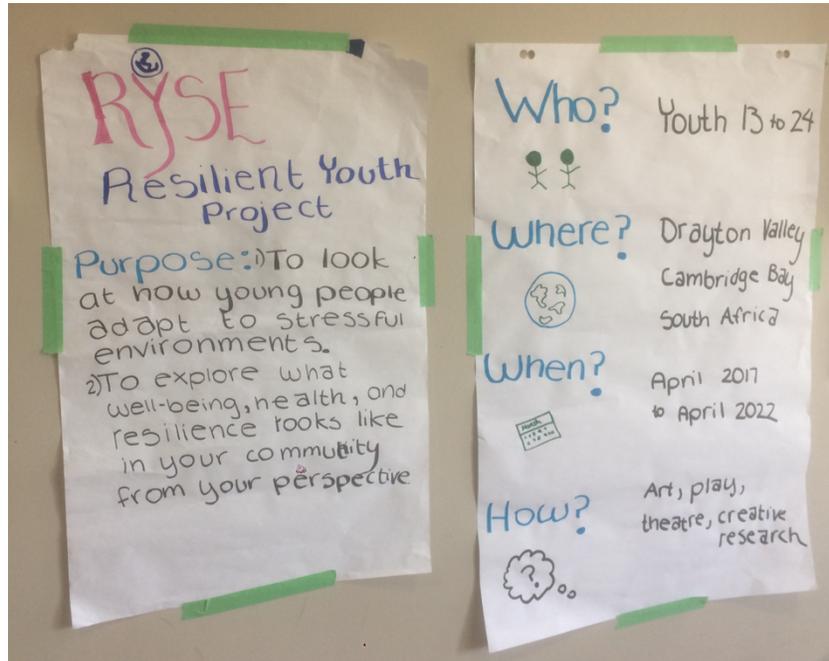


RYSE – RESILIENT YOUTH IN STRESSED ENVIRONMENTS

Resilient Youth in Stressed Environments (RYSE) is a large multi-disciplinary research project that generated from a participatory and collaborative effort between academic and community partners (Ungar, Theron et al., 2021). In 2017, Dr. Michael Ungar (Dalhousie University [Halifax, NS, Canada]) and Dr. Linda Theron (University of Pretoria [Pretoria, South Africa]) partnered with schools, community organizations, service providers and



government departments, along with youth in two communities that are severely impacted by the oil and gas industry: Drayton Valley (Alberta, Canada) and Secunda/eMbalenhle (Mpumalanga, South Africa). This partnership arose from the concerns of the community partners regarding the health and wellbeing of the young people living in Drayton Valley and Secunda/eMbalenhle. To address these concerns, Dr. Ungar and Dr. Theron designed RYSE, a research project that in the following 5 years investigated how youth in these two communities adapt to the stressful environments that accompany the boom-and-bust cycles of the oil economy.



What did we want to learn?

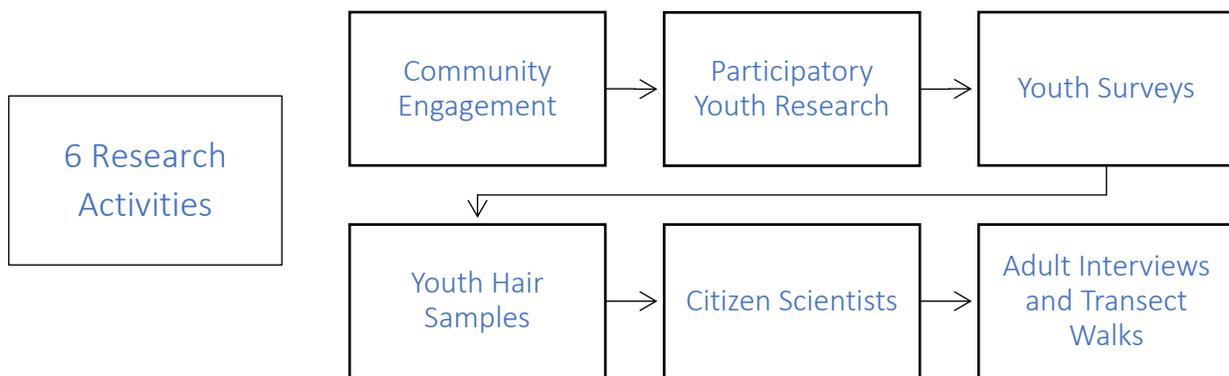
RYSE sought to better understand how biological, psychological, social, and ecological factors, individually or in interaction, affect the resilience of young people ages 13-24 who live in the unique context of oil extraction and refinement communities. Unlike other research focused on identifying problems, our interdisciplinary research team has been searching for the strengths and

protective factors that enhance the capacity of young people to adapt when their communities are going through social, economic, and environmental change.

Why?

The overarching goal of RYSE was to create scientific evidence that could help improve the lives of young people who live in Drayton Valley and Secunda/eMbalenhle, as well as in other communities impacted by the oil and gas industry around the world.

What did RYSE do in Drayton Valley?



1. **Community engagement.** We held two community engagement workshops (one with youth and one with adults) to identify youth priorities related to community resilience, health and wellbeing, and strengths and challenges in boom-and-bust economies.



2. **Participatory youth research.** Youth participated in interviews and group discussion about their health and wellbeing priorities, coping strategies, family and community support, and the impact that the boom-and-bust cycles had on their lives and community. Additionally, youth took pictures and made videos representing their life stories, struggles, personal strengths, and community resources in the community of Drayton Valley (Ungar, McRuer et al., 2020).



3. **Youth surveys.** Surveys on youth risk and resilience were administered at three different time points.

4. **Youth hair sample.** Hair samples were taken at two different time points to assess youth stress hormone levels.

5. **Citizen scientists.** To examine indicators of ecological resilience, we engaged young people in an intensive 9-day workshop to explore youth experiences and perceptions of social ecological

system change. This included youth using drones to map their community, monitoring water and air quality, and other participatory methods.

6. Adult interviews and transect walks. Interviews and transect walks (where we travelled to places in the community that were meaningful to participants) with individuals 30 years or older explored the personal lives and adaptation patterns of adults, as well as their perspective of their community's risks, resilience resources, and historical development.

What did we learn from these research activities?

These activities have produced rich data that our research team has been analyzing and interpreting to better understand how to support the wellbeing and resilience of young people in Drayton Valley. This report provides a summary of the most relevant RYSE results available to date. Additional results will also be made available as our interdisciplinary research team continues to analyze the information study participants provided during the numerous research activities involved in RYSE.



The Oil and Gas Industry and Drayton Valley

We used seven indicators of social and ecological wellbeing to understand how the oil and gas industry impacted the town of Drayton Valley and its residents both socially and environmentally over the past 30 years (Liu et al., 20220). We used indicators that directly or indirectly link to the oil and gas industry, including the following:

- **Labor force distribution across industries**, which mirrors local industrial structure and working population profile, and reveals the proportion of labor force in each industry and the degree of their reliance on each industry.
- **Education achievement**, which reflects people's knowledge, skills, earning prospects, and capacity to adapt during periods of economic fluctuation.
- **Oil and gas price** was adopted as an economic indicator to capture the economic ups and downs in Drayton Valley.
- **Household income** was chosen as a household level economic indicator to reflect the financial status of households.
- For ecological indicators, we used **air and water quality** because they are essential aspects of an ecosystem, critical to human wellbeing, and could be impacted by human activities.

We found that over the past 30 years, Drayton Valley quadrupled in size, with more than 20% of the population working in the oil and gas sector. Median income rose to 42% above the national

average despite the population lagging behind national benchmarks for educational attainment. There have also been dramatic fluctuations in levels of chemicals in water quality samples, indicating the influence of fossil fuel extractive activities on the water of Drayton Valley. Significant fluctuations in air quality were also detected throughout the years 2011, 2013, and 2014, which could be signs of air quality disturbances due to human activity and industry operations. Land cover land use change analysis showed a decreased area of water bodies, wetland, and forests, and increased built capital and agricultural land.

These results show the social and environmental impact, both positive and negative, that the boom-and-bust economic cycles of the oil and gas industry have had on Drayton Valley and its residents. On the one side, in the past 30 years, economic boom cycles have led to cash inflows in the town; on the other side, bust cycles have left residents vulnerable to social and environmental risk factors that are beyond their control in the everchanging global oil economy. This phenomenon, which has been referred to as the “resource curse”, suggests the need to anticipate cyclical (or more sustained) periods of low levels of oil and gas production. Therefore, a sustainable development plan that comprehensively considers economic growth, diversification, environment protection, and strategic land use planning is essential to ensure the long-term development of communities that depend upon extractive industries, including Drayton Valley.



Economic Diversification

Economic diversification has been proposed as one key strategy to mitigate the negative social and economic impact of the oil and gas industry on communities dependent on oil extraction and refinement. Economic diversification is the process of shifting an economy away from a single income source toward multiple sources to reach a wider range of sectors and markets (UN Climate Change, 2021). Economic diversification promotes the social and economic resilience of communities by strengthening their capacity to thrive during economic downturns. In fact, communities that rely on a variety of businesses to prosper attract investments and industries that keep residents employed despite bust, build more capacity and social capital, and experience increases community supports and enhanced quality of life.

During individual interviews and walks through the community, a group of approximately 30 adults residing in Drayton Valley discussed the theme of diversification and its connections to the resilience and wellbeing of the town's residents (Murphy et al., in press). Most adult participants spoke about Drayton Valley as an "oil and gas town" by describing how oil and gas is integrated so deeply into the roots of the community that many cannot imagine the town's existence without it. Frequent comments illustrated how the oil and gas industry impacts everything within Drayton Valley; when oil prices are up, workers from elsewhere immigrate for work, money is spent in local businesses, oil companies contribute funding to community projects and social programs, and more. When oil is down, businesses shut down, short-term (and sometimes long-term) residents leave, and families struggle financially. With its historical and current relevance to all other community activity, it is this cultural identity as an "oil and gas town" that appears to pose one of the largest threats to economic diversification.

Some adults expressed *oil optimism* while others expressed *fear and uncertainty* for the future. Despite the period of bust, there were several participants that believed that another oil and gas boom would eventually come or felt as though that was the general sentiment among the community at large. Others, however, expressed the exact opposite; that the community could not depend upon oil to create a prosperous future for the town. Consequently, some participants were largely fearful that oil and gas may not secure the future of the community, nor their own job security, or that of the future generation. Several participants expressed fear that without the oil and gas industry Drayton Valley would become a "ghost town". Others, however, were fearful of what change would mean for their livelihoods if the oil and gas industry faltered or if new industries were introduced. This was in part because they perceived a lack of opportunities in town for people who may be displaced by other industries, and in part because they recognised the difficulty of leaving an industry that pays so well.

Some participants' optimism in oil and gas came from their trust in the provincial government, while for others, federal barriers to pipeline construction created a sense of uncertainty. At the municipal level, while some participants were not convinced that past efforts to diversify were successful, in many instances these efforts were nonetheless praised. Not only does this indicate community members' willingness to diversify, but also political will to do so.

Despite numerous participants holding an affinity for oil and gas, many adults expressed *support for economic diversification*, largely because they believed that the future of oil and gas and the future of their community no longer aligned. However, participants frequently noted that others in the community were not as open to diversifying as they were. And even those who felt it necessary to diversify, often believed that the town could diversify while also strengthening its oil production. This contradiction reflects a broader narrative in which the community members identify as an oil and gas town and do not want to oppose that narrative. Those who were hesitant about the thought of economic diversification expressed a loss of trust in what they described as unsuccessful attempts to diversify in the past.

A common sentiment among participants was that because one can make a large sum of money working in oil and gas with little education, it is very difficult to leave the industry and pursue other employment options. This was perpetuated by a culture of “keeping up with Jones’s”, with participants’ noting a high pattern of spending when times are good, that residents are unable to maintain when times are bad. The “golden handcuffs” was also reflected at the level of the community where increases in housing prices during times of boom make it difficult to attract talent in other sectors with lower wages. Furthermore, whenever diversification seemed like a reasonable option in the past, participants mentioned that the momentum was always slowed by another boom, making it difficult to consider industries beyond oil and gas for any meaningful length of time.

In summary, the primary facilitator of community members’ attitudes toward diversification is the recent economic bust that has been longer than most, and the resulting concern they hold for the sustainability of their community. Competing with this, however, is the deeply engrained culture and identity as an oil and gas town, the golden handcuffs of the industry, and the fear and mistrust in change. To overcome such forces, we recommend that local, provincial, and federal governments consider the following strategies:

- Offering financially and geographically accessible training programs to re-skill and up-skill the workforce while also committing to the introduction of new industries. If educational opportunities exist but no jobs for which to use those new skills, the risk is an outmigration of residents or a continuation of the golden handcuffs to pay off any costs incurred.
- Offering a benefit plan for those people who are in the later stages of their career and unable to re-train and enter new industries.
- Helping mitigate the golden handcuffs by strengthening financial management training in the community that is well-publicized and accessible.
- Implementing strategies to build an attractive community whose identity moves beyond that of an oil and gas town toward one that promotes family and togetherness. For example, by offering affordable housing, accessible health and social services, green spaces, community events, and sporting and entertainment activities for all ages.
- Ensuring that new industries offer meaningful and well-paid employment opportunities for both men and women. If women are unable to find gainful employment, the risk is to perpetuate a culture of dependence on the high wages of largely men in the oil and gas industry.
- Given the long-entrenched oil and gas culture in Drayton Valley, the subsequent resistance to change, and community members’ distrust in prior attempts at economic diversification, committing time and resources to sensitizing the community to the possibility of economic alternatives and engaging them throughout the process is key. Seeking community support is likely to help strengthen the likelihood that diversification efforts succeed.

Youth Resilience

Youth resilience can be best described as resulting from the interaction of a variety of factors related to youth’s *biology* (for example, a person’s sex, mental and physical health, and stress hormone responses), *psychology* (for example, beliefs and attitudes, as well as processes related to psychological functioning, such as personal agency, self-efficacy, and self-regulation), *social systems* (for example, relationships with peers, family members, and those in their community, as well as the school and healthcare systems), and the *built and natural environments* (for example, streets and housing, green spaces, and air and water quality) that interact over time in complex ways (Theron et al., 2021). The interviews we conducted with approximately 50 youth who were residing in Drayton Valley, as well as the surveys that approximately 500 youth living in this community completed at one, two, or three time points, investigated the factors they perceived as meaningful in promoting their resilience in the context of boom-and-bust economic cycles of the oil and gas industry. Youth participants reported that they thrive best when a variety of factors are simultaneously present in their lives, including good mental and physical health, self-regulation and self-efficacy skills, support from family, friends and service providers, opportunities for financial independence, accessible fitness facilities, and proximity to nature.



Some youth mentioned how being male was protective given the oil and gas industry’s stereotypical preference for male workers. Increased chances of employment advanced male access to resources. In turn, this reinforced stereotypical gender roles. The youth also reported that when society advanced opportunities for young women’s employment, they were able to become less vulnerable and more independent. For example, Ariel (throughout this report, participants’ real names have been changed to protect their confidentiality) said:

“I eventually got my own job and me and him, everything just dissolved. Once I became more independent . . . We couldn’t fit together. The more I was dependent on him and the more I was that submissive person to him, the more our relationship worked. It didn’t work with me being my true self.” (Ariel, Female, age 22)

Women remain vastly underrepresented in the oil and gas workforce (Seck & Simons, 2019) and this was reflected in the many difficulties the women we interviewed described in gaining entry to this industry (Murphy et al., 2021). In some cases, participants recalled discrete examples of discrimination when seeking work, such as being told they were at a “baby-making stage of life” and were not appropriate for the job or that they would introduce the risk of adultery into the workforce. In other cases, the discrimination was even more explicit, like when participants were told a company’s preference was for a male. Those participants who did enter the industry, described how often they were subjected to gender-based discrimination and harassment

(especially sexual harassment), perpetuated by a hyper masculine work culture. For example, Monica, age 22 said:

"It was the stupidest thing, like we would be sitting at the coffee table. And they would make a sexist remark. And it's like why? I'm just sitting here having my coffee, having a break at 6 in the morning. I have no time for your shit right now...I'm just here to do my job, I'm not here for any reason that you think I might be here other than to go pick up garbage, or go mow the lawn, or go fix that pipe." (Monica, Female, age 22)

Still, many women enjoyed their work, took pride in defying gender-based expectations, and tended to persevere by having "tough skin", as Amanda said:

"But for me, I just gotta have tough skin. Those guys are out there and they're rude to me and I have an attitude back. Just like whatever. And it doesn't really bother me what they have to say about women in the oil field...I really am not gonna let what other people have to say influence what I do [with] the rest of my life. This is something I wanna do so I'm gonna do it." (Amanda, Female, age 21)



Many participating women who were working in the oil and gas industry displayed a level of self-assurance in themselves that served as a facilitating factor for their resilience. They were confident in their ability to do the job despite the contrary opinions of others, and they were determined to prove themselves when underestimated. As one participant noted:

"I don't need anybody's approval of me or my credentials, but if you're gonna underestimate me I'm gonna darn well make sure you know how good I am." (Sara, Female, age 22)

Other study participants described *meaningful and supportive relationships* and *community resources* as important to their resilience. For example, during two interviews, Trish and Alexandra said:

"I have a good support system, like my family is very supportive, my friends are very supportive . . . My mom always taught us to be very independent as well, so I've got a good skill set that way . . . it's good when you're independent . . . You're able to tackle things, but when you also have a team, I think that really helps." (Trish, Female, age 23)

“I’d like to see somewhere where the kids can go and enjoy . . . Like the pool, you got certain days you can go. . . Even with the skating rinks here, there are certain days that you can’t be there at all, like when it’s blocked off. So, I’d rather see something that was like, like a youth centre or something, so more kids could utilize that than going to drugs.” (Alexandra, Female, age 18)

Having supportive caregivers during stressful times emerged also from the surveys youth completed as the most relevant resource they rely on in times of stress (Höltge, Theron, Cowden et al., 2021). In fact, our analyses of the survey responses showed that this resource had the most and strongest positive associations with other resources available to youth, such as personal skills. Additionally, we analyzed the survey responses to investigate potential differences in the interactions between the resources that facilitate the resilience of youth at different ages (13-18 years) (Höltge, Theron, van Rensburg et al., 2021). Specifically, we wanted to find out whether specific resources interact more than others (for example, the individual and social systems) and whether these interactions change over time for youth participants so that, for example, in early adolescence individual and social resources are more interconnected than in early adulthood. In this analysis, we included three levels of resources: 1) individual (personal skills, peer support, social skills), 2) caregiver (physical and psychological caregiving), and 3) contextual (spirituality, education, culture). The results showed that resources at the Individual and contextual levels interacted the most to promote resilience in youth participants of all ages, while the relations between the individual and caregiver systems showed the weakest associations at each age. Furthermore, we found that all interactions declined as participants became older.

Our analysis of the responses youth provided to the RYSE survey also revealed that *cultural resources* shape the resilience of young persons in Drayton Valley. The RYSE survey assessed the degree to which four cultural resources, including spiritual beliefs, participation in organized religious activities, cultural and family traditions, and community traditions promote the resilience of youth respondents. Survey responses showed that having robust spiritual and cultural beliefs promotes the mental health of youth in Drayton Valley by protecting them from developing depressive symptoms.

Adult Resilience

The Individual interviews we conducted with the group of adults residing in Drayton Valley also investigated the factors that they perceived as relevant to their resilience. The goal of this portion of RYSE was to understand how adult residents of Drayton Valley withstand economic boom-and-bust cycles. To better understand the relationship between identity and resilience, we invited the participants to tell us about their lives in the form of a story. A review of the plotlines, narrative tone, and the degree of complexity in the participants’ responses became the basis for an analysis of narratives and a deeper understanding of resilience processes in the unique context of a community impacted by the oil and gas industry. Study participants described the complexity of the boom-and-bust economic cycles and how a strong identity, involving expressions of personal agency, communion and engagement in meaning making contributed to their resilience in a context of economic volatility (Mahdiani et al., 2020). Participants’ stories also highlighted how

positive attitudes towards a better future may inadvertently undermine the need for residents of oil and gas-dependent towns to commit to economic diversification and other potential resilience-promoting strategies.

Complexity in the narratives of participating adults was most evident when they described their lives during both boom and bust periods. Contrary to expectations given the opportunities people tend to experience during economic booms, participants talked more about the challenges boom times brought to individuals and families rather than the advantages; during boom periods, there were jobs and good money, but fathers/male spouses were away at work for periods of time that lasted days, weeks, or months (all our examples were of men being removed from the family to go to work in the male-dominated oil and gas industry or in other professions). Most of the female participants experienced periods as single parents or had to take on extra responsibilities for the household or a farm. For example, Rhea and Naomi said:

“My husband, he works far away though so it’s difficult and he’s also in his own very stressful situation.” (Rhea, Female, age 34)

“It took a while for that adjustment... So, it was hard being at home all the time and you’re with somebody and they’re always gone. So that was hard to adjust.” (Naomi, Female, age 49)

Additionally, when men returned from work, the pressure to adapt to stressful schedules did not end. Participants described periods of adjustment following long absences:

“When he is home and you do make decisions, you communicate, but it takes a lot to work like, you have to be strong about it... He was so used to just doing everything his way and I was doing everything mine and then he’d come home and he’d try to change things and I’d be like, ‘Yeah, no’ and so it took a while.” (Naomi, Female, age 49)

While talking about their work lives, participants told us that economic booms changed how much people earned but did not improve work-life balance. As one participant said:

“They paid you well [during the boom] but there was a lot of what I call ‘criminal exchange’, like, we want you to work, you know, 12–14 h days, 7 days a week until you’re done, and yes you got paid.” (Darlene, Female, age 50)

Examined altogether, people’s experience of family, community, and work through boom-and-bust economic cycles is complex with multiple and competing narratives that account for the impact of a good and bad economy on how well individuals, families, and communities function. While the substance of the stories men and women in Drayton Valley told was the same, the experience of each economic period meant a different set of stressors and adaptation for each gender. We can group the participants’ experiences of boom-and-bust economies into three interactive storylines:

- *Positive storylines:* Participants adjusted to the prosperity and the economic downturns having learned that life in a town dependent on the oil and gas industry requires flexibility. Such stories benefited from protective factors such as learning new skills, budgeting, and social networks.
- *Neutral storylines:* Participants accepted that conditions would always be stressful. These stories portrayed a narrative tone which was neither positive nor negative. Life for these people seemed to be always the same.
- *Negative storylines:* Family and community life is negatively affected by both good and bad economic conditions, with both booms and busts causing spouses to be absent (physically and emotionally). Financial supports are either abundant or missing, with both conditions causing strained social relationships and contributing to substance abuse.

Regardless of which storyline was most dominant in the individual's narrative, both boom and bust periods demanded a great deal of personal and collective resilience to cope with the stress caused by a changing economy. The most common adaptive responses study participants described demonstrated their *agency*, a common factor found in resilience research (Masten & Motti-Stefanidi, 2020) All participants demonstrated a highly *agentic character* reflecting *empowerment* and *self-mastery*. All the participants had experienced boom-and-bust cycles, with many commenting on the level of control they exercised in their lives regardless of economic conditions. For example, Marita, age 63 said:

"I'm... I'm a very uh, dominating person like, you know, I just, like, I said, this is what I'm doing, and I did it." (Marita, Female, age 63)

The second common theme that emerged from participants' stories was the role played by friends, family, and community supports. Belonging to a club or a group was repeatedly underscored as a source of resilience. Related to this theme is the construct of communion; participants talked about how much they care for their neighbors and the town's motto: "Pull together." Participants' storylines showed that their experience of interpersonal connection was key to their surviving economic cycles, as revealed by their narratives of specific family members who help them adapt successfully during challenging times. As two participants explained:

"Yah, and we had love and yah, we were safe... So, that's really all that mattered." (Female, age 53)

"It was always my mom. She was my biggest supporter... Even though we were poor, I didn't feel that we were poor because we had family." (Marita, Female, age 63)

Residents also showed high levels of *meaning making* in their narratives. Participants shared with us many of the lessons they have learned from weathering boom-and-bust cycles, from money management to reconsidering the value they place on family, church, and spirituality. Most notably, this pattern of meaning making started early in life and continued through each cycle of prosperity and ill-fortune, with the very fact that economic cycles occur with frequency being the catalyst for robust personalities and belief in a better future. The ability to learn a positive lesson

from a negative event (*redemption*) was common to many participants' accounts of their lives. For some adults, periods of economic bust brought opportunities for new personal growth and better social cohesion. For example, during a period of economic bust Mark, age 46 said:

"The big positive is that I get to spend a lot of time with my family...I managed, I was able to stay home for the first year of my now-4-year-old's life. And it was great, the bonding was just great." (Mark, Male, age 46)

Economic volatility fortified robust personalities among the residents of Drayton Valley who portrayed their lives and the many hardships they have experienced as meaningful. Several participants characterized themselves as competent at handling hard times:

"I am optimistic with life... You get hit in the head enough times, you kind of figure it out [chuckles]." (Arlene, Female, age 65)

Another participant explained that her life experience had taught her how to make meaning out of harsh and negative experiences and respect herself more:

"You need to, whether you have children or not, you're valuable, you're important and whatever value you place on yourself will show on what supports you put around yourself. If you don't value yourself, you won't seek out help. I valued myself because I had two kids who I loved dearly." (Simone, Female, age 55)

While there was plenty of vulnerability to be found in participants' stories, these narratives also revealed many promotive and protective factors that operate in this economically fragile community. The recurrence of agentic narratives coupled with a strong sense of community seems to be the basis for a complex set of characteristics that make residents both fiercely optimistic and, at least in the short-term, resilient. Aside from their individual resources (agency and meaning making), the participants referred to the role of friends and family (communion), spiritually, and learning as the most valuable protective factors. They also emphasized that a more stable socio-economic context would eliminate some of the major difficulties they were experiencing in the first place.

Community Identity

During individual interviews, youth participants highlighted how both positive and negative social, economic, and ecological characteristics of Drayton Valley affected the community's identity (Twum-Antwi et al., 2020). Some of the social factors youth mentioned included gender, residency status (permanent resident vs transient person), occupation, and alcohol and drug use of community members. Participants also identified many economic benefits of the oil and gas industries, such as employment, wealth creation, increased business activities and the development of infrastructure. On the flip side, however, they also described the disadvantages that came with a boom-and-bust economy, such as uncertainty and the impact of that uncertainty on youth and families. Participants' narratives described their community in a unidimensional

fashion, as either an economically successful “oil and gas town”, or a “ghost town” when the economy goes through a downturn. A counter-narrative to Drayton Valley as an oil and gas town is found in the participants’ occasional descriptions of their town as a small, quiet, and close-knit community with a “50s vibe” and a place they can call “home.”

Family Resilience

During interviews with adults, we learned that many families in Drayton Valley experienced an endless cycle of poor work–life balance and income instability throughout the boom-and-bust economic cycles. Family life often lacked social cohesion because of demanding work schedules and economic pressures. Additional challenges that some study participants described include the perceived negative effects of rigid gender roles, substance use, family conflicts, and intimate partner violence. When asked what factors made families resilient to these challenges in Drayton Valley, some adult participants cited adjusting the family’s financial and living standards (for example, living within or below one’s economic means and having both spouses become earners), maintaining regular contact by having a flexible home routine, and mutually agreeing to change roles during busts by, for example, assigning home- and caregiving-related responsibilities to the family member who used to work outside the home and vice versa. Other study participants thought that to be resilient families in Drayton Valley need to accept economic volatility and its impact on family life.

In the surveys, a number of youth participants mentioned growing up in a domestically abusive family or a family characterized by severe conflict between their caregivers that sometimes escalated into intimate partner violence episodes. We investigated whether predictable home routines (for example, regular meals and a regular bedtime) and comforting beliefs (beliefs that provide comfort) protected the mental health of youth who grew up in a home with fights or severe relationship problems between adults in Drayton Valley. We learned from youth that the mental health of those who grew up in these families and had beliefs that gave them comfort was not affected by the absence/presence of daily routines. On the other hand, for youth who experienced severe conflict between their caregivers and did not have comforting beliefs, having a daily routine acted as a protective factor against the development of depressive symptoms. Therefore, establishing predictable daily home routines seems to be particularly relevant to the resilience of youth who experience more severe caregiver conflict within their home when growing up but have no beliefs that give them comfort.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The interviews with the youth in Drayton Valley showed that their resilience has roots in multiple aspects of their lives that interact in complex ways over time. The RYSE study provides empirical evidence that in contexts of economic volatility youth, family, and community resilience is facilitated by an interplay of resources at multiple levels of youth and adults’ lives (including biological, psychological, social, and ecological resources). Therefore, efforts by policy makers and government entities should focus on strengthening multiple factors simultaneously (for example, by offering affordable housing, recreational spaces, a diversified economy, and adequate mental health and addictions services) to build a resilient community for coming generations of resident.

Additionally, our findings regarding gender discrimination in the oil and gas workplace suggest that industry practices must adapt to create a safe and inclusive workplace. Additional results will also be made available as our interdisciplinary research team continues to analyze the information study participants provided during the numerous research activities involved in RYSE.

How can the RYSE results help Drayton Valley grow?

Oil and gas industry	Human resource policies (for example, to promote family wellbeing and inclusive workplaces).	
School system	Identifying where youth need additional support to succeed in school.	
Health and social services	Access to services, the type of services needed (for example, physical and mental health, and substance use)	
Community planning	Increasing green spaces, facilitating an environment to promote social cohesion among families and community members.	
Recreational spaces	Identifying the need for safe, accessible, and affordable space for youth to form meaningful connections (such as the Youth Centre).	
Innovation	Supporting the development of new industries.	

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