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Life Skills and Resilience Building in Folk High Schools

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Abstract

The focus of this study is on Nordic folk high schools and their contribution to nonformal adult education in Denmark. The research study aims to provide an overview of folk high schools, from policies to contemporary practices concerning life skills and resilience-building. To achieve this, the study builds the contextual Framework for Adult Education and Lifelong learning in Denmark as a starting point and uses the European Adult Education Association's (2018) and The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies' (2013) psychosocial perspective on Life Skills, along with Michael Ungar's (2019) Resilience Model as a theoretical framework. These frameworks provide the layered contextual background, definitions of life skills and resilience and show the specific processes and ingredients required to build resilience within an educational institution.

The study uses qualitative analysis to examine the presence of life skills and resilience processes in folk high schools in Denmark where the folk high school movement originated and still operates. This thesis is data-driven and uses an inductive method. To gather data, the study uses document analysis and an informant interview. The study concludes that life skills and resilience building processes are implicitly present in the contemporary practices of folk high schools. Folk high schools offer pedagogical practices that foster personal fulfillment and development through life, active citizenship, and social inclusion. Thus, folk high schools are one alternative to strengthen adult education and lifelong learning policy objective in building social and civic inclusion.

Keywords: adult education, nonformal adult education, lifelong learning, adult education policy, Nordic, folk high school, contemporary practices, life skills, resilience, Denmark.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	3
Abstract	5
1 Introduction	10
1.1 Research Background.....	10
1.2 The Significance of the Study	11
1.3 The Purpose of the Research and the Research Question	12
1.4 Limitations	13
1.5 The Overview of the Study	13
2 Adult Education and Lifelong Learning: Conceptual Framework.....	14
2.1 Formal, Nonformal, Informal Learning	14
2.2 Defining Adult Education and Lifelong Learning	15
2.3 Debate on Lifelong Learning	15
3 The Danish Adult Education and Life-long Learning.....	16
3.1 Participation	17
3.2 Governance.....	17
3.3 Legislative Framework.....	18
3.4 Financing.....	18
4 Life Skills and Resilience Building: Theoretical Framework	19
4.1 Life Skills and Resilience: An Overview	19
4.1.1 Life skills-Psychosocial Standpoint	19
4.1.2 Resilience-Multisystemic Standpoint.....	20
4.1.3 Ungar’s Resilience Model.....	21
5 The Folk High School Movement: Conceptual Framework	25
5.1 Folk High School Development Through History	25

5.2	The Folk High School Ideology and Pedagogy	26
5.3	Folk High Schools in the Danish Education System.....	27
6	Research Methodology.....	29
6.1	Research Paradigm and Methodology.....	29
6.1.1	Methods.....	30
6.1.2	Document Analysis	31
6.2	Research Design.....	31
6.2.1	Choosing Documents	31
6.2.2	Online Informant Interview.....	32
6.3	Situating Myself.....	33
6.4	Data Analysis	33
6.5	Ethical Considerations.....	34
6.6	Trustworthiness	34
7	Findings.....	36
7.1	Data Set.....	36
7.1.1	Building Relationships /Developing a Sense of Belonging	36
7.1.2	Encouraging Powerful Identities.....	39
7.1.3	Providing Support for Power and Control/Promoting Social Justice.....	42
7.1.4	Online Informant Interview.....	45
8	Analysis.....	47
8.1	Thinking about the Systems and Adapting to the Local Context.....	47
8.1.1	Resilience Building Through Folk High School History	48
8.1.2	Resilience Building Through Folk High School Practices.....	50
8.2	Helping People to Navigate and Negotiate	52
8.2.1	Life Skills Building Through Togetherness	52
8.2.2	Life Skills Building Through Personal Development	53

9	Conclusion.....	54
	References	56
	Appendix	75

List of Figures

	Ungar’s Resilience Principles.....	23
	Ungar’s Resilience Ingredients.....	24

1 Introduction

1.1 Research Background

Our modern world is changing at an unprecedented pace that has led to an increased need for investment in modern knowledge societies to meet the demands of the global economy bringing unforeseeable implications for adult education (Milana, Nesbit 2015; European Commission 2000, 2001, 2006, 2007). As an essential part of lifelong learning, nonformal adult education occurs outside the formal education system. It offers a variety of planned and structured programs designed to build adult's skills and competences besides mitigating some of the cultural, social, and economic challenges adults face in their work, family, community, and society (UNESCO, 2010 quoted in Ogienko, Terenko 2018).

Over time, modern adult education has gradually evolved into a popular trend characterized by innovation, dynamics, adaptability, and flexibility. In this continual shift, nonformal adult education institutions have initiated adjustments to conform to the specific personal/social/cultural/financial/political circumstances and transform accordingly. (European Council 2000; Ogienko, Terenko 2018).

However, the pandemic and financial crisis have affected nonformal learning significantly. The discrepancies between theory and reality have been exposed, with experts in adult education highlighting that different governance and financing structures, along with COVID regulations for education and lifelong learning, do not apply to all contexts. Nonformal learning environments, such as administrative and support services and arts, entertainment, and recreation sectors, have been limited dramatically in many countries. Consequently, the transition to hybrid forms of learning, still marginalized in the agenda of governments' priorities and receiving less support as nonformal educators, has challenged the landscape of lifelong learning. (OECD, 2021; EAEA, 2020)

According to Gina Ebner, Secretary-General of the European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA), nonformal learning is one alternative solution in adult education to see educators as social changemakers. They and adult learners can translate knowledge, attitudes, and values into positive action, healthy life choices, and informed decisions (Pasino, 2021).

This approach expands the traditional view of adult education beyond just providing diplomas to people who have dropped out of school at a young age.

Folk High School

Folk high schools are the Nordic countries' unique contribution to adult education (Furuland, 1991: 468 quoted in Lövgren, Nordvall 2017). These schools emerged in Denmark during the late 1800s to meet rural citizens' basic economic, social, and educational needs, emphasizing national self-determination and resistance against the traditional education system (Paulston & LeRoy, 1980). Today, folk high schools aim to develop personal and social skills, foster democratic participation, and provide a boarding school environment for living and learning (Bagley & Rust, 2009, p. 284). Although all folk high schools share these standard features, they also developed different profiles based on each country's historical development, governmental structure, and pedagogical identity (Gustavsson, 2013; Knutas and Solhaug, 2010, quoted in Lövgren, 2015).

The research study focuses on Nordic folk high schools and their philosophy, exploring some of their contemporary practices concerning life skills and resilience building, with a particular focus on Denmark that remains outside the formal educational system.

1.2 The Significance of the Study

Contemporary folk high school research is available in English and Scandinavian languages. Folk high school research in English explores different aspects of folk high schools, including historical, social, democratic, and didactic interpretations, in several doctoral and master theses, academic journal articles, books, and bibliographies (Larsson, 2013; Lövgren, 2005; Smith, 1996; Toiviainen, 1995; Maliszewski, 2003; Maliszewski, 2004; Lövgren, 2018). The other part of this research field entails publications in monographs, reports, and anthologies (Lövgren, Nordvall 2017). However, the folk high school research field is still in its early stages of network building and collecting invaluable research together. Specifically, folk high school research on life skills and resilience building is rather limited. Moreover, it is difficult to find an analysis of the position of folk high schools in non-formal adult education development,

from policy to contemporary practices. This master thesis contributes to folk high school research.

Motivation

The motivation of this study is related to a research and work opportunity that I had while working as a researcher and student mentor at a Faroese Folk High School from September 2020 to June 2022. During this period, I took the Applied Research Project course at UIT, the Arctic University of Norway's Governance and Entrepreneurship in Northern and Indigenous Areas master program, with the intention of conducting research that would benefit a northern community. I chose to focus on the Faroese Youth Club in Torshavn, which was interested in life skills and resilience building. All these motivated me to explore the current practices of Nordic folk high schools in terms of life skills and resilience. I am aware of the ethical and methodological challenges of conducting qualitative research in an area closely related to my professional practice (Hammersley, Atkinson, 2009), and I will discuss this in more detail in the methods section. Nevertheless, I also believe that conducting research on a topic that is familiar to the researcher can be beneficial (Van Maanen, 2011).

1.3 The Purpose of the Research and the Research Question

This qualitative research study investigates the non-formal learning environment of folk high schools, with a particular focus on Denmark. The research has a two-fold aim. First, it offers an overview of folk high schools through various contexts, such as policy, historical, ideology, and pedagogy in Denmark. Second, it explores some contemporary practices of folk high schools through the lenses of life skills and resilience building. Therefore, the following research question is used with two sub-questions:

How are life skills and resilience building processes incorporated in folk high schools?

- Where are folk high schools located in adult education?
- Is it possible to identify any practices related to life skills and resilience building? If yes, what are those practices?

To find out whether life-skills and resilience building processes are present in folk high schools' contemporary practices, I collected data from document analysis and online informant interview. To answer my two sub-questions, I needed to access global/national knowledge on non-formal adult education and lifelong learning, specifically folk high schools. Then, I established the theoretical framework on resilience and life skills building. Lastly, I collected data that provided information on folk high school history, pedagogy, and contemporary practices.

1.4 Limitations

The major limitation was related to the informant interview participation. Initially, I planned to conduct online interviews with folk high school experts and teachers. Meanwhile, the research plan has changed due to the informants' busy schedule, lack of time or no interest. I could conduct only one informant interview with an expert. Therefore, I used document analysis instead of interviews with teachers' and experts' position on folk high school practices. Thus, the study became small-scale qualitative research that does not intend to generalize its findings.

1.5 The Overview of the Study

The Introduction outlines a broader research context to position the folk high schools. It contains information about the research significance, the research question, and the purpose and limitations of the research. The chapter on adult education and lifelong learning follows the Introduction. This section discusses the study's conceptual framework: the definitions of adult learning contexts, the link between adult education and lifelong learning, and debates on life skills. The next chapter gives an overview of Denmark's adult education, focusing on non-formal adult education. The subsequent chapter discusses the theoretical framework from two standpoints: the European Adult Education Association's (2018) and The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies' (2013) psychosocial perspective on Life Skills, along with the multisystemic approach of Michael Ungar's (2019) Resilience Model.

Chapter 5 discusses the folk high school ideology and pedagogy and outlines the Danish folk high school movement. In the next section, the methods applied to the study are discussed. Chapter 7 provides the study's data set. Chapter 8 is the data analysis. In the last chapter, the study concludes by summarizing the implicit presence of resilience and life skills building in certain Danish folk high schools' contemporary practices.

2 Adult Education and Lifelong Learning: Conceptual Framework

In this chapter, I will introduce the conceptual framework of the study. Here, I clarify the differences between formal, nonformal and informal learning. Then, I outline the relevant concepts to my thesis: adult education and lifelong learning and some of the main theoretical discussions and interpretations of adult education and lifelong learning.

2.1 Formal, Nonformal, Informal Learning

In 2009, UNESCO (2009) defines adult learning and education as lifelong learning practices for adults of all ages in three contexts: formal learning, nonformal learning, and informal learning.

- Formal learning is structured and organized with a curriculum and credentials through educational or training institutions.
- Nonformal learning is structured and organized without credentials, and it can occur through educational institutions, company training, evening schools, civil society organizations, or learning groups.
- Informal learning is a continuous learning process that outperforms institutional education. It is not intended but happens through daily life engagements with work, family, community, or leisure.

2.2 Defining Adult Education and Lifelong Learning

International organizations have long been working to unify adult education and lifelong learning policy by targeting a comprehensive and coherent strategy with two main objectives for all Europe: the development of vocational skills to enhance economic productivity, and the fostering of social inclusion and civic inclusion (Aspin, Chapman, 2012)

The "Council Resolution of 27 June 2002 on Lifelong Learning" defines lifelong learning as "all learning activity undertaken throughout life, to improve knowledge, skills, and competencies within a personal, civic, social, and employment-related perspective." " (European Commission, 2002, p. 9) Although lifelong learning aims to promote social cohesion and economic prosperity (Schuetze & Casey, 2006), the European Union's lifelong learning policies emphasize employability and human capital building (Vezne, Yildiz, 2022). Consequently, the instrumental discourse of lifelong learning has limited the adult learning and education objectives to skills attainment leaving little space for other discourses, such as personal fulfillment and development through life, active citizenship, and social inclusion (Tønseth and Villegas (2019), This has led to disconnection between the three forms of learning (formal, nonformal, informal) and created a mismatch between employment needs, learner needs and the education sector influenced by country-specific historical, political and developmental differences (Engesbak et al., 2010)

2.3 Debate on Lifelong Learning

Organizations such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), the European Union (EU), and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) have attained central role in spreading educational policies with a human capitalistic worldview and transnational standards for lifelong learning ideals (Kim, 2020). King (2007) and Verger, Novelli, and Altinyelken (2018) also underline these organizations' educational policy implications for the nation's states. However, while these global organizations' lifelong learning and life skills building represent a mainstream discourse, few researchers examine the hidden discourses and the taken-for-granted assumptions about lifelong learning and life skills building.

Maythreyi (2015) argues that in a neoliberal culture, individuals are responsible for their own success and must possess specific attitudes and skills to fit into the idea of what normal is for a knowledge society to prevent risks (Hollingworth; Reay 2008; Rose 1996; Fedler 1998; Urciuoli, 2008). This raises questions about fairness and effectiveness. (What kind of life skills? Who defines the needed life skills?, How are they translated to the individual level? Whose wellbeing matter?, Are individuals at risk in the absence of life skills building?). Thus, lifelong learning interventions and life skills-building programs may or may not benefit individuals in the long run, depending on their unique context and the diversity of personal development (Maythreyi, 2015).

3 The Danish Adult Education and Life-long Learning

In the following chapter, I will outline adult education and lifelong learning in Danish context with particular focus on non-formal adult education and the position of folk high schools.

Adult education and lifelong learning have a long-standing tradition in Denmark. The Ministry of Children and Education defines *lifelong learning* as a tradition of taking part in education through all phases of life. This cradle-to-grave lifelong learning approach aims to enable adults to participate equally as highly qualified and well-educated citizens in the Danish democratic society (Ministry of Children and Education, 2017).

Danish adult education has two main strands: formal and nonformal. While formal adult education encompasses both general and vocational education with the recognition of prior learning aiming at skill building and employability, nonformal adult education builds on the tradition of lifelong learning and personal development (freedom of choice, alternative teaching, no grades, and no exams). Over the years, Denmark has built various adult education programs with different objectives, structures, and content in three main areas: nonformal leisure-time adult education ("popular enlightenment"), formal general adult education, and

labor market education(vocational) (Andersen and Illeris,1997 quoted in Rasmussen, Lolle, 2022).

Nonformal adult education emphasizes developing diverse personal competencies from formal general and academic skills (with exams) to home economics, arts and crafts, and democratic education (no exams and grades) (EAEAC Eurydice, 2016a).

3.1 Participation

As per the EUROSTAT 2021 Lifelong Learning Statistics, Denmark has a participation rate of 23.4% in adult learning. The country's high participation rate is due to its vocational and general adult education programs, which are further complemented by a comprehensive non-formal adult education sector comprising folk high schools, day high schools, evening schools, and distance learning university extramural departments. In 2022, the number of non-formal adult education students was around 700,000. (Ministry of Children and Education, 2023).

3.2 Governance

Adult education and lifelong learning in Denmark is under the administration of the Ministry of Children and Education and the Ministry of Higher Education and Science, working in close collaboration with other ministries such as the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Immigration and Integration, and the Ministry of Health (Eurydice Report 2021). However, the central ministries also delegate responsibilities to other departments, institutions, and councils under the ministry's supervision. Additionally, the ministries build other social partnerships with private and public institutions (Ministry of Children and Education, 2020). Thus, the Danish structure of adult education relies strongly on formalized social partnerships among formal vocational and general adult education providers (state) and nonformal adult education providers (NGOs) (Ranki et al., 2021).

3.3 Legislative Framework

Folk high schools are independent boarding schools regulated by two main acts: the Act on Nonformal General Adult Education (2018) and the Act of Folk High Schools (2013). Folk high schools as nonformal adult education institutions are self-governing supported by taximeter funding and are responsible to the Ministry of Culture. Each school has an elected but unpaid governing body that sets the internal policy, values, and appoints the school principal. The school principal and staff manage, administer, and teach. They have autonomy to choose their subjects, content, and teaching methods until they respect the general legislative requirements. The subjects must be of a broad, general nature for half of the time, complemented by in-depth specialized subjects and skills teaching. The schools can operate until they are economically viable.

3.4 Financing

Denmark has the most extensive legislation regarding providing and financing adult education. Since 2007, state-founded self-governing institutions have provided adult education programs, formal and informal, through the taximeter system. The taximeter system is a model for distributing state funding based on per capita grants (cash per student/participant). The grants allocated to every adult education institution are recalculated annually based on the annual Finance Act. Hence, self-governing adult education institutions have two income streams: government grants and income-generated revenues (Ministry of Children and Education, 2018; Ministry of Higher Education and Science, 2021).

In 2015, folk high schools received over DKK 550 million/ EURO 74 million government grant. The state subsidy covers half of the average school's total budget (taxes, building maintenance, heating, wages of teaching and other staff, provision of meals), while the folk high schools' revenues finance the rest.

4 Life Skills and Resilience Building: Theoretical Framework

This chapter provides a theoretical foundation on life skills and resilience, which will inform and support my analysis on how to explore life skills and resilience building processes in folk high school practices.

4.1 Life Skills and Resilience: An Overview

Enhancing life skills and resilience building are part of nonformal adult education programs due to the worldwide challenges concerning poverty, inequality, violence, health, and climate change. These programs tailor their activities to meet the needs and capacities of certain groups and communities in terms of psychosocial support, education, prevention, emergency response, recovery, and development settings. By participating in these programs, adult learners and their communities can mobilize resources to adapt better to future changes, to be open to self-organization, and to learn from previous experiences (IFRC 2013).

The concepts "life skills" and "resilience" are multi-dimensional with many different and interconnected components. Across various disciplines, there are different definitions of "life skills" and "resilience." Therefore, the study uses specific operational definitions from the relevant literature to explore deeper insights into non-formal adult educational practices within the folk high school context.

4.1.1 Life skills-Psychosocial Standpoint

Life skills are a set of practical and emotional skills that adults acquire to meet life's challenges and to enable long-term benefits in many different contexts (EAEA, 2018; IFRC ,2013). They encompass a broad range of skills that empower adult learners in three main categories: cognitive, personal, and interpersonal. This implies that adult learners' emotions and thoughts are interconnected and impact their relationships with others, as well as their ability to function in society. In addition, life skills encompass a range of knowledge and values that are tailored to the individual's environment, which is influenced by cultural, social, and political/human

rights factors. Life skills include self-awareness, critical and creative thinking, decision-making, problem-solving, negotiation, conflict resolution, effective communication, interpersonal relationships, empathy, stress, and emotional management. They are widely applied in the education, health, social, and humanitarian sectors (EAEA 2018; EAEA 2019; Hodge, Danish, Martin 2012; Huitt 1998; IFRC 2013; Prajapati, Sharma & Sharma 2016).

Adult learners can also acquire specific life skills, including literacy, numeracy, ICT, cooking, and finance management. Developing these skills can have a positive "spillover effect" on the learners, the workplace, the family, and the community in different proportions. However, life skills can be learnt outside the education system, through experiences. Learning through experiences can lead to greater autonomy, self-efficacy, and social/civic engagement. This can benefit the community in terms of active citizenship, political voice, social cohesion, diversity, and tolerance (EAEA 2018, UIL 2019, Learning and Work Institute 2017).

Life skills-building programs aim to address the complexities of modern life, with key elements such as a holistic perspective, learner-centeredness, and flexibility (OECD 2013, EAEA 2018).

The research study applies the following two operational definitions:

"Life skills are a constituent part of capabilities for life and work in a particular social, cultural, and environmental context. The types of life skills emerge as a response to the needs of the individual in real life situations." (EAEA Report)"

"Life skills are psychosocial competencies and abilities for adaptive and positive behavior that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life. Life skills are vital to psychosocial recovery after a crisis and are closely linked to behavioral change, psychosocial environment, and resilience." (IFRC Report)

4.1.2 Resilience-Multisystemic Standpoint

Resilience is a concept that has a variety of definitions across disciplines such as epigenetics, disaster risk reduction, environmental science, public health, economics, architecture, public

policy, and computer science. Although these definitions focus on the functioning of different systems, they recognize and agree that resilience is both an individual trait and as a process where interactions occur within and in between multiple systems(Ungar, 2021). These interactions within and in between various systems can range from individual biology to psychological, relational, sociocultural, institutional, and ecological mechanisms. When populations under stress interact with these systems, they have the potential to do better than expected. (Rutter, 1987; Werner,1993; Masten & Cinchetti, 2015; Ungar & Theron, 2020). Additionally, multisystemic research highlights protective processes operate at multiple levels, and each system or part of a system can influence the individual/collective well-being of a system. (Ungar, 2021). In accordingly, resilience means something different to each person, family, organization, society, and culture. It shifts the focus from disorder to recovery, adaptation, or transformation in the face of adversity (Masten,2014).

This study frames the research in alignment with Masten’s resilience definition, where

“Resilience is the capacity of a dynamic system (individual, family, school, community, and society) to adapt successfully to disturbances threatening system functions, viability, or development. The concept can be applied to systems of many kinds at many interacting levels, both living and non-living, such as a microorganism, a child, a family, a security system, an economy, a forest, or the global climate change.” (Ungar, Theron, 2020, p.6)

Hence, this dynamic system can cope with change and thrive.

4.1.3 Ungar’s Resilience Model

The study also builds on Ungar’s resilience research of human systems. In his research, ***resilience is the capacity of systems to navigate the resources necessary to sustain well-being and negotiate for promotive and protective resources relevant to place and culture when contexts of adversity occur*** (Ungar, 2011). Thus, resilience becomes more of a means to reach a positive outcome.

In the light of Ungar’s multisystemic approach to resilience, a system's resilience depends on its ability to recover, adapt, and transform, which in turn affects other systems. The resilience of each system is determined by its capacities and vulnerabilities, which interact with the

physical and social environment, both near and far, shaping the system's behavior and driving it towards change. The interactions between physical and social factors determine the system's resilience, which is further impacted by the availability and accessibility of opportunities and resources. These opportunities and resources are also influenced by meaning systems, which refer to the power of each part of the system to favor one solution over another. Lastly, the resilience of one system can trigger coping processes in other mutually dependent systems, leading to the adaptation or transformation of multiple systems. (Ungar 2021)

According to Ungar (2019), designing resilience programs requires a balance between system thinking and practical problem-solving. This involves considering other systems and social issues while understanding resilience, including what it is and how it can be applied to solve problems across cultures. Ungar also advocates for a capacity-building focus instead of a disease/dysfunction/disorders-oriented thinking for organizations and governments.

For resilience programs to be effective, several key factors must be considered. These include identifying the risks individuals may face (Masten, 2001; Wright & Masten 2005), determining the desired outcomes of the program (Ungar 2019), and understanding protective processes and factors that can help people overcome adversity (Masten and Gerwitz 2006, Ungar 2019). An individual's risk exposure involves personal, social, and environmental factors that can increase the likelihood of negative outcomes. Desired outcomes are positive indicators present despite exposure to risks. Protective factors act as buffers to the effect of risk factors, and they involve context-specific interactions between the individual and the environment.

Ungar (2019) highlights, these programs must carefully balance these ingredients and be clear about which risk factors they address, which protective processes they activate, and which outcomes they seek to achieve for the benefit of the individuals, their families, and their communities. Therefore, understanding how thresholds, feedback loops, and trade-offs work is imperial in programs promoting resilience. According to Ungar (2019), each program has its own limit, and it operates best when it is stable. If the program faces too many disruptions that exceed its limit, it needs to adapt in positive or negative ways, depending on the available resources. This process can help programs be resilient and establish a new limit. The roles of feedback loops are also important since they provide valuable information on how the output of a program can be used as input in future operations. Finally, trade-offs are unavoidable in

youth programs since solving a problem in one part of the program can cause issues in other parts. (Ungar, 2019)

Ungar suggests that effective resilience-building programs use seven principles and seven ingredients. The more principles program leaders incorporate into their design, the more effective their interventions will be in providing participants with the tools to confront challenges. (Ungar 2019)

Figure 1 Ungar's Resilience Principles

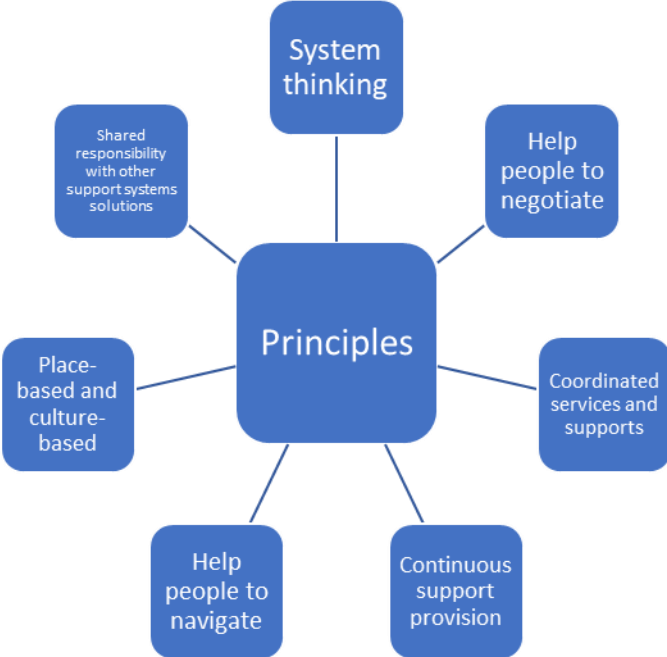
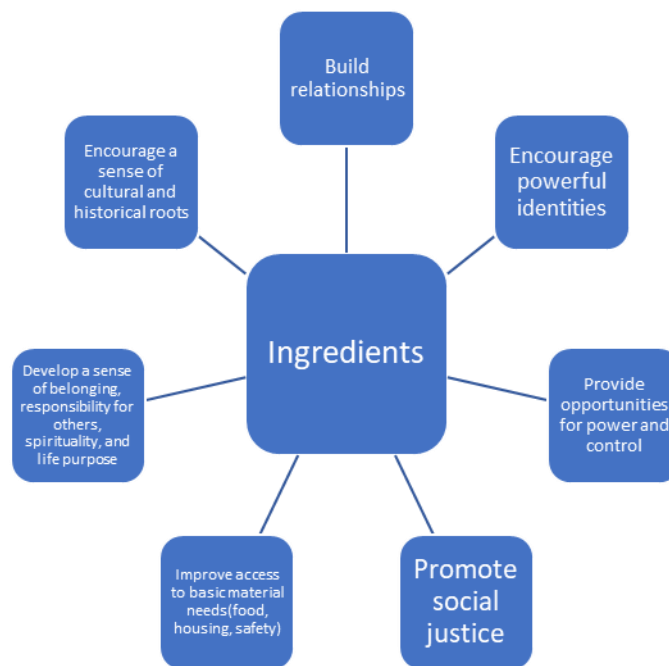


Figure 2. Ungar's Resilience Ingredients

Figure 2 Ungar's Resilience Ingredients



Based on the meticulous revision of different available definitions of life skills and resilience, the following research study views life skills and resilience as two interconnected concepts. Acquiring specific life skills can strengthen the natural resilience of adult learners as resilience research recognizes the value of enough resources and skills for individuals and communities to thrive in life. Thus, life skills enhance resilience building when individuals have enough place and culture-specific resources and skills to restore well-being, overcome vulnerabilities, and maintain a new balance.

In this research study, I define folk high school as a dynamic system that comprises of people, processes, structure, and vision. As a system, a folk high school's capacity to adapt and interact on different levels and thrive to reach optimal operation levels depend on its institutional resources, its vulnerabilities, and its external/internal opportunities.

5 The Folk High School Movement: Conceptual Framework

This chapter discusses the folk high school ideology and pedagogy. I also focus on the general presentation of folk high schools in Denmark.

5.1 Folk High School Development Through History

Korsgaard (2019) emphasizes that the development of folk high schools was continuously influenced by Danish society and the world around them. He identifies four significant transformation periods for folk high schools.

The first period began with the establishment of the first folk high school in Rodding in 1844 and lasted until 1864, when the Danish military defeated German forces (resulting in the loss of Slesvig). This period was characterized by the Danish free constitution (1849) and the first parliamentary act that ensured financial support for folk high schools. The role of folk high schools was to support the transition from absolute monarchy to constitutional monarchy by educating rural people (Korsgaard, 2004, quoted in Milana and Sorensen, 2009).

The second period, from 1864 to 1968, marked the spread of the folk high school movement across Denmark. Folk high schools became more institutionalized, with more apparent government requirements for state subsidies (1892) but received pedagogical and curricular freedom. Grundtvig's emphasis on cultural and national awakening for a more robust democracy was a guiding principle of this period. During this era, folk high schools aimed to "strengthen the national bond among the rural population in a period of economic expansion of the agricultural sector" (Milana and Sorensen, 2009, p.349).

In 1942, the Danish Government enacted a new folk high school act. There was an ideological shift from historical-poetical to political-democratic values. At the same time, the emergence of industrialism and the demand for a better labor force challenged the agricultural-oriented profile of folk high schools. The dramatic shift to industry led to farm closings, exodus to urban areas, and low participation rates (Korsgaard, 2019, pg.59).

In recent years (2006 to present), attendance at folk high schools in Denmark has been on the rise, according to Korsgaard (2019).

5.2 The Folk High School Ideology and Pedagogy

Upon initial observation, folk high school education might not appear to be pedagogically well-designed, lacking anything exceptional to offer (Komischke-Konnerup, 2019). However, spending time in a folk high school environment refutes this generalization. It reveals that folk high school pedagogy encompasses more than just the daily errands and personal development related to communal living or teaching various subjects such as nature, art, outdoor life, politics, or philosophy.

Folk high school pedagogy centers around a broader sense of learning that includes common human practices. Freedom, discovery, and repetition are key elements in this type of learning. Both the teacher and the learner are explorers of humankind, society, and the world. Being in an active role means unlearning and relearning through repetition, which challenges the learner to become self-determining (Komischke-Konnerup, 2019). Repetition is not just about imitation or mechanical reproduction, but it also changes the person doing the repetition. (Komischke-Konnerup, 2019, p. 10) Therefore, repetition is an important human practice in the folk high school's pedagogical approach, bringing order and dialogue to the teachings. (Ole Pedersen quoted in Komischke-Konnerup (2019))

According to Komischke-Konnerup (2019), folk high school pedagogy comprises a “whole series of local variations on modern pedagogy of freedom seen as the pedagogy of discovery and repetition (11).” This freedom of experiential learning builds a strong foundation on three interconnected concepts: enlightenment for life, enlightenment for the people, and democratic edification.

First, enlightenment for life implies personal and existential dilemmas of learning and edification (a whole person building with a moral development). Here, folk high school spaces, situations, and interactions act as learning spaces to engage learners in “experimenting and experiencing what it means to live and act as a decent human being alongside others” without

a prefabricated one-size-fits-all model (Komischke-Konnerup, 2019, pg. 13). Besides the spontaneity of using various learning spaces, “arrangement” as a pedagogical action is critical for folk high school teaching. As Kommisschke-Konnerup states, folk high schools become “pedagogically organized workshops, where living and learning take place simultaneously through practical interaction with the people and with the activities of the school” (14). Consequently, learners face challenges, expose themselves to others’ viewpoints, take courage to edify themselves and become themselves, take responsibility while contributing to the folk high school’s communal life.

Enlightenment for the people relates to the learners’ comprehension of different cultural historical contexts. As Hans Henningsen described, learners take responsibility “to show consideration for others, for culture and the world” while developing an inner moral compass that ensures self-awareness and self-authority. (Komischke-Konnerup 2019, p.17)

Lastly, democratic edification embodies a ‘form of teaching that is free and practical in experimentation,’ allowing learners to explore the meaning of democracy, democratic representation, and the role of the people in a democratic society through action and discussion (Komischke-Konnerup 2019, p. 19). This aspect of pedagogy not only fosters a deep understanding of democratic principles but also encourages learners to actively participate in the democratic processes within the school, thereby instilling a sense of responsibility and engagement.

5.3 Folk High Schools in the Danish Education System

The Danish free school system includes folk high schools, which offer an alternative to traditional formal education. These schools are self-governing to a certain extent in the administration, curricula, teaching, and assessment that allows creating a unique learning environment (Ministry of Higher Education and Science, 2022).

The folk high school movement played a pivotal role in people's education in the 19th century and continues to promote non-formal learning for democratic citizenship in Denmark. Folk high school ideology was founded by N. F. S. Grundtvig (1783–1872), who believed in educating people in their mother tongue and abolishing the old estate system to promote social and cultural

equality and unity (Milana, Sorensen, 2009, p.348; Tradgard (1999) Arnason & Wittrick, 2012, quoted in Knutas, 2013).

Along with Grundtvig's peasant school ideology, Christen Flor, Rasmus Sorensen, and Christen Kold contributed to the development of different currents in folk high school ideology history (Korsgaard, 2019), namely national and cultural, political, and social, and personal and existential. These additional layers to folk high school ideology enriched the more holistic understanding of a whole person learning as an individual/collective process in folk high school, adding the subjects of humanities, aesthetics, politics, and gymnastics to the school's schedule (Korsgaards, 2019).

From 2000 onwards, Danish folk high schools enlarged their understanding of democracy. They translated democracy through political and social understanding, emphasizing citizenship and citizens' active participation as a political empowerment (Korsgaard, 1997; Korsgaard 2004 quoted in Korsgaard 2019). In Korsgaard (2019) view three overall tendencies arose:

1. Folk high schools shifted their focus towards fellow citizens working with activism and projects in local/global contexts.
2. Folk high schools continue to explore personal existential ideas through movement, the arts, and creativity. Although this existential exploration has been part of the folk high school concept, modern society has prioritized individualism and self-development.
3. Enlightenment for life receives greater importance in the context of globalization and awareness raising of climate, ecology, and sustainability become more integrated. (Korsgaard, 2019)

Today, 79 folk high schools in Denmark offer short-term and long-term courses based on lifelong learning, democracy, and citizenship. The Law of the Free Boarding School stipulates that the minimum age of enrollment is 17.5, no exams or tests are given, every school must offer a set of general courses, and the primary aim should fall within personal enlightenment and democratic education. The Danish Folk High School Council defines the folk high school as a "place to meet across the differences and become valid actors in society: to learn to live together in respect, and reciprocity, despite, or even because of, these differences." The schools receive government funds and free tuition, but students must pay the boarding fee.

6 Research Methodology

This section will describe the study design and the methods utilized. Firstly, I will address the research question by briefly explaining the interpretivist/constructivist research paradigm, followed by specifics related to research on folk high schools. Secondly, I will discuss the methods employed in the study. In addition, I will explain the choices made in sampling, data collection method, and data analysis. Lastly, I will address the criteria of trustworthiness and the ethical considerations surrounding the research.

6.1 Research Paradigm and Methodology

As a researcher, I acknowledge the importance of establishing a solid research foundation through a set of philosophical and theoretical assumptions regarding ontology (the nature of reality), epistemology (knowledge), and methodology (the principles that inspire and govern scientific research and the research method) (Bryman, 2021; Gelo et al., 2008).

For this research, I have adopted a constructivist/interpretivist paradigm and will conduct qualitative research. I am aware of the principles of social complexity and the absence of law-like generalization.

The aim of this research is to understand the subjective experience of social action, what those experiences mean in practice, and how others understand those experiences and meanings (Bryman, 2021, p. 124). I interpret reality as a socially and psychologically constructed phenomenon that connects the researcher and the research subject (Bryman, 2021; Gelo et al., 2008). I acknowledge that my interpretation develops knowledge that focuses on subjective reality and descriptiveness to grasp the complexity of a constantly changing social space, such as a folk high school (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). I will explore a social setting without separating the data from the context and will build upon a subjective, multiple, and socially constructed reality (Bailey, 2007; Krauss, 2005; Lincoln et al., 2011). These philosophical and theoretical assumptions guide my research question, design, and ethical considerations. The research is mainly inductive, and data driven. I have chosen a qualitative research design as it aligns with

the explorative nature of the study on the topic of "Life skills and resilience building" in a non-formal educational setting.

6.1.1 Methods

The purpose of this study is to outline where the folk high schools are in the whole process of non-formal adult education from policy to some of their contemporary practices in Denmark. This research study applies an inductive method with document analysis and an informant interview.

Denmark is the first country where the folk high school movement began under the influence of N. F. S. Grundtvig and spread all over to the other Nordic countries. Thus, Denmark provides ideal research setting to investigate whether life skills and resilience building processes are present in folk high school practices.

Non-formal adult education, particularly the concept of folk high schools, was selected out of the researcher's motivation to understand and deepen the folk high school knowledge as a teacher and as a sociologist who worked within the context being studied for two years in another Nordic country, the Faroe Islands.

6.1.1.1 Triangulation

Triangulation involves using different methods, data sources, investigators, or theories to gather and analyze information about a certain phenomenon. It aims to provide a comprehensive and precise representation of the reality being studied (Hilton, 2003 quoted in Weyers et al. 2008). Based on the idea that several observations are better than one (Bechhofer & Paterson, 2012,57) increases better comprehension through multiple perspectives (Patton, 2002) and improves the reliability and validity of the findings (Denzin, 1989).

However, triangulation has a time-consuming nature (Weyers et al., 2008).

In this research, I apply methodological triangulation. I use two data collecting methods to explore the different dimensions of folk high schools: document analysis and an informant interview.

6.1.2 Document Analysis

Document analysis comprises interpreting various documents that are potential sources for qualitative analysis (Patton, 2015). Documents can refer to books, newspapers, articles, academic journals, institutional reports, and visual materials (Morgan, 2022). Document analysis has numerous advantages. The method can help to reach 'inaccessible persons and subjects' through access to insightful public domain documents prepared by professionals and field experts (Cohen et al., 2008). Document analysis is also cost-effective (Descombe, 2014).

I chose document analysis to counterbalance the time-consuming nature of finding gatekeepers to professionals (government/ folk high schools) so that I have more opportunities to conduct my research that would otherwise be difficult. (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Like in other methods, I am aware that conducting document analysis raises questions about bias selectivity (Bowen, 2009). Therefore, I apply informant interviews for data triangulation to increase the validity of my study. However, I also give space to certain life circumstances that can make it challenging to conduct online informant interviews if participants are unwilling to participate due to different reasons.

6.2 Research Design

I used a multi-method qualitative research design that enables to discuss and answer the different sublevels of my research question more accurately and to reach a more valid conclusion about folk high schools and their contemporary practices. I applied two data collection methods: document analysis and online informant interview.

6.2.1 Choosing Documents

In choosing documents, I applied purposive selection, ensuring that I reached a point of redundancy with my data. (Flick, 2006) The documents consulted included both state and private documents. According to Bryman (2021), the state information has potential significance for social researchers (593). I followed J. Scott's (1990) four criteria when deciding which documents to include: authenticity, credibility, representativeness, and meaning. I

checked that the documents used were genuine, with authorship, date, and publication location (Kridel, 2015). Similarly, I ensured that the selected documents' content had significance and interpretive meaning for my research. (Mogalakwe, 2009). The document's authenticity and meaning conveyed comprehensibility. However, assessing credibility and representativeness was more difficult than expected. While selecting documents from private sources, I also adopted Scott's four criteria. I collected documents likely to be authentic and meaningful for my research but with reflexivity, bearing in mind that those documents represent different viewpoints creating. (Bryman, 2021, p. 551)

In the initial phase of the study, I established a comprehensive conceptual framework by collecting qualitative data to explore adult education and lifelong learning in global and Danish context. Then, I gathered data to build the theoretical framework on resilience and life skills building. (See Appendix 1). In the next research phase I had to reiterate my research due to low informant interview participation. I decided to collect more data from 10 Lessons from Folk High Schools Book Series that provided information on folk high school history, pedagogy, and contemporary practices. This book series was the first comprehensive collection of folk high school research containing experts', teachers', and principals' perspectives on folk high school practices from Denmark and abroad. The criteria for documents selection from the book series were based on their relevancy to my research question (See Appendix 1.). Lastly, the informant interview offered insights into experiences and perspectives of the informant regarding folk high schools.

6.2.2 Online Informant Interview

Informants with expert knowledge are a widely used social research method to get a person "insider knowledge" to multiple realities (Bryman, 2021). The research participants I selected were experts in their field of study of folk high schools. Due to differences in country, I chose online informant interviews. Though I tried to build trustful relationship (sending invitation emails, clarifying details, sending updates, and making the most convenient time for them), the participation rate of interviewees was 1 out of 10. The informant who accepted the participation was a knowledgeable expert in Grundtvig's ideology and folk high schools.

When designing the interview guide, I ensured that I had open-ended questions and guiding questions to ensure the experts did not lose the themes. I reviewed the questions based on the documents.

6.3 Situating Myself

I am a researcher, a woman, a mother, and an educator with folk high school experience. According to Van Maanen, a researcher with previous experience in the field of study can take a more insightful analysis of the research phenomenon (Van Maanen, 2011, p. 126).

My positionality regarding the Danish education system is more of a mixture between an outsider and insider. I can take a more objective/neutral stance when collecting and working with the data to ensure my personal biases do not interfere with the subjective nature of the interpretivist paradigm. However, being a foreigner created barriers for my data collection, and I used language translators when needed. Adopting an interpretive stance allowed me to proceed with data collection and analysis simultaneously, correct potential flaws, and alter changes in the methodology or research question to better grasp the folk high school phenomenon.

6.4 Data Analysis

I applied thematic analysis to identify, analyze, and report themes within the data set (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The method's flexibility and independent position regarding any theoretical and epistemological assumptions suited the study's research design where the researcher takes a reflexive role in knowledge production. The reflection and methodological choices provide the basis for the analysis that further guided the identification of underlying themes regarding folk high schools' life skills and resilience-building practices (Braun & Clark, 2006, p. 84). It started inductively and continuously moved in the data set, the coded extract, and the analysis to look for themes (Braun & Clark, 2006). During this process, I moved from description (data organized to show patterns) to interpretations (patterns, meanings, and implications theorized) (Braun & Clark, 2006). In identifying explicit themes, I generated two main categories: life skills and resilience building. For the "life skills" category, I used the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (2013) definition of life skills to generate three subcategories: cognitive, personal, and interpersonal skills. For the "resilience" category, I used Ungar's Resilience Model principles and ingredients. While categorizing my data set, I

extracted relevant quotes from both the data and the informant interview. In the final phase of explicit theme identification, I identified overlaps between life skills and resilience categories. Therefore, I decided to focus on those specific ingredients and principles from Ungar's Resilience Model that integrated life skills categories I used. Then, I reorganized the data set and generated the final explicit themes for the analysis.

While describing the data, I had to acknowledge that the whole set exceeded this short research purpose, and certain documents were not relevant to my research question. Therefore, the analysis used a particular data set from the 10 Lessons from Folk High Schools Book Series.

6.5 Ethical Considerations

I made specific ethical considerations regarding informed content, participant anonymity, and confidentiality. While I was conducting the research, I took care to protect the participants' anonymity and privacy. The research design followed the principles of avoidance of harm, appropriate rational judgment, and safeguarding.

Afterward, I informed the participant about the study's aims and their rights as research participants, the audio recording, and the interview length (35-50 minutes). The interview was recorded through UIT Security Teams, and the data storage was secured through UIT, The Arctic University of Norway, and SIKT.NO. The stored data was only accessible by my supervisor and myself. The participants signed a consent form agreeing to participate in the research study. When the research was over, all the interviews were deleted. Afterward, all the participants agreed to sign the informed consent form to be audio-recorded for about 60 minutes. The research project was reviewed and received ethics clearance through SIKT Norway.

6.6 Trustworthiness

This study adopts trustworthiness and authenticity as alternative criteria for assessing the research (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Guba and Lincoln, 1994) Lincoln and Guba's with these criteria underlined that social scientist can reveal more than one absolute social reality. Therefore, they divided trustworthiness into four criterion categories: credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmability.

Credibility: Throughout the research, I ensured that the study's aim is congruent with the research process and "carried out according to the canons of good practice" (Bryman, 2021, p. 390). Then, I described, interpreted, and concluded the data I had collected represented rich accounts of the studied folk high school setting (Cohen et al., 2000). I conducted multi-method qualitative research to understand the life skills and resilience-building processes of folk high schools. This included an overall view of the folk high school system in the context of Danish non-formal adult education, document analysis of particular articles from the 10 Lessons from the Folk High Schools Book Series, and an online informant interviewee's expert knowledge on Grundtvig's ideology and folk high schools.

Dependability: I ensured my findings were consistent, clear, and logical. I adopted an auditing approach (Bryman, 2021, p. 392) to ensure that the research process and methods align with the research question.

Transferability: In this research, I intended to produce what Geertz (1973a) calls a thick description of varied accounts of the folk high school phenomena. According to Lincoln and Guba, these thick descriptions act as a database for considering the possible transferability of findings to other settings. However, I intended no generalization with this research.

Confirmability: I ensured that my values and theoretical inclinations were objective enough to lead a research study in good faith (Bryman, 2021, p. 392). I checked, examined, and analyzed the data to avoid biases in my qualitative section." The information about subjectivity being both a strength and weakness is not necessary for the general meaning of the text.

7 Findings

7.1 Data Set

7.1.1 Building Relationships /Developing a Sense of Belonging

7.1.1.1 Expert's position:

Rahbek (2019) highlights that folk high schools, such as boarding schools, center around a shared life where subject teaching and social interaction dissolve into each other. This blend of teaching and togetherness is possible due to the overall objective of folk high schools, which is to promote edification-life enlightenment, public enlightenment, and democratic education (Rahbek, 2019, 5). Living together has a significant meaning in the learners' lives because they learn, work, sing, play, eat, breathe, and exist together for an extended period. Rahbek believes that this intensity and intimacy of togetherness not only forms strong bonds amongst students and teachers but also with the place itself. In this context, folk high schools become a sanctuary where learners can coexist, be themselves, and learn from their mistakes, guided by pedagogical intention. The whole atmosphere of folk high schools is challenging to understand, as meaning and attachment are complex concepts.

According to Rahbek, learners often describe the atmosphere at folk high schools as having a "pulsating energy" that is fueled by teachings, shared life experiences, and social interaction (Rahbek, 2019, p. 11). During Rahbek's research interviews, students associated this energy with attentiveness, humor, play, engagement, solidarity, and comfort, where human relationships are built on freedom, equality, and trust. As a result, the ongoing dialogue between students and teachers in the setting of folk high schools becomes more significant than in other places. Rahbek employs Gernot Bohme's concept of "tuned spaces" from theater to explain that the conscious framing at folk high schools situates learners to connect and react to these learning spaces (Rahbek, 2019, 17). Consequently, students develop a sense of belonging where they become part of the place and vice versa (18).

Rahbek's analysis of the interviews suggests that folk high schools should not be considered conventional schools. Instead, these institutions are more akin to homes, where personal connections, communal living, and the environment combine to create innovative and indirect teaching methods. The goal of these methods is to impart knowledge about life, the public, and democracy, while also promoting enlightenment. (22)

7.1.1.2 Folk High School Contemporary Practices

The International People's College (DK)

Teacher's position:

At International People's College, a multicultural folk high school receiving students worldwide, building a caring community is a high priority. While the school values its diverse student body, Felicity Markdal emphasizes the importance of addressing cultural misunderstandings among students to foster a strong sense of unity. The Life Stories initiative aims to unite multicultural student groups while bridging the generational divide (Markdal, 2019, p. 26). According to Markdal, life storytelling can deconstruct “apathy coming from lack of care/understanding,” and plants trust in the storyteller and the listeners. During this process of opening up, “the concept of the other as something we are taught to fear” transforms into love and compassion (Markdal, 2019, p. 28) In their Life Stories I, II, and III, learners are scattered to form a diverse and representative group of 10. During the storytelling sessions, students and teachers learn more about student life from the past, present, and future. First, students build a special bond. Second, personal life stories can become a supportive teaching tool for different subjects, making learning more engaging and emotional. Lastly, personal stories are integrated into different teaching subjects as sources of inspiration, making learning more meaningful and filled with emotions. For example, topics like migration, mental health, and bullying can be explored through personal stories to create a deeper understanding and connection with the subject matter (Markdal, 2019)

Nørgaard Folk High School (DK)

Teacher's position:

Jesper Tier Gissel, a teacher at Nørgaard Folk High School, explains that the "Chaos Project" encourages student collaboration and community building. The students' primary objective is to complete a three-day project after spending 12 weeks developing a folk high school routine. The project is led by three teacher coordinators who have expertise in music, acting, writing, technology, costumes, and scenography. The teachers are responsible for guiding and assisting the students, grouping them according to their skills, and providing direction as necessary.

After the teachers divide students into three groups, each group needs to produce one-third of the play without knowing what the other groups are doing. The playwriting ends with a performance. The play centers around the story of two superheroes, Awesome Girls and Amazing Man, who fight crime worldwide with ever-changing superpowers supplied by Dr. X based on each mission's requirements. The play culminates in a performance. However, the twist in the story comes when Dr. X gets drunk at a party, and three different crime alarms sound from around the world. The two superheroes embark on their mission without knowing what superpowers they have received. (Gissel 2019, 31)

According to Gissel (2019), the Chaos Project activates and trains learners to work in new groups to cope with stress, handle conflicts, fail and reiterate, and harvest accomplishment. This way, they build their group identity and grow individually. As Gissel phrases it, students experience "the feeling of being 'in tune' (34) with themselves and the others and how important it is to value their and the other's contribution to the project. (35)

Danish Scandinavian Folk High School (DK)

Teacher's position:

Kare Birk, a teacher at the Danish Scandinavian Folk High School, includes a project called the "Game of Thrones" in his yearly Furniture, Space, and Product class. The project requires each student to select a country and its leader and then construct a throne for the leader. Birk emphasizes that the throne must be made from "recycled materials and has to underscore, reinforce, provoke, underplay, play up against or otherwise be a physical expression of the

leader and the country they have been given. (47)” In Birk’s (2019) view, the workshop project fosters togetherness in work while being together and talking together (50). Creating together enhances both tactile and cognitive comprehension from the students who build close ties with their peers, experiencing a sense of belonging on two levels: within groups where they share interests and delve deeper into their subject, and within a larger community where differences challenge them "to exhibit consideration, make compromises, engage in discussions and debates, get excited, and build upon each other's ideas" (51).

Birk (2019) states that the folk high school setting provides a safe and trustworthy environment where students can learn to give and receive feedback constructively and develop a caring attitude towards others during their projects. Finally, Birk emphasizes the importance of teachers in the students' projects, encouraging them to take risks and providing support when necessary.

7.1.2 Encouraging Powerful Identities

7.1.2.1 Expert’s position:

From Lövgren’s (2019) perspective, the theme of identity plays a central role in folk high schools, which are unique educational settings. Drawing from Etienne Wenger’s social learning theory and integrating it with Gert Biesta and Bernt Gustavsson’s works on education and democracy, Lövgren defines *democratic edifications* as “the strengthening of the ability to identify with the Other-to see yourself mirrored in another person (10)”. The student interviews reveal that folk high school learning practices adopt a distinctive “boundary-oriented pedagogy.” This teaching method facilitates a meeting between individual and community boundaries, accelerating the formation of the I/We identity. Since folk high schools embrace diverse social practices, students negotiate identity through a shared negotiation of meaning and reflection practice within the community. Lövgren underlines the importance of students forming a new community comprising individuals with different social backgrounds. Through interaction and dialogue, students discuss the role and meaning of cultures in different cultural/social/political settings (18). Lövgren concludes that students report experiencing self-development and a socially developing identity in the context of folk high schools (10).

7.1.2.2 Folk High School Contemporary Practices

Folk High School for Sport in Aarhus (DK)

Teacher's position

Inga Schjøtt, teacher and counselor at the Folk High School for Sport in Aarhus, describes her counseling with folk high school students as counseling for life that provides space for individual exploration and curiosity. She also believes: “The more clarity you get about your personality and principles, the more able you are to find your ways.” (41)

Signe, an 18-year-old high-achieving student at the Folk High School for Sport in Aarhus, began her journey of self-discovery by exploring new things. Prior to joining the school, she dedicated most of her time towards academics, gymnastics, and dance. However, she lacked a social circle and self-confidence. To address this, Schjøtt helped Signe to reflect on her reactions and self-image through the folk high school activities (43). As a student, she could do that individually and in group sessions. During her folk high school stay, Signe gradually began to put less pressure on herself and better handle her worries and negative thinking. Signe strengthened her joy of life, built more self-esteem, and made friends. In Schjøtt's (2019) opinion, experiencing togetherness in grades and an exam-free high school environment supported her self-development to realize she is not alone and has the power to take control of her life (43). Schjøtt also adds that the folk high school environment compelled Signe to interact with different people, which allowed her to gain insight into their perspectives and behavior. (43)

Egmont Folk High School (DK)

Teacher's position

Bente Kloppenborg teaches at Egmont Folk High School for disabled and non-disabled students. Interestingly, non-disabled students also work as care assistants for disabled students and earn their tuition fees for the school. Kloppenborg (2019) underlines that their folk high school sees the human being first and the staff constantly reflect on their students' wellbeing by asking” Who are you? How can you participate, and how do you want to participate in this

community? How can you open yourself up to others, and how can the others open themselves up to you in a community?” (30) In Kloppenborg’s view, the folk high school is in constant negotiation on how to meet its students’ diverse needs while allowing them the freedom to feel empowered (30). For instance, their course “My life, my responsibility” aims to empower disabled students to live their lives meaningfully in dignity as active and responsible human beings. A Kloppenborg suggests that disabled students are in a safe learning environment that teaches them how to handle themselves socially and mentally while understanding their possibilities and limitations (30). Similarly, assistant students of disabled students are also exposed to numerous learning opportunities while being students and learning how to assist and help someone. Kloppenborg concludes that in both student cases, social and self-development, the practice of solidarity receives a central part: “That is very much it is all about finding a role in the community and taking responsibility and showing responsibility based on our different conditions.” (33)

Ullerup Folk High School (DK)

Teacher’s position

Malthe Ibsen Sorensen and Lisbeth Trinskjaer, teacher and principal at Ullerup Folk High School, narrate the story of Morten- a former student. Morten came from a divorced family where the father had a strong social control over Morten. Morten worked long hours at his father’s bar, and he often remembered that he was unsuitable for any other job as an obese teenager. His father tried every possible means to control Morten until one day, Morten blood pressure went high, and he went to the hospital. Morten was offered bypass surgery but refused it. Instead, he lost some of his weight and enrolled at Ullerup Folk High School. He also asked for an educational counselor’s guidance. In Sorensen and Trinskjaer’s (2019) opinion, Morten's self-development journey began at that point. Through his folk high school stay, he gradually drew boundaries for his father until he could face him and declare he wanted to live his life. According to Sorensen and Trinskjaer (2019), Morten’s story exemplifies their folk high school's agenda: “to strengthen students’ ability to change their lives” (38). Taking action, however, requires a trustful and supportive folk high school community and “seeing the human behind the action” (39). Therefore, Ullerup Folk High School aims to teach its students to hear

their voices and act. In their account, sometimes they succeed, but other times, students never use this opportunity. (39)

7.1.3 Providing Support for Power and Control/Promoting Social Justice

7.1.3.1 Expert position:

Hansen (2019) argues that the principles of democracy and their impact on social issues is weakening and leads to a crisis in democracy. This democratic crisis not just hampers citizens' ability to engage in collective action but erodes their self-democratic confidence. This, in turn, leads to a reduction in shared responsibility for solving common problems. Hansen identifies several factors contributing to this crisis, including social, economic, ecological, and demographic challenges, as well as citizens' disillusionment with politics and their deep understanding of democratic principles.

Westheimer and Kahne's (2004) research reveal that various educational systems build on three different democratic citizen visions: the citizen with a sense of personal responsibility, the participating citizens who join organizations, the citizen with a sense of justice focusing on analysis and change. Hansen (2019) builds on the research of Westheimer and Kahne (2004), emphasizing that democratic citizenship requires the presence of these three citizens, and folk high schools offer a unique environment for exploring and practicing democratic citizenship. Folk high schools, in this respect, take a "third position" that both confronts and responds to mainstream values of the administrative elite the education system, competitiveness, and individualistic pursuits and pleasure-seeking. Instead, folk high schools have a unique approach to education, where learners are encouraged to take responsibility for the common good by appreciating values and their own talents (Hansen, 2019,12). By doing so, they develop the skills to face challenges and have control over their lives, instead of feeling like victims. (Hansen, 2019, p. 20). These schools aim to help learners discover their calling by teaching them about personal and collective understanding through different contexts where their knowledge of society/democracy requires translation into action for the community. (Hansen, 2019)

7.1.3.2 Folk High School Contemporary Practices

Krøgenrup Folk High School (DK)

Teacher's position

At Krøgenrup Folk High School in Denmark, teachers Sigrid Lauenborg Dahl and Mads Phillipsen designed a course called "The World is Burning". The course aims to promote active citizenship by teaching learners about political concepts and helping them develop a political campaign based on a real-life social issue over a period of two months. In 2014, the course participants chose to create a campaign against the Thørring-Schmidt government's proposed tightening of family reunification for refugees. They attempted various peaceful resistance initiatives to influence decision-makers, but none of them were successful, and some participants ultimately resorted to civil disobedience. This resulted in a duality of democracy, where participants felt a commitment to justice while also being liberated from dogmatism. According to the teachers, the folk high school was a space for learners to challenge their political compass, make decisions, take risks, and assume responsibility (Dahl, Philipsen, 2019). Dahl and Philipsen emphasize that teachers should not use learners as instruments for their own political agenda. In their view the course explores the limits and processes of democratic education, as well as how power and control can affect the roles of both teachers and students (Dahl, Philipsen, 2019, 36). Here, Dahl and Philipsen (2019) also highlight how teaching encourages learners to experiment with power and control and supports them in becoming active in social justice issues but they are by no means neutral in exercising power and control as an institution in the learner's learning process. As a value-based institution their folk high school has its agenda setting, but compared to formal schooling, the learners deliberately choose to study in them knowing the folk high school values and its profile.

Jyderup Folk High School (DK)

Teacher's position

The Green Guerilla course led by Nana Gerstrøm Alsted at Jyderup Folk High School is an example of how learners can be empowered through ecological activism. During this course, learners plan and design course content and execute it in real-life contexts with teacher

guidance. From building a greenhouse out of sustainable materials to reaching a consensus on a sustainability campaign, experiential learning is crucial in exposing learners to different ecological/sustainability paradoxes and dilemmas. Alsted (2019) believes that learners initially want to learn about solutions but find the complexity of the issues overwhelming until they grasp that both the individual and the wider community are part of the conversation and solution. Through this course, learners can grow in many ways by making decisions, overcoming difficulties, cooperating with others, navigating complexities, building community, and passing on their knowledge and experience to future participants. (Alsted, 2019, 59)

Rhythmic Folk High School (DK)

Teacher's position

At the Rhythmic Folk High School, Mads Mendes, a music teacher, explored the possibilities of their music course content with his learners. The main goal was to prepare students for giving a school concert as part of the "Play Danish" musical event. His teacher's dilemma was to find a means that aligns the course's aim with playing Danish songs while showing that "music cultivates a way of life" (Mendes, 2019,31). Using inspiration from Anders Greus and Nana Schwartzlose's "Unending Stories," they agreed that students compose songs based on the lives of strangers, perform the songs personally to them, and then perform them for a bigger audience. The student's learning process started with interviewing a garage mechanic, principal, hairdresser, wine merchant, priest, sewer, petrol station owner, author, and married couple. According to Mendes (2019), the learning process activated learners individually and as a group since the project's context made song composition purposeful and human. They made learning purposeful and supported learners to face the challenges of songwriting and rhyming, along with building a sense of ownership when playing the songs for a bigger audience. The portrayal of local people's stories through songs highlighted that folk high schools have numerous ways to promote power and control for their learners and social issues. Thus, learners grasp that learning and taking ownership of one's life is about the individual and the community (Mendes, 2019).

Gymnastic Folk High School in Ollerup (DK)

Teacher's position

Trine Søndersholm Larsen approached learners' empowerment through body and movement and sustainability awareness at the Gymnastic Folk High School in Ollerup. Along with her colleague, they wanted to connect their demotivated students to the world through the Sustainability Goals. Their point of departure was the intertwining relations between mind and body, reason, and emotions, and how the body acts as a powerhouse to sense and experience life (Larsen 2019, 27). The objective of the movement project was to explore individual versus other existence. The aim was to dance a Sustainability Goal for others, while also entering a dialogue with the audience, answering their questions, justifying their choices, and accepting criticisms. According to Larsen (2019) the free learning space encouraged students to experience Sustainability Goals through their bodies, and the learning process transformed into a forum of negotiation, where students could interact and process their experiences and gain new knowledge (29). Their movements and aesthetic expressions became a platform for developing new experiences and knowledge. The learning process brought things that felt distant closer to the students (Larsen, 2019).

7.1.4 Online Informant Interview

The Informant underlined that to grasp the folk high school concept as a whole requires understanding Grundtvig's ideology in both national and global historical context in the 19th century:

He started his ideology in reaction to the French Revolution and in the growing Enlightenment when people were asking questions: What is it to be a person of the world? Who I am? How can I start responsibility? How can I be part of this? How can I be part of the debate on what this society is? All these sorts of things led to democracy. He came up with the idea of the People Folk High School as a response to this. He was also concerned and sad about the changes happening worldwide and in Europe. Are we ready to make our changes? We are not just subordinate to the king but all part of Danish society.

The Informant also highlighted that the concept of folk high schools built strong foundation on Grundtvig's questions of what it meant to be a person in society, the responsibilities that come with it, and how individuals can participate in the debates surrounding society. Thus, Grundtvig's ideology on folk high schools challenges the formal Danish education system in its structure, methods, and teaching practice that serves the personal development of the people. The Informant states the following:

Folk high school is a space where you can grow and learn step by step to be an adult and be part of society. Grundtvig does it very complexly because he does not say here is the plan, and if you do it like this, you will be a responsible person. The starting point is to create a free space with no exams, where you cannot dictate how to create a responsible citizen. Instead, it is about placing trust in the individual, allowing them to take ownership of their learning and development. This trust is a crucial element in fostering a sense of responsibility and citizenship and twists the relationship between student and teacher. Learning becomes more open and explores what it is that I need to learn, how to bring all these things together and how to use curiosity to explore the world, our tradition, history and use your language.

In the Informant's view, this folk high school approach is relevant today because it is vital to learn how to become democratic citizens: "It is easy to forget the importance of freedom, how to take part in society, and what it means to be an active citizen. By creating a space that fosters exploration and curiosity, individuals can learn how to become responsible citizens who can make positive contributions to society."

Moreover, the Informant adds that folk high schools are contributing to strengthening lifelong learning as they create "no clear demarcations in learning" compared to formal education.

However, Informant admits that ideally folk high schools are for all people, but in reality, they attract a specific type of people, such as "humanist individuals" and not a "complete mix of liberals and conservatives" or lower classes and other groups. However, Informant adds that some schools do better at attracting a more comprehensive array of people than others.

Lastly, Informant concludes that folk high schools are learning spaces where homeliness, playfulness, and conflict resolution establish student unity:

1. “Living together, belonging to the place, and experiencing life situations together through rituals establishes a unique atmosphere.”
2. “The school’s architectural setup adds to this sense of belonging. Teachers are present in different situations, both inside and outside the school, but there are no clear divisions between their roles.”
3. “Playfulness is an essential element in building students’ capacity to be active since risk-taking becomes less stressful when they are accepted and permitted to fail.”
4. “Folk high schools are not conflict-free zones; they are places where the goal is to stay in the conflict, give space to disagreement, and build resilience by accepting counterarguments and overcoming the conflict.”

8 Analysis

8.1 Thinking about the Systems and Adapting to the Local Context

In Ungar’s (2021) view, one important component of building resilience is thinking about the systems and adapting to the local environment. Building on Ungar’s Resilience Model, I interpreted folk high schools as systems who have the capacity to adapt and interact with other systems based on their internal/external resources (protective processes) and the local/national/global socio-cultural-political-economic contexts they operate.

Although folk high schools do not explicitly incorporate a resilience model, findings reveal that they display systemic thinking and adaptability to the local context.

8.1.1 Resilience Building Through Folk High School History

According to the informant interview, adapting to the actual environment and thinking systemically dates to Grundtvig's concept of establishing a folk high school in the 19th century. This concept went against the trend of rationalism and formal educational settings. Grundtvig aimed to develop adult education with a humanist approach, sparking Denmark's "folkeopplysing" (popular enlightenment) notion (Kuusipalo et al., 2021, p. 104). Like the informant's point of view, Korgaards (2019) suggests that Grundtvig was an "indirect" nation-builder who recognized that Denmark's existing social, cultural, and political issues required a systemic approach to find solutions and mitigate the trade-offs. These trade-offs included the old estate system, the absence of democracy, the lack of education opportunities for the rural population, the lack of practical skills building for the rural population, the bookish learning of Latin-based schooling, the conventional teacher role, and the domineering state-church unity through religion (Andresen, 1991; Knutas, 2013).

Considering Ungar's Resilience Model, both expert and informant findings confirmed that Grundtvig's ideology is about a new type of school with its innovative structure and the strong vision of enlightenment for life, enlightenment for the people, and democratic edification played a significant role in inspiring Grundtvig's followers who began founding schools across Denmark. (Korsgaard, 2019; NOU, 2001, p. 16 quoted in Knutas (2013)). Hence, folk high schools gradually developed into dynamic systems as they built their capacity to respond flexibly to Denmark's societal changes over 175 years. In other words, folk high schools as non-formal adult education institutions had been building resilience indirectly as a process of interacting within and between multiple systems (Ungar, 2021).

As Korsgaard (2019) suggested, Danish society and the world influenced this historical development of folk high school. Along this process of building resilience, folk high schools faced numerous disturbances and institutional crises to thrive in Danish society. Korsgaard's (2019) classification of folk high schools into four transformative periods highlighted that in each period, folk high schools focused on recovery, adaptation, and transformation to address different contexts of adversity. These contexts of adversity encompassed the transition from absolutism to democracy, the economic development in agriculture, industrialism, the

multicultural Danish society, globalization, and climate change. During such adversities, folk high schools had institutional disturbances such as low student attendance and internal vision conflicts while continuously negotiating meaning(values), openness, learners' needs, and community building.

As Korsgaard (2019) and the informant indicated, folk high schools thrived on interacting with society around them. However, they also went against the mainstream society, raising awareness of different socio-political and ecological ideas and exploring personal existential ideas. As the informant highlighted, folk high schools act as a "living social movement" trying to balance practical learning with social and civic inclusion while promoting active citizenship.

The historical development of folk high schools also indicated that folk high schools' transformation into dynamic systems to cope with change was linked to external and internal protective processes. Hence, some external protective processes were Grundtvig's ideology, supportive governmental policies, the taximeter grant system, and counteracting with multiple other systems. Along these external protective processes, the role of people, structures, processes, and vision in folk high schools were internal protective mechanisms in resilience building. Thus, internal and external protective processes strengthened folk high schools as open spaces. In open spaces, flexibility and adaptability are vital features to adhere to upcoming challenges.

However, resilience building alters according to the needs of individuals, organizations, society, and cultures (Masten,2014). Consequently, discrepancies can exist between two folk high school levels: ideological and practical reality. Although folk high schools function according to the Act of Folk High School, not all have the capacity and resources to be open and adaptive to the local environment. Some schools may be more closed or rigid than others. From the informant's point of view, the role of the school's leadership, teacher community, students, and connection with other institutions are crucial to using the folk high school space and ideology in building resilience for the institution, learners, and employees alike.

8.1.2 Resilience Building Through Folk High School Practices

Some folk high school practices revealed that they implicitly engage in resilience-building processes as they center around two desired outcomes: supporting power and control and promoting social justice. To achieve these two outcomes, teachers and folk high school environments indirectly build learners' capacity on multiple levels: individual, group, institutional, local/global, and social/cultural. As per Hansen's (2019) point of view and that of the informant, the supportive learning environment allows learners to play and experiment with systems and see how the systems around them operate. The folk high school community allows one to explore different contexts, confront them, and question and adapt values that serve the common good and individual needs. Thus, learners can indirectly/directly experience how knowledge, attitudes, and values interact with the physical and social environment, strengthening protective resource building or vulnerabilities. Project designs engage learners' system thinking practices and adaptation to the local context with risk exposure on individual, social, and environmental levels. Consequently, learners experience that systems also require investment from the individual to build resources to make changes happen.

At Krogerup Folk High School, the World is Burning course teachers taught students political activism by combining systemic thinking with practical problem-solving. After explaining various political concepts and different ways of political activism, students were allowed to develop a real-life case and build a political campaign. The course went beyond the classroom and connected with real-life civil activist systems, exposing students to individual and social risks that could lead to adverse outcomes. Although teachers informed students what risks entail civil disobedience, they let students decide, problem solve, take responsibility. By this way, students have "a sense of their freedom and feel commitment" (Dahl, Philipsen, 2019, pg. 36)

Similarly, Nana Gerstom Alstred's Green Guerilla course exposed students to problem solving and system thinking in ecology and sustainability. Alstred's approach in course design, content, and execution aligns with Ungar's multi-systemic approach of resilience building as she offers no easy fix solutions during the course but various exposures to complexities and systemic approaches in ecology and sustainability. Students are encouraged to adapt to the local context and explore various viewpoints to understand how one solution in a system can affect another

system positively or negatively. Despite the complexity of the problems and the numerous trade-offs, students are encouraged to try different solutions.

At Rhythmic Folk High School , the teacher tailored the teachings to the local context and facilitated human connections to real-life situations. The project had a significant impact on learners as they became a part of the learning experience, collaborated with interviewees, and saw how their actions can affect their interviewees' well-being. As a result, students learnt that resilience can have different meanings for different individuals. By meeting different people and hearing their life stories, they understood that everyone has their unique experiences and perceptions of life.

Contrary to the other folk high school practice, at Gymnastic Folk High School, teachers approach system thinking through body sensation and movement when working with the complexity of Sustainability Goals. Interestingly, the teachers' solution to propose that students dance to the Sustainability Goals originates from a teaching dilemma: demotivated students who showed no interest in presenting facts about Sustainability Goals. Teachers reflected upon their teaching feedback loops, the desired outcomes, and the system of a demotivated student group. Then, they twisted their teaching into a negotiation forum by bringing something distant closer to students, making something global an individual story.

Research findings agreed that folk high schools have a unique advantage: providing an accessible and unconstrained space for learners. This environment can help students eliminate the pressure from systemic constraints, leading to greater engagement and action. Here, trying and failing becomes a playful game. Folk high schools are interactive spaces that adapt to the contributions of teachers and learners. These contributions may include conflicts, disagreements, and risk-taking. Thus, folk high schools indirectly help build learners' resilience by fostering a "stay in conflict and not leave" attitude, which enables exploration of different systemic layers of conflict, such as individual, relational, social, cultural, economic, or political.

8.2 Helping People to Navigate and Negotiate

8.2.1 Life Skills Building Through Togetherness

Contemporary folk high school practices showed that teaching projects indirectly contributed to support learners in developing cognitive, personal, and interpersonal life skills and everyday practical skills.

The data set and informant interview also highlighted the unique architectural setup of folk high schools, which function as boarding schools. This setup plays a pivotal role in implicitly equipping learners with different life skills to navigate the challenges of everyday life. Consequently, these institutions transform into learning spaces where interactions, personal and social development help students to become more self-aware and develop an understanding of others, as well as learn about rules and boundaries. By emphasizing togetherness and its maintenance, strong bonds are formed between teachers and students, which in turn contributes to the development of important life skills such as effective communication, negotiation, conflict resolution, empathy, tolerance, and better social engagement.

In the International People's College Life Stories course, the teacher aimed to break down students' apathy from a lack of care within a multicultural high school environment. However, the course offers more than just that. It also helps learners acquire life skills such as effective communication, active listening, empathy, and self-awareness. The teacher, himself/herself, is also a student in this process, as students' life stories provide knowledge that informs, motivates, and inspires him/her to make appropriate decisions in their teachings. The teacher can reflect and reiterate how to apply readjustments to mitigate specific risks and problems based on the needs of the learners.

Similarly, the Chaos Project at Norgaard Folk High School and the Games of Thrones project at the Danish Scandinavian Folk High School aimed to strengthen student bonding and foster collaboration. However, these courses offered more than just that. They activated numerous life skills development such as decision-making, problem-solving, reasoning conflict resolution, creative thinking, and risk management. The courses also worked with learners' self-awareness,

self-esteem, and community appreciation, providing tangible outcomes that contribute to their personal, social, and cognitive development.

8.2.2 Life Skills Building Through Personal Development

The findings suggest that the close-knit community experience at Folk High School is only possible because of the students' commitment and freedom to choose to take responsibility for their education. Even when faced with unforeseeable challenges, some learners take a few months' break and attend Folk High School. According to experts position from the data set, attending Folk High School allows students to explore their identity by interacting with different communities and meanings. However, this identity formation process is not uniform and cannot be achieved through a one-size-fits-all solution.

The practices at the Folk High School for Sport, Ullerup Folk High School, and Egmont Folk High School demonstrated that what works for one learner may only apply to some due to their social, cultural, economic, and environmental differences. However, what is essential is to see the person behind the action and take a holistic development approach to contribute to achieving a desired long-term outcome: supporting learners' development in self-reflection, empowerment, and taking responsibility. By doing so, learners can improve their life skills, make healthy choices, and adopt a healthy lifestyle.

9 Conclusion

The theme of this qualitative research study was the non-formal adult learning environment of folk high schools in Denmark. This research sought to answer the question, *“How are life skills and resilience-building processes incorporated in folk high schools?”*

To answer this question, I had two sub-questions: “Where are folk high schools located in adult education?” and “Is it possible to identify any practices related to life skills and resilience building? If yes, what are those practices?”

To locate folk high schools in Danish adult education, I overviewed folk high schools through various contexts, such as policy, history, ideology, and pedagogy in Denmark. I concluded that folk high schools are unique non-formal institutions supported by strong policy framework and a taximeter grant system that significantly contributes to Danish lifelong learning and adult education by fostering social inclusion and civic inclusion and complementing the employability and human capital-building focus of adult education. For over 175 years, these schools have provided flexible learning opportunities that meet adults’ diverse needs and interests through democratic education. They encourage an experimental, experiential pedagogy with continuous negotiation and navigation between active citizenship and individual identity formation (Milan, Sorensen, 2013). As value-based institutions, folk high schools offer alternative perspectives on what learning can mean for adults, with an institutional culture that encourages innovation, critical thinking, dynamics, and adaptability to support learners’ translation of knowledge, attitude, and values into positive action, better life choices, and informed decisions.

To answer the second question, I collected data on folk high school history, pedagogy, and contemporary practices from documents and one informant interview. The purpose was to trace the possible presence of life skills and resilience-building processes in folk high school contemporary practices.

The research findings revealed that folk high schools foster a supportive and creative environment that encourages personal expression and recognition of student experiences. The current practices of these schools demonstrated that their pedagogy and teaching methods serve as indirect capacity builders for learners in terms of protective resources. These resources are diverse life skills tailored to the cultural setup of the folk high school and the needs of the

individual or community. The folk high schools teaching practices aimed to equip learners with different cognitive, personal and interpersonal skills that support learners' navigation and negotiation processes within the school setup and in real-life situations. This inspiring learning atmosphere is a testament to the unique application of pedagogy in the non-formal setting of folk high schools.

Research findings also highlighted that resilience-building processes are implicitly present in the folk high schools' historical development and contemporary practices and support learners' resilience-building, which aligns with Michael Ungar's Resilience Model. The detected principles for resilience building were the followings: building relationships/developing a sense of belonging; encouraging powerful identities; providing support for power and control/promoting social justice; thinking about the systems and adapting to the local context; helping people to navigate and negotiate.

Reflection and further research

Conducting nonformal adult education and lifelong learning research with a specific focus on life skills and resilience-building in the unique setting of folk high school was a motivating and resilience-building experience with threshold, feedback loops, and trade-offs. From the initial research proposal till its completion, the study faced challenging roadblocks on six levels: choosing a topic, choosing a methodology, finding research participants, engaging institutional participation, dealing with the data, and the researcher's well-being. First, I needed to reiterate the data collection method from planned online interviews with experts and folk high school teachers to document analysis and one informant interview. Then, the secondary data collection revealed enough data on Danish folk high school practices but no representativeness on the Norwegian side. I needed to make methodological changes. I shifted the research focus from providing a two-country case (Denmark and Norway) in-depth analysis of folk high school practices in life-skills and resilience-building process to an overall presentation of Danish folk high schools from policy to contemporary practices through the lenses of life skills and resilience building. The research was also time-consuming because the field of non-formal adult education had less monitoring and evaluation mechanisms and the governmental administrative data on folk high schools were also scattered.

Further research is needed to understand nonformal adult education and learning programs that are socially committed, have good governance, and have clear strategic directions for developing knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values that can benefit different stakeholders.

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Appendix

Appendix 1.

I consulted the UNESCO (2009) Global Report on Adult Learning and Education, the European Union's Council Resolution of 27 June 2002 on Lifelong Learning, the website of the Danish Ministry of Children and Education and the Ministry of Culture, the website of Danish Folk High Schools and the Act of Folk High Schools (2013). I collected data from the European Adult Education Association's (2018) and The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies' (2013) psychosocial perspective on Life Skills, along with Michael Ungar's resilience research publications: Ungar (2011), Ungar (2015), Ungar (2019), Ungar(2021a), Ungar(2021b).

The research included the following documents: A Foray into Folk High School Ideology(Korsgaard, 2019),Become Yourself(Komischke-Konnerup, 2019), My life, my responsibility (Kloppenborg, 2019), Coming home to oneself(Sorensen, Triskjaer, 2019), Take responsibility(Hansen, 2019),Activism bordering on illegality)Dahl, Philipsen, 2019), Learning sustainability(Alsted, 2019), Finding yourself(Schjott, 2019), Live together(Rahbek, 2019), The folk high school as a laboratory(Winther ,2019), Life in a workshop(Birk, 2019) , Musical stories(Brendes, 2019), The living word-now in pictures(Adrian, 2019), To become the Sustainable Development Goals (Larsen, 2019), Learn together(Lovgren, 2019), Creating a caring community(Markdal, 2019), Pedagogical justifications for deliberate chaos(Gissel , 2019).

Appendix.2

Interview Guide

1. How would you condense the essence of folk high schools?
2. Where are folk high schools positioned in the Danish educational agenda today?

3. How strong/weak position do folk high schools have in the non-formal learning setting of adult education in Denmark?
4. How do folk high schools connect with adult education?
5. How would you characterise the relationship between folk high schools and adult education? Are there enough dialogue between policy makers and the folk high schools?
6. What role do folk high schools have in contemporary society? Does this role align with Grundtvig and Kold's fundamental values?
7. What are some of the factors (Danish) that challenge the status of folk high schools?
8. What can folk high schools offer regarding life skills and resilience building?
9. What did you observe in folk high school practices? Could you give examples?
10. What outcomes do you see in folk high school participants? Could you use these themes as reference points?
11. How do you see the situation of folk high schools in the future?

Appendix 3

Providers in Danish adult education

Formal adult education providers	Non-formal adult education providers
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Adult Education Centres	Study associations/evening schools (local private institutions) offer subjects related insights and skills building
Language Centres	Danish University Extension courses (local committees) offer lectures and educative instructions
Labour Market Training Centres	Day Folk High School(private institutions) offer educative or job-promoting courses for people with little education, vulnerable groups
Technical schools, business schools, agricultural schools, social and health service schools, universities, colleges	Folk High Schools (private schools) offer short courses(one or two weeks) or residential long courses(more than 12 weeks) with focus on the learning for its own sake on different subjects

