

**TITLE: THE LANGUAGE AND CULTURE
OF THE YOUTH IN THE
"NICARAGUA" SECTION OF
TSAKANE IN GAUTENG**

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YEAR: 1996

DECLARATION

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" THE LANGUAGE AND YOUTH CULTURE IN THE "NICARAGUA" SECTION OF
TSAKANE IN GAUTENG"

is the result of my own investigation and research and that it
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ABSTRACT

This paper is based on the youth culture and the language in Tsakane which is situated in Gauteng Province. It uncovers the lifestyle of both young females and males in the area mentioned above. It looks at how "Tsotsitaal" is used by both sexes and also look at different activities in which the youth are involved, ranging from the perception of the youth towards their given names and how they change their original names. The paper also looks at the world view of the youth, the youth have their own view of the world, for example, they don't see themselves as the "lost generation" as the media has in the past constructed them to be. The paper also reflect the youth involvement in politics both at the local, provincial and national level and again covers the participation of the youth in the 1995 local elections. Other topics covered are how the youth generate income for their survival, the eating habits both at homes and outside homes. It also covers the tendency to undermine or underestimate the adults and the rural youth. The involvement in love affairs as well sexual habits are also covered. In a nutshell the whole paper covers the youth lifestyle on a daily basis.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The focus of this thesis is on youth culture and language usage, particularly the youth language called *Tsotsitaal*, *Sqamtho*, *Ringers* or *Sprake*. Youth culture in this context includes every aspect of youth life.

My definition of youth has no strict limitations. The age fourteen years qualifies an individual to be categorized as a youth, but we should not exclude those individuals who might be twelve or thirteen years. The argument is that an individual can be physically and mentally matured at the age of twelve and thirteen and therefore she or he qualify to be a youth. The upper limit of age is difficult to define, but I would suggest or prefer the early thirties. My definition of the youth would be focus on those in their late teens and early twenties but extending a few years on either side of twenty.

On the other hand Bockneck (1986:134-135) defined the youth as people between the ages of sixteen and twenty-five. He argued that these young people are characterized by their energy and vigour and that the youth are said to be physically attractive and hedonistic by orientation. He further mentioned that the youth are often thought of as naive, impulsive and without serious purpose.

Furthermore Bockneck (1986) expanded his argument by mentioning

the fact that the term "youth" has gained wide social and professional recognition. He also argued that there are different view points from various parts of the world about what constitutes the youth. He gave two examples, firstly that in the Chinese Red Guards people who are between the ages eleven and eighteen are the youth and the second example, he referred to Keniston (1975) who categorized certain people over the age of twenty-one as youth.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (1981:26) gathered a lot of "youth" definitions from various organizations and individuals. According to the studies conducted by United Nations Childrens Fund, to define the "youth" as those people who are between the ages of fifteen and twenty-five is no longer valid. The emphasis is on marginalisation especially the economic one, where a young person is forced to grow up prematurely. Many contributors and participants at UNESCO conferences agreed that the definition of youth applies to all the "young" and went on defining the "young" extending to the age thirty or thirty-five years.

Having seen many definitions of culture, I personally subscribe to a definition by Tylor (1871) which goes thus: Culture is "that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, and any capabilities and habits aquired by man as a member of a society". Tylor's definition is relevant largely because it covers a whole range of issues amongst others, values, norms, beliefs and art.

Researchers have different perspectives on the question of defining the youth language and there are speculations about the origin of the language. Speculations are from both the insiders and the outsiders: Insiders indicate the youth themselves and outsiders refers to the researchers from different angles.

The origin of Tsotsitaal is not clearly known because there are speculations about how it started and where it started. Speculations are that it started in the South African prisons while other people says it started in the shebeens, on football fields and other places where the youth groups meet.

According to Glaser (1994:54) Tsotsitaal was the main element of subcultural identity and also a "secret" language with an Afrikaans basilect. Around 1935 Tsotsitaal took over as the most popular language amongst the urban youth gangs. Initially this happened in Pretoria and later in the East Rand.

The area of study is in Gauteng province in the East Rand. The place is situated about 30 km away from Johannesburg. The place is called Tsakane and the main focus is the section called "Nicaragua". The section has a few names and the original name is "Verganoeg" which is an Afrikaans name which means far-away. The correct Afrikaans word is "Vergenoeg" and in "Nicaragua" it is called "Verganoeg" to suit their style of talking.

Previously Tsakane sections were scattered and there were a lot of empty spaces and "Verganoeg" was located at a distance from other

sections, that is how the name was formed. "Nicaragua" is the name which came with the political activist popular called "comrades" in the section and the name became popular.

Another name for this area is "Rest in Peace", and it is taken from the fact that in the south of the section there is a graveyard therefore the name suits the section in the sense that people are laid to rest in that graveyard. "Nicaragua" is surrounded by four sections, in the south there is a section called Rockville. In the East there is Mandela village which is a squatter settlement. In the north there is a section called "Cuba" while in the west there is a section known as "Twelve".

The people who live in "Nicaragua" are from different "ethnic" backgrounds and speak different languages, such as North Sotho, South Sotho, Tswana, Xhosa, Zulu, Shangaan, Venda, Ndebele and Swazi. There are a lot of shebeens in the section, that is where people socialize while drinking liquor. There are two shopping complexes which include a barber shop, butcheries, supermarkets, restaurants, bottle stores and dry cleaners. There are two primary schools and one school for the handicapped and also a lot of pre-schools. There are four churches namely: Methodist Church, Lutheran Church, Baptist Church and Kingdom of God Hall. There are two soccer fields.

The boundaries of "Nicaragua" are the four main streets which are situated in the south, north, east and west. The residents of "Nicaragua" get public transport to town and other places from the

main streets. All four main streets are tarred and there are drains which carries water away during rainy days.

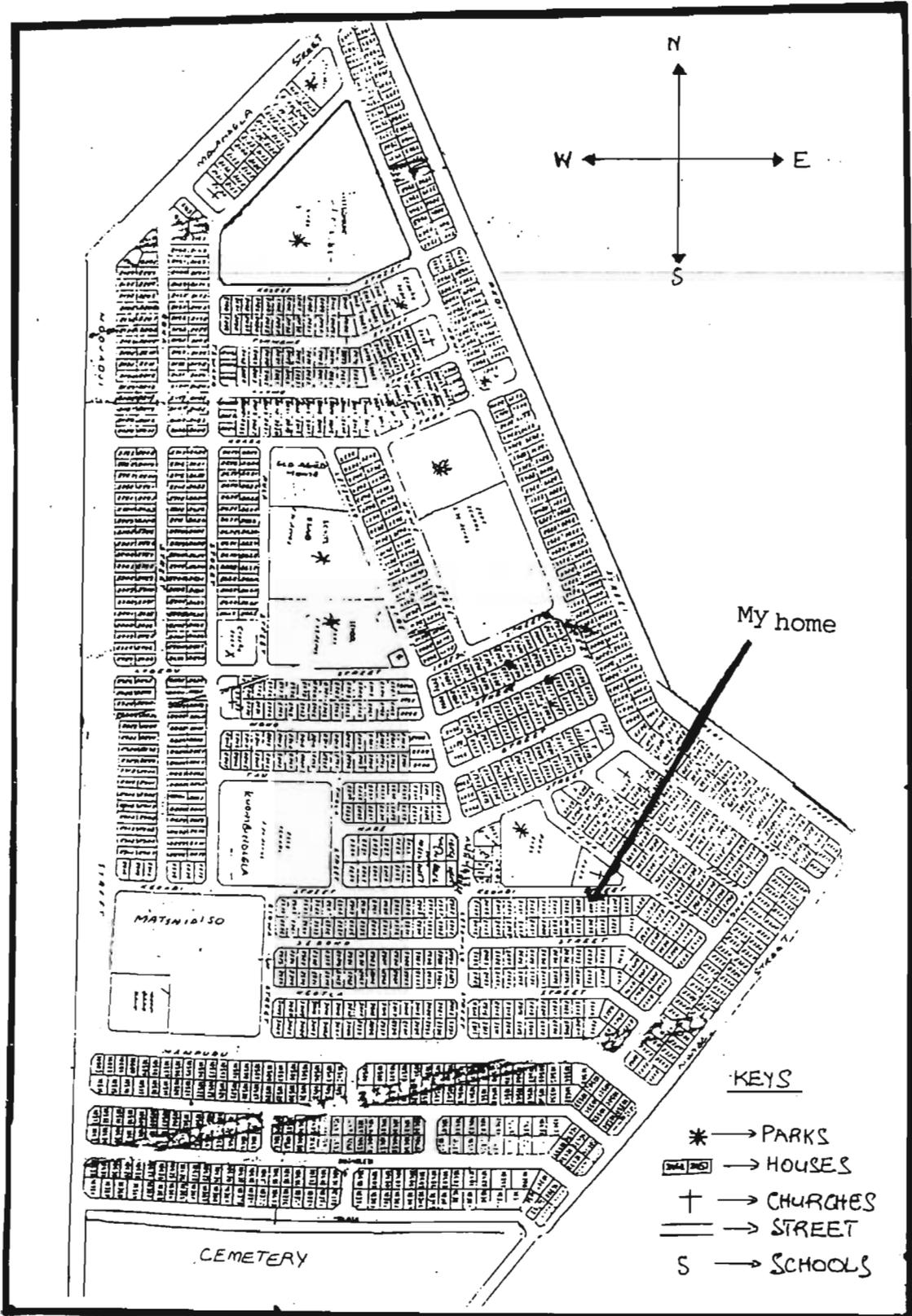
The majority of the houses in the sections have four rooms: a kitchen, two bedrooms and a dining room. Toilets are built separately at the corners of every yard, that is toilets of two houses are attached to each other. The families who afford financially extend their houses. There are professional people staying in the section for example the nurses, teachers, lawyers and police. Business people are also available in the area ranging from shop, shebeen to taxi owners.

All the houses in "Nicaragua" are electrified and water is easily accessible meaning that each household has its own tap. There is a telecommunication facility and it depends on a household whether the telephone is installed.

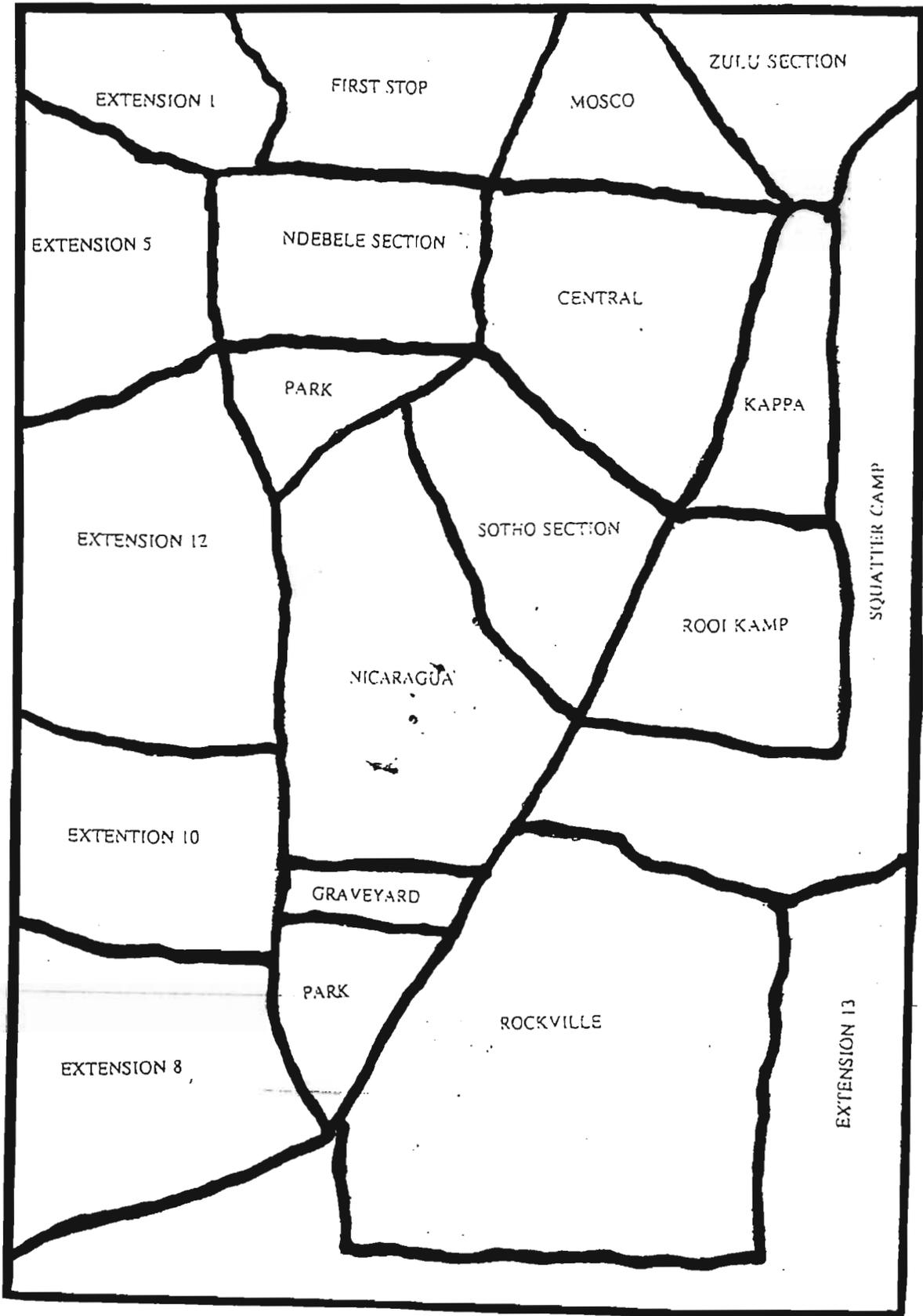
Each household has a place for gardens both in the front and the back yard. In most houses there are lawns and flowers at the front while at the backyards there are vegetable gardens. There are different types of trees in the area. For example apricot, peach and other fruit trees have been planted.

"Nicaragua" is a busy section of the township. Activity start from early in the morning when workers go to work and children go to school. In the afternoon it is busy because people came back from work, whilst others go to shops to buy different items and others go to the gymnasia.

THE MAP OF TSAKANE IN GAUTENG PROVINCE



THE MAP OF "NICARAGUA" SECTION IN TSAKANE, GAUTENG PROVINCE



The major aim of this research is to examine the urban youth culture so that it can be known. The youth are the future leaders therefore their lifestyle must be known and there should be support programmes from the side of the government. Another aim of my study is to instill a culture of tolerance amongst different age groups in societies. So much is known about the adults and little is known about the youth and much research must be conducted.

The research method employed here is not a conventional method largely because I have been staying in Tsakane for most of my life. I was doing research about my own community particularly the youth including myself. I talked a lot of the language used. I also conducted person to person interviews by asking open ended questions. I also used secondary sources ranging from magazines, newspapers and texts from different libraries. I used a camera to take pictures of the youth in the area. I further used a diary to take notes of what was happening in the area in terms of the research. I did not carry a note book with me whenever I wanted information instead I left it at home and later I utilized it by recording information. The reason for not carrying the note book was because it influenced considerably responses of the informants. For example, people tended to become anxious about what one was writing. As a results they either become reserved or they suspected one of being a police spy. the youth in the area were also reluctant to permit me to use a tape recorder.

There was an incident where a certain person was spying on his

friends to the police by using a tape recorder and the friends were arrested. Most people in the area were amazed and as a result people became more cautious cautious about talking to strangers. Hence the tape recorder was the most hated item in the area.

I did not confine myself to a specific theoretical approach; instead I relied on an open-ended theoretical approach. The specific theoretical approach would channel my research to an extent of excluding information. The open-ended theoretical approach helped me a lot in exploring different issues pertaining to the youth.

The first chapter, the INTRODUCTION which also contains three maps of Gauteng province, Tsakane and "Nicaragua", subsequent chapters are entitled GOING HOME, TOWNSHIP LINGO, NAMES, YOUTH DIET, POLITICAL STRUCTURES, SHEBEEN LIFE, HAIR STYLES, SOURCE OF INCOME, LOVE AFFAIRS, A STADIUM, VIOLENCE, CHURCH CHOIR, LOCAL ELECTIONS, CEREMONIES, SUPERIORITY COMPLEX and the CONCLUSION. There are pictures which reflect the lifestyle of the youth in "Nicaragua". Lastly there is a GLOSSARY after the concluding chapter.

The second chapter sketches my life history, advantages and disadvantages, challenges and problems pertaining to my research. The third chapter focuses on the urban youth language. An attempt is made which is to analyse the different ways in which the language finds expression for example illegal transactions and socialising at the shebeens and elsewhere are settings where the language is spoken. The fourth chapter covers how the youth like

to eat in terms of peer groups and eating outside their homes.

The fifth chapter is about youth names, that is how the youth both females and males, change their original names and what motivates them to do so. Chapter six deals with the youth's involvement in political structures at the local level, that is how the youth contribute in the political arena.

The seventh chapter is about the life at shebeens in "Nicaragua", how the youth from both sexes spend time at shebeens and how the shebeen owners operate in terms of offering their services to the patrons.

Chapter eight discusses the significance of the different hairstyles done by urban youth both females and males particularly in "Nicaragua". It addresses the question of certain hairstyles and how they are labelled. Chapter nine covers how the youth in the section create means to get money for their personal needs. The activities examined include selling items like clothes and also other methods of getting a source of income. The tenth chapter is concerned with the youth love affairs. Chapter eleven covers the process which leads to sexual activity by the youth.

Chapter twelve is about the violent activities that the youth commit ranging from criminal violence, emotional violence, political violence and other forms of violence. Chapter thirteen covers the activities of the church choir in the section that is, how this choir operates on a daily basis. It also examines the

whole structure of the choir in terms of leadership.

The fourteenth chapter covers the 1995 local elections in "Nicaragua" in which the attitude of the youth towards the local elections are examined. Chapter fifteen addresses the different ceremonies performed by the youth in the section. The focus is on four different ceremonies. The sixteenth chapter covers the tendency amongst the youth of undermining each other on a daily basis.

Chapter seventeen is a conclusion where I wrap up issues which are raised in the different chapters. Lastly, a glossary is provided which contains explanations of the terms in "Tsotsitaal" which have been used in various chapters. The glossary also includes words that are not included in the text but form part of the language.

There is an on-going debate about the youth being the "lost generation". Both electronic and print media have in the past informed the public that the youth is a "lost generation". The basis of the contention was that the urban youth are involved in activities like politics, drug taking and alcohol abuse instead of concentrating on educational matters. Most of the adults in communities also have the notion that the youth are engaged in premarital sexual activities hence many boys and girls become fathers and mothers at a tender age. They believe the youth drink a lot of liquor and as a result they become drop outs in life. Again the youth are seen as being involved in criminal activities

and violence.

Campbell (1992) in her study in Durban townships found that the adults complained about the youth. The complaint was based on the fact that the youth had lost respect. According to the adults the youth are involved far too much in politics and they are in control of the situation.

The youth in "Nicaragua" rejected the idea of being a "lost generation". They do not see themselves as being lost. They argued that they are living in modern times where life has changed drastically. According to the youth modern life is totally different from the olden life in many ways. This difference finds expression in the style of clothes, the dances, and type of music and many other aspects.

One informant mentioned that the youth are not lost. He argued that the idea of a "lost generation" has been blown out of proportion. He mentioned that time changes and the youth are not stagnant in terms of seeing life. He argued that the youth are innovative that is why they have their own language.

He further mentioned that the youth has contributed immensely in pressurising the previous regime to change its attitude and its policy of apartheid. He also noted that the youth constitute the majority in terms of the total population therefore if the youth were lost then the world would have been destroyed.

Everatt (1994:1) mentioned that the academics, journalists and main political players argued that the youth are highly politicised and leading the struggle in the township. On the other hand the state apparatus supported by the mainstream media, came with the idea that the youth are the "lost generation" who burnt down their schools and being violent. Everatt disagrees with the media's notion of "lost generation". He argued that the media and other sources are missing the point. They do not understand the basic needs of the youth. He further mentioned that the youth has been ignored for a long time. According to Everatt (1994) the support programmes are needed in order to understand and develop the youth. Slabbert (1994) also maintains that the idea of a "lost generation" is just a media construct.

In my view the notion of "lost generation" is a myth. To me it cannot be justified. The youth may be involved in deviant behaviour from the mainstream culture but it does not mean that they are lost. In all societies there is a certain amount of generational conflict, and the youth very often get labelled as deviant or delinquent. In South Africa this tension was exaggerated by the part played by the youth in the political struggle and by the fact that many of them had to sacrifice their educational prospects. To say that they are lost is to loose sight of their huge contribution to the transformation of our country, and it is certainly not the way that they see themselves.

CHAPTER 2

GOING HOME

Traditionally the anthropologists conducted their research in distant places. They studied communities completely different from their own and they were faced with different cultures, environments as well as languages. To mention a few, Bronislaw Malinowski who has studied the Trobrianders, Evans-Pritchard who studied the Nuer in Sudan and Jean and John Comaroff who studied the Tswana people.

Asad (1973:11) argued that Evans-Pritchard made it clear that social anthropology is a subject about different communities. The social anthropologist "studies primitive societies directly, living among them for months or years, whereas sociological research is usually from documents and largely statistical. The social anthropologist studies societies as wholes - he studies their ecologies, their economies, their legal and political institutions, their family and kinship organizations, their religions, their technologies, their arts, etc., as part of general social system".

Increasingly there is a tendency for anthropologists to go back to their own communities to study them. For example, I have done my fieldwork in my community. While gathering data I was staying at home. I do not know all the youth in the community but most of them are familiar to me and I had an advantage of knowing the

language used. I was born in Tsakane and I grew up playing with other kids for example, playing *black-mampatile*, *skop-die-hele*, *gubsize*, *spinning*, *monopoly*, *snakes and ladder*, *ludo* and *kopie-dice*.

Black-mampatile is a game where of a group of children play together and the total number of players must be known by all players. Other players hide themselves while one is looking for them. The requirement is to find all the hiding players and if all players are found then the game starts afresh and is the turn of the first person found in the previous game. *Skop-die-hele* is largely similar to "black mampatiele". The slight difference lies in the use of a ball in the case of "skop-die-hele". Players hide themselves with the aim of kicking the ball away while the player who is hunting them is off ball. *Gubsize* is played by a group of at least three or more children. Two players stand at the opposite ends and swing the rope while other players jump. The rest of the games mentioned above are the gambling games which involve money.

Harriet Ngubane is a Zulu - speaking anthropologist and she is from the Roman Catholic background. She also attended school and church at the Roman Catholic institutions. According to Ngubane (1977:5) Catholicism dominated her life. She mentioned that she had an advantage of the Zulu language because it is her mother tongue. In my view, although Ngubane was not born in the Nyuswa community, in a way she was doing research about her self because the informants or subjects were Catholics and also speaking Zulu. While conducting research Ngubane (1977:3) had some problems, for

example, "In a certain Christian home there were several goat skins used to cover the floor in the living room. I later found that in another room there was a second pile of goat skins. I told the woman of the house that I would like to buy a few of the skins if they could spare them for sale. In reply she asked what had happened to my goat skins. When I told her that we never had any, because we never slaughtered goats, she looked bewildered and said that I was joking, as no Zulu could survive without occasionally sacrificing to the ancestors".

My parents are from different "ethnic" backgrounds and regions. My mother is a South Sotho speaker from Matatiele in the Eastern Cape. My father is a Northern Sotho speaker from Dennilton in the Northern Province. They met long ago in the 1950's while working in Gauteng Province. They were blessed with three children, my elder brother, myself and my younger sister.

I went to Lebone Lower Primary School which is located at the Sotho section, north of "Nicaragua" about a kilometre away. I came back to "Nicaragua" when I was doing standard three to six at Nchabeleng Higher Primary School. To further my studies, I went to Tsakane Senior Secondary School and that is where I obtained a matric certificate. This school is situated three kilometres away from "Nicaragua" at the section called Central. After matric I went to the University of Durban-Westville where I obtained two degrees. My majors were Sociology and Anthropology. Anthropology became my favourite course and I decided to study it further because my interest is to know different cultures.

As a child I also went to a Sunday School at the Reformation Church where my parents are members. I also served in the Church Youth Club. In as far as sport is concerned, I have participated in various sporting codes namely soccer, golf, tennis, chess, karate and softball. My favourite sport was and still is soccer and I am a staunch supporter of Orlando Pirates which plays in the Premier Football League.

I used to be naughty at some stage. For example, I used to be involved with my peer group in stealing apricots, peaches and grapes from the yards of our neighbours. We also used to go out beating dogs and cats in our neighbourhood. At weekends we used to tease drunk old people and run away.

Z.K. Matthews was a student at Fort Hare University and he was an anthropologist and he also taught at Fort Hare University. Prior to that, he was a school headmaster. He also travelled extensively for example, America, Europe and East Africa. Z.K. Matthews (1981) in his autobiography mentioned his academic life as well as his social life. His life is portrayed in conjunction with his community. He emphasizes from time to time his link with the community.

Mphahlele (1959) also reflects the notion of his life including his community in his autobiography. He mentioned the hardship of growing up in a poor family, his academic history and his marital life. He mentioned that he grew up struggling and financial constraint was an obstacle to both himself and his family. The

apartheid laws made his life difficult. Eventually under those hard conditions, he managed to get through and he ended up being an academic.

In my view, most of the African autobiographies that I have read focus on the person concerned including his/her community. Both the words "I" and "We" are frequently used while the American and European autobiographers have a tendency of using only the word "I" frequently. In other words African autobiographers value the notion of the sense of belonging. They consider themselves as belonging to their communities, and their community is part of their own story.

As an insider I was faced with challenges and problems. Some of the challenges were as follows: to speak the language of the youth which changes from time to time. The development of the youth language is so rapid that one must be updated frequently about the new invented concepts. Speaking an outdated youth lingo automatically excludes one from chatting with other youths. Another challenge was learning how to gamble particularly dice gambling because previously dice gambling was not my interest. The other challenge was to go to shebeens and face different youth.

Girls were not easily accessible in terms of getting information. They also gambled I wanted to get information about their methods of gambling but I was rejected simply because they preferred to be on their own so. This was meant to ensure that they could discuss

freely about girls' issues. Girls like to chat about their boyfriends, and how they exploit their boyfriends financially. Another obstacle was to get data from girls who have performed back street abortions. It was also difficult to get information from young men who stole goods in town.

Okley (1992:2) argued that the important aspect of anthropology concerns the relationships between cultures. She also mentioned that the autobiography of the fieldworker does not exist in a vacuum but it is instead linked to other cultures. In other words, Okley (1992) is saying that fieldworkers are also human beings and their life histories do not exist in isolation from their communities. It is therefore very important for the anthropologists to reflect their findings by including themselves.

To do research in your own community has both advantages as well as disadvantages. It depends on the researcher's socio-economic status in his/her community. For example, if a researcher is highly respected in his/her community then the chances of having a lot of problems are slim in terms of getting data. However at times even if a researcher is respected, the problem might be that people will reserve some of the information because they do not want to dent their images before the eyes of someone they respect. On the other hand, if a researcher is not respected then the community members tend not to co-operate fully.

In the field I participated in gambling and hanging out at the shops as well as at the street corners. That kind of behaviour is

considered deviant in my community and it is associated with criminals. People were asking questions like, "Why is he gambling lately?" and "Is he still a student or is he a gang member?" At shebeens I was greeted by many people and the majority of people wanted to chat with and also drink with me. Actually they saw me as an "education advisor" because most of the time I was asked questions related to education. For example, I often dealt with questions on how to pass matric and how to apply for admission at tertiary institutions.

CHAPTER 3

THE TOWNSHIP LINGO

The focus here is on the urban youth language which is known as "Tsotsitaal". It is also known as *Ringers*, *Sqamtho* and *Sprake*. It is a mixture of different languages which are used in South Africa. It comprises the Sotho and Nguni Languages, Afrikaans and English. It is a written language although not much material was published. It is dominant at most of the townships in South Africa. In a sentence one can find words from all the languages mentioned above. New words are formulated by individuals at the particular settings where the youth socialize.

In my previous study (Bogopa:1994) I observed that girls used to refer to their boyfriends as *fakes*. This suggested that the boyfriend is not capable of handling the affair and that she maintained the relationship for financial reasons. In response to a question of the origins of the word the girls mentioned that individuals formulate words and the words spread to other groups until it becomes popular.

An article in the Sunday Times (23 July 1995) covers the fact that "Tsotsitaal" is an unofficial language in South Africa and it is showing a phenomenal growth among the youth. "Words in the language change from area to area. In Cape Town, for instance, it is more likely to be a combination of English and Xhosa. In Johannesburg, it is more influenced by Afrikaans and Sotho

therefore a girlfriend would be *imedi* or *icherry*. In Cape Town, the equivalent is *choekie* or *cherry*."

Molamu (1995:139) mentioned that "Tsotsitaal" is an important language which is made up of elements of Afrikaans and other spoken languages in South Africa. He further mentioned that there is a rapid growth of the language in the urban areas particularly in the Rand, starting from Springs to Randfontein.

The urban youth language is used by both young females and males. It is used for different reasons which I shall explain later in this chapter. There are various speculations about the origin of this language. There is the view that this language originated in South African prisons.

Another view is that it originated at the township shebeens. Some people hold the view that it originated in the sport fields and other entertainment centres where the urban youth hang around.

The results of a study conducted in 1975 reflect that women use Tsotsitaal far less than men. (Slabbert, 1994:38).

The language develops from time to time. New concepts and terms are formulated everyday. The main intension is to exclude adults, children, police, lovers and rural youth form the exclusive groups. Adults are excluded because they are too formal in approaching life. As adults are against the use of dagga and alcohol and drugs. The youth resort to talk about these things in

front of the adults by using concepts which the adults would not understand. For instance, one respondent told me how he preferred to smoke **zesta** (dagga). He said saying that in presence of his mother and the mother could not recognise what he said.

Guys also speak the complicated Tsotsitaal in order to exclude their girlfriends. For example a boy can talk with his friend about other girlfriends whilst in the company of his girlfriend without the girlfriend recognizing. There is a situation where a guy was looking for a place to make love with his girlfriend. Usually guys in the townships do favours to each other by offering a place. So this guy just asked for place by referring to it as a **stadium** and the girl could not figure out that the plan was about her.

There are a lot of words to refer to girls and they are as follows: **mady, aahliya, kind, cherry, teken, zuza** and many other names. The recent names are **aahliya** and **zuza**. Money is also known in different terms namely **zag, sthalala, sdudu, lozi, smega, nyuku, tsika** and so on. The list to refer to liquor is also endless, **gaas, spinza, poblar, cook, sbianco, sbarara** and many other words. At the shebeen the original names of liquor are also changed to suit the situation of the youth, for example the original name of the beer Castle Lager has been changed to **Incaba** and the Castle company was influenced to an extent that in their advert they have included the word **Incaba**. Another beer which is associated with the youth is Ohllsons and its slogan was invented

by the South African Breweries which goes thus "Ohllsons the beer of the new generation". The main target of the company was the youth.

An article in Next Magazine (May 1996) by Mathibe gives some of the words which are part of the language: **smega, miering** (money), **mazuzus, mataras** (girls), **spin, deal** (to be in love), **cabin** (shop), **jubas** (boyfriends) and **dizy** (bribery).

"Words are, of course, only one type of language and their relative importance to other kinds of language has always been exaggerated by those who earn a living and win social prestige by using words skilfully" (Hudson, 1983:24). The youth in the townships formulate words and use them skilfully for example a word **aahliya** (girl). It is used skilfully because originally it is a name of a female musician.

At some stages the situation is complicated by the desire of some people who avoid the possibility of being understood in their communities. The group that does not want to be understood create for themselves an "anti-language" which one could define as the special language of people who choose to be outside society. The language which is created is secret largely because the reality is secret. Those who create it and use it, are constantly striving to maintain a counter-reality that is under pressure from the established world (Hudson, 1983:25).

The University of Durban-Westville Free Press once published an

article which conveyed the message in the medium of Tsotsitaal. The topic of the article is "What the ous chooning on the quad". This language is also used by students to address political issues for example the internal conflict amongst the academics in some of the departments and corruption that prevails on campus.

"My bra was chooning I must watch I say, apparently these ous think that the new democracy includes gang rapes" (Free Press UDW August 1995). To explain the words **bra** is a brother or a friend while **chooning** is speaking in the UDW context and doing in the "Nicaraguan" situation).

Furthermore "This pozzi doesn't have to be like this, we let gangsters and stooges run the place, if we could skop out the broederbond, then brother (and sister) we can skop out these bullies and really transform this campus". The word "Ous" mean different things to different youths. At the University of Durban-Westville it means guys and in the broader Durban area, girls use the word to refer to both a friend and a boyfriend. In "Nicaragua" the word is no longer popular and it used to refer to a boy. **Pozzi** (a place), **broederbond** (the university management).

The rural youth and the police are also excluded from the language. In case of the rural youth the exclusion is largely because rural life is deemed to be backwards and formal. This is undesirable to the urban youth. The rural youth are labelled as **cowzas**. The word is taken from word "cow" and the analogy is that a rural youth behave like a cow. Police are known as **four, stapia,**

convis, gata and many more names. The police are not favourable to the urban youth because they interfere a lot with their life.

Some of the Poets used the language to write poems.

Jigg's friend by Pat Seboko

Daar loop Bra Jiggs

Haai wena, ek ken daardie ou baie goed,

Hy is 'n tsotsi van TJ.

Hy was moes in 'n two-room in Nugget Street gebore.

Nou het hy 'n huis in Doorie

Doorie is moes 'n multiracial 'kaside

Hy bly met die ander clever-bras daar.

Hy ken die hele spots van die Rand

Ek sien die hele professionals is hom bra

Las week het die mayoress gedine.

Daar loop Bra Jiggs

Haai wena, ek ken daardie ou baie goed

'n Man wat never kwaad is

Laat ek se nou af wil ek hom studeer. (Couzens, 1977:38).

Basically Pat Seboko is talking about how he knows Jigg's friend. He is saying that Jigg's friend was born in Johannesburg at the place called Doornfontein. He further mentioned that Jigg's friend

was a well known "tsotsi" who associated with a lot of professional people and also beautiful ladies.

CHAPTER 4

NAMES

Names in most communities serve a most important role for identifying individuals. In most cases names are given according to the religious denomination. My focus here is the tendency or rather a practise of changing original names. In this area of study the dominant religion is Christianity. When a child is born then he or she is given a Christian name and later on these names are changed by the owners in defiance of their parents.

Traditionally, a child was given two names a Christian name and a traditional name. Some were and are still given three names, Christian name, a name from the paternal family and, a name from the maternal family.

For a number of reasons, recently the original names are no longer used by youth in the area of study. The youth from both sexes believe that the names given by their parents are old fashioned and still reflect the ideas of the apartheid system. The other reason is that the names given to them (youth) sound unattractive. Other youths reject or hate Christian names because they are totally disillusioned about the Christian way of life.

Not only Christian names are rejected, even the traditional names are rejected because such names at times sound rural and outdated.

According to Wallwork (1967:87) most parents in Britain spent many hours selecting names for their offspring. Children themselves have very early on, decided the other way about their names.

I interviewed ten youths from both sexes. One guy was given a name Daniel and he totally rejected the name during his secondary education, the reason being that the name **test** (bore) him. Another reason given by the respondent for rejecting the name was the fact that it is an Afrikaans name and also originated from the Bible. To compromise he then preferred the name to be shortened to at least Dan. He prefer his nick-name **Faras** which originates from his soccer admirers as he is a soccerite.

Anna and Sarah both rejected their names for the same reasons as Daniel. And in addition the respondent rejected their names because those names are popular amongst domestic workers who work for Whites at the suburbs. They both preferred to be called Ann and Caroline respectively.

On this note I will quote Wallwork (1967:87) "My Christian name is Linda. It has no special meaning. I am not named after anyone. I do not like the name because it is common and horrid. Everyone calls me Lynne for short; that isn't bad. If I could choose my name I would choose Samantha because I like it and it is a pretty name as well beside that is long".

On the field of study two brothers also rejected their names Jacob and Lazarus for the similar reasons as the ones mentioned above.

In most townships as well as in this area of study, the name Lazarus refers to a very poor person in terms of finance. Actually to be called Lazarus is degrading a person in terms of the recent youth trend. Alternatively in the case of Lazarus he prefers to be called **Chicco** and Jacob prefers to be called **Jakes**.

Another guy who is originally known as Lazarus has mentioned that he prefer to be called **Lazaridus**. He boasted that the name is an Aurtialian name and therefore to him it makes sense and the name Lazarus is really depressing.

Wallwork (1967:87) mentions similar cases from Britain: "I was Christened Stephen Ralph. My second name was named after my great uncle Ralph. I do not like my name because I don't think its right. I would like to be called Fred because I think it suits me".

" My Christian names are Denise Lesley and I think they are horrid. When my father comes home he says where is Fairy - feet. My brothers call me Babs and I asked my mother if she would call me another name like Pat and she said she would not call me anything else" (Wallwork 1967:87).

In this area attractive names are as follows: **Getup, Sguavrol, Tenpercent, Chicaco, Nino, Shadow, Forest, Starblack, Stone, Jaws** and other names for guys. The nicknames are associated with how individuals behave for example being a rough person or being a soccer star. Some of the nicknames are copied from the film actors

for example **Nino** is a name of a film actor in a movie called New Jack City. **Starblack** and **Stone** are nick-names associated with tough and person with a dark complexion. **Forest** is associated with the fact that the individual usually takes his girlfriends to the forest for sexual intercourse.

All the names mentioned above are considered relevant names in terms of "timing" and also socialising. Girls names are as follows: **Shodo**, **Staff**, **Stoksweet**, **Shielas**, **Caro** and other nick names. **Shodo** is associated with the shortness of a girl in height while **Staff** and **Shielas** are associated with the beauty of the girls. Girls are also attracted by actresses names found in magazines and comics for example Clementine, Clare, Brook, Paula and many more.

In Duduza township on the East Rand, there was one of the executive members amongst the youth who was known as **America** largely because he liked the good life and was also known to be politically informed and widely feared in the area (Seekings, 1993:61).

Nick names are famous amongst the youth in both sexes. There are names which are converted the same way in most cases. Those names are as follows: **Pedana** (Peter), **Vijo** (Victor), **Mdeva** (David), **Jozi** (Johannes), **Mdoc** (Doctor) and many other names.

About 90% of the youth from both sexes prefer to use pseudonyms for the similar reasons mentioned above and there are other

reasons like those who are involved in criminal activities such names work to their advantage. It works to their advantage largely because the **Convis** (Police) will find it hard to trace them for example during the mid 1980's in "Nicaragua" there was a female political leader who was called Stanza. Stanza is originally a name of a car. The police were looking for her by using the name Stanza. People in the area were responded by referring to Stanza the car and as a result the police could not track down their target.

There is an idiom in South Sotho which reads: **Lebitso lebe ke seromo**. It means that a name can affect or influence one's life. For example if one is given a name like **Madimabe** (which means bad luck) then that person's life is not going to be smooth at all. Some of these names thus have a stigma attached to them and that is why most of the youth change them.

Some of the youth from both sexes went to the extent of changing their original names officially at the Department of Home Affairs. At times the changed names are not even known at their homes while others do report about their change of name at their homes.

Chapter 5

Youth Diet

The idea of eating together as peers seems to be strengthening friendships largely because members of the group take care of each other by collecting him or her from home when the time for eating arrives.

In the field I noticed various peer groups that organize themselves into breakfast and lunch teams. This happens to both sexes although at different times. In case of girls, they organize themselves only for lunch. The reason for not organising breakfast being that by that time they are still busy with domestic work. The guys have the opportunity of eating both breakfast and lunch. According to the youth from both sexes, they would have loved to eat supper together but time and strictness at their homes prevents them from doing so.

The youth diet is popularly known as **spy kos** or **zos** (junk food). The items that constitute junk food are as follows: **do** (bread), **mabom** (fat cakes), **special** (ham), **mantje** (chips), **chaki** (hot gravy), polony, mango atchaar, garlic, liver and tinned food. All this food is available at local restuarants, street corner vendors and at most shebeens.

The people mentioned above make a lot of profit since their food is in high demand. Another menu which is popular amongst guys is

smiley (a cow, sheep or pigs head). There is a notion that eating a cow's head will increase ones intelligence. The people who are selling the heads also cook them and they are considered tasty. The local butcheries also cook meat and sell it to people particularly those who have hang overs from the previous night of heavy drinking. Usually the cold-meat is on sale on Saturday, Sunday as well as Monday mornings. During the week days cold-meat is not available. The reasons why the youth from both sexes like to eat outside are that they are used to the food at their homes hence they need to eat in another environment and also eat the different food. Another reason is that meals at home are too formal where all members of the family sit together at one table, which is considered boring. Many girls hate the idea that they are the ones who prepare the meals and after eating they are required to wash the dishes.

Oakley and Storey (1994:144) are also illustrating the similar type of situation amongst the young ones in the United Kingdom. They argued that idea of eating together in a family situation is not favourable to young people. Most of the parents argued that it is important to eat together but the young people are opposed to the whole idea.

I was involved in a number of eating groups for both lunch and breakfast. According to my experience breakfast does not need a lot of money. In one of the groups which I had breakfast with, we use to **gazat** (contribute money) a little **zag** (money). At times in this group one contributes whatever one can afford. Other groups

had strict rules where contribution is on equal basis. Girls are also strict when it comes to contributions. They also prefer equal contributions. Besides eating together for lunch and breakfast, girls prefer eating this type of food while gambling. In contrast guys eat together after gambling. Guys also prefer to eat such meals before drinking liquor. Fish Eagle is one of the recent famous brandies in the area and both sexes enjoy to drink it while Bertrams comes second.

In addition to this type of diet, various types alcohol namely Klipdrift, Smirnoff Vodka and Betrams are consumed by both sexes. The girl's favourites bevarages are ciders whose brand names are such as Hardys, Crown, Berninis, Hunters Gold. In terms of beers there is the famous one called **Zamalek** (Black Label) and Castle Lager. The beer Black Label is labelled Zamalek because there was a soccer team from Egypt which once came to play in South Africa and the colours of its outfit was the same with those in the Black Label product.

In my previous study (1994) I mentioned some of the liquor flavours which the youth from both sexes prefer. These are **Charles Glass** (Castle Lager) which most guys like and **amaplank** (Mellowood Brandy). The other favourite liquor for girls is called **Toffee Lux** a mixture of milk and Cape Velvet.

Most of the menus mentioned above are said to be effective in terms of getting rid of **stlama** (hang over) especially in the morning after a night of heavy drinking. The shebeen queens or

owners are also aware of the fact that such food really revives a person who is down and out because of a hang over.

Shebeen owners, local restaurants and vendors who can be out of stock during Saturday and Sunday mornings could indeed lose a lot of customers. The business people tend to ensure that such food is available at times mentioned above.

Most of the youth argued that the idea of eating in groups is, to some extent, building up their friendships because they are able to share a lot of ideas and it also refreshes because one is exposed to different environments. On the other hand, this idea creates enmity in case, where some individuals are not prepared to contribute any form of money.

There are some groups which were destroyed because of the so called **ngoxos** (parasites). Many parasites were previously stabbed because of forcing their way in to some of the groups. This has happened mostly at shebeen situations where a lot of money is involved. For this reason some groups insist on the rule of equal **gazat** (equal contribution) is compulsory.

The majority of groups have been in existence from the time the individual member were at school until recently. Many of these are still in good standing. The idea of groups eating together plays an important role in the community in many ways, because it build up friendships, and it also boosts the economic standing of shebeen owners, street vendors and local restaurants.

CHAPTER 6

POLITICAL STRUCTURES

Political structures throughout the world are influenced by different political ideologies. These structures also differ as to size, hence there are macro and micro structures. The macro structures include huge political parties and liberation movements in South Africa. For example the African National Congress, Pan African Congress of Azania, National Party, Democratic Party, Inkatha Freedom Party are political parties and Azanian Peoples Organization is a liberation movement. The micro structures include street committees and other local organizations like clubs.

My focus here is the youth involvement in politics particularly at grass roots level. The youth from both sexes are involved in local politics namely street committees and youth political organizations. The macro youth political organizations in the country include Pan African Student Organization of Azania, Azanian Student Movement, ANC Youth League, Congress of South African Students and many more.

Lodge (1990:21) outlined the formation of the ANC Youth League. He argued that Lembede and his co-founders of the Youth League were responding to material deprivation. This shows that the youth have been involved in politics from long ago. The youth all over the country were involved in politics and it is not a new thing to

them.

In "Nicaragua" there are the following structures: Congress of South African Students, Pan African Students Organization of Azania and street committees as well as the civic associations. About half of the youth from both sexes are involved in politics.

My focus is on how the street committees operate in the section. I have covered several street committees and I will give an illustration of two street committees largely because there are similarities in as far as the *modus operandi* is concerned. The street committees were formed because of a number of reasons. These included amongst others, the lack of trust in police and politicians. The "Kangaroo Courts" are the structures associated with the street committees to instil discipline in the area.

Most of the street committees in the area hold meetings every fortnight especially on Sundays to discuss issues confronting the area. General meetings are also held where all members of the street meet and discuss strategies and problems. To call the meetings executive members distribute pamphlets in order to inform the residents.

According to Seekings (1993:75 & 79) the youth fought with the police, evicting African police and their families from the townships and set up informal policing and judicial structures. "Peoples Courts" or "Kangaroo Courts" gave rise to abuse. The youth started to abuse power by brutally punishing people who did

wrong things within communities. In my view Seekings (1993) has blown the issue of Kangaroo courts out of proportion. I have first hand experience of how these courts were operating. The members of the community were keeping an eye on how the courts were operating and should there be unruly elements then the whole community would stand up and dissolve the court. "Kangaroo" courts were formed by members of the community and those who were in charge of the running of the courts were mandated by the community.

I will call the first street committee "K" because the name of the street starts with a letter k. My home is also in "K". The executive members are nine: that is, the chairperson, secretary, treasurer including their deputies and three disciplinary members. The executive members are the youth and only the chairperson is in his mid-forties. There is a lot of confusion within the executive in "K". The executive members are not operating at the same level, both the secretary and his deputy are not accountable because they have missed a series of important meetings without sending apologies.

On the other hand the deputy chair wanted to overthrow the chairperson largely because the chairperson is old and always comes with old fashioned ideas. For example, he is too soft when handling meetings and he also calls the meetings after a very long time. The deputy chair is radical and he is not sure of his political ideology. Each time I chat to him he talks of different ideologies. At times he favours the South African Communist Party, sometime talks the AZAPO and the PAC language and at times praises

the ANC ideology. He also want to meet **Mdala** (Mandela) personally to tell him about the problems in the area so that things can be solved immediately.

When I attended a hearing, it was a case which involved a girl staying on the same street and a married man from the other street. Actually the wife of this man reported the case to "K" so that the problem could be solved at the street committee level. The girl and the married man were having a love affair which the wife has discovered. At the hearing the deputy chair spoiled the whole thing by asking irrelevant questions and it was heard after that he got a **dizzy** (bribe) from the married man, irrelevant questions like "you say your husband does not bring money home for maintenance". The wife decided to drop the case because some of the executive members were not reliable and accountable to the people.

I also interviewed an ordinary guy who was twenty six years old and staying on the same street. He mentioned the fact that he does not recognise the street committee as the controlling structure in terms of maintaining order in the street. He argued that members of the executive committee interfere too much in people's personal affairs.

He was sometimes at loggerheads with his girlfriend and the street committee interfered. Actually the girlfriend wanted her photos back and when the executive members came to approach him, they were violent and irrational to such an extent that they destroyed

the photos where the guy and the girlfriend were together by cutting those photos into two pieces. They were also armed with *sjamboks* (whips) to punish him should he refuse to respond to what they were demanding.

The second structure is "S" because the name of the street starts with the letter "S". In "S" there is a balance of age groups in terms of the executive members, the reason being they wanted the structure to be representative. I attended one of the general street meetings where the discussion was about various issues, such as the cleaning of the street and patrolling the street at night with the aim of preventing crime. There was also the serious issue of a missing fourteen year old girl and the matter was to be tackled exclusively by the executive committee.

Through prior arrangements I was allowed to be part of the meeting to solve the case of the missing girl. At the meeting the chairperson who is a youth had information about the girl and he was mandated by the executive committee to go and hunt for the girl and he agreed.

After two weeks I went to the secretary to discuss the development of the case. The secretary told me that it was *smogo* (trouble). He argued that the chairperson was successful in finding the young girl. It transpired that he had sexually abused the same girl and they had both gone to a hiding place at a squatter settlement. The chairperson was afraid to return because members of the street were hunting for his blood.

"S" decided to take the matter to the civic association because he believed it could track the accused down and bring him to book. According to the secretary, a meeting was planned where the focus was to discuss the code of conduct amongst the executive members. They wanted a structure which would be accountable in all respects.

In conclusion the youth are trying to bring about socio - political stability in their areas by forming structures that will cater for that, but the problem is that they are experiencing problems of unreliable elements. The government needs to come up with people who can help the youth with leadership skills. Many workshops must be organised and resources must be made available so that the youth can be well equipped.

CHAPTER 7

SHEBEEN LIFE

A shebeen is a place where people drink liquor. Shebeens in most cases are owned by individuals who are self employed. In the past shebeens were considered illegal but people never stopped to operate even if there were rules against them. In most places around the country one finds shebeens especially in townships.

A shebeen is an ordinary house which is like other houses in the township. There are signs outside to indicate that it is a shebeen. Other shebeens are easy to recognise for example the noise which is made by both the patrons and the high volumed music. Most of the shebeens are beautiful houses, the aim being to attract the patrons. In most of the shebeens the decorations on the walls are liquor posters. The liquor posters are usually provided by sales representatives from the South African Breweries. There are television sets to attract a lot of patrons particularly during weekends when there is a big soccer match which is televised. Most guys like to drink while watching soccer with friends.

According to a report in the Sunday Times Magazine the term shebeen originates from "the eighteenth century Irish Gaelic word seben, which means a beer of poor quality. Many people still have a perception that a shebeen is a dark, dingy and illegal drinking place where tsotsis, gangsters and prostitutes hang out pouring

brandy, spitting on the floor and flashing flick-knives. Today, however, many shebeens are upmarket taverns which command a large share of the liquor industry" (Sunday Times Magazine, 8 October 1995).

In "Nicaragua" there are a lot of *lonjans*, *spots* or *joints* (shebeens). Some of the shebeens are in good condition while others are in bad condition. The ones in good condition gain a lot in terms of profit because patrons prefer to be at safe and cool places. The reason for going to shebeens is the fact that entertainment centres are scarce and the youth from both sexes resort to shebeens.

The owners of the shebeens are known as *Shebeen Queens* in the case of the female owners and *Mr Lonjan* in the case of the male owners. Most of the female owners abuse men by ripping off their money during weekends and month end. The female owners are also known to be abusing young guys sexually. The male owners are also involved in a corrupt life by abusing school girls and even younger girls and they are known to be having a lot of love affairs. The shebeen owners get the beers and brandies either from the bottle stores in the area or directly from South African Breweries.

In my previous study I showed how the young girls were involved in love affairs with fully grown up men and how the young boys were involved with women. The boys labelled the women as sugar mummies while the girls labelled the men as sugar daddies. On the other hand the men labelled young girls as sweet sixteens or fourteens

while the women labelled the boys as toy boys.

Shebeens are central in the area of study, in the sense that criminals meet at shebeens in order to plan their "missions" while they are drinking. I also covered the use of tsotsitaal at shebeens.

On the other hand lovers meet at shebeens in order to further their aims. Furthermore friends also meet at shebeens in order to socialize with each other. Lonely people go to shebeens and eventually they overcome their loneliness by getting **achuz** (friends), **cheries** (girlfriends) and **auties** (boyfriends). The most important things at the shebeens are drinking **spinza** (liquor), listening to music and socialising with girls and vice versa. At one of the shebeens we were sitting and relaxing with four **aahliyas** (girls) and were talking about different issues and one of the issues was soccer matches and our favourite teams. Actually the term **aahliya** which refers to a girl originates in America. It is a name of a famous musician called Aahliya. In "Nicaragua" the name is used frequently and some of the Radio Metro DJ's (Disc Jockey) also use it when referring to girls.

In my previous study (1994:11) I mentioned how the girls were drinking at the shebeen. The girls were drinking Cape-Velvet mixing it with milk. According to the girls the mixture was known to them as toffee-lux. Actually toffee-lux are sweets manufactured by Wilson Company and the girls labelled their mixture toffee-lux because of the taste which according to them is similar to the

sweets.

On one occasion, the girls started to discuss shop lifting in town and I started to realise that we were chatting with shop lifters. They started to **draw a map** (to plan something) about stealing.

The popular music at the shebeen in "Nicaragua" is **bubble gum music** (local music) referring to the South African music. There is also a slogan "**local is lekker**" which means that local music is the best and it is relevant to the situation prevailing. The slogan is taken from a Sharon D music album. The idea in this song was to encourage people to buy local music. There was an outcry by the South African musicians that their music was ignored by people and even the radio stations. When the music plays the youth dance in different styles which are current. Dancing an old style can lead to a situation where such a person will be labelled as a **jakarumba** (stupid or backwards). The messages in many of the local songs is conveyed through the medium of Tsotsitaal.

Brake (1985:124) mentioned the fact that in America the Black Youth's favourite music is jazz and blues. The blues lovers celebrate the basic stuff of life namely love, sex, jealousy and violence. By the 1970's disco music became popular which includes erotic and complicated movements and steps.

Doornfontein and Prospect townships produced **marabi** dance in the early 1930's. It was shebeen dance initially. Thebejane was the most famous exponent of it. Marabi dance ceased to exist in the

late thirties because of the emergence of Orlando. People were moved from Doorfontein and Prospect to Orlando. One of the poets of those times complained about Separate Development apartheid policies that for a long time destroyed elements of culture (Couzens, 1977:34 - 35).

On the other hand Dikobe (1973:6) describes how the **marabi** dance was performed by the youth in Sophiatown during the early 1970's. "The dancers swayed from side to side like mealie stalks; the right and left feet moving forward and back like springbok crossing a river". According to Dikobe (1973) the dancers of marabi were dancing as well as singing as loudly as they could, singing for joy to the spirit of their fore-fathers. One of the song goes thus:

" **Tjeka-Tjeka messie.**
Tjeka-Tjeka sebebe.
Tjeka ngoanyane,
Tjeka-Tjeka ngoam wa Marabi ..."

The old dancing style include **sikiza, bump-jive, kabzela, pantsula-jive** and the youth recent dances are as follows: **madiba, thobela** and **kwaito**. **Madiba** style is taken from the style of president of the country, that is his style whenever he is at the rallies or whatever gathering which includes fun. **Thobela** style is the most popular dance recently and the founders of this style is a musical group known as Boomshaka. Arthur Vuvuzela is the king of **kwaito** and recently together with **thobela** are the most popular

styles which have taken the township youth by storm. In each and every party in the township or at the shebeens the above mentioned dancing styles are dominant.

The shebeen owners also cater food for their patrons. Menus differ from one shebeen to the other. At most shebeens snacks (peanuts, chips and sweets) are available. Wors rolls and **chaki** (hot gravy) are also available and the shebeens which are more established also have "full plate" in their menus. "Full plate" contains pap, meat and vegetables. This shows that one can be at the shebeen for the whole day without going anywhere else because the shebeens cater for everything.

One Saturday night I went to a very rough shebeen. It is rough in the sense that most of the patrons mainly the youth from both sexes, are former prisoners. On my arrival the music was so loud that we could not even hear one another as we were chatting. Six of the guys in that shebeen were still fresh from prison and there was one girl who was also from prison because of shop lifting and another girl was from prison because of murdering her boyfriend. I had a chat first with a four times murderer and he was unapproachable. I pretended to be relaxed. Both female and male patrons were wild in terms of their facial expressions. Two hours was enough for me and I had to leave for my safety.

De Haas (1991: 102 - 104) has mentioned that there are different classes which are in existence at most of the shebeens in Natal especially at townships near Durban. These classes are determined

by factors like academic qualifications as well as socio-economic status. The first class are those patrons who are educated and those who can afford brandy and whisky and this class tends to sit in a lounge. The second class are those patrons who take beer and can sometimes afford to buy brandy and they sit in the kitchen. The third class are the patrons who drink *ijuba* and *umqombothi* (a local concoction) and they can sometimes afford to buy a beer and they sit in a shack room outside.

De Haas's analysis seems not to fit the situation in "Nicaragua" where the opposite happened. One Sunday morning I went to a shebeen owned by a young guy who was by then twenty five years old. I was sitting in a lounge with guys who have only secondary education and outside on the grass there were mostly teachers. In the lounge guys were drinking brandy's as well as beers and outside the same was happening. The question now arises which group is the first class and which one is the third class in terms of De Haas's categories?

Shebeens are also the places where clothing is displayed by the youth from both sexes. At the shebeen called *number two* (second house from the corner of the street) guys were wearing clothes like *brandwoods*, (brand of trousers and also skirts) *London fox* (lumber jackets), *chesterberry's* (shoes) and more of other exclusive clothes.

Joyce Dube (in Bailey and Seftel, 1994:146 - 148) gave an illustration on how the youth from both sexes dressed in expensive

clothes such as **dobshires** (trousers), **daks and daks** (shirt and trouser) for males while for females **brandwood** and **goray** (all skirts).

Shebeens play a vital role in the informal economy of the district. Shebeens also help those youth who cannot afford to go to night clubs or bars at the city centres. Going to the shebeens can also help an individual to get a lot of information about many things for example knowing who is selling a watch, video and other items.

On many occasions I saw people selling various stolen things for example an iron and, in most cases, wrist watches. Usually at the a shebeen people talk about secret deals which involve money. Any item that is sold at the shebeen or in the area is called a **cheque**, the reason being to protect it from the police informers and even the police themselves.

Items are sold very cheap because the youth who steal these items do not want to hold **ilahla** (stolen item) for a long time. Literally **ilahla** is a coal therefore when a coal is burnt becomes hot and those who steal cannot hold a burning or rather hot coal for a long time because it will burn them. The government need to come up with strategies to improve shebeens because they contribute a lot in the economy of the country and they have an important social functions in many areas.

CHAPTER 8

HAIR STYLES

The youth from both sexes at the area of this study and elsewhere in the world do different hair styles depending on the available material they can exploit. There are various reasons attached to different hair styles. The hair styles are done at different places for example some styles are done at home and others at the hair salon or barbershops. In "Nicaragua" there are a lot of salons and few barbershops.

Most of the salons in "Nicaragua" are owned by ladies who are in their youth. Besides doing hairstyles, the salons render other services for example selling items like shoes polish, hair products, skin creams. Well established salons also have public telephones where one can phone and pay after a call. In other salons there are television sets to entertain the waiting customers. Prices of hairstyles differ from salon to salon largely because the owners do not get the hair products at the same place.

A perm cost around R30 to R45 while an *s-curl* cost R50 and more. In most salons there are new and old magazines for customers to read while waiting for their turn. Music is also provided to keep customers busy.

In "Nicaragua" there are several styles but I could not cover all of them. I have managed to cover a few of the following hair

of them. I have managed to cover a few of the following hair styles: the male youths prefer *cheesekop*, *bids*, *lambada*, *perm*, *s-curl*, *wave*, *chicco*, *beebok*, *dreadlocks*, *R Kelly* and many more hair styles.

There are reasons as to why some of the hair styles are labelled in the manner mentioned above, for example *Chicco* is a nick name of a famous South African musician and most of the youth liked his hairstyle and eventually name it *Chicco* and same applies to *R Kelly* who is an overseas musician. *Dreadlocks* is the style preferred by the youth who are interested in Rastafarianism. *Cheesekop* is a style where all the hair is removed or cut, it is done by using a razor blade and or a hair clipper.

All the hairstyles mentioned above are the ones done by the male youth. Female youths hairstyles are as follows: *perm*, *iphondo*, *s-curl*, *lambada*, *setting*, *braiding*, *fishtale*, *wave* and many other hairstyles. *Braiding* is very expensive starting from R60 upwards and it is done in various ways depending on which style is popular for example *Boomshaka style* or *Brenda style*. Boomshaka is a musical group and the latter is named after Brenda Fassie who is also a musician. *Setting* is also labelled after a famous musician called Tony Braxton and the style took the female youth by storm that is from 1993 up until recently. *Perm* is a hairstyle which takes a lot of time to be made, it takes roughly about two to three hours. It has different steps to be followed until it is done.

McAlexander & Schouten (1989:58) in their study of hairstyles also mentioned some issues which are similar to the situation in "Nicaragua". In their study they have uncovered three important transitions which are as follows: increasing independence from parental control, sexual awareness and changes in social environment.

Celebrities also provided role models. One of their informants responded by saying "*I remember trying to braid it like Bo Derek, but I actually looked more like Shirley Temple when I removed the braids. I also remember wanting to have a Fareh Faucett hairdo...*" (McAlexander & Schouten, 1989:61).

One of my female informants mentioned the fact that she spent about three hundred rands a month for different hairstyles. She argued that she wants to look different each time hence she resorts to one style after the other. The other reason is that she wants to attract or impress people from the opposite sex. Another reason is that she has a lot of clothes therefore each time she wears then she has to find a suitable hairstyle. One guy responded by mentioning that one must do a hairstyle which is recent and presentable. Without a hairstyle, according to him is old fashioned or rather backward in lifestyle. He further mentioned that he does hairstyle because he wants to entice members of the opposite sex. He also mentioned that for cleanliness hair like any other part of the body must be looked after very well.

In Japan the current trend among Japanese high school and college

"seriousness" and to convince their peers that they are the fun-loving and part of the contemporary sophisticated rage. To be considered young and in style one has to dye his or her hair brown and the style in Japan is known as **chapatsu** (The Star, 5 June 1996:11).

In "Nicaragua" and in some other parts of the world most of the parents interfered in matters related to hairstyles, for example parents tend to choose hairstyles for their children. Parents sometimes argued that some of the hairstyles are immoral in terms of how they look like.

One girl mentioned that she was once invited to a party and a day before the party she went to a salon for a best hairstyle. Unfortunately she had to cancel going to the party because her mum was saying negative things about her hairstyle.

The authorities in Japan are also against the hairstyles, one guy was about to go for a job interview and his hair was brown. He decided to dye it black because he would not get a job having a brown hair (The Star 5 June 1996:11).

According to the Japanese youth, brown hair promotes a casual image of informality, while black hair conveys an element of seriousness. Both females and males prefer to look for brown-haired dates (The Star 5 June 1996:11).

The majority of my informants have most things in common in as far

as the hairstyles are concerned. The most important reason is to attract the members of the opposite sex. Some girls prefer a certain hairstyle to his boyfriend and vice versa.

There are hairstyles which are associated to a category of the youth called the **Pantsulas** which are as follows: **cheesekop**, **beebok** and **blade**. The rest of the hairstyles are done by a category called the **Ivys** and those who do not associate themselves with any category. The different hairstyles are done mostly when there are outings, such as going to camps for picnics, when going to music festivals and when going to different parties.

Hairstyles play an important role in many societies amongst the youth but also including other members of the society. Salons and barbershops are getting a lot of profit for doing hairstyles and for selling hair products.

CHAPTER 9

SOURCE OF INCOME

The unemployment rate is a phenomenon around the world and people resort to various methods as the means for survival. In South Africa the unemployment rate is also affecting many people to such an extent they resort to other means of generating income.

In "Nicaragua" both female and male youth are experiencing the problem of unemployment and they are also resorting to different methods of generating income ranging from gambling, stealing, selling, washing taxis, caddying at golf courses and organising groups to generate money.

There are different reasons attached to raising money and they are as follows: guys raise money in order to be able to buy themselves clothes and liquor and to be able to take out their girlfriends to movies and other places. Girls raise money in order to buy clothes, to do recent hairstyles, to go to movies, to buy cosmetics and to go to entertainment centres when they wish to. Guys gamble by using the dice. They form a circle and start to gamble. There is a lot of money involved in this game of dice. It is called the school of dice and the person who owns the dice is automatically a **noxi** (the owner of the school). Being called a school of dice has nothing to do with teaching how to play the dice but that it is serious gambling. The rules are as follows: each gambler must pay a **dizzy** (form of a tax) after he has won

thrice and this happens each time when one has won thrice.

Pauw (1963:49) has described the similar gambling method to the one mentioned above. According to him the popular methods were known as *rogorogo* and *roya* which were played by thugs. Pauw (1963:43) further mentioned that *roya* derived from an Afrikaans word *gooi* (to throw) and he also mentioned other types of gambling games which are namely: *casino*, *three-cards*, *flash*, *thungathunga* and *cole-card*.

One Friday evening I went to a dice gambling game. At that game *zag* (money) was plenty and it just wanted someone with a lot of experience to win it. I realised that without a good knowledge of playing dice then cannot win even a single day. Three candles were used to shed light for the gamblers. During that night we were not gambling freely because of two obstacles, that is, the street committee which was against gambling and the *convis* (police) who usually confront the gamblers because gambling is illegal. Starting in December 1995 the guys in the area of my study are gambling freely because they are aware that gambling has been legalised.

It is very risky to gamble at times because one can be robbed of the money if one wins, especially if other gamblers realise that the winner is not armed. At most games where I have been, gamblers were carrying weapons like knives and guns for protection or self defense.

Pauw (1963:50) also mentioned the tendency of violence at the game of dice. He suggested that in order to be safe one must be fully protected or armed with at least a knife and also be accompanied by friends.

On the other hand girls gamble by playing cards and there is also a lot of money involved. I only participated once in this form of gambling because getting entrance in these card games is very difficult, because of being from the opposite sex. Although I gambled with them there was not much I gained because they were uneasy and were not gambling as usual.

Throughout my research I never got a chance of gambling with girls for the following reasons: girls like to talk evil things about their boyfriends; girls like to wear short clothes and therefore the presence of a male person will be an obstacle.

I interviewed a guy who resorted to stealing as a means of raising money and also of surviving. He argued that he specializes in **HB** (house breaking). The other name for house breaking is **huis-braak** which is an Afrikaans word and those who are stealing no longer prefer to use it because they believe that it is known by many people. This guy steals a lot of things for example videos, cameras, television sets and other properties and he prefers to steal in **sthiwa** (town) at the **kitchens** (white suburbs). He mentioned that in a month he is making a lot of money but he refused to divulge his income.

There were two girls who are **gerezing** (stealing). These two girls formed a company and they are shop lifting in town and afterwards they sell their products in the area for cheaper prices. According to them they exchange duties: that one steals as the other is looking or rather watching for any dangers. They also mentioned that they are getting a lot of money and they declined to divulge their weekly income for safety reasons.

The other method of generating income is the formation of **stokfels** (rotating credit associations). The youth in "Nicaragua" form this organization in order to help themselves financially. There are a number of them in the area and they are named as follows: **GIN and JUICE, MORNING GLORY, HIGH GATE, GARDEN PARTY, WISLA VODCA, CONNECXION** and many others.

I have been to three of the ones mentioned above. **WISLA VODCA** is a well organised stokfel. They meet every fortnight and each member has a bank saving book. The procedure is that every month end R50 is deposited into every member's account and the rest of money is deposited into the club or organisation account. Every fortnight one member hosts the club at his home. First thing they do their administrative work, that is they balance their books, and after is entertainment in the form of drinking and playing music. There is an entrance fee for non members so that they can be accommodated in the budget for that day. **MORNING GLORY** is comprised of female members and also operating the same as others but not financially established. **GARDEN PARTY** comprises of members from both sexes and it also functions the same as other

organisations.

The Sunday Times Extra (23rd & 30th July 1995) has covered the **stokfel** issue. According to TIMES the Orlando girls in Soweto brought back the youth **stokfel**. The reason for starting stokfel ranges from the fact that in the past most of the African youth lacked economic power to participate in the business sector. One of the girls in Orlando argued that they decided to launch the club due to the tough experiences that they went through, especially during the festive season. In Duduza in the East Rand youngsters are also involved in **stokfel** and they meet every fortnight. One of the members argued that the idea is to help themselves to meet their personal needs and also to realise their future dreams.

There are guys who go to golf courses to work as caddies in order to generate income. These guys wake up early in the morning with the aim of taking home more than a hundred rands. The caddies have their unique language which they get from the golf courses. Their language is a mixture of Tsotsitaal and English. At the golf course they get things like golf caps, t-shirts, golf balls and some golf clubs. They bring such things in the township and now there is a culture of the youth playing golf although not a formal one because of lack of facilities.

Golf gambling is also taking place in "Nicaragua" and other sections of the township. It take place on an open field or at times in a soccer field. The procedure in golf gambling is a

certain amount of money is put up per hole, which means that all the gamblers combine equal amounts and the winner is the gambler who has less shots. In golf gambling a lot of skill is required because the holes are designed in a tricky way. I have in the past gambled and lack of experience made me to loose. Usually the guys who have designed the holes are the ones who win because they know where the trick lies.

On the other hand some guys generate money by washing **hurricanes or cabs** (taxis). These taxis are the local taxis which are taking working people and other people to different places. These guys charge ten rands for washing a single taxi. I kept a close watch on them before I could interview them. As one is washing a taxi, he doesn't want to be helped because he won't share the money with anyone. So I just volunteered to help without getting paid. They all have regular customers and they even know those taxis by their registration numbers.

One day I just kept a close look at one of these guys with the aim of asking how much he earns per day. By the time I wished to pose my question, he had already washed four taxis. I asked him and he responded by giving me a wrong answer. He had told me that he just washed one taxi and I realised that he was not going to divulge his daily income. After about ten minutes I asked him about his daily income and he declined to respond by completely evading my question and discussing how he liked music.

In order to fulfil some of the basic needs for example going out with friends at shebeens, entertainment centres in town, the youth resort to different methods of generating income.

PICTURES



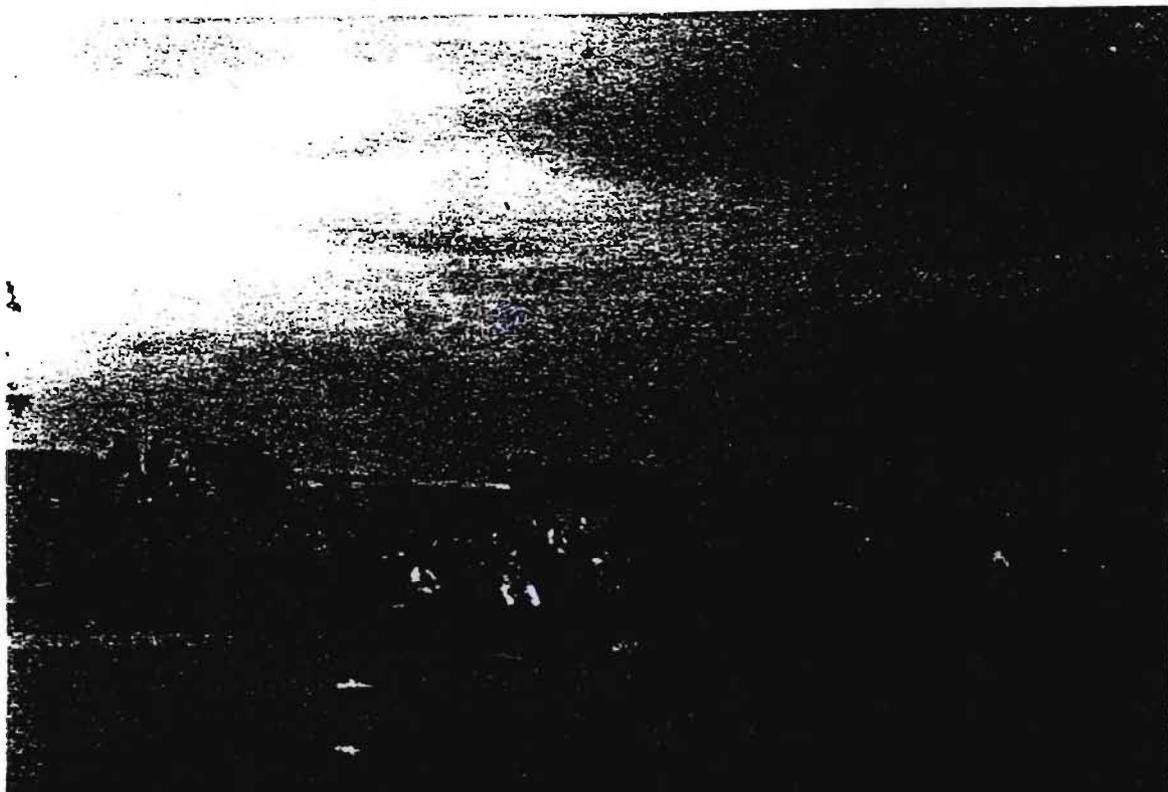
Above: Guys drinking liquor and a reseacher is holding a small bath full of beers. Below: Guys are relaxed inside a garage.

PICTURES



Above: Guys drinking liquor at the shebeen. Below: Guys and Girls at the 21st Birthday Party.

PICTURES



Above: Guys are playing soccer. It is a gambling game and the winning team takes all (money). Below: Spectators are watching.

PICTURE



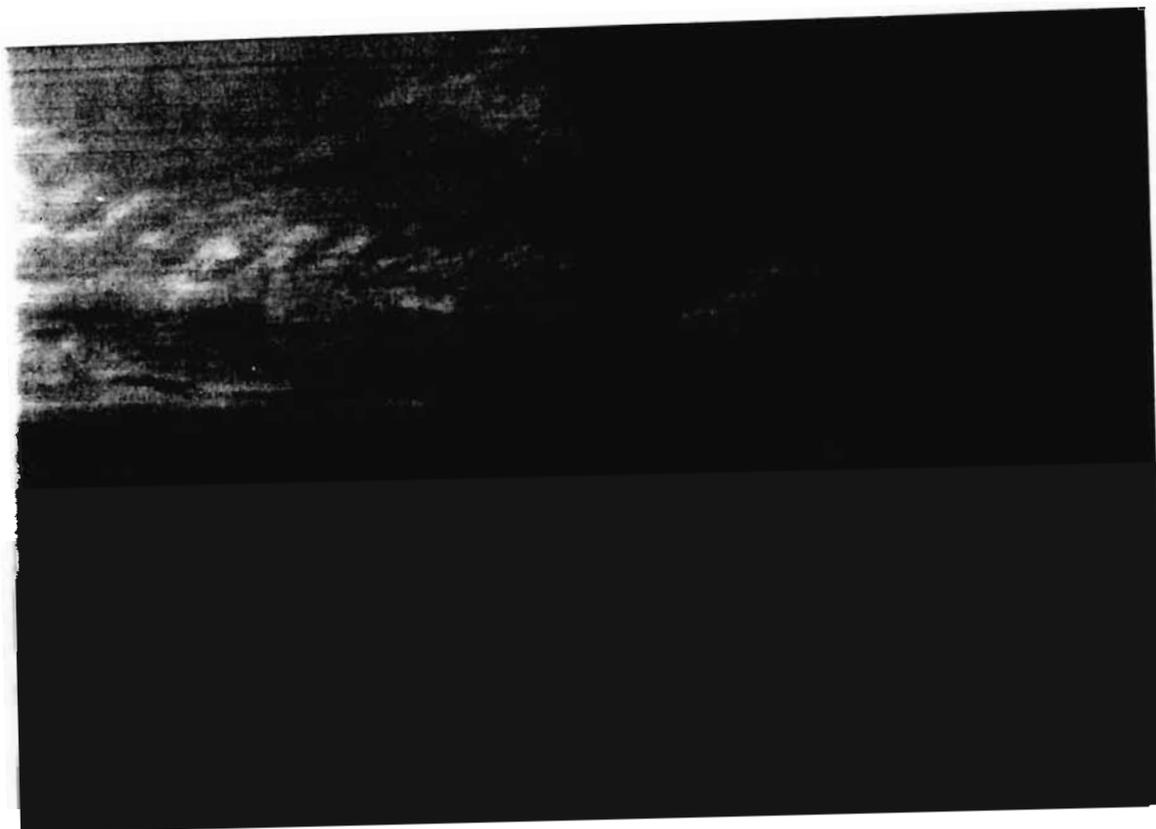
A girl is in the shebeen waiting for from friends to come in. Her hairstyle is a *Blow*.

PICTURE



A lady relaxed at her home. She is casually dressed with a hairstyle called *Push-back*.

PICTURE



A former tavern which was owned by the local administration and it was burnt down for political reasons.

PICTURE



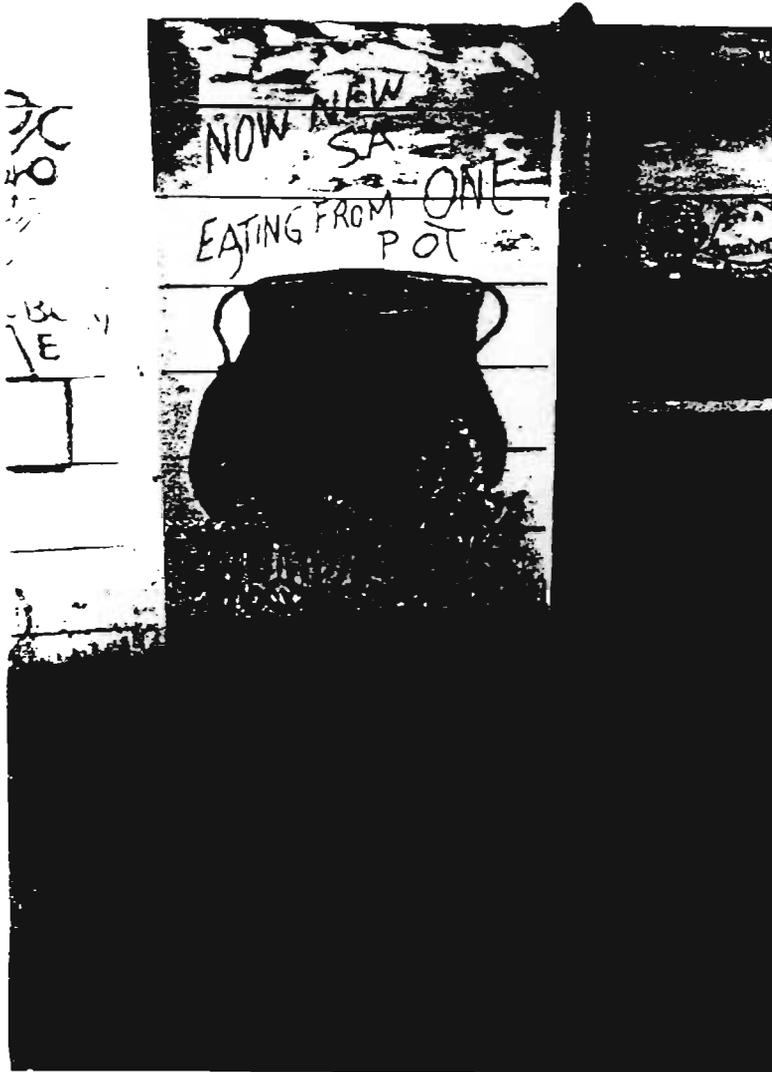
A guy is about to play a video machine inside a shop.

PICTURES



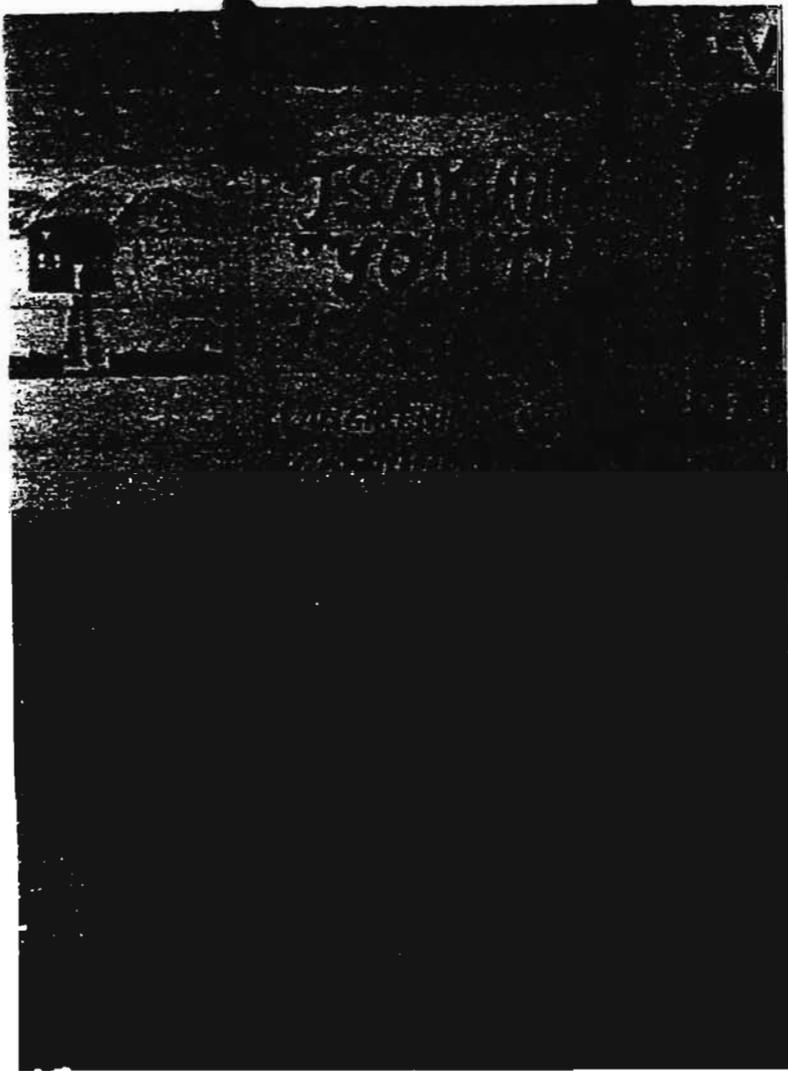
Left: Two girls sitting on the window pane. The one on the extreme left have a *Braiding* (hairstyle) while the other one have *S-curl*.
Right: A girl relaxed at her home garden. Her hairstyle is *Setting*.

PICTURE



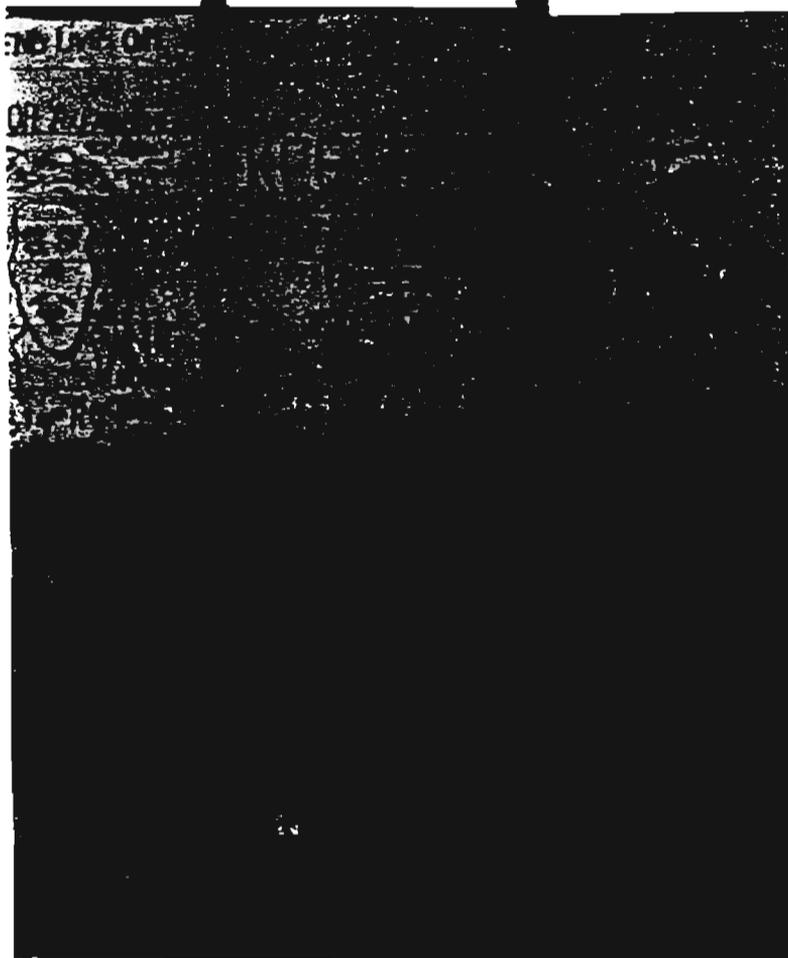
A graffiti on the wall fence, preaching the message of peace.

PICTURE



A Graffiti on the wall fence, showing how the youth should play a role in a community.

PICTURE



A graffiti on the wall fence. It is about the awareness of aids.

PICTURE



Guys talking in the night club.

PICTURE



Guys relaxed after a heavy soccer match.

PICTURE



Guys hanging outside the shops and discussing about girls and other issues.

CHAPTER 10

LOVE AFFAIRS

To fit well or be accepted in a youth social structure particularly in "Nicaragua", one has to be involved in a love affair. It applies to both sexes. At least one has to be involved in a single-affair or multiple-love-affairs. Failing to be involved in a love affair suggests that one has a big problem and different labels are going to be attached to such a person.

At night in the area one finds different youth couples standing at street corners. It is a tradition that a guy should come regularly to see his girlfriend otherwise the girlfriend will suspect that he is seeing someone else. Coming to check a girlfriend and not finding her is known as a **crab** and it means the next day the guy is going to punish the girlfriend if there is no satisfactory explanation. Single-love-affair refers to a situation where a person is involved with one lover. The favourite girlfriend or boyfriend is known as **regte** (real one). In this case it is a girlfriend or boyfriend whom everything and every moment is shared for example going out to movies, picnics, seeing friends and doing other things.

In my previous study (1994) I also covered the notion of different love affairs ranging from youths having three types of love affairs for example a boyfriend who is the real one and also being involved with a married man and having a boyfriend who is used for

financial reasons.

In this kind of love affair it went to an extent of introducing each other to respective families. The girls are in favour of introducing their boyfriends to their families, so that, should they become pregnant, a boyfriend is known. Guys do not like to be introduced because most of them know that they are unreliable therefore it is useless to be introduced.

Multiple-love-affair is a situation where one guy or girl is having love affairs with more than one person. It is the most favoured kind of love affair in "Nicaragua". Most guys in the area prefer to have many girlfriends for a number of reasons. The first girlfriend would be a **regte** (real one) and the second girlfriend would be the substitute of the real one in case a real girlfriend is sick or not available when there is an outing with friends. The third and other girlfriends would be the ones who accompany him to shebeens and they are not valued. A guy who has many girlfriends is known as a **shark** or **CJB**.

In case of girls, having many boyfriends is a priority number one. The real boyfriend would be preferably a mobile guy who owns a recent car, or alternatively is a taxi driver. Other girls prefer a guy who has money to take them out to movies and other interesting places like picnics. The other boyfriends are the substitutes in case a mobile guy is not available or the big spender is not around.

One girl mentioned the fact that naturally she is lazy therefore she needs a boyfriend who has a car so that he can take her to various places, for example to town. She also mentioned that it is convenient to be in love with a taxi driver because going to town would be very easy.

Besides going to different places for entertainment the guys have a strong belief that sexual intercourse strengthens the affair, while girls are sceptical about it. Actually, girls feel that they are being used or sexually abused especially when the affair is still new. Precaution measures are not taken seriously when it comes to safe sex. It is because of mixed feelings between both sexes. There is a mobile clinic in the area and there is a hospital in the township which is situated 3kms away from "Nicaragua". There are also three surgeries in "Nicaragua" alone. Many guys prefer to indulge in sexual intercourse without wearing a *jas* (condom).

There is a belief amongst guys that wearing a condom its like *sgomoring* (masturbating) and it is an abnormal thing to do. One guy for example mentioned that it has in the past inconvenienced him because after sexual intercourse he had to carry the condom and throw it away, which he consider a big job.

The majority of girls prefer to take the pill for prevention, because boyfriends refuse to wear condoms. One girl mentioned that her boyfriend does not want to see a condom and he was threatening to leave and she is afraid of losing him hence she uses the pill.

Out of every thirty girls in "Nicaragua" at least half of them have a child and in some cases children. There is a girl who is nineteen years and she has two children and guys in the section are teasing her. Guys always argued that this girl needs compulsory family planning.

There are a lot of illegitimate children in the area. Some guys deliberately refuse responsibility, but on the other hand girls who are involved in many affairs do not really know who the father of their child because they were sleeping with different guys. (For more details see chapter 12).

Girls at times become insecure in a love relationship to such an extent that they resort to becoming pregnant with the hope of getting married. There is a belief amongst girls that a child is a guarantee for marriage and it always works against their wishes. Girls who are doing badly or who cannot cope at school resort to pregnancy as a means of leaving school. One girl mentioned that her mother forced her to do a post-graduate degree but that she is no longer interested in pursuing her studies and the only solution is to become pregnant so that she can stay at home.

Bocknek (1986:160) has covered the notion of having children as a means to strengthen the love affairs amongst the youth in New York. Having children was for some reason the means of getting married. For others when love affairs were shaky then having a child was seen as a basis of strengthening the affair.

Another method of maintaining love relationships is the use of "muti" or love potions. The girls refer to it as **sta-soft** (love potion) which means that after they have poured it in a guy's food or drink then the guy is going to comply to their rules or demands and he is going to love them a lot. The guys call it **Africanism** (love potion) largely because it is obtainable from the African traditional healers and **sangomas**.

Love potions are obtainable from **sangomas** and African traditional healers at different prices. One guy mentioned that he once used a love potion which was in the form of powder and he paid R60 for it. According to him it worked for only three months and needed to be renewed from time to time.

There is a notion of **corobrick** (taking someone's girlfriend or boyfriend and become involved with him or her) and it is practised by both sexes. Usually the aim is to hurt each other which is caused by **fail-sandy** (jealousy). Short tempered guys end up committing murders should their girlfriends be taken that way. In case of girls, they end up fighting physically. According to one informant material wealth is the major cause for guys and girls taking each other's lovers. Usually poor guys are the victims. For example a guy who owns a car stands a better chance of taking other guys' girlfriends, while beautiful girls stand a good chance of taking their friends' boyfriends.

CHAPTER 11

A STADIUM

The concept stadium literally is associated with a place where different sporting codes take place. The context here is different to sport, actually it refers to a place where sexual activities take place. It is a concept invented by guys particularly when they have ulterior motives about their girlfriends. It is also known as a **pozzi** which according to the township lingo derived from the word position. Recently it is known as **Barcelona** which is taken from the famous olympics which were held at different stadia in Barcelona.

There are different types of stadia in the context of the code which is used by the guys in "Nicaragua". The first one which is the most preferable by both sexes is at the boyfriend's home. One girl mentioned that she broke up with her previous boyfriends largely because the boyfriends wanted to use a different venue other than his home for sexual intercourse. To many girls it is degrading to take them to other places for sexual activities because it shows a lack of respect. According to her a sexual session must only be known to her and the boyfriend.

The second type of stadium is at a friend's home and girls do not like it because it lacks privacy and respect. The reason why a second type of stadium is used is because at the boyfriend's home there are always people even during the day and therefore if the

friend's home is vacant then is a solution. Guys who do not get a chance of coming home during the day resort to **skep** (take her to his home the whole night) their girlfriends. This practice is done secretly and it is advantageous on the part of the guy but a disadvantage on the girls side. Although it is advantageous on the part of the guy the danger is that, if the parents catch him then he is in trouble, or if the parents of the girlfriend come to report the matter to his parents. The disadvantage on the part of the girl is that she is missing at her home and therefore she will have to account for her absence.

The third type of a stadium is a **jungle** (forest or veld). It is most hated place for making love particularly by girls because it is unsafe being in the forest and also it is uncomfortable. Guys who take their girlfriends to the open veld are considered backward in terms of the urban standard of living and they are unpopular with girls.

The fourth type of a stadium is at the **levi** (toilet) particularly at the shebeen. Young guys at the shebeen just call their girlfriend out to the toilet and make love to them quickly before people can disturb them. Other patrons will need to use the loo only to find out that the door is locked until the shebeen owner shouts and bangs at the door, then a couple comes out.

One informant mentioned that he has used a shebeen loo on several occasions largely because unreliable girlfriends have a tendency of drinking one's liquor and thereafter vanished. Therefore it is

advisable during the drinking process to organize her into the loo and make it quickly so that if she decides to vanish then one has also benefitted sexually.

The fifth type of the stadium is using a *transi* (a car). Guys who own cars usually use them in case they do not have a proper place for making love. Taxi drivers in the area are the most popular guys who use their vehicles for sexual encounters.

In most cases young couples do not talk things out. In this case I am referring to planning to make love. Both parties should be mentally and physically prepared for a sexual encounter. Guys like to surprise their girlfriends by randomly demanding sex without prior arrangements. Many guys argued that making arrangements with a girlfriend for sexual intercourse is a waste of time because she won't show up. The best thing to do is to organize a place at home or with a friend and insist with her. Other guys are possessive and they argued that they cannot negotiate for love making with their girlfriends. According to them being in love automatically means that they are entitled to sex anytime. One guy argued that his girlfriend has turned down many appointments and he has decided not to inform her and instead just plan alone and to be insisted when she is around. If she objects then physical force is the only solution.

The issue of a suitable place for sexual activities is a very thorny one amongst couples and at times it results in a situation where love affairs collapse because of disagreements between the

two parties involved. Girls feel that they should also decide on the venue while guys feel that they are the only ones who can organize the venues.

CHAPTER 12

VIOLENCE

Degenaar (1990:6) defines the concept of violence as a process which includes an intentional action or series of actions by a perpetrator or group of perpetrators that is damaging, destructive and violates the rights of the victims or victims.

Everatt (1994: 68 - 69) gave a broad definition of violence which includes structural violence and socio-political violence. Structural violence therefore includes not only particular actions but also social structures which were formed through apartheid legislation which violate human dignity. Socio - political violence includes child abuse, women abuse and generalized crime abuse.

The definition by Degenaar is reasonable but it could have also included the unintentional actions by perpetrators. Everatt's definition could also have included the abuse of men so that it does not appear as if the abused are only women and children. Violence can be viewed in different ways depending on who defines it or experiences it. There is physical violence, verbal violence and other kinds of violence. Physical violence refers to actual actions by an individual or other group of people at a particular time. Verbal violence refers to any violence which is made through speech and affects the next person or people. Furthermore there is political, criminal and social violence.

In "Nicaragua" various kinds of violence happen which include firing gun-shots at night for no apparent reasons. There is also the tendency of raping at night and also robbing people. Racial and political violence is also prevalent in "Nicaragua". By racial violence I am referring to the youth in the area attacking the immigrants. There is also a culture of political intolerance which results in political violence. Social violence includes the tendency of taking drugs and alcohol abuse. Youth from both sexes are involved in the kinds of violence mentioned above.

Seekings (1993:92 - 93) has covered the issue of "jackrolling" which refers to the violent abduction and rape of young women. He further mentioned that structural factors led to the marginalisation of youth primarily in economic terms which produced a violent youth culture, revolving around the need to "get by" through exploiting the environment for resources.

The firing of gun-shot at night in "Nicaragua" is interpreted in different ways by the youth. One guy mentioned the fact that he has no problem with the gun-shots at night because these shots shows that the area is well armed (the people are armed) therefore the criminals will not be able to further their activities. He further mentioned that the gun-shots scare the criminals and it becomes safe on the streets to take a walk.

Another view was that gun shots are made at night largely because the owners get bored of having guns without using them. One informant argued that most of the youth who own guns are prone to

fight. Therefore if there is no fight occurring then these owners resort to firing shots randomly at night.

Most of the female youth are against the idea of firing shots at night because it is frightening. One girl said that she could not sleep at night when she hears gun-shots, especially if those shots are at close range. Her friend added that she no longer cares about the gun-shots because she is used to them but argued that although she is used to them they do disturb people from their sleep which is unfair.

I also interviewed another girl about guys who fire gun-shots in daylight. She mentioned the fact that these guys take a lot of drugs and then they become violent. Further she mentioned that as these guys become bored because no one challenges them to fight, they resort to use the guns anyhow. Another view from her was that some guys like to show-off with these guns so that people in the area can be threatened by their presence and their rivals from other sections could be scared of them.

The guys who fire shots are well known in the section but the problem is how to stop them doing that. My efforts of attempting to get their view was not successful largely because it was unsafe for me to chat with such individuals. I had access to one of them but his mood during our conversation was controversial and I decided to ignore the topic of gun shots in the interest of my safety.

Political violence in "Nicaragua" is also prevalent. In the east of "Nicaragua" there is a squatter settlement called "Palestine" which is the home base of the **Grigambas** (immigrants). These immigrants do their shopping at the shopping complex which is located in "Nicaragua" and during their presence in "Nicaragua" they experience hardships in different forms, that is they are being attacked by the youth. The immigrants are being robbed of their money and properties.

There are stigmas which are attached to the immigrants which are as follows: the immigrants are being accused of stealing properties, of taking other peoples' girlfriends, that they agree to cheap labour, that they bring arms into the country and they are also believed to be coming with diseases like malaria.

One Friday afternoon and I was at a shebeen and some male immigrants came for some beers. At this shebeen a bottle of beer was R3.20 and for the immigrants it was sold at R4.00 a bottle. These guys were aware that a beer is less than what they were charged but they could not help it because they were told to go if they did not accept their special price. Most of the shebeen owners in the area treat them harshly.

On the other side the girls in "Nicaragua" also illtreat or rather abuse these immigrants. The girls abuse the male immigrants financially by asking money for cool drinks and other things and the male immigrants with the hope of getting love affairs do provide, and in the long run they realise that nothing is

improving in terms of their hopes.

Most of the children in the area are fatherless in theory or rather illegitimate. I am saying fatherless in theory largely because in reality the child has a biological father but the problem is that the father has denied responsibility.

There is a trend in "Nicaragua" of **jumping** (denying responsibility) in as far as the pregnancy is concerned. One guy mentioned that he **jump** (denied responsibility) largely because he heard that his girlfriend who is **baan** (pregnant) had another boyfriend. Therefore it means the girl had an extra affair which suggest that he is not the only one who was making love to her.

Traditionally when a girl is pregnant her family must take her to the home of the boy who made her pregnant the idea being that they must both confirm before their parents. This guy further mentioned that the girl's parents came to his home and he told them **nine-nine** (straight talk) that he was not responsible and he advised them to go to the other boyfriend whom he believed might be responsible.

After nine months the child was born and her family tried to persuade him and he said he maintained what he told them that he is not responsible. The second case is about the guy who refused responsibility because his girlfriend once slept **malunda** (away) three days in succession. He argued that one **Frivas** (Friday) he **bell** (phoned) and it was **jumpers** (late at night) and the

girlfriend was **geen** (absent). He also phoned the next day on Saturday and Sunday and she was missing. So being missing at home for three days without any knowledge from anyone at home suggest that there was something wrong happening.

Traditionally, according to the guy he tells her whenever he is going somewhere and she did the same in the past but she decided to go without reporting which clearly shows there was an extra affair. After two months she was pregnant and the guy refused responsibility based on the previous behaviour by the girl of missing for three days. He also mentioned that the girlfriend was using contraceptives as they agreed previously and it was surprising that she was pregnant.

The high pregnancy rate shocked me and I decided to find out from the youth what might be reasons behind it. At first I saw a thirteen year old girl being pregnant and after that I saw a number of girls in the same situation.

One guy told me that the high pregnancy rate is caused by a number of things for example, the lack of sex education, lack of discipline from home, lack of sport facilities in the area and other factors. He further mentioned that **spati** (pregnancy) is really destroying the youth in the area in the sense that girls end up leaving school and looking after their **bambinos** (children). Another problem is the dishonest practises of having many love affairs and when a girl is pregnant she finds herself in a big problem because she does not know exactly which guy made her

pregnant.

Another girl mentioned that the high pregnancy rate is amongst the girls who are in the category of the Christians and known as **bazakes** (Jehoviar's Witness). She argued that she knows about four girls who have children and yet they preach that pre-marital sex is a sin. She also mentioned that it was high time that people should not claim that they know the Bible and yet do wrong things.

Another guy mentioned the fact that girls decide on their **bolen** (own) that they should fall pregnant without prior discussions with their **jitas** (boyfriends). They do so hoping that guys will **click** (marry) them. He totally rejected the idea that to be pregnant is a guarantee for marriage, as many girls thought.

Needless to mention the boys and the girls in "Nicaragua" are involved in drugs and alcohol abuse. One girl argued that there is nothing wrong in drinking alcohol as well as taking drugs. She further mentioned that, the fact that dagga grows everywhere suggests that God accepts its existence, and therefore people should enjoy everything that God gives them. Actually she was justifying the existence of dagga and at the same time defending herself from criticism.

Konopka (1976) argued that the girls in her area of study in the United States of America knew about drugs and they were well informed at the tender age. She further mentioned that no one

reported starting to take drugs later than seventeen years. The largest number of girls admitted that they were taking dagga and alcohol.

Violence is a widespread phenomenon. It is viewed differently. To some people violence is a means to an end while to others is the end to the means. My point is that some people like the acts of violence because it works for them while other people reject it completely.

CHAPTER 13

CEREMONIES

Ceremonies in different communities serve specific purposes depending on different reasons. Some of the ceremonies are religiously motivated while others are traditional. Other ceremonies reflect happiness while there are those ceremonies which are associated with sadness.

My focus here is on four different ceremonies which are performed or made by the youth in "Nicaragua". They are as follows: **MaGents funerals** (gangsters funerals), **uKuwasha amagaravu** (to wash the spades), **uKuwasha amaballpens** (to wash the pens) and **uKuwasha amachok** (to wash the chalk).

Ruth Bengu, a journalist, has covered the gangsters funerals in Soweto. She mentioned that over the past three decades things have changed greatly. Funerals used to be sombre affairs, especially among Africans who were to bury the dead (Sowetan, 26 July 1995:6).

The first ceremony is about the guys who specialize in stealing cars. If a gang member is killed while for instance, stealing a BMW car then during his funeral his friends must also get a brand new BMW so that they can be able to burn it at the cemetery during the funeral.

I attended a night vigil of one of these gangsters. At the night vigil the priest is restrained from talking good things about the dead member, instead the priest must reflect exactly what happened, meaning that the priest must talk about how the guy was involved in stealing cars. At three o'clock in the morning of the night vigil, the members of the gang went to town to steal a MAZDA 323 which symbolized the sacrificial lamb. The car was burned at the cemetery and police came and shot at mourners and everyone was running for his or her life.

"The funeral of a "Gent" is like a gangster movie. Heavily armed guys and their women, dressed to the nines, start their performance at the church service. Before the procession leaves for the cemetery, the "Gents" shoot in the air and generally scaring the daylighters and the mourners" (Sowetan, 26 July 1995:6).

A second funeral I attended was postponed at the night vigil because the members of the gang were not successful in stealing a CRESSIDA car. According to the boss of the gang, the one who is dead will not rest in peace if he is buried without burning a car at the cemetery. The family of this guy was confused and there was nothing they could do because the members of the gang had already given the ruling that the funeral should be postponed.

The ceremony of washing the spades happens after a funeral of any young person at his or her youthful stage. After getting refreshments at the home of the deceased then the youth organize themselves and go to the nearby shebeen to drink liquor. This

ceremony is termed as **ukuwasha amagaruvu** (washing the spades). This it is a figure of speech which symbolizes the washing of the spades which were used at the cemetery to cover the coffin. I went to several funerals of youth and it is a new trend.

Pauw (1963:103) in the Eastern Cape during the sixties argued that after the death of someone, the young women of the neighbourhood take charge of the domestic work in preparation for the funeral. Mourners who visit the deceased's home are provided with refreshments by these young women.

In "Nicaragua" it is the opposite of what Pauw (1963) found. Instead the young women only come on the day of the funeral, wearing fancy clothes, expensive jewellery, hairstyles and sunglasses. The young men also do the same.

One writer in the Sowetan suggested that adults have abdicated their responsibility and have let young people to run the show. She further argued that it is because young ones were allowed to take a leading role in politics. She also added that discipline has broken down (Sowetan, 26 July 1995:6).

Campbell (1989:1) mentioned that parental responses varied from bewilderment to anger to fear. She further argued that many parents had confessed that they are lacking confidence when trying to advise their children in a world that was changing at an alarming pace.

The third ceremony (washing of pens) is done by the youth who are in secondary schools and tertiary institutions. This ceremony happens after the final examinations. Friends gather to organize beers and snacks and enjoy themselves for that day. I joined the youth from the local secondary school in their ceremony and we enjoyed a lot by drinking until late at night.

The fourth ceremony (washing of chalk) is mainly done by student teachers during their last day of teaching practice at schools. They also buy liquor and snacks. They even invite the permanent staff members to join them in their ceremony.

There are no hard and fast rules at these ceremonies namely of washing spades, pens and chalks largely because the invitation is open or rather extended to girlfriends and other friends. However at the gangsters ceremony, the rules are strict. Only members of the gangs are able to perform that ceremony.

Boys and girls no longer observe the initiation ceremony. One guy mentioned the fact that going to the mountain during winter at the initiation school is a waste of money, energy and time. He further argued that it would be better if going to the initiation school was a guarantee that one was going to be wealthy.

CHAPTER 14

LOCAL ELECTIONS

The date 1st November, 1996 marked the first democratic local elections in South Africa. All the nine provinces were supposed to participate in these local elections but unfortunately two provinces excluded themselves because of some political reasons. KwaZulu/Natal and Western Province did not participate because of political instabilities within their boundaries and also because of being dissatisfied about some issues.

Prior to the actual day of the elections, that is some few months before, there were arrangements or rather preparations for example the registration of both candidates and voters. Other preparations included the campaigns by candidates from political parties and independent candidates. The electronic and print media also informed people about the procedures of voting. The candidates took the initiative of putting up posters so that the public could see them and maybe vote for them if they were interested.

Thorold (1995:12) described an informant who was excited about the 1994 national and provincial elections in South Africa. The informant was excited because she believed that the elections were going to end her misery. The feeling of this informant was like "Seeing heaven's door open" which suggests that she was positive about taking part in elections.

Contrary to Thorold's (1995) study, in "Nicaragua" the youth were not at all positive about the local elections. Instead they criticised the elections by saying negative responses which I will mention later on in this chapter.

In "Nicaragua" there are different political parties and only two participated, the ANC and ACDP (African Christian Democratic Party) and there were independent candidates. The youth from both sexes in this area did not fully participate in the local elections because of different reasons. Some of the youth mentioned the fact that they can't vote for **mafias** (corrupt politicians). Some of the youth said that they were not impressed by the 1994 national and provincial elections therefore there was no need to vote because there are no improvements.

Bhavnani (1991:140) in his study discussed the youth, social representations of democracy and voting in Britain. According to his study the youth considered voting to be pointless. Actually the majority of the youth that were interviewed by Bhavnani (1991) mentioned that politics are boring and it is difficult to understand politics hence they say that there was no point in voting.

Most of the youth from both sexes did not even bother to register for the elections while other were not interested at all and the other category were those who were not even aware of the election taking place.

The few days before the 1st November 1996 were characterised by criticisms and vandalism. Criticisms were circulating that some of the candidates will not deliver anything for the people and also that some candidates were contesting for financial reasons and they don't have the interest of the people at heart. Some of the youth, especially the males, were destroying candidates' posters and threatening people not to vote.

On the 1 November 1995 in the morning I talked, firstly, to one guy who was working in the garden instead of going to vote. The guy had registered but had changed his mind about going to **teken** (to vote). He mentioned the fact that it is a waste of time voting for people who are after financial interest and did not have the interest of people at heart. He mentioned that **Madala** (Mandela) is no longer interested in delivering the goods and services for the people, instead he is looking after his personal interest.

I also talked to a girl who was interested in doing a hair style at the local salon. She mentioned that after doing a hair style she was going to do **spring cleaning** (intensive cleaning) at her home. After cleaning she was going to do wash her clothes so that she can be kept busy for the rest of the day and in the afternoon she was going to iron those clothes.

Many of the youth in the area, both females and males, during that morning were going to the shops to buy food for breakfast. The general idea was that they cannot waste their time to go on voting instead they had some better things to attend to. A large number

of guys were organising a soccer festival where a number of teams were formed and they played *disci* (football) for the whole day. Most of the spectators were on a drinking spree meaning that they were drinking liquor and ignoring the elections completely.

At the polling station there were long queues and the majority of the people were old people and very few of the youth. The polling station in "Nicaragua" section was in the school yard and tents were erected so that people could vote inside them. The police were also present, but not in large numbers. By nine o'clock in the evening people were still going to vote including those youth who did not want to be seen when going to vote. One guy mentioned the fact that he did not want people to see him when he was going to vote and he did not have the reason for that which suggest that maybe there were threats from other people.

The elections went on without any disturbances in the area and an ANC candidate won the elections and the candidate from the ACDP was a runner - up. The results were so close that it could have gone either way in terms of winning. People were expecting an improved life after the elections, they were expecting a positive response from their leaders in terms of delivering goods and services.

CHAPTER 15

CHURCH CHOIR

Church choirs are known to provide music at the different church functions and also at the community functions. Church choir members usually meet at specific times for practises so that the standard of music can be improved. The members are drawn from church congregations regardless of age and sex.

The focus here is on a church choir which is based in "Nicaragua" which is Apostolic in orientation. The membership is drawn from the youth of both sexes in the section. The members of this choir are from different churches. It was founded in 1984 and it went through difficult times of financial crisis and splits amongst members for several reasons which I will list later in this chapter.

The choir is useful in the section largely because it provides music without any charges during any funeral in the area. The choir also sings at the unveiling of tombstones in the area beyond the boudaries of "Nicaragua". Most people give credit to the existence of this choir except for a few people who know the corruption among the membership.

The structure of this choir is as follows: at the top is the leader who is the founder of this choir. According to him he was inspired by the death of his father who was a Zionist Priest.

There are two guys who are his assistants. Down the ladder are members of the choir known as **balefi** (male members) and **matroni** (female members). Furthermore, there is an executive committee which comprises of a chairman and deputy, secretary and deputy, treasurer and deputy and also the disciplinary committee. Membership is only constituted by the youth since adults have no place in the choir.

The leader declined to respond to the question of adult membership. He argued that for more than ten years the choir survived without adult membership and it has been running smoothly which was contrary to what former members said who alleged that there is corruption prevailing within the choir.

One girl mentioned that she has joined the choir largely because she loves music and that the choir also gave her a chance to socialize with friends. She also exploited the advantage to see her boyfriend because her parents are so strict that she does not even have a chance of seeing her boyfriend. Other female members also share the same sentiments.

The majority of the male members of this choir are dagga smokers and dice gamblers therefore gambling and smoking within the choir is a daily bread which is one of the centripetal forces to join the choir. The other reason for guys to join the choir is because they also love music. One guy mentioned that the reason for smoking dagga is because it revives their spirit of singing. I also participated in gambling within the choir which takes place

covertly in the garage where their practise sessions takes place. Gambling rights are strictly reserved because they do not want members of the community to know about it. In their dice gambling there is a lot of money involved. One of the regular gambler told me that he has won more than a thousand rand on three counts.

Brake (1985:104) argued about the youth who join religious organization which are pseudo religious and non - rational. He further mentioned that this youth learns a new language, a new value system and will often wear a new distinct costume, all of which helps in the forging of a new identity.

The pregnancy rate within the choir is and has been alarming. Many girls have in the past fallen pregnant while being members of the choir which suggests that both female and male members corrupt each other.

Brake's (1985) argument is valid to some extent. For example the youth who join the religious movements do adopt new values and so on but on the other side no one is perfect. The youth are also human beings and they sometimes become corrupt, not that I condone or justify the youth corruption.

Mid October 1995 marked a split in this choir. The split was caused by a number of issues. Usually the leader of the choir buys cigarettes, dagga and liquor for the male members during the week days when most of the members are financially battling and suddenly he was no longer providing. Moreover, the choir was

supposed to record its music but the idea was deliberately ignored by the executive members.

Seeing that corruption was taking place the majority of the male members decided to resign and formed a new choir. According to the members who had resigned there was no longer transparency in the running of the choir. They also mentioned that there was a second split since the inception of the choir. In 1991 there was the first split but it was solved and members returned to the choir. The leader of the choir declined to talk about the split and also rejected all the allegations that there was a crisis within the choir. He was doing that in order to protect the name of the choir.

The death of the deputy leader, also a soloist in the choir, further weakened the choir. He sold steelwool in the township. Members of the choir were shocked by his death. He was shot by three guys who also tried to rob money of him. A local newspaper reported as follows on the incident: "A steelwool dealer and gospel choir personality was shot on Friday in Tsakane by three men trying to rob him his money. He was shot dead at approximately 11am" (The Springs African Reporter, 16 February 1996:8). The treasurer of the choir was dissatisfied about the mismanagement of money in the choir. He mentioned that he had no knowledge of where and how the money had spent by some senior members of the choir. He was a treasurer in theory and had never handled any money and he had planned to resign as both a treasurer and a member of the choir because he had been used for so long by

this choir.

In conclusion this choir is an asset in the area largely because it comforts the bereaved families whenever they have lost their loved ones. This choir sings at home, during the church service and at the cemetery. The choir also sings during the unveiling of tombstones and also entertains people with their music at concerts.

Although it is to some extent corrupt, this corruption needs to be addressed. The choir needs to be advised that they should focus on their music and also be encouraged to record their music with recording companies so that members can be able to get money from their sales.

CHAPTER 16

SUPERIORITY COMPLEX

All over the world there are groups and individuals that believe they are superior to others in terms of "race", language, environment, gender, economic status, socio - political status, academic status and otherwise.

In "Nicaragua" like in any other township in South Africa, most of the youth from both sexes still hold that they are better than rural youth in many ways. Even within the urban youth, they still undermine each other. The urban youth believe that they are better than rural youth in terms of social behaviour, mastering the environment (being streetwise) and so on.

My focus here is on factors mentioned above pertaining to the notion of being better than other people. Talking "tsotsitaal" in "Nicaragua" is associated with cleverness.

Glaser (1994) mentioned that "Tsotsitaal" was the most important element of "Tsotsi" subcultural identity and also a "secret" language with an Afrikaans basilect. Around 1935 "Tsotsitaal" took over as the most popular language amongst the urban youth gangs; Initially in Pretoria and later in the Rand.

Dube in Bailey & Seftel (1994 146 - 148) reveals a story about Lucky Nkosi who was born in Alexandra in the late 1940's. The

whole story is about a clever person and a stupid person and how both people were living on a daily basis. According to the story, the idea of dressing to kill (dress smartly), understanding music, spending for friends at the shebeens constitutes a clever person while someone who dresses shabbily, who does not master "Tsotsitaal", and does not understand music is considered to be a stupid person. Further the emphasis is on that the clever one's both sexes are dressing in expensive clothes.

I interviewed a girl who was twenty six years old and having a child. She regrets to have a child at the tender age of seventeen years. At twenty six she was having a job so that she can maintain her child. Her source of income was from her salary and from abusing the guys financially which is a symbol of being a clever person in the area.

This girl labels guys in different ways. The first category is **reverands** (cool and collected guys), the other category is **Lazarus** (a very poor guy financially), **staporas** (wealthy guys) and lastly **guzu** (rough guy). This girl prefers to be involved with rich and rough guys who are mobile.

Whenever she goes to work she does not utilize her money instead one of her many boyfriends must come to collect her and he must also bring her back in the evening.

Most of her boyfriends are taxi drivers and she is proud of the fact that they do not know each other. She also gets money from

her many boyfriends to pay her monthly instalments. The reason why she behaves like this is that she was once involved in a love affair with a guy whom she loved very much and unfortunately this guy disappointed her. So then she decided to live anyhow.

She concluded by saying that guys like cheating a lot, therefore she is also going to cheat guys for the rest of her life. She does not see any prospects of getting married.

Another notion of superiority complex is between guys and girls. Often one find that girls do not recognize certain guys in the community because these girls consider themselves to be of higher social status.

I also experienced the problem of infiltrating the girls' card gambling, because I am a male and also because the girls told me that I was not their "type". The concept of "type" in that context was two-fold, The girls either considered themselves to be of higher social status or vice versa (Bogopa, 1994).

The young teachers form both sexes are at loggerheads in "Nicaragua" because of the different training they got before coming to teach. The issue here is the different institutions they attended. Teachers from the colleges of education consider themselves to be the best while teachers from the universities also considered themselves to be the best.

One young teacher from the college argued that the **tizas** (male

teachers) and **mizas** (female teachers) from the universities are useless because they are too theoretical and they do not even do practicals at schools. He further mentioned that the university teachers only know to impress with difficult English and that is all.

On the other hand a young female teacher mentioned that the teachers from the colleges are empty tins who cannot even guide pupils to go to the universities in future. She further mentioned that the male teachers at her school, particularly those from the colleges, are afraid to socialize with her at that school because she has a university degree.

CHAPTER 17

CONCLUSION

It was not an easy exercise to uncover the various activities carried out by the youth in "Nicaragua". Some of the informants were not accessible due to the situation which was beyond my control. For example, I had a problem of tracking down the youth who were so much involved in criminal activities. It was difficult to approach them largely because they were heavily armed with guns. It was also difficult to judge or rather predict their mood that is whenever I wanted to chat with them.

Another limitation was to interview the girls who had previously aborted their pregnancies. It was really difficult to arrange interviews with them because of the sensitiveness of abortion which is not acceptable in the community. In some cases my informants turned out to be reserved in terms of telling me information largely because they wanted to protect their images. For example, boys and girls refused to divulge information about their income. They were suspecting or rather feeling not safe because the items which they were selling were stolen. Again they were protecting themselves from being robbed of their money.

Initially my financial position was an obstacle because I wanted to buy a lot of things namely a camera to take pictures and slides. The aim was to show the prevailing situation in the area of study. Also to buy magazines, newspapers and books so that I

could have some information relevant to my research which has happened in other parts of the world. I also spent sleepless nights at various shebeens because that is where the youth spent most of their time. Going to shebeens at night was risky because guys in the area are heavily armed with guns and a fight could broke out at anytime. Actually the list of obstacles I have encountered is endless. I would not dwell too much on them because I would not be in a position of covering each and every detail but at least the ones mentioned reflect how difficult it was to conduct this research.

In my view both female and male youth prefer to have independence. The youth want to live their own life, particularly the urban youth. They like to live a life which is modern in orientation, and their thinking as well as their lifestyle is based on modern technology; for example the clothes and the hairstyle they wear and the music they play and so on. The urban youth have totally diverged from society's mainstream norms and values. I will dwell on the changes later in this chapter.

Wilson (1970) studied the Hippies in San Francisco. He argued that the Hippies were totally against the social order and although they have protested against mainstream society but remained peaceful in their protest. According to Wilson (1970) the Hippies believe in hedonism and they were completely committed. The Hippies were the fun-ethic group and their dominant hobbies were among others, to blow bubbles, to fly kites, distribute flowers and to smoke "grass" (marijuana) to demonstrate what is proper for

the youth to do.

Further the youth had a *laissez-faire* approach to the world, that is they preferred life to come as it is, as long as fun is prevailing. They disliked organized pleasures and they did not care about the past and the future. The Hippies condoned the use of drugs and they considered nude parties to be great fun. The Hippies also supported the demands to legalize marijuana and they condemned the "fuzz" (police).

In "Nicaragua" the situation is slightly similar to the one in San Francisco. Both female and male youth want an independent life where they are smoking dagga freely without police interference. They also hate the police. They spent most of their time at shebeens with friends and lovers. Drinking liquor is the order of the day.

The youth language "Tsotsitaal" shows that there is an element of art within the youth. Actually it shows that the urban youth are innovative and secretive to some extent. The urban youth are innovative in the sense that they use a self created language which is only understood by them (youth). The element of secretiveness is also displayed in a way other age groups are isolated from the language, for example the children, adults, rural youth including the police.

The future of "Tsotsitaal" is bright because the language has experienced a phenomenal growth in the past and even recently.

New words are invented from time to time at shebeens and other places. The evidence about the growth of the language was reflected by different researchers from different angles. Journalist from The Sowetan, The Sunday Times and a magazine called Next have recently published articles on "Tsotsitaal".

Academic researchers are also in the process of uncovering the importance of the language. On the other hand poets have written poems by utilizing "Tsotsitaal", for example S. S. Sepamla has written a poem called "Come duze baby" and Pat Seboko a poem called "Bra Jiggs friend". The aim of the poets was to reach the users of the language and also to reach the academics at the universities or at tertiary institutions, actually to bridge the gap between academics and non-academics by using "Tsotsitaal".

Local film producers have also realised the importance of "Tsotsitaal". There are few television series which includes the urban youth language. For instance, this language is used in the comedy called TENDER HEARTS, a love story series called GENERATIONS, and a documentary called KHULULEKA which was made to teach the public about the voting procedures. MAPANTSULA a film and a book based on the language "Tsotsitaal", portrays the culture of the urban youth. A film called THE LINE, which has caused a political conflict, controversy, aspects of youth language was used.

Local musicians have made a fortune or became wealthy because of producing their albums by using "Tsotsitaal", particularly

recently. There is a slogan known as "Local is Lekker" which refers to the idea that the locally brewed music is the best. A local musician, Sharon D, has released an album with a track called "Local is lekker" which has topped the charts in the music arena.

Advertising agencies have also realised the importance of "Tsotsitaal". Some of the adverts are in the medium of "Tsotsitaal". An example is a maize meal called Mazola, which uses the slogan: "Mazola is cooked gwapgwap". **Gwapgwap** means quickly therefore cooking Mazola is easy because it becomes ready quickly. An ointment called Zambuk uses the slogan "Zambuk the real makoya". **Makoya** means a real thing. Ohlssons beer slogan is "Ohlssons the beer for the new generation"

There is a reciprocity process. The urban youth invent words to add to their language and the musicians grasp the new words and make songs to establish themselves financially. And in return the youth get entertainment from the produced songs.

The future of the youth is promising even if they were ignored by the adults and the government. In the past and even now there are still adults who hold the notion of undermining the youth. The youth are members of society, therefore they are also contributing economically and politically. In the past the political struggle was carried out by the urban youth. They pressurised the previous regime to change its attitude. There were slogans like "Freedom now and education later" also "An injury to one is an injury to

all" which reflects how militant the youth were.

I am not condoning the slogans mentioned above, but I am trying to show the pressure exerted by the youth in the past in terms of being politically involved. In "Nicaragua" the youth also took part in the liberation struggle and there are government buildings which were burnt down by the youth in the area. A bar which was owned by the government was burnt down because the youth believed it was killing members of the community. They argued drinking liquor made people in the section lazy and the existence of that bar was a threat to the health of the people.

Economically the youth in general has contributed immensely to boost the growth in the country. Most of the basic needs of the youth for example music tapes, doing hairstyles and so on contributed a lot in the economic sector.

Some members of the youth are corrupt. This group is involved in drug taking, stealing and other negative activities. Such elements need guidance from both their parents, government and their peers. Recreation facilities and job creation can solve most of these problems. I will dwell on more details about strategies of solving youth problems later in this chapter.

The issue of the youth being labelled as the "lost generation" has created controversy in the past and even recently. Both electronic and print media have in the past published articles on the youth as the "lost generation". The facts of such a label were based on

the fact that many of the youth were and still are out of school.

The slogan "liberation now, education later" became a common expression which led to the downfall of many youths. One political commentator mentioned that being "lost" to the new political dispensation and without marketable skills, remains the country's duty for the youth to be found and be equipped with life skills (Sowetan, 23 July 1996:13).

In the past, during apartheid era, the majority of the youth found themselves excluded from school for various reasons. For example the unemployment of their parents, meant they could not afford school fees. Poverty was the major obstacle largely because hungry children could not concentrate at school.

Medical research has proved that energy is essential for one to be able to do work. It was thus evident that those who could not afford found themselves being the victims of circumstance. Even recently the existing government has not yet solved the problem of poverty and most of the youth are excluded from school not because they are not willing but the prevailing conditions just prevent them. The youth were also involved in politics. They could not follow proper channels of voicing their grievances instead they went on to destroy property and harass whoever was on their way. The alarming unemployment rate of the youth has also excluded them from the country's economic sector.

I also interviewed two authors about the issue of the youth being

the "lost generation". One is a lecturer at the University of Witwatersrand and another one is a researcher in the NGO which is based in Johannesburg. They both mentioned that the idea or notion of the "lost generation" is a media construct which lacks logic. Further a researcher mentioned that it is an old school of thought and it is irrelevant largely because the youth were affected by the prevailing conditions on the ground. They both argued that the previous government failed to cater for the interests of the youth. Therefore the youth resorted to whatever means to address their needs.

In my view the media has failed to ask relevant questions. For instance why are so many young people out of school? Is it the youth's fault or not? Why are the youth so highly politicised instead of going to school? The media should have researched first about what affects the youth before concluding or publicising the notion of the "lost generation".

Actually I am being critical of the media, it might appear as if I am taking the side of the youth, which is not the case. I am looking at the harsh reality prevailing on the ground and my basis of analysis moves from that angle. Some of my informants in "Nicaragua" rejected the idea that the youth are a "lost generation".

One informant mentioned that the youth throughout the world constitute the majority therefore if the youth were really lost then the entire world would have collapsed long ago. To me the

issue of "lost generation" is a problem or rather lacks logic. Actually it does not have a start and an end. For argument sake if the youth are lost then what happens when they grow old and become adults, are they still lost? If the media could address such questions raised above then their constructs will make sense.

There are elements within the youth who are unruly. They engage in negative practises for example taking drugs, violent activities and other deviant activities. For the media to say they are the "lost generation" does not correct the situation, instead it is destructive.

The slogan of South African Breweries "Ohlssons is the beer of the new generations" has been used extensively. It indicates that the new generations is the youth and the media did not question the company. That shows the inconsistency from the media. Again, amongst the adults there are those who are doing negative things like drug smuggling, violence and so on but the media is not questioning that.

Uncovering the culture of the youth in "Nicaragua" and also reading about other youth cultures elsewhere brings an understanding of youth culture to the forefront. My findings about the youth culture can promote human relations particularly between the youth and the adults, also going beyond that.

The government could also utilize my findings by coming up with strategies of catering for the needs of the youth through solving

or address some of the problems that the youth encountered. There is a need to invest in the youth. The youth should not be looked at in isolation. Instead they should be looked at as potential contributors in all aspects of the society.

The youth need support programmes where the government must create of opportunities so that they can generate income in order to fulfil their basic needs. In "Nicaragua" like in other townships in the country, the youth are involved in building themselves financially, for example through *stokfels* which are to some extent contribute immensely to the economy of the country. Members of the *stokfels* are linked to the country's financial institutions. For instance, young people must have bank accounts which is a positive step in that it has contributed to the economy. Therefore the government should also look at that and come up with support strategies to the establishment of the *stokfels*.

The government should also provide skills training for the youth. For example attempts should seek to integrating them into the high technology where they are taught computer skills. The advertising agencies, film industries and music industry have realised the importance of the youth language, seeing that it is popular. The government should also make a provision to include the youth language into the language policy and declare it the twelfth official language.

Finally South Africa is known to be a democratic country therefore freedom of expression should also be extended to the youth. The

youth should express themselves freely by talking their own language and their culture should be tolerated and also encouraged. The youth should be included in decision making because they also contribute a lot in shaping up the future of the country and by including the youth in strategies and policy making then most problems can be solved.

GLOSSARY

The majority of the words in this glossary are used in the chapters above and some of the words are not used but just to add the vocabulary of the youth language.

Aahliya - is a beautiful girl or girlfriend.

Achuz - is a friend.

Africanism - it is a muti that is applied by a girl to tame a lover or to regulate the behaviour of a lover (love potion).

Alfred Khuzwayo - it is an AK47 rifle.

Apa - it is to hide something or someone.

Ayzan - it is eyes.

Baan - to be pregnant or a pregnancy.

Bagaza - it is a gun.

Bakduza - a fat girl or fat girlfriend.

Bambinos - it refers to children.

Barcelona - it is a place for sexual intercourse.

Batu - it is a shoe.

Bari - a stupid person.

Bazakes - members of the Jehovah's Witness.

Begu - it is a belt.

Bencher - to quit or to go somewhere.

Blind - (a) pertaining to a boring situation (b) excelling in something for example a boy is great in soccer.

Boni - it is a bicycle.

Borg - (a) to borrow something (b) to bail someone.

Bostic - a girl who does not give her boyfriend a chance of socializing with other people.

Botokwa - it refers to Pretoria region.

Bova - a bad girl in terms of behaviour.

Bovaside - refers to both sides of anything.

Bozi - is a nickname of a town called Benoni.

Braki - is a nickname of a town called Brakpan.

Buda - it is a friend.

Chaki - it is a hot gravy.

Champion - see Bova.

Chappies - a boy who is asking out a girl even if he realises that the girl is not interested.

Char - refers to a tea.

Charles Glass - a beer called Castle Lager.

Cheque - is a stolen item that is on sale.

Chip in - to enter in a house anywhere else.

CJB - is a boy who has many girlfriends.

Consumer - an uneducated girlfriend.

Convis - refers to policemen.

Corobrick - to take someones lover and become involve with the person.

Cowza - someone from rural areas.

Crab - an unsuccessful appointment.

Crooks - refers to politicians.

Crowford - a person who is physically tough and fighting prone.

Danyan - it is a prison.

Dark dindil - is a dark in complexion girl or girlfriend.

Deur - (a) is a door (b) to be through about something.

Diana King - a beautiful girl or girlfriend.

Ding dong - to be confused both negatively and positively.

Disci - refers to a ball.

Diver - to sleep.

Dizzy - to be confused.

Do - it refers to bread.

Dolidoli - refers to an adolescent stage.

Dolphine - a modern or new model car called BMW.

Dria - to be in love with someone.

Driekop staan - see (Ding dong).

Dzeri - refers to any kind of sweets.

Dzoni - it is a stone.

Exi - refers to a any book.

Fail sandy - to be jealous.

Fanta Orange - a guy who is dirty.

Fish Eagle - it is a brandy.

Five Past 8 - it is a brandy known as Klip Drift.

Four - policemen.

Fourteen - is a young girl under the age of fourteen.

Fox - is an old man.

Fresh - refers to everything which is fine.

Gaedo - it is a train.

Gashu - a stupid person.

Gazat - is to combine money with the aim of buying something.

Gebzin - is a head.

Geen ghost - to be free from trouble.

Gereza - to raise money in order to survive.

German - is a town called Germiston.

German-tanker - is a heavy drinker.

Ghost - (a) refers to an adult (b) also refers to fighting.

Ginger - is to rape.

Gobzin - to be jealous.

Granada - is a girl who is in most cases dirty.

Graveyard - is a girl who has previously performed abortion.

Greezin - is a grandmother or any old female person.

Grigamba - is a foreigner from any country.

Gura - it is to fight.

Gwapgwap - it is to do things quickly.

Hazard - it is water.

Homor - it is a tough guy also refers to a bad girl.

Hurricane - it is a taxi.

Ilahla - is a stolen item.

Imbizo - it is any form of a party or ceremony.

Indian Tonic - it is a cold drink.

Jakarumba - a stupid person.

Jambok - a foolish guy especially from rural areas.

Jankie - a stupid person.

Japan - refers to a dirty girl.

Jas - (1) it is a condom (2) it is an illegitimate child.

Jewish - it is clothes.

Jimjom/jimros - refers to a guy.

John Salter - a tall person.

Julate - to work or any form of work.

June-July - to be afraid of something.

Jungle - (1) refers to a golf course (2) it is a forest.

Kaper - it is a knife.

Kangkel - it a tea.

Kist - it is a home.

Kofifi - is a nick name of Sophiatown.

Larney - refers to a wealthy person and also refers to any white person.

Last-ger - it is any form of struggle.

Lazarus - a guy who is financially poor.

Levi - it is a toilet.

Lonjan - is a shebeen house.

Lozi - refers to any form of money.

M - the owner of dice when gambling.

Mca - refers to sweets.

Mdori - it is any form of a hat.

Mady - a girl or a girlfriend.

Makoya - a real thing.

Mambiza - it is a nick name for a township called Tembisa.

Mantje - it refers to chips.

Ma-odds - it is any form of money.

Maria Podesta - refers to a beautiful girlfriend or girl.

Mashodan - any person who is physically shot.

Mashona - it is a nick name for a township called Tsakane.

Mavrika - it is a nick name for townships in the Vaal Triangle area.

Miza - is a female teacher.

Mondia - refers to a fine situation (when things are fine).

Mort - is a murder.

Mpara - is a stupid person.

Musk - to frown badly on something or someone.

Nine-nine - to be specific or to say things directly.

Nogter - refers to a medical doctor.

Ntjeza - it is any kind of a gun.

Nugget - is a girlfriend or any girl.

Number 5 - is any person who is an obstacle to someone who wants to advance to something or to someone.

Ofi - is a mother.

Oil - is a brandy called Mellowood.

Orla - is someone who has passed away.

Palmolive - is a beautiful girlfriend.

Paper - it is any form of money.

Pash - it is when everything is in order or fine.

Pashaza - to shoot at someone or anything.

Pin - to open something.

Pirara - it is a nick name for Pretoria region.

Plat - to be financially stranded.

Plazin - it is the rural area.

Pozzi - (a) it is any place (b) its a place for sexual intercourse.

Premium - it is a brandy.

Qando - it any form of food.

Quanch - is to go somewhere.

Quaza - to buy anything.

Queen Latifa - refers to a girl or girlfriend who is physically fat.

Regte - the real girlfriend or boyfriend.

Reverand - is a cool guy.

Rinci - is a school master or school principal.

Roof - it is to rob people their property through tricks or by physical force.

Royce-Royce - is to rape.

Safta - is to eat.

Sandy - (a) refers to any form of disguise (b) also refers to one's attitude.

Sata - is to die.

Satas - refers to Saturday.

Sbianco - it is any type of beer.

Sbilo - is a brother in-law.

Scolana - is any type of cold drink.

Sgela - is a school.

Sgomora - it is to masturbate.

Shark - is a guy with many girlfriends.

Shibas - it is a shop.

Shidiza - is to buy something on credit.

Shielas - refers to Thursday.

Sister blaze - it a matches.

Sister Monica - it is any cigarette.

Siza - is a sister.

Sjozi - is someone who work at the shebeen and being exploited.

Skep - it is when a boy takes his girlfriend to his home for the whole night.

Skido - it is a police van.

Skroof - is a father.

Skyf - is to ask for a cigarette.

Skryf - is to ask for something, it is also to write.

Slahla - it is a cabriolet.

Slenter - is a slender person.

Smandana - it is a month.

Smarties - is to smile.

Smega - it is any form of money.

Smiley - is a dead cow, sheep or pig's head.

Smogo - refers to any form of trouble.

Smovana - is a car.

Sny - (a) to tell a person bad things (b) refers to a stupid person (c) it is dagga.

Spati - to be pregnant.

Spio - is a nick name of a town called Springs.

Splash - is to take a bath and also to wash anything.

Spot - is a shebeen house.

Spoti - (a) to hold a grudge (b) is a hat.

Spro - is a bicycle.

Squash - to finish something.

Squeezer - is a sister in-law.

Stadium - is any place of making love.

Stagi - is any form of money.

Stapia - is the police.

Starch - is a stupid person.

Sta-soft - refers to muti which is used to tame either a boy or girl in a love relationship (love potion).

Stephina Cook - it is a cigarette.

Sthalala - (a) it is money (b) also refers to town.

Sthani - is a mother.

Sthiwa - it is a town.

Stidy - it when a place is crowded or full to capacity.

Stoep - is a prison.

Stola - it is to isolate someone.

Superglue - is a girl who is after a boy even if the boy is not interested in her.

Sweeper - it is when a guy takes his girlfriend to his home for the whole night.

Sweete - is a mother.

Tabalaza - is to raise money in any form.

Tafol - it is a kind of attitude one has.

Tanasa - is to boast about something.

Talaza - (a) to expose something or someone (b) also to be uneasy.

Taranova - to slap someone.

Teken - is a girlfriend or any girl.

Testa (a) to be bored or a boring situation (b) also refers to go somewhere.

Tider - it is when a boy propose a love affair to a girl.

Tiger - (a) is a slap (b) it is a ten rand (R10) (c) also refers

to someone who is socially wise.

Timer - is a father.

Tissue - refers to R10.

Tiza - is male teacher.

TJ - is a nickname for Johannesburg.

Tos - is a matches.

Transi - it is any form of transport.

Trapa - (a) to convince someone (b) to ask for something (c) to trick someone (d) to tell a lie.

Troja - it is a pair of trouser.

Trower - to get married.

Tsekeleke - is a fat person.

Tuka - refers to long ago.

Twist - (a) to dance (b) to convince someone (c) to be inlove.

Valaza - is a car called Valiant.

Vava - is a university.

Vobe - is a stupid person.

Vovo - is an illegitimate child.

Vutha - is a nickname of a township called Daveyton.

Wawa - to be talkative.

Werksman - is a working guy.

Wrepo - it is clothes.

Zag - it is money.

Zesta - it is dagga.

Zos - any kind of food.

Zwaap - it refers to all (things or people).

Zwide - it is a cigarette.

NUMBERS

Numbers are called in a unique style and also used to refer to different things and they are used as follows:

1 - *Uno*

2 - *Dwesh*

3 - *Dresh*

4 - *Twins*

5 - *Fisto*

6 - *Dress*

7 - *Pop*

8 - *George*

9 - *Nika*

10 - *Big-boots*

3 - to talk a lot of unfounded statements.

24 - to gossip about other people.

45 - it refers to home-made biscuits.

69 - to go to the loo.

MONEY

5c - *Zuka*

10c - *iron*

20c - *two-iron/two-bob*

30c - *three-iron/three-bob*

40c - *four-iron/four-bob*

50c - *five-iron/five-bob*

60c - *six-iron/six-bob*

70c - *seven-iron/seven-bob*

80c - *eight-iron/eight-bob*

90c - *nine-iron/nine-bob*

R1 - *Younger/Glory*

R2 - *De Klerk*

R5 - *Half-tiger/half-blue*

R10 - *Blue/Tiger*

R20 - *Chocolate/chomp*

R50 - *Pink*

R100 - *Draad/Clipper*

R1000 - *G/Stena*

R1 000 000 - *M*

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