) Let's say when I am just sitting in the living room and we will be talking, then we are talking about

school most of the time, about what happened that day, what I did, what I learned and yes, those kinds of things.

At least one parent/caretaker in the home environment of resilient middle-adolescents points out *overview, insight* and *positive future expectations* in one-on-one conversations. With this "baggage" these youngsters arrive at school wearing a certain pair of lenses; a road map of some sort for the school environment. For some resilient middle-adolescents, right from the beginning, an end goal (get diploma) and a number of ways to proceed (e.g. listen to the teachers, behave well) are written on this road map. For other resilient middle-adolescents the map is more detailed.

The resilient middle-adolescents proved to be able to create access to resilience promoting factors in the school environment by the above-mentioned facilitation in the context of the home environment. This skill is expressed in the area of constructively dealing with peers and adults within the school environment, such as teachers and janitors, and active participation in education. It appears this access is established because the resilient middle-adolescent estimates the value of the factors based on possible events in the future. This appreciation shows *overview* of the school environment and the events that may occur in there. By having the *overview* that resilient middle-adolescents have of the school context, they are able to identify risks for achieving the goal they have set together with the parents. This goal is repeatedly formulated and mentioned in specific situations in their relationships within the context of the home environment.

The behaviour of the middle-adolescent in the school environment leads to reactions the youngster receives in the form of reports, reactions by fellow pupils and reactions by teachers. When the reactions act as a challenge for the youngster, because the environment appears to require a different sort of behaviour of the middle-adolescent than the youngster has shown up to then, the youngster has his road map and his capacity to enter into constructive relationships with others. When the road map shows enough ways to constructively deal with the challenge (such as in a more detailed version of the road map), then the youngster will be able to make a connection between the challenge that has occurred and his own behaviour and the ways of acting mentioned on the road map. The middle-adolescent knows to adjust his

behaviour to the situation in such a way that his behaviour becomes desirable and it meets the requirements the school environment sets. By adjusting his/her behaviour, the youngster develops more skills and abilities for constructively dealing with certain situations and the youngster enlarges his behavioural repertoire.

When the road map does not mention enough ways to constructively deal with the challenge, then;

- The resilient youngster will have at least one constructive relationship in his/her home environment in which he/she is able to talk about the "challenge". This way, he will gain *overview, insight* and *positive future expectations*;
- And/or the youngster will be able to, with his capacity to enter into constructive relationships with others, find others in his/her school environment who can help him/her adjust his/her behaviour in a constructive way.

In this situation, in which an occurring challenge is constructively dealt with, with the help of current constructive relationships, growth of the behavioral repertoire of the youngster (*insight*), a growing *overview* of situations that might occur and of the school environment (*overview*) and a growing trust in one's own capacities (*positive future expectations*) occur. In a way, the road map becomes more extensive and more detailed.

The content of the relationship with the others in the school environment at that point consists of remembering the goal (providing *overview*), and/or giving an acting repertoire which enables them to reach the set goal (providing *insight*) and/or expressing trust in the youngster that he/she is able to reach the set goal (providing *positive future expectations*).

5.5.5.3 The home environment in relation to the school environment: Not-Resilient participants

The "road map" from home to school that not-resilient youngsters receive differs in a number of ways from the road map of resilient youngsters. A similarity is that on both the resilient youngsters' as well as on the not-resilient youngsters' map, the goals "get diploma" and "good future" can be found. The implementation of this future image does not differ significantly between resilient and not-resilient youngsters either.

Firstly, regarding the differences, it appears that on the "road map" of the not-resilient youngsters less *overview* has been given of the possible challenges/problems the youngster might encounter in the school environment. The way in which not-resilient youngsters talk with parents about school seems more reactive then pro-active: one talks about school when the school calls about negative behaviour of the youngster or when negative things are said during a parent meeting.

For the most part, not-resilient youngsters do not speak with parents about school in terms of actual examples of situations which occur or might occur (*overview*), not about actual ways of acting when certain situations occur (*insight*) and not about rewards when certain goals are reached (*positive future expectations*). Furthermore, not-resilient middle-adolescents are rarely asked questions about their behaviour, about the reasons for their behaviour and about the consequences of their behaviour. According to the not-resilient youngsters, the parents do show confidence or hope the youngster will get his diploma (form of *positive future expectations*).

Furthermore, the not-resilient youngster appears inactive in his/her relationship with the parents concerning the school environment in terms of discussing current situations or challenges. Possibly in part because the not-resilient youngster does not experience the challenges and, in part, because the not-resilient youngster believes the parents "can't help anyway".

The home environment in relation to School environment 2: not-resilient participants
There is little effective interaction between the not-resilient Participant 331-S2-C4-F-NR and her parents. Participant 331-S2-C4-F-NR has the impression her mother could not have done anything about her behaviour. Their interaction is reactive. Their interaction is a result of bad news from school.

Participant 331-S2-C4-F-NR

> Yes, my mother would then say stuff like… "You should do your best more"… Yes, of course I did not like that, but what is my mother going to do about it? (…) My father never talks about it. (…). Yes, for example, when something has happened, then I will tell my mother and otherwise not really. She does say "How was it at school?" and then I say "Fun. I never feel like talking, I am always so tired.

The home environment in relation to School environment 3: not-resilient participants

The parents and the not-resilient Participant 479-S3-C3-F-NR from School environment 3 talk in a "reactive" way with each other about the school environment: as a result of negative report consultations.

> Well, we do not talk about it much, only during report consultation or whatever… If it is not going well or something. (…) When I go to my cousin (I often go to her house after school) her mother always asks "How were things at school?" And then I think "My mother never asks me that!" (…) Recently I told my father "Dad, I am going to be a ground stewardess" and then he said "Yes, ok". (…) He often says "Yes, you want to always become everything, but at school you don't do a thing", or he says "You want to become everything, but you do not want to do anything for it". He is right about that. (…) No, he has no idea about what I should or could become. My mother always says to me "Why don't you become a real estate agent?" And then I say " You have to be one of those highly-educated frumps for that"… That just does not suit me. (…) Simply, because I do not have the patience for that. All those years of studying, I don't feel like that. (…) I always try to end the conversation as soon as possible. Like, yes, sure… And then I leave. (Of course, they do not) start about it out of nowhere either. Often it has to do with a report consultation and if they are at home then they start talking about it (…) Then she will ask something like "How are things going otherwise at school? You should do your best, if you know for sure that you do not want to do anything for it, then you might as well stay home, because then it is just a waste of time. You will then go to school all those years for nothing".

No transfer of *overview, insight* and *positive future expectations* takes place; partly because Participant 479-S3-C3-F-NR avoids the conversations, partly because the parents do not appear to facilitate a lot.

The home environment in relation to School environment 5: not-resilient participants
Because of her background, not-resilient Participant 573-S5-C4-F-NR wants to get her diploma; her mother hopes she will get her diploma and says that she has confidence in it, but there is little effective interaction between her and her parents:

> My brother and sister also went to this school and had to repeat the third grade twice. They have no diploma. So then I am the only one who got his diploma at this school. (…). Then I had to repeat a grade. My mother did not know most of the times that I was not at school. I was always at a friend of mine. (…) Yes, she always asks me how it was at school. Well, she knows how I feel about school, so I do not need to say much. I only have to say two things and then that is enough. A six letter word and then she knows. BORING. A six letter word. And then she knows enough. And if she doesn't ask, then my stepfather will ask. (And then I say BORING) and then he says "Yes, that is always the case, right?". Then I say "Yes. That is why". Then nothing. Then I ask how his day at work was. Then that's over and I will go on the computer or watch some TV. We hardly ever talk about

    it. No. My mother just hopes that I will get my diploma so that I can achieve
    what I want.

Compared to the description of the road map of resilient youngsters it may be argued that the road map of the not-resilient youngsters does not mention enough ways of dealing constructively with occurring challenges. Not-resilient middle-adolescents also do not have at least one constructive relationship with one of the parents in which they are active and speak about the challenges. Therefore they do not seem to be facilitated with *overview, insight* and *positive future expectations*. It remains unclear whether the lack of a constructive relationship in the home environment with at least one of the parents can be contributed to inactivity of the youngster or of the parents, or if other reasons exist. However, a notion has been formed of parents who play a strongly directive role in the relationship between at least one of the parents and the resilient youngsters, a notion which cannot be found in the stories of the not-resilient youngsters.

At the same time the not-resilient youngsters are less capable or less willing to enter into constructive relationships with others in their school environment. When at the start the road map is not sufficient for constructively dealing with challenges, then the not-resilient youngsters are not able or willing to find others who can constructively help them to adjust their behaviour. The not-resilient youngster remains dependent on the environment. When the school environment actively approaches the youngster and keeps approaching him, constructive relationships with others in the school environment are formed. However, if the school environment does not remain active, the relationship deteriorates and the not-resilient youngsters are not able to maintain the contact themselves. The fact that the not-resilient youngster is able to consciously and systematically avoid the initiative of the school environment is visible as well.

A noteworthy observation is that the needs in the school environment described earlier partly are fulfilled by the home environment of resilient middle-adolescents: a situation that *stimulates, gives responsibility, motivates (by rewarding), navigates, sets clear boundaries* and *explains why school is important.* Furthermore, the school environment supplements the home environment by: *assisting* the pupils*, helping to solve problems, being clear about what the pupils are allowed to do and what not,*

ensuring a safe school environment, *arranging appointments*, *checking whether things are going well and contacting parents.* Not-resilient middle-adolescents have more need for the school environment because they do not seem to experience these factors in their home environment.

With the researcher the findings have resulted in a comparison with a spring: A certain spring may have a lot a force (potential resilience characteristics), can be stretched far with a certain weight (risk factors) and is still be able to come back to its original position after the weight has been removed (resilience). However, to make this possible, one end of the spring needs to be anchored to a strong base. Even though the spring might have a lot of force, if the spring is not anchored to anything, the spring will still fall, together with the heavy weight. It appears as if, even though the not-resilient middle-adolescents may have resilience within them, they do not have much of a solid base at home to hold themselves on to. They have the opportunity to hold onto the school environment for their basis but, as a result of their behaviour, they do not tend to mend the relationship that allows the spring to become attached to the school environment.

In Chapter 6, a bio-ecological interpretation of the qualitative research results will be provided and the qualitative research findings will be linked to relevant literature. Furthermore, the qualitative research results will be embedded in the quantitative results.