

TITLE

A CASE STUDY OF INTEGRATED SCHOOLING WITHIN AN EX-MODEL C PRIMARY SCHOOL IN THE BLUFF AREA.

1995 - 1999

BY

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DECLARATION

I declare that this research report is my own work. It has not been submitted for a degree at any other university.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

HOA - House of Assembly

CPC - Concerned Parents Committee

SAHRC - South African Human Rights Commission

Chapter 1

1. INTRODUCTION

Conflict and change are inevitably interlocked as any redistribution of power and privilege will be sought by some and resisted by others.

(Kelly and Ball, cited in Gillborn 1995:93)

Since the transition from the system of apartheid to a non-racial democracy educational reform has been high on the list of priorities of the "new" government. Education is the key to changing many of the commonly held values and beliefs. The "new" government put forward a new democratic philosophy of education for South Africa that rejected all forms of discrimination in order to establish a more just and peaceful society after the violent repression of apartheid .
(Harber , 1990 : 3)

A significant effect of apartheid is the unequal provision of education and training at all levels. Education was used as a mechanism to perpetuate apartheid and to advantage the white population. Christian nationalism was the guiding ideology of apartheid education. The core belief was the superiority of whites.

The , then minister of Native Affairs , Hendrik Verwoerd , stated in 1954 :

The Bantu must be guided to serve his own community in all respects. There is no place for him in the European community above the level of certain forms of labour...For that reason it is of no avail for him to receive a training which has as its aim absorption into the European community, where he cannot be absorbed.

(Verwoerd , quoted by Leroux 1997: 02)

Verwoerd's speech articulated the principles of apartheid education. Bantu education , limited resources , limited access to schools and the focus on liberation during the apartheid era has

seriously disadvantaged the majority of South Africans. For decades, this has been the situation.

Historically in South Africa, there has been separation of educational provision on the basis of race. The new era (1990) has ushered in a new system of education which encompasses a culture of human rights, multi-lingualism, multi-culturalism and a sensitivity to the values of reconciliation and nation-building. Under apartheid, 19 racially and ethnically divided education departments existed. South African schools were segregated in terms of categories of WHITE, COLOURED and AFRICAN, with the latter being further subdivided into ethnic cultural groups such as Tswana, Zulu, Xhosa, etcetera. The CLASE announcements allowed schools to register students from outside of their "official" categories. Whilst such enrolments did take place before the Clase announcements, they were unofficial and depended upon the discretion of the school's principal. After the Clase announcements, however, such enrolments became public and official, and numbers increased considerably. (Carrim, 1992: 2)

Limited desegregation, which began in state schools in 1984, was given a boost with the introduction of the Clase Models (explanation of Clase Models follows in Chapter Two) in 1990. Unrestricted formal desegregation by decree, if not fully in practice, came about in 1995. Students could theoretically enter schools of their choice in a unified system on a non-racial basis. While this change has been relatively RAPID, the response of schools to the present situation have been varied. In keeping with the opening quote of this chapter, some schools have embraced the changes and are experimenting with new approaches and curricula which challenge old apartheid educational practices. Other schools have tried to resist the process of integration as highlighted by Chisholm in the following quote:

Christiana, a small town in the North West Province which had one Primary and one Secondary school with declining enrolment figures, combined the two in anticipation of the requirement to desegregate. The primary school was taken over by the Conservative Party, which planned to turn it into a retirement village for elderly white people. However at the beginning of 1995, learners from the township marched on the school and demanded that it be re-opened as a school. It is now being used as a school for black children but the white principal has been isolated by the local white community.

(Chisholm, 1995: 5)

The theoretical opening of schools to all has not, however, eliminated problems in education. According to Christie (1995: 52), responses of the historically white schools themselves point to the continuing significance of racial barriers. The majority of the schools did not use the opportunities provided by the models to desegregate during the political transition, and most of those which did admitted relatively small numbers of black students. Strict admissions criteria, fee requirements and academic entrance tests restricted black enrolments to a small elite. It cannot be assumed that bringing all races together will necessarily imply harmonious existence. Moreover, it cannot be assumed that bringing **blacks**, (a term that is used in the study to refer to people who are designated Indian, Coloured and African inclusively in the South African context), and white pupils together in schools would necessarily shift pupils and teachers as well as parents' views on race. Simply sharing facilities together would not necessarily break down years of racial prejudice generated by an apartheid ideology and the concept of cultural and class hierarchy.

Although previously segregated schools had desegregated and have resulted in multi cultural classes of learners 'there is an alarming absence of innovation, with schools continuing as if nothing has changed.'

(Naidoo, 1996: 80)

In other words, even when desegregation occurred, schools were often conservative and unimaginative in dealing with challenges. I support Fullan's (1997: 32) argument that '*real change requires individuals to alter their ways of thinking and doing.*' School change needs to be accompanied by people in schools changing, shifting attitudes and behaviours.

My interest in this study is multi-faceted and will now be outlined :

FIRSTLY, despite the publicity and interest generated by the desegregation process , and research on the integration process in so called ex-Model C schools , there is a need for further research in this field. Situations in these schools need to be constantly assessed because integration is an on-going process, unlike structural desegregation which is a one-off event. My interest in investigating the desegregation and integration process at the Wica Primary School (an ex Model-C School -The name WICA is an acronym denoting White , Indian , Coloured and African constitutes the student population of the school .Hence the psuedonym Wica Primary School is wholly fictitious.The reason for adopting a psuedonym was in keeping with the principal's request to maintain the school's anonymity.) stems partly from the foregoing point.

SECONDLY , the focus on educators in the desegregation process has generally been overlooked. If an education system changes , one has to start with teachers since teachers play an integral role in the desegregation and integration process. It is their attitudes that shape the success or failure of the desegregation and integration process. The aforementioned has inspired me to conduct an inquiry concerning educator attitudes to black children at the named school.

THIRDLY , discriminatory actions in the process of desegregation continue to be reported. In Mpumalanga , the Ben Viljoen Hoerskool ,an Afrikaans medium school in the town of Groblersdal, initially refused to allow Black learners to wear the school's uniform and placed black learners and white learners in separate classrooms (*Star* , 08/03/96) . At Hoerskool Vryburg in the North West province , Black learners were put into the school hall and left there for three weeks without receiving tuition (*Business Day* , 07/03/96). The process of desegregation has not been unproblematic. The latter holds true for the Wica Primary School. Problems at the named school have received media coverage. Letters to the editor (*Southlands Sun* , 05/12/98 ; *Daily News*

29/08/99) and articles (*Daily News* , 02/08/99 ; 08/08/99) regarding racial tension at the school have prompted me to research and investigate the situation at the school. This is to ascertain and analyse the nature and magnitude of the problems related to the integration process at the Wica Primary School in so far as staff and management are concerned. What racial tensions have been encountered at the school and what measures have been introduced to alleviate these problems constitute the focal point of the study.

FOURTHLY , no one can afford to be complacent about the prospects of integration. At the present time, there is no good reason to suppose that differences between individuals and groups from different social , racial and cultural backgrounds can be resolved without a determined and protracted effort to inform , to understand and remove misunderstanding and prejudice. There is a sense of immediacy , not to say urgency , in the work that teachers have to do.

FIFTHLY , one of the subjects of scrutiny – RACISM – is a subject of considerable importance today. It raises fundamental questions about the kind of society we now have in South Africa , about the kind of society that is likely to evolve in this country , and about how education is to serve the common needs at a time of increasing social complexity.

FINALLY , a study of this nature will deal with aspects of this complexity and consider attempts to remove the racial and other tensions which have become exacerbated since the introduction of open schools. The study covers the process of integration in a newly desegregated school in Kwazulu - Natal that was previously administered by the ex House of Assembly (ex-HOA) , that is a so called 'white school' . This research concentrates on the process of integration at the Wica Primary School , situated in the Bluff, Durban . This research focuses principally on the process of integration from 1995 to 1999.

The desegregation process at the Wica Primary School has resulted in the influx of African , Indian and Coloured students to a former White school . What has happened inside the school

as the complexion of the student body has changed at the Wica Primary School is explored in this study.

My fundamental focus in this study is on the attitudes of white teachers towards the presence of Indian, Coloured and African students since teachers play a cardinal role in the integration process.

2.CONTEXT

The Wica Primary School is situated in the BLUFF region in Durban, coastal suburb , south of the city centre .The Bluff consists of two narrow parallel ridges. These high peaks in terms of altitude , rateable value, and proportion European, fall on the Ocean RIDGE (Brighton Beach) and the BAY Ridge (Wentworth) of the Bluff .Between the ridges lies a sparsely inhabited valley.

The area was not initially inhabited by white settlers but was the location of the Bluff Lighthouse which was erected in 1869. It served as a landmark by day and a brilliant beacon of light by night. The Port Natal Lighthouse was not alone of benefit to local shipping but it was also a useful landmark to vessels homeward bound from eastern seas.
(Dawes, 1948:123)

The Bluff harbour in the 1930's was used as a whaling station. Trains bringing loads from collieries were diverted to the Bluff side of the harbour and the most modern loading apparatus was installed at the side of the Bluff wharves.
(MacMillan, 1973:74)

Up until the late 1980's and early 1990's, comparing the distribution of Coloureds with that of whites, there were very few coloureds in the areas of white dominance. Prior to the late 80's , the Ocean Ridge of the Bluff were allocated to whites. The coloureds were allocated a small area on the inner Ridge, away from the sea front. The extreme southern section of the Bluff was proposed for Indians. Africans were completely cut off from the Bluff region for many years. They occupied a section known as Lamontville away from the Bluff. The Bluff was a conservative, middle class area inhabited by Afrikaners in the main.

Regarding schooling in the Bluff, in terms of a network of apartheid regulations, prior to 1990, separate education systems had been institutionalised and racially mixed schools prohibited. In other words , schooling was segregated and the student and teacher body in the the Bluff area was homogenous (comprising of whites exclusively). Christian National Education (CNE) which was part of the Afrikaner Nationalism was emphasised at these schools.

The Wica Primary School was initially reserved exclusively for white pupils but in 1991, in keeping with developments locally and nationally and after the Model-C concept of schools was introduced the school , began admitting Black pupils.

3. DEFINITIONS

It is necessary at the outset to define certain terms of reference within which this study has been constructed.

The concepts considered are :

- * Racism
- * Desegregation
- * Integration
- * Assimilation
- * Multi-cultural Education
- * Anti-racism

RACISM

According to Moore (quoted in C Eyber et al 1997 : 02)

Racism is based on the combination of the following beliefs :

- ♦ It is legitimate and valid to divide people up according to different race groups
- ♦ There is a natural hierarchy amongst 'races' , particularly in terms of intelligence , morality , spirituality and civilization
- ♦ exclusion and or domination of certain "race groups" by others is justifiable

According to Mkwanazi and Carrim (1992:01) racism is :

The systematic oppression of people of colour which occurs at the individual, interpersonal, and or cultural level. It may be overt or covert, intentional or unintentional.

New radical approaches to racism remove intent from the equation. Actions and or rules that disproportionately disadvantage people of minority ethnic background may be judged racist in their consequences, whatever the conscious intent behind them.

(Gillborn 1995:05)

Racism therefore, may be implicit and not obvious.

Todd's (1991:08) formulation of individual racism as racism which is concerned with actions and attitudes involving the negative evaluation of people on the basis of some assumed biological characteristic such as skin colour is synonymous with stereotyping.

Institutional Racism is racism which is concerned with routine procedures and practices and the ways in which these can exclude or disadvantage people while structural

racism is concerned with the broader, historically embedded patterns of social inequality in society and in terms of this study with reference to education.

In practice all levels of racism outlined are interconnected. The emphasis on unintentional discrimination within institutional practices and procedures is important because, though widespread, it is often unrecognised. Racism at Wica Primary School has been alleged. The categories of racism outlined will be useful in attempting to identify types of racism prevalent at the school if it does in fact surface.

DESEGREGATION

According to Naidoo (1996:11)

Desegregation is a mechanical process which merely involves establishing the physical proximity of members of different groups in the same school. It implies nothing about the quality of interracial contact. Desegregation is often seen as synonymous with integration and the end of apartheid education.

Rist (quoted in Naidoo, 1996: 11) in an appraisal of the desegregation of American schools, states that racial cleavage reported time and again in those studies suggest that white learner populations may have been 'desegregated', but were not 'integrated'. This view is endorsed by Seager (1994: 214) when he maintains that 'a claim that despite the desegregation of central business districts, the opening of certain amenities to all races, and the introduction of new models of schooling, racial integration remained largely cosmetic.'

In terms of the historical background of South African schooling, the "opening" of schools did not simply imply (and is not a matter of) blacks going to white schools. It has entailed desegregation of schools within the broader black community as well.

Desegregation in the context of the study involves the opening of the Wica Primary School (racially exclusive previously) to members of all racial and ethnic groups.

Historically in South Africa , there has been separation of educational provision on the basis of race. Limited desegregation began in state schools in 1984. In 1990 the Clase Models was introduced. The Clase Models formed the basis of a new admission policy introduced by minister Piet Clase on September 10 , 1990 which gave white parent communities the choice of retaining the status quo at their schools or adopting one of three models which gave them control over admissions. These models A, B ,C which came to be known as the Clase Models allowed for limited desegregation. These models can be described as follows : Model A allowed white state schools to close down as state schools and to reopen as private schools. Model B allowed them to remain state schools but to have an open admissions policy. Model C allowed them to convert themselves to semi-private schools. (Coutts , 1992 : 16-17)

As critics such as Carrim and Sayed (cited in Christie 1993 : 7) pointed out , the models opened new spaces for progressive education struggles for a single non-racial system , rather than advancing goals of the democratic movement.

INTEGRATION

Integration is a social process and a possible outcome of desegregation. Integration is not a single event or a one-time shift in school conditions but a series of activities , events and changes occurring over a long period of time. Integration requires fundamental changes in previous educational conditions as well as in personal attitudes and behaviour patterns. It requires major changes of deep-seated attitudes and behaviour patterns among learners and teachers of minority and majority groups and in the institutional patterns and arrangements of schools. In many ways they have to become truly 'new ' schools for there to be effective integration.

(Smith , Downs and Lachman cited in Naidoo , 1996:11)

Contrasting the concepts of integration and desegregation , desegregation is a once off " opening of the school " to students from all racial , ethnic and cultural groups while integration is an evolutionary process that attempts to develop a response to students from different race , cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Integration is achieved only when positive intergroup contact has occurred.

While it has been established that the Wica Primary School is a desegregated school , this study examines race relations between students and teachers. In terms of exploring integration at the school the following aspects will be investigated :

- * What adaptations have been made to take into account some of the changes that have ensued as a result of the desegregation process ?
- * What institutional changes have been effected to take into account the changes that have been occurring in the last five years in terms of the racial composition of the school ?
- * Does the school have a particular ethos and identity and how does it relate to pupils of different races and social class ?

ASSIMILATION

According to Grant (1992 : 110)

Assimilationist teaching represents and champions the status quo. Its major function is to transmit dominant culture beliefs, values, myths and ideologies and to induct students into the role that society has determined for them with an unquestioning, uncritical view of the way schools miseducate all children, minority and non-minority.

In other words a school that remains assimilationist is one where the ethos of the school remains unchanged .

According to Carrim and Mkwanazi (1993 : 18)

Assimilationist strategies were the first responses to be used in the desegregation process in South Africa. An assimilationist strategy allows presence of the different racial , cultural or ethnic groups within a single institution. However , the groups remain distinct and separate with very little change in the behaviour of the dominant group and minimum intergroup contact.

I am not in favour of the assimilationist model since it denies the recognition of differences between racial , cultural or ethnic groups. The assimilationist model does not offer a suitable

substitute to dealing with "diverse" groups since assimilation amounts to the obliteration of cultural distinctions. Assimilationist approaches have been found **not** to reduce racist practices or instances of racial abuse. (Gillborn , cited in May, 1999 : 167) .In the South African case , assimilationism has been found to be insufficient in actually dealing with "mixed " groups , since the denial of cultural diversity within assimilationism does not enable people to gain a better understanding of each other or facilitate improved relations among them. For the purpose of this study the concept will be utilised as an analytical tool.

MULTI-CULTURAL EDUCATION

Multi-cultural education is a complete transformation of the global school ecological context , the ultimate aim being the creation of teaching and learning opportunities in accordance with the needs of learners from diverse cultural , language , socio-economic , political backgrounds. This dynamic and continuous educational process is constantly adapted to meet the learners needs.

(Viljoen cited in Johann Leroux , 1997:30)

According to Banks and Lynch (cited in Johann Leroux , 1997:31)

Multi-cultural education is a broad concept that encompasses ethnic studies , multi-ethnic education and anti-racist education. It consists of educational reform that is designed to reform the school environment so that many different groups, including ethnic groups will experience educational equality and academic parity.

Squelch (1996 : 37) indicates that the following aspects occur in most definitions on multi-cultural education

- * *Multi - cultural education is a particular approach to education*
- * *It is a continuous and dynamic process*
- * *It enhances cultural awareness and sensitivity*
- * *It acknowledges and accepts cultural diversity*
- * *Education legislation is based on the preceding assumption*
- * *Equivalence is developed in education*
- * *The entire school ecology is transformed in order to address the needs of learners from diverse cultural language and socio-economic groups.*

An evaluation of multi-cultural education raises various points of criticism that will be focussed on now.

- * Critics readily regard multi-cultural education as merely a veiled form of mixed or integrated education, or as a perpetuation of apartheid education in a concealed form. This view gives rise to negative attitudes and cultural prejudice.*
- * Numerous researchers hold the opinion that multi-cultural education constitutes an idealistic theory which cannot be attained in practice.*
- * An additional point of criticism is that multi-cultural education is but lip service and tokenism and that it does not address the actual problems of a heterogenous society.*
- * Some researchers believe that the underlying assumptions of multi-cultural education are idealistic and fail to address basic aspects such as racism and cultural prejudice. However, racism and stereotyping are deeply rooted social problems which cannot be resolved by education only.*

Carrim and Soudien (cited in May , 1999 : 161) criticised multi-cultural education by stating that multi-cultural trends in schools seem to be reconstructed forms of racism itself.

I contend that a multi-cultural approach will not be the vehicle of change and will not bring about integration. Taking cognisance of the above criticism and because of the apolitical nature of multi-cultural education models for the purpose of this study the concept of multi-cultural education will be employed only as an analytical tool.

ANTI - RACISM

To use Meyer's (1993 : 107) formulation

Anti-racism tackles problems of : identifying , dealing with and redressing those attitudes and behaviours that discriminate against people because of their colour , ethnicity or religion. It supports the inherent dignity , rights and freedom of all peoples.

Anti-racist pedagogy offers a viable alternative to the multi-cultural education currently in practice at schools. Anti – racist pedagogy seeks more fundamental structural changes in society. It attempts to understand and change the power relationships in society. Within the individual schools it seeks to deal explicitly with 'race' and 'racism' at an institutional and individual level. Placing race and racism at the centre of its programme , it seeks to deal directly with myth , suspicion, ignorance , prejudice and fear. Through anti-racist programmes all students and teachers are encouraged to reflect on their behaviour and identify prejudices and stereotypes. Anti-racist pedagogy does not see the presence of those from different cultures and ethnic cultures in one classroom as a problem to be overcome. Rather it focuses on these differences as a resource from which students can draw to provide a rich range of ideas and experiences. Sarup (1986) proposes that anti-racist teaching practices be a compulsory component in teacher training in order for it to gain recognition. Failure to develop a coherent school policy to respond to school desegregation would leave the current ratio and ethnic tensions to fester and the status quo would remain. Anti-racism is explicitly alert and sensitive to the multiple expressions of "difference " in identity. I regard an anti-racist programme of action as essential in South Africa as anti-racism emphasises the necessity of acknowledging and incorporating a notion of " difference."

4. A REVIEW OF LITERATURE ON THE DESEGREGATION AND INTEGRATION PROCESS

The complexities of the process of integration necessitated a review of literature concerning the racial integration of schools locally. This study provides a summary of some of the findings that bear specific relevance to the Wica Primary School.

It is evident that although the formal barriers to discrimination have been removed, the racial values and practices of many communities still remain and are reflected in various schools. The way in which schools adapt to increase integration is therefore critical.

The opening of schools to all has given very different interpretations of the notion of integration. Some schools have higher black enrolments, others have hardly any black students. Some have introduced curriculum and staffing changes in their student bodies, others have tried to change as little as possible.

Christie (1993 : 129) asserts :

It is important to recognise that desegregating white schools entails working with an existing legacy of assumptions and practices. These are expressed for example, in the locations of buildings of the schools, their staffing patterns, sporting and other extra-mural activities - in short what is sometimes as the "hidden curriculum". In many cases the heritage of open schools may operate as a gatekeeper to change, with the result that assimilationism is taken for granted. In other words, institutional arrangements and actions of individuals exert some pressure on the new pupils to adhere to and to conform to an existing ethos that is often alien to their own background.

Soudien (1994 : 281- 294) expresses a similar sentiment in a study of the desegregation process in the Western Cape when he maintains that desegregation in these schools have been characterised by an entrenched philosophy of assimilation. He indicated that this philosophy is expressed most articulately in white or former Model C schools, but is pervasive too in coloured schools.

According to Carrim and Soudien (cited in May 1999 : 167)

People of different " racial " groups are portrayed as being culturally different , implying a shift from " race " to ethnicity. This is particularly evident in the fact that cultural diversity within racialised groups is ignored consistently.

A review of the data in Chapter 3 indicates that the Wica Primary School has followed an assimilationist response to desegregation. In view of this I have deliberately referred to the Wica Primary School as a " desegregated school " as opposed to an " integrated school " .

At the Wica Primary School the dominant ' white ethos ' of the school remains unchanged.

Allied to the policy of assimilation is the colour blind perspective where it is claimed that all children are the same and treated equally. As indicated by Jansen (cited in Cross , Mkwanazi-Twala and Klein , 1998 : 131)

Many so-called liberal white schools actively disclaimed race as a factor in the life of the school :

" Our teachers see children , not colour "

What Jansen expresses is resounded by teachers and the principal at the Wica Primary School where many approaches appear to be focussed in the domain of racial equality – with equality perceived as the achievement of " sameness " . Greater attention is devoted to this issue in Chapter 3.

A student (quoted in Eyber et al , 1997 : 52) said that at their school (a mixed school) :

The colour issue does not really pop up that often except when there is a fight or ...a major disagreement , then race always comes into it.

A teacher (quoted in Eyber et al , 1997 : 52) said :

Nobody ever mentions colour ...we don't even think about it. Perhaps deliberately we suppress talking about it.

The above may serve to hide racist or discriminatory practices and attitudes and inhibit the recognition of differences. This is very much the case at the Wica Primary School. While I agree that change is not easy, pretending that everything is fine makes it harder. Students and teachers prejudices may silently increase than decrease as there is more integration but no discussion. Thus where attempts are made to accommodate difference and promote respect for diversity, these are often superficial.

Related to assimilationism Carrim and Soudien (cited in May , 1999 : 160) in their study noted the following :

Teachers and students, across Indian, Coloured and White schools, make consistent reference to an "us" and "them" language which not only indicates the racially exclusivist ways in which they define their own identities, but also the predominance of assimilationism in their experiences of the desegregation of their schools. The assumption being that "they" are coming to "us" and the more "they" are like "us" or the more "they" become like "us", the more acceptable "they" become. The "host" culture is not viewed as lacking in any way, since deficiencies, if any, are seen to be tied inextricably only to the incoming "other".

This discourse outlined by Carrim and Soudien persists at the Wica Primary School. So too is the perception that incoming black pupils are deficient with respect to the school's expectations.

Jansen raises the moral issue of who has the right to decide on or to represent issues of curriculum and diversity within integrated schools. This is captured in the following quotation:

Can teachers who have never seen the inside of a shanty or who are ignorant of the linguistic or cultural subtleties and richness of black life successfully teach black children? Research and experience in countries such as the United States of America suggests that children from disadvantaged economic or linguistic groups learn best when the persons teaching them share their background, culture and experiences, understand their values, expectations on beliefs, and model success and achievement in contexts where this is seldom observed. This is not a case for a one-on-one matching of black teachers with black students or white

students with white teachers. On the contrary it is an argument for providing students with diverse teachers and teaching experiences within the school setting to counter racial stereotyping and curriculum bias .

Jansen's quote unfolds a wealth of meaning and emphasises similar arguments that have been put forth by the parent's committee at the Wica Primary School.

According to Tyack and Cuban (quoted in Chisholm , 1999 : 88)

Important changes are implemented only in token , symbolic ways.

The above assertion is reinforced by Naidoo (1996 : 5) who contends that innovations are introduced sporadically rather than continuously , as a result of outside pressure rather than being generated from within. These changes are introduced superficially. The Wica Primary School echoes Naidoo's contention as will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 3.

From the review of literature three trends emerge strongly. Firstly the assimilationist mode is predominant in many schools . Secondly , racelessness , with the shift from " race" to ethnicity also features prominently. Thirdly the discriminatory discourse of " us" and " them" is also a common characteristic in many schools.

In addition to the reviewing of literature on the desegregation and integration process , this chapter has examined some of the central theoretical issues and concepts that are focussed on in this case study.

Chapter 2 outlines the research procedure followed for this research report. Besides discussing methods (interviews , questionnaires) by which data was collected , it also provides some theoretical underpinnings for adopting the case study research. Shortcomings and problems encountered with this research procedure will in turn be elucidated.

Chapter 2

Methodology is too important to be left to methodologists.

(Becker cited in Gillborn , 1995: 40)

METHODOLOGY

1. AIMS

This study aims to ascertain the attitudes of teachers towards the change in the racial composition of the school. The attitudes of white teachers and non-white students to the desegregation process at a former House of Assembly school are examined. How these changes are experienced by teachers and students with regard to integration and interaction is explored.

2. TYPE OF STUDY

My research was located within the interactionist sociology paradigm. According to Meighan and Blatchford (1997 : 14) there are several interactionist perspectives , some inclined towards a micro-view (the view that , instead of individuals being forced by the patterns of society or pulled by the strings of society like puppets , individuals create society everyday by their social actions) some towards a macro-view (they start with a view that of societies , cultures and institutions as having set patterns or rules and behaviours , with the result that individuals are seen as being forced , persuaded , manipulated or socialised into some degree of compliance with these patterns). What they tend to have in common is a view of society as a loose network of related parts in a constant state of flux. This network can be sometimes harmonious , sometimes conflict-laden , sometimes rigidly structured , sometimes more open and flexible , and sometimes can contain all or some of these features in a contradictory state of affairs. Interactionist perspectives as indicated by Meighan and Blatchford (1997 : 15) tend to have a Janus view. Janus was a Roman God , the guardian of gates and doorways , who had two faces looking in different directions.

... to understand human behaviour through observing and interaction with people in order to understand the world as they understand it. (Simon , 1997 : 25).

The intention of this research was not to look for an " objective " , "factual " measurement but to gain insight into the process of desegregation and subsequent integration of Black learners



in a formerly white school. Taking cognisance of the complex nature of desegregation and integration necessitates a qualitative approach that blends multiple sources of data collection.

For the purpose of this research I adopted the qualitative research approach not only because I considered it most appropriate but because it lends itself to interactionist sociology as well , which does form the conceptual and theoretical framework of my study.

2.2 DESIGN : CASE STUDY

The case study approach was used for this study.

What is a case study ?

According to Simon (1987 : 33) :

Case studies should be inconclusive accounts containing accurate reports of the divergent and convergent views of all the participants.

Yin (1983 : 22) on the other hand regards a case study as "*an enquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon and context are not clearly evident , and in which multiple sources are used.*"

From the above definitions it appears that the case study can be described as one form of social enquiry. To me then , a case study is an attempt to understand the social processes and meaning implicit in some undertaking in a restricted context. Case study analysis , hence , is a form of qualitative study which is generally intended to determine what "things exist" than to determine " how many such things there are ."

For the purpose of my study Wica Primary School was used as a case study. This case study has provided an account of the school's experience. This qualitative method has enabled me to provide a " holistic" picture of communication in a desegregated school and also enabled me to establish formal and informal relationships with the Principal and the CPC. Given the interest and purpose of my research report , it was clear that the case study approach was best suited in retrieving the particularities and reconstructing the meanings that became evident as the process of desegregation unfolded. Quantitative study would not have provided this sort of data.

3. RESEARCH SITE

An ex –House of Assembly school situated on the Bluff, a residential suburb, was chosen for this study – The Wica Primary School. This particular school was chosen because it serves a range of learners and local communities from diverse ethnic and socio-economic class backgrounds. In addition , this school is geographically close to my place of residence and I can commute to it with ease. Furthermore , this school has been the object of criticism and media attention. The Bluff is a middle-class , well – developed residential suburb that was designated a white area under the apartheid Group Areas Act. However , in the early 1990's limited desegregation occurred when non-whites were permitted to purchase homes in the Bluff region. More recently , a fair number of middle-class professional and business-owning Indian , African and Coloured families have taken up residence in this area.

The school enjoys a good sea-view. This school was initially reserved exclusively for white pupils but in 1991 in keeping with developments locally and nationally and after the Model-C concept of schools was introduced the school began admitting non-white pupils. The current school population is drawn from a wide area. Although the majority of the pupils reside in the Bluff area , a significant number come from the Wentworth , Merewent and Merebank area. With regard to the racial composition of learners , the principal indicated that she was unable to furnish statistics as she did not know. She clearly expressed the fact that she sees all learners as children and not as an " Indian" , "Coloured" or "Black" child. However , the CPC provided an estimate of the learner enrolment based on 1999 statistics : Whites : 275 ; Indians : 75 ; Coloureds : 50 ; Blacks : 100

The staff at the school consists of 16 educators , predominantly females , between the ages of 26 and 48. Out of 16 staff members there were two Indian educators and two Coloured educators. The rest of the staff comprised of White educators.

FIELDWORK

My principal aim during the empirical stage of the project was to build a relatively detailed and vivid picture of how the school has changed to address the issues of racism. In particular, I wanted to explore how teachers and students experienced the changes.

RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

This study has made use of various research instruments to gather relevant information of school integration. These included interviews, questionnaires and an analysis of documents. The complexity and wide scope of the subject under investigation necessitated such an approach. Furthermore when the different methods were used together they served as mutual checks and complementary sources of information.

[a] INTERVIEWS

Interviews provided data but I also organised observational work and collected documents. The methodology of intensive interviews was thought to be most suitable for eliciting the views of the principal, pupils as well as the members of the CPC on a wide range of issues relating to the school. This approach was sensitively deployed to capturing school experience in its entirety.

Semi-structured interviews were employed. The deliberate choice of this form of interviewing was considered appropriate since it allowed for far more open questions, dialogue and probing. It was necessary to be flexible with interviews because of the sensitive nature of the issues.

[b] QUESTIONNAIRES

The questionnaire that was employed was the one drawn up by Jordan Naidoo (1996) with slight adaptations (refer to annexure – sample) . A total of 16 questionnaires were distributed to teachers. The questionnaires were handed out and collected a week later allowing members of staff to complete them at their own leisure. The questionnaire included open-ended questions in an attempt to gain in depth information. Respondents were encouraged to express themselves freely. The focus in these questionnaires was on teachers' perceptions and attitudes to desegregation , integration and changes in the wider context.

The response to the questionnaires was satisfactory. A total of 11 questionnaires were completed and returned while the remaining 5 members of staff chose not to answer the questionnaire without forwarding any explanation. The teachers responded defensively at every phase of the study. The denial and defensiveness on the part of the teachers persistently blocked the needed support when an attempt at undertaking change in the school was made. Many responses were evasive and some teachers chose to ignore certain questions totally in the questionnaires which presented a problem when data was analysed. Where questions were answered teachers tended to be vague. Teacher response was generally apathetic.

[c] DOCUMENTATION

Documented evidence of racism at the school was obtained from newspaper articles and letters to the editor. Reports by the Human Rights Commission and letters by the Chief Superintendent addressing problems at the school were included.

SAMPLING

Since the staff complement was relatively small the entire staff was used. The role of the principal in any institution is a crucial one. His or her approach to racial justice and cultural diversity is an important influence on the school as a whole. The principal of the school was interviewed.

Since the members of the CPC play an integral part in combatting racism at the school , four members of this committee were interviewed. Pupils from different racial groups were also interviewed.

The procedures described in this chapter will assist in the analysis of data that follows in the next chapter. The analysis will involve an attempt to describe the social system of the school, the nature of interaction among the different participants in this setting and the attitudes of educators to the presence of non-white pupils.

Chapter Three

FINDINGS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

An analysis of the data and exploration of the findings arrived at through the procedures described in the previous chapter constitutes the focus of this chapter.

Questions of the existence and significance of racism at the Wica Primary School are alleged and are tackled in different ways , for with different definitions as starting points there can be varied assessments of evidence.

There are other problems (administrative) , since some of the activities covered are covert , are not recognised by the people involved , and there are difficulties in assessing some of the evidence. Nevertheless , there is an accumulation of evidence , which will now be drawn upon.

What follows is an attempt to draw together the common themes in the diverse and often contradictory data generated from interviews , questionnaires and documents. It is important to consider the attitudes of the principal and teachers towards the process of racial integration at the school. In examining the teachers' and principal's reactions , differences and similarities are apparent. It is important to view the kinds of adjustments made to identify the factors that facilitated or hindered the process on integration.

3.2 RESPONSES TO THE INTEGRATION OF THE SCHOOL

The varied views were expressed by teachers on the pace of integration. Many teachers presented a positive and supportive stance to integration.

Desegregation had to happen sooner or later.

[Teacher, Questionnaire]

Desegregation went on smoothly the way it occurred.

[Teacher, Questionnaire]

Regarding integration at the school , the principal had the following to say:

We started at least nine years ago accepting pupils from other races – but a few at a time.

[Principal , Interview]

The preceding quote suggests that the school tried to control the process of desegregation by limiting the number of black pupils entering the school. Research (Metcalfe , 1991: 23) has shown that the flow of black pupils to white "open" schools has been slow. The number of black pupils form a very small percentage in most schools. However this number has picked up in the last few years.

In the past few years (1995 onwards) integration at the school of pupils and teachers has been progressing quite quickly. I feel we are very representative of the demographics of the country. Integration had to happen as the need arose , that is , the movement of different racial groups into the formerly white areas. Integration cannot be stopped from happening.

[Principal , Interview]

The principal in the foregoing quote equates integration with desegregation. However , integration and desegregation are not synonymous processes. The principal saw the desegregating of schools as part of a political commitment to non-racialism. She accepted the change.

Other members of staff echoed the principal's sentiments with regard to the desegregation process. Teachers tended to speak favourably about the broad implications of desegregating schools and rejected with abhorrence any suggestion of racially exclusive attitudes.

Wica Primary School had accepted black pupils in the early 90's , before any other local schools had started.

[Teacher , Questionnaire]

When children of different races were admitted at the Wica Primary School in the early 90's desegregation began informally. However , since 1995 the process of desegregation has

progressed at an accelerated pace. But the next step is integration. This may be said to exist only when every child is welcomed as an equal member of the school community and is provided with the experiences that fulfil his or her educational needs. Though the Wica Primary School is desegregated these conditions have not been met as will be elaborated on later in this study.

Not all teachers favoured desegregation as their response in the questionnaires revealed negative associations to the desegregation process and one teacher had the following to say:

The process of integration has been too fast because many of the children of colour seemed to get the lowest marks. We find that many learners of colour seem to want to come to previously advantaged schools even though they live outside the area. They then battle to pay school fees.

[Teacher , Questionnaire]

Interactionist sociology (refer to Chapter 2 for explanation) has always emphasised the importance of symbols and meaning as essential components in understanding how social life is shaped and experienced. By analysing the role of "race" and ethnicity , I was able to trace dynamic and often complex links between issues of racism and key pronouncements. I was able critically to deconstruct comments that claimed to be unconnected with "race" whilst simultaneously granting legitimacy to a particular and racist definition of us as opposed to " them". Reference to " they " suggests that the educator bases the " our " upon inclusions against the " they " that excludes. This notion of "our" and "them" , "we" and "they" , "us" and "them" became important tools that the teachers employed. As pointed out by Bhana (1994 : 15)

Teachers interpolate black pupils as the other. Teachers articulation of their practices in terms of " our " (sameness) and " their's " (otherness) widens the gaps and perpetuates the bipolar dichotomies of the Other and Same. In this same-other dualism , exclusionary tendancies are foregrounded. The other is articulated as the lesser and the inferior term or as a marginal entity. The construction of the black pupil as " lacking " facilitates teacher attempts to proffer the preferred cultural ethos which marginalises the other.

It became apparent that this talk was an oppressive talk that emphasised difference , teachers placed difference under surveillance and attempted to close it off. The black pupils at the school are included but excluded by the very discourse whose intention it is to redress inequalities. This relation is hierachical , the tendency of the same to dominate over the other and to obliterate the specificity of the other is a form of " violence "(Bhana , 1994:15)

The above quote also brings to the fore the issue of " deficit model" where the under achievement of black pupils is seen to be a fault of the child and the home background and not that of the school. Such a response serves to reinforce the prejudices and stereotypes that teachers hold of black students. The teacher sees black children as a problem and has low academic expectations of them. This highlights the fact that stereotyped thinking is still common in schools today.

3.3 PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED BY TEACHERS

Whether teachers encountered any problems in terms of teaching racially mixed classes received the following responses :

Learners can barely speak English.

[Teacher , Questionnaire]

Their weakness in English hampers their progress.

[Teacher , Questionnaire]

They are slow in catching up and comprehending English.

[Teacher , Questionnaire]

Because of their weakness in English they tend to do badly in all subjects.

[Teacher , Questionnaire]

The teachers above have expressed concern about the " linguistic" (that is English) ability of

the African pupils entering the school , usually in the context of " **language deficiency** " . In most cases the problems are located with the African pupils. The teachers focus on " **deficiencies and inadequacies** " of African pupils without looking at their own approaches or the curriculum , reflecting a lack of understanding and an ignorance of the complexity of the issue of integration. This is accompanied by racist and stereotyped notions of different race and cultural groups.

Many teachers seem ultra –sensitive to any behaviour on the part of the new children that appears to differ from the norm or what they are used to. The following comments indicate this:

African pupils are loud and disrupt lessons frequently.

[Teacher , Questionnaire]

African pupils have the habit of speaking out of turn during lessons and need to be reprimanded.

[Teacher , Questionnaire]

The problem that I have is that African pupils in my class are not cultured . They misbehave and laugh a lot.

[Teacher , Questionnaire]

The foregoing depicts stereotyped thinking on the part of the teachers. Stereotyped thinking needs to be shed.

3.4 INNOVATIONS OR ADAPTATIONS AT THE SCHOOL

Whether and how this school has adapted to accommodate some of the changes that have ensued as a result of the process of integration were crucial questions that were focussed on.

In most cases teachers did little on an organised and formal basis to address the changes brought about by desegregation. This is captured in the following quote :

Adaptations have been minimal , besides making easier worksheets when teaching classes that are weaker with language.

[Teacher , Questionnaire]

A handful of teachers reflected the following:

- * The subject "Christian education " was replaced by "Family Life"
- * Sport is used to integrate pupils
- * Worksheets are modified by simplifying the language to cater for the linguistically disadvantaged pupils

The above indicates that there have been limited efforts by the school to address the learning needs of black pupils. However , multi-cultural education as interpreted and practiced in this setting involves minor curricular accommodations without addressing racism , and in fact , adds to the problem. Naidoo's assertion (refer to page 3) regarding the absence of innovation is played out at the Wica Primary School. This lack of innovation can be linked to the concept of " business as usual " (Willie and Becker , 1973).

3.5 INSTITUTIONAL CHANGES NECESSARY

- i) Staffing – more representative
- ii) Teaching – taking cognisance of various festivals and attitudes
- iii) Workshops – cross culture awareness
- iv) Basic tolerance and consideration between staff and pupils

[Principal , Interview]

The principal's comments suggest attempts to set in place mechanisms for accomodating students who are not white. Examples of such mechanisms are cross-cultural awareness programmes and a more representative staff. However the issue of staffing raised above by the principal contradicts her earlier comments (Page 27) that pupils and teachers at the school are representative of the demographics of the country. The principal subscribes to the notion of cultural enrichment in the abstract , yet she largely fails to seize opportunities for the expression of cultural diversities. Where cultural diversity has been encouraged (details presented later in the study) , it is often superficial and serves to reinforce cultural stereotyping.

3.6 ETHOS OF THE SCHOOL

The school teaches learners a way of life , morals and values that are applicable to **all** races , cultures and religions. Thus all learners are part of the Wica Primary School with no exceptions.

[Teacher, Questionnaire]

Our school is fully integrated and gives recognition to **all** .

[Teacher, Questionnaire]

Human rights and respect for **all**.

[Teacher, Questionnaire]

All races are accounted for. Our ethos is one of social order which encompasses **all** race groups.

[Teacher, Questionnaire]

From the foregoing comments regarding the ethos of the school one might deduce that a pleasant atmosphere and a constructive relationship exists between teachers and learners where there is an emphasis on providing a supportive environment for **all** the children. The school's pedagogy seems to be sensitive to the needs of the different groups of children and the majority of staff appear to be genuinely committed to the ideal of equality of educational opportunities. What is problematic about the comments by teachers above is the " hidden curriculum " governing them . Many of these attempts at accommodation have been superficial and have often been introduced with the precondition that the essential ethos is not changed in any substantial way.

Another teacher responded as follows to the question regarding the ethos of the school :

Those children seem to adapt easily whilst retaining their own culture and identity. They seem to stick to their own groups by choice outside the classroom , and mix very easily inside the classroom.

[Teacher , Questionnaire]

The use of the word **those** reiterates what was discussed earlier regarding discourse. The word **adapt** implies that new pupils entering the school are expected to fit into the existing ethos of the school (in this study " a white ethos "). Those (black) students are absorbed into " climate " that

prevails. The definition of assimilation (refer to page 11) can be utilised in this analysis as the teachers response draws on assimilation. To use Mkwanazi and Carrim's (1992) formulation – assimilation is accompanied by a new or modern racism and a more stark class discrimination than the overt racial discrimination of the apartheid era.

The school does not have a particular ethos and identity and relates
To different races and social class. We encompass academic excellence
and sporting participation and achievement. These activities give pupils
ample opportunity to grow with the school and help it grow.

[Principal , Interview]

The principal depicts an ethos that is " all encompassing " , projecting a climate of equality. What is however implied is uniformity rather than equality. The principal actually means putting children together, en masse, to be treated exactly the same. While the principal's response emphasises that conscious efforts are made by the school to acknowledge that the school possesses a varied population , it could also be interpreted as window dressing considering what the school has done to address " race " .

3.7 DISCRIMINATION

The question of whether the school discriminated against pupils received very defensive responses from the educators. The responses included :

No !
Not at all – If anything pupils have been treated with extra consideration
Because of their language barriers
No! Pupils make up the Wica family – with no exceptions
Definitely not!
No – Never !
All pupils are treated the same – one of fairness.

[Teachers , Questionnaire]

The teacher in stating that "all pupils are treated the same" I view as the homogenising of the Indian, Coloured and African students and is seen to be in the interest of non-racialism. This contention is filled with contradiction as will be discussed in the following sections. The defensiveness on the part of the educators is understandable since they probably felt threatened by me (an Indian) because they are aware of contradictions in the broader society that they prefer

to deny and they have been accused in the press of racism. Further, this stance is understandable since most of us don't want to be prejudiced, thought of as racist, or disliked personally, and don't approve of overt expressions of racial prejudice. We want to view racism as solved and ourselves personally as good people – as "good educators".

The principal expressed a denial of differences cloaked with the veil of "equality" behind the rhetoric of "colour blindness". Her response to discrimination was expressed as follows :

Not at all !

We strive to keep the norm in relation to the ethos and identity of the "Wica Pupil" – not the Wica School Indian, Coloured, White or Black pupil.

[Principal , Interview]

The aforementioned depicts an Utopian ideal which holds particular progressive visions and which is indeed noble. This further emphasises the fact that the principal is genuinely committed to the ideals of educational opportunity. By the same token the principal emphasises the assimilationist approach (definition page 11)

The assimilationist approach attempts to make the foreign (minority) learner fit into the existing ethos of the school. This is often accompanied by what Signithia Fordham (1988) calls the ideology of racelessness where learners are expected to discard their ethnic affiliations.

The principal tended to subsume "race" amidst other categories thus robbing race of any special status and denying its claim for attention. By denying " race " any special status in education , this discourse undermines the position of individuals and groups who seek to address "race" issues.

The principal in adopting this approach to school integration runs the risk of perpetuating prejudices and stereotypes in the educational process.

The principal used the prejudice explanation when trying to be colour blind , wanting NOT to be among those who discriminate unfairly. In advocating a colour blind perspective , the principal is attempting to negate race. This colour blind approach or perspective does not remedy

discriminatory practices. Student differences must be acknowledged whether Indian, African or Coloured and respected. In this study, where the operation of "race" and racism figure prominently, it was especially fruitful to adopt a broadly interactionist perspective, one that utilised the potential insights of attention to the social process within the school. One of the distinctive features is the attempt to move beyond rhetoric and get to grips with anti-racism.

Racial tension is still present.

[Teacher, Questionnaire]

Only one educator indicated that racial tension is present at the school. The solidarity of the rest of the members of staff serves to conceal the real inequalities that inhere at the school – the relations of inequalities that are evident in the changing face of the school and to which the CPC and students object.

3.8 CPC'S ACCOUNT OF DESEGREGATION

Schools from a micro-political perspective are viewed as arenas of struggle where individuals and groups use a variety of means to pursue their often conflicting interests. Change, whether internally generated or imposed from outside, brings about uncertainty in that the status quo is disturbed and new claims are made for a role in defining the ethos and direction of the school.

(Ball, 1981 : 37)

According to Gillborn (1995 : 179) such a perspective recognises the importance of conflict as a normal feature of school organisation, piercing the calm, orderly and rational façade that often cloaks talk of the management of change.

The CPC presented conflicting views on the state of race relations at the school. Information that follows was ascertained via interviews with four members of the CPC, letters from the superintendent, and a report by the Human Rights Commission.

A few incidences of racism and racial discrimination were alleged by the members of the CPC.

Unequal treatment was given to black and white members of the soccer team. The school's soccer attire policy prescribes plain socks with a white top. An Indian child was denied participation on the grounds that his red socks had a red stripe on the white top instead of being plain white. A white child was then allowed participation even though he was wearing grey socks. The CPC expressed their dissatisfaction by stating

Preferential treatment was afforded to the white pupil and blatant bias was practiced by the teacher concerned.

[CPC Member , Interview]

In another instance an Indian learner was denied participation in volleyball on the grounds he was not properly attired. A white learner was allowed participation even though he was attired in normal school uniform. Both these incidents were reported to the principal and department and according to the CPC were not satisfactorily addressed. When I addressed the principal on this issue she did not deny that the incident occurred. She admitted that the teacher was not consistent in his actions. She said she would like to believe that teachers at her school did not practice racial discrimination. The Chief Superintendent responded to the second incident and made no mention of the first incident. His response indicated that the action of the teacher concerned was unfair and biased at the sport practice. This is captured in the following

Teacher X's invitation to Greg Smith (pseudonym) to join the volleyball practice , although he was not correctly attired , was in conflict with the school rules and is indeed prejudicial to the rights of other children.

[Chief Superintendent , 1999 :01]

While the principal and staff would like to believe that they do not practice racial discrimination these incidents suggest that they are unconsciously practicing discrimination on racial grounds. The incident was detrimental to the Indian child concerned since he was emotionally and psychologically traumatised. The CPC maintained that the child could not comprehend the lack of consistency on the part of the teacher who had on a previous occasion favoured the white child.

The inconsistency in applying the rules in the two incidents is indeed unfortunate.

[Chief Superintendent , 1999 : 01]

It was in the application of the principles of consistency and fairness that the problems arose at the school. If one considers the definition of racism outlined earlier then the teacher's actions in both these incidents is indicative of racism. The incidents were investigated by the Human Rights Commission and their report (1999 : 02) included the following

The teacher involved in these incidents has left the school . The principal however enquired about the incident from the teacher and it appears that the teacher was unaware of the incident.

[SAHRC]

The SAHRC 's report on this incident is filled with contradiction since the principal did indicate that the incident occurred. The CPC's response to the SAHRC's comment above was

The lack of clarity on the issues , the conclusion you arrive at , your statements berating us as parents lead us to perceptions that you have taken side on the issue and are shielding the school and teachers.

[CPC , Interview]

The CPC raised concerns about nepotism. According to the CPC

Majority of the governing body paid positions are filled by white teachers. Vacant posts are not advertised either via the school newspaper or local media. The school admits this. This is a fatal defect. Governing body members solicit applications from their contacts , interview these people and appoint them.

The South African Human Rights Commission's (1999: 08) response to the foregoing issue is contained in the following quote

Many of the posts mentioned are locum tenens posts , that is , the educator substitutes for an educator until such time as the position is filled by a department filled teacher. The school draws on teachers who do not have full time teaching posts elsewhere and who have indicated that they can be called on at very short notice to fill in. The school currently calls on Mrs Koen who used to teach at the school but has since retired. The school currently has approximately 70 cv's so they have a large pool to draw on to interview for posts. These cv's represent all race groups. The selection committee sifts through and invites suitable candidates for interviews. The best person for the job is then selected and colour does not come into the issue at all.

[SAHRC]

The CPC responded to the SAHRC's above explanation as follows

Are we saying that black teachers are not as competent as white teachers?
Are we saying that we don't want white children exposed to black teachers but it is fine to expose black pupils to white teachers.

The constitution of the country enshrines the respect of the religious beliefs of all people. The

CPC alleged that there is a violation of the right of religious freedom and their substantiation is provided in the following quotation

No respect is shown to any other religion except Christianity. Christianity is entrenched to the exclusion of other religious groups.

[CPC , Interview]

The principal's response to the above contention is expressed in the following

The school is historically a Christian – based school and parents are fully aware of this when they enrol their children at the school.

[Principal, Interview]

The SAHRC presented their view on the issue of religious tolerance and they said

It is accepted that the school is a state school and is bound to treat all learners equally. The school cannot be described as a Christian school because it would result in the non-Christian learners being relegated to the deviant other. Such descriptions are unconstitutional. The school in claiming to be a Christian school is not acting in accordance with the constitutional requirements to treat all it's pupils equally , irrespective of religion and conduct and religious instructions on a voluntary and equitable basis. The school will be administered and all public functions conducted in a manner that respects the religion and cultures of all learners and ensures that they are treated equitably.

[SAHRC,1999:02]

Contrary to the principal and teacher's profession of equal treatment to **all** pupils , the above comments emphasises the fact that the school is not administered and all public functions are not conducted in a manner that respects the religions of all learners and ensures equal treatment. Cultural domination (the superior group regards only its culture and religion as legitimate. Other religions and cultures must be suppressed and the "inferior group "is forced to accept and follow the culture and religion of the "superior group ") is another pillar of racism and is equivalent to the assimilation model. I believe that an assimilationist policy in whatever form is detrimental to the process of integration and the interests of all children in the school.

Another instance of religious intolerance is outlined in the following expression of the CPC

The school will send messages of goodwill for Christian religious days but do not do the same for Hindi or Islamic religious holidays.

[CPC, Interview]

The SAHRC revealed the other side of the coin regarding the issue of religious intolerance but at the same time it echoes tokenism

The significance of religions other than Christianity was recognised and this was borne out of the fact of the explanation of Diwali by a pupil at assembly.

[SAHRC , 1999 : 04]

This token acknowledgement of cultural difference is hardly even reformist. Furthermore , this isolated example is not sufficient to explain religious intolerance. Besides Diwali is an annual festival. What happens for the rest of the year is not accounted for. In addition, apart from children being Hindi, there are Tamil , Gujarati and Muslim pupils at the school. No mention has been made of the Muslim celebration of Eid which is celebrated long before Diwali.

From the following two accounts, it appears that the school is responding defensively and uncreatively to the challenges of desegregation , once again endorsing Naidoo's earlier comment regarding innovation.

Section 6 (8)(d) of the Education Laws Amendment Act 100 of 1997 states the need for representativity when appointing staff. The CPC contested this by asserting

There has been no initiative to adjust the racial composition of it's staff complement to match the school population. No African teachers have been appointed at the school to date even though 20 % of the school population is African. There are two Indian ladies and two Coloured ladies but two of these (one Indian and one Coloured) are employed on a temporary basis. So in effect there are only two teachers of colour on the permanent staff.

[CPC , Interview]

The principal responded by stating the following

Colour is not an aspect to be considered in the appointment of staff. People of all races are interviewed and appointments are made on merit.

[Principal , Interview]

I agree that merit is important , however it is not the only factor that needs to be considered as expressed by the SAHRC concerning the issue raised by the CPC

All future appointments of teachers must be in accordance with the national and provincial legislation. To an extent that the governing body has a discretion in these matters , the following issues must be considered :

- i) The ability of the teacher
- ii) The need to make the staff and educators of the school more representative of the demographics of the province.
- iii) The need to assist previously disadvantaged persons

[SAHRC ,1999 : 05]

3.9 PUPIL'S RESPONSES TO INTEGRATION

There are a range of views of learners regarding the process of integration at the school.

Some learners were content with the situation at their school, while other pupils felt strongly that teachers discriminated against them. An African pupil indicated the following:

Sometimes African pupils do something and it is wrong.
But white pupils do the same thing but then it is not wrong.
African pupils do all the wrong.

[Pupil , Interview]

Implicit in this quote is the schools inability to deal equally and fairly with problems. A case of the practicing of double standards by the school is highlighted by the pupil.

Another African pupil complained about the racist treatment and actions of educators :

White teachers favour white pupils. African pupils are treated different. African pupils are always blamed for anything that goes wrong.

[Pupil , Interview]

The pupil above expresses the fact that teachers discriminate against black pupils. This indicates that some degree of racism appeared to exist in the interactions between learners despite the teacher's earlier denial of discrimination.

In keeping with discrimination by teachers, an Indian pupil explained :

White pupils can play soccer without their soccer kits but I was not allowed to play because my socks was not the right colour.

[Pupil, Interview]

This is another example of preferential treatment by the teacher concerned.

Regarding disciplinary problems an Indian pupil indicated :

When there is noise in the class, the white children don't get blamed. Indian and African children get scolding and hiding for the noise of the class.

[Pupil, Interview]

Black children are seen to be a problem for teachers in terms of discipline. From all pupil responses a degree of institutional racism was evident and the actions of individual educators were not totally devoid of intentional racism, but much of it seemed to be unintentional and incidental. The effects, however, are just as harmful and must be recognised so that there can be some amelioration of conditions that favour some and disadvantage others.

3.10 OVERVIEW OF STUDY

The preamble to the Schools Act states

*whereas this country requires a new national system for schools
which redress past injustices ...combat racism ...and all other forms
of unfair discrimination and intolerance ... advance our diverse cultures
...uphold the rights of ...parents*

This , however , has not been captured at the Wica Primary School as will be discussed now.

Many instances of institutional and structural racism have surfaced at the school under investigation. However , these levels of racism cannot necessarily be regarded as the wilfull acts of the educators at the Wica Primary School . In other words , covert forms of racism have been identified at the school. The claim of being a Christian school and the reading of Christian prayers at assemblies and functions despite the fact that the school's population comprised of pupils from various other religious groups is indicative of institutional racism. The emphasis on unintentional discrimination within institutional practices and procedures is important because it is often overlooked.

If one wants to achieve genuine non-racism one has to integrate not only pupils but also the staff complement. While the principal's earlier comment (page 32) with regard to institutional changes especially in terms of a racially representative staff are not reconciled by her actions , one cannot lose sight of the fact that very few new appointments are made and that it is therefore impossible within the framework of labour legislation to change the racial composition of staff. But as indicated by the principal (page 27) the process of desegregation at the school commenced nine years ago which is a long time. Attempts to adjust the teacher component should have ensured at least a few African teachers as well.

While there is a recognition of the need to nurture a new social order in the school , the mode of accommodating the students is still undoubtedly assimilationist. The assimilationist mode underpinned most of the actions of educators. This assimilationist policy is detrimental to the

process of integration and the interest of all children in the school. In addition the assimilationist approach serves to accentuate racial divisions. Wica Primary School fails to address the racial inequalities and inequities in education. While the findings of this study cannot be generalised to include other institutions, it is true to say that in ex-Model C schools or ex-HOA schools the process of integration is based on policies of assimilation rather than integration.

Desegregation has heralded the notion of equality and equal opportunities for all. The data however, captures more about inequalities and inequities. The interests of equality, defined as sameness, the same treatment of all pupils – one of fairness by staff are not reconciled by their actions. If anything, it is highly contradictory since their increasing commitment to equality actually reveals more about uneven and unequal forms of education, and through the case of the " OTHER ", more about the incoherence of togetherness. The combined contradiction lies in the process that include but exclude simultaneously and exercise hierarchies and powerlessness. The black pupils are included but excluded by the very discourse whose intention it is to redress inequalities. The teachers' privileged position in terms of power and knowledge is concealed.

Most teachers and the principal professed to be colour blind. But, in so doing, they cover over meanings they attach to race, rather than actually dissociating race from meaning. By trying to be colour blind they suppress the application of those negative associations to individual children they teach. By trying to be colour blind the principal and staff actually deny the existence of racial boundaries. This solidifies racism. It is clear that race is assumed by the principal and staff but they also assume that open acknowledgement of race violates the ideal of colourblindness. Paradoxically, this refusal to examine race openly strengthens racialised behaviour patterns. To dismantle racism and race, race must first be confronted. There is a reluctance to address race.

It cannot be hoped that somehow through osmosis, people will become non-racist. The teachers need to deal with these issues instead of shoving them under the table. For fear of keeping racism alive as an issue the teachers have ignored it. Even though this study has investigated

racism in relation to a single constituency , that is white educators , it does not however assume that racism is a problem for white teachers only. Racism exists everywhere. If racism appears , then it must be counteracted , because otherwise by default it is allowed.

The school assumes that desegregation of the school has solved all the problems of racial mixing and we have overcome the legacy of apartheid , and in so doing the school is denying the continuing racial problems. From the data racial problems appear to be minimised or categorised in ways to prevent them from being recognised. Racial tensions are frequently forced underground by the principal and staff of the Wica Primary School.

Despite the outward acknowledgement by the principal and staff of an "all encompassing" ethos there is a lack of the entire spirit or ethos prevalent at the school of the multitude of cultures. While there is certainly a multitude of cultures represented in the classroom , the multitude of cultures are marginalised in many instances. The profession of an "all encompassing " ethos did not easily translate into practice at the Wica Primary School.

It is clear that the myth prevails that the mere presence of groups of learners from a variety of cultures signifies the actualisation of multi-cultural education. This type of education at the Wica Primary School is merely a veiled form of mixed or integrated education. This has given rise to the negative attitudes and cultural prejudice on the part of the school. The very aim of multicultural education is to accommodate both commonality and diversity which is not the case at the Wica Primary School as the evidence provided stresses. Simply addressing all participants in a school is not enough. To bring about change in reality (as opposed to rhetoric) requires an engagement with the forces that shape routine interactions in school.

Many teachers proceeded as always. Many teachers still attempt to simply transmit their former school practice to the new multicultural class. Learners from minority cultures are simply assimilated into the teacher's or the dominant cultures. As Le Roux (1997:57) expresses

"evaluation does not test the skills and abilities of learners from minority cultures, but only the extent to which these learners 'reside' in the cultural mainstream, without being optimally accommodated."

No radical changes or interventions are contributed by the teacher. The teachers are not facilitators of the situation which has changed from a monocultural to a multicultural situation, they simply continue using a recipe which guaranteed success in the past, in new circumstances.

The talk in assembly on the significance of Diwali was a one-off acknowledgement of cultural diversity at the school. This is an indication of tokenism and the definition of tokenism is summed up by Meyer (1993:105) as follows ;

Tokenism : One Black doll amid many white dolls; a bulletin board of "ethnic" Images – the only diversity in the room; only one book about any Cultural group.

Racism was finely interwoven into the daily life of the school, that simply bringing pupils together in the school did not necessarily eliminate racial thinking or bring about a clear understanding of the dynamics of race.

The findings of this study suggest that those involved with the desegregation of schools cannot simply deny the effects of race, but will need to confront them.

The following chapter which concludes this study reviews some of the major issues raised in this case study that have implications for the general debate on school integration. While the temptation to generalise will be avoided, suggestions for further research will be explored.

Chapter 4

CONCLUSION

For non-white pupils from previously excluded groups , the opening of former white schools provided opportunities. At the same time, they have been a source of problems and difficulties. The problems did not emerge overnight , but are the result of a long historical process. Indeed they cannot be solved here and now. I contend that just as the development of the crisis is the product of a historical process which has taken shape and matured over generations, so will its resolutions be. The understanding of the nature of the crisis and how it came about is a precondition for a durable solution.

Expectations that desegregation would result in drastic change is premature. Desegregation does not always have the necessary desired effects.

The nature of change entails changes in practice in the curriculum , school policies and procedures. It is necessary , therefore , to give some consideration to how such changes can be accomplished.

The problem at the Wica Primary School is that the structures of power remain intact. Sufficient thought must be dedicated to changing the structures , policies and practices at the named school to cope with the new diversity. As Carrim (1992:35) aptly expresses

The school can play a vital catalytic role in the process of desegregation. Wider structural and socio-economic changes are required to facilitate and complement the desegregation of South Africa.

If we (educators) turn our eyes away from the structural inequities in our schools regarding policy programmes and practices then , we are disempowering ourselves and ...If we don't recognise the reality (of diversity) , then how can we prepare our students for the global society that will be of the 21st century.

(Jim Cummins quoted in Meyers , 1993 :108)

No teacher is expected to become knowledgeable about all cultures. Teachers at the school should rely on their students to share their important cultural traditions. Teachers ought to realise that when they encourage culture sharing among students, their multi-ethnic resources will increase dramatically. According to Meyers (1993:110)

One teacher regularly encouraged her students to inform the class of upcoming special events. When a cultural event of importance to several students was mentioned, she asked those children, as part of their work to prepare a short presentation for the rest of the students. At the end of the week, the 10 minute presentation included a written script explaining the celebration, pictures and a demonstration of special jewellery and clothes brought from home with the permission of a parent. The other students had an opportunity to ask questions. Some started to relate this new knowledge to things that were similar in their own experiences.

The Wica Primary School could learn from the above quote.

It was clear that some parents and learners were deeply hurt by certain incidents that had taken place at the school. A change in personnel at the school is seen as necessary. In order to ensure greater representivity and in order to promote the principles of transparency, the present governing body should co-opt additional non-white members.

All future appointments of teachers must be in accordance with the national and provincial legislation as outlined by the SAHRC earlier.

All religions and cultures should be respected and treated equally.

What is required is a total change of attitude, an unprejudiced empathy, a critical review of one's own classroom practice and an explicit preparedness to change, to adapt and to learn. The teacher, as a facilitator of the multi-cultural class, takes purposeful and active initiatives to enhance intercultural interaction, intercultural understanding and appreciation, as well as a reappraisal of the individuals peculiar culture. In this class the teacher manages in a proactive manner, the learning experiences of a culturally diverse group of learners, by being sensitive to

culturally related styles of learning , culturally prejudiced styles of teaching and "culture – free " evaluation strategies ; as well as preconceived notions , expectations and stereotyping statements , attitudes and conduct. This proactive model requires a new spirit , and innovative attitude , a cultural reappraisal and a co – partnership in building a new democratic current and few dispensation. Teachers are architects responsible for redesigning their classes in this manner but also , the managers of the entire process of multi- cultural education in our schools. The way in which teachers deal with cultural diversity in their class serves as an example which will be emulated by all their learners.

I believe that multi-cultural education should attempt to provide an educational environment which enables people of different colours , classes and creeds to work together to develop harmonious relationships so that they may live together in a well integrated society. I believe that the teachers have a powerful responsibility to combat ignorant and prejudiced attitudes amongst their pupils and I urge teachers to " lead by example" in seeking to 're-educate'their pupils in more positive social attitudes. But , I propose that a pre-requisite for assuming such a role is that teachers consider and analyse their own attitudes. This view is endorsed by Rampton (quoted in Willey 1984 : 57)

Teachers reflect attitudes in society and for this reason , they must be prepared critically to examine their own attitudes.

The racism to which attention has been drawn affects everyone everywhere. If we speak of self-examination we are thought to be moralising , if we recommend self – criticism , we sound as if we are cultural revolutionaries. But how else can we persuade ourselves to change our attitudes.

I believe that only through this sort of steadily widening and deepening self examination by staff of themselves and their school practices that the dismantling of racism and the establishment of positive responses to diversity can begin to be achieved. I believe that combatting racism and developing positive responses to diversity should be an integral part of teaching in all schools.

Changing attitudes via inservice and racism awareness courses therefore figures prominently in the attack on racism. The "reformed" teachers are then expected to influence positively their pupils racial attitudes.

According to Willey (1994: 27)

Preoccupation with cultural differences deflects the real issues affecting the education of black children.

Only by adopting a positive stance (that is valuing the cultures and achievements of ethnic minority students) and by using opportunities to replace ignorance with factual information about other cultures and the reason for choosing that particular institution , will teachers show that they are effectively anti – racist . From this perspective it is reasoned that racism can be combatted through rational discourse : a presentation of "the truth" , a factual undistorted , objective world view. Such a perspective , I believe , is an axiom in multi-cultural education. I contend that multi-cultural education should be education that values cultures other than the dominant one in any society and should seek to treat members of those cultures with equality to an extent that those other cultures are seriously represented within the school curriculum.

Grant (1992 : 110) advocates that " culturally relevant" teaching which serves to empower students to the point where they would be able to examine critically education content and process and ask what its role is in creating a truly democratic and multi-cultural society. It uses the student's culture to help them create meaning and understand the world. Thus , not only academic success but social and cultural success are emphasised by the culturally relevant teacher. I believe that culturally relevant teaching is what needs to be seriously considered by teachers teaching in multi-cultural institutions.

According to Willey (1984 : 69)

Multi-cultural education is not something to be tackled as a one-off project and then forgotten. It is a continuing process ; the books we use , the pictures we display , the topics we study , the festivals we celebrate should reflect the diversity of people and cultures today.

Despite the years that have elapsed since Willey expressed this , it is worth noting.

Willey's (1984 : 50) recommendations may be borrowed for South Africans. He emphasises the fact that the elements that together make up the ethos and climate of a school can give a positive message which is clearly opposed to racism. He considers the following examples : assemblies and other group meetings can be used consistently to emphasise the pluralist nature of society and of the school and to underly aims of equality. Displays on the walls throughout the buildings can have a similar emphasis. School rules and regulations can be sensitive to , and show respect for , diverse cultural practices , such as those relating to religion , diet and dress.

It is obvious that there is an overriding need to pursue policies of cultural awareness across the whole school life. Multi-cultural education will not just happen , rather prejudice and institutionalised discrimination will dominate. I believe that the discrimination (in providing a representation - ratio in staff and in terms of providing genuine opportunities for the educational disadvantaged) plus the reconstruction of curriculum and education , cultural attitudes are necessary changes in practice.

If these guidelines are adhered to by the school then it will ensure a promotion of greater transparency , accountability and representativity and will foster a spirit of co-operation which will assist in the attainment of provision captured in the School's Act. In other words , school administrators should attempt to actively involve as many people as possible in the school integration process. The process of meaningful involvement by community members produces support for the school and for what they are trying to accomplish. Such support , I consider , is essential for the achievement of effective desegregation.

Apartheid is dead , let us not nurture racism in our schools. We need to overcome the psychological baggage of the past and fears that hold us captive. Let us build a community based on fairness , equality and respect.

Diversity is a fact of life. We need to come to terms with it. In view of our history it is natural to be suspicious and fearful of the other groups. In the interest of our common future , children and country , we need to embrace diversity as at the end of the day we are all human beings.

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APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

UNIVERSITY OF NATAL

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

A STUDY OF THE SOCIAL CONTEXT OF LEARNING AND THE PROCESS OF RACIAL
INTEGRATION 1975-1979

THIS STUDY IS BEING CONDUCTED BY A MASTERS STUDENT FROM THE
UNIVERSITY OF NATAL FOR POSTGRADUATE DEGREE PURPOSES.

AS THERE HAVE BEEN MANY CHANGES IN THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM IN THE
PAST FEW YEARS, IT IS IMPORTANT TO DETERMINE AND ASSESS THE DEGREE
TO WHICH TEACHERS IDENTIFY THEMSELVES WITH THEIR CHANGED
ENVIRONMENTS.

PLEASE NOTE

THIS QUESTIONNAIRE IS STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL AND ANONYMOUS. PLEASE
DO NOT WRITE YOUR NAME ON THE QUESTIONNAIRE. PLEASE ANSWER ALL
QUESTIONS HONESTLY.

THE SUCCESS OF THIS STUDY DEPENDS ENTIRELY ON YOUR CO-OPERATION.

IT IS HOPED THAT THIS STUDY WILL LEAD TO AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE
PROCESS OF INTEGRATION AT EX-HOA SCHOOLS.

THANK YOU.

QUESTIONNAIRES FOR TEACHERS

- 1 SEX [MALE/FEMALE] _____
- 2 AGE IN YEARS _____
- 3 QUALIFICATIONS _____
- 4 HOW MANY YEARS HAVE YOU BEEN AT THE SCHOOL ? _____
- 5 WHICH SCHOOL WERE YOU AT PREVIOUSLY ? _____
- 5.1 NAME OF SCHOOL _____
- 5.2 AREA/LOCATION OF SCHOOL _____
- 6 DO YOU THINK THAT THE PROCESS OF INTEGRATION HAS BEEN TOO FAST OR TOO SLOW ?

- 7 DO YOU THINK THAT THE PROCESS OF INTEGRATION COULD OR SHOULD HAVE BEEN REGULATED ? IF SO, HOW ?

- 8 HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED ANY PROBLEMS COMMUNICATING WITH PUPILS OF DIFFERENT RACE GROUPS IN TERMS OF LANGUAGE AND LIFESTYLE ? PLEASE EXPLAIN.

- 9 WHAT ARE SOME OF THE PROBLEMS YOU HAVE ENCOUNTERED IN TERMS OF TEACHING RACIALLY MIXED CLASSES ?

10 WHAT ADAPTATIONS HAVE YOU MADE TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT SOME OF THE CHANGES THAT HAVE ENSUED AS A RESULT OF THIS PROCESS OF INTEGRATION ?

11 WHAT INSTITUTIONAL CHANGES DO YOU THINK ARE NECESSARY TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE CHANGES THAT HAVE BEEN OCCURRING IN THE LAST FIVE YEARS IN TERMS OF THE RACIAL COMPOSITION OF THE SCHOOL ?

12 DOES THE SCHOOL HAVE A PARTICULAR ETHOS AND IDENTITY AND HOW DOES IT RELATE TO PUPILS OF DIFFERENT RACES AND SOCIAL CLASS ?

13 DO YOU THINK THAT THE SCHOOL DISCRIMINATES AGAINST ANY PUPILS ?

14 IF FULL INTEGRATION OF SCHOOLS OCCURS THEN IT IS MORE THAN LIKELY THAT "INDIANS" WILL BE A MINORITY IN TERMS OF STUDENT AND TEACHER POPULATIONS IN SCHOOLS. HOW DO YOU SEE YOUR ROLE IN SUCH A SET-UP ?
