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THE CURRICULUM AND PUPILS' RESPONSES: A CASE STUDY IN AN OPEN SECONDARY SCHOOL IN SOUTH AFRICA

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A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of Education
University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg
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ABSTRACT

In the mid 1970s certain hitherto white private schools began admitting pupils of other race groups. As desegregated schools become more common in this country, there is need for curriculum research that can inform both policy makers and practioners. This study explores curriculum issues at a secondary school ten years after it admitted pupils of all race groups.

Located within the qualitative research paradigm, this research is an ethnographic case study based on a year's participant observation in the school.

The study focused on teachers' approaches to their work, their aims, choice of material and methodology; academic achievement patterns, perceptions of factors influencing these and strategies for dealing with them; pupils' responses to different curriculum content, teaching styles and strategies, and the interplay between social interaction and learning.

Within a framework of similarity, there were differences among black and white pupils' expectations of the school, their evaluation of subjects, their prioritisation of constructs of good teaching and their evaluation of the school in fulfilling key expectations. Black pupils underachieved academically, and were relatively more sensitive to the subtle tension underlying race group interaction.

The curriculum was perceived as basically assimilationist, and most teaching conservative, geared toward narrow academic aims. A small group of teachers who promoted a less Eurocentric approach which tended to be more pupil-centred, activity-based and issue-centred met some opposition from their colleagues.

The study highlights the interplay between social interaction and achievement, the need to address both social and personal educational aims together with academic achievement. The findings suggest that unless certain key curriculum changes are implemented, black pupils are likely to remain academically marginalised in open schools, and desegregated schools run the risk of contributing little to social change.

DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is my own, unaided work.
It is being submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other University.

_____

____ day of _____, 1994

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BB	black boy
BG	black girl
CB	Coloured boy
CG	Coloured girl
'cos	because
ES	English Skills
IB	Indian boy
IG	Indian girl
IS	Integrated Studies
JMB	Joint Matriculation Board
Matric	Matriculation
NSC	National Senior Certificate
SL	School Leaving
Std	Standard
TED	Transvaal Education Department
UE	University Entrance
WB	White boy
WG	White girl

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CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

1. The context of the research

1976 was a watershed year in South African education, characterised by major disruptions in black schools as pupils protested the unequal and discriminatory education with which they were provided. Muller (1992c, pp. 38-39) reports that, partly in response to this, the Roman Catholic South African Bishops' Conference decided in principle to integrate their schools, and that they were supported in principle by the Anglicans and Methodists.

The move from approval in principle to practice was a slow one. St. Mary's, an Anglican girls' school in Johannesburg, and some others admitted their first black pupils in 1975 (Muller, 1992, p.39), with a small number of other schools following in 1977. Flanagan (1977) reported in Muller, (1992c, p.39) notes that in 1977 there were only 200 black pupils in white private schools. However, by 1986, 84 percent of the 170 English-medium, private schools in South Africa were admitting black pupils (Muller, 1992c, p.47). Within the public sector, too, there were increasing, if limited, calls for open schooling, and in 1991, in the wake of major changes within the broader political context of the education system, the first few schools in the control of the State opened their doors to children regardless of race.

At the time at which this research commenced, the numbers of schools which were open was still very small. Only about one percent of the total South African school-going population was at private schools, and this represented a much larger proportion of white children than those from other race groups. None-the-less, the trend toward openness had begun, survived and grown, making the whole field one of interest for research. The changes within

the educational system that are likely as the country moves toward a democratic non-racial society mean that such research has become imperative.

While racially mixed schools are newcomers to the education scene in South Africa, this is not so in Britain, the United States and elsewhere. A large body of literature in the field of multicultural education exists, based on both theoretical and empirical work in universities and schools, and is reviewed in Chapter 3. One of the most obvious gaps in the literature is research into multicultural education in South Africa. This is largely unsurprising, given the dominance of Apartheid policies in society in general, and the impact of these on educational ideology. On a macro-level, the issues of educating for a multicultural society were not priority issues within the education system, and, nor, on a micro-level, were they, or others related to dealing with the complexities of multicultural classrooms, of relevance. The dominance of Apartheid ideology made curriculum initiatives directed toward issues associated with multic turalism difficult to innovate and sporadic in their existence. South Africa was not perceived as a multicultural society by the education authorities who controlled curriculum content.

As South Africans, we have much to learn from experience elsewhere. However, marked differences exist between our own and other school systems. We have a long history of racially segregated schools, and institutionalised racism within the broader society in which schools are set. Also, whereas in both Britain and America, 'people of colour' constitute minority groups, in South Africa, black people are in the majority. Thus while the research literature can inform educational decision makers and practicners, there is a desperate need for South Af can-based research into education in non-segregated schools.

At the time when this research was undertaken, even with the changes initiated by the Catholic and other private schools, there had been little published material on the open schools, as will be seen from the literature review.

Returning from a year of curriculum studies in Britain that had focused on multicultural education issues there, and aware of both the growth of desegregation within the private schools from 1976 and of the dearth of local research into this movement, I resolved to pursue my interest in the broad field of multicultural education in the South African context.

I was drawn toward the notion of as holistic a study as possible of a school in the South African context that was working with the new challenges and possibilities afforded by increasing openness. It seemed that an intensive study of an open school would comprise a worthwhile piece of work. After exploration of the idea, a colleague and I agreed that we would work together in a school, each focusing on a different aspect, but in such a way that the two studies, while standing on their own, together would give a more complete and insightful picture of the school in action than either on its own.

This study is an attempt to describe and discuss some of the issues associated with the curriculum in an 'open' school in South Africa. It is based on data assembled in an 'open' school from 1987, just over ten years after the first private white schools had opened themselves to pupils of all races, in defiance of the legislation which determined that education provision in South Africa should be segregated according to racial groups defined by the government.

2. The focus of the research

Within the field of multicultural education research there is a wide variety of focuses and approaches. A major focus must needs be the curriculum. The opening of a school to all races in this country offers challenges and possibilities to curriculum policy makers, teachers and students not afforded to such people in segregated schools. Participants in open schooling in South Africa are already grappling with curriculum issues that are both different from those in most South African schools at present, and precursors of those likely to be issues in an increasing number of South African schools in the future. Insights into the curriculum and students' responses to it in a non-segregated school of the present should have relevance for schools in the future, and the curriculum thus formed one focus of the study. At the same time, there are issues of social interaction that have a particular dimension in a racially mixed school. This provided the second focus.

The edges that defined the two research areas are blurred, and it was hoped that, together, the data gleaned by each researcher would paint a more holistic, and richer picture of the school than either account alone could do. It was agreed that I would work in the area of curriculum analysis and evaluation and that my co-researcher would concentrate on the area of social interaction. Unfortunately, he has been unable to write up his part of the work. However, as the initial stipulation of the University was that each part of the research was to be able to stand alone, it has not meant that this section is incomplete without the other.

3. The purpose of the research

The purpose of this part of the study was to investigate curriculum issues in a South African school that is racially mixed. It does not aim to test hypotheses nor to formulate general principles, but rather to illuminate the processes and forces at work on the curriculum and to explore the dynamic which exists between

curriculum decisions and actions, and student responses. 'Curriculum' is considered in the sense suggested by Heyman (1981, p.451):

> Curriculum includes both the subject matter which teachers are supposed to teach and pupils supposed to learn, and the methods whereby teachers and pupils 'create' that subject in the classroom.

Within this broad definition of the curriculum the research focused mainly on the formal components of the academic programme, and, although a wide variety of other curriculum components, such as assemblies and extra-mural activities formed part of the broad unfocused phase of observation, only the formal classroom-based dimensions were finally explored in any depth.

4. The research design

The methodological framework and research techniques employed during the course of the research year are the substance of Chapter 2. In brief, the study comprised an ethnographic case study based on participant observation. Although some recourse is made to statistical analysis of certain data, it lies firmly within the interpretive approach to educational research.

Very broadly, the research was conceived of around such questions as:

- What are the school's goals and aims? To what extent does formulation of these reflect cognizance of the issues involved in multicultural education?
- What are the curriculum strategies in terms of choice of content, material, teaching style, classroom organisation, teacher-pupil interaction?
- Who makes curriculum decisions? What are the factors influencing these decisions?
- What is the nature of pupils' academic achievement and performance within the school?
- What is the nature of pupils' responses to curriculum decisions and actions?
- What are the messages of the hidden curriculum, and how do students respond to these?

Given the nature of the research design, while these did remain the broad questions, observations of the curriculum in action and responses to it, and discussions with participants, both teachers

and pupils, served to focus attention on much more specific aspects of these questions than was possible before the research began, and which only unfolded as the research proceeded.

5. The choice of school

Given the scope of the study, the task then became one of finding a school which would be willing to host a researcher on a full-time and in-depth basis for the period of a year. One school, called Riverbend in this study, offered interesting possibilities for in-depth research work.

Riverbend is a non-racial (school's terminology) secondary school with students from Standard 5 to Standard 10. The Standard 5 group was not really integrated into the senior part of the school, and was not included in the research. In the year in which this research was conducted there were 265 pupils in Standard 6 to Standard 10. Of these, 75 were black, 125 white, 54 Indian and 12 'Coloured'. One hundred and twenty three pupils, mainly black, were boarders.

The school is a relatively young one, having been founded in 1970 by a breakaway group from a more conventional private boys' school. It was established first as a white boys' school, but soon became co-educational, and seven years after its inception, in 1977, was one of the first of the open schools. Its aims included child centred education, progressiveness, objectivity, discipline, human relationships, academic achievement and consensus. These are elaborated on in a publicity document about the school The Riverbend Concept, which makes clear the school's commitment to trying new ideas; unbiased attitudes and behaviour; teaching pupils to think for themselves, and to make their own decisions; self-discipline; respect for, and recognition of the values of others, and the need to make a contribution to the community; good academic results, with the proviso that these should not be

regarded as the sole measure of a school's success; and the recognition of the need to take cognizance of pupils' opinions in decision making about the school.

Because it is a private school, it has not only had the opportunity to enrol 'non-white' students, but also had considerable flexibility in its curriculum design, particularly in the lower standards where the pressure of an external examination is considerably diminished. The school's curriculum was thus potentially a response to the multiracial nature of the school and to the freedom afforded teachers to respond to both this racial mix and their own views of effective and meaningful teaching. This was the case for many of the open schools at this time, but few had Riverbend's reputation for offering an 'alternative' education, and of being experimental in both interaction patterns and curriculum matters, and therefore few offered the same chance of having interesting innovations in practice. In addition, it had a relatively high proportion of black and Indian pupils, in contrast to many other schools where the admission of such pupils verged on the tokenist.

Thus, although I had no first-hand experience of the school, it seemed a fruitful place to begin negotiations for the possibility of some research. The headmaster was very receptive to the ideas of research work in his school, particularly as there was a variety of issues of concern to him, and which he hoped the research process might illuminate. With minimum fuss it was agreed that a researcher would be welcome on a full-time basis in the school for the period of one year. He was particularly pleased to discover my main teaching subjects as a senior member of staff, with responsibilities in these areas, would be on leave for two terms, and he hoped that I might do his teaching in his absence. This arrangement suited me very well as it opened the door for a natural entree as participant observer, a role I was hoping to play during the research period. As it happened, the headmaster

with whom I had negotiated access to the school left at short notice at the end of the year before my fieldwork began, but his successor was willing to honour the commitment to my research.

6. The Curriculum at Riverbend

In the formal, academic sense of curriculum, Riverbend prepares pupils for the externally controlled Matriculation examination which marks the end of pupils' careers at the school. The period of secondary schooling is six years, from Standards 5 to 10. In many schools, however, the Standard 5 year is still part of the primary level, with pupils moving on the high school in Standard 6. At Riverbend, as mentioned above, there was a Standard 5 year, theoretically part of the school, but so much apart from it in terms of curriculum and approach, that this study excluded it. Most entrants to the school came in Standard 6, and the very small Standard 5 class filtered into this group. The curriculum considered here is that from Standards 6 to 10. (The eighth to twelfth years of schooling, with pupils generally aged between thirteen and eighteen)

The Matriculation examination has set requirements regarding the number and combination of subjects offered, and the aggregate marks that must be attained for the awarding of either a School Leaving or University Entrance pass.

Subjects can be offered on either the Higher or Standard grade. The latter offers a lower possible total number of marks, and thus, potentially, a lower possible aggregate. For a University Entrance pass, a certain minimum number of subjects must be passed on the Higher grade. Pupils made the choice between Higher and Standard grade during their Standard 9 and 10 years, having to make the final decision only by the time official registration was made for writing the examination.

All pupils must offer at least six subjects (the norm). These must include one of the official languages (English or Afrikaans) on the Higher grade, another language (which might be a pupil's mother tongue where this is not English or Afrikaans), and a set of subjects from certain prescribed combinations.

The University Entrance pass is the higher level of pass, and provides the possibility of access to University, subject to individual faculties' requirements. Thus, while a pass in Mathematics is not required for a University Entrance pass, it is an essential requirement for admission to faculties such as Medicine and Engineering. As a result, certain subjects tend to have higher status than others, and these would include Mathematics, Physical Science, Biology. The Creative Arts tend to be at the lower end of the scale of value of an Academic Matriculation, except for pupils who wish to pursue careers in Art, Drama or Music, and 'practical subjects' such as Home Economics, Typing and Technical Drawing would be at the bottom of the scale, and not on offer at all 'academic' schools such as Riverbend. Similarly, the Higher grade has greater status than Standard.

A variety of examination boards exists. Each draws up its own subject syllabuses based on a common core curriculum. Each sets its own examinations, and it is generally agreed that the style of examining differs from Board to Board. In addition, not all the Boards offer examinations in the full range of subjects that form the spectrum available at Matriculation level. The imprint of the Apartheid structure is clearly seen in the pattern of examination boards. Each of the white education departments of the four provinces of the Republic (the Transvaal, Natal, Cape and Orange Free State) sets its own papers for white pupils. There are papers set by the Department of Education and Training (DET), which are written by black candidates regardless of province. Both the 'Coloured' and Indian communities also have their own examination boards. Two examinations cross provincial and ethnic lines in that they are open to all candidates. The National Senior Certificate

(NSC) is open to all, but candidates write at racially segregated examination centres. The examination of the Joint Matriculation Board (JMB) is also written by candidates with no regard for race or provincial origin, and tends to be the examination chosen by many of the elite private schools. (Since this research, the Joint Matriculation Board has been superseded by the Independent Examination Board)

Overall, there is a popular conception that the JMB Matriculation is the most difficult, sets the highest standard and has the greatest status, while the DET is held in lowest esteem. In addition, the JMB is regarded as the only truly non-racial examination.

At Riverbend, in the case study year (and until the year succeeding it), pupils were offered the choice of sitting the JMB or NSC examinations. A racial pattern of choice was evident in the pupils' choice. No black pupils chose to write the NSC examination, and, while there were some white candidates, the majority of those opting for the NSC were Indian, and, in fact, the majority of Indian pupils chose this examination. In terms of curriculum and syllabuses, the main differences between the two examinations were that the NSC did not offer Additional Mathematics, Art, French or Drama as did the JMB, and in English and Afrikaans, different works of literature were set, requiring the two groups of candidates to be taught these aspects separately from Standard 9, the year in which the choice was made. The main reasons for dropping the NSC option from 1989 was that, with the declining number of Indians attending the school, the demand for the examination dropped and it became unviable, in terms of the need to teach the setworks separately, to offer it to the small number who would have selected it above the JMB.

Pupils began the process of choosing subjects for the Matriculation examination at the end of the Standard 7 year, and made their final decisions at the end of Standard 8.

Table 1. Pattern of Subject Options from Standard 7

Compulsory	
Mathematics	
English	
Afrikaans	
Package X	**Package Y**
Group A (choose 1)	**Group D (choose 1)**
French	French
Accountancy	Geography
Geography	Science
Group B (choose 2)	**Group E (choose 1)**
Science	Science
Biology	Biology
Art	Speech and Drama
History	
	Group F (choose 1)
Group C (optional 7th)	
Business Economics	Art
Additional Mathematics	Accountancy
	History
	Group G (optional 7th)
	History
	Business Economics
	Additional Mathematics
	Computers

Pupils had to choose between two broad packages of choices, shown as X and Y in Table 1. In both packages they all had to do English, Afrikaans and Mathematics in Standard 8. They could then choose from groups of subjects. In package X these groups are shown as A and B, with one subject to be chosen from A and two from B. Another subject could be chosen from group C at the end of Standard 8 only, with Business Economics replacing one of their previous choices or picked up as a seventh subject, or Additional Mathematics being chosen as a seventh subject. In package Y, one subject had to be chosen from groups D, E and F, and a seventh could be chosen from group G, though Business Economics, Additional Mathematics and Computer Studies only became options in Standard 9, and the latter two only as seventh subjects, while

Business Economics could replace a previous choice and History could be continued as a sixth, replacing one of the previously selected subjects.

Before Standard 8, all pupils did all subjects in the curriculum. These were :

In Standard 6: Afrikaans, Mathematics, General Science (Physical Science and Biology), Integrated Studies (which incorporated English Skills, History, Geography, Drama and Guidance), Art for at least part of the year, Zulu or French, and Computer Studies for part of the year.

In Standard 7: Afrikaans, Mathematics, Physical Science, Biology, Integrated Studies, Cultural Studies and Art and Computer Studies for at least part of the year.

In Standard 8: Afrikaans, Mathematics, Integrated Studies and the package put together from the options outlined above.

Subject choice decision coming at the end of Standard 7, and finalised at the end of Standard 8, in some way marked a boundary between two phases of the school. The first comprised the first two to three years where the spectre of the Matriculation examination was somewhat unreal, and where some teachers devoted their energies to a variety of non-specifically academic achievement aims and objectives, and the second comprised the last two years where the final examination was the focus of attention, and where many of the aims of the broad educational process that were given attention in the first three years faded into insignificance.

This broad outline of the curriculum is little more than a list of requirements. What was of interest in this research was the way in which the curriculum was implemented, and pupils' responses to it.

7. Organisation of the thesis

In the standards before Standard 8, although set core syllabuses do exist in each subject, teachers at this school had freedom to interpret these as they chose, to restructure and reinterpret the content and the approach to the subject matter. The freedom for innovation and experimentation allowed in the first three years was interpreted differently by different teachers and gave rise to some of the most heated debates regarding curriculum, particularly in the area of Integrated Studies. From the broad description of the curriculum given in Chapter 4, it is clear that a tension exists between the work of a small group of more progressive teachers, and a larger group of more conservative teachers.

Such tensions are to be found in most schools. Attitudes to learning and the curriculum are complex. Insights into the views of teachers and pupils about what is taught, what should be taught, how it is and should be taught, the value of knowledge of different types was derived from interviews, observations and from questionnaires, and some of the complexity of attitude and value is explored in the description and analysis of the curriculum that forms the focus of Chapter 4, which gives both teachers' and pupils' accounts of the curriculum in action. The tension between the two approaches forms the basis for much of the curriculum analysis that follows, for it is in the differential responses of pupils to the two broad approaches that much of interest in the curriculum lies. It is the particular details of the debate in this school, particularly in the light of its multiracial context, that are more fully explored in subsequent chapters, and which, in fact, form the central issues explored in this thesis.

The relative academic success of different racial and ethnic groups is shown in the literature review of Chapter 3 to be a matter of real concern in American and British schools. It is similarly a matter of concern within the segregated education system of this country. Within the country as a whole, the success

rate at Matriculation level varies enormously from race group to race group, with white candidates achieving both overall pass rates and University Entrance passes well above those of other groups, particularly black candidates (Race Relations Survey, 1993/1994). In addition, the percentage of white candidates taking, and passing, high status subjects such as Mathematics and Physical Science far exceeds that of other groups. Given the differential access to high status careers of such different results, they clearly have huge consequences for social mobility and the maintenance of the status quo. It was thus of interest to discover whether this pattern changed for pupils at an open school, and whether such a school had a role to play in 'levelling the playing fields' in this context. For this reason the patterns of academic achievement were examined in the case study school. This was done in several ways, statistically and from the teachers' and pupils' perspectives, and the description and analysis of these findings is provided in Chapter 5, together with an account of teachers' and pupils' perceptions of reasons for differences in achievement.

Teachers' strategies for dealing with perceived differences in academic performance are explored in Chapter 6, and again the tension between different views of the ideal curriculum and educational aims are explored in these contexts, as are some of the constraints on curriculum change in a school such as Riverbend. It is success or failure in the Matriculation examination that has a marked impact on pupils' access to further educational opportunities, and to bursaries to assist financially with costs involved in tertiary level study. As such, the Matriculation examination serves as a gatekeeper to access to tertiary institutions. Perceptions of the significance of this, and of its value as an educational goal, provided the basis for a split in the attitudes of staff and pupils to the fundamental role of the school, and to selected aspects of the curriculum.

Academic achievement is but one aspect of pupil response to the curriculum. There were certain aspects of the affective domain of learning that were either intentionally or inadvertently outcomes of both the content and organisation of the curriculum, and analysis of teachers' and pupils' perceptions of, and attitudes towards these, while included in almost all chapters, form the focus of Chapter 7. The link between social and personal learning, and academic achievement is also considered, particularly in Chapters 7 and 8.

In Chapter 8 an attempt is made to draw together some of the main ideas that have emerged in earlier chapters by analysing responses to questionnaire items which focus on a broad evaluation of aspects of the curriculum from the pupils' perspectives. In this chapter attention is paid to pupils' constructs of enjoyable and less enjoyable subjects, 'good' and 'not good' teaching, worthwhile subjects, the qualities of a 'good school' and the extent to which qualities of a good school apply to Riverbend. Patterns in, and reasons for their responses, serve to highlight themes that emerged in earlier chapters.

Throughout, differences between the responses of black, Indian and white pupils are considered, and the extent to which these groups have different needs and aspirations, the extent to which the school meets these, and the constraints on its ability to do so are considered. The extent to which the school falls within the assimilationist, integrationist or transformationist models of multicultural curriculum, factors affecting this, and the implications of the findings are also given attention.

The Conclusion attempts to draw together the main themes around the issues that are developed in the separate chapters. Given that this is a case study, it considers the extent to which the findings might be of value to other educationists working in open schools.

8. Definition of Terms and Concepts

Non-racial school

Riverbend considered itself a non-racial school. By this it meant that it did not consider race or culture as significant descriptions of any of its pupils, and viewed them as individual human beings with their own set of characteristics unrelated to a group. It did not enter any information regarding race in its records about the pupil, but did record home language and religion, both aspects of culture.

Despite the repeated assertions of teachers and pupils that they did not 'see colour', frequent reference was made to pupils as 'black', 'Indian' and 'white'.

White, Coloured, black and Indian pupils

The Population Registration Act of 1950, until its repeal in 1991, required that all South Africans be classified into one of the official 'race' groups, and a variety of laws attributed rights and privileges to people according to this classification. Very broadly speaking, all people who were not 'white' were 'black' and this term embraced a plethora of groups defined by 'racial' and national origin. These included, inter alia, African people, people of Indian origin, and the so-called Coloured (people of mixed race).

At Riverbend, the white group referred to those pupils classified as white by the government, and were thus pupils whose families were of European origin and who enjoyed the privileges their classification bestowed on them in the South African context. The black pupils were only those of African origin, from a variety of language groups, and did not include the Indians or Coloureds, who were identified separately as such. The Coloureds were few in number, and were not really perceived as a group within the school by teachers or pupils, though they themselves were aware of their af-

filiations. The Indian group were those pupils who were of Indian origin. The majority of the Indian pupils at the school were Muslim, but there were also those who were Hindu. These religious distinctions did not play a major role in teachers' and pupils' frames of reference outside the Indian group itself.

In discussing pupil responses to the curriculum, the groups as perceived to exist within the school were used as the basis for analysis.

9. The issue of race, class and gender

Clearly, the use of the set of racial groups for analysing pupil responses to the curriculum means that only one dimension of interest is examined. Gender and class, which intersect and overlap issues of race, are two other dimensions that perforce influence pupil response to the curriculum. Focusing only on race means that this study is limited by this perspective, and does not consider the ways in which girls or boys, regardless of race or class, respond to certain initiatives, nor the extent to which middle-class pupils have perceptions and responses in common, and different from those of the minority working class pupils in the school, regardless of race or gender.

However, given the strong influence of race on South African education, and the major step taken by an open school such as Riverbend in challenging the system by admitting pupils regardless of race, it seems that a study such as this is justified in taking the race issue as its focus. One of the major changes facing South African schooling currently lies in the arena of desegregation, and it seems reasonable that empirical research in schools should, where it is not possible to address the spectrum of race, gender and class, at least initially, prioritise race. It was envisaged that issues of gender and class would be given some attention by my co-researcher, but as this work was not completed, these aspects have not been considered in this report.

CHAPTER 2. METHODOLOGY

1. Theoretical perspectives on the research design

1.1 The interpretive paradigm

The research approach adopted in this work is what Cohen and Manion (1985) describe as interpretive rather than normative. It is philosophically different in approach to the research tradition based on positivism. An adequate discussion of positivism, and of criticisms of it are given by Cohen and Manion (1985, pp. 1-27). While positivism has value in many instances of research, for the project undertaken at Riverbend an alternative approach was perceived as more appropriate, and therefore will be discussed in some detail here.

Cohen and Manion (1985, pp. 27-28) provide the following exposition of work within the interpretive approach:

> Although the opponents of positivism within social science itself subscribe to a variety of schools of thought each with its own subtly different epistemological viewpoint, they are united by their common rejection of the belief that human behaviour is governed by general laws and characterised by underlying regularities. Moreover, they would agree that the social world can only be understood from the standpoint of the individuals who are part of the ongoing action being investigated; that their model of man is an autonomous one, not the plastic version favoured by positivist researchers. In rejecting the viewpoint of the detached, objective observer - a mandatory feature of traditional research - antipositivists would argue that an individual's behaviour can only be understood by the researcher sharing his frame of reference; understanding of the individual's interpretations of the world around him has to come from the inside, not the outside. Social science is thus seen as a subjective rather than objective undertaking, as a means of dealing with the direct experience of people in specific contexts.

The interpretive paradigm in sociology is represented by three main schools of thought - phenomenology, ethnomethodology and symbolic interactionism. Cohen and Manion (1985, pp.27-44) and

Meighan (1981) give good accounts of these. Meighan (1981, p.227) notes that there is considerable overlap between them, although the focus in each is slightly different. The interpretive approach focuses on action and the research task is to ascertain the intentions of the actor and to share his experience in order to make the observed actions meaningful. He suggests that the concern is to 'develop an appreciative understanding of social action in everyday life'.

Influenced by these counterbalances to positivism within sociology, there has been an increasing number of research projects within the sociology of education that have been rooted in the interpretive tradition.

1.2 Education research in the interpretive paradigm

Jacob (1988) uses the term 'qualitative research' to discuss a group of approaches that differ from the positivistic approach, and which can be said to be within the interpretive perspective. She notes that the various traditions of qualitative research have different historical roots, important assumptions and different emphases. However, she asserts that the qualitative approach as a whole is characterised by emphasising the importance of conducting research in a natural setting, assuming the importance of understanding participants' perspectives; being free from predetermined theories and questions, with questions and theories emerging after data collection rather than being posed before the study begins and having participant observation as a central methodology.

Atkinson, Delamont and Hammersley (1988) note that qualitative research developed in Britain in the late 1960's and early 1970's. New scholars in the field at this time:

> reacted against the theoretical and methodological approaches that had previously been dominant - psychometrics, systematic observation, survey research and structural functionalism. Nonstandard forms of sociology and psychology were drawn on - symbolic interactionism, phenomenology, and social and cultural anthropology. Approaches to

> education research were developed that refused to take conventional wisdom for granted, and set out to explore what happens in schools from the point of view of the participants. (p 234)

Both Jacobs (1987, 1988) and Atkinson et al (1988) have compiled typologies of qualitative research approaches that have been applied to educational research, and attempt to categorise research cases in terms of these. Jacobs (1987, p.1) notes that qualitative research conveys different meanings to different people, and confusion arises from discussing qualitative research as if it were one approach. The work of Atkinson et al (1988) serves as a useful framework. They recognise seven approaches in the British tradition, and incorporate American work by comparing and contrasting the categories and classification adopted by Jacob. The seven approaches they identify are: symbolic interactionism, anthropology, sociolinguistics, ethnomethodology, democratic evaluation, neo-Marxist ethnography and feminist research. They cite over sixty authors published between 1961 and 1988 in their typology of educational research in the qualitative tradition.

The large volume of work in this perspective bears witness to Cohen and Manion's (1985, p.36) assertion, in which they quote from Woods (1979), that the approaches within the interpretive perspective are singularly attractive to the would-be educational researcher because:

> they 'fit' naturally to the kind of concentrated action found in classrooms and schools, an action characterised by 'pupils and teachers...continually adjusting, reckoning, evaluating, bargaining, acting and changing'...and they are able to preserve the 'integrity' of the situation in which they are employed.

Within this growing body of educational research in the interpretive tradition is a notable lack of work in Britain directed toward the educational experience of ethnic minority groups. Atkinson et al (1988, p.236) point to this in contrast to work in America, noting that 'American scholars have more frequently represented a situation of cultural pluralism', while those in Britain have represented 'local manifestations of class conflict'.

For Atkinson et al (1988, p.243) 'an unfortunate consequence of this is that in the British context the study of ethnic differences has not figured prominently.'

They note the shortfall in this focus within the anthropological tradition in Britain compared with America:

> ...the substantive issues that have preoccupied American anthropology of education have also been neglected in Britain. It is particularly striking that though Britain is a multilingual, multiracial and multicultural society, this has not been noticeable in the anthropology research literature.
>
> Little anthropological work has explicitly addressed the educational experiences and 'problems' of British minority linguistic and/or ethnic groups...A few do exist (Driver, 1978; Fuller, 1980; Furlong, 1984; Wright, 1986) but nothing to parallel the American focus on its minority cultures, as revealed in the extensive bibliography by Wilcox (1982). (Atkinson et al, 1988, p. 230-237)

Given the purpose of this study, the interpretive perspective seems the appropriate research approach. The work of Heyman (1981) gives weight to this contention. He focuses specifically on approaches to the analysis of curriculum. After reviewing curriculum work in the functional and neo-Marxist perspectives, he provides arguments for the adoption of the interpretive, particularly the ethnomethodological, perspective.

He suggests that the study of the curriculum in ethnomethodological terms becomes:

> the study of the mundane life of school and classroom. This includes ...the subjects teachers teach and the way they go about teaching and evaluating these subjects...the curriculum is seen to be the work done by teachers and pupils so as to produce the sense of a world of teaching and learning. (Heyman, 1981, p.381)

Atkinson et al's (1988) comments on the paucity of work in the qualitative tradition in Britain related to multicultural/ethnic /racial issues, quoted above, are tinged with regret, indicating a belief that there is a need for this kind of research in this context. This, coupled with the greater use of it in the American research process, lends support to the choice of this tradition as the underpinning methodological approach for this research.

While Jacob (1' , p. 40) argues that research needs to fall within one tradition or run the risk of being 'poorly focused, conceptually unclear and weakly implemented', Buchmann and Floden (1989, p. 242) note that 'the truth of this is not self evident'. They point out that ground breaking studies can be well implemented and conceptually clear, and that, just because some work can be classified as being part of a tradition it is not necessarily focused, clear and rigorous. Atkinson et al (1988) support this view, noting that 'much sound work explicitly or implicitly combines emphases from different traditions, without seeking to establish a new tradition.' (p. 233)

In contrast to the American writer, the British reviewers contend that research can seldom be said to fall completely within any of the categories defined and that few workers can be said to have conducted their research within any one approach in a pure sense. Classifying research and researchers into neatly segregated 'paradigms' or 'traditions' does not reflect the untidy realities of real scholars. (Atkinson, 1988 p.243). They cite the work of the London-based researchers such as Sharp and Green (1975) and Young (1971) who 'blended symbolic interactionism, phenomenology, and Marxism into studies of social control and the curriculum . (Atkinson et al 1988, p. 234). The difficulty of classifying research is given weight by the fact that they and Jacobs classify work by Mehan (1979) in two different categories. In addition, they argue that there are important differences among studies within any of Jacobs' proposed traditions, just as there are among traditions within the domain of qualitative research as a whole. Anderson (1989, p.249) notes that 'Geertz's (1983) phrase "blurred genres" characterises the fluid borrowing that has occurred across disciplines, bringing with it new perspectives and new debates in educational research.'

In considering the nature of approaches within the qualitative perspective, Burgess (1985a, pp.4-5) observes that:

> no single attribute is present in all studies, but the following are present to a greater or lesser degree in many qualitative projects:

- The focus is on the observed present, but the findings are contextualized within a social, cultural and historical framework.
- The research is conducted within a theoretical framework. While there may only be a small number of questions to orientate a study, further questions may arise during the course of the investigation.
- the research involves close, detailed, intensive work. The researcher participates in the social situation under study.
- the main research instrument is the researcher who attempts to obtain a participant's account of the social setting.
- Unstructured or informal interviews in the form of extended conversations may complement the observational account.
- Personal documents may give depth and background to the contemporary account.
- Different methods of investigation may be used to complement qualitative methods with the result that different methodologies may be integrated by the researcher.
- The decisions regarding the collection and analysis of data take place in the field and are products of the enquiry.
- The research attempts to disturb the process of social life as little as possible.
- The researcher has to consider the audiences for whom he or she is producing a report and the main concerns to be included.
- Research reports disseminate the knowledge which informants have provided without rendering harm to them, taking into account ethical problems that confront the researcher and the researched.
- The researcher monitors the dissemination of materials and provides feedback to those who have been researched.

Thus, despite the diversity of approach within the interpretive paradigm, it can be seen that certain characteristics are held in common by all work within it to some extent. Attention will now be turned to the characteristics of approaches particularly relevant to the study at Riverbend.

1.3 The research design of this study of Riverbend.

Given the controversy surrounding attempts to categorise qualitative research, and to classify research work as belonging to one or other category, no attempt will be made here to slot this work definitively into any of the above-mentioned categories of qualitative research. It should be seen as being a case study falling broadly within the interpretive/qualitative tradition, and to be drawing most directly on the anthropological and illuminative evaluation approaches. These will now be considered in the context of issues relevant to the research procedures used at Riverbend.

1.3.1 Illuminative evaluation

From the curriculum evaluation point of view, the broad approach that has been applied is that of 'illuminative evaluation', propounded initially by Parlett and Hamilton (1972). Developed first in the context of curriculum innovation, illuminative evaluation can be said to have as its aims:

> to study the (innovation) programme; how it operates; how it is influenced by the various school situations in which it is applied; what those directly concerned regard as its advantages and disadvantages; and how the students' intellectual tasks and academic experiences are most affected. It attempts to discover and document what it is like to be participating in the scheme, whether as teacher or pupil. (Parlett and Boardon, 1981, p.1)

Bynner (1981, p.38) gives the following definition:

> A form of evaluation which draws its main inspiration from ethnographic research strategies rather than those of experimental science. The emphasis is on describing the curriculum via the perspectives of the different participants... and on gaining understanding of the process of teaching and learning that are occurring rather than assessing particular products against particular goals.

This research, then, attempts to describe aspects of the curriculum at Riverbend, and to reflect teachers' and students' perspectives on it.

1.3.2 Ethnography

The underpinning research method is that of ethnography. Traditionally the description of the culture of a whole community, ethnographic enquiry is well suited to classrooms and schools. (Wilcox, 1982, p. 458) The ethnographer's goal is to provide a description and an interpretive-explanatory account of what people do in a setting (such as a classroom, neighbourhood...),the outcomes of their actions, and the way they understand what they are doing (the meaning the interactions have for them) (Watson-Gegeo, 1988, p.576). Wilcox (1982, p.458) suggests that the goals of ethnographers are 'to focus on a setting and discover what is going on there'. Hammersley (1985, p.245) suggests that the primary aim of ethnographic research on schools from the 1970's has been the

'description of the diversity and complexity of the perspectives and activities of teachers and pupils'. A large number of ethnographic studies of schools is documented in the literature, and includes studies by Ball (1981); Burnett (1973); Grobsmith (1981); Hargreaves (1967); Kleinfeld (1979); Lacey (1970); Nash (1973); Peshkin (1978); Rist (1978); Sharp and Green (1975) and Turner (1983).

Certain concerns regarding the role of ethnographic studies in developing theory have been expressed by writers such as Hammersley, (1985), but these reservations have related to the way certain studies have been conducted, rather than to the approach per se.

1.3.3 Case study.

In essence, the research design which has been adopted is that of a case study. Walker (1980. p.33) notes that case studies are valuable in that they give insights into specific instances, events or situations. Nisbett and Watt (1978, p.7) point to several strengths of the case study approach which include its having a three-dimensional reality like a documentary, contributed to by the 'eclectic' nature of its data collection (Lawton, 1980), and providing suggestions for the intelligent interpretation of other similar cases. This point is supported by Hamilton (1981), and Delamont and Atkinson (1980). The styles of writing appropriate for case study reports include narrative, vignette, and analysis in some combination. (Stenhouse, 1982)

Cohen and Manion (1981, p.41) point to other important qualities of the case study. They highlight the advantages accruing to the fact that it is 'an in-depth study in a natural setting' which enables the 'holistic qualities of the unit to be taken into consideration'. They also highlight its ability to 'bring to light many variables, processes and interactions and, because of its heuristic nature, provide the investigator with insights and hypotheses denied to workers adopting other approaches'.

Case studies are marked by the acceptance of personal viewpoint and interpretation, by the solicitation of multiple perspectives, and by a focus on a personal or 'subject-centred perspective' rather than an 'object-centred perspective'. (Kenny and Grotelueschen, 1984, pp. 39-40) In this encouragement of humanism lies much of the strength of the case study.

As with any approach, it has disadvantages. Nisbett and Watt (1987, p.8) point to its subjectivity and and subjectivity, with the observer's perceptions probably affecting the conclusions reached. Careful reporting and cross checking via triangulation techniques (to be described later) can minimise the negative effects of these factors. The extent to which its findings can be considered relevant in other settings has also been questioned (Christie, 1992b), and this aspect will be considered more fully in the final chapter.

1.3.4 Classroom research

Classroom research has been described by Delamont and Hamilton (1976, p.4) as research that aims to study the processes that take place within the classroom 'black box', in contrast to research that has seen the classroom as providing merely a vehicle for input-output research designs, or a captive audience for psychometric testing programs. They ascribe the shift towards the focus of interest on the classroom to the 'recognition....that an appreciation of classroom events is essential to an analysis of educational processes'. (Delamont and Hamilton, 1976, p.5)
Hamilton and McAleese (1978, p.10) point to the fact that:

> classroom researchers exhibit a strong divergence in task and method and that...recent interventions in the sociology and history of knowledge (e.g.Bordieu and Passeron, 1977) have pointed to the functional but not simple relationships that exist between what is taught and how it is taught. In this sense, too, classroom research must also be curriculum research.

1.4 Research techniques and procedures associated with the research design

1.4.1 Data collection techniques

1.4.1.1 Observation

The fundamental data gathering technique within ethnographic research is that of observation, and the accompanying recording of observations. Wilcox (1982, p.460) notes that 'observers have attempted to capture in concrete detail the conduct of everyday life in classrooms and schools'. She refers to a variety of recording techniques used by observers - ranging from structured observation instruments to cameras and audiotape. None of these, however, can replace the presence of the ethnographer 'as a person constantly absorbs a wider variety of data than any mechanical device can record'. (Wilcox, 1982, p.461)

Observers can be either remote, adopting the view of the fly-on-the wall approach typified by King (1978), or can be participant to a greater or lesser degree in the actions which they are observing. Willis (1977) provides an instance of full participation. Given the range of approaches within the studies involving participant observation, Cohen and Manion (1985, p.147) have concluded that 'participant observation is best thought of as a generic term that describes a methodological approach rather than one specific method'.

As will be more fully described later, the approach used here was one which changed from fairly fully participant observation to more remote observation later in the year.

1.4.1.2 Interviews

Generally, the interviews used in this research were what Whyte (1982, pp. 111-112 in Jacob, 1897, p.15) would typify informal interviews, where the goal is:

> to have the participants talk about things of interest to them and to cover matters of importance to the researcher in a way that allows the participants to use their own concepts and terms... To do this, ethnographers must listen more than they talk and listen with a sympathetic and lively interest.

Agar (1980, p.90 in Jacob, 1987, p. 15) notes that informal interviewing can vary from casual discussions while participating in an activity, to open-ended interviews, to in-depth discussions with selected individuals called key-informants. In some casual interviews ethnographers do not have a written list of questions but a repertoire of question-asking strategies used to follow up and probe participants statements. According to Whyte (1982, p.196, in Jacob, 1987, p. 15) these include responses such as 'uh-huh' or a nod of the head to encourage the person to continue talking, reflecting back what the participant has just said to encourage talking, or asking for more information on a particular topic.

Cohen and Manion (1985) distinguish several types of interview, from very structured, using a set interview schedule, through less structured, but focused interviews, to non-directive interviews in which the interviewer has very little control over the discussion topics and direction. As will be described later, a range of such interviews was used for different purposes in this research.

1.4.1.3 Other data gathering techniques

The main techniques associated with an ethnographic, illuminative evaluation of a school curriculum are those of observation and interview. However, the researcher is by no means limited to these. Watson-Gegeo (1988, p.583) points out that, in addition to observation:

> ethnography includes...informal and formal interviewing of the participants observed in situ/ons, audio- or video-taping of interactions for close analysis, collection of relevant or available documents and other materials from the setting, and other techniques as required to answer research questions posed by a given study... Historically, ethnographers have been methodologically very eclectic, using both quantitative and qualitative research methods where appropriate.

Burgess (1985a, p. 4 quotes Wax, 1971, p. 10) in support of this use of a variety of research approaches and data collection techniques:

> Strict adherence to any method, technique or doctrinaire position, may for the fieldworker, become like confinement in a cage. But if he finds himself in a field situation where he is limited by a particular method, theory or technique he will do well to slip through the bars and try to find out what is really going on.

He points out that:

> On this basis, researchers who have used a qualitative approach in their investigations have tended to use a range of methods, styles and strategies based on interaction with those who they study, observation of people, situations and events, formal and informal interviewing, and collection of documentary materials. (Burgess, 1985a, p.4)

In this study, an eclectic approach to data collection techniques has been adopted. Techniques have been used in different ways for different purposes in the course of the study, as will be discussed more fully in later sections.

1.4.2 Fundamental procedures associated with the research design

Certain fundamental procedures are associated with an ethnographic study that has as its purpose an illuminative evaluation of curriculum. These are 'progressive focusing' and 'triangulation'.

1.4.2.1 Progressive focusing

The most basic technique associated with ethnographic research is observation. Obviously, the researcher cannot observe and record everything that is occurring in the situation that is being observed. One of the initial tasks facing the observer is deciding what to focus on. Because the researcher is attempting to 'understand a system in its own terms, according to its own criteria of meaningfulness', it is not possible to predict in advance which aspects of the system will have significance. 'An essential part of the research task is discovering what is significant, what makes sense to count, what is important to observe.' (Wilcox, 1982, p.459)

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(Hamilton, 1984, p.19) As areas of

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that these studies, (and others) provide theoretical

comparison among settings, and for the ethnographers'

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important to note that:

> guided by ... broad theory ... ethnographic observation and interpretation are not determined by it...Each situation must be understood on its own terms...The ethnographer shifts the focus of observation to include phenomena and interactions not suggested by prior theory, to search for interactions, patterns of behaviour and other meanings significant to and perhaps unique to the situation under study (p. 19)

This view is supported by Osborne (1987, p.113) who notes that one of the distinguishing characteristics of ethnography is 'a commitment to obtaining the perspectives of the key actors in the social scene being observed (Mehan, 1982, p.60; Spradley, 1979, p.5; Wolcott, 1976, pp. 24 -25; Woods, 1979, pp. 260-6)', and that, in order to achieve this goal:

> .. the research questions of ethnographic investigations remain relatively open, because the 'goal of ethnographic research is to allow the reality of the situation to impinge on the investigator's subjectivity until the categories for description are determined by the scene itself'. (Mehan, 1982, p.62) The researcher does not predetermine hypotheses and observation categories: both emerge and are refined over time. As a result, members of the social setting become key areas of knowledge about the setting, rather than

The process by which the observer isolates areas of particular interest is known as 'progressive focusing'. (Parlett and Hamilton, 1972, p.15) In this, the researcher 'reduces the breadth of enquiry systematically to give more concentrated attention to the emerging issues'. (Delamont and Hamilton, 1984, p.19) As areas of interest become more sharply defined the observer has r course to a range of data gathering techniques.

Watson-Gegeo (1988, pp.578-579) makes the point that ethnographic data collection begins with a theoretical framework directing the researcher's attention to certain aspects of situations and certain research questions. Ethnographers do not come to a situation like a 'blank slate'. She points to numerous ethnographic studies (Mehan, 1982; Boggs, 1985; McDermott and Hood, 1982; Watson, 1975) and notes that these studies, (and others) provide theoretical grounding for comparison among settings, and for the ethnographers' initial decisions on what to observe.

However, it is important to note that:

> though guided by received theory.... ethnographic observation and interpretation are not determined by it...Each situation must be understood in its own terms...The ethnographer shifts the focus of observation to include phenomena and interactions not suggested by prior theory...to search for interactions, patterns of behaviour and other phenomena significant to and perhaps unique to the situation under study. (p.579)

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> .. the research questions of ethnographic investigations remain relatively open, because the 'goal of ethnographic research is to allow the reality of the situation to impinge on the investigator's subjectivity until the categories for description are determined by the scene itself'. (Mehan, 1982, p.82) The researcher does not predetermine hypotheses and observation categories: both emerge and are refined over time. As a result, members of the social setting become key sources of knowledge about the setting, rather than

> providers of discarded statistics on a coding sheet. The ethnographer needs to incorporate variables perceived as important by actors in the scene.

The research process is thus divisible into two broad phases. The first is an open-ended, loose and exploratory phase, in which the researcher attempts to be as open as possible to issues and patterns prevalent in the situation being studied, and at the end of which a set of issues and patterns appears to have emerged. The second is a more focused phase, in which the researcher's attention is focused on these apparent issues and patterns, and in which he/she attempts to establish their validity, and to unravel the perceptions of the participants about them. In other words, the first phase attempts to find out what there is to explore, and the second to explore what has been revealed as significant in a more structured way.

The research tools appropriate to these two phases, even when of the same broad type, have differences associated with them. Those of the first are more open-ended, less focused, less directive and less structured, while those of the second are more closed, more focused, more directive and more structured.

The fundamental role of observation and interview has already been noted. What is significant in this context is that the application of these in the two phases is notably different.

Ball, (1984, p.77) describing his approach to observation in the early phase of his work at Beechside Comprehensive notes that in the first three months he observed any lesson to which he could gain access, and made a set of notes, with no idea of what would later be useful. His main aim at this stage was to 'get a feel for the place'.

His approach to interview was similarly open in this unfocused phase of research:

> My basic concern was to hear the teachers talk on topics that concerned them as they arose in the course of everyday work. (p.82)

At later phases of the research process, more focused observation and interviews become appropriate.
The way in which other tools are used is similarly different at different stages of the research process.

1.4.2.2 Triangulation

Cohen and Manion (1985, p.254) define triangulation as 'the use of two or more methods of data collection in the study of some aspect of human behaviour'. By analogy (with its literal sense), 'triangulation techniques in the social sciences attempt to map out, or explain more fully, the richness and complexity of human behaviour by studying it from more than one standpoint, and, in so doing, make use of both qualitative and quantitative data'.
They make a strong case for the use of triangulation. They note that the single observation provides only a limited view of the complexity of human behaviour and situation, and continue by saying:

> As research methods act as filters through which the environment is selectively experienced, they are never atheoretical or neutral in representing the world of experience. Exclusive reliance on one method, therefore, may bias or distort the researcher's picture of the particular slice of reality he is investigating. He needs to be confident that the data generated are not simply artefacts of one specific method of collection.

Based on Denzin (1970), Cohen and Manion (1985, p.257) provide a typology of types of triangulation. The two types used in this research are those of methodological triangulation and investigator triangulation. Methodological triangulation refers to the use of the same method of study on different occasions, or different methods on the same object of study. Both kinds of methodological triangulation were used in this study, as attested to by the range of data collection techniques, and to the repeated observations in classroom and other settings. Cohen and Manion suggest that 'methodological triangulation' is needed to give a holistic view of educational outcomes, to generate a full and realistic view of the phenomenon being studied, and to assist in the attempt to validate inferences drawn from observations. In-

vestigator triangulation refers to the use of more than one observer, something that is a basic part of this research in that two researchers were present at the school contemporaneously, and spent a lot of time checking observations and interpretations with each other.

1.4.3 Broad issues associated with the two main research techniques

1.4.3.1 The period of fieldwork

For both the observation and the interview aspects of the research, the period of time in the school is important. Watson-Gegeo (1988, p. 583) notes that 'a hallmark of ethnographic methodology is intensive detailed observation over a long period of time'. Osborne (1987, p. 112), noting a variety of criteria that are crucial for ethnographic research, develops this point by referring to several commentators, inter alia Miller (1969), Argyris (1969), Hymes (1980a) and LeCompte and Goetz (1982). He reports that a short time in the field results in:

> insufficient time to build up the trust relationships between researchers and the people who provide information for them,... essential if answers are not to be guarded, stilted, incomplete or even deliberately distorted. If the researcher stays on in the field long enough, the inaccuracies increasingly become apparent as the researcher checks with other informants and makes observations, and as the original informant comes to trust the researcher more completely. There can then be no zip-in-zip-out approach to ethnographic research. Internal reliability and external validity depend upon spending long periods of time in the field.

Johnson (1984, in Jules-Rosette, 1988, p.129) has described the anthropologist's experience of entering a new field:

> Sex and colour differences between ethnographic stranger and host group render research difficult, but not impossible... Much like class initiations, ethnographic research involves non-negotiable tests for greater permitted access to socio-cultural information.

The longer the time spent in the field, the greater the chance of building up the trust relationships needed for access to this socio-cultural information.

However, time is not the only requirement. Ethnographic research makes great demands on the researcher's personal sensitivity, and ability to respond to situations and people with tact.

Further motivating the need for a lengthy period of time in the school, Osborne (1987, pp. 112-113) cites the following:

> It also takes time to observe the cycle of events that occur in natural settings... To capture the social system at one, two or three points in time can just as easily lead to a static image when the data are collected by an ethnographer as it can when collected by a classroom interaction researcher. The ethnographer needs to spend time in the classroom watching the development of phenomena like the social system (Smith and Geoffrey, 1968), rules of the classroom game (Mehan, 1979; Schultz, Florio and Erickson, 1982), structure of classroom events (Mehan 1979; 1982), the differential interactions between teachers and students (McDermott, 1977; McDermott and Gospodinoff, 1979), and the evolution of different teaching strategies (Erickson and Mohatt, 1982).

Osborne (1987, p.113) notes that, "as hypotheses begin to develop during observation, and as the researcher begins to develop insights and see relationships between variables, time is needed to employ the constant comparative method (Glaser, 1969, p. 220-5), and seek 'negative or qualifying as well as supporting instances' (Strauss et al 1969, p.25)".

Hence, there are matters of establishing rapport, collecting developmental as opposed to static data, as well as modifying and verifying hypotheses which require ethnographers to spend considerable time in the field. Osborne (1987, p.113) notes that it is not surprising that ethnographers such as Heath (1982, p.44); Mehan (1982, p.61) and Wolcott (1976, p.31) stress the time requirement for classroom ethnographers.

At the same time, there are dangers associated with too long a period in the field. Osborne (1987, p.119) collates some of the 'weaknesses associated with ethnography which stem from the researcher's long-term personal involvement in the setting':

There are problems of ethnographer fatigue (Walcott, 1976 pp. 32-3; Zigarmi and Zigarmi, 1980); ethical issues of what to do about personal confidences shared by informants during the data collection process (Rynkiewich and Spradley, 1976; Spradley 1979, pp.34-39), interpersonal skills and sensitivity (Walcott 1976, p.29), and the substantial time required to write up the data which have been collected (Wax, 1971, p.46; Walcott, 1976, p.31)

1.4.3.2 Reliability and validity

The whole issue of reliability and validity in ethnographic research is contentious. Osborne (1987, p. 118) notes that 'a major reason for the scepticism of quantitative researchers about ethnographic research is the relative lack of description of how problems of reliability and validity have been confronted'. It seems appropriate, therefore, to look at this issue in more depth.

Reliability in the context of a piece of research has two dimensions. Internal reliability refers to the degree to which multiple observers within a single setting agree about what they see and hear, and external reliability is related to whether another researcher can replicate the study. (Osborne,1987, p.118)

In qualitative research it is difficult to ensure absolute reliability because, 'unlike quantitative studies, the main instrument of research is the researcher, a person, not an observation scheme, standardised test or questionnaire form (Pelto, 1970, p.140; Wolcott, 1976, p.27)'. (Osborne, 1987, p.118). As a result, the reliability coefficients of quantitative research are not appropriate here. Bynner (1981, p.39) notes that 'in ethnographic work (internal) reliability relates to the extent to which two observers would produce a consistent analysis of a particular aspect of the same special setting. This is dependent on the accurate recording and checking of observations.' External reliability is difficult to achieve because, as social settings are not uniform, it is difficult if not impossible to replicate ethnographic studies. (Osborne, 1987; Bynner 1981, p.39)

Internal validity is related to whether researchers actually observe and measure what they think they are observing and measuring. (LeCompte and Goetz, 1982, pp.43 in Osborne, 1987, p.118) Validity in ethnographic research 'refers to the extent to which the actor's expectations, perspectives, meanings etc, are accurately represented through the research process'. (Bynner, 1981, p.40) External validity refers to the extent to which 'abstract constructs and postulates generated, refined or tested.. are applicable across groups'. (LeCompte and Goetz, 1982, p.43, in Osborne, 1987, p.118) It relates to 'the extent to which one can rely upon and trust the published findings of some research and involves an evaluation of all the methodological objections that can be raised against the research'. (Bynner, 1981, p.40)

Several writers have expressed concern about the degree of reliability and validity in ethnographic research. Osborne (1987) was referred to earlier. Meighan (1981, p.230) notes that 'while these more recent perspectives have presented a model of man that is more in keeping with common experience, their methodologies are by no means above reproof. Fears are expressed that the collection of data via interviews and accounts can be subjective, and incomplete.'

From the above, it is clear how important in ethnographic work are the procedures of triangulation, and of the long period of observation, for reliability and validity. In this research, for these reasons, recourse was made to the variety of data collection techniques directed at illuminating the same ideas and cross-checking observations, the large number of lesson observations and the recording of specific classroom interaction patterns, and the interviewing of a large number of staff and pupils in order to have multiple perspectives on issues and observations. In addition, the participation of two researchers also contributed to these efforts. The detailing of the methodology should allow readers to assess the validity of the research findings and description.

1.4.4 Data analysis

The analysis of data is related to the nature of the data generated by the research process.

Both quantitative and qualitative analysis may be appropriate for different purposes in the same study. Osborne (1983), cited in Osborne (1987, p.120) attempted to use aspects of both paradigms selectively to maximise the accuracy of his description and analysis of Zuni elementary teachers. He cites other cases where ethnographers have also used quantitative techniques. (Erickson and Mohatt, 1982; Jacob, 1982; LeCompte, 1982; Reed and Lave, 1979; Spradley, 1970)

Thus, while the bulk [illegible] qualitative in this research, recourse is also made to [illegible]tical' methods in analysing certain questionnaire re[illegible]ment patterns.

While the use of quantitative techn[illegible]ght seem out of keeping in an interpretive study, I do not think it is the techniques per se that are potentially incongruous, but the status they have in the study, and the way their results are used. In this study, the results of statistical tests are not used to uphold or refute an hypothesis that was brought into the research from an extraneous source, and which arose from theoretical deductions. The statistics used here test whether perceived patterns are statistically significant, and whether apparent differences in views among groups are statistically valid. They were used to establish generalisations that had emerged as part of the findings of the observation and interview phase of research, and which seemed important enough for the findings as a whole to be worth testing rigorously. They serve as a means of triangulating more qualitatively derived observations, and are never an end in themselves.

2. An account of the data collection procedures used in this study

In summary, the following can be said about the research design. It comprises a case study within the interpretive perspective. As such, it falls within the ethnographic tradition of research, particularly as its focus is the curriculum, within the methodology advocated i.e. 'illuminative evaluation'. Its fundamental data gathering techniques are observation, particularly classroom observation, and interviewing, with recourse being made to a wide range of other data collecting and analysing techniques (qualitative and quantitative), both to enrich the account and to validate data and inferences drawn from it. Progressive focusing and triangulation are key aspects of the research design.

As was mentioned in Chapter 1, this research was conceived as one part of a larger case study. For the entire fieldwork year there were two observers in the school, each with a slightly different area of interest. As will be seen from the account which follows, this was useful in some aspects of triangulation, in the possibility it provided for sharing the initial broad staff interviews, and for the assistance afforded in administering the questionnaires. However, after the observation and data collection phase, the co-researcher resigned from the project. As his accumulated data remained, his role thus became more akin to that of a fieldworker or data collector. While I had access to all the accumulated data at the end of the fieldwork, I made almost no use of the material collected by my co-researcher.

In the following sections, the way in which the broad principles of the research design were applied to the study of Riverbend will be considered in more detail.

2.1 Observation

The setting for the research was natural, and the observation a mixture of structured and unstructured. The degree of participation in the life of the school varied during the course of the

year. I spent the first two terms as both teacher and researcher. I taught a class of Standard 9 pupils, and one of Standard 10 for the first two terms of the three term year.

In keeping with the view of the central role of personal observation in an ethnographic study, I attempted to spend as much time as possible in the school, both during the initial phase and later in the more focused phases of the research. While I attended as many of the varied activities of the school as possible, and just by being in it at any time was observing aspects of the life of the participants in it, the bulk of my formal observation was located in the classroom. Given that most of the formal curriculum is acted out in classrooms, classroom observation of necessity formed a major thrust of this enquiry. I spent most of each school day for the third term, and much of it during the first two, observing classroom and outdoor learning activities. I also attended staff and parent-teacher meetings and numerous social events. I accompanied the Standard 8 Integrated Studies group on their camping trip to the coast. I spent a lot of time in the staff room, particularly during the first two terms when I was a teacher, and was anxious to become informally known to the staff. In addition, I perused school documents and pupils' work.

2.1.1 *Progressive focusing and observation*

With the process of progressive focusing in mind, the classroom observation moved from a very unfocused phase to one where far more specific aspects were being focused on.

It would be true to say that in this research I approached the setting with a basic awareness of classroom and other ethnographic interaction research findings. The multicultural literature had predisposed me to be aware of certain likely issues within the school. At the same time, however, I did not set out to test earlier findings in the new setting, and had no notion of looking for

previously documented interaction patterns. I made a genuine effort to wait for patterns to emerge from observations, and then to devise more structured ways of testing the validity of these.

In many of the first lessons observed I made no effort to record anything at all. When I did record classroom observations, it was very much in an unstructured way. Apart from a few attempts at tape recording lessons I made no recourse to mechanical recording devices. I made detailed notes of activities during lessons, writing the time at short intervals in the margin, and recording as much dialogue as possible. Often, I sat in on a small group activity, and recorded the discussion as closely as possible. Clearly, all the lesson notes are incomplete. It is not possible to record everything that took place. As the period in the school passed, and I became attuned to the major issues of debate within it from informal discussion and from casual observation in class, I became aware of certain key aspects of interest. These became crystallised as the style of teaching, the content of the curriculum, and pupil participation. For these purposes, the rather coarse recording afforded by my notemaking sufficed. When it became apparent that certain pupils participated more actively than others in lessons, I drew a sketch of the classroom, and noted each time a particular person spoke. This activity corresponded to the more focused phase of the period of observation.

With regard to observations in other areas of school life, progressive focusing was less successful, largely because these areas did not reveal much of relevance to the curriculum themes that were emerging as significant, and also because these aspects fell more within my co-researcher's field than mine. An exception to this were the staff meetings and the annual staff conference, where matters related to curriculum and pupil achievement were on the agenda. Here I attempted to keep verbatim records of interactions, and extracted those aspects of significance at the data processing stage. In many ways, it was the items that were not on

the agenda that were important, the absence of certain issues, as much as the details of discussion about those topics that were raised.

2.2 Interviewing

2.2.1 Types of interviews

In this research, use was made predominantly of focused interviews. The least directive of these was in the initial phase of the research. I made use of every opportunity to listen, and to ask questions, mainly for clarification of meaning. I set up interviews in the first few weeks in which the staff were all asked to talk about the school. In this, there was a broad outline of questions about such things as teachers' reasons for coming to the school, and any issues that they percieved to be of importance in the school. After this, both informal, fairly impromptu interviews based on an observed interaction or incident, and longer, pre-arranged interviews with selected respondents in the later phase of research, were more focused.

Cohen and Manion (1985, p.310) identify several qualities of focused interviews, which applied to the interviews I conducted. Firstly, the persons interviewed are known to have been involved in a particular situation. In my case, this could be in a particular lesson, part of a small-group discussion, in the school play, or in any number of other situations, either observed directly by me, or reported, sometimes in the course of another interview.

Secondly, Cohen and Manion (1985, p.310) note that elements of the situation have previously been analysed by the interviewer, who then constructs an interview guide. This identifies the major areas of enquiry and hypotheses which determine the relevant data to be obtained in the interview. In the more formal, pre-arranged interviews, this structure was followed as outlined. I interviewed about 138 pupils, chosen from certain previously identified groups

or because of some noted behaviour or comment, and asked questions based on a pre-prepared interview guide that was fairly similar, though not identical, for each pupil. The order in which the questions were asked, the way in which they were phrased and the way in which responses were probed varied from interviewee to interviewee. Each interview lasted between 45 and 90 minutes. These interviews took place at the end of the research year and early in that which followed, and were based on ideas and hunches developed in the focused phase of the research in the final term. Table A1 in Appendix A shows the numbers of interviews across the race groups and standards in the school.

Certain staff interviews toward the end of the year were also in this more-focused category. Here each interview was tailor-made to the information hoped for from the particular person, and again was the result of specific focusing.

The more impromptu interviews varied in length from a few minutes to an hour or more. Sometimes these were initiated by a teacher or student, and I encouraged them to speak freely, occasionally probing their information for interpretation or clarity. Sometimes I initiated a conversation, and asked questions related to perceptions and interpretations of an event or meaning. Probing was generally based on the information that was forthcoming, but was also related increasingly to a broader framework of inquiry that developed as the research entered a more focused phase.

In the kind of probing described above, these interviews were in keeping with Cohen and Manion's (1985, p.310) description of a third quality of focused interview in which they say that the 'actual interview is focused on the subjective experience of the persons who have been exposed to the situation. Their responses enable the researcher to test the validity of his hypotheses and ascertain unanticipated responses to the situation, thus giving rise to further hypotheses.'

In the interests of this aspect of the research, I had chosen carefully what to tell to staff about my research focus. Toward the end of 1986, I had been invited to attend a weekend staff conference and to introduce myself to the staff. I also asked for, and was given time at one of the first assemblies, to tell the students who I was and why I was in the school. In these introductions, I couched my project in general terms, making no mention of the multicultural focus. I felt it important to maintain both this facade of neutrality and this rather covert approach to the research focus so as to facilitate the staff and students' talking to me about what were issues to them without feeling constrained by some notion of what I might be hoping to find, nor directed by some concept of a 'right' answer or action.

2.2.2 Types of questions

In general, the questions used in interviews were open-ended. Kerlinger (1970, in Cohen and Manion, p.297) defines these as 'those that supply a frame of reference for respondents' answers, but put a minimum of restraint on the answers and their expression'. He suggests that the advantages of this type of question are that they are flexible, allow the interviewer to probe so that he may go into more depth if he wants to, or clear up misunderstandings; allow the interviewer to test the limits of the respondents knowledge; allow the interviewer to make a truer assessment of t the respondent really believes; and can result in unexpected and unanticipated answers which may suggest hitherto unthought-of relationships or hypotheses. This last aspect often gave rise to the process of snowballing. An idea that seemed to give insight into a particular view of the world would be put forward by a person being interviewed. I would then 'test' it by asking about it in subsequent interviews with people I thought would have a similar view, and with those I thought might hold a different one, but for whom the concept might be valid. A similar process was used in identifying people with a similar view - an interviewee would be asked who else they thought shared a particular view, and then these people would be interviewed for further insight.

A combination of direct and indirect, specific and non- specific questions (as distinguished by Tuckman, 1972 in Cohen and Manion, (1985, p. 298) was used in most interviews. Generally, the number of specific and direct questions increased as a discussion on a particular topic progressed, or when the topic was likely to be uncontentious and non-threatening to the respondent, or to check my interpretation of something a person said, or to probe along a line of interest that I wished to know about but was reluctant to pursue until it emerged in an interview. Tuckman suggests that non-specific questions 'may lead circuitously to desired information, but with less alarm to the respondent' and that 'the less direct approach is more likely to elicit free and open responses'. (Cohen and Manion, 1985, p.298) It is for these reasons that I tended to use the more indirect approach to questions in interview situations as indicated earlier, and to use more direct questions in specific circumstances only.

2.2.3 Composition of interview groups

While most interviews were conducted with one person at a time, I sometimes interviewed two or three pupils together, and found this fruitful. When asking a person I knew to be shy for an interview, I would say that if they wished, they could bring a friend with them. Only one or two did this, but I believe that the interview was more successful than it would have been on a a one-to-one basis under these circumstances. Also, on one or two occasions, I found myself in conversation with a group of three or four students during break, or at night in the hostel, and these interviews were also productive. Woods, (1979, p.265, in Pollard, 1985, p.229) similarly found group interviews useful. He explained the advantages as follows:

> The company of like-minded fellows helped to put the children at their ease... Other advantages were that they acted as checks, balances and prompts to each other.

Generally, pupils were remarkably willing to be interviewed, and open in their discussions. Several factors facilitated an easy relationship with them: I taught several of the first

two terms, made informal contacts with a range of pupils during break and in free periods, and sat in many of their lessons, at the back and among them. By the third term, when much of the in-depth interviewing took place, I was a familiar figure on the campus and had come to recognise most of the pupils by name and found it relatively easy to strike up a natural conversation based on some shared experience, and to approach pupils for more formal interviews. In this term, too, my teaching came to an end, and I was firmly established in my role as researcher rather than teacher.

2.2.4 Recording the interviews

The first set of interviews with staff was tape-recorded and later transcribed. However, because the quality of transcription was poor, and the procedure was both time-consuming and expensive, I decided to abandon it after the initial set. After that, I tried as much as possible to write down what was being said as the discussion took place, and to 'neaten up' my notes as soon after the discussion as possible. The same applied to staffroom discussion, though here I would wait until a convenient moment to absent myself, or until the end of break or the free period, and then write down as near-to verbatim account as I could. Interviewees were remarkably co-operative about waiting for me to finish writing something, and even repeating what they had said so that I could take it down verbatim.

2.2.5 Progressive focusing and interviews

One of the very first things I did at the school was to conduct a semi-structured, very open-ended interview with the principal and each member of staff, including the school secretary, the bursar and the librarian. In this I encouraged teachers to talk about the school as they saw it, its strengths, weaknesses, need for change and development, and their reasons for their opinions. These interviews served to open up some of the issues that were important

in the minds of the teachers, as did informal chats in the staffroom during free periods and at break. Similarly, with pupils, much initial contact was very informal and open-ended.

As certain patterns began to emerge in classroom observations and informal conversations, interviews became increasingly structured to explore patterns of occurrence and interpretations of their significance more fully, i.e. to focus more directly on the themes that appeared to be emerging from the data. Questions became more directed toward specific aspects that I wanted a perspective on, and less open to what pupils and staff chose to talk about. In addition, I actively sought out certain teachers or pupils who I believed would have a particular perspective on an event or issue, and engaged them in conversation about it. This served both to elaborate on key themes that were emerging, and to triangulate observations and perspectives gained elsewhere.

2.3 Issues associated with observation and interview

2.3.1 Period of time in the school

As has been mentioned, I spent a full academic year in the school. The period of a year was a good one. I think that any less would have been too little, given the yearly cycle of school activities. The balance between teaching and researching was also a good one. As I taught for the first two terms, I was able to conduct a fair amount of informal observation and talking in these terms, and then to concentrate in a more formal way in the third term when I did not have any teaching duties.

I think that more than a year would have been too long. Some of the staff undoubtedly found it a strain to have observers in their classrooms. I believe that a longer period of observation, as intensive as ours was, presents certain problems. Jules-Rosette (1986, pp. 130-131) has described some of these, in the context of ethnographic research in general. I believe they are exacerbated by a prolonged period of observation:

> It is not uncommon for the anthropologist to become involved in various aspects of the setting and for members of the setting to identify with the anthropologist.... Rewards are mixed. They include some degree of acceptance into a group and access to a broader range of information. There are also dangers associated with intensive involvement - overcommitment to the setting, loss of "objectivity" and multiple role expectations for the observer.

There is no doubt that as the year progressed, and as I became increasingly aware of the issues in the school, the perspectives on them, and their impact on different members of the community, I did become overcommited in some ways. It was difficult to remain 'neutral'. I had my own opinions on certain events and actions, and had to work hard to appear as if I did not. Sometimes, I had to restrain myself from intervening in an incident, interaction or decision, even if I believed someone was going to be harmed by it, realising that would alienate one faction. This created a lot of personal tension, particularly during the more participatory phase when I was teaching, and still trying not to 'take sides' in an issue.

Being constantly non-committal is a difficult facade to maintain. Becker (1970, p.99), quoted in Burgess (1985, p.191), argues that it is impossible to do research that is value-free, and suggests that 'researchers need to ask themselves the question "whose side are we on?" All views are significant in understanding and reflecting the case - but it is not always easy to to remain impartial to different perspectives.' Denzin (1970) expresses a similar view.

In addition, I often had information from an interview that would have ameliorated a situation had it been divulged to someone else. The matter of confidentiality is paramount, however, not only for the sake of the research process, but because of the trust displayed by the confidence. This, too, imposed certain personal strain. And, often, during the course of an interview, it was impossible to keep to the topic of interest to the research as interviewees (usually one of the pupils) began to talk of a matter of personal significance, triggered by the research focus, but not

relevant to it. Such conversations, such as one about the tension a child was experiencing coping with a terminally ill parent, were enriching but stressful. So were interviews in which painful experiences to do with school interactions were revealed. At the same time, many of these were rewarding as pupils observed how helpful it had been to get certain feelings off their chests and that by expressing them they had gained insights into matters that were issues for them.

By the end of one year of full-time research, the advantages of the situation were just in balance with the disadvantages, and I found it helpful to be able to leave my full-time involvement in the situation, and benefit from the relationships established during it, to be able to conduct interviews in the first few weeks of the next year.

2.3.2 The question of selectivity

Throughout the research process, even in the theoretically unselective, unfocused stage of research described earlier, one is of course, as mentioned earlier, making choices and selections all the time. Ball (1984, pp. 74-75) suggests that:

> A decision to select or focus is also a decision to set aside or exclude other issues or contexts. Taken together the decisions made at choice points are of major significance in shaping the overall topography of a study. Despite the understandable reluctance of ethnographers to use the term, these decisions constitute a form of sampling. In studying a large, complex institution like a school, a single-handed researcher must of necessity sample, whether aware of it or not.

Smith (1978) quoted by Ball (in Burgess, 1984, p.75) writes of sampling:

> In our view it lurks behind every decision the investigator makes when he elects to be here versus there, to spend more time here rather than there, what array of documents to read, of people to interview, of settings to hang around. At the day to day level, the question is always, 'Has one seen the nooks and crannies of the system as well as the main arenas to give a valid picture of the system?'

This is undoubtedly an issue for ethnographic work in a school. Riverbend had an enrolment of 265 pupils, and at any one time a minimum of 20 classes were in progress. There were 23 members of staff, including the Headmaster. It was impossible to be in more than one place at once, and difficult to know whether one was missing something really worthwhile by choosing to be in one rather than another. Ball (1984) reports on the same dilemma. He concentrated on the academic components of the curriculum, rather than the extra-curricular activities, Physical Education or Crafts. He notes that Lacey (1970), Hargreaves (1967), and Woods (1979) similarly have little to say about the non-academic parts of the curriculum. Ball notes that as a result, his account of school life is profoundly distorted. (p.77)

To some extent, having two researchers in the school at the same time helped with this problem of selection. We agreed that I would focus on the formal aspects of the curriculum and that the less formal parts, such as the extra-mural activities and the tutoring system would be more of my co-researcher's responsibility. We both, of course, attended sessions in each other's areas, partly because we believed that each component was significant for our particular research focus, and partly to assist each other in cross-checking ideas and observations. Even so, given the scale of the school described earlier, two researchers could not hope to cover all the activities at any one time.

Analysis of my classroom visits (Appendix A, Table A2) shows clearly how I tended to focus on certain subjects, and see very little of others. In part this reflects my own ease of access to the subjects, but also, in the later, more focused phase of the research, the richness of the subject for data collection.

I believe that this selectivity is something that researchers have to both be aware of and take care to minimise and, at the same time must learn to accept. It is an inevitable part of the research constraints, and must be acknowledged as such. In an ethnographic case study of a school, one is looking at the school as

a whole, over a period of time, and for patterns that typify the interactions and interpretations of the participants at the school. None of these, if they are a fundamental part of the school, occur so rarely, or so specifically, that they will not be observed in action in some form repeatedly in a variety of settings. The chances of continuously missing these by being in the wrong place at the wrong time, are remote. Where a major event occurs, it is possible that the researcher will miss it - but in such a case, reports are soon received, and discussion with other observers and with participants gives a good idea of the event, and of the players interpretations of its significance. What is missing is the observer's first-hand account of the event, not generally the relevant facet in a one-off event or incident.

In addition, even in the unfocused phase of the research, selection of classes to visit and people to talk to is not altogether random. Informal conversations and casual observations set the observer on a series of paths of interest, some of which may develop into more directly focused research areas. It is inevitable that this will happen. At this stage, while choice of ideas for close focus is still open, one can attempt to keep the options open by recording which classes are visited, and balancing numbers as much as possible to ensure a spread. It is also possible to speak to a wide range of students and teachers - at break and in the staffroom. Inevitably, certain people are more amenable to discussion and are more obvious sources of information, a point Ball (1984, p.78), too, noted, saying that:

> I was most 'at home' sitting with the English department... This may tend to distort the range and variety of observations... There is a clear pattern to my contacts with teachers, of which I was not fully aware at the time.

Again, this is almost inevitable. Two researchers are helpful in this context, too. At Riverbend, it became clear that certain members of staff found it easier to relate to one or other of us, and, where we were aware of this, we tried to divide our interviewing and informal chatting accordingly. The same was true of the pupils, but it was not as easy to recognise this in all cases.

We tried to ensure that all staff were talked to on major issues and significant events, but often limited ourselves to people who were directly involved with a particular event.

As the research became more focused, I found that I had a fair idea of most people's standpoints in general, and could consciously test my ideas by choosing representatives from different groups. The same procedure was followed in selecting students for close interviewing at the end of the research - they generally had identified themselves as typifying some group or perspective that the observation over time had thrown up. And, while trying to 'spread' observations and informants, it is true that some situations and people immediately offered greater rewards in terms of information offered, and these were naturally chosen more frequently than those where less useful material was to be garnered. Similarly, with regard to classroom observation, certain classes were focused on more than others to check hunches, apparent patterns, and differences in these from class to class. Classes which did not offer the same potential for data collection were visited much less frequently at this stage. It was in this more focused phase that we developed a set of questionnaires and attitude elicitation exercises to gather data directly related to emerging main themes.

2.4 Other data collection techniques

At several points in this discussion I have made reference to data collection methods other than observation and interview. It seems appropriate at this stage to discuss more fully what these were.

2.4.1 Questionnaires and attitude elicitation techniques.

Observation and interviewing threw up certain patterns of interpretation and responses to the activities that constituted the curriculum in action. Because of the impossibility of interviewing all the pupils in the school, it became necessary to devise a means of testing the observations and leads from interviews across

the student community. In order to do this we devised a series of questionnaires and made use of a variety of attitude assessment techniques.

Many of the questionnaire responses, in turn, yielded information on which to base interview discussion. In addition, right at the end of our stay, we asked the staff to complete three questionnaires. The responses, as well as affording opportunity for categorisation and quantification of the prevailing ideas and attitudes, also provided material for triangulating data gained from observation and information gleaned from interview. They also afforded an opportunity to look for patterns of response across the different groups in the school. I think it is important to note that, throughout, the data base for the questions had emerged from observation and interview. At no time was any attempt made to introduce constructs and categories that derived from other research or from expectations based on theory alone.

The use of questionnaires in this research should be seen as complementary to the interviews and other data collecting techniques. Cohen and Manion (1985, p.292), point to some of the relative advantages and disadvantages of interviews and questionnaires. In this they draw on the work of Tuckman (1972), Kitwood (1977) and Kerlinger (1970). Clearly, in an interview, the interviewer has an opportunity to probe for meaning, and ask for clarification of responses. This is not possible in a questionnaire, although, if this is not anonymous, it is possible to use written responses as a basis for follow-up discussion. In my case, probably the most important reason for using questionnaires was the economy of time they offer. Written responses on fixed schedules made it possible for us to access a large number of people in a time-economical way, and to acquire a set of responses to standardised questions or statements. At the stage of research at which I used them, the direct questions and statements were appropriate as they were based (as mentioned earlier) on constructs that had emerged during the course of the year, and were therefore not as constraining as they would have been if used earlier in the research. They

provided a way for me to acquire a data bank specifically related to many of the issues on which I was focusing, and for which I hoped to be able to provice some simple descriptive quantification. The use of what Tuckman has called 'structured response modes' - in my case scaled, ranked, checklisted and categorical responses - in these written tests, afforded a means of quantifying data in a more direct way than that afforded by the open-ended responses used in the rest of the work, and in the questionnaires themselves.

All the student questionnaires were piloted with a small group of students, and statements and questions modified in the light of comments and difficulties encountered by the pilot group.

The questionnaire forms are shown as Appendixes B1 - B5. Their analysis will be discussed more fully in the context of the data gleaned from them, but some observations about their use as data collection sources is appropriate at this point.

Two of the questionnaires (Appendixes B2 and B4) were used for both teachers and pupils, and Questionnaire B5 for teachers only. The others were for pupils.

In all of these questionnaires it was important for us to know the identity of the respondents. For this reason, we allocated a number to each student, and asked them to write this number on the forms when they filled them in. We explained that we would be able to work out whose form it was, but that no-one else would have access to this information. We said that if anyone really did not want to fill their number in they need not. In all, only one or two students ever exercised this option.

Each questionnaire was administered to a class at a time, in a period negotiated for with the staff. The requirements were carefully explained, and it was stressed that there were no right or wrong answers, that it was important that students write their own

views, and that we were available to help if anything was unclear. Where appropriate, we worked through a few related examples so that the sort of response required would be clear.

The response to our request for teachers to complete the questionnaires was disappointing, with less than half returning any one of them to us, and many staff responding to items by saying that they had already told one or other of us all they had to say on a certain matter. In view of this, I used individual responses to triangulate data about a person, rather than attempting to analyse the set for patterns.

In the students' case, because of the greater control possible in the completion of the questionnaires (with specific periods allocated to this), the return rate was almost 100%, and, in some cases, where a student had been absent, we made arrangements for them to complete the questionnaire at another time, although, as the absenteeism rate increased as examinations approached, this was not always possible. It was also unusual for a student to leave a question unanswered, though in certain cases this was done. It was not possible for us to exercise the same control over the staff, many of whom felt pressurised by the volume of work that is always attendant on the end of term, and who were for other reasons reluctant to spend the time required to complete the questionnaires, or reluctant to answer the very specific questions.

The final term was a poor time for the Matriculation class as very soon after it began they had few formal lessons, and were allowed to use much of their time for personal revision. We decided to exclude them from the questionnaires, as they were feeling the pressure of time, and were difficult to get together for efficient questionnaire administration. It seemed more sensible to use any time they could spare us for in-depth interviews.

2.4.1.1 Questionnaire 1: Curriculum Questionnaire. (Appendix B1.)

This questionnaire was designed to give a quantifiable sense of the students' attitudes to certain subjects, their concepts of worthwhile knowledge, their perceptions of their personal achievement and factors affecting achievement, their constructs of 'good' and 'not good' teachers, their attitudes to the two prevailing class organisation patterns used in the school (small group work and whole class teaching) and to streaming, the factors affecting their participation in lessons, and the sort of books chosen from the library.

By the time this questionnaire was devised, I had become aware of certain distinct views among the students and staff regarding 'worthwhile knowledge'. Many members of staff had made statements about the sort of knowledge the students 'needed', or that were being over- or under-emphasised in the school. Several students had commented on the value of certain components of the curriculum. In addition, I had observed different patterns of response when different topics were discussed in class - the most obvious occurring when political debate developed. There had been a lot of controversy about the study of Zulu, with the black students generally feeling it of little use to them, and many of the whites wanting to learn it more effectively. To test and triangulate observations, and hunches about certain patterns in these, questions 1 - 6 related specifically to views about subjects. Item 7 asked about students aspirations' for their careers, and it was hoped to shed light on their view of knowledge as worthwhile for its personal enrichment or career potential.

Students in the school had different needs, which influenced their perceptions of good and bad teachers. Certain students ascribed success and failure, and participation in a subject to the teacher's methodology and attitude. At the same time, there were certain teachers who seemed to have qualities that appealed to

all. Items 8 and 9 were included to triangulate these ideas. They enabled me to develop constructs of 'good' and 'not good' teaching, and to consider patterns in these.

Items 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15 were included to triangulate information gathered from earlier questions and from observations. How significant did students perceive a teacher's style, expectations and attitudes to be for their achievement and class participation? Were some aspects more important for certain groups of students than others?
Students were grouped in a variety of ways for certain subjects in the school. In certain cases, students had expressed either good or bad opinions about their class organisation, and teachers, too, had reflected on it. In some cases, streaming had led to a predominantly racial split in the year group for a particular subject and in some cases subject choice or regulation had had the same effect. Items 16 and 17 were included to cross-check my perceptions of students' attitudes to streaming, and the influence it had on them.

Item 18 was an attempt to triangulate information about concepts of 'worthwhile knowledge', more directly asked about in item 5. The extent to which these aspects formed part of the formal curriculum was apparent from observation and interviews with staff, and from perusal of curriculum materials. Together these aspects gave an insight into the extent to which the school curriculum met the perceived 'content' needs of the students.

This questionnaire consists mainly of incomplete sentences, with a set amount of space available for the response. The statements are open-ended, but focused. Most of the aspects covered yielded data of particular significance for the curriculum focus. However, when I came to writing up the findings of this research, not all the questions related to the final focus that emerged, or were an unnecessary form of triangulation of a pattern already clearly established, and so not all responses were analysed fully.

2.4.1.2 Questionnaire 2: Qualities of a 'Good' School (Appendix B2.)

This questionnaire was designed to enable me to quantify the students' attitudes to the concepts of a 'good' school, and also to gain a broad perspective on reasons for coming to Riverbend, their expectations of the school, and the extent to which the school met these expectations. All the statements were based on constructs that had emerged in discussion, either informal or during more formal interviews. Some had recurred many times, others had come up only in one or two cases, and it seemed important to be able to see what the dominent views were, and how these corresponded again with groups which had emerged in the course of observations and in analysis of other questionnaires. Because I had not discussed the issues with everyone, I asked for contributions to the list in case there were aspects that I had omitted. Obviously, if these were added by many students, I would be able to work out how widely held they were.

The statements covered certain categories of constructs that had emerged in the context of evaluations of a good school. Broadly, these categories were related to opportunities a school offered for a sound academic education, for personal development and for racial mixing, learning about culture and increased awareness of broader social issues. The statements were largely based on actual comments, and were selected as representative of the three categories. Both positive and negative statements were included, but no attempt was made to design a formal research questionnaire schedule. Statements 1, 9, 14 and 18 relate to the academic view of the good school, statements 4, 10, 13, 16 and 19 to the personal growth aspect, and 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, 11, 12, 15, 17, 20 and 21 to the broad range of multicultural issues. We were aware of people within the school that held one or other of these views more strongly than others, and wished to use this information to triangulate our perceptions. Also, several people had mentioned to

us that 'the blacks are here for ...reason', and I wished to investigate the notion that the different racial groups in the school had different expectations of the school.

Respondents were asked to indicate their degree of agreement or disagreement with the statement by marking the relevant block with one or two, ticks (for agreement) or crosses (for disagreement), depending on the strength of the agreement or disagreement.

As well as attempting to gauge which responses were agreed with or disagreed with, we tried to gain insight into the relative importance of the school qualities listed, by asking respondents to give the most important five in rank order.

In addition, I elicited views about Riverbend in the context of these statements by asking respondents how well they felt they applied to Riverbend - 'to a large extent', 'a little', or 'not at all'. In a pilot questionnaire I asked pupils if they felt that the school achieved these aspects 'very well', 'well enough' or 'not well enough'. The combination of favourable and unfavourable aspects made this type of response too ambiguous, and I changed the format in the second run of this questionnaire, in which several of the statements were more clearly stated. Some of the questions in the first questionnaire allowed for unambiguous response, and certain of these were analysed. While the responses to 'this applies to Riverbend to a large extent, a little, not at all', allowed some measure of satisfaction with the school to be inferred in conjunction with the value attached to the statement, it might have been more helpful to ask pupils to state whether they felt that the aspect applied to Riverbend 'too much', 'about the right amount', or 'too little.'

2.4.1.3 Questionnaire 3: Counselling and Guidance (Appendix B3.)

This questionnaire was directed mainly toward my co-researcher's focus of interest, and I made little use of the responses to items on it, apart from the subsections of items 18 and 19 which were related to political debate in the curriculum and to pupils' views of the role of teachers in facilitating inter-race interaction.

2.4.1.4 Questionnaire 4: Views About Different Things.
(Appendix B4.)

This questionnaire was directed mostly toward matters of inter-personal and group relationships, and, as such, was intended for use in my co-researcher's aspect of the study. While focusing on interaction, certain items were useful for triangulation in the curriculum aspect of the research. Statements 8, 18 and 21 throw up views about the value of different classroom groupings, and 14 relates to the place of political debate in the curriculum, and I have made use of responses to several of these items in this report.

2.4.1.5 Questionnaire 5: Broad questionnaire for staff
(Appendix B4)

Toward the end of the year (in fact in mid-November) we asked the staff to complete three questionnaires. We hoped to survey staff views more comprehensively by using these, and have a final set of statements from the staff on what had emerged for us as key issues. Two of these were the same as two given to students - the statements about a 'good school' and the 'views about different things', shown in Appendixes B2 and B4 respectively. The third questionnaire (Questionnaire 5, shown in Appendix B5) covered a wide variety of issues - the tutoring system, extra-murals, the counselling service, the curriculum and inter-group relationships. In this we asked more directly than before for comment on the staff and the school's approach to the multi-ethnic nature of the school, something we had not addressed so overtly for fear of

steering responses and actions, and for making people self-conscious when observed by the knowledge of my interest in a particular aspect of their work. Again, the questions were open-ended, but specific.

2.4.2 Marks

Because of the interest in differential achievement patterns in racially mixed schools in Britain and elsewhere (as described in the literature review) this formed a research focus in this study. Interviews and informal discussion had revealed much about perceptions of achievement, but of course, it was the school marks that reflected the teachers' estimates of student achievement in the different subjects. The analysis of these, and of the Matriculation results, provide much of the quantifiable data on this aspect of the research.

3. Analysis of data

3.1 Statistical analysis

3.1.1 Marks

Three statistical techniques were used in the analysis of marks. For all of them, standard procedures as set out by Siegal (1956) and Guilford and Fruchter (1978) were used.

3.1.1.1 The Kruskall-Wallis one-way analysis of variance test

Firstly, in the case of differences of academic performance among the three race groups, the Kruskall-Wallis one-way analysis of variance by ranks was used.

The Kruskall-Wallis test is one of three nonparametric procedures for testing for the significance of differences among three or more independent groups described by Siegal (1956, pp. 174-194). (Siegal (1956, p.194) asserts that 'the Kruskall- Wallis seems to

be the most efficient of the nonparametric tests for *k* independent samples', and as its requirements of at least ordinal measurement of the variable are met by the data, this test was chosen for the initial analysis of the differences in performance among black, Indian and white pupils as measured by the school's internal assessment procedures.

The null hypothesis tested by the Kruskall-Wallis test is that the *k* samples come from the same population or from identical populations with respect to averages. In the circumstances of the case study, the null hypothesis is that there is no significant difference in the performance of white, black and Indian pupils. A probability level of 0,05 of the differences being ascribable to chance was used throughout to determine whether or not there were significant differences among the groups.

3.1.1.2 The Mann-Whitney U test

The second statistical test applied to the data is the Mann-Whitney U test. This tests whether two independent groups have been drawn from the same population, and, according to Siegal (p. 116), is one of the most powerful of the nonparametric tests, and the most useful alternative to the parametric *t* test. As Siegal (p.136) notes that for larger samples the Mann-Whitney test is more efficient than the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, it was decided to use the Mann-Whitney test on the data here.

There are two situations in which the Mann-Whitney U test was applied. Firstly, it was applied to test for significance of differences among pairs of racial groups where the Kruskall-Wallis test indicated that the three groups were significantly different from each other. Secondly, it was applied to the analysis of differences where only two groups exist. Thus, for certain subjects where there were no representatives of a certain race group and thus where there were only two groups, the Mann-Whitney test was used.

In both cases a one-tailed test was considered appropriate. In this, the null hypothesis is that the two groups have the same distribution, and the alternate hypothesis is that one population is stochastically larger than the other (or that one has performed better than the other).

In all cases in which the Mann-Whitney test was used, the null hypothesis was rejected at significance levels greater than than 0,05.

3.1.1.3 The Chi square one-sample test

This was used for the analysis of Matriculation examination results.

While it would have been interesting to analyse difference in the distribution of pupils' marks in the Matriculation examination in the same way as was done for marks based on internal assessment, this was not possible as the Matriculation results are given as symbols, not percentages.

The null hypothesis being tested by the χ^2 test is that there will be no significant difference in the proportions of each group falling in each category (University pass/School Leaving; Higher grade/Standard grade)

As the number of pupils in the five year-groups as a whole who obtained a University exemption or Higher grade pass is known, it is possible to work out the expected number of each group in these categories if the requirements of the null hypothesis are to be met. The proportion of each group in each category should be the same as that for the five-year group as a whole. 'The X^2 technique tests whether the observed frequencies are sufficiently close to the expected ones to have occurred under Ho.' (Siegal, 1956, p. 43)

Siegal cautions against the use of the X^2 test where more than 20% of the expected frequencies are less than five. Where this is the case, attention has been drawn to the need to bear this in mind in interpreting the results.

3.1.2 Statistical analysis of questionnaire results.

3.1.2.1 Chi square one sample test

Following the method outlined by Siegal (1956, pp.42-47), this test was used to ascertain whether there was a statistically significant difference in the distribution of each race group's responses to the 21 characteristics of a 'good school' given in Questionnaire 2, shown in Appendix B2. Pupils had to state whether they agreed or disagreed with the statement, and this test was useful in ascertaining whether there was a statistically significant opinion held by each group regarding any of the statements.

Given the question, 'Do the responses of any group to the statements about a good school fall predominantly in the category "agree" or "disagree" ?', this technique seemed appropriate. The null hypothesis was that for each statement, there would be no difference between observed and expected responses in each category of response for each statement for each group.

3.1.2.2 Coopers' statistic

Pupils were asked to state whether the characteristics of a good school listed in Questionnaire 2 (Appendix B2) applied to Riverbend 'to a large extent', 'a little', or 'not at all'. These Likert-type ratings made it possible to use the statistic defined by Cooper (1976), and cited by Freer (1983), as being useful in concluding whether a given population of raters hold a particular belief. Once the statistic is derived for any set of responses,

any categories of response which have a value at least equal to the statistic are considered to be a statistically significant opinion.

3.1.2.3 Chi square two-sample test

This chi square test was used to ascertain whether or not the differences in pupils' responses to certain of the questionnaire items was statistically significant across the racial groups. The two sample test was used, following the procedure outlined by Siegal (1956, pp. 104 - 110), and the responses of pairs of groups was tested in turn.

This test seems ideally suited to testing whether the differences between groups in their responses to several of the questionnaire items is statistically significant or not. It was applied to the pupils' responses regarding both agreement and disagreement (and shades of these where possible) with the statements about a good school, and to their opinions as to whether these statements applied to Riverbend 'to a large extent', 'a little', or 'not at all'. The hypothesis being tested was that there was no significant difference between groups in the distribution of their responses across the categories of response. A probability of 0.01 that the difference was not related to chance was taken as significant. This value, rather than that of 0.05 was used because the number of calculations among the pairs increased the likelihood of significant findings actually being related to chance.

3.1.2.4 The Spearman Rank Correlation Coefficient

In Questionnaire 2 (Appendix B2) pupils were asked to select and rank the five statements (from a list of twenty one) they considered the most important aspects of a 'good' school. In order to compare the rankings of the groups, average rankings were computed for each statement for each group. This was done for each statement by multiplying the number of times it was chosen first by

five, the number of times it was chosen second by four, third by three, fourth by two and fifth by one. The totals for each statement were then computed, and this sum divided by the number of pupils in the group. For each race group, each statement was then ranked according to this value, and a Spearman rank correlation coefficient was calculated for each pair following the procedure outlined by Siegal. (1956, pp. 202-213)

3.2 Qualitative analysis

Only those questionnaire items that had a closed response where pupils had to choose from a limited range of categories were suited to any form of statistical analysis, and no attempt was made to analyse other sorts of responses statistically.

Open-ended questionnaire items were analysed with the aid of simple percentages, and by looking for the responses which obtained the highest scores.

4. Writing the research report

By the end of the year in the school I had collected a mass of data from observation, interview, from the written student and staff exercises, from examination of curriculum materials and from perusal of school records and reports.

The next task was the writing of this report. I have already mentioned that the initial proposal was that my work in the school would comprise one focus of a joint study, but that my co-researcher chose not to complete his part of the work. I had, as a result, to write my section without recourse to the findings that would have emerged from the writing of his portion. Fortunately, although working co-operatively in much of what we had done during the year, we had each kept our own focus in mind in observations and in interviews, and so I had more than enough data with which to explore fully the aspects of school life that related to cur-

riculum and pupils' responses. I made use of one set of his sociogram results, and analysed the responses to certain items on questionnaires mainly designed for his use. I had all the notes he made in class, and all his interview records, but found that they had little of direct relevance, and that in-depth exploration of their contents would cause me to lose much of my focus, and would create too wide a spectrum of issues for this one piece of work. Had they been fully analysed by a co-worker, I am sure that it would have been possible to link some of the patterns in my observations with aspects of his, as had been our initial aim, and that the case study as a whole would have been richer for this greater breadth. However, at the same time I think that the data collected and analysed here had enough internal cohesion to be able to stand alone although originally intended as part of something larger.

The writing process, in many ways, represented the final phase of the progressive focusing that had taken place during the year. During this, it became possible to distil many of the themes and patterns that were latent in the observations and apparent almost intuitively during interviews, and which had informed the questionnaire compilation in this way. As one set of data was analysed, so the significance of other findings to particular themes became obvious, and it was possible to draw them together in the writing phase. At the same time other parts of the findings became redundant in the context of major themes, and were excluded from the report. Inevitably, the final report has raised questions and issues that need further clarification and exploration.

In writing this report, all names of both teachers and pupils have been changed, as has that of the school.

CHAPTER 3. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. What is meant by 'multicultural' education?

The theoretical framework of this research lies within the field commonly referred to as 'multicultural education'. It seems appropriate, in order to locate the research questions explored in later chapters, to review some of the debates and areas of inquiry within the field, and to explore some of the concepts associated with the term 'multicultural education'.

Very broadly, 'multicultural education' refers to a body of theory and practice that has to do with educating children in a heterogeneous society to live in such a heterogeneous society.

As Sleeter (1989, pp.53-54) points out, the field is a complex, ever-changing one:

> Critics, as well as advocates, of multicultural education often assume that it is a fairly homogeneous set of practices, and that all advocates subscribe to the same end and to the same model of social change...The field is often treated as static and homogeneous rather than as dynamic and growing, with its own internal debates.

She notes that diversity exists not only within one country's educational system and practice, but that it is exacerbated by differences across national borders. The different historical and cultural contexts of Britain, Europe, the United States, Canada and Australia have produced 'somewhat different alignments of educators who use the term "multicultural education"'. (pp.54-55) In addition, a review of the literature makes clear that different strands are identified, different terminology used and different classifications produced for both theoretical work and practice by writers in the field within and across national boundaries.
Grant and Sleeter (1985) and Grant, Sleeter and Anderson (1986) have reviewed and analysed nearly 200 journal articles and 68 books forming part of the body of literature on multicultural

education in the English language, and conclude that 'different terms are often used synonymously for multicultural education' and that when 'writers write about multicultural education, regardless of the term they use, the educational, social and political meanings they advocate often differ'. (Grant, Sleeter and Anderson, 1986, pp.47-48)

In this review I shall focus largely on the British and American literature, with some reference also to Australian and Canadian authors. Some recent work in South Africa will also be considered. However, given the complexity of the debates, and this chapter's intention to contextualize the research within the field, only the broad themes will be identified.

The debates about multicultural education revolve around its aims, underpinning philosophies and curriculum implications with respect to content, teaching style, and pupil responses in both the cognitive and affective domain.

Concepts about the goals and purpose of education for a multicultural society cannot be separated from the education policy and practice derived from it. Broadly speaking, the approach to the education of members of a multicultural society has moved through three main phases, strands of all of which are present concurrently in theory and practice today, and give rise to the complexity referred to by Sleeter (1989) and Grant et al (1986).

Within any heterogeneous nation-state, government is faced with the question of how to deal with the different groups that comprise it. Government policy in general, and educational policy in particular, has a range of options from seeking to eliminate cultural diversity through modifying it to actively encouraging it. (Watson, 1988; Goodey, 1989) According to Goodey, (1989, p.478) who refers to the work of Appleton (1983), Lynch (1986) and Pratte (1979), 'policies with a direct bearing on educational provision can broadly be categorised in assimilationist or pluralistic approaches'.

Brown (1988, p.51) notes that the terms multiracial, multi-ethnic, and multicultural education (and curriculum):

> reflect a movement over the last 30 years from policies which have sought to assimilate immigrants into some perception of a mainstream, indigenous culture towards policies which have sought to open the education system to the representation of ethnic and cultural diversity.

This historical development provides a broad framework in which to discuss the complexity of concepts associated with the notion of 'multicultural education'. I shall discuss three major approaches, based on a broad view of the goal of education in a multi-group society, subsuming other typologies and refinements under these where appropriate. Particular attention will be paid to attitudes and policies related to cultural plurality and racism associated with each broad approa as debates about these are central to the field as a whole.

1.1 Assimilation

Watson (1988, p.537) defines assimilation as 'the policy whereby immigrant groups or ethnic minorities are absorbed, over a period of time, into the mainstream of the dominant group in society'. Goodey (1989, p.478) suggests that 'the aim of this policy is to absorb ethnic minority groups into the mainstream culture'. He notes that this approach, also known as Anglo-conformity, was the official social policy followed in most western societies such as USA, UK, Canada and Australia until the 1970's, a view shared by others such as Craft (1986) and Mullard (1982). The second report of the Commonwealth Immigration Advisory Council in 1964 stated its views clearly:

> ...a national system of education must aim at producing citizens who can take their place in a society properly equipped to exercise rights and perform duties which are the same as other citizens. If their parents were brought up in another culture or another tradition, children should be encouraged to respect it, but a national system of education cannot be expected to perpetrate the different values of immigrant groups. (HMSO, 1964, in Watson, 1988, p.537)

Nixon (1985) considers that the assimilationist approach was a direct response to the perceived threat to existing values posed by the impact of black children on the British school system. Mullard (1981a) has argued that black students were perceived as a problem. In part, the solution to the problem lay in absorbing the newcomers into British society and way of life as soon as possible, and facilitating their acceptance of majority values and mores and their command of the English language. (Watson, 1988, p.540)

Attempts have been made to use education to good effect to ensure assimilation. 'Educational systems have been traditionally used to inculcate a single concept of mainstream culture.' (Lynch, 1981, in Brown, 1988, p.53) The curriculum implications are to ignore different facets of minority group culture and to teach through one language about one set of social values and customs. (Watson, 1988, p.537) Particular attention is paid to the teaching of English as a second language. Curriculum responses in this tradition have been documented by inter alia, Craft (1981), Gundara (1982) and Mullard (1982).

In-service courses for teachers of English as a second language were provided, peripatetic language teachers were appointed and Special Language Centres were provided. (Watson, 1988 p.540) In addition, in Britain, official policy required the 'spreading of children' to different schools to avoid 'concentrations' of immigrant children in any one school (DES, 1965, in Watson, 1988, p.541), a model based on the American concept of bussing as schools became desegregated.

From the 1960's there was an increasing expression of dissatisfaction regarding educational provision for minority groups in both the USA and the UK. McCarthy (1991, p.303) notes that 'black and other minority groups contended that schools as they were organised in the USA were fundamentally racist and did not address the needs and aspirations of minority people'.

Banks (1981a, p.13) notes that 'the unfulfilled promises and dreams of the assimilation idea was a major cause of the black civil rights movement of the 1960's'. This gave rise to the ethnic revitalisation movements in most of the major western societies, and to a notion of integration in a broad context. 'It is in this context of radical black discontent with American schooling that educational policy makers and liberal intellectuals began to forge a new discourse of multiculturalism.' (McCarthy, 1991, p.303) In the UK, Watson reports that pressure for change in official thinking began to build up during the 1970's as minority groups began to demand a fairer deal.

Information about the apparent underachievement of minority pupils in English schools was becoming available (Coard, 1971), and first the Rampton (1981) and later the Swann (1985) commissions were appointed to look into the issue of achievement and the educational needs of ethnic minority groups in the UK.

1.2 Integration

Goodey (1989, p.478) notes that there has been a trend toward rejection of assimilationist policies since the 1970's in most western democracies. They are beginning 'to acknowledge the fact that deep-rooted historical differences characterising various cultural groups cannot be dissolved into the open air with one stroke of the pen'. He notes that, by 1985, the rejection of assimilation in official policy can be seen very clearly in the Swann report (1985, p.4, cited in Goodey, 1989, p.479) which states that:

> a deliberate social policy of assimilation would, we believe, be a denial of the fundamental freedom of all in society to differ in aspects of their lives where no single way can justifiably be presented as universally appropriate. The sense of 'ethnic identity' amongst many members of ethnic minority groups... is very strong and there is little indication that this will simply dissolve in the face of the influence of the majority group's way of life.

Some writers, such as Watson (1988) refer to the new approach as 'integrationist', as it has as its base an espoused acceptance of cultural and ethnic diversity, and an intention to develop a society in which different groups live harmoniously together. Roy Jenkins (1968), in a speech quoted in Watson (1988, pp.541-542), describes the essence of the approach that gradually began to replace blatant assimilation by saying that there should not be 'a flattening process of assimilation but... equal opportunity, accompanied by cultural diversity, in an atmosphere of mutual tolerance'.

Watson contends that integration differs from assimilation only in degree, as its long term aim is still to integrate minority groups into mainstream British society. She quotes from several official documents to support this assertion:

> the education service should help promote the acceptance of immigrants as equal members of our society....(while also) permitting the expression of differences of attitudes, belief and customs, language and culture ...which may eventually enrich the mainstream of our culture and social tradition. (DES, 1971, p.120 in Watson, 1988, p.542)

and

> while blacks should not be expected to get rid of their own customs, history and culture, those who come here to settle must, to some extent, accept the ways of the country.
> (HMSO, 1973, in Watson, 1988, p.542)

However, by the time the Swann report was published, there had been a shift in official attitude, with integration into a diverse society emphasised more than integration into a dominantly British mainstream reality:

> We believe it is essential to change fundamentally the terms of the debate about the educational response to today's multiracial society and to look ahead to educating all children from whatever ethnic group, to an understanding of the shared values of our society as a whole as well as to our appreciation of the diversity of life-styles and cultural, religious and linguistic backgrounds which make up this society and the wider world. (Swann, 1985, p.318)

Hannan (1987, p.119) refers to this change as a progression from assimilationism, via integration, to cultural pluralism .

Because of the acknowledgement of the need to educate students to live in a diverse society (multicultural/multi-ethnic), and the recognition of the need to incorporate materials that reflect the diversity of culture in society into the curriculum, several writers have equated work within this approach with 'multicultural education' per se.

McCarthy (1988, p.267), for example, has the follow' to say about 'multicultural education', showing clearly his equation of it with this second broad approach:

> Multiculturalism is a body of thought which originates in the liberal pluralistic approaches to education and society. Multicultural education, specifically, must be understood as part of a curricular truce, the fall-out of a political project to deluge and neutralise black rejection of the conformist and assimilationist curriculum models solidly in place in the 1960's.

He notes that Troyna makes similar claims with respect to the origins of multicultural education policies in England:

> It is no coincidence that this flurry of (multicultural) activity has taken place in the period since the civil disturbances rocked virtually every major city in the summer of 1981... Broadly speaking this educational response parallels what took place in the USA after the 1965 riots. (Troyna, 1984a, p.78 in McCarthy, 1988, p.268)

The curriculum response, as intimated earlier, has been for schools to incorporate culturally relevant material and culturally appropriate teaching techniques which take account of culture, lifestyles and values of minority pupils. 'Black' or 'ethnic' studies began to appear as curriculum components. (Watson, 1988) In addition, in Britain, teachers were encouraged to visit India, Pakistan and the Caribbean, and to become aware of differences among their pupils. It must be noted, however that under the broad umbrella of approaches that incorporate cultural and ethnic diversity into the curriculum, are a variety of aims and practices.

Grant and Sleeter (1985) and Grant, Sleeter and Anderson (1986) have developed a typology of six approaches to what they call 'multicultural education', using it in a broad sense. Three of these, 'Business as Usual', 'Teaching the Exceptional or Cul-

turally Different', and 'Human Relations', all have as their purpose the maintenance of social stratification and the promotion of cultural assimilation. They are thus, in the context of the three broad approaches used as framework here, not part of the integrationist approach, but clearly fit into that defined as assimilationist. Grant et al's 'Single Group Studies' and 'Multicultural Education' fit into the integrationist approach. Their sixth type, 'Education that is Multicultural and Social Reconstructionist', belongs, I believe, to a third approach to the broad area of multicultural education. The two approaches which can be seen as belonging to the integrationist approach will be elaborated on here.

Grant et al (1986, p.48) define the purpose of 'Single Group Studies' as being 'to reduce social stratification and assimilation by promoting knowledge and appreciation of distinct groups' histories, cultures and contributions'. The approach is based on assumptions that assimilation is undesirable, and that by teaching about oppressed groups, often via the addition of courses on ethnic groups, women, labour or handicap groups, school curricula can be instrumental in bringing about structural change.

In Grant et al's (1986) typology, 'Multicultural Education' has as its purpose the reduction of social stratification and assimilation by promoting knowledge and appreciation of America's cultural diversity. They note that its assumptions include ideas such as: assimilation is undesirable; standard school curricula and practices are biased; all aspects of schooling should reflect diversity, which will eventually lead to reduction in prejudice and social structural change. Practices identified by Grant et al (1986, p.49) as being encompassed by the approach include re-writing of curricula to reflect ethnic, gender, social class and handicap diversity; the promotion of diverse learning styles; the promotion and use of more than one language and the provision of non-traditional staffing patterns. It is this package of aims and strategies that is most commonly in the literature meant by people writing about 'multicultural education' per se.

In their review of books on multicultural education, Grant et al (1986) found that many wrote about ethnic diversity, giving as their rationale for writing them the need to 'strike down and move away from the melting pot ideology to cultural pluralism'. They note that Banks (1977; 1981b), Gollnik and Chinn (1983), Grant (1975) and Grant, Boyle and Sleeter (1980), amongst others, have argued that 'diversity should be recognised and applauded because it is a salient part of American life and culture'. (Grant et al, 1986, p.49). According to Grant et al, these writers wanted the school to 'reduce tensions and injustices more assertively, to affirm equal opportunity more actively, and to build in students an awareness that human diversity is a fact of life and should be prized'. (Grant et al.1986, p. 50) Grant et al note that Lynch (1983), Verma and Bagley (1984) and Samuda, Berry and Laferriere (1984) made similar arguments when discussing multicultural education in Australia, the United Kingdom and Canada respectively.

Grant et al found that 23 out of the 46 books reviewed used what they have termed the 'multicultural approach'. They noted that, while the topics were varied, the authors' argument was common: the assimilationist ideology does not work, and will not work, especially for people of colour, and it denies equal educational opportunity. Therefore it is important to alter social stratification and assimilation by promoting understanding of cultural diversity. (p.55) Books in this category included those by Gollnick and Chinn (1983), Cohen and Manion (1983), Banks (1981b), Grant (1977) and Lynch (1983), which devoted much attention to curriculum.

The aims and procedures associated with the integrationist approach have been criticised by many writers. Conservative critics consider it misdirected and radical. Sleeter (1989) cites Broudy (1975) who believes that the stress on culture is divisive and likely to exclude minority groups from the system by not teaching them to participate in the country's culture, and Hirsch (1988) who asserts that, by teaching children about diverse groups, schools have made them culturally illiterate and given

them little sense of a shared culture. Stone's (1981) criticisms are based on the idea that the teaching strategies associated with the approach lead to the underachievement of minority pupils by diverting the educational effort away from the mastery of skills. McCarthy (1991, pp. 306-307) cites work by Fish (1981), Gibson (1984) and Buckingham (1984) which suggests that studies of ethnic groups can lead to the formation of new stereotyped views and, instead of improving attitudes to other groups, can in fact worsen them. Giroux (1992, p.1, refers to conservative writers such as Ravitch (1990) who 'have argued that multiculturalism points a serious threat to the school's traditional task of defending and transmitting an authentic national history, a uniform standard of cultural literacy, and a singular national identity for all citizens to embrace'.

From the left, writers such as Mullard (1981b, 1982), Nixon (1985), Suzuki (1984) and Craft (1986) point to multicultural education's failure to confront the issue of racism and to its implicit acceptance of the status quo. Nixon (1985, p.31) has suggested that implicit in it is the view that:

> provided the classroom is seen to reflect in its teaching materials and resources something of the cultural diversity of British society then...the demands of multiculturalism have been fully met.

McCarthy (1988, p. 269) expands on this thesis:

> As Berlowitz (1984a), Carby (1982) and Mullard (1985) have all contended, the underlying assumptions of multicultural education are fundamentally idealistic. As such, the structural and material relations in which racial domination is embedded are under-emphasised. ...By focusing on sensitivity training and individual differences, multicultural proponents typically skirt the very problem which multicultural education seeks to address: WHITE RACISM.

Mattai (1992, p.70) concedes that this is an overarching criticism of multicultural education, while Olneck (1990) argues that multicultural education serves as a vehicle for social control more than for social change. He has the following to say in this regard:

> ...dominant versions of multicultural education delimit a sanitized cultural sphere divorced from socio-political interests, in which culture is reified, fragmented and homogenized, and they depict ethnic conflict as predominantly the consequence of negative attitudes

> and ignorance about manifestations of difference, which they seek to remedy by cultivating empathy, appreciation and understanding. (p.166)

For those reasons, Olneck (1990, p.160) asserts that 'multicultural education is fundamentally integrative and incorporative, and, therefore, possibly reproductive of prevailing relations of power and control'. McCarthy (1991, p.305) suggests that:

> Cultural understanding models of multicultural education...generally take a 'benign stance' (Troyna and Williams, 1986) towards racial inequality in schooling and consequently place an enormous emphasis on creating racial harmony among students and teachers from different cultural backgrounds.

Banks (1987, p.539) refers to the criticisms of radical writers such as Modgil, Verma, Mallick and Modgil (1986) and Carby (1980) who argue that:

> Multiethnic studies are a palliative to keep excluded and oppressed groups from rebelling against a system that promotes structural inequality and institutionalized racism (Carby, 1980). The radical scholars also claim that multiethnic studies avoid any serious analysis of class, racism, power, capitalism, and other systems that keep excluded groups powerless. Multiethnic studies, they argue, divert attention from the real problems and issues. Instead they focus on the victim as the problem.

One of the key documents regarding education policy for a multicultural society to be published in Britain is the Swann Commission's report, 'Education for All' (1985), which had as its role the stimulation of changes along multicultural lines throughout the various strata of the English education system.

Troyna (1986), after a detailed analysis of aspects of the report, concludes that, in effect, its goal was to 'identify reformist policies which might secure an integrated society; in other words, stabilise a society characterised by social, political and racial divisions'. In support of this, he quotes this statement from the Committee's final report:

> We believe that unless major efforts are made to reconcile the concerns of both the majority and minority communities along more genuinely pluralistic lines, there is a real risk of the fragmentation of our society along ethnic lines which would seriously threaten the stability and cohesion of society as a whole. (Swann, 1985, p.7, in Troyna, 1986, p.175)

In his criticism of Swann's conception of racism, Troyna (1986, p.179) articulates a view that recurs throughout the radical critique of this approach.

> ...individual teacher prejudice is only part of the story of racism...the Swann committee fails, or refuses, to consider the more insidious and covert forms of racism as they operate routinely in the pedagogic, administrative and organisational features of school and college life.

And further:

> the arguments provided in Education for All circumvent the central problem of how to provide antiracist education in multiracial Britain...first, through defining racism in terms of prejudice and recommending teaching strategies to combat these attitudes (amongst students) and racism awareness courses to eradicate them (supposedly) from the teaching profession.

He concludes that:

> Swann and his colleagues have provided little support or encouragement for those interested and committed to the racialisation of educational policy and practice; for those... who are committed to 'minimising racial inequalities and discrimination where these are present'. (Troyna and Williams, 1986, p.5) For educationists and bureaucrats, on the other hand, committed to 'cultural tourism' or the three S's (Saris, Samosa and Steel Bands) conception of educational change, Swann's song will constitute an important weapon in their ideological armoury. (Troyna, 1986, p.179)

In response to such criticisms of the field of multicultural education, Sleeter (1989) makes the point that several factors should be born in mind by its critics. Firstly, they need to make clear which strand of the field they are criticising, as, as has been shown, different approaches are lumped together under the broad label 'multicultural education'. She contends that many of Olneck (1990) and O'Connor's (1989) criticisms pertain to the 'Human Rights' strand and not to what in Grant (1985) and Grant, Sleeter and Anderson's (1986) typology is defined as 'Multicultural Education', nor to 'Education that is Multicultural and Social Reconstructionist'. To my mind, this reflects more on the confusion of terminology than on the validity of the criticism, and highlights the necessity that Sleeter points to.

In addition, Sleeter (1989, p.56) points out that it is important to 'distinguish between an approach as formulated by its main theorists, and superficial applications of it that one often finds in schools', a point also made by Banks (1984). She cites the case of Single Group Studies which is envisaged by its theorists as including the examination of a group's historic and contemporary oppression, and the mobilisation of its members and sympathetic out-group supporters for social action. (1989, p.56) She notes that 'in schools this approach sometimes takes the form of superficial study of the food, music and dances of a group'.

Thus Sleeter (1989, p.59) defends multicultural education by referring back to its origins and intentions. She quotes Geneva Gay, 'one of the field's major proponents and developers', who notes that multicultural education:

> originated in a socio-political milieu and is to some extent a product of its times. Concerns about the treatment of ethnic groups in school curricula and instructional materials directly reflected concerns about their social, political and economic plight in society at large. (Gay, 1983, p.560)

According to Sleeter (1989), multicultural education, in its inception, was connected with, and attempting to contribute to, a much larger social and political racial struggle. As Banks (1984, p.58, in Sleeter, 1989, p.60) has said:

> A major goal of most ethnic revival movements is to attain equality for the excluded ethnic groups. Since the school is viewed by ethnic reformers as an important institution in their oppression, they attempt to reform it because they believe it can be a pivotal vehicle in their liberation.

Developing this idea, Sleeter (1989, p.60) suggests 'that multicultural education's emphasis on cultural pluralism was an articulation of this vision of equality in power and rights among racial groups without resorting to separatism'. However, it seems that many 'who are relatively new to multicultural education' see it as a 'means of reducing prejudice and stereotyping among individuals, as an attempt to learn to overlook differences in an effort to allow Americans of colour to progress" in the historic

manner of ethnic whites'. She avers that this is 'not what multicultural education meant to most of its developers and activists, but is nevertheless a common interpretation'. (p.62)

Sleeter (1989, p.63) has the following to say about the direction multicultural education should take:

> As we enter the 1990's, the field must develop in ways that are consonant with its original mission: to challenge oppression, and to use schooling as much as possible to help shape a future America that is more equal, democratic and just, and that does not demand conformity to one cultural norm. And it must reaffirm its radical and political nature.

In keeping with this view, Giroux (1992, p.7) makes the point that:

> if the concept of multicultural education is to become useful as a pedagogical concept, educators must define it outside a sectarian traditionalism. They must also reject any form of multiculturalism in which differences are registered and equally affirmed without understanding how such differences both emerge and are related to network and hierarchies of power, privilege and domination. Moreover, .. a critical multiculturalism must also address issues regarding group differences and how power relations function to structure racial and ethnic identities.

1.3 Education that is Multicultural and Reconstructionist

Elements of the trend in development suggested above are present in the third approach to multicultural education (as broadly defined). This third broad approach is propounded by Nixon (1985, p.34) as 'critical practice'.

Appleton (1983, p.206) suggests that:

> it (multicultural education) should help students conceptualise and aspire toward a vision of a better society and acquire the necessary knowledge and skills to enable them to move the society toward greater equality and freedom, the eradication of degrading poverty and dehumanising dependency, and the development of meaningful identity for all people.

And Suzuki (1984, pp.304-305) proposes a definition of multicultural education within this approach:

> Multicultural education is a multidisciplinary education program that provides multiple learning environments matching the academic, social and linguistic needs of students. These needs may vary widely due to differences in the race, sex, ethnicity or sociolinguistic

> backgrounds of the students. In addition to enhancing the development of their basic academic skills, the program should help students develop a better understanding of their backgrounds and of other groups that compose our society. Through this process, the program should help students learn to respect and appreciate cultural diversity, overcome ethnocentric and prejudicial attitudes and understand the socio-historical, economic and psychological factors that have produced the contemporary conditions of ethnic polarization, inequality and alienation. It should also foster their ability to analyse critically and make intelligent decisions about real life problems and discuss through a process of democratic, dialogical inquiry. Finally, it should help them conceptualise a vision of a better society and acquire skills to help them move the society toward greater equality of freedom, the eradication of poverty and dehumanising dependency and the development of meaningful identity for all people.

Banks (1987, p.538) notes that schools rarely educate students for social change, nor help them acquire 'knowledge, attitudes and skills needed to help close the gap between our democratic ideals and social realities'. He acknowledges the view of neo-Marxist scholars such as Bowles and Gintis (1976) who, he says contend that the school is incapable of teaching students to be agents of change because of its primary function of reproducing social structure, but asserts that:

> revisionists and other radical scholars overstate the case when they argue that the schools merely socialise students into the existing social order...While the school socialises students into the existing social order, it also enables some students to acquire the knowledge, attitudes and skills needed to participate effectively in social action and social change. (Banks, 1987, p.539)

Implications for the curriculum deriving from this go beyond the inclusion of culturally diverse source materials and 'open' debate. Suzuki (1984) discusses these in detail while Lynch (1985) highlights the fluidity 'in the state of the art' by saying that what is needed is major curriculum reform to render a curriculum appropriate to a multicultural society.

Banks (1987, p.539) stresses the role of the teacher as 'cultural mediator' and 'agent of change':

> Whether it is a deliberate goal of the school or not, many students learn cognition and democratic ideals and develop a commitment to participate in social change from powerful and influential classroom teachers. These teachers are also cultural mediators who interpret

> the mainstream and ethnic cultures to students from divorce cultural groups and help students understand the desirability and possibility of social change.

Grant and Sleeter (1985), Grant, Sleeter and Anderson (1986) and Sleeter (1989) would term this approach 'Education that is Multicultural and Reconstructionist', and in Britain, many of the notions of anti-racist teaching could be seen as part of a continuum of work included in this third approach. In addition, some aspects of the work of the ethnic revivalists, in its intended form as referred to earlier, would also fall under this umbrella. Grant, Sleeter and Anderson (1986, p.49) consider that the purpose of this approach is to 'prepare students to challenge social stratification'. They suggest that its assumptions are that:

> schools serve an unequal social structure, and do not sufficiently promote equity unless they openly challenge that structure, and that the practices should, in addition to those of multicultural education, organize curriculum around current social issues, actively engage students in problem generating and problem -solving and teach members of oppressed groups political action skills. (Grant et al, 1986, p. 49)

Giroux (1992, p.11) suggests that a curriculum for a multicultural and multiracial society:

> provides the conditions for students to think and act otherwise, to imagine beyond the given, and to critically embrace their identities as a source of agency and possibility

and gives several prerequisites for a critical multicultural curriculum which:

> would address curriculum as a form of cultural politics that demands linking the production and legitimation of classroom knowledge, social identities and values to considerations of power. (pp. 7-8)

Thus, several writers have suggested what a more radical form of multicultural education should be. However, in the surveys of the literature by Grant and Sleeter (1985) and Grant, Sleeter and Anderson (1986), it is clear that there has been least written about this approach. Of the 46 books classified by Grant et al to be directed toward exploring a rationale for and overview of multicultural education, 23 used a 'Multicultural Education Approach' and none took an 'Education that is Multicultural and Social Reconstructionist Approach' (pp.55-56), possibly, they suggest,

'either because they had not thought about the radical ideas suggested by the approach, or because it would be difficult to get the ideas published'. Five books had as their main thrust the development of a theoretical model of multicultural education, and only Appleton (1983) could be said to be arguing for 'Education that is Multicultural and Social Reconstructionist'. Of the four books devoted to instructional models and strategies, only Banks (1981a) supported this approach, and of the 14 teaching guides, only the guide by Meyers, Banfield and Colon (1983) used an 'Education that is Multicultural and Social Reconstructionist' approach. A similar pattern of under-representation was found in Grant and Sleeter's (1985) analysis of articles, although 8 of the 46 articles directed toward the purposes and goals of multicultural education advocated the approach. (Dodgson and Stewart, 1980; Green, 1982; Mukherjee, 1983; St Lawrence and Singleton, 1976; Grant, 1978; Suzuki, 1979 and Williams, 1982)

Differences in attitude to racism, strategies for dealing with it, and its link with other forms of oppression based on class, gender and handicap between writers adopting this approach and the 'integrationist/multicultural education' approach have been alluded to above, largely by reference to the criticisms of the latter approach. It seems appropriate here to develop the theme a little further in the context of the ideas within the 'Education -that is - Multicultural- and- Social - Reconstruction' approach.

Sleeter (1989) refers to structuralist theory for guidance in putting attitudes into perspective. She notes that structural theory 'holds that attitudes and sterectypes are part of a group's culture, which is created within a context of social and economic relationships'. (p.63) She contends that on the basis of this 'it is not possible to change attitudes and perceptions at the cultural level on a large scale, without also changing the structural context in which given attitudes and stereotypes make sense'. (p.64). In the light of this, she argues that 'multicultural education needs to articulate more clearly that its goal is equality of social resources, rather than simply elimination of

stereotyping and prejudice'. (p. 64) She does concede, however, that attitudes and stereotypes should not simply be disregarded because at an individual level they can reinforce inequality through allowing certain behaviours which can make school an overtly inhospitable place for ethnic minorities.

McCarthy (1988, p.270) makes similar reference to the work of Neo-Marxist writers on the subject of racial inequality. Drawing on the work of Berlowitz (1984), Bowles and Gintis (1976) and Nkomo (1984), he corroborates Sleeter's analysis:

> These radical theorists maintain that attempts to cast the problem of racial oppression in American schooling in terms of attitudes, values and psychological differences are grossly inadequate. They argue further that liberal emphasis on the domain of values serves to divert our attention from the relationship of schooling to political economy and political power...They have asserted instead that problems of social difference and inequality are more firmly rooted in the socio-economic relations and structures generated within capitalist societies such as the United States.

McCarthy goes on to criticise this school of theory for relegating racial domination to a 'tangential distraction' to the 'main drama of class conflict'. (p.270) He points to the fact that, for writers such as Berlowitz (1984) and Jakubowicz (1985), racial inequality in schooling is little more than a symptom of more powerful class-related dynamics operating within the economy. Edari (1984, p.8) quoted in McCarthy (1988, p.271) summarises this notion by saying:

> For this purpose, ethnicity, racism and sexism must be understood in the proper perspective as forms of ideological mystification designed to facilitate and weaken the collective power of the labouring classes.'

Among other criticisms of this perspective on the role of racism in schooling, McCarthy (1988, p.271) contends that the neo-Marxists underrate the school's role in the production and reproduction of cultural identities and social differences. They therefore trivialise the school's role in the reproduction and transformation of race relations, and have minimised the importance of black struggles, particularly in the field of education, but also with respect to class and gender struggles.

McCarthy cites the work of others (Omi and Winant, 1986; Apple and Weiss, 1983; Carby, 1982; Giroux, 1985; Troyna and Williams, 1986 and Weiss, 1985) who, like him, would argue for a more integrated and synthetic conceptual framework as the basis for researching inequality in schooling. The writers described as Marxist cultural theorists have drawn attention to 'the autonomous logics and effects of racial and sexual dynamics in schooling, and to their necessary interactions with class, in lived social and cultural practices in the organisation, reproduction and transformation of social life'. (McCarthy, p.272) The term 'parallelist' is given to their framework as it 'directs our attention to the interrelationships among a number of dynamics, and attempts to illuminate complexity, not wish it away'. (McCarthy, 1988 p.272)

Apple and Weiss (1983, p.24) express this view succinctly:

> [A] number of dynamics are usually present at the same time in any one instance. This is important. Ideological form is not reducible to class. Processes of gender, age and race enter directly into the ideological moment... It is actually out of the articulation with, clash among, or contradictions among and within, say, class, race and sex that ideologies are lived in one's day-to-day life.

McCarthy (1988, p.273.) summarises the differences between the approaches of the neo-Marxists, liberals and parallelists as follows:

> For neo-Marxists, then, one must first understand the class basis of racial inequality; and for liberal theorists, cultural racial values and prejudices are the primary sources of racial antagonism. In contrast, Apple and Weiss contend that race is not a 'category' or a thing-in-itself (Thompson, 1988), but a vital social process which is integrally linked to other social processes and dynamics operating in school and society. These proponents of the parallelist position therefore hold that at least three dynamics - race, class and gender - are essential in understanding schools and other institutions. None are reducible to the other, and class is not necessarily primary.

At the same time, it can be said that the relations between race, class and gender are more complex than the parallelist theory suggests. Hicks (1981), has introduced the term 'nonsynchrony' to express the concept that the operation of race, class and gender are not necessarily in step with each other in daily practices at school and in the workplace. Individuals and groups in their relation to economic, political and cultural institutions do not share

an identical consc isness and express the same interests, needs or desires 'at the same point in time'. (Hicks, 1982, p.221, in Mccarthy, 1988, p.275) Hicks suggests that:

> dynamic relations of race, class and gender do not unproblematically reproduce each other. These relations are complex and often have contradictory effects even in similar institutional settings. The patterns of social stratification by race, class and gender emerge not as static variables but as efficacious structuring principles that shape minority/majority relations in everyday life. (In McCarthy, 1988, p.275)

Gilroy (1982), Omi and Winant (1986) and Sarup (1986) have pointed to the fact that racial and sexual antagonism can cut across class solidarity. The work of Nkomo (1984), Burawoy (1981) and Fuller (1980) provides further examples of nonsynchronous relationships between race, class and gender. McCarthy suggests that 'it is to this literature - on the tensions and contradictions among raced, classed and gendered forms of domination both inside and outside education - that critical scholarship in education should now turn'. (p.276)

Grant and Sleeter (1986), concerned about education literature's failure to conceptualise race, social class and gender as integrated issues (p.195), have analysed 71 articles published in four journals over the period 1973 - 1983. Their analysis showed that most of the literature surveyed treated race, social class and gender separately. They suggest that:

> concern with one status group can lead to neglect for people's multiple group memberships that may relate to an issue...There needs to be more dialogue among those interested in race, social class and gender. Until integration of these three status groups are investigated, we.....may oversimplify theory and perpetuate biases...(p.207)

Gay (1990) affirms the need to deal with race, class and gender as forms of inequalities in curriculum design. She asserts (1990, p. 61) that:

> We cannot avoid confronting sexism, racism, classism and other inequities. To do so would constitute an abdication of professional responsibility. These social ills can be remedied more effectively when students are socially conscious.

From the preceding rather coarse survey of some of the main approaches to the broad field of multicultural education, it seems to be clear that two main themes distinguish the approaches from each other: their concepts of the relationships between groups in a heterogeneous society, and attitudes to racism, class, and gender, and education's part in modifying attitudes and bringing about social change. From these basic positions flow notions about the curriculum and school organisation.

I have tried to divide the approaches into three main groups, but hope it has been clear that the edges between at least two of them are blurred, and that a fair amount of confusion arises from the fact that one term is used to convey a spectrum of meanings to a range of writers.

The assimilationist approach is clearly rooted in a conservative position, and differs in its conception of society and of the aims of education more markedly from the other two broad approaches than they do from each other.

The 'integrationist approach', sometimes referred to as 'multicultural education', can loosely be defined as liberal. In it, the pluralist nature of society is acknowledged, and efforts are directed at education that leads towards harmonious coexistence, with everyone having an equal opportunity to share in the benefits of society. Its thrust is toward helping 'students develop ethnic self-identities, knowledge about different cultural groups, respect for others' right to be different, competence in more than one cultural system'. (Grant and Sleeter, 1985, p. 101) McCarthy (1991) suggests that these aims can be subscribed under three broad concepts: cultural understanding, cultural competence and cultural emancipation. The strategies advocated include 'integrating information about contributions and perspectives of different cultural groups into the entire curriculum, and building on different students' learning styles. Staffing patterns should be integrated, and culturally fair evaluation techniques used.' (Grant and Sleeter, 1985, p.101) Implicit in this approach

is a desire for social change, and the expectation is that desirable changes would come about 'as young people learned to respect those different from themselves' and 'learned to function in different cultural contexts'. (Grant and Sleeter, 1985, p. 101) However, the approach devotes little attention to social structural inequality, nor to the operation of racism in the school, other than at the level of personal prejudice which can be modified.

In the third approach (critical practice, education that is multicultural and social reconstructionist, anti-racist education) the plurality of society is also acknowledged. However, greater emphasis is placed on the unequal power relationships that exist among different groups in society, and the need for education to equip students with the skills to confront these inequalities and take action to redress them. It is clearly a more radical approach than the other two. The attention of writers within this approach is increasingly focusing on the need to move the thrust of 'multicultural education' (in its broad sense) on from racism to other forms of inequality, such as those based on gender, class and handicap, and to develop a more integrated approach to all these forms of oppression and inequality.

From this literature review it is clear that there is fierce debate about the precise meaning, boundaries between and relative value of different approaches to 'multicultural education'. Short (1991, p.13), after a careful analysis of some of the main ideas of both 'multicultural education' and 'anti-racist education', suggests that 'eradicating ignorance', the aim of the former, and 'promoting racial justice', the central concern of the latter, are not irreconcilable aims. On the contrary, 'they are different sides of the same coin and moral and practical considerations demand that both be addressed concomitantly'. The extent to which the school can play a real role in any of the aims espoused by any of the approaches to multicultural education (in the broad sense) is also a matter of much debate.

Thus far, I have outlined some of the macro-scale debate related to 'multicultural education'. I shall turn now to consideration of some of the research devoted to particular areas of concern within the field. In particular, the areas of academic achievement and concepts of underachievement, of self-concept and of friendship choice will be examined.

2. Academic achievement

2.1 Brief summary of research findings

In part, the debate around 'multicultural education' has been sparked by the perception that ethnic groups have differential success, particularly, but not exclusively, as measured in terms of academic achievement within the school (and further education) system. The meaning of success has been construed in a variety of ways, and its achievement or lack thereof has been attributed to a wide range of complex factors. In this part of the chapter, I shall attempt to review some of the work, empirical and theoretical, which has focused on notions of, and explanations for, differential educational success among ethnic groups. Again the focus of my review will be work from Britain and America.

In Britain, research that has compared the educational achievement of immigrant and other minority groups with that of indigenous white British schoolchildren has found that, in general, across a variety of ages and measures, children of West Indian origin underachieve in the school system and are over-represented in schools, classes and programmes for the educationally sub-normal Children of Asian origin, except for Bangladeshis, are, in contrast, generally among the highest achieving groups at school.

Reviewing work on the educational performance of children of West Indian origin reported in the literature before 1983, Tomlinson (1983 a, p. 28) cites twenty-four large-scale studies (sample size

of more than 600), seven medium-scale studies (sample size 100 - 600, and twelve small-scale studies (sample of less than 100). The conclusion reached by Tomlinson (1983a) is that West Indian children do under-perform and underachieve in comparison with 'white' and 'Asian' minority groups, and that, despite some optimism in this regard, black British children's performance over time has not come to equal that of inner-city white children. (p.44) An interesting conclusion from the research has been that West Indian girls tend to achieve better than boys.

These conclusions were based on research which examined such diverse aspects of school performance and academic achievement as the reading ages of children compared to their chronological ages (Little and Mabey, 1973; Little, 1975a,b; Mabey, 1981), listening and reading test scores (Halsey, 1972; Payne, 1969; Edwards, 1976, Bagley, Bart and Wong, 1979), IQ scores (McFie and Thompson, 1970; Bhatnagar, 1970), English proficiency (McEwan, Gipps and Sumner (1975), [illegible]ptual development with reference to the concept of 'life' (G. [illegible]iths, 1982), achievement at CSE/O level and stream allocation (Jones, 1977), NFER tests of verbal reasoning, English and Mathematics at Junior school (Redbridge, 1978), NFER tests of reading and Mathematics at 16 years of age (Essen and Ghodsian, 1979), percentage of children entering grammar school (Townsend, 1971; Rex and Tomlinson, 1979; Scarr et al, 1983), percentages of children taking examination courses (Townsend and Brittan, 1972), clustering in high and low streams (Townsend and Brittan, 1972; Driver, 1977; Troyna, 1978; Redbridge, 1978 and Williams, 1978), acquisition of O and A level qualifications (Redbridge 1978; Allen and Smith, 1975; Rex and Tomlinson, 1979; Craft and Craft, 1983, DES 1981 - the Rampton Report), entry to further education at university (DES, 1981) and representation in schools and units for the educationally subnormal and disruptive. (ILEA, 1967, 1968; Townsend 1971; DES, 1972; Redbridge, 1978)

Tomlinson (1983a) reports that in a small number of studies, or by reinterpretation of data from some of those quoted above, writers have found that the discrepancy in educational achievement between

indigenous white students and children of West Indian origin is not significant, or is even non existent. (Smolins, 1975; Stones, 1979; Phillips, 1977; Weir, 1980, Bagley, 1982: Driver, 1980a and b;) However, these findings have not changed the overall picture which shows that children of West Indian origin tend to achieve less success and to perform less well than indigenous white children in the British school system.

Tomlinson's (1983a) review of multicultural literature contains a chapter considering the research related to the educational performance of pupils of Asian origin. In addition to large scale studies which also addressed the issue of the performance of West Indian children, several others are cited as having addressed specifically the performance of Asian pupils. She also considers the work of six medium-scale studies and seven small-scale studies which included, or focused on, the achievement of children of Asian descent. This research examined a similar range of aspects of academic performance and achievement as that directed to the West Indian children.

According to Tomlinson (1983a, p.58):

> Some crude generalisations can be drawn from the research. Asian pupils have tended to score lower than their white peers on tests of ability and attainment, but Asian performance has improved with length of stay and length of schooling in Britain. In selected urban areas with large numbers of ethnic minority people, Asian pupils achieve school leaving qualifications on a par with their white peers ..Evidence on sex differences is equivocal. If anything, Asian girls score lower than boys on tests of ability and attainment.

Ballard and Vellins (1985) and Taylor And Hegarty (1985) have found that 'Indian students in Britain have demonstrated a high degree of success in surmounting both the influence of prejudice and discrimination in British society and that of low economic status'. (Gibson and Bhachu, 1988)

Subsequent to Tomlinson's (1983a) review of work up to the early 1980's, the Swann Commission published its findings in the report 'Education for All' (1985), the final phase of the work of the

committee of enquiry into the education of children from ethnic minority groups in Britain of which the Rampton Report (1981) had been an interim report.

In the chapter on academic achievement and underachievement the Swann report (1985, p.59) refers to the conclusion of Taylor (1981) on behalf of the NFER that:

> ...there is an overwhelming consensus that research evidence shows a strong trend to underachievement of pupils of West Indian origin on the main indicators of academic performance.

They then refer to the work of Craft and Craft (1983) which showed that 'West Indian children are markedly under-represented among high achievers and markedly over-represented among low achievers'. (Swann, 1985, p.60)

A DES survey (1985), requested by the Swann Commission, analysed the 1981/1982 school leavers' results and again found that West Indian children were 'performing markedly less well than their fellows from other groups on all the measures used'. (Swann, 1985, p.62) The measures referred to here were largely 'O' and 'A' level passes and grades, and percentages of students proceeding to university. What is of interest is that the analysis shows some improvement in the performance of West Indian school leavers in each measure when compared with the findings of the analysis of the 1978/79 results. Swann suggests that this is part of a trend reported also by Tomlinson (1983b and c) and by Fogelman (1983) of some 'narrowing in the gap between the performance of West Indians and their school fellows from other groups'. (Swann, 1985, p.63)

Referring to the analysis of the school leavers' results carried out by the DES for the 1978/79 and 81/82 years, and reported in an annex to the Swann report (DES 1985), the study by Craft and Craft (1983) and a smaller study by Brooks and Singh (1978), Swann notes that, 'while the evidence about school performance of Asian pupils is not unanimous, the majority of studies show an average level of performance, other than in English Language, that is generally on a par with that of indigenous white children'. (p.65)

Tomlinson (1991, p.122) notes that, while the research evidence up to the 1980's 'demonstrated that minority pupils on the whole did not achieve educational credentials on a par with white pupils, the situation in the late 1980's appears to be changing'.

Differences in academic achievement based on ethnic background have also been well documented in America. Saks (1988), referring to scores on standardised tests in 1987, reading assessments conducted by the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP), NAEP Mathematics assessment, Scholastic Aptitude Tests in the last decade, and 1985 SAT scores for New York city notes that:

> despite gains, minority students still have a long way to go to close the achievement gap. The performance of black students is still significantly below that of their white counterparts.(A8)

Graham (1987) notes that the number of black students applying to, and graduating from, colleges is declining. Cummins (1986) refers to the differential drop-out rates that exist for Mexican American and Puerto Rican students and those of whites. (p.18) A small-scale, local study by Streitmatter (1986) found that whites are under-represented and blacks and Hispanics over-represented in school suspensions. Murphy (1986) cites the work of Bacca and Chinn (1982), Coleman et al (1966) and Grant and Eidem (1982) to support her statement that:

> Since the early 1960's, researchers have reported that children from typically depressed ethnic groups, such as blacks, Hispanics, and American Indians tend to score lower than do white children on various measures of cognitive ability and academic success, are disproportionately placed in special classes for the mentally retarded and and learning disabled, and drop out of high school at rates much higher than those of whites. The literature on these findings is extensive. (p.455)

Further evidence for the differential performance of minority groups comes from the work of Gibson (1987), Matute-Bianchi (1986), Suarez-Orozoco (1987) and Ogbu, (1974). Slaughter-Defoe et al (1990) provide an extensive review of research into achievement patterns and explanations for these for both Asian-and Afro-Americans, and point to the relative success of Asian-Americans.

particularly the Japanese, in the American school system. d'Ailly (1992, p.243) notes that 'it has long been recognised that Asian students outperform their Western counterparts in Mathematics'.

Thus, on a broad level, in both the United States and the United Kingdom, despite apparent efforts at equality in education, outcomes in terms of success within the educational system are not seen to be equal across broadly defined ethnic groups. There are some suggestions of changing attainment patterns, but the gap has not everywhere been closed. These findings, should, however, be interpreted with care, as the nature and validity of tests and testing, and of interpretation of results can distort the picture. Tomlinson (1991, p.121), r es that:

> ...despite the volume of evidence, it is still hard to draw firm conclusions. The results of research have been used to fuel political debates, with input from both left and right, about the intellectual capabilities and educational achievements of different minority groups...

2.2 Reflections on the nature and validity of tests and of testing

There have been many reservations expressed about the terminology, methodology and philosophy underpinning research into disparities in academic achievement among children from different ethnic groups. An ethnic analysis of educational attainment may offer a useful tool, providing an indication of the extent to which equality of educational outcome is a reality, and also possibly pointing to particular factors in the educational process which militate against the success of people in certain groups and the subsequent seeking of solutions to overcome these. (Verma, 1986, p. 38) However, there are dimensions to such an analysis which need consideration.

2.2.1 Patterns of achievement in particular subject areas

Kelly (1988) suggests that it is important for us to know not only patterns of overall achievement, but also patterns of achievement in certain subject areas. She comments on how little attention has been paid to this aspect of research, and notes that it is particularly important in Science because of this subject's key position in the national core curriculum and the consequences of underachievement in Science for children of ethnic origin's future place in British society. (p.114) She found, on analysing data from the GIST project, that black and Asian children were less likely to take Physics in the fourth and fifth year than white children, and that blacks leave school less well qualified in Science than whites and Asians. Asian boys had consistently positive scores, and achieved better in Science examinations at 16+, while black boys achieved the same as whites in Science. White girls are least interested in learning Physical Science and white boys most disaffected with regard to Biology. Reworking Driver's (1980) data to compare Asian, black and white results on the CSE examinations in Physics, Biology and Integrated Science, she finds that there are 'some striking patterns in this data'. (p.115) The sex differences in Physics and Biology were present for all groups. Asian boys did best in Physics, followed by white and West Indian boys; the ordering of the groups was the same for girls, but at a lower level. In Biology the most notable feature was the low achievement of white children of both sexes, Asian girls doing best, followed by West Indian girls and Asian boys.

In the United States, Goggins and Lindbeck (1986) note the small number of black students choosing a career in Science, and the decline in the percentage of minority students enrolled in Science. They also have data to show the over-representation of Asians (Japanese, Koreans and Vietnamese), particularly in engineering. Hall et al (1986, p.108) report that in the United States national assessments have shown significant racial differences in performance in Science at all levels. Atwater (1986,

p.55) notes that 'despite the common impression among educators that opportunities are equal, minority students are still under-represented in Science and Engineering'.

Little data for differential success in particular subjects is available, but patterns of interest that are not necessarily fully revealed by broad achievement reviews can be discerned. The issue of gender differences that cut across ethnic lines, pointed to in Tomlinson's (1983a) survey, is clearly another avenue worthy of further research.

2.2.2 Choice of categories

Kysel (1988) suggests that the broad ethnic categories used in much research obscures some of the differences in achievement within broad groups - a point also made by Swann (1985), Tomlinson (1983a; 1991), Banks (1988) and Verma (1986) amongst others. Kysel notes that when, in 1985, ILEA began to monitor its public examination results by ethnic background, finer distinctions in performance became possible. She points to the fact that the results of the summer 1985 examinations show that the highest and lowest achieving groups were both, in broad terms, 'Asians'. Bangladeshi students were the lowest scorers, while Afro-Asian and Indian pupils did particularly well, with Pakistani and South East Asian children also achieving above-average results.

Gibson and Bhachu (1988) comment on the relative success of Punjabi Sikh pupils within the British and American school system, in contrast to that of the Battra Sikhs who tend to have a high rate of truancy and to drop out of British schools in their teens. (Gibson and Bhachu, p. 253)

Slaughter-Defoe et al (1990, p. 369) note that:

> In the past two decades, research has not provided much information on the variations and diversities of the various Asian-American groups. The stereotype limits both how society perceives Asian-Americans and how the individual Asian-Indian, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Laotian, Pacific Islander, Thai or Vietnamese perceives him- or her-self.

Some writers suggest that there has not been sufficient discrimination within ethnic groups themselves. Matute-Bianchi (1986) points to the fact that the Spanish-surname students at a school in California are all 'Mexican-descent' students, yet five distinct sub-cultures can be recognised among them, each showing different orientations to mainstream schooling, and variation in academic achievement. Considering them all as one ethnic category would lose a lot of the interesting variation among these students. Swann (1985, p.39) notes that this lack of distinction has coloured our view of achievement, and is partly the result of statistical procedures. He notes that 'averages of course, conceal much variation. There are West Indian children who do well, as well as Asian children who are underachieving.'

2.2.3 Using categories at all is problematic

Verma (1986) notes the potentially contentious nature of such record keeping and the problems that might arise with regard to accuracy of information, the rights of access to such information and the uses to which such records might be put. Elaborating on this, he points out that current data 'may give rise to stereotypes of ethnic minority groups in Britain along the lines that superficially emerge from the Swann report (1985)'. He cites phrases from the report which point to the underachievement of West Indian pupils, and the Asians 'doing as well as their white peers'. (p.42)

Demaine (1989, p.196) supports this view, saying:

> The terms and categories involved in the debate over 'race' and education are important in a number of ways. Language is one of the vehicles for racism, and nomenclature plays a significant role in stereotyping and racist appellation. But terms and categories are also crucial to the collection and interpretation of data about social groups. Social statistical classification is rarely unproblematical, and the problems are evident in the collection and analysis of what are known as 'racial' or 'ethnic' statistics. The production of 'evidence' concerning the educational achievement of different groups, and evidence as to the needs and interests which social and educational policy is called upon to address is problematical. Categories and terms are regarded as particularly im-

portant because of their possible effects on the construction of teachers' thinking - their 'expectations' of pupil performance and effects on pedagogic practice.

Clearly, with regard to the assigning of people to groups, many difficulties arise from the categories used by Swann. (1985, p.vi) This is not something which the report writers are unaware of. They note that, in fact, many children referred to in the report as belonging to an ethnic minority were born in Britain, and that the terms describing them do not make this clear. As Demaine (1988) points out, the terms 'West Indian' and 'Asian' imply immigrant status to children who were born in Britain and whose legal status is British.

In addition to these problems of classification, there is the additional one of a common understanding of the terms used, and of their contribution to acceptance of stereotypes. Demaine (1989, p 198) wonders whether 'data classification agencies use the same categories and terms as those who classify and interpret the data' (p.197), and points to the admission by Swann (1985, p.xvii) that there is no nationally agreed definition of 'West Indian'.

Demaine (1989) feels that 'the categorisation of social groups is particularly problematic in the discussion of educational achievement'. (p.199) He refers to an article by Troyna (1984b) in which that writer discusses the problem of interpretation of evidence of the 'fact' of educational underachievement of children of Afro-Caribbean descent relative to that of white and Asians, arguing, correctly in Demaine's view, that the facts are artefacts. (Demaine, p.199) Demaine concludes that:

> Indeed, all social facts are, in a sense, artefacts; the constructs of concepts and theories. Contemporary interpretations of the social distribution of educational achievement are dependent upon theories and concepts. The latter generate the categories of analysis and they are signified by particular terminology or vocabulary. (p.199)

2.2.4 Scale of study

Verma (1986, p.40) points to the need for consideration of the scale and quality of data collected if it is to be possible to generalise upon findings:

> Localised studies may produce findings atypical of the country as a whole, or produce findings which cannot be generalised with any confidence. More widely-spread studies would lend themselves to generalisation, but tend to lack the requisite detail on the circumstances of the individuals whose performance contributes to the total 'scores' or gears for particular groups or categories of people.

Referring to the study by Craft & Craft (1983), he notes that despite its shedding light on the under-representation of one ethnic minority group within the middle-class category, it was 'only able to provide a broad definition of ethnicity, and was only a localised and small-scale study'. (Verma, 1986, pp. 41-42)

2.2.5 Significance of measures used

Several writers have questioned the significance of some of the measures of academic ability and achievement used by researchers, and have also pointed to their limitations in measuring the impact of school learning.

2.2.5.1 Intelligence tests

The whole issue of what exactly is meant by 'intelligence', and what precisely 'intelligence tests' measure, is beyond the scope of this review. Attention will be focused not so much on intelligence tests per se as on the implications of their use in comparing children from different cultural and ethnic groups.

Verma and Mallick (1982, pp.181), citing the work of Karier (1973, 1976) and Kamin (1977) state that 'many widely used ability and achievement tests are thoroughly permeated by the cultural and ideological perspectives of their developers'. Haynes (1971, in Verma and Mallick, 1982, p.183) has noted:

> intelligence tests given to 'immigrant' children in Britain are not able to measure their present or future performance because of the tests' verbal bias and cultural assumptions which are not those of the children's culture.

and Scarr (1984), quoted in Verma (1986, p.28) points out that:

> An obvious problem for minority children is the content of the tests. Items are written by educated, urban, middle-class psychologists and educators to predict the middle-class standards in the schools and jobs. While the tests may predict well, they may not be fair examples of intelligence.

In view of such criticisms, designers of IQ tests, according to Demaine (1989, p. 204), claim that efforts are made to exclude outside influences. He notes that 'in fact, it is impossible to imagine an IQ test... which is free from outside influences in the sense in which the phrase is used'.

A further major problem associated with the use of IQ tests is that differences in performance on them have been linked to genetic differences in groups regarding innate intelligence, and have thus been used to support racist ideas about group inferiority. Burt's (1966) notion that intelligence is an innate potential, fixed in humans as part of their genetic endowment has been 'demolished' (Demaine, 19889, p.202) and 'many psychologists working in the field distance themselves from the views of Burt (1966), Jensen (1969), and Eysenck (1971).' Verma and Mallick (1982, p.184), referring to work by Bagley (1975) and Stones (1979), note that 'as soon as the Jensen article appeared it became the object of vigorous criticism, both for its methodological shortcomings and for technical inadequacies in sampling procedures.'

Despite the criticisms of IQ tests, they are often considered to be 'objective' measures of ability, and thus to form a reasonable basis for allocating children to bands in school, and hence to affect teachers' perceptions of their ability, and also their access to public examinations. (Verma, 1986, p.29) Swann (1985, p.77) asserts that 'IQ tests are designed to be as free from outside influences as possible' and supports their use because of

Mackintosh and Mascie-Taylor's view that, 'IQ tests, although no doubt very far from perfect, are as good a measure of intelligence or cognitive ability as we have'. (Mackintosh and Mascie-Taylor, 1985, p.128)

Demaine suggests that by taking this view the Swann Report 'runs the risk of adding spurious credibility to psychometric testing although it is clearly not Swann's intention to do so'. (Demaine, 1989, p.203) Certainly, the report does pay attention to research that points to differences in IQ among different groups in British school society. Demaine (1989) suggests that the Swann report leaves itself open to the allegation that it has not completely refuted the possibility of IQ being linked to heredity factors by noting that it is 'not a significant factor in underachievement'. (p.89) Demaine points out (p.207) that it is significant that the Swann report does not say that IQ is not a factor, merely that it is not a significant factor in the underachievement of West Indians.

MacKintosh and Mascie-Taylor (1985 p.148), in the summary and conclusions section of their paper on IQ prepared for the Swann commission, suggest that, in fact, there are more interesting and important things in life than IQ, and continue by saying:

> Even in a narrow educational context, no one should be particularly interested in IQ scores. Educationalists should be concerned rather with how well children do at school, how adequately they master certain basic skills, and, if need be, with their examination results - since these results will affect their future chances in life in a multitude of ways. They would then ask, for example, why West Indian children do not read as well as white children, and rather than wondering whether this is due to a difference in IQ, they would be better advised to tackle the problem directly.

2.2.5.2 Is race or socio-economic difference the critical variable?

With regard to results of school-based or national examinations, several writers have questioned whether lower attainment by ethnic minorities actually reflects differences between ethnic groups, or whether in fact these difference reflect other differences between

the groups compared, particularly socio-economic background. Kelly (1988, p.125), discussing her results of tests of achievement on Science tests in which blacks achieved as well as whites in Science, and Asian boys achieved better than white boys, suggested that 'it is class, not race which is influential in depressing academic performance'.

Kelly (1988, p. 124) notes that this finding is similar to that of Maughan and Rutter (1986) and Roberts et al (1983) in inner city schools, but contradicts some of the findings reported by Tomlinson (1983a) and Swann (1985) which suggest that blacks achieve worse in schools than comparable whites. Bagley (1979) has said that in both the psychometric tests and those tests using group tests or teacher assessments, social disadvantage rather than race is the factor that accounts for the apparent [illegible] of West Indian children.

Thus, this dimension further complicates the [illegible] ferences in achievement of groups of children, and serves to highlight the view that West Indian underachievement is not a function of ethnicity per se, as the analysis of achievement patterns along ethnic lines could lead one to believe.

2.2.6 Need for tests of success or failure can be questioned

McDermott (1987) has cast doubt on the very activity of considering failure at all, suggesting that instead of examining the nature of failure, and considering why some groups fail more than others, we should recognise failure as an 'institutional fabrication, a mock up for scapegoating,.. a culturally mandated foolishness that keeps us all in our respective places... a culturally necessary part of the American school scene'. (p. 363) He suggests that we 'do not need to explain which kids do or which kids do not learn at school. We need to explain why we have organised such an elaborate apparatus for pinpointing the failures of our children, when we could put all of that energy into organising more learning.' (p.363) He states that 'school success and school

failure can be understood only in terms of our willingness to turn small and generally uninteresting differences in test-defined learning into institutional facts with devastating consequences for the children differentially labelled by the system'. (p.364)

Astin (1990, p.458), similarly critical of the role of assessment, suggests that 'if assessment were to be used primarily as a form of feedback for enhancing the learning process rather than for screening and selecting, the cause of educational equity would be much better served'.

Whatever the pros and cons of achievement tests, of scrutinising the results of these on racial or ethnic lines, or any of the other problematic areas of the whole issue of comparative achievement, the fact remains that testing is done, comparisons are made and ethnic differences are found. In the light of these, a large volume of work directed toward explaining these differences has been undertaken, and, based on some of the findings, attempts have been made to introduce changes in education policy and practice to modify differences. It is to the explanations of difference that this review now turns.

2.3 Explanations for patterns of achievement and underachievement

A wide variety of 'explanations' for the underachievement of groups of children in schools has been proposed. They reflect both the time of research and the discipline and, in some cases, the ideological background of the writer.

2.3.1 Deficiency theories

A major group of studies encompasses ideas which ascribe underachievement to the personal and social deficiencies of the child including such things as their intelligence (Jensen, 1971), their language codes (Bernstein, 1971), their cultural deprivation in terms of parents' low education levels, attitudes to schooling, or their lack of facilities and an environment conducive to study

(Davie, Butler and Goldstein, 1972, and others, reported in Cohen and Manion, 1983, pp. 68-69) and the amount of English spoken at home. (Hewitt, 1977, 1978 in Sturman, 1985). The Coleman study on equality of education opportunity (Coleman et al, 1966) suggested that the family exerts a strong influence on academic achievement. Tomlinson (1983a, p.64) notes that:

> studies of the family characteristic of West Indian immigrants during the 1960's and 1970's did tend to stress negative aspects of family structure, and differences in family organisation and child-rearing patterns, which were considered to be detrimental to children' educational performance.

Banks (1988, pp. 452-453) notes that these ideas form part of the theory of cultural deprivation which suggests that 'lower-income and minority students were not achieving well in school because of the culture of poverty in which they were socialised'. Erickson (1987, p.335) encapsulates this by saying:

> minority children did not achieve because they did not experience a cognitively stimulating environment... They were 'culturally deprived' or 'socially disadvantaged'.

Tomlinson (1983a, pp.64-68) notes, however, that 'the link between family organisation and childrearing practices and poor success at school has been rejected by some West Indian parents', and that the notion that immigrant children's underachievement might be ascribable to their parents' poor expectations of schooling has been discounted by Cross (1978), Noor and Khalsa (1979), Rex and Tomlinson (1979), who found that minority parents, in the same way as indigenous parents, expect schools to equip their children with skills and qualifications that will equip them, if not for white-collar work, at least for manual jobs.

This approach can thus be criticised because of the inconclusiveness of its findings. In addition, it can be seen as implicitly racist. Erickson (1987, p.335) notes that:

> As the anthropology of education became a distinct field in the mid-1960's, its members were generally appalled by the ethnocentrism of the cultural deficit explanation. It was not literally racist, in the sense of a genetic deficit explanation. Yet it seemed culturally biased. The poor were still being characterised invidiously as not only deprived but depraved.

Despite criticism of it on these grounds, Erickson (1987, p.336) notes that the cultural deprivation idea was not dismissed by educators as it 'enabled educators, frustrated by their difficulties in working with minority children, to place the responsibility for school failure outside the school'. Syer (1982, p. 94), quoting Becker (1965), points to the dangers involved in such an approach:

> If we locate the responsibility for everything that happens in the individual's we work with, by making everything that happens a function of their attributes - their abilities or interests or motives - we hide our own contributions to the shaping of that we do.

This is not to suggest that the family background of the child is irrelevant in discussions of academic achievement at school. It is the connotation given to qualities that come from home and the assigning of 'problem' that are at issue in the comments above. In line with this view, Edmonds (1983, p.760) argues it is not socio-economic status but 'school responses to family background (that) is the cause of depressed achievement for low-income and minority students'. His view is that it is not the inherent disadvantage of poor children, but the discriminatory treatment such children receive in 'middle-class' schools that leads to academic failure. The same can be said for the disadvantage minority children might be at in a dominant culture school.

2.3.2 Mismatch between pupil and school

Banks (1988, p.453) describes a further step in the consideration of 'difference' with regard to academic achievement:

> Researchers who rejected the cultural deprivation paradigm created a conception of the cultures of and educational problems of low-income and minority youths based on a different set of assumptions. They argued that these students, far from being culturally deprived, have rich and elaborate cultures. Their rich cultural characteristics are evident in their languages and communication styles, behavioural styles, and values. These theorists also contended that the cognitive, learning and motivational styles of ethnic minorities such as Afro-Americans and Mexican-Americans are different from those featured in the schools. These students, therefore, achieve less well in school because the school culture favours the culture of white mainstream students and places students from other backgrounds and

> cultures at a serious disadvantage. The school environment consequently needs to be reformed substantially so that it will be sensitive to diverse learning, cognitive and motivational styles.

Thus, the location of the problem is no longer the child and his/her home background per se, but the mismatch between this, whether socio-economically or ethnically construed, and the school - what Burger (1968) and Phillips (1972, 1983) have referred to as 'cultural discontinuities' or 'culture conflicts'.(in Ogbu, 1987, p.313)

Ogbu (1987) notes that based on this realisation, two main groups of anthropological research developed: improvement research, including microethnography and intervention (or applied) ethnographic studies, and explanatory research, consisting of comparative analysis of ethnographic studies and comparative ethnographic research in minority education.

'Improvement Studies' have as a focus an attempt to discover cultural solutions to educational problems of minority children. Micro-ethnographic studies focus on process, that is 'how the assumed cultural/language differences', such as cognitive style, communication style, motivational style and interaction style, 'interact with teaching and learning to cause the problems experienced by the minorities'. (Ogbu, 1987, p.313)

Intervention ethnography attempts to discover 'what works' and 'what works best for whom' for minority students. (Ogbu, 1987, p.314) Thus, once a cultural discontinuity has been identified, attempts are made to modify the teaching process to accommodate it. Trueba (1988b, p.282) reflects that the 'conditions for effective learning are created when the role of culture is recognised and used in the activity settings during the actual learning process'. The application of such an idea is well exemplified by Au and Jordan (1981), Boggs (1985), Moll and Diaz (1987), Vogt, Jordan and Harp (1987), and others referred to in Trueba (1988b) and Ogbu (1987). Trueba (1988b, p. 283) notes how studies such as those of Goldman and McDermott (1987), Spindler and Spindler

(1987a and b), Trueba (1988a), and Trueba and Delgado-Gaitan (1988) show how 'school failure may be rapidly reorganised into school success'.

Erickson (1987, p.342), while not disputing the role of 'culturally responsive pedagogy', points out that it is an incomplete explanation because we can still find instances of educational success in children who were not taught by culturally compatible pedagogy.

Examples of work in the explanatory research category include that of Gibson and Bhachu (1988), Gibson (1987), Suarez-Orozoco (1987, 1988), Matute-Bianchi (1986), and others cited by Ogbu (1987).

The focus of this perspective is an attempt to understand and explain why some minority groups are less successful than others in social adjustment and academic performance in schools. 'It is not explicitly about discovering cultural solutions to educational problems of minority children, and although it includes the study of process, that process extends beyond the classroom and even beyond the school.' (Ogbu, 1987, p.314) Elaborating on this theme Ogbu, (1987, pp.314-315) has the following to say:

> The immediate goal is to explain why different minorities perform differently in school in spite of cultural and language differences. ...Why and how the problems created by cultural and language differences seem to persist among some minority groups but not among others. The long-range goal is to provide knowledge for better and more effective educational policy as well as for preventive and remedial efforts.

Addressing the question of why some minorities cross cultural boundaries and do well at school while others do not, he suggests that:

> While cultural, language and opportunity barriers are very important for all minorities, the main factor differentiating the two more successful from the less successful minorities appears to be the nature of the history, subordination, and exploitation of the minorities, and the nature of the minorities own instrumental and expressive responses to their treatment, which enter into the process of schooling. (Ogbu, 1987, p.317)

Thus, while 'societal forces' (such as denial of access to good education, lack of access to further education opportunities, lack of entry into the job market where good education 'pays off'), and 'school and classroom forces' (such as lower teacher expectations of minority groups, channelling of minorities into education for the disadvantaged) have a role to play in differential performance of minority groups at school, he suggests that, as all minorities do not 'perceive the treatment alike', or 'respond alike', it is only in understanding 'community forces', in addition to 'societal' and 'school and classroom forces' that it is possible to understand the variability in school performance.(p.320)

In analysing the community forces, he distinguishes between different types of minorities.(pp.321) - The two of greatest interest are immigrant minorities, who have moved more or less voluntarily to their new home in search of a better life, and castelike or involuntary minorities, brought to their new country in subservient positions and denied access to mainstream life. Members of the former group seem to perform better at school than members of the latter.

Ogbu (1987,pp. 321-333) suggests that there are several significant differences between these groups that are pertinent to an understanding of differential success at school. These differences include: the nature of cultural differences, whether they are 'primary' and came into existence before the minority and dominant groups met, or 'secondary', arising in response to the meeting of the two groups; perceptions of group identity, which are inherent in the case of immigrant and more oppositional in the case of castelike minorities; and trust in the school system, which is greater for immigrant than castelike minorities.

The consequence of these differences is that the two groups adopt different responses to schooling. Gibson (1983), cited in Ogbu (1987, p.328) suggests that immigrant groups adopt a strategy of 'accommodation without assimilation'. Members of the community communicate non-ambivalent messages about the importance of educa-

tion for 'getting on', and children are encouraged to follow school rules, value good grades, work hard, respect school authority, and invest a good deal of time and effort in their school work. (Ogbu, 1987, p.330)

Castelike minorities, on the other hand, 'tend to equate school learning with the learning of a white American cultural frame of reference and to equate following the standard practices ... of school that enhance academic success and social adjustment with "acting white"'. Students thus feel that they have to choose between "acting white" and achieving school success, and maintaining oppositional attitudes and behaviours and group solidarity, possibly at the risk of school success. Ogbu (1987, p.331) cites the work of Phillips (1983), Fordham and Ogbu (1986), Matute-Bianchi (1986) as offering examples of such oppositional behaviour among low-achieving minority groups. In addition, because the community as a whole does not perceive that educational success is the route to further success, students from these communities are not encouraged to pursue the route of conformity to school behaviours and to strive for academic success by the community from which they come.

Ogbu (1987, p.334) concludes by saying that the real issues in the school adjustment and academic success of minority children are threefold:

> First, whether the children come from a segment of society where people have traditionally experienced unequal opportunity to use their education or school credentials in a socially and economically meaningful and rewarding manner; second, whether or not the relationship between the minorities and the dominant-group members who control the public schools has encouraged the minorities to perceive and define school learning as an instrument for replacing their cultural identity with the cultural identity of their 'oppressors' without full reward or assimilation; and, third, whether or not the relationship between the minorities and the schools generates the trust that encourages the minorities to accept school rules and practices that enhance academic success.

Trueba (1988) notes that Ogbu's analysis of the different responses of ethnic groups to their interaction with the dominant culture 'makes sense in a broad socio-historical context, but does

not explain why individuals subjected to the same oppression, even from the same ethnic group, respond differently'. (p.276) Erickson (1987, p.342) echoes this reservation by saying that Ogbu's perceived market approach 'does not account for the success of domestic (castelike) minorities, whether the conditions of that success involve culturally responsive pedagogy or not'. It also seems to imply 'an organic or mechanical view of society in which ... the general social structure drives the actions, perceptions and sentiments of particular actors' and 'in which there is no room for human agency'. (p.343) This view, applied to education, implies that 'neither domestic minority students nor their teachers can do anything positive together educationally' - a pessimistic view with which Erickson does not concur. (p.343)

Trueba (1988b) also challenges Ogbu for making 'overwhelming generalisations' about the relative permanence of the position of castelike minorities at the bottom of the ladder, noting, with reference to the work of McCarthy and Valdez (1985, 1986), that groups like the Mexicans, classified as an exemplary castelike group, have shown incremental improvements in education, English language proficiency, and upward economic mobility (Trueba, 1988b, p.277). He quotes the conclusion of the Rand Report of McCarthy and Valdez (1986) that:

> ... the key to this occupational progress is education. Because they typically have no more than a sixth-grade education, most immigrants have 'little hope of filling anything but the lowest-paying jobs. But the high school education their children receive is their ticket to the next rung on the occupational ladder. Finally, post-secondary school education opens white-collar job opportunities to the second generation, a substantial proportion of who are employed in such jobs. McCarthy and Valdez (1986, pp.54-55 in Trueba, 1988b, p.276))

Trueba (1988b, p.278) asserts that this shows that 'Mexican immigration is not any different from European and Asian immigration waves, and thus severely limits empirical support for the stereotypic taxonomy advanced by Ogbu and his colleagues'.

However, a close reading of Matute-Bianchi's (1986) research findings suggests that the diversity of sub-groups within the group called 'Mexican-Americans' allows for Ogbu's ideas to retain credibility in the light of the findings of the Rand Report.

Erickson (1987) considers the relative merits of what he calls the 'communication process explanation' and the thesis of Ogbu which he calls the 'perceived market explanation' as explanations of minority group success and failure at school. His description of the 'communication process explanation', and the examples of work within its perspective which he cites, (p. 338) suggest that it is closely allied to the 'improvement studies approach' of Ogbu, with a special focus on culturally learned verbal and non-verbal communication patterns. He finds that both approaches have inadequacies (mentioned earlier), both have much to recommend them on theoretical and empirical grounds, and that they are not mutually exclusive. (p.341) Trueba (1988b, p.273) also takes issue with this dichotomy in research approaches, saying that 'not all micro-ethnographic studies involve applied ethnography, and those that are applied have a cohesive theoretical framework behind them. Theory and fieldwork research feed each other and are complementary.'

Foley (1991), too, enters this debate, and, after reviewing the contributions of each, similarly concludes that 'both sides have, at times, overstated the superiority and utility of their perspective', that ' both the cultural difference and the caste theory perspective provide explanations of school failure that have merit. He notes that the 'rival explanations are actually complementary'. (pp. 71-72) He provides an example of work in which he 'tried to develop a macro-ethnography of schools that incorporates sociolinguistic and interactional concepts into a modern undogmatic version of class theory'. (Foley, 1988, 1990).

2.3.3 Resistance theory

Erickson (1987) places his analysis of the reasons for differential school failure within the context of resistance theory. He notes that when we speak of children 'not learning' at school, we mean they are 'not learning' something that has been chosen for them to learn. He suggests that learning what has been deliberately taught can be seen as a form of political assent, and that failing to learn may be construed as a form of political resistance. (p.344) He suggests that the act of learning involves trust in the validity of what is being taught, and in the teacher's ability to provide effective assistance, and that without this trust, learning will not take place. While this trust is, in part, a function of the legitimacy of the school as a whole, it can be negotiated within the 'intimate circumstances and short time scale of everyday encounters between individual teachers, students and their parents'. (p.345)

Erickson (1987, p. 345) sums this up as follows:

> Labour market inequity, as perceived by members of a despotic minority community, and conflictual teacher/ student interaction that derives in part from culturally differing communicative styles, can both be seen as impediments to the trust that constitutes an existential foundation for school legitimacy.

Erickson notes that cultural differences, if allowed to become significant in classrooms, can develop into 'entrenched, emotionally intense conflict between teacher and student' (p.348), and that as this occurs, 'mutual trust is sacrificed', leading over time to the increased alienation of the student from the school, and the concomitant lessening of commitment to schoolwork which contributes to poorer academic achievement. Erickson (1987, p. 350-351) sums up his argument thus:

> ...consistent patterns of refusal to learn in school can be seen as a form of resistance to a stigmatised ethnic or social class identity that is being assigned by the school. Students can refuse to accept that identity by refusing to learn...Students' school experiences may contribute to their need to resist acceptance of a stigmatised identity, but the sources of such an identity lie in part outside the school, in the conditions of access to the labour market,and in the general assumptions of nonstigmatised members of society regarding the members of stigmatised groups.

He notes that, in this context, as Apple and Weiss (1983) have implied, it is not necessary to 'wait for a revolution in the general society. There are progressive choices people can make within their own immediate circumstances.' (p.352). If teachers and schools are to win trust, they need to earn the perception of legitimacy in the eyes of the local minority community. This will involve the school in a 'shift... away from hegemonic practice and toward transformative practice', (p.355)

2.3.4 The role of social class

As was mentioned earlier, an explanation for differences in ethnic group achievement patterns has been sought in the debate related to social class and educational achievement. Generally, socio-economic status is assumed to be strongly related to achievement and behaviour, and it is thought that this is because higher socio-economic status families provide better social and intellectual support for their children as students (Gaddy, 1988, p.472) Educational underachievement can result from the mismatch between a child's background in this regard, and the middle-class norms and expectations of the school.

I do not intend to enter into the debate around the validity of the general thesis, but rather to focus on its applicability in the discussion of differences in achievement across ethnic groups.

Banks (1988, p.454) notes that 'while variables such as region, religion, gender and social class create intra-group variation within ethnic groups, social class is presumably one of the most important of these variables'. He cites Wilson (1984) who argues that the importance of race has declined and that class has created important divisions among blacks. Banks (1988, p.454) sums up the notion by saying:

> If social class is as important a variable as Wilson (1978) and Gordon (1988) state, then middle-class black and white students should not differ significantly in their cognitive, learning and motivational styles. However, middle-class and lower-class blacks should differ significantly on these variables.

Banks notes that it is very difficult to determine the relationship between social class, ethnicity, and cognitive and motivational styles. Many studies of these styles in ethnic students do not consider their social class and, where they do, they vary in their conceptualisation of social class and use different scales and instruments to measure variables related to cognitive, learning and motivational styles, making it difficult to compare results across studies.

Banks (1988) reviews numerous studies, such as those of Lesser, Fifer and Clark (1965), Burnes, (1970), Backman, (1972), Orasnu et al (1979), Rychlak (1975), Trotman (1977), Moore (1985) and Cohen (1969), and concludes:

> As the review of literature indicates, our knowledge of the effect of social-class status on cognitive and motivational styles of the ethnic minorities is thin and fragmentary... Collectively, the studies reviewed in this article provide more evidence for the cultural difference than for the social-class hypothesis...They indicate ethnicity continues to have a significant influence on the learning behaviour and styles of Afro-American and Mexican-American students, even when these students are middle-class. They indicate that, while ethnicity is to some extent class sensitive, its effects persist across social-class segments within an ethnic group...However, the research also indicates that social class causes some within-ethnic group variation in behaviour. (pp. 401-402)

Tomlinson (1983a) makes a similar point when she says that there is much evidence to show that minority groups are disadvantaged by poor socio-economic status, but that it is difficult to separate this out as a factor in the explanation for poor school performance.

Kelly (1988) warns that 'the distinction between race and class may be a false dichotomy. If blacks come to form the new underclass in our cities, we may be disguising the extent of racial disadvantage by attributing it to class.' (p. 124) This is a point made also by Swann. (1985, pp. 88-89)

2.3.5 School processes

It is time, now, to turn to some of the explanations for underachievement that are rooted in the socio-economic and cultural difference notion, but which focus more finely on some subtle processes and interactions within the school itself and which have been said to be related to underachievement in minority children.

2.3.5.1 Indirect racism

2.3.5.1.1 Teacher expectations

Teacher expectation has been cited as an important contributor to educational success or failure. Cohen and Manion (1981, p.77) note that to date there have been literally hundreds of studies of what have come to be known as 'teacher expectation effects'. They describe how, by having different expectations of children, teachers treat them differently, leading the children to behave differently according to the teacher's expectations and reinforcing his/her originally held view about the child. This process allows for the establishment of the 'self-fulfilling prophecy'.

It seems, that if the self-fulfilling prophecy is to operate, the teacher must be successful (even if not intentionally) in communicating expectations to the child. Brophy and Good (1970) referred to by Short (1985, p.96) suggest that for the self-fulfilling prophecy to have lasting effects, the child must change his/her self concept by correctly interpreting and internalising the teacher's perceptions. Blease (1983) isolates five essential factors for the operation of the self-fulfilling prophecy and stresses that the quality of the interactions in which the teacher transmits expectations are significant. Nash (1973) states that to be effective in the transmission of expectations, teachers must be seen to be providing qualitatively different classroom experiences for children depending on their expectations of them. Thus different behaviours based on stereotyped views, and the need for negative views to impinge on the student's self concept, are both identified as significant for the operation of the self fulfilling

prophecy. In addition, if the self-fulfilling prophecy is to be considered as a factor in ethnic group underachievement, teachers must also be seen to hold negative views of certain groups.

The Rampton Report (1981) claimed that unintentional racism is widespread within the teaching profession and contributes, via the self-fulfilling prophecy, to the relative academic failure of West Indian children. Research by Brittan (1976), Rutter et al (1974), Tomlinson (1979), Rutter et al (974), and Carrington and Wood (1983) cited in Short (1985), offers support for the Rampton Report's suggestion that teachers believe that West Indian children have low academic achievement, higher achievement in sport and low status practical activities, and a high incidence of unacceptable behaviour.

Tomlinson (1983a) notes that work by Rubovits and Maehr (1973) suggested that white teachers in the USA do have lower expectations of black pupils, and that these do affect black academic performance. Rist (1970), reported in Tomlinson (1983a, p.74), found that there did seem to be a link between teacher expectations of pupils in an urban 'ghetto' school and their subsequent poor school performance. As this occurred even where the teacher was black, and considering that the children were all lower-class, he concluded that the findings accord with others that suggest that teachers tend to expect less from lower class children, and to teach in accordance with these expectations. Pidgeon's (1970) work supports the conclusion that teacher expectations are a significant factor in their students' subsequent achievement. (Tomlinson, 1983a, p.74) Tomlinson (1983a, p.76) also notes that Green (1972) and Mabe (1981) report negative teacher views of the behaviour of children of West Indian origin.

Short (1985, p. 97) cautions, however, that teacher expectation can 'function as both product and determinant of pupils' performance'.

And Tomlinson (1983a p.74) notes that:

> ...a major problem with research or comment which links teacher attitudes and expectations with the poorer academic performance of minority group, particularly, black, children, is that the links are difficult to prove empirically; they are largely logical. Thus, it is logical to assume that if teachers hold stereotyped views, and have low expectations of black children, this will lead to different classroom treatment which will work to the detriment of the child's education.

The next section explores further the link between teachers' attitudes toward ethnically different children and classroom behaviour.

2.3.5.1.2 Classroom behaviour

There has been some report in the literature about the link between negative attitude and classroom behaviour. Good (1980), reported in Short (1985), identifies several behaviours likely to contribute to the fulfilment of the self-fulfilling prophecy (demanding less work of, and calling less frequently for responses from children perceived as low achievers are two examples), while Green (1983) reported in Short (1985), found that ethnocentric teachers gave West Indian children, particularly boys, less of their time than did less ethnocentric teachers. Dunkin and Doenau (1982) report that Barnes (1973) found a difference in the kind of questions asked of black and white children in a class, that Mangold (1974), Gay (1975) and others found that white pupils received more positive and encouraging teacher responses than black students, and that Gay (1974) and Mathis (1975) have found that black students interact less with teachers in class. Irvine (1985) reports several other pieces of research with similar findings (such as Simpson and Erickson, 1983; Aaron and Powell, 1982). Irvine's (1985) own research found that black students received more combination positive-negative statements and more negative behavioural responses from teachers. Gillborn (1992) found that 'observations in lessons and around the school revealed that Afro-Carribean students were frequently criticised for behaviour that other students shared in but for which white and Asian children were not criticised'. (p.60)

Despite the evidence of some teachers holding stereotyped and negative views of some minority children, and of the link between children's race and classroom interaction patterns, research evidence is not conclusive about the link between teachers' racial stereotyping and expectations, and pupil achievement. Teachers seem able to hold racial stereotypes but be able to set them aside in evaluating individual pupil performance. From a study of 60 teachers, Guttman (1984, p.7) concluded that:

> ...when teachers are given relevant information about student behaviour, ethnic origin is of negligible importance in the teachers' evaluation of the pupils.

And a study by Short (1983), cited in Short (1985, p.98), reflects that:

> ... even if teachers accept a racial stereotype in principle, they will acknowledge its partial or complete irrelevance for particular children who belong to the racial group concerned. A teacher's behaviour towards a child may thus bear little resemblance to the teacher's attitude towards the child's racial group as a whole.

Clifton and Bulcock (1987), working with teachers of French and Yiddish students', found that they based their expectations on students previous performance rather than their ethnicity.

However, as has been mentioned earlier, ethnic group pupils' classroom behaviour can be misinterpreted by mainstream teachers, and lead to ethnic minority pupil being disproportionately punished and excluded from learning situations. Messages via the hidden curriculum can impact negatively on ethnic minority pupils.

Gillborn (1992, p.63-64) reflecting on a study of teacher-pupils interaction in a large English comprehensive school, concludes that:

> The hidden curriculum...transmitted very clear messages about the second class citizenship afforded black group in the UK. Beneath the rhetoric of equal treatment, black students were effectively denied the basic rights enjoyed by their white peers...despite often benign intentions, the teachers played an active role in re-creating the racial structuring of educational experience and opportunity.

2.3.5.1.3 Self-concept/self-esteem

The other aspect mentioned earlier as of importance for the working of the self-fulfilling prophecy, and for academic achievement generally, is that of self-concept (or self-esteem or self-image). Findings regarding the source of students' self esteem and its relationship with achievement are diverse.

Verma (1986, p.33) notes that the sources of self esteem are the family, the peer group and the school. He notes that studies, reviewed by Pettigrew (1964), show that many black children had internalised negative stereotypes held about them by the white majority community and, as a result, had poorer self esteem than whites. However, Verma cites more recent studies (Coopersmith, 1975; Bagley, Mallick, Verma and Young, 1979) that show that blacks do not have poorer self-esteem than whites, and that in certain cases the opposite is true (Goldman and Mercer, 1976). In Britain, Verma notes that Bagley, Mallick and Verma's (1979) study shows that West Indian girls, unlike boys, had a self-esteem as high as their white counterparts, a finding corroborated by Louden (1978), who found that there was, overall, no statistically significant difference between ethnic groups' self-esteem, but that West Indian girls had higher levels of self-esteem than white girls.

Returning to the link between self-concept and achievement, poor academic performance, being in a low stream or negative labelling of the pupil can be sources of poor self-esteem. Verma (1986, p.33) cites several studies (Labenne and Greene, 1969; Simon and Simon, 1975, Prendergast and Binder, 1975) which show that educational achievement and self-esteem are positively related. He reports that Coard (1971), Milner (1975) and Bagley, Mallick and Verma (1979) found that self-esteem is significantly related to academic achievement as measured by being in a low stream at school. However, Faunce (1984) reports findings which support the notion that peer assessment is a significant factor in students' view of their status and that, given low status in academic achievement, low achievers withdraw self-investment from the stu-

dent role, resulting in its having little impact on their self-esteem. Lay and Wakstein (1985) concluded from their study that blacks' self- esteem is affected by their academic success, but that 'the level of self-esteem among blacks depends less on academic achievement than does the self-esteem level of whites'. (p.61)

Mboya (1986) distinguished between global self-concept, and self-concept of academic ability, and found that the two were differentially related to academic achievement. A conclusion from this work was that 'it appears that the values placed on "self" by black adolescents are quite separate from academic performance... They may view academic achievement as a separate activity that does not influence greatly their personal feelings of "self".' However, a significant positive relationship was found between self-concept of academic ability and academic achievement...to black adolescents the role of academic self-concept is very crucial'. (pp.694-695)

With regard to the significance of teachers' expectations and self-esteem, Rogers (1982) suggests that even where a child can correctly identify the teacher's expectations, his self-concept will not necessarily be derived from this. Blease (1983) makes the point that for pupils to receive signals transmitted by the teacher, they must value school and believe that their teachers are legitimate and competent judges of their behaviour and performance. The operation of self-concept in the self-fulfilling prophecy via the the indirect effect of teacher expectation (as distinct from that which directly affects behaviour), might not be as strong as has been proposed.

Rampton (1981) suggests that low self-concept resulting from teachers' negative expectations causes underachievement. On the other hand, research by Calsyn and Kenny (1977) and Bridgeman and Shipman (1987) reported in Short (1985) and several of the studies reported above, suggests that attainment exerts more of an influence on self-concept than vice versa. It is, therefore, dif-

ficult to ascribe causality either way, particularly in the case of correlation studies. Tomlinson (1983a, p.121) sums the situation up when she says:

> The relationships between minority group pupils' perceptions and understandings of themselves and their school achievement is by no means fully researched or understood.

2.3.5.1.4 Setting and streaming practices

Troyna and Siraj-Blatchford (1993), reviewing analysis by the Commission for Racial Equality of school records at a Comprehensive school in 1988, found that white students were over-represented in classes for children with special needs compared with Asian and other pupils, and that pupils of South East Asian origin were notably more identified as being in need of second language support. They found that the pupils identified as needing second language support were generally placed in the lowest streams, along with those with special needs, and that the organisation of the school made it almost impossible for them to transfer to better ability classes.

They suggest that such misallocation of pupils to lower ability streams based on a conception of difficulty in using English condemns them, through lack of mobility, to poorer life chances through education than is available to other pupils. Troyna and Siraj-Blatchford (1993, p.9) note that:

> In recent years educationalists have begun to challenge the racist assumptions which have served to designate bilingual children as sub-normal.

However, they also note that Tomlinson (1990, p.3) has found that some practioners continue to take the view that 'difficulties with English' lead inexorably to 'poor educational performance and learning difficulties'.

In their view, their research confirms the suggestion of Burgess (1986), Tomlinson (1987), Wright (1987) and Gillborn (1990) that:

> In general, teachers have been shown to favour middle-class students over their working-class counterparts, to characterise girls, bilingual and black students in stereotypical terms and to allocate them to ability streams and subject option classes accordingly. (Troyna and Siraj-Blatchford, 1993, p. 10)

Thus far, this section has looked at the effects of indirect racism, working through teacher stereotyping and its possible impact on self-concept, classroom interaction, and on school patterns of tracking and streaming that might in turn influence pupil achievement.

2.3.5.1.5 A Eurocentric curriculum

There is also, of course, in this context, the whole issue of the content of the curriculum mentioned in the earlier part of this chapter. The assimilationist view of curriculum clearly denied minority culture a place in the curriculum. However, following on from that phase in multicultural education, there have been numerous attempts to portray a more equitable view of a multicultural society, and to challenge racist ideas held by children. Schools where a dominantly Eurocentric curriculum is presented can be said to be racist, even if more out of ignorance than intent, and to work against the interests of minority children by denying their culture credibility and thus affecting their self- concept, and, possibly, their academic performance.

Bernard Coard (1981, p.256) has said:

> The black child acquires two fundamental attitudes or beliefs as a result of his experiencing the British school system: a low self-image, and, consequently low self-expectations in life. These are obtained through streaming, banding, busing, ESN schools, racist news media, and a white middle-class curriculum; by totally ignoring the black child's language, history, culture, identity. Through the choice of teaching materials, the society emphasises who and what it thinks is unimportant, infinitesimal, irrelevant. Through the belittling, ignoring or denial of a person's identity, one can destroy perhaps the most important aspect of a person's personality - his sense of identity, of who he is. Without this, he will get nowhere. (p.256)

Eurocentric curricula are also thought to have a negative effect on both minority and dominant group children by denying them the chance to learn about other cultures and to break down stereotypes and negative attitudes.

However, while claims linking a decrease in Eurocentricity in the curriculum to positive personal and academic outcomes are appealing, there has been little empirical work testing their validity.

Tomlinson, (1983a, pp. 101-102) reviewing work on the 'multicultural curriculum' sums these ideas up neatly:

> Proponents of multicultural education assume that changing the curriculum will lead to wider acceptance of cultural diversity and an enhancement of the self-concept of minority children as they see their cultural values reflected in the curriculum. They also see it as leading to an improvement of the chances for equal opportunity for minority children. But it is difficult to test these assumptions empirically.

Short (1991, pp. 10-11) is even more outspoken:

> By definition, courses and textbooks that ignore black experience discriminate against black pupils. However, to go further and claim that such omissions are responsible for inequalities in outcome between black and white children is no more than an article of faith. Not only is there an absence of research on this issue but some writers have openly challenged alleged links between these 'discriminatory acts' and racial inequality in education.

Stone (1981) is one such writer. She believes this move toward attempting to enhance self-concept and to focus on minority culture in fact detracts from the teaching of basic skills, and thus disadvantages minority group children. 'While not decrying all attempts at curriculum innovation and creativity, the need for schools to retain a commitment to the mastery of basic intellectual skills and competencies by all children has been expressed.' (Stone, 1981, p. 57) Support for this view might be found in Tomlinson's (1991, p.135) account of research which found that, in a longitudinal study of 20 multiracial schools, 'the variations across ethnic groups were minor when compared to the very large school differences across all ethnic groups'. The study (Smith and

Tomlinson, 1989) 'also concluded that schools that were good at helping white pupils to progress were also good at helping minority pupils'.

Cummins (1986), extending ideas of the need to validate minority groups within the school curriculum, relates his ideas to the nature of power imbalance within the broader society. He notes that 'it becomes evident that power and status relations between minority and majority groups exert a major influence on school performance'. He suggests that what is crucial in minority success or failure is the extent to which the school reflects or counteracts the power relations that exist within the broader society. What is important, he believes, is that students should be empowered by their school experiences, that this is critical for them to develop the ability, confidence and motivation necessary for success. He defines the key elements of a supportive school programme as one that promotes students' linguistic talents, actively encourages community participation in developing students' academic and cultural resources, and implements pedagogical approaches that liberate students from instructional dependence. (p.32) He reports the Haringey project where an active campaign to involve parents' support in teaching reading was met with an enthusiastic response. The Project resulted in improved reading performance across the spectrum of ability, and in better behaviour from children at school. Cummins believes that, in part, the success was due to the fact that teachers worked in a collaborative way with parents, rather than dismissing them as irrelevant or detrimental to their children's achievement, and that this did something to challenge the inferior role afforded the minority group in society at large.

Gay (1990) consolidates many of the ideas discussed under indirect racism in her concept 'curriculum segregation'. She notes that:

> ...curriculum segregation - in which different course assignments, instructional styles and teaching material are routinely employed for different groups of students - constitutes a form of discrimination that mirrors the prejudices and inequalities in the larger education system and society. (p.58)

She therefore suggests that desegregating schools is thus only part of the process - the curriculum (in a broad sense) is also in need of more complete desegregation.

2.3.5 2 Direct racism

In addition to the subtle forms of racism alluded to above, more overt racism, too, might work indirectly on children's academic performance.

Swann (1985) reports findings that racist graffiti is written on school walls and that, in many instances, schools do nothing about it and other racist issues, such as name-calling and even direct physical attacks at school and in the neighbouring community. The responses to such actions include parents' reluctance to attend meetings to discuss children's work or to become involved in the work of the school, the failure of children to return to school for extra-curricula activities, loss of motivation, and damage to self-image and loss of confidence in the school's ability to work in the best interests of all students. (Swann, 1985, pp.31 -36) There is a strong possibility that direct racism of this sort may adversely affect the academic performance of children against whom it is directed.

Both direct and indirect racism in schools has the potential to lead to a sense of alienation among pupils of colour in schools. Calabrese and Poe (1990, p.22) cite Fine (1986) who suggested that 'the effects of school policies, teacher attitudes and the school organisations' ethos impact on adolescents of colour'. and they suggest that school policies and practices 'create a feeling of estrangement or alienation from the school organisation'. According to Calabrese and Poe (1990, p.23) 'alienation... may be represented as a sense of impotence, isolation, refusal to accept prevailing norms, or a lack of meaning in daily activities'. They

report the findings of a study of 1064 students enrolled in a large midwestern junior high and high school where African-Americans and Latinos were found to be significantly more isolated than Caucasians, and suggest that:

> ...primary examination should be given to the myth that the lack of success for people of colour is due to lack of competence rather than discrimination... Their (students of colour) recognition of discrimination in an environment that professes to offer equal opportunity creates a sense of estrangement or alienation...Powerlessness among African-American and Latino students may be caused by a perceived inability to alter the school environment and the social relationships that exist among their peers. (p.25)

They conclude that:

> School administrators...must demonstrate courage by deciding to examine organizational culture and policies as causes of high dropout rates and reject traditional practice that attributes the blame for dropping out students of color to their families, culture and environment. (Calabrese and Poe, 1990, p.26)

This section of the chapter has addressed the complexity of research related to academic achievement at school as it relates to differential success across ethnic groups. There is more debate than firm conclusion, both about the reality of the differences and about possible reasons for them. It seems that a complex mixture of factors, micro and macro scale, is at work in explaining minority pupils academic attainment patterns.

3. Friendship patterns as a curriculum outcome

If one of the aims of 'multicultural education' is to reduce racism and stereotyped views of ethnic groups in all children then this is also surely an aspect of educational outcome that needs consideration. The notion that school should influence outcomes other than just cognitive or intellectual is a persistent theme in the multicultural education literature. (This has been discussed in the first section of this chapter.) The way to achieve this has been suggested as being through curriculum materials, through teaching styles and strategies, and through the ethos of the school as a whole.

One area in which a fair amount of research has been reported is in the area of friendship patterns in racially mixed schools. It has been suggested that cross-race friendships might be seen as an indication of the breaking-down of negative racial stereotypes. Hallinan and Teixeira (1987a, p.563) express this idea as follows:

> One of the goals of the effort to desegregate American schools is to provide an opportunity for students of different races to interact with each other. When black and white students are assigned to the same classroom, the expectation is that, over time, racial differences will become less salient and that negative stereotypes will be replaced by more positive racial attitudes and behaviours. Ultimately, cross-race friendships are expected to form.

School and classroom organisation, and teaching styles have been seen to be crucial in this area of attitude change. Tomlinson (1983a, pp. 125-127) reports the following findings:

- pupils' friendships were strongly influenced by school stream (Hargreaves, 1967);
- immigrant children who were clustered in the lower streams tended to make in-group friendships and were not chosen as friends by white pupils (Ford, 1969);
- black pupils feel more comfortable in schools with medium to high concentrations of blacks (Louden, 1978);
- a pattern of own-group friendship preference by the age of 8, intensifying at ages 10,12 and 14 (Jelinek and Brittan, 1975; Davey and Norburn, 1980; Davey and Mullin, 1980, 1982);
- black pupils would prefer to have more white friends than they actually did have, and despite the fact that West Indian and Asian children might be thought to have problems in common in their relationships to white children, they directe their feelings of dislike at each others' group rather than at white (Davey and Mullin, 1980, 1982).

Other reported findings include:

- kindergarten and third grade children in an ethnically diverse school were interacting and forming friendships with cross-ethnic as well as same-ethnic peers, though the majority group (Euro-American) were less likely to have positive cross-ethnic interactions than minority children (Howes and Wu, 1990);
- at an integrated school, while most children reported a close other-race friend at school, only about a quarter of these extended to the non-school setting, and these friendships were more common among blacks and among students who lived in non-segregated suburbs; black children's friendship network was more strongly developed in their neighbourhood than at school as opposed to that of white children and the school friendships seldom extended into non-school settings.(Du Bois and Hirsch, 1990)

Several recent studies have considered the effect of different types of school organisation and climate on friendship choice, and provide interesting insights into cross-group friendships and some of the processes associated with these.

Hallinan and Texeira (1987a) point out that social psychological theories suggest that it is naive to believe that simply putting students in the same class will necessarily lead to the positive outcomes posited. A variety of factors will impinge on the process. Referring to the work of Allport (1954), they note the possibility of intergroup interaction reinforcing stereotypes and hostility unless steps are taken to ensure equal status for minority groups' members. They cite Cohen (1982) who extends this cautionary note by saying that a co-operative equal status environment is not enough to improve relations because 'biased expectations will lead whites to continue to have a position of dominance'. (Hallinan and Texeira, 1987a, p.564) Hallinan and Texeira (1987b, p.1358) cite Schofield (1982) who points to the finding from empirical studies which show that 'black and white students in desegregated classrooms remain socially segregated un-

less school authorities create an environment that de-emphasises racial differences and supports and promotes cross-race relations'.

Some of the aspects of classroom organisation that might be significant are: class size, as larger classes make it likely that students will find same-race peers with whom to interact; the racial structure of the class, which affects the power structure of the class and the number of same-and-cross race peers from whom to select friends (as found by Patchen, 1982; Hallinan, 1982 and Hallinan and Smith, 1984); and the organisation of instruction, as the way students are grouped can influence their opportunity for interaction, particularly if groups are based on ability, and black students are heavily represented in the lowest ability section of the class. Hallinan and Sorensen (1985) found that assignment to the same group has a positive effect on the selection of friends in classrooms in general.

Texeira and Hallinan (1987a and b) have explored this finding in the context of the mixed-race classroom. Their research suggests that the factors influencing same-race friendship choices (gender, age, social status, friendliness and reciprocity) operate in cross-race friendship choices. More cross-race friendships were formed when students participated in co-curricular activities (such as sport) than when they did not, supporting the idea that interaction and shared activity promote inter-racial friendliness. (Texeira and Hallinan, 1987b) The influence of classroom organisation was found to be important. When students were placed in mixed-race, same-ability groups for instruction, white students were more likely to choose a cross-race friend than when not placed in such a group, and more likely than blacks to choose a cross-race friend in such a group. Hallinan and Texeira's (1987a) study repeated this finding, and also found that black students are no more or less likely to choose a white friend if placed in a same-ability group with them than if this grouping is not used. Hallinan and Texeira (1987b) suggest that this difference can be accounted for by the different ways in which the academic status

hierarchy operates for blacks and whites. Same ability group placing is sufficient to eliminate differences in status for whites, and allow them to cross the race barrier in friendship choice. For blacks, however, academic status works in such a way as to make other-race peers with higher academic status more attractive as friends than those with equal or lower status.

In their (1987a) study, Texeira and Hallinan focused on the significance of 'classroom environment' on the formation of cross-race friendships. They found that different climates had different effects on friendship choices. Where academic test scores and grades are not emphasised, the likelihood of whites choosing black friends increases, but that this kind of environment has no effect on black friendship choices. In classes where teachers do not stress curriculum and basic skills, whites again show a greater tendency for choosing black friends, and blacks' choice of whites as friends also increases. In classes where the teachers stress student initiative and enjoyment of learning, blacks' choice of whites as friends increases, while there is no significant impact on whites' choice of blacks as friends. Hallinan and Williams' (1989) research was based on data for 58 000 students from 1000 public and private schools in the USA.They found how very few cross-race friendships there actually are - only a few hundred out of the thousands of students surveyed. Students typically formed friendships with their own race and gender categories. However, there was evidence to suggest that the tracking of students can effect the possibility of cross-race friendship choice, by both reducing the chance of interaction and by placing students in different positions on the status hierarchy.

Comparing cross-group friendship patterns at two schools Damico and Sparks (1986) found noticable differences between them. Research revealed that the ability grouping which promoted same ethnic groups based on differential patterns of achievement, and reliance on a recitation mode of instruction at one school, severely limited the opportunities for cross-race interaction and established a clear academic status hierarchy along racial lines.

Both these factors mitigated against the formation of cross-group friendships. In the other school students were assigned to groups across the ability range and had a more heterogeneous range of tasks to perform, including activities designed to develop acquaintanceship. As Damico and Sparks note, 'students were provided with authority-sanctioned opportunities for interactions across race and ability lines, co-operative interdependent academic tasks and with a sense of equal status'. (p.122) In the light of this, they do not find it surprising that there were more cross-race friendships here than at the other school.

Differential academic achievement seems to have an effect on friendship patterns. However, classroom organisation and climate can produce positive effects regarding cross-race friendship choices, and lead to the achievement of some of the affective aims of desegregated schooling. Hallinan and Williams (1989, p.77), while recognising the complexity of factors involved in friendship choice, have the following to say in this regard:

> The effects of achievement differences on friendship choices suggest that classroom policies that decrease status differences and give all students the chance to win the esteem of their peers may enhance the likelihood that inter-racial friendships will form. Since these factors can be modified by school personnel, they represent possible means for influencing the social relations between black and white students and for promoting inter-racial friendship.

In addition, the study by Damico and Sparks (1986) suggests that teaching style and curriculum design can be seen to have important outcomes. They suggest that 'educators need to consider the effects of friendship contact, or its lack, upon the academic achievement and social adjustment of young adults'. (p.122.) They note that adolescents who feel isolated and friendless do not achieve maximally. They point to the role of classroom organisation and teaching strategies in this regard, and conclude their article by saying:

> if cross-race contact is deemed important, then the structure of a school's curriculum and many of its policies can be used to reach this goal. Educators should consider school structure as a mechanism for personal/interpersonal development as well as cognitive development. (p.122)

From this overview of the outcomes of education in a multicultural society, it is clear that the area is complex and that little can be stated with much certainty. It seems, however, that, despite debate about validity and reliability regarding the measurement of academic achievement in multi ethnic contexts, the academic achievement of students from certain groups tends to be less successful than that of students in the dominant mainstream culture, though, of, course, the generalisation hides a number of interesting variations.

The problems associated with measuring educational outcomes in the affective domain are even more difficult than those in the cognitive. The influence of curriculum on attitudes and values, as well as on academic achievement, has been postulated, but little concrete evidence regarding the efficacy of curriculum change has been documented in the affective domain. The area of self-concept/self-esteem has been the one most focused on, and evidence is inconclusive about the impact of schools on the self-concept/self-esteem of minority group children, and the link between this and academic achievement. Some recent research has reported the significance of classroom and school organisation and teaching style on friendship patterns in desegregated schools, and has suggested that these may point to a lessening in stereotyped views of groups within a particular school setting.

The explanations for differential achievement range from those that ascribe the problem to deficiencies in the minority group children - their inherent inadequacies, or those that derive from their deprived social, cultural and economic backgrounds, through those that focus on the mismatch between characteristics of certain minority children and the characteristics that are required for success in the dominant culture's school system and the school's inability to accommodate these, to those that ascribe the root of the problem to racist and discriminatory attitudes and behaviour on the part of the mainstream school system and

educators within it, and beyond the school, to society at large, where institutionalised racism might have engendered oppositional responses to schooling in certain groups.

From this brief overview of some of the major themes in the analysis and explanation of minority student achievement patterns, it should be clear how the awareness of, and attack on, inequality in education provision has been closely associated with the phases and approaches to 'multicultural education' outlined in the first section of this chapter. Those that ascribe lack of achievement to 'problems' in the students' background form part of the assimilationist approach to the education of children from minority groups - that is, they fail because they are not sufficiently 'like us'. Those that ascribe failure to the mismatch between the school and the culture of the child could be said to ally themselves with the broad area commonly called 'multicultural' in the narrow sense defined in the first section in this chapter, and having a broad foundation in ideas of integration and cultural pluralism. Those that see the problems as more closely rooted in the inequalities within the broader society as a whole, and with issues of structural racism, might be seen as being somewhat related to the ideas of the 'multicultural education that is anti-racist and social reconstructionist'.

To attempt a neater aligning of ideas would be to impose an order on the work in this field that would do an injustice to the complexity of the interwoven nature of the ideas within it.

4. Multicultural education literature in South Africa

The dominance of Apartheid ideology in South Africa has meant that notions of multicultural education in any of the forms described in this chapter have not been on the educational agenda for schools in this country for most of its history. The notion that different racial groups would lead separate (but equal?) lives has meant that concepts of assimilation, integration and reconstruction have had no place in official educational policy. With

regard to small minority groups of immigrants from Europe, it would probably be true to say that the dominant policy regarding education for these pupils would be that of assimilation.

As a result, there is little published work in the field of multicultural education. However, since the opening of some of the white private schools in the mid-1970's to pupils of other races, a greater interest in the issues of schooling in a desegregated context has been shown, and a small but growing amount of literature has accumulated.

Several contributions have been collected in a volume edited by Freer (1992). Research reports include the analysis by Gaganakis (1992) of black pupils within elite private schools in the context of usurpationary and excluded groups within these schools; Freer and Christie's (1992a) analysis of views about non-racial education held by pupils at prestigious open schools; Hickson and Christie's account of issues pertaining to appropriate guidance and counselling in non-racial schools and Lit's (1992) findings about friendship patterns across gender and race groups in six classrooms in three South African open primary schools.

In addition, Christie has conducted a large amount of work related to the Catholic open schools which is reported in publications such as her book Open Schools (Christie 1990a), an article on curriculum in open schools (Christie, 1990b) an evaluation report on Catholic open schools commissioned by the Catholic Bishops' Conference (Christie and Butler, 1988), and a case study of the Integrated Studies curriculum project at a secondary school in Johannesburg. (Christie, 1993) Freer and Christie (1992b) discuss attitudes held by private school pupils toward Apartheid education.

Only Christie (1990b and 1993) addresses the issue of curriculum in non-racial schools directly. In the report of a survey of 42 open secondary school Christie (1990b) identifies four main variations in the impact of racial desegregation on these schools.

She found that 'most schools had not made any adjustment at all in curriculum content because of admitting black students' and that 'in some cases, the hegemonic common sense of what counted as school knowledge was so taken for granted that principals had not even considered change'. (p.43) Another approach had been to include some practices alongside the existing curriculum. These included introducing a black language, keeping the same syllabus but using less biased textbooks, and introducing bridging courses. In the third group of schools there was a move to recognise the broader educational struggles of which open schools might be a part, and to include in the curriculum enrichment and awareness programmes which tended to run on the peripheries of the school day. The fourth set of schools comprised curriculum practices which 'involved adjustments within the dominant competitive academic curriculum itself'. (Christie 1990b, p. 46) Only two such schools were identified, one which had introduced courses in African and Classical cultural studies, and one which had introduced an Integrated Studies programme in the Standard 6 and 7 classes. Very little mention is made of pupils' response to the curriculum in the published account, and there is no exploration of relative academic achievement in such schools.

The Integrated Studies programme mentioned above is the focus of further research by Christie (1993), and her account of the Integrated Studies curriculum at Sacred Heart College gives a good analysis of its aims and approach, and some of the constraints experienced by the teachers developing it. This programme takes a skills and concepts approach. It has as clearly articulated aims those of educating for tolerance and challenging prejudice. It points to the need for teacher sensitivity in dealing with contentious issues, with their need for support, for assistance from the school administration, for quality teachers and commitment, and for time for meeting and reflection. There were also reports of teachers and pupils finding the challenge to the status quo 'too political'.

Christie and Butler's report (1988) includes a number of findings and recommendations, such as: the cultural bias of admissions tests need to be recognised; there is a need for educational support for black pupils whose educational levels do not meet those of the open school; the need for a more conscious consideration of the nature and operation of race; there are likely to be particular issues confronting black students at open schools which the schools are not always aware of; black pupils have different views from white on a variety of issues; there is a need for structured strategies for dealing with race and racial issues; there is a need to encourage racial mixing via activities within and outside the classroom that encourage such mix ng; schools need to find ways of resolving racial tensions and conflict, rather than denying them; where the percentage of black pupils reached a critical mass, white pupils were less positive about racial mixing than when this percentage was smaller, suggesting that the open school did challenge racial assumptions; there is a need for school-based curriculum development, and the use of alternative texts and materials; all schools should offer an African language; schools should share their resources and initiatives; new teachers need induction into the objectives of open schools; teachers would benefit from in-service work to help them confront and work with their own social and political assumptions, and to develop new curricula; there should be more black staff.

This empirical work in open schools suggests that, in the main, South African open schools are firmly located within the assimilationist tradition. Research into curricula which have at iempted alternative approaches have highlighted some of the constraints on this sort of programme, and made recommendations about what is needed if more of this sort of work is to be successfully implemented.

More theoretical work in the field of multicultural education includes that of: Cross (1992), who considers the issues associated with 'Education for a National Culture'; Christie (1990a;1992a), who has reviewed the development of the open schools movement in

South Africa and Muller (1992a and 1992b), who has considered the role of private schools in general in education provision in South Africa. Other work on open schools is that of Randall (1982) whose study of private schools in South Africa includes an account of open schools in the 1970's. Some ideas regarding policy formulation for multicultural education have been written by the Task Group for Multicultural Education of the Natal Teachers' Society Education Committee, and a brief overview of their report is given by Coutts (1992). Cushner and Trifonovitch (1991) consider some of the issues regarding effective communication across diverse cultures, and stress the need for educators to be familiar with these and to integrate effective strategies for dealing with them into the curriculum to ensure effective intercultural interaction. Bot (1987) has briefly placed the move toward openness in the context of international experience, and has reported on interviews with five South African headmasters of open schools in which she asked for their views about the aims of integrating schools and some of the issues they had had to address in the process of opening their schools.

Christie (1990a) notes that 'commentary on open schools has tended to be journalistic and polemical'. While noting the contribution made by Randall (1982), Cross (1987) and Flanagan (1982) to an understanding of open schools, she points out that 'none is comprehensive in its approach. All are general in their treatment of open schools, and none attempts to address what happens inside open schools themselves.' (Christie, 1990 pp.2-3). Clearly, some of the work cited earlier has been published since this comment was made. Nonetheless, the comment still has a large element of truth. The small volume of work reviewed here, coupled with recent changes within both the broad political system and the Education sub-system, suggest that there is a need for more such research. The fact that the amount of research is increasing suggests that this need is being recognised. The research reported here is one contribution that has grown out of the recognition of the need for such work, particularly that which 'attempts to address what happens inside schools themselves'.

CHAPTER 4. THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM: AN ANALYTICAL DESCRIPTION

From the information about the curriculum at Riverbend given in the introduction, it can be seen that there is a natural division between those years before preparation for the final examination begins in earnest, and which have Integrated Studies as a core component (Standards 6, and 8), and those in which specialised subject teaching for the final examination begins in earnest (Standards 9 and 10).

From classroom observations and from teachers' and pupils' accounts, it is clear that, in broad terms, marked differences existed between the Integrated Studies programme and the rest of the curriculum. In subjects outside Integrated Studies, while obviously content differed, the approach to knowledge and learning was much the same in the individual subject areas, but substantially different from these in Integrated Studies. There was one notable exception, the senior English classes of Ms Chetty, who also taught in Integrated Studies. Clearly, there were differences between subjects within the non-Integrated Studies group, particularly in subjects like Art, but by-and-large the differences among these subjects were never so great as to warrant dealing with them as separate from the rest of the curriculum, as appeared to be the case with Integrated Studies.

A major difference in approach was demanded by the reality of the final, externally assessed Matriculation examination that came at the end of the Standard 10 year. By Standard 9, all subject teachers had to follow a prescribed syllabus to prepare their pupils for this examination. In the lower standards, although there was a national core curriculum, teachers in this school had freedom to deviate from it as much as they wished. They were able to construct a syllabus, and teach it in any way that they felt would benefit the pupils. This freedom was an aspect of the school

many of the teachers commented on as a favourable attribute of the school. Despite this, it was really only in Integrated Studies, and in the senior English classes of Ms Chetty, that any real attempt was made to deal with the personal and social dimensions of learning, and specifically to develop academic skills rather than subject content per se. In few classes was any real attempt made to incorporate materials that encompassed the widely different educational and social backgrounds of the pupils, and to be accessible to pupils other than those from a white, English-speaking background.

It is likely that these differences in approach to the curriculum stem not only from the constraints imposed by the Matriculation examination, but also by the teachers' perceptions of what was important curriculum, and their own philosophies of education.

To substantiate these assertions about major differences in the components of the school's curriculum, use is made of teachers' and pupils' accounts of the curriculum, and teachers' reflections on their work. Particularly salient verbatim comments are used to support a point made about the curriculum, or to assist in showing the subtleties in views about it. The number of verbatim comments is too great to include in the text of this chapter, but many that cannot be included are interesting and deepen the understanding of the teachers' or pupils' views. These additional comments are therefore provided in Appendix C and reference will be made to the appropriate parts of this appendix.

I. Integrated Studies.

Integrated Studies replaced English in Standards 6, 7 and 8, and combined this with Geography, History, Drama and Guidance in varying proportions in the three years. Geography and Drama declined in importance in Integrated Studies in Standard 8 as they then became part of the mainstream curriculum and subjects pupils could elect to take.

Five teachers, divided into three teams, taught in the Integrated Studies programme. Some of them taught in more than one year, and three of them taught another subject elsewhere in the school. Each year had a set of themes around which the details of the course were built. None of these was immutable, and teachers initiated change to a greater of lesser extent as they chose.

Within the Integrated Studies course was a sub-component known as English Skills, the main aim of which was to develop the language skills of the pupils. It was an integral part of the Integrated Studies programme in that the projects and essays set as tasks in Integrated Studies were dealt with in English Skills periods, both in the preparatory phases and in remedial English work when projects and tasks had been marked. Because of the differences in English proficiency across the class, these smaller sub-classes were streamed on the basis of proficiency in English.

The whole class met together for Integrated Studies, and either had a lecture, saw a film or broke into small groups for some learning activity, the product of which was generally reported back to the whole class for comment and discussion.

I shall attempt now to explore the aims, methodology and content of Integrated Studies more fully.

1.1 The aims of the course

There was consensus among the Integrated Studies staff that the thrust of their work was in the area of skills and attitude development, rather than the mastery of subject content per se. There was a sense that the content was subservient to these aims, should lend itself to their development, and should also be appropriate to the specific needs and interests of pupils of different ages. The idea of developing the pupils' knowledge base was held by the staff, but the particular direction in which this

knowledge base expanded was not prescribed beyond the broad themes, and much choice as to detail of study was left to the pupils. (See Appendix C, part 1)

The skills and attitudes on which the course focused may be broadly described as academic, social and personal.

The academic skills related mostly to those based in English language and literature analysis, communication and research competence. Mr Jones, one of the teachers, gives a fairly detailed description of this dimension of the course.

> They learn how to do research - note-taking, based on key words; composition skills, paragraph writing, sentence writing, planning how to build an essay, topic sentences and supporting details - we reinforce this all the time so that hopefully by Standard 8, even if they don't write a decent essay they write better than they would have. Note taking from a lecture; how to use the library; how to cross reference to obtain a wide source of information. Public speaking, but not in the formal sense - rather we stress the importance of being able to hold an idea even if someone pronounces it wrong, the importance of forming ideas, not being afraid to share them, defend them, and admit they are wrong. Dramatic skills. We exercise literary criticism skills at different levels - in Standard 8 we are more heavily into the theme and contextual questions rather than simple comprehension questions

Other comments that reveal this view are given in Appendix C, part 2.

Certainly, the emphasis on independent study and communication skills was recognised by pupils. Soyapi, a pack boy in Standard 6, notes that he learnt about non-verbal communication:

> We learnt communication, writing skills and note-taking. We had to sing without using our voices - sometimes only our faces or only your hands. We used to have listening and passing-on games of communication.

Other similar comments are given in Appendix C, part 3.

There was little attention paid to the traditional academic skills associated with the subjects that together made up Integrated Studies. There was little direct attempt made to teach such things

as atlas and map reading skills, diagram drawing and interpretation, directed question answering, and evidence-sifting and weighing, such as might be taught in Geography and History.

Much of the work in Integrated Studies was designed to give pupils the opportunity to develop skills at working in a group. These can be broadly classified as 'social skills'. Ms Silver describes this by saying:

> They also learn group skills - to listen to each other, work with a leader. We gave them a lesson on group work.

Ms Driver's comment expands this:

> Interpersonal development is important. Tolerance of others, sensitivity to others, ability to work in a group.

Thus, in the minds of the Integrated Studies teachers, their programme hopes to develop tolerance of difference, sensitivity to the needs of others, and the ability to work co-operatively in a group.

Khondy, a black girl in Standard 7, typifies the comments of many pupils which indicate that this aspect of Integrated Studies was recognised by the pupils:

> You learn how to get along with different kinds of people. In a group you'd have some people eager to work and some who didn't and you'd learn how to cope with the ones who didn't want to work

(See also in Appendix C, part 4)

It also hopes to foster certain personal attributes in the pupils such as self-confidence and self-awareness. As Ms Chetty states:

> The Integrated Studies programme hopes to empower individuals by giving them opportunities for self-discovery, interaction with others and communication skills.

Gezani's comment is similar to many which show that this aspect of the work was recognised by the pupils. Others are given in Appendix C, part 5.

> If I'm acting I don't get shy. In the beginning I was shy, but I'm no longer shy. Actually, we do Drama in groups with everyone, and that helps.

Other pupils, such as Soleni in Standard 7, note how Integrated Studies helped her develop her creativity:

> You're given a chance to perform, make plays. They give you a theme, and you can do anything. They help you to be imaginative.

(See also Appendix C, part 6.)

Integrated Studies also has as a central aim that of encouraging a love of learning, and a view of knowledge as open-ended and holistic:

> Integrated Studies aims to make education relevant, to make it stimulating so that the gaining of knowledge isn't just a dusty pursuit of excellence by compulsion rather than desire, to make education of such a nature that the quest for knowledge is its own reward.
>
> Mr Jones

This view was recognised by pupils such as Obed, a black boy in Standard 7, quoted below, and many others whose views are given in Appendix C, part 7.

> In IS there'd be a foundation, and then you'd go on. It's better than being taught because you feel free to do whatever you like. It's not like they're telling you something you're not interested in.

There is a sense that knowledge should be part of the pupils' daily experience, not something that resides in a book, or in some authority.

> The idea is to break down the artificial walls that exist, so that History, Geography, Art, Music and Religion, whatever, are not studied in isolation from other areas of life's experience. Life is experience, and education should reflect this. I believe it aids learning if you can see how things interrelate.
>
> Mr Jones.

The aims of the course thus reflect an emphasis on the development of a variety of academic, social and personal skills, of personal qualities such as co-operative behaviour and self-discipline, and of certain attitudes to learning and interaction. As Ms Chetty summed up:

> It adopts a holistic approach. This favours the integration of subjects, and views the child as a physical, emotional and intellectual being.

This view is echoed by numerous pupils whose comments are provided in Appendix C, part 7.

There is a certain emphasis on developing tolerance, the notion that there are differences among people, and that what is important is to acknowledge these and behave in an accepting way toward them. Only from one of the teachers is there any sense of a need to educate for a change in the status quo.

> It aims at democracy in education. This entails the questioning of the present system which is based on the industrial notion of education: 'warehousing' children and turning them into willing recipients of the status quo. When we ask ourselves why is it so difficult for people to entertain, let alone try to bring about change, we must look at the education system and see it as a contributing, if not a major factor, to rigid institutions that need revolution to change them. Education should provide creative individuals who can bring about change in an evolutionary way.
>
> Ms Chetty (extract from essay on IS)

The aims of the course were developed through both the choice of content and the pedagogy that prevailed. I shall look at these aspects in turn.

1.2 The content of the course

Content in the form of themes varied from year to year, and was motivated by different factors and aims. Generally, it seems that the present Integrated Studies teachers had inherited a set of themes from a previous generation of
teachers, and had not felt sure enough of themselves to change them. They tended, therefore to justify the themes, rather than motivate their selection, and also used the flexibility of the programme to develop the theme along lines that seemed important to them.

> I wasn't party to the choice of themes. I've no particular feelings about them either way. It's the way they are developed that's important.
>
> Mr Jones, Std 6 IS

Ms Driver's and Ms Silver's very similar comments are provided in Appendix C, part 8.

The nature of appropriate content varied for each standard. In Standard 6, there was consensus that the curriculum material should be 'factual':

> The themes were chosen many years ago. I'm happy with them. Whatever you do, you have to do a theme that's factual with the Standard 6's. Most are too young to interpret, they mainly just absorb
>
> Mr Slocan

Mr Jones' statement along similar lines is given in Appendix C, part 9.

The view that the course should deal with the content of History and Geography in the mainstream curriculum also influenced the choice of themes in Standard 6:

> We do try to prepare them for later work in Geography and History We've covered parts of the Standard 6 syllabus under the guise of IS themes - introduced them to the subject in a non-prejudiced way. We have done this in Geography - the atmosphere, weather, and in History have done the history of gold, the history of a battle.
>
> Mr Silver, Std 6 IS.

The choice of themes reflected this emphasis on the content based subjects of the mainstream curriculum: the Sea; the Sky; Gold; a Discoverer; with only, 'Who am I?' being more abstract and not clearly related to the formal school curriculum.

In Standards 7 and 8, there was less focus on the formal school subjects:

> We do no specific Geography in seven, and in eight it's out anyway. We did do the Greeks, and Roman History in Standard 7, and the Industrial Revolution and the Renaissance
>
> Mr Driver

and the themes dealt with a more abstract set of concepts with those in Standard 7 being Survival, Conflict, the Industrial Revolution and in Standard 8 an unconventional set of three R's - Relationships, Religions, Roots.

Given the common set of aims for the course, it is interesting to consider the way in which the choice of content in the form of themes facilitated their fulfilment.

With regard to the improvement of language skills, there was no discernible difference in the potential for any theme to be exploited more or less than any other in this regard. All lent themselves equally well to library work, essay writing and discussion.

Many social and personal development aims of the course were best developed through the pedagogy rather than the course content (as will be discussed later in this chapter). But certain themes certainly paved the way for more fruitful discussion of certain socio-political issues, and the exploration of attitudes and values better than others did.

The potential of the content for allowing an exploration of attitudes to different racial and religious groups within the class, learning about other cultures, and for developing the self-awareness and tolerance of the aims of the curriculum increased over the course of the three years.

In Standard 6, the themes, 'Who am I?' and 'Gold' afforded the only real content areas for the social and personal dimensions of the curriculum to be expanded.

In the theme, 'Who am I?' some attention was paid to the notion of stereotyping people, and the nature of prejudice and discrimination based on stereotypes. This component of learning is not one which has had much impact on the choice of content in this standard, and is afforded little formal time in the curriculum, as is revealed by Ms Simcox's comment on it:

> They come in with the prejudice of their parents. Ms Silver discusses what prejudice and discrimination are, and the concept of 'all black people are..., all Afrikaans people are...' This takes about one 15 session.

And Ms Silver reveals, that for her at any rate, this was not a significant part of the Standard 6 programme:

> We did talk about prejudice in their own lives when we did migrant labour. We talked about what it felt like to go into a group that is different from you. I can't remember if I did the lecture on stereotypes this year or not. When I do, I start off by telling jokes

> to bring out stereotypes. They come and act them out. It's to make them aware of what they are doing, to get them to think of the kind of person who is Afrikaans, not stereotyped.

In Standard 7 there had been a more conscious effort to provide an opportunity for the exploration of concepts related to social interaction and attitudes towards aspects of it:

> We did plan discussion of oppression and racism into the conflict theme. Sexism we never plan in, not overtly, don't give it much direct thought. In Standard 7 we look at areas of conflict in life, how you handle them, and how you could. We look at different areas of conflict - inner, inter-personal, global conflict. We look at South Africa, the origins and areas of conflict at present, and possible future scenarios.
>
> Ms Driver

In Standard 8 all the themes are indirectly focused on these aspects of the pupils' learning. Ms Driver elaborates on this as follows:

> The Roots theme is really a buggy for clearing differences and accepting and tolerating. We look at where we come from - as far back as they can go, and share that in groups. Then they interviewed each other to answer the question, 'What is your culture like?' and then considered how their culture had changed so that there was a gap between themselves and their grandparents. There were some very interesting things. The theme on 'Religion' also gave everyone a chance to learn about other religions.

The Integrated Studies team had as a guiding principle the relevance of the curriculum material to pupils' experience and background. Given the multicultural nature of the class, the extent to which this dimension was a feature of material and content choice is of interest. Again, the significance for curriculum planning varied greatly from year to year, and was least well developed in Standard 6. As the team leader of this year asserted:

> I'm not sure how the themes were chosen. They are not particularly group related. The sky and the sea are around all of us. We cater for different groups in the level we work on in E8.
>
> Ms Silver.

The quotations above by Ms Driver show how there was greater awareness of different backgrounds in the Standard 7 and 8 years, and of attempts to validate life experiences and cultural backgrounds other than those of white English speaking pupils. She

elaborates on the nature of the work done in the theme on Religions by describing the content and type of religious institution:

> In the theme on religions we do try to be more non-Eurocentric. In fact, the only visits we made were to Eastern religions. We try to keep it in mind, but neglected the Black Christian Zionist movement - but there didn't seem to be any Zionists among the kids - mostly Baptists or Anglicans - and also, the library hasn't got any info.

In the quotation below she gave more detail on the nature of the work on the 'Conflict' theme:

> In the conflict theme we tried to focus quite a bit on what they were experiencing in their own lives. We did a lot of small group discussion for this. We wanted them to recognise that South Africa is in a conflict situation, to recognise the power and the greed - we mentioned the hut tax, migrant labour, for them to have a general idea of all that. But we really wanted them to have time to get in touch with how they feel about the future - in Standard 7 they are not writing a political science doctorate - they need to get in touch with their reactions - more a personal than a factual thing.

Descriptions of these aspects of the work given by Mr Jones and Ms Khosa may be found in Appendix C, part 10.

Thus, in the second and third years of the Integrated Studies Programme there is a deliberate attempt to deal with curriculum content that raises contentious issues, and requires pupils to learn about each other and themselves. There is also a focus on issues common to all of them - the racism integral to South African society, and attitudes and values related to it.

Despite this apparent sensitivity to the need to embrace curriculum content that might be described as 'multicultural', there was little attention paid to this dimension in the choice of setworks for study. In many cases, the books used were a legacy from previous decision making, and had been accepted with little thought:

> Some books are just suggested by a staff member, and if they suggest something, you accept it and do the best you can with it.
>
> Mr Jones

Several of the staff referred with regret to the fact that their books were not more consciously less Eurocentric. Ms Simcox reflects what all of them said:

> We have tried to select books from Africa, but could do better here. The content is not sufficiently African, too Western. Dry White Season is a step in the right direction, but we do need more African input.

Similar sentiments expressed by Ms Driver and Mr Jones are given in Appendix C, part 11.

Several of the books did lend themselves to discussion of issues of racism, sexism and prejudice. However, the teachers' comments on the way the books had been used indicates that exploration of these issues had not been uppermost in their minds when dealing with the books in class. Aspects of language development and literary analysis had been the focus of the work, and the issues contained in the books seen as peripheral to the development of these skills.

Ms Silver, in discussing the Standard 6 setwork, Walkabout, makes clear that there was little attempt to deal with the issues of prejudice exposed by the author, and that it was the book as a piece of abstract literature that she focused her class's attention on:

> Walkabout was used before I came. I decided to keep it. It's on their level, they can relate to it. It's interesting, exciting and different. It's main themes are survival and prejudice. We didn't discuss prejudice much, just where it came up. I didn't ask them to write on the prejudice in the book, made it too formal. Only spent five or ten minutes on it, not even that. Didn't receive more prejudice than anything else, we weren't prejudiced to spend more time on it than the rest. They've got to be able to analyse literature, so as soon as I see they're not enjoying a topic, I move on. I didn't ask the kids to talk about prejudice in their own lives.

This was corroborated by the another Standard 6 Integrated Studies teacher, whose comments may be found in Appendix C, part 12.

The teacher of the weakest Standard 6 group, had, however attempted to delve into some of the issues open to debate in the setwork:

> I found The Wave very stimulating. There was a lot to latch on to in terms of History - the Hitler period - and could look at that history in terms of what happens in South Africa, and how easy it is for people to follow order rather than sense. It's quite within the reading ability of the S's, and there are so many issues to latch on to.
>
> Mr Jones, Std 9 HS

In Standard 7, the work on literature had largely fallen away, as the course was steered in other directions by the team leader, Ms Chetty:

> Once Ms Chetty hi-jacked the theme we've done a surfboard exercise, and haven't had time to pursue the setwork.
>
> Mr Jones

This view of the significance given to setworks in this year is corroborated by Ms Driver. (Appendix C, part 13)

In Standard 8, three of the books selected lent themselves to the discussion of broader social and political issues. One of these was Good times, Bad Times which Ms Driver describes as follows:

> They also read Good Times, Bad Times. We did one exercise on chapter one, and didn't do any more in class. It's not a bad thing - it doesn't have any major themes, the linguistic style is straightforward. The biggest thing was that it spoke directly to the kids about teenage troubles and people - didn't need to be handled as a piece of literature. It's just the story of a guy at school who becomes victimised by a homosexual man who lusts after him, and how he forms a friendship with another boy. The boys at hate us - the book deals with the idea of boys finding each other attractive - must think we're hooked on homosexual issues - but it's a very humane story. I don't know how constructive airing issues is: Jeremy still thinks you should shoot fags. Guys who have felt those urges can feel normalised by the book - don't feel they're going to be homosexual.

Here the opportunity to deal with sexist attitudes in the book had been taken, but not developed much. There had been only one class period devoted to this work. The work on A Dry White Season had dealt with a highly relevant personal situation in the context of the political situation of South Africa. There had been little discussion of the themes, but the pupils had had to dramatise the key events in the form of a court case. Attention had been paid to the linguistic style of the book, and the thrust of the work based on it was in the development of critical thinking and the logical presentation of argument, Again, Ms Driver reflects on this work:

> We handled ... y White Scarves through a court room drama. The political and human impact of that was powerful enough without having to make a scene of it. I handled the linguistic style of the book in ES - bland and clichéd and flat, but it does say what it says powerfully - and I felt drama was a good way of handling it. They had to think critically.

Thus the setwork component of the content of the course is not directly chosen for the opportunity it affords for the exploration of racist and sexist issues, nor for exploration of personal attitudes and values. Nor is it deliberately non-Eurocentric. It tends to be treated as literature, or a medium for developing language and thinking skills.

Further comments that substantiate this view are provided in Appendix C, part 12.

Mr Jones made clear that work done on film is also directed largely toward the development of skills that enable a film to be analysed in terms of the communication devices used in its production. It is also a vehicle for fostering writing skills, and to teach analysis of film-directing and symbolism.
(See also Appendix C, part 14)

Although the choice of themes, films and setworks was not always directed toward the exploration of attitudes and values, racism, prejudice, sexism and other socially relevant issues, there was a certain openness to the inclusion of these issues where appropriate, and where the discussion led the pupils naturally. Personal experience was allowed to steer discussion and to build the course content:

> We've allowed explorations. In sight there is no conscious effort to handle racism - we talk at the level of what they experience now, what's touching them now. In Standard 7 we've had complaints from the northern suburbs that there's too much politics.
>
> Mr Jones

(See also Appendix C, part 15)

As far as the content of the course is concerned, then, it is probably true to say that there is a fair amount of flexibility in exactly how each theme is developed. Within a basic framework of already chosen books and films, teachers follow their own and the pupils' interests. A possible exception to this is the Standard 6 year, where a fairly set programme, developed more fully in previous years, and based on more set chunks of content, is laid before the pupils. This did not go uncriticised by other members of the team:

> Normally there's a lot of choice in the theme. But this year, Ms Silver has followed her little black book. I'm disappointed in the way I've handled Standard 6 this year. I have emotional fatigue in negotiating with Ms Silver. She's very materialistic, lacking in imagination in Integrated Studies. It's a perfunctory performance of a duty to be done. She's thorough, but the journey is so marked out that no-one sees anything on the way. I get frustrated when you get through the whole of 'The Atmosphere' in 40 minutes, with time to spare.
>
> Mr Jones

(See also Appendix C, part 16)

The themes came from the development of the Integrated Studies programme as one which explored personal growth and development, and examined relationships among people before the school was multiracial. To some extent, the themes were open-ended enough to be adapted for a multiracial group of pupils. Where there were teachers sensitive to the need for exploration of different cultural backgrounds, tensions that existed in the interaction among pupils of different groups, and to the need to affirm cultural contexts other than those of the white South Africans in the class, some of this was done. It would, however, seem that these aspects were not a major influencing factor in the planning stages of the year's work - they were given attention when, fairly spontaneously, this seemed appropriate. Themes, films and books were not chosen with a view to maximising the possibilities of working in a non-Eurocentric way, nor of dealing directly with issues of racism and sexism. In the Standard 6 year, as a result, very little of this sort of work was done, and the year passed by with the emphasis on finding out facts about the sea, naval battles

that might have occurred in Europe centuries before, the solar system, and the Bermuda Triangle. The teacher leading the team could not remember half way through the year whether or not the lesson on stereotyping had been given, and made the point that only five or ten minutes had been spent on the theme of prejudice in the chosen setwork.

Apart from this one Standard 6 teacher, however, there was a general sense among the staff that these issues and emphases were of importance, and their planning of how to develop each theme took cognisance of them. In addition, where issues came up spontaneously in class discussion, they allowed time and space for the pupils to exchange ideas. These four teachers expressed dissatisfaction with some of the Eurocentric aspects of their work, and three of them also expressed their feelings of inadequacy regarding how to bring about change.

Pupils' accounts of these aspects of the Integrated Studies course corroborate the efforts made by teachers in these areas of their work.

The attempts to introduce a less Eurocentric curriculum were recognised by Lucy, a white girl in Standard 8:

> They tried to bring in other cultures. Obviously, it's going to be centred more on Europe because it's taught in English and because that takes most of the curriculum up - well, the high school curriculum is based on European culture, mostly. But in IS they brought all the cultures into it as far as possible, in each of the themes, and we found out the religion of different cultures.

Further supporting quotations are given in Appendix C, part 17.

At least one pupil noted that, generally, the literature used was Eurocentric:

> The only book we read that had any bearing on South Africa was A Dry White Season. I thoroughly enjoyed it. And maybe a few poems. Not much else. Most stuff is European based.
>
> David, WB in Std 8

There was consensus that, if political discussion did occur, it was based in the Integrated Studies course:

> It didn't come up much. When it did, it was in IS. It had to be there. It can't come up in Science or French. It's got to do with IS. IS is a link to the world.
>
> Veronica, WG in Std 8

For other quotations related to the inclusion of political discussion in Integrated Studies, see Appendix C, part 18.

Pupils felt that there was freedom in Integrated Studies to discuss matters of interest, and share ideas and views. They felt that, through discussion, they clarified their own attitudes and values, and learnt more about themselves and others. Much of the discussion was seen as relevant, and linked to the world beyond the school. Tebogo, a black boy in Standard 7 gives a concrete example of this:

> We discussed a lot in IS. You heard people's opinions, especially about South African politics. You got to know their opinions, don't just know your own things. We talked about them in the second term in IS. We did the Industrial Revolution and someone had the idea that the rich got richer and the poor poorer, and we compared it with this country's situation and found that that is more-or-less happening here.

Tracy, a white girl in Standard 8, encapsulates what others, quoted in Appendix C, part 19, had to say on this theme:

> People out of school ask you what IS is, and it's not just a subject, it's a person-growing thing. It's researching things and finding out other people's point of view, and finding out your point of view while you never know.

1.3 The teaching styles and strategies of the Integrated Studies Team.

The aspect of Integrated Studies that probably plays the greatest part in contributing toward it achieving its aims is the prevailing pedagogy. The teaching approach was one that was open-ended, based largely on pupil input and activity, and allowed for personal exploration and review of attitudes and opinions. Teachers attempted to develop a friendly relationship with pupils, and to break down the traditional barriers and conceptions of ownership of knowledge that exist in the usual teacher-pupil relationship.

As noted earlier, much use is made of individual research in the library, the writing of essays, group work on dramatic and other presentations, large class discussions, and small English Skills classes. There is also scope for peer assessment of work, and efforts are made to encourage the pupils to draw on themselves and their experience as learning resources, and to see the teachers as facilitators in the process, not the ultimate source of all wisdom.

A great deal of use is made of drama. It is part of Integrated Studies in that the programme attempts to introduce pupils to dimensions of the conventional curriculum. However, its main purpose is to develop personal skills among the pupils. Ms Silver expresses this well:

> We do a lot of drama. It's partly to introduce them to Drama which is now a subject at the school, to open it up to them. But it's also to get them to relax with each other, to express themselves, to become less embarrassed in front of the class, to become more open and imaginative, and just to have fun, too.

This view of the function of the Drama work is shared by Ms Driver (see Appendix C, part 20), while Ms Simcox put forward the view that the oral work demanded by the dramatic presentations assisted the acquisition of language sills in tandem with the development of confidence:

> Oral presentations are important. The black students often improve orally first, and then confidence comes. People like Bengi, when she first came here you couldn't hear a word. But the other day in class we asked her a question which she was prepared to answer - that's progress, and comes from confidence, from skills, from dramatic presentations.

The work in Drama was done in small groups. This structure was used in other contexts, too, and the teachers saw it as having much potential for valuable learning. One of the areas where group work was perceived to be important was in the understanding of group dynamics, and of how they fitted into these:

> In group work they develop self awareness - learn if they are best at taking charge or at giving support
>
> Ms Simcox

Darryl was one of several pupils who was aware of this aspect of the work in small groups. He felt that he had developed leadership skills:

> The work on our drama presentations was often very exciting. You only had two periods, and you really had to work together. There were people who did feel around, and you had to get them to work, and you had to all work together, otherwise it didn't work. I learnt sometimes you've just got to take charge, you've just got to tell people, 'Come on, we've just got to do this.' You'd be given two periods, and some people would say, 'Let's go and sit by the river and think', and you had to say, 'No, let's get on with it.'
>
> Darryl, WS in Std 8

Another, Fred, felt that he had learnt how to work considerately in a group, and Risimati felt that she had developed negotiating skills and an ability to compromise. (See also Appendix C, part 21)

It was also seen as a valuable vehicle for encouraging pupils to get to know each other to hear and impart different views, and to develop respect for each others' differences. Ms Driver expresses this aspect as follows:

> In group work, and in class discussions, they have to interact, learn to tolerate different ideas. We're trying to foster the realisation that not everyone thinks like you, and that that's not wrong.

To this end the Integrated Studies Team indulged in a degree of 'social engineering', often consciously rearranging groups so that they became racially mixed, in the hope that the social learning afforded by group work would become particularly valuable in the cross-race context. Ms Driver reflects on this aspect as follows:

> We try to get them to work with other kids in the group work. It's so funny, to work on these colour things - you'll hear someone saying, 'I need a black' when told to find someone of another culture. When we were discussing different South African futures we were saying, 'Oh no, you need an Indian, no point in having a group that's all the same.' I'm still not sure why we insist on mixed groups. If the black kids are comfy together, why not. We do need to broaden their experience, but at the same time they should be allowed their feeling of security.

Ms Simcox notes that by mixing the groups the learning of the content of the theme is given deepened significance by being related by people who have first-hand information to impart, and that discussing the issues in groups required the development of sensitivity to the feelings of others:

> In the Religion theme we did the Creation myths in play and music. The pupils researched a religion other than their own, and got into groups with people whose religion it was so there was the emotion, not only the facts. It was also to develop respect for each others' religion and for each others' feelings.

This concern with interaction across the racial boundaries was one that recurred in the Integrated Studies staff's reflection on their work. The manipulation of groups was an area where they intervened to attempt to promote integration. The other major curriculum initiative aimed at fostering relationships among the pupils in general, and indirectly cross-race interaction, was the excursions which took place each year for Standard 7 and 8. These were linked to the themes 'Survival' and 'Relationships' respectively. The 'Survival' excursion was based on an Outward Bound Excursion in the Drakensberg, in which the pupils had to be relatively self-sufficient, and to improve their conditions by cooperative behaviour. In Standard 8 they spent a week at Sodwana bay, on the Northern Natal coast, camping. The staff who accompanied them left all the organising of the camp to the pupils, and facilitated evening discussions about the day's activities and interactions, which had been generally unstructured. Ms Simcox gives an account of the kind of learning that was possible on such trips. In Appendix C, part 22, she gives a detailed description of how the group dealt with an unpleasant incident of racial abuse from holiday-makers on the same beach as the Riverbend pupils. As in so much of the formal curriculum, no activities were planned to promote discussion of racial tensions and incidents, but the informal nature of the trip, and the comfortable relationship among staff and pupils meant that this unpleasant experience was turned into something of educational value.

Some of the work, as mentioned before, is done in the large, whole-class group. This is where themes are introduced, films viewed, presentations given by the small groups, and where topics are discussed. The intention of these is 'to have structured activities where different levels of ability can interact' (Ms Driver), and where each pupil can participate in and contribute to the airing of a broad spectrum of views and information.

Several of the teachers had doubts about how well this large-group work served the needs of the black pupils. Ms Simcox believed that the freedom allowed by the whole group debate was one that the black pupils found threatening, but which they adapted to in time. She expressed these views as follows:

> In Standard 8 black children feel inferior in IS. They are not used to the method - they are used to being told to shut up and write down. It takes the whole of Standard 8 to adapt. By the end, some come forward. I think they're absorbing a lot, but won't come forward because they feel threatened in a big group. Bright kids come forward and express complex ideas they can't begin to understand because it's not their language.

Ms Chetty felt that this methodology in itself was inappropriate (see Appendix C, part 23), and Ms Driver, acknowledging the fact that black pupils participated less than white, felt that the teachers had a responsibility to draw them out. (See Appendix C, part 23)

Work that was assessed in Integrated Studies was both individually- and group-produced written work and oral presentation. The pattern was to sketch the task, and allow pupils time to work on it with minimum guidance, although for the pupils whose English was weak, there was a lot of support given in the library research periods and in the English Skills periods. The pacing of the work was left to the pupils, who, it was hoped, would learn a self-disciplined approach to their work through the freedom they were allowed, and through having to take the consequences of their own actions. Ms Driver describes this approach to the pupils' work:

> We try to get them to take responsibility for their actions. We'll structure a thing, give a task, make sure they know what to do and send them outside. We wander round a bit, I suppose to police a bit and also to give guidance, but also just shrug and say, 'They know what to do, have got a time limit, and must take the consequences'. If they choose to behave in a certain way they must take the consequences - they will put on a sloppy performance in front of their peers and get SIB' But we do balance it. We sometimes ensure they work. To what extent it's effective, I don't know.

Many pupils reflected on how this approach to the tasks set helped them develop self-discipline. Frank, a white boy in Standard 6, is one example, with others provided in Appendix C, part 24:

> We learnt how to take notes, and how to do research. Then we were expected to put it into operation ourselves, which we did, or didn't get marks. the beginning, people played around in the library periods, but they learnt that they had to get on with it or it would just be harder for them. The teachers were there to supervise, but they didn't make you work. They said, 'You should work now or you won't have time', but they didn't force you to do it, just told you it was better for you. After a while we tended to realise that it was actually us, we had to use the time they gave us to work in.

This view of themselves as facilitators, not determiners, of learning was one held by all the Integrated Studies staff, and characterised much of their interaction with the pupils. Much of what I have reported thus far about the curriculum as they perceived it supports this view, which is expressed by Ms Driver, who sees it as a strategy for encouraging independent thought:

> Also, by never holding ourselves up as oracles of all indisputable knowledge, IS does try to encourage the kids' own thinking - and they're allowed to disagree.

Also, Ms Simcox felt that it was important for the pupils, particularly the black pupils, to see the teachers as people, not as mere authority figures, so that they would feel comfortable with them and able to ask for help when necessary. Drama and staff-student trips were clearly seen by her as two strategies to develop this relationship:

> In Drama, they play games where the staff take part - to get rid of the idea of the staff as purely authoritarian, to see them as human. In DET, no studen[illegible]ld come for help, ask a question in class. Here black students will do that, but it takes time. Also, when we talked about the trip, in my group the black students spoke of their relationship with the teachers, seeing them as people

> - possibly important 'cos the teachers are white, too. The black students also said that they began to relate to people on the trip - people they had not related to before.

In addition, in facilitating discussion the Integrated Studies teachers were anxious to avoid taking control and inhibiting discussion, with a sense, at the same time, of the need to handle sensitive issues with care. As Ms Driver describes:

> We play it by ear. There's a fine line between control and moving in the direction you want to move, and stopping in when the discussion gets stuck, not getting anywhere, or when it needs a wiser person. You have to step in sometimes, but mustn't be too intensive and controlling. Like Mr Jones with Mlangeni. Mlangeni was going on about homosexuality being against religion, and Mr Jones stepped in to say, 'That's your personal viewpoint.' Perhaps we should keep to that. The whole issue of whether homosexuality is disgusting or not is not something you can resolve, so allow them to air views and move on.

Use was made of visiting speakers and short outings to broaden the information resource base and show that teachers were not the sole source of knowledge.

The teaching methodology was chosen to maximise pupil involvement in their work, to encourage exploration of feelings and emotions as well as an exchange of ideas, to foster self-discipline and an increase in self-confidence and in the ability to formulate and express views and attitudes, and to facilitate the integration of the group. There was an attempt made to democratise the learning process, with teachers stepping down from the role of expert, allowing pupils free expression of ideas, requiring pupils to research and invent material for presentation to the class, and calling on outside experts where they felt they would enrich the programme. Several teachers were anxious that the pupils should feel at ease with them and able to discuss matters of concern and importance.

Pupils' comments again make clear that these aspects of teachers' intentions were perceived by the pupil. Arthur, a white boy in Standard 6, recognises that in Integrated Studies the teachers were not the owners of knowledge:

> In Current Affairs you had to give your presentation. The group after you had to criticise you, and you learnt a lot. It was good. It was their opinions, and you could think back and think, 'Well, I did do

> that.' If you disagreed, you could tell them. It was good 'cos Ms Silver told them to tell to us, not to the teacher. When you talk to the teacher it's easy, but when you have to talk to the actual person it's hard. We had to learn that it's not the teacher who governs the class. She didn't command much, the students did.

and Harold, also a white boy in Standard 6, had noted that Integrated Studies teachers were able to allow discussion to flow, yet maintain some direction within it:

> The IS teachers are mostly teachers who didn't mind if you as a student challenge their ideas, who don't feel threatened by any student, who could let the class flow without losing control of the thread, but without stopping the discussion. They have to be teachers with a lot of imagination.

Further quotations can be found in Appendix C, part 25.

Pupils found that they learnt by their own initiative and activity, and not by being told what to do and think:

> IS was a new thing to us. I never knew there was such a lesson. It came to me as a shock how simply and easily a person can learn by doing interesting things. I thought maybe a person could only learn by sitting in class and listening to a teacher.
>
> Meshak, BB in Std 6

Many quotations from other pupils demonstrate this awareness of their independence as learners, and the value it had for them. They are reported in Appendix C, part 26, while part 27 gives further quotations that substantiate Amanda's view, given below, that teachers were readily available to facilitate rather than control learning:

> The teachers would give you a lecture, so you'd be familiar with the topic. They wouldn't give us many facts, would just give us a ground foundation so we'd be familiar and know what they're talking about a little. And then we'd do research. If you got stuck they'd help. They wouldn't spoon-feed you, just give you a bit of a nudge.
>
> Amanda, MG in Std 6

Several students commented on the particular relationship that existed between pupils and Integrated Studies teachers. Mahale, a black boy in Standard 7, expresses its quality well, as do other reported in Appendix C, part 28.

> The IS teachers were different from other teachers. There was no wall dividing us. We were equal. No-one on top, superior.

From the pupils' comments about the work done in Integrated Studies it seems that there is a fair degree of correspondence between their views and the teachers'. They are aware of the attempt at treating knowledge holistically, the development of research, general communication and language skills, the opportunity for pursuing topics of interest, the chance to discuss matters and to relate these to personal experience, the learning situations that helped them overcome shyness, develop self-confidence and of Integrated Studies as the time where where pupils could learn to work with people not usually their friends. There is general consensus that pupils' contributions to the learning process were valued, and that they in fact formed a major part of the content of the curriculum. Integrated Studies is seen as a place in the formal curriculum where there is an opportunity to learn about the other cultures in the class, share views and discuss the political situation. Teachers were generally seen as open and friendly, people one could establish an open relationship with.

In their reflections on their work the Integrated Studies teachers showed themselves open to many of the curriculum issues associated with the multiracial composition of their classroom. Four of the five teachers expressed concern about certain aspects of the group dynamics, such as integrating different racial groups and encouraging better participation among the black pupils, and expressed doubts as to whether their methodology adequately coped with these aspects. Further, the need to Africanise their curriculum, and to deal with issues of relevance to the spectrum of pupils in the class was expressed by all but one of the Integrated Studies teachers. Ms Driver expressed the view held by the four of them:

> Education here should be catering for all the kids. For the white kids who think western is western and what is right; and for the black kids who have to develop self-confidence and pride in being black. All our speakers are white - but we need more black professional speakers, and more black staff. It's all very well having a white telling you that it's good to be black, but if all he sees is white people in positions of status then the underlying message is not the same. We develop images of what's appropriate.

This view was expressed even more strongly by Ms Chetty:

> It has become a routine. It's characterised by boredom, plagiarism, and a lackadaisical attitude to work, with a mindless repetition of themes. I think all courses should be revamped, with a central theme for each year, and a number of sub-themes. There should be a greater integration of the themes in one year, a more holistic approach. The students should be more involved with the course. There should be more student input. The student should be seen in context. The themes must be relevant to the students' world, and other experiences should be evaluated in terms of the South African experience, and vice versa.

Overall, then, it seems that the Integrated Studies team was committed to an experiential approach to learning, willing to work in an unstructured way, and to respond to what seemed to be the pupils' needs. It was generally confident that its approach to learning was holistic and in the pupils' long-term best interests, academically, socially and personally. There was, however, some sense that the programme, which had largely been inherited, needed modification in both its content and methodology to meet better the needs of the diverse group of pupils for which it catered. An attempt had been made to meet language needs that varied greatly by the division of each class into three streamed groups. (Discussed more fully in Chapter 6). The Integrated Studies teachers' reservations about their work revealed a willingness to grapple with newly perceived issues, and an attempt to develop a curriculum that addressed the broad spectrum of pupils' needs, found in any school, but heightened perhaps by the multiracial component of Riverhead.

2. The Rest of the Curriculum

On the whole, there was a notable contrast between the Integrated Studies programme and the rest of the curriculum in the aims the teachers saw as appropriate, the content they dealt with, and their methodology. The senior English teacher, Ms Chetty, was a notable exception to the generalisations made about the work of the other teachers in the non-Integrated Studies part of the curriculum, and her work will be described separately from the rest of the curriculum.

2.1 Aims

A major focus for most of the staff outside the Integrated Studies program was preparing the pupils for passing the Matriculation examination. Mr Parks' expression of this view could have been made by any of the senior teachers:

> Ultimately, I'm there to see that the Matric syllabus gets taught to the Matrics to the best of my ability and that they get the highest possible mark in the final year of exam according to their ability.

Even lower down the school one eye was kept on the requirements of the final examination. Mr De Winter made this clear for Afrikaans, but the same was true for the other subjects, too.

> In Standards 6, 7 and 8 there's an open-ended syllabus. We regard it as preparation for Matric, but not directed toward Matric per se. We do quite a bit of oral work, and projects. And we work through the grammar books, so in that sense it is directed toward 9 and 10.

The emphasis was on 'getting through the content' in the most efficient manner. Mr Banks, who taught Geography and History, put this plainly:

> The bulk of my teaching is concerned with just getting through the syllabus.

Additional statements showing this orientation to the Matriculation examination are given in Appendix C, part 29.

This impacted on both the introduction of extraneous content in to the curriculum, and on the methodology used. Bot these points will be elaborated on in the description of the curriculum that follows.

Skills development was largely confined to those skills related to information processing and expression, and of direct relevance to competence in a particular subject. Space does not allow the range of supporting quotations to be given here for each subject. Those of Ms Clarke, who taught the senior classes English and History, illustrate this point, and others may be found in Appendix C, part 30:

> I try to improve their writing skills, the communication skills. They're not competent in writing an analytical essay, say on Hamlet. I want to talk to them about grammar and spelling - those kids don't know what an apostrophe is and, almost without exception, there is never one person who doesn't have a spelling error.

None of the teachers mentioned any efforts to develop the more personal and social dimensions of their pupils. None, apart from Ms Chetty, mentioned efforts to encourage group co-operation, to foster racial tolerance or to promote the understanding of different points of view and of different life experience.

2.2 Content

One or two of the teachers referred to attempts to introduce material that was not Eurocentric into the curriculum, and to choose textbooks that were appropriate to the different groups in the class. But these attempts were minimal and in the minority.

Ms Clarke supported the school's choice of History textbook because of its attempts to deal with black perspectives on South African history:

> We use the Illustrated History of South Africa because Boyce tends to ignore black people. He will touch on areas like SAANC which became the ANC while the Illustrated History gives the whole development of the SAANC - how it came into being, who were the leaders, what were the issues. Right throughout it looks at SA as one nation - whatever was happening touched the lives of all people, not just white people. For the whole issue of the Native Land Act, Boyce mentions it once, as an act promulgated in 1923, and who promulgated it, but it's a crucial issue in the lives of black people and Apartheid, to the point that we're using it as an exam question.

Also, the Art teacher had incorporated some work on Art from outside Europe:

> In Standard 8 we followed the syllabus more or less, except for Byzantine art. I felt the need to do other religious art. Each did a project on the role of religion in art. They could do anything from the first 10 centuries after Christ. They did Islamic art, Chinese, Byzantine. After that we did Romanesque and Gothic. I felt it unfair to force just Christian Art down the throats of such wide cultural groups.
>
> Ms Hughes

In addition, the Zulu teacher had made a desultory foray into Zulu culture:

> I did an end at the lessons on Zulu culture when I started. But I thought it pointless. They won't use it. It doesn't help them knowing our culture. They don't mix with people from the rural areas, so it's pointless, not in everyday life. And I never teach anything about township life. I've never thought of it, nor of using Zulu magazines. But I have used some Zulu music. They liked that, started giving.
>
> Mr Khoza

In the main, however, staff either ignored this dimension altogether, or referred vaguely to possibilities which might exist in their subject, but which they, for a variety of reasons had not taken advantage of. Verbatim comments from the Art, Biology and Drama teachers are given in Appendix C, part 31, and show how they had often followed the interests of vociferous white pupils, had been restricted to what was available in the library, or had dealt with such aspects scantily because of pressure to get through the syllabus.

This Eurocentric bias in the curriculum did not go unnoticed by the pupils. Appendix C, part 32, provides a series of comments which show how pupils recognised that the work they did in subjects outside the Integrated Studies curriculum focused on the European tradition and perspectives, with little incorporation of Eastern or African dimensions. Where less Eurocentric material was included in the curriculum, it was often a vehicle for learning subject-related content, and not open for discussion. Linda, a white girl in Standard 6, makes this point in the context of work done in Speech and Drama, and comments reporting on other subjects in this context are given in Appendix C, parts 32 and 36:

> If we see a political play we'll discuss it, but she limits the discussion. I think she's scared. She'll stick to drama discussions in class, never takes it to the point where it gets political. We'll discuss characters, how they were portrayed, what the themes were. The conversation is very limited. Everything is discussed on the Speech and Drama syllabus basis, not our opinions.

To a large extent the curriculum content was tightly controlled by the teachers, and where 'stimulus' material was brought in, it was determined by their view of what was appropriate to the pupils. At best it was innocuous, if irrelevant, such as the sort of themes the Afrikaans teacher chose for the pupils to write about:

> In Standard 8 I give them topics to talk about - clothes, the river, flowers, water. I try to keep within the limits of their world, but that's difficult to determine.
>
> Ms Marshall

At its worst it was fundamentally sexist, as is shown by this view of the English teacher, Ms Clarke:

> I want to use more magazines - Cosmopolitan, Femina and Fair lady for the girls, Style and You for both and Car Magazine, Financial Mail and Sports magazines for the bo[illegible] current material, they can pick up errors, the audience [illegible] style the writer used, and for what reason. These [illegible] talk for language. I'll encourage them to wri[illegible] trials for a particular magazine - aimed at the re[illegible] the comprehension in the JMB exam is from a page [illegible] ure the sorts of questions asked, as in a cubic [illegible] g them for their Matric exam.

Occasionally, in certain other classes, teachers did make some attempt to include some discussion of non-syllabus related issues they believed to be important. Quotations that illustrate some of these efforts are given in Appendix C, part 33, and make clear the generally secondary importance given to this aspect of their work.

There was little opportunity for discussion of topics of direct social or personal relevance, though in Speech and Drama it was perforce part of the work:

> When we discuss the plays, though we focus on the contextual questions, we do talk about other things. When you do any type of education you're learning about life in general - and in the Speech and Drama class you can look at the meaning of life, and that's what we do. In the Glass Menagerie, the whole issue of family, being a mother with no husband, having a child with polio, how people can withdraw from reality. It's so appropriate in our school, there are lots of kids with only a mother or only a father. It's amazing the things they come out with. In The Doll's House the whole thing of woman's lib came up. I had people shouting and screaming. Jabu was telling them that a woman's place is in the kitchen. In People are Living There we talked about the whole futility of life and how people try to escape reality by dreaming. It was strange to them that people

could be sympathetic. I asked them to think of people like that, and they did. It was wonderful. They must link the world and themselves, not be in a bubble.

Ms Williams

Indrin, an Indian boy in Standard 8, reflects on this part of the work of the Speech and Drama Department:

> We don't have much opportunity to get to know ourselves and each other in class. It does happen in IS, and sometimes in Drama. In Season of Drama we did experiments with blank masks, and we all became a new characters, and began talking to each other. I like to think our inner selves came out. My character was insecure and wanted recognition, and every one of these people, it was theirs as well.

But this is the only curriculum area outside Integrated Studies where this dimension of learning was noted by the pupils, and even here, it is a very small part of the work, as Jenny, a white girl in Standard 9, recounts:

> She sometimes notes from books and reads them to us. I'm not illiterate. I can read at home. It's literature we're doing, and we hardly do any analysis, and if we do, she tells us what we must say. She tells us everything, we don't tell her. We don't do much prac work - she doesn't think it's important. We've done a little voice work, and some improvisation, but not that often.

Clearly, these instances were in the minority, as Barry, a white boy in Standard 6, noted:

> IS is different from the other subjects. In Science, say, you'd arrive. 'To-day you're doing blood. Take a blood sample. Read your book. Write a paragraph, and tomorrow there'll be a test.' It was based on the learning side, and IS is based on learning and being with people.

There was a general tendency for teachers to avoid social and political debate in their classes, or to control it very carefully if it was unavoidable. Ms Clarke held this view on the matter in the context of teaching English:

> Ms Cherry and I don't discuss our work much, though we do discuss how far we've got. I know when Claudius killed Polonius she had two class discussions on capital punishment, how it should be handled, how it is handled in South Africa. It didn't arise in my class, kids didn't bring it up, neither did I. I would feel it's off the point, not related to the play. I feel I've got an academic class, there's pressure of exams - and there are opportunities elsewhere to discuss these things. I wouldn't disallow it entirely if it arose, but I wouldn't allow two periods. Shakespeare is talking about universal truths, material that is relevant to any time, so it is important from that point of view. But not to go on with it.

She similarly believed that some discussion of current events could be allowed if there was time after a thorough mastery of the facts required by the syllabus. (See Appendix C, part 34 for verbatim comment)

Many consciously attempted to keep political discussion out of their classes. Both Ms Clarke, and Mr Deventer, the senior Afrikaans teacher, had strong views on this issue. The former felt she was not competent to deal with such issues:

> I am child centred. I believe in group work. But we have a set programme of work to get through, and sometimes I find that other issues intrude and the work just slides away. I am not prepared to have political discussions in my class. It's not the place. I'm not a political animal, and I'm not competent to cope with those. I find it quite difficult in History when we're doing South Africa.

Mr Deventer believed that in his subject, Afrikaans, pupils did not have the language skills to deal with socio-political topics. (See Appendix C, part 35 for verbatim comment)

Apart from Ms Chetty, only Ms Stocks, the Accountancy and Business Economics teacher, believed that there was a role for political debate in her classroom, and actively encouraged it:

> The syllabus is such rubbish. They just need to learn the facts. I insist on point form - there's no need even for sentences. We spend our time talking about issues. Like we talked about MP. Phatela had a lot to say about it, and it's very interesting to hear the black students' point of view. In the first term we do a lot of international trade - it's my favourite section, and it asked them be politically aware. And there's always some financial crisis for them to be aware of and do some research on.
>
> Ms Stocks

This pupil's comments on the work in this subject corroborate the account of the teacher:

> I find BE interesting. Mrs Stocks hates textbooks. She's very open to discussion, and is a lot of fun. She'll discuss the black and white business, and how each one wants to cope up. She asked us what we thought about sanctions, and she said we should consider that it'll affect black and white, and that blacks will suffer most. I agree with her, though I think many of them are willing to do this.
>
> Teenager, IG in Std 9

The Zulu teacher made some attempt to discuss relevant issues in the lives of her black pupils in the context of their work on their setwork, a translation of Cry the Beloved Country, but felt that such discussion was inappropriate for the white children learning Zulu:

> In the Zulu class we're reading the Zulu version of Cry the Beloved Country. We read a passage, and then discuss - things like what's happening in the story, and the characters, and the situation in South Africa - like somewhere they were going to Alex, and at the bus terminus someone asked them not to board because people were on strike - and this happens to-day. People strike 'cos the prices go up and they don't have enough money to pay. And the difference is that to-day, if you're brave enough to stir up a strike you get arrested. It was not like that in those days. I never discuss anything like this with the white kids. It'll be difficult for them to fit that situation. They don't experience it, and will think it's not true. The wouldn't believe that people live in a drum that's cut in the middle. They wouldn't believe me. These know that, they see it. It is important that the white kids are made aware, but they would not believe me. I don't talk to the white kids. They will tell their parents and they will say, 'We didn't send our kids to school to talk politics.' So I feel it's wise just to discuss such things with the other group. So with the white kids I do Zulu and only Zulu.
>
> Ms Khoza

Numerous accounts of pupils confirm the assertion that little work of personal relevance for pupils was done in most mainstream classes, and that very little discussion of political and social issues was either introduced or discussed. A selection of these is given in Appendix C, part 36.

2.3 Teaching styles and strategies

Methodology outside the Integrated Studies programme was generally directed toward the transmission of content, with little emphasis on strategies that encouraged personal or social learning. There was little experiential learning.

In Science, the teacher feared damage to property and persons if the pupils engaged in practical work:

> They don't really do many experiments. We haven't got the equipment - and enough gets broken on the side, and it's a hassle to replace. Also, I don't think they learn much from doing it themselves. Ms Watt used to let the B's do work with light - but, I dunno - they play around with the equipment - so don't think they get much out of it.

> And some of the reactions can be dangerous. They take time to 'go', and they look at them and can get hot substances in their eyes. So, none of my class do experiments themselves.
>
> Mr Banks

The Biology teacher had found that discovery-based learning took a lot of planning, and that in fact straight teaching was a more effective way of getting through the mass of material:

> Discovery is a good way of teaching - but it takes a lot of forethought - and you're often in a position where it's easier to give it to them. Also, many kids want you to give them the facts so they can learn them, and get marks. A lot of what you're taught about teaching is ideal. You end up going in and sprouting facts, and they sit there and listen. It's boring. The volume of work is also a problem. You just have to plod on.
>
> Ms Green

But, of course, certain aspects of a subject like Speech and Drama demanded alternative teaching strategies that developed social and personal skills:

> I do exercises to get them to form bonds. They must touch each other, lie on each other, trust each other. We do that one where one falls backwards and the others catch them. And that links them up in such a strong bond. It cuts across the racial cliques. I do those in a double period sometimes - at least twice per month if I can.
>
> Ms Williams

In other subjects, methodology was related to perceived social learning needs. The Afrikaans teacher allowed some work in pairs as she felt this developed friendships (though she was not concerned about these across race lines) and also gave pupils confidence in their oral work; the junior Biology teacher also encouraged group work, but primarily to aid learning; one Mathematics teacher encouraged pupils to work in pairs so that they could help each other with the work. Teachers' comments related to the use of pair and group work are given in Appendix C, part 37, and pupils' verbatim comments, shown in Appendix C, part 38, give the reasons for teachers using pair work and group, but also show how little use was generally made of this strategy.

Most lessons were noticeably teacher centred. One quotation, given here, expresses common threads in many. (See also Appendix C, part 39):

> In Standard 8, they're a rowdy group. I've taught by, ' You sit and I'll explain and you sit listen.' My main way of teaching is to give them a hand-out and talk to it while they listen. With paperwork, I'll show an example, then go round to the kids I know are weak.
>
> Mr Parks

In general, very little discussion was encouraged, though Business Economics was an exception, where pupils' contributions were seen as important parts of the content of the lesson:

> In Business Economics one can step and let people talk. Nkhonzani Nxumalo usually has a lot to say - her father has a Kentucky Fried Chicken franchise, and Krishna's mother makes clothes for business - they can offer us a lot in class, which is super.
>
> Ms Steele

Classroom observation invariably confirmed the view that teacher-centred, content transmission was the prevalent pedagogy in most classes observed, and a plethora of comments from interviews with pupils confirms that the selection of lessons I observed represented the range adequately. Anthony's description could have been of any one of a number of classes, by any one of many pupils:

> He teaches well. But he's a teacher, that's all. He's not interested in what you feel, in discussing political things to do with South Africa unless they are really part of the syllabus. He teaches us. He explains to us. He teaches you what's going on, and then you discuss it. We come in, he sits down, he reads the book, and we follow. He'll tell us things, and if we don't understand, we'll ask some questions about what's stated. If it's paperwork we'll practise. He decides what we'll do, we come and do it, and then we go.
>
> Anthony, WB in Std 8

Appendix C, part 40, gives a large number of comments about a variety of subjects in which it is clear that pupils were aware of: the lack of practical work; the absence of experiential learning; the teacher centred, fact-transmission teaching style; the lack of opportunity for them to engage with material; and the use of whole class teaching rather than pair- or group-work that were the norm in the mainstream classes.

In contrast to the attitudes of the teachers in Integrated Studies, teachers elsewhere were generally concerned to show the pupils who was in charge. These sentiments are well expressed here by Ms Green, while Mr Parks' and Ms Clarke's similar statements are given in Appendix C, part 41:

> It took me a while to feel confident with the idea that in your classroom you're the boss - you set the parameters, and the kids must fit in.

Pupils had a variety of responses to the very different teaching st_ ~ and approaches in Integrated Studies and the rest of the curriculum. Earlier comments have made it clear that many pupils enjoyed the freedom Integrated Studies offered to follow their own interests, to explore their own and others' attitudes and values, to be creative, and to develop self-discipline. At the same time, it must be said that many pupils also enjoyed the more structured life of other classes, found them less demanding, and the subjects and teachers interesting.

Beauty gives her views of why she found History enjoyable:

> Well, he's a wonderful teacher. He knows how to teach, can express himself so we understand. He's very interesting. He doesn't just tell you the facts. He adds something to it. Tells us something funny to make us laugh. We do the writing work, summarising from the book, or from what he's told you.
>
> Beauty, BG in Std 8

Tessa enjoyed Geography for not unrelated reasons:

> Mr Parks is a good teacher. He teaches us like we were two-year-olds - so it's easy to understand, though a lot of students don't like it. He sort of feeds it into us. We don't have much discussion. He'll tell us about what he's seen in his life, and then go back to what he's teaching us.
>
> Tessa, WG in Std 8

Similar c ents can be found for other subjects in Appendix C, part 40.

For others, these characteristics made some classes stifling, and pupils found the way of teaching meaningless. Camilla remarks on this for Science, and Nadine for English, and others are to be found in Appendix D, part 40:

> I do well in Science, but find it quite boring. He's more a fact teacher. He likes giving facts, and writing down facts, and that's what he wants to get across. A lot of people don't understand science, but know the facts he's told you. He does all the experiments, so what's the point - to prove the facts.
>
> Camilla, WG in Std 8

> I've found English with Mrs Clarke very disappointing. She's into getting a good Matric. Somehow I think she's got a very narrow outlook on things. Poems tend to have a straightforward meaning, and you're not allowed to argue with her.
>
> Nadine, M2 in Std 8

Many pupils felt resigned to this way of teaching. It was something that had to be endured. It was meaningless, but it got one through the Matriculation examination:

> Well, in Biology, we'd come in , and she'd give us a lecture. You could take notes if you wanted to, though she said it was all in the book. At the end you could ask questions. Now and again we'd do a prac. It was OK. My marks were quite good in Bio - it's a kind of a swotting subject, and you can learn parrot fashion and still get a good mark.
>
> Joy, F2 in Std 8

3. The work in senior English

As I have implied elsewhere, the work done by Ms Chetty was different from that of the other English teacher and the majority of other non-Integrated Studies teachers in that she consciously chose to incorporate non-Eurocentric material, often wi political theme, into the work in her English class. Her , make clear her intention to use literature whose context will be familiar to black pupils, and where the realities of social interaction in South Africa can be addressed in the classroom:

> I've just read Waiting for the Barbarians. I would rather use that with the kids than I Wo 'd on Ow1 Call My Name. It's difficult. But it's important for the children to do some work that raises South African issues. It's also important for children to do work that is not in their world view. Americans, British and French do their 'own' literature, but South African children seldom do. It'd good for black children to be able to identify with the world view in the books they're reading. In fact, in Waiting for the Barbarians they'll not only be familiar, but will also be ten steps ahead of the white kids. It will be nice for them not to be alienated from the literature they're studying.

And:

> I have shown them a film on the change, with the Renaissance, from a stereotyped view, to one of seeing individuals. I think this is important in the South African context. I ..ew some of the common stereotypes from the children in the previous lesson - whites as rich and oppressive; blacks as stupid and lazy; Coloureds as drunken buffoons and Indians as cunning, rich and exploitative.

She felt that, by dealing with relevant mate ; ... ils (and others) would be motivated to work more productively:

> I'm trying to get my students to see that they have power - and can put words into action - and look how much work they do when it's relevant. Cecilia had that letter (response to white staff's refusal to attend a party for the black staff) written and photocopied at the end of the day - and we only decided on it at lunch. Look at how much Ridiseti has written on a future education system for South Africa.

In her classes, too, pupils had much say in what was discussed, steered the debate, and agreed on the programme of work. She expresses her views on her relationship with her pupils in reflecting on the other English teacher's reaction to it:

> Ms Clarke said she felt things had got out of control. I said, 'They are in control. I can be in control without being authoritarian. I like the group to see the need for limits and set their own, rather than having them imposed.' She said she's more conservative than I.

There is no doubt that the differences in Ms Chetty's English classes were obvious to the pupils. Her classes were notably less teacher-centred, provided much opportunity for pupil debate and exploration of views, dealt with material that was socially and politically relevant to the pupils and encompassed the black pupils' world view. The pupils felt that they learnt not only academic content and skills, but also grew as people in terms of insight into themselves, others in the class, and the society in which they lived.

Much of the supporting material from pupils interviews is to be found in Appendix C, part 42, but some pertinent quotations here will serve to elaborate on the nature of the differences, and to substantiate generalisations made about the nature of her work.

Rajeesh, an Indian boy in Standard 9, comments on the links made between the syllabus and broader issues:

> English is the subject I enjoy most. We do our syllabus work, and at the same time relate it to the outside world, and discuss it. It's the only subject where we do this. Like, when we do Macbeth, we link it to the State of Emergency. We get a mixture of everyone's opinion, and learn about other students. I suppose we do it in English 'cos it's possible here and not in subjects like Maths and Science.

According to Mzamani, a black boy in Standard 9, she made it possible for everyone to feel they had something worth contributing to the class discussion. And the stimulating topics and interest he had in them encouraged him to speak in class, which he felt improved his English:

> We learn about the outside world and each other. And my English got better. Your English improves when you do core talking and discussing and arguing. When you speak the language, it's easier to learn it. In other classes, the way you're situated it's blacks, and whites, so you don't talk English all the time. In other classes we just respond, or ask a question. In Ms Chetty's class it was our views, and that was what was important to her and to us - other people's views. In other classes we don't have a chance to share, we don't have much discussion. We don't do anything to do with black life in Maths and Science - they're not that sort of subject. In BE we do discuss who can have a business where. The blacks don't own shops in Johannesburg, especially in the centre of town. Ms Steele is open. She would hear your views, and give hers. Not like in English where everyone gives views.

Rajiv, an Indian boy in Standard 9, felt that he had got to know other pupils in his class better:

> I enjoyed English a hell of a lot, and 'coz I enjoy it so much I got my best mark ever for English. The discussions we had. It wasn't a normal kind of school thing. The normal curriculum was interesting the way she did it. Sometimes we messed around a bit, but we got the work done. We learnt a lot about the stuff we were doing, and also through discussion became friendlier with a lot of people in my class than I would have been. It's natural, too, that if you enjoy a subject you work harder than at a subject you don't enjoy so much.

And Rodger, a white boy in Standard 9, noted the way in which the work was negotiated with the class:

> I was in Ms Chetty's class. I think it was good. The thing I learnt was discussions. She didn't give us her opinions. We had to push ours forward, and back it up. She taught us how to back up a statement. She'd discuss with us what we were going to do. She wouldn't come in and say, 'Right, we're doing this.' She'd say, 'We've got to do this book of poems. How would you like to approach it?' If our way wasn't OK for Matric she'd say why, and we'd reach a compromise.

4. Summary and discussion

From the descriptions of their aims, how they go about their work, and their reflections on it, it seems clear that for the majority of the staff not involved in the Integrated Studies programme, a different set of priorities prevailed from those of the Integrated Studies teachers. There was far more emphasis on the acquisition

of concepts and skills directly related to the subjects of the conventional school programme. The standard school syllabus was followed to a large degree, even in the classes where there were no external examinations. By the Standard 9 and 10 years the focus in all classes was on direct preparation for the Matriculation examination.

Some teachers attempted to incorporate in their work material that they believed to be relevant to the children's experience and interests. In the main, the choice of material was decidedly Eurocentric and, in certain cases, sexist in its orientation to the interests of boys and girls. Some of the teachers allowed discussion of relevant issues, but controlled the scope of these. In one of the English classes, in Afrikaans, in Art and in the mixed Zulu class, political debate was consciously avoided if possible. The reasons for this were varied - the teachers felt they would not be able to deal with the emotions that arose; they felt the time was needed for dealing with 'proper' content; they felt the pupils did not have the vocabulary to deal with issues in a language not their own; they feared the response of white parents; they believed that the black children were unable to discuss sensitive issues in an unemotive and unbiased way.

In Business Economics, time was given to the discussion of contentious issues, with the teacher recognising that it was not possible to separate political and economic issues. The Zulu teacher had spent some time on discussion of political events in South Africa with her black group, but had not felt empowered to do the same with the whites.

Only one teacher, Ms Chetty, consciously attempted to politicise the curriculum, and to create deliberately linkages between the content of her lessons and the political climate in both the country as a whole, and the school. She was the only teacher who in any way encouraged the pupils to challenge their own and each others' views of the world, and the conditions that they took for granted.

The concern about a Eurocentric bias expressed by the Integrated Studies teachers was absent from most of the other teachers' reflections on their work. The Art, and Speech and Drama teachers made reference to it, and to attempts to incorporate aspects of other cultures in their curricula. Neither felt that the had had much success, nor that they had given much attention to the issue. The Zulu teacher had made a short-lived foray into work on Zulu culture, but had felt that this was irrelevant to her pupils' lives, and had not persisted. The junior Biology teacher dealt with issues of interest to black children in her class when they were able to raise them without the white children steering the lesson.

In terms of methodology, it was clear that in most classes there was a predominance of teacher-centred pedagogy. In Afrikaans some time was given to oral work and dramatisations where the pupils worked in pairs to prepare presentations on topics of their choice. In Zulu, some use was made of game-playing, but really in the form of drill routines. Some discussion took place in English, Geography and History and Speech and Drama but, in the main, except in Ms Chetty's class, the emphasis was on the transmission of content and the acquisition of academic skills necessary for success in the Matriculation examination.

Few teachers made any reference to the development of any aspects of their pupils' learning other than that which would lead to academic success. The few exceptions were the Art teacher, who saw the development of individual creativity as important, the Speech and Drama teacher, who had a sense that the establishment of trust and the breaking of racial barriers should be part of her work, and the junior Afrikaans teacher who hoped that pair work would help pupils get to know each other. One Mathematics teacher expressed concern about the racial division of the class when they were streamed, and the Afrikaans Department, too, felt that this negative social effect outweighed possible academic benefits and would not be repeated. The Biology teachers hoped that a respect for natural systems and processes, and a conservation ethic would

develop through the learning of their subject, and the teacher of Junior Biology was concerned about the pros and cons of the racial divide that characterised her classes.

However, in none of the classes were the exploration of social and political issues, of interpersonal relationships, of racism and sexism major considerations in devising teaching strategies and in choosing and incorporating teaching materials. At best, in some classes, there was sufficient freedom for the pupils to bring in such issues if they felt them of interest. What was clear, too, was that in these informal discussions, which were not a major feature of any of the classrooms, it was generally the needs and interests of the more vociferous white pupils that were addressed. In the main, whole-class teaching predominated, with some recourse made to pair work in junior Afrikaans and in Mathematics, and to occasional group work in junior Biology and in Speech and Drama.

An exception to these general comments on the subjects outside the Integrated Studies programme was the work of Ms Chetty. I think it would be true to say that it was only in Integrated Studies, and in Ms Chetty's English classes, that innovative education was to be seen in the school, and where the teachers were clearly in touch with at least some of the realities of life that the black pupils from the townships brought to school with them.

Pupils' comments show that the pupils, too, perceived differences between Integrated Studies and the rest of the curriculum, and between work done in Ms Chetty's English class and elsewhere. In general, it seems that the teachers' views of their courses and the ways in which they went about their work were mirrored by the pupils.

The differences in approach that existed between Integrated Studies, on the one hand, and the rest of the curriculum, generally (with the exception of Ms Chetty's work), on the other hand, created a tension on the staff that was remarked on by almost all the teachers we spoke to, and which had led, even in the

years prior to my research year, to bitter and heated debate among the members of staff. The differences in approach to curriculum would have existed at the school regardless of the presence of the black pupils. Ms Singer, the French teacher, encapsulates the essence of the debate on one level thus:

> One of the main issues at the school is the issue of our Matric results and what we are aiming for. Are we aiming for straight A's and pushing them to get A's like Rascalin does, or are we aiming at a more holistic view of education? And can we do both?

The debate turned into something of a battle as it focused on the work of the Integrated Studies department. Mr Park, the senior History/Geography teacher acknowledged the value of some of the work done in Integrated Studies, but felt that this was in no way as important as the building of a sound knowledge base on which he could develop toward Matriculation examination success:

> In a lot of ways, I don't know much about IS, but I'm working with the products of pupils in Standard ' and 10 History at the moment who have come through the whole system of Integrated studies and although their whole command of language and their whole process ..ion of work is above normal, as I've come to expect from children of that particular age group, I find that fundamental issues in History like the French revolution and the rise of au. -powers and conflict between East and West, in many instances, has passed those kids by. I think the whole idea of Integrated Studies is a wonderful idea. But, personally, I feel that if I continue in my .ole of History and Geography teacher, I would need to have a greater input into Integrated Studies to specify certain events in the world and South African History that it would be absolutely fundamental that the kids have a knowledge of before they get to my classes. Some of the things they do in Integrated Studies - for a week or month they do human relations or conflict - these are all very important issues of study that need to be bridged by these kids - but I feel at the same time they are missing out on the more day-to-day routine.

Although he acknowledged the value of much of what was done in Integrated Studies, because it had, in his opinion, no bearing on success in the Matriculation examination, it had no real value as an integral part of the pupils' curriculum. Thus, because of the difference in approach and in emphasis in their work, he felt that there was no possibility of his working with the Integrated Studies team. The only way was for him to gain control of his subject in Standard 8:

> There is no possibility of solution. I'm teaching for an exam. They say they are educating. Anyway, IS is doomed. The content will have to be a function of the demands placed on it by all departments in the school. They're not qualified to teach half the subjects. I'm not going to stop till I get History as a separate subject in Standard 8

The Head of the Integrated Studies team, had the following to say about the debate:

> There is a tension between achieving results that can be measured in terms of academic symbols and achieving results that possibly cannot be measured, but eventually be found in people who are equipped for life.
>
> Mr Jones

The extreme differences in approach to education were summed up by the Counsellor in his comment about a discussion held between Mr Jones and Mr Parks concerning the possibility of their working more closely together:

> To be honest, I don't want to talk about it. All I can say is that one person was talking French, and the other Zulu, and one taking it down in English.

It was a difference of perspective that was to lead to the dismissal from the school of two of the Integrated Studies teachers - Mr Jones and Ms Chetty, either in the research year or the year immediately following it, and to a situation whereby two years after our research, Integrated Studies as described here no longer existed at Riverbend.

The presence of black pupils, and the different perceptions of the impact of their presence on curriculum, exacerbated the differences in the approaches.

In the context of the perspectives on multicultural education reviewed in the Chapter 3, the school curriculum could be seen as being broadly assimilationist. For the majority of teachers on the staff, the basic underpinning premise was that the school, which had for a large part of its history been white, should continue more-or-less unchanged now that it admitted black pupils. The validity of the Matriculation examination was acknowledged as a significant measure of educational progress, and the school's task was seen to be that of ensuring that pupils were taught in such a

way that they achieved as much success as possible in it. Generally, appropriate teaching was seen as that in which the teacher was firmly in control, decided what knowledge was relevant, and imparted it using a fairly formal whole class-organisation. Scant attention was paid to the affective dimensions of education, and effort was directed toward the acquisition of content and skills seen as necessary for success at Matriculation level. Material that was not Eurocentric, or which included an understanding of socio-economic political issues in South Africa, was not considered relevant for their educational objectives. The status quo, in which white children had relevant knowledge and skills for success in the school system, and were rewarded for it, was unchallenged by this group.

The second group of teachers comprised largely the Integrated Studies teachers and the senior English teacher, but also some aspects of the junior Biology and Accountancy teachers' work. Their work be seen as belonging more to the integrationist, and even, in the case of the senior English teacher, the reconstructionist approach to multicultural education. This group of teachers acknowledged the validity of black pupils' experience and background, and accorded it significance in the curriculum. The Integrated Studies teachers and Ms Chetty placed emphasis on the social and affective dimensions of learning, and strove to increase cross-race understanding and association. Their lessons were notably pupil-centred, and they made an effort to democratise the learning process.

The debate about appropriate curriculum was given added impetus by the differential achievement of black and white pupils within the school system. The generally poorer Matriculation results of the black pupils added fuel to the fire of the most conservative teachers. They increasingly called for the teaching lower down in the school to focus on the content and skills of direct relevance to the needs of pupils at Matriculation level. At the same time, it sharpened the more radical teachers' belief that what was needed was a change in curriculum content and approach which would

incorporate more of the background and experience of black pupils, give greater opportunity for cross-race friendships, and affirm black pupils within the school system. It is to aspects of this achievement pattern, strategies for dealing with it, and the further curriculum debate it engendered, that I will turn my attention in the following chapters.

CHAPTER 5. ACHIEVEMENT PATTERNS AT RIVERBEND

Clearly, one of the main aspects of pupil response to the curriculum is that of academic performance. Given the interest in relative academic achievement among different racial groups, which forms the focus of so much of the literature in multicultural education, it seemed appropriate to examine the pattern of achievement in the case study school.

While the thrust of analysis of Riverbend has been within the interpretive paradigm, in the first part of this chapter recourse is made to quantitative techniques to supplement and contextualize the more subjective discussion of achievement patterns which forms the focus of the second part.

Because of the small number of so-called 'Coloured' children in the school, it was decided to leave them out of the statistical analysis. This means that attention is focused on the black, white and Indian groups as defined in the introductory chapter. The central questions explored in this chapter are, 'What is the pattern of academic performance within the school?' And, 'Are differences in performance among race groups statistically significant?'

In keeping with the general trend in this work, no attention will be paid to patterns related to gender.

1. Statistical analysis of patterns of achievement

In this school, academic achievement is measured by an external, nationally-based examination (the Matriculation examination) only at the end of the Standard 10 (form V) year. For the rest, academic performance is gauged by teachers on the basis of internal assessments which include in-class tests, written and oral as-

signments, sometimes group-based and sometimes individual, and, in some, but not all subjects, on end of year examinations. Thus two measures of academic performance are used - the set of symbols awarded by the Matriculation examiners, and the set of marks assigned by teachers to the pupils, and recorded as a percentage at the end of each term. Apart from the final Matriculation symbols, then, all marks that measure achievement are those assigned by the teachers. None of the tests have the sort of reliability and validity usually required of tests of achievement for statistical purposes, but do reflect the kind of assessment on which the staff of the case study school measured pupil performance. In this sense, they have meaning for the interpretation of ability and performance within the context of the case study. They reflect the pupils' achievement in terms of the standards set by their teachers, and on the basis of criteria deemed important by the teachers. They afford some measure of differentiation of academic performance among the pupils.

In certain classes pupils were streamed according to teachers' views of their ability. No distinction is made between streams in the analysis of marks in this chapter as these were derived from tests and assignments that were written by all pupils in a class, regardless of stream. Streaming gives an insight into achievement patterns within the school, and so the composition of streamed classes is examined in this chapter. The rationale for, and implications of, streaming within the school are discussed elsewhere.

In the higher standards, the formal dimension of streaming is expressed in the choice between Higher and Standard grade. After the decision to take a certain subject on Higher or Standard grade, (made initially in the Standard 9 year, and subsequently intermittently in Standard 10) pupils wrote different end-of-year examinations according to this distinction. The analysis of marks in this chapter considers only Higher grade candidates in Standard 9 because of the small numbers who chose the Standard 9 at this

level. Clearly, which pupils are channelled into the Standard grade is an issue of importance, and is given attention in the section that analyses Matriculation attainment.

The pupils in 1987 had the option of writing the National Senior Certificate examination instead of that set by the Joint Matriculation Board. Within the school itself, the only subjects in Standard 9 in which differential assessment procedures were based on this distinction were English and Afrikaans, where different setworks were studied. In Standard 10, all tests and and examinations were based on this distinction. Thus, in Standard 9 English and Afrikaans, marks have been analysed separately for JMB and NSC, but no distinction has been made in other subjects. In Standard 10, a distinction needs to be made between candidates for the NSC and those for the JMB examination in all subjects. The strong racial bias of the selection for the NSC, however, has meant that in Standard 10 only one white pupil elected to write the NSC examinations, and all the others were Indian. Here, therefore, only the marks of JMB candidates have been analysed for racial difference in performance. After 1988, as mentioned previously, the NSC option was no longer offered, and all pupils wrote the JMB.

The fact that the Matriculation results are given in symbols, not marks, means that the statistical technique used for their analysis differs from that used for the marks within the school - as was elaborated on in Chapter 2 and will be referred to again later.

The fundamental question asked in this chapter, 'Are there significant differences in performance between the groups?' requires the application of several different statistical procedures. These are more fully referred to in Chapter 2, and attention here will be paid to the results and their analysis.

The literature review stressed the importance of considering differential performance in different subjects (Kelly, 1983), and for this reason the analysis that follows is organised around the different subjects that form the academic curriculum of the school. The analysis will focus first on the internally assessed performance of the pupils, and then on that based on external assesement (Matriculation examination results).

1.1 Analysis of the school-based marks

Firstly, in the case of differences among the three race groups, the Kruskall-Wallis one-way analysis of variance by ranks was used.

This test was chosen for the initial analysis of the differences in performance among black, Indian and white pupils as measured by the school's internal assessment procedures. It tests the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference in performance among the three race groups that form significant components of the school population.

Secondly, in cases where a significant difference in performance among the groups was found to exist, a Mann-Whitney test, also described in Chapter 2, was applied to ascertain the nature of the difference. This test was also used in cases where there were pupils from only two of the three race groups taking a subject. The null hypothesis was that there was no significant difference between the groups. The analysis of the internally assessed performance of pupils looked at the performance of each class in the case study year (1987) for each subject.

The main results of the Kruskall- Wallis and Mann-Whitney tests are summarised in Tables D1 - D3 in Appendix D. The class lists of ranked marks are provided in Appendix E.

The most noticeable feature of the Kruskall-Wallis tests (summarised in Table D1 in Appendix D) is that there is generally no significant difference in the distribution of the three groups' marks. However, a notable exception to this is in Integrated Studies and English, where, fairly consistently, a significant difference is indicated. The only group which does not show a significant difference at the end of the year is the Standard 10 group, and this can probably be explained by the fact that only Higher grade candidates are considered, and the weakest students (black) have been streamed into Standard grade by this time. Support for this idea is provided by the results of the X^2 test discussed later.

In addition, the Kruskall-Wallis test suggests that there are differences in the distribution of marks of the different groups in Afrikaans in Standards 6 and 9, and in Science in Standards 6 and 9.

Table D2 in Appendix D summarises the findings of the Mann-Whitney tests for those subjects where only two groups of students took the subject. The pattern described above is not changed by these, as no significant differences in performance are suggested by these results.

Because the Kruskall-Wallis test merely alerts one to significance of difference, and does not say between which groups these differences exist, nor the direction of the difference, one has to examine the results of the Mann-Whitney test for this information. (See Table D3 in Appendix D)

In Table D3 it is clearly shown that, in almost all cases where there is a difference in the distribution of marks, white pupils do significantly better than black. The only exception to this is in Standard 6 Afrikaans, and Standard 9 Afrikaans in the third term, where there is no difference between these two groups. In

Integrated Studies and Science, where there are differences among groups, the difference is consistently that of white pupils achieving better than black.

There is generally no significant difference in the performance of black and Indian pupils. Where there is a difference, as in Integrated Studies in Standard 8 and in English and Afrikaans in Standard 9, Indians do better than black pupils.

The relationship between Indian and white pupils is as expected from the description of the previous two relationships. White pupils perform better than Indian in all subjects (where the Kruskall-Wallis test indicated a difference), except Integrated Studies in Standard 8, and English and Afrikaans in Standard 9, where Indian and white pupils perform as well as each other (and better than black pupils). In Integrated Studies in Standards 6 and 7, in English in the first term of Standard 9, in Afrikaans in Standard 6 and in the third term of Standard 9, and in Science in Standards 6 and 8, white pupils do significantly better than Indian.

Thus, within the school, where any group does better than the others, it is consistently the white pupils in Integrated Studies and English, and sometimes in Afrikaans and Science. Black pupils are the worst achievers in these subjects. Indians are generally on a par with black pupils, but do perform better than them in Integrated Studies, English and Afrikaans in certain standards.

For the majority of subjects, there is no significant difference in performance among the groups. However, the subjects in which there is a difference tend to be core curriculum subjects, and certainly in the case of Afrikaans and English, key subjects for access to higher education via the Matriculation examination. Mathematics is a notable exception to the pattern of white pupils performing better than black in the core curriculum subjects. It must be noted, that, while there was no statistically significant difference in the performance of white and black pupils, certain

comments about differences can be made. In Standard 6, in the third term, the difference tended toward significance. Out of a class of 50 pupils, there were no black pupils in the first twelve performers. At the same time, the bottom eight were white or Indian.

This pattern is repeated in both terms in Standard 7, with black pupils absent from both the top and bottom scoring group. In Standard 8 in the third term, there is only one black pupil in the top 12 group (out of 51 pupils). By Standard 9, there are black pupils nearer the top, but still not within more than the top five.

It should be noted, too, that it is in Standard 6 that the greatest numbers of subjects show a statistical difference in achievement between the groups - Integrated Studies, Afrikaans, General Science, and Mathematics tending toward significance.

The composition of streamed classes reflects the differences highlighted by the statistical analysis. Generally, where streaming occurred, the top group had a larger share of white than black pupils, while the converse was true for the bottom groups. Tables in Appendix F show this pattern for the classes where streaming was done. The pattern of little significant difference in Mathematics is reflected in the composition of the streamed classes in this subject. (See Tables F1, F4, F9, and F12) Standard 6 is the exception. However, the tendency toward significance is given form by the racial split in the top and bottom classes, and the higher representation of white pupils in the top classes. (See Table F1) In addition, in Standards 7 and 8 in particular, the predominance of white pupils in the very top group in Mathematics (the accelerated group) is also shown by the streaming pattern. (Tables F4 and F9)

1.2 Analysis of Matriculation results and choice of grade of examination.

While it would have been interesting to analyse difference in the distribution of pupils' marks in the Matriculation examination in the same way as was done for marks based on internal assessment, this was not possible as the Matriculation results are given as symbols, not percentages. As was explained in Chapter 2, a X^2 test was applied to the data in the Matriculation examination.

The analysis of the internally assessed performance of pupils looked at the performance of each class in the case study year (1987) for each subject. This was to provide a detailed picture of performance within the school linked to the curriculum for each class. For the Matriculation results, however, only one class (Standard 10) wrote the examination in 1987. All others wrote in the four subsequent years.(1988-1991). The performance in the Matriculation examination was a response to the curriculum over the entire period of the pupils' time at the school, and not just to that of the case study year (among all other influences on performance). A detailed year-by-year analysis of Matriculation results would not yield any data of real value, particularly as the children writing the examination were generally significantly changed from those who had been in each class in the case study year. In addition, the small numbers of certain groups in each Matriculation class meant that the minimum frequency requirements of the X^2 test would not be met. For these reasons, this analysis of Matriculation results considers all standards of pupils who were in the school during the case study as one group, and considers patterns of performance in the Matriculation examination for all these classes combined. The questions being asked thus become, 'What is the pattern of performance in Matriculation for the five years from 1987 to 1991?' 'Are there significant differences in the proportions of black, white and Indian pupils passing the Matriculation examination with a University Entrance (as opposed to a School Leaving) certificate?' and, 'Are there significant

differences in the proportions of black, white and Indian pupils passing each subject on the Higher (as opposed to the Standard) grade?'

1.2.1 Analysis of the Matriculation examination results for each subject

The tables in Appendix G show how the registration for Higher grade or Standard grade is distributed across the race groups for each subject offered for the Matriculation examination over the five years for which Matriculation results are studied. This selection of Higher or Standard grade is an indicator of both the school's and the pupil's subjective assessment of the pupil's ability in the subject, as only pupils considered unlikely to succeed at the Higher grade will have been entered for the examination at the Standard grade. The distribution of failures, regardless of whether on the Standard grade or Higher grade is also shown for each subject for each of the five years examined on these tables.

These distributions were tested for statistical difference among the groups, and the results are summarised in Table II, in Appendix I. The contingency tables used in the chi square tests are shown in Appendix H.

When the relative numbers of pupils writing the different grades of examination in different subjects is considered, a similar pattern to that suggested in the analysis of the internal marks is found. Black pupils, who were shown to perform significantly worse in English, Afrikaans and Science, are here seen to be over-represented on the Standard grade. In addition, they have significantly more failures in Physical Science, and although nowhere else showing a significant difference in achievement, have more than their share of the failures in Mathematics.

The analysis of the internally awarded marks did not show differences among the groups in Geography or Business Economics, but here black pupils are seen to be over-represented in the Standard grade.

Indian pupils are over-represented on the Standard grade in English and Geography, over-represented on the Higher grade in Science, and under-represented on the Standard grade in Business Economics, Physical Science and Mathematics.

White pupils are comparatively under-represented on the Standard grade in English, Afrikaans and Physical Science and Geography. They have more than their share of Standard grade candidates in Business Economics.

1.2.2 Analysis of the overall Matriculation results

In 1987 and 1988, pupils could choose the NSC or JMB examination (as mentioned before). Only the JMB results have been considered in these years, as this was the only examination available to pupils in the subsequent years.

Table 2, below, shows how University Exemption passes, School Leaving Certificates and failures are distributed across the race groups for the five years under scrutiny. Contingency tables set up for chi square tests of significance of difference in attainment among the groups are shown in Appendix J. Table 3, below, provides a summary of these findings

The overall results reflect the generally weaker academic position of black pupils shown in the analysis of internal marks. Here they are seen to be over-represented in the School Leaving Certificate and failure categories, and to achieve fewer than their share of the University Exemption passes. The position is the opposite for white pupils, who are over-represented in the University Exemption category, and under-represented in the School Leaving group. Indians tend to achieve results in proportion to their

numbers, and might be said to fit mid-way between the other two groups in terms of academic achievement in the Matriculation examination.

Table 2. Numbers of each group attaining a University Exemption, School Leaving Certificate, or failing Matriculation in each year from 1987 - 1991

Year	No. in class				Univ. Exemption				School leaving				Failed			
	B	I	W	Tot.	B	I	W	Tot.	B	I	W	Tot.	B	I	W	Tot
1987	5	2	14	22	2	1	11	14	2	2	1	5	1	0	2	3
1988	14	4	18	37	7	1	12	20	4	1	6	11	3	2	1	6
1989	17	7	26	50	3	5	18	26	11	1	7	19	3	1	1	5
1990	17	3	20	40	10	3	15	28	7	0	5	12	0	0	0	0
1991	21	2	24	47	5	0	19	24	14	1	5	20	2	1	0	3
Total	74	19	102	196	27	10	75	112	38	5	24	67	9	4	4	17

Table 3. Summary of findings of differences between expected and observed frequencies for race groups in the overall Matriculation results (1987 - 1991)

University Exemption	School Leaving	Fail
Fewer black pupils	More black pupils	More black pupils
Indians as expected	Indians as expected	Indians as expected
More white pupils	Fewer white pupils	Fewer white pupils

The attainment of a University exemption, and of passes on the Higher rather than the Standard grade have implications for access to further education, particularly admission to Technicon and University. It is clear from the analysis of the results here that white pupils leave school with a better chance of access to further study than do black. In the pattern of achievement in the Matriculation examination the school is not 'non-racial'.

1.3 Patterns of improvement in achievement within the school for different subjects

Final success is one aspect of achievement within a school. Another, particularly in the context of pupils from 'disadvantaged backgrounds', is the relative improvement or decline of a group's marks over the course of a year. If a school with pupils from dis-

advantage backgrounds is managing to 'make up' for this disadvantage, it would be reasonable to expect that there would be a greater relative improvement in performance among the disadvantaged than advantaged group as they 'caught up' in a climate of better educational provision.

In order to examine this aspect, the Kruskall-Wallis test was applied to ranked differences in marks attained in the first and third terms in each subject. The marks shown in Appendix E were used. The null hypothesis tested was that there was no significant difference among the groups. This null hypothesis supports the idea that no group's marks improved or declined significantly more than any other during the year in the subject for which the test is applied. Standard 10 was omitted because there are no school-based marks for the end of the third term.

Table K1 in Appendix K gives the results of the tests.

The results of the Kruskall-Wallis tests show that there is no significant difference in change of mark in any subject for any standard except in Afrikaans in Standard 6, and in Mathematics in Standard 9.

Mann-Whitney tests were performed on those subjects where only two groups took the subject (Standard 9 Speech and Drama and French), and no differences between these groups was found.

In addition, Mann-Whitney tests were done on Standard 6 Afrikaans and Mathematics in Standard 9, to find out where the difference lay. It was found that in Standard 6 Afrikaans, black pupils' marks improved significantly more than those of white or Indian pupils, and that in Standard 9 Mathematics, white pupils improved more than black but not more than Indian pupils.

It seems, from these results, that the curriculum was not serving to improve the marks of any group more than any other, except in Afrikaans in Standard 6, and in Mathematics in Standard 9. Given

the claims of the Integrated Studies team that they hoped to run a bridging programme to assist the weakest (black students), the differential in performance from beginning to end of year, as measured by the marks, does not attest to their success. The gap in English achievement did not close. In Afrikaans, in Standard 6, the greater improvement in achievement or marks among black pupils could be partly ascribable to the emphasis on extra-Afrikaans for the weakest children. Clearly, for the black pupils, but not for the Indian, this had a positive impact on relative improvement and enabled black pupils to progress more rapidly than their white and Indian counterparts in this subject at this level. The greater improvement in white pupils' marks in Standard 9 might serve to show the trend toward greater success in this subject that was not apparent lower down the school, but which manifested itself in the Matriculation results.

1.4 Discussion

The statistical analysis of the marks serves to make certain patterns of achievement clear. With regard to differences in achievement in different subjects, the main aspect seems to be that, in the core subjects of English, Afrikaans and Science, white pupils tend to perform better than black or Indian within the school. At Matriculation level, this pattern is reinforced, and, to some extent, Mathematics and geography are added to the list. In Mathematics, a greater than proportional number of black pupils take this subject on the Standard grade, or fail it at Matriculation level, and in Geography a greater than proportional number of black pupils achieve only a Standard grade pass at this level. In other subjects, this differentiation of achievement on racial grounds does not appear to be significant.

With regard to achievement at the level of the Matriculation examination as a whole, black pupils clearly underachieve, with a greater than proportional representation in the School Leaving and Failing categories, and a smaller than proportional representation in the University Exemption category.

Certain cautionary notes about the use of the statistical techniques should be made at this point. Both the Kruskall-Wallis and the Mann-Whitney tests allow for the analysis of very small samples. However, the real worth of a result which says there is no significant difference between groups when there are only two or three representatives in each group is doubtful. Thus, it might be that there would have been a different result in subjects such as Art, French, Geography and History in certain standards had the samples been bigger. The split into the NSC and JMB streams in Standards 9 and 10 of the case study year might also have affected the findings, as the weaker white pupils and most Indians tended to opt for the NSC examination.

With regard to the Matriculation results, the small samples in individual subjects might also have had an impact on the findings in certain cases. The chi square test requires a minimum number of expected frequencies in order to be reliable. This minimum expected frequency was not found in all cases, particularly in the Standard grade categories. It might be more accurate for the Standard grade representation to note the uneven spread of race groups across the Higher grade and Standard grade categories, but not make assertions about the statistical significance or otherwise of the patterns shown by this. The use of the term 'not significant', and of suggestions of significance of difference in Table 11 in Appendix I should thus be interpreted with this caution in mind.

It is interesting to note that the patterns of achievement at Matriculation level for the pupils at the school for the case study year are in keeping with a pattern noted by the school counsellor for the preceding five years. At the staff conference in September of the year, the school counsellor spelled out for staff the pattern of underachievement of the black children in the school, making it clear that it was not a new feature.

In a paper, 'Academic pressures in a changing South Africa', the Counsellor presented statistics to show the staff the under-achievement of black pupils in the Matriculation examination over the previous five years. In the table of results, the black pupils were shown in the third column, and became known as the column three's. An excerpt of his analysis is given below:

> Forty three percent of our white pupils obtained a C aggregate or higher - a truly remarkable record when one also considers that only one out of one hundred pupils has failed Matric. In 1984 our results were not as good as in previous years. In particular, our Indian group had six failures. In response, we offered the NSC as an alternative to JMB from 1985. The trend has been best of our Indian pupils do NSC, while our black pupils are 'excluded' from NSC due to its connection with the DET. So are faced with major problems with our black pupils. Seventy four perc[illegible] did not get a University exemption. I believe it is this area where we need to focus our attentions and energies.

Given the history of Apartheid Education, and the extreme differentials in Matriculation achievement among the different race groups in the country, with fewer than fifty of black pupils writing the DET examination achieving a Matriculation exemption compared with white success rates in the high nineties, there are great expectations placed by parents and pupils on the role of private schools in providing success at Matriculation level, and the access to tertiary opportunities this affords. At present, with many black pupils coming to these schools *from* a school system characterised by underprovision in all aspects, and by disruptions caused by dissatisfaction on account of this by both staff and pupils, the task of closing the gap in achievement between black and white pupils is a real challenge for open schools such as Riverbend. The need to 'produce the goods' in this regard is clearly a major factor influencing admission and curriculum policy at such schools, and was a major springboard of debate at Riverbend. It will be examined more fully in later in this report.

The statistical analysis of marks gives one dimension of achievement patterns within the school. Of equal interest is the staff and pupils' perceptions of these patterns, and of individual and group abilities, and I give attention to these aspects in the next section of this chapter.

2. Perceptions of achievement patterns

2.1 Teachers' accounts

The evidence accumulated from interviews suggests that, even though some teachers were reluctant to admit to seeing children in terms of race groups, in fact most of them had a sense of black children as a group performing less well academically than their white peers. They tended, when talking about achievement, to talk about black children as a group. Their comments refer to this group particularly, seldom to white pupils as a group. Comparisons tend also to be between black and white pupils, with the Indian pupils mentioned only by two teachers. The only teacher who consistently refused to consider that differences in performance were linked to race was one of the mathematics teachers, who taught the middle groups which were consistently mixed in composition.

Mr Parks' statement giving his perception of the general view is given below:

> The staff as a whole is very well aware that some of the pupils come here being very disadvantaged in their education, and much of what the staff does is an attempt to to fill up the backlog, fill in the gaps that some of the pupils have in certain subjects.

This Ms Driver reiterated, though somewhat reluctantly:

> When people say, 'How do black guys fare?' I want to say, 'On a par.' But it's not true. One of the problems is the kids who come in late - but many have been here since Std 6. As for the reasons, I really don't know.

Similar comments are given in Appendix L, part 1.

For the Mathematics and Afrikaans departments, the division of the classes into streams based on achievement and perceived ability made the racial discrepancies clear. Mr Welsh noted this for Mathematics for the Standard 6 year:

> If we streamed Standard 6 on Maths ability, not more than six would change places in a class of fifty. There's a strong lesson here. Having streamed on the basis of ability in language - a second language - we have effectively streamed according to colour.

Similar perceptions about the link between race and streaming in Standard 9 Mathematics, in Afrikaans, and English Skills are provided in Appendix L, part 2.

This reference to racial discrepancies in such blatant terms was not the norm, as the general ethos of the school was one in which people felt constrained not to notice colour. The school principal in fact, despite long interviews in which he revealed his anxiety about how best to deal with the problem of under achieving black students, when asked directly in a questionnaire, 'Do you think the different groups you teach have particular learning strengths or difficulties in your subject?' replied, 'No', and elaborated by saying, 'I don't think along group lines.' Other teachers' comments that display this sentiment are provided in Appendix L, part 3.

To some extent, the teachers' perceptions mirror the patterns revealed by the statistical analysis of marks, with the greatest perceived differences among groups being between black and white pupils, and the Indian pupils lying somewhere between the two, and thus not a focus of teachers' perceptions. However, the fact that the in-school results do not show significant difference in performance except in Integrated Studies/English, and in one class in Science and in Afrikaans suggests that there is some impression of pupils' ability, related to their race, that teachers are working with rather than an objective assessment of the pattern of marks. Perhaps the fact that many of the best achievers are white has dominated their view, and been more significant than the fact that many of the worst achievers in various subjects are not the black pupils. It is also possible, of course, that the profile of Matriculation results, spelled out for them by the Counsellor, influenced their view, although most teachers gave their opinions based on their knowledge of the pupils in the context of their courses.

When teachers' comments on reasons for the differences in achievement are examined, it becomes clear that the view of black pupils as lower achievers than white is very firmly held. These comments will be examined more fully after the section on pupils' accounts of achievement patterns to which I will now turn my attention.

2.2 Pupils' accounts

Many of the pupils, when asked whether they were aware of patterns of achievement, felt that there were pupils of all colours who did well and badly in all subjects, and that no patterns could be identified. Jessica, a white girl in Standard 7, states clearly the views of many others which are shown in Appendix L, part 4:

> I can't see any patterns. It's got nothing to do with skin colour what you prefer, or how well you do.

However, I think it would be true to say that for a large number of pupils, differences in achievement were perceived, and black pupils were generally seen to be weaker, either overall or in certain subjects, though there were some areas where black and Indian pupils were seen to be better than white. Negative perceptions of black performance were undoubtedly strongly held by many black pupils.

Nkhensani, a black girl in Standard 9, made the following observation:

> Riverbend might have success socially in mixing, bridging barriers, but not so much academically - even for people here from Standard 5 - don't get blacks who excel - I would like to see more of that.

Others with the same view are recorded in Appendix L, part 5.

Some of the white pupils thought that black pupils were good at subjects where memorising facts was important, but did not do well when higher order skills were required:

> They seem to do well in subjects where you're told what to do and you just have to learn it and write a test. They find it hard when it's sort of, 'Do what you want - do your speech on whatever you want.' I've been it in IS. If they are given a worksheet, they can manage well, but in a discussion they'll battle 'cos it's not quee-

> tion and answer, it's exploring, think, do whatever you want to. That's why a subject like Maths goes down easier 'cos it's dealing with figures, and figures are set.
>
> Gemma, WG in Std 8

(See Appendix L, part 6 for similar observations.)

Some students were oblique in their statements of differential ability, implying their perception, rather than stating it directly. The essence of these sorts of comments appeared to be that whites performed better than blacks, and several instances of this sort of statement are provided in Appendix L, part 7.

Many students believed that different groups were better than others at certain subjects. There was a wide, and often contradictory spread of ideas in this regard, but some patterns were fairly consistently remarked: blacks underachieve in English; Indians are good at Accountancy; blacks are good at soccer, whites at cricket, and black girls not white play netball; blacks are better than whites at singing and dancing. With regard to Mathematics and Science, some thought one group better than another, and vice versa, so that no clear pattern of perception emerged.

The numerous quotations that support these general principles are provided in Appendix L, part 8.

It was clear, however, that the racial pattern based on streaming was clear to many of the pupils, and it was apparent to those who perceived this that black pupils were in the lowest stream. The quotation from Hermann, a white boy in Standard 8, serves to illustrate this, and many others are given in Appendix L, part 9:

> They divided us up, put clever people in one group and so on. In the lower group there were only black people.

though several professed to be unaware of how the streaming was arranged, or that it corresponded with race:

> I don't know how we're divided up
>
> Khandy, BG in Std 7

> Maths was divided up so the better ones were all in one class. There wasn't any pattern, we were all mixed up.
>
> Fred, WB in Std 6

Other quotations are to be found in Appendix L, part 10.

There is clearly a mixed set of perceptions on relative ability. In part, pupils' perceptions were influenced by the class they were in, and by the performance of certain individuals within it. Many tended to see individual rather than group performance, and to judge a group by the individuals they knew within it. Thus, in a class where there were high-achieving black pupils, the group as a whole was seen to achieve well. Where a child was in a certain stream, he or she tended to judge the performance of groups by the pupils in that stream.

However, where group differences were seen, it was, overall, the black group that was seen to underachieve. Many pupils were reluctant to state this directly, and couched it in indirect terms, but the view can clearly be seen to be held by many of the pupils interviewed. Even where a difference in pattern is being described, often inherent in the comment is a view of black pupils as generally weaker.

Support for the view that pupils' had a perception of black pupils as weaker academically comes from the analysis of certain of the questions asked as part of my co-worker's set for drawing up sociograms. I included in this set a question on choice of working partners, (Question 3) to see if there were differences in the pattern of choice for this and the pattern of choice for social partners.

Question 1 was:

> There is a school outing, and everyone is going in cars. Four pupils can fit into each car. Which three from the list would you choose to come with you?'

and Question 3 was:

> You have to do an important group project for marks. Which three pupils from the list would you choose to work with you?

The responses to these questions provided a means to triangulate information derived from other sources.

The responses to these questions were analysed for all classes for both the first and third terms. The detailed responses for each class for each term for each question are shown in tables in Appendix M. For greater clarity, the responses for all the classes for both questions at both times of the year have been averaged. Tables 4 and 5 show the mean of the responses to Question 1 for the first and third terms, while Tables 6 and 7 show the responses to question three for the same two terms. Values have been rounded to the nearest whole number, so that in certain cases the totals do not add up to 100%. I will look at the responses to Question 1, and then compare these with those to Question 3.

For Question 1, in both terms there is a marked tendency for each group, except the Coloureds, to allocate the greatest percentage of its choices to its own group. This is not unexpected in the Coloured group as the small number makes it impossible to allocate substantially within its own group in most of the classes. For the other groups, there is a notably higher allocation to their own group than to the next most chosen group. Group preference seems to be strongest among the whites (over 70% in each term), and is of the order of at least 55% for both the Indian and black groups. Group preference strengthens slightly for both the black and white group over the year. (See tables 4 and 5, below)

For each group, the overall percentage of choices is roughly the same as the percentage of that group in the population as a whole. Thus, for example, in the first term, where the mean of the classes that is black is 28%, 26% of the choices of all pupils are allocated to black pupils, and correspondingly close relationships exist for the other groups.

Table 4. Question 1: Who would you choose to come in the car? Term 1

	Mean of Distribution of choices				
Choosers	Black	Indian	Coloured	White	Total
1. Black	59*!	17	6	20	102
2. Indian	12	61*!	3	24	100
3. Coloured	30	44!	4*	22	100
4. White	11	12	4	74*!	101
5. Whole class	26	25	4	46	101
6. Total in class	28	22	5	46	101

* indicates same group choice ! indicates group preference

Table 5. Question 1: Who would you choose to come in the car? Term 3

	Mean of Distribution of choices				
Choosers	Black	Indian	Coloured	White	Total
1. Black	69*!	10	7	20	100
2. Indian	14	55*!	3	28	100
3. Coloured	21	27	14*	39!	101
4. White	7	11	4	78*!	100
5. Whole class	26	21	5	50	102
6. Total in class	28	21	5	47	101

* indicates same-group choice ! indicates group preference

What is significant is the way in which the responses to question three differ from this broad pattern of choice. (See tables 6 and 7) The most noticeably different feature of this set of tables for Question 3 is the strong position of the White group. In contrast to the responses to Question 1, black pupils no longer preferentially choose blacks as working partners, but shift allegiance to the White group. A similar shift is shown for Coloured pupils in the first term. The other feature of interest is the increase in choice of Indians by whites in the third term.

In terms of overall pattern of choice, whereas in the responses to Question 1, choice distribution is roughly proportional to the composition of the population, here there are marked differences.

Whites receive a disproportionately large allocation of choices. In the first term, the whites comprising on average 46% of the population, receive 57% of the choices, and the figures are virtually the same in the third term. Black pupils, on the other hand, receive a disproportionately small allocation of choices, with the roughly 20% of the population receiving only about 16% of the choices.

Table 6. Question 2: Who would you choose to work in your group? Term 1

	Mean of Distribution of choices				
Choosers	Black	Indian	Coloured	White	Total
1. Black	34*	12	4	48!	98
2. Indian	9	58*!	1	33	101
3. Coloured	17	21	10*	53!	101
4. White	7	11	0	77*!	101
5. Whole class	16	24	6	57	102
6. Total in class	28	22	5	46	101

*indicates same group choice ! indicates group preference

Table 7. Question 3: Who would you choose to work in your group? Term 3

	Mean of Distribution of choices				
Choosers	Black	Indian	Coloured	White	Total
1. Black	34*	17	7	44!	102
2. Indian	11	49*!	5	38	103
3. Coloured	14	32	8*	48!	100
4. White	8	17	3	72*!	100
5. Whole class	17	24	3	56	100
6. Total in class	28	22	5	47	102

* indicates same group choice ! indicates group preference

These patterns support the view that black pupils are perceived by their peers as less likely to do well academically than white pupils. The biggest discrepancy between choice of travelling com-

panion, and choice of working partners exists among the black pupils themselves, suggesting that this group has a keen sense that white pupils are more successful academically than they are.

Several black students made clear this perception of black underachievement. Mkhacani, a black boy in Standard 9, expresses it as follows:

> When I got here, I went to the library. I saw some board with academic merit and asked someone what does that mean, and they said that if you get three A's or more, your name goes up. Before I got to Riverbend I was concerned about the performance of black students at non-racial schools who had been to DET schools. I just saw white names and thought there must be something wrong. Black people come here, the standard is so high that marks automatically drop and I thought I'd make it my business to get my name up there... I'd like to think of myself as a student but there's something in my conscience that says, 'Hey, you're still a black student till you do well' - and every student is a black student till they do well.

Mphasa, a black pupil in Standard 9, comments similarly:

> We guys in the dorm make jokes about the whole thing, ask ourselves, 'Why are the white guys doing so well when the blacks don't?' It's not a serious thing, though, just ask ourselves, 'How come whites do better than blacks?'

It is to attempts to answer this question that I will now turn my attention.

3. Perceptions of reasons for differences in achievement

3.1 Teachers' perceptions

Two broad [illegible] ideas were put forward by the teachers to explain the differences in academic achievement among the groups of pupils. There were those ideas which laid the problem at the door of the children, their deficiencies in the light of what demands the school and the examination system would make of them. There were also those which, recognising these differences, felt that the problem lay, conservatively, in the failure of the school to help the children 'catch up' and 'fit in' or, more radically, suggested that the fault lay with the school in not adapting itself to the multiracial nature of its population, and for persisting in

educational requirements and practices which were insensitive to the realities of black children's world view and experience - that, in short, were Eurocentric.

I shall look at each of these views in turn.

3.1.1 The deficiency syndrome

The ideas contained within this section all pertain to the notion held by teachers that black pupils are in some way lacking knowledge, abilities and attitudes that will enable them to perform on a par with white children in the school. The pupils are seen as deficient in some way, and the school is seen to be failing in its duty to provide adequate support for deficient pupils that will enable them to compensate for, and overcome, their deficiencies, and cope with the demands of the school system.

3.1.1.1 *A deprived school background*

The fact that many of the black pupils had come to Riverbend from a 'township' school, and had had a disrupted, and even when not disrupted, a less advantaged education than the white pupils, led many of the staff to believe that this discrepancy in the educational background of black and white pupils accounted for the disadvantaged position of many black pupils at Riverbend in comparison with white pupils from a more stable and better resourced school system.

Ms Newby sums up what was the view of many in this regard:

> If they didn't have such different standards of education before they came here, there wouldn't be the problem of the great differentials in standards in class.

This inferior educational background was seen to have had an effect on the possession of fundamental knowledge required for the syllabus at Riverbend. Many black pupils simply did not have an adequate knowledge base

Ms Bolt expresses this problem in terms of Biology:

> We tend to have to do a more general type of Biology, because most of the kids that come in have never done Biology before. None of the black schools does Biology. Some of the black children are very weak - they haven't the background. There's a big gap in knowledge. Black girls ask, 'Do fish eat water?' And the white boys in the same class ask, 'How do filter feeders eat?'

Other comments reporting this concern with a limited knowledge base are provided in Appendix L, part 11.

Some teachers refer to the differences in style of learning that are prevalent in black schools. There is an emphasis on rote learning, on the memorisation of facts. Pupils have not been encouraged to process information in the way that is required at a school like Riverbend. Ms Green comments in the context of Biology:

> When they did their projects, the white kids put the concept in a nutshell. The black kids wrote out pages from encyclopaedias and neither they nor the white kids had any understanding of it after they presented them. Nothing made sense. They used words that didn't make sense, put the emphasis in the wrong place. There are lots of books that are easy to read - but they must rush to the encyclopaedia. I wanted the essence of the thing, but they wanted the facts. It's the way they have been taught before - make sure you know the word, then you know it all.

Ms Stocks supports this view apropos Accountancy:

> It's amazing how well some of the black students do when it's a question of learning the facts. Vusi got 23/25, and Miriam 24/25 - the Indians hate it.

The whole style of teaching is one that many teachers believe is one that black pupils' previous school experience had not prepared them for. The counsellor reflects on this aspect of black pupils' 'deficiency'. They have not learnt how to learn, how to take notes and how to engage actively with the learning process:

> Our black pupils experience a kind of culture shock. We are all white teachers, having our own set of values. We have different demands. They haven't yet learned how to learn; it is in the second order. They are sitting in the class passively because there have been 100 of them in class. Teachers sort of talk, and they have to make a few notes. They will only speak if they are spoken to. We now expect them to be active and ask questions themselves, voluntarily. We actually have to do a whole process of learning how to learn. Not to learn what is being taught, actually to learn about learning.

3.1.1.2 Language deficiency

Given that the medium of instruction at Riverbend was English, and that that in fact was the mother tongue of all the teachers except the one teaching Zulu and the three Afrikaans teachers, while the black pupils home languages were invariably one of the Bantu languages of South Africa, many teachers felt the black pupils difficulties lay in the fact that they had an inadequate mastery of English. They believed that this led to problems in generally understanding the content of lessons, as suggested by the Zulu teacher:

> They don't blame the teacher. They don't have anything bad to say except that they don't understand. Really, no-one ever said that so-and-so is not treating us well. It is only that they don't follow quite clearly. It is the communication problem. We are not used to talking English, and it is very difficult for us to hear somebody who is speaking English the first time.
>
> Ms Khoza

Where concepts had to be manipulated in the medium of language, black pupils were seen to be disadvantaged. One of the Mathematics teachers expressed this as follows:

> In Maths we have to explain very sophisticated concepts, and can only explain them in words - and a logical form of words. 'If A, then B', and the fact that the converse is not always true - the black child cannot get this - there's too great a language subtlety
>
> Mr Walsh

The Afrikaans department was aware of the fact that, for many pupils, Afrikaans was a third or even fourth language.

Statements that elaborate on teachers' views of the problems black pupils encounter because of poor mastery of English are given in Appendix L, part 12.

3.1.1.3 Cultural background and race-linked deficiencies

Although these were in the minority, some teachers made fairly racist statements regarding the innate inabilities of black pupils to cope with their subjects.

The most blatant of these were two of the Mathematics teachers. One of them supposed that his predominantly black lower stream class was just 'slow', and that background problems were an excuse for the real reason for poor performance:

> They're very slow. There are some background problems, though that's not always valid - a factor in some cases, but often a blanket excuse. White pupils have the same sort of difficulties as blacks, and supposedly no background problems. I just think they are slow - a couple are above average - it's difficult to extend them 'cos the others will be lost. It's difficult to say it's a background problem - I'm reluctant to use that as an excuse.
>
> Mr Ronnie

The other, Mr Welsh, had a fairly elaborate theory related to the notion that black children did not play in the same way as white, were not given the same stimulus to deal in abstract concepts. He expressed this view quite directly:

> There's a difference in ability in black and white. The difference goes back to the first years of life. There's nothing that can be done about that.

and his elaboration of the idea is given in Appendix L, part 13.

He also believed that black pupils had a different desire to solve puzzles, see patterns and categorise data. His words develop this idea:

> The search for pattern is a multicultural thing, but I still find a colour differentiation. The sort of pattern is less eagerly sought by the black child than the white, there seems to be less joy in discovering it. I've got one black child in six years teaching Maths who has the gift to lose himself with great joy in Maths, as another child would with a computer set. I think that the concept of solving a puzzle for joy is a very European idea, not a natural idea. It is that particular pursuit of an answer, categorisation, which is the motivation in most gifted Mathematicians.

He mused on the existence of an innate cultural deficiency:

> There's not much difference between a Zulu male and and Athenian - both leisured classes - but the Athenian scratched patterns.

Both the Biology and Geography teachers thought that black pupils might have a poorer ability than white pupils to see in three dimensions. The relevant quotation from the Geography teacher is shown in Appendix L, part 14.

That of the Biology teacher is reproduced below:

> I've noticed, actually, that a lot of black kids have trouble seeing things in 3D - I'm generalising by saying black, some others do, too.
>
> Ms Green

3.1.1.4 Inappropriate attitudes and behaviour patterns

Several teachers, and the Counsellor, felt that many black pupils had inappropriate attitudes to work, and that their behaviour was not always conducive to learning. The Biology teacher felt that several of her pupils were inattentive and lethargic in class and made no effort. The Geography teacher believed that many black pupils felt that all they had to do was get to Riverbend, and their problem would be over without further exertion on their part. (See Appendix L, part 15). The Counsellor gave an analogy that encapsulates both these views:

> Somehow they expect to be passive, sit back and leave it to you. Just getting to Riverbend is enough to ensure that they'll be a doctor. It's an interactive thing. Come and sit here passively - alright by me, I am, be passive - but to try to get them to take some action. There's a good metaphor - sit in the sun, it's nice and warm. Sun moves, and I stay put and get cold. Get angry, but don't think of picking myself up and moving to the sun. They think that just by getting to Riverbend they're assured of being a doctor. Someone the school will do it, and they get angry when it doesn't happen.
>
> Mr White

There was a sense that the attitude toward doing a minimum amount of work was infectious, and that black pupils caught it from each other by following poor examples:

> The standards in the hostel have dropped. Basically, you have mostly underachievers in the hostel. The previous principal went mad and admitted large numbers of blacks and now you have mostly blacks in the hostel. It's not good because they don't have other high achievers to set their pace against. They see the others doing the minimum of work, and then everyone feels that that is sufficient.
>
> Mr Welsh

The History teacher was of the opinion that black pupils were less willing than white to be objective in arguments, and so found work in History difficult:

> Everything is not straight and narrow in History. History is ultimately interpreting, and that some find difficult to understand. Most of the black children believe they are right and the government is wrong, and there are no grey areas in between. To get across the

idea that History is someone's point of view, right to some, biased to others, is very difficult. White children can see both sides more easily.

Mr Parks

3.1.1.5 Poor and misdirected teaching

Included in the broad deficiency syndrome perspective is the view that the problem of black underachievement lies both in the deficiencies of the pupils, and in the failure of the school to recognise these and take appropriate measures to compensate for them.

For some, the problem was seen to lie in poor teaching, which did not help disadvantaged pupils catch up. Mr Welsh had this to say in this regard:

> The school has failed people like Nolaka. He came from the Gifted Child Project in Soweto. A bright boy from all accounts. Now he's gradually slipped down to a school-leaving certificate in Standard 10. He didn't receive proper grounding - proper teaching later down the school - hardly know any Standard 8 or 9 work when I came in March last year. He wasn't properly taught.

The Librarian, who also taught Cultural Studies, believed that the black pupils were poorly served by Integrated Studies. She felt that black pupils come to school without the cultural capital of white pupils, and that the Integrated Studies programme takes this for granted and does nothing to provide it for black pupils. They need a more basic course of History and English to fill the gaps in their knowledge, and enable them to cope more competently with the Matriculation syllabus. Her own words express her views:

> Integrated Studies is developed for the upper middle-class white child - there's a lot of Western culture already in their heads to be tapped and put in order - they've got it there already - they're brought up on Greek legends, will never read poetry and not know who Aphrodite is. We're trying to teach Black children Integrated Studies without all of this. IS is good for white kids, but the black kids - I'd like them to be taught English and History. What can they do in an English comprehension when there are the sorts of things that have not been seen as important in IS?
>
> Ms Rawlins

She also felt that the lack of structure in Integrated Studies did not serve the interests of the black pupils. They, in contrast to white pupils, need a far more structured course, and greater attention to the marking and correcting of work. She expresses her anxieties about the poor performance of the black pupils, referred to by the Counsellor, thus:

> Mr White's column three is worrying. What we are saying is that we have got to have an exceptional black child to do anything - but they are the ones who really want to get on. How to improve is very difficult. One of the best ways is giving work, marking it, going over it with them. I want to feel that this is the best place for black kids to be - but I don't think it is. St Stithians and St Johns are better - they know what to do there - the black children wouldn't be so bewildered. Black children are from a very formal background - they have to learn things, regurgitate - and they come in to this, and their marks drop and they feel terrible about themselves. I get the feeling they are bewildered and don't know how to improve. It is wonderful for boys like Jon Green, and Bill Atkinson - brilliant boys.

The French teacher, who had also taught some English, felt that there was a need for more formal language teaching than the rather spontaneous treatment English Skills afforded. Her views are given more fully in Appendix L, part 16.

Thus, while these teachers perceive the need for change in the school curriculum they see it in terms of modifying the course to make it more structured, more directed toward supplying missing knowledge and skills to enable black pupils to better fit in with what is taken as given. These teachers feel that the black pupils need to become more like the white pupils in order to succeed as well as them in a system that would remain unaltered.

3.1.2 The Curriculum is Eurocentric

A small number of teachers did not see the fundamental problem of black underachievement as rooted in deficiencies of black children, but rather in a school curriculum that ignored the reality of their different (but not therefore deficient) background.

The Zulu teacher felt that the recourse made to general knowledge from one cultural milieu disadvantaged the black children. She makes this point here:

> It's OK for the white kids - they have touched and seen these things. They are conversant with things, they've seen them. Those (black pupils) are often talking from the abstract. Tebudi sits talking and making a noise 'cos he's not involved.
>
> Ms Rheeo

An elaboration of her view is provided in Appendix L, part 17.

Ms Simcox supported this view, and felt that it indicated the need for curriculum reform:

> We are trying to impose Western civilisation on people who are not white, and why should Western civilisation be seen as superior just because it's dominant? Maybe our black students would be more at home if learning about things that were of their own viewpoint

The senior English teacher, Ms Chetty, was convinced that black pupils would do better with more Afrocentric material:

> I found the standard of English much higher than usual - which is what I'd expect - I believe that the students will express themselves better when writing about things that matter to them - it's not the case with Jane Eyre.

She elaborated on this theme in disgust at the choice of comprehension passage for the Standard 9 examination:

> The comprehension on Walter Battiss was awful. No relevance to anything they can relate to. The JMB should know better, and not be so ethnocentric. I'm going to advise the new head of English, 'Try your best to turn all your black kids into whites - then they'll be alright.' The paper doesn't give a true representation of their ability. Rhabola (8G) has insight and gets 4 out of 50 for a comprehension like that. Walter Battiss doesn't even cater for all the white kids - it's very much elitist stuff. Our kids must just sit back and believe it's unfortunate that they are not white.

Ms Stocks felt that somehow the black pupils were not at ease in the school, did not have confidence, and thus did not flourish academically. She saw the need for insight into this issue from the black parents and their children:

> I'll be shattered if Roginah doesn't get a C aggregate. I don't expect her to do better. My experience in dealing with these black kids is that they don't cope under pressure in the same way as white kids do. I can't say why not - they are from a DET school with exams - possibly they lack confidence in this situation. My kids have a positive self-image and confidence at their private schools - that is

what we pay for. Possibly we need to look at the way black kids feel - but we need the black kids and their parents' input - we'd need workshops.

3.1.3 Discussion

A wide range of reasons for black pupils' underachievement was put forward by the staff. The bulk of them lay squarely in the deficit model. Black children had a poor educational background, in which they had not been taught appropriate content or approaches to learning; their language competence was too poor for them to cope; they had cultural and inherited characteristics that made them unsuited to the kind of learning required of them; they had poor attitudes to work and to certain subjects. A very small number of staff located the problem in the mismatch between the children and the school, and felt that the school was in some way to blame for the poor underachievement. Generally, the view taken was conservative, with teachers feeling that the 'gap' in the children's knowledge was not being adequately catered for, that the curriculum took too much for granted, both in terms of knowledge and approach to learning, and that this gap caused pupils to underachieve, and to feel unconfident and ill at ease - because of their deficiencies. The more radical members of staff located the problem squarely in the Eurocentric curriculum, feeling that the abilities that the black children had were not given an opportunity to flower under the oppression of working with a curriculum that had little relevance to their experience or world view, and that the Eurocentric nature of the school caused them to lack self-confidence and to underachieve.

An interesting feature of these comments on differences in ability/achievement and on reasons for them, is that no views are given in terms of the white group. Very often comments about achievement are not given in terms of any particular group, but where they are, it is the black children who are seen in terms of the group to which they belong. The only exceptions to this were

the comments made by the Science teacher regarding the slyness of Indian children (Appendix L, part 18), and a comment made by the Accountancy teacher regarding the Indian children in her classes:

> They have a natural ability. I learn a lot from them.
> Ms Stock

At no time did we ever ask for comments regarding black children in particular, but phrased questions in an open-ended way. No generalisations were made about white children as a group. Of course, many teachers talked about individual black children, either when looking down a class list, or in giving an exception to an observation about the group as a whole. It seems clear, therefore, that the black children were not perceived as individuals in quite the same way as whites, and that certain preconceived ideas about their ability and the reasons for their lack of achievement were held by most of the staff.

3.2 Pupils' perceptions

As with the teachers, there was a wide range of views as to the factors that contribute to black pupils' apparent underachievement at Riverbend. To some extent there is a degree of correspondence between teachers' and pupils' views, but the pupils pay more attention to emotional and attitudinal problems that affect their ability to work effectively, and tend to identify fundamental causes of perceived inappropriate behaviour more perceptively than do most of the teachers. At the same time, they are less conscious of issues related to the impact of a Eurocentric curriculum, and so make little direct reference to it. I will elaborate on this assertion through an examination of pupils' reflections. I have categorised the factors in the same way as in the analysis of the teachers' accounts as far as possible, but because of the differences mentioned, it is not always possible to use the same set of sub-headings, a situation that lends weight to my contention that there is not an entirely neat overlap between the two sets of views.

3.2.1 The deficiency syndrome

As with the teachers, many pupils felt that many of the academic difficulties of black pupils could be ascribed to 'deficiencies' in their background. The list of factors within this category is very similar to that of the teachers.

3.2.1.1 A deprived school background

Both black and white pupils referred to the differential in their educational backgrounds as something that was likely to disadvantage black pupils.

It related to the information they had acquired, as Rani, an Indian girl in Standard 7, suggests:

> White students would achieve more because they were more educated than some of the black students - but you'd get some black students who were able to be educated at a young age, and they'd do very well.

Several similar statements may be found in Appendix L, part 19.

In particular, as suggested by several members of staff, the difference in approach to learning, the greater emphasis on independent work and on active participation in the learning process, the lesser emphasis on rote learning, was something black pupils had found difficult to adjust to. Shamiseka, a black girl in Standard 8, expresses this with regard to the classroom situation, particularly in Science and Integrated Studies:

> We're not very good at Science. At DET schools we don't have equipment or experiments. We're not very good at IS 'cos mostly we did English writing, didn't discuss much. There wasn't enough speaking. All we had to do was homework, like putting things in categories. We didn't do enough work to enable us to speak. The teacher would explain and then we would do homework. If we did write essays, we didn't have to find the information for ourselves.

Tsakani, a black girl in Standard 9, reflects on how black pupils find it difficult to adjust to the differences in teaching style and the greater reliance on self-discipline:

> At Riverbend you start work on the first day, and other for your tests. Black kids don't always get on with it. Riverbend is quite relaxed, and they come here and are also quite relaxed - no one showing them the right or way. Sometimes the tutor doesn't help because they're not compatible. I never used to work - did my homework, but wouldn't read six books, just one. I changed at the end of Standard 8 - grew up and realised I need to work.

Several other pupils, reported in Appendix L, part 20, have similar comments to make with regard to the way in which the absence of punishment meant that some black pupils did not settle down to work, and how the generally relaxed atmosphere masked the pressure of work.

3.2.1.2 Poor command of English

Many pupils referred to this aspect as one that contributed to underachievement. It was a factor that seemed to influence both performance in the English class per se (as numerous quotation given in Appendix L, part 21 show), but also impacted on ability in other classes. Tsakani, in Standard 9, notes how this was a factor in her progress when she first came to Riverbend:

> At Alex High I was among the top, and here I was at the bottom of the class. Half the time I didn't get the teachers' accents, and I wasn't concentrated in learning - I just liked the idea of having no uniform. Somewhere along the line I changed, I don't know why.

3.2.1.3 Cultural background and race-linked deficiencies.

Few students made reference to racial differences per se as explanations for differential achievement.

One black girl, new to the school that year, had perceived the differences in achievement, and wondered if black people had the ability to do as well as white:

> Some of us, like I am, are trying to be at their average, but I can't cope. The other minute you've got what they've got, the other minute it's gone. They are just quick minded. We don't have the brains that other people have. Some blacks sit back and say, 'I can't do it.' I'm trying to get to their stage, but I can't. I'm trying, but feel, no, I can't make it. The way I see this, I see them as too much better than me, and I can't reach their standard, whatever I do.
>
> Tinny, BG in Std 9

Reckson, a black boy in Standard 9, felt there might be differences in home attitudes to work that impacted on black pupils' study habits and Clive, a white boy in the same standard, had a vague feeling that black people might have poorer three dimensional perception. A few pupils felt that the home environment of some pupils had given them knowledge and attitudes that better equipped them to cope with the demands of school.

There was a prevailing view that Indians' success in Accountancy was largely ascribable to the fact that many of them had fathers who were successful businessmen. Manoj, an Indian boy in Standard 6, puts this view as follows:

> The Indian students are good at Accounting. I think it's because we, like myself, I work in my father's shop on Fridays and Saturdays and the whole holiday, and I get to know what a business is.

Mohlatlego, a black boy in Standard 10, had noted that white pupils had an advantage in certain subjects because their home environments exposed them to things of use in understanding school work. He had the following to say in this regard:

> Benjamin, Jack, Daniel and Ben (WBs) always had practical things to do with Science, just tend to be more scientific. They know about practical applications like light through cameras - they've had access to these things all their lives, while black students may not have been as fortunate, and I think that makes a difference, to see things in action.

and Rodger, a white boy in Standard 6, felt that, in general, white students had a more stimulating home background, and that as a result they were more imaginative and creative:

> Maybe white students choose Art because they come from a more stimulating environment - no fault of the blacks - and that gives them more imagination.

Other statements about the role of different backgrounds are to be found in Appendix L, part 22.

3.2.1.4 Inappropriate attitudes and behaviour patterns

Recurrent in the students' comments is the perception that black pupils did not seem to work as hard, to strive for excellence in the same way as white pupils, did not engage actively with their learning. In this they mirrored the observation of some of the members of staff.

This comment of Mzamani, a black boy in Standard 9, shows this perception:

> Also, I mean, I've found, don't know if I'm right, their attitude to work is not very enthusiastic. Learning, it's like a slack attitude.

and Frieda, a white girl in the same class, had the following to say:

> I tend to find quite a lot of white students more ambitious. They strive for excellence in their academic work, though Indians do, too.
> What' mean you say this?
> Well, from seeing [name] participates in class, and from the marks people got. You do need some ability, but also need to work hard. And if I look at the top marks in our class it's Sunil (IB), Clare (WB) Jack (WB). They strive more for excellence.

What is interesting, however, is the wider range of reflection on the underlying factors which gave rise to this behaviour, and which in themselves are possible contributors to black under-achievement. I shall consider some of these in the next sections.

3.2.1.4.1 Alienation from the school environment

Many black pupils noted that, particularly on first coming to the school, they had felt alienated from its context and unable to work because of this.

Some expressed this in general terms, such as Magigwani, a black boy in Standard 7:

> I'm much better than last year. I've got used to the teachers and the students and I've become free in school, I'm not so uptight as last year. Even out of class I felt I was a new child and couldn't just do anything I liked.

Moloko, who had come from the gifted school in Soweto, and whom Mr Welsh felt the school had failed in not giving him a more solid academic base, had the following to say about how he had felt alienated from the school:

> I didn't participate 'cos I didn't feel at home, you know, that I belonged - and when you feel like that you can't participate. I did have times when I tried to push myself. I realised how important it was for University. But I felt so helpless - about everything, like I told you. Spending too much time trying to make myself feel at home at Riverbend, scaring myself up with life at Riverbend, getting to know people, has affected my academic progress.
>
> Moloko, BB in Std 9

For others, the multiracial context of the school was stressful. They were aware of barriers to communication, of the segregated pattern of interaction. The teachers were white, and demands were made on them to communicate in English. Santosh, an Indian boy in Standard 7, expresses how painful he found the process of adjusting to the new situation:

> First of all, I was very new. It was a new horizon. I didn't know what to expect. I was lost in class 'cos I didn't know what was going to come. I battled the whole way through. I achieved low marks and there was no looking. In my previous school it wasn't multiracial, everyone was Indian. It was difficult for me to adapt. The whites sit together, and the Indians. In IB it affected me, especially my marks. You were alone, had no friends, your tutor was new to you. It's very rare you'll see them together. I felt I wasn't part of any group, only me and my friend Anil (IB). In our class you'll see blacks sitting together, and whites. It's natural, but they make you feel left out. You're under so much stress, and your marks drop.

Mithetho, a black friend of Tlhabane, another black boy also in Standard 9, reports that Tlhabane, too, had found it difficult to adjust to going to school with other races:

> Tlhabane is very conscious of this. ('fact' that white pupils do better than black) He's a township boy. I don't think he enjoys this school as much as the township, not the feeling of being with his friends. The atmosphere for him is heavy and dull. The rest see there's a difference, accept the difference, and don't come with the township stuff. Tlhabane feels comfy with us, but not with whites or Indians. Not that he doesn't like them, just doesn't feel comfy, not how his life has been.

3.2.1.4.2 Negative expectations of success

Several black pupils noted that they had found themselves unable to work hard because they felt demoralised. They were keenly aware of their underachievement, and felt helpless and demotivated in the face of it. What appeared as a reluctance to work hard to the staff, was in reality a reflection of helplessness. Maile, a black boy in Standard 8, puts this particularly well:

> Mr Parks and Ms Dalt - they have the attitude 'you don't understand 'coz you can't understand.' They think you are not learning if you get a D or an E - there may be other reasons for the D or the E. Sometimes you just feel you can't make it and teachers don't get through. It's not because you're not learning. Sometimes you feel, 'What's the use if you don't understand?' You feel you can't make it, feel you won't make it - you feel you can't and won't make it. The teachers don't understand how you feel. They think you are not working. Some just ignore it, 'If you don't want to work, what can they do?' Some tell you to work - but that doesn't help the problem. And if you don't improve, they just leave it. They tell you to work hard, and that's it. You don't even start fighting, you just feel you're beaten.

The general perception that black pupils as a group underachieve made some of these students feel that this was an inescapable fate for them, too. In the face of a poor result, or a lesson not understood, you give up hope, believing that this is how it is for black pupils. Mphasa attributed Manyelo's apparent laziness to this underlying factor:

> Manyelo is just lazy. I guess he came into the school and saw that a lot of black students fail. You're a new pupil, and got your first assignment, and find it difficult, and feel you'll never do well, and that thing of blacks not doing well comes back to you, and you feel, 'No, it's not for me.' And you lose hope.

This negative attitude to potential success also meant that some students lowered their expectations, feeling pleased with a low mark as long as it was a pass and remained so consistently. Aiming for anything high would only end in disappointment, and thus was avoided. Tsakani, a black girl in Standard 10, explained her view of this to me:

> Know how you stick with the group from the townships - have the same background - always want their approval? It takes a long time not to care about their comments - they'll say, 'I'm happy with 40 'coz when

> I got 50 I feel great, but if I get 80 feel sad if I drop to 70.' This could stop you from doing well - but others say, 'No, go for it.'

The segregation of white and black pupils socially exacerbated this problem. Students set their standards by those they mixed with, and felt satisfied if they were doing as well as they were. They were not encouraged by the possibility of success made apparent by their friends' example:

> If black and white mixed well here I think the black would have developed quite a lot from that. If your friend gets in the 50's you relax. If your friend has 80 and you have 50, you push yourself up. It won't affect you if a guy who isn't your friend gets 80, but if he is your friend you will adapt his style - and that doesn't happen at Riverbend a lot.
>
> Hugh, 88 in Std 9

For this reason, high achieving black role models were important, but were not the norm at the school. According to Aaron, a black boy in Standard 9:

> Hulicani (BG) was in that class, and she is strong. It's important for some blacks to get good marks. It's psychological. People like Tinebana (BB) experience a depression, they think they just can't succeed.

Appendix L, part 23, contains further quotations of interest regarding the postulated link between black pupils' concept of themselves as achievers and the impact of this on their attitude, behaviour and performance.

Of particular significance in this context is the sense of many black pupils that the teachers had lower expectations of them than of other pupils in the class. Several instances of this are cited in Appendix L, part 24. For some of the pupils, this perception spurred them on to greater efforts, to prove that the teacher was wrong, but many others reflected on how teachers' negative expectations reinforced a poor self concept with regard to achievement and contributed to a diminished sense that achievement was possible.

Fofoza, a friend of Manyelo, a fellow black student in Standard 9, summed this up well:

> I think a guy like Manyelo could do better. Possibly he should stop saying, 'I just cerage and that's OK.' He just accepts it. If he doesn't do well, it's not such a big deal, he's used to it, no-one really minds or says, 'Jeez, Manyelo, that's terrible'. Like if Clare (WB) got 50%, that would be really terrible. Possibly if Manyelo (BB gets 80% and Alfred (WB) gets 80%, Manyelo would get more praise, 'Jeez, for a black guy, that's really good.' To Alfred they'd say, 'That's great' and to Manyelo, 'That's really great'. There's a different expectation.

This sense of black underachievement came not only from the patterns perceived to exist in the school, but also from observations in society at large. Fofoza, elaborated on this as follows:

> Some people feel that intelligent geese and stuff are for western society, so they must stay simple-minded - that's what I think, not sure. People are saying, 'I hate Maths and Science' 'cos they don't believe they're for them. I think there is a basic prejudice - blacks are good at Music and rhythm, and whites are good at Science. People see this - there are so many black singers, and so few black scientists. It filters down - perhaps not consciously. It's the way South Africa is made up. Like when I was younger I'd hear people saying, 'Whites are clever, they make aeroplanes' and someone else would say, 'But we carry the things.' That used to irritate me, 'cos it implies that blacks can't do the mental side, only the physical. I've made sure that attitude doesn't affect me, but I think it does affect some people.

Clearly, at least some of the black pupils' inappropriate behaviour in relation to work and their lower academic achievement can be ascribed to the impact of negative feelings and expectations about their potential to achieve. Certain teaching strategies and classroom organisational practises reinforced this view, and others ameliorated it, and these will be more fully discussed in this context in Chapter 7.

3.2.1 5 Poor and misdirected teaching

As suggested, poor and misdirected teaching was seen by several staff to contribute to the black pupils' underachievement. This was not a factor which pupils articulated directly. The debate about the contribution of Integrated Studies, most directly under attack by the non-Integrated studies staff in this context, lay at

the heart of the debate about curriculum in the school. Pupils' responses to the kind of learning it afforded will be examined more fully in Chapters 7 and 8.

3.2.2 A Eurocentric curriculum

Again, this aspect of the curriculum was not overtly identified by pupils, nor was it perceived as a direct cause of underachievement, except in the context of language. Pupils tended to see the curriculum as something given, and their inadequacies in meeting its demands the problem.

Mlengani, a black boy in Standard 10, noted the following in this regard:

> Black students find poetry and literature more difficult. It's easier for white students because they can relate to the historical background - it's a bit of a strain for black people.

However, much of what the students have said about their feeling of alienation in the school is a reflection of their unease in the context of a dominantly white ethos. Also, few of them had experienced any school work that was not Eurocentric, and the significance of this had not been apparent to them. Few pupils said in any overt way that they believed black pupils did less well than white because of the Eurocentric nature of the curriculum. When their attitudes to this dimension of the curriculum were probed, however, a variety of views were revealed, including those linking Eurocentricity and achievement. These will be explored more fully in Chapter 7, in the context of pupils' responses to certain curriculum initiatives in this regard.

3.3 Discussion

To some extent there is an overlap in the views of factors affecting performance between teachers and pupils. The fact that black pupils come from disadvantaged educational backgrounds, particularly with regard to language, is seen to be a factor of pupils' perception as well as teachers', as is the notion that

some black pupils don't work hard enough. The view that some black pupils are satisfied with a lower level of achievement is one held more by pupils than by staff. Some teachers had a more clearly articulated view of the negative impact of a Eurocentric curriculum on achievement patterns than do the pupils, although one did refer to it, and with reference to differences in background several pupils did make oblique reference to this concept. As with the teachers, there are several negative views expressed about black pupils inherent characteristics and abilities, but these overtly racist statements are in the minority.

What comes across far more clearly in the pupils' perception of factors influencing black pupils' achievement is the whole realm of negative stereotypes and their link with the self-fulfilling prophecy. Many black pupils are sensitive to differential achievement patterns in society at large, and within the school, and feel that, given this pattern, they are unlikely to succeed. Many felt that teachers held similar negative expectations of their chance so success. Much of what they saw at school - the pattern of marks, streaming patterns, teacher responses to their performance - confirmed their view that black pupils were less likely to succeed. While in some cases this strengthened black pupils' resolve to do well, those who were struggling expressed feelings of despondency, believing that their feelings of inadequacy were justified by the 'facts' before them, and causing them to feel disempowered and demotivated. The importance of association with high achieving black pupils was seen as something necessary to affirm the possibility of achievement for black pupils.

A further factor which is far more strongly identified by the black pupils is the feelings of alienation that many felt from the school system, and the difficulty they had adjusting to it. For many, adjusting to the non-racial dimension of the school was stressful, particularly as they were acutely aware of the general lack of spontaneous mixing among the different groups. While several implied that this was a feeling of their early period at the school, others indicated that it was something that persisted.

Many expressed the view that they were unable to work as well as they might because they felt 'uncomfortable', had teamed up with other non-achievers as this was the group that they felt at ease with, and that they found the freedom of choice and lack of structure something that they had not adjusted to in time to do well academically.

The lack of motivation, and reluctance to work hard perceived by some teachers and pupils, was, in many cases, an expression of despondency and marginalisation from the mainstream of academic work. While the symptom was noted, the cause was in many cases misdiagnosed. The gap between pupils' and teachers' perception of this reality clearly had implications for the sensitivity with which the needs of these pupils were addressed.

What is clear from the findings reported in this chapter is that there is a strong link between the social and academic dimensions of the school, and that the status of black pupils in it, and in society in general has a bearing on their real and perceived academic performance. This clearly has significance for curriculum design and implementation. It seems to point clearly to the fact that for black pupils to be successful in a mixed-race school, attention will have to be paid to ways in which they can feel as at home, as much part of the school as the white pupils, and to strategies that ensure that their feelings of academic inadequacy and social alienation are eliminated.

CHAPTER 6. RACE, ACHIEVEMENT AND PEDAGOGY

Not surprisingly, in the light of the range of perspectives on the issue of perceived black underachievement discussed in Chapter 5, there was an equally diverse range of opinion as to what the school ought to do about it. In broad terms, there were two main approaches to the problem, largely in line with the two broad perspectives on the reasons for black pupils' underachievement. Thus, the first worked within the broad perspective of the deficiency perspective, and embraced three main categories of strategy, two more significant than the third. Firstly, those strategies which aimed to minimise the problem of pupils who were deficient by denying them access to the school and by getting them out of the school if they had got in and proved unable to keep up; secondly, a wide range of strategies which aimed at assisting those with 'deficiencies' to 'catch up', and thirdly a group of strategies that aimed to help pupils side-step the gap. The second broad approach was rooted in the perception that the curriculum was Eurocentric, and that the best way forward was to institute curriculum change that addressed this issue.

I shall examine teachers' accounts of their work in the context of coping with differential academic competence in terms of this broad framework of their approaches. As elsewhere, much supporting material is included in an appendix. (Appendix N)

1. Approaches that were fundamentally rooted in a perception of black pupils as deficient in terms of ability to cope in the school system

As indicated above, there were three broad groups of approaches within this perspective.

1.1 Attempts to minimise the occurrence of the problem

1.1.1 Keep children with potential problems out of the school

A major strategy employed by the school was that of screening for potential ability to cope with the academic demands of the school.

The admissions policy served both to establish the reality of, and minimise the differences in background that impinge on academic achievement. The policy of the school was to test all pupils applying for admission, using a set of standard tests of English compstence and spatial perception. The school psychologist, in applying the tests, clearly expected poorer performance on the part of black pupils. In order to compensate for this, he considered the stanines of black children as if at a standard lower than they actually were. i.e he compared a black Standard 6 child's results with the set standard of a white Standard 5 child. This attempted to compensate for a poorer educational background and for the cultural bias of the tests, and gave admission to black children where admission to white children would have been denied. It is likely that this policy reinforced the view that black children were less likely to cope than white, as they did not have to score as well on the admission tests in order to gain entry.

At the same time, the aptitude tests in Standard 6 did serve to eliminate those pupils who were clearly very weak and who had very little chance of 'catching up'. As the school psychologist noted:

> They're a very good predictor of ability to cope. We might exclude people who would cope, but we can be fairly sure that we are not admitting people who won't'.

Part of the ability to cope will depend on the pupil's ability to manage culturally biased tests:

> The tests are culturally biased, but we have to accept that this is a white school with white values and a white way of operating. If a child can't cope with the tests, they won't cope with the school.
>
> Mr White, school psychologist.

Thus the school is screening not only for academic ability, but for an ability to fit in with the dominant white culture of the school. An attempt is made to minimise the difficulties of assimilation by eliminating those most likely to experience them. There was a hope that an effective admissions policy, that screened out the children who might have academic or cultural difficulties that hindered their progress, would relieve the school of the burden of having to deal with these deficiencies in any other way. If the admissions policy did its job, the school could continue as usual, and all would be well for all its constituents:

> Through our selection procedures we have reduced the number of kids who need a bridging programme coming in at higher levels very substantially, and hope they will be able to cope mostly in the classroom context.
>
> Mr Phillips, Headmaster

Others sharing this hope are reported in Appendix N, part 1.

Sifting via the admissions policy had applied to pupils coming in to the school at the beginning of the case study year. However, the sifting process had been evaded by many. The principal's comments, and reflections by the Counsellor, reported in Appendix N, part 2, show how the practical reality of a private school, dependent on fees and with spaces that need filling, and a market made particularly desperate for them as the educational crisis in the townships persisted, enables pupils who might well fail the admissions tests, to be admitted to the school. The fact that this increased the number of pupils unlikely to cope in the school was acknowledged, and a decision was taken to ensure a more timeous initiation of the advertising for tests and the more rigorous application of the tests to all applicants to diminish the numbers slipping through into the school in succeeding years.

1.1.2 Problems should be asked to leave

It is clear from the accounts above that pupils with a poor prognosis of success entered the school either by some failure of the entrance test to eliminate them, or more likely, because more

pragmatic pressures had allowed them entrance despite this poor prognosis. A solution for the school was to ask those pupils who were not achieving well academically to leave the school:

This conversation is recorded in my notes of a discussion with a member of staff:

I ask about Vusi (BB), 'Was he asked to leave?'

> Yes, at the end of last year, he and Rattan Singh (IB)'.
> Why?
> Just not passing, not making the grade.
> So why asked to leave?
> Why?: Well, no point in staying, just not coping with the work. What's to be gained by staying?
> Is that school policy - weak students, unlikely to p[ass] - are asked to leave?
> Well, probably no black line, it's all negotiated.
> Wears the staff out
> In a government school those who are weak academically
> Ja, they have special classes and things.

Clearly, this principle applied to both black and white [illegible], but given the differential success, it is likely that more black than white pupils were affected by it. The reality of this view was confirmed by Ms Chetty in an impromptu conversation with me:

> They've kicked Tilasi (BB) and Lethabo (BB) out - 'cos they won't make it academically. They're very hurt by it. Anyone who won't shape up must leave. No concern for where they'll go or what they'll do. Lethabo is not unintelligent. Could always put together a good argument. Tilasi is such a nice boy - stirling qualities - strong and wise - only stumbling block is that he doesn't handle language well. It's always hurt us at Riverbend, to see these kids regarded as inferior because they don't handle language well.

Some teachers, sharing this more sympathetic view, considered condoning failing marks in order to give a weak child another year at the school:

> He struggles tremendously in Maths. He should really repeat, but he's too old. My inclination is to push him up so he at least has another year of school - so his bursary is maintained and he has another year of school. I don't think AECI will lose out - if he fails they won't get the bursary back. He probably won't pass matric, but he can benefit so much from having more time.
>
> Mr Banks

Allied to the principle of asking weak children to leave was that of channelling them into the Standard grade. i.e accepting their weak ability and requiring them to aim for a lower grade pass rather than doing much to assist them in improving. It will be shown fairly clearly that few efforts were made by senior staff to directly assist those pupils who entered the school in the senior years to 'catch up". The most usual policy was to encourage them to accept their predicament, and aim for a School Leaving certificate. Again, there was no overt racial policy on this issue, but given the generally weaker status of many black children, they were to some extent indirectly discriminated against by this policy.

The higher proportion of black pupils passing on the Standard rather than the Higher grade (shown in Chapter 5) supports this contention, as does an analysis of the reasons for pupils present in the case study year for leaving before they wrote the Matriculation examination.

In the class that had been in Standard 6 in the case study year, twenty-five, just over half, were not at the school for their Matriculation year five years later. Ten of the twenty-five who had left were White. Of these, seven had been withdrawn by their parents for a variety of reasons - emigration, the perception that they would achieve a better Matriculation pass at a more structured school, because they had failed a standard, because they wished to pursue a career in ballet. one had been asked to leave, and for two no reason is given. Eight of the twenty-five who did not remain to Matriculation were black, and seven of their files record that they had been asked to leave because of weak academic progress. The eighth had been expelled because of an act of vandalism. The remaining pupils were Indian, one of whom had been asked to leave because of poor academic progress, while the others had been withdrawn, with no clear reason recorded in their files.

In the Standard 7 cohort, thirteen who left were white. Three were withdrawn for no clearly recorded reason, one left as her parents felt she was unlikely to benefit from further academic education, one was withdrawn to a more structured school environment and five had left after stern warnings of probable forthcoming failure. One was virtually expelled for unacceptable behaviour.Of this group, four black students were not in the Matriculation group, and all had been asked to leave because of poor academic progress. Seven Indians had left before Matriculation, all of their own volition. Five had gone in response to poor academic progress and the perception that they should leave school altogether or re-register at a more structured institution, one had fallen out philosophically with the direction the school was taking, and the remaining one had been withdrawn after threats of future expulsion for continued bad behaviour.

In the Standard 8 group, four of the five black students who left had been asked to do so after repeated class failure, and one had withdrawn for no specified reason. Ten white pupils had left, and of these three had been asked to leave after an unsuccessful trial run at the school. The others had withdrawn for a similar range of reasons as described for previous years. Four Indians had withdrawn.

In the case study Standard 9 year, eight white pupils left. One emigrated, and the rest moved to more structured school environments such as the cram colleges and local government schools. Three Indian pupils left, two for no recorded reason, and one to attend a cram College Two Coloured pupils had had their bursaries reduced and withdrew to attend more sport-orientated schools. One dropped out of school, and one left for no clear reason. Five black pupils left, three going to a cram College after being asked to do all their subjects on the Standard grade. Two were asked to leave because of poor academic progress.

It seems that many weak white students chose to leave the school in the hope of finding a more supportive and better structured academic environment. Weak black pupils, however, did not so readily see this as a solution to their difficulties. Many of those who clearly were unlikely to achieve a pass at Matriculation level were either told that they had to opt for the Standard grade or leave the school, and then chose to leave, or were told directly that they should leave.

The librarian was one member of staff who articulated this reality clearly:

> I feel very nervous about the black kids we take in. You see, every black kid we take in wants a Matric exemption certificate. Every black child we take in wants to go to varsity. So often they can't get it, they don't achieve it, and so they have to leave.
>
> Before Matric?
>
> Ja, and this I hate. Putting them back into the other system. It's the biggest blow in their lives. They have to go back because they can't cope. Some go at the end of Standard 6, and some at the end of Standard 7. Not a lot, but some will have to go because they can't cope. If you look back through our results, you will find the black children have not done well
>
> Ms Rawlins

1.2 Attempts to 'close the gap'

Given the fact that the school's admissions policy did not effectively keep pupils with problems from enrolling at the school, and given the acceptance that, applied as it was, it admitted black pupils who were weaker academically than white but had 'potential to catch up', many members of staff had to acknowledge the needs of black pupils, and to devise strategies for dealing with differences in background. Some were more committed to this view than others. A wide range of strategies in this category was apparent, and teachers' accounts of them will be considered below.

1.2.1 Very little can be done by the teachers/school

For some teachers, the disadvantaged background of many black students who entered the school was so great that they felt that little could be done to help them 'catch up'. One teacher, reflecting on the weak black pupils that the Counsellor had shown in his column three, expressed this view as follows:

> The children in column three got here in a severely disadvantaged condition with regard to their language, and from the point of view of the experience they've had to do - which makes me think we could try many ways of getting them through exams, and none would succeed.
>
> Mr Parks

Others, such as one of the Biology teachers, felt that there was little she, as a subject-based class teacher could do to deal with fundamental problem in language and the approach to learning that many black pupils brought with them:

> Lots of black kids learn things off by heart, and use phrases and words out of context. They don't understand how to express themselves properly - it's a problem of their primary schools - I can't see how a Biology class can really do anything about it.
>
> Ms Groon

The senior Geography teacher expressed a similar view that it was not his job to teach basic academic skills in senior classes, it was to develop subject specific skills on what should be a firm foundation.

Teachers with this perspective adhered to the view that it was not their place to deal with 'remedial problems', and that pupils in need of such help should not be at the school. This was felt particularly strongly with regard to pupils who had been admitted in the more senior years, as this senior Afrikaans teacher expresses:

> In Standard 9 and 10 students must have reached a satisfactory level of language proficiency. Remedial work does not belong here, and students who still struggle below the Standard 9/10 level should not be admitted or passed.
>
> Mr Daventer

Another related feeling among such teachers was that weak pupils should be required to repeat classes. This in fact was often a requirement of admission for black students from DET schools, and even, in certain cases, from other open schools. On entry to

Riverbend, they repeated the standard they had just completed at their previous school. The senior Geography teacher reported on what his group had concluded after discussion of the problem of 'column three' at the staff conference:

> There was some discussion of the third column. We didn't come to an agreement - so we said little in our report back. Several of us thought that the school in some cases is promoting too quickly - pupils go: hit in Standards 8 and 10 - they need more time to make up the backlog.
>
> Mr Park

Closely allied to this view is the broader one that just by their being at a better school, pupils' work would improve in response to the better conditions and teaching they would experience there in comparison to that of the township schools. The principal noted that this was in fact a common view, but did have reservations about its validity:

> With the Standard 7's and 8's, we feel there are enough years and few enough of them for us to be able to do the job anyway, but I don't think that is a fully satisfactory answer.

Clearly, for teachers who subscribed to the view that pupils with background problems had no business being in the school, should repeat standards in order to make up the backlog resulting from their previous education or would improve merely by exposure to an improved set of circumstances, there was little commitment to any effort to deal constructively with the needs of such pupils themselves. Few of them, of course, did nothing to help, but their efforts tended to be desultory, and related largely to requiring more effort from the pupils themselves, and to sporadic assistance when asked for it. These efforts will be reviewed in the next section.

1.2.2 Informal and unstructured overtures of assistance

At one extreme in this approach was the view that the pupils had to make the effort to bridge the gap, and that the teachers' role was to point them in the right direction and alert them to a willingness to help if requested to do so.

One teacher reported his response to the needs of black pupils who entered his Standard 9 class with little background knowledge:

> I give them the textbook, and tell them which chapters they need to catch up.
>
> Mr Parks

Others were more directive, but still left the problem with the pupil:

> My advice to him (BB in Std 8, now at school) is that he must ask questions, must present things the way I do in class, must get the example out properly, must be sure that his work is done everyday. I've asked him to work with Phungula (BB) to master the things he must know how to do. He really needs Standard 7 Maths again - there's too big a gap, and the Maths syllabus is the same thing over and over again at a different level - it's difficult to start in Standard 8.
>
> Mr Banks

There was a sense that pupils should be made to work hard. The headmaster responded to a teacher's complaint about Maile, reported in Chapter 5 as feeling too demoralised to be able to work hard with the following injunction:

> Sit on him. We can't recommend his bursary again if he doesn't produce the goods.

One more sympathetic teacher reflected on the need for black pupils to work hard but also recognised the fact that there were motivational and background factors that mitigated against many of them being able to do so on first arrival at the school:

> Mostly the black kids get on with their work, are well behaved in class - it's the white kids who have no manners, no motivation, want to out having fun.... I think they could all have passed if they put some effort in. It's so sad about some of those black girls. I had a meeting with a group of them, and the Counsellor, and Tintswalo, Nkokani and Tinyiko have been a success - took it seriously - though mostly all did - Constance tried hard, but had lost too much. Mandla tried, and so did Pule - but they left it too late - I've been pleading with them all year to start but they left it too late - I think they were overwhelmed by it all when they arrived, and had no background of Standard 7 work to fall back on.
>
> Mr Banks

A feature of this teacher's belief that some hard work would be helpful was that he had recognised that there might be circumstances making it difficult, and had addressed the issue in a co-operative way with the pupils concerned and the counsellor. He

had got involved in trying to find a solution, and had not merely called for harder work. Such an approach moves a little along the continuum toward genuine efforts to help.

Teachers also varied in their commitment to extra help outside the normal class contact time. The senior Geography teacher noted that he was available for help, had invited pupils to come and see him if they wanted assistance, but that few of the weakest had taken advantage of his offer. Having made it, he felt th his obligations to their progress had been fulfilled. His words express his views clearly:

> I always say, 'If you're having problems, come and s .,' but the weaker ones don't seem - I dunno why, possibly because they are embarrassed, possibly because they are frightened of losing their place in the school, or being made a fool of. I ask, 'Do you all understand?' - and everyone nods. Some do ask, but not the very weak ones - like Kanishi, Moshavini and Tsakani. They've no clue. I've accepted that's where they're at, they don't want to learn, or they're too inadequate, or they just feel, 'I can't anyway.'
>
> Mr Parke

There is no indication that he did anything to c with pupils' feelings of inadequacy or hopelessness which he recognised might be obstacles to them in taking advantage of his offer.

One Biology teachers reported that she made similar offers of help, and w similarly disappointed in the response. Some pupils came at the end of a lesson, but none approached her for help in a free period or during break or lunch. Her words are quoted in Appendix N, part 3.

Implicit in the informal approach to help outside class time offered by certain staff members is the perception that weak children should make more effort to overcome their problems. They should take more responsibility for their learning, and actively seek help. While some teache s recognised that this was difficult for many, they still believed that they had done their bit by making the offer, and it was up to the children to take advantage of it. The most active role they had to enjoin pupils to work harder.

Several teachers, aware of black pupils reluctance to ask for help, took the initiative in this regard.

This Integrated Studies teacher attempted to raise what might be problem areas in Integrated Studies in the smaller English Skills class:

> I'm sure some of them get lost in the first five minutes. It's important to follow that up in EB. And it's important for the relationship between teacher and student to be such that they feel they can come and ask. It's a cultural battle, they feel it's rude to question the teacher.
>
> Ms Silcox

Ms Silver, in her Mathematics class, had a strategy which made her accessible to pupils who might need help, without their having to ask for it:

> I withdraw for a while, and then go round - find I must do that 'cos some never put their hands up, never ask - like Kanlani and Machavisi.

Others made a point of giving individual help where they could:

> Maile's (BE)approved. He didn't know where to put a full stop. I have a system of just indicating an error, and they have to correct them, and I sit with him. I found that reading aloud to find natural pauses seems to help.
>
> Ms Driver

For the senior Geography/History teacher, the reality of black pupils in the school meant that there would always be mixed ability classes, and that it would be important for them to be small so that he could give individual attention to those in need. The presence of weak pupils in his class did not make any difference to the way he taught:

> The way I teach is the way I've always taught. If Riverbend always has such an ability range, which it will have because black kids are always disadvantaged, then small groups are essential. I don't change my style, don't teach up or down, but I'm helping the low and more than ever before, and so small classes are essential.
>
> Mr Parks

Allied to these in-class efforts are those where extra lessons were formally offered.

1.2.3 Scheduled extra lessons

Some members of staff offered extra lessons. There was a range in the formality of these. At one extreme were those who arranged for an extra class or help with a specific problem during tea or lunch breaks. Ms Driver had arranged a week-end Mathematics workshop. This help was initiated by the teachers, but occurred fairly sporadically.

Mr Welsh had a regular Mathematics workshop for Standard 9 and 10 pupils during activity time. He made himself available to help with homework and problems at a set time each week. There was, however, no such help for pupils lower down the school in need of extra Mathematics help.

The Afrikaans department had a timetabled period in Standard 6 where pupils who were weak in Afrikaans, or who had to start the language as immigrants, were taught basic Afrikaans quite separate from the work done in the mainstream classroom. It is not designed specifically with black pupils in mind, as many of the immigrants are white and Indian children, but is certainly an avenue used to help weak black children 'catch up'. The Afrikaans teacher believed that 'this is helping the weak ones a lot'.

1.2.4 Dividing pupils according to ability allows for specialised teaching according to needs

Like extra Afrikaans, streaming, apart from that done in the Integrated Studies course, was not a strategy particularly devised for the benefit of black children, but, as was shown before, streaming in practice often resulted in these children being part of the bottom ability group.

It operated in the formal context, with a class coming for a particular subject at the same time, and then broken into smaller groups according to ability, with each group assigned a different teacher.

Within mixed ability classes, it sometimes evolved in a less formal way by teachers sending more able pupils outside to work on their own, leaving the teacher more time to work with strugglers.

Incorporated into Integrated Studies, the 'bridging' component of the course involved streaming into three different English ability groups for English Skills.

I will look at each of these approaches in turn.

1.2.4.1 Formal bridging programmes

These bridging programmes were referred to several times by the principal promoting the school, but in fact did not exist in reality except in a somewhat desultory attempt in Standards 6, 7 and 8 Integrated Studies where pupils were broken into different groups for English lessons. The principal referred to bridging programmes as part of the school's mechanism for dealing with unequal backgrounds, but in fact admitted that they were limited Referring to three black pupils in Standard 6, he said:

> I am concerned about those very low Science marks. The school needs to address the problem, particularly as the tests show them to be able. I am surprised at the poor performance as at least two are from convents. I am hoping to get funding for a bridging programme. At present, the teachers will attempt one this year for Standard 6, and if we don't get it right this year, we'll try again next. The school must do something for the child with potential.
>
> Mr Phillips

He felt that it was important to be able to offer the child with language difficulties a mechanism for dealing with these, but that at present, all that could really be honestly said to be available was a lot of 'good hearted amateurism'. (See Appendix N, part 4.)

The bridging concept differs from that of formal 'extra-lessons', or streaming, in that it forms part of the curriculum followed by all pupils in the standard, but allows for differentiated teaching in small, similar ability groups:

> It's really a support programme to enable the child to keep pace with other members of the Standard 6 class. The intention hasn't been to develop a special curriculum for them. I believe this is the right way to go in terms of their own self-confidence and esteem - there shouldn't be a division between children who have English problems and those who don't. The theory is more intensive care in 6, diminishing through 7 to 8, and by 9, hopefully they can cope with English as a second language.
>
> Mr Jones

Thus in the mind of Mr Jones, the bridging programme was specifically designed for second language English speakers, and aimed to develop their language skills in the context of the mainstream work in Integrated Studies. The social implication of isolating second language speakers from the rest of the class was seen as a major reason for keeping the group together as much as possible.

There was no set programme of work for the English Skills periods, no co-ordination among the groups in any one year, nor across the three years that the programme spanned. (See Appendix N, part 5.1) There was a general sense that the work was differentiated according to the ability level of the three groups. The teachers who had the group whose English was weakest generally spent part of the English Skills time helping pupils with the concepts dealt with in the main Integrated Studies component of the course, and spent more time than the other teachers with the tasks set as part of the Integrated Studies course.

> In Standard 8, Ms Chetty, who has the slow group, goes over the lead lesson, helps a lot with projects, writing paragraphs, things like that. I take the middle group and do more on planning effectively the whole essay - and I expect a lot more skilful use of language - don't want simple sentences, want them to join sentences properly. I did a short bit of Kafka - it would be a waste of time, because of the vocabulary, to do it with people for whom English is a third language.
>
> Ms Driver

In addition, there is more attention paid to formal grammar, and less to literary analysis. The demands made on the pupils in the weakest group are less challenging than those who have more language competency, and lower standards are accepted for the same work.(See Appendix N, part 5.2) This focus on the basics was particularly significant in the Standard 6 year, where the teacher

spent a lot of time working hand in hand with pupils as they prepared their projects. There is an emphasis on individual attention in the smaller group allowed by the streaming:

> ES is timetabled for all in Standard 6, but my group does English problems and short stories. Ms Simcox's group (top) is going ahead, delving into the network and Mr Jones is not delving into the network at all, he's doing the task with them, sitting with the task, looking at their plans, their rough work, helping each one.
>
> Ms Oliver

There was a sense that work in the small English Skills groups developed a close teacher-pupil relationship, and, by helping the pupils feel at ease with the teacher, made it easier for black pupils to ask questions and request help in class:

> It's important for the teacher-pupil relationship. It should be such that they feel they feel they can come and ask - it's a cultural battle - they feel it's not correct to question the teacher. It's easier to get them to come forward in a small group.
>
> Ms Simcox

Thus the reluctance of black pupils to ask for help, recognised by many staff, was noted here and an effort made to help bridge the gap that inhibited pupil initiative. The significance of a relaxed teacher-pupil relationship in Integrated Studies was referred to also in Chapter 4.

The labelling dimension that was a likely concomitant of dividing the class into groups based on ability was recognised by the staff, but felt to be counterbalanced by the benefits:

> I think they do feel they are in a weak group, even though we don't label it - but what happens in the smaller ES groups between teacher and pupil is more important. There has been no call to move away from it.
>
> Ms Simcox

The counsellor noted the dilemma posed by the streamed group concept in the bridging programme:

> But what do you do with the bridging group - leave children in a group where they can't understand - or take them out and have them labelled? It's a no-win situation.
>
> Mr White

Some of the staff expressed reservations about the efficacy of the English Skills programme. Ms Driver worried that, by dealing mainly with the basics of language competence, the black pupils in the weakest class were not being exposed to the kinds of English skills they would be required to demonstrate in the Matriculation examination. She felt the tension between dealing with their obvious and immediate needs, and preparing them for the rigours of the final examination. (See Appendix O, part 5.3)

Despite the perception that the English Skills programme was of vital importance, several of the staff in the Integrated Studies team reflected that they felt it was not well enough structured into the programme, that it often got left out of the week's work, and that long periods of time might elapse with no English Skills period. For Ms Driver, this meant that it was not always possible to return marked work soon after it had been handed in, and made it difficult to do effective remedial work on projects. (See Appendix N, part 5.4)

She also felt that there was a need for better co-ordination between the members of the team, for a greater focus on issues related to the nature of the work in English:

> We haven't made enough use of meetings - we haven't discussed even simple things like the best length of essays, what we are going to do in ES.
>
> Ms Driver

There was also a sense that the staff needed the help of experts in second language teaching, and a certain amount of cynicism about the priority this had received in the staffing plan for the school:

> We have bridging in IS. I think it will go a long way to helping. The kids are not singled out - do have interaction in other areas and can shine in things like Drama. But we need people who are competent in teaching English as a second language - but what do we have - we'll be too busy putting up tennis courts to worry about that, I suppose. He's (the principal) talking about hiring a music teacher and a sports teacher.
>
> Ms Driver

It seems, from these accounts, that there was some truth in the principal's comments that the bridging programme was the product of a group of enthusiastic amateurs, that it was poorly planned and not co-ordinated. It did, however, represent the only real effort made by any of the teachers to deal specifically with the language needs of the black pupils. It was one of the few places in the school where a direct attempt was made by teachers to establish a close working relationship with them and to foster their sense of being able to ask questions and seek help. Pupils' responses to this initiative will be more fully examined in Chapter 7.

1.2.4.2 Streaming classes

In Mathematics, Afrikaans and English Skills, streaming was a strategy to cope with differential in performance. In several cases, as noted earlier, this divided along racial lines.

The correspondence of high achieving streams with predominantly white children highlighted certain issues associated with this division. Most of the teachers who discussed the pros and cons of streaming in the contexts of their subject felt that there were strong academic reasons for persisting with the practice, and social factors which made it less advantageous.

1.2.4.2.1 Perceived advantages of streaming

The senior Science teacher expounded on the difficulties of teaching a large mixed ability class, and made clear that in her opinion, all parties would benefit from a streamed class:

> It's much easier in the streamed Standard 10 class. The bright don't get bored, and in the other class, I can explain till they all understand. But there is a problem of subject choice in 9, they have to be in groups the way they are 'cos of subject choices. At the moment we have kids who all got over 70% (mentions seven white, three Indian and three black pupils) in the same class as kids who consistently get less than 20% (mentions four black, one white and one Indian pupils). So I aim for the middle. Then when I explain again, the bright kids get fidgety. The low ability kids sit quietly, I often

> think they are thinking their own thoughts. I've told them to ask questions. Some respond well, but some just like sit there. When I think the average understand, I stop.
>
> Mr Watt

She had a sense that in an unstreamed class, the brightest pupils became bored at the pace of her mixed ability lessons and the weakest pupils were disadvantaged by being left behind and disengaging from the lesson. In an unmixed ability class she would have been better able to meet both sets of their needs:

> With the slower stream Matrics I tell them, then tell them again through questions, then give them a worksheet, and go through the worksheet. One of the problems of Science is that if you don't know yesterday's work, you can't do to-day's. I try to cut down the work for the slow kids, tell them what to leave out.

Mr Welsh felt strongly that mixed ability teaching in Mathematics was particularly detrimental to the most able pupils. He felt that the brighter children would suffer academically if made to stay in a class with weaker pupils.

In addition, he felt that there were benefits to be derived from increased confidence when weak pupils were not constantly reminded of their deficiencies by being pitted against more able peers in a mixed ability class:

> I think it is important to stream, or the low achievers begin to feel inferior. In this class, there's been a new feeling after the split - they feel competent. I think they are happier, don't feel they are completely incapable - they are achieving at their own level - and they might catch up eventually. I don't like to ve a point till they have all understood, and high achievers would get bored.

1.2.4.2.2 Perceived advantages of unstreamed classes

The social benefits of unstreamed classes are seen to be particularly significant in a multiracial context, as Mr Welsh reflects:

> I'm forced to ask myself if true multiracial education is possible in South Africa today. We've got a problem here - segregated streaming. I'm pushing for totally mixed classes next year, so that the racial division is avoided. Some will say that this will deprive the bright child, but other things we are trying to achieve are more important. It's a great problem. It's an advantage for the bright child to be in an accelerated stream - so multiracial education pays a heavy price in terms of academic standards at this stage - multiracial education is academically expensive - a better word than impossible.

He was not alone in his concern about the social impact of streaming which results in racially segregated classes. In the context of Mathematics, the principal, who also taught this subject, expressed concern about the negative impact of such segregation on group cohesion:

> Streaming is a problem. With the black children in the bottom groups, I'm not sure it's a good idea - it doesn't encourage racial mixing - part of the reason why the B's are so cliquish. It's perfectly possible to teach an unstreamed class.
>
> Mr Phillips

Other similar comments are reported in Appendix N, part 6.

In addition, he feels that there might be some benefit to black children with potential, who, in a mixed ability class reach a level they might not have been challenged to aspire to in a streamed class:

> The drawback is that in a streamed class they don't get pushed enough - there's a lower challenge. I'd like to see some of them given a chance in the other class. (He mentions two black boys and two black girls)

This is further described in Appendix N, part 6.

The issue of streaming was clearly perceived as a complex one for the teachers. The general consensus was that it was easier to meet the academic needs of pupils in a streamed class, but that division into ability groups could mean that apparently weak students were not challenged to maximise their potential, and in cases where they could have coped with the better stream, would be disadvantaged by going at a slower pace and possibly not completing the same amount of work, making it difficult to change status at a later stage.

Socially, the negative impact of being in the slower stream was seen to be significant, although there was a divergence of views in this regard. Some teachers felt that pupils gained in self confidence by being able to work at a pace suited to their ability, and that this compensated for the loss of opportunity to integrate. Others felt that, because the division into ability

groups corresponded with race in so many instances, the policy was detrimental to racial integration within the school and that the social impact was of more importance than the academic.

In Zulu in Standard 6, streaming of a different sort took place. After an initial attempt to teach all pupils together, the class was split along racial lines so that those pupils (all white and Indian) who had no knowledge of the language could be taught separately from those who had at least common knowledge of Zulu. Because of a timetable combination, this had a notable impact on the racial division of the class for General Science. All the black pupils taking Zulu came together with the few Indian and white pupils who were taking French, and the rest of the white and Indian pupils who were learning Zulu came at a separate time. This effectively gave the Science teacher one class with no black pupils in it. Her classes were segregated, without being streamed for ability, as she described:

> In the one class, ther[illegible] a huge range, with some of the black children very weak, with no background. It's mostly black, with some of the white kids. In the other class are the Indians and most of the whites who don't do French. This is a slower class, generally more homogeneous in ability - mediocre to lower. The Indian boys are not motivated, not interested and the white boys are the jollers.
>
> Ms Bolt

She observed that in general she preferred a mixed ability class for perceived possibilities for co-operative work and because it allowed for greater racial mixing:

> I prefer to have a mixed class - racially and in ability. I use a lot of group work, and the more able can help the others. It encourages the kids to mix more.

However, having taught the racially split Standard 6 class, she felt that the division had some advantages for the black pupils. It allowed them, for once, to be the dominant group in the class, and this gave them the opportunity to steer the discussion:

> The way the class has been divided for Zulu, I have one class that's nearly all black, and a few of the white boys. In some ways, the racial split is a bad thing. In others it is better. I often let the children's questions steer the class, and so it boils down to the white group steering. Now, when I've got mostly the little black kids I can allow them to follow their interests.

She believed that this gave the black pupils a sense of empowerment, increased confidence and enabled them to participate more freely in the class:

> The black kids seem to have more confidence and back-chatting to each other than usual in this class. They laugh and joke. I wonder if they've felt threatened. They would have sat there before, and kept quiet. A lot of white kids are precocious, and encouraged to speak out. Brian Smith can't roll his tongue - and for once he was not the one who could do everything. There was a lot of giggling and teasing him about it. They were in the majority for once - for everything - had dark hair and dark eyes. I don't agree with the racial split, but it does have some advantages.

Her observations give added dimension to the debate about the value of mixed or segregated classes that was raised in the context of streaming. Pupils' responses to this arrangement will be more fully examined in Chapter 7.

1.2.1.3 Streaming within mixed ability classes

Even where mixed ability teaching was officially the norm, informal streaming was practised. The Afrikaans teacher described how the policy worked in her subject:

> Some people are allowed out, and I work at a slower pace with the rest of the class. Those outside do the same work, but by themselves, and hand it in. I give out a worksheet, and let the faster ones work outside so I can give my time to the group.
>
> Ms Marshall

The names of those allowed out were all Indians and white, suggesting that this form of informal streaming operated along racial lines.

In Accountancy, the same strategy of allowing the most able to work alone outside the class was used. Again, the informal streaming meant that Indian and white pupils left, and black and a few of the others remained:

> In my class, my strongest are Indians, and I send them out to work on their own.
>
> Ms Stocks

This policy clearly had similar issues associated with it as that of formal class streaming, as is evidenced by the Accountancy teacher's comments on a black pupil's response to it:

> Dalatsang said that made her feel inferior, so in my last double I asked who would like to go and work in the library - and who went? Dalatsang, Tsakani and all these, and Rajiv and co. stayed, though they don't need my help, and the ones who left do - but it all part of this thing about the Indians.
>
> Ms Stocks

The policy of streaming, whether formally or informally, is clearly one of the school's major strategies for dealing with differential academic ability in its pupils. It allows teachers of the slower stream to work more slowly with their class, to repeat and consolidate basic concepts, while in other classes it is possible to work faster, and to extend the curriculum beyond basic content and skills. Clearly, pupils in faster streams have a potentially enriched exposure to the subject, as was the case in Mathematics, while in others they are merely able to do the set work faster and in a less controlled environment.

Designed with academic goals in mind, streaming none the less has implications for social interaction and self-concept. All these aspects will examined more fully from the pupils' perspective in Chapter 7, which deals with pupils' responses in more detail.

1.2.5 Focus on basic knowledge and skills - filling the gaps

Clearly in the minds of both teachers and pupils was the view that many black pupils underachieved because they lacked appropriate foundation knowledge and skills, and had difficulty with English as the medium of instruction. Several approaches to these problems were in evidence in the school, either as direct responses to the problem, or as part of the teachers' beliefs about the nature of appropriate teaching.

In part, by affording the weaker student the chance to work at their own pace, and to build up concepts from their foundation streaming can be seen as part of the general strategy to focus on the basic knowledge and skills on which the basic curriculum is built.

Mr Jones, who was responsible for the weakest Standard 6 English Skills group, shows how this approach applied in English Skills:

> I work through the Standard 6 project work, help to create their essays. I work with them, and mark them, to see where they go wrong, and to help them improve. It enables me to see where the problems lie - such as carelessness, lack of understanding English usage. I talk about planning and structure of essays, and repeat basic skills. I work the ideas out on the board with them, and help them to see a structure.

The Zulu teacher who worked in the class with him felt this helped the black children:

> Mr Jones's method is helpful. He's steady. Not concerned about doing a lot of work in a short time - he concentrates on them, makes sure they understand. Does a few things, but does them well. Like in The Wave he took his own time, and explained words. He's very helpful with essays - they write one paragraph, he goes through it with them, then on to the next paragraph - by then they know what is required.

Similar descriptions of slow and methodical structured work are also given by the Mathematics teacher of the weakest Standard 6 class.

For many members of staff, whole-class teaching that was directly related to their subjects, that dealt with the basics, as outlined in their descriptions of their work in Chapter 4, suggests that many held the view that with a structured approach to their subject and with careful teaching, all pupils, regardless of ability, would make progress.

Certain teachers defined for themselves areas of knowledge that they felt would benefit the pupils' general knowledge, and designed their curriculum to encompass this. The Cultural Studies course was a prime example of such a focused effort.

In justifying a heavily classical content-based course in Cultural Studies, focused on Egypt, Greece and Rome, with some attention to the world map, this teacher noted:

> I just know what is needed for the kind of world I live in. Perhaps this knowledge won't be necessary for the world they will live in, or went to live in, but I still can't help thinking it will, and that those who have it will be the ones at the top. For many children, this school is a chance in a lifetime, and it's my and the school's responsibility to plug the gaps, make up for the knowledge, that my daughter, for example, acquired just by being in the house with me. I can't help conjuring up the soup kitchen image, which I don't like, but which I think is valid.
>
> Ms Rawlins

While acknowledging fundamental gaps in appropriate language competence for their subjects, several teachers noted that, while they recognised the need, there was no place in the school where teaching directed at resolving this problem existed, and that they were not willing or able to tackle it.

Ms Silver, who taught Mathematics and Integrated Studies noted:

> I have no time to do English in Maths - that's why the bridging course is there - to help with English. But it doesn't do English that helps with Maths because the English teachers don't do Maths!

The senior Geography teacher expressed a similar view:

> There must be a definite programme to assist students who are weak in expression -I can't show a child in Standard 9 what words mean - I don't see it as my role in 9 and 10 - my job is to develop them into something meaningful in my subject. They should have the basic skills of expression before 8, 9 and 10 History and Geography.
>
> Mr Parks

Thus, there was a sense that there was a need for some language work that would prepare students for the requirements of specific subjects, but that no such language programme existed, that the work in Integrated Studies did not address this issue, and that it was not the responsibility of subject teachers.

Of course, the Integrated Studies teachers perceived themselves as committed to the development of the black pupils' language, but did not do 'language across the curriculum work', nor offer a structured, grammar-based course that more conservative teachers felt was what the black pupils needed.

1.3. Side-stepping the gaps

Several staff members reflected on strategies which they believed help pupils toward academic success without the issues of the 'gaps' in their English language ability and other aspects of academic background impeding progress. In the light of the perceived difficulties facing black students because of language, several informal strategies had evolved.

One strategy acknowledged the value of the vernacular in assisting children who had not understood content in a mainstream English class, and the other recognised the value of home language use for pupils grappling to acquire new concepts.

Ms Silver was adamant that black pupils should use vernacular in her Mathematics classes:

> I'm quite happy for them to use the vernacular - in fact they work together and must do that if it helps.

The Geography teacher also referred to the help vernacular speakers gave each other in class, and the Zulu teacher found that she was sometimes required to explain Integrated Studies work in the vernacular:

> Black children turn to me for help. It helps them because they can speak vernacular to me. When there is something they don't understand - like the Bermuda Triangle - I explain briefly so they can understand better. I sit there, listen attentively so in Zulu lessons I can pour out in Zulu what was happening in IS. I do this especially since they were split and it's an all African class. I try to explain and explain to them - I sit and listen just as if I were a pupil, and then I explain to them. But it would be better if they asked an English speaker - this is not helping their English.
>
> Mr Parks

She had reservations about her role here, though, as she felt it hindered the pupils' mastery of English.

The other approach for dealing with language problems was one which attempted to get by despite them. Certain teachers organised the learning of the weakest pupils in such a way that they did not

do any extraneous work, and showed them techniques that would help them pass the final examination, sometimes regardless of any real learning.

The Geography teacher articulates this policy particularly clearly: One part of the solution is to leave out large parts of the work, and drill others, making sure that information is learnt:

> I've got such an ability range. Old Zacharia (BB) can't speak English. Jabulani has to translate it all into Zulu for him. I would rather have them in History than Geography - can leave out chunks and give them lots of work in the rest and be sure they'll pass.
>
> Mr Parks

He clearly believed that spoon feeding and rote learning help pupils who do not really have language skills to master the required content:

> Well, Vusi has passed!. And you know how? I gave him seven essays to learn, told him four would be on the paper and they'd have to choose two - and he did really well on one!

He also felt that if facts are crammed there is a vague chance that some understanding will evolve at later stage:

> I don't expect them to grasp the concept of the Renaissance. But they can learn it. And, hopefully, when their language improves they will begin to understand something.

These approaches, characteristic of many of the senior teachers' attempts to deal with the problems of the weakest pupils, are directed at circumventing the basic problems facing the pupils, and directed toward helping them as pragmatically as possible achieve success in the Matriculation examination. Nowhere did I hear any of them question the work that they were doing, the value of it for the pupils in their charge, or the value of the kind of education that required pupils to learn content regardless of understanding, and rewarded them for doing so. There was pressure from many of them for the introduction of their subjects lower down the school, and for a more formal style of teaching, better directed toward the needs of the pupils for passing Matriculation than the Integrated Studies programme was seen to be.

The History teacher, in his campaign to have History taken out of Integrated Studies in Standard 8, and taught as formal subject, justified his demands as follows:

> The style of teaching and learning in Integrated Studies and History are fundamentally different. History is about a textbook, a notebook and a pencil. The weakest third, who are all black children, do History, and they have to open a drawer in their heads, put History in and spill it on to a page in the exams.
>
> Mr Parks

Another strategy in the category that I have labelled 'side-stepping the gaps' was the one that attempted to identify curriculum areas where the black pupils had some chance of achieving success despite their limitations, and to channel them into these. Given the apparent failure of black pupils to achieve as well as their white counterparts in the mainstream curriculum courses, several of the teachers felt it might be in their interests to select those subjects that did not make such rigorous demands on their language competence and academic skills.

The Accountancy teacher reflected on the importance of academic success for the black pupils' self-image, and felt that if they were to take subjects where they had a good chance of success, they would gain in confidence, extend their expectations of themselves and do well.

Her comments on this matter, and her suggestion as to what might be done, are given below:

> If we were building our black kids up more, they'd have better expectations and do well. We must give black children a chance to do better than white. When Ngaladi (SG) moved to the top group in Accountancy, the black kids cheered. Now another black girl is there. We need to make them feel academically equal - and this is difficult - it's often just not possible - that's a fact of life. It does happen in BE, and it does them so much good to find themselves the top of the group - but it happens in BE 'cos BE is a lesser subject, which they opt for 'cos of lesser ability - and excel. The white children don't make the same effort - and the subject is taken by lesser able whites. Possibly we need to look at subjects like Music and Speech and Drama where blacks can excel.
>
> Ms Stocks

The Art teacher was aware that ability and self-concept can interrelate with achievement, and recognised that in her subject children who could not express themselves well in English had a non-verbal form of communication to draw on. She had the following to say about a black boy in one of her classes:

> He does express himself when it comes to drawing, while he struggles with words, and to understand what people say. I am actually sorry for him because I think because of that a lot of teachers lose their patience and yell at him, and he just gets more withdrawn.
>
> Ms Hughes

Clearly there is a view that black pupils might do better in certain subjects that do not make such apparently rigorous demands as others. No policy of channelling students into these, though, existed at the school, and the pattern of subject choice showed in fact that very few black pupils opted for Art or Speech and Drama.

One area, though, where the school had taken a policy decision regarding the channelling of pupils into a course where the black pupils might be expected to do well was in the introduction of Zulu as a semi-compulsory course in Standard 6. This had largely been in response to the principal and the counsellor's recognition of the link between achievement and expectation of success. The Counsellor elaborated on the motivation for introducing this subject as follows:

> Afrikaans seems to be a problem for our black students on two levels - repressive connections of Afrikaans with the Government, and secondly, by virtue of the fact that it is a third, and sometimes a fourth language for some of our students... We therefore need to consider introducing the vernacular as a first language...this would seem we have provided a language context where our black students can feel more confident of achievement. In this way we may be able to break down the chain of feelings of failure in the language field.
>
> Mr White

However, as the Zulu teacher observed, the notion that Zulu was universally accessible to black pupil was not valid:

> It's supposed to be Zulu first language, but it's difficult for me 'cos most of them have never learnt Zulu before. They speak [illegible], but it's not their first language, and it's hard for them to learn Zulu - but they are trying, and do at least know some Zulu. It's not an easy option - but at least they can speak, and the difficulty is only the grammar - they must learn that. But I'd advise people like Sibongo

(SB) and Phineas (BB) to try Afrikaans - they are very weak and not interested. Esther (SG) says she finds the grammar difficult, but feels she won't make it in Afrikaans, at least she can speak Zulu.
Ms Khoza

The real commitment of the school toward the vernacular as an option for black pupils could also be questioned. If they wished to register for it instead of Afrikaans they had to make all arrangements for suitable tuition, and all arrangements for registering as a candidate themselves. The school gave permission for this, but no assistance, and made clear that the onus for obtaining tuition and for entering for the examination lay with the pupil (or his/her family). In addition, the school had made a particularly under-researched decision with regard to choice of vernacular to introduce as many of the pupils in Standard 6 were in fact not Zulu mother tongue speakers.

Clearly, the introduction and promotion of subjects such as these does not solve the problem of unequal achievement in the mainstream curriculum, where access to opportunity in the formal education sector at tertiary level is determined by success in the high status subjects, not in Art, Drama and Music. Nor is there any assurance that black children would excel - certainly, within the school context, there was no evidence that this was the case in the two subjects (Art and Speech and Drama) already on offer. But the teacher espousing these views were looking beyond the accepted curriculum, and attempting to find ways for black children to have an outlet for their abilities. Their approach would undoubtedly lead to the form of 'channelling' described in British literature, and would perpetuate the problem of differentiated achievement via subject choice rather than within curriculum subjects per se - and, although showing an attempt to match the curriculum to the child, does so within a stereotyped view of the child-as-member-of-a-group.

Part of the strategy of diverting black pupils to 'easier' options included offering the National Senior Certificate as an alternative to the Joint Matriculation Board's Matriculation examination.

This examination was preferentially chosen by Indian pupils who perceived that it afforded them a chance of better Matriculation results because of it's apparently lower standard. The Counsellor mooted the idea of encouraging black pupils to follow the same route, despite its racist implications.

1.4 Discussion of approaches rooted in notions of deficiency

All the approaches discussed so far have been broadly within the assimilationist and integrationist paradigms. The school, and its approach to knowledge and learning have been seen as fixed, as given, as something the new pupils have to adjust to - come up to and catch up with. Success in meeting the requirements of the Matriculation examination is seen as the yardstick by which school achievement should be measured. That black children underachieve in this context is acknowledged, and a variety of strategies are put forward in an attempt to overcome the problem.

At one extreme of the strategies are those that attempt to keep problem pupils out of the school. Once they have been admitted there is a range of approaches for dealing with their deficiencies. Several teachers feel that the onus to catch up lies with the pupils, and make it their responsibility to ask questions, seek help, work harder. More constructive are those where, while all things remain the same, extra help is offered to the child in the catching up process. This extra help varies from informal help in class, to the occasional extra lesson, through to formal additional classes in Afrikaans.

A further curriculum attempt on the part of the school is seen in classroom organisation - where arrangements are made to extract weaker, or stronger pupils, and help them according to their specific academic needs, to tailor teaching strategies and pace to particular strengths and weaknesses, via a system of streaming, with variations on this theme being official streamed classes, informal streaming within mixed ability groupings, and the bridg-

ing programme within Integrated Studies, where attempts are made both to do differentiated work on English skills and to assist the black pupils with the content of the Integrated Studies programme.

Many of the approaches outlined here are no different from those that might be attempted by teachers in any mixed ability setting. What makes these different is the fact that the real and perceived abilities of the children, as measured by criteria set by the school and the external examining body, to a large extent, divide the pupils along racial lines. This creates an awkward situation in a school attempting to be 'colour blind', and leads to the debate about mixed ability teaching being compounded by the sensitivities of mixed race teaching. The debate about streaming, always complex, now has to consider the relative academic benefits of what is perceived by most to be more efficient teaching in a streamed class setting, with the negative social spin-offs when the stream divisions so often coincide with race divisions.

From many quarters there is a call for the Integrated Studies programme to address basic needs and lay a better foundation for work in later years in subjects subsumed by it in the first few years of school (such as History and Geography), and for there to be better attention to the language needs of subject specialists who do not see this as their function. This call is part of the broader call for the curriculum to prepare all pupils better for the academic demands of the external examination system, and lies at the heart of the curriculum debate at the school. Because the black pupils showed such noticeable underachievement in this examination, the 'back to basics' call was heard particularly loudly in the context of their needs by those who believed this to be the route to greater academic success, and the correct path for the school to follow. Teachers adhering to this view attempted in their own classrooms to focus on the requirements of the Matriculation examination, to fill gaps in useful knowledge, and, in certain cases to assist pupils in developing strategies that

offered a measure of success in side-stepping their deficiencies in language ability and understanding and achieve some measure of success despite them.

Allied to this notion of side-stepping the difficulties of the high status curriculum was the suggestion that black pupils should be channelled into subjects that were easier, such as the Arts and Business Economics, that they should be offered Zulu as a subject in which they might excel, and that they might be offered the chance to write the supposedly easier NSC examination.

Where the negative impact of poor achievement on black pupils' self-concept and motivation, and their reluctance to actively seek assistance with their work were perceived as a factors contributing to their underachievement, very little was done to deal with this dimension. Several teachers, apparently aware of it, made no allowances for it in making demands on black pupils for better attention, more hard work and more initiative in asking for help. Others took a more proactive approach, arranging extra lessons, and going to weak pupils to help without being asked. Streaming, of course, was the most obvious dimension of the school taking the initiative in dealing with weak pupils, and here slow and careful teaching, with attention to individual problems was perceived as the best approach.

2. Approaches rooted in the view that there was a Eurocentric base to the curriculum and the school ethos

For a few teachers, the mismatch between children and curriculum was recognised as a source of underachievement, and the suggested solution was one of changing the curriculum and its context. Of course, such change was suggested by the 'back to basics' school of thought, but that change was designed to 'close the gap' between the children and what the conventional curriculum, as assessed by the Matriculation examination, required. Advocates of the changes here were hoping to find some way of allowing black children to achieve in their own right.

At the staff conference in September, one of the points that the counsellor made was that the school needed to move toward an approach other than helping the black students adapt to the school situation, and hinted at the need for staff to change their frames of reference:

> There is increasing pressure to accept more and more black students in our school. This will add further pressure on our staff to maintain academic standards... Some pupils are continually struggling to cope to terms with the demands we place on them. Adaptation of the individual however, is only one side of the coin. The complementary function of adaptation is accommodation. Accommodating pupils that are different (on any criteria) is no easy task. Although we are pupil centred, holistic and non-racial in our philosophy of education, we as a staff somehow maintain our own frames of reference in our instruction /teaching.
>
> Mr White

He elaborated on this by saying:

> We say we are pupil-centred - but how does this apply to our black pupils? We need to look at Integrated Studies, and the themes, and ask if they are relevant to to-day's society. What is meaningful to the child? We say we are non-racial, but we are status quo in terms of the syllabus as the dominant culture is prescribing what we must do - something we can't get away from because of Matric. We say we are in pursuit of academic excellence, but if 50% of our pupils are not achieving a pass, are we achieving academic excellence? It's nice to know we had five distinctions, but what about the others?

Teachers who shared his concern regarding these matters were clearly in the minority, but there a few ideas regarding change that might lead to a less Eurocentric environment.

2.1 Change the curriculum content

Ms Chetty had a clearly articulated view of the problems of context facing black students. In the final questionnaire she made specific much of what had been discussed, and what was apparent in her teaching:

> Since we teach through the medium of English, those whose language is English have a tremendous advantage over others. I have tried to correct this by introducing content which deals with chiefly the black experience in order to engage students through content rather than language. The effect of this is that students feel confident and are willing to express themselves, but they are not being trained for the present Matriculation examination which in a language paper presents them with passages that are ethnocentric and based on a European world view (especially when it comes to humour).

She clearly sees the need for curriculum reform in a more radical sense than the teachers calling for 'back-to-basic' measures to close the gap. She is not calling for efforts to change the children to meet the curriculum needs, rather for a curriculum which matches their experience. The problems of doing this within a basically Eurocentric system have not escaped her.

Clearly, for her, the need to empower black children, to make them feel that their background and experience has value is significant. Other sentiments along these lines were expressed by the Integrated Studies teachers in reflection on the need they felt to introduce less Eurocentric material, and in the attempts they had in fact made to incorporate aspects of learning that were not always based in the experience of the white pupils.

For teachers who had the view that there was a need for more Afrocentric material, the need to reduce the alienation experienced by many black pupils from the regular curriculum content was seen as a factor contributing to their academic underachievement.

2.2 Introduce the vernacular as an official curriculum subject

Although this was discussed in the section on side-stepping the problems of the 'deficiencies' in black pupils, it should also be included in this context because it was also seen as a strategy for validating black culture and part of the move to make the curriculum less Eurocentric.

The school counsellor expressed this view as follows:

> We have got to move in that direction if we are going to be multicultural. The system hasn't shifted enough. I would prefer the vernacular with six kids rather than French - we're making a statement there.
>
> Mr White

The statement of course would be that black culture had a place in the school, and would serve, indirectly, to improve black students' belief that the knowledge they had was worthwhile. Black pupils' response to the move to introduce the vernacular were unexpected by the school, and will be examined more fully in Chapter 7.

2.3 Employ more black staff

This plea was made by the counsellor at the staff conference. Sensitive to the black pupils' poor self-concept of achievement, he recognised the importance of black role models of success. Black teachers would have a role to play here. He also felt that they would contribute to a school environment in which black pupils would feel more comfortable. He explained this view as follows:

> There are several more things we need to do. Unfortunately, the black inferiority complex is perpetuated by our own system. The achievement of the white leads them to being doctors and engineers, and the failure of the black perpetuates the status quo. In order to break the pattern we are going to have to be more committed in a multicultural view. We must look at the integration of blacks in the staff. By the nature of our present staff we tend to be rather monocultural in our views. An increase of black staff members will provide a more comfortable and predictable interactive context for our black students. That's where our understanding of black culture will start - what will get us through this pattern.
>
> Mr White

Not everyone on the staff had his confidence in the value of black staff. The Accountancy teacher was dubious of the ability of the newly appointed Indian teacher to cope adequately with the needs of white English speaking pupils:

> I'm worried about Biku Gohil (new Indian teacher) teaching Clare Simpson English - how can a man from Loudium High teach a girl like Clare Simpson?
>
> Ms Stocks

This perception of black members of staff as unequal to the task of teaching the academic subjects to the white pupils was keenly felt by the Zulu teacher:

> They will never have blacks for the academic subjects like Maths and Science, only the vernacular. They're scared the standard of education is going to drop - and in a way they might - our methods are

> different from the methods here, and the standards here are far above DET standards. A Riverbend parent will not be happy to have a black teacher giving Maths - not even the kids will accept that.
>
> Ms Khosa

Her experience at the school had confirmed this feeling that black staff would not be considered as having a valuable contribution to make. She had been asked to work with the weakest English Skills group in Standard 6, but in fact had never felt herself part of the Integrated Studies team. She had never been asked her opinion on black pupils' learning difficulties, had never been included in the Integrated Studies team's meetings:

> You are the first one, and probably the last, to ask about the black students' problems. I haven't heard them trying to find out the problems they encounter when trying to do IS. They only discuss what they will do, and nothing about the problems. They never ask us how the black students are managing, or what I think ought to be happening. They never even tell us about the meetings.
>
> Ms Khosa

She perceived Mr Jones's minimal attempts at including her as patronising, though unlike the others, he had afforded her status as a teacher:

> Mr Jones will ask us to help us and us. He is the only one who feels I can take part and help - others don't feel I'm capable of helping the children do something. He's the only one who regards me as a teacher - who can tell a child to do something, let a child do something. He sometimes asks my advice, 'Do you think it's OK if I give them seven days to hand in?' I sceptical think he does it just to make us feel comfortable.

With regard to the black children's problems with the curriculum content, brought to her attention by the children, and her ideas about what might be more accessible to them, she had the following to say:

> I think of such things, but say, 'Let us leave it for now.' I doubt if they (IS teachers) will carry out anything I suggest.

Her perception of her status was confirmed as valid by Ms Simcox's response to my asking about Ms Khosa's role in offering help with regard to the problems of black pupils:

> I have asked about boarding house matters - like the black girls attitude to menstruation, 'cos they manipulate it - but I haven't asked her much about the black students' learning difficulties. I haven't consulted her about S's - haven't thought of it - and I might be

> better able to deal with English problems if I did. I wouldn't have consulted her on the academic side - didn't think of it - maybe a mistake.

My observations of her interaction in the classroom showed her to be in somewhat in the position of a pupil, sitting with the children and learning the same lesson as they were. The only times she was asked to participate actively were the few occasions on which she was asked to give a lecture on some aspect of Zulu culture and tradition. She never gave any of the other theme lectures, and was very much a teaching assistant to Mr Jones in the English Skills classes, which she did not attend regularly.

2.4 Talk to the black students to find out what they need in terms of curriculum and teaching/learning

The counsellor felt, that, in order to meet their needs better, it was important to discuss curriculum issues with the black students:

> We need to talk to our black students and co-evolve the content of subjects. This is possible in the 6, 7 and 8 years... We need to find out from them how we as a staff can be more helpful to their development. This is a challenge that faces all staff members. We can't look at the traditional helpful ways, we must create new ones. We have got to risk, have courage.
>
> Mr White

2.5 Discussion of approaches noted in the view that the curriculum was Eurocentric

Clearly, with regard to changing the curriculum and creating a less Eurocentric school environment, there was more talk than action. Ms Chetty's sustained the approach in her English classes, but the Integrated Studies team, as they themselves reflected, were more aware of the need for change than felt they had effectively brought it about.

The school's official policy showed no movement toward this sort of curriculum change, apart perhaps from the introduction of Zulu as a part of the official curriculum. Neither, in the time that we were there, was any conscious effort made to recruit black staff.

The principal, concerned that so much of his time was taken up by day-to-day administrative matters and by the burden of fundraising, decided during the year to create a new post - that of a deputy head - to give academic leadership to the school. The creation of the post was generally acknowledged as valuable by the staff (though there was a measure of opposition to the manner in which it was announced).

For the principal, the main curriculum issues that needed consideration, and which would be the brief of the new incumbent, were the appropriateness of the introduction of an option to study one of the black vernacular languages to Matriculation level, the possibility of introducing Computer Studies as a Matriculation option, the refinement of the admissions tests so that only pupils with academic potential would be admitted to the school, improved bridging programmes for black pupils, the relative time that should be accorded Integrated Studies in the week, as he was concerned that at present it took time that might be better allocated to Science, and the real focus that the themes in Integrated Studies should take, with particular concern expressed about the extent to which it provided pupils with relevant general knowledge and background for the conventional subjects of the core curriculum. The desirability of offering the NSC examination option was also seen as part of the brief for the new post.

The staff saw the benefits of the new post largely in terms of a person who could offer guidance with regard to discipline and methodology for new teachers, someone to act as a springboard for teachers in small departments, a person who could observe lessons and offer useful ideas for improvements and who could keep senior teachers informed about the requirements of the Matriculation sub-

jects. At the same time, several wondered why, if there was money available for such a post, it was not rather being spent on increasing the teaching staff in overloaded departments.

Thus, this initiative on the part of the principal was seen by all as one that would address mainly the issues related to improving the academic success of pupils in the given situation, not one that might consider changes to the curriculum in a fundamental sense. Efforts would be directed toward helping staff maintain order and improve methodology, and would also assist in determining how best to select pupils for academic success in the school, and bridge those from disadvantaged backgrounds into the school system. Clearly, changing the system was not part of the principal's frame of reference.

3. Discussion of approaches to black pupils' apparent underachievement at Riverbend

In general, It would probably be true to say, that there were three main broad views on the issue of unequal academic achievement among the teachers. Teachers generally subscribed mainly to one perspective, but many had elements of others in their thinking.

One view, clearly the most conservative, held largely by senior class Matriculation subject teachers was that, although there were difficulties in background, it was not really their responsibility to do much to overcome these. Basically, children with problems should not be admitted into the school in senior standards, should not be passed up from junior classes with weaknesses that impinged on their ability to master content prescribed for the Matriculation examinations, and that it was the responsibility of the teachers in the junior classes to prepare the pupils adequately for the senior standards. More hard work and improved attitudes to work on the part of the weaker black children would do much to assist their progress. They believed in the need for imposing greater order and control on the pupils' learning. Sub-

scribers to this view tended to pay scant attention to the personal and social dimension of their work, and focused rather on the need for good results. They did not articulate a need for radical curriculum change, and felt instead that there should be a decrease in the number of years given to Integrated Studies and a change in the nature of Integrated Studies so that it served the senior classes' interests better.

A second view, more liberal than the first, was held by a large group which comprised some senior teachers, the bulk of the others, and included the principal. This group felt more sympathetic toward the children with problems, and felt it their duty to 'do something' to help them 'catch up' and 'bridge the gap'. They favoured careful selection so that only those with potential were admitted, improved bridging programmes, extra tuition, streamed classes, steering pupils into subjects they could more easily manage and the use of the vernacular where needed to assist in understanding. Subscribers to this view had a sense that black pupils worked hard, but often did too little too late. They had a sense that the curriculum confused many pupils in both its content and methodology, and saw the need for better strategies for helping pupils cope with its demands. They were aware of the social dimension of curriculum decisions, and varied in where they put their emphasis, though generally gave this aspect very little attention.

The third, and most radical view, held by a small group, saw the problem of poor achievement rooted in a Eurocentric system, imposed on the school by the Matriculation examination, but also allowed to exist within the school because of its dominant white culture. There was probably only one teacher with a clearly defined and articulated stand on this matter, (Ms Chetty), but there were others sympathetic to its ideas, but who had not yet clearly outlined it for themselves. This group was the most vociferous about the need for change in the curriculum and ethos of the school. These aspects of the school were seen as impinging on academic achievement, and in need of reform because of this,

among other reasons. They felt that a large part of the problem lay in the mismatch between the school and the curriculum, and the pupils, and felt that it was important to address the former so that all pupils might feel affirmed and confident within themselves, and at ease in the school system. They believed that a less Eurocentric curriculum, and one which placed aspects of social and personal learning in a central position, that shifted the knowledge power base from the white pupils to one that was more evenly distributed, was what was needed to bring about effective education. They acknowledged that there was some significance in success at Matriculation level, but felt that this was not the most important measure of educational success, and that, in any case, it could be better achieved by building pupils' self-confidence and sense of worth, and that in the long run, the only way in which black pupils would really come in to their own was through a changed curriculum emphasis.

The conflict between the more conservative and more radical elements on the staff was given impetus by the differential academic achievement of black and white pupils. It served to entrench their positions about what was appropriate curriculum. Each group believed that, not only was their perspective on education correct for all pupils, it was particularly appropriate given the poorer academic performance of the black pupils in the school. This difference in achievement thus came, to some extent, to justify views about appropriate curriculum that were held by the different groups regardless of the racial composition of their classes.

However, despite this deep-seated tension in the staff there was little open debate about either the differential achievement of black pupils or about the school curriculum in general for most of the year, nor was there any programme of staff development that might have addressed these issues. The overriding covert consensus was that the multiracial nature of the school was not something that needed discussion, for to do so would somehow imply that the staff was racist in its perspective, suggesting that there might be differences among the pupils on the basis of their race. For

much of the year little attention in any structured way was paid to the issue of differential achievement, or of how best to facilitate the learning of the black pupils' (or any others').

A key element that became evident during the course of conversations with staff about their work was that, in general, the staff were unaware of the debates around multicultural curriculum issues, or even, really, what these issues were. None of the staff had chosen to come to Riverbend because it was a multiracial school, or even because it was a school that offered opportunities for curriculum innovation. For the majority, the decision to apply to the school was based on a combination of chance factors or personal contacts. (See Appendix N, part 7 for some teachers' accounts of reasons for coming to the school.) For some teachers, the multicultural composition of the school had engendered some thought about the appropriateness of the curriculum for all pupils, but these teachers were in the minority. The majority of teachers took the curriculum as given, and gave little thought to whether and how it might be modified given the reality of the multicultural school population. Discussion with the principal, and my observations during an interview for a post for 1988, made clear that no such awareness was probed for when potential staff were interviewed for posts, not even in the selection for the newly created post of academic deputy principal.

In an attempt to generate some debate around curriculum issues and the direction in which the school was moving, the counsellor arranged that the staff conference that year revolve around these issues. The programme comprised a morning of papers, with time for questions, and an afternoon of small group discussion. The programme included papers on the history of the school, socio-political dimensions impinging on the curriculum, perspectives on multicultural education, cultural differences in the work of the school counsellor, academic achievement differences among the race groups in the school, and the principal's vision of a school that should be striving for excellence in the (academic, musical, sporting fields.

Most of the small groups agreed that the school was firmly located within the assimilationist model, and felt that there should be some movement toward a more integrationist approach. However, there were reservations expressed as to their competence in this dimension, with many expressing the need for workshops and guidance in making changes, and for more co-operative work among staff regarding useful teaching strategies. There was also a sense of the need for more black members of staff, coupled with reservations, expressed in private, as to whether competent black and Indian teachers could be found.

The significance of the Matriculation examination, and of parents' expectations concerning their children's success in this were seen as strong factors influencing the curriculum. Many teachers felt that they were not intentionally forcing black pupils into a white-oriented curriculum, but that this was the inevitable consequence of the Matriculation syllabus.

What was also clear from interviews with staff was that there had been three broad categories of response to the issues raised in the morning.

One clearly defined response was that of the most conservative section of the staff. For this group, much of the small group discussion had been unrelated to the issues raised in the morning, but had revolved around other matters of concern, such as the headmaster's image with the pupils, approaches to discipline, the need for more regular staff meetings and the desirability of paid outsiders to take on extra mural responsibilities.

This verbatim extract from conversations with staff after the conference gives a picture typical of this group's response:

> My group in the afternoon had a wonderful discussion. There was little philosophising. We were more practical and attempted to meet what we saw as the shortcomings of Riverbend at present: the initiation of newcomers into the ways of the school; the lack of a daily control meeting. We felt that the school should meet on a daily

basis; the need to bolster the head's image. We didn't answer the question about which model we fit into. We didn't see it as important.

Mr Parks

(See also Appendix N, part 8.)

For this group, the issues of differential achievement, approaches to multicultural education and appropriate curriculum in a school like Riverbend in the context of these, were clearly not seen as 'important issues'.

An intermediary group recognised that the morning had raised important issues, and that these had been left unaddressed:

There was no link between the morning input sessions and the afternoon discussion. The major issues were not addressed.

Ms Marshall

The more radical group had found the papers exciting and challenging, and had felt disappointed by the unwillingness of their colleagues to grapple with them:

Your and Tom's paper was quite simple. Based on theory and observation. You were able to manipulate us into looking into a mirror, to see we're an old fashioned assimilationist model. The first part of the day had a lot that was exciting - a light drawing us to the future. But my discussion group was very tardy. Ms Green doesn't like political discussion. Mr Banks is a slow cogitator. We didn't make a lot of progress.

Ms Simcox

(See also Appendix N, part 9.)

The conference made clear that the ignorance regarding multicultural education issues on the staff was not only due to a lack of awareness of avenues to be explored, but was as much the result of a lack of interest in them. At least one person felt that the poor quality of debate reflected the staff's general reluctance to deal critically with key educational issues:

The group that had the least to say about anything got the floor, got the approval of the chair, brought us back to the chitter chatter of the staffroom - and the fact that they referred to the toilet seat for an summarised the level of their intellectual debate. This is the warm cocoon into which we drift when faced with making erroneous decisions - we return to maintenance issues. This is where the conference ended, and where it began. The only talk about the conference

> that has come up again is the toilet seat - and we are going to talk about assemblies. No-one has talked about multicultural models, the approaches we could be following, education in a nation in crisis - it's all thrown out the window.
>
> Mr Jones

This reluctance on the part of the staff as a whole to address what he perceived as crucial matters for debate in the school was a matter of concern to the counsellor, Mr White. He reflected that there was not enough commitment to thinking about the issues:

> I don't think we do enough thinking about what facilitates learning - about the job we do - we need to get ourselves outside the job.

An extreme example of this sort of attitude was expressed by this teacher:

> I don't really worry about these things after school. The bigger issues I often feel pretty small against. I worry sometimes that my function here is mainly getting A's in Matric - apart from that, I'm decorative - help with PRO, for example.
>
> Mr Singer

This was undoubtedly a major factor in curriculum development at the school. There was a general complacency about it. Little effort and time were directed toward addressing issues, thinking in new and creative ways, attempting to keep abreast with reading and research, or even in discussion with other teachers working in non-racial school situations.

The counsellor had two views about this reluctance to consider change: it could be seen as arising from complacency, and also from the security of the familiar in the face of a changing situation:

> Maybe the system isn't right to handle these issues - maybe we need more heat in the oven - but the heat is going to increase - no doubt - but the staff don't move unless an issue really needs addressing. The black students impact has made us unsure and frustrated - and therefore we hang onto the past - as long as we can get some good results. People have to take note when there's pressure in the classroom - like half the class can't understand - they have to do something. Some people turn their eyes away from the pressure by looking at the content. They don't understand that they might need change in their own approach. I'm going to look at the conference material again, and force the issues out - don't know what else to do.
>
> Mr White

It seems clear that the need for there to be some change was acknowledged by members of even the most conservative group. However, perspectives on the nature of the change that was conceivable, with which staff would feel comfortable was, I believe, related to their political perspectives which, not surprisingly, overlapped to a large extent with their educational approaches. To a large extent the continuum among the staff in the educational sphere from conservative to more radical was mirrored by that among them in the political sphere.

The senior Science teacher recognised the existence of these differences in political approach on the staff:

> I think one of the things is that we have had a group who are very liberal in their thinking and a group who are more conservative. When issues have come up in meetings or over the weekend, you tend to oppose one another.
>
> Mr Watt

Needless to say, issues of political debate were reflected in the curriculum debate as well. Mr Parks elaborated on this perspective in this way:

> Somehow, everything you say or do is given a political label. I find it hurtful. I would suggest that a major dividing force on the staff at the moment is where you stand or are perceived to stand in terms of the revolution in South Africa. Once that label has been attached, then everything you do or say is prejudged according to the label you've been given, and makes it impossible for you to work with the group that has given you the label. (On probing, the group was revealed to comprise three of the IS teachers) What becomes important is whether you are perceived to be actively working for, passive about or would rather not have, the revolution. What we are seeing on the staff now is a shift in power. The majority of the staff are no longer the old-fashioned, old-world Riverbend teachers. They are now realists, concerned with education first, and then, maybe, politics. In some people, those three, the whole revolution thing is such a driving obsession that it permeates their whole being.

Other reflections on the split in the staff are provided in Appendix N, part 10.

This difference in the staff was revealed in many of their actions, comments, and in their attitude to black pupils and their backgrounds. In general, many of the staff had little experience of teaching black pupils, and little social contact with black

people. They were unaware of issues in the townships, and uninformed politically. They had little knowledge of, or interest in, the political issues of significance in the black pupils' lives (and those of all South Africans'), and saw them as irrelevant to their own. Several comments in Chapter 4 and Appendix C show this perspective clearly. For many teachers, exemplified here by Ms Watt, the school, largely the Integrated Studies Department, was too liberal, too one-sided in what it showed the pupils, out of synchrony with her home:

> If I were to send my kids here, I would like to think that they would see not only the very liberal political point of view, but that somebody would counter it with the views and reasons of more conservative people. I don't mean the NNP, just more moderate views, because I don't think anybody can be expected to make an intelligent decision unless they actually know some facts. You can't make a choice unless you know something about the whole range. It disturbs me that that doesn't happen here. I haven't attended, but I believe these kinds of views are very much strengthened in IS, and not the other side seen. If they came here they would only get very liberal views. So that would definitely put me off sending my kids here because I tend to be a little bit conformist, and my husband. Not that we are very right wing in any way, but I would like my kids to see a range of opinions.
>
> Ms Watt

The avoidance of matters of current political concern was a feature of the majority of staff's attitudes to the informal as well as formal aspects of the curriculum. The History teacher, when approached by a pupils on the recommendation of the headmaster, for material which could be used in a Soweto Day service, was adamant that this was not part of his domain:

> I told Mr Phillips I didn't want to do it. I'm not prepared to do that sort of thing It would involve too much work. I don't have any information, and there's nothing in the current history books.
>
> Mr Parke

The senior Biology teacher, in the context of a person being invited to speak about the children in Detention under the laws of the State of Emergency, complained that she wished, 'they would choose people to speak on issues of importance to all of us'; many members of staff were upset by black pupils singing freedom songs at the Soweto Day service and only the Integrated Studies teachers could understand many pupils' anger at the builders flying the South African flag over the newly roofed community centre. Only

three members of the Integrated Studies staff and the Zulu teacher were regular attenders at meeting the pupils convened to commemorate days such as Soweto Day, and only one or two of the others attended even one such meeting. The school itself was uncertain how best to handle a day like Soweto Day:

> We don't really have contact with schools in the township. But we do have children that go to our school that come from the townships. That became a bit of an issue last year, when we didn't know what to do about June 16th. (Soweto Day) I don't know if it's going to be an issue again this year. The students organised speakers at assembly, and so on. There was resistance to actually acknowledging it on the part of the staff.
>
> Ms Chetty

It is not surprising, therefore, that a more Afrocentric curriculum, directed toward the needs and experience of the black pupils, was not easily conceived of by this group of teachers, nor one that was immediately attractive. It is also not surprising that this group of teachers was not committed to the type of educational transformation which they perceived as that which would accompany political transformation within South African society.

Ms Chetty, reflects on the staff's perspective thus:

> Not many teachers believe as I do, that we should be involved in a process of change. Most teachers don't really think about it. They assume that we are involved in the process of change because we are a non-racial school and so on. I just feel that that is a bit of a farce. We did that in 1976, but now in 1987 we need to go a step further. That is how I feel about it. Maybe I'm wrong. I think in general the IS people feel like that. We need to push further.

From what I have revealed about the staff's resistance to radical educational change at Riverbend, it is clear that it was a major and successful force within the school. It is also clear that the reasons for the resistance were many and complex. I have probably over-simplified group divisions and attitudes in my analysis, for many staff did not fit neatly into one or other box in all dimensions of their work. However, the delicate tracery of overlapping notions is too complicated to unravel in detail without losing sight of certain key elements underpinning the overall theme of resistance to reconceptualising the curriculum.

For the opponents of Integrated Studies as practised in the school, and those resistant to reform in their own teaching approach, it is true to say that a major factor was the reality of the present Matriculation system, geared specifically toward the white middle-class pupil. Given this reality, and the relative disadvantage of black pupils confronted by it, they believed that the best way to success for their pupils was an insistence on a traditional approach to learning and knowledge within the school, as these were the ingredients of conventional success at Matriculation level.

Bolstering this justification, was the notion of the kind of education this group perceived to be in demand by the parents of the pupils (and, presumably, the bursary donors). Strong influences on the nature of curriculum development at the school were the beliefs of the principal about what was appropriate, and the staffing policy he followed in the light of these beliefs. He, in turn, was influenced by a need to make the school economically viable, and to satisfy what he perceived to be the demands of the school's market.

Several of the staff, in reflecting on the pupils at the school, divided them into groups according to the type of educational demands they were likely to have, and reflected on how these had changed during the history of the school. Originally conceived as an alternative to the conventional private schools modelled on the British public school system, Riverbend had attempted initially to provide a more 'progressive' form of curriculum, with Integrated Studies as a key component of this. Its apparent lack of formal discipline and emphasis on individual development and self-discipline was seen to have attracted a group of parents who valued a more liberal approach to education than was offered by either the state or the traditional private schools. A fair component of the school's population was seen to be derived from families with artistic inclinations, and who were unconventional in their approach to education, and also from pupils who had failed to fit into the rigid practices and emphasis on conformity

of other schools. However, it was the view of the headmaster, and many of the influential staff, that this element of the school's market had declined, and that in fact, there was increasing demand for a more disciplined approach to school life, and a real emphasis on academic excellence.

Many of the staff perceived that for the black parents, an increasing proportion of the school's constituency, the liberal values of the school's founders were of secondary importance, and that what was uppermost was an education that afforded children an entree to tertiary education opportunities, and the sound academic grounding that was increasingly difficult to acquire in the strife-torn township school system. For white parents, too, this component was seen to have become of increased significance, and the principal felt that this drive toward academic excellence was one that should be seen as meeting the 'bottom line' demands of the majority of parents.

The bot om line was based on traditional teaching and conventional measures of success. All members of this group, even if only grudgingly, acknowledged the success of many of the aims of Integrated Studies, bu none saw them as having value in the ultimate goal of Matriculation success, and therefore perceived them to be of little value. While staff members asserted that they valued the development of self-discipline, self-motivation, self-confidence, increased knowledge about their society, co-operative work for the benefit of the group, the ability to get on with people from different racial groups and the valuing of people for qualities other than academic excellence as important characteristics of a good school, increasingly the success of the school was seen as measured by success in terms of academic excellence, and these were not seen as strong contributors to it. The view of some of those pushing for change, that the less conventional dimensions of learning were essential ingredients for academic success, was given scant hearing or attention.

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At the same time it would probably also be true to say that a certain inertia directed their opposition, as change is always more effort to implement than is the pursuit of a well-worn track. Change in an area in which you feel incompetent and for which you feel inadequately prepared is change that has little enticement for the overcoming of inertia.

Probably, however, given information that was philosophically in tune with the kind of change this group would find acceptable, some measure of curriculum reform might have been possible. As Mr Parks notes:

> No strategies for coping with column three were suggested in our group at the conference. As the only senior teacher of Geography, who does one ask for assistance in a non-racial situation? I don't know if black kids perceive differently - what do they make of climate instruments, what about their spatial perception - I'm floundering in the dark - each has to find his own way.

The junior Biologist remarked:

> There are big academic problems filling gaps. We need workshops on teaching methods - new ideas. We need to work together to find ways to tackle these things.

These, and other similar comments suggest that if there was help available to bridge gaps, remediate for disadvantage and compensate for inherent differences in the cognitive process, such help might be accepted, and the change it required implemented. Such change of course, would not radically alter the status quo.

More radical change though, movement toward multicultural education that is transformationist and reconstructionist, was unlikely to succeed in the kind of situation reported at Riverbend. It was simply too threatening for the majority of teachers, too out of tune with their fundamental value systems and perceptions of he role and value of education. The junior Biology teacher, reflecting on the admissions policy, encapsulates some of the thinking of the more radical teachers about this in the context of the admissions policy:

> It's the biggest failure of the school. Other kids will get through. There's no ways we can carry on saying we're child-centred, liberal, offer an alternative education. It's not child-centred, it's academically-centred, and directed toward university passes. We'll

> became more selective in our Black intake, more elitist. The Black results will improve because of that, not because of our teaching method. Any system of the future must be more radical, and Mr Phillips is not willing to take a chance.
>
> Ms Bolt

Thus, from the view of the opposition, more stringent selection of pupils, better control of work and focus on the Matriculation requirements might bring academic success, but will perpetuate a system that is elitist and conservative.

The dominance of these attitudes and values among the power group on the staff made the task of those working for curriculum change increasingly difficult. The fact that they felt themselves beleaguered was one that inhibited the Integrated Studies staff's creativity and sapped their energy. Ms Simcox summed this up in reflecting on the work in the Integrated Studies department:

> It has been lackadaisical. This year we didn't have a beginning of year meeting to formulate the aims for the particular themes. On the one hand, structures are important, on the other you must be willing to abandon them. There are times when you should throw away notes and start again. We should reassess the themes regularly, but didn't do it this year. Conflict has impeded progress. We've been putting our energy into anger. Energy should have been funnelled into improving it.

More importantly is the view, expressed here by Ms Driver, and echoed by the others, that, while they were willing and anxious to move in new directions, their own limitations, based in the education to which they had been exposed and the separateness of the society in which they lived, left them ill-equipped to know what to do for the best:

> I do feel there is a need to Africanise the curriculum. I've been reading Ibsen, the names put me on the left foot, I'm already at a disadvantage. That part is easy. The difficult part is, because we're white, knowing how what we're doing is strange. So very aware, socially conscious black staff members are essential, or we have no guidance and we're ignorant. Not necessarily black, but people with insight and information. We're so useless. We go on doing Lord of the Flies - what does it mean to Thabo from the township. So we need alternatives, don't know what to do. It's the way I was brought up, what I know, what I've been exposed to. We need so much more than that.

Recognising the problem was one aspect, knowing how to deal with it constructively was another. Clearly, working with insightful black colleagues, committed to change would be one solution. Allied to it would be more teacher development, in-service work that was directed toward the kind of change seen as important by the Integrated Studies teachers and a few others on the staff. (See Appendix N, part 11 for related comments.)

In addition, there existed the problem of inertia. There was an already existent curriculum, with a lot of material and resources allied to it, that made it easy to continue in the same routine and divert energy into the logistics of which activity should happen in which period, organised by which staff:

> What saddens me is that we don't talk about these issues as an IS staff enough. Maybe it's correct to work on gut feeling - no-one has the answer - but maybe it would clarify our thinking - we're inclined to drift and hope it works out - human, but not always the most constructive. Maybe we should say, 'There's a group of silent girls in Standard 7. Should we leave them, mix them, what should we do?' There's so much to do, so much to consider it mind boggling. I've felt the articulation of what we're trying to achieve has been lacking in our meetings. We seem to spend the time working out the logistics.
>
> Ms Driver

Certainly, the proceedings of the Integrated Studies meetings I attended corroborated this assessment of them.

In addition to the factors already mentioned, the reality of the Matriculation examination, and the contribution of the work done in junior years toward pupils' success at this level, made some of the Integrated Studies staff anxious about whether they were doing the pupils an injustice in not focusing more specifically on the formal requirements of this examination:

> I keep seeing where they're going, what'll be expected in Matric. Ms Chetty says we need to focus on what they need now, what they'll relate to. It takes a lot of courage to do that. I'm interested in talking to her 'cos she seems to manage. But will they be able to cope? How will they cope with the external examiner? We have to be fair to them - have to meet that need as well as their personal needs. Sometimes I'm afraid - though I know the Matric English results have always been fine - but when I see Alisdair still spelling so badly I think I could have done more.
>
> Ms Driver

This is a large part of the dilemma facing the move for curriculum change in the school. The Matriculation examination is externally set, is orientated to white middle-class educational patterns. Can a school attempting radical curriculum change equip pupils for this challenge? Is it true that a changed curriculum is essential if black pupils are to reach their potential in a racially mixed school? What is the significance of aspects of personal and social development in pupils - not only from the perspective of educational philosophy, but also in the context of the more pragmatic aspect of academic achievement? It is beyond the scope of this study to provide answers to these questions. However, much of the analysis of pupils' reflections on the reasons for black pupils' underachievement suggests that these are indeed key factors, which should be considered in curriculum design. Pupils' perspectives on some of the strategies which impinge on these dimensions of learning will be explored more fully in an attempt to illuminate such issues further.

CHAPTER 7. SOCIAL INTERACTION AND THE CURRICULUM

The analysis of patterns of social interaction per se within the school forms the focus of an intended companion to this case study. This will not be discussed in detail here, but the reciprocal relationship between social interaction and curriculum issues needs to be explored, i.e the way in which certain interaction patterns influenced curriculum decisions, and also the way in which these impacted on interaction itself.

From observation and from numerous accounts from both teachers and pupils, it was clear that although the school was a racially mixed school, within it there was a degree of voluntary racial separation. In class and at break predominantly same-race groups were to be found together. In the sports teams there was differentiation along racial lines, with the soccer and netball teams almost exclusively black, and the cricket team almost entirely Indian and white. The sociogram questions related to choice of companion for working and social outing groups corroborated this view.

This aspect of the pupils' lives was given scant attention by teachers other than in the Integrated Studies Department, and one English teacher, although others had commented on it in their reflections on the pros and cons of streaming, and occasionally on the fact that black pupils did not feel at ease at the school, did not have self-confidence, and that this influenced their academic performance. In Integrated Studies and Ms Chetty's English class, attempts were made to devise curriculum material and classroom organisation and teaching strategies that would encourage better 'race relations', foster the growth of understanding of different world views and experiences and generally encourage the pupils to mix better. Some attempts were also made to to validate the experience of black pupils and enhance their self-confidence and achievement in the academic sphere. These initiatives included