A baseline study of youth identity, the media and the public sphere in South Africa

Media trust across race

10.00%

0.00%

00%

TV News

Newspape

A baseline study of youth identity, the media and the public sphere in South Africa

Report compiled by Vanessa Malila

Contributions by Jane Duncan, Irene Costera Meijer, Nico Drok, Anthea Garman, Larry Strelitz, Lynette Steenveld, Tanja Bosch, Musa Ndlovu and Media Tenor

School of Journalism and Media Studies, Rhodes University
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Illustrations

Acronyms

ANC   African National Congress
ASSA   Actuarial Society of South Africa
AWB   Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging
COSATU   Congress of South African Trade Unions
DA   Democratic Alliance
HSRC   Human Sciences Research Council
ICT   Information and Communication Technology
IFP   Inkatha Freedom Party
SA   South Africa
SABC   South African Broadcasting Corporation
SMS   Short Message Service
TV   Television
UCT   University of Cape Town
UKZN   University of KwaZulu-Natal

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The aim of this study is threefold: It investigates the ways in which various forms of media, including new media, shape youth identity in South Africa. Secondly, it probes the possible ways in which media contribute to the civic identity of South African youth. Thirdly the study explores whether the media reflect youth voices. Information from this study will show if and how the media contribute to the construction of the social identities of the South African youth and if these identities help the youth to contribute to the strengthening of South Africa's democracy. This information will also contribute towards formulating media policy that is responsive to the needs and interests of the South African youth.

METHODOLOGY

This analysis is based on three sets of data:

Quantitative survey data comes from survey questionnaires completed by 956 respondents, mostly between 15 and 30 years of age in four provinces: Eastern Cape, Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal and the Western Cape. These sites were selected for a combination of reasons. The provinces are the four most populated provinces in South Africa (Census 2011). Two of the provinces are uniquely representative of particular historical classifications of the South African population: Coloured people form the majority of the population in the Western Cape (Hendricks, 2005: 118) and the majority of Indian South Africans live in KwaZulu-Natal. According to the Actuarial Society of South Africa (ASSA) (2000) the province was divided along racial lines in the following way – 84.9%, Black African, 1.5% Coloured, 8.5% Indian, 2.4% White.[1] A practical consideration for choosing the locations was the fact that the institutional partners were based here: Gauteng – Media Tenor, Eastern Cape – Rhodes University, Western Cape – University of Cape Town, and KwaZulu-Natal – Durban University of Technology. Just over 87% (87.2%) of respondents were between 15 and 30 years old, with only 12.8% above 31 years. The information therefore shows a bias towards younger re-

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[1]   http://www.sahealthinfo.org/bod/kwazulunatal.pdf

spondents. There was a fair gender balance across respondents with 50.8% female respondents and 49.2% male respondents. Because race remains a significant socio-economic indicator in post-Apartheid South Africa, respondents were asked to identify themselves as Black African (57%), Coloured (13%), Indian (11%) and White (6%). Due to the relatively small numbers of Indian and Coloured respondents and because there were no significant differences in responses across questions for these two categories and they have been grouped together in the results. There is a more extensive discussion on the race categories in the main section of the report.

Media Tenor[2] conducted a **quantitative content analysis** of the kind of media coverage of the youth in both print and broadcast (television only) media in South Africa. A total of 8736 articles were analysed from South African print media between January 2011 and July 2012. Articles were chosen on the basis of whether they have the youth as subjects. Each article was analysed for the following variables:
• Who/what is the subject
• what is the field of business of the subject
• where does the action take place
• what time does the statement refer to
• what topic is the statement about
• who is the source of the statement
• and the tone or value of the statement (whether it is negative, positive or neutral).

Print media analysed were: *Beeld, Business Day, Business Report, Business Times, Cape Times, City Press, Daily Dispatch, Daily Sun, Die Burger, FinWeek, Financial Mail, Isolezwe, Mail & Guardian, New Age, Rapport, Sake24, Sowetan, Star, Sowetan, Star, Sunday Independent, Sunday Times, Times, Witness.* Broadcast media analysed were the following news broadcasts, all on television: SABC3 News@One, E-TV News, Afrikaans News, SABC2, English News, SABC3, Zulu/Xhosa News, SABC1, Sotho News, SABC2, KykNet (Afrikaans), SiSwati/Ndebele News, SABC1,

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[2] Media Tenor is an international media analysis institute "in the field of applied Agenda Setting Research, serving partners in the corporate, government and scientific world with strategic media intelligence" (http://www.mediatenor.co.za/ou_who_we_are.php).

SABC3 news@10 and SABC3 Africa News Update.

Focus group discussions provide qualitative information and offer insight into a number of issues that emerged in the quantitative data. Focus group discussions were conducted in three provinces in South Africa: Gauteng, Eastern Cape, and KwaZulu-Natal. In total 14 focus group discussions were conducted with a total of 107 participants across the demographic range: unemployed / employed (full time and part time), students (full time and part time), young people living in rural and urban areas, and participants across all racial categories. In addition to a better understanding of the survey data, the focus group discussions offer a deeper understanding of young people's perceptions of community, civic and political engagement, media use, and attitudes towards the media in relation to political and civic engagement. The choice of focus group participants was shaped by the results of the survey and participants were identified based on variables that showed particular relevance in the results emerging in the survey data. These variables include age, rural/urban location, gender, race, and employment status.

A qualitative policy analysis was conducted to provide an overview of youth policies in South Africa. The analysis focuses on whether general youth policy and specifically media policy promote active youth participation in the public sphere. Researchers analysed the National Youth Policy 2009-2014, the Children's Act, the Films and Publications Act, and the Media Development and Diversity Agency Act. The aim of the policy analysis is to allow the research to make policy recommendations based on key focus areas identified by the government. This policy analysis is related to the key findings of the study and allows for recommendations for better youth engagement and participation in the public sphere through the media.

FINDINGS

The findings are collated in relation to information from the surveys, the focus group discussions, the content analysis and in comparison with the research conducted by the Dutch partners.

Media coverage on the youth

The content analysis identifies trends of reporting on the youth as well as issues most closely associated with youth. The analysis focuses on reportage of organisations and programmes concerned with youth development. The analysis also examines political coverage on youth.

In general the content analysis shows an **unbalanced trend of reporting on gender** with young males receiving almost 20% more coverage than young women. Analysis of long-term media trends indicates that the share of coverage on women is decreasing over time. Another **imbalance in coverage emerges with regard to coverage of White youth and Coloured youth**. While coverage of Black African and Indian youth is relatively proportionate to population estimates, the content analysis shows more coverage of White youth compared to coverage of Coloured youth. According to Statistics South Africa's population estimates for 2011 there are 8.64% Coloureds and 9.09% Whites currently living in South Africa, Yet White young people receive more than twice the amount of coverage when compared with coverage of Coloured youth.

Education was by far the top issue in terms of volume associated with the youth covered in the media. A total of almost 1 500 news items focused on education in the review period with the next biggest issue – crime – getting mentioned in just over 200 items. Of the 1 500 items, almost 1 200 were either negative or neutral news items with the remainder being positive. See Figure 2 for a breakdown of the volume and ratings of top issues in the media associated with South African youth.

In terms of **crime**, the top three issues in terms of volume related to coverage of rape/sexual abuse (more than 40), murder (less than 35) and kidnapping (less than 30). The third issue in terms of volume was **health** with about 200 articles. Of these, the biggest volume of news items was

about HIV and AIDS (just more than 40), followed by pregnancy (just more than 20). Substance abuse, food poisoning and neonatal deaths were the next biggest health issues in terms of volume, all of them being covered in between 15 and 20 news items.

The lowest number of news items covering the youth related to **social services, politics** and the **justice system** (each with about 50 news items for the time period in review).

Media use

Most respondents say they use radio news most for getting information (70.8%), with SA TV[3] news (67.3%) as the second highest source of information. Google or other search engines was the third most-stated source of news media (62.8%). The medium used the least by survey respondents to gather news is tabloid newspapers (38.5%). Figure 10 gives a breakdown of findings in terms of media usage.

Unemployed youth favour SA television (SA TV) and radio most as news sources (both at 82.5%). SA TV is also the most favourite source of employed youth (71.9%). Radio news is the most significant source of news for youth attending school (73.4%) with Google or other search engines the second most preferred source (68.9%). The most preferred way for young people in college of university to access the news is through Google or other search engines (68.4%). Six out of 10 young people (61.3%) in this category said they use social media as a news source – the highest amongst all the occupation categories[4].

Media usage amongst South African youth is surprisingly comparable with the young people in the Netherlands who also still favour traditional broadcasting media rather than printed newspapers. South African youth favour radio more than television as opposed to Dutch youth who favour television over radio as their most important news source.

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[3] The survey distinguished between South African television and international television. SA TV includes South African channels such as SABC, e-TV, KykNet and Soweto-TV.

[4] Google or other search engines as a news source: In school, 52.9%; employed, 50.5%, and unemployed, 39.5%.

Perhaps more revealing in terms of what young people use media for, are the results regarding their interest in specific topics. Survey respondents were asked to rate a number of specific media topics according to those they are most interested in. The results reveal not only their **interest in popular culture** (which was the highest at 86.3%), but also their significant **lack of interest in politics** or topics that relate to politics. Of the two lowest topics of interest, both related to politics, with political actions the least interesting (34.6%), and politics/government the second lowest (37.9%).

Media and institutional trust

Respondents were asked about their trust in local, provincial and national government. The results show significantly **low levels of trust in all three levels of government with trust in local government showing the lowest level**. Only 34.4% respondents say they trust local government a great deal or quite a lot. Close to four out of ten (38.3%) respondents say they trust provincial government quite a lot or a great deal and 40.9% of respondents say they trust national government a great deal or quite a lot. There is no significant change in levels of trust across the different age categories of survey respondents. Figure 16 illustrates differences across other variables like race, rural / urban, income and employment.

Race is a significant variable in levels of trust in public institutions. Indian/Coloured youth show very low levels of trust across all institutions. White youth are also less trustful of public institutions than Black African youth. White youth are most trustful of private companies. Black African (77%) and Indian/Coloureds respondents have high levels of trust in religious institutions (73.3%) and White youth have low levels (53.4%) of trust in religious institutions.

Young people in South Africa are **generally uninterested and mistrustful of political institutions and political parties**. This includes low levels of trust in the legal system, the police, and in parliament. Only 30.7% of respondents say they trust political parties either a great deal or quite a lot. This mistrust in political institutions and political parties could have implications for strategies to strengthen democracy or building civic identities in South Africa.

Young people who live in rural areas are more trusting of public institutions than those who live in large cities. Interestingly, those who live in rural areas show less trust in the older generation (75.1%) than those who live in large cities (77.8%), while those who live in small towns show the highest levels of trust in the older generation (80.5%). This trend is reversed when one examines trust in religious institutions with respondents in rural areas showing higher levels of trust (75.3%) than those in large cities (69.8%), and respondents in small towns (78.3%) showing the highest levels of trust in religious institutions.

Compared to levels of trust in political institutions, **levels of trust in the media are significantly high amongst South African youth**: TV news (79.5%), radio news (78.3%) and newspapers (71.9%). Almost six out of ten respondents say they trust magazines and social media (59.2% and 57.7% respectively).

Most young South Africans note the older generation as an institution they trust most (77.4%). Although there are some differences amongst race groups (Indians/Coloureds, 84%; Black Africans, 76.5%; Whites, 75.4%) these are relatively high in comparison with trust shown in other institutions. Figure 18 provides a breakdown of levels of trust in different institutional categories.

Civic identity and the media

One of the aims of the research project is to determine whether young South Africans use the media to establish their civic identity and whether the media form part of the resources they draw on to establish their identity as South African citizens.

In order to evaluate this quantitatively, respondents were asked which entertainment and lifestyle media they felt provided the most relevant information to them as young South Africans. Interestingly the **top three media most relevant to respondents are radio (37.7%), social media (34.1%), and Google or other search engines (33.8%)**. This is significantly different (except for radio) to usage figures for the media that show TV, radio, and SMS as the three top media regularly used by young people. This may indicate that while **young South Africans**

regularly use certain media, they find the information they receive on those platforms as less than relevant to their lives.

When asked which media they felt provided the **most relevant news and information the results were quite different (again except for radio) with the top three being radio (44%), SA TV news (42.9%), and mainstream newspapers (39.1%)**. Trends across age groups show that the older respondents become, the more relevant these three media are to them. Mainstream newspapers' relevance to 15-20 year olds is 30.9%, but for 21-30 year olds it is 44.9% and for 31+ year olds it is 49.2%. The findings further show that young White South Africans find the news and information from the media more relevant than other race groups. (Except for tabloids that show low levels of relevance across all race categories.) Figure 22 gives a breakdown of the relevance of news media across race groups.

Focus groups discussion probed the relevance of news media in more depth. When focus group participants were asked if they felt the news media was relevant and of interest to young people the results varied. The **generally negative perceptions about the news media raised by focus group participants correspond with the survey results**. Focus group participants raised two issues in particular: the first was that **negativity in the news media is unappealing** to them and secondly, that they **find the news media irrelevant because it does not help them to make sense of specific contexts**. Figure 24 shows a breakdown of survey responses to the question what could make the media more relevant to young people.

Civic engagement and the media

In part, this research aims to examine the levels of engagement by the youth in different kinds of civic, social or political activity. Survey responses and focus group discussions reflect **low levels of political activity and engagement**. Willingness to vote, political activity and general interest in politics was particularly low amongst South African youth across the categories, and this is perhaps one of the most striking results of the data. Survey respondents were asked which activities they had been involved in during the last 12 months. Of the options, politi-

cal activities were often at the lowest level of responses. The data show **young South Africans tend to participate more in civic or social activities**. Helping a neighbour was the most common answer from survey respondents (79.1%), with being involved in a social group (67.4%) and being active in a religious activity (64.9). Respondents reported relatively **low participation even in activities specifically aimed at youth involvement**, such as activity in a youth movement, and being part of the student council. Figure 25 gives a breakdown of participation levels in 16 different activities.

While levels of involvement in political activities are low across all categories of respondents, young **Black Africans show higher levels of involvement in political activities than other races**. Black African respondents are significantly more involved in youth movements (40.8%) than both White (36.5%) and Indian/Coloured (36.3%) respondents. With regards to trade union activity Black African respondents are almost twice as likely to be involved (13.8%) than White (7.5%) and Indian/Coloured (7.6%) respondents. Black African respondents are almost three times more likely to be involved in party political activities (23.3%), than White respondents (8.2%), and almost five times more likely than Indian/Coloured respondents (5.8%). One category where **Indian/Coloured respondents are significantly more involved is in religious activities**. Indian/Coloured youth show the highest levels of involvement (71.3%) over Black African youth (67.1%), and White youth (46.3%). **White youth show the highest levels of involvement in activities that take place online** (posting views to an online blog/group, and visiting online forums).

In focus groups, engagement in political and civic activities (such as charitable work and signing a petition) was further examined. These discussions provide greater insight into some of the reasons for the lack of participation and engagement. Focus group participants were asked at different points during the discussions about the problems they face as youth and whether they feel they can do anything about these problems. The responses reveal **perceptions of a lack of agency with regards to being active in their communities or helping other people**. Some of the responses indicate that the youth themselves feel they need to give assistance but they are not in a position to help others.

Conclusions and recommendations

Do the media reflect youth voices?
While young people use traditional and some new media for gathering news and information, there is a strong sense from the results that the youth do not feel that the media are relevant to them. This may indicate that while young South Africans regularly use certain media, they find the information they receive on those platforms as less than relevant to their lives. It could be in the interest of the media and especially the news media, to investigate issues of media relevancy and what it means for young people in more detail. This investigation could include targeting more content specifically towards young South Africans. This is particularly true of Black African and Indian/Coloured youth who feel strongly about the need for youth content in newspapers.

Do the media contribute to the construction of social identities?
The results of this study illustrate that young people across South Africa need support in developing a civic identity. The older generation has emerged as a key support system for young people in this study. This can be used to great advantage by educators, NGOs, the National Youth Development Agency, government departments, private companies and other facilitators in thinking creatively about ways to engage young people (across all key categories) in civic and political life.

It is evident that young people use a range of media to build their civic identities, that they use the media to access news, and that there are high levels of trust in the media in general. The Media Development and Diversity Agency, which engages with community media across the country, should be required to engage more with young people about conceptions of relevance, trust and content targeting youth in general. The MDDA could also encourage recipients of its funding to target young people.

The youth and the strengthening of South Africa's democracy
Willingness to vote, political activity and general interest in politics was particularly low amongst South African youth across the categories. The data further show that young people are mistrustful of politics and political processes. The findings also generally show that youth are uninterested in politics as a topic for media consumption.

Two issues emerge in relation to these findings that need further investigation: The first, is the disparity between respondents reporting low levels of interest in voting, but reporting relatively high levels of having actually voted in the last national and local government elections. The second issue to explore is a possible relationship between actual voting, willingness to vote and the low levels of trust in public and political institutions reported in the survey and in focus groups.

Media policy responding to youth needs

Young people with access to the internet (whether through their mobile phones or laptop/PC) are using this resource to find information that is relevant to them. This is an avenue for further engagement with the youth if levels of access, literacy, affordability and usage are increased. This is particularly true for Black African youth, unemployed youth and youth with little or no schooling. Access to internet resources will allow young people to control the content they receive, find information and news that is relevant to their context and perhaps even generate content of their own that can be shared by other youth. The use of search engines, and other online media do play a role in news awareness amongst some South African youth. It is also evident that because of the perceived lack of relevance in traditional media, those who can are using online sources to gather information and news that is relevant to them.

The National Youth Policy document addresses some of the issues related to technology where it proposes access to ICTs as one of the ways in which opportunities for young people can be enhanced (2009:31). The policy document mentions ICT peer education as among the youth's responsibilities and proposes that young people should "engage in peer to peer education to promote youth development in areas such as literacy, use of information and communication technology, healthy lifestyles to prevent no communicable [sic] diseases like HIV and AIDS and others, violence prevention and peace building" (2009: 20). This is an important step towards responding to the needs of the South African youth as expressed in the survey and focus group discussions.

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this study is threefold: It investigates the ways in which various forms of media, including new media, shape youth identity in South Africa. Secondly, it probes the possible ways in which media contribute to the civic identity of South African youth. This civic function of the media, as captured partly in Habermas's notion of the public sphere[5], is important if youth are to become integrated into the fabric of society and participate in its development. Thirdly the study explores whether the media reflect youth voices. Failure on the part of the media to articulate youth aspirations and frustrations may contribute to feelings of alienation. This alienation is already evident in youth disengagement from and disaffection with societal institutions. Information from this study will show if and how the media contribute to the construction of the social identities of the South African youth and if these identities help the youth to contribute to the strengthening of South Africa's democracy. This information will also contribute towards formulating media policy that is responsive to the needs and interests of the South African youth.

In South Africa, youth[6] constitute 70% of the population. Those 15 years and younger constitute 35% of the population (Statistics South Africa 2009). Although most aspects of South Africa's youth remain under-researched, Gower (2009) notes that nearly three million of the 6.7 million young South Africans are disengaged from society's major institutions. They are either unemployed or not engaged in any education or training activities – a problem the Ford Foundation referred to as a 'social time bomb' (Gower 2009). A large number of youth have been engaged in recent protest action in South African and discontent among the youth has been recognised as a key factor in the social unrest (Bernstein and Johnston 2007; Gower 2009). Youth were also at the forefront of many

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[5] Habermas theorized the notion of the "public sphere" as a space where individuals could debate issues of public importance. This debate generated public opinion and attempted to articulate some of society's most important issues. The importance of the public sphere is that it was a space between the state and the private realm in which citizens could participate (Habermas, 1989).

[6] The National Youth Policy defines youth as anyone between the ages of 14 and 35 years.

of the xenophobic attacks that took place in South Africa during May 2008 (Bekker, 2010).

These events suggest that many youth are alienated from contemporary South African democratic political culture. Cognisant of this, this project investigates the ways in which various forms of media shape youth identity, how the media can contribute to the development of a youth civic identity to enable young people to become integrated into the democratic fabric of South African society and participate in its development.

The focus on the media is important from both a liberal and radical perspective because of its potential to create a public space for discussion and dissent (Golding & Murdock, 2000; Dahlgren 2000). Most current theorising about the media's (and particularly journalism's) role in society is based on Marshall's (1964) theorising of citizenship. Murdock, for example, argues that journalism is judged by the extent to which it facilitates and promotes the various dimensions of citizenship outlined by Marshall, namely the civil, political, social and cultural rights which constitute citizenship as a particular identity (Murdock 1992: 20). The level of youth alienation implies that the media may not be playing this role sufficiently. This raises important questions about the impediments by the media to fulfilling this democratic function and whether the state is playing a facilitating role in this regard. To a large degree, the exercising of citizenship rights implies a responsibility on the part of citizens to become informed and to be media literate so that they can use the media to inform their civic actions (Firestone 2010).

Much of the research on youth and media has been conducted in the North[7] and has shown that youth media consumption patterns are changing. For example, in Northern countries, television viewership has been declining for some time now. Youth interest in news and current affairs has been waning (Buckingham 1997; Costera Meijer 2006; Costera Meijer 2008) and youth appear to be increasingly drawn to participatory media, especially mobile and Web 2.0-based social networking tools. In contrast, research by Strelitz (2002) on the South African media

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[7]   The Global North represents the economically developed societies of Europe, North America, the UK and Australia amongst others.

indicates a strong coincidence between race, class and an interest in traditional sources of news. In South Africa, as in the rest of Africa, radio remains the most heavily consumed medium (SAARF 2009) but when it comes to the use of mobile communication, preliminary research in South Africa is contradictory. A pilot study conducted by Duncan (2013) indicated that mobile media were used by Black African working class youth for survival purposes (for example, checking for jobs), rather than for social networking, whereas preliminary unpublished research undertaken by Schoon (2011) in the Hooggenoeg Coloured township of Grahamstown indicates a strong social networking aspect to the use of mobile phones.

The media can play an important role in enabling youth participation in the development of the country. This research investigates whether the media are, in fact, playing this enabling role. Youth need access to diverse media technologies and genres to ensure that they have meaningful choices in what media they consume and how they exercise their voices. Ideally, they should be able to select from a range of different media that allow them to make sense of their lived context, think critically about their own life conditions, to re-imagine ways in which these conditions could be different, and to exercise their voices as citizens to give effect to these re-imaginings. However, South African society is characterised by uneven development and this is reflected in youth access to media. If youth voices are absent from South Africa's development agenda, or if more privileged youth are in a better position to shape public discourse on development issues, then those youth on the margins of society may be less able to influence the direction of society. This may lead to a reinforcement of uneven development and a continued marginalisation of the needs and aspirations of Black African working class and female youth.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

We have used the following conceptual frameworks to illuminate our study:
1. Youth
2. Citizenship
3. The public sphere: constituting youth as citizens
4. Media, youth, and politics
5. New media, youth and politics

Youth

From an international perspective, Ruthanne Kurth-Schai usefully identifies three distinct images of youth in contemporary theorising. On the one end of the spectrum, children/youth are seen as victims of adult society and in need of protection (1988: 114). On the other end, they are viewed as dangerous and in need of guidance or as a threat to adult society (see also Finn and Checkoway, 1998: 335). In between these two perspectives, youth are seen as incomplete, incompetent and in need of guidance - as "learners of adult society" (Kurth-Schai, 1988: 115). As a result, youth are confronted with "confusing and contradictory patterns of protection and pressure, with conflicting perceptions of their abilities and inadequacies, rendering their social presence inconsequential and their social power invisible" (Kurth-Schai, 1988: 116). Kurth-Schai suggests that cultures in which children and youth undertake socially useful tasks produce "heightened self-esteem, enhanced moral development, increased political activism, and the ability to create and maintain complex social relationships" (1988: 117). The recognition that children can perform important tasks such as nurturing (even of smaller siblings) is key to their capacity for "social insight and environment-shaping competence" (Kurth-Schai, 1988: 116).

In South Africa, different, sometimes contradictory, terms have been used to describe its youth. The 'Young Lions' and 'Lost Generation' refer to Black African youth of the 1970s and 1980s (Boyce, 2012; Seekings, 1996). Mattes (2011) suggests a broader historical typology: He divides the electorate into the Pre-apartheid Generation (those who reached

their formative years before the National Party came to power in 1948); the Early Apartheid Generation (those who turned 16 between 1948 and 1960); the Grand Apartheid Generation (spanning formative years between 1960 and 1976 when apartheid was sedimented throughout South African life); the Struggle Generation (people who turned 16 between 1976 and 1996 during a time of continued political violence and resistance), and the Born Frees who entered adulthood and "came of age politically after 1996" (2011: 4), after South Africa's first democratic elections.

> "Beginning in 1997, a group of people began to move through the ages of 16, 17 and 18 and enter the political arena with little if any first-hand experience of the trauma that came before ⋯ their first political experience, possibly casting a vote in the 1999 election, was with a relatively normal, though clearly reform-minded democratic political system. While some backward looking dramas were still being played out, such as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the order of the new day was forward-looking: massive state investment in construction of houses and other infrastructure, the transformation of the state, educational reform, and growth-oriented economic development." (Mattes, 2001: 4)

Based on studies by the Institute for Democracy in South Africa (Idasa) in 1998, and by Afrobarometer from 2000 to 2008, Mattes notes that the proportion of Born Frees has increased rapidly from 5% of eligible voters in 2000, to 31% in 2008. This cohort is now the second biggest segment of voters, just behind the Struggle Generation (43%). Significantly, the Born Frees is 83% Black African and 43% urbanised. Despite the transformatory intentions of the ANC government, this generation suffers, just as previous generations did, from low levels of education, low levels of school completion and joblessness. Despite their coming of age in an era of political stability and change, they live with high levels of physical and material insecurity. These include "victimisation by corrupt bureaucrats, exposure to crime, shortages of food or cash income, or the loss of friends or family to AIDS" (Mattes, 2011: 7). Mattes characterises the lives of the Born Frees as "continuity rather than sharp generational change" (2011: 7).

In an Afrobarometer study to test 'demand for democracy' and 'democratic commitment', Mattes finds an instrumentalist attitude among [South African] voters in judging the efficacy of democracy revolving around whether it delivers services and other benefits. Compared with other studies across Africa, Mattes claims that the features that predispose other Africans towards a positive attitude to democracy are startlingly absent in South Africa:

> "The most striking result is the absence of any positive impact of education, or of news media use, two findings very much at odds with what we know about other emerging African democracies" (2011: 11).

In addition, interactions with government officials or elected representatives are "generally negative". These interactions alienate South Africans from democracy rather than 'habituate' them towards it", and this, Mattes concludes, is particularly acute among the Born Free Generation (2011: 11-12). His overall conclusion is that the post-apartheid generation is less committed to democracy than their parents:

> "⋯ Whatever advantages might accrue from the new political experiences of political freedom and a regular, peaceful, electoral process, are diminished by frustrating encounters with the political process, victimisation by corrupt officials, and enduring levels of unemployment and poverty" (2011: 14).

This research echoes the findings of a 2005 Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) report that "⋯there are in general low levels of participation by young South Africans in organised activities" (HSRC, 2005: 30). It notes that as much as 75.3% of the research sample has never participated in a community society or club. Evidence also seems to suggest that the South African youth are turning away from traditional forms of political participation such as voting as young people do not see the point of doing so (Matshiqi, 2011).

Boyce (2010) challenges these pessimistic views on the basis of an HSRC *Social Attitudes Study* dealing with youth. In Boyce's view the

HSRC report indicates that a majority of youth do have faith in democracy in South Africa and its social institutions but that they, along with other age groups, are dissatisfied with public service. Boyce does not feel that perceptions of their heightened dissatisfaction and disaffection are a correct portrayal (2010: 93). He proposes that the HSRC survey shows that despite their general experience of "low levels of life satisfaction at present" Black African youth are generally more positive about various aspects of life in South Africa than Indians, Coloured and Whites (2010: 96). While acknowledging that race is still a major determinant of attitude among South African youth Boyce suggests, "the general perception of disinterested and disillusioned youth seems to be incorrect and unfair in many instances. Results illustrate that it is often older respondents [the 25-35age group] who are more pessimistic. Further, when youth are dissatisfied, their dissatisfaction appears to reflect wider national sentiment" (Boyce, 2010: 100).

Gerrit Kamper and Jo Badenhorst share Boyce's view. Kamper and Badenhorst's survey of 391 Black African adolescents (focusing on the impact of social change on Black African youth in post-apartheid South Africa) shows "a general spirit of optimism and independence exists, paired with a strong desire to escape the trappings of poverty and the inferiority of the past" (2010: 243). Drawing on other studies (Heaven et al, 2000; Everatt, 2002; Tyson and Stones, 2002; and Möller, 2005) they argue that despite their present circumstances many Black African youth have high expectations of a brighter future:

> "Equal opportunity policies have raised expectations of job opportunities…black youth in general share the consumerism of South Africa's wealthy classes, but many lack the history of participation in the struggle or the ability to argue that current consumption is an extension of a reward for earlier political sacrifices. Although they might be politically aware and engaged, they are overwhelmingly not politically active to the extent their predecessors were" (Kamper and Badenhorst, 2010: 246).

Drawing on these and another study (Gaganakis, 2004) Kamper and Badenhorst claim that Black African youth do "feel empowered" (2010:

246). They propose that Black African youth in South Africa exhibit individualism (evidenced by a desire to "pursue unique destinies and private satisfaction"), independence, a desire to use academic qualifications as an escape from working-class occupations and they aspire to jobs formerly reserved for Whites. Kamper and Badenhorst compare their own study to similar studies done in Europe (Alsaker and Flammer, 1999: Crocket and Sibereisen, 2000; and Larson et al, 2002) and show that in South Africa a major impediment faced by South African youth is societal instability. This is evident in the high levels of poverty (26.3% of South Africans were living below the food poverty line in 2008-2009[8]), unemployment (25.5% in 2012), HIV and AIDS (life expectancy for South Africans was 52 in 2010) and violent crime. In short, they argue that Black African youth "feel excited" about the future, and even though many live in "dismal circumstances" they believe these will change for the better. "It appears that a new generation of Black African youth is emerging, creating its own culture and style, and developing its own particular goals and social problems" (Kamper & Badenhorst, 2010: 255).

Citizenship

Citizenship describes the condition of one's membership of a polity. Marshall (1950) identifies three main dimensions that constitute citizenship as a particular social identity with associated rights and institutional means for securing them: the political, civil, social and cultural (Golding and Murdock, 1989:181; Murdock, 1992: 20; and Dahlgren, 2000: 317). The first of these sets of rights is *political rights*, which ensures the rights of democratic participation in the exercise of political power. The second set of citizenship rights, *civil rights,* guarantee the individual's freedom within 'civil society'. *Social rights* secure members' general life circumstances within the state, and refer to such areas as social security, welfare, education, health care etc. In other words, *social rights* refer to "the whole range from the right to a modicum of economic welfare and security to the right to share to the full in the social heritage and to live the life of a civilized being according to the standards prevailing in so-

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[8]   This is the lowest category for poverty levels and amounts to R305 per month, "while roughly 38.9% and 52.3% were living below the lower-bound poverty line (R416) and the upper-bound poverty line (R577) respectively" (Statistics South Africa, 2012: 5).

ciety" (Marshall, T.E. qtd. Murdock and Golding, 1989: 182). This range of rights was partly what the struggle for South African citizenship was about, and what was potentially signified by the 1994 elections.

More recently, the idea of 'cultural citizenship' has challenged the idea of citizenship as a "discourse of stability by which the modern state could achieve a degree of integration by compensating for the inequalities of class" (Delanty, 2007: 1, quoting Marshall, 1950). Citizenship is now "part of the transformative discourses of contemporary society in which the problem of inclusion has become more acute" (Delanty, 2007: 1). Delanty speaks about how (in particular referring to the UK and Austria); there is 'governmentalisation' of citizenship. In these terms citizenship is understood to be a 'cognitive competence'. Many governments now adopt a strategy "into which the individual as citizen is inserted" (Delanty, 2007: 3). Instead of citizenship referring to an existing identity of belonging to a polity, it is seen as one that is acquired: *learning* to become a citizen (Delanty, 2007). This view shifts the focus from membership to "common experiences, cognitive processes, forms of cultural translation and discourses of empowerment" which can take place in the informal context of everyday life and is influenced by the critical and formative events in people's lives. Citizenship is therefore not just about rights and responsibilities, but also more importantly about capacity for action, the learning about the self and the relationship of the self and other. In Delanty's view, citizenship is a quality of "identity and action" (2007).

Citizenship, says John Hartley, is a term that suggests '*association among strangers*' (2010: 233). This association involves struggle, contestation over meanings and identities, differing power relations. Hartley argues further that strategies of inclusion and appropriations of citizenship are uneven and unequal. He takes issue with a static and universal understanding of citizenship, which denies that at the heart of this 'association', is a discursive practice that grapples with the problem of how to reconcile strangers in "modern associated life" (2010: 234). Hartley points out that the term 'citizen' usurps the place of 'subject' and moves the power of the state from the monarch to the people. Hartley also proposes that the state continues to monopolise the power to decide who "among those people count as citizens" (2010: 234).

Hartley then turns to cultural citizenship as an idea which, when propounded by Toby Miller, is defined as 'the right to know and speak' in addition to 'the right to reside and vote' (political citizenship) and 'the right to work and prosper' (economic citizenship) (2010: 238 quoting Miller, 2006: 35). Cultural citizenship extends citizenship from public participation to social entitlements and "exposes the concept to challenge by its traditional opposite – the *consumer*" (Hartley 2010: 238).

> "⋯ Most people in affluent societies experience themselves as citizens and consumers, publics and audiences, workers and traders, all at once. Furthermore, it is now possible to express relational and identity associations, and to take actions and participate in collective decisions, through global commercial consumer culture. So citizenship *as* consumption is startling to social theory, but lived by millions" (Hartley, 2010: 238).

Hartley claims that social and digital media enable citizenship to include the following three features: play, the ability to self-organise, and to produce relational identities through changing and patterned relationships within communication systems. Play is the performative aspect of deliberation and participation that is not reduced to rationality, the comedic, competitive, entertaining, festive or body-centred. Self-organisation is possible because citizenship, in this sense, is discursive rather than narrative. Apart from allowing individuals to self-organise, it also enables citizens to self-represent and construct for themselves what the associational relations among strangers will be.

Hartley says the history of mediated communication since the nineteenth century shows how "completely civic engagement itself is 'abstracted' from local and personal realities" (2010: 244). By contrast new media technologies make it possible for citizen-consumers to create their own knowledge, their own self-representation and their own mutual relations. "Recognition of what's needed for 'healthy democratic functioning' requires renewed attention to these demotic aspects of citizenship" (Hartley, 2010: 245).

Based on research conducted in the UK (Nottingham) in 2005 and 2006

based on New Labour's attempt to 'renew citizenship', Hart shows how young people are posed in government policies as a 'threat' to democracy. She poses that young people are treated as recipients for programmes of education and control about citizenship, and that paradoxically by making them the focus of such programmes as in need of 'discipline and training' they are alienated from a sense of inclusive citizenship (Hart, 2009: 643). Hart argues for a "broader definition of citizenship" that enables youth participation and enables them to express what they think their contributions could be. She argues for 'cultural citizenship' as an approach to citizenship, rather than the 'highly normative' concept defined by government policy in which the condition of citizenship is pre-determined and then policed through surveillance of behaviour that doesn't conform (2009: 643). For cultural citizenship theorists, equality of citizenship is only realisable in a context where the experiences and views of citizens themselves, whatever their background, culture or social location, are recognised and respected (Hart, 2009: 645). Hart says a cultural citizenship approach acknowledges differences between young people, and that treating young people as a homogeneous group in need of 'responsibilisation' is the source of much of their negative experience of citizenship.

Another approach to citizenship is to view it from the perspective of civic engagement. Civic engagement can be located within the broader construct of social capital: a critical resource for positive social, emotional, and intellectual development (Winter, 2003). Jobson (2011) notes the importance of building social capital through civic engagement as a strategy for the development of youth leadership in South Africa. Many theorists argue that civic engagement (for example, participation in clubs) is a vital and pre-requisite component of democratic practice, and that civically engaged youth are more likely to exhibit pro-social behaviour (Winter, 2003; Galston, 2003; Flanagan and Levine, 2010; Zaff, Boyd, Li, Learner and Learner, 2010; and Youniss, Bales, Christmas-Best, et al, 2002). The benefits of social capital and civic engagement accrue from the view that social capital is a resource, like financial capital, that can be used to achieve a diverse range of personal or collective goals for the general development of communities (Putnam, 1993; Granovetter, 1973; Adler and Kwon, 2002; and Winter, 2003). In South Africa where levels of unemployment and poverty are

high, especially among the youth, social capital and civic engagement become a necessity. The potential benefits of high social capital and civic engagement could positively impact on the abovementioned social challenges facing the country.

Public sphere [media, popular culture]: Constituting youth as citizens

Habermas theorises the 'public sphere' as a common meeting point for the debate through which public opinion could be formed. Through participation in such debate, citizens attempt to articulate some of society's most pressing issues bridging the realms of the private and the state. As Garnham notes, Habermas's concern was to find a way "to establish 'solidarity among strangers'" (2007: 203). For Habermas this entailed separating the private from the public, and establishing a mode of discourse – 'rational critical debate' – through which citizens could thrash out issues of public concern. The public sphere could be seen as a site through which the state is put in touch with the needs of society and as a regulatory institution against the authority of the state (Habermas, 1989: 31; Garnham, 2007: 206). In the digital age, the 'public sphere' concept has been used to describe the internet as a 'cyberspace', 'global public sphere' (Sparks, 2001) and a 'virtual public sphere' (Papacharissi, 2004).

Habermas's theorisation has come under much criticism especially with regards to its perceived neglect of issues such as gender, class and age (Fraser, 1992; Negt and Kluge, 1972). It has also been criticised for sidelining the role of alternative media (Schudson, 1997; Dahlgren, 2007; Buckingham, 1997; and Gitlin, 1998), ignoring the existence of 'counter-public spheres' and multiple public spheres ('sphericules') (Dahlgren, 2007; Gitlin, 1998), disregarding 'dissensus' and the agency of audiences. Equally important for this study is the critique of Habermas's assumption that the public sphere fosters rational deliberation. This assumption ignores Bakhtinian notions of dissimilarity, dialogical engagement and 'carnival and spectacle' (Gardiner, 2004: 30). The concept of the alternative public sphere is most relevant here because it allows one to explore how youth creatively appropriate and adapt new media such as Facebook and mobile phones to construct identities – potentially as citizens.

Another position regarding the public sphere debate is to look at virtual spaces in terms of popular culture instead of the Habermasian concept of rational debate. Popular culture is defined here in terms of its opposition to power: 'The people versus the power bloc' rather than 'class against class' (Hall, 1981: 238). Conceptualising social media – which allow different kinds of people to interact as 'produsers' (producers + consumers) (Bruns, 2007) – as popular culture offers a 'way out' of the theoretical impasse between critics and advocates of the public sphere. Alternative media, as part of the alternative public sphere, is defined as "a gamut of media forms that offers the means for democratic communication to people who are normally excluded from media production" (Atton, 2002: 4). Alternative media also enable oppositional groups to advance their political goals (Pickard, 2007; Dockney et al, 2010: 77; and Couldry, 2003). Extending this argument, studies on the subaltern, drawing on Gramsci's work on popular culture and hegemony, have lauded the role of popular forms of media in constituting an alternative public sphere especially for subaltern and marginalised groups in society (Willems, 2011). This echoes James C. Scott's (1976) theorisation of everyday forms of resistance[9] and Gluckman's 'Rituals of rebellion'[10], which allow one to account for hidden transcripts relating to the critique of power that 'goes on offstage' and which power elites cannot decode. This is a useful way of thinking about youth protest (and different concepts of citizenship) as it departs from the narrow definition of resistance and related identities referring to physical and material protests in the streets, to include a set of practices used by the dominated to challenge those who make attempts to dominate them (Willems, 2010: 4).

Media, youth, and politics

Research into the relationships between youth, media, and politics does not present a clear-cut picture. For example, although research shows that youth who read newspapers and consume media are more likely to engage in various kinds of civic activities (Buckingham, 1997; Lopez

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[9]   In his book 'Weapons of the weak: everyday forms of resistance', Scott (1985) argues oppression and resistance are in flux and that by focusing too much on events such as organised rebellion, we miss subtle but powerful forms of "everyday resistance".

[10]   This work by Gluckman (1952) recounts his theory that ceremonies among tribes in South-East Africa strongly express social tension.

et al, 2006; and Amadeo, Torney-Purta & Barber, 2004), many North-ern scholars argue there is no longer a straightforward, unambiguous interrelationship between watching or reading the news, civic iden-tity and social identity among young people (Barnhurst and Wartella, 1998; Buckingham, 1999; Beekhoven & Van Wel, 1998; Katz, 1993; Livingstone, 2002). Chaffee & Yang (1990: 141) argue that 'television-dependent citizens' can hardly be seen as citizens at all as they are less likely to vote, understand political processes, and be involved in politics (quoted in Buckingham, 1997: 346). This raises questions about the sa-lience of the consumption of particular media to political engagement. Putnam (1995 & 2000), and more recently Mindich (2005), suggest that the marginal significance of news and current affairs programmes in the lives of Northern youth is indicative of their limited social involve-ment. On the basis of research in the Netherlands, Costera Meijer (2006, 2008) and Drok (2009) conclude that young people's interest in news is still indicative of their social engagement but does not impact on their actual news use. In other words it appears that for some Northern youth, the informative function of news and media is becoming secondary to their communicative function (Costera Meijer, 2008). A driving concern about the relationship between youth, media and civic engagement is the finding by the *Times Mirror* (1990) study that suggests young peo-ple who are not well-informed politically may fall prey to 'blind faith' in political leaders (p345).

Other research on youth culture challenges this pessimistic view. Re-searchers have indicated that adolescents' views are mediated by their relationships with peers and parents, and they therefore argue it is not just youth media consumption that is important, but whether and how youth discuss the ideas they get from the media with their peers and family (Boyd et al, 2011). These researchers argue for the critical im-portance of 'communication competence' (Shah, McLeod & Lee, 2009; McLeod, Shah, Hess, Lee, 2010). This competence 'includes media use (with focus on public affairs news consumption) and interpersonal com-munication (discussion of public affairs and politics with others), as un-derpinning civic competence' (Boyd et al, 2011: 1169). These communi-cative abilities are described by civic scholars such as Battistoni (2000) and Kirlin (2003) as an 'important aspect of civic development and criti-cal for effective civic participation' (Boyd et al, 2011: 1169).

Given the complexity of the relationship between youth, media and civic engagement, it is helpful to unpack some of the key issues that have been raised through research. A key argument that underpins this relationship is the link between 'information', often associated with 'hard news' and political involvement. A fundamental question is whether being informed enhances public ability to fulfil democratic responsibilities. Delli Carpini & Keeter (1996) think this is the case, but Lupia & McCubbins (1998) argue that citizens don't need much knowledge to fulfil their duties as citizens. The existing research centres on a debate about the relevance of traditional forms of news media to today's youth, as they attempt to relate broader political events to their everyday lives (Katz, 1992; Buckingham, 1997; and Costera Meijer, 2006). Buckingham (1997) links these concerns to Habermas's notion of the public sphere, which underpins traditional notions of journalism and its contribution to democratic culture. However, in order to achieve this social engagement in the public sphere, Habermas privileges 'rational critical debate' – a position which has been critiqued, as discussed earlier in this report.

Buckingham (1997) is critical of the 'rigid distinction between the public and private' in which there is no place "for the 'irrational' side of language, for rhetoric or narrative, nor indeed for aesthetics, for ceremony, or ritual, indeed, for precisely those elements which characterise popular cultural forms" (1997: 354-355; see also Fraser, 1990; and Costera Meijer, 2001). Yet, it is precisely these 'irrational' forms, and the new communications technologies that enable them, to which Northern youth are attracted. Baum (2002, 2003) shares this view and argues that so-called 'soft news', which is 'typically more sensational, more personality-centred, less time-bound, more practical, more incident-based than other news' (Patterson, 2000: 4), is a way of attracting viewers to issues – such as foreign policy – they may not otherwise be concerned about. Baum does acknowledge Prior's research, which found that soft news, is "unlikely to be consistently associated with increases in general factual knowledge about politics" (Baum, 2003: 174). In contrast, Patterson (2000) argues that 'hard news' is still important, but that 'soft news' and what he calls 'critical journalism' is a turn-off for viewers and both, in different ways, are weakening democracy. Patterson argues that people who prefer 'hard news' are heavier consumers of news than

those who prefer soft news, and that the trend towards soft news has contributed to the decline in news consumption (2000). In addition, Patterson suggests that critical journalism – what Barnett (2002) describes as 'journalism's disdain for politics' – has weakened people's interest in politics and their interest in news (Patterson, 2000: 2).

From this Northern research it appears that many topics in routine news programmes and so-called quality newspapers are not appealing, and staples like domestic politics, international politics, culture and the economy are of least interest to young people.

Jenkins' argument about convergence culture[11], and Couldry's use of the term 'mediation'[12] point to the complex ways in which content flows between different media and genres in the new media environment. This offers opportunities for youth consumers to become producers of meaning, with an attendant shift in their identities. This is consistent with Hall's view of the construction of identity in post-modernity.

The Northern debates about youth engagement with media are about the extent to which popular new technologies such as online or mobile social networking should be used to engage the youth around issues that are meaningful to them, and in this way possibly foster a civic identity that could potentially enable their participation in social/political life. This is relevant given the recognition that these new media technologies enable the constitution of 'public sphericules'[13] (Gitlin 1998), which may enhance participation in public life as intermediate spaces in which aspects of democratic citizenship are developed (see Curran 2000).

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[11]   Jenkins explores this theme in his book 'Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide', which examines the relationships between media convergence, culture and collective intelligence (2008).

[12]   Couldry regards mediation as the "variety of dynamics within media flows" (2008: 380) and argues that mediation is the relationship between media production and what flows back into social and cultural life.

[13]   Gitlin argues that because society has become so multicultural, fragmented and complex we can no longer speak of one public sphere, but that there are numerous public sphericules which are emerging.

New media, youth and politics

The use of the internet and new media to mobilise the youth and other politically active citizens to engage in alternative political activity follows the premise made by many politicians and researchers who regard new media as a means through which to capture this 'apathetic' and non-participatory group. There are examples of British politicians using the internet to connect with their constituencies (Gibson & Ward, 1998), governments using mobile phones to encourage voting (Dale & Strauss, 2009) and using the internet as a key source of information provision (Xenos & Moy, 2007). The assumption is that the internet is an alternative means to engage and connect with young people because young people are not engaging in traditional political activity as a result of not consuming traditional mass media. Carpini (2000) cites research that found 70% of young people between 18 and 25 years regarded the internet as a source of valuable political information. He adds that "what these technologies seem clearly to provide is access to young adults, an increased ability for organized interests to more effectively reach young adults, and new or easier opportunities for already engaged (and perhaps interested but not yet engaged) young adults to participate and do so more effectively" (2000: 348).

The question is whether the internet and new media are mobilizing young people to engage in traditional political action and civic duties. Researchers and theorists regard the issue from within two camps – the optimistic and the pessimistic. The optimists believe the internet and new media will enable more democratic engagement because it lowers the cost of communicating about politics and political activity, it lowers the cost of being associated with organisations which engage in political activity and it makes participation cheaper and easier (Rheingold, 2000). The pessimists argue the internet plays no significant role in changing political behaviour (Margolis & Resnick, 2000; Sustein, 2005).

Despite the pessimism, the general trend towards engagement of youth on the web does suggest it is a tool for promoting participation in political and civic action. Montgomery et al argue, "the Web is already integrated into most young people's window on the world, and that it offers them a broader perspective than any before" (2004: 126). These as-

sumptions, coupled with a declining rate of youth participation, means that there seems to be a juncture between internet usage and recapturing the 'wayward' youth. Coleman argues that "observing that very young people who are mostly politically alienated and disengaged are the most active users of the internet, it is argued that if the interactive features of the internet were used to encourage young people to civic and political activities this might serve to overcome traditional barriers to participation" (2007: 258). Research suggests that the internet is a viable tool for engaging youth in political activity. The internet is also able to capture the attention of the youth and encourage them to participate in civic and political life (Iyengar & Jackman, 2004). Research by Walton & Donner (2011) suggest that mobile communications can be used in the same way as the internet to engage young people in political action and voting during elections. Their research provides evidence that the mobile internet, the use of SMS and social networking tools such as MXit can be key factors in mobilizing young people during election periods.

Research on the use of Facebook as a particular medium of social communication amongst youth has provided mixed results (Pew Research Centre 2011; Boyd, 2008). Cyber-optimists have branded social media the 'new vessel' of cyber-democracy and a 'tool of political freedom', which enables social movements and activists to reinvigorate democratic processes (Downing, 2001). Clay Shirky, a cyber-optimist, sees new media technologies as having the potential to 'organise, plan, and coordinate direct political actions – elections, demonstrations and insurrections' (2011). In response, cyber-pessimists like Malcolm Gladwell (2010) dismiss social media activism as based on weak ties and therefore limited to low-risk participation. Evgeny Mozorov adds that social media are affecting the world "but it also looks like the other side – the authoritarian governments – are getting empowered as well" (2011: 5). Despite this seemingly endless theoretical debate, new media technologies such as SMS messages and mobile media have been seen as enabling activism worldwide (Kellner, 2002: 182; Fuchs 2006: 293, Nyamnjoh, 2009; Moyo, 2010; Ekine, 2010; Willems, 2010; Atwood, 2009; Ndlela, 2009; Neumayer and Raffl, 2008; Makinen and Kuira, 2008). Online social networks are believed to have played a key role in recent democratic revolutions in Tunisia and Egypt (Joseph, 2011; González-Bailón,

2011), leading to the coinage of the concept 'Twitter/ Facebook Revolutions' (Christensen, 2011; Bohler-Muller and Van der Merwe, 2011). Social network sites such as Facebook, Twitter and BlackBerry Messenger have been used by the Occupy Movement in the United States (Sassen, 2011), protesters in the 2011 London riots (Bright, 2011) and rioters in 'Occupy Nigeria' (Fripp, 2012) to facilitate and coordinate political activity. This fuelled debates on the relationship between social network sites and political action.

Internet access and usage figures in South Africa are difficult to determine but some research estimates them at 20% (World Wide Worx), which makes it one of the least used means of communication and information gathering in the country, heavily outweighed by radio (77%) and television (69%) (RIA Household Survey, 2008). More recent research has suggested this figure might be higher, with one third of South Africans accessing the internet daily (de Lanerolle, 2012). What is significant about this number is that the researchers suggest 84% of these users access the internet through their mobile phone, with only 18% accessing through a computer. While fixed internet may not hold out much hope as a means of mobilizing young South Africans to engage in political action, perhaps holding greater potential is the mobile phone, which has high penetration, and usage rates. With mobile phone access at around 83% (RIA household survey, 2008), the potential for reaching young South Africans via their mobile phones is a possibility.

METHODOLOGY

The study uses qualitative and quantitative research methods to provide information about general trends, as well as more nuanced perceptions of the relationship between media consumption and usage, and civic identity and engagement of South African youth. These data provide an assessment of the media genres that most commonly raise issues affecting youth. The data also examine which media are perceived to be more conducive for enabling youth voices to be heard and responded to. These methods further provide research data for how the media assist in the construction of civic identity and enhance potential for youth participation. The research tools were also constructed to establish whether media policy promotes youth participation in the public sphere.

The quantitative methods include survey questionnaires and media content analysis. The qualitative methods include focus groups discussions with young people and an analysis of youth policy in South Africa. The methods and rationales for particular methodological choices have reflected those used by the project's Dutch partners (Irene Costera Meijer and Nico Drok) in a similar project conducted in the Netherlands in 2009[14]. While the Dutch study provided excellent tools, which were used for the South African study, the researchers were also conscious of the different contexts in which the studies were undertaken, and this was taken into account in the South African research. The findings of the South African project combined with the Dutch research provide an international comparative dimension to the findings.

The key objective of the study was to investigate trends in youth media consumption and usage. Four provinces – Gauteng, Eastern Cape, Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal – were chosen for a combination of reasons. The provinces are the four most populated provinces in South Africa (Census 2011). Two of the provinces are uniquely representative of particular historical classifications of the South African population: Coloured people form the majority of the population in the Western

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[14] The Dutch project report is available at: http://www.windesheim.nl/~/media/Files/Windesheim/Research%20Publications/111006_DrokSchwarz20Jongerennieuwsmediabetrokkenheid20compleet.pdf

Cape (Hendricks, 2005: 118) and the majority of Indian South Africans live in KwaZulu-Natal. According to ASSA (Actuarial Society of South Africa, 2000) KwaZulu-Natal is divided along racial lines in the following way – 84.9% Black African, 1.5% Coloured, 8.5% Indian and 2.4% White[15]. A practical consideration for choosing the locations was the fact that at least one contributor to the project were based in each of the provinces.

Quantitative surveys were conducted with 956 young people, between 15 and 30 years of age across the four sites[16]. Because the research was conducted across a number of different sites in the provinces there was no sampling frame for the populations of the specific sites. Instead, the quota sampling method was used which allows for a representation of population at each particular site. Random sampling was excluded as a method of data collection because it was not possible to effectively and scientifically sample the population in a random way in any of the sites. Furthermore, many researchers argue that besides the savings in time and money, a well-designed quota sample should be at least as representative as a random sample and is therefore legitimate to use for making statistical inferences (Kruskali & Mosteller, 1979; Yule, Udney & Kendall, 1950). While quota sampling should be representative of the broader population, depending on which characteristics of the target population are chosen as key indicators, this may not always be possible. This was the case in this study as a result of the characteristics chosen to categorise the sample. Due to the fact that South Africans are still strongly influenced by race[17], race was chosen as a key variable. One of the challenges is, that in many places quotas for races other than Black African would have been challengingly small and would have made the quota difficult to work with when other characteristics (namely gender, age, and education) were added to race. It is for this reason that the quota sample in this study is not a strict reflection of the population classifications at the wider national or provincial level. It is also for this

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[15]   http://www.sahealthinfo.org/bod/kwazulunatal.pdf

[16]   See Appendix One for survey questionnaire administered to participants.

[17]   "Race" has historically been used as a defining characteristic in South Africa. Because of the historic legacy of a race-based system such as Apartheid, there are still social, political and economic differences between people of different races.

reason that KwaZulu-Natal and the Western Cape were key sites for the survey because of their proportionately larger populations of the smaller race categories.

Just over 87% (87.2%) of respondents were between 15 and 30 years old, with only 12.8% above 31 years. The information therefore shows a bias towards younger respondents. These numbers reflect one of the challenges of quota sampling: those administering the questionnaires may not always stick to the quotas as stringently as required (Babbie, 2013). There was a fair gender balance across respondents with 50.8% female respondents and 49.2% male respondents. As mentioned, race is a significant factor in South Africa because it is still a determining factor for many life trajectories. While the Dutch study did not use race as a variable for the quota sample, the researchers of the South African study felt that race could not be disregarded in this study. As a result of Apartheid conditions of different race groups in South Africa are different. To evaluate media use and consumption, and the relationship between media use and civic identity it was important to consider the impact of racial categories.

Respondents were asked to categorise themselves according to the historical race categories (Black, Coloured, Indian, and White)[18]. Respondents consisted of Black African, 57% (2011 national figures, 80%), Coloured, 13% (2011 national figures, 9%), Indian, 11% (2011 national figures, 2.5%), and White, 6% (2011 national figures, 9%). Due to the relatively small numbers of Indian and Coloured respondents and because there were no significant differences in responses across questions for these two categories they have been grouped together in the results. This is to ensure that results are easy to read and to ensure that the most significant results can be included in the report without making it too extensive.

Considering the age of the respondents, it is not surprising that just under one third of respondents (31%) were still in school (called learners throughout the report). Almost four out of ten (23%) were studying

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[18]   These figures do not correspond with national figures as a result of the quota sampling method used – see previous explanation.

at either a college or university (called students throughout the report). Just more than one out of ten (12%) respondents said they were unemployed. This is well below the official 2012 national figure of 25.5% (Statistics South Africa). More than three out of ten (34%) said they were either in full time employment (23%) or that they were employed part time (11%). These figures could reflect the fact that a number of surveys and focus groups were administered in sites close to universities or other tertiary institutions.

This survey generated the expected large amount of data. This report will focus on results that are regarded as significant and relevant to the focus of the study: consumption and use of the media by the youth for the purpose of constituting civic identity and political participation. Key correlations were made considering the following variables: race, age, education, location, income, school type and occupation. Each of these variables include a number of categorisations:

- Race: Black African, White, Indian/Coloured
- Age: 15-20 years old, 21-30 years old, 31 or more years
- Education: none/little schooling, Grade 12, tertiary education
- Location: large city, small town, rural area
- Income: less than R1500, between R1501 – R3300, between R3301 – R9000, between R9001 – R21 000, more than R21 001
- School type: township, ex-Model C[19]/private school, other
- Occupation: unemployed, scholar, student, employed

Some variables produced analytical challenges. These include school type. Respondents who provided 'other' as school type but did not provide further details regarding the school. Almost 50% (46.5%) of respondents stated that they attend an ex-Model C or private school and 41.3%

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[19] During apartheid there were separate departments responsible for White children's schools, Black African children's schools and Coloured children's schools. The House of Representatives (HOR) was the department that handled coloured children's schooling, the Department of Education and Training (DET) handled Black African children's schooling and the White children's schools were known as Model C Schools. Even today, Model C schools still typically have better facilities, better teachers and better educational opportunities for children than township or rural schools (http://www.my-cape-town-south-africa.com/south-african-schools-and-education-system.html)

attend township schools. Location was another variable which proved challenging. Results show indistinct differences between the categories small town and rural area (and could perhaps have been grouped together for purposed of analysis). Cross tabulations within these key variables have been included in the study only where significant associations occurred in the results. These results are based on the Pearson Chi-Square test, where a *p*-value of less than 0.05 indicates a significant association between the variables.

Media Tenor conducted a quantitative content analysis of the kind of media coverage of the youth in both print and broadcast (television only) media in South Africa. A total of 8736 articles were analysed from South African print media between January 2011 and July 2012. Articles were chosen on the basis of whether they had youth as the subject. Each article is analysed for the following variables:

- Who/what is the subject
- what is the field of business of the subject
- where does the action take place
- what time does the statement refer to
- what topic is the statement about
- who is the source of the statement
- and the tone or value of the statement (whether it is negative, positive or neutral).

Print media analysed were: *Beeld, Business Day, Business Report, Business Times, Cape Times, City Press, Daily Dispatch, Daily Sun, Die Burger, FinWeek, Financial Mail, Isolezwe, Mail & Guardian, New Age, Rapport, Sake24, Sowetan, Star, Sowetan, Star, Sunday Independent, Sunday Times, Times, Witness*. Broadcast media analysed were the following news broadcasts, all on television: SABC 3 News @ One, E-TV News, Afrikaans News, SABC 2, English News, SABC 3, Zulu/Xhosa News, SABC 1, Sotho News, SABC 2, KykNet (Afrikaans), SiSwati/Ndebele News, SABC 1, SABC 3 news @ 10 and SABC 3 Africa News Update.

Focus groups discussions were then conducted in three provinces in South Africa: Gauteng, Eastern Cape, and KwaZulu-Natal. In total 14 focus group discussions were conducted with a total of 107 participants

across the demographic range: unemployed/employed (full time and part time), students (full time and part time), young people living in rural and urban areas, and participants across all racial categories. The purpose of the focus group discussions was to gain a deeper understanding of young people's perceptions of community, civic and political engagement, media use, and attitudes towards the media in relation to political and civic engagement. Participants for the focus groups were selected through purposive sampling, as well as snowball sampling. Focus group studies in media research rarely seek to obtain focus groups representative of the population. Rather, focus groups are selected according to dimensions that may be significant to the way in which people use and interpret media. For this project, the choice of focus group participants was shaped by the results of the survey and participants were identified based on criteria drawn from the survey results such as age, location, gender, race, and occupation. Different moderators conducted the focus groups in KwaZulu-Natal using a different moderator's guide and moderating procedures than the moderators in Gauteng and the Eastern Cape. This posed analytical challenges despite similarities in the general objectives of conducting the focus groups.

A qualitative policy analysis was also conducted to provide an overview of South African youth policies. The particular focus was to analyse whether general youth policy and specific media policy promote active youth participation in the public sphere. Researchers analysed the National Youth Policy 2009-2014, the Children's Act, the Films and Publications Act, and the Media Development and Diversity Agency Act. The aim of the policy analysis is to allow the research to make policy recommendations based on key focus areas identified by the government. This policy analysis will be related to the key findings of the study and allow for recommendations for better youth engagement and participation in the public sphere through the media.

FINDINGS

The findings are collated in relation to information from the surveys, the focus group discussions, the content analysis and in comparison with the research conducted by the Dutch partners. The findings will be discussed within the following categories:
1. Media coverage on the youth
2. Media use
3. Media and institutional trust
4. Civic identity and the media
5. Civic engagement and the media

Media coverage on the youth

This report is aimed at identifying trends of reporting on the youth as well as issues most closely associated with young people. The analysis focuses on reportage on organisations and programmes concerned with youth development. The analysis also examines political coverage on youth.

Traditional media became increasingly negative towards issues associated with the youth during 2012. Coverage on the youth was linked to concern regarding societal challenges in general. Growing pertinence was given to unemployment, inequality as well as the situation of the poor. Major contributors towards negative focus on the youth was the ousting of Julius Malema as ANCYL leader, the quality of, and access to, education as well as growing concern regarding social unrest as a result of disillusionment on the part of unemployed youths.

In general, there is an unbalanced representation of youth in the media based on population statistics from Statistics South Africa 2011. Based on these figures there is an unbalanced trend of reporting on gender with young males receiving almost 20% more interest than young women. Analysis of long-term media trends indicates that the share of coverage on women is subsiding over time.

Media reportage of various race groups is also unbalanced. According to

Statistics South Africa's population estimates for 2011 there are 8.64% Coloureds and 9.09% Whites currently living in South Africa, Yet White young people receive more than twice the amount of coverage when compared with coverage of Coloured youth.

Figure 1
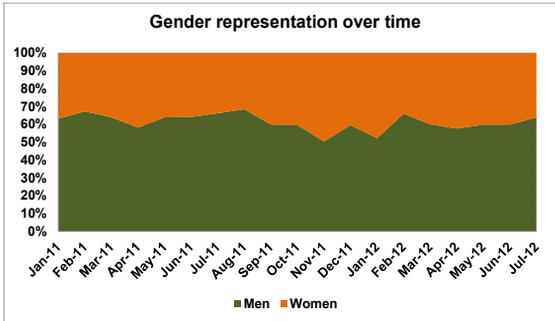
Basis: *5864 statements in SA media over time: January 2011- July 2012.*
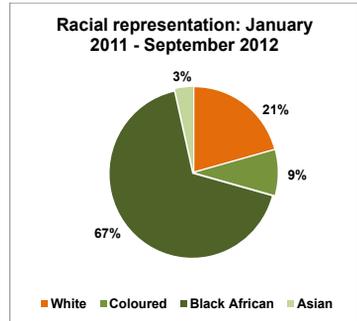
Basis: *5864 statements in SA: January 2011 – September 2012.*

Issue coverage on the youth

Education
The media took greatest interest in challenges faced by the youth and issues that were either contributing to, or were as a result of, inequality and social circumstances. The media were particularly focused on education seen as – the key to alleviating poverty and inequality.

Figure 2
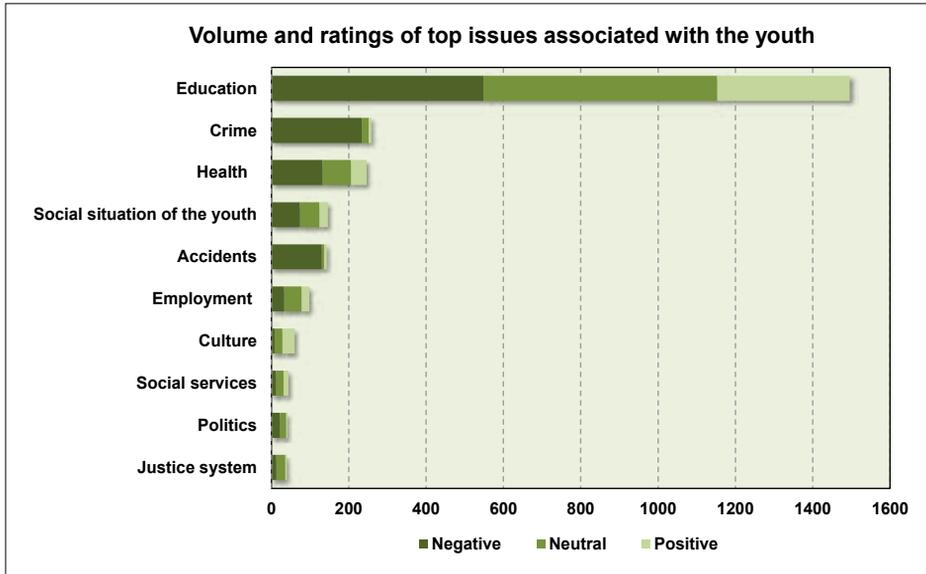
Basis: *2572 articles in SA media: January 2011 – September 2012.*

Education received growing negative attention during 2012. Three incidents gave rise to growing media perceptions that education is facing a crisis:

- **The stampede at the University of Johannesburg during the beginning of 2012**[20]. The issue highlighted the shortage of space at institutions of higher learning in South Africa. *The Daily Maverick* (10/01/2012) reported: "It was not too hard to figure out there would be a lot of tense people at UJ on Tuesday. South Africa's university system has room for 150,000 first-year students. One-hundred-and-eighty-thousand matriculants whose results qualify them for further study won't get a place".

- **The Eastern Cape education crisis since 2011**[21] focused increased

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[20] On the 10th January 2012 one person was killed outside of the University of Johannesburg in a stampede of more than 10 000 people. The woman was the mother of a prospective student who had been standing in queues with her son, along with the other thousands, in the hope of registering for the new academic year.

[21] The Eastern Cape Province has been plagued by a number of challenges in the education sector. These include strikes by teachers over pay, shortage of teachers for key

media awareness on ailing education standards. Much debate pertained to Helen Zille's 'educational refugees' utterance[22].

- **The Limpopo book scandal**[23] caused a media outcry. The focus on the textbook scandal in Limpopo was responsible for a spike in negative coverage on education for the South African government during the third quarter. A relatively stable rating for most of 2011 was derailed by persistent coverage on Limpopo.

Unemployment and the social situation of youths

Social unrest

Unemployment and the social situation of the youth received intensified debate. Media scrutiny of the issue was fuelled by strong support for former ANC Youth League leader Julius Malema's aggressive stance on the nationalisation of key industries (particularly mining and banks) as well as land reform. The increased violence associated with protests and strikes intensified concern of a looming social uprising. General Secretary of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu), Zwelinzima Vavi, a prominent source on social unrest, reportedly argued that the increase in violent public protests in the country was the beginning of an uprising. He stated that unemployment – especially unemployment of the youth in SA – was a ticking time bomb and that social programmes such as the Expanded Public Works Programme and the social grants system that benefited 15 million people were not enough and were not a viable solution (Business Day, 07/06/2012).

The Youth Wage Subsidy

The Youth Wage Subsidy[24] received extensive media debate during 2012.

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subjects, poor infrastructure, and calls for the dismissal of the Eastern Cape head of education Modidma Mannya,

[22] In April 2012 Democratic Alliance leader, Helen Zille, who is also Premier of the Western Cape, called learners from the Eastern Cape who move to the Western Cape with the purpose of gaining better education, "education refugees".

[23] In June 2012 the media reported that Grade 10 pupils in the Limpopo province had still not received textbooks which were scheduled to be delivered in January. This became a national scandal because the national education department had taken over running the provincial education department in December of the year before.

[24] In 2011 the Treasury suggested a subsidy for employers who take on first-time

Much interest focused on the fact that Cosatu had opposed the subsidy. Cosatu claimed the subsidy would aid profitability levels of enterprises at the expense of workers. The trade union also argued the government would be unable to monitor whether the subsidy would be used for the intended purposes (The Mail & Guardian, 20/06/2012). It was reported that the Democratic Alliance (DA) and the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) strongly supported the subsidy. The youth subsidy received heightened levels of interest when DA and Cosatu supporters were involved in street battles, as the DA tried to march to Cosatu House to highlight Cosatu's opposition to the scheme. The media criticised the ANC's 'deafening silence' regarding Cosatu's violent reaction against the DA's march (The Mail & Guardian, 16/05/2012). The ANC and government received intensified scrutiny when they seemed to have backpedalled on the youth wage subsidy so as to win back Cosatu's favour. Journalists said: "Until consensus is reached, unemployed youth will remain a political football" (Daily Maverick 23/11/2012).

Figure 3
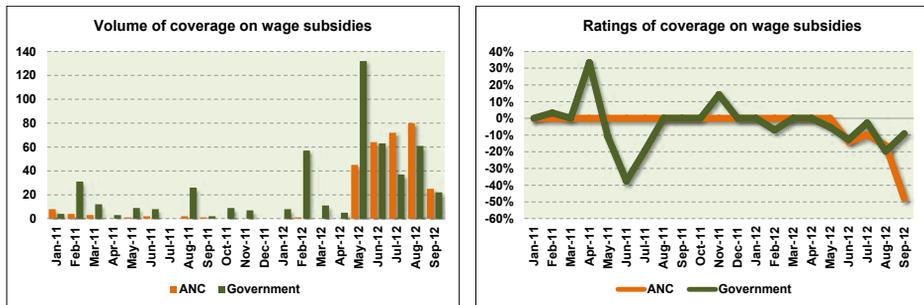
Basis*: 815 statements January 2011 – September 2012.*

Health
Regarding health issues, the media focused most extensively on HIV. The press were particularly focused on the prevention of HIV; less interest pertained to the prevalence of the virus. The media were particularly critical of the commonness of teenage pregnancies as well as substance

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workers in a two year programme which aimed to improve employment nationally. The Youth Wage Subsidy was to be implemented in April 2012, but had been stalled due to discussion between relevant parties and organisations.

abuse. Substance abuse was closely linked to the contraction of HIV as well as the incidence of crime.

Figure 4
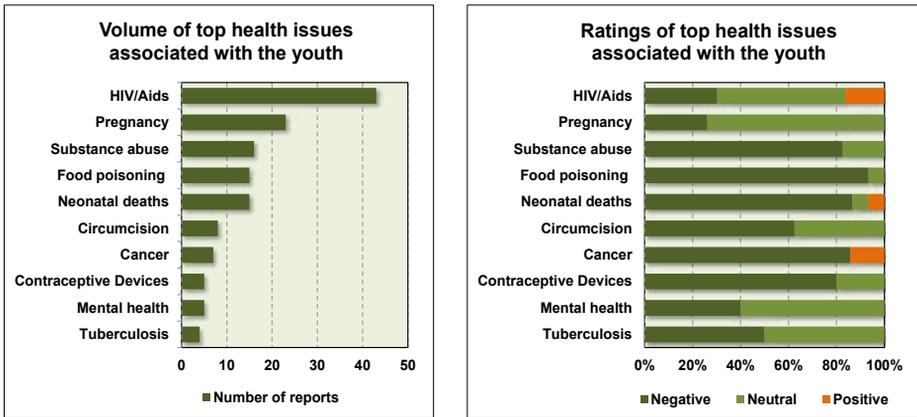
Basis: 141 articles in SA media: January 2011 – September 2012

Crime

The youth received much reportage in connection with crime – most noticeably violent contact crimes such as sexual assault and murder. The sexual assault of a mentally-handicapped girl caused a media outcry and resulted in increased media debate on societal elements that contribute to the youth committing such violent acts. To this effect, director of the Medical Research Council's Gender & Health Unit Rachel Jewkes was quoted as saying: "Parental absence was significantly associated with raping, as was the quality of affective relationship with parents related to raping. Experiences of bullying and being bullied were much more common among men who raped" (City Press, 22/04/2012).

News that a minor had admitted to killing the former leader of the right-wing Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging (AWB), Eugene Terre'Blanche not only resulted in intensified focus on murder, but also stimulated media interest regarding claims that young people were exploited as farm workers.

Figure 5

Volume and ratings of top crime-related issues associated with the youth

Coverage on organisations or programmes focused on youth development

The organisations or programmes aimed at youth development received either much scrutiny or a dearth of media interest. The mismanagement of funds as well as a failure to meet expectations was at the heart of media concern.

The National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) has been shrouded in controversy since its inception in 2009. NYDA received much negative attention during November 2011 as it was reported that ousted ANC Youth League leader Julius Malema "astutely placed many of his Youth League allies in lucrative positions within (NYDA)" (Cape Times,

17/11/2011). Questions regarding exorbitant salaries during March 2012 perpetuated beliefs that the NYDA is a 'fat cat' organisation plagued by nepotism. The media quoted DA Youth leader Makashule Gana as saying that: "We have known for a long time that the ANC Youth League-aligned national NYDA board is running an employment agency for pals. It is only now that we can see just how focused on staffing, to the exclusion of real youth development, the NYDA board is – to the point that its plans are simply nonsensical" (News24; 14/03/2012). Opposition parties again called for the National Youth Development Agency to be disbanded during September after its annual report revealed irregular expenditure of R133 million during the past financial year.

The Department for Women Children and People with Disabilities (DWCPD) has consistently attracted negative focus. The department received renewed scrutiny during August due to the fact that the DA had asked Public Protector Thuli Madonsela to investigate the department's failure to deliver on its mandate.

Figure 6

Volume and ratings of organisations or programs focused on youth development
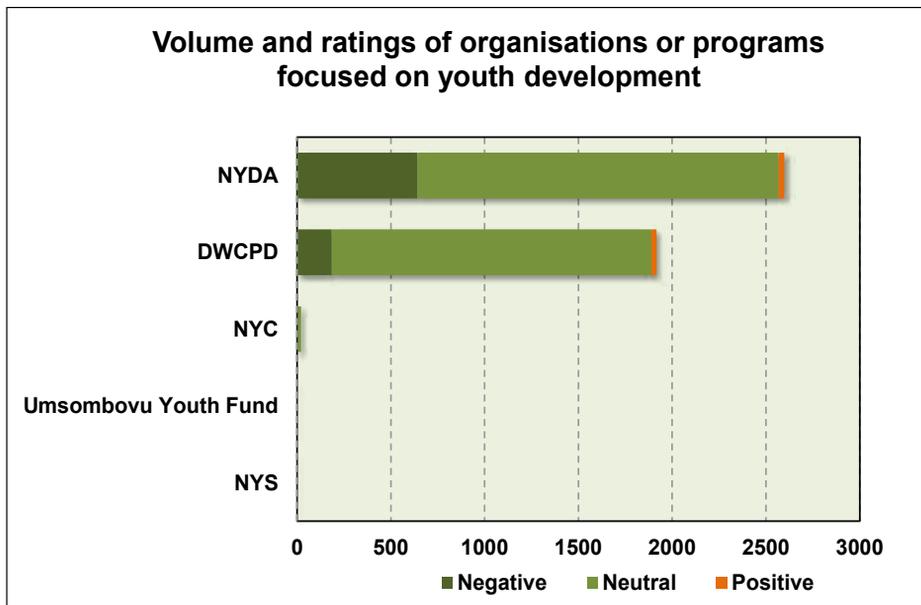
Basis: 4537 statements in SA media: January 2011 – September 2012.

Coverage on political parties' youth divisions

Analysis of political coverage associated with the youth indicates that the media agenda mostly centre on issues of importance to the ANC Youth League. The ousting of former ANCYL leader Julius Malema[25] is a pertinent example. The media show little interest in the youth wings of opposition parties. Not only was the ANC Youth League most in focus, but the League also achieved the greatest share of coverage when looking at the total amount of coverage on the ANC. Other youth divisions received less than 5% of total coverage on their respective political parties.

Figure 7
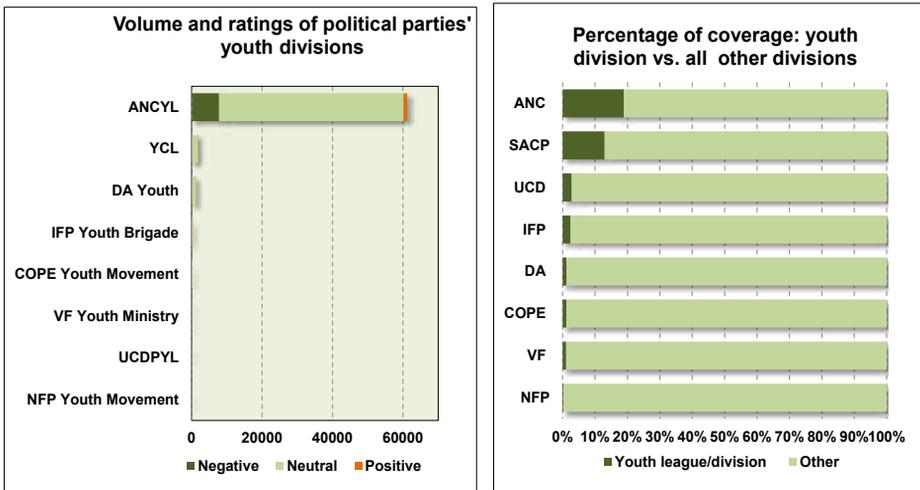
Basis: 6512 statements in SA media: January 2011 – September 2012.

Basis: 494908 statements in SA media: January 2011 – September 2012.

The ANC Youth League's political affairs received most pertinence. Much less interest pertained to the youth wing's policies regarding issues pertaining to issues of interest to the youth. The ANC Youth League's policy regarding the nationalisation of mines was the only policy receiving extensive media discussion. As such, it could be argued that political debates regarding issues of importance to the youth are neglected.

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[25] Julius Malema had been president of the ANC Youth League (ANCYL) until he was expelled from the ANC after being found guilty of sowing divisions within the party. This was a controversial decision as he was strongly supported by certain factions of the ANC as well as being popular amongst the ANCYL.

Not only did the youth divisions of political parties receive mostly negative media attention, but there was also a lack of media confidence in young up-and-coming political leaders. Julius Malema dominated coverage on young leaders.

Figure 8

Volume of coverage on young political leaders

Figure 9

Ratings of coverage on young political leaders
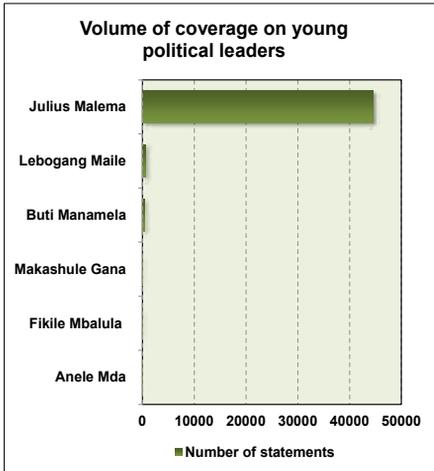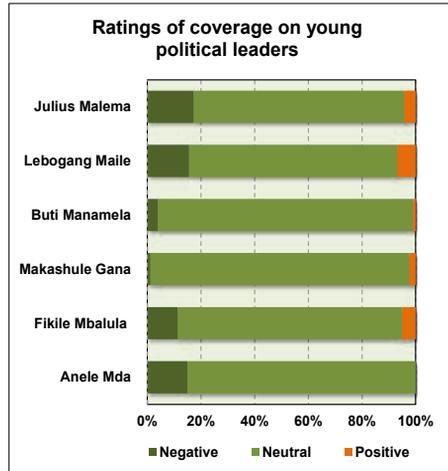
***Basis****: 45663 statements in SA media: January 2011 – September 2012.*

Media use

Most respondents said they used radio news most for getting information (70.8%), with SA TV news (67.3%) as the second highest source of information. Google or other search engines was the third most stated source of news media (62.8%). The medium used the least by survey respondents to gather news were tabloid newspapers (38.5%).

Figure 10
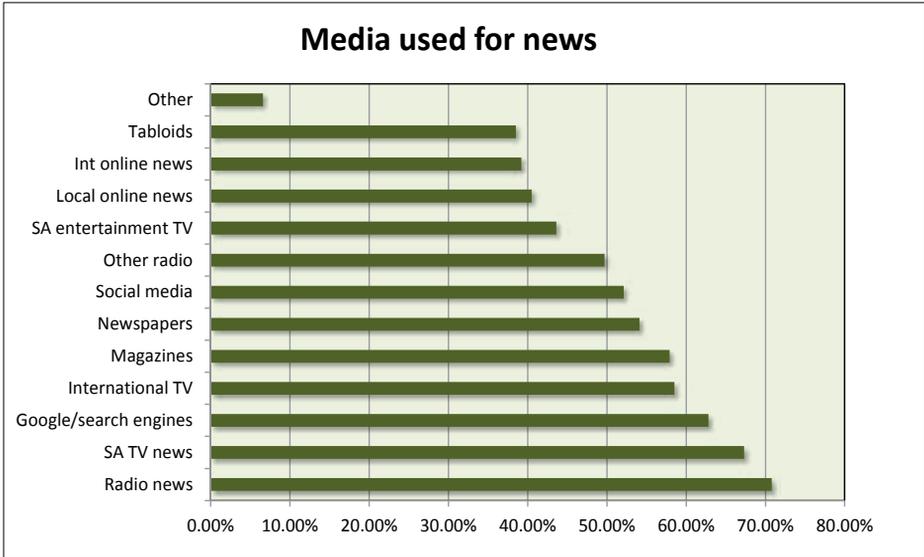
Unemployed youth use tabloid newspapers significantly more than others in the employment category (58.8%), but are at the same time the highest users of SA TV news (82.5%). There is equally high use amongst unemployed youth of radio news as a source of news (82.5%). Of the media surveyed, employed youth use SA TV news most to obtain news (71.9%). Employed youth also use mainstream newspapers significantly more than other occupation categories (61.7%)[26]. Employed youth use tabloid newspapers least to obtain news (36.1%). Radio news is the most significant source of news for youth attending school (73.4%) with Google or other search engines the second most preferred source (68.9%). The most preferred way for young people in college of university to access the news is through Google or other search engines (68.4%). Six out of 10 young people (61.3%) in this category said they use social media as a news source – the highest amongst all the occupation categories[27].

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[26] Mainstream newspaper use: In school = 46.8%, in college/university = 53.3%, and unemployed = 54.4%.

[27] Google or other search engines as a news source: In school = 52.9%, employed = 50.5%, and unemployed = 39.5%.

The data show strong disparities for the use of Google and other search engines as a source of information for news amongst South African youth. Although unemployed youth show the lowest usage of Google or other search engines (40.4%), this figure is still much higher than general internet usage figures across South Africa. There is disagreement about the number of internet users in South Africa. Some statistics show figures of 20% (World Wide Worx) while another more recent study showing evidence of up to one in three people in South Africa, or 12.3 million people, accessing the internet (De Lanerolle 2012: 6).

More interestingly is the comparatively low number of respondents who said they use either local online news websites (40.5%) or international news websites (39.2%) to obtain news information. This is significantly lower than the figures for Google and other search engines across all respondents (62.8%), but still significantly higher than the average for internet use across South Africa. This may point to the fact that young people are using the internet to find specific information, using search engines to find relevant information rather than relying on generic local or international news websites.

Youth with tertiary education also use Google or other search engines as their most preferred source for news most often (71.8%) and significantly more than respondents with lower education levels. (No/little schooling, 53.1%, Grade 12, 65.5%.) Seven out of 10 (71.9%) respondents with little or no education use radio news as a source of news most. SA TV news is also a predominant source of news (70.6%) in this category. Respondents with Grade 12 education also use radio news most to access news (74%), with Google and other search engines as the second most used medium for news access (65.5%)

Younger survey respondents (15-20 years) use radio news most to access news (70%) and Google or other search engines almost as much (68.8%). Google and other search engines saw significant disparities amongst different age categories. Older respondents (31 years and older) use this technology the least of those surveyed (49.2%). While 60.3% of 21 – 30 year olds also use Google and other search engines for news access, this medium was the third most used within this age group after radio news (72.3%) and TV news (71.8%).

Black African respondents use both radio news and TV news equally as sources of information of the media surveyed (74.1%). SA TV news is used significantly less amongst White youth (46.3%), who use Google and other search engines most to access their news (78.2%). Indian/Coloured youth also use radio news the most to access news (68.2%). Tabloid newspapers are the least preferred news source (38.1%) among this group. Significantly, more Black African youth use tabloids as a news source (45.8%) than White youth (11.6%).

Youth with high income levels[28] use Google and other search engines the most to access news (80.8%) and use tabloid newspapers the least (20.2%). Radio news is the most accessed media for those in the lowest income category (80%), while least used amongst this group is international online news websites (28%). The second lowest income group use SA TV news as their predominant source of news (82%). This category is the highest users of this medium amongst all income categories while the highest income group use SA TV the least (56.7%). Radio news is used most by the third lowest income group as their most significant news source (71.4%), while radio news show significantly lower figures as a preferred source for the higher income groups (60-61%). The second highest income group uses Google and other search engines, and local online news sites as the two highest sources for news (both 69.2%).

Respondents from rural areas (79.1%), small towns (68.9%) and cities (68.1%) all use radio news as the most preferred source of information. Respondents from rural areas use international online news websites the least (31.6%). Respondents from rural areas (53.9%) use tabloid newspapers as a news source significantly more than those in large cities (31.7%). Tabloid newspapers are the least preferred medium of information for urban respondents as well as respondents in small towns (38.1%). Almost eight out of ten respondents in rural areas (76.7%) prefer SA TV news as a source of information while 63.1% of urban respondents and 67.1 of respondents in small towns prefer the same medium. Local online news websites, social media, and Google or other search engines show no significant difference in usage by respondents from different areas.

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[28] Income was divided into the following categories – less than R1500, between R1501 – R3300, between R3301 – R9000, between R9001 – R21 000, and more than R21 001.

Significant differences are evident between respondents who attend different types of schools with respondents attending township schools using predominantly SA TV news (75.1%), and radio news (74.6%) as sources for news. These respondents also use tabloid newspapers significantly more (47.1%) than respondents who attend ex-Model C or private schools (28%). Respondents from township schools also use local community newspapers significantly more (51.9%) than those who attend or private schools (34.5%). Only 58.2% of respondents from ex-Model C or private schools use SA TV news as a news source. This is not only significantly lower than respondents from township schools, but also significantly lower than the overall percentage. Of the media surveyed, respondents from ex-Model C or private schools use predominantly Google and other search engines (71.6%) and radio news (66.1%) to obtain news.

Figure 11
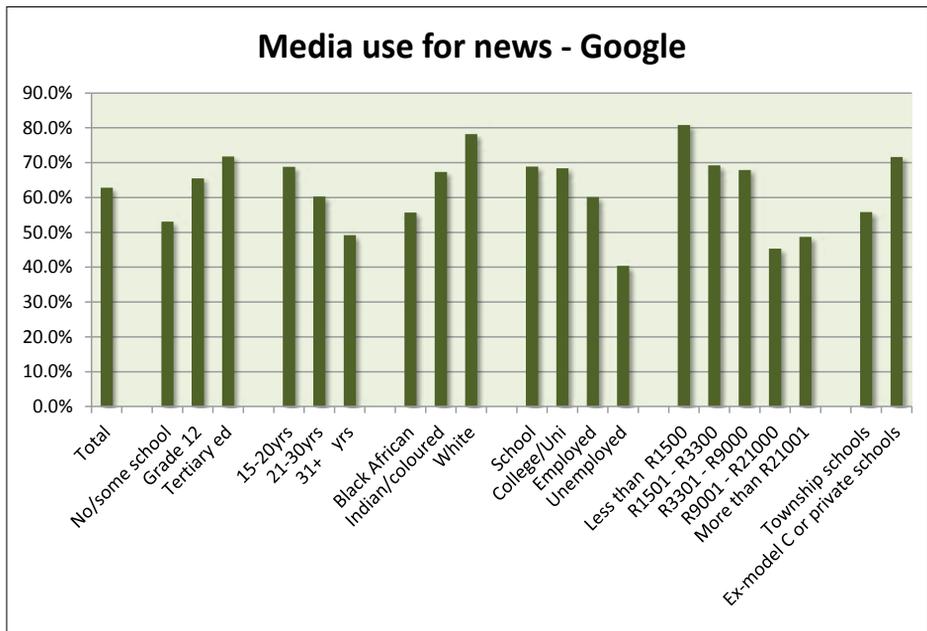
It seems that young people have an interest in using online resources (particularly search engines) to find news information but they may be prohibited by cost, access and education. Young people who are better

educated, employed or in an educational institution are more likely to use online resources for gathering news. There is no significant difference in the use of Google or other search engines as a news source amongst respondents who live in different areas (Pearson Chi-Square – 0.107).

Media usage amongst South African youth is surprisingly comparable with the young people in the Netherlands who also still favour traditional broadcasting media rather than printed newspapers. South African youth favour radio more than television as opposed to Dutch youth who favour television over radio as their most important news source. Young people in the Netherlands also use online news proportionately more as sources of news than printed newspapers. While South African youth use online resources to access news, Dutch youth use search engines rather than news websites to gather news. If one regards these results in relation to theory discussed in the literature review, this may suggest young people from the North and from South Africa may be well placed to access information about political and civic activity from online sources. At the same time, political and civic organisations would be well placed to use online tools to engage with young people. The fact that South African youth who were surveyed use search engines to gather news at such a significantly high level may suggest however that in order to use the internet as a tool to engage young people, civic and political organisations would need to target the material carefully at this audience in order to attract their attention. It also suggests that these young South Africans would need to be interested in a topic in order to use the internet (whether on a PC or their mobile phone) to search for information and news about this issue.

Figure 12
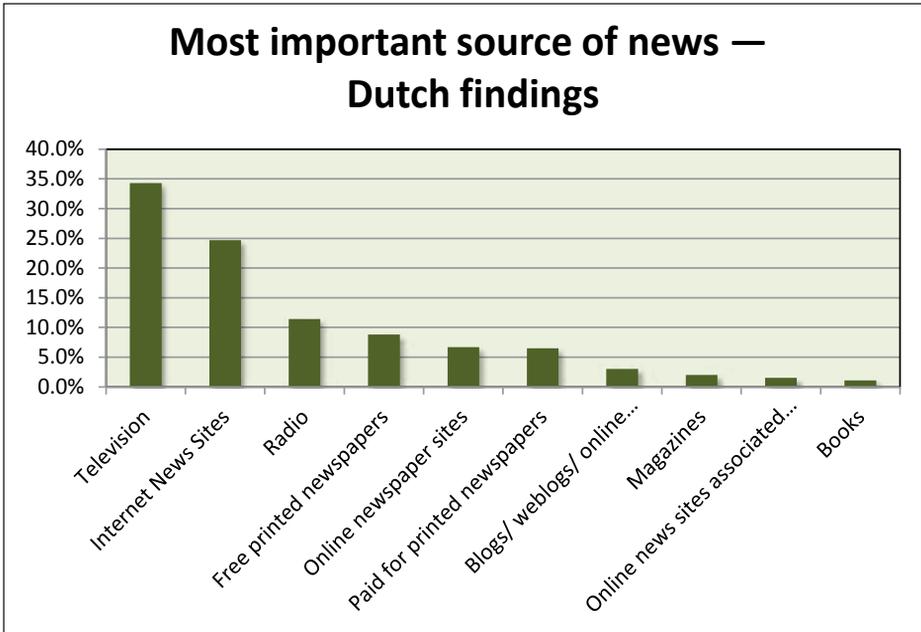
It seems from both the survey and focus group results that young people do have some interest in consuming news. When asked which three media genre they enjoy the most, the survey respondents mostly answered soap opera's (47.1%), which may indicate why TV consumption is so high for young people. News is the second most enjoyable genre (40.9%), with situation comedies as the third most enjoyable (39.6%). When asked which genre of media they prefer, focus group respondents echoed these findings by noting comedy, soap opera's, news on Al Jazeera, documentaries and sport. The fact that news scores relatively highly amongst the youth may have to do with the 'politics of the remote' as a number of focus group respondents noted that they watch particular programmes because those with the power over the remote were watching them. One participant notes:

> *"For me, it's not [that] I don't enjoy news but it's about the politics of the remote control in residential communal properties. I don't look forward to watching news but just watch it as and when I have time."*

Another notes:

> *"At 7pm you know it's time for the news at home so we just
> stay and watch with our parents."*

As one might expect, interest in news increases with age amongst both
South African and Dutch youth. South African school attendees are
significantly less interested in national news (63.5%) as a media topic
than unemployed youth (71.1%), students (73.6%) and employed youth
(77.3%).

Figure 13
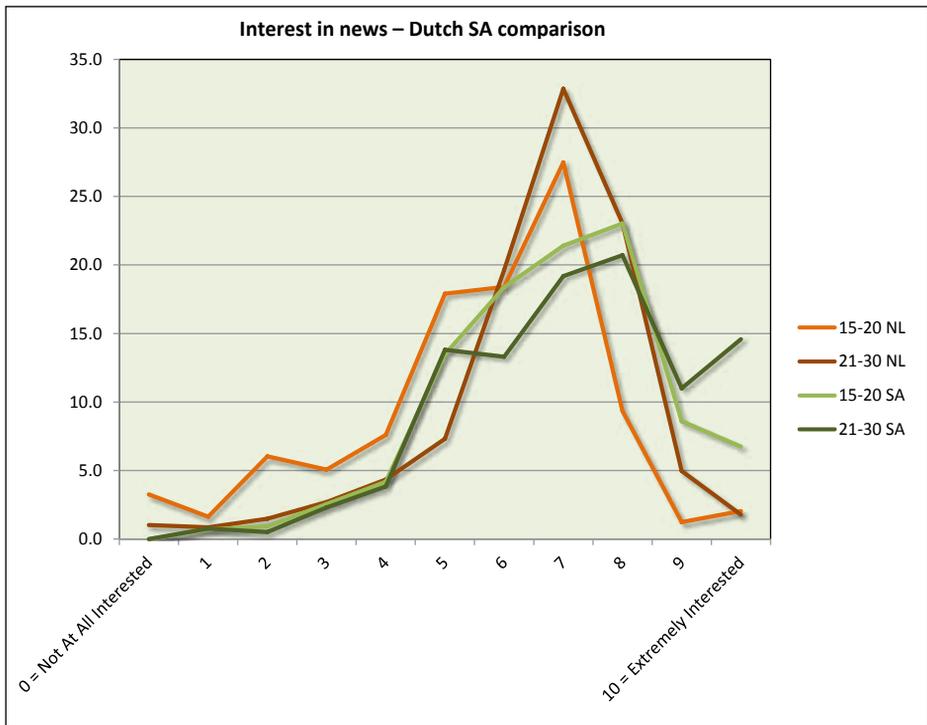
Perhaps more revealing in terms of what young people use media for,
are the results regarding their interest in specific topics. Survey respon-
dents were asked to rate a number of specific media topics according to
those they are most interested in. The results reveal not only their inter-

est in popular culture (which was the highest at 86.3%), but also their significant lack of interest in politics or topics that relate to politics. Of the two lowest topics of interest, both related to politics, with political actions the least interesting (34.6%), and politics/government the second lowest (37.9%).

There are significant differences in politics as a media topic of interest amongst different races with lowest interest from the Indian/Coloured respondents (23.3%) and highest amongst Black African respondents (44.5%) (White respondents = 30.6%). The media topic that was of most interest to the Indian/Coloured respondents was popular culture – which showed similar levels across all races and no significant differences amongst the respondents. Black African respondents show strong levels of interest in education (86.9%), while significantly fewer Indian/Coloured respondents showed an interest in this topic (74.4%) and even fewer White respondents showed an interest in this topic (68%). White respondents showed strong interest in comedy/humour (87.8%), popular culture (86.4%) and health (83.7%). Health was also of strong interest to the other respondents and showed no significant difference amongst different races (Black African = 79.6% and Indian/Coloured = 80.3%).

Very few of the topics of interest surveyed show any significant difference amongst the income categories across survey respondents. 'Breaking news' was of least interest to respondents earning lower incomes. Comedy/humour show an increased interest as income increased (highest earners, 88.5% and lowest earners, 64.7%). Careers/job hunting is of most interest to those who earn the least (80%) and of least interest to those who earn the most (60.6%). Interest in education as a media topic increases significantly as income decreases, and social justice is of most interest for the highest income earners (73.1%). Only 48.2% of middle income earners think social justice is an interesting media topic[29].

As with income, differences in age show few significant distinctions in which media topic is of most interest to respondents of different ages. Older respondents (45.9%) think politics/government is of most interest while younger respondents think the same topic is of the least

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[29] Less than R1500 = 63.3%, R1501 – R3300 = 60%, R9001 – R21000 = 63.1%

interest (31.6%). National news is of most interest to the middle age group (77.1%) but least interesting to the younger respondents (65.4%), and comedy/humour is more interesting to the youngest respondents (83.1%) than to the oldest respondents (69.7%). All of the respondents find political actions to be the media topic of least interest to them, while both the two younger age categories find popular culture to be the most interesting. The oldest respondents go against this trend as they find education to be the media topic of most interest to them (86.1%).

Popular culture is the media topic of greatest interest to those with no/some schooling (88.4%), as well as those with Grade 12 (87.5%). Health is the topic of most interest to respondents with high education levels (83.8%). More than seven out of 10 (73%) of respondents with higher education are interested in international news, significantly more than those with Grade 12 (63.9%) and those with little or no schooling (60.3%). Interest in sport is higher amongst those with less education (79.7%) than those with Grade 12 (70.6%) or those with higher education (69.3%).

Interest in popular culture is high across all the respondents. Respondents who are employed show marginally more interest in education (83.7%) than popular culture (83.4%). The only media topic that shows significant difference across this category is national news, which is of most interest to those working (77.3%) and of least interest to learners (63.5%). This seems to be linked to the age of the respondents as younger respondents show less interest in national news (65.4%) than the older respondents (21-30years = 77.1%, and those over 31 = 73.8%).

Respondents who live in large cities are least interested in politics (32.8%) but not significantly less than respondents from small towns (38.1%) and from rural areas (49.5%). Popular culture was the topic of most interest to both those living in large cities (86.9%) as well as those in rural areas (89.9%), while education was of most interest to those living in small towns (86%).

Very few of the media topics surveyed show significant differences across school categories. Respondents from township schools show the most interest in education (85.2%) and popular culture (84.4%) as

media topics. The interest in education as a media topic was significantly higher than those in ex-Model C or private schools (76.4%) and may have been strongly influenced by the difficulties that township and poorer schools have in accessing educational resources such as textbooks, infrastructure and teachers. While popular culture is the topic of greatest interest to respondents from ex-Model C or private schools (88.6%), these respondents also show high levels of interest in comedy/humour (84.3%) and topics of human interest (79.1%).

Interestingly, two of the most highly regarded topics – education (81.3%) and health (80.3%) – were also two of the topics most associated with youth in media reporting between January 2011 and September 2012. The content analysis show education, crime and health were the three topics most associated with the youth in media reporting with education outweighing all the other topics. This may indicate a link between media coverage and topical interest by readers. As with the survey results, politics as a topic scored very low in terms of media coverage associated with the youth. Again, one may see a greater interest in politics and political activity amongst the youth if the media associated such activities with young people in a positive way in their coverage of youth in South Africa.

Figure 14
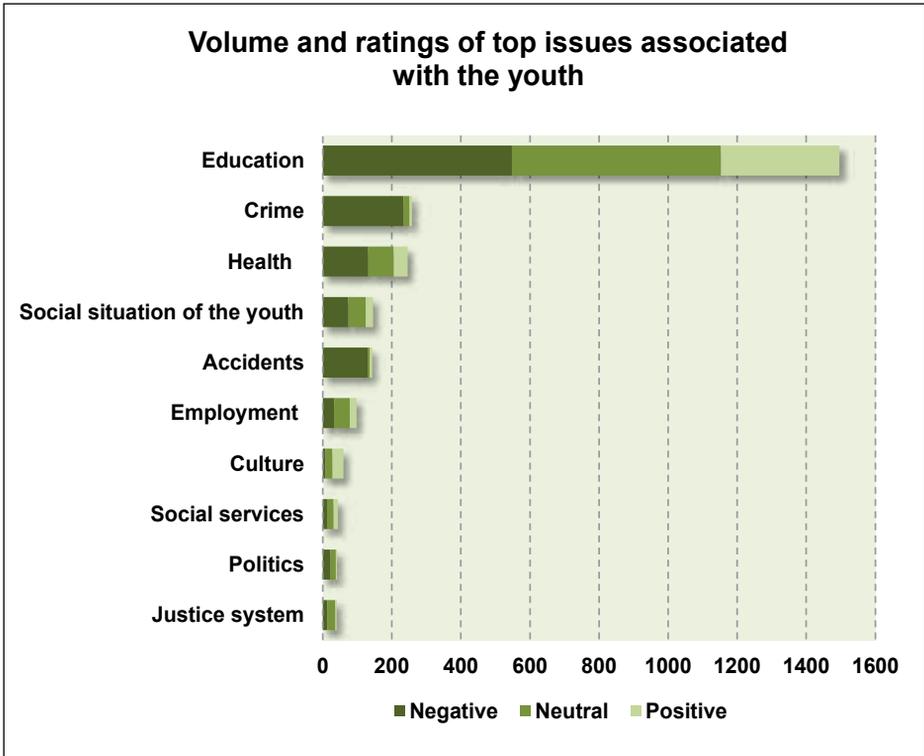
The kinds of media topics that South African youth are interested in are strongly matched by those in the Dutch study. As with South African youth, popular culture is of most interest to youth in the Netherlands, while political actions is the topic of least interest. But the data also show significant differences between the two cultures. Religion, for example, is one media topic of relatively high interest to South African youth, but scores much lower in relation to other topics amongst the young people in the Netherlands. While breaking news is one of the topics of moderate interest to young South Africans, it is one of the topics of most interest to youth in the Dutch study. Figure 15 shows relative levels of importance/interest across the two countries.

Figure 15
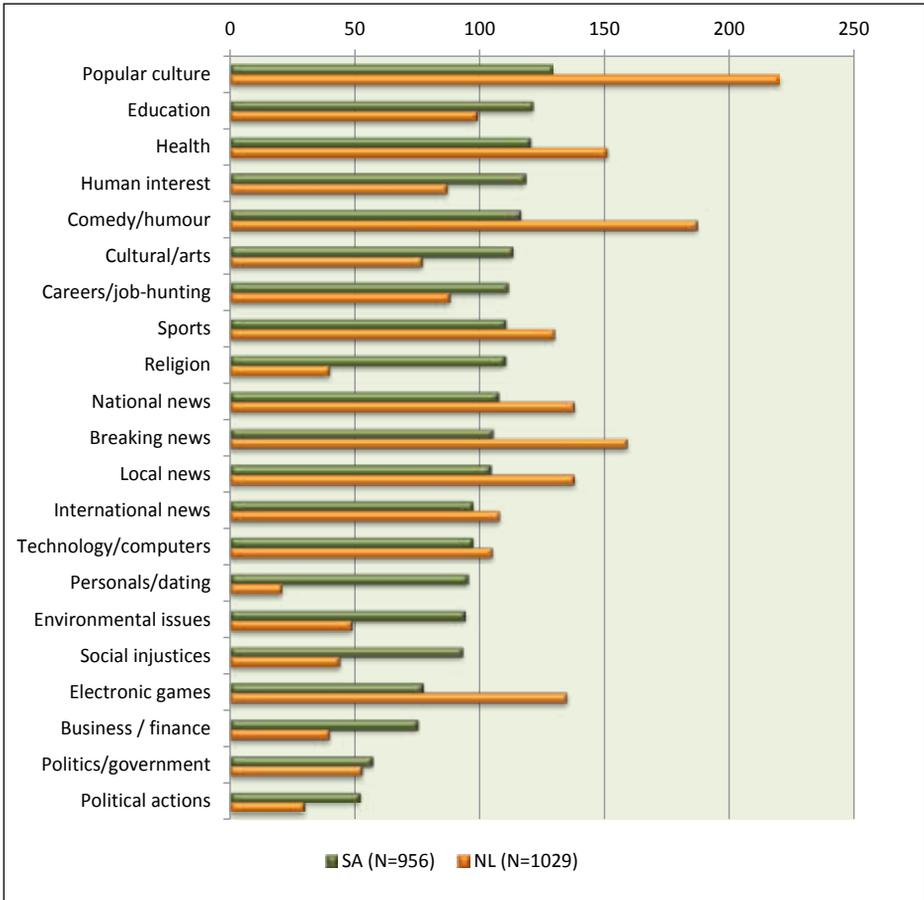
Chart axis values: 0, 50, 100, 150, 200, 250

Categories (top to bottom): Popular culture, Education, Health, Human interest, Comedy/humour, Cultural/arts, Careers/job-hunting, Sports, Religion, National news, Breaking news, Local news, International news, Technology/computers, Personals/dating, Environmental issues, Social injustices, Electronic games, Business / finance, Politics/government, Political actions

Legend: ■ SA (N=956) ■ NL (N=1029)

Media and institutional trust

Respondents were asked about their trust in local, provincial and national government. The results show significantly low levels of trust in all three with trust in local government showing the lowest level. Only 34.4% respondents say they trust local government a great deal or quite a lot. Close to four out of ten (38.3%) respondents say they trust provincial government quite a lot or a great deal and 40.9% of respondents say they trust national government a great deal or quite a lot. There is no significant change in levels of trust across the different age categories

of survey respondents. There are however significant differences across other categories, as illustrated in Figure 16.

Figure 16

Trust in local government
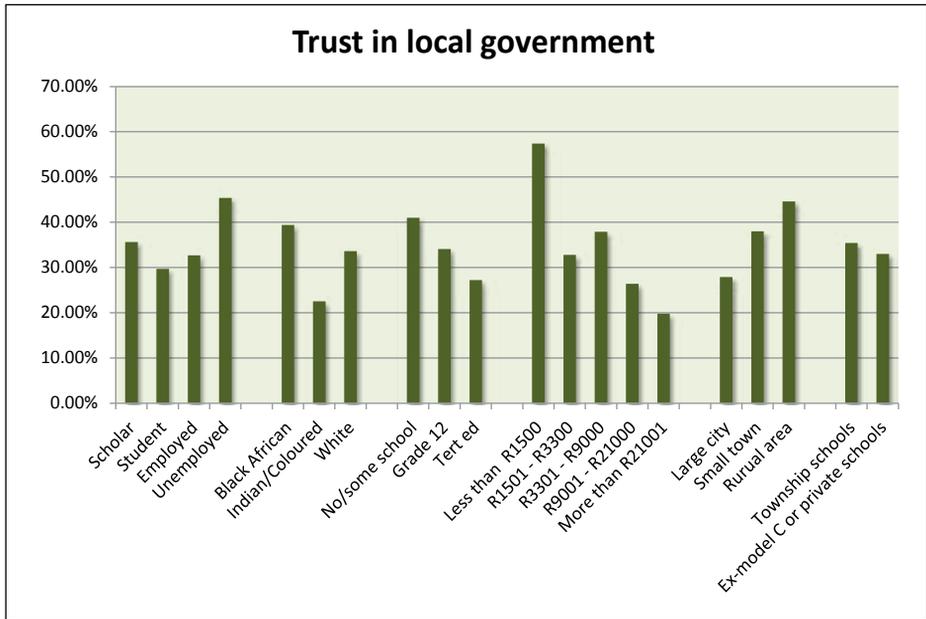
Levels of trust in provincial government follow the same patterns as those in local government, with Black African respondents reporting the highest levels of trust amongst the race categories (Black African, 44.3%, Indians/Coloureds, 29.4%, and Whites, 31%). Respondents with the lowest levels of schooling reported the highest levels of trust amongst the education category (no/some schooling, 42.6%; Grade 12,39.6%, and tertiary educated, 31.8%), and respondents who are employed have lower levels of trust than those where are unemployed (employed, 33.5%; unemployed, 48.1%). Respondents with less monthly income are significantly more trusting of local government than those with higher incomes. Almost six out of ten respondents (57.4%) say they trust local government while only two out of ten respondents (19.8%) in the highest earning category have trust in local government. Of the respondents living in in rural areas 44.6% say they trust local government – significantly more than respondents from large cities (27.9%) and small towns

(38%). Respondents from township schools also trust local government significantly more (35.4%) than those who attend ex-Model C or private schools (33%). The same kind of pattern emerges when one examines levels of trust in national government. Trust in the national government is highest amongst Black African respondents, respondents with low levels of schooling, the unemployed, lowest earners, respondents who live in rural areas and who respondents who attend township schools.

Figure 17
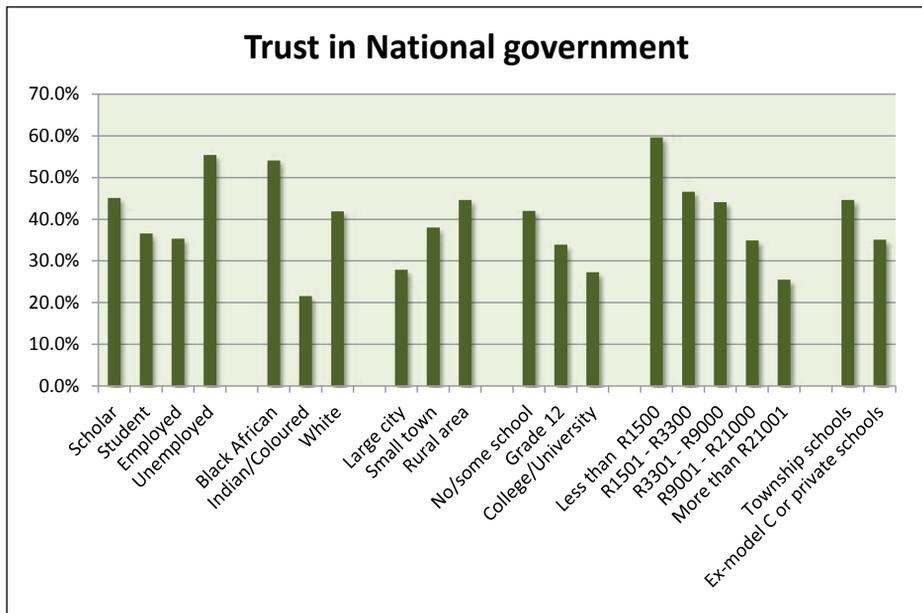
Race is a significant variable in levels of trust amongst South African youth. Indian/Coloured youth show very low levels of trust across all institutions. White youth are also less trustful of public institutions than Black African youth. White youth are most trustful of private companies. Black African (77%) and Indian/Coloureds respondents have high levels of trust in religious institutions (73.3%) and White youth have low levels (53.4%) of trust in religious institutions.

It seems that young people in South Africa are generally uninterested and mistrustful of political institutions and political parties. This in-

cludes low levels of trust in the legal system, the police, and in parliament. Only 30.7% of respondents say they trust political parties either a great deal or quite a lot. Young people who earn more are less trustful of public institutions, including the police, while those with lower incomes are more trusting of the older generation. Unemployed youth are more trusting of public institutions. This could be because they rely on public or state assistance such as child support grants and other social grants. Young people who live in rural areas are also more trusting of public institutions than those who live in large cities. Interestingly, those who live in rural areas show less trust in the older generation (75.1%) than those who live in large cities (77.8%), while those who live in small towns show the highest levels of trust in the older generation (80.5%). This trend is reversed when one examines trust in religious institutions with respondents in rural areas showing higher levels of trust (75.3%) than those in large cities (69.8%), and respondents in small towns (78.3%) showing the highest levels of trust in religious institutions.

Young people with lower levels of education show higher levels of trust across public institutions than those with higher levels of education. Attitudes towards religious institutions show high levels of trust across the education category. This pattern is the same for levels of trust in the older generation across the education category. Respondents from township schools show higher levels of trust in most political processes including local party elections (34.9%) and political parties (32.9%) as compared to respondents from ex-Model C or private schools (33.5% and 25.7% respectively). Respondents from all types of schools show the highest levels of trust in the older generation, with those from township schools showing significantly higher levels of trust (80.4%) than those from ex-Model C or private schools (77.1%). Higher income earners show lower levels of trust in public institutions, the police and parliament, but higher levels of trust in public companies than lower income earners. Respondents with low income show significantly high levels of trust in the older generation when compared with higher earners.

Figure 18

Institutional trust
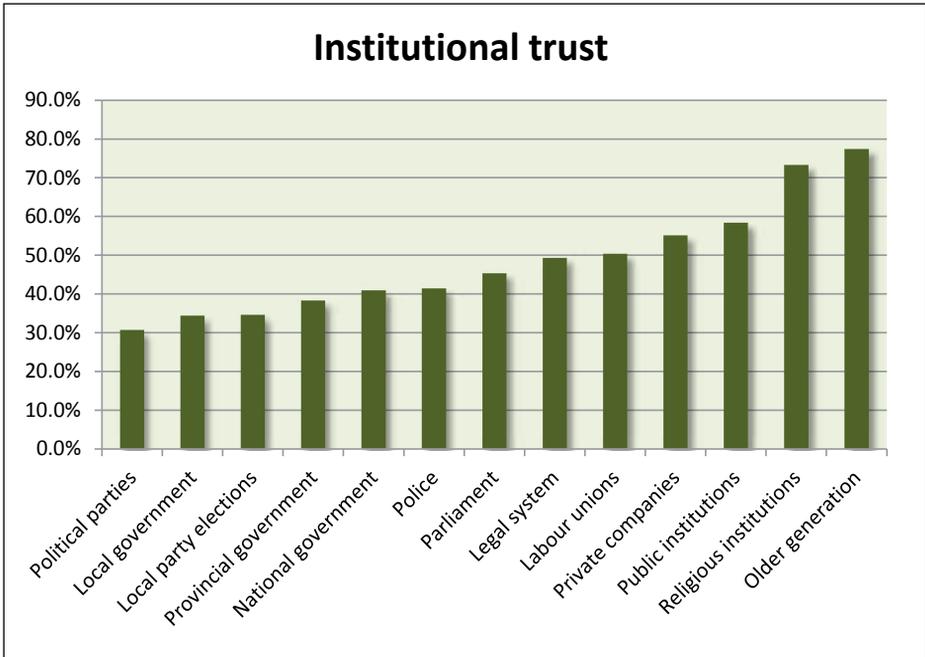
These findings correspond with the responses from participants of the focus group discussions who reported that their experiences with politicians are generally negative because politicians tend to make promises that are never kept. One respondent, when asked about meetings with politicians, said:

> *"They don't always keep their promises. Those are some of the things we have experienced in the meetings."*

Another argued that meeting with a politician was a negative experience because of the '*political propaganda".*

These remarks relate to experiences around voting at municipal (local) and national level and many focus group participants reported negative experiences around voting. This will be discussed in more detail later in the report.

The high level of trust among respondents in religious institutions (73.3%) and the older generation (77.4%) is significant. While respondents show trust in religious institutions respondents did not show significant interest in consuming religious content through the media either in the survey data or the focus group discussions. So while Indian/Coloured South African youth distrust the government and political institutions they do turn to their religious institutions and leaders as a source of trust. White youth on the other hand show little trust in political institutions or religious institutions.

Most young South Africans note the older generation as an institution they trust most (77.4%). Although there are some differences amongst race groups (Indians/Coloureds, 84%; Black Africans, 76.5%; Whites, 75.4%) these are relatively high in comparison with trust shown in other institutions. It is possible that trust in the older generation stems for a culture of trust and respect amongst all race groups for their elders. It is also likely that as trust in other institutions weakens, youth are turning to the older generation as a point of stability and a source of assurance. The literature review in this report points to a more theoretical understanding of the importance of relationships between young people and their parents in the formation of civic identity and shaping political participation.

Compared to levels of trust in political institutions, levels of trust in the media are significantly high amongst South African youth: TV news (79.5%), radio news (78.3%) and newspapers (71.9%). Almost six out of ten respondents say they trust magazines and social media (59.2% and 57.7% respectively).

Figure 19
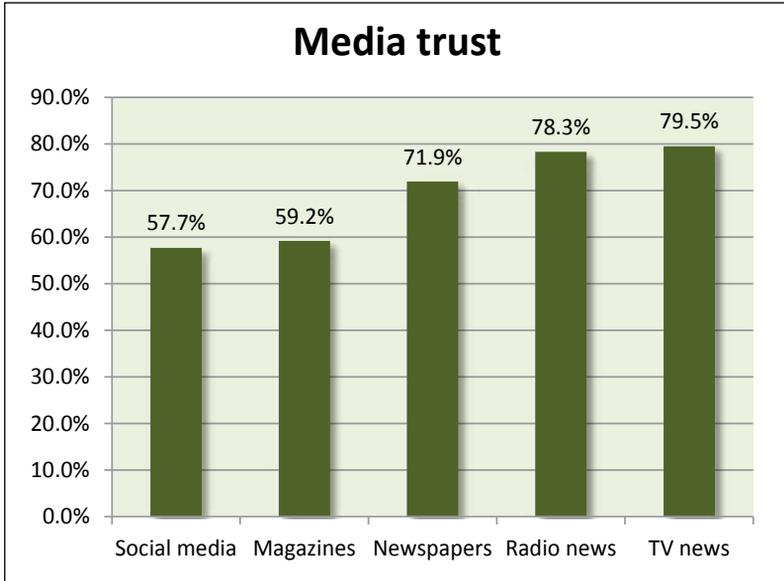
It is interesting that respondents regard newspapers as more trustworthy than social media. Usage statistics in this survey show that young people use newspapers much less than social media. (Although they do not use social media for news gathering purposes.) Also interesting is the fact that young people said they use radio news to gather news information more than TV news and yet trust TV news more than radio news. This is perhaps linked to access to television, as well as some of the findings from the focus group discussions, which indicate a preference for television because it allows them to see what was being discussed in the news broadcast. This finding also correlates with findings from studies in the North which provide evidence that showing imagery of what happens counts as proof for young people that the reporting is reliable (Costera Meijer, 2006). In the South African focus group discussions this was noted by a number of participants. One participant noted:

> "I would say that I trust TV the most because they always show what happened live. They don't just say that something happened. There is something, a picture that shows you that something did happen so that you trust it and it's live."

Another participant added:

> *"I like TV because you can see that thing when it is happening and you can see that it happened, but in the newspaper you cannot see it happen, it is written."*

Finally, a third participant reiterated these feelings by stating:

> *"TV is real because the cameras were there, so it's something real and newspaper people were not there."*

Focus group respondents acknowledge that the media may sometimes be biased and that reporting is influenced by profits and politics:

> *"The media chase money so they thrive on controversial topics to sell papers"*

> *"It's like the media can be controlled by political powers ⋯ if they can control it, then that means they [politicians] have something to hide."*

One respondent notes that trust in the media "*depends on your education or media literacy to be able to dissect facts from opinion. The ordinary people believe the news as nothing but facts*".

The survey findings support this. Respondents with less schooling and who are unemployed are more trusting of the traditional media (broadcasting and print). Significantly more respondents who are unemployed trust TV news (91%) compared to respondents who are employed (74%). This trend continues with trust in radio news. Unemployed respondents trust this medium more (89.1%) than those who are employed (74.1%). Social media is trusted almost equally by both unemployed respondents (63.7%) and employed respondents (60.75).

Race also seems to be a significant indicator in levels of trust in different types of media. Black African youth show higher levels of trust in television news (83%) than both White (78%) and Indian/Coloured youth (74%). Black African youth show lower levels of trust than White youth in all other media.

Figure 20
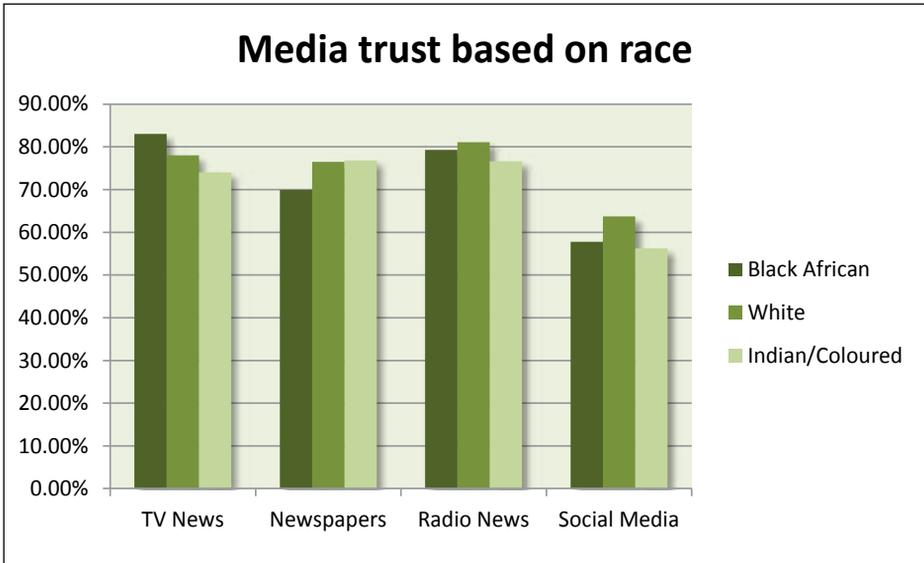
Respondents across different age categories show no significant differ-ence in levels of trust in media. The only significant difference is a relation between education and trust in television as a source of news. Respon-dents with little or no schooling show high levels of trust (85.1%) when compared with respondents who had Grade 12 (79.1%) or a college/university education (73.5%). Respondents with lower levels of income show significantly higher levels of trust across all media than those with higher incomes, and those who live in rural areas show significantly higher levels of trust across all media than respondents in large cities. Respondents from township schools show significantly more trust in media than those from ex-Model C or private schools. Trust across this category was highest for both types of schools in television news (town-ship, 81.4% and ex-Model C or private schools, 77.6%).

Trust in media could be related to how well respondents think the media are reporting on news in South Africa. Media that scored highly in the survey when respondents were asked whether they felt the media were doing a good or bad job in reporting the media correspond with levels

of trust. SA TV news is regarded as doing a good job (81%) but only marginally better than radio news (79.9%). Mainstream newspapers also score highly overall (70.2%). Surprisingly, international TV (DSTV), score the highest level of trust (84.1%). This may be related to feelings expressed by focus group respondents about the bias of both profits and politics in the South African media.

Respondents in the survey and focus group participants show little trust in the tabloid press. When asked in the focus group discussions which media they trusted, participants not only noted ones that they did trust, but also specifically pointed to the tabloid press as publications which cannot be trusted: *"It's best staying away from the tabloids."* When asked specifically if they trusted tabloid newspapers, most focus group participants were disparaging of tabloid newspapers and said they read them only because they were '*fun*' or because they were '*bored*' and needed entertainment. Other phrases used to describe the tabloids include '*sensational*', '*senseless*', '*untrue*', and one participant noted that they '*stretch things to a point that it is not true anymore*'.

This mistrust in tabloids is further reflected in the survey results which show that respondents (40.7%) feel the tabloids are doing a good job of reporting news almost half as much as SA TV news. When asked if they felt that tabloid newspapers were credible or trustworthy, only 19.2% of respondents agreed.

Figure 21

Evaluation of news reporting
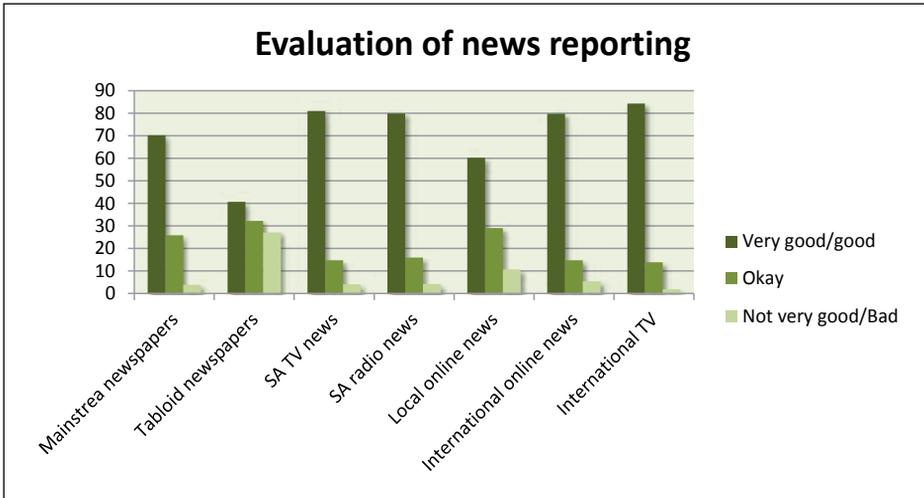
Civic identity and the media

One of the aims of the research project was to determine whether young South Africans use the media to establish their civic identity and whether the media form part of the resources they draw on to establish their identity as South African citizens. It is often taken for granted that the media are central to identity formation (Marshall 1964, Murdock 1992). This assumption needs to be explored further to better understand how young people create a sense of themselves, and particularly how they establish their civic identity and their sense of social responsibility in the South African context.

In order to evaluate this quantitatively, respondents were asked which entertainment and lifestyle media they felt provided the most relevant information to them as young South Africans. Interestingly the top three media most relevant to respondents were radio (37.7%), social media (34.1%), and Google or other search engines (33.8%). This is significantly different (except for radio) to usage figures for the media that show TV, radio, and SMS as the three top media regularly used by young people. This may indicate that while young South Africans use certain media regularly, they find the information they receive on those platforms

as less than relevant to their lives. This is particularly surprising considering that soap operas and situation comedies are the genres most favoured by young people – genres they are consuming although they don't consider them to be relevant to their lives. This finding may be related to the potential of social media platforms that allow young people to search for, select, regulate and generate entertainment and lifestyle information that is relevant to their lives. This corresponds to research done by Buckingham (1997), which shows that young people are drawn to Web 2.0 technology because of its participatory nature.

When asked which media they felt provided the most relevant news and information the results were quite different (again except for radio) with the top three being radio (44%), SA TV news (42.9%), and mainstream newspapers (39.1%). Trends across age groups show that the older respondents become, the more relevant these three media are to them. Mainstream newspapers' relevance to 15-20 year olds is 30.9%, but for 21-30 year olds it is 44.9% and for 31+ year olds it is 49.2%.

Figure 22
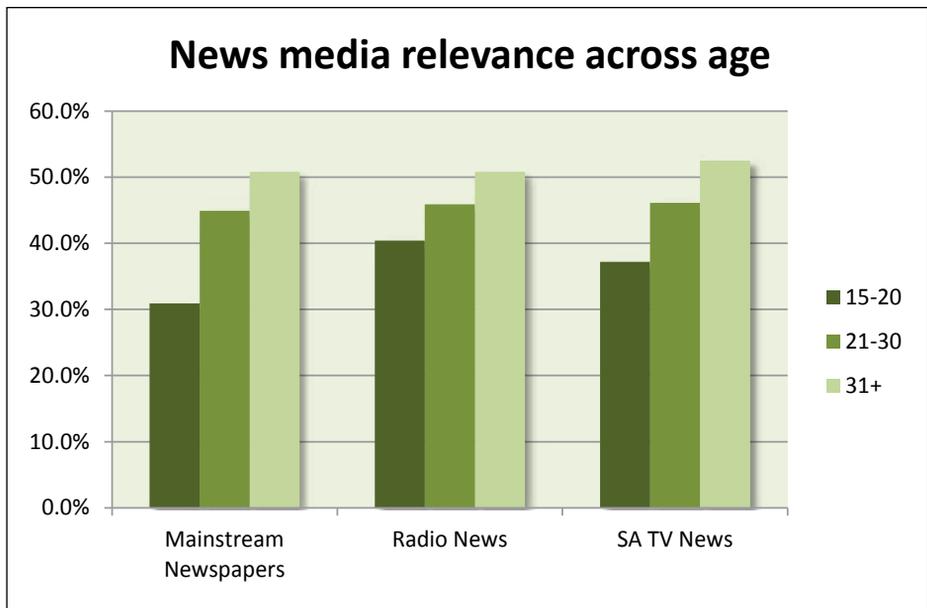
News media relevance across age

The findings further show that young White South Africans find the news and information from the media more relevant than other race groups. (Except for tabloids that show low levels of relevance across all race categories.) This may reflect a tendency in the South African news media to provide content that disregards Black African and Indian/Coloured youth, or that White South African youth are accessing news media that is more relevant to their own particular lived experience.

Figure 23
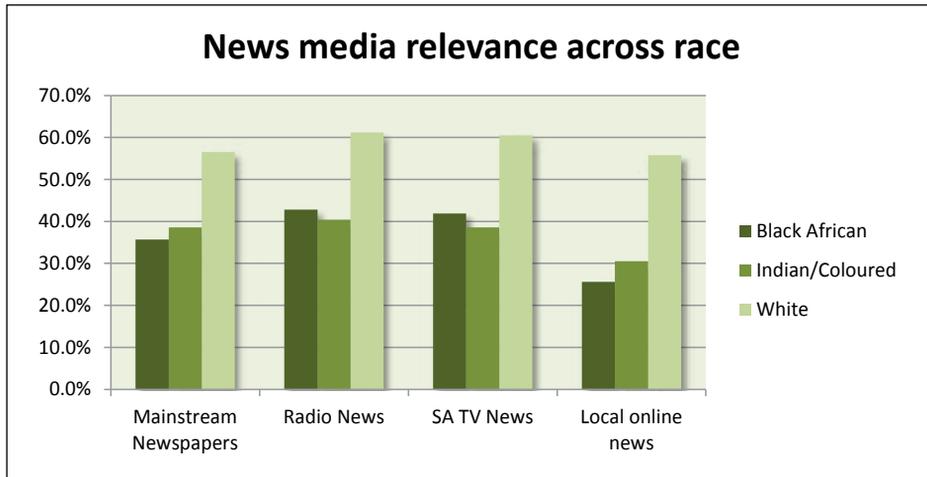
News media relevance across race

When focus group participants were asked if they felt the news media was relevant and of interest to young people the results varied. The generally negative perceptions raised by focus group participants correspond with the survey results as illustrated above. A number of participants mentioned Julius Malema specifically in response to this question, saying the news media pay too much attention to Malema. One respondent said: "*Politicians – Zuma and Malema must stop it now. Please we want our own space now.*" Another argued that he would "*like to see less of Julius Malema*".

A large portion of focus group participants feel the news media they are exposed to are not interesting or relevant to them because it portrays negative stories. One participant said: "*The media only tell us about the problems. That is what makes me apathetic.*" Another said: "*I'd like to*

see more things that are uplifting on the media." Another participant, referring to the miners' strikes[30], said: "*They [the media] must give us something we can learn from and leave the strikes. We are not learning anything from the strikes."*

Focus group participants also said the news focus on issues which are outside of their particular context:

> *"If it could be that the content of the news focus on our local areas and show things that affect people, it would be best."*

Another reiterated this point: *"I would like the media to focus on things closer to home; on our issues."*

Another said:

> *"Most of the time we hear about international news, so if you could go to these places like farms and see how people live. It would be interesting to me to see how they live."*

Finally, one respondent used a city in the Eastern Cape as an example of how the media are failing to make news relevant to young people:

> *"Mthatha is only on the news when Nelson Mandela is around. News is everywhere but we hardly see those news."*

These focus group results indicate that the media are failing to engage young people with information and news that is relevant to them, that is contextualised either by geography or in terms of youth issues. The survey results show that as young people begin to gain qualifications they will begin to look at local online media for more relevant information (no/some schooling, 24.7%; Grade 12; 29.7%; tertiary education,

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[30] On 16 August 2012,the police killed 34 miners during striking action for better wages against gold mining company Lonmin at the Marikana mine. The incident was significant not only because of the large number of people who were killed, but also because it evoked comparisons with Apartheid-era treatment of striking workers. This incident came to be known as the Marikana Massacre and caused widespread condemnation of the police action by both local and international organisations.

43.2%). As mentioned previously, when it comes to entertainment and lifestyle media, the youth are already moving away from traditional media as their biggest sources. This move could continue as mobile internet and mobile applications for social media become more accessible and affordable to young people in South Africa.

When asked what would make the media more relevant to young people like themselves, respondents noted that one of the most important ways to make the media more relevant is to ensure that it helps them understand the world they live in. Focus groups participants also emphasised a focus on their lived contexts. This points to an expectation by youth to relate media information to the world they live in. These findings are similar to those from Dutch youth, who wanted to understand their world better and learn more from the news than they felt they received (Costera Meijer, 2006).

Figure 24
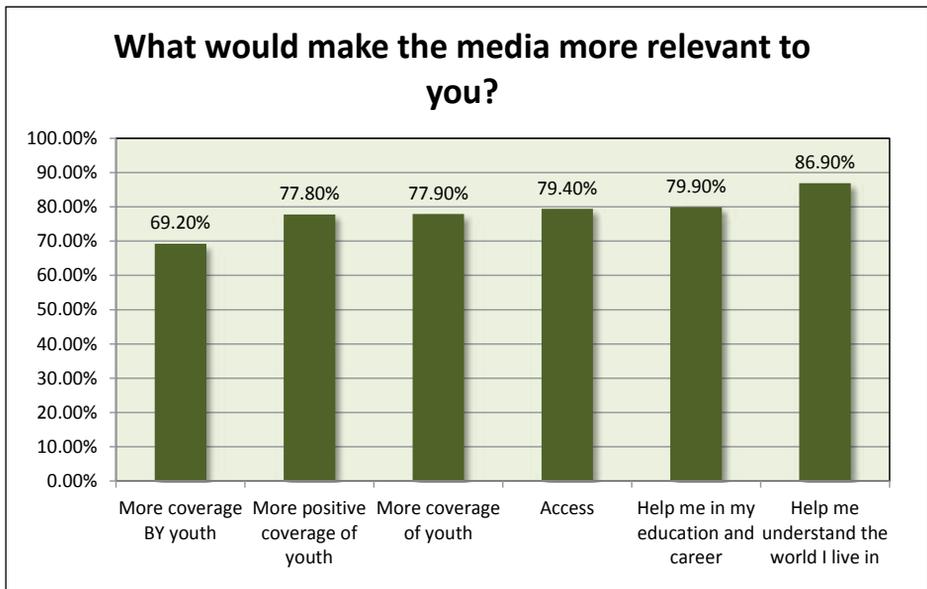
The data is significant in relation to the content analysis data. Although the content analysis shows education as the topic most associated with youth, the survey results show that respondents feel strongly that the

media are not helping them in their education or their career. This could be attributed to the fact that only a small portion of the media coverage on education was positive. So while the media is reporting a great deal on topics that young people feel are relevant to them, the nature of the reporting not of value to the youth. Participants in the focus group discussions said that although they watch soap operas, they would find programming focused towards their careers more beneficial:

> *"When you get SABC, ok, mostly they broadcast soapies. Why not broadcast more like career guidance programmes, or programmes that advise you about jobs that are out there?"*

Survey respondents (70.6%) felt strongly that every newspaper should have a youth page. This is an indication that young people are not able to relate to content in newspapers. Interestingly, Black African youth, and Indian/Coloured youth feel more strongly than White youth with regards to this statement (see table below). This links with data that show White youth find newspapers more relevant than Black African and Indian/Coloured youth and as a result are less inclined towards the need for a specific youth page.

Table 1

	Every newspaper should have a youth page			Total
	Black African	Indian or Coloured	White	
No/No response	25.9%	29.1%	42.2%	29.3%
Yes	**74.1%**	**70.9%**	**57.8%**	70.7%

The general apathy towards news content and the notion that newspapers should include a youth page was echoed in the focus group discussions. Par ticipants said news content should be targeted towards young people rather than generic programming:

> *"We want different news for different audiences. The way in which news is presented is not captivating for the youth. There needs to be a rethink about news presentation strategies and formats. We need more entertaining programmes."*

If the youth feel like they are not receiving relevant, contextual and targeted information from the news media, then it is less likely that they will engage with the media as a source of identity formation.

Civic engagement and the media

One part of civic identity is engagement with civic and political activity. In part, this research examines the levels of engagement by the youth in different kinds of civic, social or political activity. Survey responses and focus group discussions reflect low levels of political activity and engagement. Willingness to vote, political activity and general interest in politics was particularly low amongst South African youth across the categories, and this is perhaps one of the most striking results of the data. Survey respondents were asked which activities they had been involved in during the last 12 months. Of the options, political activities were often at the lowest level of responses. The data show young South Africans tend to participate more in civic or social activities. Helping a neighbour was the most common answer from survey respondents (79.1%), with being involved in a social group (67.4%) and being active in a religious activity (64.9).

Figure 25
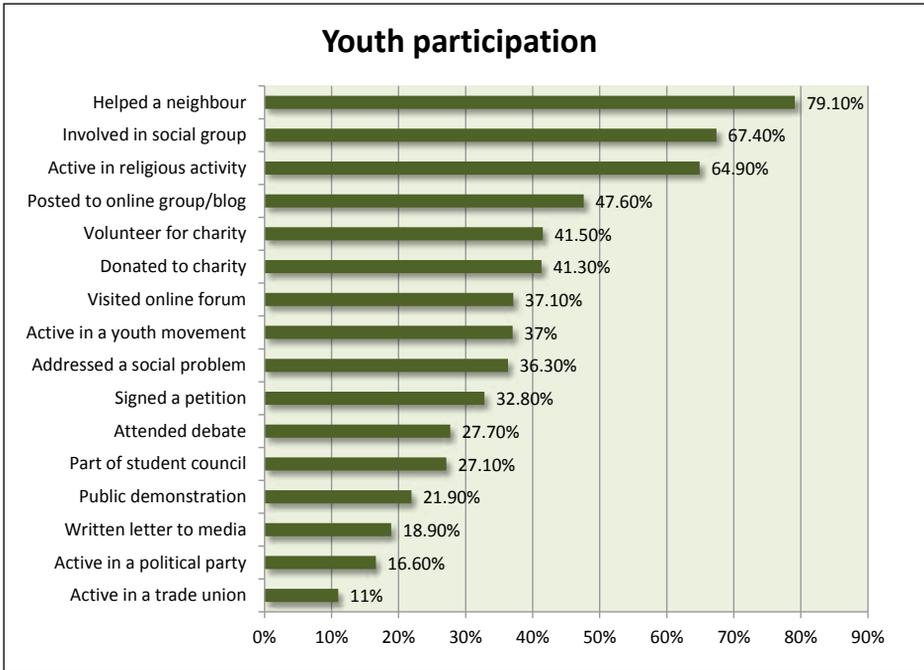
Respondents reported relatively low participation even in activities specifically aimed at youth involvement, such as activity in a youth movement, and being part of the student council. In focus groups, engagement in political and civic activities (such as charitable work and signing a petition) was further examined. These discussions provide greater insight into some reasons for the lack of participation and engagement. Focus group participants were asked at different points during the discussions about the problems they face as youth and whether they feel they can do anything about these problems. The responses reveal perceptions of a lack of agency with regards to being active in their communities or helping other people. Some of the responses indicate that the youth themselves feel they need to give assistance but they are not in a position to help others:

> *"How can you say that you are going to help someone…if you yourself are not employed or…earning so much [little] that you can only help yourself."*

Another respondent reiterates: *"Basically as an individual I'm not sure what I can do personally as a person."*

While levels of involvement in political activities are low across all categories of respondents, young Black African South Africans show significantly higher levels of involvement in political activities than other races. Black African respondents are significantly more involved in youth movements (40.8%) than both White (36.5%) and Indian/Coloured (36.3%) respondents. This pattern is similar with regards to trade union activity where Black African respondents are significantly more involved (13.8%) than White (7.5%) and Indian/Coloured (7.6%) respondents. One sees a similar proportion of involvement by Black African respondents in political parties (23.3%), with White respondents (8.2%), and the lowest level of involvement in political party activity by Indian/Coloured respondents (5.8%). One category where Indian/Coloured respondents are significantly more involved is in religious activities. Indian/Coloured youth show the highest levels of involvement (71.3%) over Black African youth (67.1%), and White youth (46.3%). White youth show the highest levels of involvement in activities that take place online (posting views to an online blog/group, and visiting online forums).

Respondents with higher education levels are significantly more engaged in online activities than those with no/some schooling and those with Grade 12. Levels of engagement in other political or youth activities show no significant difference across the different levels of education. Young people in rural areas or small towns are generally more involved in youth and political activities than those in large cities. Online activities (posting views to an online blog/group, and visiting online forums) are significantly higher in large cities than small towns and rural areas. Employed youth are significantly less involved in political activities such as being active in a political party or part of a trade union than those who are unemployed or in school or college. Students in college or university are significantly more involved in online activities (posting views to an online blog/group, and visiting online forums) than either learners, employed or unemployed youth.

Compared to Dutch youth, South Africa's youth is significantly more engaged, particularly in activities that are time consuming such as helping a neighbour and being involved in religious activities. See Figure 26.

Figure 26
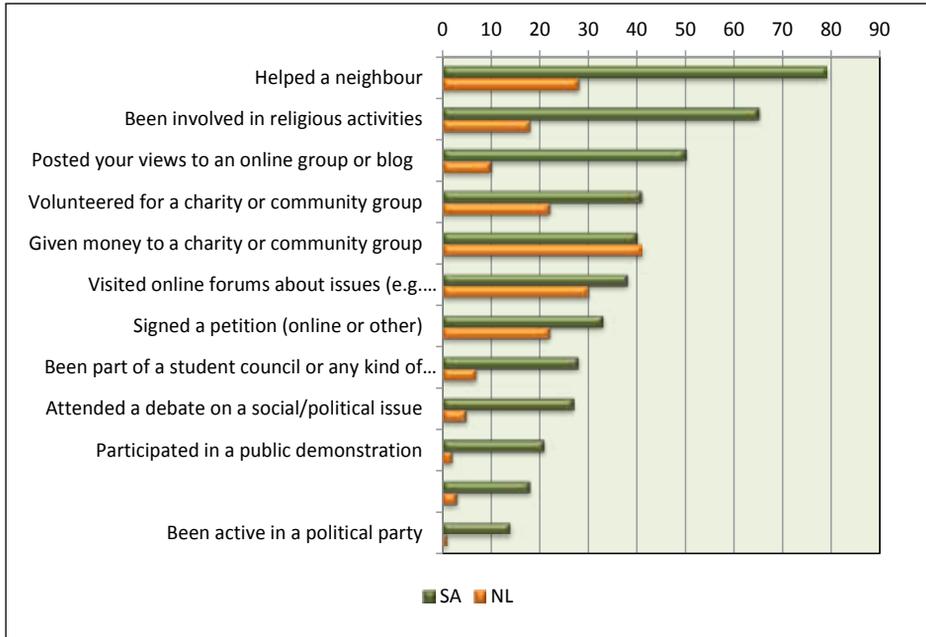
As a key indicator of political activity, voting patterns amongst the youth were surveyed and probed in the focus group discussions. Three out of ten (27.9%) respondents did not vote in the last national elections, 42.1% did vote, and 30% said they were not old enough to vote at the time. While the figure for those who voted is relatively high, it is still lower than the figures for the last national election when 56.7% of eligible voters cast their ballot[31]. Slightly more respondents say they voted in the last municipal elections (40.7%), while 34.5% say they did not vote, and 24.8% saying they were not old enough to vote at the time. When asked if they intended to vote in the next elections (both national and municipal), the vast majority of survey respondents said they did.

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[31] Data gathered from the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (http://www.idea.int/vt/countryview.cfm?CountryCode=ZA)

More than eight out of ten respondents (82%) said they intended to vote at the next national elections and 78.3% said they intended to vote at the next municipal elections.

One of the few questions that show a disparity between the survey results and the focus group discussions was the question of voting. A strongly negative perception of voting emerge from the focus group discussions, particularly amongst unemployed participants who say that they do not vote because they feel let down by having done so in the past. Some of the responses from participants include:

> *"No it's useless. I'm not going to vote anytime soon."*

> *"I have never voted too. I don't see the use of voting."*

> *Personally I've lost trust in politicians, and the last time I voted was 2006."*

> *"Never voted, because the thing is I feel that the party that's in power right now, even if it loses its nantsika⋯ its rule, another party's going to do the same thing that they are⋯ the one in power is doing, so I don't really participate in politics."*

> *"I've never voted. And I will never vote, because the government is going to do what they want anyway."*

These kinds of responses relate to results discussed previously in this report with regard to institutional trust and the lack of trust in political institutions.

Figure 27
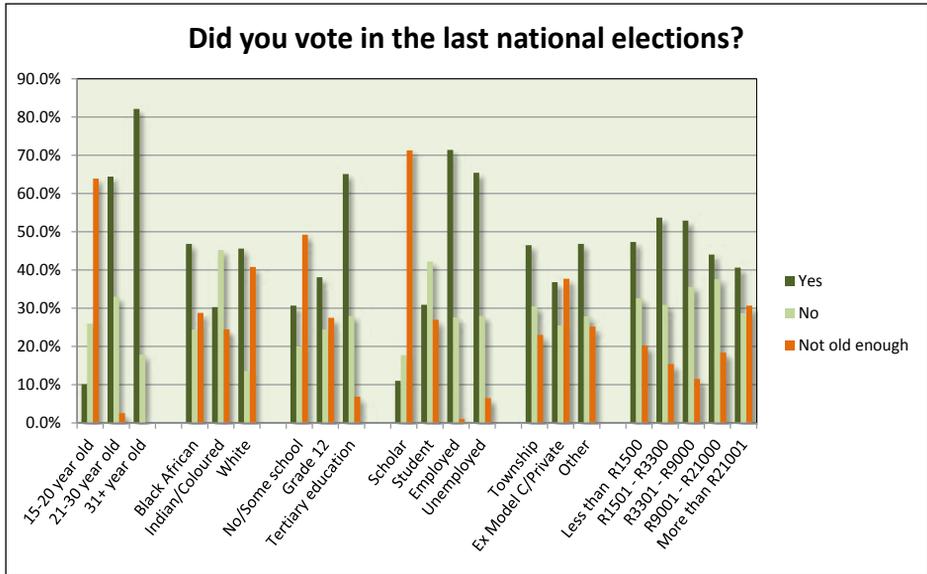
One of the reasons offered by participants in focus group discussions for not voting is that their vote will not improve government services (such as health, education, roads, transport, etc). This perception emerges from almost all the focus groups. One respondent argues: "

> *It's all the same, if you vote or not because nothing improves. Your vote does nothing."*

Another says:

> *"We have been voting for a long time and there is nothing going on. It is like as it was before."*

One respondent notes:

> *"I was saying that the vote will make a change to people that are already living that life, not to us people living here in the location."*

There was not a single positive comment with regards to the potential influence of voting on government services within the focus groups consisting of unemployed participants.

Young people further seem to be uninterested in information and news about politics or political activity. When asked if news about political actions interest them, 34.6% of survey respondents said yes. Similarly when asked about interest in politics or the government as a media topic only 37.9% of survey respondents are interested. This could be related to responses to questions about the necessity of the media for citizens to be engaged in society. Almost five out of ten respondents (47.3%) agree with the statement the media (especially news media) are not necessary for citizens to be engaged in South Africa. One can relate these findings to the discussion in the literature review on the complexity between media consumption, information gathering and civic engagement. Researchers do not agree on how this relationship influences young people, and the results of the study also seem to show some challenges to traditional views regarding consumption and action.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The extensive amount of data collected through the surveys, focus groups and content analysis have resulted in interesting and sometimes surprising results with which to examine the relationship between the youth, civic identity, civic engagement and the media. As discussed in the literature review, the relationship between media consumption (particularly traditional news media) and civic engagement has often been taken for granted. The aim of the study is to examine this relationship more closely within the South African context and to probe further the nuanced relationship between the media and young people in relation to the public sphere and their place within it. The findings illustrate that although there are strong correlations across the different variables chosen for the survey results (age, location, occupation, income, race, school, education), some disparities are emerging. One example of such a disparity is relatively high levels of voting amongst many youth respondents reported in the survey, but low levels of trust in public and political institutions.

What is most evident from the data is the mistrust of politics and political processes amongst the South African youth. The findings also generally show that youth are uninterested in politics as a topic for media consumption. This disinterest has implications for the identity of young South Africans who are disengaged from political activity (although voting patterns seem relatively high). The findings suggest that if the South African government and other political institutions want to engage with the youth they would need to consider inserting political information in the kinds of media that young people are interested in, and media they enjoy using the most. The National Youth Policy is one key strategy for engaging youth in civic and political life if it were able to harness trends of media access and media use among young people. The youth policy acknowledges for example that young people have the right to 'access information which is age appropriate' (2009: 19), but does not provide information on how this can be achieved and how to go beyond age appropriateness to context appropriateness. A key finding in this study is that young people feel the media are not relevant to them. Generating relevant media that engage young people could be set as a key objective by agencies such as the National Youth Development Agency and the Media Development and Diversity Agency.

While young people use traditional and some new media for gathering news and information, there is a strong sense from the results that the youth do not feel that the media are relevant to them. In order to make politics and civic engagement more integral to the identity of young people the media need to be made relevant to the youth in the genres that they enjoy most (soap operas and situation comedies). Baum (2003) argues that one way of attracting viewers (in this case young viewers) to certain topics (such as policy or politics) is to use 'soft news'. Soft news is defined as information that is entertaining and personally useful to the recipient, as opposed to hard news which is argued to be news of a breaking event which involved major issues or 'disruptions in the routines o daily life' (Baum & Jamison, 2011:122). Participatory media may also be a strategy for engaging with young people and producing media that is relevant to their lives. Community radio stations in South Africa have been using participatory methods in engaging young people in the content production for some time. This could be expanded as a possible avenue for engaging young people on civic and political issues[32].

The findings show that it would be in the interest of the media and especially the news media, to target more content towards young South Africans. This is particularly true of Black African and Indian/Coloured youth who feel strongly about the need for youth content in newspapers. The content analysis shows that 'the media's tone of reporting on the youth became increasingly negative during 2012 and coverage was mostly problem-focused'. Comments from focus group participants show that this is regarded as a shortcoming in attracting youth to the media. The findings further show a need for more contextualised coverage of young people. This could make young people feel that they are being addressed in a positive way and it could help young people understand their world better. The National Youth Policy identifies six 'priority target groups' (2009: 1) among the youth: young women, youth with disabilities, unemployed youth, school-aged out-of-school youth, youth in rural areas, and youth at risk. Interaction with these groups can be used to guide policy makers, civil organisations, public institutions and the media to target young people in a more nuanced way than is currently the case.

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[32] A shortcoming of the survey questionnaire was not to consider community radio as a source of news, information, entertainment or communication.

The results of this study illustrate that young people across South Africa need support in developing a civic identity. NGOs, the National Youth Development Agency, government departments, and private companies could provide such support. The older generation has emerged as a key support system for young people in this study. This can be used to great advantage by educators and other facilitators in thinking creatively about ways to engage young people (across all key categories) in civic and political life.

Young people with access to the Internet (whether through their mobile phones or laptop/PC) are using this resource to find information that is relevant to them. This is an avenue for further engagement with the youth if levels of access, literacy, affordability and usage are increased. This is particularly true for Black African youth, unemployed youth and youth with little or no schooling. Access to Internet resources will allow young people to control the content they receive, find information and news that is relevant to their context and perhaps even generate content of their own that can be shared by other youth. Young people make up a large majority of the South African population, and while voting figures are relatively high in these survey results, the lack of trust and engagement with political activity by young people should be worrying for government and civil society. The use of new media and mobile media such as SMS can be a powerful tool for engaging and empowering young people to be active citizens.

Media literacy is another issue emerging as a possible key to encourage political and civic engagement. The word 'media' does not occur in the National Youth Policy document. The closest is the occasional reference to ICTs. For example, increasing young people's access to ICTs is seen as one of the ways in which opportunities for young people can be enhanced through involvement in political and civic activities (2009:31). The policy document mentions ICT peer education as among the youth's responsibilities and proposes that young people should "engage in peer to peer education to promote youth development in areas such as literacy, use of information and communication technology, healthy lifestyles to prevent no communicable [sic] diseases like HIV and AIDS and others, violence prevention and peace building" (2009: 20).

The use of search engines, and other online media do play a role in news awareness amongst some South African youth. It is also evident that because of the lack of relevance in traditional media, those who can are using online sources to gather information and news that is relevant to them. The government, educational institutions and NGOs could promote online media as a resource for young people to gain news and information that could build their civic identity. More young South Africans should have more access to not only the technology, but also the skills and education required to use media technologies as a resource to learn more about themselves and the world they live in.

It is evident from the content analysis that the media's tone of reporting on the youth became increasingly negative during 2012 and coverage was mostly problem-focused. The ramifications of Apartheid on the development of the youth are evident in media coverage. The press focused increasingly on unemployment, inequality as well as the situation of the poor. Growing debate regarding the social situation of the youth resulted in greater scrutiny of access to, and the quality of, education. There is an increasing perception that education is in crisis. The stampede at the University of Johannesburg, the Eastern Cape education crisis as well as the Limpopo books scandal contributed towards growing concern of an education crisis. The Youth Wage Subsidy received much debate during 2012. The media reported that the ANC-led government had backpedalled on the Youth Wage Subsidy so as to win back Cosatu's favour. Cosatu strongly opposed the Youth Wage Subsidy and was in favour of a job seekers grant. The outcome of the debate has not yet been fully determined.

The high levels of trust of the media in general, particularly amongst Black African and unemployed youth, may point to the need for better media literacy and better understanding of the manner in which the media as an institution operates within broader society. Young people are also perhaps not literate in the manner in which the media can be used to inform their civic actions (Firestone 2010). The failure of the media to be a resource for young people's evolving civic and political identity and the lack of mention of media in national, and local policy documents which are targeted at the youth, should be a key point of focus for those who work with young people. It is evident that young people use

a range of media to build their civic identities, that they use the media to access news, and that the media is strongly trusted by most South African youth. The Media Development and Diversity Agency, which engages with community media across the country, should be required to engage more with young people and encourage recipients of its funding to target young people.

It is evident that young people use a range of media to build their civic identities, that they use the media to access news, and that the media is strongly trusted by the youth surveyed. The Media Development and Diversity Agency, which engages with community media across the country, should be required to engage more with young people and encourage recipients of its funding to target young people.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX ONE
Survey Questionnaire

SANPAD QUESTIONNAIRE

A. DEMOGRAPHICS

Age:

Gender:

Female	1
Male	2
Other	3
Refused to answer	4

B. SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT/SOCIAL INTERESTS

3. **Over the last 12 months, in which of the following activities have you participated or been involved in? Answer yes or no.**

Given money to a charity or community group	1
Volunteered for a charity or community group	2
Helped a neighbour	3
Been active in a political party	4
Been active in a youth movement	5
Been active in a trade union organisation	6
Been involved in religious activities	7
Been actively involved in a social group (sports team, cultural organisation)	8
Been part of a student council or any kind of elected student body	9
Participated in a public demonstration	10
Signed a petition (online or other)	11
Attended a debate on a social/political issue	12
Attempted to address a social problem	13

Written an email or a letter to a newspaper or magazine to express your opinion on an issue	14
Posted your views to an online group or blog (Twitter, Facebook) about a community or social/political issue	15
Visited online forums about issues (e.g. discussion forums, YouTube or picture galleries)	16
None of the above	17

4. Did you vote in the most recent elections?

	Yes[1]	No[0]	No, I was not old enough[2]
National election			
Local government (municipal) election			
Refuse to answer			

5. Do you *intend* to vote in the next election?

	Yes[1]	No[0]
National election		
Local government (municipal) election		
Refuse to answer		

6. How much trust do you have in the following?

	A great deal[1]	Quite a lot[2]	Not very much[3]	Not at all[4]
Local government				
Provincial government				
National government				
Local party elections				
Political parties				
Public institutions (eg. Dpt of Home Affairs, Telkom, Post Office)				
Private companies				
Police				
Legal system				

Parliament				
Religious institutions				
Labour unions				
Older generation				
Television news				
Newspapers				
Radio news				
Social media				
Magazines				

7. Which of the following media topics are of particular INTEREST to you? Answer yes or no.

Popular culture (music, fashion/beauty, movies, television, entertainment, celebrity events, news, gossip; scandals)	1
Cultural/arts events and news (art, dance, drama, theatre, opera, books)	2
Sports	3
Health/ exercise/keeping fit/diet	4
Social injustices/people or causes I can help	5
Political actions/activism	6
Politics/government	7
Local news/current events	8
National news/current events	9
International news/current events	10
Breaking news	11
Business and finance	12
Technology/computers/gadgets	13
Environmental issues/climate change	14
HIV/Aids	15
Education	16
Personals/dating/relationships	17
Comedy/humour	18
Electronic games/video games/online games	19
Careers/job-hunting	20
Religion	21
Human interest	22

8. Which of the following issues are you most *concerned* about?

	Very concerned[1]	Concerned[2]	Undecided[3]	Somewhat concerned[4]	Not concerned[5]
Education					
Health eg HIV/ Aids					
Housing					
Economy eg unemployment, cost of living					
Service delivery					
Crime and safety and security eg. corruption, rape, violence against women					
Lack of social amenities for young people					

C. MEDIA USE

9. Which media do you use to get the information/entertainment you are interested in? Tick all that apply

Mainstream newspapers (*Star*, *Cape Times*, etc)	1
Tabloid newspaper (*Sun*, *Son* etc)	2
Local community newspapers/knock and drops	3
Local online news sites	4
International online news sites (Guardian, BBC World, CNN, Al Jazeera)	5
Google and other search engines	6
Social media	7
Radio news	8
Other radio (talk shows, morning live etc)	9
South African TV news	10
South African TV entertainment (soaps, Soul City etc.)	11
International TV (DSTV)	12
Magazines	13
Other: name	14

10. Which media do you normally use to obtain *news*? Tick all that apply.

Mainstream newspapers (*Star*, *Cape Times*, etc)	1
Tabloid newspaper (*Sun*, *Son* etc)	2
Local community newspapers/knock and drops	3
Local online news sites	4
International online news sites (Guardian, BBC World, CNN, Al Jazeera)	5
Google and other search engines	6
Social media	7
Radio news	8
Other radio (talk shows, morning live etc)	9
South African TV news	10
South African TV entertainment (soaps, Soul City etc.)	11
International TV (DSTV)	12
Magazines	13
Other: name	14

11. Which media do you normally use to get information on *entertainment* and *lifestyle (eg. fashion, food, travel)*? Tick all that apply.

Mainstream newspapers (*Star*, *Cape Times*, etc)	1
Tabloid newspaper (*Sun*, *Son* etc)	2
Local community newspapers/knock and drops	3
Local online news sites	4
International online news sites (Guardian, BBC World, CNN, Al Jazeera)	5
Google and other search engines	6
Social media	7
Radio news	8
Other radio (talk shows, morning live etc)	9
South African TV news	10
South African TV entertainment (soaps, Soul City etc.)	11
International TV (DSTV)	12
Magazines	13
Other	14

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12. From the list below tick the 3 that you enjoy most?

Soap operas (radio/TV)	1
News	2
Documentaries	3
Reality shows	4
Situation comedies (sitcoms)	5
Fictional stories	6
Special interest blogs	7
Internet/video games	8
Advice and self-help (magazines or online)	9
Celebrity news	10
Analysis and commentary on current events	11
Opinion columns (in either newspapers or magazines)	12

D. MEDIA AND TECHNOLOGY

13. To what extent do you think the following media are *doing a good or bad job* regarding the reporting of *news*?

	Very good[1]	Good[2]	Okay[3]	Not very good[4]	Bad[5]
Mainstream newspapers (*Star*, *Cape Times*, etc)					
Tabloid newspapers (*Sun*, *Son* etc)					
Local community newspapers/knock and drops					
Local online news sites					
International online news sites (Guardian, BBC World, CNN, Al Jazeera)					
Radio news					
Other radio (talk shows, morning live etc)					

South African TV news					
International TV (DSTV)					
Magazines					

14. **To what extent do you the following media are *doing a good or bad job* regarding the reporting of *entertainment* and *lifestyle*?**

	Very good[1]	Good[2]	Okay[3]	Not very good[4]	Bad[5]
Mainstream newspapers (*Star*, *Cape Times*, etc)					
Tabloid newspapers (*Sun*, *Son* etc)					
Local community newspapers/ knock and drops					
Local online news sites					
International online news sites (Guardian, BBC World, CNN, Al Jazeera)					
Radio news					
Other radio (talk shows, morning live etc)					
South African TV news					
South African TV entertainment (soaps, Soul City etc.)					
International TV (DSTV)					
Magazines					

15. **Which of the following do you USE regularly—at least once a week? Tick all that apply.**

Radio	1
TV	2
Paid printed newspapers	3
Free printed newspapers	4
Basic cellphone	5
Smart phone (Blackberry, iPhone, Android)	6
MXit	7
Facebook	8

Twitter	9
SMS	9
Other social media	10
Tablet PC (iPad, Galaxy)	11
MP3 player (iPod etc)	12
Music/video downloading / sharing sites	13
Digital camera/video camera	15
Video games (games console)	16
Desktop computer with internet connection	17
Desktop computer without internet connection	18
Laptop computer with mobile/internet connection	19
Laptop computer without mobile/internet connection	20
Online local news sites	21
Online international news sites	22
Google and other search engines	23
Blogs/ forums	24
YouTube, Flickr and similar	25
Facebook, LinkedIn	26
Wikipedia	27

16. On a scale of 0 to 10, how interested are you in keeping up with news and current events as covered on TV, radio, certain internet websites, and newspapers?

Scale 0 to 10 (not at all to extremely interested)	1

17. In an average day, how much time do you spend keeping up with news and current events?

None	1
15 minutes or less	2
16-30 minutes	3
31-60 minutes	4
More than 1 up to 2 hours	5
More than 2 hours	6

18. `Where does your understanding of the following issues come from?

	Education	Health (eg. HIV/ Aids)	Housing	Politics	Crime, safety and security (eg. rape, violence against women, corruption, etc)	The economy (eg. unemploy-ment, cost of living)
Mainstream newspapers (*Star*, *Cape Times*, etc)						
Tabloid newspaper (*Sun*, *Son* etc)						
Local community newspapers/ knock and drops						
Local online news sites						
International online news sites (Guardian, BBC World, CNN, Al Jazeera)						
Radio news						
Other radio (talk shows, morning live etc)						
South African TV news						
South African TV entertainment (soaps, Soul City etc.)						
International TV (DSTV)						
Magazines						

19. How good a job are the media doing in covering the following issues?

	Very good[1]	Good[2]	Not very good[3]	Bad[4]
Education				
Health eg HIV/Aids				
Housing				
Economy (eg. cost of living, unemployment				
Service delivery				
Crime and safety and security (eg. corruption, rape and violence against women, corruption)				
Issues that affect youth in particular				

20. We are trying to understand how you view different *news and information* sources. How do you find the following media? Answer yes or no.

	They are credible/trust-worthy[1]	They provide in-depth coverage[2]	They cover a range of issues[3]	They provide information relevant to me[4]	They are enjoyable to use[5]
Mainstream newspapers (*Star*, *Cape Times*, etc)					
Tabloid newspaper (*Sun*, *Son* etc)					
Local community newspapers/ knock and drops					
Local online news sites					
International online news sites (Guardian, BBC World, CNN, Al Jazeera)					
Radio news					

Other radio (talk shows, morning live etc)					
South African TV news					
South African TV entertainment (soaps, Soul City etc.)					
International TV (DSTV)					
Magazines					
Other					

21. We are trying to understand how you view of different *entertainment* and *lifestyle* sources. Please select all the attributes that apply to each of these media:

	They are credible/ trustworthy[1]	They provide in-depth coverage[2]	They cover a range of issues[3]	They provide information relevant to me[4]	They are enjoyable to use[5]
Mainstream newspapers (*Star*, *Cape Times*, etc)					
Tabloid newspapers (*Sun*, *Son* etc)					
Local community newspapers/ knock and drops					
Local online news sites					

International online news sites (Guardian, BBC World, CNN, Al Jazeera)					
Google and other search engines					
Social media					
Radio news					
Other radio (talk shows, morning live etc)					
South African TV news					
South African TV entertainment (soaps, Soul City etc.)					
International TV (DSTV)					
Magazines					

22. Do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

	Strongly agree[1]	Agree[2]	Disagree[3]	Strongly disagree[4]
If you're well informed about current events/ news/social issues you get ahead in your school and in your career				
If you're well informed about current events/ news/social issues you are respected by others				
I regularly discuss news/current events/social issues with my friends				
I regularly discuss news/current events/social issues with my family				
I discuss news/current events/social issues on blogs, webforums, etc				

23. What would make the media more relevant to you? Answer yes or no.

I shouldn't have to go to much trouble to access the media	1
The media should include more coverage of people my age	2
The media should include more positive coverage of people my age	3
The media should include more coverage BY people my age	4
The articles would help me do better in my education and career	5
The media would help me better understand the world I live in	6
None of the above	7

24. Please tell us which of the following statements apply to you?

	1
Much of the news is not relevant to me	2
In our home we watch TV news almost on a daily basis	3
Following the news is important for your general knowledge	4
News is mostly dull	5
The news media are often unnecessarily negative	6
News should be less about problems and more about solutions	7
News media are often biased	8
In our home a newspaper is read almost on a daily basis	9
I find newspapers something for old people	10
News consumers are more likely to be engaged citizens	11
Every newspaper should have a youth page	12
Entertainment is more relevant to me than news	13

25. Are you a South African citizen?

Yes	1
No	0

26. If you answered NO to question 4, what is your nationality?

27. Please indicate in which of the Apartheid racial categories you would have been placed prior to 1994*

Black	1
Indian	2
Coloured	3
White	4
Refused to answer	5

28. What type of school was the last one you attended?

Ex-Model C (well-resourced South African Public School)		1
Township school (under-resourced South African Public School)		2
Private		3
Other (please specify)		4

29. Which of the following best describes where you live?

Large city	1
Small town	2
Rural area	3

30. What is the highest level of education of parent/guardian (one parent, whichever is highest)

None to some schooling	1
Matric/Grade 12	2
Technical college certificate (trade qualification)	3
University certificate, diploma or degree (professional qualification)	4

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* We are aware that the use of these racial categories is controversial and apologise to those who might take offence. However, although socially constructed, these apartheid-era racial categories remain an important social reality for most South Africans and remain indicative of life chances and experiences.

31. What is your highest level of education?

None to some schooling	1
Matric/Grade 12	2
Technical college certificate (trade qualification)	3
University certificate, diploma or degree (professional qualification)	4

32. Monthly household income

Less than R1500	1
Between R1501 and R3300	2
Between R3301 and R9000	3
Between R9001 and R21000	4
More than R21001	5
I don't know	6

33. Which of the following best describes your *current* situation?

In school	1
FET/college	2
University	3
Working part-time	4
Working full-time	5
Unemployed	6

APPENDIX TWO

Focus group discussions moderator's guide
– Eastern Cape and Gauteng

Let's begin with where you live:

1. Thinking about the problems you face as young people today, which is the most important problem you face?
    a. Do you think there is something you can do about these problems? What?

2. Do you think the information you get from the news media is useful to give you a better understanding of these problems?
    a. What is most useful about this information?
    b. What is least useful about the information?

3. Can you recall anything you have read in the newspaper, heard on the radio, watched on television or read on social media that made you want to go out and do something about it?
    a. What did you do?
    b. Did you use the media to help you do this?
    c. Did you ask your friends or others who live in your community to help you?

4. If you want to do something about a problem in this community / neighbourhood how would you find out if there are other people who would join you?

Now let's talk a bit about your experience with elections and political meetings:

5. Think of the last time you voted in an election – either local or national government – what or who helped you most in deciding which party to vote for?

6. Have you ever attended or participated in a meeting with politicians – nationally or locally?
    a. Did that experience motivate you to get more involved in politics?

7. Have you ever participated in a community meeting about problems facing this community?
    a. Did that experience motivate you to get more involved in your community?

8. Do you think that your vote will improve the quality of government services? (like education, or health care or roads or housing)

Now I would like to talk about ways in which you get and share information

9. Do you think there is enough information in the news media that is of interest to young people?
   a. What would you like to see more of? Why?
   b. What would you like to see less of? Why?

10. What media that you use do you trust most? Why?
    a. Do you trust the news in tabloid newspapers like The Sun or The Daily Voice? Why?

And the last two questions:

11. What do you think are the responsibilities of younger citizens, like yourselves, in South Africa?
    a. What do you think it is that newspapers or the radio or television or social media can do to help young people do that?

12. Could you live without newspapers, or the radio, or television or social media? Why?

APPENDIX THREE

Details of focus group discussions

Focus group 1 – Kwazulu-Natal
No of participants: 9
Age groups: 15-17
No of males: 5
No. of females: 4

Focus group 2 – Kwazulu-Natal
No of participants: 10
Age groups: 18 - 23
No of males: 4
No. of females: 6

Focus group 3 – Kwazulu-Natal
No of participants: 9
Age groups: 23 - 30

Focus group 4 – Eastern Cape (Grahamstown)
No of participants: 7
Age groups: 18-36
No of males: 5
No. of females: 2

Focus group 5 – Eastern Cape (Grahamstown)
No of participants: 7
Age groups: 18-36
No of males: 4
No. of females: 3

Focus group 6 – Eastern Cape (Grahamstown)
No of participants: 7
Age groups: 18-36
No of males: 5
No. of females: 2

Focus group 7 – Eastern Cape (Alice)
No of participants: 7
Age groups: 18-36
No of males: 6
No. of females: 1

Focus group 8 – Eastern Cape (Alice)
No of participants: 7
Age groups: 18-36
No. of females: 7

Focus group 9 – Eastern Cape (East London)
No of participants: 8
Age groups: 18-36
No of males: 3
No. of females: 5

Focus group 10 – Eastern Cape (EL)
No of participants: 8
Age groups: 18-36
No of males: 6
No. of females: 2

Focus group 11 – Eastern Cape (Port Elizabeth)
No of participants: 6
Age groups: 18-36
No of males: 6

Focus group 12 – Eastern Cape (PE)
No of participants: 7
Age groups: 18-36
No of males: 5
No. of females: 2

Focus group 13 – Gauteng (Johannesburg)
No of participants: 6
Age groups: 18-25
No of males: 2
No. of females: 4

Focus group 14 – Gauteng (Johannesburg)
No of participants: 5
Age groups: 26-36
No of males: 2
No. of females: 3