Master thesis

The perspectives of youth in Doornkop (Soweto) on accessing post-secondary education: Challenges and strategies

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"Education is the great engine of personal development. It is through education that the daughter of a peasant can become a doctor, that the son of a mineworker can become the head of the mine, that a child of farm workers can become the president of a great nation. It is what we make out of what we have, not what we are given, that separates one person from another."

Nelson Mandela (1994: 166)

CONTENT

Acknowledgements

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List of abbreviations

CSDA	Centre for Social Development in Africa
CSG	Child Support Grant
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DBSA	Development Bank of Southern Africa
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
FET	Further Education and Training
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council
NEET	Not in Employment, Education or Training
NSFAS	National Student Financial Aid Scheme of South Africa
SETA	Skills Education Training Authorities
UJ	University of Johannesburg

Introduction: The access to further education

The unemployment rate in South Africa is 25,2% (first quarter of 2013) and according to Stats SA (2013), the youth (15-34 years) accounts for the highest proportion (almost 71%) of the unemployed. The unemployment rate amongst youth in the province of Gauteng is approximately 35% (SA, 2013). Next to these high unemployment rates amongst young adults, there is almost one third of the people in the age of 15-24 not employed nor in education or training (Stats SA, 2013). These young adults can therefore be regarded as NEET youth: Not in Education, Employment or Training (Raffe, 2003).

A major factor in the probability of finding a job is the role of education (Mlatsheni & Rospabé, 2002). The majority of South African youth either suffer from deficiencies in education; because they dropped out of the schooling system before obtaining their matric (starter's qualification for post-secondary education) and low quality of education as an indirect, still prevailing effect of apartheid, or they undergo a lack of skill recognition from employers, even if they have qualifications in the fields that are considered to be in high demand (Mlatsheni & Rospabé, 2002). It is mostly Black and Coloured[1] youth in South Africa that suffer from a lack of education and/or skill recognition from employers due to the history of apartheid in the country. Apartheid refers to a system of legalized racial segregation in South Africa between 1947 and 1994 (Trial et al., 2007). The apartheid legislation classified the inhabitants and visitors of South Africa into racial groups (Black, White, Coloured and Indian) and then separated people using this arbitrary classification allocating grossly unequal civil rights (Trial et al., 2007). A ceiling on job and income earning possibilities for non-White South Africans was placed and it is therefore likely that artificially created low levels of inequality among the non-White, African population is still maintained (Carter & May, 2001). The separation of people by race also took place in the educational institutions; Black people had Bantu education, which was supposed to prevent Black Africans from receiving education that would lead them to aspire to positions they would not be able to hold in society (South African History Online, [SAHO] 2013b). The government spending on Bantu education was very limited compared to what was spend on White schools, which still affects the current inequality of education in South Africa (Fiske & Ladd, 2004).

Post-secondary education options in South Africa include Further Educational Training (FET), Skills Education Training Authorities (SETA), private colleges and

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[1] During apartheid, the population in South Africa was classified into four groups: Black, White, Indian and Coloured. The meaning of coloured refers to people of mixed race (SAHO, 2013a)

universities. Accessing such institutions can have a marked effect on young people being able to find a job and to make the transition from school to work easier. However, these interventions cannot adequately address the scale and complexity of South Africa's youth unemployment crisis, because there are substantial gaps in the current spectrum of programmatic interventions (DBSA, 2011).

In South Africa too many young people face a future of economic marginalization and poverty; due to a non-labour absorbing growth path and an education system that seems to have failed to equip young people with the skills to enter the labour market (DBSA, 2011). This is a cause for concern; it can harm the integration of young people, influence the future socio-economic status of the country and can influence the political stability (DBSA, 2011).

The problem stems from the apartheid system of education, which promoted unequal access to educational resources. This has been inherited into the post-apartheid era with some schools continuing to be more equipped than others (different curricula) (Gamede, 2005). This has resulted in a more challenging access to post-secondary education for youth in deprived areas. A long-term solution might be found in improving the education system in order to provide an easier transition from school to work and a short-term solution might be making more people aware of the existing interventions (temporary job offices as intermediate solution; youth employment subsidies) and expand those interventions (DBSA, 2011). The experiences of the NEET youth in Doornkop, regarding their challenges to access post-secondary education and their coping strategies have not been explored and the findings from this study might help in developing relevant policy.

Significance of the study

This study intends to understand, from the perspective of young people in Doornkop, Soweto, the challenges they encounter and the strategies they employ in accessing post-secondary education in South Africa.

From a scientific perspective this research is relevant because it contributes to the existing literature on accessing post-secondary education. There is a lot of literature on youth transition to adulthood (Ansell, 2005; Arnett, 2004; Furlong, 2009; Henderson et al., 2007) and on the challenges to post-secondary education in South Africa (Chisholm, 2012; Gamede, 2005; Jansen, 1995; 1998; 2002; 2003; Nkomo et al., 2007), but there is an information gap in what the actual perspective of the NEET youth of Doornkop, Soweto is. The ideas that govern education focus largely on the needs of new and emerging economies, underestimating the

impact of social change on young people's lives and their needs (Wyn, 2009). In the literature there is mostly an expert view (by labour market economists, scholars or policy makers) on the access of post-secondary education and youth employment strategies and other policies concerning NEET youth, in which the perception of the youth themselves is missing. To understand the perspective of the NEET youth in Doornkop, Soweto and why they are not in post-secondary education although they are matriculated, an explorative in-depth research was needed. This understanding could help policy makers to develop a youth employment strategy and/or post-secondary education strategy that is more directly linked to the actual perspective of their target group, the NEET youth in Doornkop, Soweto. Therefore this study also has a social relevance.

The study is problem oriented; it has examined the perspectives of NEET youth in Doornkop, Soweto and their experiences and difficulties with accessing post-secondary education. The research has an interdisciplinary nature; different aspects of the influence of the post-secondary educational system on the NEET youth in Doornkop are being examined. The psychological approach of individual factors that can influence the youth to become and/or stay NEET is being examined; personal capabilities, self-esteem, self-confidence, etc., which influence the development of and choices youth make (Pittman, Irby, Tolman, Yohalem & Ferber, 2003; Sen, 1999). Also a more sociological approach is being used, with a focus on the context of the youth and the circumstances they live in; the available resources for the youth in Doornkop are examined (Sen, 1999). In the literature review different theoretical approaches from different disciplines will be examined; the capabilities approach of economist Amartya Sen (1999), the youth development approach of sociologist Pittman and colleagues (2003) and the coping strategies according to developmental psychologist Seiffge-Krenke (1995).

Overview

In chapter one of this study the theoretical framework that led to this study is presented and the expectations adapted from the literature have been used to form the research questions which are presented in chapter two. In chapter three the research methodology and data analysis is discussed. The results of the study are presented in chapter four, whereby the central research question is answered. Finally, the conclusions on basis of theoretical, methodological and ethical reflections are presented in chapter five, as well as some policy directions.

1. Theory

In this chapter the most important theories will be discussed in order to give a better understanding of the NEET youth in South Africa and the challenges they employ in accessing post-secondary education. The theoretical framework of this study is based on the capabilities approach of Amartya Sen (1999), the youth development approach (Pittman et al., 2003) and coping strategies according to Seiffge-Krenke (1995) linked to post-secondary education. This chapter starts with a description of the issues of NEET youth and the (post-secondary) education system in South Africa.

1.1 NEET youth

Youth is a difficult concept to define; based on Stats SA statistics (2012), youth can be defined as 15-24 year olds. Based on National Youth policy in South Africa youth can be defined as 14-35 year olds (Republic of South Africa, 2009). Although the researches above are both conducted in South Africa and might therefore be applicable for this study as well, in this study the definition of youth that Tanner and Arnett (2009) would like to call the emerging adulthood: 18-25 year olds will be used, because it is the most pertinent time in which young people access post-secondary education after obtaining their matric.

In this study the concept of NEET youth is meant: young people who are Not in fulltime Education, Employment or Training (NEET). These young people are the subject of continuing policy concern and it is believed that many young people who are NEET are from disadvantaged background and experience disadvantage in later life (Raffe, 2003). There is an on-going debate on labelling youth; as Pittman et al. (2003: 27) state it: "targeting is fine, labelling is not". There are other ways to give an explanation on the situation of these youth without labelling them. However, the label of NEET does not imply a negative (nor positive) stigma on these youth, it just states the fact that those young people are not in education, employment or training.

It is estimated that about 2,8 million young South African people (18-24 years old) are NEET (Cloete, 2009). According to Perold (in Perold, Cloete & Papier, 2012) almost half (42%) of this age group have no prospects of becoming productively engaged in society, which is a reason to be concerned. Perold states that the NEET youth in South Africa is isolated, out of touch with networks that can guide them into post-secondary education opportunities or employment options. A factor that also influences youth to have a difficult transition from school to tertiary education or employment is lack of support (Perold et al.,

2012). Because of this complicated transition to further education or work, the youth are considered to not being able to realise their aspirations for the future (Perold et al., 2012).

Another reason that can affect the youth in Doornkop to not be in employment might be highly influenced by the high youth unemployment rates in South Africa and the few youth unemployment strategies that exist. As far as the existing literature and government policies tell us about the youth in the townships of South Africa, there are few incentives for youth to not be in employment or education; there are no forms of social protection or support policies for youth that have never been employed before (DBSA, 2011). For youth development and the chances of a future job, the access to post-secondary education can be considered as highly important.

The emerging adulthood represents a crucial time in the development of an individual and is a period marked by rapid cognitive, social, emotional and physical changes (Hess & Copeland, 2001). Hess and Copeland state that adolescents are going through an accelerated development in which the above mentioned changes present the youth with a constant exposure to stimuli that may challenge their coping resources (*cf.* §1.5 *Coping strategies*).

1.2 Post-secondary education in South Africa
"*The doors of learning and culture shall be opened!*" – one of the core principles of the Freedom Charter made by the South African Congress Alliance (SAHO, 2013c)

1.2.1   The education system in South Africa
In South Africa everyone has the right to a basic education (Department of Basic Education (DBE), 2013). There is primary school (grade 1-7), secondary school (grade 8-12 and sometimes extended to grade 13) and tertiary education, which is also known as post-secondary education. After finishing grade 10-12 students will gain their starter's qualification; the matric. Post-secondary education in South Africa knows different forms of education: Further Education and Training (FET), Higher Education (HE) in the form of university and Skills Education Training Authorities (SETA) and private colleges funded by fees parents pay. In order to get into university a 'Matriculation endorsement' is required, which indicates one gained the degree needed to access university (Government of South Africa on education, 2013).

The country has a system of public schools and private schools; they differ in character, size, quality of education and financial means. There are only some private schools (funded by fees parents pay) and most schools are public schools and funded by the

government (DBE, 2013). The government in South Africa has two ministers of education; one for the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) and one for the Department of Basic Education (DBE). The DBE states the main vision on education: "All people in South Africa should have access to lifelong learning, as well as education and training, which will, in turn, contribute towards improving quality of life and building a peaceful, democratic and prosperous South Africa" (DBE, 2013). In order to reach these goals a huge budget allocation to education has taken place in the past two decades. More money is spent on education to strengthen the capacity of education and training systems to provide a growing number of young post-school learners (Government of South Africa on education, 2013). Despite the budget allocation the country is still struggling with the quality of education in 'Black areas' because of the aftershocks of apartheid and there is still significant inequality in education levels.

1.2.2   Education during apartheid

During apartheid there were different education policies for the various racial groups; educational institutions were separated and the apartheid regime neglected the development of Black educational institutions (Chisholm, 2012). In the 1950s the minister of Native Affairs in South Africa, Dr. Hendrik F. Verwoerd (later prime minister of South Africa 1958-1966), had a clear vision on education for Black Africans: "There is no place for him [the Bantu / Black African] in the European community above the level of certain forms of labour" (Nkabinde, 1997) and "Education must train and teach people in accordance with their opportunities in life according to the sphere in which they live." (Robertson & Whitten, 1978, p.114). In other words; the Black youth was prepared for menial jobs, while the White youth was prepared for skilled jobs.

The ideas of Hendrik Verwoerd on separated education for White and Black South Africans has led to a segregation law for Black education: the Bantu Education Act (1953). The Bantu Education Act was the basis of racially separated educational facilities for all educational institutions (primary, secondary and post-secondary education) (SAHO, 2013b). The aim of the Bantu Education Act (according to founder Verwoerd in 1953) was to solve South Africa's "ethnic problems" by creating complementary economic and political units for different ethnic groups and to prevent (Black) Africans receiving an education that would lead them to aspire positions they would not be able to hold in society (SAHO, 2013b). The money that was spent on Black schools was very limited compared to what was spent on White schools; Black schools had inferior facilities, only few qualified teachers and there was a lack

of proper textbooks (Fiske & Ladd, 2004). The Bantu Education Act was condemned and rejected as inferior by many Africans from the time of its introduction and can be seen as a cornerstone of the apartheid ideology-in-practice, which has disadvantaged millions of people for decades (SAHO, 2013b). The political, economic and personal devastating effects are still felt and wrestled with nowadays during the post-apartheid (SAHO, 2013b).

1.2.3 Education in the post-apartheid

As apartheid began to unravel in the late 1980s and early 1990s, a huge restructuring of (higher) education and a redistribution of school funds took place; no more separated White and Black education. Any redistribution of funds from the former White schools to the rest of the schools across South Africa would do little to enhance the education available to the historically disadvantaged schools, because only 17% of the total population in South Africa was White in 1993 (Fiske & Ladd, 2004). There were insufficient public funds to equalize public funding at any educational institution in order to reach the quality of education that had previously been available to White students only (Fiske & Ladd, 2004; Sayed & Motala, 2012). South Africa needed to spend a larger share of its gross national product on education but it was still not enough to equalize the quality in all schools (Fiske & Ladd, 2004). The education in many Black areas of South Africa is still of low quality due to under-qualified teachers, inferior facilities and lack of financial resources (Jansen, 2002). Jansen (2002) states that despite the production of literally thousands of pages of formal policy documents after apartheid, there still is a very limited change in education throughout South Africa. The primary explanation for non-change Jansen (2002) gives, especially in the transitional period after apartheid (1994-1999), is that it had to do with political symbolism. Politicians would not always invent policy in order to change practice, but it often represents a search for legitimacy (Jansen, 2002). In other words; policy formulation in South Africa was according to Jansen (2002) not always about changing practice, but was weighted towards important symbolic considerations. Although there has been some degree of positive change within the education system in South Africa, this could be only because policies always leave a trace in practice (Jansen, 2002). Well-resourced schools with well-qualified teachers and a stock of inherited material resources were able to respond to innovative changes and new curricula in the education system, while less-resourced Black schools had more difficulties with adjusting to the new education policies (Jansen, 2002). This might explain why education in the more poor and Black areas in South Africa are still of low quality. The youth

that currently copes with the challenges to access post-secondary education in South Africa was born during the transition period (the beginning of the post-apartheid) and therefore the quality of their education has still been influenced by the education system during apartheid.

1.2.4   Challenges to access post-secondary education

Despite the changes in South Africa from apartheid legislation to democratic governance almost twenty years ago, there is still growing evidence that equitable access to quality education remains elusive for the majority of South African youth (Sayed & Motala, 2012). The goal after apartheid was to reach a high quality, equitable and democratic education system with public ('no fee') schools funded by the government (Sayed & Motala, 2012). During the early period after apartheid this 'no fee' system could not be reached due to the financial constraints as mentioned in the previous paragraph. Therefore there was still a user fee policy in education, whereby beneficiaries contribute towards the cost of education. This can be directly in paying fees and levies for tuition and registration and indirectly by paying for school uniforms and school supplies. The school funding reform strategy of user fee policy in South Africa potentially eroded the notion of education as a public good that is fully and fairly funded by the state and a right for all (Sayed & Motala, 2012). The intention of the government was that middle-class youth have the same access to schooling as the poor and therefore have an interest in improving education for all (Sayed & Motala, 2012). But this system is only "most likely to succeed in contexts that have a high level of social equity and not in highly unequal societies emerging from protracted periods of colonization, oppression and minority rule" [like South Africa] (Sayed & Motala, 2012, 673). In 2007 the *National Norms and Standards for School Funding* were amended by the Department of Education; the idea being that state funding to public schools be provided (Sayed & Motala, 2012). Although the amendment of 'no fee schools policy', there are still numerous obstacles standing in the way of implementing the policy at provincial and school level due to weak capacity in provincial education departments especially in the poorer provinces and school's dissatisfaction with placement criteria (Sayed & Motala, 2012). Principals of schools can still deny access to certain learners who are 'not right' for the school (Gamede, 2005). And although schools are supposed to follow the national curriculum in their lessons, many schools have their own (hidden) curriculum based on their own values, which gives youth unequal access to knowledge (Gamede, 2005). These are both reasons that can make it a more

challenging experience for youth in deprived areas like Doornkop to access post-secondary education after they matriculated at secondary school.

1.3 Capabilities approach

Amartya Sen (1999), an Indian philosopher and Nobel Prize winning economist, states that human well-being can be approached by the freedom of choice. The freedom of choice consists of resources and capabilities; resources can be seen as sources or supplies from which benefit is produced and capabilities can be seen as the abilities people have to perform actions. The focus of this capabilities approach is on what individuals are capable of and it can serve as a basis for measuring human development. In combination with theories on youth development (Pittman et al., 2003) and the transition from youth to young adulthood (Furlong, 2009), the capabilities approach can help with understanding the challenges youth encounter in the access to post-secondary education in Doornkop, Soweto which will be explained in the following paragraphs.

A key concept in the capabilities approach is the concept of *functionings*; which consists of 'doing and being' in a person's social situation (Sen, 1999). The life of young people can be viewed as a set of interrelated functionings. Functionings can be seen as possibilities: what we are capable of, want to be able to do, or should be able to and/or what we do. The chosen combination of functionings of a young person and what they are doing is part of a total capability set: the actions that the young person is able to do (Sen, 1999). Examples of functionings can be to participate in the community, have a home, be in relationships with other people, be employed in the labour market, be healthy and being in education. The capabilities of youth are the combinations of functionings of a young person that can possibly be achieved (Sen, 1999). The youth should have the freedom to choose a set of doings and beings (a set of functionings) according to how they want their life to be (Sen, 1999). The capability approach of Sen (1999) emphasizes the importance of freedom of choice and the individual heterogeneity; it is for youth not only to simply have the capabilities, but also to use them, know how to use them and to make the practical choice of wanting to use their capabilities.

Scholars argue that the capability approach can be applied to many fields of study, because Sen has explicitly refrained from defending a well-defined list of resources, capabilities and functionings (Alkire, 2005; Robeyns, 2006). Saito (2003) and Terzi (2007) applied Sen's capabilities approach to education. The capabilities approach in education is a

growing and evolving area and according to Saito (2003: 29) "the capability approach is rich in implication for education". Terzi (2007) states that education is even central to the capabilities approach; according to her the capability approach "emphasizes specifically the contribution that the capability to be educated makes to the formation and expansion of other capabilities" (Terzi, 2007: 759).

Sen (1999) states that in order to promote human well-being, governments should provide health and education for all citizens, and supporting a sustainable environment and a sustainable living standard. "A strong commitment to the widespread and equitable provision of basic education is the first requirement to achieve rapid progress" (Drèze & Sen, 1995, 110-111). Education plays a role in accumulating human capital and in broadening human capability (Drèze & Sen, 1995; Saito, 2003). Education makes a person autonomous in terms of creating a new capability set and thus capabilities of a young person can be reached or expanded through education (Saito, 2003). According to Saito (2003) education should play a role in supplementing the enhancement of capability with attention to values and it should help develop people's judgement about capabilities and the choices of what they do with these capabilities (Saito, 2003). This is in line with Terzi (2007) who states that education leads to an expansion of capabilities and therefore it will increase ones freedom of choice (Sen, 1999).

Opportunities for NEET youth should be viewed in a broad sense: "educational resources, both physical resources and human resources; settings like school buildings and facilities; and external conditions like policies and regulations that are necessary to promote educational achievement" (Terzi, 2007: 762). Important in this respect is that the youth has access to secure educational functionings, while this allows the possibility of choosing whether or not to achieve certain functionings (e.g. having self confidence and a high self esteem), providing the relevant available opportunities (Terzi, 2007). Besides making youth autonomous through education (Saito, 2003), it will also equip them with fundamental capabilities they can use in the future (Terzi, 2007). In order to let youth enjoy valuable beings and doings, they should have access to necessary positive resources (like post-secondary education) and they should be able to make choices that matter to them (Alkire, 2005).

Development of human capital and progress in the transition from youth to young adulthood can be reached by expanding the freedoms and the elimination of un-freedoms of a young person. Freedom can be economic freedom (enough financial resources to access post-secondary education), political freedom (e.g. equality) and social security in the form of social protection (e.g. an unemployment fund) (Sen, 1999).

As stated above, the freedom of choice consists of resources and capabilities. In order to make the capabilities approach applicable to the NEET youth in Doornkop, Soweto and the challenges in accessing post-secondary education, a closer look should be given to facilitating factors; the different resources and capabilities they have and factors that may deprive their opportunities to use the capabilities and resources they have. Examples of *facilitating factors* might be the resources of these NEET youth in Doornkop such as health, income, a home, access to post-secondary education, free books for school, a library, and access to trainings. Capabilities that could be of influence for the NEET youth in Doornkop and their access to post-secondary education may be self confidence, self esteem, options to plan their own life and human capital (competences). *Depriving factors* might be the lack of financial resources (poverty), ignorance, government oppression and false consciousness about their future (Sen, 1999). Human capital is needed for being a productive individual in order to transfer skills, have the freedom to make well-considered decisions and to reach greater well-being. The capability of youth in Doornkop to choose to access post-secondary school can be seen as a reflection of the freedom that they can lead the life they want to live. Also, education can represent a central resource through which transitions are shaped (du Bois-Reymond, 2009).

Contradicting to the above theories in which education is seen as a facilitating factor for the development of capabilities and the development of freedom is an article of Unterhalter (2003). She examined the capabilities approach and education with a focus on South African complexities and gender differences. She questions if education in South Africa, and more in particular for young women in South Africa, can be seen as a development of freedom. She states that education can also be a limitation for these young women due to the fact that they get confronted with all possibilities and opportunities while they see they are not being able to reach this themselves (Unterhalter, 2003).

1.4 Youth and the transition to adulthood

Young people experience multiple transitions in their life; they have to cope with unexpected sequences of events at the same time as they are constructing their own biographies that will help them to make sense of these discontinuities (Heinz, 2009). The transition from youth to young adulthood is a process of social reproduction (Roberts, 2009) and can be conceptualized as the *emerging adulthood*; a concept introduced by Tanner & Arnett (2009). Emerging adulthood is the phase well-beyond adolescence, with some responsibilities, but not yet regarded as fully autonomous adults: a period of development and

personality change (Tanner & Arnett, 2009). The emerging adulthood includes rapid changes and can therefore be experienced as stressful and difficult.

The period of development or the transition to adulthood is based on individual factors and social factors. The psychological base of emerging adulthood consists of identity exploration, subjective experiences, feeling 'in-between', instability, self-focus and possibilities young people have in their lives (Tanner & Arnett, 2009). Besides this individual base of emerging adulthood there are also social factors of influence, in which differences in cultures are central: there are differences between social classes, economical and political circumstances are of influence, there is a role for society and educational attainment plays an important role in how a young person experiences the emergence of adulthood (Tanner & Arnett, 2009). Tanner and Arnett (2009) state that the more economically developed a country is, the more widespread emerging adulthoods tend to be; poor young people tend to adulthood more quickly due to more pressure to work and move out. Their study was conducted in Latin America, but what would that mean to the youth in Doornkop, Soweto who live in other circumstances than youth in Latin America? In the South African context there are many challenges for youth considering the high youth unemployment (Stats SA, 2013). This may cause poor young people in Doornkop, Soweto to experience less pressure in looking for a job and therefore it may cause a delayed emerging adulthood.

Another approach linked to the transition from youth to adulthood is the youth development approach of Pittman et al. (2003). They state that there is a need to push beyond current thinking about what outcomes, inputs, settings, strategies and actors are needed to help young people to address problems, build skills and pursue opportunities for learning, work and contribution (Pittman et al., 2003). Pittman et al. (2003) adopt a positive youth development approach: instead of focusing on problems addressing youth, the focus should be on how to prevent problems, promote development and encourage engagement as complementary goals for youth development. In order to gain these goals, young people need and deserve a set of basic services, consistent support and challenging opportunities (Pittman et al., 2003). The youth development approach should be seen as a life stage involving intensive identity-work rather than seeing it as a short phase through which young people pass (Graham, 2012). The idea is that young people are participants and change makers; youth should be engaged as problem solvers and thus prevent problems by ensuring access to basic support and opportunities (Pittman et al., 2003).

The main concepts of capabilities in the youth development approach that can be applied in this study on strategies and challenges to accessing post-secondary education are

that young people need competences (social, emotional, physical, vocational and civic), skills (for example literacy), confidence (of having the needed knowledge for accessing post-secondary education), connections to family, peers and community (to gain support from in the access of further education) and opportunities to contribute to their context. The youth should acknowledge that post-secondary education is the first step into employment and that they can actually change their context due to their opportunities (Pittman et al., 2003).

In addition to the capabilities that can give the NEET youth in Soweto the freedom to choose the access into post-secondary education, there is also a set of resources (Sen, 1999) being discussed in the youth development approach of Pittman et al. (2003). These resources can (just like the capabilities) be easily applied to this specific research: affordable and accessible services are of big importance in the development of youth: transportation (how do these young people in Doornkop get to school; can they walk or do they need to pay for transport?), assistance with accessing post-secondary school (is there someone who helps them with making choices of education during or after secondary school?), a safe an stable place to live and to go to school (do these youth have a safe place to go home to or be in education?) and a high quality of instruction and training (how do they consider the quality of their secondary education and is the post-secondary education they can access of high quality?) (Pittman et al., 2003).

1.5 Coping strategies

Coping resources can be seen as the strategies one undertakes to solve a specific issue or challenge. In social sciences there is no consensus about how to classify coping strategies. Three broad types of coping strategies are emotion-focused, problem-focused and appraisal focused coping (Weiten, 2008), whereby most individuals would use a combination of coping skills with a primary emphasis on one approach (Hess & Copeland, 2001). Another classification of coping strategies is by the German developmental psychologist Seiffge-Krenke (1995) who identified two types, namely functional and dysfunctional coping. *Functional coping* refers to a defined problem whereby active efforts are made to manage the problem or think of a solution. *Dysfunctional coping* refers to the behaviour that one makes effort to deny or avoid the problem (Seiffge-Krenke, 1995). In this study the coping strategy theory of Seiffge-Krenke (1995) is applied in order to explain the coping behaviour of the NEET youth in Doornkop.

Hess and Copeland (2001) conducted a research on the relationship between high school completion status and the (reported) coping strategies at stressful life changing events among 92 high school students in a Western State of the USA. Their study focuses on the differences in the capacity to cope with stressful life events and if there is a correlation with the drop out of high school. The research of Hess and Copeland is useful for this study, because it focuses on coping strategies of adolescents in combination with educational performance. Although it is conducted in America and its focus is on drop-outs, a link can be made to the problems in accessing tertiary education for South African youth. Problems these NEET youth experience could be economic hardship in the family, early motherhood and bad relationships with peers and teachers (Hess & Copeland, 2001). According to the study of Hess and Copeland, stressful life events correlate with lower academic achievement. Hence, this might also be the case for a bad transition between secondary school and tertiary education. The coping strategies (or *functional coping*) that youth use to handle stressful life events are *inter alia* proactive orientation, avoidance of problems, participation in social activities, family interactions and staying positive (Hess & Copeland, 2001). The results of their research suggests that only three functional coping strategies are predictive for high school completion: seeking professional support, family interaction and availability of social activities. But according to the authors there is still no easy explanation for understanding how stress and the way of coping impact high school completion (Hess & Copeland, 2001).

1.6 Expectations

In the previous paragraphs, the capability approach (Sen, 1999), the youth development approach (Pittman et al., 2003) and functional versus dysfunctional coping (Seiffge-Krenke, 1995) have been discussed. The following expectations for this study are based on the results of this literature review. Although most of the researches were conducted in another context and/or had a different approach, the results could be compared to the context of the NEET youth in Doornkop.

According to the capabilities approach (Sen, 1999), the freedom of choice consists of resources and capabilities. Facilitating factors in the development of freedom linked to the access to post-secondary education are health, income, a home and availability of post-secondary education near the home. Depriving factors might be the lack of financial resources, lack of information and the lack of options to plan one's own life.

Expectation: Given the poor context of the people in Doornkop, the NEET youth experience a lot of challenges in the access to post-secondary education due to lack of financial resources and lack of available information on how to access further education.

The youth development approach (Pittman et al., 2003) state that the access to relevant resources are needed to prevent problems and to promote youth development. Relevant resources (Pittman et al., 2003) can be expressed in the availability of assistance in making choices (at school, or via family/peers) and ways of transport; is the aspired education easy to reach and is the transport affordable? Besides that, support (of friends and relatives) is needed in order to go through a better development in life (Pittman et al., 2003; Perold et al., 2012).
Expectation: The youth in Doornkop has become NEET due to lack of support, lack of available assistance in making choices and lack of available facilities; inter alia easy and affordable transport to further education and/or a job.

In ways of coping, one can make a difference between functional and dysfunctional coping (Seiffge-Krenke, 1995). It is important that youth use functional coping (e.g. by a positive attitude and proactive orientation) in becoming more adaptable to stressful life events (Hess & Copeland, 2001). The support of family, peers and the community (schools) is considered to be a highly protective factor in enabling the youth to handle stressful life events. The outcome of the research of Hess & Copeland (2001) suggests that functional coping strategies as 'seeking professional support', 'family interaction' and 'availability of social activities' are most predictive for high school completion. Whereby in this study the link to the transition from high school to further education is made.
Expectation: The youth in Doornkop come from a poor context with probably a limited access to facilities. They have become NEET due to dysfunctional coping in handling the stressful life events they experience.

To verify these expectations, it is important to study the context of these youth in Doornkop, the reasons for them to become NEET, the coping strategies they use to access post-secondary schooling and/or employment, their perspectives on the access to tertiary education and what challenges they experience in accessing post-secondary education.

2. Research question

The focus of this study is on the NEET youth in Doornkop, Soweto who have their starters qualification of secondary school; the matric. Based on the theoretical exploration; the key question of this research is: '*What are the perspectives of NEET youth with a matric in Doornkop, Soweto on challenges and strategies while accessing post-secondary education*'
In order to answer this question, a few sub questions should be answered:

- Who are the NEET youths of Doornkop, Soweto?

- What are reasons for these youths to be without employment, training and education?

- What is their perspective on the access to post-secondary education?

- What challenges do they experience in the access of post-secondary education?

- What strategies do they use to access post-secondary education?

3. Methodology

This research is an explorative qualitative research, which is appropriate because the perspective of the young adults in the access of post-secondary education of NEET youth in South Africa was not yet studied. There was mostly an expert view (by scholars, policy makers or labour market economists) that focused on the access to post-secondary education. The voice of the youth in Doornkop, Soweto had not yet been heard in this particular field of study. The youth development approach in combination with the capabilities approach and theories on coping strategies seek to understand young people's views on issues that concern them. The perception of the youth is therefore considered as being significant. For this study sixteen NEET young people who live in Doornkop, Soweto have been interviewed.

3.1 Conceptualization

NEET

Literally NEET means Not in Employment, Education or Training. With not being in employment is meant that one is not in formal employment. Being in education is seen in the broadest sense in this research; every form of subscription and participation in any school, college or university is seen as being in education. In this research, training is also seen in the broadest sense of the meaning: participating in a free computer course at a community centre is seen as being in training.

Youth

Youth is defined as 18-25 year olds in this research, because this is the most pertinent time in which young people access post-secondary education after obtaining their matric results. Tanner and Arnett (2009) call youth in this age the emerging adulthood.

Doornkop

Doornkop is a poor background area situated at the North-West end of Soweto, a township near Johannesburg in South Africa. The people in Doornkop live in formal settlements; small brick houses built by the government. Electricity and water is available and most households make use of it.

Matric

In South Africa the secondary school is concluded with final exams which lead to matric. Matric is a starters qualification after finishing secondary school, which can give access to either university and/or college. Having a matriculation endorsement means that one is qualified to access any form of tertiary education and having a matric without exemption means one can only qualify for college.

3.2 Operationalization of concepts

The questions being asked to the participants of this research are based on theoretical concepts of the capabilities approach (Sen, 1999), the youth development approach (Pittman et al., 2003) and the coping strategy theory (Seiffge-Krenke, 1999). Within these theories different concepts are important both at individual and environmental level. In appendix 2, there is an overview of how each research question is linked to these concepts and what interview questions have been asked to the participants in order to answer the central research question. The most important concepts are operationalized as following:

Self confidence

With the concept of self confidence it is meant that one has faith (confidence) in oneself and/or one's own abilities. In this research this is operationalized in asking questions about getting the things done one would like to get done and if a person becomes nervous when it is the first time someone is doing something.

Self esteem

Self esteem can be seen as having pride in oneself and having self-respect. In this research the self esteem of the youth is questioned by asking to what extent the youth cares about what other people think about them and what the youth considers successful for their future.

Options to plan own life

A central thought within the capability approach (Sen, 1999) is not only that one has capabilities, but also how one can use the capabilities obtained. This can be entangled into the concept of 'options to plan own life'. Does one know what available options are in his/her current situation and is one able to use this knowledge to reach what one wants to reach?

Skills

Skills can be seen as an ability through knowledge and is therefore in this research based on the results gained during matric. Did the participant have good marks and did he/she have the right subjects to apply for their wished study.

Competences (/human capital)

Competences can be seen as a set of behaviours or actions needed to successfully perform in a particular context. Human capital is the stock of these competences and gained knowledge; it is a concept indicating individual development. The individual development is in this research operationalized in several questions about the career choices these young participants made and for example why they chose for specific subjects.

Influence of environment

The influence of family, friends and other persons in the community is one of the environmental factors Pittman et al. (2003) describe in their youth development approach. The influence of the environment is operationalized in the advice the youth got and what the youth did with this advice, expectations from their own environment and to what extent does the youth want to follow those expectations and the influence of the support the youth experienced.

Coping strategies

Coping can be seen as the effort to solve (inter)personal problems. The strategies the youth use to cope with the challenges they experience in the access to post-secondary education are questioned by asking about ideas for the future (in matric and after matric) and about what the respondents did after something did not work out. Did they use functional or dysfunctional coping? How does the NEET youth react to the challenges they experience?

Available resources

The concept of available resources is very broad. In this study it is based on the availability of a home, financial resources (an income, or a household member with an income), presented information on accessing education/bursaries/a job, the availability of services and facilities at school (was there a library at school, were there sports facilities and/or computers, could one study with free books?) and the availability of transportation to education.

3.3 Data gathering

There are various methods to collect qualitative data, but the form that best fits the objective of the study (to give an understanding of the challenges young people encounter in accessing post-secondary education in South Africa, from the perspectives of the youth in Doornkop, Soweto) was to do semi-structured interviews. With doing semi-structured interviews, the interviewer could act flexible to the circumstances of the research at that moment (Boeije, 2008). The choice for interviews has been made due to the fact that the personal experiences of the NEET youth on their strategies and challenges to access post-secondary education can give more insight on what individual capabilities and assets might influence their challenges than by using a focus group.

A topic list has been made in order to ask the respondents about their experiences and perspectives. A topic list is a list with interview questions categorized by different subjects which give more structure to the interviews (Boeije, 2008). The subjects and questions in the topic list are based on the theoretical frameworks of the capabilities approach (Sen, 1999), the youth development approach (Pittman et al., 2003) and theories on coping strategies (Seiffge-Krenke, 1995) which are operationalized as mentioned in paragraph 4.2. By questioning and analyzing these theoretical-based subjects, the empirical research questions could be answered. Before starting the actual research, some pilot interviews have been held in the target group to see if the topic list was good enough to do the actual research with. There were made a few minor adjustments after these two test interviews.

With the use of semi-structured interviews a lot of in-depth information could be gained by using the topic list and by keeping on asking when answers were not yet clear. Using a topic list offers structure, which made it easier to analyze and compare the different interviews later on in the process. The youth development approach (Pittman et al., 2003) and the capabilities approach (Sen, 1999) stress the importance of acknowledging "how the individual is located and shaped by the socio-economic and cultural surroundings – aspects of life that profoundly influence the development of capabilities" (Graham, 2012, 62). It was therefore important to locate the NEET youth within their own context, so the interviews took place in the area of Doornkop. Data collected by the interviews have been used to form conclusions about the strategies and challenges the youth experience in accessing post-secondary education. The time of the data gathering was from the end of March until the end of April 2013. This was a period of approximately a month and during this period and right after this period the data has been analyzed during May and June 2013. In appendix 1 the data gathering material is been showed.

3.4 Research population

The target group of this research are NEET youth in Doornkop, Soweto after matriculating. Young people living in Doornkop who are Not in Employment, Education or in Training (NEET), but who do have their starter's qualification in the form of a matric, either for university or college. Because all participants have obtained their matric, they have had their secondary education in English so the researcher did not have to worry about translation issues during the interview.

The age and gender of the respondents varies, just like their backgrounds. They are between 18 and 25 years old; with 18 as a minimum age, due to the fact that it is the age in which youth in South Africa finish their matric. There has been a variation in the age of the respondents with an average age of 20. Sixteen interviews were carried out and the interviews lasted approximately half an hour to an hour. There was an interest in both genders, because there could be a difference in the way young men and women experience the challenges to access post-secondary education (due to for example having to take care of a child). The majority of the interviewed youth is female, only five respondents were male. In appendix 4, a detailed overview of the research population is given.

The respondents were selected through purposive sampling and the snowball effect, in which Humana, a non-governmental organisation in the community of Doornkop, Soweto helped to find the respondents. Some respondents have been reached through doing voluntary work for Humana and during several days with social caregivers walking around in the different blocks of Doornkop. Others have been reached through the network of other respondents; also known as the snowball method (Boeije, 2008). There has been one moment of measuring, in which the interviewer asked questions about the experiences of these NEET youth and their access to post-secondary education.

3.5 Ethics

By doing this research, some ethical acknowledgements had to be kept in mind. The interviewer had an important social responsibility; she had to show her respect to the respondents and give them the freedom to choose whether to be interviewed or not and she has to tell them in advance what they could expect. This is also called '*informed consent agreement*' (Boeije, 2008). Another important ethical matter was to inform the participants about the confidentiality of the research and especially the confidentiality of the participation of the respondents. The researcher has developed a research protocol before starting the

research which outlined for participants what the purpose of the research was, a guarantee of anonymity (if wished for by the respondent) and confidentiality and a request for their informed consent and a request to audio record the interview (Hochfeld & Graham, 2012). All respondents have signed this informed consent form in which they stated that they understood what the research was about and that they agreed to participate on a voluntary basis.

3.6 Reliability and validity

Essential criteria for the quality of academic research are reliability and validity. Reliability is the extent to which a measurement will have the same outcome when used repeatedly to measure the same thing (Rossi et al., 1999). Reliability will be reached when there are no unsystematic (or coincidental) mistakes being made in the data gathering and analysis. The reliability will be higher in a standardized form of data gathering (like in quantitative, structured interviews), but the reliability will also be high with using semi-structured interviews instead of open interviews.

The validity is the extent to which a measurement is influenced by systematic mistakes (Boeije, 2008). Does the researcher actually measure what she wants to measure? The validity is dependent of the chosen methodology; if it fits the research questions and if the analysis is being influenced by the interpretation of the researcher. Within qualitative research, the researcher is being personally involved with the respondents, which has the disadvantage of the NEET youth answering in a way they think the researcher wants to hear, because they are being observed by the researcher. This is called reactivity and it can influence the validity in a negative way. The researcher tried to avoid reactivity by doing voluntary work in the area of research (Doornkop) and therefore the participants did hopefully get used to the presence of the researcher which could have reduced the risk of reactivity (Boeije, 2008). Besides this, the critical perspective of the researcher can decline when there is more involvement with the target group (Boeije, 2008); which is something that is kept in mind during the research; the perception and interpretation of the researcher could have played a role in the research. Although there are some disadvantages for the validity in doing qualitative research, there is also a big advantage: the data gathering and the data analysis take part at the same time. Interpretations that came up in between, have be tested in the continuation of the research, which has brought a higher validity (Boeije, 2008).

To gain a higher reliability and validity in qualitative research the credibility and trustworthiness are important criteria (Golafshani, 2003). Credibility and trustworthiness in

qualitative research depend on the abilities and efforts of the researcher. To gain a higher credibility and trustworthiness, and therefore more reliability, the researcher should be well-prepared before doing the interviews. The interview questions need to be derived from the existing literature and the theoretical framework and the conclusions should derive from the data gathered and should not be influenced by the researcher's own assumptions (Golafshani, 2003). After the data gathering, an independent advisory group has inspected the data collection and the analysis procedures, so judgments concerning the reliability and validity of the research can be made.

3.7 Data analysis

The data has been managed by the qualitative research software Nvivo. This is a software that is being used to making the analyzing of data less intensive than by analyzing all on paper and it makes the analysis more reliable. The interviews (all transcribed after being recorded with a voice recorder) have been saved in one program, coded fragments were easy to find back, the search function to search for a specific word/code/combination has been used and Nvivo is used as a resource to put everything together in the results section of the research. The interviews have been imported into the software, put in special maps and the software made it easy to code the interviews, make code trees, put labels and memo's in the texts. The analysis has been theory-based, whereby the theoretical framework has been used to guide the researcher in developing relevant and appropriate themes from the interview transcripts. The analytical approach was hybrid; theory-based in the way that predetermined themes (based on the capabilities approach, youth development approach and coping strategies) played a big role in analyzing the data, but also new things that came up during the interviews played a role in the analysis of the data. In appendix 2 the analysis framework is showed and in appendix 3, an example of the data analysis is given.

4. Research findings

This chapter presents an overview of the research findings. It answers the central question and the sub questions. The conclusions are based on the interviews held in the region of Doornkop, Soweto with NEET youth who have finished their matric. First of all the NEET youth of Doornkop is being tackled, a description of this youth, the reasons why they became NEET and their perception on the access to post-secondary education. This is followed by a paragraph on the challenges these young people experience in the access to further education and the strategies the youth uses to access post-secondary education. To conclude, an answer will be given to the central research question: '*What are the perspectives of NEET youth with a matric in Doornkop, Soweto on challenges and strategies while accessing post-secondary education?*'

The quotations in this chapter were directly derived from the interviews, with a few grammatical adjustments to make the fragments more readable.

4.1 The NEET youth of Doornkop, Soweto

The young people who live in the township Doornkop, Soweto live in formal settlements; brick houses built by the local government. The houses are small compared to the number of people living in the same house; most households consists of five or more members, with some exceptions. The youth live with their families, varying from living with parents to grandparents, aunts and uncles. For most people living in Doornkop their first language is Isizulu and almost all speak more than one language. All the young people who participated in this research have finished their secondary school with a matric certificate and speak English on a reasonable level. From the sixteen participants in this research, six have finished their matric with a matriculation endorsement, the others qualified for college. The respondents were at the point of interviewing between 18 and 25 years old, with an average of 20 years old. Half of them matriculated last year; December 2012. The age these young people had when finishing matric varies between 16 and 21 years old. Eleven out of sixteen participants were female, of whom six have a child due to a (mostly unexpected) pregnancy.

During the interview with Bridget (F, 19) she mentioned that she was not exactly NEET, because during her matric she started a project management training twice a month and was still doing that at the point of interviewing. She is included in this sample, because

also after this training her post-secondary education future is by no means secure. The young people in this research can demonstrate some of the circumstances NEET youth with matric experience while not working or studying.

A regular day in the life of these NEET Youth

A regular day for the NEET youth in Doornkop is mostly watching television after doing the house chores; cleaning, washing dishes and sometimes cooking. The young women also take care of children; either their own child, their younger siblings or the children of their siblings. There is not much different between weekdays and the weekends, but during weekends the youth spends more time with friends and on Sundays they attend church. Most of them seem to experience their daily life as boring: *"I sit at home and... I don't do much* [...] *Yeah, I clean the house.. yeah.. and then just sit, watch tv. I spend the day with my sister. We just chill and chat."* (Wendy, F, 18).

Some of them are looking for a job, but they only manage to do that if they have the money to go out and check vacancies: "*I just wake up, I take my child to school, look for a job if I have money for transport, then I'll go to take my CV to different places and then I clean.. look after the house and then, like cooking and stuff, and tv, watching tv, when I'm back from job hunting I cook and yeah.. I just.. until late, like watch tv and stuff until the next morning and same things next day.* [And when you don't have the money to go job hunting?] *I just stay in the house the whole day, cleaning and doing like the normal things in the house.* [How often do you go job hunting?] *Eh.. most of the time it's like.. I have no money, but let's say once a month I have like 20bucks and I just go to town and make a lot of copies of my CV and go to like different places and agencies and sometimes in shops. Like, I'll say like maybe twice a month, only if I have money."* (Thandeka, F, 25).

Self confidence and self esteem of the NEET youth

The question that aimed to measure the self confidence of the youth 'Do you get the things done you would like to get done in life' was interpreted in another way by the youth. The youth states that they cannot do the things they would like to do (e.g. study or a job). The main causes for not achieving what they want is because of lack of money and/or lack of information: "*the things that I want still don't happen. Maybe it's because I'm not financially stable on my own. That's why they don't happen* [...] *sometimes the situation just.. sometimes it isn't right*" (Nosiphele, F, 19) and "*not that eh.. I'm lazy, it's just that I don't get enough help on how to tackle it. So other people who have the information, they don't want to pass the*

information. They just keep the information in their pockets […] *For now, I may say, I don't have any clue on where to start*" (Lehlohonolo, M, 19). Lehlohonolo refers to passivity as a reason to not being able to achieve what he aspires, which is for some respondents exactly the reason for not achieving their dreams, although they might have self confidence: "*Because I cannot do anything now, I just have to sit and wait. I don't know what happens*" (Chantel, F, 19) and "*It's just that I'm impatient, like if I want something, no.. to work in my way.. and then it doesn't, I just let it go*" (Bongiwe, F, 20). Some of the young people do have the confidence and a good self esteem and they try to achieve their aspirations although they experience a lack of information and/or money: "*Eh.. I will say that I'm trying to get it done; like I will look for information, yeah, like get help to certain places, ask people for help when I don't know, I don't have the knowledge to get the things done, if I need particular information. I'm trying to get things done*" (Thandeka, F, 25).

The results as mentioned above can be interpreted in two ways; either the external obstacles (poor financial background and lack of available information) are too big to address the self confidence the youth might have. Or the youth externalizes the problem as a way of dysfunctional coping.

Availability of education for these young people in Doornkop

The availability of high schools nearby the homes of the youth in Doornkop is rather good. There are secondary schools within walking distance from home, whereby most of the youth walked to school. The walking time varied from 5 minutes to a long walk of about an hour. There were only few exceptions of going to school by bus, car or taxi, which made it difficult for those young ones to get to school, because they were highly dependent on others; either to drive them to school or to give them the money for transport. The schools almost all had a library and computers, which the participants used to do research for school assignments. With a few exceptions, the study books in high school were free of charge. The father of Nosiphele (F, 19) paid for her study books; Lindiwe (F, 16) was less fortunate in this respect, her family did not have the money to pay for her books so she always had to borrow them from her friends. The schools all had sports facilities (netball, soccer, rugby and/or athletics) which the youth made use of during matric.

Sphelele (M, 19) and Bonga (M, 19) were in a high school where they did not have a choice in what subjects the students wanted to follow during their matric, but all other young ones could choose a variety of subjects during their matric. The obligated subjects for students

in matric are according to the South African Department of Education (Government of South Africa on education, 2013): English, mathematical literacy and life orientation. There is a variety of subjects the young people could choose; e.g. biology, economics, business, geography, agricultural science, tourism, consumer studies and the different home languages of South Africa.

The availability of tertiary education near their homes is less satisfactory than the availability of secondary education for the youth in Doornkop. The three universities where youth with a matriculation endorsement can apply for, are all near the centre of Johannesburg, about 15-30km away from Doornkop. Colleges and FET's are neither widespread in Soweto; the nearest college is about 10km away, which is also not on walking distance. For all options of post-secondary education, the youth of Doornkop depends on public transport. This is seen as an obstruction to get into further education because most of the youth do not have the money to pay for transport to check out the different options nor have the money to get there to get more information on how to apply: Zintle (F, 23): "*Right now, I am facing more troubles, financially... people would tell me: Zintle go to maybe at town, there is a college for learning how to cook. Only to find that... Okay, I can cook, but I don't have the money to go to Johannesburg, because from Soweto to Johannesburg it's a long distance and maybe I don't have the money to go there. Sometimes it's difficult for me to go to town, because sometimes I don't have money*".

The respondents in high school

How the youth was in high school can tell something about how they are now and about why they have become NEET after they finished their matric. Therefore it might be interesting to know about their lives back then. All of the young ones liked to be in school, some said this was just because school kept them busy, while others enjoyed it because of the company of friends at school. Another advantage of being at school was that it is a safe environment and a place to gain knowledge.

In general, the youth consider themselves as good students during their high school period, because they worked hard, listened to the teachers, did not make any trouble and shared their knowledge with other students. Many of them referred to respect to teachers when talking about being a good student: "*I was a good student, because I used to do my homeworks everyday and I used to listen to my teachers and never disrespected them*" (Zintle, F, 23). This could indicate a difference between the South African and Dutch culture with regard to the authority of teachers. Marking themselves as a good student did not have to do

with the marks obtained during their matric; although marks were insufficient, the youth considered themselves as good pupils because of hard working: "*because I was able to ask the teachers what was needed and I was able to discuss the things with the other students at school and asking them the questions and telling them the good idea to give me the situation that they face, to help them*" (Bonga, M, 19). The girls were much more quiet and shy during their high school period, while the boys mainly talked about themselves as being 'the class clown' and making a lot of jokes: "*Well I was one of the students who was the class clown [...] I always cracked jokes back in class, maybe even when there was a teacher. But the teachers wouldn't be angry or worry about it, because at the end of the day they knew that I did my school work*" (James, M, 20).

Bunking class is exceptional, which is in line with the statement that the youth liked to be in high school. The few adolescents who did bunk class, did this just because they did not feel like going to school that day and rather hang out with friends.

Options to plan their own life; the way they see themselves in the near future

Although the young people in this research are currently not in education, training or employment, they are very optimistic about the future. Studying is priority for the near future and they see themselves working in the coming five years. The studies they want to accomplish vary from engineering to education or a study in travel and tourism. Bonga (M, 19) thinks he will be studying in the coming five years, but he does not know what study this will be: "*maybe if I go to the university to study photography, maybe I'll be doing the photography. And maybe if they take me in nursing, I will be doing the nursing. Because there are many places that I am applying for, just in case that in September the post at the police will come out and maybe I'll apply there, but there are many places that I'm applying for to find a job*". His dream is to become a photographer, but he is not sure to be accepted for that at the University of Johannesburg, so he is keeping his options open and applies for three different studies: photography, nursery school and the police academy. Wherever he will be accepted, that's the study he will do, as long as he is able to study and find a proper job in the next couple of years.

Having a household on their own is also an option for the young ones, whereby the female respondents refer to this as having at least one child and do not refer specifically to having a partner to raise the child with: "*A happy family [...] I don't know if I have a man in my life then. But I will have 2 children; a boy and a girl*" (Wendy, F, 18) and Thandeka (F,25): "*I'm thinking; no more child, but if maybe it happens I have one extra* [child] *I'll be*

finished. Maybe a man in the house as well". The male respondents think more concrete about how they want their future family-life to look like: "*A family.. It depends on my financial status, but I think I should firstly make sure that at least I achieve first all the things that I would like to achieve first. A family would be a follow-up. It also needs responsibilities, so .. not that you can't have anything to provide for them*" (Paul, M, 23). Nursing is the most popular study named by the participants, whereby many want to study at nursery school because it is a workplace-based course. In nursing, study should be free of charge and therefore it is a study that is easier to reach in the near future. Contradicting with this is the perception of Lindiwe (F, 18) who wants to become a nurse and states that she needs to look for a job first in order to be able to pay for her access to the nursery school: "*If I get like.. a serious job, I would do a course of nursing. That's my dream*". In this respect one can recognize a variety in perceptions and experienced availabilities of their near future.

The influence of their environment

The NEET youth in Doornkop do experience influence of their environment. The youth is particularly influenced by what friends and family think about them; "*Some.. [acquaintances] you don't mind them, just live your life. Other people.. yeah, like people close to me* [...]*I care about it then, they don't tell me what to do, but guide*" (Felicia, F, 20). The influence of non-relatives (e.g. people living in the neighbourhood, acquaintances) is not high for most of these young persons. The emerging adults do not always care about what others think of them, but when it are positive thoughts about them, they do care about it: "*people say like many things about you and sometimes it can make you lose focus on what you want. Sometimes people's opinions don't matter so much. But sometimes it matters if people say positive things. I consider those things they say and I take it to my advantage, but if it is a bad thing.. no..*" (Thandeka, F, 25). Positive thoughts or forms of advice have more influence on the NEET youth in Doornkop than negative thoughts. They take the advice from others seriously: "*I don't care when they say bad things about me, because people are always there to talk bad things about you, but I always care if someone advices me with something that I can see that this thing is so very important for me and it makes a better future for me. That's when I care*" (Zintle, F, 23).

4.2 The reasons for these youths to be without employment, training and education

We have now discovered more about the lives of the NEET youth in Doornkop, but what are the reasons for these young people to become without employment, education or training?

The future plans while in matric

In the final year of their matric, the youth thought of accessing post-secondary education in the near future. The youth had a clear plan on what to study after matric, with a few exceptions of ones that did not have any idea yet and some had several courses they liked to do and their plans were far from concrete while still in matric.

Just before entering the matric years in high school, the children in South Africa have to choose the subjects they would like to follow and gain their matric in. Some schools do not offer a variety in subjects (for example the schools of Sphelele and Bonga), but most of the youth had the opportunity to choose the preferred subjects. Bridget (F, 19) based her choice of subjects on ideas about the future: "*Because I knew after my matric obviously I would get a better job, yeah.. because this nowadays they need the science students. So I thought that I was capable of doing those subjects*". Unfortunately during her matric years she found out that those subjects were not the ones she was good at, so she did not make it to a qualification for university as she first thought: "*My marks for physics and maths are very very low.. So in order to get there* [university]*, they need level 5. Yeah, level 5 both for maths and physics, but I only have level 3.. or 2.*". The other young ones did not yet think about their future when making their choices of subjects before entering matric. Hence, there are several non-compatible matches between the chosen subjects and the studies these emerging adults aspired at the end of their matric. Some examples of this: Paul (M, 23) chose subjects in biology and physics, while wishing to study Human Resource Management and Nomsa (F, 22) wishes to do a course in hospitality, but all her subjects were focussed on an engineering study. Fortunately, it is also occasionally the case that the chosen subjects seem to match with the aspired field of study, although these young ones did not plan this. This can be explained by the fact that most adolescents make their choice of subjects on basis of interests and are interested in the same things now as when they had to make the decision a few years before matriculating. Besides that, some of the courses the youth want to do in college or university are accessible with a variety of subjects; for example nursing school (*inter alia* the choice of Sibongile, F, 19) and journalism (the dream of Sphelele, M, 19).

For most post-secondary education in South Africa one has to apply during the final year of matric in order to gain access at the beginning of the next academic year. Especially everyone who like to have a learnership or bursary during their study need to apply early, because there are many people applying for these extra finances and there is a maximum of bursaries to give away each year. That's why it is important for the youth in Doornkop, youth with lack of financial resources, to think about their study plans during their matric. In the final year of matric, the youth did think about the future a lot. The young ones thought about becoming a successful person through studying: "*when you are in matric that's when you say: this time of the year you come to finish school. This is the time where you must design what you are going to do the following year and you must make sure to study hard in order to get a bursary or maybe a learnership to continue studying*" (Thandeka, F, 25) and Paul (M, 23): "*most of the time you must always think ahead and make sure that you push yourself in order to start achieve it at the end of the year*". While in matric they wanted to try to change their situation of living in a poor background: "*being successful in life, living a very good life, changing the.. the situation at home. Yeah. Being independent.* [So you would like to change the situation at home?] *Yeah.. Like.. the situation as living in a poor area you know.. not having access to everything, working hard to get everything you want. Yeah*" (Felicia, F, 20). Sometimes the prospects for the future made the young ones lose hope, because they already knew they might be unable to reach their aspired study and therefore thinking about the future was avoided: "*academically we are not in the right level, so one could also pass to a certain percentage which maybe sometimes not make them getting what they wish to have most*" (Thandeka, F, 25) and James (M, 20): "*sometimes I would think; I'm just being ahead of myself. Let me just wait and see, if and how would things turn out. If I get there, I will be there. And if it takes long for me to be there, then let it be. Because I'm just trying to avoid like giving myself high hopes, trying to avoid that I am getting disappointed at the end of the day*".

The future plans after finishing their matric

At the point of interviewing, all these youth had finished matric and were not in education although they wished for it. The young ones did not all try to access further education, but a few tried to access tertiary education while in the final year of matric and failed to access it. Exceptional is the situation of Nosiphele (F, 19) who applied for further education and got into the study she wanted to do, but had to stop this study due to an unforeseen pregnancy. More frequently mentioned is trying to access further education after

finishing matric. The youth are now aware of the fact that they were then already too late in applying for a college and/or university and say they are currently trying to apply again for next year. For the ones who did apply during their final year of matric this mostly failed because of a lack of information on how to apply. This meant that they were not eligible for a bursary, because they did not know where to get a bursary. Not all young ones had access to computers at school, in order to search on the internet for more information on further education. In most cases if the youth heard they could apply for a bursary, most did not get accepted for a bursary because the money was only available to students applying earlier than them and the maximum number of students for a bursary was already reached. Thandeka (F, 25) was one of the young ones who did not know what to do after matriculation because of a lack of information: "*I always like dreamed of maybe after matric I'll go to college or whatever university. But then after school, I dropped it blank. I didn't go and ask for information and stuff like that. I don't know why, because now I can see there are many opportunities to further education and where to go for bursaries, NSFAS and yeah.. So I didn't know where to get information*".

The youth did talk about the future with their classmates and/or friends, but most of these conversations could not help them in getting more information about the available opportunities after matric: "*Usually we had a small meeting whereby we just talked, not exactly we were facing the reality, we were just talking* […] *We were like: me next year, I want to do this and this and that. Others were playing, joking and other stuff. We didn't take it serious*" (Lehlohonolo, M, 19). These conversations mostly took place during informal meetings with friends, but some participants talked about their future and researched for opportunities for the subject Life Orientation at school, which was valued as very useful: "*during life orientation sometimes we made a research about a certain career and made sure to get more information about it* [...] *that will push one to even go further: you made a project but it also boosts the knowledge about the career choice you want to study*" (Paul, M, 23). Talking about the available opportunities with friends and classmates did not help the students a lot in making a well-considered decision to access further education, because in general there is a lack of information amongst the other students as well, like Lehlohonolo mentions in the quote above. Only some of the participants had an acquaintance or friend who was already accepted in post-secondary education and asked that person for more information on how to access. So far, this did not work out yet, because most of the time the youth only thought about asking their friend after the application deadlines.

In addition to talking to their classmates and friends, these emerging adults also talked about their future and the available opportunities with their families. The issue that was more or less only discussed with family (mostly parents, siblings, aunts and uncles) is the lack of financial resources. The young ones asked their families for help and/or advice on how to pay for the application fees. More specifically questions on opportunities for certain studies, were mainly asked to (older) siblings.

Besides the advice of family and friends, the youth sometimes also got advice at their school. Most participants went to a school which organized a so-called 'career expo' for matric students: an event at school in which several colleges and universities present themselves and give information to the students in helping them with making career/study choices. "*The people from universities they come to your school and they tell you about the different faculties you can choose from. Then they would give us advices, like to take which subject and then... like.. yeah, they gave us advices on what to do, with our subjects that they offer, yeah.. things like that* [...] *most of the advice was from people from different varsities and colleges, they told us about what to do for different courses. That was useful because like if I went to college, I would know which career to take. I knew if I wanted to go to university I needed to upgrade my subjects to further my education so that they would allow me to study business studies and things like that.*" (Thandeka, F, 25). The career expo is highly valued by the youth, but some young ones did not think it was useful because of several reasons: Lehlohonolo (M, 19) thought it was not useful for him because the colleges and universities that came to his school only presented some of the studies and there was no valuable information for him about his aspired career.

The youth experienced a lot of support from their high school teachers: "*They always had time to help us. They would always encourage us to give out our best back in matric. So we can stand a chance to, like, maybe get some bursaries, or some sort of funding; if we would perform well after matric*" (James, M, 20) and "*Most of them it's sometimes when you are at school it was like when you are at home, and if you had problems, they even make sure that they assist in a way for good cause. If you were at school they were not just teachers, they were also like parents to a lot of us*" (Paul, M, 23). Some young ones got advice from a specific teacher on available options, but this was primarily based on giving ideas on what to study than on how to access further education: "*I was asking them [my teachers] that if I can be the policeman, can I be able to do all these things that the police has to do? And then they say it's okay, you can be the police. They advised me to be a police man. But they don't know how to become a police man*" (Bonga, M, 19).

Additional actions needed?

When looking back on the actions being taken to reach to further education, all young ones have the opinion that they need additional actions to achieve their study plans for the future. A few of them do not know what they should do to get into further education or a job: "*Like, I don't really know, you know. I tried so many things now.* [What did you try?] *Like... I did like send my CV's out, but with no luck and then went for interviews, but none of that succeeded*" (Bongiwe, F, 20). But most of the youth do know what they need to do, e.g. they say they have been too lazy in their search for more information and they state they need to be more active in looking for information and they would like to change that in the near future: "*I think I should work hard to find information, not to sit home and think that everyone would come to me and help me. I'm the only one who should wake up every day, go and find information to people. Because some people are there to help you, so I'm willing, really willing to study a lot if I could only get the help from another person* [...] *maybe I should go ask someone who has the skills that I am looking for, like a social worker, where did he study, how much that the cost takes, how much money must I pay. Or maybe find information of how can I apply for NSFAS*" (Zintle, F, 23). Some state they would like to look for a job now, in order to earn some money and pay for further education in a later stage in their life. Others want to do a course in university but did only qualify for college so they state that they should have to upgrade their matric results in order to get into the course they want: "*I think I need extra lessons in physics and maths. Because my marks were not like good enough for me to go to varsity.* [Are you planning to take extra lessons?] *Yeah, but I haven't talked to my sister yet. She was planning to put me to the school where I could like upgrade my maths and physics*" (Bridget, F, 19).

As shown in the examples above, most of the youth do know that they need to do something in order to get into further education, but most of them do not have specific ideas about this. They do not have a clue yet on how to get to it.

So why are these young people NEET?

These young people are not in education or training mostly because of lack of information and lack of financial resources. Having a job during their matric or right after finishing matric was not an option. Some of the young ones started to look for a job after they were rejected by the post-secondary education they applied for, but this has also been not successful for them. The reasons that these young people are not in employment vary: "*finding a job.. I always read newspapers. Whenever they have an advertisement they say*

we're seeking for people with a matric. I always get the address, drop of my CV. Sometimes they don't call, if they call I don't have money to go to that place, or I don't know this place where it is" (Zintle, F, 23) and "*No, I just went to shops and go looking for a job. [Did you find a job?] Yeah. I once found a job, but it was for a week. Yeah.. so I couldn't work, so I quit the first day, because it was long hours for little money and it was like I was a slave*" (Felicia, F, 20).

In addition to the above factors that played a role in becoming NEET, there is an extra risk factor for women: six out of eleven women in this research have a child. Having a child is seen as a challenge to start a (new) study and/or to look for a job, because they need to take care of their child. For some of the women it is one of the reasons to become NEET, while for others they only fell pregnant after already being NEET and it is one of the reasons to stay NEET. These young women are 'stuck'; they have not been able to access further education and because of their pregnancy, they lack avenues through which they could pursue their study aspirations.

4.3 *The perspectives on the access to post-secondary education*

We now know more about the lives of the NEET youth in Doornkop and their dreams to study further. What is their perspective on the access to post-secondary education?

"You pass a lot of difficulties" (Felicia, F, 20)

The perspective of Felicia can be seen as a summary of the different views of the NEET youth in Doornkop on the access to post-secondary education. A more explicit explanation of the obstacles that the youth have to deal with is the story of Paul (M, 23): "*I wouldn't say it is difficult to access, just that you know... nowadays like.. the only thing that makes it more difficult is just the lack of career or education festivities in our areas, because maybe one should move from a certain area to a certain area at least get to study, to further the education, so maybe.. that's the only thing that makes it difficult, because it becomes more.. like, when you go and register, they tell you that you should register for the next semester due to there is no space, that's what makes it more difficult. [...] Sometimes if the... the financial problems at home won't allow you to go to a private college maybe or something, most of us would advice each other that maybe it would be better to go and find a job with which maybe you could also do a certain course. So you study parttime and work at the same time, in order to try and push things. Maybe after that you look for another job*

which will accommodate a certain course, maybe you'll end up doing the certain course which you would want to do most". His story contains a lot of different reasons why the access to post-secondary education is perceived as difficult. The young ones do not explicitly state that they think the access to further education was difficult, but they do mention a lot of obstacles they have experienced in accessing further education. The young adolescents mostly do not know how to access further education due to lack of information. Also an option is that they tried to access further education, but they have no clue on why they did not get accepted into the course they applied for and therefore their reason for experiencing difficulties in the access can also be considered as lack of information: *"I think it is difficult. It is difficult because sometimes you apply and they don't call you. And the person that you apply with get called but you don't. And they don't say what made your application not to be approved. They don't mention that"* (Nomsa, F, 22) and *"I filled in forms they used to give us; but I don't really know where they ended up.* [Those forms did you hand them in somewhere?] *Yes, in a box; there was a box.* [And you never heard of it again?] *No" (Chantel, F, 19).* Chantel was very hopeful to get accepted into UJ, because the university people came to her school to help the students to apply: *"Yes, they told us everything about it.. like, they informed us how you could go to UJ. They told us to first fill in the forms, then they would call us back to keep us updated and then they would set an appointment so that we could come [to UJ] and talk to the student advisors.* [Did that happen?] *No.* [Did you try to reach them?] *No.* [Why didn't you try to reach them?] *Because I thought they were going to keep their promise.* [So what did you think about this situation?] *At first they were helpful, because they came to our school, we filled in forms. But after it ended, we got nowhere.* [Were you the only one who wasn't called?] *No, the rest of the students in my class were also not called."* (Chantel, F, 19).

Another frequently mentioned reason is the lack of financial resources: *"*[What do you think about the access to further education?] *It's too demanding. Because for people who like, don't have the means, like to get finance, that means there is no further education for them"* (Bongiwe, F, 20). Additional to this is that there are limited available bursaries (which have already been given away to other students). This is a reason for the youth in Doornkop of not being able to access due to lack of financial resources: *"Well, eh.. I think* [...] *just the disadvantage is that there are so many people applying for it* [...] *even those who can afford to pay for themselves, they sometimes apply for it [a bursary] as well.* [...] *the only disadvantage is that there is no guarantee that you can get.. or... yeah, it is more like taking chances"* (James, M, 20) and Paul (M, 23): *"After I completed matric I went to some places but did not get accepted. In January most of the people here said maybe I should go*

somewhere where they offer learner ships. I need to go there to apply and take everything that is needed, documents that are needed and I should give them my filled forms. At least I am hoping that I would get the learner ship in order to study at least for a certain period [...] *In the next five years, if I could just get a bursary for HR management, I would just study and it will also be when you study the first six months then you're learning and the next six months it's practical so like, it includes a job training*" (Paul, M, 23).

As been stated above, the NEET youth who have applied for post-secondary education did come across various obstacles in the process of accessing further education. More about these challenges will be discussed in the next paragraph of this chapter.

4.4 Challenges they experience in the access of post-secondary education

After finding out more about the youth in Doornkop, their reasons to become NEET and their perspectives on this access, the question arises what challenges these young people experience in the access to tertiary education. These challenges can be split up into individual challenges (for example lack of financial resources and the influence of self confidence) and more general challenges on community level (for example a lack of information and available facilities).

Individual challenges

As mentioned in paragraph 4.1 of this chapter, the NEET youth in Doornkop refer to lack of money in why they do not achieve the things they would like to do and otherwise it is due to lack of information. Overall this makes the youth a bit pessimistic and undermines their self confidence, because although they have obtained their matric they are not able to do the things they would like to do in life (e.g. studying). The young ones stay optimistic about the future because they try to compare themselves to others who have not been able to finish school with matric as a result and they keep having high hopes for the future: "*I do have a lot of hope* […] *I've seen that in this area, around my neighbourhood these people they just like those who are successful. I'm one of them, I think.. they do like me very much*" (Lehlohonolo, M, 19). Although Lehlohonolo is having a lot of hope, he is pessimistic for other young people around him: "*My plans were like, I just wanted to go maybe to university and I wanted to just stay there and study hard and come back by my home, whereby everything is okay. So for now, I can say I'm not happy at all. And this really discourages others that look at this: 'He did finish eh.. he passed his matric but he's just rolling around here by the streets'. So the*

percentage of the eh.. dropouts it will increase, because they will see others who have their matric certificate but who are here around the area doing nothing".

In Lehlohonolo's story he also expresses his dissatisfaction with the current situation. Therefore, it is interesting to take a closer look to what is considered to be successful for the future according to these young persons. When will they be satisfied with their future lives? To the question 'What do you consider successful for your future', the young ones answered with a realistic view on their capabilities and the available opportunities. Some slightly unrealistic dreams for the future are presented (for example to win the lottery or become a famous architect while not being able to access the study architecture and a lot of them dreaming of their own business), but the youth is content with a lot less than their dreams. For example Nosiphele (F, 19): *"When I finally know that I've done everything that I always wanted to do, that's when I know it is successful. [What kind of things?] Maybe finish my schooling and then get a job, and then have my own family and then live with my own child, that's when I know that.. whatever I wanted is successful"* and the shy Nomsa (F, 22): *".eh.. I think when I can redo my mathematics, then I will be able to reach my dreams, because I think that's the only thing stopping me"*. The positive aspect of having only few expectations of themselves before calling their future successful is that it is easier for them to actually become successful and the youth do believe to see themselves successful in a couple of years.

Struggles in reaching their dream future

In order to reach the dreams for the future, struggles cannot be avoided. These struggles are visible in a lot of different aspects in the lives of these young persons from a poor background: *"Like the challenges..? Yeah.. I must learn hard, and go to university to study. You must make sure that you.. that you pass. [so what are the challenges you experience?] That I have a child.. I'm a mother.. Yeah, I'm a responsibility now. [and any other challenges?] Yeah, to get a job. [...] I must need the money because at home I must buy food and clothes for my mother and my child"* (Lindiwe, F, 16). For the young females in Doornkop having a child is not uncommon: there is a lot of early motherhood in this area. The young mothers of this study named this as one of the struggles they experience in reaching their dream future, although this did not always come up as one of the first answers to the question on what struggles they experience. Some other struggles the youth experience in reaching their dream future is the lack of not studying at the moment: *"Well.. so far: yes [I experience struggles], but I do have hope that it is upcoming. Yeah. If things could go my way, I will achieve things.* [You said so far you experience some struggles; can you tell me about

it?] *Well.. Due to the fact that I am not studying so far, I see it as being an obstacle that maybe can and keep me from achieving those goals, dreams*" (James, M, 20), the lack of emotional and financial support: "*Sometimes you know.. like.. I don't have the.. sometimes I don't have the support you know, that can push me to do.. to carry on, studying and you know.. financially.. if I had the support I would be.. I think I would have achieved some of my dreams. Yeah.* [So it is also a financial problem?] *Yeah.* [And motivation for yourself?] *Yeah*" Nosiphele (F, 19). Another big struggle in reaching the dream of studying further is the lack of financial resources, like Bongiwe (F, 20) talks about: "*Like, I've got...I don't know. Like, maybe my only problem is finance, because I did get enrolled in a college and then... now I can't go to school, simply because I don't have money to travel. And then another thing: they expect us to type our assignments and then print them out, and then... that also requires money. And then I can't submit, simply because I don't have a computer and I don't have the money to print all those assignments. So that's why I decided to drop out*".

The adolescents do not give away the responsibility for these struggles: "*I don't blame anyone* [...] *Maybe it's myself, because I sometimes I feel so negative about life, thinking that .. like... I'm nothing, but sometimes.. the time that I get so tired and like I'm sick and tired, life is boring, I don't know where to go. But sometimes, God gives me that wake-up call and say; no, this is not the end of life, people struggle and you should stay strong and you should stay positive*" (Zintle, F, 23). To blame their parents for the struggles they experience is also an option, because the youth think the cause of their struggles is mostly due to a lack of financial resources and they state that they are their parent's responsibility: "*My parents. They are responsible, because.. I would say; they have to send me to school. I am their child and I am different also from other children who have dropped out of school. I worked hard. But still they don't take me to school* [further education]. [is it a problem they can do something about?] *Now it's too late, but if they planned like before a long time ago. They would have saved money for me, because they know I would go to school. And they know I was doing matric last year at school and they still didn't do anything*" (Chantel, F, 19).

Individual challenges during matric

As stated earlier (*cf. §4.1 The respondents in high school*), the young adolescents consider themselves as good students. Given the fact that these young people all obtained their matric, while a lot of young people do not finish high school in South Africa (Townsend, Flisher & King, 2007), this is very likely to be the truth. Due to the fact that these young people all finished their high school with either a matric, it can be stated that these young

people do have the competences to study further. Besides the competences that the youth all gained the starters qualification to apply for further education in either a college or a university there was not always a match between the chosen subjects followed in matric and the choice of study after matric. In addition to that, some of these young people wanted to apply for university while only having a matric for college as has been explained in paragraph 4.2 of this chapter.

Challenges on the community level

Besides the above discussed individual factors that have an influence on the challenges the youth experience, there are also environmental influences which play a role in the access to post-secondary education. The support the youth gets from family, friends and others is valued as very important. The majority of the youth do get support from their families, mostly emotionally, because the family is not always able to financially support them: "*my mother is always there for me*" (Zintle, F, 23) and "*my uncle, and also my mother and my sister; They tell me to focus, I must not.. like.. be busy with boys and stuff like that*" (Lindiwe, F, 18). But sometimes it is experienced the other way around: "*They* [family] *gave me the* [taxi] *fare money* [...] *But sometimes I felt like they were ignorant*" (Sibongile, F, 19). The emotional support of friends is not for all respondents something they get; occasionally they do not experience any support from friends, for example: "*I would say I don't really have friends around [...] the only friends I got were those guys which I was with back in high school. But since after school [...] everyone took his own path, went his own way*" (James, M, 20) or simply because they do not talk about the future (a further education or looking for a job) when they are together. The youth that do experience support from their friends value this as very important, because: "*Sometimes they give me information.. and there's the other one* [friend] *who showed me how to fill out the forms of applying and I was going with him to town, to fetch the forms*" (Bonga, M, 19) and "*Even now they do, because even some of them if they know certain information about certain areas they tell me so that I can go there and try to register or apply*" (Paul, M, 23). Exceptional is support from people who are not family or friends; like neighbours, community members or even the boss of a family member that tried to support them (Thandeka and Felicia). All the support is very much appreciated by these young people: "*they gave me the idea that I will become a better person in life and that I will be able to have things of my own in life. Like a house and a car*" *(*Bridget, F, 19). Very exceptional is the story of Lehlohonolo (M, 19) who did not experience any kind of support (emotionally nor financially) and he said that "*it would have been* [important] *because I once*

said; this people they got information, but they don't want to pass it to others, so they just take the information for their families […] *They don't share it. I could have used more information and support from others*".

The resources that can facilitate or deprive the access to post-secondary education

Besides individual and environmental factors, resources are also considered to be highly important in facilitating or depriving the opportunities of young people (Sen, 1999; Pittman et al., 2003). The advice the young people got in this respect played an important role. The provided information on bursaries and on how to apply for further education and if the youth had the money to apply for further education and if there was anyone who they could go to in order to get the money; all issues that have been questioned in order to get some insight in the facilitating and depriving factors of the youth in Doornkop.

The youth got mainly advice from friends or family and this was valued as very helpful. Besides that, almost every adolescent got some advice from universities and/or colleges based in Johannesburg. A so-called 'career expo' had been organized at their high school, in which several colleges and universities presented themselves. However, the focus of this career expo was predominantly on promotion of the educational institution and not on informing the high school students on what they need to apply and when they need to apply in order to also qualify for a bursary like the NSFAS, Eduloan or other bursaries. Therefore these career expos were not always valued as being very useful and although a lot of these youth have heard from the NSFAS at this career expo, most of them have no clue on how and when to apply for it: *I didn't get the chance. I didn't have the money to call them and ask. All I knew was that they offer bursaries* (Chantel, F, 19).

The young ones are not able to pay the money for the application fee of post-secondary education by themselves. However, it occurs that the youth did manage to pay for the application fees with the help of family members. Sometimes they borrowed the money for it and sometimes their family gave them the money. This was not something which was easy; a majority of the family members who helped had to save money for quite a while or even borrowed it from others: "*My father will give money for me* [Do your parents have the amount of *R3280* for your application?] *No, they save it to pay for it. They both work*" (Sphelele, M, 19) and "*My mom borrowed the money*" (Bongiwe, F, 20). The young ones who did not have the finance to apply for further education, do not know they need money before trying to apply for a course; which is a reason why they not yet saved some money for the application and why it sometimes occurred that when they did manage to get the money,

the application deadline had already passed. That is the reason why most of these young people would have wanted to know more about what they actually needed for an application before they tried to access it: "*how it works and what to do. I searched and researched and asked people about it, but still I don't know what to do and when to do it*" (Wendy, F, 18) and "[I would have wanted to know] *how is it operating, what is expected of you, how are you going to complete.. yeah.. Like how many years are you going to be there?*" (Felicia, F, 20).

4.5 Strategies they use to access post-secondary schooling

Now the challenges the NEET youth of Doornkop experience in trying to access post-secondary education are clear, the question rises how these young people cope with the fact that they all wanted to study further but did not study at the moment of interviewing. Do the youth know how to reach further education and how did they found out about it? Did they found out because of an active search for information? Or do they have no clue on how to access tertiary education because they do not look for information?

Coping with the lack of information

As been mentioned in the previous paragraph on the challenges that youth experience in the access to post-secondary education, lack of information is one of the main obstacles for these young ones. How the adolescents cope with these struggles varies from *functional coping* (active participation in looking for a solution) to *dysfunctional coping* (avoiding of the problem and not active in the search for solving the problem). An example of functional coping with lack of information is the story of James (M, 20): "*I have a booklet which contains the faculties that they offer at UJ and also the other information about UJ. It also got a website link on it.* [So you found out about the access to further education via a booklet?] *Yes.* [Who gave you the booklet?] *Now, I've got it when I went there [UJ] to fetch the forms; they gave me the booklet*". And after he completed the application procedure, he went to UJ to check the status of his application: "*When I went there; I just gave them my student number. Then they checked, when they checked they told me that formally it wasn't approved. So the reason they gave me why it was; they told me, they said the funding was never enough to accommodate every student who had applied for it*" (James, M, 20). An example of dysfunctional coping after a setback is the story of Zintle (F, 23): "*I need my matric certificate, that's what I know. That's why I want more information on where I could go. I just need more information to find out where I should ask what I need for my college*

qualifications. [How will you get the information you need?] *I don't know.* [Can you ask someone for advice on this?] *I'm not sure*".

Despite the challenges and struggles the young ones experience in the access to tertiary education, the matriculated youth in Doornkop is still optimistic about their chances to study in the near future. The youth think they know how to reach further education, either because of acquaintances who are already studying or because of the information they have been given by people at their high schools: "*There is one friend of mine, who was my classmate back in high school; well he managed to get into varsity and he's still studying there, I think he's doing his second year this year. Yeah.. well, he told me he also got me the forms to apply last year*"(James, M, 20) and Bongiwe (F, 20): "*We got information from school, when I was still at school. They would like give us maybe pamphlets and booklets... or people would come to our school, like people from different further institutions.* [And they told you about their education?] *Yes*".

The adolescents that tried to apply for post-secondary education before, can explain the process of application in general, which indicates that although they did not succeed in tertiary education they do know how to get in. But at the moment the application was not approved, most of the youth did not know what to do or how to get more information and showed dysfunctional coping: "*When you fill in the application form, then you take it with the money.. right.. so you must wait for when they call you, and then they call you and maybe they say you are in, so you have to pay the registration and then the other tuition fees.* [So after you filled in the forms, you delivered the money and wait to be called?] *Yes.* [And did they call you?] *No.* [Did you try to call them?] *No.* [Or did you try to reach them in another way?] *No... I just gave up*" (Felicia, F, 20) and "*I went to UJ and then asked for the form, and then it was given to me. Then I filled it in, deposited the money to their account. And then I went there with the [pay]slip. I send the slip along with the form and then I waited for their response.* [And did you get the response?] *Yes, they declined my application.* [Do you know why they declined you?] *They said, I don't know, that I don't meet the requirements.* [And was it the subjects you had taken? Or your marks?] *I think it was the subjects, but I'm not really sure about that, I never asked about it*" (Bongiwe, F, 20).

Coping with the lack of financial resources

The other key obstacle the NEET youth experience in the access to further education is the lack of financial resources. There are possibilities to get a bursary (e.g. NSFAS) or a student loan (e.g. Eduloan), but before one can get financial aid, the application procedure at

university or college should be succeeded. The youth in Doornkop does not have a lot of information about the available financial plans for students and the information they did get about the bursaries was only limited. The youth heard about it at high school during the so-called 'career expo', whereby the higher institutions informed the students about the availability of a bursary. Although the availability of a bursary is well-known for the adolescents in Doornkop, the young ones are not really familiar with the registration procedure of the bursaries (*cf.* §4.3 *"You pass a lot of difficulties"* the fragment of Chantel). Chantel (F, 19) states why she did not apply for the funding of NSFAS: "[So you heard about the NSFAS. Did you apply for it?] *No. I didn't get the chance. I didn't have the money to call them and ask.* [Did you try to reach them in other ways?] *No.* [Why not?] *I don't know how*" (Chantel, F, 19). As can be read in the quotation above, Chantel does not know how to apply for the NSFAS funding and has no clue on how to find information about it without having the money to call them. Searching for more information on the internet is not an option, since the NEET youth in matric do not have the access to internet in their neighbourhood. Chantel has no contact with other students that are in further education with a bursary, so she does not know where else to find the necessary information other than the information UJ had been giving her at high school last year.

Another issue is the limited amount of bursaries: "*I was accepted at UJ, but it [NSFAS application] wasn't approved, because there was no funding, because there were too many students applying for it.* [And without the funding?] *No, well, I couldn't like go on, because I would not earn enough to pay for my own fees*" (James, M, 20).

So how do the youth cope with the lack of financial resources? Lack of money is a big obstacle for the NEET youth in Doornkop to study further. Most friends of these young ones advice them to work after matric, before trying to access further education, in order to being able to pay for the study themselves: "*Most of them [friends] said I must work first so that I can save money in order to, so that I can save money to pay for my studies*" (Bongiwe, F, 20) and Paul (M, 23): "*Mostly sometimes if the... the financial problems at home won't allow you to go to college, most of us would advice each other that maybe it would be better to go and find a job. And maybe you could also do a certain course, so you will be studying part time and work at the same time, in order maybe to try and push things*". Looking for a job seems to be hard for these young ones, which is in line with the high youth unemployment rates in South Africa from approximately 36% (HSRC, 2011; Stats SA, 2012). The youth is looking for jobs by reading advertisements in newspapers and by asking at local shops for vacancies. Asking friends or family if they know a vacant work spot for them is also an option. The

youth is able to explain how to look for a job, but most of the adolescents do not have a clue in how to make a CV and how to do a job interview, because they have no experience with it. Most of these young people seem to give up or not try further after a setback: "*I've tried, but now I am just relaxing for a while [...] I'm just waiting for my parents to have the money*" (Chantel, F, 19).

Stay positive and work hard, to reach the dream future?

Despite the previous mentioned struggles, the youth still tries to reach their dream to study in the future. The coping strategies they use are *inter alia* applying early, actively search for more information on the study they would like to complete and looking for a job to be able to pay the application fees. A frequently mentioned approach for the youth is to stay positive and have an active attitude towards looking for more information: "*I think I should work hard and also encourage myself and make sure that I don't let any negative thoughts in. I must make sure that I don't have negative thoughts about myself or even doubt myself that I can do something. I should always be positive in anything that I want to achieve [...] I think maybe if most of the time you know, it is to have confidence in yourself as a person that's when other people would also feel like this person is passionate about everything and people will start to be motivated in a way to support you and to make sure to at least try and help you. [...] At least they should meet me half way and give me information or else I'm just sitting and do nothing, I must do something instead of doing nothing, I need people to meet me halfway*" (Paul, M, 23).

The adolescents are in a phase of their lives in which they do not know how to succeed in the near future. And as Paul mentioned in the quotation above, support in how to reach his dream to study in the near future is very important. Some young ones do not have a clue on where to get the support other than by themselves: "*Maybe if I find a person, like, who is going to help me. Or maybe if I just win a lotto... yes.. Maybe everything will be more perfect for me*" (Zintle, F, 23) and "*Well.. through pushing harder I think. Because at the end of the day this is for me to achieve. I think I have to push myself*" (James, M, 20).

In order to get the support they need, the youth would ask someone for advice, whereby asking family and friends is most frequently mentioned: "*Because they are people who are close to me. And because they know how to apply for further education and how to find a job*" (Wendy, F, 18) and "*at least I know that whenever they advice me it comes from their best interest at heart. They have my best interest at heart. I know they will not give me, like bad advice*" (Bongiwe, F, 20).

4.6 Answer to the central research question

'*What are the perspectives of NEET youth with a matric in Doornkop, Soweto on challenges and strategies while accessing post-secondary education?*'

The NEET adolescents of Doornkop are not in employment, education or training against their will. The reasons for being NEET vary, but the fact that they do not achieve what they aspire in their young lives does have an effect on the self confidence and the self esteem of these young persons. The youth does not refer to these capabilities (confidence and self esteem) directly, which might indicate that the external obstacles they experience are just too big for them to address these individual capabilities to reach further education (Sen, 1999), or it might mean that they try to externalize their problems as a way of dysfunctional coping (Seiffge-Krenke, 1995). However, the fact that the youth did not bunk in high school and they have finished their high school with matric, indicates that they all have the individual capabilities to study further. This finding points out that there is a key role for environmental factors and that dysfunctional coping is one of the main reasons for these young ones to be NEET.

The youth experience a lack of information in how to reach post-secondary education, whereby they not always use their capabilities in order to reach to further education. The adolescents do not always search for more information, because they do not know where to look for it. Also, the choosing of subjects for matric has not been based on ideas about the future. Availability of career guidance could have helped students to make a better decision in what subjects to chose while starting matric, to provide a better match between the subjects followed in matric and the aspired study. The young adolescents were during their matric years not aware of the fact that their matric subjects and achieved results would be substantial in the access to tertiary education. Therefore they experience an extra threshold in reaching further education, because for many young ones their marks were insufficient or they did not finish with the right subjects to access their aspired study. The struggle is that they either have to choose a study which they would not really like to follow, or they need to upgrade their matric results before accessing the study of their dreams. Both choices are not an option for the NEET youth in Doornkop, because of the lack of finances.

Lack of financial resources is for the youth in Doornkop a big obstacle in life. Doornkop is a deprived area and the people living there come from a poor background. Despite lack of financial resources in all families, there are also some facilitating factors in

the neighbourhood of Doornkop, e.g. the presence of different high schools near home (Sen, 1999). The availability of resources such as a library, computers and sports facilities at high schools in Doornkop can be seen as positive stimulations to functional coping (Hess & Copeland, 2001; Seiffge-Krenke, 1995) and might therefore be indirect factors in promoting the access to post-secondary education for school-going youth in Doornkop. The post-secondary educational institutions are not in a walking distance from Doornkop, which is a highly influential depriving factor, because the young ones comes from a disadvantaged, poor neighbourhood with only limited financial resources and the youth is unable to pay money for transport.

Despite all the struggles the youth experiences, the young ones do not deny these challenges and they try to handle the stressful life events they experience in a positive way. In general, the NEET adolescents in Doornkop use functional coping in achieving the study ambitions for the near future (Seiffge-Krenke, 1995). The emerging adults think they will be studying in the coming five years and although they not always know how to deal with it, they try to look for information on how to get into post-secondary education and they try to get the mental and financial support needed from their families.

5. Conclusions

In the previous chapter the results of the research on the access to post-secondary education for matriculated NEET youth in Doornkop are presented. The central research question and the sub questions have been answered and based on these results, the expectations derived from the theory are reflected upon. This theoretical reflection will be followed by a methodological and ethical reflection on this research and this study will be concluded with some policy directions.

5.1 Theoretical Reflection

This paragraph describes how the research findings relate to the expectations from the theoretical framework.

The first expectation was based on the capabilities approach of Sen (1999):

Given the poor context of the people in Doornkop, the NEET youth experience a lot of challenges in the access to post-secondary education due to lack of financial resources and lack of available information on how to access further education.

The outcome of this study on the access to further education and the challenges these adolescents experience show that the expectation is correct. The youth in Doornkop come from a derived area and therefore lack of financial resources and lack of information is a big obstacle these young ones experience. It is a struggle to get into further education, because the available information is limited; the universities and colleges do not always give feedback on why one does not meet the requirements to study at their institution and if they get accepted into the wished education, the youth has no idea on how to get financial aid for their studies, or they are too late to apply for a bursary because no one has told them about these deadlines and the fact that there are only limited spots for a bursary.

The second expectation was:

The youth in Doornkop has become NEET due to lack of support, lack of available assistance in making choices and lack of available facilities; inter alia easy and affordable transport to further education and/or a job.

The above expectation derived from the importance of support according to Perold et al. (2012) and the ideas of the youth development approach that young people need connections to family, peers and community (to gain support from in accessing further education) and opportunities to contribute to their context; the availability of facilities, such as easy and affordable transport (Pittman et al., 2003). The results show that the youth in Doornkop experience a lot of support from their families and some support from their friends

and people in the neighbourhood. They have not become NEET due to lack of support, but the lack of available assistance in making choices about studying further can be considered as influential. The youth have experienced some sort of assistance at school, due to the support of their teachers and the school expo's being organized, but from the perspective of the youth this assistance is far from enough. The young ones do not have information on the available study opportunities and especially information on how to access post-secondary education is being missed. The lack of easy and affordable transport is (due to lack of financial resources) one of the main reasons for these young ones to become NEET. With no computers at home, the youth do not know how to search for information on how to study at their wished college or university without going there. In addition to that, even if they know how to access post-secondary education, there is no money for transportation to get there.

Within the youth development approach (Pittman et al., 2003) the need of competences, skills and confidence are also very important besides the above mentioned connections (e.g. support) and opportunities (e.g. available facilities). The youth in Doornkop do have the competences and skills to access post-secondary education; their marks were sufficient; they liked to be in school (they did not bunk and consider themselves as good students) and they all matriculated. The youth does not have the needed knowledge for accessing further education and not a lot can be concluded on their self confidence. At the intended questions to measure self confidence and self esteem: e.g. '*Do you get the things done you would like to get done?*' the young ones referred to external problems why they did not achieve everything they wish for (*cf. §4.6 Answer to central research question*).

The final expectation was based on the theory of functional versus dysfunctional coping of Seiffge-Krenke (1995) and the link to secondary education that Hess and Copeland (2001) made in this respect:

The youth in Doornkop come from a poor context with probably a limited access to facilities. They have become NEET due to dysfunctional coping in handling stressful life events (unforeseen pregnancies, setbacks in their educational careers) they experience.

Although Doornkop is considered to be a deprived area and the youth comes from a disadvantaged background, the availability of facilities such as a library, computers, free study books and sports facilities at high school was widespread. The youth all made use of these facilities which could have had a positive effect on their coping strategies. But although a library and/or computers were available in most high schools in the area of Doornkop, the young ones did not use these computers and libraries to do research in accessing post-secondary education. This could be seen as dysfunctional coping (Seiffge-Krenke, 1995), but

these young ones all obtained their matric certificate and all see themselves studying in the coming years. This implies that the youth stays positive although they have experienced some setbacks (unforeseen pregnancies, not accepted at the study of their choice).

A limitation in the theoretical framework as being used for this study is the late discovery of a research on resilience in South Africa by Theron and Theron (2010). In this article, Theron and Theron present a critical review of 23 studies on South African youth resilience conducted between 1990 and 2008. Resilience is a concept that is directly related to functional coping and could therefore be very useful for this study. The conceptualization of resilience used in this article is that resilience is the product of protective resources and the product of a person-context transaction (Theron & Theron, 2010).

The authors set apart protective or supportive factors for resilience which they categorize in an interdisciplinary way; protective resources anchored in the self, embedded in families and protective resources anchored in the community. The individual factors that encourage resilience are *inter alia* optimism, autonomy, problem solving skills, self esteem and goal or achievement orientation (Theron & Theron, 2010). Besides these personal factors the role of the community is very important according to resilience studies conducted in South Africa. A big role within the community is the availability of education and in particular seeing the teacher as a role model by providing knowledge, sharing food and giving advice is seen as encouraging resilience amongst youth in South Africa (Theron, 2007). If youth experience school as a secure and safe environment this encourages resilience as well (Barbarin, Richter & Wet, 2000), which is the case for the NEET youth in Doornkop. Within the schools, the access to recreational resources also encourage resilience, for example with an open access to books (e.g. by having a library or the use of free study books), computers and sports facilities (Theron, 2007).

Peers are also considered to be very important as a protective factor for youth: "primarily because they afforded opportunities for social acceptance and the development of positive identity and values and because youth could talk to their peers about troubling matters and trust them to help out with any problems they may be facing" (Theron & Theron, 2010: 6). Supporting family relationships (e.g. by being loved and valued within the family system and having the opportunity to finish matric) are almost equally important for South African youth (Rensburg & Barnard, 2005; Theron, 2007). The support of the family is especially important in encouraging Black youth towards resilience in the many challenges these youth face when completing post-secondary education (Theron & Theron, 2010). The importance of family support might also be equally important in the access towards post-

secondary education. Within the families, especially mothers are mentioned as 'pillars of strength' that enable Black youth in South African townships towards self-actualisation and resilience by their attitude of never complaining and not quitting (Dass-Brailsfort, 2005). The review of Theron and Theron (2010) on resilience would have been very useful for this study, and it is highly recommended to use it in a follow-up research on the strategies and challenges NEET youth in deprived areas of South Africa (like Doornkop) experience.

5.2 Methodological and ethical reflection

Each research project is subject to certain limitations and as mentioned in the previous paragraph on theoretical reflection, a limitation to this study is the fact that a very useful article on resilience of South African youth has not been used in the theoretical framework of this study. This is not only a theoretical limitation, but also a methodological limitation. The theory on resilience would have been very useful in the preparation of the interviews. The important concepts within this resilience theory (e.g. optimism among adolescents, supporting family relations, the support of peers and the key role of secondary education) would not have been out of place in the topic list.

Another limitation to this study is the fact that there has been chosen for one moment of measuring, a choice being made due to time constraints. More moments with the participants could have given a broader sense of the story and would therefore probably have provided even more useful information.

The interviews have been conducted in a couple of weeks in the field, whereby the search for respondents also had to take place. It was difficult to rely on respondents, due to the fact they do something for the research that does not help themselves. Therefore, it happened that sometimes respondents did not show up at the time and place agreed upon.

Further research on the access to post-secondary education and the perspectives of youth, should have a focus on resilience, more moments of measuring and preferably a bigger group of participants. This study had a focus on matriculated youth who are NEET, while there might also be an interest in NEET youth who did not finish their high school and what challenges they experience and how they cope with this.

An ethical problem that arose during the interviews was that just before the interview started, it sometimes occurred that the participant had different expectations from the interview than intended, due to the double meaning of the English word 'interview'. Interview can mean 'job interview' or 'interview for a research'. The youth saw the White researcher as an opportunity for a better future and thought that if they needed to have obtained their matric,

that the interview would probably be a study or job interview, so some of them brought their CV and matric certificate. For the researcher this was a difficult finding, due to feelings of guilt. However, all young ones still wanted to participate after explaining the means of the research and the researcher was able to give something back to them as well. During the interviews, the youth had to think about certain choices being made and also about the consequences of some actions, e.g. by a question: 'You were too late in applying for further education, when will you apply this year?').

The researcher had much help in the search for participants due to the help of Humana. The social workers of Humana have asked a lot of young people in Doornkop about their job and education status and made some very useful appointments for interviewing. The researcher gave back to the community by doing volunteer work for a couple of weeks during the phase of interviewing. With the voluntary work (by designing a crafts room for the young children in the community and some teaching of the young children), together with giving the youth information pamphlets of the University of Johannesburg which contained information about available bursaries, how to make a CV and how to apply for UJ helped the researcher to give something back to the community.

5.3 Policy directions

With the outcomes of this study, it is shown that there are some limitations to the present form of the South African education system. There is a huge information gap between the available opportunities and what the youth in Doornkop know about this. There is a lack of career and/or study guidance at secondary schools and although most schools do have a career expo, this is not enough. It might be wise for the colleges and universities in and surrounding Johannesburg to corporate with the secondary schools in Doornkop for an expanding of the career/school expo. There should be more information on the available courses, it should provide more information on the available financial aid for students (and how to apply) and it should have more information on how to apply. This study shows that the youth in Doornkop is not able to go to the colleges and/or universities to look for information due to lack of transport (due to lack of financial resources), so it would be wise for the colleges and universities to come to the students. It might also be helpful if they bring the application forms, together with a clear statement about the requirements, which will cause the youth to have a better idea on where to apply, why to apply and most importantly how to apply. A career advisor in each secondary school could help coordinate the career expo and guide the youth in making choices and in the access to post-secondary education.

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APPENDIX 1.1   Topic list

Interview

During the interview I will be taking some notes. You can see what I write down and I will try to fill in some things together with you in the form of a timeline, which we will draw together.

The timeline will be from when you entered matric until now. Next to the period, we will write down what you tell about that period in your life: what you were (and are) doing in your daily life, in your school life and what you were and are dreaming of.

A. Daily life

1. Can you tell me about a regular day in your life?

    1.1 Tell me what happens in a typical day; you wake up and do what?

    1.2 How do you spend your time during the day?

B. Previous education

1. You have matriculated in _____. Could you tell me a little bit about your high school?

    1.1 Was your school close to home? How did you get to school?

    1.2 Did your school have a library / computers / sports facilities / free books?

    1.3 Did you use these facilities? Why/why not?

    1.4 Can you tell me what subjects you followed during matric? Why did you choose those?

    1.5 What subjects did you like at school, which ones did you dislike?

    1.6 Can you tell me about your teachers at school? Did you like/dislike them?

2. How were you as a student at school?

    2.1 Did you like being at school? Why/why not?

    2.2 Do you consider yourself as a good student? Why/why not?

    2.3 Did you bunk during school time? Can you tell me about it?

    2.4 Did you like to do sports/other activities? What activities did you like in school?

3. When you were in matric:

    3.1 What did you want to do?

        3.1.1 Study further?

        3.1.2 Do something else?

        3.1.3 Did you think about your future?

        3.1.4 Did you try to avoid thinking about your future?

    3.2 What did you do to reach this?

        3.2.1 Can you tell me about what you did to reach your dreams for the future?

3.2.2 Did you go to other students (at school/whom are already studying) to ask what they were planning to do?

        3.2.3 Did you ask for advice on what you could do after matriculating?

           - family?

    - friends?

    - someone at school?

    - someone else?

        3.2.4 Do you think you need additional actions to reach those plans for your future?

4. What kind of advice do you assume helpful?

    4.1 Which advice showed to be useless?

C. After matriculation

1. What were your plans after you completed matric?

2. Did you intend to get to further education?

    2.1 If so; do you know how to reach this?

    2.2 Who told you about this?

    2.3 Can you explain the process of application to me?

    2.4 What else do you intend to do?

    2.5 do you know how to reach this?

    2.6 Who told you about this?

If you did not intend to study further: What did you intend to do after you completed matric?

    - a job?

    - other things?

3. Do you get things done you would like to get done? Can you tell me about it? (why/why not?)

4. Are you nervous to get things done when you have never done them before? (why/why not?)

5. How did you find out about how to access further education?

    5.1 Did anybody tell you about the available opportunities? Who/what?

If respondent intends to access further education; then the following questions. If not continue with section D.

6. What do you need to access further education:

        6.1 finances: did you have the finance to apply?

        6.2 specific subjects: Did you have the right subjects to apply?

        6.3 marks: Did you have the marks needed to apply?

        6.4 information: Did you have all the information to apply?

        6.4.1 Did you know how to apply?

        6.5 support (family/friends/others)

6.5.1 Did your family support you in applying for further education?

6.5.2 Did your friends support you in applying for further education?

6.5.3 Did others support/stimulate you to apply for further education?

6.5.4 Do you feel this support is/was important for you?

6.6 anything else you need to access further education?

7. Did you already try to access further education?

7.1 What did you do to access further education?

7.2 Have you ever applied to study further?

7.3 How?

If respondent tried to access further education: continue. If not: continue with section D.

8. How did you manage to pay for the application fees?

8.1 Was there anyone who you could go to, to get money for the application?

8.2 Did anybody tell you about NSFAS / Eduloan / bursaries? (+ who?)

8.2.1 Did you try to apply for NSFAS / Eduloan / bursaries?

9. What do you think about the access to further education? (difficult/easy?)

10. Is there something you would have wanted to know before trying to access further education?

Now we will finish the timeline. Imagine yourself from now on, for the next five years.

D. Future life

1. Can you tell me what you <u>think</u> you will be doing in the next five years?

1.1 How do you see yourself in five years from now?

1.2 Would you be working? (+ what kind of work) Can you explain this to me?

1.3 Would you be studying/have studied further? (+ kind of study) Can you explain this to me?

1.4 Do you think you will be having (/maintaining) a family in the next five years?

1.4.1 How would your family look like?

1.4.2 Do you think you will have a house on your own?

1.5 What else would you be doing in the next five years?

2. Do you care about what other people think of you?

2.1 What do other people want for you for the future?

2.2 Do you want the same things as they want? (Do you want to follow their plans for your future?)

3. Can you tell me about your <u>dreams</u> for the future?

3.1 How do you <u>want</u> to see yourself in five years from now?

3.2 Do you want to be working? (+ what kind of work) Can you explain this to me?

3.3 Do you want to be studying/have studied further? (+ kind of study) Can you explain this to me?

3.4 Do you want to have a family in the next five years?

3.4.1 How would you want your family to look like?

3.4.2 Do you want to have a house on your own?

3.5 What else do you want to be doing in the next five years?

4. What do you consider successful for your future?

4.1 Do you believe you can reach this in the future?

4.2 Do you experience any struggles in how to reach your dream future? Can you tell me about it?

4.2.1 Who do you think is responsible for that problem?

5. How will you try to reach your dreams for the future?

5.1 Will you search for a job?

5.2 How will you get into education?

5.3 How will you get the support for your dreams?

5.4 Will you ask anyone for advice? Who? Why?

Is there anything else you want me to know about your experiences with the access to further education?

Thank you for the interview and I hope you will be able to reach your future dreams.

APPENDIX 1.2   Cover page for topic list

Personal information

NAME: _____

Demographic, personal details
We will start with some personal details, so I can get to know you a little bit better.

Gender: M / F
Nationality: _____
First (mother)language: _____
Date of birth: _____(age: _____)
Marital status: married / single / cohabiting

Where in Doornkop do you live? BLOCK_____

Who do you live with? Parents / siblings / children / partner / others: _____

Do you have your matric? YES / NO
          If yes: Do you have your matriculation exemption? YES / NO
If no: what is your current level of education?

Since when are you matriculated: _____

Are you currently studying? YES / NO
If yes: secondary school / training college / distance education / local university / _____

Do you have any health problems (illness) or disabilities you are struggling with? YES / NO
If yes: what kind of?
- are you able to study / work?

Do you work? YES / NO
If yes: What is the work do you do?
How many hours per week?
On a regular or temporary basis?
          Do you work for an employer (/company)? YES / NO
          Do you work for yourself? YES / NO
          Do you work fulltime / part-time / on a casual basis?
          Do you get money for the work you do?

Do you (also) get additional money?
If so:
          Do you get money from family / friends? YES / NO
                  If yes: From who? _____
          Do you get money from earnings? YES / NO
                  if yes: What kind of earnings? _____
          Do you get money from grants? YES / NO
                  if yes: What kind of grants? _____

APPENDIX 1.3   Informed consent form

Informed consent form

Name: _____

Introduction

I am Sophia Geerars, a master student from the Netherlands. I am now in Johannesburg and studying at UJ to do my master research. My research is about youth and their experiences with further education in South Africa and particularly in Doornkop. I am focusing on young people (18-25 years old) who have their matric and who are not in school, not studying at the moment and who are not working. I am trying to understand how you, young persons in Doornkop, experienced high school and what happened after your matriculation.

I would like to interview you to give your voices and experiences about your educational career.

I need you to know a few things about my research:

- Participation is voluntary; meaning that you don't have to participate if you don't want to
- There are no rewards or payments for participating. The only advantage to you is the opportunity to have your voice heard
- If you are uncomfortable at any point in the interview, please tell me and we can either change the way of interviewing or you can decide that you do not want to participate anymore. Of course, I will try to ensure that I do not make you feel uncomfortable
- you do not have to speak in English – you can speak Zulu as well
- If you want to, I will ensure that I keep your name anonymous
- There is an interpreter with me at the interview, her role is to help us understand each other better and the things being said during the interview remain confident
- I would like to record (sound) our conversations. This is just to make me remember clearly what you have said during our conversations. The recorded conversations will only be used for my research and will not be used for any other purposes.

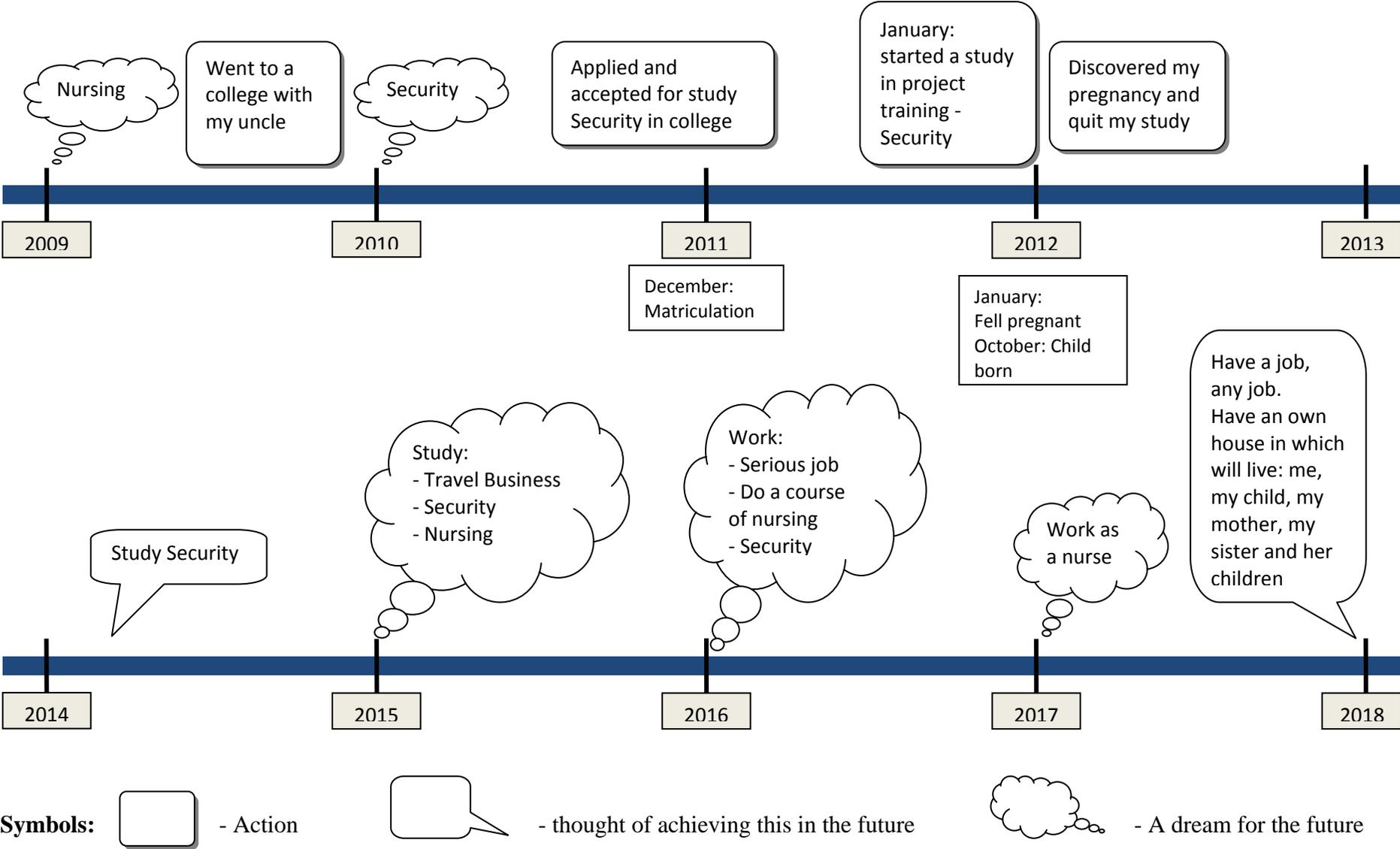Do you want to ask me any questions at this stage? You can always ask me questions throughout, but is there anything you would like to know now?

If you are still happy to participate, I need you to sign this form. The reason is that if anyone asks us, we can prove to them that I did tell you about my research, the process and the risks, and that you still agreed to participate.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX 1.4   Example of a timeline drawn with a participant (Lindiwe, F, 18)

Nursing

Went to a college with my uncle

Security

Applied and accepted for study Security in college

January: started a study in project training - Security

Discovered my pregnancy and quit my study

2009

2010

2011

2012

2013

December: Matriculation

January: Fell pregnant October: Child born

Study Security

Study:
- Travel Business
- Security
- Nursing

Work:
- Serious job
- Do a course of nursing
- Security

Work as a nurse

Have a job, any job. Have an own house in which will live: me, my child, my mother, my sister and her children

2014

2015

2016

2017

2018

Symbols: - Action   - thought of achieving this in the future   - A dream for the future

APPENDIX 2   Analysis framework

The research question(s) in relation to the used theoretical concepts *and* the relation between the theoretical concepts and the data gathering

Research question:

What are the perspectives of NEET youth with a matric in Doornkop, Soweto on challenges and strategies while accessing post-secondary education'

Research subquestions:	Theoretical concepts:	Data required:	Where data comes from:	Interview questions:
Who are the NEET youths of Doornkop, Soweto?	1. Self confidence 2. Self esteem 3. Options to plan their own life 4. Competences 5. Influence of environment 6. Available resources	Experiences of youth in their daily life What shaped them: experiences in previous education	Cover page Interview	A1 (to break the ice) 1. C3 2. B2.3 3. B2, D1, D2 4. B2 5. D2 6. B1
What are reasons for these youths to be without employment, training and education?	1. Self confidence 2. Self esteem 3. Options to plan their own life 4. Competences 5. Coping strategies 6. Skills 7. Influence of environment 8. Available resources	What shaped them: experiences in previous education Information about influences from their environment Availability of assistance and resources	Interview	1. B3.2.4 2. D2 3. B3.1, D1, D3 4. B1.4, B1.5 5. B3.1.3, B3.1.4, B3.2 6. B2 7. B3.2.2, B3.2.3, B4 8. B1, C2

Research subquestions:	Theoretical concepts:	Data required:	Where data comes from:	Interview questions:
What strategies do they use to access post-secondary schooling?	1. Competences 2. Coping strategies 3. Skills 4. Influence of environment 5. Available resources	What shaped them: experiences in previous education Information about influences from their environment Availability of assistance and resources Knowledge about their own capabilities	Interview	1. C6.3 2. C7, C9 3. C6.2, C6.3 4. B3.2.3, C5 5. B4, C2, C5, C6.1, C6.4
What is their perspective on the access to post-secondary education?	1. Self confidence 2. Options to plan their own life 3. Coping strategies 4. Competences 5. Influence of environment 6. Available resources	Information about influences from their environment Availability of assistance and resources Knowledge about their own capabilities	Interview	1. C3, C4 2. C1, D3 3. C9 4. C6.3 5. C6.5 6. C8, C10
What challenges do they experience in the access of post-secondary education?	1. Self confidence 2. Self esteem 3. Options to plan their own life 4. Coping strategies 5. Competences 6. Skills 7. Influence of environment 8. Available resources	Information about their capabilities on the individual level Information about environmental influences Availability of assistance and resources	Interview	1. C3, C4 2. D4 3. C1 4. D3.3.1, D5 5. B2.2, C6.3 6. C6.2, C6.3 + combination of B1.4 & B3.1 7. C6.5.4 8. B4, C8, C10

Explanatory notes on the analysis framework:

The individual level – capability approach (Sen, 1999)
- self confidence
- self esteem
- options to plan their own life
- competences (human capital)
- coping strategies

The individual and environmental level – youth development approach (Pittman et al., 2003):
- competences
- skills
- self confidence
- influence of family / friends / peers
- influence of the community they live in

Resources that can facilitate or deprive the access to post-secondary education (Sen, 1999; Pittman et al., 2003):
- a home
- income or a household member with an income
- cash available to pay for application fees
- availability of a bursary / scholarship
- informal employment
- voluntary work
- (a lack of) information
- health / (dis)ability
- available services (sport activities/library/etc.)
- transportation
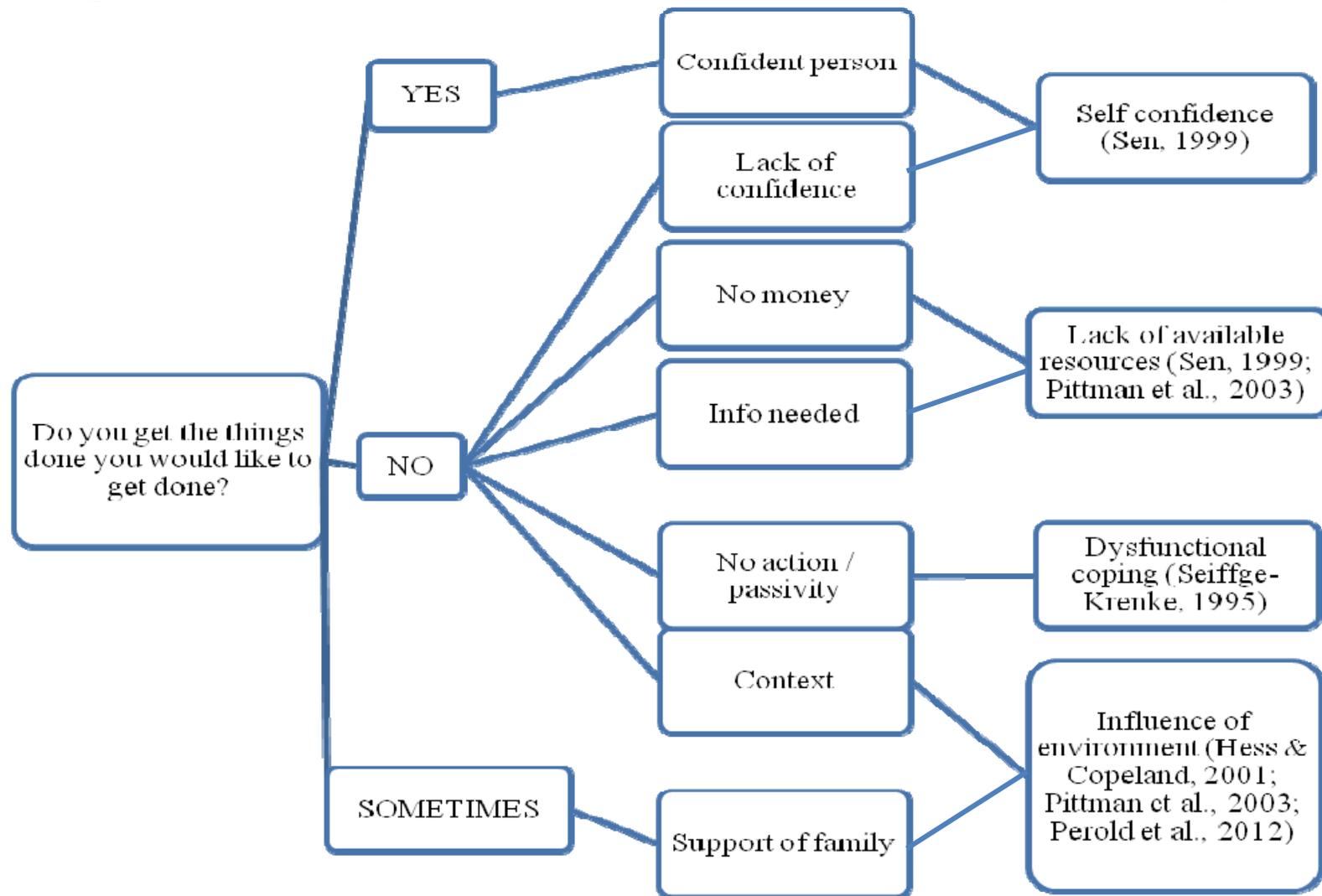- assistance with accessing post-secondary school

APPENDIX 3   **Example of data analysis**

Interview question C3:   *Answer:*   *Codes:*   *Theory:*

APPENDIX 4   Detailed overview of the respondents

Respondent	Gender	First language	Age	Block in Doornkop	Total number of people in the household	Matriculation exemption?	Matriculated since December ….?	Wish for the future: To study:	Additional money from?	Additional information
1. Chantel	Female	English	19	6	11	University	2012	Travel & Tourism and Business	-	-
2. Zintle	Female	Isixhosa	23	5	5	College	2009	Social work	Child Support Grant	1 child (2 years old)
3.Bongiwe	Female	Isizulu	20	3	5	University	2011	Fashion design	Child Support Grant	1 child (2,5 years old)
4.Sibongile	Female	Isizulu	19	5	7	College	2012	Nursing school	Sister, brother, partner	-
5. James	Male	Tsonga	20	6	4	College	2011	Humanities / Tourism	mother	-
6.Lehlohonolo	Male	Southern Sotho	19	5	5	University	2012	Journalism / Fire fighting	-	-
7.Paul	Male	Isizulu	23	5	4	College	2010	Human Resource Management	Occasional informal employment, brother (as a loan)	-
8. Sphelele	Male	Isizulu	19	5	4	College	2012	Journalism	Father	Came to Doornkop after matric
9. Bonga	Male	Isizulu	19	5	4	University	2012	Photography/ Police/ Nursing	Father	Came to Doornkop after matric
10. Bridget	Female	Isizulu	19	9	5	College	2012	Accounting/ Physics	Occasional informal employment	Attending a Saturday school twice a

Respondent	Gender	First language	Age	Block in Doornkop	Total number of people in the household	Matriculation exemption?	Matriculated since December ….?	Wish for the future: To study:	Additional money from?	Additional information
										month
11. Thandeka	Female	Isizulu	25	2	9	College, upgraded to university	2005, upgrade 2009	Management assisting/ Teaching	Child Support Grand	Child (1 year old)
12. Wendy	Female	Setswana	18	7	9	University	2012	Fashion design	Occasional informal employment	-
13. Nomsa	Female	Isizulu	22	7	2	College	2008	Hospitality / Human Resource Management	Child Support Grant	Has a child (4 years old) who does not live with her anymore
14. Nosiphele	Female	Isizulu	19	2	7	College	2008	IT / Hospitality	Child Support Grant + sometimes from uncle	Has a child (3 years old) who lives at her father
15. Felicia	Female	Setswana	20	1	2	University	2012	Education (English/ Geography)	Sometimes from mother	Came to Doornkop after matric
16. Lindiwe	Female	Isizulu	18	7	6	College	2011	Nursing / Security	Child Support Grant + sometimes from mother	Child (6 months old)