

The educational value of cultural awareness

The past and future of youth with an African background



Share. Think. Act



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Introduction

With the support of the European Erasmus+ program, welfare organization Swazoom from Amsterdam Zuidoost in co-production with the English youth work organization Share, Think and Act from London has conducted a joint study project about the importance of cultural awareness in youth, for youth work that focuses on youth of African origin. The project took place during the year 2016. This report documents the exploration of this theme based on literature research as well as through inspection of youth work practices in both cities.

Clarification

Especially in larger European cities, many residents with African backgrounds from former colonies have settled down over time. This is also the case in Amsterdam Zuidoost and Lewisham, a London district. Amsterdam Zuidoost harbours many people from Surinam and the Dutch Antilles, as well as from various countries in West-Africa and other parts of the continent. Many people from the Caribbean, but also from many African countries, live in Lewisham and other parts of London. Experience teaches that when youth work that aims to contribute to youths' upbringing as a professional facility may encounter developmental problems in youths from an African background that are related to their cultural background. A central issue is that many of these youths deal with identity problems combined with a lack of confidence and ambitions. Factors like experiences with racial discrimination, limited availability of positive role models at home and in the neighbourhood, and relatively negative conceptualization of culture and background contribute to these issues. It seems like the youths in questions are hindered in their personal and social development by a lack of cultural awareness. To prevent this, throughout their upbringing more attention should be paid to their culture and history, from which they can derive pride.

Research Question

The question, however, is how cultural awareness may be stimulated in a good way through youth work. The methods of youth work in Amsterdam Zuidoost and Lewisham for dealing with this subject matter were reviewed within the scope of the study project 'The best of both worlds'. First, a delegation of youth workers from London visited their colleague youth workers at Swazoom in Amsterdam Zuidoost. Subsequently, a delegation from Amsterdam went to visit in London. During this exchange, projects and youth centres were visited, bilateral discussions were held about methods of dealing with this subject, and youth workers were interviewed extensively about their work. The results of the exchange were recorded in a conceptual report that was presented at the conference on the educational value of cultural awareness held on 25 October 2016 at the Bijlmer Park theatre in Amsterdam Zuidoost. There, youth workers, social workers, and contributors to youth policy from the Netherlands and England entered into conversation with each other about this subject matter. The inspiring results from this discussion will be presented in this report.

Contents

Chapter 1 provides the theoretical framework for cultural awareness of youths from ethnic minority groups. Subsequently the specific contexts in London and Amsterdam Zuidoost are illustrated based on statistical data from the youth populations (chapter 2). In the third chapter, the efforts of youth work in both metropolitan city areas are described, according to several examples of inspiring

programs. The report is concluded with suggestions and recommendations for ways in which attention can be paid to cultural awareness among youths from ethnic minority groups through youth policy in general, and youth work efforts specifically (chapter 4).

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Chapter 1. Theoretical background

Introduction

This chapter outlines the theoretical background of cultural awareness in youths from minority groups in general, and youths from African origin specifically. Several theoretical and empirical insights shine a light on the reality that these youths grow up in, and the roles that cultural awareness and identity development play in finding a place in society. First of all the function of social and cultural capital in youths' development is considered (§ 1). Secondly, the meaning of discrimination and suppression, and the influence these have on youth growing up, is discussed (§ 2). Subsequently, insights into identity development in youths are reviewed, with special attention to the importance of discovering their ethnic identity (§ 3). The chapter is concluded with the possibilities for positive youth policy and techniques for empowerment (§ 4).

§ 1. Social and cultural capital

The socio-economic status of a family not only influences the financial limitations of a household, but also has social-cultural and pedagogic consequences. The fact that many children and youths grow up in poverty, regardless of their ethnic background, not only poses an economic problem, but can furthermore lead to pedagogic poverty. Parents who are constantly worried about a lack of income and the settling of debts experience increased stress, are at a higher risk of physical and psychological problems, and often become insecure about their role as a parent.¹ This risk is especially significant in single mothers that, in many cases, receive limited support from their environment.² This is what youth work professionals observe in their work practice with disorganised families that are dealing with accumulating problems. This leads to stress and tensions that prevent parents from having an overview over- and control of their situation and the upbringing of their children. Poverty, because of the chronic stress that accompanies it, forms an important obstacle for successful parenting.³ However, having the experience of being a good parent has immense value in families that suffer from poverty, since parenting provides essential direction and confidence in this context. This means that great value is placed on the feeling of being a good parent, while the possibilities of realising that feeling are very limited. It is possible that this situation enhances the negative effects of poverty on the interactions and relationships within families.

To distinguish between socio-economic circumstances on the one hand, and social-cultural and pedagogic consequences on the other, sociologist Pierre Bourdieu's theory offers clarifying insights. Bourdieu distinguishes three types of 'capital' that a person may possess: economic capital, cultural capital, and social capital.⁴ Economic capital refers to available financial possibilities, cultural capital concerns an individual's knowledge and skills, and social capital refers to the social network and relations that a person has.

People derive status from the economic, cultural and social capital that they have at their disposal.⁵ Especially the accumulation of types of social and cultural capital that are recognised and appreciated in society, can be viewed as a form of symbolic capital that increases people's chance of a valuable position in society.⁶ A lack of symbolic capital may lead to social exclusion. Living in an

open society is no guarantee for success, since one requires some of each of these capitals to be able to participate. Being well-informed of the unwritten rules of a society is essential for maintaining one's position. The sizes of an individual's economic, cultural and social capital are interrelated and often correlate with the environment in which they grew up.⁷ For example, the financial means available to parents often govern the type of recreational activities that their children can participate in. Those activities in turn influence the children's skill development and social network.

Both having a vulnerable socio-economic position and being a member of an ethnic minority group are often seen as restrictions on the accumulation of symbolic capital and therefore on the consolidation of a position in society.⁸ However, in recent years there has been increasing attention internationally for a concept of 'ethnic capital' that embodies a more valuable relationship between ethnic minority positions or migration histories and the accumulation of (symbolic) capital, in particular in terms of educational achievement and social mobility.⁹ For example, youth from ethnic minority groups in Great Britain were shown to score higher than their white peers in terms of educational achievement, which may be related to their parents' high expectations. The capital that they obtain constitutes an ethos of studying, working hard, and achieving goals.

Conflicting parenting environments

Youth belonging to ethnic minority groups often have to switch between various social environments that can differ from each other strongly. The reality of the family environment in which they grow up is sometimes far from that of their school. In many cases each environment is governed by different rules concerning the behaviour that is expected of them. This can lead to confusion about the expectations different people have of these youths. Both for youth from socioeconomically vulnerable families and immigrant youth it is not rare that the family's, school's, and neighbourhood's parenting environments are conflicting.¹⁰ Youth thus receive conflicting information on how to behave and how the world works throughout their upbringing. In immigrant families, which often come from a more collectivist cultural background, for example, the upbringing can often be classified as stricter and more conformist, with parents more focused on obedience compared to non-immigrant families.¹¹

These three parenting environments that represent conflicting values mostly form independent, isolated environments with their own social networks, between which there is hardly any to no interaction. In many cases there is little contact between the home and school environments. It is known that both primary schools and secondary education facilities often struggle to communicate with lowly educated parents of their students. Conversely, parents are often inexperienced when it comes to supporting their child in their education. Furthermore, there is strain between the school and home cultures on the one hand and the culture of the neighbourhood on the other hand. Many socioeconomically vulnerable families and migrant families live in neighbourhoods with a flourishing street culture that values learning at school and civil decency norms only lowly.¹²

It is essential to take into account the characteristic circumstances that the target groups of the youth work in Amsterdam Zuidoost and London grow up in, in the development of a programme that stimulates them in their personal growth. Showing understanding for the diversity of social and cultural environments that these youths are confronted with, and offering tools that make switching

between these environments and making the right choices for their future easier, are essential in doing so. Examining possibilities to strengthen these youths' social and cultural capital using the productive and valuable starting points that their ethnic backgrounds can offer, can give them the development boost needed to find their place in society. We may speak of success once the youth feels like they belong in society, without having to distance themselves from the cultural upbringing that they enjoy at home.

§ 2. Discrimination and suppression

Discrimination as a concept

The concept of discrimination traditionally refers to making distinctions: treating one person different than another.¹³ Through the years, however, the word discrimination has gained more negative connotations, and the range of definitions that are used nowadays emphasize the aspect of disadvantageous treatment or neglect of groups or individuals based on irrelevant characteristics.¹⁴ People who are discriminated against, experience disadvantages because they are perceived to belong to a certain group. Various types of discrimination may be distinguished, such as conscious and unconscious discrimination, and individual and institutional discrimination.¹⁵ In the case of conscious discrimination, the 'offender' is aware that they are treating people or groups of people disadvantageously, while in the case of unconscious discrimination the 'offender' is unaware. There is moreover a distinction between individual discrimination, in which one person is responsible for his or her own discriminating behaviour, and institutional discrimination in which larger institutions in society operate by rules that favours a majority population over a minority. An example of institutional discrimination is the use of admission- or other examinations that are not culturally independent.

Discrimination is a complex concept in which many factors are at play. In many cases discrimination plays a role below the surface, with many people being unaware of it. Indicators of discrimination include the structural neglect of minority groups compared to the majority, and the experience of discrimination by people from minority groups themselves.¹⁶

People may experience discrimination for any number of reasons like age, gender, sexual preference, or ethnicity. Some categories or groups of people are at higher risk of experiencing discrimination because more negative stereotypes exist about them in a society.¹⁷ This is often the case for minority groups because they are in some way different from the norm in the society. Ethnic minorities are no exception and are often subject to discrimination because in many cases they can be distinguished as belonging to a minority group based on physical characteristics. In the Netherlands a portion of the non-immigrant inhabitants feels resistance to immigrants. In 2010 approximately 40% of the Dutch population reports that they feel like there are too many immigrants.¹⁸ This negative attitude is often based on an overestimation of the number of immigrant minorities in the direct environment, and is strengthened when the number of minorities is perceived to increase quickly.¹⁹ On the other hand, the negative attitude recedes when mutual contact is good.²⁰ This phenomenon can be explained

using the ‘intergroup contact theory’ which describes how negative stereotypes may lessen or disappear by increased experience with and knowledge of the other culture.²¹

Research investigating experienced discrimination among the Dutch population in 2014 shows that, among the non-native population, especially Moroccan and Turkish Dutch people experience discrimination (66% and 64% respectively).²² Furthermore, Surinamese (53%) and Antillean (56%) Dutch people report having experienced discrimination in the previous year. For the native population this percentage is merely 19%. All of these migrant groups mostly experience discrimination based on their ethnic background, but also based on their religion (Moroccan and Turkish Dutch) and their skin tone (Surinamese and Antillean Dutch).

With regard to the situation in England there are several insights into discrimination and ethnic inequalities. For example, a report from the university of Manchester and the Runnymede Trust states that inequalities based on ethnicity are widespread in England and Wales, and may be treated as a persistent phenomenon.²³

Discussed inequalities include inequalities in terms of education, employment, health and housing. Ethnic inequalities in education and housing have even increased in previous years. In districts of London the largest inequality is between white Brits and ethnic groups from Asian or African origins. To what extent these inequalities are related to discrimination was not investigated. However, there are other reports that discuss racism and discrimination in Great Britain. These include among others a study investigating discrimination in the workplace.²⁴ That study showed that unemployment rates are higher, wages are lower and more low-skill jobs are done by members from ethnic minority groups, especially Pakistani, Bengal, Caribbean or African people. These inequalities cannot be explained by differences in age, level of education, or birth abroad since these findings also apply to second-generation immigrants who were thus born in Great Britain. Although this does not mean that all inequalities can be blamed solely on discrimination, there are many indications that ethnicity is a leading basis for unequal treatment. In keeping with these findings, nearly 30 percent of the British population indicates that they are biased against people from a different racial background. This percentage is the same among employers and managers. Furthermore, data about experienced discrimination are an indication of the prevalence of the phenomenon. Among ethnic minorities, 11.4 percent of people report having been rejected for a job based on racial grounds. Especially African minorities (25.7%) and to a lesser degree Caribbean minorities (11.3%) have experienced this. Also so-called ‘field experiments’ in which, for example, identical job applications are sent out under different surnames, indicate that applicants with a West-Indian or Asian ethnicity are discriminated against in 30 percent of cases.²⁵

Expressions of discrimination

Discrimination can be classified into two types of expression: negative treatment and unequal treatment.²⁶ Unequal treatment is often the result of a risk assessment: a certain personality trait is related to an increased risk. For example, consider ethnic profiling by the police, or statistical discrimination on the labour market, wherein employers apply opinions on the expected productivity of specific groups on individual applicants from that group. Negative treatment is often correlated with a lack of societal acceptance of a certain group. Members of this group may for example be

bullied, called names, or even treated with violence based on the notion that they possess negative personality traits. The people giving negative treatment hereby want to create distance between themselves and the group, for example by encouraging an immigrant to 'go back to his own country' or through the negative treatment of homosexual couples in the public space.

Negative treatment and unequal treatment can be the result of stereotypes or prejudices that exist about ethnic minority groups and the homogenous opinion that native people have about them.²⁷

Discrimination can take place in several spaces, among which are the public space, the labour market, educational facilities and a diverse array of other organizations. The latter case may include health care facilities and governmental institutions, but also the police that, as previously mentioned, employs ethnic profiling.

A large portion of the life of the youth takes place in educational settings, one of the spaces in which they can encounter discrimination. This space can also border the labour market, for example in the case of looking for an internship. More than a quarter of Dutch immigrant students has experienced discrimination at some point during their educational career, for example through unfriendly treatment by a teacher or by receiving lower-than-warranted grades.²⁸ Among students who had problems finding an internship, one in three Turkish-Dutch students, one in four Moroccan-Dutch students, and one in five Surinamese-Dutch students thinks that discrimination played a role.

Also in England, youths from ethnic minority groups experience discrimination in education. Youths with an African-Caribbean background are more often chastised for their behaviour, more often receive punishment, and less often receive compliments.²⁹ Furthermore, teachers have structurally lower expectations of African-Caribbean youths due to among other things negative stereotypes.³⁰

Consequences of discrimination

Experiencing discrimination can have severe impact on people's lives. For example, a Dutch study showed that experiencing discrimination in education affects motivation, absence and wellbeing of students.³¹ Of all students that report having experienced discrimination in education, two thirds enjoy going to school less, nearly half have reduced self-esteem, and a third is less conscientious after having experienced discrimination.

Discrimination can thus make people feel worse or perform worse. British research focuses on the fear of failure and hopelessness that individuals from an African-Caribbean background develop because they experience throughout their life that not just performance, but also skin tone influences success.³² Another Dutch study discusses the possibility of reduced social participation due to individuals feeling like they are not offered an honest chance of getting a job.³³

This can even lead to a complete halt of the job search, which may result in social isolation and reduced income, which in turn leads to lowered socioeconomic status. In this way, discrimination can therefore maintain the low socioeconomic status of many ethnic minorities: a chicken-and-egg situation. Moreover, discrimination was shown to not only negatively affect the individuals

experiencing it, but also their social environment. Especially youth often share these experiences with family and friends, with the result that the community as a whole starts to feel suppressed.³⁴

In these ways, discrimination can influence the society as a whole strongly. Potential talents cannot flourish and social participation declines, with serious financial consequences such as costs for welfare and poverty reduction.³⁵

Beside the negative effects on a societal level, the experience of discrimination furthermore influences the health and wellbeing of individuals.³⁶ Especially mental health suffers from discrimination: depression and lower self-esteem occur often among people who deal with discrimination often, especially among children and adolescents.³⁷ Consequences for physical health, such as high blood pressure, overweight and health-related behaviours like smoking or bad eating habits were furthermore investigated.³⁸

Dealing with discrimination

The effects of experienced discrimination turn out to decrease as people get older. This might have to do with the coping strategies that people develop throughout their own life.³⁹ There are different ways of dealing with discrimination, but especially looking for social support was shown to play an important role.⁴⁰ Youth from an African-Caribbean background often become aware of the discrimination that can be associated with their background during adolescence. When they are surrounded by white people they may feel isolated and misunderstood.⁴¹ Several authors argue that the role of one's own family and the broader ethnic community can be very important.⁴² Since youth often only have few positive (male) role models from their ethnic minority group available in their direct social circle, putting them in touch with this type of role model through welfare and care work can be valuable.⁴³

The emancipation of discriminated groups like ethnic minorities is not just the responsibility of the minorities. Responsibility falls on society as a whole, and participation of all parties is necessary to stop discrimination and accomplish emancipation of minority groups.⁴⁴

Suppression and the history of slavery

Beside the experience of discrimination, various population groups may also experience the consequences of a history of suppression that burdens their ethnic group. For communities of African origin, such as Surinamese and Antillean Dutch minorities and Jamaican populations in England, this mainly concerns their history of slavery. Different theoreticians pose that their history of slavery still has negative consequences on these minority communities.⁴⁵ They describe how the combination of the structural discrimination and the enslavement of their forefathers may have led to the acquisition of destructive behaviours and beliefs. These include, among other things, low self-esteem, learned helplessness, depression, internalised racism and a self-destructive vision.⁴⁶ This combination of behaviours and beliefs is theorized to have developed as an effective survival strategy in the context of slavery, but was maintained through intergenerational transfer after changes in circumstance and loss of effectivity. There are many different names for this syndrome, such as Post-Traumatic Slave Syndrome and Post-Traumatic Slavery Disorder.⁴⁷

In 1952, psychiatrist Franz Fanon published an analysis of the psychological consequences of suppression among colonised populations.⁴⁸ Based on psychoanalysis he explains feelings of dependence and shortcoming of black people in a white world. Fanon describes how a loss of the culture of origin creates an inferiority complex and leads people to try to imitate the coloniser's culture. This is particularly true for black people who experience a process of social climbing due to the education they have completed, which put them in the white elite environment that they must learn to navigate.⁴⁹

Fanon's theories strongly influenced the ideas of Paulo Freire, who emphasizes how a skewed division of power may be maintained by reciprocal process between suppressor and suppressed in his 'Pedagogy of the Oppressed'.⁵⁰ He relates the reproduction of suppression to a traditional educational system in which a hierarchical relationship between teacher and student, knowledge is planted into the 'empty heads' of the students. This type of education does not work for youth from ethnic minority groups. Freire proposes an educational transformation that emphasizes development of critical awareness. He considers pedagogy a partly political problem, meaning to become articulate, and being actively involved in one's own situation.⁵¹ Freire finds that there are parts of 'third world' in the 'first world'. Also in Western civilisations there are populations that occupy such a marginal position, that one may rather speak of 'keeping silent' than of participation.

The pedagogy that Freire developed is mostly aimed at the battle for emancipation of suppressed groups. Freire describes the 'culture of silence' as situations in which the suppressed are powerless against the ruling society that crushes them. The suppressed is inarticulate and thinks in fatalistic ways, looks for causes of his problems in something outside himself or in his own shortcomings. The suppressor is, to him, the model of knowledge and ability. The fatalism – one born worth a penny will never be a pound – is transferred from parent to child. Freire advocates for the development of awareness among the suppressed of their situation and their power. They must learn to see that they have a fundamental right to give direction to their own life, and should continually re-examine their possibilities in society.

Through the transfer of destructive behaviours and beliefs from generation to generation, the history of suppression of minority groups still influences their opportunities in the current society. The unequal opportunities experienced by youths from these groups cannot only be prevented through clinical or individual treatment of the problems they experience. To truly create equal opportunities, a far-reaching societal change is needed, both in the own ethnic culture and community and in the dominant culture and larger society.⁵² This is in line with Fanon and Freire's ideas which emphasize that there should be more attention for the history and origin, and simultaneously propose cooperation between *humans*. Fanon phrases this as follows: *"The negro does not exist, neither does the white man. Both must disengage from the inhuman sounds of their forefathers, such that true communication can exist."* Freire also argues for as much being-human as possible, and for coming to unity and cultural synthesis through dialogue and cooperation.

§ 3. Identity

The target groups of the youth work in Amsterdam Zuidoost as well as in London often deals with a lack of positive pedagogic stimulation both at home and in school and the neighbourhood. They have insufficient insight into the workings of the world outside their neighbourhood, the possibilities that lie there, and how to make use of these chances. Additionally, there is a shortage of positive role models that can introduce them to this.⁵³ This is not only important for their opportunities to shape their future, but furthermore serves an important role in the process of identity development that youth goes through.

The shaping of identity is a central topic in Erikson's developmental psychological views.⁵⁴ The concept of 'identity' is determined by two elements, according to him: 1) self-awareness of continuity and consistency in the person one is, and 2) the recognition thereof by others in the social environment.

Adolescence is a crucial period for the development of identity, because the youth are letting go of the familiar certainties of childhood, and are focusing more on changed social expectations of the environment now that they are transitioning into adulthood. During this journey of discovery full of personal, relational and social choices, an awareness of one's own identity slowly develop in a more or less set, recognizable way.

Identity development and the social environment

Guidance and positive stimulation from the environment are essential for a successful process of identity formation in youth.⁵⁵ The presence of adequate role models that can serve as examples to youth, as well as having a social environment that positively reinforces the learning of new behaviour are important. An important part of this social environment is the family, but other environments that the youth navigates, such as the school and the neighbourhood, and the social rules of the society in general also play a role. The family ideally offers a warm emotional environment that gives youths the safety and confidence to develop further and spread their wings. The social environment should offer young people acceptable future ideals and realistic perspective, and the necessary social space to experiment with those. Thus, a society in which there is discrimination of a certain population group or a high rate of youth unemployment is not a good environment for healthy identity development of youths. Youths will start to feel insecure, alienated, and obsolete in such circumstances, resulting in the tendency to behave antisocially and to develop feelings of resistance to- and rejection of society.

The importance of a successful process of identity development shows from, among other things, the way the youth functions in society.⁵⁶ Youth that has constructed a robust identity based on exploration, experimentation, and strong interpersonal relationships, have a higher chance of positive integration in society. Youths who are less involved with the exploration of their identity, make opportunist choices in their lives and do not build up stable relationships, often occupy a less favourable position in society and often suffer from depression and social-emotional problems.⁵⁷ These youths also more often come into contact with the justice system.⁵⁸

There are several factors that influence the way in which a person actively explores their identity.⁵⁹ Firstly, there are personal factors like self-esteem, insight into one's own capacities, and the need for and openness to new experiences. However, contextual factors also play a role, like choices that individuals are confronted with, and the extent to which their environment stimulates and supports the exploration of choices and possibilities.

During adolescence, role models and ideals play an important role in identity development and the confirmation of an inner life plan. An important pitfall during this period, according to Erikson, is 'role confusion'.⁶⁰ This means that a young person does not manage to unite the different aspects that are part of their identity. Often, this means that the youth feels forced to choose between particular identity components permanently. This feeling can also correlate with a conflict between on the one hand individual preferences of the youth, and expectations from the society or community on the other hand. These preferences and expectations may pertain to a variety of identity components such as sexual identity, professional identity, and philosophical identity. Youth from migrant families are often faced with additional challenges in this area. They are generally confronted with a diversity of environments that raise identity issues and increase the risk of role confusion than non-migrant youth.

Ethnic identity

The identity of a person consists of a broad range of aspects. Ethnic identity is one of those aspects. Ethnic identity refers to the awareness of belonging to a certain ethnic group, and the meaning and emotional value this awareness has for the individual in question.⁶¹

Because of the diversity of environments that they grow in, youth from minority groups is confronted with identity questions and generally explores their ethnic identity with more awareness. According to a Dutch study, adolescents from ethnic minority groups explore their ethnic background more, and feel more connected to their own ethnic group.⁶² For non-minority youth, the ethnic background is probably so evident and safe that they pay less attention to it. Furthermore, youth from minority groups are tasked with uniting their membership of an ethnic community with that of society as a whole. They have to develop a cultural identity that relates to two cultures that can differ significantly. This integration of ethnic identities to form a bicultural identity is often complex and does not always happen without problems.⁶³ Frequently, society offers little room for deviation from the prevailing, 'mainstream', culture. For youth from ethnic minority groups this means that they can experience pressure to adapt to the dominant culture. For the situation in the Netherlands, it has been posed that the indigenous identity is emphasized to such an extent that there is barely any space for other forms of identity.⁶⁴ Essential components of the identity of people from other cultures are not accepted. This can lead to their complete adaptation and thereby loss of an important part of their cultural identity and background. The opposite reaction is that they reject the Dutch society and become isolated in their own culture.⁶⁵

Youth from minority groups who view two cultures as impossible to unite and therefore keep them strictly separate report a less positive self-image, are less optimistic, show less prosocial behaviour, and have less strong family relationships.⁶⁶ Dutch research shows that as youth more actively explore their ethnic identity and feel connected with their ethnic background, the better they score on

reports of wellbeing and self-esteem, the better they perform in school, and the less problem behaviour they display.⁶⁷ Moreover, a weak and negative identification with one's own ethnic group turns out to be an important determinant in the development of schizophrenia in youth from ethnic minority groups.⁶⁸

Active socialisation and identity formation.

Youth growing up in an urban environment with a great diversity of minority groups and subcultures like Amsterdam Zuidoost and London Lewisham, but also many other European city districts, ask themselves who they are and what group they belong to. They are looking for their identity, as suits their life phase. Becoming aware of one's own culture is also part of this search for their own 'me' and their own opinions. Good supervision during the exploration of cultural identity in youths has a positive influence on their development. It was shown that youth who are socialised in their ethnic-cultural background little, generally score lower in terms of wellbeing than youths who do get offered that possibility in their environment.⁶⁹ Furthermore, they more often suffer from depression and they score lower on exploration and recognition with their ethnic background.⁷⁰

The best basis for youth in a diverse society thus seems to be the development of a positive connection with their ethnic identity, combined with an open attitude to society and dominant culture that they are part of, in the broader sense. In other words, youths should know who they are, where they are from, and be open to the possibilities that society offers. It cannot be forgotten that many cultures of non-western ethnic minorities can look back on a wealth of centuries-old traditions. Youths can derive pride from this for their self-esteem and identity. This history moreover offers a strong foundation in the culture of origin, and provides a basis for exploration and finding a place in the 'new' culture. This idea can also be found in literature on bilingual parenting that poses that mastering the mother tongue is a requirement for the mastering of a second language.⁷¹ This is also shown in a study among Dutch students that showed that children learn to speak better in a second language when they have a stronger fundamental knowledge in their mother tongue.⁷² Students from ethnic minority groups who were educated in their mother tongue were more competent and had better command of the Dutch language than a control group that was only educated in Dutch. *"We want education that teaches us our true history and our role in the present-day society. We believe in an educational system that will give to our people knowledge of self. If a man does not have knowledge of himself and his position in society and the world, then he has little chance to relate to anything else."* – Black Panther Party Platform (October 1996)⁷³

Exploration of identity in general, and ethnic identity particularly, is important for the positive development of youth. Also the socialisation in the culture of origin turns out, as previously mentioned, to yield positive results for youths from minority groups. By paying extensive attention to identity formation and by offering guidance in their search for a societal destination in the social environments (at home, in school and in the neighbourhood), these youths can be empowered. With this input they can realise their own potential and participate in society as active citizens.

Offering opportunities to youth from minority groups in education and on the labour market is not only valuable for the youth themselves but also for society as a whole. Comparative research across several European countries shows that cities with favourable conditions for inclusion of minority

youth in education and on the labour market, a successful generation of young adults emerges that plays a leading role in the emancipation of their ethnic-cultural community. These often highly-educated youth from minority groups succeed in combining their socialisation in two cultures in a productive way, and bridge the gap between two worlds, thereby bringing a tolerant urban society one step closer.⁷⁴

§ 4. Youth policy, cultural awareness and empowerment

In the previous sections, attention was paid to the challenges that youth from minority groups living in socioeconomically vulnerable neighbourhoods are faced with. It is therefore interesting to also consider possible solutions and available effective interventions known from the literature. How may these youth become resilient against the risks they experience, and receive positive stimulation in their development?

Attention for identity formation

As previously mentioned, the development of a stable identity offers the best chance a positive functioning in society. The social environment can play an important role by challenging youth to actively explore the aspects of their identity. In particular in the case of minority groups attention should be paid to their socialisation in both the culture of origin and that of the dominant society. It is important to keep a broad view and thorough exploration of identity, which is characterized by reflection, experimentation and trial-and-error.⁷⁵ Exploration should be prevented from assuming the form of fruitless pondering and worrying (ruminative exploration), which is correlated with lowered self-esteem and symptoms of anxiety and depression. Moreover, the consolidation of a strong connection with the identity choices a youth makes is crucial. They must experience a certain commitment, feel involved in their choices and opinions, and support their choices fully. The extent to which youths explore and experiment plays an important role in this involvement in their identity choices. The creation of a favourable climate for a thorough exploration of identity and hands-on guidance in this process of exploration and experimentation can thus increase the chances of developing a stable identity.

Empowerment

'Empowerment' has often been mentioned as a promising method for offering more equal opportunities to disadvantaged groups in recent decades.⁷⁶ Also in youth work with minority groups, and more specifically with youth with an African background, empowerment was introduced as a strategy. Despite the familiarity and popularity of the term, there is much uncertainty about the exact definition of empowerment, and the way it can be introduced in the care and welfare sectors. In a review by Boumans, empowerment is defined as follows: *"the pursuit of emancipation of socially disadvantaged individuals and groups"*. This definition emphasizes the recognition and use of people's own strengths, so that they can influence and take charge of their own lives. The central idea is that the balance of the suppressed or disadvantaged group shifts from 'being defined' to 'defining oneself'.⁷⁷

Boumans's literature review shows that a truly empowering approach should at least comprise the following elements: 1) the goal is to enlarge the (social) environment of the individual, and the extent to which they can shape their life, 2) the means are offering meetings, support and tools the individual can use to shape their own life, 3) an integral approach that welcomes dialogue, and 4) recognition of both the possibilities and limitations of the individual, and the setting of realistic goals (not patronizing or overly optimistic).

There are several programs aimed at the empowerment of youth.⁷⁸ Many of those programs meet the criteria described above, but are not purely aimed at empowerment. Empowerment strategies are often employed in intervention programs, such as the youth work that pays special attention to positive reinforcement and the teaching of skills that make youth more self-reliant, and to positive identity development.

These three elements are often combined in youth work programs.⁷⁹ Examples are programs aimed at talent development, creation of opportunities for the future, and identity formation.

What works for minority groups

In recent years, researchers have focused on the investigation the results and effectivity of intervention programs. The Dutch Youth Institute (Nederlands Jeugdinstituut) has established a database of 'Effective youth interventions', and has analysed the effective ingredients of intervention programs with different methodologies, target groups and issues based on international scientific research. The target group youth from minority groups is also included.

Based on a number of international and Dutch reviews of care and prevention programs for ethnic minority groups, it was concluded that the number of studies done on so-called 'culture sensitive' intervention programs that are specifically aimed at standards and values of the target group, is limited.⁸⁰ It is known that many generic interventions that were not specifically adapted to the ethnic background of the target group also yield positive effects for minority groups. Still, adaptation can lead to better acceptance and better contact with the minority target group, and fewer premature drop-outs.

Another factor is 'ethnic matching' of professionals and the target group. Several Dutch and American studies show positive results of deployment of intervention professionals from the community of the target group.⁸¹ On the other hand, ethnic matching can also have an adverse effect: youth and adults do not always want to be helped by someone from their own community, out of fear of personal information becoming known within the community.⁸² In general, it is important that the professional is at least aware of the cultural background of the target group, and of their own 'cultural view' and possible prejudice they might have, without generalising and overlooking the diversity that exists not only between but also within groups.⁸³ Furthermore, especially in the case of minority groups, a 'social network strategy' that includes the family and broader social environment in the intervention can be more effective than the individual treatment of problems.

Stimulating youth policy

How can actively stimulating youth policy further advance the personal and social development of youth dealing with risks and a lack of opportunities?

An inspiring example is the large scale approach the Obama administration put into place in the United States.

In 2014, the program My Brother's Keeper started, a federal effort to improve the standing of boys and male young adults from minority groups in education and on the labour market, and to encourage them to realise their potential.⁸⁴ The initiative includes among other things a mentoring programme for students in the last year of primary education (6th grade elementary school) and the first year of secondary education (9th grade middle school), programmes for career guidance and second chance education for prisoners. The goal is to reduce inequalities in education and on the labour market through government policy and private initiatives. The business world is an important partner in the project. Some parts of My Brother's Keeper are specifically aimed at youth from ethnic minorities, but other initiatives within the program have broader target groups of disadvantaged youth, defined by the socioeconomic position of the families they belong to.

My Brother's Keeper is an example of directive stimulating youth policy for minority youth that includes an enormous diversity of interventions aimed at the improvement of their chances of social integration, for example through training- and coaching programs and the provision of internships and jobs. In large part this seems to be the strength of the initiative: a diversity of interventions with the focus of improving the educational and labour market position of disadvantaged youth.

Important elements are the adaptation of government policies that further equal treatment (such as equal access to healthcare and high quality day care), and organising sustainable support courses including mentoring and professional internships. Cooperation between public services, (local) communities and private partners seems to offer the best prospects for success.

Chapter 2. London and Amsterdam in numbers

Introduction

This chapter presents a number of statistical details about the youth populations in London (§ 1) – with particular attention for the Lewisham district – and Amsterdam Zuidoost (§ 2). A concise conclusion that compares the situation in both metropolitan city areas follows (§ 3).

§ 1. Statistical insights London

Demography

London consists of 32 districts, or boroughs, that are all governed by their own district council. ‘Inner London’ comprises twelve districts, and the remaining twenty form ‘Outer London’. Additionally, the ‘City of London’, which is not included in the districts but operates as a city within London, is governed by its own local authority.



Figure 1. Districts (boroughs) of London divided into Inner London (green) and Outer London (grey). Source: CBRE Research.

In 2015, London harbours 8.7 million inhabitants, 3.4 million of which live in Inner London, and 5.6 million live in Outer London.⁸⁵ Compared to the rest of England, London has a high percentage of young adults in the age group 25-34 years old and young children in the age group 0-4 years old. The age group 10-19 years old constitutes 10.9% of the population.

Inner London has many more single-person households (28%) and multiple-family households (18%) compared to the rest of England. For Outer London the difference with the rest of England is a bit less severe.

Poverty

Approximately 27% of the inhabitants of London live in poverty when taking into account housing costs.⁸⁶ The high cost of housing is the most important cause of the high poverty figures. Children in London have a higher chance of living in poverty than adults. To illustrate, the percentage of children growing up in poverty is 37 percent. See Table 1 for an overview of indicators of poverty among the population of London. The majority of families living in poverty concerns households where the provider has a job. Thus, there is not just poverty due to unemployment. Job opportunities in London have increased in recent years – unemployment rates are the lowest since 2008 – but simultaneously there has been an increase in the number of working people living in poverty.

The poverty percentages differ strongly per district. In around one in five districts in London, more than a quarter of all children live in poverty. Districts with the highest poverty percentages mostly lie in the Inner East and South of London, but also in the Outer East, North East, and parts of London there are districts where many children live in poverty. At the district level, Tower Hamlets harbours the highest percentage of children living in poverty.

Table 1. Indicators for poverty in London in 2015. Source: Trust for London (presented data are Crown Copyright)

Indicator	London	Inner London	Lewisham	Tower Hamlets
Inhabitants with low income	21%	19%	20%	19%
Families that receive unemployment benefit	9.3%	10.4%	11.7%	10.6%
Children in poverty	37%	46%	34%	49%

Ethnicity

In 2011 more than 3 million inhabitants of London (37%) are born outside the United Kingdom.⁸⁷ An overview of the most common birth countries expressed in percentages of the city's population are included in Table 2. Table 3, which shows much higher percentages, illustrates that the second generation immigrants make up a large part of the ethnic minority groups in London. It shows that in 2011 the ethnic group of white Brits does not constitute a majority (44.9%).

This means that the ethnic diversity in London is so big that the ethnic minority groups together form a majority and thus constitute more than half of the population. After non-British white minorities (12.6%) the African minority group is the largest in size (7%). After them follow Indian Brits (6,6%), other Asian groups (4.9%) and Caribbean Brits (4.2%).

Table 2. Population of the city of London according to country of birth (%). Source: Office for National Statistics, 2012

Country of birth	%
England	61.1%
India	3.2%
Poland	1.9%
Ireland	1.6%
Nigeria	1.4%
Pakistan	1.4%
Bangladesh	1.3%
Scotland	1.1%
Jamaica	1.1%
Sri Lanka	1.0%

Table 3. Population of the city of London according to ethnic group (%). Source: Office for National Statistics, 2012

Ethnic group	%
British White	44.9%
Other white	12.6%
African British	7.0%
Indian British	6.6%
Other Asian British	4.9%
Caribbean British	4.2%
Pakistan British	2.7%
Bengal British	2.7%
White Irish	2.2%
Other ethnic groups	2.1%

Education and labour market

In 2016 job opportunities in the United Kingdom increased and unemployment rates have dropped. Nevertheless, there are still 1.6 million unemployed persons in that year, and the unemployment rate for youths between 16-24 years old is 13.6%.⁸⁸ For London this percentage is lower than the national average (9.9%). Also in the Lewisham (9.3%) and Tower Hamlets (10.5%) districts youth unemployment rates are lower than the national average. Furthermore, a third of London 19-year-olds are known to not (yet) have obtained educational qualifications. In Lewisham (44%) and Tower Hamlets (39%) these percentages are higher. See Table 4 for an overview.

Table 4. Work and education in London in 2015. Source: Trust for London (Crown Copyright) and Office for National Statistics.

Indicator	London	Inner Londen	Lewisham	Tower Hamlets
Unemployment	6.4%	6.6%	6.8%	8.8%
Unemployment 16-24 year	9.9%	8.4%	9.3%	10.5%
19-year olds without qualification	36%	38%	44%	39%

§ 2. Statistical insights Amsterdam Zuidoost

Demography

In 2016, Amsterdam counts 834,713 inhabitants including 166,172 youths between 0-19 years old.⁸⁹ Amsterdam is divided into seven city districts, including Amsterdam Zuidoost that harbours 86,057 inhabitants. The district Amsterdam Zuidoost is geographically separate from the rest of the city and is separated from the other districts by parts of the municipalities Ouder-Amstel and Diemen (see Figure 2).

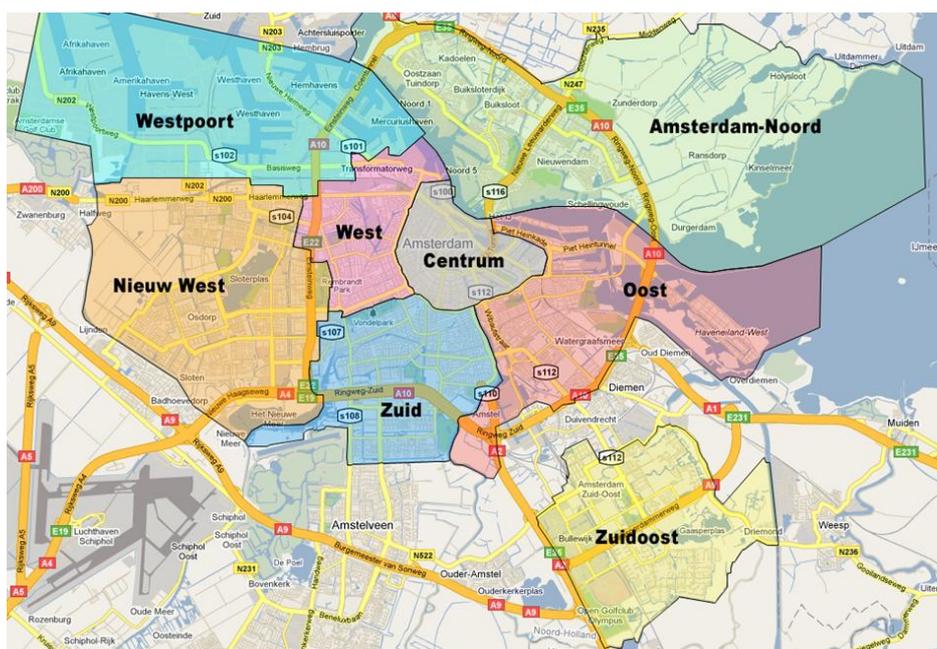


Figure 2. The city of Amsterdam according to district

The data in table 5 show that the Amsterdam Zuidoost district has a large youth population. Especially the percentages of children aged 4-12 (10.5%) and adolescents aged 13-17 (5.8%) are much higher than the average in Amsterdam (8.8% and 4.3% respectively). 9,036 children aged 4-12 and 4,991 adolescents aged 13-17 live in Amsterdam Zuidoost. Youth and young adults in the age group 13-24 year old account for more than 28% of the population, while the average in Amsterdam

is only 23 percent. Furthermore it is known that there are relatively many single-parent families in the district Amsterdam Zuidoost (17.7% compared to 9% in Amsterdam as a whole).⁹⁰

Table 5. Age of inhabitants Amsterdam Zuidoost and Amsterdam in 2016 (abs. and %).
Source: OIS Amsterdam

Population	South East		Amsterdam
4-12 year	9.036	10.5%	8.8%
13-17 year	4.991	5.8%	4.3%
18-22 year	7.143	8.3%	6.6%
23-24 year	3.098	3.6%	3.8%
13-24 year	24.268	28.2%	23.5%
Total number of inhabitants	86.057	100%	100%

Amsterdam Zuidoost has gone through a remarkable transformation in the last twenty years, introducing a number of measures mostly targeting spatial renovation. Along the way, substantial societal and social programs were additionally introduced. The goal was to increase the socioeconomic standard in Amsterdam Zuidoost toward the city average. A report by the Sociocultural Planning Office (Sociaal Cultureel Plan Bureau) shows that the restructuring measures in Amsterdam Zuidoost have led to beneficial effects in terms of safety and contentment of inhabitants in the district.⁹¹ The perception of Amsterdam Zuidoost as “a dangerous district” is slowly being replaced by a more positive image. However, the goal of improving vital indicators like education and income to match the city average is not being achieved. Amsterdam Zuidoost is still significantly behind in terms of socioeconomic indicators. A recent analysis by the Research, Information and Statistics (Onderzoek, Informatie en Statistiek) office of the municipality of Amsterdam, for example, shows that inhabitants of Amsterdam Zuidoost perceive their living situation as relatively unfavourable.⁹² This conclusion was based on ratings in several domains, including health, mobility, social participation, sports activities and social network.^b

Poverty

The district Amsterdam Zuidoost has a relatively large population of households with low incomes than the city average. The average disposable income in Amsterdam Zuidoost is lower than in Amsterdam as a whole (see Table 6).⁹³

Moreover the municipality of Amsterdam has data on poverty related to the number of households living from a minimum income at its disposal.^c The data show that both the proportion of minimum

^b The level of welfare in Amsterdam is expressed in the living situation index. The living situation index was developed by the Sociocultural Planning Office and describes the quality of life in terms of several important social domains in one number. The index is calculated based on questionnaires comprised of questions about eight domains: living, experience of health, consumption goods, leisure activities, mobility, social participation, sports activities, holidays, and social network.

^c In 2009 the minimum income constitutes a net yearly income of maximum €11,915 for single-person households, €15,325 for single-parent households and €17,021 for a couple with or without children.

income households and the number of youths younger than 18 years old growing up in such households are relatively large in Amsterdam Zuidoost.⁹⁴

Table 6. Indicators of poverty in Amsterdam South East and Amsterdam. Source: OIS Amsterdam

Indicator	South East	Amsterdam
Average disposable income (€) in 2016	€ 26.500	€ 31.800
Percentage of minima households in 2011	24%	19.6%
Percentage minima youth till 18 years in 2011	35%	25%

In the context of a new, district-oriented approach, the municipality of Amsterdam has brought into focus a number of districts that are characterized by high percentages of families and relatively high levels of poverty. Children growing up here often deal with disadvantages. Therefore, they are more dependent on services offered by the neighbourhood to help them start out good in life, than children in other neighbourhoods. There are eleven such districts in all of Amsterdam, three of which are in Amsterdam Zuidoost: Bijlmer Centrum (T93), Bijlmer Oost (T94), and Holendrecht/Reigersbos (T96). In total 67.746 inhabitants are living in these three districts, which is more than 80 percent of the total population of Amsterdam Zuidoost. Many of the inhabitants from these ‘focus areas’ are of non-Western origin. These neighbourhoods are dealing with backlog in several respects, like a weak socioeconomic position, and below-average academic achievements of the youth. The socioeconomically weak areas within neighbourhoods turn out to harbour concentrations of specific groups of inhabitants, more than previously. These neighbourhoods observe a growing concentration of people living in poverty.⁹⁵

Ethnicity

Amsterdam Zuidoost is characterized by large ethnic diversity. It is the district with the highest percentage of inhabitants of non-Western origin (63.7%). The city-wide average in Amsterdam is 34.8 percent.⁹⁶ There are thus relatively few people of Dutch origin (26.4%) and fewer Western immigrants (10%) in Amsterdam Zuidoost (see Table 7).

Table 7. Ethnic origin of inhabitants Amsterdam South East and Amsterdam in 2016 (%). Source: OIS Amsterdam

Population	South East	Amsterdam
Non-western immigrant	63.7%	34.8%
Western immigrant	10.0%	16.8%
Indigenous	26.4%	48.3%

Education and the labour market

In Dutch primary education, extra financial means have been allocated to students with lowly educated parents for many years. In the school year 2012/2013, there were 2,416 children in Amsterdam Zuidoost in the ages of 4-11 who were considered disadvantaged students in this

context. This number comprises 32.5 percent of the total number of students (see Table 8). This percentage is far above the municipal average (22.7%), and the national average (12.8%).

Table 8. Youth aged 4-11 in Amsterdam and the Netherlands according to student weight 0.30 and 1.20 for school year 2012-2013. Source: OIS Amsterdam

Area	Number	%
Amsterdam South East	2.416	32.5%
Amsterdam	13.655	22.7%
The Netherlands	196.310	12.8%

Moreover, it is known that relatively more students from Amsterdam Zuidoost are in lower levels of education. Figure 3 shows the proportion of students divided according to type of secondary education for the school year 2012/2013. This data shows that students from Amsterdam Zuidoost are more often in the senior classes of the VMBO (vocational education; 28.8%) compared to the municipal and national averages (21.1% and 21.7%, respectively).

Furthermore, the percentage of students in the senior classes of VWO (pre-university education; 3.7%) is remarkably low compared to Amsterdam (20.5%) and the Netherlands (16.9%).

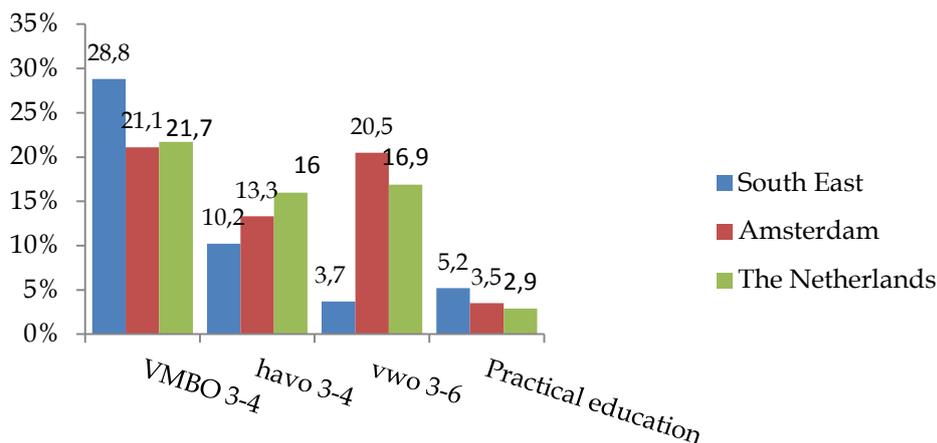


Figure 3. Students aged 12-18 according to secondary education type for Amsterdam Zuidoost, Amsterdam and the Netherlands for school year 2012-2013. Source: OIS Amsterdam and CBS Jeugdstatline

Additionally, there is data about the percentage of youth that successfully obtain a so-called starting qualification from their education. A starting qualification is obtained when finishing HAVO or VWO education, or a level 2 MBO degree. Every person aged 12 to 23 leaving school without a starting qualification is classified as a premature school-leaver.

Table 9 shows an overview of the number of premature school-leavers in Amsterdam Zuidoost, Amsterdam and the Netherlands. The percentage of premature school-leavers from Amsterdam Zuidoost is 14.9%. Converted to the age group of 4-11 year olds, 1,204 children and 929 adolescents

aged 12-17 are concerned. The percentage of premature school-leavers from Amsterdam Zuidoost is significantly higher than in the municipality of Amsterdam (10.7%) and in the Netherlands (9.1%).

Table 9. Premature school-leavers aged 18-22 for Amsterdam Zuidoost, Amsterdam and the Netherlands on 31-7-2012 (%). Source: O&S Amsterdam en CBS Statline

Region	%
Total Amsterdam South East	14.9%
Total Amsterdam	10.7%
Total The Netherlands	9.1%

Moreover, it is known that the labour market perspective of youths in Amsterdam Zuidoost is relatively unfavourable. Table 10 gives an overview of the proportion of unemployed youth, according to several characteristics. The unemployment rate among youth aged 15-27 is 20 percent in 2013.⁹⁷ However, for youth of non-Western origin (39%) and youth lacking starting qualifications (33%) these rates are higher. Since the Amsterdam Zuidoost district houses relatively many youths with these characteristics, it can be assumed that the unemployment rate among youth in Amsterdam Zuidoost is higher.

Table 10. Youth unemployment according to several characteristics in 2013. Source: OIS Amsterdam

Percentage unemployed youth	%
15-27 year	20%
Non-western origin	39%
Without starting qualification	33%

§ 3. Conclusions

From the available data, it is reasonable to assume that youth from Amsterdam Zuidoost and London Lewisham show similarities to a reasonable extent. For example, there is significant ethnic-cultural diversity in both metropolitan city areas. More than half of the population belongs to an ethnic minority group, and the indigenous ethnicity no longer makes up the majority. Youth growing up in poverty accounts for more than a third of the population in both regions, with the percentage in Lewisham even being higher than 40 percent. The available data on youth unemployment and educational careers show that there are substantial issues.

Chapter 3. Methodologies of youth work

Introduction

In this chapter, the methodologies of the youth work in London and Amsterdam Zuidoost will be described. It will give a general idea of the youth work in both areas, illustrated by a number of inspiring examples of educational programs in the youth work. First, the youth work in London is described (§ 1). Second, the situation in Amsterdam Zuidoost is discussed (§ 2).

§ 1. Youth work in London

The youth work in England has had to deal with continuous budget cuts since 2015. The first cut of on average 40 percent was realised in 2015.⁹⁸ In 2016 and the years to follow, further budget cuts are planned. Depending on region, the local governments have mandated further cuts that, in many cases, will lead to minimal development or complete termination of the youth work. Since local authorities are not obliged to offer youth work, this tends to be one of the first facilities that is cut.

In London, the budget for youth work will be reduced by 90%: from £22.6 million to £2.3 million in the year 2016/2017.⁹⁹ The goal is to make youth work more self-sustaining. In practice this means that it will become more and more dependent on external funds and charities. Local governments trust that the dedication of volunteers and community organisations will compensate for the created lack of youth facilities. Many youth work programs have now become temporary projects, since there is much uncertainty about the duration of financing. Moreover, a large part of the youth work is faith-based: it is provided by churches or other religious institutions.

During the exchange week in London, different programs were visited and recorded, two of which will be discussed here. The other programs are included in Appendix 2. The programs are similar in terms of their goals: all programs directly or indirectly aim to work towards creating better chances for the future for the youth. This happens in many programs that teach the youth skills that help them develop themselves and become more self-reliant. The skills vary from general skills like communicating, cooperating and planning, to more specific skills like financial and construction skills. Often, the programs also offer guidance for finding a job towards the end of the course.

Additionally, practicing setting realistic and long term goals is practiced, by thinking in steps and formulating sub-goals. Role models can be employed who can serve as inspiring examples. Youth develop skills through personal coaching by a youth worker, through academic counselling or gaining professional experience, and through talent development in group- or community-based cultural or sports activities. Furthermore, many youth workers are working to strengthen the identity of youth. Again, this happens through talent development: youth learn what they are good at, and they learn to be proud of themselves. Moreover, youth workers pay particular attention to the historic and

cultural background of the target group (relatively more African-Caribbean youth) in hopes of their being more in touch with their heritage, and deriving pride from it.

Youth workers furthermore mention that they do not only want to encourage individual youths in their development, but also want to aim for emancipation of the (minority) group as a whole. Knowledge transfer and the strengthening of group ties are a large focus in the personal view of youth workers, but are less well-expressed in the methods that they use. Furthermore, several programs are aimed at broadening horizons and stimulating societal involvement so that the youth can develop a strong social network and gain a wide, independent view with which they can set the goals for their own future. Lastly, many of the programs focus on the facilitation of positive daily activities, simply to prevent youth from spending their free time in a negative way and, for example, become criminals.

Because of a lack of educational infrastructure in the city and its districts, many of the youth work programs work independently, and cooperation with other organisations dedicated to the target group is very limited. However, referral to service and welfare facilities or organisations that offer job experience placements does happen. Partially this concerns referral to other programs within organisations.

From the review of youth work programs in London, it may be concluded that a start was made in the mapping of the results yielded by youth work. Coaching programs often work with evaluations at the end of the course, and one of the reviewed programs employed a form of objective effects measurement. At Lewisham Youth Service, such an effect measurement is in use. The measurement instrument is called the 'Capability Wheel', which tracks the progress in terms of development of specific skills in children and adolescents. It is based on observations by the youth workers, as well as self-report. Skills that are mapped are: communicative skills, social skills and leadership, creativity, planning, problem-solving, self-esteem, and ambition.

Other aspects that receive attention are the broadening of horizons, resilience, and citizenship (among others, tolerance). It is unclear if reports on the effects or other results of the youth work are available.

1.1 Mentoring program

Offering mentoring services and workshops to beginning students in higher education, who were signed up by the school attendance officer.

Motivation

London houses many youth who are not originally from England, and who experience problems with their ethnic identity. Youth workers indicate that these youth are sometimes treated differently from their peers, based on their background, which can lead them to feeling isolated. Furthermore, the English education system pays much attention to European history, but little to for example African history, so that these students have few opportunities to learn about their own background. Moreover, there are few positive, well-known role models for these youth. All of these factors can contribute to them not being able to form a strong ethnic identity: they have little knowledge of their

background, and are always treated as a minority. Additionally, they struggle with setting concrete and realistic goals for their future and making long-term plans. In addition, some youth grow up in aggressive or isolated environments with high crime rates and little support or guidance. Many of these youth do not perform well in school: they are unmotivated, but also lack the skills to succeed. Finally, a large portion of the youth is coping with low self-esteem and a distorted self-image, which is probably related to the factors mentioned above.

Objective and target group

The goal of the program is to make sure youth do not drop out of school, and to teach them the skills they will need to succeed in higher education.

The target group is comprised of youth aged 16 to 18 with an African-Caribbean background that is in the first years of higher education. It concerns youth that technically has enough potential to succeed in higher education, but that has not developed the skills and/or ambition to do so by themselves.

Methodology

The youth are signed up for the program by the education attendance officer, and are subsequently placed in a mentoring program or a workshop series, aimed at the development of essential skills for higher education. Some participants are required to take part in the program, but for most participants this is not the case.

In the course, attention is paid to historical and cultural background of the youth: this can help them form their own identity. Furthermore, the course makes use of role models: the youth complete an assignment for which they have to look for people who inspire them and who give them an example of who they want to be or what they want to achieve. These role models can be celebrities with the same African-Caribbean background, like famous football players or artists, but also people who are closer by like friends, colleagues or family. On the basis of these role models and the development of awareness, the youth start setting goals for their own future, and formulating steps or sub-goals that will help them reach their goals. Moreover, they learn to deal with unexpected events or setbacks by practising problem-solving, and they develop presentation skills. In the end they work towards developing a wide view and independent way of thinking: the program tries to increase their ties with the outside world, and to teach them that they have a choice in who they let influence their lives and who they don't. At the end of the course there is an evaluation, in which the youth can make suggestions for improvement.

Timeframe

The mentors are employed by the school throughout the schoolyear: from September to May. The workshop series consists of five workshops, and the mentoring can take place year-round. For the mentoring, maximum one appointment per week takes place, and an evaluation is completed every six weeks in which the sub-goals are discussed. The mentoring program is taking place this year for the third time.

Results

A mentor reaches around 30 to 40 students per year. In the workshop series, 8 to 10 students attend

each series, and personal mentoring is always one-on-one. The mentoring programs for boys and girls are dissociated. Mentoring in girls has shown good results for a while. Since the mentoring program has not been organised for as long, the results are not yet very clear. Still, personal observations of a mentor illustrate that also boys are visibly improving in several areas. Because they are gaining knowledge about themselves and their background, it becomes easier for them to make good choices for their future and to be more socially involved. Furthermore, they learn that they can shape their own lives by setting short-term goals. Additionally, the youth develop motivation for so-called *lifelong learning*: they are motivated to keep learning for the rest of their lives, both in- and outside of school. Finally, the added security about their own identity allows the youth to better present themselves to the outside world.

Conditions

The school that hosts the mentoring program employs two mentors for the workshop series and the personal counselling. Meetings and workshops take place in the school building.

Required skills of the mentors are: good abilities to communicate with young people and having experience with giving trainings and leading workshops. However, it is equally important to have knowledge of the system the youth are manoeuvring, and knowing the ways of the education system and the labour market.

1.2 Kori: a community-oriented charity initiative

Kori is a charity initiative with an accommodation situated in the North-London district of Haringey. Children and youth from the neighbourhood are welcome outside of school hours for a broad range of programs, varying from day-care to guidance for premature school-leavers, neighbourhood excursions, a variety of cultural and sports workshops, and open days and courses focusing on entrance to the labour market.

Motivation

Many children and youth from Haringey lack a clear, positive future outlook. They are for example struggling with their schoolwork or even get kicked out of school. There are also children and youth who get bored after school because they don't have any positive daytime activities, or because they have few social contacts. Many of them are not very involved in the neighbourhood and the larger society, and are stuck in their own subculture. Youth workers have the experience that many of these youth are halted in their personal development and find it difficult to stay focused on a clear path for the future, and to set goals to do so. This also often deters them from finding a job.

Objective and target group

The goal of the activities of the project organisation is to unlock the potential of the children and youth attending Kori, and to improve their skills and talents so they have a better outlook and in turn can contribute to a positive and close-knit community. The programs that are executed to reach these goals are developed with and by the youth themselves as much as possible.

The target group consists of young people from the neighbourhood (Haringey, North-London) of the ages of 5 to 25 years old. Most programs are aimed at children aged 5 to 16 looking for positive daytime activities after school or during school holidays.

Furthermore, there is a program for vulnerable youth who have been (or are at risk of) getting kicked out of school. Lastly, there are two programs for young adults between 18 and 24 years old, one specifically for starters in the labour market, and one for youth who are interested in charity work.

Methodology

Children and youth end up at Kori in different ways: some are referred by schools or social work organisations, but most of them hear about Kori through peers, neighbours or parents. Many children start attending afterschool activities related to the open day or an activity program in the school holidays, and subsequently continue into programs with a bigger focus on content. There are four core programs that are connected so that participants can progress from one program to the next, or participate in more than one program at a time. The first core program, 'Home from home', focuses on offering children and youth a homey environment where they can develop securely. There are walk-in afternoons and evenings where different games and workshops are offered, often aimed at encouraging creativity and with a lot of space for cultural diversity. Moreover, excursions are organised in which broadening horizons and learning are central, there is a homework room and a special club for young girls. Furthermore, there is a youth council that busies itself with organising Kori's programs, and that develops and executes projects for the neighbourhood. All of these activities are group activities, but there is space for mentoring by volunteers or employees when children or youth need it.

The second core program, 'The Haven', is aimed at children and youth who have been kicked out of school. After their referral by a school or institute, they receive academic supervision and mentoring meetings on a daily basis. They are furthermore stimulated by creative forms of learning and excursions, so that they can return to regular education after maximum two school semesters.

For the target group in the age of 18 to 24, there is the core program 'Talent Match', which focuses on helping youth who are having a hard time finding a job or a positive outlook, through coaching, training, excursions and internships, to find them jobs that suit them.

Many of the youth that got involved in Kori at a young age flow through to the 18+ programs when they get older. It also happens that children and youth eventually become volunteers or professionals working in one of the programs.

Kori cooperates with several partners. Schools in the neighbourhood refer their students to Kori when they are in need of recreational activities or help with their homework, and sometimes Kori organises workshops at the schools. Kori moreover has relations with different organisations where youth can participate in other activities, extend their education, or gain work experience. Finally, Kori cooperates with community centres where youth can take an active role in the neighbourhood and community.

Timeframe

On principle, children and youth can be involved in Kori for years: from age five they are welcome to Kori's child- and youth programs, and when they turn 18 they can progress to the job-prospective and exchange programs. The core program The Haven for students that got kicked out of school does have a maximum time of participation (two academic years) but even those students can then go on to participate in other Kori programs if they are interested. The excursions and walk-ins always take place on weekdays in the afternoons after school.

Results

Kori reaches over 2,000 children and youth per year with all of its programs. Among these are also the students at schools where Kori offers cultural projects or workshops. These children and youth develop in all kinds of areas, partially dependent on the programs they take part in. First of all, many of them learn to cooperate better with others, and to work with children from different neighbourhoods in the district, and from different schools. They use their free time after school and during school holidays productively, by working on personal and cultural skills. Many of the participants improve in terms of arts and creativity, and their self-confidence grows. For example, they learn to present with confidence, to think critically, and to deal with criticism. In addition, they can obtain leadership- and professional experience via trainings and internships with several organisations.

Conditions

Kori employs two long-term employees: the director and a program manager who is an educated youth worker and artist. Together with a team of volunteers they manage the programs. Furthermore, Kori has a supervisory board. They rent their own accommodation with office, sanitary facilities and community room. The financing is made up of donations from a range of funds, sometimes to Kori as a whole and sometimes to a specific program.

§ 2. Youth work in Amsterdam Zuidoost

The district Amsterdam Zuidoost utilizes the policy framework 'Amsterdam youth work new style' (Amsterdams jongerenwerk nieuwe stijl) as a basis for subsidy allotment for the youth work.¹⁰⁰ Youth work in Amsterdam is seen as an educational professional facility for youth, as a preventative element of broader local youth policy and youth and safety with a large emphasis on participation or input by youth. Seeing the large diversity of nationalities and ethnic groupings in Amsterdam, a general approach of the target group is preferred over an ethnicity-specific welfare and youth work strategy.¹⁰¹ This neutral, general approach makes it more difficult for youth workers to address ethnic identity in the contact with the target group.

The goals of the general youth work are most importantly identity formation in youth, social resilience and social participation.¹⁰² Special attention goes to obtaining a starting qualification. In location-focused and ambulatory youth work, there is additional focus on battling nuisance and crime caused by youth, and referral to care facilities and possible recreational activities.

Swazoom, as a welfare organisation, sets the goal that every child and youth should grow up in a safe, stimulating environment in order to be able to participate as a whole member of Dutch society. The youth work therefore focuses on the improvement of social and economic independence of youth and their social environment. The educational message that Swazoom's professionals broadcast in the process is to: 'develop, make something of your life, do your best in school and at work, and take others into account'.

The youth work is organised in a neighbourhood-based way, and offers easily accessible activities for the neighbourhood's youth in community centres. Moreover, there is a team of ambulatory youth workers who make contact with youth in the streets and organise activities together with them, or refer them to already existing services. By being present in the youth's environment – in the streets, in community centres, and in places like schools, shopping centres and sports facilities – youth workers are successfully getting in touch with the target group. The next step is to offer activities that match their needs of meeting peers and developing their talents. This happens, for example, via cultural activities like dance, theatre and music, but also by organising sports- and play activities. The youth is encouraged to take an active role themselves in organising the activities.

Through these acquainting activities and programs for talent development, a relationship of trust is built that is the basis for further educational activation and possibilities for referrals in the case of individual problems. The latter requires a strong and extensive network of diverse care services and other cooperating partners. Cooperation in Amsterdam Zuidoost mostly takes shape through networks like district teams that the youth work participates in together with other welfare initiatives and partners in the areas of health care and social work. Furthermore, the youth work establishes co-productions with educational institutes such as schools, or with the police in the joint approach of problematic youth groups that cause nuisance or are involved in criminal activities. In addition, youth workers approach volunteer initiatives by neighbourhood inhabitants who want to help the neighbourhood youth, and they focus on maintaining relations with the part of the business world in Amsterdam Zuidoost that wants to get socially involved by supporting social initiatives or by offering job openings for vulnerable groups on the labour market.

Aside from the regular meetings and talent development activities, the youth work organises several specific programs for the target group that have a more intensive character and are more specifically aimed at stimulating personal and social development in the participants. This concerns training programs and coaching courses over longer periods, with an intensive education component. Two of these 'excellence programs' will be described below: '100% passionate for your future' and 'My School Choachzz'. A number of other programs are described in Appendix 2.

2.1 Program 100% passionate for your future

100% passionate for your future is an education program that focuses on identity development and future planning.

Motivation

Vulnerable youth from the youth work target group in secondary education in Amsterdam Zuidoost are making choices that are detrimental to their future. A remarkable element in this behaviour is

the lack of awareness of the consequences of their behaviour, and the fact that they have no plans for their future. The thoughtlessness that they display in the choices that they make also shows in the unrealistic ideas they have about their future, and what the necessary education and determination is that is required to end up in a good place in society. More in general, many of the youth from the target group show that they have little insight in the consequences of their daily behaviour for their social future.

These tendencies are also visible in the data about youth unemployment and early drop-out in Amsterdam Zuidoost: over 37 percent of 15-16 year-olds is unemployed and the percentage of premature drop-outs is 14 percent.¹⁰³

Many youths from the target group are insufficiently challenged at home to give thought to their future. As such, they rarely inherit skills like handling finances, and they receive no stimulation for starting to earn money with a side job or career.

In giving thought to future options, it is important to have an idea of your own identity. If you have insight into what you enjoy doing and what you are good at, this also gives you a framework for thinking about your future. The education program '100% passionate for your future' by the youth work of Swazoom in Amsterdam Zuidoost is aimed at better preparing the youth for today's society and future social functioning.

Objective and target group

The education program '100% passionate for your future' has the goal to teach the youth to make choices about who they are (identity), what they want to achieve in society (ambition) and to gain the means and develop the skills necessary to reach those goals.

The program is aimed at youth from the youth work target group with a vocational educational background in the ages 16 to 23 years old.

Methodology

The education program '100% passionate for your future' can be seen as a type of non-formal education that takes place outside of school but that does offer intentional, organised and structured learning.¹⁰⁴ The focused type of learning is different from informal learning in that informal learning occurs spontaneously in many of the youth work's regular activities.¹⁰⁵

Potential participants are invited for an intake in which further explanation is given about the program and its rules, and to assess their motivation. Participants who are subsequently selected receive a letter for their parents. Personal contact between the youth worker and the parents takes place in the form of a parent meeting that informs the parents about the program that their children will participate in, and gives the opportunity to ask questions.

The education program takes the shape of a training that employs many playful, interactive work forms. The youth take on a number of themes in the trainings, under supervision of a youth worker and appealing role models.

For example, a guest speaker is invited to every training to talk about their own experiences. Every meeting is concluded with a communal meal.

Examples of elements of a training are learning to present and do job interviews, dealing with peer pressure, and formulating a learning path. In the learning path component, the youths set out to draw their own life line. What moments were important in their lives, and what were situations that they learned a lot from? It is also about their future: what do they want to achieve in the near future, and where do they see themselves in ten years? What profession would they like to have, and what steps could they already take to prepare for that?

Every meeting revolves around making a 'mood board' or collage of images, words, objects that are an expression of interests, qualities and identity of the individual. Per meeting, the youths can choose between elements through, among other things, the internet, a stack of post cards, a card game with quotes, or illustrated magazines. The program is concluded with a personal development plan for each participant, and a final presentation in which the participants present their mood board to an audience of family, friends, teachers, other interested people, and representatives of companies.

Timeframe

The entire program comprises eight meetings of three hours each. The execution of the program within the youth work takes six months. For schools, a shortened version of one week is available.

Results

The past year, a group of 9 participants completed the entire education program and obtained a certificate.

The education program was evaluated with a baseline- and final measurement among participants based on a short questionnaire. The leading question is what the program taught them in terms of developed skills, future plans, and improvement of their situation with regards to school and work.

Conditions

Requirements are a space to organise the meetings in, a budget for teaching materials, and the organisation of the final event. One youth worker giving training and guidance should be available. Furthermore, guest speakers and possibly a trainer should be involved for specific elements (such as a job interview training).

2.2 Program My School Coachzz

My School Coachzz is a coaching course in which students who are experiencing difficulties in their academic career are counselled by somewhat older youth who were trained to give coaching voluntarily. The methodology was developed by the DOCK Foundation (Stichting DOCK) and is also used in the Amsterdam Noord and Amsterdam Nieuw West districts.

Motivation

Many students in Amsterdam Zuidoost encounter problems during their academic career. They lack

certain skills that are needed for planning activities and keeping up with school work. This is very demotivating for them. It is also possible that they have problems in other areas of their life that are influencing their school results. It was found that the percentage of early school drop-outs in Amsterdam Zuidoost is 14 percent.¹⁰⁶ This percentage is higher than the city's average.

Guidance by a volunteer coach can give these students the push that they need and make them feel better and more competent in terms of school activities, and make them more motivated to commit to school work.

Objective and target group

The goal is to prevent premature school drop-out. The program focuses on youths aged 12-17 years old who are experiencing problems in their academic career.

Methodology

Students with academic problems may be signed up in different ways, such as through a contact person at the school, by their parents, or through the youth work. Parents are always required to give permission before a coaching course is started. It was specifically agreed to work with young coaches, who are motivated to help other youth, and who know their environment well.

Based on intake meetings with coaches and participants, a profile is made for everyone, based on which a 'match' can be made to link coaches and participants. Subsequently, weekly meetings are organised between coach and participant. At the beginning, they formulate 'change wishes' together, that they will work on throughout the course.

Voluntary coaches complete a three-day training to prepare them for the job. This training teaches basic conversational techniques and problem-solving directed coaching.

Afterwards, the volunteer coaches independently lead the counselling meetings with the participants. They meet the supervising youth worker biweekly to monitor the counselling progress and to discuss their questions and doubts.

Students give their own input of what they want to work on. The coach then looks for solutions together with them, tries to discern what their own role is in the problem, how they handle certain situations, and what they should change about their behaviour. They also explore their talents and how they can realise them better. Participants are continually challenged to reflect on themselves and their behaviour. In this way, there is a lot of attention to identity formation in the meetings.

Timeframe

A coaching course takes 4 to 6 months. Coach and participants meet weekly for 1.5 to 2 hours to work on the formulated goals. After 4 to 6 months, a meeting takes place in which the student decided whether they want to continue the coaching or they have learned enough to continue independently.

Results

Participants develop academic skills, gain more insight into their own qualities, are motivated for

their education again, and less often have to repeat a year. Furthermore, the relationship with teachers and parents improves because tensions decrease. In the academic year 2015-2016, 47 participants in the age of 12-17 were reached.

Conditions

It is essential to have a solid network with chain partners for the registration of participants and the contact with potential new youth coaches. The commitment of one youth worker is furthermore required, who takes the role of project leader for the coordination of the coaching courses and for the training and supervision of the youth coaches.

§ 3. Conclusions

In this section a number of conclusions are formulated based on the descriptions of methodologies used in the youth work in London and Amsterdam Zuidoost. A short summary of the two contexts follows, as well as a comparative perspective. A number of differences and similarities result from this comparison of youth work in the two areas.

London

The English youth workers are mostly motivated by personal reasons to empower the target group – African-Caribbean youth. They strive not only to stimulate individual youths in their development and social integration, but in doing so they also hope to emancipate the whole ethnic group that they are a part of. This translates to a relatively political activist type of attitude among a number of the youth workers. Many of them are also involved in initiatives aimed specifically at the emancipation of the African-Caribbean population in England. Nevertheless, very few programs seem to explicitly address ethnic identity development through their methodology. The youth workers do often mention this as a point of concern for personal meetings and coaching.

Only little money is available for youth work in London, and that has several consequences for the contents of the youth work. First of all, many programs are executed on project basis: there is little space for the development of programs with a longer duration. Furthermore, many youth workers work alone, which means that there are few opportunities for joint reflection, and that it is more difficult for the youth workers to connect with a diverse group of youth. They do not have the chance to make use of the different skill sets of other team members. Additionally, most youth workers are in a situation of social insecurity: the chance that their job will cease to exist is significant. This could possibly explain the idealist and assertive attitude of the youth workers: the uncertain existence of youth work in England only attracts people who are very passionate about the problems of the target group. Furthermore, in many cases they are responsible for funding acquisition to finance youth work programs themselves, so that idealistic persuasive power can be viewed as an important skill in their work. At the same time, because of this context English youth workers are less concerned with substantive frameworks or the limits that government policy can place on their work, since they are not financially dependent on them.

Amsterdam Zuidoost

The youth workers in Amsterdam Zuidoost are also focused on youth that is at risk, but they count all youth in their district to their target group, regardless of ethnicity. Considering the demography of the population of the district, their target group does mainly consist of youth with an African background. Because of this starting point, their first priority is therefore not with the empowerment of this minority group and fighting suppression, but rather they focus more on encouraging personal development of individual youths that are attending youth work activities. Eventually, emancipation of the group can be a result.

Since there are more means available for the youth work, there is more space for the development of substantive educational programs, and youth workers have more social security compared to youth workers from London. Partly because of this, youth workers in Amsterdam might be more focused on the educational methodologies of the youth work, and how to reach the goals that were set with specific programs. They can be less concerned with the secondary conditions, because those are already provided in large part.^d

The youth work in Amsterdam, compared to the situation in London, is dealing with more policy frameworks that direct the type of programs that can be employed. Due to the neutral, generalist approach of the local government, this leaves less space to allot attention to ethnic identity development.

A comparison between contexts

In nearly all youth work programs of the youth work in both London and Amsterdam Zuidoost, improving future chances of the youth is part of the core goals. Many programs try to reach this goal through talent development, identity development, broadening horizons and teaching practical skills like cooperating, communication, coming on time, etc. The programs in London are mostly using personal coaching for this, and are often focused on teaching practical skills and offering work experience places. Moreover many programs in London are neighbourhood- and community-based, which means that many organisations not only exist for the youth, but involve all residents living in a neighbourhood, including youth and their parents.

In Amsterdam Zuidoost, the focus of the youth work is on educational group work with youth. This concerns the regular offer of programs in community centres and in the streets by the ambulatory youth team, but also several educational programs for groups of youth. Exceptions to this characterisation is the individual guidance in the mentoring program My School Coachzz, and in personal meetings that result from contact with the target group during the work in community centres and on the street. Furthermore, nuisance reduction is an explicit goal of the youth work in Amsterdam Zuidoost, especially for the ambulatory branch. In the situation of the youth work as

^d For Amsterdam Zuidoost, with approx. 86,000 residents, almost 20 FTE is available for structural youth work and 'street corner work'. In Lewisham in London, on the other hand, for a population of approx. 300,000 according to estimations in 2016 only a handful of professional youth workers are available, with a flexible group of temporary employees and an extremely limited budget, and the knowledge that this will be reduced significantly in coming years.

described here, this is merely a point of concern in one of the reviewed projects (see Rockstone Community Foundation, Appendix 2).

In the British government policy the youth work does not seem to be aimed specifically at nuisance and crime reduction and prevention.

Finally, there is a difference in context between the methodological use of youth work in London and Amsterdam Zuidoost as discussed here, in terms of the institutional embedding. For Amsterdam Zuidoost a number of programs were discussed that originated from the same organisation with the same views. Therefore, the use of these programs can be assessed as a whole much better. In the exchange project, youth work programs from multiple organisations in London were reviewed, that are active in different parts of London and that are not well-connected to each other.

Chapter 4.

Suggestions for youth work and youth policy

Introduction

The insights from the literature, and the experiences of youth workers in Amsterdam Zuidoost and London as described in the previous chapters, have given rise to a range of suggestions for improvement of professional youth work and youth policy with regards to working with youth from ethnic minority groups. These suggestions are partly based on discussions on the educational value of cultural awareness at the conference held in the Bijlmer Park theatre in Amsterdam Zuidoost on 25 October 2016. There, around 200 involved persons, among which there were youth workers, social workers and policy makers from the Netherlands and England, discussed the theme of youth work for ethnic minority groups together. Based on discussion reports and a short survey held among 68 visitors of the conference, the opinions, ideas and suggestions that were put forward are included in this chapter.

§ 1. Working on social, cultural and ethnic capital

In finding a place in society, not only financial means are important, but mostly the availability of sufficient knowledge, skills, and a large and varied social network are important. Especially the creation of a type of social and cultural capital that is recognised and appreciated in society, can be viewed as a form of symbolic capital that gives people opportunities for acquiring a valuable position in society. One must be very well-aware of the unwritten rules of society to maintain one's position. A lack of this symbolic capital can therefore lead to social exclusion.

Youth coming from families with a vulnerable socioeconomic position, and youth who are members of an ethnic minority group often deal with limitations in amassing such symbolic capital. On the other hand, their minority position and the migration history of their family and community may also been seen as a strength. From home they often receive high aspirations and an ethos of studying, working hard and achieving goals. This is viewed as 'ethnic capital'.

For youth from ethnic minority groups and other non-dominant population groups, it is important to build up a broad basis of social and cultural capital that stimulates shifting between the conflicting environments that they are faced with. By developing a varied social network, broad knowledge and a varied skill set these youths are improving the social chances.

Local youth policy could play an encouraging role in this by offering specific educational programs that focus on the development of knowledge and skills, and that can connect youth to new contacts through networking strategies. Beside education and sports activities, the youth work can play a leading role in this. Taking charge of the possibilities to strengthen their social and cultural capital using valuable starting points offered by the youth's ethnic background, this youth can be given the boost they need to find their position in the society. We may speak of success once the youth gain a

sense of belonging in the society, without having to distance themselves from the cultural identity that they get from home.

For strengthening the symbolic capital among youth from ethnic minority groups, it is important that they can explore their cultural history as part of their identity. If you don't know your history, don't know where you come from, then how can you know yourself? Knowledge is power, which is also true for knowledge about one's own cultural past. Over 90 percent of the attendees to the conference has the opinion that youth with an African background should explore their cultural history in order to take a good position in the current society.

The pitfall is that the dramatic stories from the past of slavery can actually limit the youth in their development. They also feel a strong need to look forward rather than back. The art is to derive strength from the past, be liberated from the history of slavery, and to be proud of ancestors rather than internalising racism. Slavery leaves a heavy mark on the collective memory right now, but seeing the rich history, it should not dominate African history. *Slavery is not African history, it interrupted African history.* That rich African history, however, is unknown to many. An important step is therefore to enrich the cultural history with other stories and lessons from Africa. Another strategy that may be complementary is to look at the slavery history from a different perspective, by centralising the courage and resilience of the forefathers, who went through so many trials. The central idea is: "Do not make the past a burden, but a catalyst for the future". Youth should have the room to relive their history in their own way, and to find the strength to define their own future. This means that information about the ugly and the good sides of history should be available. But what the youth decide to do with that information, is their own decision.

Visitors of the conference furthermore emphasize that more attention should specifically be paid to the 'bicultural' past of the youth, which can be viewed as the strong basis from which they can grow. If they embrace both cultures, that will make them stronger.

In that it is important to remember the power of independent decision-making. Mostly, they should get the feeling that they can influence their own lives, by breaking loose from stereotypes and making use of the opportunities that society has to offer.

§ 2. Dealing with discrimination

Discrimination is a complex concept and in many cases difficult to talk about because of the emotional charge the subject carries. Discrimination is often at play underneath the surface, and certainly not everyone is aware of it. Indicators of discrimination are the structural disadvantaging of minority groups to a majority, and the self-report of experience of discrimination by people in the minority group. A distinction can be made between two types of discrimination, namely: negative treatment like name-calling or bullying, and unequal treatment. Both forms can come from stereotypes that exist about a specific (ethnic) minority group. For example, consider ethnic profiling

by the police, or statistical discrimination on the labour market, where employers apply ideas about the expected productivity of specific groups on individual applicants from that group.

Discrimination of ethnic minority groups exists and mostly has negative consequences for the youth from these groups. It concerns personal functioning of the youth, such as having a negative self-image and decreased wellbeing. Furthermore, it has negative consequences for their academic and professional achievements. The feeling of not getting fair chances at a job can lead to decreasing social participation of youth and the loss of hope for a better future.

To turn the tides it is important to make discrimination a publicly debated issue, without assuming a victim role that limits the possibilities for own contribution. This means that the youth must learn to influence their own future despite the obstacle of discrimination. An important means to this end is the dedication of positive role models who show what is possible and offer social support and encouragement to keep going from their own network when youth is experiencing discrimination. In the words of Paulo Freire: the development of critical awareness instead of fatalistic thinking.

Furthermore, there is of course a responsibility with society as a whole to combat discrimination and to accomplish the emancipation of minority groups. An important aspect in this is the improvement of inter-ethnic contact. It is about achieving unity and cultural synthesis through dialogue and cooperation. The best of both worlds.

§ 3. Focus on identity development

A positive identity development is essential for the personal functioning of youth and their social integration. Youth who do not develop a strong identity based on exploration and interpersonal relationships, have reduced chances of finding a favourable position in society, and increased chances of social-emotional problems and problems with justice and police.

Guidance and positive stimulation from the environment in the active exploration of identity is therefore not only important for the personal development of the youth, but also for their future social standing. This support is particularly important for youth from ethnic minority groups because they have a higher chance of encountering problems in their identity development because of the conflicting realities that they deal with growing up. The challenge of uniting different aspects of their identity is therefore a more difficult task. Conflicts between personal preferences of the youth, and expectations from a society or community can further contribute to the problem.

Firstly, it is important for youth from minority groups to actively explore their ethnic identity and the value they place upon belonging to a specific ethnic community. Exploring the ethnic identity and feeling connected to the ethnic background is actually correlated with better wellbeing, improved self-esteem and better academic and behavioural achievements. Subsequently, they have the task of uniting their memberships of an ethnic community and of a larger society. They must develop a bicultural identity in which the ethnic identity and the dominant cultural identity exist in harmony.

The best starting position for youth in a diverse society therefore seems to be the development of positive contact with their ethnic identity, combined with an open attitude toward the larger society and dominant culture that they are a part of. In other words, the youth should know who they are, where they are from, and be open to the possibilities that society offers them. By focusing on identity formation and offering extensive guidance from the environment (at home, at school and in the neighbourhood) throughout their search for their personal identity and a social destination, this youth can be empowered.

The surveyed visitors to the conference mostly (90%) agree that attention to the cultural history and identity development is important for all youth, whether or not they are part of an ethnic minority.

A portion does find, however, that ethnic minorities face more challenges in this area, especially youth with an African background. This is mostly caused by a lack of information about the past, and the interruption of traditions and cultural expression due to the slavery time. Therefore, it is especially important for them, and schools should pay more attention to the (migration)past of minorities in society, and the strengths that they may derive pride from.

§ 4. Consequences for youth work and youth policy

The challenges that youth from ethnic minority groups from socioeconomically vulnerable neighbourhoods face, need extra attention in order to make the youth resilient against the risks they encounter and to provide a positive stimulation for their development. It can be concluded from the available data that the youth populations in the ethnically highly diverse districts of Amsterdam Zuidoost and London/Lewisham is dealing with substantial challenges in growing up, including poverty, youth unemployment, and problems in the academic career. Intervention programs that focus on identity development, positive reinforcement, and learning skills and independent coping strategies are good starting points for the stimulation of youth toward personal growth and social development. These elements are often combined in the youth work.

During the exchange program of youth workers from London and Amsterdam Zuidoost, it was concluded that in both contexts a good start was made with programs that pay attention both to identity development and creating future chances for youth, and to their cultural awareness. In almost all of the reviewed programs, working on creating future opportunities is one of the goals, and this happens, among other ways, through talent development, identity formation and the learning of practical and social skills. To this end, the programs in London often employ personal coaching and offering internship placements. In Amsterdam Zuidoost the emphasis is on educational group work with youth in community centres and in the streets via among other things educational program for groups of youth.

Both in London and in Amsterdam Zuidoost the youth work offers a solid basis for further developing cultural awareness and (ethnic) identity formation in the programs for youth. Important is that the attention to cultural awareness of youth with an African background not be limited to specific programs, but rather to let it be a smaller or larger part of all kinds of programs and daily work. The

results of the conference survey also show that there is ample support for both strategies or a combination thereof.

People mostly agree that cultural awareness should play a role across the youth work programs (65%). Furthermore, half of the surveyed attendees thinks that attention should (also) be paid to it in specifically targeted programs. In the discussion, several examples of *good practices* from youth work in this area were mentioned. For example, a program was mentioned that discussed historical inventions from the Arabic world and that still play an important role in Western society nowadays in a single session with Moroccan-Dutch youth. Such a program could be developed for a broad range of cultures. Mentoring programs are furthermore mentioned, in which the counselling pays specific attention to identity- and talent development. Mentoring offers a lot of space for the needs of every individual youth, and can thus tailor to those needs through counselling. Dance, music and theatre moreover offer a lot of possibility for focusing on cultural awareness. In chapter 3 and appendix 2, several other programs were discussed that can serve as inspiration.

To further extend this theme of cultural awareness and identity development in the youth work programs, more space is needed within youth policy to a lot resources to this. In Amsterdam Zuidoost, this means that the policy framework of a neutral, generalist approach to youth work should give more leeway for more specifically aimed programs. For the situation in London, space in youth policy mostly refers to offering better conditions and financial means. Youth workers experience a lot of limitations because bureaucratic processes confine or delay the results of their guidance. Politicians and government workers often do not know what is going on out in the streets, and do not know the challenges that youth workers face. The paperwork that they must complete to take responsibility for the policy choices they make, in their opinion limits their options to achieve better results. In addition, around 40 percent of surveyed conference attendees think that more professionals from ethnic minorities should be employed. The importance of role models from ethnic minority groups is also mentioned in the discussion. Many attendees do however, acknowledge that above all it is important that the professional, regardless of their background, should speak the 'language' of the target group and show interest in the youth that it is about. The ethnic background of workers should more or less reflect the population of society. Around 40 percent of the surveyed attendees furthermore states that an up-scaling of youth work in general is necessary.

Finally, at the conference the good advice was exchanged to be creative within the limitations of youth policy as a youth worker, and to not let yourself be stopped by the framework of youth policy in reaching for your goals. If it cannot be done how it should be, then it should be done how it can be.

The challenge for professional youth work and other local youth policy facilities is to methodically address the educational value of cultural awareness. The hope is that insights and discussions that spring from the present study project financed by Erasmus+ contribute positively to this. For youth from ethnic minority groups, and other youth who are facing social risks, this could mean an important stimulation for their identity and their position in society.

Appendices

Appendix 1. Notes

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Appendix 2. Inspiring youth work programs

Introduction

A number of other inspiring youth work programs in London and Amsterdam Zuidoost are described in this appendix. First we highlight programs organised by the involved youth workers in London (§ 1). After, several youth work programs carried out in Amsterdam Zuidoost are described (§ 2).

§ 1. Youth work programs London

1.1 Ladywell Fields Adventure Playground

Brief characterisation

The Ladywell Fields Adventure Playground is an adventure playground where children enjoy, beside a wide selection of playground equipment, the care of professional caregivers who not only ensure the children's physical wellbeing, but furthermore monitor their mental health and development.

Motivation

Children and youth living in Lewisham, one of London's districts, are faced with various problems to which they cannot find effective solutions by themselves, at home or at school. There are, for example, youths who are very introverted and have trouble working together with others, youths that display clear leadership potential but are not challenged into developing their skills further, youths with behavioural problems or disorders like ADHD or aggressive tendencies that their social environment does not know how to manage, and youths that grow up in unsafe neighbourhoods with high (violent) crime rates, leading to an increased risk of their own involvement in criminal behaviour. The problem is that these children and youth do not receive enough attention, allowing their problems to persist and worsen. Furthermore, these children and youth are not challenged sufficiently, and are therefore not able to develop their skills optimally.

Objective and Target Group

The Ladywell Fields Adventure Playground's goal is to stimulate children's positive personal development by offering them a safe and challenging recreational environment. By logging the development of various skills using an objective measurement tool, the personal development of each child is recorded and personal points of concern or potential are identified so that the child can develop in a goal-directed manner.

The target group consists of all children and youth from the Lewisham district, in the ages between 8 and 19 years old. Children aged 0 to 8 are welcome under supervision, and youths with a disability are welcome until 25 years old.

Methodology

All children and youth are welcome to come and play. Awareness of the playground happens through word-of-mouth from parents, friends and volunteers from the playground, as well as through youth forums and the distribution of flyers. The first time a child comes to the playground, they are obliged to fill out an application form that also requires parental consent. A member of the playground's staff furthermore completes the measurement tool questionnaire with them. The questionnaire covers several different skills, that are mapped onto a scale from one (not yet developed) to five (fully developed). Taking into consideration the child or youth's less-developed skills, a plan of action is developed that stimulates the development of these specific skills. The children and youth can join organised group activities, or join a group of kids or youths by themselves. The objective is that the playground staff creates a safe and stimulating environment for the children and youth to play in, by maintaining basic rules and by organising challenging activities. Particular attention is paid to the integration of new members in the group. Furthermore, the staff strategizes in creating opportunities for development of the specific skills that the children are lacking as described in the personal plans of action for each child.

Beside the organised group activities and playground equipment at the park, there are also opportunities for other projects. For example, children are encouraged to come up with strategies to raise money for excursions, there is a youth council that can propose ideas and improvements to the playground, there are tournaments with other playgrounds, and sometimes weekend trips are organised. Children and youth who improve their skills during activities receive credit, which is also relevant for their high school diplomas. Moreover, children and youth that perform well may be recommended by the youth workers for special competency courses or an award, financed by the Jack Petchey Foundation. Children and youth attending the playground activities can also be referred to health care facilities, internships or (side)jobs.

Timeframe

The playgrounds are open on weekdays (Tuesday to Friday) and on Saturdays. During the summer, they are also open on Mondays.

Results

The playgrounds are visited by approximately 200 children and youths per day, half of whom are male and half female. On sunny summer days this number can even rise to 400 to 500 youngsters. The children and youth enjoy coming to the playground not only to play but also to learn: many of them improve on several skills. A large proportion of children learns to work together with others better, to be less focused on themselves, and to take into account other children more. Many children and youths that were rather shy upon first arrival furthermore learn to stand up for themselves and to present in front of large groups during their time at the playground. Moreover, many children and youth show increased creativity: they are encouraged to generate ideas that are both fun and good for the community. Because the playground offers a platform for the execution of the ideas, they learn many things that will be useful in their future as well, like time planning, setting realistic goals, and persevering.

Conditions

Five of these playgrounds – Adventure Playgrounds – are run by Lewisham Youth Service in the London district of Lewisham. One of these playgrounds, the playground in Ladywell, has four staff members who coach the children and youths personally, and supervise the group activities. Nearly all activities take place at the playground itself: using the playground equipment, or in the building on site. Sometimes excursions to other places are organised. The playground financing comes from local governmental subsidies, as well as from funds like the Jack Petchey Foundation. The children and youth are furthermore encouraged to raise money themselves for projects and activities that they would like to organise.

1.2 Rockstone Community Foundation

Brief characterisation

The Rockstone Community Foundation is a foundation in the North-London district of Haringey that organises a community-based bicycle project. At the Rockstone Bike Alley club physical activity, cycling, and bicycle maintenance jobs are employed as a means of empowering youths and improving their skills in several areas.

Motivation

A large proportion of the youth population in Haringey comes from an African-Caribbean background. According to youth workers, these youths have special and specific needs. They often have trouble adapting to a society in which being white and British is the norm, with which these minority youths do not always identify. There is no cut-and-dried method for the development and integration of these youths, and little funding from the government is available for youths at risk of becoming involved in crime. However, there are many concerns about this group – for example about their health and weight, and their daytime activities. Many of these youths do not have the resources to entertain themselves with paid recreational activities, leading to them being bored and hanging around in the streets. This situation leads to their increased risk of involvement in criminal behaviour.

A number of professional youth workers are active in the district, but they are criticized for having received education focusing on “white problems” and lacking insight into the actual issues at play in the streets of Haringey. They often do not connect well with the target group.

Objective and Target Group

The goal of the bicycle project is to offer daytime activities, improve health, and teach valuable life skills and thereby stimulate the development by teaching the youth about cycling.

The target group consists of youths from the Haringey neighbourhood between 6 and 21 years of age.

Methodology

The bike workshop is located centrally in the neighbourhood, which is why youths become aware of the bicycle project. The police or parole board, as well as schools can furthermore refer youths to the project. Anyone is welcome to join, and may participate in parts of the programme after an initial intake. The intake for children younger than 14 years old includes a parental consent form. Additional information is furthermore obtained from general practitioners, the police and the school. The bicycle project lasts 10 weeks and consists of several phases.

In the first phase, the youths learn how to exercise in a healthy way, for example by cycling through the neighbourhood. In the second phase they assist with small jobs in the bike workshop. In phase three, their responsibilities in the workshop are extended to those of bicycle mechanic. The youth is reimbursed for the work done in the workshop. A noteworthy aspect of the project is the communication and coordination between the youths, their parents, and their school. The youths are furthermore coached individually. The project is unique in its focus on youth from an African-Caribbean background, specifically offering coaching and personal interviews with a focus on ethnic-cultural aspects of identity formation. Since participants in the program learn to cycle well and learn how to repair and restore bikes, they experience the feeling of being good at something, and how to grow in this. They furthermore learn social and societal skills that they can use in the future, for example when looking for a job. There is room for the participants to suggest changes in the program throughout the project: the atmosphere is informal and the program is not completely fixed. When the youths have completed the project or are in need of a different type of programme, they are often referred to youth centre Kori where there are opportunities to become involved in programs in the field of , among other things, art.

Timeframe

The Rockstone Community Foundation was founded in 2005, and oversees several different projects. During the bicycle project the youth visit the bike workshop once a week for ten weeks. Outside of the project days, the workshop is open often, and occasionally activities are organised which are open for everyone. The youth is therefore welcome to visit the workshop more often than the bicycle project requires, and can visit or help out on occasion after they finish the project.

Results

Annually, at least 100 youths participate in the bicycle project on a regular basis. Approximately 70% of the attendees is male. In the summer cycling program, another 500 participants take part. During the years in which this summer cycling program was offered, the number of burglaries in the neighbourhood decreased by 40%. Moreover, the program is achieving its goal: the youths are more and more conscientiously involved with their own health and exercise plans, and they are learning social and practical skills like communication and repairing bikes. These skills can be valuable in the future, for example when looking for a job, giving them a brighter outlook in life. The youths themselves are also satisfied with these results.

Conditions

The Rockstone Community Foundation employs ten members of staff, three of which are paid employees and seven are volunteers. The staff are all committed to the positive development of the participants. While one of

the paid staff members focuses more on physical health, for example by giving information about preventing and handling injuries, another is specialised in coaching and supervising the social aspects of the programme. The third employee mostly teaches about bicycle repair. The volunteers support the employees wherever needed. The bicycle project mostly takes place in the streets or in parks where the participants can cycle, as well as in the workshops where they can work on the bikes. The project is funded by private donations that the organisation applies for. There is no funding from the government.

1.3 Build it

Brief Characterisation

Build it is a project organised by the London Youth organisation. The program attracts mostly young men with social problems who are recruited to help renovate dilapidated houses with the objective of making the houses habitable again. The goal of the project is to reintegrate the participating youth through positive daytime activities, so that eventually they can take control of and shape their own life independently.

Motivation

London harbours a large group of young adults that gets in trouble by making bad decisions that lead to their dropping out of education or even ending up in jail. When these youngsters have a healthy social network that supports them when things go wrong, a bad decision does not necessarily result in such dramatic consequences. However, a significant group exists that does not have such a social safety net. Their parents do not care for them, they have experienced neglect throughout their youth, or their family distances itself from them when they make bad decisions. For this group of youths it is very important that programs exist that help them recover after they made a mistake. First and foremost it is important to offer them useful and meaningful daytime activities. These youths furthermore need opportunities to develop various skills. For example, their social skills are often weak, and they lack practical skills that increase independence such as handling money or being on time. Finally, many of these youths do not have any qualifications or skills that will help them find a job. When they increase their chances of employment by obtaining a diploma or gaining work experience, they have better chances later on in life, and the chance that they will revert to making bad decisions that get them into trouble again, decreases.

Objective and Target Group

Build it aims to offer youths who lack a positive outlook in life due to bad decisions in the past meaningful and useful daytime activities and increased opportunities in life by teaching personal skills and skills in construction work. The most important goal is to make the youth more independent, and to teach them to function independently in society by the end of the program. The target group consists mostly of men in the ages of 16 to 24 years old with a limited social safety net, who have dropped out of school or were recently released from jail.

Methodology

Youths are either referred to Build it, or they register for the program based on their own initiative. The program lasts thirteen weeks, the first two of which comprise the orientation and assessment. In cases where the program is deemed appropriate for the candidate, the next phase is a group introduction, in which the participants get to know each other. In the following weeks, the participants set out to develop the construction work skills for three days per week. The teaching is mostly offered through practical experience in the renovation of dilapidated buildings, but there are also opportunities to develop particular skills that may subsequently be tested. In this way the participants work toward obtaining a CSCS-card: a certificate required for working in construction. Beside developing construction work skills, participants are also asked to complete an assessment once every week or every two weeks that examines whether the program is effective and if they can successfully complete it. If it becomes apparent that the program does not suit the participant's needs, other ways to improve their situation are explored. For example, they might be encouraged to return to school, to enter a different program, or to look for a job. Through coaching and assessment, as well as during the

practical construction work, a lot of attention is paid to social skills and practical life skills. Among other things, the youths learn to be on time and to see agreements through at work, as well as to communicate properly with managers and to handle their finances. Upon completion of the 13-week course, the youths have obtained the CSCS-card if everything went according to plan, with which they can enter the labour market as construction workers. Furthermore, they are allowed to extend their participation in the project until they find a job or internship position. Finally, the youths are advised throughout the program to maintain and expand their social safety net: when they run into a problem it is not the Build it staff that will solve it for them, but they try to guide the youth in question into finding their own solution and to appeal to their own social network. Ultimately, all of these practices are directed at the key objective, which is to enable the program's graduates to independently take charge of their lives. Build it is mostly organised by the project's own staff, but they have ties with several organisations like the jail and parole board for the referral of candidate participants. Furthermore a partnership exists between Build it and schools, workplaces and other projects, so that they can refer the youths that finish or drop out of the program to a stable new environment.

Timeframe

Build it is a program that has been up and running for several years. The course that participants follow runs for 13 weeks, for three days a week. However, this time period is rather flexible: the participant only progresses to the CSCS-card exam when they are ready, and when the course completed, the participants are welcome to stay until they have found an internship or a job.

Results

Build it takes in approximately 400 young adults annually, mostly attracting young men from an African-Caribbean background. These youths visibly develop in a number of areas. Firstly, they improve their construction skills: they not only learn to paint and build, they also learn more about safety, finally resulting in a tangible certificate that is useful when they enter the labour market. Additionally, they learn all sorts of other skills like communicating clearly, managing stress, financial skills, IT-skills, and adjusting to working life. All of these skills combined allow young adults to become more self-reliant and independent in structuring their lives. Reviews from participants who have completed the program show a mostly positive opinion of the results as well. A number of participants is disappointed about not (yet) having achieved their goals, but they remain dedicated to achieving them.

Conditions

Seven staff members are available for Build it. The meetings or interviews take place at the London Youth main office, but the practical parts of the project take place in dilapidated buildings throughout London that are being renovated. Funding for the project is in large part supplied by the Big Lottery Fund, and additionally comes from other sources such as housing corporations that grant access to buildings in need of renovation.

1.4 Cultural project workshops at Second Wave

Brief characterisation

Second Wave is a youth work organisation that includes a trainers-database comprising eight trainers/counsellors that provide cultural workshops at schools and other institutions.

Motivation

There is a large group of youths that never ventures outside the Lewisham district. Youth workers have observed that the youth often loiter in the neighbourhood or cause nuisance, and they often lack productive recreational activities. Moreover many of the youths experience insecurity about their identity. This insecurity may come from a lack of knowledge about their (ethnic) background, but also because they are not aware of their strengths and talents, and do not have concrete plans on how to shape their lives. This insecurity about their identity is sometimes channelled into shyness, but others try to compensate for it by being inappropriately loud, overly energetic and often quite brazen.

Objective and target group

The goal of the project workshops is to provide the youth with productive recreational activities and thereby take them off the streets. Furthermore, increasing awareness of the youths' own talents and encouraging them to make the most of themselves are focus points. "Make them shine."

The target group consists of school-aged youth in the ages between 11 and 24 years old, who lack productive recreational activities.

Methodology

The project workshops may be requested by different clients such as schools, municipalities, police, funds and ministries. Most of the workshops are subsequently executed at schools or youth centres by two to three trainers/counsellors, and the client controls what children are invited. The workshops make use of a peer-to-peer dynamic: trainers giving the workshops are close in age to the target group. This equality makes working with youths easier than, for example, in a student-teacher relationship, since youths more easily feel understood by a peer-trainer. In the introductory phase of the project, the participants are interviewed and an introductory lecture about script writing is offered for the final project. Theatrical, dance, and musical skills are practiced in subsequent meetings, which will finally lead to a final presentation that is open to the public, the parents and the sponsors. Aside from the project workshops for youths at schools, in the Stopwatch project police officers are furthermore trained in awareness about ethnic profiling and the impact this can have on the youth.

Timeframe

The workshops take place throughout approximately a month and a half, in which the participants come together weekly to practice for the final presentation. The final presentation concludes the project workshops.

Results

Each year individual trainers/counsellors impact approximately 100 children and youths, in groups of 20 participants per project at most. A little over half of the participants are male and the rest is female, and most of them come from an African-Caribbean background. Apart from the participants noticing their own growth and talent development, there is also recognition from their social environment, which strengthens the youths' self-confidence. They not only become better at presenting, but they also become more confident about what they want which helps them formulate more concrete goals for their own future. For most of the participants taking part in the workshops is a hobby, but for some of them the workshops are a first step in building a career in art. The youths can for example progress from participant to supervisor after completion of the project.

Conditions

Eight trainers/counsellors are available at Second Wave who are hired to schools for the project workshops. The main office of the organisation is a youth centre in Deptford, in the Lewisham district of London, but workshops can take place in all sorts of locations like schools and youth centres.

Required skills for the trainers/counsellors are: patience, understanding, flexibility, adaptability and focus on an ultimate goal.

1.5 Coaching at high schools

Brief characterisation

Deployment of youth workers as coaches at high schools who guide the personal development of students and improve their commitment to school activities.

Motivation

A large part of the student body at this school comes from an African-Caribbean background. The youth worker observes that this target group experiences additional challenges that are also relevant at school. It is

important for youths to discover and shape their identity during the years they spend in secondary school. For youths from an African-Caribbean background this can be a difficult process, since they are not offered a lot of space to form their own ethnic identity, or are confined by a pressure to adapt. For example, there is a student association that is predominantly white, thus posing a high risk of exclusion of African-Caribbean youths. Beside the fact that this institutional environment can damage the self-image of these youths, it also affords them fewer opportunities according to youth workers, since participation in such student associations provides all sorts of opportunities for talent development that these students therefore miss out on. Moreover, there is a lot of prejudice about African-Caribbean youth that makes it difficult for them to discover their own identity and skills without being influenced by the (negative) judgments of others. The result can be that these students, for example, perform worse in school, or even that they are kicked out of school. It is important for them to feel like they are heard, and to connect better with others so that they can securely develop their identity and feel stronger. The hope is that when these students become more sure of their identity and position, they will perform better in school, be better able to speak up for themselves and their equal treatment, within school as well as in society, and to become empowered to fight for these ideals.

Objective and target group

The goal of the project is to empower youths from disadvantaged neighbourhoods to bridge the gap of inequality such that they become more self-reliant and continue to grow after leaving school. Beside better performance in school by individual students, the youth work is also aimed at cultural awareness and emancipation of the target group; African-Caribbean youths.

All students at the school can turn to the youth worker for help, but the focus is on students who are, for example, at risk of suspension and need extra help to continue to function well within the school system.

Methodology

Students can walk in at any time, and consequently sign up, but teachers may also register students occasionally. On principle, every student that needs help is welcome, but in cases where there are more complex problems or practical issues they may be referred to therapists or psychologists, providers of additional funds or financial aid, or to (part-time) jobs or internships. When a student enters a counselling course, their personal situation dictates the form of supervision that they will receive, but all supervision is aimed at development. Through coaching and monitoring the student is helped to improve in areas where they are lacking. There is space for the student's input and contributions based on their own goals, such that the coach mostly has a listening role and only interferes where necessary. Particular attention is paid to the development of a clear identity, with the idea that children and youths who clearly know who they are can perform better in several aspects of life. By developing talents or social skills students not only learn new skills, but they also gain the experience that they can improve in any area when they put their mind to it in the right way. This happens among other ways by encouraging students to become a member of an association or student board where they can learn to communicate and cooperate, but also to define and reach personal goals.

Timeframe

As long as the students are attending school they can make use of counselling, and once they leave the school they are excluded from the project. The duration of supervision varies per student, depending on their initial issue and the progress that they make.

Results

Approximately 200 students aged 14 to 19 make use of the counselling offered at the high school each year. Circa half of these students is male, and half is female. There are two important challenges for the supervision of these students. Firstly, there are very few resources for the individual supervision of students: the coach works alone so the workload is very high and it is difficult to offer all the students what they need. Secondly, there seems to be few opportunities for students once they have completed their education. The development

of skills and a proactive attitude can have a highly positive effect on their prospects, but when chances are low that students can find a job somewhere this can be quite discouraging.

Still, the personal goals of the students are generally being met. They mostly make strides in terms of self-confidence. Additionally they learn a lot in the areas of leadership and organisation, and about working in teams in which communicating clearly, sharing ideas, and dialogue which are central themes in the associations and other activities that they participate in. These personal goals, however, do not always align with the school's goals. The students are therefore often dissatisfied with the school, but in more than half of the cases they are satisfied with the outcomes of their counselling track. They are especially positive about the extra time and attention that they receive, and the space that they get to grow independently, without the prior specification of goals by the school.

Conditions

The counselling is carried out by one fulltime staff member that mostly works as a coach. The meetings take place in an open space at the high school that is freely accessible to all students. Since the school has limited financial means there is a strong dependence on temporary subsidies that are granted according to strict conditions, so that continuation of the counselling is uncertain.

§ 2. Youth work programs Amsterdam Zuidoost

2.1 Girls in Business

Brief characterisation

Girls in Business is a training program for girls, aimed at the development of social and entrepreneurial skills.

Motivation

Not only boys but also girls in the Amsterdam Zuidoost youth work target group suffer from a vulnerable social economic status and prospects. In 2012 34.1 percent of children and youth in Amsterdam Zuidoost were growing up in poverty households. The Amsterdam-wide average percentage of poverty households is 23.3 percent.¹

Furthermore, youth unemployment rates in Amsterdam Zuidoost are very high. In 2014 37 percent of 15 – 26-year-olds are part of the unemployed labour force. This number is significantly higher than the average percentage across all of Amsterdam (24%).¹ Another indicator for vulnerable future prospects of youth is the number of premature school-leavers without starting qualifications. The size of this category of youths is higher in Amsterdam Zuidoost than it is in other districts: in 2012 the percentage of premature school-leavers in Amsterdam Zuidoost is 14%, compared with 11% average across Amsterdam.¹

In some ways the prospects of young women in Amsterdam Zuidoost is particularly vulnerable. The labour participation of young women in the age group 15-26 years old lies, with 44%, much lower than the average in Amsterdam (55%).¹ Young women moreover work fewer hours in their jobs than do young men, and their average personal income is much lower than that of men. These differences are larger in Amsterdam Zuidoost than in other districts. The girls youth work at Swazoom aims to better prepare girls for their future by paying more attention to social- and entrepreneurial skills in the training program Girls in Business.

Objective and target group

The training program focuses on the development of personal insight and girls planning their future, as well as on promoting the development of skills necessary for this. The target group consists of girls in the ages of 14-18 of different educational backgrounds, whom Swazoom is in contact with through the girls youth work or through local partners.

Methodology

Girls in Business is a specific form of social skill training that, aside from learning general social skills, also focuses on specific skills in the area of entrepreneurship and the acquisition of income. Elements of career

planning like developing a portfolio, a personal development plan and practical simulations are combined with social skill training.

The preparation phase of the training program is focused on recruitment and selection of participants, involving external specialists with specific knowledge, and approaching people who can function as personal, voluntary coaches.

Girls in Business consists of three components. First of all, the girls complete a training course of three sessions, in which they consider their personal development (what can I do, what do I want, what are my dreams), the development of entrepreneurial skills (networking, trend-watching and budgeting), and developing a business plan. Being inspired by other successful young entrepreneurs is at the heart of this part of the course. After the training course the participants each have a business plan and they have obtained skills to position their plan and themselves in the market. Successful completion of the course is rewarded with a certificate.

Subsequently the participants start a coaching course in which they will execute their business plan under the supervision of a young entrepreneur or a girls youth worker. Over the course of three months they have weekly meetings and work on realising their own plan step by step. During this process they can bring into practice the skills that they obtained during the training course, and develop them further.

Finally, there is a festive final meeting in which the participants present their realised plan at a sizeable event. This allows them to take on an exemplary role for other youths and girls in particular, in their neighbourhood.

Timeframe

The Girls in Business program lasts four months in which weekly meetings with the participants take place. A training- or coaching meeting takes approximately three hours. Days and times for the meetings are determined in consultation.

Results

In 2015, 20 participants took part in the program.

The program completed with an evaluation among the participants, coaches, and other collaborating partners. The guiding question is what the program brought, and what points of improvement could be formulated.

The Girls in Business program shapes participants to become self-aware young women with concrete ideas for their societal position and who have increased chances for a job or an own business.

Participating young women are ultimately available as role models for other youth through activities organised by youth work, schools, and other collaborating partners.

Conditions

Requirements are a space where training activities can be organised, a budget for educational materials, and organisation of the final event. At least one youth worker must be involved for giving trainings and supervision. Furthermore young entrepreneurs must be approached about becoming guest speakers and possibly trainers for specific parts of the program (such as a networking training).

2.2 The Breakfast Club

Brief characterisation

The Breakfast Club is a program for interactive health education with sports components and a communal breakfast.

Motivation

Overweight and obesity are health problems that occur relatively frequently among the youth and other inhabitants of Amsterdam Zuidoost.¹ In 2013, 28% of 5-19 year-olds suffers from (severe) overweight while the Amsterdam average is 18%. In 2013 only 12.5% of 13-14 year-olds in Amsterdam Zuidoost met the Dutch Healthy Exercise Norm.¹ This percentage is the lowest among all Amsterdam districts, and lies below the average (15.2%). Amsterdam Zuidoost also scores relatively low on breakfast habits: 61.5 percent of 13-14 year-olds has breakfast at least five days per week. On average in Amsterdam more than 75% of members of

this category do so. The majority of inhabitants of Amsterdam Zuidoost moreover do not include sufficient fruits and vegetables in their diet.

Overweight and obesity are manifestations of an unhealthy lifestyle that is not uncommon in the district and that schools and other youth facilities are confronted with regularly. Based on this data the youth work at Swazoom developed the 'Breakfast Club' program which promotes healthy lifestyle among youths in Amsterdam Zuidoost. This program was inspired by a concept of Michael Jordan, who transformed his own start-of-the-day training programme to a counselling program for students.

Objective and target group

The Breakfast Club's objective is to stimulate the youth and their social environment to adopt a healthy lifestyle through a combination of exercise, healthy breakfasts and information about health in a safe social setting.

The target group consists primarily of primary school-age youth to young adults, but parents and other inhabitants from the district are also welcomed, especially to the communal breakfast including health counselling.

Methodology

The Breakfast Club is an intervention program in which a group of 15-30 participants follows an exercise program at 10.00 in the morning under supervision, and subsequently shares breakfast in a public space. The program may be categorised as a sporty behavioural intervention with educational components.¹ Relevant local partners like a school (hosting location, client), the sports community centre (sports instruction), school gardens (supplier of fresh fruits and vegetables), the petting zoo (supplier of fresh eggs), the food bank, businesses, nutrition experts and other experts are involved in the execution of the program.

The Breakfast Club program includes six meetings. Each meeting is composed of several fixed components that can be divided into three categories:

- Sports exercises at an appropriate location in the public space, overseen by a qualified instructor. For example at a park or in a square where there is fitness equipment available.
- Collective preparation of a healthy breakfast. This activity takes place at a community centre or another appropriate accommodation.
- Breakfast with an informal atmosphere, which includes counselling about eating healthily and exercising by an expert from a local facility. Themes include: sugar, tap water, reading product labels, low-budget cooking, and fruit and vegetable varieties. The meeting ends with a quiz about the theme of the that day with a small prize for the person with the largest number of correct answers.

At the last meeting, participants receive a cookbook with healthy recipes that was compiled by the volunteers that prepared the breakfasts. The cookbook also includes the information that was distributed as part of the health counselling.

Apart from counselling by professionals about welfare and sports and exercise, role models and peer education are furthermore used in the program. Youths who are more experienced in sports function as approachable role models during the execution of exercises. Peers with more knowledge and practical skills thus transfer their experience to other participants in an active manner.

Timeframe

The program of the Breakfast Club consists of six meetings that may take place at variable frequencies. These may be in school holidays, but also on weekends. One meeting takes two hours and 45 minutes, from 10.00 to 12.45.

Results

The goal is to motivate youths with an unhealthy lifestyle to exercise more, eat more healthily, and to give them more knowledge and awareness of consumer behaviour.

Results are surveyed by a baseline- and final measurement through a short questionnaire that participants fill out prior to and at the end of their participation in the program. Furthermore, an evaluation takes place among

the cooperating partners. The guiding question is what the program's yield was and what points of improvement could be formulated.

The program was executed 20 times over the past 3 years, for approximately 400 youths.

Conditions

An appropriate outdoor area is required for the exercise part of the program, and an indoor space is required for the breakfast and counselling sessions. Additionally, budget is needed for material costs and for compensation for the volunteers. One youth worker should be present to give training and counselling. Furthermore, experts should be involved for the different counselling components, and youths that may be introduced as role models.

2.3 Swazoom Live

Brief characterisation

Swazoom Live is a program for talent development in arts and culture, that builds toward a final event at which youths can perform and present their newly developed skills.

Motivation

Youth work often employs arts and culture in the talent development of youth. Beside the artistic and cultural value of these activities in themselves, arts and culture may also function as a means for social development. Participation in cultural activities can be a way to stimulate the growth of social cohesion, to expand basic knowledge, as well as to teach social skills.¹ Research from Great Britain shows that cultural participation has a positive impact on, among other things, personal development, social cohesion, development of identity, health and wellbeing.¹ Participants in cultural activities furthermore feel more in control of their environment, and are more confident about their own abilities.

Youth workers often experience a shortage of the mentioned skills in the target group in Amsterdam Zuidoost. The talent program Swazoom Live aims to contribute to the development of youths in these areas.

Objective and target group

The objective of Swazoom Live is the development of talents in youths, improvement of their skills in a wide range of aspects (working together, presenting, persevering) and strengthening their sense of self-esteem. The course simultaneously offers its participants a meaningful recreational activity. The program for talent development focuses on motivated youths who show affinity for arts and culture, and who want to develop themselves in the area of a variety of performing arts.

Methodology

Youths or youth groups who are involved in or interested in arts and culture are signed up, or sign themselves up, with the project leader. It also occurs that the project leader scouts youth groups at festivals or other events. If the youth or the group shows enough motivation, they are requested to perform at the next Swazoom Live event. Each youth or youth group comes in for an interview in which the possibilities and wishes are explored. The interview is an important trademark of the methodology: working with the ideas and ambitions of the youth themselves. Next, the participants are supervised in a counselling course up until the final presentation. Weekly meetings are organised between the group and a coach or teacher to discuss the set-up of the presentation, to set goals, to make a task-division and mostly to practice constantly. The presentations may include a wide range of performing arts, like dance, music, theatre, acrobatics, and fashion. The supervision is not only aimed at developing skills in the relevant arts discipline, but also focuses on broadening horizons, presentation techniques, and social skills. Because of the focus on reflection and broadening their horizons, as well as the meetings about how the youths would like to give arts and culture a place in their life, the youth also work on exploring their talents and future prospects. The counselling course also includes identity formation and social position of the youths in this manner. Following the final presentation, ways are sought to continue the youths' initiatives with input from the youths themselves, for

example by performing at other events, joining an association or professional education (among which is the Academy of Arts), or continuation as an independent group. Since participants primarily include youths coming from an African background, and the arts and culture that interest them often have a basis in their cultural heritage, attention is also paid to the development of their ethnic identity.

Timeframe

In a period spanning 10 to 14 weeks prior to the Swazoom Live event, the presentation of talent is worked toward during a counselling course. The youths receive 2 to 4 hours of supervision per week, by a coach or teacher with whom they collaborate to prepare a presentation.

Results

Per event, approximately 100 participants are reached. Among the audience of the event are another circa 160 youths. Participating youths develop skills in the areas of presenting, organising, entrepreneurship and collaboration. Furthermore they grow in creativity at an artistic level, and they broaden their horizons in terms of performing arts.

Conditions

A good network with chain partners is essential for the registration of participants and for contacting potential coaches and teachers. One youth worker is required to lead the project, coordinate the counselling courses and takes responsibility for the organisation of the event.

2.4 Ambulatory Youth Team

Brief characterisation

The Ambulatory Youth Team (Ambulant Jongeren Team; AJT) is a partnership between Swazoom's youth work and the field work by the Streetcornerwork Foundation (Stichting Streetcornerwork). Youth workers and field workers work together in duos and make contact with groups of youth in the streets to inform them about available recreational activities and welfare work.

Motivation

Documentation from the municipality of Amsterdam shows that Amsterdam Zuidoost is one of the district in which inhabitants are most dissatisfied about their neighbourhood. Amsterdam Zuidoost scores a 7.1, which is below the city-wide average, 7.4.1 The satisfaction of inhabitants is strongly correlated with their appreciation of the social interaction and cohesion in the neighbourhood. However, the majority (56%) of inhabitants in Amsterdam Zuidoost report that they interact with their neighbours on a weekly basis, which is more than average compared to the rest of the city. In several neighbourhoods in Amsterdam Zuidoost, people are highly positive about the way neighbours from different ethnic or cultural backgrounds interact with each other. Relatively many inhabitants in Amsterdam Zuidoost (18%), especially in the Bijlmer-Centrum area, report experiencing nuisance in the street because of the youth. On average in Amsterdam, this number is only 12%. The Ambulatory Youth Team is a method devised by youth work to improve the quality of life in neighbourhoods by supervising youths and offering them alternatives to hanging around in the streets.

Objective and target group

The objective of the Ambulatory Youth Team is to encourage youths in the street to take a more active and positive role in society by staging motivational dialogue, confronting youths with their responsibilities, and correcting unwanted behaviour in an open, communicative way. Important tasks include offering direction to and organising recreational activities, and offering support and welfare work. This concerns groups of youths in the streets in the ages from 12 to 27 years old.

Methodology

The youth workers of the Ambulatory Youth Team function as pedagogic professionals in the streets. They actively approach youths in the streets and encourage them to take up a more active and positive role in society. This happens, for example, by having motivational dialogue with the target group in which youths are confronted with their own responsibilities. Furthermore, undesirable behaviour is corrected in a communicative way.

Another important task is informing the youth about the available recreational activities and welfare work, and to motivate them to use these facilities if they can profit from them. Guiding youths to available facilities is thus done in an active manner. The youth workers at Swazoom particularly focus on organising specific activities that improve communication with the target group and that allow talent development. Furthermore, attention is paid to giving information and advice, and signalling cries for help. Many youths are not aware of the existence of facilities and activities and the possibilities that these offer. By informing them, their horizons are broadened and they gain more insight in what society has to offer them. Dialogue moreover focuses on the youths' future prospects and reflects on how they should or could adapt their behaviour to achieve their goals. If the youths in question are faced with problems, they are also offered additional support to help them. The expertise in this area lies mainly with the Streetcornerwork field worker.

Parts of these youth groups in the streets cause nuisance. The objective of the Ambulatory Youth Team is to decrease nuisance by offering support, coaching, and alternative recreational activities, thus also improving the social chances of these youths. Youths who are motivated and who have proven that they want to contribute in a positive way, may also be used as role models in the organisation of activities for other youth.

Timeframe

The methodology of the Ambulatory Youth team does not include structural coursework with a fixed duration. Youth workers make contact with groups of youths, and depending on their questions and needs a wide range of group- or individual counselling courses may be carried out that differ in duration.

Results

On an annual basis the Ambulatory Youth team reaches out to approximately 600 youths in the streets. A large portion of them receive offers for recreational activities, either through a reference to existing activities, or through a search together with the youths for possibilities that meet their wishes.

Individual counselling courses are carried out with some of the youth. Results have mostly been obtained in terms of active and useful recreational activities, positive behavioural change, redirection back to school, and where necessary referral to specific support in terms of integration in the labour market and debt assistance.

Conditions

The Ambulatory Youth Team ventures into the streets in couples, to maintain contact with the youth groups. Duos consisting of one youth worker and one Streetcornerwork worker who can offer individual support are required. A stable network with chain partners is furthermore essential for the organisation of- and referral to recreational activities and specialised support institutions.

Appendix 3. Participants study project ‘Best of both worlds’

London

Althea Bart
Kristina Marie Stylianou
Macey McMullen
Marcus Senior
Michael Hamilton
Odiri Ighamre
Ricardo Johnson
Shanai Levy
Sekai Makoni
Tyler De-Fretis

Amsterdam South East

Censey Jonathas
Charro Mauricio
Desta Deekman
John Lachman
Judith Hogers
Kimberley Leysner
Laya Leysner
Lea van Kallen
Manon Mulders
Marcello Dello Stretto
Nikita Schuurman
Otmar Watson
Servano Williams
Sjoerd Bakker
Steven Cleans
Wenner Regales

Researchers

Annelieke van Dijk
Debora Reesink
Jaap Noorda

Appendix 4. Results questionnaire conference ‘Best of both worlds’

Among 68 participants from the ‘Best of both worlds’ conference, a questionnaire was distributed. The results, which illustrate their answers to different questions and statements, are displayed below.

Questions and statements	Agree	Disagree
Youth of African descent need to investigate their cultural heritage to attain a good position in society	90%	10%
Youth of a different ethnic descent need to investigate their cultural heritage just as much in order to attain a good position in society	91%	9%
For non-minority youth it is unimportant to investigate their cultural heritage	10%	90%
A lack of attention to cultural heritage has negative consequences for the position in society of youth of African descent	79%	21%
How can youth workers best pay attention to cultural awareness of young people of African descent with respect to their future in society? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making cultural awareness a part of all activities • Offering specific programmes focussed on cultural awareness 	63% 49%	
What has to change in youth policy to promote cultural awareness of young people of African descent? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural awareness as a focus of youth policy • More professionals from ethnic minorities • Expansion of youth work • No changes are needed, current youth policy suffices 	69% 41% 38% 4%	