

An exploration of the occupational-life-trajectories of five young men in the Heideveld community

by
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Plagiarism Declaration

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Abstract

Heideveld, a suburb that forms part of the “Cape Flats”, is plagued by high levels of crime, gangsterism, unemployment and relative poverty. I became specifically interested in the occupations of the young men in Heideveld, as I often observed them loitering in the streets, at an age when they should have been in school, studying or starting a career. This led me to wonder about the repertoire of occupations that they had performed over the course of their lives, i.e. their occupational-life-trajectories. I became interested in the influence that the environment and their personal attributes had on the occupations that they performed over time. Guided by the Person-Environment-Occupation model as a conceptual tool I decided to explore the occupational-life-trajectories of men between the ages of 20 and 25 throughout the course of their life, up to their current age.

At the organisation where I volunteered during my time in Heideveld, there was a weekly programme for the children and young women (aged 12 to 22), but nothing for young men, which prompted my interest in doing research about this age group. My initial thinking was to form the theoretical basis from which an occupation-based intervention group could be developed. I intended to explore what had motivated occupational participation throughout their lives, how certain occupations developed over time and the influence of the environment on their occupations.

Snowball sampling was applied to gain access to the participants. Using a qualitative approach I combined a method called PhotoVoice with individual, narrative interviews, in order to collect data on the occupational-life-trajectories of five young men from Heideveld. PhotoVoice is a participant-based method that allowed the interviewees to take photos of occupations that they have performed throughout their lives. The photographs were used to facilitate the interview process along with two or three guiding questions. Within-case and cross-case analysis were used to find themes that pertained to the aims of the study.

I uncovered five themes in my analysis: “Ons gee nie krag weg nie/We don’t give away power”, “Ons het saam geloop/We ‘hang out’ together”, “Ek het baie probleme by die huis gehet/I had many problems at home”, “Die lewe is swaar hier buite/Life is hard out here” and “Ek wil net uit hierdie plek kom/I just want to get away from this place”.

I found that the environment played a large role in the occupational-life-trajectories of the participants. I also found that the participants’ sense of masculinity, gender and identity affected their occupational choices and participation. I explain the peer nature and motivational factors influencing gangsterism and drug use as they manifested in the young men’s lives.

I concluded that an occupation-based intervention programme might address certain aspects such as occupational choice and exposure, but that wider, more long-lasting intervention was necessary to truly

make a difference in the occupational-life-trajectories of young men in Heideveld. After taking the support structures in the physical environment into consideration, recommendations were made in terms of the family unit, the peer group, education, skills training and community empowerment. Furthermore, as the organisation already serves boys between 10 and 14 years and a greater impact may be possible at this life stage, more detailed recommendations were developed regarding a possible occupational therapy intervention programme.

Opsomming

Heideveld, 'n voorstad wat deel vorm van die Kaapse Vlakte, gaan gebuk onder hoë vlakke van misdaad, bende bedrywighede, werkloosheid en relatiewe armoede. Ek het 'n spesifieke belangstelling ontwikkel in die "occupations"¹ van die jong mans in Heideveld, omdat ek dikwels waargeneem het dat hulle in die strate drentel, op 'n ouderdom wat hulle op skool moes gewees het, besig om te studeer, of om 'n loopbaan te begin. Dit het my laat wonder oor die verskillende "occupations" waaraan hulle deelneem gedurende hulle lewens, m.a.w. hulle "occupational-life-trajectories"². Ek was geïnteresseerd oor die invloed wat die omgewing en hulle persoonlike eienskappe gehad het op die "occupations" waarin hulle oor 'n tydperk deelgeneem het. Gelei deur die "Person-Environment-Occupation" model as 'n konseptuele instrument, het ek besluit om die "occupational-life-trajectories" van mans tussen die ouderdomme van 20 en 25, gedurende die tydperk van hulle lewens tot en met hul huidige ouderdomme, te bestudeer.

By die organisasie waar ek 'n vrywilliger was gedurende my tyd in Heideveld, was daar 'n weeklikse program vir kinders en jonger vrouens (vanaf ouderdom 12 tot 22), maar niks vir jong mans nie. Dit het gelei tot my belangstelling om navorsing omtrent hierdie ouderdomsgroep te doen. My aanvanklike gedagtes was om 'n teoretiese basis te vorm waarvandaan 'n "occupation"-gebaseerde intervensie-program ontwikkel kon word. Ek wou die motivering agter die jong mans se "occupational"-deelname, hoe sekere "occupations" oor tyd ontwikkel en die invloed van die omgewing op hul "occupations" verken.

Sneebalsteekproeftrekking is gebruik om toegang tot die deelnemers te kry. Deur 'n kwalitatiewe benadering te gebruik, het ek 'n metode genaamd "PhotoVoice" met individuele, narratiewe onderhoude gekombineer, om data te versamel omtrent die "occupational-life-trajectories" van vyf jong mans in Heideveld. "PhotoVoice" is 'n deelnemer-gebaseerde metode wat die deelnemer toegelaat het om foto's van die "occupations" waaraan hulle gedurende hulle lewens deelgeneem het, af te neem. Die foto's is gebruik om die onderhoude te fasiliteer tesame met twee of drie gerigte vrae. Tussen-geval en kruis-geval analise is gebruik om temas te vind wat die doelwitte van die studie aanspreek.

Ek het vyf temas geïdentifiseer gedurende my analise: "Ons gee nie krag weg nie/We don't give away power", "Ons het saam geloop/We 'hang out' together", "Ek het baie probleme by die huis gehad/I had many problems at home", "Die lewe is swaar hier buite/Life is hard out here" en "Ek wil net uit hierdie plek kom/I just want to get away from this place".

¹ Daar is geen Afrikaanse woord/woorde wat die betekenis van "occupation" perfek weergee nie. Die woord "aktiwiteitsstyl" word deur die Woordeboek vir Gesondheidswetenskappe aanbeveel, maar aangesien ander verwante woorde nie vertaal kan word nie, het ek die Engelse woord deurgaans gebruik.

² Ongelukkig bestaan daar geen Afrikaanse woord vir "Occupational-life-trajectories" nie. Hierdie term verwys na aktiwiteitsstyl van 'n persoon deur die loop van sy of haar lewe.

Ek het gevind dat die omgewing 'n groot rol speel in die deelnemers se "occupational-life-trajectories". Ek het ook gevind dat die deelnemers se sin van manlikheid, geslag en identiteit hul "occupational" keuses en deelname geaffekteer het. Ek verduidelik ook die portuur natuur en motiverende faktore wat lei tot bende-aktiwiteite en dwelm gebruik, soos dit in die jong mans se lewens gemanifesteer het.

Ek het afgelei dat 'n "occupation" gebaseerde intervensie program moontlik sekere aspekte soos "occupational" keuses en -blootstelling kan affekteer, maar 'n breër, langduriger intervensie is nodig om werklik 'n verskil te maak in die "occupational-life-trajectories" van jong mans in Heideveld. Nadat ek die ondersteunende strukture in die fisiese omgewing inaggeneem het, het ek voorstelle gemaak in terme van die familie-eenheid, die portuur groep, onderrig, vaardigheidsopleiding en bemagtiging van die gemeenskap. Aangesien die organisasie reeds toegang het tot seuns tussen 10 en 14 jaar oud, en 'n groter impak in hierdie lewenstydperk gemaak kan word, maak ek verdere, meer gedetailleerde voorstelle rondom 'n arbeidsterapie program vir hierdie ouderdomsgroep.

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Operational definitions and terminology

Activity

Within this study I refer to activity as the building blocks of occupation (1).

Adolescence

The period of life from puberty up to the completion of physical growth. Adolescence is a social construct that differs within societies. According to the WHO it is a person between 10 and 19 years of age (2).

Apartheid

Apartheid is an Afrikaans word that describes an enforced system of racial segregation that occurred between 1948 and 1994 in South Africa. The ruling National Party government classified all inhabitants according to their perceived race ('black', 'white', 'coloured' and 'indian'). During this time a 'white' minority rule was maintained and the rights of 'black' inhabitants were oppressed. Racial segregation of medical care, housing, education and other public services was enforced by the government. (3)

Buttons

Buttons, or Mandrax, is a potentially habit-forming drug that was used as a sedative and a hypnotic in the early seventies. In medical terms, it is referred to as methaqualone. Currently it is widely used as a recreational drug in South Africa and is commonly referred to as "smarties" or "buttons" in the Western Cape. This drug is also ingested by crushing and mixing it with cannabis into a pip and is widely used within low-income communities. (4)

Cape Flats

Geographically the Cape Flats refers to the strip of land adjoining the Cape Peninsula to the main land. Historically the term came into usage during the apartheid regime, when forced removals, under the Group Areas Act, moved 'coloured' and 'african' people from the city centre into informal settlements in the outlying areas. (5)

Environment

In this study, environment refers to the larger context within which occupation occurs. This includes the historical, socio-economic, political, institutional, cultural, social, family and physical environment. There are certain cues available in each person's immediate and broader environment which influence them to act in certain ways and to partake in particular occupations.

Marijuana

Marijuana, or cannabis, is a herb, and the world's most commonly used recreational, illicit (in most countries) drug. Leaves from the cannabis plant are usually rolled into "joints" and then smoked. Street names include marijuana, pot, weed, mary-jane and tea. Short term effects of cannabis include mild tachycardia and dilation of the conjunctival blood vessels (red eye), increased appetite and dry mouth. Long term effects could include respiratory diseases, lung cancer, memory loss, cognitive deterioration and schizophrenia. The use of marijuana is accepted within certain religions and it is also prescribed for pain management by some medical practitioners. (6) It is one of the most popular drugs in South Africa and is cultivated in some areas of KwaZulu-Natal (7).

Negative occupation:

Occupations that have a negative influence on a person's health, social relations and overall well-being. They are occupations that inhibit the fulfillment of human needs or could destroy the potential for the eventual fulfillment thereof (8). Within this study, I refer to gangsterism, drug-abuse and high risk sexual occupations as negative occupations.

Occupation

Occupation speaks to everything we do to occupy ourselves in order to fulfill a specific purpose (9). It is the purposeful tasks/activities that we engage in over a lifetime. Occupation is situated within a specific context and is influenced by the factors within this context. It can be engaged in individually or within a group. Townsend argues that occupation is a basic human need (10).

Occupational Justice

Occupational justice, as understood by occupational therapists means "...the enablement of individual and communal occupational needs, strengths and potential" (11), p245.

Occupational-Life-Trajectory

Human beings engage in "...a complex, yet reasonably coherent set of occupations that changes course over time in response to a variety of factors..." (12), p103. These sets of occupations constitute an individual's occupational-life-trajectory. Occupational-life-trajectory can then be defined as "A repertoire of occupations chosen and performed over time" (12), p102 and "...sets of occupations that endure over time in a person's life" (12), p103.

Positive occupations

Occupations that influence a person's health, social relations and overall well-being positively. These occupations contribute to normal development and help to fulfill multiple needs over time (8). They also

aid in the development of skills that will eventually contribute to the person becoming a well-adapted, functional being who negotiates barriers within the environment effectively.

Post-apartheid

Post-apartheid refers to the time period after 1994 when apartheid officially ended. It also refers to a time when people started to break away from apartheid thinking. (13)

Poverty

The "...the denial of opportunities and choices most basic to human development to lead a long, healthy, creative life and to enjoy a decent standard of living, freedom, dignity, self-esteem and respect" (14), p17 leads to a state of poverty.

Race

"Race is a classification system used to categorize humans into large and distinct populations or groups by heritable phenotypic characteristics, geographic ancestry, culture, history, language, physical appearance, ethnicity, and social status" (15), p1. Race has become a social, rather than a biological classification and the categories can be redefined and challenged. Race forms part of the daily experience of South African citizens. (16)

Slow boats

The method of smoking marijuana in the form of a cigarette or "joint". It is usually shared between people. (7)

Tik

Tik is the street-name for the drug known as crystal methamphetamine, also known as "speed". It is the drug of preference in poverty stricken areas of Cape Town, especially the Cape Flats. (17) The drug leads to increased self-confidence, high levels of energy, sexuality, restlessness and irritability. Prolonged use can lead to severe weight loss, uncontrolled emotional outbursts, psychosis and paranoia. (18)

Tjappie

This refers to a tattoo that signifies allegiance to or membership of a specific gang. They are usually self-made tattoos, done with a needle and ink.

Township

The term township originated within the apartheid era. It referred to residential areas where 'non-whites' were allowed to live, segregated from white residential areas. Non-whites were often forcefully removed

and relocated to areas beyond the city centre. The word township also has a precise meaning when used in legal documents, referring to land titles. (19)

Well-being

Well-being is defined as “...the pursuit of personal aspirations and the development and exercise of human capabilities within a context of mutual recognition, equality and interdependence” (20), p61.

Young men

This study refers to “young men” as anyone between the age of 20 and 25. I set these parameters for my study, and refer to the participants as “the young men”.

Youth

According to the United Nations, the term “youth” refers to persons between the ages of 15 and 24 (21). The experience of youth varies between different regions and countries. Colloquially the term generally refers to a period between childhood and adulthood.

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION AND MOTIVATION

1.1 RATIONALE AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

1.1.1 Personal experience

During 2010 and 2011, I spent a lot of time in Heideveld, a suburb that forms part of Athlone, in the Western Cape, volunteering and working for an organisation called Together.³ I began to notice many young men loitering in the streets, with seemingly little to keep them busy. This observation got me thinking about occupations (both positive and negative) that they might engage in, and I started to observe what they were doing with their time. I noticed them performing activities like playing soccer, cards and TV games, standing on the street corner and socialising with girls. I engaged them in informal conversations in which they mentioned negative occupations such as high-risk sexual activities, gangsterism and drug misuse. I asked myself about what motivated the occupations that the young men engaged in and the restrictions, variety and influences surrounding their occupational choices. I questioned how the environment that they grew up in would impact on these choices. What meaning did their occupations contribute to their lives? What attracted them to certain occupations and not to others? How are different occupations represented throughout the life course of the young men? These questions prompted me to conduct research about the occupations of young men in the Heideveld community. The answers to these questions were best found using qualitative methodology, as explained in chapter 3.

I came across a term called “occupational-life-trajectories” in the literature (12) (22). This refers to the occupations that a person engages in throughout the course of his or her life. Ikiugu (12), the author, suggests that these trajectories are influenced by personal aspirations, values and identity, and also by the environment that we function in. There are certain “attractors”, which we find meaningful, that draw us to particular occupations, because we experience them as adding meaning to life. The term occupational-life-trajectory and its definition seemed to tie in with some of the questions I had been asking myself about the young men’s occupations. Consequently I decided to study the occupational-life-trajectories of these men in the Heideveld community.

Occupation is a concept central to the understanding of the study (and will be discussed and expanded on in Chapter 2). Occupation is more than simply an activity or task, both of which are the building blocks of occupation (1). Occupation includes the daily routines and habits that we engage in (1). Our occupations help us to form the story of our lives (23). In the simplest terms, occupation is defined as *what people do*.

³ Together is a pseudonym used to protect the identity of the organisation and the confidentiality of the people involved.

Townsend says that occupation is:

...the active process of everyday living. Occupation comprises all the ways in which we occupy ourselves individually and as societies. Everyday life proceeds through a myriad of occupations, embedded in time and place, and in the cultural and other patterns that organise what we do... The active process of occupation is a basic human need since it enables humans to develop as individuals and members of society. To live is to enfold multiple occupations which provide enjoyment, payment, personal identity and more. p9, (24)

This definition speaks to the multi-dimensional nature of occupation. Occupational therapists explore the nature and meaning of occupation (1). Occupational therapy assumes that occupational engagement influences well-being and ill-being (25). Occupational therapists therefore work towards the improvement of quality of life of all the people whom they aim to help (25). This understanding of my own profession motivated me to explore what the men in Heideveld “do”, and have done during the course of their lives.

1.1.2 Person-Environment-Occupation (PEO) model

I used the PEO as a conceptual tool, in order to explore and explain the relationship between occupation, the person and the environment (26). The model acknowledges that a change in any one of these elements can bring about a change in occupational performance (positive or negative), that is to say, that the model is also transactional, rather than interactive (26). The transactional nature highlights the interdependence between the three elements. The PEO guided my thinking in terms of what influences occupational participation, which was the study’s focus. An understanding of the model is especially helpful in community settings as it explores the complex transactions between the environment and occupation (27).

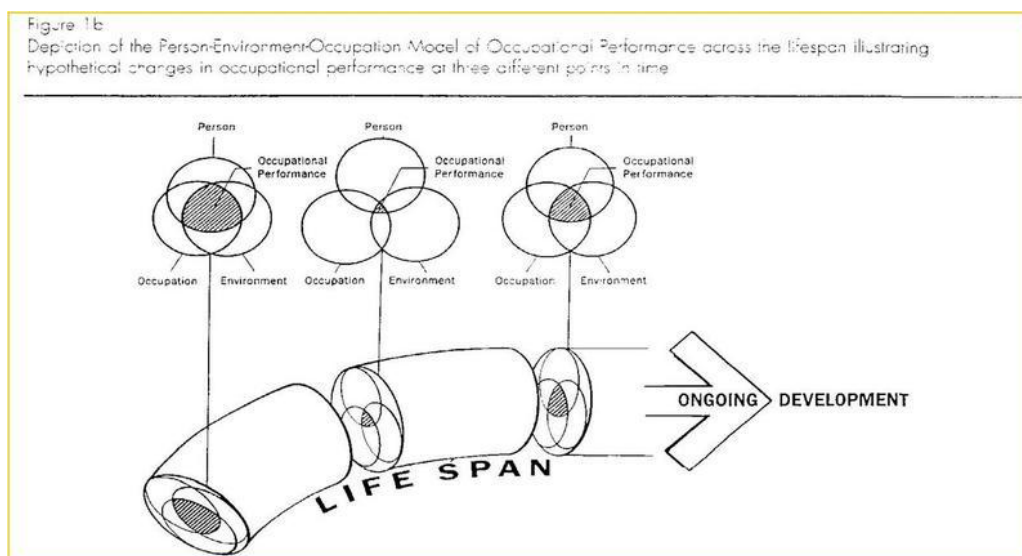


Figure 1: Depiction of the Person-Environment-Occupation Model of Occupational Performance over a lifespan.

Law, M., Cooper, B., Strong, S., Stewart, D., Rigby, P. & Letts, L. The Person-Environment-Occupation Model: A transactive approach to occupational performance. *Canadian Journal of Occupational Therapy*. 1996;63(1):9-23

Every person possesses certain inherent characteristics e.g. psychological, cognitive, physiological, neurological, personality and behavioural (28), which influence his or her occupational choices, determining why he or she chooses to engage in selected occupations and reject others (28). Some literature suggests that the person component can also refer to a group, who acts as a unit and possesses certain values and beliefs surrounding particular occupations (27). The environment includes the cultural, economic, political, physical, social and natural elements (28) as well as services such as the availability of electricity, fuel and transport; and instruments available for occupation (23). Elements within the environment influence what people do; for example, access to places of employment, how and when, what it costs and any risk factors involved.

A healthy and well-balanced individual engages in meaningful activities in order to meet personal and environmental demands (1), engaging occupationally, in order to gain mastery over it (14). Such a person is able to function within a work environment, participate in recreational activities, care for others, manage their own time and participate in home and community life (1). Occupational therapists work toward achieving this goal for everyone that they work with.

1.1.3 Historical Context

1.1.3.1 Background of coloured⁴ people in South Africa

The history of the coloured people tells a story of the continual erosion of their dignity, identity formation and civil rights. In the first part of the twentieth century, a wave of segregation measures were implemented and racial prejudice in South Africa increased. Various laws that undercut work opportunities for coloured people caused a steady decline in their employment rate between 1924 and 1934 (29). In the 1930's the Great Depression affected South Africa and many people moved towards the cities (29). This created the "poor white" problem, as white people competed for low-paid jobs in the open labour market with other citizens. This prompted a range of Acts that secured sectors of the job market for "whites" only (29).

⁴ The term "coloured" was created for political reasons to describe a Creole group of people in South Africa, descendants of Europeans, local people or those from Eastern countries. As early as the 1950's the coloured community started to develop as a group with unique features and characteristics (29). This was reinforced by the Population Registration Act and the Group Areas Act, both introduced by the apartheid government in 1950. The act officially made coloured people a separate (unequal) racial group (31). The Population Registration Act defined a coloured person as: one who is not European and not a Bantu (31). Thus everyone who was not white or 'native', was coloured. This term came into being in the context of Separate Development and was seen as a derogatory term for many years. However it has become colloquial. For the purpose of this paper "coloured" is used to signify a specific group of people. I do not support the origin of the designation or the derogatory use thereof, but its use is necessary for ease of identification.

In 1948 the National Party won the general election (30) (31). The apartheid government viewed coloured people as a racial group with unique socio-economic problems, and commissions of enquiry were set up to look into these. They included the Wilcocks Commission of inquiry, the Cape Coloured Commission and the Cape Coloured Liquor Commission (29). The Wilcocks Commission grouped people into the following 3 'classes': The undesirable class (habitual convicts, ex-convicts and drunkards); the farm and unskilled labourers class (factory workers, household servants and farm workers); and a relatively well-to-do and educated class. This reflects the thinking of the time when great importance was placed on race and class. From the findings of these commissions certain policies were implemented. The Population Registration Act of 1950 formed the basis for segregation thinking (29) and specific laws were formulated in order to implement this. Eventually racial segregation existed in all spheres of life: social, political, residential, economic and educational. Marriages between white and coloured people were forbidden and separate public amenities were allocated (30). White prejudice and assumed superiority was abundantly clear.⁵

As a consequence coloured people struggled to gain access to health, education and public services (29) and a variety of social problems arose from the socio-economic position that they found themselves in (29). A summary of key Acts and events that curtailed the civil rights of coloured people is provided in the Appendix A.

This historical overview (Appendix A) demonstrates that coloured people were objectified even before the implementation of apartheid. Decades of oppression and classification as lower class citizens affected the group's identity. The effects of apartheid have been far-reaching and will remain visible in South Africa for an indeterminate time. It is within this socio-political and historical context that coloured people now live, and perform their daily occupations.

1.1.3.2 Transition period

Despite previous racial turmoil, the transition from apartheid to a democratic republic in South Africa was surprisingly non-violent. In 1994 the African National Congress (ANC) won the first racially-inclusive election to become the ruling party (29) (30) (31). However the new government faced a set of obstacles and economic challenges-the remnants of the apartheid system-including high-levels of poverty. Crime and on-going violence increased in certain areas of South Africa. On top of this, state officials struggled to gain access to township areas. Acts of violence and protests compromised state presence and authority in these areas. (29)

⁵The Wilcocks Commission also reported that "...compared with Europeans it can be accepted that: a.) the Coloureds as a group are not as physically robust as the Europeans, b.) the Coloured people have lower resistance to disease and c.) the general death rate and infant mortality rate among Coloureds are higher than among Europeans." (29), p24. They also reported that, even though there existed exceptions, coloured people were generally lacking in moral fiber and commitment (29). The Cape Coloured Commission also included words like "irresponsible, irrational and unstable" in their description of coloured people (29). Coloured people were continually put down, legislatively and morally, and treated as second class citizens.

Even though apartheid had ended, racial groups were slow to integrate. The Group Areas Act was repealed in 1991, but coloured people experienced little success in attempting to return to their previous residential areas (30) (31). The government offered little support for land and property restitution; for most, return to their previous residential areas was simply too expensive (31). In many areas, including Heideveld, drugs and violence became increasingly problematic and socio-economic inequalities burdened these societies (29).

Race-based inequality proved persistent (29). In 1997 the average income of white residents in Cape Town was three times higher than that of coloured residents (29). Little work was available in and around Heideveld and jobs were in greater supply in the city centre (29). Parents who were working often had to leave children unsupervised due to long working hours (32). This socio-economic context led to increased fatigue, greater transportation expenses and high-levels of tension in many households and consequently contributed to increased domestic problems (29). To sustain a steady income and provide for a family proved difficult. For poor people, the demise of apartheid brought equal political and civil rights for all citizens, but has not really improved social and economic opportunities for the previously disadvantaged people (33).

Today not many white people will voluntarily enter the Cape Flats area. The media depicts these areas as violent and gang-ridden and portrays young men as the perpetrators of violence, describing their deeds as inhumane and senseless (32). Coloured people, especially those living in poverty, also feel threatened and out of place in predominantly white areas (29). Different racial groups often live in parallel worlds, but seldom interact on a social level (29). Racial integration remains an on-going challenge in South Africa (29).

1.1.4 Heideveld

1.1.4.1 Development of Heideveld

The apartheid policy of Separate Development became the basis for creating certain areas for different racial groups in order to keep them apart geographically (30). This was supported by the conviction of the National Party that different “races” could develop better when they remained segregated in their own groups. This policy led to the forced removal of coloured people from where they were living to areas far beyond the outskirts of the city, now referred to as the “Cape Flats” (29). This is a geographically flat area, unsheltered from harsh weather conditions such as wind and rain and prone to flooding. Many stories of the uprooting of people from their lifelong homes, neighbourhoods and friends exist in the literature. Those forcibly removed were forced to start anew with little compensation (29) (30) (31). In District Six alone (an area on the verge of the City of Cape Town) 40 000 people were forcibly removed and their homes bulldozed (31). The Group Areas Act restricted each population in terms of ownership, occupancy

and trading (31). This policy impoverished the coloured people and left large parts of their economy in ruin (31).

Heideveld came into being between 1963 and 1969 when the Department of Community Development started to construct low-cost housing for people who were relocated from the city (29). Half of the units built were reserved for forced removals from the city and the remaining residents came from squatter camps⁶ and surrounding areas (29).

1.1.4.2 Physical location

Heideveld is situated next to a national highway (N2) and close to the Cape Town International Airport. It is bordered by Guguletu and Welcome Estate (29) and is located approximately 20km from Cape Town city centre. The following key institutions form part of the physical environment of Heideveld: Heideveld Day Hospital, Heideveld Public Library, six primary schools and three secondary schools, Heideveld/Guguletu train station, Heideveld Community Centre, various churches, one mosque and the Arise Centre⁷.

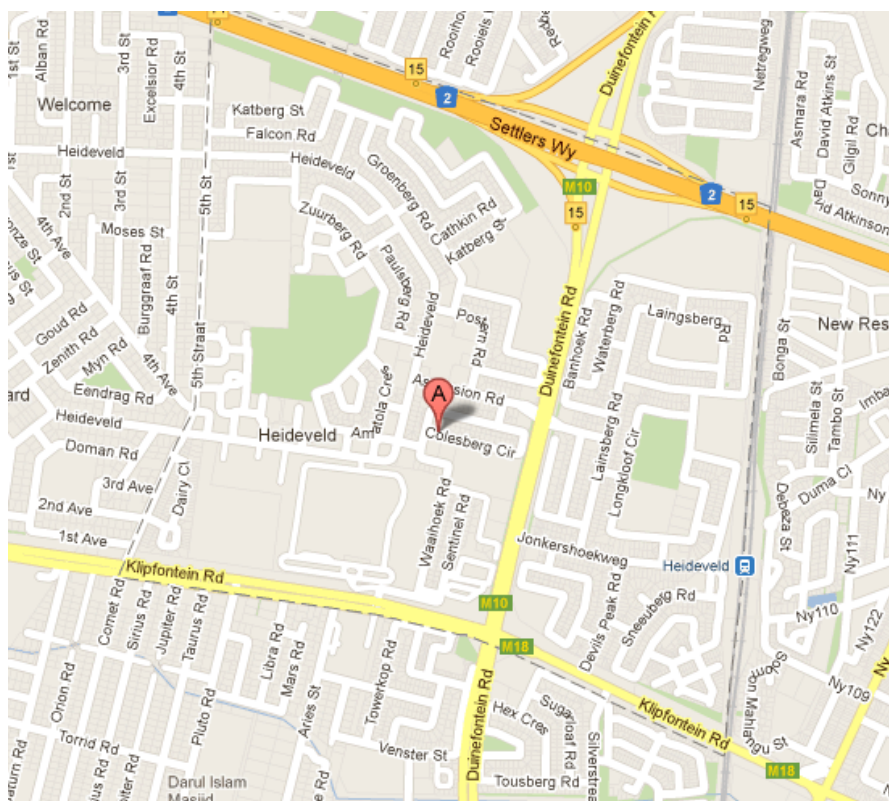


Figure 2: Map delineating the boundaries of Heideveld
 Google maps [online]. [cited 2012, October 11]; Available from: <http://tinyurl.com/9mlthns>

⁶ Informal settlements consisting mostly of shacks (houses made of wood, cardboard, tin and other scrap materials)

⁷ Arise Centre aims to ensure the “safety, stability and success of vulnerable children, through community-based interventions aimed at uplifting families.” (103), p1.

1.1.4.3 Heideveld Statistics

Heideveld forms part of Ward 044, which includes Gugulethu, Heideveld, Vanguard and Welcome Estate. The following results are based on the 2011 census report⁸ and was compiled by Strategic Development Information and GIS Department, City of Cape Town and supplied by Statistics South Africa (34). A further overview of statistics regarding Ward 044 is available in appendix B.

Ward 044 currently houses 34 405 residents, a 31% increase from 2001. According to the 2001 census Heideveld alone housed 12 782 residents. (34) The following statements pertain to Ward 044: 70% of the labour force is employed, with 58% of households earning an income of R3200 or less, often having to support an entire family. This leads me to believe that Heideveld lives in relative poverty. (34)

1.1.4.4 Gangsterism in Heideveld

Gangsterism is an on-going problem in Heideveld and gang territories play a large role in people's freedom of movement and how they relate to each other. The size and activities of the gangs vary and territories subsequently change (29). In the two years that I spent in Heideveld, I learned that currently the most notorious gangs are The West Siders and The Funky Junkies. Gang violence between these two gangs caused many injuries and deaths in the time that I spent there.

Gangs provide a means for young men to form a specific identity. They offer the chance for them to shake off the notion that they are "weak" and enable them to claim an identity of power. By joining a gang, young men gain access to power, drugs, money and girls, as well as to support and acceptance within a peer group (29). "The irony is found in this, that the gangs were often the embodiment of everything outsiders saw as wrong with the Cape Flats, and a large obstacle in the development of these areas" (29), p105.

Due to on-going violence, gangsterism, drug-dealing, sexual abuse and other negative occupations associated with the Cape Flats, young coloured men between the ages of 14 and their late 20s have become the embodiment of anxieties and fears which surround these communities (29). Racial stereotypes continue to permeate attitudes in the Western Cape, with notions of danger frequently relying on stereotypes of race and gender, and young coloured men still characterised as "dangerous" by many white people (32).

1.1.4.5 Religion in Heideveld

In direct contrast to gangsterism and similar negative occupations, religion developed as a strongly represented occupation in Heideveld. There are almost thirty different places of worship in the area. The largest faith-based group is Muslim, followed by Christian denominations such as the New Apostolic,

⁸ At the time of completion of this study the results specifically relating to Heideveld was not yet available, so I used information pertaining to Ward 044, which included Heideveld.

Anglican, Dutch Reformed and Catholic Churches. It is speculated that many of the older residents in Heideveld turned to religion as a means of escape from negative occupations that dominate the neighbourhood. (29)

1.1.4.6 My own observations

During the two years I spent in Heideveld I observed many things, including examples of household poverty (my understanding of “poverty” is further explored in the literature review). Often children attending the Kid’s Clubs at Together arrived in torn and dirty clothes. Many of the young children (aged 2-6) in the neighbourhood were unattended to during the day, playing on their own while their parents were at work. Some parents asked a grandmother to take care of the children. I came across a few cases where an older, female sibling needed to leave school to take care of the younger children while the mother was at work. I also observed many boys and girls of school-going age hanging out in the streets or playing in the park during school hours. This speaks to little parental supervision, as well as a possible disregard for the value of education.

I visited many households where a number of people stayed in one house, with up to four or five people sharing a room. Parents often shared a bed with their children or children shared a bed with their siblings. A lot of properties had a Wendy house⁹ in the back yard, which the owners sublet. The picture Heideveld painted for me was one of a community that had formed its own social, behavioural and occupational norms, in order to navigate the circumstances in which the residents found themselves. People had to be innovative in order to gain access to finances and to survive. My initial observations led me to believe that many of the peoples’ occupations centred on surviving from day to day or on satisfying boredom.

I gained first-hand experience of the societal discourses and prejudices that surrounded attitudes towards the Cape Flats, which had become very real for me. Many of my friends were surprised or questioned me when I told them that I spent a lot of time in Heideveld. They were worried and asked questions about my safety when I told them that I conducted research with young, coloured men.

1.1.5 Summary

People who were once defined as “coloured” are now citizens of an ostensibly non-racial South Africa. However years of systemic inequality have affected them economically and personally (31). Historical context is an important factor that influences the current occupations of the young men in Heideveld. The influence of the past on their socio-economic and personal situation remains part of the present.

The environment of Heideveld certainly affects the dignity of the young men who live there. Dignity is an important part of who we are as a person, and influences our occupations, how we view the world and how

⁹ Garden hut

we view ourselves and our occupations (35). This contributes to the formation of our identity. The young men's sense of dignity affects their occupational involvement. It is an on-going struggle for them not to internalise the stereotypes assigned to them (29). LeRoy states that: "The stigma of inferiority will continue to befuddle their minds...it will take generations before they start to consider and accept themselves as equal to others" (30), p5.

I hope that through the use of occupation as an intervention method, the young men in Heideveld will have a chance to engage in a wider range of activities, to experience success, feel pride, work as a team and engage in positive occupations, rather than high risk ones. Different types of occupational engagement might provide them with opportunities to improve their self-esteem and dignity, which could impact on their identity construction (23) (36).

1.2 PROBLEM FORMULATION

At the time of this research study, Together had no intervention programme for the young men in the community. The organisation currently offers intervention programmes for: children up to the age of 14; girls between the ages of 12 and 25; and for the older women in the community. Programmes include support groups, life skills, Kid's Clubs, playgroups and other activities such as special events and home visits. Men are left out of this programme and yet they are an important part of the community and a valuable group for focused intervention, if one wants to see the community change. According to the 2008 Status of the Youth Report, youth in the Western Cape still face a range of problems including delinquency, teenage pregnancy, school dropout and violence (14). The findings of this report coincide with my observations in Heideveld. Conventionally, men play an important role in a household and within a society. Therefore by creating opportunities which might lead to changed behaviour amongst the young men in Heideveld, I hope to affect their families and eventually the community. My hope is that the men might develop to become community leaders and father figures who contribute to the development of future generations. Without some form of intervention, the men could continue in a cycle of gangsterism, violence, drug use and high-risk sexual activities (32).

Therefore, this study contributes specifically to the future development of an intervention programme for the young men of Heideveld. The focus of this study is the different occupations that an at-risk group of unemployed and informally employed men in the community engage in (37). On a wider scope, this study will add to the body of research that looks at occupations of men who live in in the Cape Flats.

The data collected may also help graduates to prepare for working in low-income communities, by enabling them to better understand the context in Heideveld as well as the individuals who live there. The research is also an example of the lack of occupational rights in a historically and socio-economically disadvantaged

community, and may provide information that could be used to advocate for the rights of young men living in these communities, in order to increase their engagement in meaningful occupations.

As a beneficiary of the past oppression of others, I aimed to complete this research as a small step in restitution. I have attempted to lay the groundwork for recommending changes in order to bring about some measure of social justice for young men who still suffer due to the past injustices, specifically situated within the context of occupational participation.

1.3 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study is to find out what a group of young men in Heideveld's major occupations have been throughout their lives (i.e. their occupational-life-trajectories) and to discover why they do the things that they do (their motivation). In order to do this, I will use the PEO to guide my understanding of what influenced their occupational-life-trajectories. I will explore how the environment influenced the young men's occupational participation, and include the historical, physical, social, family and economic environmental dimensions. Taking the person component into consideration, I will explore the *why* behind the young men's occupations. I aim to discover the motivation behind their occupations; what attracted them to certain occupations and caused them to reject others. I will also explore identity, gender, masculinity and meaningfulness. With regard to the occupational component, I will look at *what* occupations the young men have participated in for periods of time, throughout the course of their lives. Finally, I will attempt to identify any emerging patterns in the young men's occupational-life-trajectories and to explore possible consequences of this.

Using the findings of my study, I will make recommendations for an intervention programme aimed at all the young men in Heideveld, which will probably be developed in 2013. I will make recommendations in terms of the target group, age group, aims and occupations that can be used for the programme. The purpose of the programme will be to reduce participation in negative occupations amongst young men in Heideveld and provide opportunities for positive occupational participation. The programme will also aim to equip the young men with life skills and other proficiencies necessary for gaining and keeping employment.

The primary research question that guides my study is as follows: *What are the occupational-life-trajectories of a group of young men from the Heideveld community?* My secondary research questions are: *What motivates the occupational choices for these young men?* and *How does the environment influence their occupational choices?*

1.4 RESEARCH AIM

The aim of my research is to gain an understanding of the occupational-life-trajectories of a select group of men between the ages of 20-25 in the Heideveld community, which could then be used to develop an occupational intervention programme for them or other men in similar circumstances. The research will not result in the creation of a programme, but rather it will assemble information to form a theoretical basis for development of such a programme.

1.5 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Objective 1: To describe the environmental context of the young men in Heideveld, with a view to understanding how this influences their occupational participation.

Objective 2: To explore specific occupations¹⁰ that the young men have participated in during their lives.

Objective 3: To identify what attracts the young men to specific occupations and not others and what influenced the occupational choices that they made.

Objective 4: To identify patterns in the occupational-life-trajectories of the participants over the course of time and comment on the course of their trajectories.

Objective 5: To make recommendations, based on the assembled data, which can be used to guide the development of an intervention programme.

1.6 DELINEATION OF THE STUDY

1.6.1 Unemployment

I chose to narrow my focus to unemployed or temporarily employed young men. Two thirds of the South African population between the ages of 18 and 35 are unemployed (14). The prospective intervention programme is aimed at the unemployed in this age range as they find themselves experiencing leisure boredom (37) and are at risk of engaging in negative occupations. In the literature review I will explore the effect of leisure boredom on occupational choice and participation. By exploring the participants' past occupations and the environment that they grew up in, I will endeavour to gain more insight into their current vocational occupations or lack thereof, and to whether there are occupational influences that have prevented the young men from locating and keeping formal employment. During data collection I will attempt to gather information surrounding the development of vocational occupations and what impacts on it.

¹⁰ These occupations will be identified by looking at persistent participation, repeated mention and commitment. I am specifically interested in how these persistent occupations influence future occupational participation and skills development.

1.6.2 Age and size

I decided to use a sample of six men between the ages of 20 and 25, as this is the age group that I initially observed in Heideveld. The sample size was limited due to time and financial constraints. The men in this age bracket are still young enough to remember which occupations they engaged in throughout the course of their lives. This is also an age where they should be starting a career, engaging actively in the economy (14), and defining their futures. I think intervention aimed at men in this age bracket could be beneficial, as they are able to look back over their lives and decide which occupations were harmful to them and which occupations they want to pursue in the future. The men are still young enough to change the course of their occupational-life-trajectories, but old enough to recognise a possible destructive trajectory. At this age, their peer group wields less influence on them, as compared to during adolescence.

1.6.3 Location

The study is limited specifically to Heideveld, the community in which the Together organisation operates. I remain in contact with the project manager at Together who has agreed to use the information that I gain from my study as a guide for developing an intervention programme for the young men in the community.

1.7 CHAPTER OVERVIEW

Chapter 1: Introduction

This provides insight into my initial thinking around the problem, the background of the problem and the background of the community in question. The purpose, aim and objectives are then stated and an outline of the study is given.

Chapter 2: Literature review

This provides a theoretical background for the study. It also explores literature pertaining to the Person, Environmental and Occupational components as they apply to the young men in Heideveld.

Chapter 3: Research methodology

This describes the methodology in detail. It includes data collection, research setting, analysis, reporting, sampling and the limitations of my study. I also explain my method of quality assurance as well as ethical considerations I had to take into account in this study.

Chapter 4: Results and discussion

This contains a description of the process I followed to arrive at the themes. I then explore each of the themes in detail using the data I collected as evidence to support the themes. I then discuss my findings and the insight gained through the themes.

Chapter 5: Conclusion and recommendations

This summarises the findings of the previous chapter. I then make recommendations in terms of a theoretical basis for an occupational therapy programme. I also mention the strengths and limitations of the study, as they changed during the data analysis. I conclude by making recommendations for further research.

1.8 SUMMARY

I have provided a brief background to the problem and the geographic area in question. I also mentioned how my thinking developed and provided specific aims and objectives for this study. I framed my study within the PEO-model and will continue to refer to certain components within the model throughout, noting how they influence the participant's occupational performance. In the next chapter, I will explore further some of the personal and environmental factors, as well as the occupations that youth and adolescents in township areas participate in.

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

My literature review is a broad attempt at researching and critically analysing literature on issues pertaining to the occupational-life-trajectories of all young men in Heideveld. Firstly I situate this research within the framework of social and occupational justice. This is followed by a review of literature pertaining to the components of the PEO: I start with definitions of occupation and occupational-life-trajectories, followed by an analysis of the person component that includes meaningfulness, identity, gender, masculinity, and human needs. I then discuss research pertaining to the environment, which includes poverty on a global and local level. I then circle back to specific occupations that youth and adolescents engage in and the influence of poverty on these occupations. Finally I refer to an article focusing on hope in situations of poverty.

2.2 PURPOSE OF THE LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of my literature study is to create an academic basis for the discussion of my findings. The literature will provide certain results and theories that may be used to interpret, support, or question my study.

The PEO suggests that occupational performance is the product of the dynamic relationship between a person, their occupation and their environment (26). In chapter 1, I introduced the socio-economic, cultural, socio-cultural and political history of Heideveld. I also mentioned the current economic condition of this suburb. A closer look at poverty and culture, and the interplay between these, occupational participation, masculinity, and motivation will create the setting for a discussion of occupational engagement in the Heideveld context.

It is difficult to describe the person, occupation and environment components of the PEO separately, as they interact with each other, but I have tried to make this distinction, or mention interdependence with other components as far as possible.

2.3 METHOD OF LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to gain access to the articles mentioned in this chapter I used the following approaches: Searching databases, contacting universities and drawing on previous knowledge. I focused on literature based in a South African context, specifically the Western Cape Province. I then included articles that looked at occupations within a poverty context. I gave preference to systematic reviews and meta-analyses as they rank highest in the hierarchy of evidence (38), but this type of review was not always available. I also gave preference to more recent research, preferably since 2008, but I allowed other literature in the cases of

historical research, groundbreaking research, inavailability of other research or when specific insights were gained pertaining to my study, that could not be found in a more recent source. I included qualitative studies in support of my methodology in order to compare descriptions and themes found in previous research with my own theoretical framework, purpose, aims and objectives.

2.3.1 Searching databases

I searched EBSCO host and OT seeker, using variations of the following key words: poverty, low-income, leisure, occupation(s), activity, activities, occupational-life-trajectory, drug abuse, gangster(ism), boredom, Cape Town, South Africa, Heideveld, community, communities, intervention programme(s), young adult(s), young adulthood, young men, adolescent and adolescence. I then included books and journal articles according to the criteria mentioned above.

2.3.2 Contacting universities

I contacted the occupational therapy departments of the University of Cape Town, University of Stellenbosch and University of the Western Cape in order to gain access to various PhD studies completed in fields of study similar to my own.

2.3.3 Drawing on previous knowledge

During my studies and work experience I became familiar with different books and journals that I could use as part of my literature study. As I continued with my literature review I noticed areas where these journal articles would be helpful, and included them.

I combined the three methods to do a comprehensive literature search pertaining to occupations and occupational-life-trajectories in communities living in poverty.

2.4 DIFFERENT CATEGORIES OF MY LITERATURE REVIEW

2.4.1 Situating the research within the framework of social and occupational justice

Social justice deals with the equitable distribution of resources and bridging the gaps of past injustices (39). Social justice is a broad issue and affects society as a whole, as well as a personal issue, affecting the individuals within society. My research is situated in a community where many social injustices occur and therefore the issue needs to be defined and addressed. Definitions of social injustice focus on "...societal structures, policies and hierarchies that limit access to resources based on group or individual characteristics including age, race, ethnicity, social class, poverty, religion, gender, immigration status, sexual orientation and language" (40), p55. Systemic inequalities continually pose a challenge to those

trying to promote social justice (40). Sufficiency views¹¹ define social justice as making sure that everyone has enough. They claim that benefiting those below a certain sufficiency threshold should take priority over benefiting those above the sufficiency threshold (41).

Occupational justice refers to “the enablement of individual and communal occupational needs, strengths and potential” (11), p245. I understand occupational justice as a social justice issue. In Heideveld I have observed incidences of occupational injustice, where young men and women lack the opportunity, skills and resources to engage in a variety of occupations. This deprivation consequently influences the ability to satisfy basic human needs as proposed by Max-Neef (8). Participation in meaningful occupations is necessary for the formation of identity, development of cognitive skills, personality development, social engagement and self-esteem (42).

2.4.1.1 Occupational rights

Occupational rights are defined as the rights of “all people to engage in meaningful occupations that contribute positively to their own well-being, or the well-being of their communities” (25), p61. Hay et al. (20) define well-being as “...the pursuit of personal aspirations and the development and exercise of human capabilities within a context of mutual recognition, equality and interdependence.” Hammel argues that occupational therapists should be working towards the improvement of quality of life of all people (i.e. not only the ill and/or disabled people), because she claims that occupational rights include (25), p62:

- The right to experience occupation as meaningful and enriching
- The right to develop through participation in occupations for health and social inclusion
- The right to assert individual or population autonomy through choice in occupation
- The right to benefit from fair privileges for diverse participation in occupation

I situate my research within the body of research that advocates for the attainment of occupational rights for people living in environments of deprivation and poverty, using this definition of well-being and the philosophy surrounding the occupational rights of all people (25). Systemic inequalities pose an obstacle to social justice, occupational justice and therefore occupational rights.

2.4.1.2 Person, Environment and Occupation and the interaction of these elements

I will now address the different components of the PEO model and the influence of person and environment on occupation.

¹¹ Sufficiency is a social justice view that argues that the first priority in distributing resources is to relieve want. The main (and perhaps only) aim is to raise individuals and families to a certain threshold of sufficiency (41)

2.4.1.3 Occupation

Different definitions of occupation

In Chapter 1 (see p2), I referred to a definition of occupation by Townsend that includes the multifaceted nature of occupation. It speaks to occupation being a human need, therefore supporting the theory of occupational rights. It also mentions that occupations occur within a time and a place. In my study the place gets expanded to the entire context in which occupation occurs and its influence on occupation.

In 1994 Yerxa proposed the following definition in an effort to define occupation as a uniform term within the profession of occupational therapy: "Occupation is an engagement in self-initiated, self-directed, adaptive, purposeful, culturally relevant, organized activity" (43), p586. All occupations provide a purpose, but the purpose may not be apparent to an observer. It might be easy to recognise the purpose of the occupation of making dinner as fulfilling the need for subsistence, but the purpose of sitting on the street corner might be less apparent and differ between individuals. According to my own understanding, sitting on the street corner is still an occupation as it is a purposeful activity that occurs over time. Occupations may be non-concrete and appear the same to observers, but individuals engage in them differently (1)(44). Harvey and Pentland state that our personal beliefs and values are expressed through occupation (23).

In 1995 Clark proposed the following definition of occupation: "The ordinary and familiar things we do every day" (45), p15. This definition is simple and easy to understand and helpful in capturing the essence and simplicity of occupation. However, I feel it requires expansion in order to include an element of meaningfulness, as proposed by Hasselkus (44).

I situate my research within a multifaceted understanding of occupation, thus I will draw on the definition that Law, Polatajko, Baptiste and Townsend put forth in 1997 (9):

Occupation refers to the groups of activities and tasks of everyday life, named, organized and given value and meaning by individuals and a culture. Occupation is everything people do to occupy himself or herself, including looking after himself or herself (self-care), enjoying life (leisure), and contributing to the social and economic fabric of their communities (productivity) (9), p32.

This definition encompasses everything I refer to as *occupation* within my study. It also includes the *meaning* element of occupation. Thus I will make use of the Townsend (24) and the Law, Polatajko, Baptiste and Townsend (9) definitions to fully appreciate the use of the term *occupation* within this study. My understanding of occupation includes an element of purpose (though not necessarily visible or known to an observer), a meaning element, a time element and a cultural element.

Occupational-life-trajectories

Ikiugu claims that the occupations we engage in usually follow a specific course, or trajectory, which can change due to variety of factors (12). He defines occupational-life-trajectories as follows: “A repertoire of occupations chosen and performed over time” (12), p102 and “...sets of occupations that endure over time in a person’s life” (12), p103. His ideas are formulated from the chaos/complexity theory (46) in order to create a framework for interpreting human performance (12). He describes human beings as dynamic and adaptive systems, who engage in occupation over time (12); this is in accordance with the chaos/complexity theory (46).

Ikiugu argues that the direction and shape of an occupational-life-trajectory is influenced by a set of attractors, which motivate or encourage a person to participate in certain occupations. From the chaos/complexity theory, an attractor is defined as “...a point around which a system trajectory hovers” (12). Within the framework of occupation, Ikiugu defines an attractor as “...a condition that structures occupational performance” (12), p102, which determines the trajectory that the system will follow. Ikiugu used empirical evidence from previous studies in order to form an argument for using meaningfulness as a framework for the study of occupation. He tested the hypothesis that a person’s life path or trajectory is influenced and determined by his or her awareness of purpose, but found this hypothesis to be false. He illustrated that meaningfulness, rather, forms the basis of occupational attraction (12) and argued that meaningfulness of occupations is determined by life goals, values and purpose, all of which create the attractors that guide the occupational-life-trajectory (12).

Occupation and Human Needs

Harvey and Pentland wrote that engaging in occupation is a way of meeting our basic needs and meeting environmental demands, which includes cultural and social expectations (23). Christiansen proposes that occupations have specific goals. The goals can be mainly organised according to five categories: enjoyment, self-assertion (creativity and individuality), esteem (personal growth), interpersonal (relational), and avoidance of negative effects (avoiding anxiety and stress). He argues that occupations can meet more than one need at a time. (47) Some of these goals coincide with Max-Neef’s human needs (8). These will be further explored later in this chapter.

2.4.1.4 Person

Under the person component I describe how the factors of meaningfulness, identity, gender and masculinity relate to occupation. The environment influences these factors as well, but their interpretations remain up to the individual. Therefore I will mention environmental influences, but I have placed them under the person component.

Meaningfulness and occupation: The importance of occupation to human beings

Many authors link the importance of occupation to the meaning that we derive from it (1) (12) (44).

Meaningfulness comprises personal meaningfulness and communal components (12). Firstly, occupation gains meaning through its cultural context (1)(12). For example, in a Western society it is seen as important to have a full-time job. In this example, the vocational occupation gains meaning from the way that it is viewed by society. Occupations that have a communal significance (shared meaning) provide a sense of connection within a community (12). Occupations such as school attendance, physical fighting, substance use and seeking employment all have a certain meaning and level of acceptance and importance within a specific community. Meaningfulness is therefore formulated within a specific, communal context (12) (44). This means that the importance placed on an occupation by an individual is influenced by the way that it is viewed by society.

This being said, meaningfulness remains an individual experience and will differ from person to person in the same community and be influenced by the same environmental factors (12). What is meaningful to one individual might not be meaningful to someone else. Meaning is a personal construct and cannot necessarily be repeated by others (1) (12) (23). Factors that could contribute to the meaningfulness of an occupation include its purposefulness (23), creating a sense of pleasure in the individual, being helpful to others (44) and matching the constructs of the individual's identity (12) (47). For example, if a person views himself or herself as "being a role model" he or she might place more meaning on activities that fit into this construct.

Hasselkus argues that, not only does a person place meaning on specific occupations, meaning is also created by means of engagement in occupation (44). Thus occupation and meaning are interwoven (44). In 1998 Wilcock added to the description of occupation by describing it as "doing, being and becoming" (48). Hasselkus argues that the "being and becoming" aspects of occupation contribute to its meaning (44). Who we are (being) and who we are becoming are integrated parts of the stories that we live and create every day (44). Thus, who we are "being and becoming" adds meaningfulness to what we are doing right now (44). Therefore occupation has the potential to transform us and can be an agent of change. Wilcock stated that "Occupation has the potential to change the world or the species, and this provides the mechanism for human survival and development which in turn impacts and maintains health and well-being..." Wilcock (49), p35. My study rests on the assumption that occupation can be used as an agent for change.

Occupation as it relates to the construction of identity

Christiansen wrote that identity is a framework from which people interpret occupations in terms of personal meaningfulness (47). In her keynote address at the 12th International Congress of the World Federation of Occupational Therapists, Polatajko said, "Occupation is the crucible in which our identities

are formed" (50). The American psychologist Baumeister wrote extensively on the self and identity. He defined identity as "...the definitions that are created for, and superimposed, on the self" (51), p697. He sees the self as consisting of the following aspects: interpersonal, values, and potentiality. According to his theory, the sense of self, or identity, is made up of a collection of schemas about one's own features and traits. These features and traits are collected through interaction with others, achievement of goals, and participation in occupations. The self is always under construction, and every individual is continuously constructing a self that is acceptable within his or her life contexts (51).

The influence of personal projects and life projects on identity

Harvey and Pentland suggest the construction of life projects as a useful framework for understanding the reasons behind what people do (23). They propose that life projects can be small, and happen within a limited time period, such as feeding yourself and finding a job, or long-term projects, such as finding an appropriate career path (23).

Christiansen reviewed archival data from 120 adults aged 19-79 in order to explore identity in relation to personal projects, during which he found significant correlations between the self-identity dimension of life projects and the measure of happiness ($r=.37, (p<.001)$) (47). He extrapolated that identity plays an important role in people's perceptions of their life projects (47). He claims that goal-directed occupations contribute towards identity development (47). Christiansen argues that identity is influenced by a person's subjective perception of whether or not others approve of his or her actions as well as a person's perceptions of his or her own skills and competencies (1). Achieving a goal leads to self-confidence and then an acceptable, positive identity (1).

Identity construction in adolescent boys

According to Erikson, a major task of the adolescent is to construct an individual identity (52). McLean, Breen and Fournier write about identity construction in adolescent boys, in a mixed method study of 146 adolescent boys aged 11-18 (35). The authors attempt to marry the individual and narrative approaches to identity formation. The individual approach theorises that identity develops through autonomy of an individual, by acquiring personal goals and values, while forming acceptable relationships with others. This negotiation progresses through stages and eventually forms an individual identity for a person. The narrative approach focuses on the development of identity through time, in the context of a life story. This approach to identity takes into consideration past, present and future experiences which contribute to creating meaning. The authors attempt to marry the narrative and individual approaches in order to understand identity in adolescents (35). They found the age period 15-16 years old to be a critical meaning-making period for adolescent boys. At this age adolescents can draw personal meaning from difficult experiences, where before they lacked the cognitive skills to integrate these experiences into

meaningfulness. They theorise that to form an integrated identity one needs to be able to create continuity by connecting past, present and future experiences meaningfully within the narrative of the self (35).

Identity as being, having, doing and interacting

Max-Neef describes identity within the context of human needs and as having components of being, having, doing and interacting (8). The being component includes a sense of belonging, consistency, differentiation, self-esteem and assertiveness. This theory states that negative identity synthesis could lead to lack of confidence, lies, making decisions that are against personal convictions, domination, lack of personality, fear and rootlessness (8). Positive synthesis leads to authenticity, integrated personalities, taking responsibility and feeling part of a social system (8). This is a communal approach to identity and takes into consideration the effects of the context and the environment on the formation of identity (8).

Gender identity and masculinity

Wada (53) claims that, throughout literature, people have come to understand gender as “...social meanings bestowed upon biological sex” (54), p92. Gender is based in socially and culturally constructed meaning, but the interpretation thereof remains up to the individual. Among other factors, gender concepts are influenced by the expectations of others and individual interactions. An individual’s understanding of gender will influence the occupations that he or she engages in. (53) Doucet and Merla argue that individuals are more likely to find meaningfulness in their occupations, if the occupations fit in with their gender ideologies (55). Sanders describes gender as a social construct defined by culture and society (56). Gender is continually reconstructed and can be observed by individual displays of behaviour within everyday tasks (56). Certain gender characteristics may be dominant at different times; therefore the dimensions of gender do not remain fixed throughout a lifetime.

Masculinity is also a social construct and defined by certain displays of behaviour, involving a range of social behaviours and nuances. These behaviours are bound and interpreted within that culture. Social structure and the actions of individuals are interconnected. Class also influences how masculinity manifests itself. Masculinity encompasses what is meaningful to the men within a specific group or community. (56)

Sanders researched the achievement of masculinity through behaviours of substance use, juvenile delinquency and recreation, through in-depth interviews conducted with 11 men, in a qualitative research study (56). She suggests that male drinking rituals are a rite of passage to manhood in many cultures, and men who engage in them achieve popularity and respect. Terms like “learn to handle your liquor” or “drink like a man” support the conception of drinking as a masculine activity. Masculinity is depicted through different recreational activities. Culture shapes the display of masculine activities. Two specific symbols of masculinity were found: the gun and the physical body. Outdoor play and competitive sports are meaningful recreational activities that contribute to the development of adolescent masculinity. Sanders

concluded that masculinity includes subtle differences and nuances which are culturally contextual. Masculinity is initially learned from adults and other older figures, then practiced with peer groups and eventually passed onto future generations. (56) Jensen speaks of young men in Heideveld feeling powerless. He argues that they experience a breakdown in masculinity. He also claims that involvement in gangsterism could be an attempt at regaining dignity and respect, among other factors. (29) Jensen's observations correspond with Ikiugu's (12) theory in terms of meaning and the engagement in occupations.

In the light of my own study, the formation of masculinity and gender identity might contribute meaningfulness to the activities and occupations that the young men participated in.

Addressing Human Needs through the Human Scale Development

In 1991, Max-Neef and his colleagues developed a Taxonomy of human needs in an attempt to address the problems of Third World countries (8). Most attempts at that time focused on developmentalism¹² and monetarism¹³ as solutions. According to Max-Neef, these failed to include people's inability to control financial imbalances, and approached development as a purely economic problem (8). Through his research and seminars Max-Neef noticed that there was seemingly no correlation between achieved economic growth and the relative happiness of the people in a country. He also observed that there are unfulfilled needs in all societies. (8)

Max-Neef and his colleagues proposed a theory for satisfying fundamental human needs, called the Human Scale Development (8). They argued that human needs, self-reliance and organic articulations are the pillars that support human development (8). This approach is trans-disciplinary and based on the principles of democracy. He also claimed that development is about people and not about objects, and that quality of life is dependent on "...the possibilities that people have to adequately satisfy their fundamental human needs" (8), p17.

Basic human needs are an interactive system and not hierarchical. This means that there is no order in which needs are actualised. There is, however, a subsistence threshold, below which deprivation is so severe that there is no motivation to meet any other need. This severely impairs the possibility that other needs are met. This may be expanded to other needs as well, such as in cases of severe deprivation in terms of affection or identity. If such an extreme level of deprivation is reached with a specific need, that need must be prioritised, before the satisfaction of other needs can be addressed. The way in which we experience the quality of our lives is subjective. Needs are universal to all people and societies. Satisfiers are individual or collective and therefore differ between people. (8)

¹² **Developmentalism** is an economic theory which states that the best way for Third World countries to develop is through fostering a strong and varied internal market and imposing high tariffs on imported goods (101)

¹³ **Monetarism** is a tendency in economic thought that emphasizes the role of governments in controlling the amount of money in circulation (102)

Max-Neef argues that if a human need is not adequately met, pathology develops; and that due to unemployment and economic problems in the third world, collective pathologies have developed (8). Trans-disciplinary research is needed to address these collective pathologies. “It does not help to heal an individual and send him back into a sick society” (8), p18. It is necessary to understand to what extent the environment suppresses, tolerates or stimulates opportunities for participation.

When looking at this approach, it is evident that the environment in which young men in Heideveld grew up influences their potential to satisfy their human needs. This approach could be useful in understanding the occupations that they have engaged in throughout their lives and their attempt to satisfy certain needs. Pseudo-satisfiers, destroyers, singular satisfiers, and inhibiting satisfiers could explain why certain needs of the young men in my study are not being met. The Matrix of Needs and Satisfiers and an expansion on the different kinds of satisfiers can be found in Appendix C.

2.4.1.5 Environment: The context in which occupations occur

It is important to explore the influence of context on occupation. As early as 1979, Bronfenbrenner’s Person-Process-Context model emphasised the relationship between the individual and his or her context (57). He proposed that there is a dynamic inter-relationship between the macro- and micro level contexts and that individuals’ responses vary within them (57).

The World Health Organisation (WHO) generated a list of factors from the environment that influence human actions¹⁴ (58). Hasselkus claims that the environment adds to the meaningfulness of occupations (44). Kuo (59) supports this notion by stating that occupation is both context driven and an intrinsic experience. An occupation needs to be situated within a context, and is an on-going transaction between a person and the world around him or her. We interpret different experiences through our own socio-cultural background, which gives meaning to certain occupations. Previous experiences also influence the meaning we assign to occupations, thus the meaning holds a historical element as well (59).

Therefore meaningful occupations are constructed by a person’s interpretation of reality. This reality is inter-dependent on the environment. Occupation cannot exist outside of the self or outside of the environment. The PEO model speaks of this transaction as the interaction between the person and occupation element (individual meaningfulness as it influences occupation) and the interaction between the environment and occupation (the influence the environment has on occupation) (26). That is why it is necessary to take note of the historical, socio-cultural, political and economic background of Heideveld when exploring occupational-life-trajectories.

¹⁴ The list includes social networks, family structure, political systems, government, legal systems, economic organisations, health and social services, educational services, public infrastructure, community organisations, social rules, values and attitudes, land development and technology.

The influence of community on occupation

Christiansen and Townsend write about the occupational nature of communities (10). They claim that humans are social beings who live in groups, and exist and function in relation to others. They also state that a community forms its own identity, creating their own rules, expectations, values and norms. Interdependence is also a function of communities, which create positive feelings through engagement in occupations or activities together with other people; this can have positive or negative consequences. For instance, a positive feeling can be created by peer engagement in drug use, but the occupation in itself will have negative consequences. The two authors argue that positive interdependence generates reciprocal giving, empathy and other optimistic relational outcomes while negative interdependence leads to violence, communal drug use, alcohol dependence and other addictions. (10)

Poverty as an environment that influences occupation

Global viewpoints on poverty

Poverty is multi-dimensional and any definition thereof should aim to look beyond the simple monetary definitions of poverty (60). I will now offer a description of two types of poverty: absolute poverty and relative poverty.

In 1995 at the World Summit for Social Development, in Copenhagen, 117 countries agreed upon a definition for absolute poverty: "A condition characterized by severe deprivation of basic human needs, including food, safe drinking water, sanitation facilities, health, shelter, education and information. It depends not only on income, but access to social services." (61), p57. Although helpful in understanding poverty in terms of access to services, this definition does not address a person's social, cultural and occupational needs.

Relative poverty is based in the viewpoint that being poor is different in different places and at different times. Townsend describes it as follows:

Individuals, families and groups in a population can be said to be in poverty when they lack the resources to obtain the type of diet, participate in the activities and have the living conditions which are customary, or at least widely encouraged or approved, in societies to which they belong. Their resources are so seriously below what is commanded by the average family or individual that they are in effect excluded from ordinary living patterns, customs and activities" (62), p31.

Relative poverty is measured in relation to a socially acceptable standard of living as determined by the average living conditions within a certain society (60). I prefer this understanding of poverty as it includes occupational needs and cultural elements of poverty. According to this understanding of poverty I argue

that Heideveld residents live in relative poverty as they are excluded from ordinary living, customs and activities that other members of society engage in.

Poverty in South Africa

Poverty is endemic in South Africa (60). The dignity of people affected by past injustices cannot be fully restored if poverty remains widespread in our country. Alcock said that poverty is not just "...a state of affairs; it is an unacceptable state of affairs" (63), p6.

In South Africa, it has been broadly accepted, that poverty includes the denial of opportunities and choices related human development (60). Lehohla defines poverty in South Africa as "the denial of opportunities and choices most basic to human development to lead a long, healthy, creative life and to enjoy a decent standard of living, freedom, dignity, self-esteem and respect" (14), p18. This definition takes a broad approach to poverty, including subjective and personal elements.

Noble, Wright, Magasela and Ratcliffe argue that, in South Africa, a definition of poverty should take into consideration the perceptions and views of all the people in the country (60). The authors determined socially perceived needs of people in South Africa, by including a model as part of the South African Social Attitudes Survey (SASAS) conducted by the South African Human Sciences Research Council. This quantitative survey was completed by a nationally representative sample (precise number not given) and respondents were asked to rank needs according to the following categories: "essential", "desirable", "neither" and "I don't know" (60). Amongst the top 5 items seen as essential by the sample were: "Someone to look after you when you are ill", "A house that is strong enough to withstand the weather", "Street lighting", "Mains electricity in the house" and "A fridge" (60), p127. Almost 90% of the sample viewed the above needs as necessary to experience quality of life (60). This was interesting, as the number one need was a social need, and not a need that can be addressed or defined in monetary terms. The authors conclude that a perceived acceptable standard for quality of living includes factors like adequate care for the sick, secure housing, adequate child-care, living in an acceptable neighbourhood, supportive social systems, opportunity to express religious freedom and resources in case of emergency situations. Thus poverty goes far beyond the need for material possessions. (60)

Criticism to the above approach includes the assumption that homogeneity exists among perceived needs. This approach to socially perceived needs does not create a space for cultural diversity or the fact that needs within cultures may differ even though people live in the same country. Another criticism to this approach is that the felt need might under or overestimate the real need. The approach is therefore limited by the perception of individuals. (60)

In South Africa there is wide diversity amongst citizens in economic, social and geographic terms (14). Apartheid exacerbated the economic and geographical differences between people and prohibited

integration among different cultures (14). Large economic disparities still exist in post-apartheid South Africa, therefore perceived needs would differ widely between cultures, rural and urban areas, religion, different levels of income and other diversifying factors. Residents from different areas and backgrounds would perceive certain needs as essential, which other residents might not. I argue that it is important to find a balance between perceived needs as well as subsistence needs. The definition of poverty in South Africa will always be a changing and evolving concept. By using Max-Neef's Human Scale Development (8), the above "perceived needs", can be classified as "satisfiers". According to Max-Neef the satisfiers would differ between different societies, but the needs would remain the same (8). This could be a possible way of interpreting the above results by Noble, White, Magasela and Ratcliff (60).

Poverty and occupation

Watson and Duncan researched the interaction between poverty, disability and occupation, in peri-urban informal settlements and rural villages in South Africa. They found that human occupation is influenced and shaped as much by the people's environment as by their inherent developmental traits and the meaning that individual's attribute to everyday activities. Chronic poverty contributes to conditions that could compromise the development of a 'normal' and functional life course. (64) I then argue that chronic poverty contributes to conditions that could negatively affect one's occupational-life-trajectory, thus creating a negative trajectory. Poverty restricts the development of a person's potential to fulfill their human needs (8) (64). Human beings trapped in chronic poverty spend a lot of their time on survival occupations (65), limiting their engagement in a variety of activities necessary to fulfill basic human needs (64). Furthermore occupational engagement and the use of potential are limited in individual, household and community dimensions (65).

2.4.1.6 Youth and adolescent occupations

Youth in South Africa

Youth is a socially constructed concept for which definitions differ between societies. The United Nations and World Bank define youth as people between the ages of 15 and 24 (14). In South Africa, the National Youth Commission Act of 1996 defines youth as all people between the ages of 14 and 35 (14). Poverty exacerbates social problems among the youth such as crime and violence, substance abuse and teenage pregnancy (14).

The second South African youth risk behaviour survey (Medical Research Council) of 2008 collected data from 10 270 participants, who were between grade 9 and 11, from 192 randomly selected schools nationwide (66). The following statistics were calculated from the respondents (see table 1) (66).

Table 1: Selected results from the 2008 youth risk behaviour survey (66)

Had sad or hopeless feelings in the past 6 months	24%	Current smokers	21%
One or more suicide attempt in the last 6 months	21%	Carried any weapon	15%
Used alcohol in the past 30 days	39%	Used marijuana in the past month	10%
Engaged in past month binge drinking	29%	Used cocaine in their lifetime	7%
Had sex in their lifetime	38%	Used Mandrax in their lifetime	7%

Youth in the Western Cape

The 2008 Western Cape Status of the Youth Report gives an overview of literature and research pertaining to youth (14). The report found that historical disadvantages still affect households as the struggle to survive often takes priority over parenthood, and that traditional adult-child roles are changing with young people becoming the decision-makers in their families. Disruption of the family unit may have sparked violent behaviour and crime among the youth. A stable family unit promotes emotional support, better school performance, higher levels of self-esteem and better coping mechanisms as well as decreased levels of aggression, crime and substance abuse. It is theorised that gangs act as a replacement of the family unit. Gangs provide respect, social status and more prosperity than going to school. (14)

The youth are also affected by a lack of quality and easily accessible recreational activities. Young people who are involved in a sport, cultural or religious club are less likely to be involved in high-risk and self-destructive behaviour (14). A study by Pludderman et al. showed a considerable increase in substance abuse among youth in the Western Cape, especially methamphetamine (Tik). The report also states that a substantial portion of imprisoned youth have a history of alcohol and drug abuse. (14)

Parry et al. conducted research on alcohol and substance abuse between 1997 and 2004 in the Western Cape, collecting data from multiple sources, including specialist treatment centers, trauma units, school students, rave party attenders, and arrestees (67). They found that the average number of learners who start drinking before the age of 13 years is higher in the Western Cape than any other province. The Western Cape also exceeds the national average in many areas for substance abuse risk behaviour, which includes binge drinking in the past month, dagga use in the past month and lifelong use of Mandrax. Alcohol use, in particular, is linked to violent crime, high-risk sexual activities, bunking school and low academic performance. (67)

Factors influencing the occupational choices of youth in South Africa

Galvaan explored the occupational choices of young adolescents (aged 11-13 when the study commenced) in post-apartheid South Africa. This study is a critical ethnography, conducted over a four-

year period, of a specific community in the Western Cape called Lavender Hill (13). Through critical analysis¹⁵ of the context I have come to the conclusion that Lavender Hill and Heideveld are similar.

Galvaan found that within the area of Lavender Hill, the factors influencing the occupational choices of the young adolescents included: (13), p193

- Historically predicated patterns of occupations at a community level in Lavender Hill
- Prevalent subcultures and subgroups
- Competition for symbolic status
- Low educational expectations

These factors inter-related in order to bring about the eventual occupational choices of the studied youth.

Galvaan concluded that the peer group plays a strong role in the occupational choices of adolescents in Lavender Hill. There is a strong cohesiveness within the peer group and occupational decisions are almost always made with reference to this group. Galvaan also observed clusters of adolescents and young adults often grouped together, as I observed in Heideveld. She found that this grouping together is an occupation within itself, and also an environment within which other occupational choices are made. (13)

Furthermore Galvaan found that occupations involving physical or health risks were accepted as normal within the peer group and the community. Children in Lavender Hill engaged in occupations such as underage drinking and occasional marijuana use. When asked, they could explain the health risks involved, but this did not influence their choice. Participation in these occupations is a norm that they had learnt from adults and older children as well as their peers. Occupational choices were dictated by implicit societal rules. (13) During my time spent in Heideveld, I also observed children and adolescents engaging in underage drinking, smoking and marijuana use. I can use this study in trying to understand the occupational choices that the young men in my study made throughout the course of their lives. Since the communities are similar, it is likely that these occupations are also learned from adults, peers and older children.

Galvaan explains how the participants described their occupational choices as “simply the way things were.” The participants referred to their occupations as if they were inevitable. Galvaan observed that the legacy of apartheid seems to be a strong influential factor in the way that these adolescents simply accepted their occupational choices without contesting or questioning their limitations. (13) This observation is supported by findings from the Western Cape status of the youth report (14).

¹⁵ I critically analysed the two environments by looking at the description of Lavender Hill found in Galvaan’s study and my own observation, historical overview and current literature on Heideveld, and found that the youth in the area are exposed to same risk factors, grew up in the similar socio-economic circumstances, are of the same perceived race and language and are exposed to factors influencing their occupational choice.

I found this study helpful in understanding the background to the occupations that I observed in Heideveld. It is possible that the occupational choices of adolescents in Heideveld are influenced by the same factors as the adolescents in Lavender Hill.

Occupational participation in children, youth and adolescents

Leisure occupations

Constructive leisure time participation has been linked to a number of positive outcomes in literature (42). On the other hand negative leisure time occupations (such as engaging in high-risk sexual activity, substance abuse and lack of recreational activities) has been linked to low academic performance and other negative outcomes. Therefore, it is important for youth to be able to participate in constructive leisure time activities, because a lack of positive leisure time participation can hinder normal adolescent development (68).

Dearing et al. discuss deprivation in terms of leisure time and recreational activities in poverty-stricken neighbourhoods throughout the United States of America (USA) (69). In a quantitative study including 1420 participants, they found a positive correlation between family income and participation in out-of-school activities. The results showed that children and adolescents from low-income areas are one third less likely to engage in activities outside of school such as sport clubs, music lessons, drama clubs and community clubs, than children and adolescents from middle- and higher-income families. (69) These activities often involve high costs in terms of both the participation of the activity as well as the transport to and from the activity. Participating in recreational activities benefits children and adolescents as it provides opportunities for them to learn social norms, widen the skills of the child, engage in meaningful activity, and form supportive relationships (70).

A qualitative study by Palen et al. describes the barriers to productive leisure time participation in an under-resourced area in Cape Town (42). The study was conducted in four schools with 114 learners in Mitchell's Plain. The participants constituted the following racial groups: 87% Coloured, 9% Black, 3% White and 1% Indian. A focus group, used as method of data collection found the following constraints to leisure time participation (see table 2), according to different categories: (42), p441.

Table 2: Constraints to leisure time participation as found by Palen et al. (42)

Intra- personal constraints	Interpersonal constraints	Structural constraints	Socio-cultural constraints
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of interest in or dislike for a certain activity - Lack of skills/ability - Health reasons - Psychological - Body image issues - Fear 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parents - Friends - Fear of criticism and judgment - Boyfriends/ girlfriends 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Risk of harm - Time - Availability of facilities/ equipment - Cost - Location/ transport - Weather - Legality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gender - Religion - Race - Age

Mitchell’s Plain is situated on the Cape Flats, not far from Heideveld, and shares the same socio-economic, demographic and historical features. Therefore the above barriers to leisure time participation are likely to influence the leisure and recreational participation of young men in Heideveld as well.

Leisure boredom and adolescent risk behaviour

Leisure boredom is defined as: “...the subjective perception that available leisure experiences are not sufficient to instrumentally satisfy needs for optimal arousal” (71), p4. A systematic review, done by Wegner and Flisher (37) investigated leisure boredom and adolescent risk behaviour. They found that context influenced leisure boredom. Reasons for experiencing leisure boredom included having nothing to do (feeling bored), limited leisure resources, lack of challenge and too much free time (time use). They also found leisure boredom to be a risk factor for substance use, high-risk sexual activities, school dropout and delinquent behaviour.

Wegner, Flisher, Chikobvu, Lombard and King conducted a prospective cohort study with grade 8 learners from 39 high schools in Cape Town who were followed up twice at two-yearly intervals (72). This study was limited to urban areas in Cape Town. Of the 281 participants who could be traced, they found the following: 53% had dropped out of school at the second follow-up; leisure boredom is a significant predictor of school dropout from the age of 14 years; adolescents who had dropped out of school were more likely to be involved in cigarette smoking, alcohol use and sexual intercourse. They hypothesised that students experiencing boredom in their leisure time could be dropping out due to their experience of school as being boring. (72)

Negative occupations among South African youth

Gangsterism and violence

Literature reports that gang-related occupations remain notoriously high in township areas, especially within the Western Cape (14) (73) (74). Poverty and unequal income distribution are seen as major exacerbating factors of violence and gang-related activity in South Africa (73). High levels of inequality correlate with high incidence of gang-related violence (73).

Masculinity and dignity of young men living in poverty are recurring themes within the literature on gangsterism (29) (32). Glaser said that “Young men, often subjected to unstable family life, poor schooling, and high levels of youth unemployment were attracted to gang life, which offered protection from other gangs, a sense of belonging, local status and potential material gain” (73), p8. Some literature argues that young men often join gangs in order to survive (74). Jensen states that in many cases initially young men do not have a choice, and need to join a gang for their own and their family’s protection (74).

Gangsterism provides the opportunity to create structures within which young men can reinforce their sense of masculinity (32) (73). In a historical overview by Glaser, he reviewed research on gang structures and violent crime in South Africa. Within a normal societal structure, young men learn their values and knowledge systems from their peers and older adults. Within gang structures new social norms are created. In battling with racial discourses and discrimination, men find a means within the gang to demand respect, albeit by the use of violence. The gang also provides them with a sense of belonging and the promise of financial wealth, girls and societal respect. (73) Jensen made the same observations about gangs in Heideveld (29). He also argues that due to economic and social marginalisation, the open labour market is often unattainable to young men; therefore they become involved in other illicit activities for financial gain (74). Jensen states that the three major reasons why young men in Cape Town join gangs are: for survival, for financial gain and to regain dignity and power (74).

Brankovic makes the separation between informal, neighbourhood gangs and formal gangs that participate in organised crime (32). She conducted in-depth interviews with 6 men between the ages of 16 and 33 in Guguletu. Guguletu is a neighbourhood adjacent to Heideveld, also plagued by high levels of crime and gang activity. Brankovic argues that physical violence is associated with social visibility and growing into manhood, and runs from generation to generation. The young men in her study perceived violence and participation in gangsterism as an unavoidable norm. The separation between a gang and a friendship group was not clear-cut. She also found that young men received mixed messages about violence. Violence was said by authority figures, such as parents and older people in the community, to be wrong, but seems to be legitimised when used to enforce guidance, protection, punishment and/or self-reliance. She argues

that violence should be looked at beyond individual pathology, and in the light of systemic and socio-economic influences. (32)

Substance abuse

Literature reports that alcohol abuse and dependence is more prevalent in low-resourced areas (14) (75) and incidences of residential instability (75). Cerda et al. argue that contributing factors to alcohol abuse and dependence within low-resourced areas include: the limited number of employment options, lower levels of social cohesion and compliance to social norms, higher density of stores that sell alcohol (legally or illegally), and high levels of stress, due to life experiences (75).

Dunlap, Johnson, Kotarba and Fackler investigated the influence of social forces on the drug market in New Orleans, USA (76). New Orleans is plagued by poverty, racial tension, unemployment and lack of societal opportunities. This qualitative study used ethnographic observation, in-depth interviews and focus groups with drug users and dealers to assemble data on a total number of 438 participants. These authors found a connection between poverty and entrance into the drug market, aggravated by social factors such as race, lack of opportunity and lack of social capital. They found that drug behaviour and norms are inter-generational, and that children learn these from family members. They also found the physical environment to be an entry point to the drug market and that drug behaviour is learnt from engagement with the community. In neighbourhoods where the number of school dropouts is high, people are perceived as less “work-ready” by society and struggle to find formal employment, limiting legitimate opportunities for them to make money. In low-income, urban areas adolescents are often exposed to the drug market as both users and sellers. Drugs offer a way to make money as well as an escape from life circumstances. (76) Sanders also noted that the participants in his study learned to drink and smoke marijuana from older siblings or peers and that almost all the participants had their first taste of alcohol pre-adolescence. Drugs and alcohol were easily accessible to them (56).

Megan et al. attempted to describe the onset of substance abuse among coloured youth between 8th and 9th grades in a specific area in Cape Town, and compared the results to international standards (77). The study used self-report questionnaires as a means of data collection with 1118 participants. The area in question was not named, but it is stated that the area came into being as part of the former apartheid government’s urban relocation plans and that the majority of residents in the area are perceived as coloured (77). This compares to the origin of Heideveld and its racial demographics. The study found the pattern of substance abuse as typically starting with either alcohol or cigarettes first, then the other, then progressing to the use of cannabis within a few years and then inhalant use. They found this course true for both boys and girls. Between 8th and 9th grades, South African youth has a slightly more accelerated trajectory when it comes to substance use, as compared to American youth. Youth who started

experimenting with cigarettes before alcohol were more likely to progress to marijuana and inhalant use in future. (77)

2.4.1.7 Hope

A qualitative study by Van Breda, conducting interviews with a group of 10 vulnerable young people living in a township in South Africa, explored the importance of hope for previously disadvantaged communities (78). He emphasises the significance of creating opportunities for poverty-stricken adolescents and young adults to develop a realistic dream for their future. He argues that having clarity in terms of such a realistic dream for their futures influences the current behaviour of adolescents and young adults in poverty. (78)

2.5 CONCLUSION

My literature review indicates that poverty is about more than measuring income, it is multifaceted, and affects how a young man's dignity, gender identity and viewpoint on masculinity are formed. The literature supports the PEO notion that the environment interacts dynamically with the person and occupation components. The fact that many studies focus on adolescent occupations supports my assumption that adolescence is an important age and that occupational participation during adolescence strongly influences future occupations. Reflecting upon the PEO model, one should consider that young men in Heideveld experience considerable pressure, due to their current and historical environment to engage in negative occupations. A lack of opportunities and other barriers to participation in appropriate leisure time and other occupations also exists. Research focusing on participation in positive occupations for young men in townships or living in poverty was not found. This study aims to further explore their involvement in both negative and positive occupations.

CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

I found that the phenomena under investigation are both complex and context dependent. This called for a holistic study design. I used a qualitative, collective case study, citing works by Yin, Starke and other experts in the field to guide my research. I also made use of a narrative interview, combined with a method called PhotoVoice.

The following is an outline of the steps I used within the study design to aid in the understanding of the progression of the research:

1. Gaining access and choosing participants
2. Orientation group (explaining concepts and handing out cameras)
3. Participants taking pictures of their occupations
4. Individual, narrative interviews
5. Transcribing of interviews
6. Data analysis
7. Member checking
8. Integrating data from member checking into analysis
9. Final report

The specific steps are explained in more detail throughout the rest of this chapter.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

3.2.1 Collective case study

Yin and Stake respectively define a case study as follows:

Yin's definition: "A case study is an empirical enquiry that: investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used" (79), p38. Stake's definition: "A case study is the study of the particularity and complexity of a single issue" (80), p448.

I found another definition to be useful in understanding a case study:

Case studies, in which the researcher explores a single entity or phenomenon (the case), bounded by time and activity (a programme, event, process, institution or social group) and collects detailed information by using a variety of data-collecting procedures, during a sustained period of time. (79), p12

As the phenomenon of occupational-life-trajectories is contemporary and cannot be separated from the context, I chose a case study as my study design. Furthermore the events under investigation could not be controlled artificially. The experiences of the subjects were vital to exploration of the research question, and therefore a case study was best suited.

According to Stake a collective case study is: “when a number of cases may be studied jointly, in order to investigate a phenomenon, population or general condition” (80), p445. A collective case study was used to explore the occupational-life-trajectories as this is a joint phenomenon of the participants and perhaps all the young men of Heideveld.

Stake and Yin base their approach of the case study on a constructivist paradigm (79) (80). According to this paradigm the truth is relative and based in individual experience. It incorporates individual perspective into enquiries and denies the notion that there is only one, unchanging truth. This is the paradigm in which I situated this study.

3.3 RESEARCH SETTING

I knew a few of the community members relatively well when I started this study, due to my experience as a volunteer for Together. In trying to decide on my research topic, and in the initial phases of defining my research, I spent time observing and having informal conversations with the young men in the community. By the time that I wanted to start the research, I had formed a relationship with some of the young men, and could easily use snowball sampling to gain access to more of the men that fitted my criteria. When choosing participants I deliberately decided to leave out the men that I had initially formed a relationship with, in order to reduce bias and start on the same page with all the interviewees.

I used my discretion in choosing participants in order to ensure my own safety. I did not choose participants who seemed hostile towards me, but rather decided on those who engaged in open conversation with me.

I used the Together building as my research base from which to conduct the interviews. They were held in a private room, free from distractions. There were, however, people in the other rooms, which made me feel safe in this setting, while still ensuring privacy. Transcription and data analysis was done in my own home, and all the documents that I used were kept in my locked room during the time that the study was conducted.

3.4 TARGET POPULATION AND SAMPLING

3.4.1 Target Population

The sample consisted of six unemployed or informally employed men, between the ages of 20-25 who have lived in Heideveld for more than half of their lives.

3.4.2 Sampling

I made use of purposive maximum variation sampling. This included differences in age (although constrained within the inclusion criteria), level of involvement in gangs, level of education (though none had completed high school), household (single or two parent households), being in a serious relationship and current employment status (within constraints of the inclusion criteria).

Furthermore I used snowball sampling (also called sequential sampling, chain sampling or referral sampling) as a method of identifying participants. Snowball sampling identifies 'cases' of interest from acquaintances. These cases then identify further cases of people that might be information-rich, good examples for the study and good interview subjects. (81) The referral chain process allows the researcher to reach populations that are difficult to sample when using other sampling methods. The process is also simple and cost-effective.

I knew one man from the community who fitted the inclusion criteria from my work as a volunteer. From this sample, using the snowball sampling technique, I met a variety of young men (almost 20) from whom I could choose participants for the study. Looking for maximum variation from within the sample, I narrowed the number down to six possible participants. I held informal conversations with each one and tried to judge who would be open enough and willing to share information with me. These conversations guided my choice of who to include, based on willingness to participate and ability to communicate and formulate ideas. As an incentive to participate and arrive on time, I promised to give each participant snacks, a cool drink and R50 on the day of the interview. They were only informed of the incentive after they attended the orientation group, as I wanted participants who were willing to share information and not only have those who wanted to come due to financial gain. I conducted six interviews, but only analysed five as data saturation was reached.

3.5 PREPARATION PHASE

3.5.1 Orientation group

I felt that it was necessary to orientate the participants to certain aspects of the research before I conducted the individual interviews. Therefore, once the participants were chosen and agreed to participate, I invited them to take part in an orientation group. The group facilitated the construction of knowledge¹⁶, through explaining the concept of occupational-life-trajectories and discussing this term in the group.

¹⁶ This process facilitates gaining access to knowledge that the participants might not know they possess. It brings certain ideas to the forefront, and guides them in their thinking surrounding a subject that they may be unfamiliar with. This was done through the introduction to and explanation of terms, asking and answering questions and encouraging them to think about their own occupational-life-trajectories before they arrived at the interviews.

The objective of the group was not to collect data, but rather to:

- Introduce and explain the concept of occupational-life-trajectories
- Encourage thinking around the subject before the individual interviews were conducted
- Guide me in formulating the questions for the individual interviews
- Set the men at ease and build an initial relationship in the non-threatening environment of the group
- Hand out cameras

I explained to the group what pictures they needed to take and why. I asked them to take pictures of boys or men participating in occupations that they themselves had done throughout their lives. It was important that the group understood this clearly, and that they all shared the same understanding of the term “occupation”. During the group I used culturally-appropriate language and asked questions to make sure that they understood me. Data from the orientation group was not interpreted, but was used as a base from which to formulate questions for the interviews.

3.5.2 PhotoVoice

“PhotoVoice’s vision is for a world in which no one is denied the opportunity to speak out and be heard” (82), p1. PhotoVoice was first developed as a method of conducting participatory action research and used among village women in China (83). The methodology is to distribute disposable cameras to chosen people in marginalised communities, enabling them to record their everyday experiences (83) (84). The photos are then used to facilitate discussion surrounding identified issues (83) (84). This method was developed with the intention that results eventually reach policy makers (83) (84).

PhotoVoice is a powerful tool, as almost anyone can be taught to use a simple camera. The purpose of the method is to gain insider knowledge that only the individuals in the community possess and that the researchers or outsiders lack. Its use is based on the understanding that people are experts on their own lives (83).

The advantages of PhotoVoice are that it improves communication, is participatory, helps to engage marginalised communities, facilitates the sharing of stories and ideas, aids individual expression, gives choice and ownership, promotes dialogue and is flexible and adaptable, allowing the user to reach specific goals (82). It can therefore be adapted to suit the particular issue and context the researcher aims to investigate. PhotoVoice has been used extensively in community-based health-related research (84). Galvaan used this technique for research undertaken in a community similar to Heideveld (13).

For my own research I used PhotoVoice as a tool to gain knowledge on the participant’s occupations and to facilitate discussion during the interview. I negotiated with the participants about how much time they needed to take the photos. We decided together that two weeks would be enough. We then agreed when

the cameras would be collected to allow for the photos to be developed. After the photos were developed, I scheduled an interview with each of the participants. I conducted one interview with each participant.

3.6 DATA COLLECTION

3.6.1 Individual narrative interviews

The narrative interview is a method used to facilitate the telling of stories by the participants in order to gain access to information. The stories and events related to the purpose of the study are reconstructed from the memory of the participant. (85) (86) As occupational-life-trajectories are imbedded in the narrative of the subjects' lives, the narrative interview seemed the best-suited method of gathering information. This method allowed me to gain the participant's trust as well as assisting me to ensure that the information they shared with me remained confidential, because the interviews were done individually. Yin summarises the advantages and disadvantages of interviews as a data-collection method (see table 3) (79), p80.

Table 3: Advantages and disadvantages of interviews as a data-collection method (79)

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • targeted - focused on case study topic • insightful - provides perceived causal inferences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • bias due to poor questions • response bias • incomplete recollection • reflexivity - interviewee expresses what interviewer wants to hear

This style of interview provides participant's perspective as they use their own language to describe an event. The language that the interviewees use is likely to be more spontaneous and constitutes their world-view. (86)

I interviewed each of the participants once using two or three guiding questions (see Appendix D), which pertained to certain phases in their lives. The questions were formulated using the language and information obtained from the orientation group. I attempted to refrain from "feeding" the participants information and rather left it up to them to describe events. I asked many open-ended questions and steered the participant in terms of the information I wanted to gain, by asking follow-up questions such as: "How old were you when you did that?", "What happened before/after that?", "What made you decide to do this?", and "Is there anything else you remember from that time?" I also made use of the photographs to guide the questions during the interview. I asked the participants to explain each photograph to me and asked more detail where needed. I had to make sure that the narration contained the data I needed.

Information that did not relate to the topic or the purpose of the study was left out during the transcribing process.

3.7 ANALYSIS AND REPORTING

I combined information sourced from different authors to formulate the steps to follow for the data analysis (87) (88) (89) (90).

Step 1: Getting to know the data

During this phase I listened to the interviews several times. I also listened to recordings I made of my initial thoughts, directly after each interview. I aimed to identify all data that was found, after critical reflection, to be relevant to the participant's occupational-life-trajectories. I investigated the quality of my data critically and decided what could be used to help gain the necessary information, and what could be left out. This might have been when the participant got off track in the interview or gave information that was irrelevant to the research question. An example of this is when a participant started to describe in detail the injuries that he received during a gang fight, or showing his scars to me, after I had already gained the necessary information (i.e. that he was injured in a gang-fight). I also decided when data saturation was reached (when no new themes, sub-themes or categories could be added by transcribing additional interviews). I used my reflective journal throughout this step to record my initial ideas around possible themes and ways to interpret the data.

Step 2: Transcribing the interviews

I transcribed the interviews word-for-word, each of which took about four to five hours. This helped me to familiarise myself with the data and to prepare for analysis. I left out data that did not relate to the occupations of the participants, possible motivation for occupational participation, their environment, history, background and social contexts. The level to which I transcribed the interviews depended on the type of information I needed, pertaining to the research question.

Step 3: Individual thematic analysis (Within-case analysis)

Firstly, I printed hard copies of all the transcripts. I then read through them, highlighting descriptive sentences pertaining to occupation. I used different colours for coding themes within the original text. I then wrote down key words next to these sentences in order to easily identify them later. I organised the information according to different themes in a word document. I went through the interview again to make sure that I had not missed any valuable information and kept in mind the possibility of adding another theme. From the themes, I broke down the information into sub-themes and categories. This was done for each interview. These themes, sub-themes and categories were derived from the content of the interviews and were not pre-decided.

Step 4: Collective content analysis (Cross-case analysis)

Once each interview was analysed according to themes, sub-themes and categories, I compared the analysis of the five interviews with each other and identified collective themes, sub-themes and categories. In some cases themes were broken into two or more themes, or in other cases I collapsed two or more themes into one theme, adding sub-themes and categories.

Step 5: Interpretation

The data was interpreted by using the socio-cultural history of Heideveld as background, keeping in mind the literature that I had reviewed.

3.8 QUALITY ASSURANCE

3.8.1 Trustworthiness and rigor

Trustworthiness includes credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. Rigor is described as the strict enforcement of rules. Techniques that I included in this study to ensure trustworthiness and rigor were methodological triangulation, reflexivity, member checking, thick description and an audit trail (91) (92). I will now discuss how I implemented each technique in my study.

3.8.2 Methodological triangulation

Methodological triangulation increases the trustworthiness of a study, as it makes use of combined methods (92). In qualitative research this can be done by using several data sources, data collection or data analysis. Triangulation in this study was attempted by combining the PhotoVoice technique with a narrative interview and by using a collective case study (different sources) instead of a single case study. I also made use of my observations during the time I spent in Heideveld, in the interpretation of my data. This method helped me to increase the depth of the data collected, and to ensure consistency.

3.8.3 Reflexivity

Reflexivity acknowledges the fact that the researcher is part of the context and setting that is being studied and will inevitably influence the direction of the study (93) (94). I critically reflected on my biases, perceptions and opinions during the research process, by keeping a reflective journal. I regularly recorded my thoughts, opinions and interpretations. I also made entries pertaining specifically to methodological decisions and reasons for making them, logistics of the study and how I perceived my personal values

influencing my perceptions. In chapter 4 I also gave an example of how my reflective journal influenced my thought process (see page 78).

3.8.4 Member checking

Member checking allows the participants a chance to correct any mistakes in interpretation made by the researcher, provides more information on a certain topic, affirms the participant's role and importance in the research process and gives a summary of the initial findings (93). I used member checking to corroborate the analysis of the data with the participants' intentions (91). I should have done this soon after I had transcribed and initially analysed all the interviews. Months after the interviews I struggled to get hold of all the participants and member checking proved problematic. Finally I was able to member check with two of the original participants and one other young man from the community who matched the original inclusion criteria for the study. Hard-copy transcripts of the interviews and the themes that I found in my analysis were used for member checking. Examples of questions that I asked during member checking are: "Did I understand this correctly?", "Did you mean it this way when you said...?", "Is my interpretation correct?" I also asked for clarification of terms, such as "ek gee nie krag weg nie"/ "I don't give away strength" in order to ensure that I understood the nuanced meaning within the context.

3.8.5 Thick description

In order to corroborate and substantiate my findings with other similar contexts and situations, I had to make use of thick description (95). An in-depth understanding of the study's background was necessary, so that commonalities with other research could be explored. In addition to this thick description helps the reader to understand the narrative better, by richly describing the contextual details applicable to a study (91). I used thick description to capture my initial thoughts and observations, Heideveld's past, the story of racial discrimination and its residual influence on the lived experience of the residents, the current setting and the participants. In the findings the environmental influences such as family structure, physical environment and the peer environment milieu are described.

3.8.6 Audit trails

I created an audit trail by keeping careful documentation of all the components in my study. I will keep my field notes, reflexive journal, recordings of the interviews, records of my initial thoughts straight after the interviews, transcriptions and all other relevant documents for one year after completion of the study.

By taking these steps, I believe that I have endeavoured to apply trustworthiness and rigor in the execution of this study.

3.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

3.9.1 An introduction to ethics

Ethics should be taken into consideration during the preparation for a study, in actions during the research process and in the way in which research is conducted (92). Ethics should not be treated as a separate part of research, but integrated into every step of the process. This includes the understanding that the researcher is an outsider who is allowed into the participants' lives for a certain period (86). Initially I made the research process visible and transparent to ethical committee and throughout the study, to the participants and reader.

3.9.2 Beneficence, non-maleficence, respect, justice and autonomy

I took great care to ensure that the ethical principles of beneficence, non-maleficence, respect, justice and autonomy were taken into consideration during my research. Non-maleficence applied: there was no intentional or foreseeable harm in participating in the study. Beneficence lies in the fact that the study aims to benefit Together in gaining understanding of the occupations of the men in the community and to eventually provide appropriate intervention through the organisation. The study also adds a small portion to the growing body of research that attempts to contribute towards bringing about occupational justice, in terms of occupational choices, occupational rights and occupational opportunities to young men living in previously disadvantaged communities. Autonomy was maintained by giving the participants the right to withdraw at any time and by not being judgmental about the choices that they have made during their lives.

3.9.3 Ethics in qualitative research

Shaw takes under consideration that, in narrative research, by asking people to tell their stories we become characters in the stories and thus change them (96). I needed to be constantly aware that I was a participant in the stories that the young men were telling me. My response influenced what and how they shared information with me. I needed to be attentive and sensitive to this fact throughout the interviews.

3.9.4 Ensuring ethical research during this study

3.9.4.1 Informed consent forms (see Appendix E)

Once the study's purpose, process and contents were understood, participants were asked to sign informed consent forms. I ensured to the best of my ability that each participant understood the content of the form, by using easily understandable and culturally-appropriate language, and by explaining in more detail if there was anything they did not understand. The participants were not coerced into accepting the terms of

the informed consent and knew that they could withdraw from the study at any time. This was stated during the orientation group as well as at the beginning of each interview.

3.9.4.2 Ethical committee approval

I gained approval from the Ethical committee of the University of Stellenbosch in April 2012 before starting any of the steps in the research process.

3.9.4.3 Process

I carefully followed the research process as described in my proposal. Any deviations are stated in the final report.

3.9.4.4 Interviews

I aimed to be open, approachable and empathetic during the interviews. I tried to respond appropriately when sensitive topics were raised, and to encourage openness and honesty. If an unrelated issue was raised during the interview that required referral, this was discussed with the participants, and an appropriate referral made if the need arose. This included referrals to primary health clinics, rehabilitation centers and psychological services.

3.9.4.5 Confidentiality

In order to ensure confidentiality, each participant was asked to choose a pseudonym. These were used in any transcripts, documentation and, most importantly, in the final report. Only the researcher knows the real identities of the participants. This ensures an extent of confidentiality of any information given during the narrative interviews.

3.9.4.6 Anonymity

Before distributing the cameras, I asked the participants to use discretion when taking pictures of other people. They had to ask permission and avoid conflict if someone refused to have their picture taken, in which case they could not take the picture. If someone asked them, they had to explain the reason for the photograph and what it would be used for. The photographs had to be non-intrusive and respect the privacy of the subjects.

I blotted out the faces of the people that appeared in the photographs, before they were used to facilitate the narrative interviews. The photographs were not shown to anyone else, before this step was taken. This ensured the privacy of the persons appearing in the photographs, should anyone else, except the

researcher or the participant who took the photo, see the pictures at a later stage¹⁷. This ensured anonymity.

3.9.4.7 Storing of documents and other data sources

Audio recordings, transcripts, reports, photographs and other raw data is stored in a safe place (E.g. in my possession) and will be destroyed one year after the completion of the study. Digital documentation is stored in a password protected folder on my personal computer. Physical documentation is stored in a private area in my home.

3.10 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study design possesses a few inherent limitations. It is necessary to take note of these limitations and use this study for the purpose for which it was designed.

3.10.1 Participants

The first limitation lies within the fact that I could only gather information that the participants chose to share. If, for various reasons, there were things that they did not want to share with me, I had to respect their wishes. I tried my best to be non-biased, open, empathetic, non-judgmental and trustworthy, so as to encourage participants to share as many of their experiences as possible. However, it remains impossible to tell what information I might have missed or not have had any access to.

3.10.2 Recall bias

The second limitation is within the participant's own memories of their lives. There might be occupations that they engaged in, which they simply did not remember during the interviews. This is referred to as recall bias. In order to minimise recall bias, I used PhotoVoice and the orientation group, during which I assisted the participants in constructing knowledge surrounding the occupational narratives of their own lives. During the interviews I encouraged them to remember as much as possible, by exploring different phases of their lives, and phrasing the same question differently.

3.10.3 Application of the data

The data will be used for the planned purpose and does not apply to other situations, even if they are similar. However, some principles may be broadly useful. These can be supported by other research and can guide future studies in similar communities.

¹⁷ This could include an instance where the reviewer, supervisor, university or other people involved in the research process requests to see the photographs.

3.10.4 Personal characteristics of the researcher

Limitations also lie within the researcher's personal attributes. I am a white, female in my twenties, who conducted research in a setting that was culturally, historically and economically different to my own background. This could have had both positive and negative consequences. As an outsider, I was allowed the opportunity to ask many questions regarding events, the motivation behind specific occupations and the clarification of slang terms. The interviews were conducted in Afrikaans, which is my first language. The Afrikaans spoken in Heideveld, however, differs from the Afrikaans that I speak in accent, cultural interpretations and the use of specific words and slang terms. During the interview some of the slang terms used by the participants needed clarification. Occasionally, when transcribing, it was hard to understand the accent of the participants.

The negative consequences included the fact that the participants may have chosen not to share specific occupations due to my gender or background. They might have felt judged or that I would not have understood the reasons behind their actions. I may perhaps also have missed cultural nuances, because I was interpreting their occupations from my own values and beliefs. I attempted to make myself aware of this as much as possible throughout the research process and asked for clarification as often as possible.

3.11 SUMMARY

I set out to achieve insight into the occupational-life-trajectories of a small group of men in the Heideveld community and to achieve the objectives that I described in the introduction. The collective case study design provided insight into the subjective occupational experience of these men. Through various methods such as methodological triangulation, reflexivity, member checking, thick description and audit trails I believe I achieved rigor and attempted trustworthiness¹⁸ as far as the limitations of my study allowed me. Great care was taken in ensuring that I used sound and ethical research methodology. The results should be interpreted by the reader by taking careful note of the methodology of this study, keeping the background of the study in mind as well as my personal limitations. In qualitative research one will always interpret the results through the lens of one's own background, but it is important to be aware of this fact.

¹⁸ The amount of data collected was a limitation in achieving trustworthiness.

CHAPTER 4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The analysis revealed examples of the interplay between the Heideveld environment and the occupational-life-trajectories that the participants are drawn towards. It also revealed the conflict that the young men in my study experienced surrounding occupational choices throughout their lives. I found that there were multifaceted environmental and personal influences on their occupational-life-trajectories.

The process I followed in order to arrive at the themes, subthemes and categories is presented below: Firstly I read through each of the transcribed interviews and highlighted any occupations that the young men mentioned. A list of each participant's individual occupational repertoires can be found in Appendix F. Next I grouped the occupations into specific categories. The categories consisted of the names of the occupations, such as "soccer", "playing pool" etc., and I described their development over the course of a lifetime. However, I found this approach lacking in information necessary to reach my aims, as it simply revealed occupations over time (occupational-life-trajectories), but no information regarding the influence of the environment or person on occupation.

I then decided to critically read through the transcribed interviews again, this time attempting to identify factors that influenced the occupations that I had found in the first search. I endeavored to identify words that conveyed meaning surrounding the occupations, factors leading up to engagement in occupation and descriptions of how the participants experienced these occupations. I also looked for recurrence of occupations, which could mean that this occupation was an important part of the participant's life.

I then copied all the highlighted phrases into one document. Firstly I went through the interviews individually, after which I started to identify common themes from among all the interviews. I developed themes from the highlighted phrases, according to the questions "what motivated or influenced engagement in specific occupations?" and "how did these occupations develop over time?" I went through the data multiple times, expanding or collapsing themes, in accordance with verification from the interviews. The evidence consisted of the specific words or phrases that I could quote to support my theme, or use as a title of a theme or a subtheme. Where this consisted of lengthy descriptions, rather than shorter, direct phrases, I opted to paraphrase the participant's words using my own.

I found five themes, describing occupational participation and choices of the young men over time. These themes run as a common thread, some more prominent at times than others, influencing the occupational-life-trajectories of the participants. The participants chose their own pseudonyms in order to protect their identities, and will be referred to as such.

Table 4: Themes, sub-themes and categories as found in the analysis of the data

Themes	Sub-themes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Categories
Ons gee nie krag weg nie/We don't give away power	Ons is nie bang nie/We are not scared <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lekker fris wil wees/Wanting to be strong Ons was die beste/We were the best <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wie se hond is die beste/Whose dog is the best Hy vat my vir 'n gat/He is making fun of me Learning behaviour from older men in the community
Ons het saam geloop/We "hang out" together	Ons jaag jou nie weg nie/We don't chase you away Ek wou big boy wees/I wanted to be a big boy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Al my vriende het dit gedoen/All my friends did it Toe is ek in die gangsterism in/Then I was part of gang-life Communal environments as the backdrop for peer occupational engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Die parkie/The park Op die hoek staan/"Hanging out" on the corner
Ek het baie probleme by die huis gehad/I had many problems at home	Die's nou hoe ek skool gelos het/This is now how I came to leave school Hy was daar vir my weekends/He was there for me on weekends
Die lewe is swaar hier buite/Life is hard out here	Ek moet agter myself sien/I have to take care of myself Ek leer maar van dophou/I learn by observing others Om in die geld te kom/Making money <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Informal occupations as a means of gaining access to finances High-risk occupations as a means of gaining access to finances Open labour market as a means of earning an income
Ek wil net uit hierdie plek kom/I just want to get away from this place	Dan decide ons waar om te gaan/Then we decide where to go Camps Bay and other areas as an example of the ideal environment Dan as ek gerook is, werk ek baie lekker/When I smoke I work very well

4.2 THEMES AND SUB-THEMES

These are the themes that I identified from analysing the interviews.

4.2.1 Theme: "Ons gee nie krag weg nie / We don't give away power"

"Ons gee nie krag weg nie" within the context of Heideveld, means not backing away from a challenge. During member checking, one participant explained to me that, if you back away from a challenge you are seen as a weakling. This theme entails all the occupations that the young men do in order to prove to themselves and their peers that they are not weak. It also speaks to the young men's construct of an acceptable masculine identity within their environment and engaging in occupations in order to prove superiority, masculinity and power. Masculinity in the participants' lives revolves around physical measures of strength, but also includes proving that one is better than someone else through material possessions, popularity and engaging in competition. This theme consists of the subthemes: *Ons is nie bang nie / We are not scared*; *Ons was die beste / We were the best*; *Hy vat my vir 'n gat / He makes fun of me*; and concludes by making mention of the systemic nature of violence.

4.2.1.1 “Ons is nie bang nie/ We are not scared”: Not backing away from a challenge

As early as primary school Spiderman joined what he described as a gang. He told me how his gang used to fight with another gang during break: “Ons het nie van mekaar gehou nie. Ons het met mekaar baklei op skool, elke pouse baklei.... Ons vat onse jackets dan maak ons knope daarvan, dan slaan ons mekaar” / *“We didn’t like each other. We had fights in school, every break... We take our jackets and make knots in them and then we hit each other”*. This fighting as a gauge of strength started in early childhood.

Bollie also gives an example of fighting in during childhood:

Karliën: “En toe jy change na die ander skool... hoe was dit?”

Bollie: “Dit was lekker gewees, but ek het baie baklei op die skool”

Karliën: “Issit?”

Bollie: “Want hulle wou my gebully het”

Karliën: “En dan, wat doen jy?”

Bollie: “Dan baklei ek met hulle”

Karliën: “And when you changed to the other school, how was that?”

Bollie: “It was nice, but I was fighting a lot in school”

Karliën: “Is that so?”

Bollie: “Because they wanted to bully me”

Karliën: “And then, what did you do?”

Bollie: “Then I fight with them”

(Bollie, line 63-69)

Spiderman continued by telling me how, during high school, other gangs would take his gang on in physical fights: “...dan het hulle kwaad geraak vir ons. Dan baklei hulle met ons. Nou ons is nie bang nie. Ons het hulle gewys, ons gee nie krag weg nie” / *“...then they became mad at us. Then we fought with them. Now we are not scared. We showed them, we don’t give away power”* (Spiderman, line 92). His gang would not back away from a fight when challenged by another gang because this signified weakness.

Tyson gives an example of how a fight would start at his school: “Net so van miskien ek loop verby jou, dan stamp jy teen my. Dan maak die persoon sommer vir hulle wil groot hou... En dan begin hulle nou eerste te slat en so...” / *“Just like, I maybe walk past you, then you bump into me. Then the person acts as if they are big... Then they start hitting first and so...”* (Tyson, line 92-94). From this description, it appears that Tyson did not see backing away from a fight when challenged as a realistic option. He described it to me as if he had no choice but to rise to the challenge. A minor incidence such as bumping into someone could expand into a fist fight.

Tyson described another event in more detail at a later stage during the interview. He explained how other boys tried to intimidate him when he started at a new high school “...dan sê hulle van, jy gaan nou ‘n matchie stokkie regom die hele skool tel... want hulle wil mos nou vir jou vir ‘n gat vat... amper soos hulle tart jou man... as jy vir hulle gat se ek gat nie [dit doen nie], dan check hulle orraait... jy’s sterk, dan gat hulle jou aflos. But as jy gaan vir jou sag hou op hulle, dan gat hulle jou so vir ‘n gat vat” / *“then they say, you are going to count around the school with a match stick... because they want to make fun of you... almost like they are teasing you... if you tell them you won’t do it, they see okay... you’re strong, then they will leave you along. But if you behave like a softie, then they will make fun of you”* (Tyson, line 304-314). He described how he had to stand up to the other boys, when they provoked him, otherwise he would have been perceived as weak. It seemed important to prove his strength in order to keep other boys from picking on him. From this account it appears that “...vir ‘n gat vat”, is equated to being taken advantage of.

The above examples given by the young men refer to physical strength as a measure of power. The words that they use to describe these challenges, however, provide a glimpse into the underlying motivations for physical fighting. The giving away of power, in this context, appears to refer to losing advantage, which they equate to weakness. The phrase: “We don’t give away power”, idiomatically then means “We don’t give away advantage”. The young men seem to stand their ground in a challenge, in order to protect their advantage and therefore, not be taken advantage of.

“Lekker fris wil wees/ Wanting to be strong”: Physical strength as a way of delaying the future

Tyson, Spiderman, Bollie and Slim Shady spend a lot of time working out in the gym. Tyson took a photograph of some of his friends exercising, which we discussed in the interview: “Die is eintlik om onse future uit te stel. Lekker fris wil wees” / *“This is actually to show our future. Wanting to be strong”* (Tyson, line, 553). In this quote, he tells me that he is trying to depict his future, as he wishes to become stronger.

Physical strength is a manner of “proving you have power”. Being strong places you in an advantageous position. The above examples probably link to the participant’s perception of masculinity. It appears as if the young men equated physical strength, challenge and fighting to measures of masculinity.

4.2.1.2 “Ons was die beste/ We were the best”: Popularity and material possession as a measure of self-worth

The young men often described themselves or something/one they were affiliated to in terms of being better or stronger than someone else. An example of this is Spiderman’s high school gang : “...En ons wou nou die beste gewees het. Ons het al die girlies gehet, alles, geld gehet... Nou baie van die ander mense kannie gekry het nie, vir hoekom, ons was die beste...” / *“...We wanted to be the best. We had the girlies, everything, money... Now many of the other people couldn’t get it, because why, we were the best...”*

(Spiderman, line 93). Later in the interview he told me again that he enjoyed school, because he had many girlfriends and was part of a popular gang.

Slim Shady told me that he had many girlfriends when he was in school “Seker nou so drie girlies op skool” / *“Probably around three girls in school”* (Slim Shady, line 111). Having many girlfriends, belonging to the right group of friends and having material possessions seemed to be a way of measuring self-worth during adolescence. Self-worth influences identity construction (51).

“Wie se hond is die beste / Whose dog is the best”

Proving that you are better or stronger than someone else also manifested in the form of dog fighting. Slim Shady, Bollie and Spiderman currently enjoy dogfighting as an occupation “...wie se hond is die beste, wie se hond is die sterkte” / *“...whose dog is the best, whose dog is the strongest”* (Spiderman, line 524). From this account it seems that dog fighting can also be used as a measure of power and challenge. Thus, power can also be measured by something you possess.

4.2.1.3 *“Hy vat my vir ‘n gat/ He is making fun of me”*: Avoiding insults to ‘power’ and protecting advantage

Two of the young men described situations where they felt personally insulted, causing them to quit their respective jobs. Slim Shady told me that he left a specific job because his superior was rude to him: “Hy was baie onbeskof gewees met my, toe kan ek dit nie meer vat nie” / *“He was very rude to me and I couldn’t take it anymore”* (Slim Shady, line 173). He left a second job for a similar reason. He explained to me that he was told to be in one location, but when he arrived, the building site was in another location (Slim Shady, line 175): “...toe dink ek, nee man, die mense vat my vir ‘n gat, vir ‘n papie” / *“...then I thought, no man, these people are making fun of me, teasing me”* (Slim Shady, line 176).

These accounts are interesting because Slim Shady experienced both as personal insults. He automatically assumed that, because of a misunderstanding, people were making fun of him. Furthermore, he experienced being made fun of as a good enough reason to leave a job, despite having no other prospects at the time.

Tom described a similar experience where he felt that his boss and co-workers were gossiping about him. “Nou skinder hulle, hulle kannie vir my eie gesig se nie... Toe se ek, good shit, want ek wil hoeka net nie weggebly het nie, want daai was ook junk werk en die geld was nie lekker nie” / *“They were gossiping, they couldn’t say it to my face... So I said, good shit, because I didn’t just want to stay away without a reason, because that was a junk job and the money wasn’t good”* (Tom, line 242-245). He described the incident as a good enough reason to leave his job. He mentioned that he did not like his job, and the money wasn’t good enough, but only when he experienced people talking behind his back, he quit his job.

Both the young men felt that being insulted or made fun of was an acceptable reason for terminating employment. This leads me to believe that the subjective experience of being insulted posed a threat to their self-worth. They seemed unable to integrate the experience of being insulted with their masculine identities. This speaks to a fragile identity construct. They might experience these incidents as “krag weg gee/giving away power”. In this case “vir ‘n gat gevat”/ “being made fun of” becomes the opposite to “ek gee nie krag weg nie/I don’t give away power”. It seemed that they would rather permanently leave a situation where they are made to feel “weak”, than stay for the sake of gaining access to income. Being made to feel weak would subjectively place them in a situation where someone was able to take advantage of them.

4.2.1.4 Learning behaviour from older men in the community: The systemic nature of violence

Tyson told me that he used to love listening to stories that his grandfather told, describing how men used to fight when his grandfather was young. “Soos my oupa hulle my vertel het, in die jong dae... Ek hou van as my oupa sulke stories van die past vertel... Nou vertel my oupa, julle twee baklei, met die vuiste, tot ene mekaar se hand gat vat. So, nou dis hoe ek dit wil hê, jy moet saam my baklei om te kyk wie is nou die sterkste” / “As my grandfather told me, in his day... I like when my grandfather tells stories of the past... Then he told me, the two of you fight, with your fists, until you take each other’s hands. Now that is what I want, you have to fight with each other to see who is the strongest” (Tyson, line 686-687).

This is one example of the systemic nature of violence and how it is passed on from generation to generation. Tyson learned from a young age that a man does not back down from a fight and that masculinity is linked to physical strength. He learned that this behaviour is acceptable by gathering cues from an older family member. The systemic nature of violence will be explored further in my discussion.

In the theme “Ons gee nie krag weg nie” / “We don’t give away power” I gave examples of the young men in my study having to protect their masculinity and identity constructs through being physically strong, having many girls or material possessions and challenges of strength. It appears that many of the occupations, especially those related to violence, are engaged in as a means of protecting their advantage within their peer group or community.

4.2.2 Theme: “Ons het saam geloop / We ‘hung out’ together”

In the context of their environment, the phrase “ons het saam geloop”, means more than just walking together, which would be the direct translation from Afrikaans. This phrase entails affiliation to a specific group of peers and participating in activities and occupations as a group. It reflects the communal nature of the participant’s occupational engagement. From an early age, the young men almost always participated in activities as part of a group. This was especially prominent during their adolescent years. The participants described their own occupations in terms of “us” and “we”, for example “...dan sit **ons** weer op die hoek

soos altyd” / *“Then we sit on the corner again as always”* (Bollie, line 208). Galvaan also found that occupational engagement was conducted within a peer group (13). This theme consists of the sub-themes: *Ons jaag jou nie weg nie / We don’t chase you away*; *Ek wou big boy wees / I wanted to be a big boy*; and identified communal environments for the backdrop of peer involvement in occupation.

4.2.2.1 “Ons jaag jou nie weg nie / We don’t chase you away”: Communal participation in occupation

Tyson explained how he and his friends would collect money to buy a joint (marijuana cigarette) and then sit together and share it (Tyson, line 272-276). They would also collect money for food from among their friends in order to make a meal together. Spiderman described how his friendship group would support each other financially *“As iemand nie geld het nie, ons worry nie, ons jaag jou nie weg nie. More is nog ‘n dag, dan het ons nie geld nie. Ons is almal vriende” / “When someone doesn’t have money, we don’t care, we don’t chase you away. Tomorrow is another day, then we don’t have money. We are all friends”* (Spiderman, line 342). At a later stage Spiderman explained how he and his friends would put together petrol money to take a trip in his friend’s car (Spiderman, line 563). Spiderman’s choice of words *“ons jaag jou nie weg nie” / “we don’t chase you away”* were particularly interesting to me, because his own family had chased him away during a certain period in his life. It’s possible that his friendship group fulfilled the role that his family should have satisfied.

The young men gave many accounts of how occupations sprung forth from interaction with their peer group. The peer group was both an environment for engaging in occupation, as well as a place where future occupations were discussed. The peer group worked together in order to engage in specific occupations, as described above.

4.2.2.2 “Ek wou big boy is / I wanted to be a big boy”: Influence of the friendship group on occupations

This sub-theme explains how the importance that the young men placed on an occupation was influenced by the peer group’s view on that occupation. Slim Shady stopped participating in athletics in high school, because it was not a popular and socially acceptable occupation within his friendship or peer group: *“...want ek wou big boy is. Ek wou nie nou kinderse aktiwiteite doen nie” / “...because I wanted to be a big boy. I didn’t want to engage in children’s activities anymore”* (Slim Shady, line 95). He had told me earlier in the interview that he had been very good at soccer and enjoyed playing soccer. Slim Shady rejected an occupation that he had previously enjoyed in order to engage in occupations that were seen as acceptable within his peer group.

Bollie also mentioned that he stopped playing soccer because he preferred being with his friends *“...daai tyd dan worry ek nie vir die sokker nie. Ek’s net by die vriende. Die vriende en die girlies” / “...during that time I didn’t worry about soccer. I’m just around my friends. Friends and girls”* (Bollie, line 124). Later in the interview Bollie told me that he also rejected playing in his uncle’s “kaapse klopse” band because he

wouldn't have enough time to spend with his friends. He rejected occupations that he seemed to have enjoyed previously because he would rather spend time with his friends and with girls¹⁹.

The peer group became a method of determining which occupations to engage in and which these young men should reject; it was their point of reference. They felt that it was important, especially during their adolescent years, to participate in occupations that would make them popular within their peer group.

In the following categories I will present examples of how the friendship group facilitated or influenced participation in high-risk occupations such as drug use, gangsterism and bunking school.

“Al my vriende het dit gedoen / All my friends did it”: Influence of the friendship group on high-risk occupations

During member checking, I asked one participant about the influence of his friendship group on certain occupations, such as drug use, in order to confirm that I understood this correctly. He explained to me that his friendship group did not force him to participate, but rather that he felt “left out” if he didn't. I found that most of the young men decided to participate in high-risk occupations for the same reason. This can be seen in the following examples.

Spiderman's first contact with drugs was around grade nine. He started to experiment with Tik, because his friends were using it: “Ek wil dit nie gedoen het nie, but al my vriende het dit gedoen. Dit het lekker gelyk vir my. As ek niks het om te doen nie en almal doen dit...ek voel baie uit. Om in te voel, moet ek dit doen... but ek was spyt agterna” / *“I didn't want to do it, but all my friends did it. It looked nice to me. If I have nothing to do and everyone does it... I feel very left out. To feel 'in' I have to do it... but I regretted it afterwards”* (Spiderman, line 99-100).

Bollie initially started smoking marijuana together with his friends. He speaks of his first encounter “...dan vat ek 'n trek, but ek was mos nie so like ek gat elke dag rook nie. Ek wil maar net uittry, dan try ek dit uit. But ek rook nou nog” / *“...then I take a drag, but it wasn't like I'm going to smoke every day. I just want to try it out, then I tried it. But I am still smoking”* (Bollie, line 88).

Slim Shady described how he and his friend used to sniff glue at school and how he would bunk school in order to play video games at his friend's house (Slim Shady, line 120). He was in grade nine at the time. Tyson started using drugs in his friendship group. Tom was in grade nine when he first started using Tik: “Die vriende van my hulle het gese, kom Tom, try dit. Toe se ek vir hulle ja ek wil Tik, toe laat hulle vir my Tik” / *“The friends of mine they said to me, come Tom, try it. Then I said to them, yes, I want to Tik, then they let me Tik”* (Tom, line 127).

¹⁹ This does not necessarily differ from adolescents in other communities. Peer engagement is important for most adolescents. The emphasis falls on the specific (often negative) occupations that this peer engagement facilitated.

All the young men in my study experimented with drugs for the first time within their friendship group. They also continued doing drugs as a means of engaging socially with their friends. I would argue that engaging in this occupation with their friends became a leisure time occupation for them.

“Toe is ek in die gangsterism / Then I was part of gang life”

Tyson described what he called, his gangster life, when he was younger: “Die’s... hoe ons gangster lewe altyd gewees het, wat ons jongere gewees het. Dan staan ons so, discuss ons nou, jy gat daar om, ons gat daar om” / *“This... is how our gangster life always was, when we were younger. Then we stand like this, discussing, you go this way, we go that way”* (Tyson, line 638-639). This was when he was in grade eight or nine.

When I asked about high school, Bollie told me that he became involved with friends that were gangsters: “...daar het ek bietjie uitgerafel. Vriende gekry wat gangsters gewees het. Saam hulle geloop... beginte dagga rook, begin skool bank, klasse bank. Hardloop huistoe elke dag... Bly ‘n maand uit die skool uit dan at ek weer terug skooltoe” / *“...there I started to unravel a bit. Became friends with gangsters. Hung out with them... started smoking dagga, bunking school, classes. Run home every day... Stay out of school for a month and then back to school again”* (Bollie, line 107-108).

The above are examples of how the young men engaged with their peer group during adolescence by joining a gang or participating in gang-like activities. This also led to engagement in further negative or high-risk occupations such as bunking school and using drugs. The gang seemed to form their peer group, during this time. They engaged in occupations together with other gang members. There are also examples of men joining gangs when they were older and not in school anymore.

Slim Shady classifies himself as having been a West Sider. The West Siders are a notorious gang in Heideveld. Slim Shady was in his early twenties at the time. He attributed gangsterism as the reason he stopped playing soccer “...toe is ek in die gangsterism, toe los ek die sokker” / *“...then I was into the gang-life, then I left the soccer”* (Slim Shady, line 491). Slim Shady also told me that he had enough talent to “go far” with his soccer. He had played at a young age for a private club in the area: “My hele lewe was net football” / *“My whole life was just football”* (Slim Shady, line 25). He was able to identify that his occupational choice of participating in gangsterism influenced his future occupational participation (playing soccer).

Spiderman used to do certain tasks for the West Siders gang, which he was part of: “Daai tyd was ek ‘n West Sider. Dan koop hulle guns en koële, dan het ek alles by my huis gehou daar... Dit toegemaak al’s, dan steek ek weg in my kamer” / *“That time I was a West Sider. Then they would buy guns and bullets, then I kept everything at my house... I closed it and everything, then I hid it in my room”* (Spiderman, line 344-345). This example depicts how he would take a personal risk in order to be part of, or be accepted by, a gang.

The nature of gangs will be further explored and compared to literature in the discussion.

The examples show both how high-risk occupations were engaged in within a peer group (whether this be a friendship group or a gang) as well as the influence the peer group had on occupational choices.

4.2.2.3 Communal environments as the backdrop for peer occupational engagement

I identified communal environments where the young men engaged in occupations with their peers, as they were repeatedly mentioned during the interviews by all participants. They are the most important physical environments within which communal occupational participation occurred.

“Die parkie / The park”

All the young men mentioned hanging out in the park as children. The park fulfilled the function of being a communal place where they could play together with their friends.

To my surprise, three of the young men described themselves or a friend getting hurt in the park.

Spiderman explains how he enjoyed playing in the park when he was a child “Ons was lief om in die parkies te speel. Hier by onse parkie... ek het myself seergemaak daar ook” / *“We loved playing in the parks. Here by our park... I’ve hurt myself there as well”* (Spiderman, line 256).

Early in the interview Tyson described how a friend of his got hurt on the swings in the park. At another point Tyson again mentioned getting hurt in the park. He explained how they played a game on the jungle gym and how they got hurt during the game “...dan kry ons baie seer op die ding” / *“...then we get really hurt on the thing”* (Tyson, line 564).

Incidences of physical injury seemed almost common in their environment. The young men tell the stories as if they are ordinary, everyday occurrences and not as isolated incidences. Repeatedly getting hurt or injured while playing in the park could possibly tie in with the lack of adult supervision. This is a subject for possible future exploration.

“Op die hoek staan / ‘Hanging out’ on the corner”

The street is represented quite strongly in the telling of the young men’s occupational narratives. It seems to be a place where they decide what occupations to partake in, but also forms the environment in which certain occupations take place. Simply hanging out in the street (on the corner) is an occupation that all the young men engaged in during their lives and continue to engage in. “Die’s wat ons in die aande doen, as ons niks het om te doen nie. Dis tussen agt en negen, dan staan ons daar voor by die winkeltjie” / *“This is what we do in the evenings, when we have nothing to do. Between eight and nine, we stand there in front of the shop”* (Spiderman, line 329).

Tyson and Spiderman both took pictures of children playing in the street, representing how they used to play in the street when they were children.

Tom also told me how he “hangs out” in the street, and participates in occupations that developed from there (Tom, line 363-366). The occupation would depend on who walked by or what occupation presented itself.

These examples coincide with my initial observations in Heideveld of seeing many young men standing around in groups, on the street corners. This led me to question occupation in Heideveld. Concurring with Galvaan’s findings (13), I found the street to be an occupation in itself and an environment in which other occupations occurred. Additional to her findings, I also found the street to be a place in which future occupations were discussed i.e. “...staan ons nou daar, hou geselsies, praat oor wat ons more gaan maak” / “...then we stand there, chat, talk about what we are going to do tomorrow” (Spiderman, line 329).

4.2.3 Theme: “Ek het baie problems by die huis gehet / I had many problems at home”

The family environment forms the initial background to occupational engagement for the young men, especially during childhood and adolescence. Instability within the young men’s home environment manifested as both internal and external conflict. The family unit traditionally serves as a place where children and adolescents learn socially acceptable behaviour, gain exposure to adult role models, learn to accept authority, develop the ability to function within a structure and gain support. In this theme I will explore the influence of the family environment on the young men’s occupational-life-trajectories. This theme consists of the following sub-themes: Die’s nou hoe ek skool gelos het / *This is how I came to leave school* and Hy was daar vir my weekends / *He was there for me on weekends*.

Firstly I will shortly describe four of the young men’s family environments according to the information that they gave me. The fifth will be explained as an example of the first sub-theme.

Tyson (21) and his mother stayed with his grandmother in Mannenberg (a neighborhood adjacent to Heideveld) during the first part of his childhood. They moved to Bonteheuwel and later to Heideveld, when he was ten-years-old. This was the first time that his parents were able to afford their own house. His father had been addicted to Tik as long as he could remember. His mother and father divorced when Tyson was still young, he is unable to remember the specific age, but they were living in Heideveld at that time. Tyson, his brother (18) and sister (14) are currently staying with his mother. His grandfather also lives with them. During member checking he told me that, as the oldest child, he feels responsible for contributing to the income of the family and that his mother looks to him to fill his father’s role.

Slim Shady (25) grew up in Bridgetown (a neighbourhood adjacent to Heideveld). His family was staying with his grandmother at the time. His parents were able to afford their own house in Heideveld when he

was eleven-years-old. His mother currently works as a 'tea girl' in Cape Town and his father works for Sasol. He has one brother (32) and two sisters (15 and 30). His brother and one sister are married and do not live with them anymore. Slim Shady did not mention parental drug abuse or domestic violence during his interview.

Spiderman (24) was born in Heideveld and lived with his mother at his grandmother's house. When his mother moved out about three years ago, he continued to live with his grandmother. He also has a four-year-old sister. Due to religious differences, his mother and father never got married. His father died when Spiderman was eight-years-old. He was stabbed during a fight one evening "...dan steek hulle vir hom in die blad. Dan bloei hy vir hom dood, hy't hom doodgebloei" / "...then they stabbed him in the shoulder. Then he bled, he bled himself to death" (Spiderman, line 241). This depicts a traumatic experience in Spiderman's life. He had no male role model to correct his behaviour or guide appropriate occupational engagement.

Tom (20) stayed with his mother at his grandmother's house while growing up. His father had been an alcoholic for as long as he could remember and his mother chased him away whenever he came to the house. Tom has three sisters (21, 24 and 27) and he is the youngest of the siblings. His mother has always had a steady job working at a clothing factory. Tom's account of his childhood contains many stories of getting hurt, in which case his sister would take care of him or take him to the hospital. His mother seemed mostly absent due to work. He also lacked a father figure on whom he could model his behaviour.

The young men's family environments were filled with accounts of trauma, including being a victim of or witnessing physical abuse, or death of a loved one. There was little supervision. This environment would form the background to their occupational engagements. The following is a description of some incidents where the influence of an unstable family environment on occupational choices is clear:

4.2.3.1 "Die's nou hoe ek skool gelos het / This is now how I came to leave school": Family environment as an influence on occupational choices

Bollie (20) stayed in Heideveld his entire life. He describes his home life as follows: "Ek het baie problems by my huis gehet" / "I had many problems at home" (Bollie, line 157). His father started smoking Tik when Bollie was still in school. He said that his father wasn't concerned about him or his brother and used to steal money from his mother in order to pay for his Tik addiction "...daai was miskien die kosgeld vir die week gewees, dan vat hy dit. Nou's daar niks nie, dan moet my ma weer 'n way maak" / "...that was maybe the food money for the week, then he takes it. Now there's nothing, then my mother has to find another way again" (Bollie, line 165). He told me that father never physically abused his mother. He said that his father is still doing Tik, but "...nie meer soos hy eerste was nie, hy kom nou reg" / "...not as he always was, he is becoming better" (Bollie, line 181). His father also stopped stealing money from his mother.

Contrary to this depiction of his father, he told me that his father spoiled him as a child, by taking him to the beach every week “My pa’t my elke week geneem. Ek was gespoil gewees toe ek jonger was” / “*My dad took me every week. I was spoiled when I was younger*” (line 247). These contradictory statements reflect his confusion in trying to consolidate the conflicting images of his father: a father who is addicted to drugs and steals from his mother and a father who shows his affection to his children by taking them to the beach. I can imagine that this would leave him confused as to what a “good” father is and does. His fatherly role model leaves him with little guidance for when he becomes a father himself one day.

Bollie provides his father’s drug addiction as a reason for leaving school: “My pa het begin te Tik rook, dan’s dit amper soos, ek worry nie meer van skool nie, ek wil net by die huis wees... my mind se vir my, gat skool. Dan sien ek weer ander pad, los skool, ek makeer nie daai nie ek kan my ma gat help werk” / “*My dad started smoking Tik, then it was almost like, I didn’t care about school anymore, I just wanted to be home... my mind tells me, go to school. Then I see another way again, leave school, I don’t need it and I can help my mother by working*” (Bollie, line 157). This quote clearly depicts his conflict surrounding school as an occupation. His family’s situation eventually led to his decision to leave school: His father’s behaviour left him feeling responsible to helping his mother by finding a job and contributing to the family income.

Tyson also describes his decision to leave school as a consequence of an unstable family environment. He explains the events of the evening he decided to leave school. When I asked him to give me the reason he left school, during member checking again, he repeated the exact same story: Tyson’s stepfather was staying with them at the time. Tyson and his brother were fighting about school clothes, and his stepfather became involved and started to hit him. He lost control and hit his stepfather back “...hy het mos my ma geslat, nou daai’s die rede wat ek hom vasgryp, nie omdat hy my sê van die skool nie” / “*...he was hitting my mother, now that’s the reason I hit him back, not because he was telling me about school*” (Tyson, line 367-369). He told me that stepfather had been physically abusing his mother since the start of their relationship. Earlier, Tyson had been too young to do anything, but that night he was able to stand up for himself because he was older and had grown stronger. After that incident his mother went to court to get an interdict, keeping his stepfather away from them. Tyson did not go back to school after that: “Die’s nou hoe ek skool gelos het” / “*This is how I left school*” (Tyson, line 357). He was sixteen-years-old and in grade nine at the time (Tyson, line 395, 398). After this incident he decided to find a job, because his stepfather was no longer there to help support the family. This is an example of the unstable home environment that Tyson had grown up in. He had no appropriate father figure and his mother was busy trying to provide for him and his brothers and sisters.

4.2.3.2 ***“Hy was daar vir my weekends / He was there for me on weekends”*: Conflict around adult behaviour and role models**

The young men received mixed signals on appropriate behaviour from adults in their families and immediate environment. I asked Spiderman if he went on any trips with his mother to places outside of Heideveld. He answered as follows: “Toe ek klein was ja, was ek baie saam my ma’le [ma hulle]. Ek was saam my ma uit, na jolle to. Clubs ook. Nightclubs. Ek was saam my ma’le daar ook” / *“When I was younger yes, I did many things with my mother. I went out with my mother also, to parties. Clubs too. Nightclubs”* (Spiderman, line 234). Spiderman’s mother was role-modelling “acceptable” behaviour to him, which could lead to high-risk occupations in his life. Her actions communicated that this behaviour was acceptable.

Spiderman described his father as “a good father”. “My pa het ek net weekends gesien, but... hy was daar vir my weekends... Hy’t geld gebring, luxuries. Hy’t vir my alles gegee wat ek wou hê” / *“I only saw my dad over weekends, but... he was there for me on weekends... He brought me money, luxuries. He gave me everything I wanted”* (Spiderman, line 236). A strong focus is placed on material possessions as a reflection of his father’s affection.

Bollie received information from his father on the acceptability of drug use as an occupation: “Ons rook daar by my huis, in my yard in. Want my pa wil nie hê ons moet buitekant rook nie, want as die boere vir ons kry dan vat hulle vir ons as ons buitekant rook. Dan sê my pa, jy kan in my yard rook. Ek en my vriende. Maar nie saam my broetjie nie... Hulle moet relax, hulle is mos nog jonk” / *“We smoke there by my house, in the yard. Because my father doesn’t want us to smoke outside, where the cops can find us and then they take us if we are smoking outside. Then my dad said, you can smoke in my yard. Me and my friends. But not my brother... They have to relax, they are still young”* (Bollie, line 204-205). Bollie’s father created the impression that drug use is acceptable, but only from a specific age.

The young men received inconsistent messages from their parents and other adults about specific occupations. They were left to consolidate behaviour that adults displayed, with regard to the acceptance of engagement in specific occupations, into their own framework of what was acceptable or not. The next theme develops from this one, in addressing the fact that they often had to look out for themselves as there was little support and guidance available within the environment.

4.2.4 **Theme: “Die lewe is swaar hier buite / Life is hard out here”**

Growing up in an environment with few financial and material resources, little adult supervision, inconsistent role models and little support, the young men often had to find their own way to get the things that they wanted. These things included access to finances, material possessions, activities that they wanted to participate in and the acquisition of new skills. The sub-themes consist of: Ek moet agter myself

sien / *I have to take care of myself*; Ek leer maar van dophou / *I learn by observing others*; and Om in die geld te kom / *Making money*.

4.2.4.1 “Ek moet agter myself sien/I have to take care of myself”: Learning to make your own way

During member checking, one young man stated clearly that he had to take care of himself and find his own way, by saying: “Ek moet agter myself sien” / *“I have to take care of myself”*. He told me how life was hard and that he had to take responsibility for his own life. He could not look to anyone else to take care of him.

Spiderman told me that his grandmother used to kick him out of the house often when he was younger. “My ouma het my uitgesit, dan bly ek op die straat... Ek was veertien jaar oud, dertien, veertien jaar oud... toe my punte uitgekome het die eerste keer” / *“My grandmother threw me out, then I would live on the street... I was fourteen, thirteen-years-old... when my marks came out the first time”* (Spiderman, line 513-517). Spiderman told me that, during this time, he did not care about his family. “Ek was nie oor my ma’le nie, ek was oor myself. Ek was nie oor familie nie” / *“I didn’t care about my mother and the rest of my family, I cared about myself. I didn’t care about my mother”* (Spiderman, line 188).

Spiderman lacked adult guidance and supervision during a critical period in his development. His mother stayed with his grandmother throughout his childhood. It seemed they expected him to behave according to certain rules, and when he was unable to, they would punish him disproportionately, by, for instance, putting him out of the house. A parent would perhaps try a different approach in trying to teach a teenager the correct behaviour, before taking these actions. As his father had died when he was eight-years-old, Spiderman had no father figure in his life. He had little exposure to the correct way to behave, especially from male role models. When he felt that his family had given up on him, by putting him out of the house, he responded by doing his own thing, claiming individuality and saying he didn’t care about his family.

Most of the young men joined a gang, at least partially, in order to find support and acceptance within the gang. They realised, however, that the gang members were quick to abandon them when problems arrived. Spiderman recognised that affiliation to a gang and gang membership did not mean that he could expect affection or loyalty from them, “As jy daar le, hulle worry nie meer nie. As jy doodgaan, hulle worry nie” / *“When you lie there, they don’t care anymore. When you die, they don’t care”* (Spiderman, line 169). Even within the structure of a gang, each person was still left to look out for themselves.

Tom tells of an incident where he was riding on a bicycle that his friend had stolen, but he had not known that it was a stolen bike. Somebody then threw a brick at him, thinking that he was the one who had stolen the bicycle. His “friends” ran away while he was bleeding. That was when he decided he did not want to hang out with them anymore. “Van daai tyd af, toe hou ek my weg van verkeerde vriende af” / *“From that time, I kept away from the wrong friends”* (Tom, line 206).

Both Bollie and Spiderman had spent time in jail. Spiderman was sentenced to prison for four months the year before the interview. He also missed his first interview appointment with me, because he had spent the night in jail and was only released on bail the following afternoon. He tells me of his first experience in prison and how his mother reacted:

Spiderman: "My ma't my altyd gese, as jy in die tronk gaan beland, my kind, ek gannie hardloop vir jou nie. En daai't [daai het] gebeur. Ek het gesien my ma't die waarheid gepraat. Sy't nie gehardloop vir my nie"

Karliën: "Wat is gehardloop vir jou?"

Spiderman: "Kom af, kom hof toe vir my. Kom visit vir my by die tronk. Kom besoek vir my. Bring sy vir my geld of property. Sy't niks soos daai gedoen nie"

Spiderman: "My mother always told me, if you end up in jail, my child, I'm not going to run for you. And that happened. I saw that my mother was telling the truth. She didn't run for me"

Karliën: "What does, 'running for you', mean?"

Spiderman: "Come down, come to court for me. Come visit me in jail. Bring me money or property. She didn't do any of that"

(Spiderman, line 406-409)

The fact that Spiderman tells me this story, when I ask him about prison, shows that it was an important event in his life. He felt that mother once again did not support him during a difficult time.

When I asked him, if he wasn't scared when he was in prison, he replied: "nee... ek het my hart baie sterk gemaak... Nou moet ek maar my man staan" / "no... I made my heart very strong... I had to stand my ground" (Spiderman, line 152). He was referring to violent beatings and rape that happens in prison. He did not want to expand on whether he had experienced this or whether "making his heart strong" meant that he managed to avoid this.

The young men's narratives are filled with accounts where they had to negotiate life obstacles by themselves. Both their families and peer group/gangs did not provide the support they had hoped for during hard times.

4.2.4.2 "Ek leer maar van dophou / I learn by observing others": Innovative strategies to partake in specific occupations

Slim Shady, Spiderman, Tyson and Bollie taught themselves how to drive a car. Slim Shady said: "Ek leer ma net van dophou" / "I learn by watching others" (Slim Shady, line 443). The young men told me how they would observe a friend, parent or uncle driving and then they would try to drive themselves. Spiderman observed his uncle while driving a taxi. One afternoon he stole his uncle's taxi and attempted to drive

(Spiderman, line 448). Learning to drive is an activity a parent would traditionally teach a child, but the young men had to learn to drive by themselves. This reflects the parenting style of the young men's families. These accounts also show that the young men would take initiative in order to learn how to do the things that interested them.

Spiderman didn't have a bicycle when he was younger, but all his friends had bicycles. He then decided to build his own bicycle: "Al die jare het ek mos nie 'n bike gehet nie. Van dertien jaar oud af wou ek 'n bike gehet het. Ek het altyd gery op my vriende se bikes... (toe) bou ek my eie bike op, het my tyd gevat, but ek het daar uitgekome, finally... ek is nou baie dankbaar vir my bike, dis baie mooi" / *"All the years I didn't have a bike. Since I was thirteen I had wanted a bike. I always rode on my friend's bikes... (then) I built my own one, took my time, but I did it, finally... I am now very thankful for my bike, it's very beautiful"* (Spiderman, line 462, 470).

When they were younger Bollie and his friends taught themselves to make weights for weightlifting. They observed other people working out and then figured a way to make their own. "Dan maak ons sommer ons eie weights... Met koffie blikke... Met sement in, dan laat ons die sement hard raak in die blikke in. En 'n yster paal in die middel in die koffie blik. Want die sement raak mos hard om die yster. Dan tel ons dit so op" / *"Then we make our own weights... With coffee cans... With cement inside, then we leave the cement to dry inside the cans. And a steel pole in the middle of the can. Because the cement will dry around the pole. Then we pick it up"* (Bollie, line 240-241).

Tyson told me that he started a freestyle dancing group when he was fourteen or fifteen-years-old. He came up with the idea when he watched the movie "You got served". He formed a group with children in the neighbourhood and challenged other groups to dance against them. "Dan vat ons van die "You got served" se moves... dan haal ons uit daar, dan maak ons onse eie moves in. Toe gebeur daar 'n klomp competitions en so" / *"Then we take the "You got served" moves... then we take some out, then we make our own moves. Then there were many competitions and so on"* (Tyson, line 159-163).

The young men employed innovative strategies in order to negotiate environmental constraints pertaining to occupational participation. They found ways to learn the skills that they wanted to acquire, made their own equipment necessary to participate in a specific occupation and developed creative ideas for occupational participation within their environment.

4.2.4.3 "Om in die geld te kom / Making money": Gaining access to finances

This sub-theme discusses the strategies of gaining access to finances through informal occupations, high-risk occupations and the open labour market that the young men employed.

Informal occupations as a means of gaining access to finances

After leaving school, the young men found themselves in a position where they had to seek employment with very few marketable skills, an incomplete education and little support from their parent/s. “Die lewe is swaar hier buite. As jy nie gat werk nie, gaan jy nêrens kom nie” / *“Life is hard out here. If you don’t work, you won’t get anywhere”* (Spiderman, line 126). This quote sums up Spiderman’s thinking around his situation. Spiderman solved this problem by working as a “sliding door” operator (gadji) on his uncle’s taxi. This occupation started while he was still at school. Later on he became a driver for his uncle and other taxi owners.

Tyson had started to breed with dogs “Daai’s hoe ons, as ons nie werk ook nie, dan maak ons geld. Like, verkoop die puppies. Toe decide ons, ons kry onse eie honde... Pit bull puppies is mos duur” / *“That’s how we, when we weren’t working, would make money. Like, sell the puppies. Then we decided, we get our own dogs... Pit bull puppies are expensive”* (Tyson, line 630-632).

Tyson and Spiderman both employed different, innovative strategies in order to make money.

High-risk occupations as a means of gaining access to finances

Tom started committing robberies when he dropped out of school. He explains as follows: “Dan wag ons daar agter Vanguard, daar by Bridgetown, dan wag ons die mense in wat nou oor die brug gat loop. Dan vat ons hulle goed af, na daai gaan ons, hier agter, hier in die Athlone se kant toe, dan verkoop ons dit daarso. Dan kom ons Heideveld toe, dan tel ons die geld op. Almal kry nou n stukkie” / *“Then we wait there behind Vanguard, there by Bridgetown, then we wait for the people that are going to walk over the bridge. Then we take their things, then we go there, behind, towards Athlone, then we sell it there. Then we come to Heideveld, then we count the money. Then everyone gets a piece”* (Tom, line 153-154). All the other participants also admitted to robbing people at one stage of their lives. Tyson, specifically, used to steal scrap metal from people’s yards and sell it at the scrap yard in order to make money.

Spiderman explained to me how a friend of his is smuggling drugs, because he needs to support his family and cannot find a job. “My vriend het ‘n laaitie nou. Hy weet nie wat om te maak, om in die geld te kom nie. Hulle wil nie meer gaan rob nie, toe beginte hy smokkel” / *“My friend has a child now. He doesn’t know what to do, to make money. He doesn’t want to rob people, so he started smuggling”* (Spiderman, line 376, 377). It seemed that drug dealing was seen as a suitable alternative occupation for gaining access to money.

Open labour market as a means of earning an income

All the young men had worked in the open labour market at some time during their lives. Tyson worked at five different jobs in three years and Slim Shady had six different jobs in more or less the same period. The

young men's vocational trajectories seem to be unstable and inconsistent, with periods of employment ranging from a few months up to two years, and apparently sudden terminations. Most of the men had many different jobs within a relatively short period. Most jobs included manual labour, working on construction sites, carpentry, tiling, acting as a packer for a newspaper company and for Coca Cola, and other unskilled labour positions. Spiderman has only worked as a sliding door operator for a taxi, a taxi driver and now as a cleaner for a bus company in Cape Town.

4.2.5 Theme: "Ek wil net uit hierdie plek kom / I just want to get away from this place"

I found that a lot of the young men's occupations were motivated by attempts at escape from their physical environment and their circumstances. This seemed to entail physical escape, by leaving Heideveld, or emotional and cognitive escape, by using drugs. This theme consists of the following sub-themes: Dan decide ons waarheen om te gaan / *Then we decide where to go*; Camps Bay and other examples of the ideal environment and; Dan as ek gerook is, werk ek baie lekker / *When I smoke, I work very well*.

4.2.5.1 "Dan decide ons waarheen om te gaan / Then we decide where to go": Physical escape

If finances allowed, the young men would try to take day trips out of Heideveld: "Weekends as ons nou by die huis is, en ons is boring, en ons het geld en niks om te doen nie, dan gooi ons almal se geld tesame. Dan decide ons nou waarheen om te gaan... Dan klim ons in die kar dan gaan ons" / *"Weekends when we are at home, and we are bored, and we have money and nothing to do, then we throw the money together. Then we decide where to go... Then we get in the car and go"* (Spiderman, line 563-564). Spiderman also explains how one of his favourite activities was to go to Signal Hill "Signal Hill was een van my gunsteling plekke. Of chill saam my girlie miskien daar in die aande..." / *"Signal Hill was one of my favourite places. Or chill with a girl there maybe in the evenings..."* (Spiderman, line 572).

Tyson described how his mother would organise a van for him and his friends in order to take a trip, when he was younger: "My ma organise miskein 'n van, en sê, bring jou vriende. Ons was lekker klein man. Dan gat ons, dan speel ons sokker daar op Sea Point of so" / *"My mother would organise a van, and say, bring your friends. We were nice and small. Then we go, then we play soccer in Sea Point or so"* (Tyson, line 569-570). During member checking Tyson again mentioned how he just wanted to get out of Heideveld: "Ek wil net uit hierdie plek kom" / *"I just want to leave this place"*. I asked him to explain a bit more and he said Heideveld made it difficult for him to resist temptation because drugs were all around him. He appeared to place a lot of hope on moving out of Heideveld, speaking as if everything would be better if he managed to escape his current environment.

The young men all tell stories of family trips, trips with friends and other ways of leaving Heideveld. It appears as though they would take any chance they could get to leave their environment for a while.

4.2.5.2 Camps Bay and other areas as an example of the ideal environment: Something to hope for

Many participants referred to Camps Bay during the interviews. Camps Bay is an upper-class neighbourhood in Cape Town. It is located next to the beach and includes an array of shops, expensive restaurants, coffee shops and night clubs. The area is filled with large two or three-story houses that look out onto the ocean.

Tyson described his work in Camps Bay in detail. He showed pride in this job and placed it in high regard. “Daai huis lyk self mooi, ons het die tiles ingesit en so” / *“That house looks beautiful, we put the tiles in and so”* (Tyson, line 488).

Tyson and Spiderman both told me how they would challenge one another, by deciding how far they could ride their bicycles. They often ended up riding to Camps Bay. He describes this using a photograph that he took: “Daai’s nou die bike as ons jongere gewees het, so vyftien. Dan decide ek en Spiderman nou ons vat sommer ‘n ry Camps Bay toe of so” / *“That’s the bicycles when we were younger, around fifteen. Then me and Spiderman decide to ride to Camps Bay or so”* (Tyson, line 769). Camps Bay was the immediate choice when deciding where to go; it seemed to hold a specific attraction for the young men.

Tyson told me how, when he was in school, he did not enjoy playing soccer against a school in Camps Bay. The boys on his team were rude to the Camps Bay soccer team. He clearly noticed the difference between the two environments, and how his own teammates acted as opposed to how the other team behaved. Tyson saw Camps Bay as a place where people conduct themselves differently to the “rude” boys from Heideveld.

When Bollie showed me a photograph that he had taken of Signal Hill, he said “...ek wil eendag ‘n huis hê daarso. Die view is kwaai daar man. Hier is nog nie ‘n view hier by ons nie” / *“...I want a house there one day. That view is amazing. There is no view where we live”* (Bollie, line 423). Bollie also noticed the differences between his own environment (Heideveld) and another environment (Signal Hill). He placed Signal Hill in a high regard. When given the cameras to take photographs for the interviews, the participants organised a trip together, clubbing in petrol money, and went to Sea Point and Camps Bay to take pictures of different occupations.

The young men seem to idolise environments that are different from their own, especially richer, upper-class neighbourhoods. They would take any chance they could to participate in occupations in a different neighbourhood. Bollie also clearly noticed the physical differences between Heideveld and other places in this example: “...mar hier in Heideveld, ek weet nie of jy gesien het nie, hier by onse park is dit teer (op die grond). Nou kyk net daarso, in Sea Point, dan is daar van daai sagte mat wat onder daai is” / *“...but here in Heideveld, I don’t know if you’ve seen, here in our park there is tar (on the ground). Now look there, in Sea Point, there is soft felt under there”* (Bollie, line 269).

Slim Shady was proud to stay in the Western Cape. He took a picture on Signal Hill to show me “Daai is hoe onse Western Cape lyk” / *“This is how our Western Cape looks”* (Slim Shady, line 327).

Camps Bay primarily, but also other areas like Sea Point and Signal Hill seemed to be the sort of places that the young men longed to be. They experienced them as very different from Heideveld. They observed a different life when they were there. The buildings, clothes, cars and the way people spoke, dressed and acted were different. They also saw that people do different things compared to what happens in Heideveld.

4.2.5.3 “Dan as ek gerook is, werk ek baie lekker / When I smoke I work very well”: Drugs as an escape

I identified drug use as a means of cognitive and emotional escape from daily problems and routines. Spiderman admits to smoking marijuana at work. He works for a Cape Town bus company, cleaning busses, which is a repetitive, non-stimulating task. Smoking marijuana enables him to do his work. “Dan as ek gerook is, klaar gerook is, dan werk ek baie lekker... Dan werk ek op my lekkerste” / *“Then when I smoke, finished smoking, I work very well... I work at my best”* (Spiderman, line 488-490). In his case, smoking marijuana is used as an escape from reality and the monotony of everyday life.

Spiderman currently puts his job at risk by smoking marijuana. He says this helps him relax and finish the menial task of cleaning the bus. Spiderman says: “Ek glo myself, ek doen alles. As dit kom by werk, sit ek alles in” / *“I believe in myself, I do everything. When it comes to work, I give my best”* (Spiderman, line 551). His accounts seem inconsistent to me, as he claims to give his best at work, but still puts his job at risk by smoking during work hours. It is possible that, for him, this is the best he can do to continue with the menial, repetitive job tasks in order to receive an income. This is his way of making his situation bearable without losing his job.

During member checking I asked Bollie why he feels he needs to get away from Heideveld. He told me that life here is “boring” and full of temptations to do the “wrong” thing. He said that he wakes up every morning with nothing to do the rest of the day. The first thing he does is smoke a joint (marijuana cigarette), and then he feels better about everything. This is another example of drugs being used as a means of escaping from his environment.

4.3 DISCUSSION

Firstly, I describe a pattern that I have identified in the occupational-life-trajectories of the young men, by critically viewing the data. I then discuss specific high risk as well as vocational occupations in more detail. Lastly I comment on the identity construction of the young men through the lens of their occupational participation.

4.3.1 Occupational-life-trajectory

I closely examined the development of occupation and the occupational choices of five young men throughout the course of their lives. See Appendix F for a summary of the occupations of the participants over time. I noticed two turning points in each of the participant's occupational-life-trajectories. The young men started out engaging in occupations such as playing in the park, participating in sports, taking trips with their parents, playing with their friends and attending school (Appendix F). However, these occupations were participated in against the background of little parental supervision, early exposure to violence and with few, or in the absence of role models. I noticed a first turning point around early high school and another turning point a few years later. I will now discuss these turning points, as well as the current situation.

4.3.1.1 *The first turning point:*

The first turning point seemed to occur around the time that the participants were in the early high school years. At this time all of the participants started to experiment with drugs and gang-like activities. Tyson describes the time as "Toe kom die drugs mos, man" / *"Then the drugs came, man"* (line 203). He was about fifteen years old then. "Van daai tyd wat die drugs inkom en toe is almal en alles nie meer dieselfde nie" / *"From the time that the drugs came, nothing and no one was the same anymore"* (Tyson, line 230). Slim Shady started to experiment with drugs when he was fifteen or sixteen years old (Slim Shady, line 99-100). He also described this as a time when everything changed. Bollie also mentioned the start of high school as a time that he himself changed: "Ek het bietjie begin uitrafel...begin te dagga rook, begin te skool bank..." / *"I started unraveling a bit... starting to smoke dagga, starting to bunk school..."* (Bollie, line 108).

The young men gave different reasons for their initial involvement in drugs and gang-like activities, which will be explored in more detail later. This initial experimentation turned into long-term drug use for all of the men. All the participants left school between grades nine and eleven. Spiderman describes this time of his life as: "My lewe was te vinnig, too fast, of the fast life" / *"My life was too fast, too fast, of the fast life"* (Spiderman, line 204).

The young men found themselves in situations where it was very hard to make a decision to go against the main stream. Everything in their lives seemed to draw them towards this specific occupational-life-trajectory. Their peer group appears to have had a big influence on their occupational decisions, and therefore their occupational-life-trajectories, especially during adolescence. Galvaan recorded similar findings in which the peer group had a strong influence on occupational choices, particularly during adolescence (13). At times the peer group was used as a substitute in order to meet needs that their families did not fulfill. These included subsistence needs, such as food and protection, understanding,

leisure, participation and identity (8). Attempts to fill these needs often appeared to developed into participation in negative occupations such as substance abuse and gangsterism.

This occupational course appeared to be normative for the young men whom I had got to know in Heideveld. At that time in their youth they did not grasp the impact that their decisions would have on the future.

4.3.1.2 The second turning point

A second turning point came later in the participants' lives, for most of them in their early twenties. This is the time when most of them attempted to leave gang-like activities. The young men also stopped doing hard drugs such as Tik and buttons and turned to smoking marijuana (which they do not necessarily view as a drug). Brankovic also found in her research that, as young men enter their twenties they see gangsterism as a younger boy's activity (32).

Slim Shady explains the difference as follows: "Ek was baie gruwelik, ek het gehou van gun skiet en baklei. Maar dank die Man daar bo dat ek my lewe agter mekaar gekry het. Ek's nou rustig. Dis al" / *"I was horrible, I liked shooting my gun and fighting. But thank the Man above that I got my life together. I'm calm now. That's all"* (Slim Shady, line 517). During this time, he stopped doing Tik and turned to marijuana.

Bollie's second turning point came when he had to stay in jail for one night because he had stolen a 'phone. He realised how this hurt his family: "Wat my ma daar is, toe huil my hele familie... Nou kyk wat maak ekke. Toe sê ek vir myself, ek wil nie weer my family deur sulke goeters sit nie..." / *"When my mother was there, my entire family was crying... Now look what I'm doing. Then I said to myself, I don't want to put my family through this again..."* (Bollie, line 446-447). This quote shows an awareness that change is needed, whether this change would be lasting or not. Bollie was conscious of the fact that his life was on the wrong track and that he had to change something.

The second turning point for Spiderman came when he realised he had nothing to show for the work he had done and no money: "Daarom se ek nou, agterna, ek is spyt ek het daai gedoen. Ek het elke aand my geld net so gespend, môre oggend dan het ek niks meer nie... Ek kannie so aangaan nie, ek hou myself soos 'n hobo, 'n bergie. Ek gaan agteruit" / *"That's why I'm saying this now, after everything, I regret doing those things. Every night I spent my money just like that, in the morning I didn't have anything left... I can't go on like this, I act like a hobo, a street person. I'm deteriorating"* (Spiderman, lines 498, 501). Spiderman also said, "...but my oë het ope gemaak. Dis nie die lewe vir my nie" / *"...but my eyes opened. This life is not for me"* (Spiderman, line 163). He also now smokes only marijuana.

Spiderman's attempt to turn his life around seemed partially motivated by fear of death: "Ek kon sien almal daai is gou dood. My beste vriend is dood" / *"I could see that all of them died early. My best friend is dead"*

(Spiderman, line 163). Spiderman also sees having only one girlfriend as a sign of growing up: "...at the moment het ek net ene (girlfriend). Hoekom, ek raak nou groot, ek wil vorentoe gaan met my lewe..." / *"...at the moment, I have only one (girlfriend). Why, because I'm growing up, I want to move forward in my life"* (Spiderman, line 283). He, like the others, realised he had to change his life and attempted to do so.

The young men attributed their second transformation to different factors, including fear of death, fear of spending time in jail, a realisation that gang affiliation did not necessarily mean that the gang members cared about them, recognising how their actions hurt their families and the fact that they had nothing to show for their work, because all of their money went into drugs and alcohol. It seems to me that, as the young men grew older, they realised that the life path they were on was harmful to themselves and those close to them. All the young men hoped for a life that is different from that of their parents and possibly noticed that the path they were on would lead to destruction. Another explanation may be that as they grew older, they were able to evaluate their own choices and break away from their peer influences, to a greater extent than during adolescence.

4.3.1.3 The now

All the young men claim that they are not the way they used to be. They said that they are not involved in gangsterism anymore. They also stated that they were only smoking marijuana now and were not involved in the use of other drugs.

Spiderman still spends time with gangsters, but says he turned his life around. He now has a steady job. I'm unsure what this transformation entails, as Spiderman missed his first appointment for the interview because he had spent the night in jail. He also spent a night in jail a few months earlier. Both times the police had caught him with drugs. He does not see this as a contradiction to his changed life and describes them as isolated incidents.

Bollie says he currently tries to stay away from gang-related activities: "Daar is nogsteeds goed wat gebeur, maar ek is nie nog meer eerste nie. Ek try nou om weg daar te bly" / *"There are still things that happen, but I'm not first anymore. I try to stay away from those things now"* (Bollie, line 216).

Tyson dreams of a future where he doesn't follow in his father or stepfather's footsteps: "Ek gat vir my familie wys ek gannie in my pa se footsteps gaan nie of in my stiefpa se footsteps nie. Ek het mos klaar alles geleer van hulle af, en hoe moet ek nie wees nie. Wat moet ek nie wees of so nie. Ek sal 'n betere persoon wees dan hulle. My vrou uitsort. Enigiets wat sy wil hê, ek sal uit my way gaan" / *"I'm going to show my family I won't walk in my fathers footsteps or my stepfather's. I learned from them how not to be. What I shouldn't be and so on. I will be a better person than them. Sort my wife out. Anything she wants, I'll go out of my way"* (Tyson, line 856-858). In this quote, Tyson describes his desire to be different from the male role models he had growing up. He wants to show his wife a better life than his mother had, as he

described earlier in the interview. A lot of his hope for the future (as he describes above) is placed upon finding the right job: “Ek wag net vir die regte job” / *“I’m just waiting for the right job”* (Tyson, line 860).

Bollie wants to give his children a life that is different from the one he has had: “Nou ek weet, ek gat ‘n betere persoon wees vir my kinders eendag. Nou ek wil net vir hulle uit die plek uit kry dat hulle net kan skoolgaan... Ek wil nie hê hulle moet deurgat wat ek deurgegat het nie, om uit te draai soos daai nie... ek sal likes, net om vir hulle, my familie en daai ‘n lekker lewe te gee. Daai’s mos belangrik” / *“Now I know, I will be a better person for my children one day. Now I just want to get them away from this place so that they can go to school... I don’t want them to go through what I went through, to turn out like that... I would like to give them, my family and so on, a nice life. That’s important”* (Bollie, line 431-436). Bollie realises the influence that his environment had over him and places high hopes on leaving Heideveld and having his own family. Both Tyson and Bollie clearly see the importance of family and express a desire to create a family environment that is different from their own growing up experiences.

Spiderman currently enjoys playing hand tennis with some of the younger children in the street as this gives him an opportunity to talk to them. He says he wants to be a role model and guide the children so they don’t do the things that he did in his life: “Want hoekom, ek wil nie hê hulle moet deurgaan wat ek deurgegaan het nie... Ek wil hulle leer. Hulle brein oopmaak vir die lewe” / *“Because why, I don’t want them to go through what I went through... I want to teach them. Open their minds for life”* (Spiderman, line 420). This shows some insight into the problem. He wants to warn future generations to prevent them from leading the life that he has led. He also clearly expresses a desire to act as a role model.

Most of the young men’s expectations for their future are unrealistic given their current situation. The young men spend a lot of time waiting to find “the right” job or expect a change in their physical environment to occur. Vague expectations of their future could also influence their vocational trajectories. When asked what they expect from their futures, most of the young men describe vague concepts such as having a big house, living in a nice area, caring for their children, finding a job and leading a good life. However, they have no clear strategy for attaining these goals. Therefore, they do not know what they are working towards. Both Hasselkus and Christiansen argued that meaning is placed on occupation through having specific goals, knowing what you are becoming and an awareness of specific life projects (44) (47). Brankovic also found that the occupations of men in her study were influenced by vague expectations of their futures (32). My concern is that the cycle of poverty will continue to the next generation in Heideveld, leading to the same occupational-life-trajectories of the young men that I’ve interviewed.

4.3.2 A closer look at gangsterism

I gathered a lot of information on gangsterism as it manifested in the lives of the participants. This occupation seemed to be a prominent component in their occupational-life-trajectories. Firstly I discuss the

nature of gangs, as recognised and experienced by the men in my study. I then explore the reasons for joining a gang as given by the young men and influenced by the systemic nature of violence. I also continually compare my findings to that of previous research.

Jensen stated that it is not easy to identify gang involvement or to define gangsterism (29), and in my study gangsterism does not appear to be a clearly defined either. It was not easy to distinguish the young men's gang activities from other high risk activities that they participated in together with a peer or friendship group. Therefore I make the same distinction as Brankovic (32), in the separation between formal and informal gangs. Formal gangs constitute an organised, member-based group. Affiliation to these gangs is usually signified by getting a "tjappie" (gang tattoo). This shows formal and lifelong commitment to a gang. These gangs participate in organised crime (32). An example of such a gang in Heideveld is the West Siders. The young men in my study associated mostly with informal gangs, though there was some affiliation with formal gang activities during the course of some of the young men's lives. Informal gang association appears to stem from the area that they live in, the family they belong to, participation in specific activities or association with a group of other young men. Even with this distinction, formal and informal gang association is hard to identify. I will now give examples of the above.

Spiderman tells of trips he took to Canal Walk, Camps Bay or one of the beaches for a picnic with his gang. This typifies the friendship and peer association nature of gangs. Spiderman's account lead me to believe that he experienced gangsterism as a group of young men doing things together, which does not necessarily involve illegal or dangerous activities.

Tyson suggests that one can be associated with a gang simply by the neighbourhood that you live in. He tells a story of when he was younger: "Nou ons was net laaities gewees, man, niks gangs gewees nie. Dan sê Mannenberg se laaities miskien... 'van waar's julle?' Dan sê ons 'Heideveld'. Dan sê hulle 'oh, julle is West Siders'. So kom die ding, dan is ons sommer nou West Siders... Net van waar ons is, is ons sommer nou West Siders" / *"Now we were just young boys, not a gang. Then the young boys in Mannenberg ask, 'where are you from?' Then we tell them, 'Heideveld'. Then they say, 'oh, you are West Siders'. So the thing starts, then they think we are West Siders... Simply because of where we are from, we are seen as West Siders"* (Tyson, line 652-653). From this account, it seems that gangsterism can be imposed on you as a result of where you live.

Tyson also told me that another friend of his is a gang member, because of family association: "Hy's 'n West Sider want sy uncle was 'n West Sider. Sy nefie is 'n West Sider" / *"He is a West Sider because his uncle was a West Sider. His cousin is a West Sider"* (Tyson, line 661).

Tom speaks of the informal nature of gang affiliation: "Ek het met gangs geloop al. Ja ek was ook, ja mens kan mar sê ek was ook al 'n gangster al, but nog, ek was nog nie soos in ernstig nie" / *"I've walked with*

gangs before. I've been one, yeah, you can say I've been a gangster, but, I wasn't that serious" (Tom, line 167).

From the above descriptions I deduced that the young men could be associated to a gang due to family ties, where they lived, involvement in specific activities and "walking with" (hanging out with) members of the gang. Jensen made the same assumptions (29). Specific occupations were attributed to gang involvement, even though they were not necessarily organised by gang members. These occupations include fighting, "gun skiet" (shooting with a gun), selling drugs or cigarettes and robbery. Examples of these are seen specifically in the young men's accounts of gangsterism in school. Spiderman equates fighting in primary school to being in a gang, and Bollie equates selling cigarettes in a group with being in a gang.

During the time I spent in Heideveld, I made the following observations: Many young men and women would informally show "gang signs" or write gang names on their books or on the sides of buildings. This did not necessarily mean an affiliation with the gang, but in most cases represented positive social status. It was, simply, a "cool" thing to do. Galvaan made the same observations in Lavender Hill (13). I also found it common for young children in Heideveld to know the names of prominent gangs in the area, or show gang signs from ages as early as three years old. The children would know that they are showing, for instance, the sign signifying the West Sider's, but not the full extent of what gang involvement entails.

Some of the young men in my study were involved with more formal gang relations. Slim Shady used to be a West Sider. Spiderman used to do "drug runs" for the same gang, meaning he would buy drugs from the suppliers or merchants and bring them back for gang members to sell. Bollie used his house as a hiding place for guns because the police raided gang-member's houses on a regular basis. None of these men formalised their involvement with a gang tattoo. Slim Shady gives the following account:

Slim Shady: "Ek was 'n terrible West Sider gewees"

Karlien: "Was jy 'n West Sider gewees, hier in Heideveld?"

Slim Shady: "Ja. Ons het klomp mense seergemaak. Maar die dag wat hulle gesê het, kyk hier ouens, ons gan nou decide ons gan ou tjappies vat-"

Karlien: "Wat is dit?"

Slim Shady: "Jy moet brandmerk vat... Toe sê ek net naai ouens, ek wil 'n ander lewe vir my vat, die's nie 'n lewe vir my nie..."

Slim Shady: "I was a terrible West Sider"

Karlien: "Were you a West Sider, here in Heideveld?"

Slim Shady: "Yes. We hurt many people. But the day they said, look guys, we are going to decide to take a tjappie..."

Karliën: "What is that?"

Slim Shady: "You have to get a tattoo... Then I said, no guys, I want to lead a different life, this life is not for me..."

(Slim Shady, line 246-252)

When I asked the other participants if they received a gang tattoo they all said no. Spiderman said: "It's all in the mind, I told myself. Ek hoef nie tjappie te vat nie" / *"It's all in the mind, I told myself. I don't have to get a tattoo"* (Spiderman, line 165) and Tyson said: "Oh no, dis nie hoe my ma my groot gemaak het nie" / *"Oh no, that's not how my mother raised me"* (Tyson, line 669-670).

These quotes suggest some inherent consciousness that the young men felt they needed to distance themselves from lifelong gang involvement. It shows some measure of insight as to the dangers of formal gang involvement. All the young men rejected a gang tattoo. They somehow knew that they did not want to lead a life of gangsterism. As in Brankovic's study, none of the young men in my study have been imprisoned for violent crime (32). Spiderman was imprisoned twice for drug related charges and Bollie and Tom both spent one night in jail on charges of theft.

The young men gave different reasons for initial gang involvement. This included access to material possessions, affiliation with a peer group, protection by a peer group and involvement with activities that gave them access to finances. The young men's accounts of their occupational-life-trajectories show early exposure to violence. Tyson's depiction of stories that his grandfather told him and Spiderman's father's death are examples of this.

Godobo-Madikizela worked on trauma, forgiveness and understanding in post-apartheid South Africa, finding a connection between trauma and violence. She argues that people deal with trauma by taking it out on others, which perpetuates the cycle of violence. She also says that "When a group has suffered victimisation and share humiliating injury, the 'narrative' of this victimisation establishes an imprint in the group's identity, and becomes a theme in the group's violently 'acting out' this past trauma. These traumatic re-enactments are known to be passed on from one generation to the next, playing out cycles of violence that so often repeat themselves historically" (97), p1.

The young men in Heideveld suffered repeated trauma from childhood onwards, including early exposure to violence, parents who abused alcohol and/or drugs, dysfunctional households and the death of loved ones. Living in poverty may also be a traumatic experience. This possibly explains the young men's attraction to violent occupations as a means of dealing with trauma in their own lives. The Heideveld community has also experienced repeated trauma. One recognises the socio-economic and historical roots of violence when considering the insults to dignity and identity that the people of Heideveld experienced during the apartheid regime. Max-Neef argued that collective pathology develops within a society when

their Human Needs are left unsatisfied for an extended period of time (8). Therefore gangsterism has developed into an almost unavoidable norm within the Heideveld environment. Brankovic made the same observations in her study on gangsterism and violence in a neighbourhood next to Heideveld (32). Maladaptive cycles (36) of violence are formed and reinforced by the environment.

Within the Human Scale Development model, gangsterism could be classified as a pseudo-satisfier (8). It generates a false sense of satisfaction for the need of protection, understanding, participation, identity and freedom (for clarification of these terms see Appendix C). Involvement in gangsterism could inhibit the ability of satisfying future needs for protection, understanding, identity and freedom. The young men in Heideveld seem to have become involved in gangsterism mainly in order to be part of a peer group and for protection. This includes both physical protection, as well as protection as described within the Human Scale Development²⁰. Even though they were aware of the risks, as they observed their friends getting hurt or dying, this did not deter them from initial involvement in gangs. Gang-related activities are dangerous and illegal and could lead to injury, death or imprisonment. Through gang involvement, the young men also seriously jeopardised the possibility of their realising protection, identity, subsistence and freedom needs.

4.3.3 A closer look at substance abuse

I will now examine the young men's excursion through substance use and abuse. They were exposed to this occupation at a very early age. Bollie's father set a clear example through his acceptance of this occupation. Tyson's father was addicted to Tik and Spiderman's father died at an early age, leaving him to learn how to conduct his life from other men and from his peers. From my literature review I found that substance abuse is more prevalent in incidences of family instability (14), which seems true in the case of the young men I interviewed as well. Dunlap et al. also speak of the intergenerational nature of substance abuse (76). Some of the young men in my study also depicted the peer influence of substance abuse and demonstrated how this behaviour can be learned from older siblings (such as Bollie's brother learning from him), as noted by Sanders (56).

Looking back on his life, Slim Shady saw how his drug habit affected his occupational choices. Drug use was part of the reason that he did not further his career in soccer: "Want vir hoekom, ek sien ek sal ver gewees het in die lewe...Klomp talent en ek het dit nou opgemors deur my drugs gebruikery..." / "Because why, I would have gone far in life... Lots of talent and I wasted it by using drugs" (Slim Shady, line 239).

Interestingly, Slim Shady, Spiderman and Tom do not seem to categorise marijuana as a drug. Spiderman told me that: "Ek rook nou net dagga... Ek het die drugs beginte aflos, tot ek opgehou het" / "I only smoke

²⁰ Within the Human Scale Development, protection refers to the qualities of care, adaptability, autonomy; having social security, health systems and work; being able to co-operate, plan and take care of others; and interacting within a social environment and a dwelling.

marijuana now... I started leaving the drugs, until I stopped" (Spiderman, line 206). Tom and Slim Shady said similar things.

From the young men's accounts, they were clearly conflicted when they initially started experimenting with drugs. Intellectually they knew that it was a bad choice to make, but this knowledge did little to deter them from taking part. However, they participated because their friends were engaging in drug use and they did not want to feel left out. They also named boredom and curiosity as motivating factors for drug use. The aforementioned reasons, together with the example set by adults in the community, propelled their engagement in this occupation. Lack of occupational and other choices in their environment caused monotony: they were bored. At a certain age the occupational choices available at school (athletics, soccer, volleyball, etc.) were not seen as a "cool" activities to do, while their peer groups engaged in other occupations, such as hanging around with girls and smoking marijuana. This left them with few occupational options that they could engage in while continuing to be accepted within a peer group.

I described the onset of substance abuse as observed by Megan et al. in my literature review (77), and found the onset of drug use in the participants to be similar to their description. Four of the participants started with smoking cigarettes or drinking alcohol, then experimented with marijuana and finally moved onto harder drugs²¹. All but one young man started initial experimentation with marijuana; Spiderman started with doing Tik early in high school and moved onto drugs such as heroin, buttons and rocks. He smoked marijuana for the first time later in his life, when he wanted to stop doing other drugs. Tom experimented with marijuana at the age of fifteen and soon after experimented with Tik. He says that he only did Tik twice and decided to smoke marijuana instead. Tyson started smoking marijuana at the age of fifteen and moved onto Tik and other drugs around eighteen or, nineteen years old. Bollie started smoking marijuana in grade eight and says that he still only smokes marijuana. Slim Shady started smoking marijuana at the age of fifteen or sixteen years old, but quickly became involved with other substances abuse activities such as sniffing glue or doing buttons. The trajectory of the young men's drug use seem to be initial experimentation with marijuana and then harder drugs, with some continuing to use harder drugs and others becoming lifetime marijuana smokers.

In view of Max-Neef's Human Scale Development, drug use fulfils the young men's need for participation and leisure, but is also a pseudo-satisfier, possibly inhibiting the satisfaction of future needs. Continued drug use causes permanent cognitive and neurological damage and influences the user's coping skills, ability to handle conflict, memory, decision-making and motivation (6).

Leisure boredom has been linked to high-risk behaviour such as drug use (37). Limited resources, lack of challenge and too much free time could cause the young men to experience leisure boredom. As with

²¹ These include Tik, heroin, cocaine and buttons.

gangsterism, substance abuse seems to have developed as an almost unavoidable norm within the young men's environment.

4.3.4 A closer look at school dropout

According to the Western Cape Status of the Youth report, the more educated a parent is the more involved and invested a parent will be in the education of the child (14). Due to historical disadvantages, many parents of the young men in my study worked in positions of unskilled labour and had not finished high school. It would seem that the community does not place a high value on education, and this needs to be understood through the lens of historical educational inequalities, and/or that surviving from day to day takes priority over investing in the future. Literature states that historical disadvantages still affect households in the Western Cape with the struggle to survive often taking priority over parenting (14).

All the young men describe skipping school and three of them had failed a grade, but none of them ever talked about their parents trying to intervene or support their school attendance. When I asked Spiderman if his mother minded that he missed school, he answered: "My ma het nog nooit geweet nie, ek het haar nooit vertel nie" / "My mother didn't know, I never told her" (Spiderman, line 113). Bollie stayed out of school for up to a month at a time. It could be expected that a parent would notice if his or her child did not attend school for such extended periods. However, Bollie's mother worked long hours to sustain an income and his father was a drug addict, so supervision of Bollie's school attendance may have been compromised. Tom would skip school by telling his mother he had a headache, and she would let him stay at home.

Bollie, Tyson, Tom and Slim Shady dropped out of school because they wanted to work and gain an income in order to help support their households. Spiderman was expelled for making fun of the teachers, but he also wanted his independence.

Leisure boredom is also linked to school dropout, as presented in my literature study (72). It is possible that the young men experienced leisure boredom because their peer group did not view the available leisure occupations—athletics, soccer and other organised sports—as "cool." They had a lot of free time, which they spent engaging in high-risk occupations. The occupations that they engaged in did sufficiently satisfy their need for optimal arousal (37); thus they experienced leisure boredom.

4.3.5 Open labour market vocations

As described earlier, the young men's vocational trajectories seemed haphazard, unstructured and unstable. Reasons for leaving places of employment appeared to be unpredictable, and some were apparently related to interpersonal misunderstandings.

Bollie attributed his decision to leave his job at a warehouse in Epping to the fact that the travel was too dangerous. He needed to walk quite a distance to work from the train station, and once experienced an

attempted robbery (Bollie, line 194). This is an example of how physical location influenced occupation. It would seem that the young men have to take their own safety into consideration when finding suitable employment. Other reasons for termination of employment included ending of a short-term contract, employers not being able to afford them anymore and misunderstandings about location.

I felt that the following accounts needed further exploration:

Tyson left a certain job because his uncle promised to arrange an interview for him and his friends at a different company on a specific Monday. The interview never came through, but Tyson just stayed away from the place where he had been working because he kept waiting for the interview (Tyson, lines 496-499). *“Nou check ek vir myself, jirre, hier gat my werk alweer” / “Then I see, oh dear, there my job goes again”* (Tyson, line 503). Tyson felt as if he had no control over the situation, when in fact, he had made the decision to stay away from work and to continued to stay away without contacting his employer. He decided to disregard his current employment without being certain of future employment. This method appears impulsive and leads me to believe that there were other factors at play. Tyson was simply “going with the flow” without taking responsibility for his decision or any action to keep his current job. When I asked him why he did it in this way, he said he had no money to phone his employer and did not want to miss the opportunity to go for an interview. This shows little insight into other ways of solving the problem, budgeting, structuring his time or communication skills

Slim Shady left his job as a carpenter because he had cut his finger, but he neglected to send the doctor’s note that booked him off work to his boss (Slim Shady, line 195). Consequently his boss terminated his employment. In explaining the different reasons for leaving his jobs, I gained the impression that Slim Shady felt his bosses had been unreasonable and unfair in doing so. Slim Shady and Tom had both mentioned a superior or co-workers who were rude to them as reasons for leaving their jobs, which I explored under the theme *“Ons gee nie krag weg nie” / “We don’t give away power”*.

The young men appeared not to take responsibility for their own vocational trajectories. The reasons that they gave for leaving a job seem impulsive and lacked insight into the realities of the situation and into the possible consequences of their choices. They also lack the necessary exposure that would equip them with the skills to negotiate these situations, such as communication, problem solving, conflict management and decision-making.

From the young men’s accounts I identified specific factors that appear to influence their vocational trajectories:

Their environment clearly impacted on their vocational trajectories. The young men have lived a very unstructured and undisciplined lifestyle. They didn’t finish their education and never learned to follow the rules of a structured environment, such as at the schools that they attended. Among other things, school

requires one to be on time, act according to set rules and norms and respect authority. In the young men's home environments they were left mostly unsupervised. It seems that no one taught them how to function according to the structures and norms required in the open labour market.

Member checking and my reflective journal helped me to realise that I underestimated the extent of the fluidity of the environment. I did not fully grasp this at beginning of my study. In my planning, I aimed to finish analysis and then return for member checking almost four or five months later. When I attempted to do the member checking of the interviews, I found that one man in my study had moved away and another had found a job, working long and irregular shifts. Both were not available for member checking. When attempting to member check with the remaining three men, they repeatedly did not show up for appointments. One of them had a cellphone, but would often not answer my calls. When he did answer, he said that he had gone to town or was busy with some other activity. At first, I felt that this was a personal insult because I thought I had built a relationship with the young men and that they respected me enough to show up for the appointments. I wrote this down in my reflective journal. After thinking about the situation for a while, I realised that this was my own error, for having underestimated the strong influence of the environment that the young men live in. Their lives had been mostly unstructured and having to be somewhere at a specific time for an appointment was not something that they were used to. Rather they participated in occupations as they arose from social engagement and lacked the skills to plan far ahead. This was simply the way that their world worked, and their actions were not meant as a personal insult or indicative of a lack of respect. I was able to perform member checking by simply spending time in Heideveld, asking the participants if they had time when I walked past them or going directly to their houses to speak to them.

The way that the young men manage their time may however influence their ability to secure and engage in open labour market occupations. My respondents lacked planning and communication skills, the determination to persevere in the face of difficulty and other skills necessary to engage in vocational occupations. These are the sort of skills usually taught within the family and school environment.

4.3.6 Identity

Baumeister describes how identity is influenced by personal achievements, interaction with others and individual skills and traits (51). In addition to the constructs of gender masculinity (56), identity is also influenced by life projects (47) and the experience of trauma during childhood and/or adolescence (35).

Christiansen links identity formation to a person's perception of their life projects (36). Lack of goal-directed activities and future prospects may have influenced the identities of the young men in this study. They lacked a clear vision of their futures because they were unable to set realistic goals and unsure of how to achieve their aspirations. This could have impacted on their identity formation. The young men also

experienced repeated failure in trying to finish school, finding a job and changing their lives. Building a sense of self-worth during childhood and adolescence is imperative in order to succeed in other areas, such as personal relationships, education, work and family life (14).

The young men have all been exposed to repeated trauma during their life course. Being exposed to these traumas during adolescence when identity formation is a major developmental task (35) would have influenced how their identities were formed. Traumas which they experienced included the death and/or injury of loved ones, encounters with violence²² and drug use at an early age, instability in their family environment and family violence, as well as poverty.

From the theme “Ons gee nie krag weg nie”/ “*We don’t give away power*”, the young men emphasised the importance of not being seen as weaklings. During the member checking, I discussed this theme with Tyson. He explained to me that, once someone realises that you are weak, they will take advantage of you. He described clearly that weakness constitutes both physical and psychological limitations. He reiterated the importance of having to stand up for yourself and of looking out for your own welfare. It seems that acceptance within a peer group was better if you were seen as “strong”.

A large portion of the participants’ narratives focused on violence between men. This emphasised the connection between violence and masculinity. Being physically strong, as well as not backing down when verbally confronted, was connected for the participants with the characteristics of masculinity. Masculinity was closely connected to their identities (56). Their statements indicated that their understanding of masculinity was influenced by the example set by older men in the community.

Identity construction is a continuous process (51). Therefore, the young men are continually busy trying to construct an acceptable identity, through which they can consolidate their actions, their perception of how the world sees them, their values and their character. Historically, young, coloured men have been stereotyped by society (32) (74). It is likely that this stereotype reinforce the participants’ actions and the way that they see themselves.

The young men described themselves in a negative way when they spoke of their adolescence. The following are examples of how they perceived their own character: “Ek was daai tyd al onbeskof gewees”/ “*Already back then, I was rude*” (Tyson, line 298), “...ek was so gruwelik gewees” / “*...I was terrible*” (Slim Shady, line 455) and “...ek was net so gewees toe ek jongere was. Dan likes ek gruwelike goete...” / “*...I was just like that when I was younger. I liked terrible things...*” (Bollie, line 245). In contrast, the young men also found it important to describe positive characteristics of themselves, to me, as emerged in the interviews. When I asked Spiderman if his uncle was fine with Spiderman borrowing his taxi, Spiderman replied “...hulle trust vir my, hulle glo vir my” / “*...they trust me, they believe (in) me*” (Spiderman, line 57). The young men

²² This refers to violence between peers, gang-violence, street violence and violence in prison.

had to consolidate negative self perceptions, such as the occupations that they engaged in and descriptions of themselves described as “bad” and “terrible”, with who they wanted to be, and what they aimed to achieve in life. They also had to consolidate the view of the broader community and the media, where young, coloured men are depicted as the perpetrators of crime and violence, with perceptions of their own actions and what kind of person they would like to be and/or become.

Max-Neef speaks of a communal identity construction (8). The environment shapes a communal identity. The Heideveld environment did not create an opportunity for consistency, differentiation and the development of a positive self-esteem. A communal identity has been constructed about the way that young, coloured men in Heideveld are perceived. This could support the fact that almost all occupations are done within a peer group.

The above-mentioned factors which influence their identity could explain why the young men are prone to violence and drug use. They struggle to form an acceptable identity which helps them to negotiate environmental and peer influences, and to set and achieve goals in their lives.

4.3.7 The occupational nature of communities

Christiansen and Townsend write about the occupational nature of communities. Communities contain groups of people engaging in occupation together, because humans are genetically predisposed to function in groups. Communities flourish when its members are active partners in decision-making, take on a particular identity and generate their own empowerment. Communal participation in occupation generates optimism and hope. Occupations within a community serve many functions, including giving members an opportunity to express their own culture, offer artistic expression, sustain communal life and generate economic as well as social capital. Communities that engage in occupation for the above reasons tend to flourish. (98)

On the other hand, communities that flounder lack shared and organised occupational engagement. Lack of coordination and cooperation within a community undermines the opportunity to develop trust, effective communication and the systems which help to govern and organise a community. Their physical environment should support positive occupational engagement by creating a safe area with enough diversity and resources to support a variety of occupations. Communities flounder when they are isolated and alienated from the occupations that they would like to engage in due to various restrictions. (98)

The Heideveld environment clearly restricts occupational participation due to safety concerns, lack of resources, lack of diversity and lack of mutual respect between community members. It is also burdened by poverty and crime, which limits the occupational rights, freedom and opportunities for participation of the community members (98). The Heideveld community appears to have difficulty in addressing the need for a variety of positive occupations that would improve the well being of all its residents.

4.4 CONCLUSION

Ikiugu emphasises the importance of meaningfulness as an occupational-life-trajectory attractor (12). In these young men's lives meaningfulness is placed on occupations that:

- Attain popularity and acceptance for them within their peer group and the community
- Allow them to compete so that they can display their strength
- Add to their personal understanding of masculinity
- Alleviate boredom, and allow them to escape from their circumstances
- Instill feelings of pride in themselves and their community

These above attractors form the basis of attraction to occupation and therefore determine their occupational-life-trajectories.

Their occupations influence their identity formation, which in turn influences their occupational participation. It becomes difficult to separate the two as they reinforce each other. In their twenties the young men find themselves in a situation where they have vague perceptions of their future goals, but lack the skills and abilities to reach these goals. Currently their identities appear to be fragile and to include a distorted construct of masculinity.

On the positive side, the young men show some initiative in occupational participation. For instance, Spiderman built his own bike and Tyson started a dance group. The young men also showed some resolve to change their lives, but have failed in many instances due to a lack of support, guidance and access to resources. The young men also have intellectual insight into what the "right" and "wrong" thing to do is, even though they are at times unable to act in accordance to these insights.

It is from this conclusion that I will attempt to develop a basis for my intervention programme during the next chapter.

CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The study set out to gain insight into the occupational-life-trajectories of five young men in Heideveld. Two turning points in the occupational-life-trajectories of the participants were identified: one in their early high school years and the other in the early years of adulthood. During both of these periods, the course of their occupational participation seemed to change. Unfortunately, some of the occupational choices made after the first turning point limited their occupational participation after the second turning point. An example of this would be that they left school without completing the school year, limiting their choice of vocational occupations and therefore their employment opportunities.

The limitations imposed by the environment on the participants' occupational trajectories proved to be multifaceted. Within the physical environment factors such as access to transport, danger in terms of gang-violence and crime, lack of recreational areas and few financial resources became barriers to occupational participation. Within the social environment, the young men were influenced by the occupations that they were exposed to by their peer group, family and community members.

Neither the residents of Heideveld nor the environment offered or stimulated a broad range of occupational choices. The participants' choices were persuaded by exposure, peer pressure and their experiences within a restricted and under-resourced context. They received cues from the social environment on what occupations were acceptable and tolerated within the community, such as drug use at a certain age or dropping out of school. The young men engaged in occupations that were familiar to them, just as everyone else does. Their occupations were therefore very similar and lacked diversity in range and challenge. The young men's lack of exposure, resources and experience limited their ability to imagine different occupations.

The participants also engaged in occupations in order to bring relief to monotony and boredom. This often manifested in high-risk occupations, as these were exciting and unusual at first. Through taking a closer look at the development of specific occupations over the course of time, I gained insight into factors that drew the young men to participation in these occupations. I became specifically interested in drug use and gangsterism, as these occupations filled a large portion of the men's narratives. These were occupations that had been familiar to them from childhood, throughout adolescence and early adulthood; they were part of the young men's lived experience. Their occupational choices were reinforced by stereotypes of what the community expected of them, such as dropping out of school to support a family, gang involvement for protection and access to a peer group, early experimentation with drugs, and unskilled labour as a vocational path. It seems that they simply followed the trajectories that others and they themselves expected them to.

The environment (physical, social, historical, socio-economic and cultural) appears to, not only have allowed for, but in some cases, propelled them towards certain high-risk occupations such as drug use and gangsterism. In the case of drug use as an occupation throughout adolescence and adulthood, the community environment provided the exposure to and tolerance of this occupation, the peer environment provided the motivation and opportunity for participation, the socio-economic environment provided easy access drugs and the physical environment provided few resources and variety to engage in alternative occupations. Thus the environment seemed to propel them towards drug use as an occupation.

The five themes that I identified in my findings describe the importance of certain factors on their occupational-life-trajectories and included physical strength and masculinity, the influence of the peer group, the effect of the family environment, the need to look after themselves and wanting to escape their environment/circumstances. These five themes appeared to be the primary drivers behind most of the young men's occupational participation and became the attractors that set the course for their occupational-life-trajectories.

Having taken all of the above into consideration I concluded that an occupation-based programme would impact the lives of the men in Heideveld to a certain extent, but that the environmental and personal influences would remain a barrier to changing their occupational-life-trajectories. In order to see real change, many levels of intervention would be needed. On a personal level the young men would need to form an identity of self-worth and empowerment in order to see themselves differently, set attainable goals, develop the skills necessary to attain these goals and develop self confidence. The young men would need assistance in bridging the gap between what the environment offers them and the skills and competencies necessary to become well-adjusted adults who are able to meet the demands of everyday life in society, both within and beyond Heideveld. In order to achieve this, many different levels and areas of intervention need to be addressed and it may take many years to realise this change. The influence of the person and environment components on occupation (PEO model) is clear within the findings of this study.

I will now continue this chapter by using the insights gained from each theme in order to form a framework that can be used as the foundation of an intervention programme.

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of the study show that there are many barriers to be overcome if the occupational-life-trajectories of young men like those in the study are to be changed in ways that would make a difference to their life choices and therefore to the sort of future that they might experience. I began this study thinking that an occupation-based intervention programme could bring about change in the young men's occupational choices. I now realise that this mode of intervention would only address certain aspects of

their problems such as occupational choices and exposure to different occupations. A multifaceted approach would be necessary to implement widespread change. I will make broad recommendations, both touching on certain influential factors and in terms of an occupational therapy intervention, which I will explain in more detail.

5.2.1 Multifaceted recommendations

I will now make recommendations in terms of different environmental and personal factors that influenced the occupational-life-trajectories of the young men in my study and the different support structures and government departments that could be partnered with. The following figure provides an overview of the levels of intervention and support structures available.

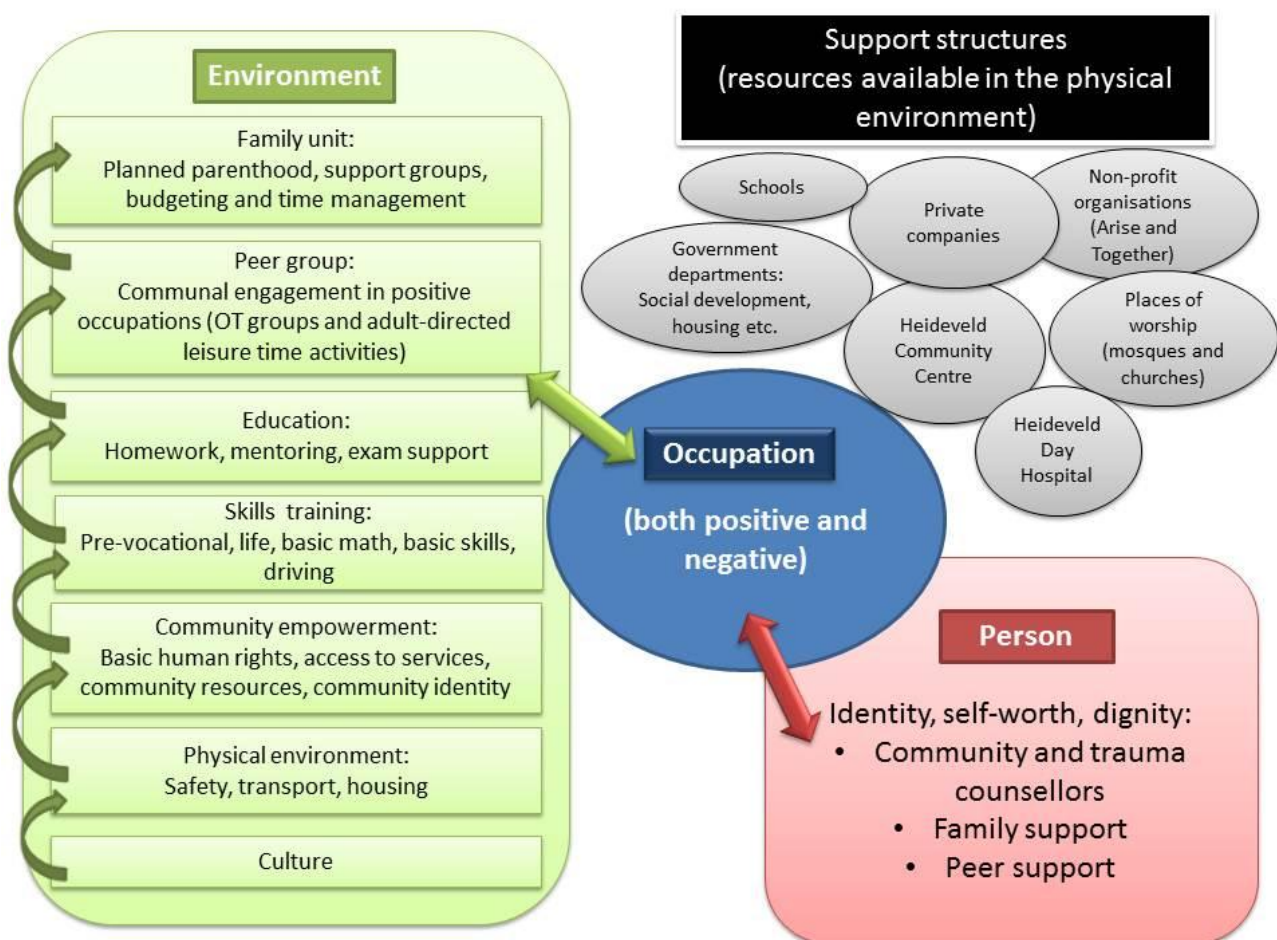


Figure 3: An adaptation of the PEO model depicting the multifaceted factors that would need to be addressed in order to bring about a change in the occupational-life-trajectories of the participants in my study (and others like them):

5.2.1.1 Social intervention

The theme “ek het baie problems by die huis gehet” / “I had many problems at home” and “ons loop saam” / “we walk together” (meaning peer group support of one another, both literally and figuratively) displays examples of how the family and peer environment influenced the young men’s occupational choices.

Empowering and upliftment of the family unit could possibly bring about change in the occupational-life-trajectories of boys in Heideveld. One could provide guidance for parents in order for the young men to receive more support within their family environment which would form a stable backdrop for their occupational engagement. Family-based interventions should aim to provide support in terms of negotiating obstacles and stressors specific to their contexts. This can include family-planning clinics, parenting workshops (focused on behavioural change as well as practical skills acquisition), single parent support groups and basic time budgeting and time management workshops. One could make use of Arise Centre²³ and the Day Hospital to facilitate these interventions.

The young men also need role-models from their environment. A mentoring programme could be a possible way of meeting this need as well as a support group for men wanting to leave gangsterism. These groups could possibly be held at the Community Centre and involve the support from local churches and mosques.

5.2.1.2 Educational support

More research is necessary in order to find out why the young men repeatedly failed their grades and how to prevent them from dropping out of school. Family and community support is a significant influential factor and the importance placed on education within the community needs to be addressed. The young men need multiple levels of support in order to finish their school education. Some suggestions include homework groups, mentoring programmes and exam preparations. Together could involve local schools and other non-profit organisations in order to implement these interventions.

5.2.1.3 Skills training

The young men who were unable to finish school require skills training if they are to find work in the open labour market. My suggestions include basic skills such as carpentry, building and tiling; learning to drive and getting a license; learning to put together a CV; basic math skills; communication, conflict management and other skills that would enable their transition into the open labour market. One could partner with corporate companies and the department of labour in this respect²⁴.

5.2.1.4 Community mobilisation

It is necessary to empower the community in terms of access to services, education of their basic human rights, availability of resources within Heideveld and the development of a positive and supportive community identity. An example would be teaching women (and men if needed) about the different kinds

²³ Arise Centre promotes and supports foster care and adoption. They also aim to support and strengthen existing family structures within the Heideveld community (103).

²⁴ Companies may be hesitant to become involved in social projects as return-on-investment might be marginal. One could explore government funded and assisted projects and possible tax benefits as an incentive. Companies with a vision of social responsibility and community investment could be approached first.

of abuse and how to gain access to legal support. I suggest using PhotoVoice as a method of initiating discussion, identifying problems within the community and developing appropriate intervention from there. Local government and policy makers can be invited to the discussion and approached for support.

5.2.1.5 Physical environment

Residents perceive Heideveld as unsafe and studies have shown that there are high levels of violent crime (34). The sense of insecurity impacts on community mobility and therefore occupational participation. The police department could become involved to address this issue²⁵. Private citizens could also form a community watch in order to ensure the community's safety.

Over-crowding of houses and children and adults staying in one room or sleeping on one bed is also a cause for concern. Social services and the department of housing are possible partners in addressing these problems.

The physical environment can also be influenced by change on a personal and community level: interventions focusing on dignity, respect, community identity, positive occupational participation, motivation, vocational occupations and many others could have an impact on the physical environment of Heideveld.

5.2.1.6 Culture

Culture will always remain part of the environment in which occupation occurs. The cultural context influences: the importance that is placed on specific occupations, the way the community views the young men, communication between community members, family structures and gender roles. This needs to be taken into consideration in any mode and level of intervention.

5.2.1.7 Personal factors

In the presentation of themes that I identified, "Ons gee nie krag weg nie" / "We don't give away power," I gave examples of factors that influence the identity construction and self-worth of the young men. These need to be addressed in order for the young men to become capable in making their own choices, setting goals, taking responsibility and becoming well-adapted members of society. Community counsellors and trauma counsellor could help the young men deal with the many traumas that they have experienced. They also need emotional support from friends and family. Self-worth and identity can also be addressed through meaningful occupational engagement.

²⁵ From my engagement with a few community members I experienced that the community mistrusts the police. Mediated talks and focus groups between the police and community members might be a possible way forward.

As my research focused on young men's occupations, I have very little information from my findings on how to implement interventions aimed at the broader community. However I did find that there is a need for intervention on a family, educational and community level and that it affects the occupational-life-trajectories of the young men in my study. The above are suggestions on how to proceed, but further reading is necessary, specifically on research done into family and community-based intervention within historically disadvantaged and poorly-resourced settings in South Africa. However, this falls outside the scope of my study and is simply a recommendation for others who may proceed in this direction.

A possible avenue to explore is the involvement of universities and other tertiary institutions in multifaceted community intervention. Different departments could become involved and different government and corporate funding avenues accessed.

5.2.2 Occupational therapy intervention

I used the themes from my findings in order to form the basis of an occupational therapy intervention programme focused on boys of primary school age groups. I suggest that intervention should be focused here, before the first "turning point", as this is the time to develop the skills needed to handle obstacles later in life. Initially I had decided to aim this intervention programme at young men between the ages of 20 to 25 years, as this group is where I first noticed the problem. Through my study, I have come to recognise that the problems regarding their current occupational engagement start at a much earlier age. I feel that one can make a larger impact by aiming intervention at primary school-aged boys as well as reaching a larger number of boys. Once the young men are involved with drug use an array of new obstacles present themselves such as: addiction, side-effects of drug use, financial implications of drug use, low motivational levels to attend school, among others. In terms of education it is also better to implement intervention at an early age, when they are still forming school-going behaviour and have not fallen too far behind in their education. This does not mean that nothing can be done for men like the ones in my study, but as far as our resources at Together and a possible mode of intervention goes, the younger age group is a priority. At Together, we already have access to primary school-aged boys in our weekly programme, and we can simply expand our intervention. It might be the domain of another organisation to work with young men in their early twenties.

5.2.2.1 Younger boys as a target group:

Boys of primary school age, preferably ages 10 to 14 years (or until they leave for high school), will be the target group. I recommend that the groups should start at the age of 10, because before that age a boy might lack the cognitive ability and insight to participate in these groups. It is also important to keep a sense of homogeneity within the group. By deciding on a four-year age range I hope that the boys will engage in the same activities, experience similar problems and be able to form a peer support network. If

this proves to be too wide of a range and the boys in the group are unable to identify with each other, the groups can be broken into the ages of 10 to 11, and 12 to 14 years (for practical reasons).

Table 5: An overview of suggested occupational therapy interventions targeting younger boys (aged 10-14) in Heideveld

Activity:	Intervention method:	Purpose:	Theme:
Recreational activity groups	Sport group Dance group Music group Craft group	Providing a range of recreational options and opportunities. Providing peer support through engagement in similar activities. Developing certain skills such as teamwork, planning, perseverance and specific client factors ²⁶ depending on the activity. Developing a sense of belonging and aiding the formation of self-worth and a positive identity.	Ons gee nie krag weg nie / <i>We don't give away power</i> Ons loop saam / <i>We "hang out" together</i>
Support group (this should be given a socially acceptable name- the group members could possibly choose the name)	Life skills Discussions Possible visits by role models, previous gang members or experts in specific fields such as drug addiction to develop emotional insight.	Building life skills necessary for negotiating a fulfilled and satisfying life, such as communication skills, conflict and stress management. Assisting the group members in forming clear future goals and formulating the steps necessary to reach those goals. Providing peer support and helping them to develop insight about the fact that there are others who are in a similar situation as they are. Developing emotional insight (versus the intellectual insight that they currently have) into the dangers of high-risk occupations such as gangsterism and drug dealing, and how engagement in these occupations affects your future.	Ons gee nie krag weg nie / <i>We don't give away power</i> Die lewe is swaar hier buite / <i>Life is hard out here</i> (this theme could be addressed by providing skills to help them cope with life's challenges)
Educational support	Study groups	Providing for assistance in planning for exams and implementing different study methods. Empowering the boys in terms of learning how to gain access to resources, take responsibility (for instance starting a study group) and seek help.	Die lewe is swaar hier buite / <i>Life is hard out here</i>
Mentoring programme	Weekly/monthly meetings with a mentor	Finding appropriate role models from whom acceptable occupational choices and appropriate behaviour can be learned. Providing guidance in value clarification.	Die lewe is swaar hier buite / <i>Life is hard out here</i>

²⁶ Examples of other client factors would be: mood, self-esteem, confidence, motivation, assertiveness, endurance, decision making, planning and coping with aggression, amongst others.

The above table is meant to form the basis of an intervention programme that would set out to influence the occupational-life-trajectories of boys, and eventually young men, in Heideveld. This programme needs expansion in terms of resources, expected outcomes, indicators and other factors. I suggest using the Logic Model (see Appendix G) as a tool for programme planning, monitoring and evaluation of the programme (99) (100).

5.3 IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study contributes to the understanding of the identified issues surrounding the occupations of the young men in my study who live in a socio-economically and historically disadvantaged community. This study may be used as the starting point for planning an intervention programme that aims to influence the occupational-life-trajectories of boys and men within Heideveld community.

The study also emphasises the multifaceted nature of occupation. It found that many factors influenced the occupational choice, occupational participation and therefore occupational-life-trajectories of young men in Heideveld, as illustrated by the five themes. The findings form the starting point for further exploration of the issues that emerged. This study highlighted the lived experience of a handful of young men. Each emerging theme lends itself to further exploration and more in-depth research.

5.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

There are certain limitations in the method as well as in the analysis and the interpretation of the data.

5.4.1 Method

The method I used was a collective case study, which made use of in-depth interviews to gain access to the data. This method prevented the generalisability of the findings, but it did provide a depth of information that could not have been realised using quantitative methods. The findings cannot be extrapolated to the entire Heideveld or Cape Flats area, but many of the incidences and circumstances described by the respondents corroborate the writings of other researchers.

In terms of member checking, I was only able to member check with two men who I had interviewed. In the absence of the other three men, I used another man from the community that matched the criteria of my participants. The lack of member checking limited the opportunity to confirm that what I had come to understand through transcription and analysis was correct and to ask follow-up questions. This impacted on my ability to confirm the depth of my understanding of the situation.

5.4.2 Time constraints and nature of the study

Due to time constraints and the nature of this study as a research assignment, I was unable to use additional methods of data collection, such as participant observation and follow-up interviews. This restricted the amount of information and understanding that I was able to gain. I was only able to gather information about what the participants remembered and chose to share with me on the specific day of the interview.

5.4.3 Authenticity

I am unable to verify the authenticity of the information that the participants shared. Some events could perhaps have been emphasised more than others, for a variety of different reasons; dates could be incorrect and content may be inaccurate; or the young men could possibly not have remembered the precise details surrounding an event or story. I do, however, feel that the data rings true, as the young men's accounts share many similarities and their stories coincide with published research as well as with observations that I myself made during my time in Heideveld.

5.4.4 Occupation

I noticed that the young men did not expand on their sexual occupations during the interviews. I suspect that my gender prevented them from feeling comfortable in sharing the details surrounding these with me. The participants appeared to respect me to an extent and could have seen the sharing of their sexual encounters as disrespectful. If these included stories of disrespect or abuse towards women, they would have been even less likely to share them with me.

The only mention of sexual occupations would be metaphorically, for instance when Spiderman told me what they used to do when they skipped school: When he and his friends bunked school, they would take a few girls with them and go to a friend's house "...dan sit ons daar vir 'n hele halwe dag. Speel music, lê op die bed saam die kinders (meisies). Elkeen sy eie kind (meisie). Lekker sweet talkies... en da gaan jy" / *"...then we sit there for an entire half a day. Play music, lie on the bed with the children (girls). Each one their own child (girl). Sweet talking... and, there you go"* (Spiderman, line 108-109). The other men used similar wording when talking about sexual encounters. However, they did not expand, and I did not gain enough information about this occupation to explore it in detail. One could also interpret their lack of detail in terms of sexual occupations as a positive sign. They possess the necessary social skills to know that it is inappropriate to talk about your sexual encounters in detail with a relative stranger, especially if she is female.

5.4.5 Personal attributes of the researcher

I was also limited by my standing in the Heideveld community. I work for a community organisation and the young men had often seen me before they became involved in the study. I think the relationship they have formed with me was complex: respectful and comfortable enough for them to share their life stories, but avoiding detail with regards to certain subjects. I am a white, educated female who was working within Heideveld but I was still an outsider, from a background and community that differs from their own. These factors could possibly have led them to feel that they could not share certain occupations with me, for fear of judgment. For example, when I asked specifically about occupations such as hijacking and other gang-related activities, the young men denied ever participating in these.

Though I aimed to be subjective, my own background, values, personality and other attributes impacted my understanding of the situation and thus my analysis of the data. Another researcher might have interpreted the data differently and have developed different themes.

5.5 STRENGTHS OF THE STUDY

5.5.1 Transferability

Even though the findings are not statistically generalisable, they are transferable. By looking at certain factors such as history, socio-economic background, income, physical environment and gender the findings could be used to understand the occupational-life-trajectories of men in similar circumstances. It is likely that most of the young men in Heideveld engage in some similar occupations as the participants in this study because they all share similar influences.

Secondly some of the findings and motivating factors are transferable to other, similar, communities: specifically the large impact that the family environment, community, peer group and identity had on the young men's occupational-life-trajectories. The background information in the introduction would enable researchers to make comparisons with other communities. By looking at the factors mentioned in the previous paragraph, other communities can be identified as "similar" communities. The occupational-life-trajectories of young men in those communities may be similar to the occupations of the young men in Heideveld.

5.5.2 Intervention programmes

This research could be used as a guide for occupational therapy intervention programmes in both Heideveld and similar communities. The framework set out under the recommendations could be a useful starting point. The insight gained in this research into the young men's occupational-life-trajectories contributes to the development of community based intervention programmes for boys and young men.

5.5.3 Student placement

This research gives a descriptive, analytical background on the five young men in Heideveld. Tertiary institutions could use this information to guide student placement. It is valuable in terms of getting to know the community and also guiding students in terms of occupational intervention within similar communities.

5.6 FURTHER RESEARCH

Future research should expand on the information gathered during this study. This can be done in several ways:

5.6.1 Action research

The development and implementation of an occupational therapy intervention programme for young men in Heideveld could take the form of an action research study. This approach takes real situations and makes changes within the situation, while evaluating the impact of the change. Knowledge will be gained through action.

5.6.2 Expansion using different methods

An ethnographical study could be useful to explore the issue further and gain even more information on occupational-life-trajectories. This would entail participant observation, prolonged engagement and more interviews over a longer period of time

5.6.3 Focused studies

Studies could be done to focus specifically on different themes within the context of occupation. There is a wide scope for research which would gain a fuller understanding of the different themes within the context of historically and socio-economically disadvantaged communities.

5.6.4 Repetition of this study in a different location

This study could be repeated in other areas where young men who have similar historical backgrounds are living in conditions of poverty. The information from this study could form the basis of planning a similar study. This study could also be repeated in areas where people of a different race or language live in order to gain a wider understanding of the occupational-life-trajectories of young men in South Africa.

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Appendices

Appendix A: A summary of key Acts and events that historically influenced the civil rights of coloured people

Table 6: Key Acts and events that influenced the civil rights of coloured people (30), (31), (32)

Year	Event
1910	The self-governing Union of South Africa was created
1913	The Black (or Natives) Land Act prevented all non-whites from buying or renting land outside of allocated reserves. The reserves constituted only about 7% of South Africa's land.
1921	The Juvenile Affairs Act ensured the placement of only white youth into appropriate employment
1922	The Apprenticeship Act stipulated educational entry levels that were only attainable in white schools
1923	The Natives (Urban Areas) Act required all non-white people over the age of 16 to carry a permit on them at all times. These permit books stipulated where, when and for how long they could be in a certain area.
1925	The Minimum Wages Act was a form of reserving certain trades for white people and promoting white employment
1926	The Mines and Works Act (Coloured Bar Act) prevented non-whites from practicing skilled trades
1932	Carnegie Commission set up to deal with "poor white" problem. Strategies included job reservation and wage-fixing mechanisms
1937	Wilcocks Commission of Inquiry into the Cape Coloureds defined coloured people as "...a residual group, including all persons not of unmixed European descent, or of unmixed Bantu descent, or of unmixed Asian descent, unless ordinarily accepted as Coloured people" p23 (29)
1945	Native's (Urban Areas) Consolidation Act imposed the same restrictions as the 1923 Act.
1945	Cape Coloured Liquor Commission found that 40% of all Coloured convictions were linked to alcohol. They did not take into consideration that the police often explicitly targeted gatherings organized around alcohol. The 'tot system' in which farm labourers, particularly in the Western Cape vineyards, were paid in alcohol also played a large role.
1948	The National Party wins the general national election
1950	The Group Areas Act created different residential areas for different races
1950	The Population Registration Act forced every person to be registered according to a different racial group. Initially there were 3 classifications: European (White), Native (African) and Coloured (Mixed race). Later on the government added "Asiatic" for Indian and other Asian people. A Race Classification Board was set up for those who could not easily be identified and placed into a specific racial group.
1950	Commission of Inquiry into Deviate Children (Non-European) was founded
1951	Department of Coloured Affairs became a division within the Ministry of Interior. Over the years it oversaw welfare provisions, vocational training, information services and educational services for coloureds.
1951	The Separate representation of voter's Act removed coloured people from the voter's roll. Three MP's were selected to represent coloured people in parliament. This robbed them of their own parliamentary representation.
1955	The Coloured Labour Preference Policy privileged Coloured labour over African labour in certain parts of the Western Cape

1961	Nationalist party argued that separate development should not be understood as a hierarchy. They coined the term “separate but equal”. p29, (29)
1963-1969	Heideveld was constructed as part of the Department of Community Development’s plan to construct low-cost housing for coloured people.
1969	The Department of Coloured Affairs ceased to exist and became the Coloured Persons Representative Council. Investigated matters of unequal pay, white resistance to taking orders from Coloureds and delegation of political powers.
1978	The Coloured Persons Representative Council was terminated
1980’s	Intense violence escalated with frequent boycotts. Townships became “no-go” zones for white people. Students and teachers from Heideveld protested vehemently against the apartheid regime.
1986	Large scale consumer boycotts against South Africa
1994	ANC won the first inclusive national election, which marked the end of Apartheid
1996-1999	Flare-ups of gang violence in the Cape Flats

Appendix B: An overview of statistics regarding language, employment, income and education of Ward 044 residents in 2011.

Table 7: Heideveld statistics (34)

Race	57,1% Coloured	40,2% Black African	0,8% Asian/Indian	0.1% White
Age	0-4 yrs old 10.1%	5-14 yrs old 15,5%	15-24 yrs 19,4%	25-64 yrs 48,8%
Education	Some secondary 47,7%	Grade 12 27,3%	Higher 6,3%	No schooling 2,1%
Income	Income between R1- R1600 pm 22,9%	Unemployed 18,9%		
Type of dwelling	Formal dwelling 84,3%	Informal dwelling/ shack in backyard 8%	Informal dwelling/ shack not in backyard 6,8%	Other 0,9%

Appendix C: The Matrix of Needs and Satisfiers

Max-Neef defined human needs according to existential needs and axiological needs. The existential needs are: Needs of Being, Doing, Having and Interacting. The axiological needs are: Need for Subsistence, Protection, Affection, Understanding, Participation, Idleness, Creation, Identity and Freedom. (8)

Satisfiers are seen as ways and methods of fulfilling human needs. Food and shelter are then not needs, but satisfiers of the need for subsistence (and possibly other needs). Satisfiers can contribute to the satisfaction of many needs. (8) The Matrix of Needs and Satisfiers aids in the explanation of the relationship between the above-mentioned components (8), p32.

Table 8: The Matrix of Needs and Satisfiers (8)

Fundamental Human Needs	Being (qualities)	Having (things)	Doing (actions)	Interacting (settings)
subsistence	physical and mental health	food, shelter work	feed, clothe, rest, work	living environment, social setting
protection	care, adaptability autonomy	social security, health systems, work	co-operate, plan, take care of, help	social environment, dwelling
affection	respect, sense of humour, generosity, sensuality	friendships, family, relationships with nature	share, take care of, make love, express emotions	privacy, intimate spaces of togetherness
understanding	critical capacity, curiosity, intuition	literature, teachers, policies educational	analyse, study, meditate investigate,	schools, families universities, communities,
participation	receptiveness, dedication, sense of humour	responsibilities, duties, work, rights	cooperate, dissent, express opinions	associations, parties, POW*, neighbourhoods
leisure	imagination, tranquillity spontaneity	games, parties, peace of mind	day-dream, remember, relax, have fun	landscapes, intimate spaces, places to be alone
creation	imagination, boldness, inventiveness, curiosity	abilities, skills, work, techniques	invent, build, design, work, compose, interpret	spaces for expression, workshops, audiences
identity	sense of belonging, self-esteem, consistency	language, religions, work, customs, values, norms	get to know oneself, grow, commit oneself	places one belongs to, everyday settings
freedom	autonomy, passion, self-esteem, open-mindedness	equal rights	dissent, choose, run risks, develop awareness	anywhere

*POW - Place of worship

Satisfiers are classified according to the following categories:

Destroyers: “When applied with the intention of satisfying a given need, not only do they annihilate the possibility of its satisfaction over time, but they also impair the adequate satisfaction of other needs”. An example of this would be an arms race, which is originally aimed at satisfying the need for protection, but inhibits the satisfaction of the need for subsistence, affection and participation. (8), p34

Pseudo-satisfiers: "...are elements that generate a false sense of satisfaction of a given need". They could, in the long term, inhibit or destroy the possibility of satisfying the need that they intended to fulfill. An example of this could be the exploitation of natural resources, which in the end inhibits the need for subsistence, in the long run. (8), p34

Inhibiting satisfiers: "...generally over satisfy a given need, therefore seriously curtails the possibility of satisfying other needs". Unlimited permissiveness is an example, where it over satisfies the need for freedom, but protection, identity, affection and participation are inhibited. (8), p36

Singular satisfiers: "...satisfy only one particular need". Assistance programmes and development plans generally fall into this category of satisfiers e.g. housing projects. (8), p36

Synergetic satisfiers: "...satisfy a given need, while simultaneously stimulating and contributing towards the fulfillment of other needs". Breast-feeding is an example, where it satisfies the need for subsistence, but also contributes towards protection, affection and identity. (8), p36

Appendix D: Guiding questions for interviews

Question 1: "Can you remember what you used to do as a child?" / "What do you remember from childhood?" / "How did you keep yourself busy as a child?"

Question 2: "What did you do in school?" / "Did you participate in any activities in school?" / "What did you and your friends do during and/or after school?"

Question 3: "How did you keep yourself busy after you left school?" / "What did you do during the day after you left school?"

Question 4: "How do you keep yourself busy at the moment?" / "Describe a normal day to me?"

All of the questions were not used in every interview. The choice of questions depended on information that the participant had already shared with me, and the course that the interview took. I asked questions to guide participants and help them to focus on the age that they needed to think about, and when the participant went off-track during the interview, but I mostly left the participants to share information as they wished. This strategy proved fruitful and I gained access to the information that I had set out to acquire. The photographs also proved useful in facilitating the discussion.

Appendix E: Informed consent form

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION LEAFLET AND CONSENT FORM

An exploration of the occupational-life-trajectories of five young men from the Heideveld community.

Karlien du Preez

20 Bow Bells
Derwent Street
Tamboerskloof
Cape Town
8001

Contact nr: 083 655 2454

Dear participant

You are being invited to take part in a research project. Please take some time to read the information presented here, which will explain the details of this project. Please ask the researcher any questions about any part of this project that you do not fully understand. It is very important that you are fully satisfied that you clearly understand what this research entails and how you could be involved. Also, your participation is **entirely voluntary** and you are free to decline to participate. If you say no, this will not affect you negatively in any way whatsoever. You are also free to withdraw from the study at any point, even if you do agree to take part.

This study has been approved by the **Health Research Ethics Committee at Stellenbosch University** and will be conducted according to the ethical guidelines and principles of the international Declaration of Helsinki, South African Guidelines for Good Clinical Practice and the Medical Research Council (MRC) Ethical Guidelines for Research.

What is this research study all about?

This study is about finding out what types of activities you and other men from the community engaged in during your lifetime. The study will be conducted in the Heideveld community, with you and five other men from the community. In doing this study we aim to understand the main activities in your lives better, so that we can know more when trying to start projects in the community.

This study asks your involvement in the following way:

- You will be part of an orientation group, during March 2012, along with all the other participants. Here we will talk in the group about the activities that you were involved in during your life. This group will take 1-2 hours.
- During this group you will be handed camera to take pictures of other males (children, teenagers or young men) doing activities that you did during your life. You can also take pictures of yourself and your friends doing activities in your normal day. This will be explained in further detail during the orientation group.
- During April or May 2012 you will participate in an individual interview with the researcher. She will ask questions in more detail on the activities that you participated in during your life. This will also take 1-2 hours.

Why have you been invited to participate?

We are inviting a few men between the ages of 20-25 from the community to participate. We chose men by finding out from others in the community who will be willing to participate.

What will your responsibilities be?

You will need to meet me for the orientation group in March and for the interview in April or May. You will need to get to the place where we will do the interviews yourself. We will discuss where you will feel comfortable to do the interview and meet at that place. The focus group will be done at 9 Badsberg Close, Heideveld.

Will you benefit from taking part in this research?

By taking part in this research you will help us to understand your life and your community better.

Are there in risks involved in your taking part in this research?

There are no risks involved in taking part in this research.

If you do not agree to take part, what alternatives do you have?

If you chose not to take part, there will be no consequences. You can leave any time you want to.

Will you be paid to take part in this study and are there any costs involved?

You will be paid R50 for participating in the interview, on the day of the interview. There will be no costs involved for you, if you do take part.

Is there anything else that you should know or do?

- You can contact the Health Research Ethics Committee at 021-938 9207 if you have any concerns or complaints that have not been adequately addressed by your study doctor.
- You will receive a copy of this information and consent form for your own records.

Declaration by participant

By signing below, I agree to take part in a research study entitled (*insert title of study*).

I declare that:

- I have read or had read to me this information and consent form and it is written in a language with which I am fluent and comfortable.
- I have had a chance to ask questions and all my questions have been adequately answered.
- I understand that taking part in this study is **voluntary** and I have not been pressurised to take part.
- I may choose to leave the study at any time and will not be penalised or prejudiced in any way.
- I may be asked to leave the study before it has finished, if the study doctor or researcher feels it is in my best interests, or if I do not follow the study plan, as agreed to.

Signed at (*place*) on (*date*) 2012.

.....
Signature of participant

.....
Signature of witness

Declaration by investigator

I (*name*) declare that:

- I explained the information in this document to
- I encouraged him/her to ask questions and took adequate time to answer them.
- I am satisfied that he/she adequately understands all aspects of the research, as discussed above
- I did/did not use an interpreter. (*If an interpreter is used then the interpreter must sign the declaration below.*)

Signed at (*place*) on (*date*) 2012.

.....
Signature of investigator

.....
Signature of witness

Appendix F: Summary of the occupations of the participants over time

Table 9: Summary of Tyson's occupations over time

Age group	Category	Occupation
Childhood (5-10 years old)	<i>Free time</i>	Playing in the park Going to the beach with his mother and friends Going on trips with his mother to Signal Hill and other sights around Cape Town
	<i>School</i>	Attending class Bunking school
Adolescence	<i>Free time</i>	Cricket Soccer Freestyle dancing Playing pool Hanging around in the streets Riding bicycle Hanging out with girls Fighting with other boys Gang-related activities conducted in a friendship group Listening to stories told by his grandfather Experimenting with marijuana and cigarettes Stealing scrap metal to sell for money
	<i>School</i>	Attending class Being teased by other boys Taking part in fights Dropping out of school
Young adulthood (19yrs-present)	<i>Free time</i>	Doing hard drugs (Tik and Mandrax) Smoking marijuana Drinking alcohol Waiting for interviews Hanging out in the street Working out Playing Sony Playstation (video game) Thinking about the future
	<i>Income generation</i>	Working at a construction company Working as a builder Installing ceilings Laying tiles Dog fights

Table 10: Summary of Slim Shady's occupations over time

Age group	Category	Occupation
Childhood (5-10 years old)	<i>Free time</i>	Playing in the park Playing soccer From age 9 he started playing soccer for a club
	<i>School</i>	Attending class
Adolescence	<i>Free time</i>	Playing club soccer Playing volleyball for Western Province team Playing athletics for his school team Experimenting with drugs and cigarettes Hanging out with girls Bunking school Playing video games Dropping out of school
	<i>School</i>	Attending class Bunking school Doing drugs at school Dropping out of school
Young adulthood (19yrs-present)	<i>Free time</i>	Doing Tik Hanging out with his friends Drinking Taking girls to his place that he rented in Gugulethu Gangsterism- part of the West Siders gang Fighting Going to parties Informal soccer games Working out on a friend's gym equipment Breeding with dogs Dog fights Sleeping (sometimes till 12'o'clock in the day)
	<i>Income generation</i>	Installing ceilings together with his brother- manual labour Packing pallets and marking newspapers for the Cape Argus newspaper Working for Shoprite loading trucks and putting stickers on boxes Installing wooden staircases Sorting returned items for Pick n Pay

Table 11: Summary of Bollie's occupations over time

Age group	Category	Occupation
Childhood (5-10 years old)	<i>Free time</i>	Playing marbles Playing soccer Playing basketball Playing cricket Helping his grandmother in the garden
	<i>School</i>	Attending class Fighting with other boys in school
Adolescence	<i>Free time</i>	Playing trumpet for his uncle's band (Kaapse klopse) Attending a music school Taking care of his pet doves Athlet Hanging out with girls Making his own weights Working out Experimenting with marijuana and cigarettes Fighting with rival gangs Drinking alcohol
	<i>School</i>	Joining a gang and hanging out with gang members at school Selling cigarettes as part of gang activities Drinking at school Bunking school Dropping out of school
Young adulthood (19yrs-present)	<i>Free time</i>	Robbing people with a gun Smoking marijuana Taking trips to the beach Playing with the Kaapse Klopse occasionally Watching movies Playing video games Making lunch or dinner with his friends Hanging out with his friends at his house or on the street Playing informal soccer in the park or in the street Listening to music Working out at a friend's house Breeding with puppies
	<i>Income generation</i>	Worked at Truworths warehouse Worked a contract position sorting bottles for Coca Cola Company

Table 12: Summary of Spiderman’s occupations over time

Age group	Category	Occupation
Childhood (5-10 years old)	<i>Free time</i>	Playing soccer Playing cricket Visiting his father Going to the beach with his family
	<i>School</i>	Attending class Forming a gang called “West side” Fighting with other boys in school
Adolescence (11-18 yrs)	<i>Free time</i>	Playing pool Family trips to the beach Playing in the park Going with his friends to Grand West Casino, Century City or Campsbay Attending rave clubs Building up his own bicycle Cycling to different places Taking girls to his or a friend’s house Experimenting with Tik, heroin and mandrax Working as a sliding door operator on his uncle’s taxi Teaching himself how to drive Entertaining his friends and having parties Robbing people
	<i>School</i>	Attending class Hanging out with girls Joining a gang at school Bunking school Being expelled from school
Young adulthood (19yrs-present)	<i>Free time</i>	Smoking Marijuana Hanging out with gang members Taking trips with his friends to the beach or signal hill Working out Dog fighting Hanging out in the street Watching movies Sharing meals with his friends Spending time with his girlfriend
	<i>Other</i>	Spending time in prison
	<i>Income generation</i>	Driving taxi’s Working for a Cape Town bus company as a cleaner

Table 13: Summary of Tom's occupations over time

Age group	Category	Occupation
Childhood (5-10 years old)	<i>Free time</i>	Drawing pictures Playing soccer
	<i>School</i>	Faking illness in order to bunk school Attending class Taking part in a drawing competition
Adolescence (11-18 yrs)	<i>Free time</i>	Smoking Marijuana Experimenting with Tik Robbing people Gangsterism Fighting with other gangs Drinking and socialising with his friends Watching soccer
	<i>School</i>	Attending class Spending extra time on a subject he specifically liked: civil technology
Young adulthood (19yrs-present)	<i>Free time</i>	Watching movies Playing soccer Playing hand tennis Hanging out in the street with his friends Drinking Watching soccer Cigarette smoking
	<i>Other</i>	
	<i>Income generation</i>	Working as a manual labourer on a construction site Assists a man doing odd jobs such as carpentry and pumbing Assisting his friend who is a DJ, when he is playing a gig Stealing scrap metal from people's yards

Appendix G: Logic Model Worksheet

Table 14 : A worksheet according to which the logic model can be used to plan, monitor and implement intervention (99), (100)

Focus	Resources	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	Impact
Planning and development					
Implementation/Operations					
Monitoring and Evaluation					