

A STUDY OF FIFTY DROP-OUTS AND FIFTY
MATRICULANTS IN THE COLOURED
COMMUNITY OF JOHANNESBURG

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A STUDY OF FIFTY DROP-OUTS AND FIFTY MATRICULANTS

IN THE COLOURED COMMUNITY OF JOHANNESBURG

A dissertation presented to the Graduate School of
Education, University of Witwatersrand, in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Education.

by

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P R E F A C E

The Coloured population originated as a result of "White" settlement of the Cape 300 years ago. A recognisable Coloured population group emerged out of the process of biological and cultural assimilation of "Whites", hottentots, slaves, and other natives of the country. This Coloured group became closely integrated into the religious and economic structure of the "White" population of the Cape, and became what could be called Western orientated, but with a distinctive biological identity. In September, 1970 the Coloured population of South Africa numbered 2,107,450 out of the total population of 20 million for the Republic (Sadie Pg. 2)

WRITERS NOTE:

The writer is the Principal of a Coloured Boys' Home situated in Western Township, one of the Coloured Areas of Johannesburg. Much of his information has been gained from first-hand experience during his seven years working and living in this Coloured Area of Johannesburg.

I N T R O D U C T I O N

In initiating an investigation into dropping-out the writer first visited four Primary Schools in the Coloured areas of Johannesburg. These areas are situated west of the City centre and tend to be collections of sub-economic rented houses occupied by working-class or lower middle class people, with the exception of Bosmont, a suburb which is a middle-class home-ownership area with houses of a better standard.

The preliminary investigations made it apparent that the extent of dropping out in primary schools is comparatively small. At school A with 1200 pupils the daily attendance rate was 96.3% and in 1969 only two pupils dropped out. At school B with 1314 pupils the daily attendance rate was 95% and in 1969 only ten pupils dropped out. At school C with 779 pupils the daily attendance rate was 95% and in 1969 four pupils dropped out. At school D with 948 pupils there were seven drop-outs and the daily attendance rate was 94%.

In view of the small extent of dropping out in these Primary Schools the writer felt that his investigation should take place interviewing Matriculants in Secondary Schools, and in the Coloured Areas by interviewing drop-outs from Secondary Schools and those who had recently completed Matriculation.

It was therefore decided to interview fifty boys who had reached matriculation, or who had recently matriculated, and fifty boys who had left school in Standards five to nine.

On investigating the South African situation as a whole, it was found that in Coloured Schools in 1970 only 11.1% of all scholars at school were in Secondary Schools. The average number of pupils enrolled in Standard 6 - 8 was only one quarter of the average in Standard 5. In fact in 'Secondary Schools there is a sharp decline in the proportion of pupils in each successive standard particularly after Standard 6 and 8. Consequently a very small number of pupils proceeds to Standard 9 or 10. Between 1964 and 1970 the number of Standard 10 pupils ... formed only .38% of all pupils attending school' (Pollak Pg. 20). After Standard 8 there is a drastic drop and in Standard 9 and 10 there is only one-sixth of the enrolment in Standard 6 and 7. Less than one out of twenty who are enrolled in Standard 1 reach Standard 10. This may be compared with figures in 'White' schools where 35 out of every 100 pupils who started in Standard 1 reached Standard 10. (1963 figures - Behr-MacMillan Pg. 165) This could also be compared with 75% of the whole population in Japan who reach Standard 10! The writer feels that for all race groups in South Africa the highest priority in education should be to increase the number of matriculants. Standard 9 and 10 seem to be almost unattainable for Coloured South Africans, and the writer therefore decided that an investigation into what he considered to be contributory factors causing dropping-out would be of great value.

However, a study of this nature would be incomplete without giving information as to nursery and primary education for Coloureds in South Africa. It is possible that lack of provisions at these levels could be probable factors leading to

later dropping-out. When there are few available nursery schools it means that large numbers of primary school pupils go to school without any prior stimulation which is so necessary for learning-readiness. Furthermore it should be noted that most Coloured Children in Primary Schools go to school without breakfast and make do with white bread and coffee for lunch. Educational performance suffers from the lack of concentration resulting from poor diets and malnourished children are often those who do not do well at school. Such factors do not emerge from the data of this investigation but should nevertheless be kept in mind.

In examining the drop-out figures of two Johannesburg Coloured Secondary Schools, it was found that prior to 1968 numbers dropping-out were much greater than in 1968. This is because of the new regulation which commits parents to keeping their children at school during the year that they register. The regulation has, however, had only short-lived effect as can be seen by the increased rate of dropping-out in 1969, and in 1970. The regulation is now considered ineffective because no action has been taken against defaulting parents. There seems to be a need of traditional truant-officers, both to check on children and to warn parents of the legal action that must be seen to be taken. The two tables A and B show numbers of drop-outs at these two schools and the trend described above.

TABLE A

School A (Numbers of Drop-outs)

	S T A N D A R D S				
	6	7	8	9	10
1965	70	60	47	23	2
1966	74	47	29	20	2
1967	100	24	54	25	-
1968+	6	-	4	10	-
1969	20	-	20	3	2
1970	25	5	22	5	2

TABLE B

School B (Numbers of Drop-outs)

	S T A N D A R D S				
	6	7	8	9	10
1966	58	37	47	20	1
1967	69	39	27	28	-
1968+	14	12	7	7	1
1969	30	21	23	5	2
1970	35	28	25	6	2

+ - As stated above this is the year in which the regulation which commits parents to keeping their children at school came into effect.

CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND TO COLOURED EDUCATION

Current Provision and Organisation in South Africa

Nursery Schools

For Coloured people this service depends entirely on private enterprise, but in 1964 the Coloured Affairs Department took over 32 provincial subsidised nursery schools. In 1969 there were 3054 pupils in forty-two schools throughout the country. There is one subsidised private nursery training school for teachers but since 1964 only fifty-three teachers have been trained. Provision for nursery school education and equipment is of a poor quality and the importance of Nursery School Education has yet to be fully realised. The inadequate facilities for the pre-school Coloured child could well be an underlying factor in our problem of dropping-out.

Primary Education

The following table shows the number of primary schools for Coloureds province by province.

TABLE 1.1

Figures for 1969

CAPE

State-aided schools:	1329 schools with	208084 pupils
State schools:	<u>345</u> " "	<u>210189</u> "
	1674 " "	418273 "

TRANSVAAL

State-aided schools:	1 school with	46	"	"
State schools:	45	"	"	33312
	66	"	"	33358

O.F.S.

State-aided schools:	2 schools with	68 pupils
State schools:	42	" " 7211
	44	" " 7279

NATAL

State-aided schools:	18 schools with	4696 pupils
State schools:	41	" " 14664
	59	" " 19360

TOTAL:

State-aided schools:	1350 schools with	212894 pupils
State schools	490	" " 265376
	1840	" " 478270

(MOHR - 1969)

In 1964 the Coloured Affairs Department started to introduce a uniform course and syllabus for all Primary Schools in the country. This was effected gradually and was completed in 1969 with the result that now there is a uniform course and a uniform syllabus for all Coloured Primary Schools. According to the Director of Coloured Education 'the requirements in school for Coloured children are virtually still the same as for the White.' (Mohr 1969). In the Primary Schools provision is made for instruction in ENGLISH, AFRIKAANS, ARITHMETIC, GENERAL SCIENCE, HYGIENE, HISTORY, GEOGRAPHY, HANDWORK, PHYSICAL EDUCATION, MUSIC, AND SCRIPTURE. For backward children,

however, there are no special schools but "adaptation classes" were started in 1965 and there are now ninety-six of these containing 1337 pupils.

In the writer's experience it has often been felt that owing to excessive fear of inspections and fear of book losses, pupils are not allowed to bring home their books, and this makes homework extremely difficult. Furthermore many pupils go to afternoon classes instead of morning school with the result that they arrive at school tired, and are taught during the hottest time of the day. Whether this lack of homework and afternoon school are contributory factors towards later dropping-out cannot be assessed here, but these factors can be kept in mind. Furthermore afternoon school is shorter in time than morning school, and the present President of the Transvaal Association of Coloured Teachers has calculated that nearly one term every year is lost because of the shorter programme in afternoon schools.

Secondary Education in the Republic of South Africa

In 1969 there were twenty-two Junior Secondary Schools (Standards 6 and 7) and seventy Secondary Schools of Standard 6 to 10. The Coloured Affairs Department has introduced a uniform system with the same courses and syllabi for the Republic as a whole. All pupils now write the Senior Certificate Examination of the Coloured Affairs Department. Mohr said that education is 'at least on a par with the standards applied to education of Whites at corresponding levels.' (Mohr 1969). In that the Joint Matriculation Board approves the courses and the syllabus, and that it moderates the Coloured Senior

Certificate, this is probably so, but in so far as extramural activities, equipment, qualified teachers, and size of buildings, Coloured Education is demonstrably of a poorer quality.

The Secondary Schools are multilateral in that instruction provides for academic, technical, commercial and other courses.

The subjects offered for Junior Certificate (Standards 6 to 8) are:

ENGLISH, AFRIKAANS, LATIN or GERMAN, MATHEMATICS, PHYSICAL SCIENCE, HISTORY, GEOGRAPHY, HANDIWORK (Boys), ART, MUSIC, NEEDLEWORK (Girls), DOMESTIC SCIENCE, AGRICULTURE, ACCOUNTING, COMMERCE, TYPING, AND TECHNICAL DRAWING.

The subjects offered for Senior Certificate (Standards 9 and 10) are:

ENGLISH, AFRIKAANS, LATIN or GERMAN, MATHEMATICS, PHYSICAL SCIENCE, BIOLOGY, AGRICULTURE, DOMESTIC SCIENCE, HISTORY, GEOGRAPHY, BIBLICAL STUDIES, ACCOUNTING, COMMERCE, PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION, TYPING and SHORTHAND, MUSIC, ART, NEEDLEWORK, WOODWORK, TECHNICAL SUBJECTS, TECHNICAL DRAWING, APPLIED MECHANICS.

An academic and a mixed course are in operation but in fact the full range of subjects are rarely, if ever, offered owing to the shortage of teachers.

Vocational Guidance

This subject was introduced in 1967 and in each Secondary School in theory one teacher, in consultation with the school psychologist, gives vocational guidance. Again, the shortage of trained teachers limits the effectiveness of this move. The writer has not met one Guidance teacher who is in

any way suitably qualified or even knowledgeable about the careers open or closed to Coloureds in South Africa. Vocational Guidance therefore is haphazard and in many schools almost ignored.

Technical Education

(a) Apprentice Vocational Schools:

There are five such schools in five urban areas of the Republic, two of which have hostel accommodation. They do not offer a wide variety of trades owing to Job Reservation Legislation, and are not highly thought of by the Coloured people who feel the staff employed at such schools are not competent. It is widely believed that the staff of these vocational schools are more interested in government "apartheid" policies, including Job Reservation, than in imparting the skills required by the students.

(b) Multi-lateral Secondary Schools:

Technical subjects are found in curricula of such schools including courses in Bricklaying, Painting, Plumbing, Welding, Motor Mechanics, Electricity, Fitting and Turning, Woodwork. Schools usually offer two such subjects but in fact there are only seven such schools offering technical streams and even they have an acute shortage of qualified teachers.

Special Education

The institution for deaf, blind, epileptics and cerebral palsied have been exclusively initiated by charitable and church organisations. So far the State has not established any. The existing Special Schools are:

1. Athlone School for the Blind with 142 pupils (in 1969)
2. Witteboom School for the Deaf with 347 pupils (" ")
3. Worcester School for the Deaf with 230 pupils (" ")
4. Worcester School for Epileptics with 46 pupils(" ")
5. Eros School for the Cerebral Palsied with 16 pupils (in 1969).

It will be noticed that all such schools are in the Cape Province and that they are not used to full capacity. It seems that there is little public knowledge of these schools and the generally unsophisticated parents of such children are mostly unaware that suitable facilities exist. In the Transvaal there are no special schools although some special classes are set aside for backward children. Efforts are at present being made by private individuals, including qualified social workers, to establish in the Transvaal a school for mentally retarded children. The fact that this must be done privately is a severe indictment on the lack of Government concern regarding special education for Coloured children. Many children in need of special education are at present in the backrooms and back gardens of houses and do not attend any type of school let alone receive special education.

CHAPTER 2THE HOLDING-POWER OF COLOURED SCHOOLS IN SOUTH AFRICA

The writer believes that Coloured Schools and Coloured parents do not succeed in encouraging their children to remain at school. Owing to excessive punishment, poorly trained teachers, and overcrowded schools, pupils come to seek for opportunities of leaving the schools which have very little appeal. Parents prefer the short term benefits of sending their sixteen-year-old out to work rather than waiting a few more years for them to matriculate. The pupils know that existing legislation regarding school attendance is not observed and some play truant regularly until such time when they can drop out. Playing football in the streets, street corner gang life, general relaxation, or going out to work in shoe factories are considered preferable to long, dull days at the schools. The tables below show how small a proportion of children are in secondary schools compared with those in primary schools. On average, little more than 10 or 11 per cent of all scholars are in secondary schools, and the primary schools in each year consequently have nearly 90% of all school going pupils.

Furthermore in high schools there is a sharp decline in the proportion of pupils in each standard particularly after Standard 6 and Standard 8. As a result very few proceed to Standard 9 and 10. Between 1964 and 1970 the numbers of Standard 10 pupils increased from 1378 to 1955 but in 1970 they formed only ,38% of all pupils attending school. In 1969 only 1446 pupils passed the Senior Certificate or equivalent examination and of these only 413 obtained matriculation

exemption, entitling them to enter a University (Pollak 1971). As approximately 3% of all Coloured children in South Africa who begin school reach Matriculation and approximately 10% reach Secondary School, the magnitude of the drop-out problem is obvious. The 1964 Survey of Western Township, a Coloured area of Johannesburg, showed that 76.58% of the children aged between 5 and 14 years were at school, but that after 14 the drop-out rate was high. This incidentally seems to be a perpetuation of the educational history of their parents, since a 1964 investigation in the Coloured area of Johannesburg called Riverlea showed that 50% of the parents had not studied beyond standard six, 19% had left school between Standard six and ten and only 1.5% had matriculated. (Randall 1966 Pg. 37).

The Table following (Table 2.1) shows clearly how few pupils are in the Standard six to ten range compared with those in the Sub A to Standard 5 range. The 1970 figures show that only 11% of those enrolled, are in the Secondary Schools. This percentage has remained constant at approximately 10% since 1966 and the writer feels that no significant change has occurred during 1971.

Table 2.2 shows how small a percentage of Coloured children are in Standard 10 in the Transvaal and how the percentage falls sharply from Standard 6 onwards.

TABLE 2.1Enrolment of Coloured Pupils from 1966 to 1970 in South Africa

	<u>SUB A to STD.5</u>	<u>STDS. 6 - 10</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
1966	355,532	35,068	390,600
1967	369,505	38,384	407,889
1968	405,876	44,995	450,871
1969	-	-	483,822
1970	459,340	57,420	516,760

1. Figures 1966 to 1968: Coloured Affairs Department 1/4/68 to 31/3/69 (Pg. 30)
2. Figures 1969 : Hansard 3/70 13/2/70 Col.1197
3. Figures 1970 : Hansard 2/70 27/7/70 Col. 804

TABLE 2.2

Percentage enrolment of Coloured pupils by Standards in the
Transvaal (a province of South Africa)

Adaptation:	.42	Std. 2: 10.65	Std. 6: 8.27
Sub A:	16.87	Std. 3: 10.23	Std. 7: 5.45
Sub B:	13.83	Std. 4: 9.44	Std. 8: 3.15
Std. 1:	11.23	Std. 5: 8.43	Std. 9: 1.45
			Std.10: .53

CHAPTER 3SHORTAGE OF TEACHERS IN THE COLOURED SCHOOLS OF SOUTH AFRICA

In 1969 there were 14,619 teachers in Primary Schools, and there were 1,530 teachers in Secondary Schools, making a total of 16,149 teachers. Since 1964 2502 teachers left the service, and during 1969 alone 863 Coloured teachers resigned, 342 of them for reasons other than marriage, death, retirement, or dismissal. The 1969 shortage was 652 (Horrell 1970).

The chief reasons for this teacher shortage are the poor salaries, the control by unknown authorities, the inadequate consultation, the feeling of continually being watched by inspectors, and the low morale caused by the generally poor relationships between Principals and staff. Concerning this poor relationship teachers feel that Principals are more concerned with pleasing the Inspectors than with the welfare of their staff. Principals are often considered to be appointed more because of their standing with the Coloured Affairs Department than because of experience and qualifications. It is common practice for known opponents of Government Policies to remain subordinate to appointed Principals despite being better qualified.

In 1966 (Horrell Pg. 22^e) it was calculated that Coloured teachers earn 65% of what equally qualified "White" teachers would earn, yet in earlier times Coloured teachers earned four-fifths of White teachers' salaries. Furthermore in 1966 only 3% of Coloured teachers had degrees although it must be recorded that 90% had Teachers Training Diplomas.

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The large number who in 1969 resigned (342) went either into better paid employment, or left the country. The basic dissatisfaction among Coloured Teachers with the profession leads to lack of enthusiasm and contributes to the drop-out rate.

The writer's experience in daily contact with teachers is that grievances are many and large portions of each day are spent discussing salaries and problems rather than in teaching. It is also common for many a child to play truant regularly, without the teacher noticing his absence or when noticed without the teacher reporting to the Principal.

CHAPTER 4

OTHER FACTORS RELEVANT TO COLOURED EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

The Socio-economic Background

As a population group the Coloured people exhibit all the demographic characteristics of an industrial and agricultural working class, characteristics such as a high death rate, a high birth rate, and a relatively low life expectancy. However, life expectancy is growing and there is a high rate of natural increase. Although it is difficult to generalise about so heterogeneous a people as the Coloureds and their diffused involvement in the economy of the country, it can be said that they should be viewed as members of the industrial and agricultural working class in South African Society.

An examination of South African statistics referring to 1960 indicates how few Coloureds can be regarded as members of the professional classes, and how many are involved in working class occupations, in industry, and agriculture. According to the 1960 census and regarding Coloured males in South Africa there was one architect, one surveyor, one veterinary surgeon, there were three chemists, five accountants, six engineers, eight jurists, sixty-nine medical practitioners, and one hundred and thirty draughtsmen and technicians. Against these small numbers of professional people should be weighed the 111,997 farm workers, 12,149 road transport drivers, 15,963 bricklayers, 8,270 carpenters and 7,046 shoemakers. The census enumerated a total of 7,164 who were considered professional, technical or related workers;

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this figure included 6,002 teachers. A total of 6,701 were classified as clerical workers. Farmers and fishermen, by contrast, numbered 122,198, and 155,587 were craftsmen, production workers, and labourers.

By percentage the main occupation groups of Coloureds in South Africa today are as follows:

Professional:	2.51
Administration:	.23
Clerical:	1.48
Salesmen	1.92
Farmers and Fishermen:	22.85
Miners:	.16
Transport:	3.96
Factories:	35.19
Service Workers:	21.22

(S.A. Statistics 1970 - Compiled by Department of Statistics Pretoria).

This picture clearly indicates that the overwhelming majority of Coloured people are working class.

A reason for this abnormal proportion of the population that can be classified as working class lies in the South African informal and formal "Colour Bar". Because of the Trade Unions' and Government's labour policies preventing the entry of Coloureds into what are known as "white" jobs, opportunities for advancement of Coloured people beyond the rank of labourer have been very limited indeed, particularly in the Public Sector such as the railways, the post office, the civil service and the government controlled industries. Although legal colour bars in

private industry do not apply as rigorously to Coloureds as to Africans, restrictions do arise in practice as a result of colour prejudice among white employers and employees. Furthermore "white" trade unions oppose the acceptance of Coloured artisans.

Regarding income of Coloureds in South Africa the S.A. Population Census of 1960 states that 103,738 people earned less than R100 per annum 120,860 between R100 - R200 per annum, 73,964 between R200 - R300 per annum and that these numbers steadily decreased to 1,679 earning R2000 - R3000 per annum, 184 between R3000 - R4000 and 187 more than R4000 per annum. In the Transvaal only ten people earned more than R4000 per annum.

Consequently it can be state that generally the Population groups with which the writer is concerned can not only be viewed as members of the industrial and agricultural working class but also as very poor members indeed.

Demographic Factors

One demographic characteristic needs to be emphasised; there is a high concentration of persons in the lowest age groups. This population structure calls for a high ratio of expenditure on education which is productive only in the long term. In 1960 children between the ages of 5 and 15 formed 27,2% of the Coloured population compared with 20,9% of the white population. In 1970 this figure will rise to 27,89% . the large proportion of children and the expected rapid increase implies that the demand for educational facilities will grow. Projection based on Sadie's work (Sadie Pg. 30) indicate that the number of children below 15 will increase from 826 430 in 1965 to 1624 520 in 1985. Thus in the short time of 20 years numbers will double and educational

provision will have to be more than doubled since so many children receive no education at present.

Coloured Housing

Throughout the country and more particularly in the Transvaal there is a tremendous shortage of housing. Both the Johannesburg City Council and the Department of Community Development have recently reported waiting lists of over 3 000 families. This means that a total of 18 000 people in Johannesburg alone are not housed, let alone suitably housed. Furthermore, the writer knows from personal experience and from his investigation that many families board with others and do not bother to be put on the waiting lists. Consequently these people live in tin shanties or in overcrowded conditions and cannot be expected to be motivated to aspire towards social stability or economic security. The children who live under such conditions are unlikely to attain reasonable educational standards. It is difficult for a child who lives in a shanty together with a large number of adults and other children to gain very much from a formal classroom education. It is clear that lack of adequate housing is a contributing factor to dropping-out and low educational performance.

In short, Coloured homes, even in the newer areas, are overcrowded owing to the large families and the housing shortage. Incomes are generally low and job opportunities are limited mainly because of White employer and employee prejudice.

The Nature of Employment

The data given above regarding number of Coloureds in different occupations show that Coloureds are concentrated in

the occupational groups: craftsmen, production workers, farmers, and fishermen. Thus Coloureds tend to be concentrated in those occupational groups associated with the lower middle and lower economic and social status. Other than people in farming, fishing, factories, and service, no other single specific occupational group accommodates more than 3% of economically active Coloured males. In the Transvaal Coloureds have made greater progress into skilled and semi-skilled trades and crafts than in the Cape as a result of the general pattern of urbanisation and industrialisation in the country.

The traditional and legal colour bar has had a strong impact on patterns of employment. It should be noted, however, that legal restrictions in the case of Coloured people are relatively few and insignificant. The colour bar as it applies to Coloureds is maintained not legally but on the support of tradition.

Tradition has it that Coloureds are idle, often absent, always drunk and unable to perform responsible tasks. These stereotyped pictures must be looked at in view of the general low standard of living, the inadequate social and cultural amenities, and the shortcomings in educational provisions.

Few Coloureds are to be found in medicine, law, or in the technical fields. The problem here is not the legal colour bar but that such careers require advanced entrance qualifications which the vast majority of Coloureds do not have. The training period for such work is long and the cost is high. Few Coloureds have the financial means for such careers. Apart from unskilled workers, it is the service industries, building and construction, the clothing industry, and the metal, machine, and motor industries that offer major opportunities.

There is a great need for better educational and training facilities. Substantial educational provision is required owing to the massive urban-wise migration, the slum clearance and resettlements, and to the increasing cost of education as a result of inflation. The State has a duty to re-think its attitude to Coloured Education in South Africa.

CHAPTER 5BACKGROUND TO FAMILY LIFE IN THE COLOURED COMMUNITY
OF JOHANNESBURG

As Coloured people in Johannesburg vary from the rich to the abysmally poor, there is a danger in trying to generalise about the group as a whole. The writer therefore describes the wealthier upper-class "Bosmont group", the poor but comfortable "Coronationville group", and the poverty stricken and degraded "Western Township group". The Bosmont people live in attractive medium-to-large houses and have "freehold" rights. The Coronationville group live in rented council-type houses that have small gardens presenting rather a drab appearance. The Western Township families live in dingy, small, and overcrowded houses overlooking unlit streets that become streams and puddles throughout the summer.

Family life in Bosmont is similar to that of any middle class area in the world. Here each family has a car and some families have two cars. As each family has some form of ownership they consequently take much pride in beautifying the houses and the gardens. As freehold for Coloureds is extremely rare, families in Bosmont realise how precious are their houses, and consequently there are few if any "for sale" signs. Because of the favourable living conditions there is not much crime, few disturbances, and life can be lived normally. The average family is a stable unit, the children dress well, the mothers are usually at home, and nearly every house has a servant. Life in Bosmont is usually peaceful and children who grow up here have reasonable expectations and security.

By contrast, life in Western Township, like the houses,

is drab, hopeless, and depressing. Where there are electric lights there are smashed by gangs. What roads do exist in summer are flooded because of lack of drainage, and in winter they become dust paths. The average house consists of a lounge-cum-kitchen, a bedroom, a stoep (verandah), and an outside toilet. There are no bathrooms and personal cleanliness is accomplished by using galvanised iron baths in the backyard. In the middle of winter this is an extremely unpleasant way of keeping clean. Each house officially contains 7,5 people but when one considers that 3059 Coloured families are without housing (according to recent reports of the Chief Officer of the Coloured Division of the Non-European Affairs Department) it takes little investigation to discover that these people live with relatives or as lodgers in the small houses. The result is that very many homes contain more than ten people living in two rooms. The writer recently visited a house containing 34 people in four rooms. Furthermore when a young man marries, more often than not he goes onto a waiting list for some years and during this time he lives with his wife and children in his parents' house. In addition the eldest daughter very often has her illegitimate child or children with her for in this Coloured community the privilege of producing children is not restricted to marriage. In this connection it could be mentioned that over the last thirty years the percentage of births registered as illegitimate runs at a constant 35 - 37%. Many births are never registered and when one reads population figures concerning Coloureds one should take this into account. The average house in Western Township is consequently "home" to as many as ten people and such numbers in two rooms provide little or no opportunity for rest or study for the scholar.

With overcrowding at home, no street lights, and few recreational facilities, gang life thrives. Only very recently, as many as sixty members of one gang went on the rampage, breaking windows, shooting, and ransacking houses in which opposing gang members lived. They did this in revenge for the death of their leader who was stabbed in a fight the previous day. It took three deaths to make the police active in the township but gang members know from experience that police vigilance does not last.

Drug-taking and drinking are practised by young and old. The drinking is not only of alcohol but of methylated spirits and other unusual concoctions. The preliminaries to drug-addiction are the smoking of dagga, the experimenting with injections, and sniffing of benzine and glue.

Western Township from which many of the respondents come was to be cleared eight years ago, but lack of alternative accommodation has perpetuated this slum. Little concern by the authorities, the lack of enthusiasm of the inhabitants, together with gang-life, poverty, drinking and drug-taking are providing the ideal conditions leading to possible delinquency. Furthermore opportunities for study are limited, and the environment is not conducive to scholastic success.

By contrast the Coronationville community is relatively more stable, partly because of adequate housing, reasonable street lighting, and a community spirit built up by the residents. This area has been in existence for nearly thirty years and there has been time to establish clubs, scout groups, and community services of different kinds. The area has a large community centre, a hall, a swimming bath, and various established churches. The inhabitants are mainly blue-collar workers, but with a sprinkling of teachers, one or two doctors and a number of shop-keepers. Although the

houses are old they are well-kept and very rarely is there a change of tenants. As nearly every family has relatives or lodgers staying with them a special room for studying or even a bedroom for one person is rarely to be found.

The writer has used the Louw family as one that as nearly as possible typifies the Coloured people in Johannesburg.

Mrs. Louw has been in her home for nine years but cannot afford an electric stove or refrigerator or the monthly fee for electricity. She cooks on a coal stove and a primus (paraffin stove). However she has a portable radio which is constantly in use. Her kitchen has a dresser, a table, and four chairs, her bedroom has a double bed, a single bed, a cupboard, and a dressing table. Her two small children share the single bed, and she and Mr Louw the double. Her two older sons sleep in the lounge, and an aged grandfather sleeps in a curtained-off section. The home is decorated with family photographs and there are thick carpets on the floor and vases of flowers on the tables. Quotations from the Bible are framed and hang over the beds.

Mrs. Louw spends her day at home. From 5.30 a.m. when she rises and makes tea and sandwiches for her husband, who is a furniture maker, to 10 p.m., she spends doing household chores and visiting the supermarket in the nearby "White" area. All her family belong to the Dutch Reformed Church and Sunday morning is a "dressing-up occasion" and church-going time. On Fridays and Saturdays particularly, grandfather and Mr Louw drink heavily on the stoep (verandah) with the neighbours but Mrs. Louw "doesn't take a drop".

Mrs. Louw is a cheerful woman and cannot imagine herself in different circumstances. She likes the neighbours who gossip

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Mrs. Louw is a cheerful woman and cannot imagine herself in different circumstances. She likes the neighbours who gossip

with her and help her with the two younger children. She is pleased that her son is nearly sixteen so that he can begin work and help to supplement the family income. She is also very happy that her third child is a daughter for she will certainly have at least one more child and this daughter will stay at home to help with it and the housework. She does not see any purpose in her sons going much further than standard eight because "she never went to school and her husband has only a standard four". Lately she is worried about being robbed coming or going to the supermarket, and so she keeps her money tied in a knot in her handkerchief. She is also worried about the Lulabelles, a gang, that is out to fight the Spaldings, her son's gang.

The Louws certainly typify a Western Township family and many of the drop-outs the writer investigated came from homes such as theirs. There is no stigma attached to leaving school and those who stay on after the age of sixteen are not really highly regarded.

In Western Township therefore life for the aspirant student is hard. He has no privacy for study, nearly every house plays a radio for the benefit of every other house, and overcrowding at home makes it difficult to keep a light on for any length of time, as other working members of the family must sleep. In fact opportunities for study in pleasant, quiet surroundings are totally non-existent. With the highest birth rate of all groups in S.A. (48 per 1000 as compared with 25 per 1000 for whites)(Theron 1964) a decreasing infant mortality rate, and a growing life expectancy, it can be concluded that living conditions are bad and unlikely to improve in the near future.

CHAPTER 6SCHOOLS, TEACHERS, AND TRUANCY IN THE COLOURED AREAS OF JOHANNESBURG

The school situated in the Coronationville area typifies a Coloured High School. It has 1600 pupils with over 700 in the Standard Six classes alone, yet there is an appalling lack of recreational facilities, a dusty soccer field being all that is provided. There are a few, if any, teaching aids such as projectors, tape recorders, and so forth, and even maps, paper, and books are in short supply. Each class has nearly 40 pupils and furthermore the majority of the teachers are poorly qualified as regards degrees. However it is noticeable that most do have diplomas. It could be recalled that only 3,5% of Coloured teachers throughout the country hold University degrees.

As drop-outs very often begin as intermittent or chronic truants some information on truancy is relevant. Truancy is regarded by every Principal as the greatest problem encountered at the schools. A recent survey into the problem of truancy by a Coloured Affairs Department Sociologist (E. Whitby) examined teachers in Transvaal Coloured Schools, and discovered that out of 53 questioned only one had an M.A., three had B.A.'s, and one had a B.Sc., but to their credit the rest, with only one exception, did have teacher training diplomas. Of the teachers he questioned 67% did not know how many children were in their school or how many were truants. Of these teachers nearly all, in fact 64%, blamed parents alone for truancy. Teachers who had taught for over ten years were just as ignorant in that they also blamed parents alone for truancy and had no idea of how many truants there were. Of interest is the finding that there

was a high rate of truancy among schools which recommended corporal punishment, and that only one school recommended other methods and this school had the least truants. Whitby concludes that corporal punishment is one of the factors contributing to truancy. The writer agrees with this finding and has himself found corporal punishment also to be a factor contributing to dropping-out.

This survey on truancy does indicate the lack of concern of most teachers in Coloured Schools. Teachers regard truancy and dropping-out in a detached manner and felt that these matters were solely the problems of the Principal. It was further found that truancy and dropping-out occurred far more often in classes with male teachers, and Whitby believes that most male teachers make no attempts or use negative methods to combat truancy.

The writer's experience confirms all that has been mentioned regarding teachers in the Coloured Schools. Salaries are still poor, although they are improving. Better qualified teachers leave the country, and those that remain show very little interest or concern, and Whitby found 25% of parents interviewed reported that no teachers or principals had ever put their foot in their houses. High School teachers generally are inclined to drift to a position where nothing more than transmitting academic knowledge is their aim.

The schools are over eager to remain in a good light vis-a-vis the administration. Thus attempts are made to conceal the problems that would call for home visits, and personal concern is replaced by concentration on neatness of books, tidiness of classrooms, and an acceptable image.

The writer feels that the schools are inadequately equipped with a noticeable lack of recreational facilities. Furthermore the teachers have to instruct large classes with a minimum of teaching aids, and generally with only a vague knowledge of their subjects. The schools moreover are faced with the enormous problem of truancy and the Administration takes no steps whatsoever to alleviate the problem.

Finally there is a shortage of school places even though there is no compulsory education forcing children to attend. Recommendations have been made that a new secondary and a new primary school be built, but there has to date been no progress towards building these two schools.

The schools visited by the writer were all poorly equipped, inadequately staffed, and he considered them as lacking appeal even to the keen student let alone to the drop-out.

CHAPTER 7INTERVIEWING PROCEDURES

In making the investigation the writer used the usual techniques of interview and questionnaire. Known addresses of drop-outs and matriculants meant that these persons could be contacted and invited to the writer's flat for the interview. Associates of the writer in his profession invited friends of theirs to visit him for an interview. Both drop-outs and matriculants were from areas that can generally be classified as slum or lower middle class. Because of the acute shortage of housing many teachers lived also in these areas and although these people could be classed as professional, their environment was very little different from that of factory workers or labourers. In all fifty drop-outs were interviewed and fifty matriculants. It was easier for the writer to find the drop-outs who loiter constantly in the streets around his children's home, than the matriculants, some of whom had to be found from school records, traced, and then asked in turn if they knew of other matriculants from the same areas.

The respondents whom the writer interviewed came from lower middle class or working class families. They were all fully bilingual (in English and Afrikaans), and were almost without exception able to answer the questions sensibly. All were from slum conditions or slightly better houses rented from the City Council in areas set aside for Coloured people.

The writer's aim was to assess the possible reasons for some dropping out and the possible factors keeping others at school in these relatively poor working class areas. He interviewed the respondents individually and in a relaxed atmosphere to avoid the resentment attached to filling in

forms. The writer therefore feels that the answers given to his questions were accurate, as he was able to explain what was meant by each question.

THE CONTENT OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Firstly, the writer felt that the immediate living surroundings would be of primary importance in assessing causes for dropping-out. Eight questions were asked aiming at building up a picture as to overcrowding, availability of electric light, place for study, atmosphere at home, and type of discipline.

Secondly the attitude of both father and mother to education together with their occupation and educational qualifications were assessed.

Thirdly in the writer's opinion Coloured Schools generally provided minimum extramural activities and "like the factory are thoroughly regimented institutions." (Lynds' Middletown). Therefore questions regarding the attitude of boys to the school and regarding teachers' abilities and attitudes were asked.

Finally, the writer asked the matriculants four questions aimed at establishing reasons for their success as they saw it.

CHAPTER 8EXAMINATION OF THE ANSWERS TO THE QUESTIONNAIREOvercrowding as a Relevant Factor (Questions E 1.2. 5)

The area from which our sample was taken has definitely developed what can be called "cultural poverty". Such a culture is characterised by the high fertility and mortality rates, insufficient incomes, insufficient and inadequate housing, overcrowding and slum conditions, a lack of proper education, and people underemployed or unemployed.

Many of the respondents live in totally inadequate overcrowded conditions and can hardly be expected to attain high educational standards. Educational problems are a high rate of scholastic retardation, early dropping out to aid the family income, poor performance, and a complete lack of motivation.

TABLE 8.1

The distribution of Matriculant and Drop-out Groups according to whether there was overcrowding in the house

	YES	NO	TOTAL
fo Matriculants:	27	23	50
Drop-outs:	38	12	50
	65	35	100

If there were more than two persons per bedroom the writer considered the house overcrowded. In considering the respondents the writer found that of the drop-outs 76% were judged as living in severely overcrowded conditions, whereas the conditions of 54% of the matriculants could be similarly described. Overcrowding therefore affected the large proportion

of all the respondents but the higher percentage of drop-outs who came from overcrowded houses is statistically significant. The distribution was tested by the X^2 (Chi squared) test. The value of X^2 was 4.40. In a test based on one degree of freedom this value of X^2 is significant at the 5% level. It can therefore be maintained that there was an actual difference between the matriculant and the drop-out group, and not merely a chance difference.

In the case of one respondent, James J., fourteen children and the mother shared a servant's room and there was no permanent or wage earning father. For James to go out and work all day was an escape from the situation, and the need to help his mother by earning money to feed the family was paramount.

Electric Lights as a Relevant Factor (Question E3.4)

Table 8.2: the distribution of matriculant and drop-out groups according to whether there were electric lights in the house.

	YES	NO	TOTAL
fo Matriculants:	34	16	50
Drop-outs:	16	34	50
	50	50	100

The presence or absence of electric lights was found to be a most significant factor in the writer's study. Only 32% of the drop-outs had electric lights whereas 68% of the matriculants reported they had electric lights in their homes. The distribution was tested by the X^2 test and the value of X^2 was found to be 11.56 which is significant at the 1% level.

Table 8.3

The distribution according to whether there was a quiet place to study.

	YES	NO	TOTAL
fo Matriculants	21	29	50
Drop-outs	4	46	50
	25	75	100

In reply to the question concerning a quiet place to study only 8% of the drop-outs answered in the affirmative compared with 42% of the matriculants. The value of X^2 here was 13.65 a value significant at the 1% level.

Most respondents studied in rooms with three or more people, or in a lounge which often served also as a kitchen.

When the writer considered how many respondents had both an electric light and a quiet place to study, he found that only 8% of the drop-outs and 38% of the matriculants satisfied both conditions.

Who was "Boss" in the House? (E6a)

Table 8.4

The distribution according to whether the father or mother or both were considered "boss" in the house.

	FATHER	MOTHER	BOTH	TOTAL
Matriculants:	33	12	5	50
Drop-outs	23	26	1	50
	56	38	6	100

Among the matriculants 66% said their father or father-figure was "boss" compared with 46% of the drop-outs. In the X^2 test the value of X^2 was found to be 7.3 which is significant at the 5% level, based on 2 degrees of freedom. In replying to the question twenty-three respondents, whose fathers were "deserted" or deceased cited their big brother or sister as "boss", and the writer assumed them to be father or mother figures.

From an analysis of the replies the writer can tentatively comment that the presence of a father's discipline seems conducive to study, and that his results throw doubt on the belief that the Coloureds are a matriarchal society. On the basis of the writer's research and his personal experience he agrees with Professor Cilliers who says "Mother centred and/or mother dominated families are to be found amongst the lower class in contrast to a more father-dominated and equalitarian pattern amongst the higher social classes". (S.P. Cilliers - 1971). Among the "lower class" certainly in Coloured society it is very common for the fathers not to be living at home or even known to the children and this may explain the mother-dominated families among the lower classes.

The Question of Type of Discipline (E 6 b)

The distribution of matriculants and drop-outs according to the type of discipline experienced.

Table 8.5

	<u>BEATING</u>	<u>TALKED TO</u>	<u>PRIVILEGES WITHHELD</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
fo Matriculants	27	17	6	50
Drop-outs	36	11	3	50
	63	28	9	100

The writer used the three categories: Beating, Talking to, and Withholding of privileges. Firstly it seems that withholding of privileges is a rather advanced and sophisticated type of discipline, and this type was used in the case of only 12% of the matriculants and 6% of the drop-outs. Secondly, however, when it came to beatings, 70% of the drop-outs answered "yes" whereas 54% of the matriculants answered "Yes". Beatings, therefore, are the general rule but their efficacy must be doubted,

particularly when one thinks of the 70% of drop-outs who were "disciplined" by beating! Thirdly, 34% of the matriculants were talked to as opposed to 22% of the drop-outs, and the writer tentatively attaches some significance to this. However the X^2 test gave a value of 2.35 for X^2 , and this is not statistically significant.

No firm conclusions can be reached although the writer's view is that fewer beatings and more talkings-to could help the drop-out problem. This view, however, cannot be substantiated by his sample.

Table 8.6

The distribution of matriculants and drop-outs according to their replies as to what age beatings ceased.

	NOT	UNDER 14	OVER 14	TOTAL
to Matriculants	16	22	12	50
Drop-outs	15	17	18	50
	31	39	30	100

The distribution was tested by the X^2 test, the value of X^2 was 1.24 which is not significant. No worthwhile information was gained from this question.

Helping in the Home(E6d)

Table 8.7

The distribution of matriculants and drop-outs according to whether or not they helped in the Home.

	YES	NO	TOTAL
to Matriculants	46	4	50
Drop-outs	41	9	50
	87	13	100

There appeared to be little difference between drop-outs and matriculants in respect of "helping-out" at home. A total of 87% of all respondents helped by making beds, washing dishes, cleaning floors, and doing other tasks, indicating that boys in Coloured families have other responsibilities to undertake in addition to the responsibility of doing well at school. A moderate amount of housework does not seem to have any adverse effect on educational performance. The value of χ^2 here was 1.41 at 2 degrees of freedom which is not significant.

Leisure time activities (E7)

No statistical significance can be attached to the replies of matriculants and drop-outs as regarding leisure time activities. It would merely be of interest to mention the limited nature of the activities. Cinema and soccer were favourite pastimes and gang-membership was bluntly mentioned by six drop-outs. The lack of interest in such activities as drama, clubs, swimming, societies, hobbies, music, etc. was noticeable. The lack of extramural school activities will be commented on later. Stimulation in the form of worthwhile extramural activities hardly existed. The writer feels that there is little knowledge of, or enthusiasm for the clubs that do exist in the Coloured areas. More extensive facilities, better organisation, and widespread advertising could help this problem.

The Question of Pocket Money (E 8)

Table 8.8

The distribution of the groups as to whether or not they

received regular pocket money.

	YES	NO	TOTAL
fo Matriculants	38	12	50
Drop-outs	14	36	50
	52	48	100

Of the matriculants 76% received regular amounts of pocket money compared with 28% of the drop-outs. 30% of the matriculants saved some money as compared with 6% of the drop-outs. (See Table 8.9 below).

Table 8.9

The Distribution as to whether the groups saved some money

	YES	NO	TOTAL
fo Matriculants	15	35	50
Drop-outs	3	47	50
	18	82	100

Among the parents of drop-outs the idea of regular pocket money is almost totally foreign, and particularly the idea of saving money occurred to only 36% of the respondents. They preferred to spend their money on soccer, cigarettes, cold drinks, and clothes. A deeper knowledge of Building Society and Post Office Savings schemes seems to be required, and the parents of all children should be made aware of the need to supply regular pocket money. The number of matriculants who received and saved their pocket money was statistically significant when compared with the number of drop-outs receiving and saving money. The χ^2 test was used in both cases and resulted in significance at less than .1% level (the value of χ^2 being 21.19) for receiving pocket money, and

at less than 1% (the value of χ^2 being 8.20) for saving pocket money.

Occupation of Father

Table 8.10

The distribution of matriculant and drop-out groups according to occupation of the Father.

fo	Dead Deserted	Labourer Unskilled	Skilled	Clerical	Professional, Technical, Managerial	Total
M:	7	4	13	12	14	50
D:	16	13	8	6	2	50
	23	22	21	18	16	100

If the writer were to group together the labourers, unskilled, and skilled and call them "blue collar" workers, and similarly if the writer were to consider clerical and the professional columns together as "white collar" workers. it is found that 74% of the fathers of matriculants were "blue collar" compared with 52% of fathers of drop-outs in the same category, and it is found that 52% of fathers of matriculants were "white collar" compared with only 16% of fathers of drop-outs. The distribution was tested by the χ^2 test. The value of χ^2 was 20.18, a very significant result. J.W. Douglas' findings may be of some interest here. his main distinction also lies between children of non-manual workers (white collar) and children of manual workers (blue collar). "The former have, on the average, relatively little infectious illness in early childhood, they enjoy excellent standards of care at home and their mothers take them regularly to child welfare centres and in general make good use of the available medical services. They have in other words what may be regarded as a

middle class pattern of upbringing. In contrast, the manual working class children are more often ill, particularly with respiratory tract infections, and their mothers are seen by the health visitors as giving low standards of care to their children and homes, as making relatively little use of the child welfare centres, and as often failing to have their children immunised against diphtheria." (Douglas Pg. 40).

Furthermore 28% of the matriculants' fathers were "professional" people as opposed to only 4% of drop-outs' fathers. Eleven of the fathers of the matriculants were teachers, and two fathers of the drop-outs were teachers. J.W. Douglas asserts that children whose parents take an interest in their work and encourage them, improve their scores in tests of school performance and mental ability, and the writer certainly feels that 32% of the fathers of matriculants who were teachers are significant.

The large percentage of fathers of drop-outs (32%) who were deserters who had deserted their families is felt to be of some importance when compared with 14% of fathers of matriculants who had died or deserted. It is known that the incidence of broken families affects the linguistic skills and the thinking skills of children, who often have feelings of insecurity and inferiority which adversely affect school performance.

(Bernstein's experiments carried out by Goldfarb - D. Lawton Pg 23). The writer notes also that parents who have had greater formal or informal education have a greater interest in their children's education. The occupation of the father is felt to be of importance and his presence almost vital to the child's upbringing and scholastic performance.

Educational Qualifications of the Father (F 2)

The distribution of the groups according to level of education

	NONE	PRIMARY	SECONDARY	UNKNOWN	TOTAL
fo Matriculants	5	9	26	10	50
Drop-Outs	5	17	7	21	50
	10	26	33	31	100

Of fathers of matriculants 52% had benefitted from a secondary education compared with 14% of the fathers of drop-outs. The value of χ^2 was 15.03 and this value of χ^2 was significant at the 1% level. It seems fair to suggest that those fathers with a secondary education put considerable pressure upon their children to do well and continue at school.

A surprisingly high 62% of respondents had no idea of their father's educational qualifications and this may point to the fact that a larger percentage of the fathers had little or no education than the figures of 10% each for matriculants and drop-outs indicate. Perhaps also the lack of communication between parents and children is significant.

Did fathers show interest in the school?(F 3 a,b,c,d)

Table 8.12

The distribution of matriculant and drop-out groups according to whether the father showed interest in their schoolwork.

	YES	NO	DESERTED DEAD	TOTAL
fo Matriculants	26	17	7	50
Drop-outs	4	30	16	50
	30	47	23	100

Table 8.13

The distribution according to whether the father attended school functions.

	YES	NO	DEAD OR DESERTED	TOTAL
Matriculants	26	18	6	50
Drop-outs	3	31	16	50
	29	49	22	100

When asked whether their fathers showed interest in school-work and homework 60% of the drop-outs said "no" compared with 34% of matriculants. The value of χ^2 here was 20.55 which based on 2 degrees of freedom is significant at the .1% level.

When asked whether their fathers attended school functions 62% of drop-outs replied in the negative compared with 36% of the matriculants. The value of χ^2 was 23.31 which once again was very significant at the .1% level.

The 52% of matriculants' fathers who showed interest in their son's work were almost the same fathers who attended school functions. J.W. Douglas found parental interest to be a very strong factor, so much so that it could cancel out low socio-economic status. "The teachers consider that 59% of the manual working class children are suitable for grammar schools if their parents are interested and only 15% if they are uninterested". (Douglas 58)

Occupation of Mother (M1)

The distribution between the two groups according to mother's occupation.

fo	Dead Deserted	Unskilled	Clerical	Housewife	Total
M:	5	6	15	24	50
D	12	8	18	12	50
	17	14	33	36	100

The value of χ^2 was 6.31 which was not significant. It may tentatively be suggested that the greater number of matriculants' mothers who were housewives may give added security to the homes.

Educational Qualifications of the mother (M2)

Table 8.15

The distribution of the matriculant and drop-out groups according to the educational qualification of the mother.

fo	NONE	PRIMARY	SECONDARY	UNKNOWN	TOTAL
Matriculants	6	11	24	9	50
Drop-Outs	9	28	4	9	50
	15	39	28	18	100

Only 8% of the drop-outs had mothers with a secondary education compared with 48% of mothers of matriculants. The value of χ^2 was 19.78. Based on 3 degrees of freedom this value is highly significant at the .1% level. Matriculants who had both mother and father with secondary or higher qualifications numbered fifteen. Obviously these were at a considerable advantage and it is interesting that only 4% of drop-outs had both parents with secondary education. J.W. Douglas notes that the influence of the mothers' education is evident when he looked at the average test scores of their children and their performance in secondary selection.

examinations. He concludes that the mother's influence is as strong as that of the father's education, but no stronger. This writer found the mother's influence and her secondary education to be statistically slightly more significant than that of the father.

Mothers and their interest in their son's school work (M3 a b c d)

Table 8.16

The distribution of the groups according to answers to the question whether the mother showed interest.

	YES	NO	TOTAL
for Matriculants	28	22	50
Drop-outs	12	38	50
	40	60	100

Of mothers of matriculants 56% showed interest in their son's homework compared with 24% of mothers of drop-outs. Using the X^2 test the writer found this to be statistically significant; the value of $X^2 = 9.38$, significant at the 1% level. Of the housewives (48% of matriculants' mothers) only half showed interest in their son's school work. Nineteen out of twenty-four matriculants' mothers with secondary education showed interest in their son's school work. It seems possible that secondary education amongst mothers is a more important factor than simply being a housewife and remaining at home.

Table 8.17

The distribution of the groups regarding whether the mother attended school functions.

	YES	NO	TOTAL
for Matriculants	26	24	50
Drop-outs	10	40	50
	36	64	100

The value of χ^2 was 4.88 which is a significant result at the 5% level. Mothers of matriculants were those mothers generally who showed an interest in the school thereby making it clear to their sons that they were also interested in them.

The Respondent's Opinion of his School (S 8)

Table 3.18

The distribution of matriculant and drop-out groups according to their opinions of their schools.

	GOOD	BAD	INDIFFERENT	TOTAL
for Matriculants	21	-	29	50
Drop-outs	7	6	37	50
	28	6	66	100

Although the χ^2 value was 10.94, a value significant at the 1% level, it became obvious that the socially accepted answer had been given to this question. Not one of the matriculants said his school was "bad" and only 12% of the drop-outs described their schools as "bad". Of the drop-outs 74% and of the matriculants 58% were unable to give an opinion. One factor became clear, and it is that schools do not engender much loyalty, and that they are generally regarded as dull places. This perhaps is understandable when one recalls that only 3.5% of Coloured teachers in South Africa hold degrees, that extramural activities are very limited, and that overall educational facilities are inadequate as the writer has indicated above.

Why did you leave school? (S 1 2 3 4)

This question was directed at the drop-outs to attempt to discover their reasons for leaving school and the age at which they left.

Most of the drop-outs gave their reasons for leaving school as "financial", wanting either to supplement the family income or earn money for themselves. Fourteen per cent of the drop-outs left school under the age of 16, 30% left in Standard five, 20% in Standard seven, and 18% in Standard eight, showing these three standards to be the educational limits of many. Conversely only 4% of our respondents left in Standard nine showing that once a pupil reaches his matriculation years there is every likelihood of his passing sooner or later.

Worth recalling here is that in 1970 only ,38% of all pupils attending Coloured Schools in South Africa were in Standard ten (Pollak 1971).

Of the drop-outs 74% were older than their fellows in class and this age difference is important in that many of them admitted to feeling "out of it" owing to their age. They were embarrassed by being as one said explicitly " a man in a class of kids".

What was your ambition on leaving school? (S 5)

The matriculants were not asked this question as the writer wanted to elicit the drop-outs' reasons for leaving school so early. In answer to this question 54% of drop-outs spoke of immediate financial needs such as "to help out in the home", "to buy clothes", "to do the same as father" or "to make money". In response to the same question 32% had no answer, only 14% had what could properly be called ambition, and among those there was one whose ambition was to "be a professional boxer"!

It seems clear that motives for leaving school are short-sighted in general, although some do believe that they can help their families. Furthermore the restricted opportunities

for Coloured people in the labour market, the extremely limited opportunities for vocational and technical training and of apprenticeship, together with the lack of well-paid opportunities for matriculants all make for early school leaving.

Influence of Friends (S 6)

The writer felt that friends who were already at work may have influenced the drop-outs to leave school and go to work. However, this feeling was not supported by the evidence and none of the respondents mentioned that they were in any way influenced by their friends.

Were you at the top or bottom of your class? (S 7)

This question was directed towards the drop-outs only and most (i.e. 61%) of the drop-outs were in the bottom half of their classes. Poor educational performance does seem to discourage the boys from further attendance at school.

Were there sufficient teachers? (T1)

Table 8.19

The distribution of matriculant and drop-out groups according to their reply to the question "were there sufficient teachers?"

	YES	NO	TOTAL
fo Matriculants	47	3	50
Drop-outs	47	3	50
	94	6	100

The socially-accepted answer was given by 94% of the drop-outs and of the matriculants. The X^2 test was used resulting in a value of .27 for X^2 and obviously this was not significant. The writer feels that scholars are not in a position to answer this question, as their only indication of a teacher shortage is absence for a long period of a teacher

from the class. In the writer's experience pupils are put into larger classes to avoid the shortage of teachers.

Did they know their subjects and make them interesting?(T2.3)

Table 8.20

The distribution of the groups according to whether the respondents felt that their teachers knew and enjoyed their subjects.

	YES	NO	UNSURE	TOTAL
Matriculants	29	2	13	50
Drop-outs	33	5	12	50
	62	13	25	100

Table 8.21

The distribution of the groups according to whether teachers made their subjects interesting.

	YES	NO	UNSURE	TOTAL
Matriculants	24	6	20	50
Drop-outs	13	21	16	50
	37	27	36	100

The respective values of X^2 were 1.76 and 5.11 both of which were not significant. Furthermore when the writer analysed the replies and found that 66% of drop-outs said their teachers knew their work but only 18% of those thought that teachers made the work interesting, he felt that no valid conclusions could be drawn regarding the views of the drop-outs. Of the matriculants 58% said that teachers knew and enjoyed their subjects but of those only 36% said they made the work interesting.

Were you bored or stimulated by your teachers? (T4)

Table 8.22:

The distribution of the groups according to whether they felt bored or stimulated by their teachers.

	BORED	STIMULATED	BOTH	TOTAL
Matriculants	10	16	24	50
Drop-outs	26	7	17	50
	36	23	41	100

The distribution was tested by the χ^2 test and gave a value of 17.81 for χ^2 which is significant at less than the 1% level. Of the drop-outs 52% felt that they were bored by their teachers compared with 20% of the matriculants who felt the same way. Granted that the answers are entirely subjective, nevertheless the writer does consider boredom at school to be a factor contributing to dropping-out.

In the writer's experience in running a Children's Home he has found that many boys would rather work and study at the "Home" than attend school. They complain that teachers do not make the work interesting, the subjects are dull, there are no teaching aids, and in all they are not really stimulated at school.

Did teachers take a personal interest in you?(T5)

Table 8.23

The distribution between the groups as to whether teachers took a personal interest in them.

	YES	NO	TOTAL
Matriculants	29	21	50
Drop-outs	7	43	50
	36	64	100

As expected very few (14% of the drop-outs) felt that their teachers were really interested in them. Furthermore only 58% of the matriculants considered that their teachers had taken a personal interest in them. However when the distribution was

tested, the value of X^2 , being 19.14, was found to be significant at less than the 1% level. There was therefore an actual difference between the drop-out and matriculant groups, not merely a chance difference. The drop-outs therefore may well have felt rejected by the teachers even before their drop-out stage. Finally only 36% of all respondents felt that teachers took an interest in them, a very small percentage.

Table 8.23

The distribution of the groups as to whether they had extra lessons from their teachers.

	YES	NO	TOTAL
Matriculants	28	22	50
Drop-outs	4	46	50
	32	68	100

When the writer asked the respondents whether or not they had extra lessons from their teachers, 56% of the matriculants but only 8% of the drop-outs answered in the affirmative. The value of X^2 was 24.37 which is a highly significant result. Perhaps in giving extra lessons, the teachers would indicate greater interest and thus counteract dropping out.

Relevant here is the finding of the 1971 conference on education (S.A.I.R.R. Pollak) that teachers were very dissatisfied with their status and conditions of service, and that 1800 teachers had resigned from 1965 to 1969 for reasons other than death, dismissal, superannuation, and marriage. "Some of the most highly experienced and qualified teachers had resigned and emigrated to countries in which they were pursuing a teaching career." (Pollak Pg. 25).

Extramural Activities

Sporting Facilities (A1)

The extreme paucity of facilities other than the provision of a soccer and cricket field, and perhaps a tennis court, was noted. Few respondents took part in school extramural activities, and most played soccer for outside clubs. The attractions of weightlifting, swimming baths, athletic tracks, and gymnasia are almost totally absent in the Coloured Schools. Those who would be able to do well in such activities are not encouraged to remain at schools that offer so little extramural activity to counterbalance the hard work of study.

The χ^2 test was applied here but the result was not significant. In fact only 12% of matriculants and 12% of drop-outs said that facilities were good.

What cultural activities are offered? (A 2)

Table 8.24

The distribution between the groups as to whether or not they enjoyed adequate cultural activities at their schools.

	GOOD	BAD	TOTAL
Matriculants	27	23	50
Drop-outs	16	34	50
	43	57	100

Here again the picture is dismal with little other than an occasional play, film, or chess club being provided. A slightly larger percentage of matriculants (54% compared with 32%) said that they felt cultural activities were sufficient. Although the χ^2 value of 4.08 is significant at the 5% level the writer feels that few of the drop-outs knew precisely what

was meant by cultural activities, and that few would have taken the trouble to attend any in out-of-school hours.

The general picture regarding extramural activities is most depressing. There is little or no provision for sporting facilities, or even proper halls. One secondary school visited by the writer has more than 1 300 pupils and is housed in prefabricated single storey buildings surrounding a dusty courtyard. It has no facilities for outside activities and no indoor rooms set aside for cultural activities.

Persons who reached matriculation

Why did you succeed?

This question was asked because the writer felt that boys who succeeded (despite the general poverty, the drab environment, the inadequate schools, and the overall depression) must have some special qualities.

Of the matriculants 74% replied that they succeeded because of personal ambition, determination and hard work. Typical of such a person was Ruben H., who came from a poor background, had a drunken father who had twice been arrested for stealing, had two brothers dependent on him, and who was put in an institution himself. Ruben often studied right through the night, stopped all other pleasures, and dedicated himself absolutely to succeeding. Another boy Solomon J. asked to be admitted to the writer's Children's Home because he had no electric lights in his Western Coloured Township two-roomed house, and because his family of seven made it impossible for him to study. He too worked hard to succeed.

"Owing to other people's sacrifices" was the answer given by 32%. The story here was usually one of poor parents

struggling hard and resisting the temptation of sending 16 or 17 year olds out to work. Edgar J. typifies this group. In a family of nine he not only did his share of the housework, but found time to study extensively with the aid of a father who worked during the day and gave him extra lessons at night.

What sacrifices did you make, and what sacrifices did your parents make?(p 3.4)

Nearly all the matriculants considered that they had sacrificed most of their pleasures over the final year and that their parents had made considerable sacrifices to keep them at school. Here it must be remembered that although most schools for Coloureds are free, parents must resist pressures to let their children earn money for them in order that the children may obtain better qualifications. Where families are large and incomes are small the earnings of every one are an insurance for all.

Did you feel a misfit?(P 2)

The writer asked this question believing that the matriculant (fewer than one in a hundred who start school) would feel different from the remainder of his family. This feeling was erroneous, and obviously those who reached matriculation are made to feel very much wanted, and therefore do not feel odd or misfits at all. Considerable sacrifices are made by parents who keep their sons at school and it should be remembered that many are aged nineteen or twenty when they matriculate and that therefore four or five years of earnings have been lost to the family. Despite this, all the respondents felt that their families considered them as they did other siblings, although perhaps as being rather special because they had advanced right to the top of their schools.

SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

Environmental factors generally were found to be of great significance in the writer's study. Nearly all the drop-outs came from conditions of material poverty, these being small, unlit, overcrowded houses occupied by as many as ten people in as few as two rooms. Overcrowding of this nature was found to be significant not only for the obvious lack of comfort but also for the lack of such essentials as a quiet place to study and an electric light. Most of the drop-outs stated that they attempted to study in a lounge occupied by four or more people and assisted by the inadequate light of a paraffin lamp or a candle.

As regards the drop-outs particularly, nearly all had working fathers who left early in the morning, returned home late at night and what little interest they showed in their children seemed limited to "a good hiding".

Therefore, the typical environment of a drop-out amounted to a crowded and small house occupied by a mother and many noisy children with a tired father returning late at night to exercise "discipline". The drop-out's leisure time activities were limited generally to the cinema and the football and pocket money for these purposes was irregular and given at the whim of the parents.

Concerning the occupation, education and interest of the fathers very significant results were obtained. Very few (16%) of fathers of drop-outs were "white collar" workers, a large number had deserted their families or had died, and the others were mainly "blue collar" workers, 35% in fact being

unskilled labourers. These fathers having little formal education themselves, as only 14% had experienced secondary education, could hardly be expected to have a great understanding of the value of matriculating. The very small numbers of fathers of drop-outs who showed interest in schoolwork or attended school functions were highly significant. There is no doubt that the lack of encouragement of fathers was a most important factor in bringing about a lack of ambition in their children.

When the writer considered the education and interest of mothers of drop-outs, similar results were found. Only 8% of mothers of drop-outs had a secondary education, only 24% showed an interest in their son's schoolwork, and only 20% attended school functions. This lack of secondary education and the apparent unconcern for the education of their children had an obviously detrimental effect on their children's school performance.

The schools themselves do not seem to have been inspiring places and the competitive mark system does seem to have made the lowly-placed boys disillusioned. Of the drop-outs a high percentage (66%) said they were in the bottom half of their classes, 74% said they were older than their fellows and 74% felt indifferent towards their schools. The schools in general were overcrowded, poorly equipped, and lacked qualified or inspiring staff.

The matriculants in general seem to be boys who had some environmental advantages including electric lights for 68%, a quiet place to study for 42%, and a comfortable house for the lucky 46%. However more significant was the educational

qualifications and occupation of their fathers and mothers.

Perhaps of greatest significance was the matriculants' intense desire to succeed, their willingness to study hard and sacrifice pleasures, and their parents' encouragement and sacrifices to keep them at school.

General comment on the findings.

The writer's study indicated clearly to him the obvious need for better housing, brighter schools, and parental encouragement. If some definite improvements were made in the socio-economic living conditions, in the school provisions, and in educating parents there can be little doubt that the rate of dropping-out would fall.

CHAPTER 9SOME RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To lower the drop-out rate, some means of preventing truancy must be found. It is often the truant who soon after becomes the drop-out. The writer has mentioned the ineffectualness of the legal provision requiring Coloured children to remain at school. The appointment of truant officers could well salvage the rehabilitable truant and make him return to school. The lack of attention afforded the occasional truant makes it an easy matter for him to develop into a chronic truant, and soon to a drop-out. Chronic truants could perhaps be sent to youth camps designed to train them in worthwhile trades, and the occasional truant could be encouraged to return to school. The rate of dropping out would certainly fall if these measures were carried out.
2. In the writer's survey concerning attitudes of parents towards the schools it was apparent that little or no interest was taken by parents of drop-outs. Parents should be encouraged to build furniture for the school, to help in the gardens, to participate in sports coaching, and to help in ways familiar to them. The schools in their turn must offer far more facilities to parents. Night classes, literacy courses, musical evenings, cards and indoor games would attract parents who find little or no stimulation or interest provided by the community. Ways and means can be found to

cement the relationships between parents and the school if only the principals and teachers would make use of their accepted position as leaders of the community.

By making parents become involved in the school a chance is created for them to become integral parts of it. They then will understand the school's problems and those of their children. Furthermore they may come increasingly to understand their children's educational problems and will perhaps become inspired to take a more positive and active attitude and approach to the schools. Thereby children will also become more involved in the school situation.

3. The writer's survey indicated to him how totally uninspiring are all the secondary schools he visited. The lack of facilities, the large size of the schools, the depression of the pupils he interviewed, the lack of interest of the teachers in their pupils; all these indicated that school was completely dull and no delight was present. All this can only begin to be improved by the injection of enormous funds to build brighter and better schools complete with sports fields, swimming baths, and gymnasiums. Teachers would have to receive vastly improved salaries to provide some encouragement for the vastly increased responsibilities they should have and the necessary qualifications they would be required to obtain.
4. The Administration of Coloured Affairs should be encouraged to concentrate more on reducing drop-out rates, than on insisting that books be covered with brown paper, and that schools themselves make provision for

improvements they feel are necessary but with which the Administration disagrees. A less paternalistic attitude on the part of the Administration and a different type of inspector, people who wish to help rather than find fault would do much to raise the morale of the schools.

A completely new attitude towards education and school is needed by parents, pupils, teachers, and the authorities. School must become a delight and a happy experience rather than a twelve year sentence inflicted on children who want to matriculate, and a shorter sentence for those who will leave to earn poor wages to free themselves from boredom. The Administration must improve facilities and the morale of teachers, the teachers must improve their qualifications and their attitudes, the parents must take a close interest in their children and their schools, and pupils must be inspired. All this constitutes a most difficult task but it can be accomplished.

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QUESTIONNAIRE

Name:

Address:

Which School did you attend?

Have you any brothers or sisters ?

ENVIRONMENT (E)

1. How many bedrooms were there in your house?

2. How many other rooms?

3. Did your house have electric lights?

4. Was there a room for studying or where did you study?

5. How many people lived in your house? Adults:

Children:

6. What was the home atmosphere like?

(a) Who was boss in the house?

(b) Who disciplined the children and how? (e.g. beaten, talked to, privileges withheld)

(c) Until what age were you hit or beaten? (if you were)

(d) Did you help in the home? What did you do?

7. What did you do with your leisure time? (Bioscope, gang, walked about, etc.)

8. Did you get pocket money, did you save, or how did you spend it?

FATHER (F)Approx.
Salary

Occupation

Educational Qualifications

3. (a) Did he ever visit your Principal or Teacher?

(b) Did he ever go to a P.T.A. Meeting?

(c) Did he ever go to any school functions?

(d) Did he help with reading, homework, etc.?

MOTHER (M)

Occupation Approx. Salary

Educational Qualifications

3. (a) Did she ever visit your Principal or Teachers?
- (b) Did she ever go to a P.T.A. Meeting?
- (c) Did she ever go to any school functions?
- (d) Did she help with reading, homework, etc.?

SCHOOL (S)

1. Why did you leave school?
2. At what age did you leave school?
3. What standard were you in?
4. Were you older than others in your class?
5. What was your ambition on leaving school?
6. Were your best friends at school or at work? Did your friends persuade you to leave?
7. Were you in the top or bottom half of your class?
8. Give your opinion of your school

TEACHERS:(T)

1. Were there sufficient teachers at your school?
2. In your opinion did they know and enjoy their subjects?
3. Did they make the work interesting?
4. Were you bored or stimulated by your teachers?
5. Did teachers take a personal interest in you? Did you have extra lessons at school or at home?

EXTRAMURAL ACTIVITIES(A)

1. What sporting facilities did your school have?
2. What cultural activities did they offer?
3. What were your extramural activities?

TO BE FILLED IN BY PERSONS WHO REACHED MATRIC.

1. Why did you succeed?
2. Do you feel out of it at home? (a misfit)
3. What sacrifices did you make? Did you stay in at night?
4. What sacrifices did parents or others make for you?

○



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Author James P D

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