

THE INTEGRATION PROCESS IN SOUTHLANDS HIGH SCHOOL,
CHATSWORTH, DURBAN IN 1991-1992 : RESULTS AND
IMPLICATIONS

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ABSTRACT

This research report examines the contemporary process of integration in an 'Indian' school in Natal. Using Southlands High School as a case study, this project aims to throw analytical light on the process of "opening" schools that are under the jurisdiction of the House of Delegates : Department of Education and Culture. Whereas other studies have focused on independent/private schools and on "white" schools, this study focuses on an aspect of intra-"black" integration, with the aim also of highlighting the crucial role of "actors" within this process. For comparative and contextual reason, an 'African' school, A.J. Mwelase High, was also included in the study.

The focus of this study is specific and consequently limited. It falls squarely within the boundaries of a case study.

DECLARATION

I, declare that this research report is my own, unaided work. It is being submitted for the Degree of Master of Education in the University of Natal, Durban. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other University.

NHLANHLA NGUBANE

DECEMBER 1992

To my late parents Meva and Myra, and my sister Thandiwe.

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PREFACE

I wish, first and foremost, to express in all humility my profound thanks to the spirit of my late parents for the health, strength and dedication they so readily bestowed which made it possible for me to complete this work.

I am deeply grateful to all those who contributed directly or indirectly in the completion of this work. In the first instance, sincere thanks and gratitude are due to my supervisor, Mr Robert Morrell for his unwavering patience, his constructive criticism and guidance.

I am also indebted to all the members of Southlands High School whose warm responses, and co-operation made this research project a reality.

My sincere thanks are also extended to my colleagues at A.J. Mwelase High School, whose encouragement inspired me greatly even at times when all odds were against me.

In conclusion a word of special thanks to my present and previous students who have been my source of inspiration.

This study will examine the contemporary process of integration in an 'Indian' school in Natal. South African schools have historically been segregated either formally or informally. In order to understand the social patterns within South African education generally, and the schools being discussed in this project specifically, it is necessary briefly to enter the political economy of South African education.

In South Africa the issue of race and ethnicity is complex due to decades of statutory racial and ethnic discrimination. The racist construction of people as either White, Indian, Coloured or African and the bolstering of ethnicity amongst these four categories and blatant fostering of ethnicity amongst 'Africans' has given rise to different social and class experiences of people so defined.

There is an unavoidable interconnection of education, politics and economics; the role of education in whites power and capitalist accumulation; and the adoption of Christian National Education policies in 1948. To think education can be divorced from the political economy, is to ignore the most obvious historical lessons of South African experience with education. CROSS M. & CHISHOLM L. argue that

"the foundations of segregated schooling were intimately connected with the development of a segregationist social policy linked to the rise of industrial capitalism in the late nineteenth century South Africa" [1]

... can be traced back to labour structures and class relations in the mining industry which eventually resulted in state intervention in education. From 1903, education for whites became part of a campaign to secure them preferential treatment in employment outside the gold mining industry and to minimize the spread of massive unemployment of unskilled white labour. This state intervention in education revitalized and formalized of the legacy of colour prejudices which accompanied previous colonial practices in the form of job colour bars and of economic, social and political institutions based on racial discrimination. "Thus the institutional racist barriers imposed to regulate labour relations in the mines were gradually extended to almost all spheres of economic, social and political life, including education" [2].

The passing of the First Education Ordinance of 1903 for the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony and the more comprehensive policies of segregation through the Cape 1905 School Board Act, Smuts Education Act of 1907 in the Transvaal and Hertzog's School Act of 1908 in the OFS, made provisions for compulsory education for white children and institutionalized racial separation in education. With these measures white children were placed on a fundamentally different footing from that of 'Black' children [3].

Despite changes in government which first brought a Pact government to power, and in 1933 a coalition between Hertzog's Nationalists and Smuts's South African Party, overall state policy in education towards black and white followed the pattern of racial segregation established in the first two decades of the twentieth century. The accession of the National

... power in 1948 introduced significant changes. Its social policy involved a renewed, overt commitment to white supremacy which called for a program of 'separate development' or apartheid. The Population Registration Act, Group Areas Act, Immorality Act and others, institutionalized a far more rigid and thoroughgoing system of racial domination than existed to date. Several laws were passed to bring the education system into line with this policy. These were: the Bantu Education Act of 1953, the Extension of University Education Act of 1959, the Coloured Persons Act of 1963, Indian Education Act of 1965 and the National Education Act of 1967.

These developments need not be viewed as simply the next stage in a systematic and cumulative process, in which each step built on the successes of the last. Nor were they a complete departure from previous segregationist policies. Rather, "they were more a response to pressures and problems of the historical moment and reflected an attempt to remedy what was perceived to be errors of the previous policies, e.g. the inability of missionary education to address the issue of the social reproduction of the black urban working class." [4]

It is within these parameters that the present schooling structure was racially defined. And it is within this educational context that social class identities in South Africa have been developed. This research report will try to examine not only when, and the ways and means by which schools classified as 'Indian' have opened to other races, but also how this process has been complicated in two main ways by the existence of racially separate schools.

enrolling in white, 'coloured' and 'Indian' schools. They have battled to adjust. There is a peculiar irony produced by Apartheid which construct them as 'foreigners'. They thus have to be assimilated into the dominant cultural ethos in such schools. This is encouraged by the prescribed provisions of the departments responsible for these schools as they insist on the maintenance and preservation of the existing curriculums which were initially designed along racial and ethnic lines. In this way racial stereotypes are reinforced rather than challenged. In the second place, this research report will attempt to show that 'African' students, as a consequence of their earlier schooling, experience learning difficulties; and this has implications also for teachers in these schools.

Multicultural education which I have adopted in this paper as an analytical tool has many interpretations. One will be aligning oneself with the radical, anti-Racist version because :

multicultural education help students overcome the debilitating effects of institutionalized racism, classism, and sexism" [5].

Secondly, multicultural education offers insight into the integration of education in South Africa. Giving focus on the approach adopted in Britain and comparing that to the education segregation policies in South Africa within the ambit of this case study, this point will be illuminated.

Chapter One provides a brief historical background of RACIAL SEGREGATION in South African education within the scope of comparative analysis of international multiculturalism and multiracial education systems.

Chapter Two examines the composition of the areas within which the case study is located. Focus here is on the teachers, students and governing structures of both schools, Southlands High and A.J. Mwelase High for comparative analysis.

Chapter Three will provide some background information on the conceptualization of the research project. Procedures of data collection will be discussed. Interviews, observation, participant-observation and documentary sources were utilized and elaborated upon during feedback session. Some of the problems encountered and the limitations of the research will also be discussed.

Chapter Four will explore the findings based upon the information derived from the data gathered on the field.

Conclusion will be focusing on the implications of integration on the schooling system. Can school integration serve to heal our decaying society? And what is/will be the importance of human agency (teachers) in this process?

INTRODUCTION FOOTNOTES

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The General Structure of the South African Education System

Within the total system of education in South Africa separate sub-systems or education authorities exist, all of which are based on race. The white population is assigned four provincial departments which fall under the Department of Education and Culture, while one department deals with coloured, one with Indian education and one with black education within 'white' areas. The Department of Education and Training controls the education of blacks outside these areas and technically has control over the non-independent states as it offers 'professional help'. Nine separate departments are found in the 'national states' and in territories given a form of 'independence' by the South African government. The independent 'Bantustans' budget for their own education systems because there is no special financial assistance for education from the South African government.

RELEVANCY OF THIS NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL SITUATION TO THE SCHOOLS BEING INVESTIGATED - SOUTHLANDS/A.J. MWELASE

The two schools which are the focus of this research paper are directly affected by these racially defined educational structures. Southlands High is in Chatsworth, an 'Indian' populated area. It thus falls directly under the control of the House of Delegates (HoD): Department of Education and Culture, which is the controlling authority of "Indian" education.

Lamontville is not under the authority of "national" or "independent" state but located in "white" area it thus falls under the control of the Department of Education and Training (D.E.T.).

An exploration of the historical background of the HoD : Department of Education and Culture, will provide necessary context for this research paper.

HOUSE of DELEGATES: DEPARTMENT of EDUCATION and CULTURE

Undeniably, South Africa is a country comprising people of different colour, race and creed. Unlike Britain where people who can be classified as minorities are at the receiving end of harsh racial discrimination, the Blacks who are a majority in South Africa are subjected to racial discrimination. Through laws and administrative practice, racial and ethnic difference has been spread through all social, educational, political and cultural walks of life. The historical background to these developments has been briefly analysed in the introduction.

The focus now will be specifically on the historical background of the House of Delegates Schools in order to get a clear focus of this study's location. This at the end will prove that the uniqueness of South African situation makes it impossible to adopt any one of the theoretical approaches used in other areas (eg. Multiculturalism in the UK). Yet we can learn from the debates which have been generated by the multicultural education in the United Kingdom. The qualified multicultural approach injected with an anti-racist approach will be the option at the

INDIAN EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

In 1965, the Indian Education Act was passed. This Act was informed by the overall policy of Apartheid. Prior to this policy being implemented, Indian children were educated in separate schools which were under the control of provincial administrations. The effect of the Act of 1965 was to segregate Indians more completely and thereby empower the Department of Indian Affairs to administer the education policy nationally.

In 1974, the South African Indian Council (SAIC) was established by the (white) Minister of Indian Affairs. The SAIC, which comprised of people nominated by the Minister, replaced the Department of Indian Affairs. Schools catering for Indian education fell the under control of the SAIC.

In 1984, with the establishment of the tricameral system of parliament, the SAIC was dissolved and replaced by the House of Delegates (HoD). The Department of Education and Culture : House of Delegates then became the controlling authority of education for Indians in South Africa.

To date, the Indian Education Act of 1965 still remain in force and stipulates the guiding principles upon which Indian education ought to be run.

HOW POPULAR STRUGGLES IN THE 1980s SHAPED INDIAN EDUCATION

It is important to highlight the consequences of these measures

... the reformist strategy which was adopted by the state during the P.W. Botha's era. In the 1970s ever-growing contradictions, fed by changing economic and class forces, necessitated a rethink on the part of the state. A growing belief that apartheid must be reconciled to some liberal democratic principles took root. Moving away from Verwoerdian principles, concepts of pluralism and consociationalism were used to inform P.W. Botha's unfolding reform programme which sought - through a new language of legitimation (1) - to build a wider base of consensus for National Party rule. The changes initiated by Botha centred on the 1979 labour reforms, the granting of freehold title for Africans in urban areas, the abolition of 'influx control' for those residents outside the 'independent Bantustans' and the new constitution of 1983 which established a tricameral parliament with separate houses for whites, coloureds and Indians.

This reform programme was inherently limited because, as the report of Commonwealth Group of Eminent Persons noted, it had to "be viewed against the background of a determination not to give up white control." (2)

The N.P. was unwilling to democratise state power and grant freedom of association. Consequently the tricameral parliament fell short of meaningful reform. There was for example,

"no question of segmental autonomy as prescribed by consociation theorists. The coloured and Indian Houses of Parliament do not generate their own revenue.... The financial strings are still firmly held by the President and his cabinet." (3)

It was thus not surprising to witness unprecedented opposition towards the tricameral system, Indian schools throughout the country, among others, boycotted schools in protest. The Indian teachers' organisation, Teachers Association Of South Africa (TASA), had been in the forefront of attempting to expose the inequities of the Department of Education and Culture: HoD. This became patently clear when this organisation threw its lot behind other organised black teachers unions, between 1985 and 1990, towards the position of the broad liberation movement. After much tension between the teachers unions and organisation, which were much based on ideological differences, agreement was reached in 1987 principle between National Education Union of South Africa (NEUSA), Western Cape Teachers Union (WECTU), Democratic Teachers Union (DETU) and the Progressive Teachers League (PTL) that all of the progressive teacher organisations would unite in one national teachers' trade union. At the same time mainstream teacher organisations, mostly the affiliate of African Teachers' association of South Africa (ATASA), Teachers' Association of South Africa (TASA) and Teacher' Federal Council (TFC) also responded to ongoing calls for teacher unity. By early 1988, ATASA, UTASA, TASA, together with the Transvaal Teachers Association (TTA), South African Teachers Association (SATA) and Natal Teachers' Society (NTS) had established an agreement in principle that they would work towards unity amongst themselves. Parralel unity talks were now in progress.

The intervention of the All Africa Teachers' Organisation (AATO) and the World Confederation of Organisations of the Teaching Profession (WCOTP), in conjunction with the African National Congress (ANC), speeded up the process of teacher unity. They

invited a range of South African teacher bodies to a seminar in Harare in April 1988 to thrash out this matter. ATASA, UTASA, TASA and most of the progressive teacher organisations from South Africa were represented at the meeting. After a week of intense discussions all parties unanimously adopted the 'Harare Proposals' [4], a set of guidelines to be taken back to their organisations as the basis for future teacher unity in South Africa. By the end of 1989, the teacher unity process had become formally consolidated in the establishment of the National Teachers' Unity Forum (NTUF). This process accelerated considerably during the 1990. The NTUF sharpened its unity programme and objectives as it took over leadership of teachers nationally from various establishment federations and progressive unions, and consolidated it in a united national thrust. The public announcement by ATASA, UTASA, TASA and NEUSA of their commitment to disband once a new national organisation was launched proved the powerful role NTUF was now playing. This was also an indication that the unity which emerged in the NTUF had overcome the divisions of the pre-Harare period. In August, the NTUF resolved to launch one united teachers' organisation by October. The name, SADTU, was decided on and it was formally launched in October 1990. The rift of the pre-Harare conference was to resurface again as mainstream organisation stood aloof and they formed an alternative union, National Professional Teachers Organisation of South Africa (NAPTOSA). TASA remained within the SADTU fold and it has developed up within the firmly established ethos of the liberation movement which has informed the formation of SADTU. The changes which have thus occurred in the past five years within the HoD: Department of Education and Culture, can thus also be attributed to the growing strength and influence of

...within the fold of SADTU. This is quite a remarkable achievement on the part of the teachers as it proves that they are also agents of change.

Reform under Botha was thus a pragmatic and uncoordinated process guided by the need to contain the unfolding contradictions of apartheid, and did not seriously address root causes. The developments on the educational front were a proof for this. Regardless of the De Lange recommendations on education in 1980, the Botha government was reluctant to undertake bold steps by implementing these recommendations as its White Paper in 1983 rejected them. The dily-dallying of the Botha government when it came to educational matters was also inherited by the F.W. De Klerk's administration. This has resulted in schools like those under the HoD operating on ad-hoc-basis when it comes to the issue of opening up for other races.

'OPENING SCHOOLS' UNDER THE HoD: DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE

Schools under HoD receive at least 0.07% of the national budget as reflected in the table below. They thus stand financially closer to White schools than 'African' schools. This is because the size of the Indian population (3.1% of the total population) is much smaller than the African population (69.6% of the total population). This thus places them on a far better footing of being able to have better facilities, well qualified and competent teachers, and a healthy pupil-teacher ratio. The Matric pass rate within these schools over the past few years are an indication of qualitative improvement in educational standards

The Table below indicates a steady increase in the education budgets for each department across 1985-1990. Such increases need to be viewed in the light of general increases in inflationary rates.

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>WHITE</u>	<u>COLOURED</u>	<u>INDIAN</u>	<u>AFRICAN</u>	
1985/6	2.97bn	724.07m	323.97m	917.47m	
1986/7	3.06bn	868.30m	363.06m	1.2bn	
1988/9	3.7bn	1.1bn	463m	1.64bn	
1989/90	4.4bn	1.4bn	589m	2bn	(5)

A significant enrollment of 'African' pupils in 'Indian' schools began seven years before white state schools were opened. This predates the Clase announcements of opening white schools under Models A, B, and C, in 1990. This is a very important development because it exposes the fact that the challenges to Apartheid policies during the 1983-85 period opened up loopholes which gave access to these schools to 'African' students. It has been very difficult to establish, with any accuracy, whether non-Indian pupils were enrolled into HoD schools prior 1985. What is quite clear, however, is that a few HoD schools began to enroll non-Indian pupils of their own accord in 1985, by-passing the existing procedures barring these pupils from enrolling within these schools.

This can be attributed to two factors. The escalation of the political crisis during this period and the emergence of a "people's education" movement. The socio-political atmosphere after 1985 is also significant. The dominance of the United

front (UDF) and the strong base of Indian support during this period provided the necessary ideological base for such openings of HoD schools.

Given the above facts it is important to now briefly focus on the admission criteria that are being used by the schools under the HoD. The following conditions have been stipulated by the HoD: Department of Education and Culture on how any school under its control may admit non-Indian pupils. These conditions are

- the character of the school shall not be prejudiced;
- accommodation and other facilities must be available after provision for Indian pupils has been made;
- the medium of instruction is one or two of the official languages;
- the pupil shall reside within reasonable living distance;
- the courses to be followed shall be acceptable to the parents;
- the pupil shall be easily assimilated into the relevant class (taking into account physical stature and educational level);
- the pupil shall not be more than two years older than the class average;
- no additional staff is required;
- expenditure shall be met from the annual allocations of the school concerned. [6]

These conditions clearly privilege the Indian pupil over the non-Indian pupil. At the same time one needs to highlight the fact

many now schools do not follow these official conditions to the letter. However, even if schools ignore such conditions in admitting non-Indian pupils into their schools, they are still unable to transcend the assimilation principles that inform such conditions. This would be the case because the predominant Indian culture is obliged to remain intact. This is further justified by the fact that the syllabus which was designed with an Indian child in mind remains unchanged and the non-Indian pupil is expected to adapt to it. The student population within these schools have remains overwhelmingly Indian, [at Southlands High there are 864 students, only 66 are 'African'], and the entire staff composition is Indian too.

There is no well structured policy to address the problems of racial segregation within the education system in this country. There are no proactive programmes aimed at ensuring that all and sundry appreciate the values of multicultural education in the quest for breaking away from the past. A brief analysis of Britain's attempt in addressing racism within education is here appropriate in order to get a comparative understanding of multicultural education.

ADDRESSING RACIST EDUCATION PROBLEM : THE BRITISH EXPERIENCE

The problem of racism in South Africa is at a number of levels : structurally (in the many racially defined education Departments) and at the level of human agency (bolstered by apartheid). British society is different, for although it suffers from racism, its population composition is different, its structures are different too. In this situation, the approach of

racism. Historically, there have been different emphases within multicultural education. The assimilationist approach, the integrationist approach, the cultural pluralism approach and anti-racist approach have been developed at various times to tackle educational racism..

The Assimilationist Approach

This approach was prevalent in the sixties. This was during the period when Britain was experiencing "the problem" of large scale influx of people, from Pakistan, India, the Far East and the Caribbean. All British state policies, in general, and education policies in particular, were based on the notion of assimilation. This view held that the problem was to "acclimatize" blacks to British conditions and then develop them into 'Englishmen'. The inability of immigrants to handle British customs and language was deemed to be the problem.

Assimilationism was predicated on a liberal racism which implied that though Black people were not as yet equal to white people, if they assimilated and got lost in the fabric of the tapestry of British life there would no longer be problems and blacks might even become equal to whites. The focus here was dominantly cultural. The latent implication was that if blacks could give up their 'deficient and inadequate' cultures and assimilate into the mythical monolithic British culture they would in all but colour become White and thereby become acceptable. Unfortunately, even those Black people who were able to transcend this fluid boundary, confronted hardships in their newly found paradise as it became evident that they were not accepted as discrimination

assimilationist thesis was therefore seen to be inadequate in meeting the needs of Black people or even in terms of pacifying racial tensions. (7), (8).

The Integrationist Approach

Given the failure of an assimilationist approach, Black people's presence was acknowledged with an accompanying call to the Black community to make an effort to integrate. Thus the key was seen as 'cultural tolerance' (9) though any adjusting that had to be done was seen to be entirely the responsibility of the Black communities. As Street-Porter R. succinctly states:

"Cultural integration seems to be accepted as a modest tokenism, an acceptance of that which is quaint in minority culture but worried rejection of those cultural aspects that seem not just alien but threateningly so. In other words minority groups in practice are allowed complete freedom to define their own cultural identity in so far as this does not conflict with that of the indigenous White community".
(10)

Thus the 'innovations' of this phase, were nothing else but a restructuring of the racial status quo. It was not a surprise that it received a cold response from people it was intended to serve and rejected with the contempt it deserved. The demand was for full integration between minorities and the indigenous White community.

Cultural Pluralism Approach

"The premise of cultural pluralism is that social

relations can be wholly explained through culture and that there is a range of cultures in society which are in themselves homogeneous and have shared interests. Also, that these cultures interact with each other by a system of negotiation thereby coming to a consensus where there is a potential conflict. The state is then seen as a neutral arbiter acting on behalf of the injured party and against the guilty. Thus class and indeed race could be seen as epiphenomenal to the interests of the competing cultural groups".(11)

The dominance of culture as a focus has been premised on the notion of it being all-embracing. Unfortunately amongst the proponents of this approach, the multiculturalists, there is tension based on the disagreement over the tendency of 'multiculturalist' theory and practice to depoliticise culture. The analysis is that there is a social problem which is to do with cultural difference and lack of understanding. Thus in order to bring about positive change one needs to promote cultural exchange and understanding.

The 1985 Swann Report was a reaffirmation of cultural pluralism as the desired goal for British society. It proclaimed that:

"We consider that a multiracial society such as ours would in fact function most effectively and harmoniously on the basis of pluralism which enables, expects and encourages members of all ethnic groups, both minority and majority, to participate fully in shaping the society as a whole within a framework of commonly accepted values, practices and procedures, whilst also allowing and, where necessary, assisting

...by communities in maintaining their distinct ethnic identities within this framework." [12]

This report has been largely hailed as the multiculturalist manifesto. This is probably because despite its references to racism and anti-racism, it seems to assert the primacy of culture as an explanation of social/racial relations. This approach is also the preferred approach of the state.

Anti - Racist Approach

This approach has always been regarded as the essence of Black struggle though only recently has it been articulated as a specific approach. Objecting to the top - down approach of the British state in addressing the problems of racism in all spheres of lives of the minorities, British activists have adopted this anti-racist approach. This approach has filtered down to the political and educational terrains. Within educational terrain it has gained a substantial leverage as volumes of researches have been produced. Mullard (1983) argues that:

"Anti-racist education evolved as a racial form of education from quite a different starting point and set of tensions, conflicts and contradictions. Always present as a form but only recently expressed as a specific educational politics, it reflects a truly alternative and oppositional expression" (13).

There is a reluctance by educational authorities to accept an anti-racist approach as a plausible educational strategy. This is a clear indication of its oppositional nature. As Mullard emphasizes, the appreciable difference between anti-racist

education and other racial forms of education is that anti-racist education is not a White definition but a Black one. It is not a device of the oppressors but an indication of the resistance of the oppressed (14).

The anti-Racist approach is advantageous for South African schools given the inherited legacy of racial division which will still plague our education for years to come. Its unequivocal stance on being an alternative and oppositional approach is appropriate for challenging the top - down approach of the state and strive towards empowering the less privilege groups.

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In this chapter the profiles of both Southlands High School (a school on which this case study is based) and A.J. Mwelase High School, an 'African' school which is in close proximity to Southlands High, will be explored. This will illustrate how cultural and educational practices have been affected by Apartheid and will reveal the nature of the social identities of the actors within these institutions. Such an exploration is necessary to understand intra-"black" educational integration.

Southlands High School: Social Background and Its Structures

Southlands High School is situated in the southern Durban suburb of Chatsworth in an area called Havenside. Chatsworth is an 'Indian' area which was created as an Indian township under the Group Areas Act of 1950. The general purpose of this Act was to exclude 'non-Whites' from the central areas of all towns and cities, in some of which they had lived for centuries, and to resettle them in newly developed, totally segregated areas on the outskirts.

The Havenside suburb is composed of a lower middle class population judging by the social environment of the area and the houses which have been upgraded from ordinary municipal houses to luxurious double storied homes. Moving around the area one can't fail to notice that in most of the houses bordering the school, there are glittering cars. The tranquility of the area gives a conducive and serene environment for the Southlands High School community to conduct its activities without hindrance.

facilities, housing a pupil population of 667 pupils and a staff of 27 members. It now (1992) has 864 students and 46 teachers, excluding the Principal and his Deputy, who do not teach as they are exclusively involved in administrative work of the school. Acknowledging the fact that this school is a state-aided school like 'African' schools, the teacher-pupil ratio here is comparatively low. In the schools under the KwaZulu Department of Education and Culture (in 1987) the teacher-pupil ratio was estimated at 1:49, whilst in those under the Department of Education and Training the ratio was 1:37.(1) In this school the ratio is 1:19, thus placing this school on par with the elite private 'white' schools. The question here is: under the present pressures from the budget deficit facing the HoD, which is estimated at R215m short in the education budget for the 1992-1993 fiscal year (2), and attempts to cutback on teaching staff within these schools, are schools like Southlands High not going to be affected and their standards compromised? In addition the fact that the national goal towards teacher-pupil ratio is 1:35, it is likely that Southlands will come under added fiscal pressure in the near future. However, affluent Havenside parents are, attached to the school involved in it via structures like the Education Committee and Southlands High Old Pupils Society. It is equally likely, therefore, that there will be strong resistance towards the lowering of standards.

Southlands High offers a sophisticated and varied packages of subjects. In this regard the school is more like elite private schools than the government schools which have very limited, or no subject options. There are five broad directions of study which can be followed:

- (a) Science
- (b) Commercial
- (c) General/Humanities
- (d) Technical
- (e) Non-Exemption Courses

The parents of the children are informed before their children complete standard 7 about these packages. With the assistance of the professional career guidance Counsellor, who is employed as a member of the staff, the parents are advised on the best stream for their children to follow from standard 8 till matric. The criteria are largely based on the performance of the students in their academic work within the set requirements of the schools and this is reinforced by aptitude tests which are designed by the career guidance Counsellor.

Like all public schools and private schools, Southlands High has its hierarchy. On the top of the ladder there is a principal, who is responsible for the total administration of the school. In this demanding task he is assisted by a Deputy principal, who also acts as a principal if the principal is away. Lower down on this ladder there are Heads of Departments who are responsible for maintaining educational standards within their various departments. Their tasks involve assisting teachers in their teaching procedures, moderating pupils' marks, ensuring that there is progress within their departments, etc.. There are then subject teachers who work in conjunction with the Heads of Departments and the administrative office in ensuring that there is progress on the academic terrain of the school.

There is a media resource centre which is well utilized by the

and it was a pleasure to sit in a number of the lessons conducted by the librarian of the school and appreciate the power of the inquisitiveness of the young minds which are excited in their quest to quench their thirst for knowledge. The staff members adhered to the library-integration approach, placing integrated library skills and resources within the context of the subject taught. The students also seemed very enthusiastic about borrowing books from the library and this indicated a positive learning culture.

Southlands High also boasts a fully equipped computer room as computer study is also provided as an examination subject in the school. A teacher responsible for running this unit has designed a number of projects which are much enjoyed by the students. The House of Delegates: Department of Education and Culture provided all the equipment for the centre.

There are also woodwork and technical centres which are very impressive. All the finished products which are made by the students, like tables, T.V. cabinets, study desks, etc., are sold to the students for a fixed price of ten rands. The skills which are displayed by the students are advanced.

Recreation is part of this school's life as all students have to be engaged in physical education theoretically and practically. The physical education instructor during the chat I had with him emphatically stressed that there is a need for all to realize that sport and physical activity are fundamental rights and that their promotion will contribute more to the future health of this nation than any other single action. Southlands High has a multipurpose court for tennis and volley ball, a soccer field and

the school for other activities.

The Role of The Parents

In 1968 Havenside parents formed an Education Committee which functioned to promote both the educational and physical environment of the school. One example of their contribution is the Tennis courts which were built using the funds raised by this committee.

Given the high level of political consciousness of the parents of this area, they have refused to participate in the House of Delegates; Department of Education and Culture's designed management council. Teachers within this school have also refused to participate in this structure. Instead, there have been broad-based demands for a Parents, Teachers, Students Association [PTSA]. The constitution of this structure should be drafted by parents, teachers and students, and all should sit on the committee. This demand has been was thwarted by the HoD: Department of Education and Culture which is insisting upon the acceptance of the management council. This has resulted in a stalemate at this level of administration and there is a vacuum which has yet to be filled.

The Alumni Role

The Southlands High School Old Pupils' Society (SHOPS) was established in 1970 by the alumni of this school. Its objectives are the following:

- * To unite ex-pupils of Southlands Secondary
- * To promote the educational and cultural aspirations of the people

- * To assist students by providing bursaries
- * To assist in any charitable or other related projects to uplift any community at large.

The Students

The students are represented by the body named Southlands Youth Committee (S.Y.C.). This structure is elected annually by the students. Its function is to liaise between the administration and its constituency. Numerous activities have been organized by this committee to entertain students and afford others the opportunity to display their talents.

There is no clear connection between this body and the rise of the Students Representative Councils (SRCs) which blossomed in the area during the hey days of the United Democratic Front (UDF) in the post-1983 period.

A.J. MWELASE HIGH SCHOOL: SOCIAL BACKGROUND AND ITS STRUCTURES

A.J. Mwelase is situated in Lamontville, an 'African' township which is within walking distance of Southlands High. A brief history of Lamontville will shed light on the complexities facing 'African' schools.

Lamontville is one of the older 'African' locations in Natal. It predates the 1950 Group Areas Act as it was built in the early 1930s. In terms of the 1923 Native (Urban Areas) Act local government was given the power to resettle Africans from centre - city areas. In Durban, which was a racially mixed city, African inhabitants were moved out, when the Durban Municipality Corporation gave in to demands of the white community of the

separate hostels and townships for Africans were thus built on the outskirts of Durban. Lamontville, to the South of Durban, was one of these townships. Work started on Lamontville in the early 1930s and as soon as the first houses were built, people began moving into them. (3)

Unlike Havenside, Lamontville houses are nothing to brag about as they are built on hilly and sloping ground. When there are heavy rains the area becomes a nightmare. Some houses frequently get flooded. Most of the people who are employed are working in factories in Mobeni, Isipingo and Jacobs which are the industrial areas near Lamontville. There is a high unemployment rate in this area. Lamontville is not a densely populated township as there are +- 40 000 inhabitants according to the conservative figures obtained from the local municipality board. There is a shortage of affordable houses in this area as there has been no attempt by the local municipality to build houses to meet population growth. The only housing development project so far has been the private developers' initiative and as most of the people in this location do not qualify for housing bonds, progress has been slow. It is thus not surprising that most of these new houses are owned by teachers, nurses and other professional groups, most of whom come from areas outside of Lamontville.

Lamontville was affected by the political crisis which gripped the country in the 1980s. Due to the downward swing which characterized the South African economy during this period and political uncertainty in the whole country, the effects of these were bound to hit hard on the people who were on the low rungs of economy. Many people were being retrenched nationwide. It was

during this period (1983), that the Durban Transport Municipality Board decided to increase the bus fares for the Lamontville routes. This led to a widespread bus boycott which was initiated by a progressive councillor, Msizi Dube under the auspices of the Lamontville Commuters Committee (LCC). This was to become a bitter bus boycott as it spread to other township under the Port Natal Administration Board like Chesterville and Hambanathi. This bus boycott lasted for 17 months - from 1983 till mid-1984.

When this Board suddenly increased housing rents this raised the ire of the people of these townships. The council systems were collapsing all over the country as they were viewed as illegitimate by the people they were supposed to serve. In addition the National Party's reform process encouraged rationalization and necessitated structures raising funds for themselves:

"The rent increases were part of the government's effort to make townships self-supporting. Township administration boards all over the country were losing money. They saw rents as a solution to their financial problems". (4)

The residents of these townships then organized themselves under the umbrella body called the Joint Rent Action Committee (JORAC). This body finally won its battle against rent hikes.

The question now is what were the implication of these developments for schooling in Lamontville.

How Schooling Was Affected By The 1980s Crisis In Lamontville

There are three lower primary schools which cater for sub A to

for standard 3 to standard 5. There are also 2 High schools, Lamontville High, which was the first school to be built in Lamontville and A.J. Mwelase High school, which started to operate in 1980 as a Junior Secondary school and only became a High school in 1989.

The political and social crisis which was gripping the whole of the country was soon felt also within Lamontville education circles. As the bus and rent boycott were going on in Lamontville, the students also engaged themselves in these struggles. Lamontville High School, as the only senior school at that time became a flash point.

In 1985 a branch of the Congress of South African Students (COSAS) was formed at the school. In 1986 the students decided to embark on a class boycott demanding the supply of the textbook and stationery from the D.E.T. The management council of the school at that time was unable to intervene meaningfully as it lacked credibility in the eyes of the students who classified all government endorsed structures as collaborationist. This eventually led to communication breakdown as the D.E.T. refused to meet the populist Lamontville Education Crisis Committee (LECC) resulting thus in a stalemate. This led to a total breakdown of constructive communication between the students, teachers, parents and the education officials, as the second state of emergency was declared in June 1986, prohibiting all gatherings. This provided the D.E.T. with an opportunity to unilaterally close down the Lamontville High School. The teachers were seconded to far away places. They were charged with incompetence and were made the scapegoats by the D.E.T. Hundreds

...the whole of 1986 was a wasted year. In 1987 the school remained closed and this meant that those students who wanted to further their studies had to travel by buses and trains to Umlazi and KwaMashu.

These conditions shifted the focus of many parents to A.J. Mwelase High, which was still a junior secondary at the time, catering for only standard 6 to standard 8. The parents, using the management council structure of this school, started to pressurize the D.E.T. to grant A.J. Mwelase School high school status. In 1988 this school started to embark on the path of becoming a high school as it opened standard 9 classes and in 1989 the first matric classes became functional. In the same year, 1988, Lamontville High School was reopened under a new administration, headed by a white principal and new staff.

Tension mounted between the D.E.T. and the Lamontville Education Crisis Committee which objected to the D.E.T.'s authoritarian handling of Lamontville High School affairs and also its failure to consult the parents of the students affected. The new administration of the school was also viewed with suspicion as it was seen as being cast within a racial mould. The D.E.T. was adamant about its programme and it was the question of accepting the new administration or else facing a repetition of the 1986 closure of the school. This then placed pressure upon the A.J. Mwelase High School which had to accommodate a number of students from the two feeder schools as most parents now opted for this school rather than Lamontville High School. The uncertainties about conditions at Lamontville High was the major reason for the influx of students to the new High School.

A.J. Mwelase had to cope with an influx of students and from 1989 onwards was inundated with requests from desperate parents and pupils. The present enrollment is 967 students and 24 teachers including the principal who is also compelled to teach due to shortage of teachers. The teacher - pupil ratio is standing at 1:40. It has been worse from 1989 when there was a sharp increase in the number of students who enrolled in the school as there were only 14 classes placing the ratio at an unmanageable 1:70. Through negotiations with one of the feeder schools in 1989, which has six empty classes an agreement was reached of utilizing them in order to address this problem. Since 1989 the teachers workload at A.J. Mwelase High has been in the region of 45 periods per week. A "normal" load is 30-35 periods.

Like Southlands High School, A.J. Mwelase has its own hierarchy. There is a principal who is responsible for the running of the entire administration of the school. In this task he is assisted by an acting deputy principal. This post will only be made permanent in 1993, according to the information supplied by the D.E.T. Area Manager. Both the principal and his deputy are compelled to teach and administration duties thus lag behind. There are also Heads of Departments but only for Science, Afrikaans and Commerce. The Afrikaans Head of Department is expected to act also as the head for African languages and English although his only qualifications are in Afrikaans. This has resulted in further stagnation within these two departments as there is no mechanism of ensuring that there is professional evaluation and development as the onus rests upon the subject teachers most of whom are inexperienced. The other departments are

frustrated with their own problems as their heads rarely have time to evaluate the progress of individual teachers as they are also saddled with heavy loads which are in the region of 40 periods per week. The heads at Southlands High have a maximum load of 18-23 periods per week. There is no career guidance counsellor at A.J. Mwelase and thus unlike Southland High, parents are not assisted in choosing the academic path for their children. It is thus not surprising to find that many students who pass their matric cannot develop career orientations due to the absence of proper career guidance.

Reactive measures are rife at the beginning of every academic year as there is no proper planning. This can largely be attributed to the acute shortage of teaching staff here and the unprofessional planning of the Department of Education. To cite one example in order to clarify this assertion the D.E.T. only sees the need for providing teachers if there are students who have not been taught for many months. They tend to ignore the principal's requests for teachers which are usually based on his assessments of conditions at that time and predictions for the following year. It is thus not surprising that also the time table for the academic year is only drawn up during the middle of that academic year as it is not easy to predict for the following year. One can argue that what we witness here is an 'organic crisis' [5] within the education system of the 'Africans' which has reached a point where most schools have turned out to be nursery institutions rather than academic institutions. The D.E.T. is content with a situation where students are within the boundaries of the school and they seem to be less concerned about the developments within the classroom. This gives them a

the chaotic situation within the classroom. Unfortunately the DET's cynicism has turned to entrench itself among most teachers who have been caught within this 'spontaneous consent' (6), as they now turn a blind eye to the lack of progress within their classrooms. This can be attributed to their fears of the repetition of harsh D.E.T. expulsion of teachers from Lamontville in 1986 and also the lack of proper commitment to the profession. Definitely, this is a very sensitive assertion and needs to be qualified with the observation that most African teachers opted for the profession not out of own will but because there were no other avenues open for them given their educational backgrounds and professional possibilities. The teaching profession for them is the only profession which guarantees a salary at the end of every month and other perks which offer long-term security, like housing subsidies.

The Role of Parents

The Department of Education and Training endorsed Management Council is very active at A.J. Mwelase High School. Although the members are not paid by the DET for the execution of their duties, they have tirelessly worked for the welfare of the school. Given the fact that under the new DET rules this structure has been empowered to have more control over the schools, one has witnessed positive developments within the A.J. Mwelase Management Committee. They have powers of employing and firing the teachers. Although this might be questioned on academic grounds, it has on the other hand resolved the problems which were plaguing this school in the past whereby the Area Manager was the one who decided who to employ which opened up

...are not accommodated within this structure the members have turned out to be sympathetic towards teachers' grievances. This committee has also played a pivotal role since 1989 in pestering the D.E.T. to upgrade the school as there is an unacceptable overcrowding in the classroom. After many petitions and deputations from 1989-1990, A.J. Mwelase has recently been upgraded and the new buildings will be put to use in 1993.

The Role of The Students

Students play a minimal role in the administration of A.J. Mwelase. There have been attempts to encourage them to establish a student representative structure, but in vain. The information I derived through discussions I had with some students was that they don't see the need for this structure as they are only here for studying and also they assume that teachers will view their participation in such structures as a challenge. My conclusion here was that there is no clear direction either among teachers or students on the whole issue of student representation. Most teachers still harbor a deep seated ill-feeling against such structures given their role in class boycotts in the 1980s. Those teachers who are sincerely committed in developing leadership skills within the student body are also in the dark because of the unpredictability of the D.E.T. action if they are suspected of initiating such structures.

The lack of recreational facilities within the school is also a cause for concern. This is depriving the students of opportunities to develop their talents and to be eligible to take up leadership positions in the various sporting codes. Even

playing fields. It is thus not surprising to find students loitering in the verandas and toilets during lunch breaks.

The A.J. Mwelase High - Southlands High Link

A trickle of students from A.J. Mwelase to Southlands High from 1988 onwards led to the development of important links between the two schools. Most of the students who went to Southland High in 1988 cited their reluctance to be transferred to far away schools like Umlazi after completing their standard 8 at A.J. Mwelase as it was still a junior secondary at that time, others were encouraged by their parents who were concerned about the near total collapse of learning culture within 'African' schools at that time.

Initiatives on the part of teachers from both schools led to undertaking of joint ventures which occurred in an atmosphere of warmth and mutual respect and also understanding of legacies of deprivation of the 'African' schools. From 1988 onwards, the science faculty of Southlands High opened its doors for A.J. Mwelase science students. In 1989-1991 sporting activities and educational activities were jointly undertaken and they proved to be a success. Unfortunately these were to be one-off things due to technical problems like time constraints and distance problem as these were to take place during school hours. On the other hand these exposed the need for exploring further possibilities of corporation to address the glaring discrepancies between these two divided but very close communities who have common educational goals.

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3. MSHENGU T. et.al. (1992) ASINAMALI ! THE LIFE of MSIZI DUBE, Hadedu Books, Pietermaritzburg p 7-20
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CHAPTER 3

AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

AIM

The aim of this research paper is to analyse the "opening of schools" not from the perspective of the state, which is a preoccupation of a lot of South African education literature, but from the angle where the people involved interpret the process of integration taking place around them. Given the fact that the issue of 'open' schools has been located within the 'white' walls of the elite private schools and recently the white public schools, it became imperative to try and break into untrodden grounds.

METHODOLOGY

Case study research was utilized for this research paper. The advantage of using this methodology is that it is possible to get at the heart of the issue as people involved are the ones who give the interpretation of the developments around them. The case study acknowledges the fact that there is a need to conceptualize the problems facing our education within the context of the myriad legacy of apartheid and popular struggle. The previous two chapters were thus largely informed by the available literature on apartheid education and popular struggles.

Before the actual process of data gathering on the developments within the two schools, Southlands High and A.J. Mwelase High began, a very important assertion was borne in mind. That is:

"(a) Case study research is an intervention, and often an

uncontrolled intervention, in the lives of others". (1)

To ensure that there would be 'minimal' intervention a well defined fieldwork programme was prepared.

PREPARING FOR FIELDWORK

In September 11 - 16 1991, I had informal discussions with African students who had formerly been at A.J. Mwelase High and who had then joined Southlands High. After these discussions and also informal discussions with staff at Southlands High and A.J. Mwelase High (where I am a member of staff), I was able to formulate a proposal for this research paper.

On October 8 1991, I had an opportunity to address the Southlands High staff about the intention of my study. The intention here on my part was to ensure that when the actual project got off the ground, I would have the cooperation of the staff of this school as I would be coming in as an outsider. The staff subsequently offered their unequivocal support and cooperation.

Given the fact that this is a school based case study, it was imperative to obtain permission from the House of Delegates Education officials for ethical reasons, as the school is a terrain where professional activities are taking place. I was granted this permission on the 6th of May 1992 after meeting with Mr S. Pillay, an education official at Truro House, the offices of the Department of Education and Culture, HoD.

FIELDWORK

The fieldwork was a solo effort of the researcher. Gathering information for A.J. Mwelase High was not much of a problem as I

...a member of the staff there. I was able to use insider knowledge to good effect. As I had already laid ground for my arrival at Southlands High, there wasn't much ice breaking to be done as I was expected. From the 1st of September until the 9th of October 1992, I spent time there gathering data.

DATA GATHERING INSTRUMENTS AND METHOD

Data gathering instruments used were the combination of interviews, observation, participant - observation and documentary sources.

All the informants who were interviewed were tape recorded and this avoided the time consuming exercise of note taking and allowed the interview to flow. Teachers from both schools were interviewed. This was further supplemented by informal discussion which we held both informally and formally as colleagues.

As I had the 'freedom' of the school, observation and participant observation proved to be an exciting experience. I was able to roam around the school grounds during the breaks and observe the interaction and behaviour of students when they were on their own. Although I had been strongly warned by the House of Delegates Education official during the interview I had with him that the teachers would not allow me to observe when they taught as they felt uncomfortable with people who intruded or intervened in their lessons, I was taken aback by the enthusiasm of the teachers, in fact their insistence that I should come and observe them when they taught.

At Southlands High it became necessary at one point to have discussions with 'Indian' students and 'African' students

separately. This was to ensure that I was able to unmask them as they tended to patronize each other when I had discussion with them being one group.

VERIFICATION OF DATA

Given that this is a case study and acknowledging the fact that schools are relatively speaking 'closed' communities which have a special task of being answerable to the educational authorities and also the community they serve, it became necessary to verify the data with the people affected. These being the staff of the school, I was thus obliged to verify my finding with them. As this study was conducted largely during the time of examination pressures, it became an impossible task to convene staff meetings for both schools. Green light was granted by the heads of these schools to continue and verify my findings with teachers who were willing to assist. Meetings were held with those teachers who had time and consensus was reached over the validity of the data.

LIMITATIONS

After having discussions and interviews with the teachers at Southlands High, I could detect that I was getting similar responses. This became a disturbing aspect of this research as I could sense that the teachers here wanted me to hear what they thought I wanted to hear. The fact that I am a teacher and also a member of the union (SADTU) which they belong to and moreover that I am an 'African' I believe was a hindrance here. They could not come out in the open and assert their own position as their argument was all centred around castigation of the HoD: Department of Education and Culture. The principal and his deputy were the only people who tried to paint a rosy picture of their

education department and this was obviously motivated by their positions within the school.

A lack of comparative previous literature on the integration process within the HoD further complicated this research paper as there was no hard research to be relied upon as a source of reference.

CHAPTER THREE FOOTNOTES

1. WALKER R (1983) "Three Good Reasons for not doing Case Studies in Curriculum Research." JOURNAL OF CURRICULUM STUDIES, Vol.15, No. 2

EDUCATION FOR ALL ! A HOUSE of DELEGATES: DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE POLICY?

As has been stated this department is strictly under the control of the central government as the Indian Education Act of 1965 still remains in force and stipulates the guiding principles upon which this department is to be run. As has also been argued here, the opening up of schools was determined by socio-political conditions of the 1980s and the pressures exerted upon the schools under this department by the apparent desperation of black students during this time. The flimsy racial divide between the 'Indian' and 'African' community was tossed aside as these schools opened their doors for 'African' students. The House of Delegates: Department of Education and Culture has obviously not been enthusiastic about this move but given its shifting position it tentatively approved this move although setting very strict and assimilationist conditions for admission of non-Indian students [1]; [2]. The question which needs to be asked here is what really caused this softening of heart from the policy - makers to the extent of overlooking the violation of its 'sacred' policy of segregationist education to the degree of giving a free hand to the HoD Department of Education to determine ways and means of admitting non-Indian students. The pressure exerted upon the government to address the crisis within 'African' education can be cited as one of the reasons which compelled it to be 'flexible' when it came to the opening of schools under the HoD education department. The government seemed to have calculated very well on the sympathies the Indian communities had towards the plight of their 'African' counterparts. The 1984 tricameral

election low poll among this group has been an indication of the Indian community refusal to be in cahoots with the government. The Indians during this election demonstrated their rejection of this system as the polls were as low as 20%. The government's stance also was affected by public sector rationalization. Saving money was a key state imperative. Government efforts at rationalising were disjointed and compartmentalized. There was no clear policy on how schools under the departments like HoD ought to run their admissions. Unlike the white public schools which are provided with the Clase Models C', HoD schools have had to adopt reactive measures when it comes to admitting non-Indian students.

The phenomenon of silent 'opening' of these schools since 1985 largely has escaped attention in the existing literature on 'open' schools. One possible reason is the assumption that this structure, (the HoD: Dept. of Education and Training) will undergo natural death. However there are reasons for believing that these schools will survive the disappearance of apartheid. The pass rate within these schools are the envy of many 'African' parents. The overt learning culture within these schools is also an inspiration to the observer. Unfortunately, as these schools are still subjected to apartheid laws, unlike the white schools whereby the parents have been given autonomy of actually running their school [3], the parents of these schools are still dictated to by the state. This then puts a lot of question marks on the 'openness' of these schools. The issue of admission here solely lies with the principal. As the Southlands High categorically stated that:

parents were informed, not consulted because the admission of the students lies with the principal following the HoD rules not the parents." [4]

It is necessary here briefly to assess the role which the parents are supposed to play in Southlands High when it comes to the admission of non-Indian students.

Parental Involvement In The Admission Of Non-Indian Students

As was stated in Chapter 2, there is an Education Committee which was established with the aim of encouraging parental involvement in raising funds for the school. The HoD education department has made some attempt to give parents a hand in the running of the schools but on its own terms. This has been in the form of Management Councils, which were to operate independently from the teachers and also abide by the HoD education department-drafted constitution. This was rejected by the teachers with the support from the parents who also wanted to have structures which involved teachers. One teacher clearly stated this with respect to Southlands High:

"The HoD tried to institute Management Councils but we rejected them as our Teachers Union is against such toothless structures. We only get into contact with parents through an Education Committee, which functions as a fund raising agency for the school." [5]

It is interesting to note that at A.J. Mwelase High the Management Council functions along similar lines as those prescribed by the HoD department of education. The Department of

which were formerly known as School Committee. The restructuring of these structures within the D.E.T. in 1991 gave them more power in running the schools as they now had to be involved in staff selection, the managing of school finances and approving of any activities which involved the school curriculum. Although the A.J. Mwelase High School Management Committee has been sympathetic to teachers' welfare, the staff of this school still harbour some reservations about its undemocratic nature and the lack of professional insight of its leader. Since its inception there has not been a re-election and for the past 3 years not one meeting called by this committee has achieved a quorum as dictated by the constitution. In actual fact it has become a one - man show. The chairman is the committee. One teacher at A.J. Mwelase High argued that:

"It is apparent that there is no tradition of parent participation among the black community. This can be attributed to the fact that the level of education among many black parents is minimal." [6]

Putting aside the argument of whether the Management Council needs to be rejected or not, it will be argued that parental involvement is crucial for the attainment of desired academic goals for any school. There is a need for an educational campaign at the local level which will aim at making parents aware of the need for involving themselves in the educational activities of their children. While applauding the initiative of the Southlands High Education Committee, it must be stressed that they also need to be part of decision making mechanisms especially on sensitive issues like 'opening' of the school.

After much discussions with the teachers and pupils and, observing the lessons conducted by various teachers, three issues seemed to be central. Firstly, the issue of 'inferential racism', secondly, the issue of language competency, and, thirdly, the different levels of ability in the same classroom.

The legacy of apartheid laws have imprinted on the minds of the people of this country an awareness of being different from one another. The Group Areas Act of 1950 which segregated and zoned people along racial lines played a very important role in instilling 'inferential racism' among Indians, Coloureds and 'Africans' in this country. Regardless of the fact that these groups have been subjected to similar harsh apartheid laws, they have generally been regarded as distinct groups and these groups also have acknowledge their differences due to the years of living apart from each other. Unaccounted evidence of hostility between these groups at various levels is also evident. It was difficult to detect this 'inferential racism' among Indian teachers, given the fact that we relatively belong to the same class and it was an insurmountable task trying to unmask them. When interviewing them about the racial tolerance within the school, one teacher commented about the 'Indian' children thus:

"Indian kids are quite receptive, but what I have noticed is that they seem to be over patronizing the African kids, and they are not aware of the damage they are inflicting upon them." [7]

The sentiments echoed by this teacher were evident in many class

patronization. In one group discussion the 'Indian' students gave an 'African' student credit for contributing to a collective project even though he had not contributed anything.

As I moved around the playing grounds during breaks, I could hardly fail to notice the grouping along racial lines. When I had discussions with the students of both groupings, Indians and Africans on separate occasions, they raised common arguments. To cite one 'African' student:

"We do not play or have discussions with the Indian students because there is nothing in common to discuss with them as they are discussing their own things and we are discussing what was happening in our homes." [8]

An 'Indian' student also reiterated this sentiment as he argued:

"We do not mix with them during breaks because they keep on their own, we only discuss with them in class." [9]

These students statements are very important in the light of the present developments within this school. The school being located within a racially segregated society finds great difficulty in fostering a sense and spirit of unity among students who came from different environments. The 'African' students still perceive themselves as foreigners within the school whilst the 'Indian' students continue to treat them as visitors. This has resulted in the reification of the "us" and "them" syndrome as both groups refer to each other in these terms. One senses that if this is not addressed soon, the whole exercise will be a failure. What is patently clear is the high level of

assimilationist tendencies within the school as the 'African' students are expected to conform to the existing ethos of the school. The recent removal of the Group Areas Act brings hope that these problems might be overcome as 'African' people would be able to buy houses in these areas which were designated as 'Indian' areas, and that 'African' students will thus be able to identify with these schools.

With regard to language, all teachers, including the principal, complain about the difficulties they are encountering in pitching their lessons, and what to do about the poor language proficiency level of the 'African' pupils. The English teacher described the situation:

"As I teach English, they lack critical analysis skills which are crucial for reading of poems, and they fail to express themselves when they write compositions. Maybe we need to learn Zulu also as teachers so that we can meet them half way." [10]

Although I sympathise with this teacher's views, I do not think that the acquiring of Zulu language skills will alleviate the problem. The restructuring of the English curriculum by introducing English as - Second language literature might make sense and solve the problem.

Teaching different students who have no common educational background is another area of difficulty for teachers in this school. The school career counsellor stated that they are becoming acutely aware of how under prepared 'African' students in fact are, not having the basic skills to cope with mathematics

and science, for example. What mostly frustrates teachers here is the lack of coherent, co-ordinated programme to deal with student' learning difficulties.

What evidently comes out of the integration process here at Southlands High, is the still remaining racial division among students. This is inevitable given the historical backgrounds of both racial groups involved here ('Indians' and 'Africans'), who have been for decades seperated along racial lines. At the same time, it is clear that there is a lot of willingness among the 'Indian' students and teachers, to ensure that they break down educational racial barriers, as they strive towards accomodation of 'African' students.

1. BOT M (1991) BLACKBOARD DEBATE: Hurdles, Options and Opportunities in School Integration, S.A.I.R.R., Johannesburg
2. HANSARD (A) 10q col 610, 18 August 1987
3. CARRIM N & SAYED Y. (1992) 'Pay As You Learn', in WORK IN PROGRESS, No. 28.
4. Principal of Southlands High Interviewed in Southlands High 2nd September 1992. Interviewed by N. Ngubane.
5. A teacher in Southlands High Interviewed in Southlands high 8th September 1992. Interviewed by N. Ngubane.
6. A teacher at A.J. Mwealase High Interviewed in A.J. Mwealase High 20 August 1992. Interviewed by N. Ngubane
7. A teacher in Southlands High Interviewed in Southlands High 21th September 1992. Interviewed by N. Ngubane.
8. An 'African' student at Southlands High interviewed in Southlands High, 24 September 1992. Interviewed by N. Ngubane.
9. An 'Indian' student at Southlands High interviewed in Southlands High, 23 September 1992. Interviewed by N. Ngubane.
10. An English teacher at Southlands High Interviewed in Southlands High 4 September 1992. Interviewed by N. Ngubane.

This research project has sought to explore the implications of the integration process in Southlands High. It asks the questions whether this process serves as a microcosm in portraying itself as an example to heal our education system that has become highly polarised? What is the importance of human agency (teachers) in this process?

Southlands High, as an individual school, can not be taken as being representative of what is happening in other schools. Broad assumptions can only be drawn taking into cognisance that schools are not the same as they differ from area to area and are also guided by distinct policies. The hopes and fears of the actors involved within this school illuminate the implications of this integration process. It is likely that we shall not witness a major exodus of 'African' students into the 'Indian' schools because these schools are still guided by strict conditions in admitting non-Indian students. Non-Indian students are thus still discriminated against when it comes to admission. The number of 'African' students has thus remained significantly low within this school. This has ensured that the assimilationist tendencies became overwhelmingly dominant as the 'African' students have to adapt to the already existing 'ethos' of the school. The criterion which is also used by this school in admitting 'African' students, as they give them English comprehension exercises, does not cater for those 'African' students who have been educationally disadvantaged as they had been taught by teachers who were ill-qualified under chaotic conditions. Given this kind of setup it would be idealistic to classify these

open door policy when it comes to admission of
'African' students.

Nevertheless, it has given some hope to the few involved within this process. In the case of those few 'African' students who are now members of this school, it has given them a renewed sense of learning culture. At the same time it has helped both 'African' and 'Indian' students to cross the artificial racial boundary which have been created by decades of statutory racism. In a sense all individuals involved within this process won't have much problem when it comes to the national acceptance of a multicultural, non-racial education system as envisaged by many in this country.

The efforts of the teachers from both schools, A.J. Mwelase and Southlands, need to be commended as they have been able to jointly run projects which have brought these schools together. This should serve as an example to other schools that it is possible to utilise the schools as sites of socialization and moreover giving access to those communities who have been deprived of useful educational facilities.

This study has also drawn attention to the process of integration occurring beyond the well-publicised walls of "white" schools. It has been argued that, despite some obvious shortcomings, integration has become a serious and important endeavour in 'black' schools.

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