

The copyright of this thesis rests with the University of Cape Town. No quotation from it or information derived from it is to be published without full acknowledgement of the source. The thesis is to be used for private study or non-commercial research purposes only.

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

A case study of **some** of the factors which affect learning
for Black students in residence at the
University of Cape Town

A Dissertation
presented in partial fulfilment of
the requirements for the Degree of

Master of Philosophy

in

Educational Administration, Planning and Social Policy

by

Clifford Mushishi

MARCH 1997

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	.....	(i)
LIST OF TABLES	.....	(ii)
ABSTRACT	...	(iii)
CHAPTER 1	: INTRODUCTION	.....1
CHAPTER 2	: SOME GENERAL FACTORS WHICH AFFECT LEARNING FOR STUDENTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION	7
CHAPTER 3	: RESEARCH METHODS	.....37
CHAPTER 4	: KEY FINDINGS OF THE RESEARCH	.....49
CHAPTER 5	: CONCLUSION	.....90

Declaration

I declare that this is my own, unaided work. It is being submitted for the degree of Master of Philosophy through the University of Cape Town. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at any other University.

Signed : _____

Date

University of Cape Town

Acknowledgements

I am thankful to several personalities for the assistance rendered during the production of this thesis:

Mr D. Gilmour of the School of Education, University of Cape Town, for the untiring supervision of the entire thesis; Prof Tim Dunne for his challenging paper on Black students, from which I have taken many insights for my thesis; Dr H. Chipeya, Dr M Shabalala, Dr Mall, Prof K. Bennett and Ms T. Khona for advice, assistance and support of various forms.

I am also grateful to the University of Cape Town's Postgraduate Scholarships Office for awarding me the J.W. Jagger award to study for this degree.

Finally I thank my family for the emotional support and encouragement during this study.

List of Tables

TABLE	PAGE
1. Sample selection	.... 42
2. Inter-faculty distribution	.... 43
3. High school preparation for university education	51
4. Student activities prior coming to UCT	54
5. Black students admitted through Alternative Admissions Scheme	58
6_ Orientation week attendance distribution	60
7. Study methods	66
8. Extra study methods	69
9. Submission of assignments on time	72
10. Academic assistance provision	80
11. Student feelings about UCT residences	83

Abstract

This case study is an investigation into some of the factors which affect learning for some Black students in residence at the University of Cape Town. It attempts to identify related factors which affect learning for disadvantaged students at UCT. It also tries to analyse critically how these factors cause some deterioration in academic performance of some Black students. Data were gathered through formal and informal interviews, questionnaires and participant observation. The poor school system, problems related to orientation, poor methods of studying, negative attitudes to academic support programmes and some aspects of residence life have been found to affect learning for most Black students. The report proposes a re-examination of the orientation week programme, the academic support programmes and the residence tutorial scheme and students' study methods. It further recommends an expansion of this study to involve wider participation of the student population with a view to improving the quality of learning.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this thesis is to examine some of the factors which affect learning for some Black students in selected residences at the University of Cape Town.

The major research question is : What are some of the factors which affect learning for some Black students in residence at the University of Cape town?

Other subsidiary questions which seek to address the title of this thesis are:

- a) What could be the causative factors for a deterioration of academic performance by some Black students?
- b) To what extent is residence life at UCT supportive or detrimental to Black students academic work?

Specific Aims:

1. To identify some specific problems which affect learning for some Black students in selected residences.
2. To assess the scale of the problems and analyze critically how they affect learning for some Black students at UCT.

Broad Aim:

To inform the university administration on how the present academic and residence policies and services to Black students at UCT, may be improved to ensure effective learning activity.

1.2 Problem Statement

This thesis is a follow up contribution to the problems and issues raised in a paper written by Prof Tim Dunne in 1990, entitled " Impressions of Disadvantage". At the time of his writing, Prof Dunne was the warden of University House, one of the residences being examined in this study. The paper raised quite a number of problems and issues relating to Black students at UCT being a disadvantaged group amongst the entire student population of about 14 500. Some of the problems and issues were:

- 1) Black students come to university with an attitude that black is inferior and cannot manage without help and must seek a hand out trail,
- 2) Several Black students experience a culture shock and adjustment difficulties after beginning at the University of Cape Town,
- 3) Black students come to university with expectations of being taught, rather than being given an opportunity to learn and become self-taught,

- 4) Prevailing mores communicated by dominant white leadership and structures have conveyed the notion of the residences as digs and places to relax, socialize and party (preferably with alcohol) to the exclusion of an overt academic ethos,
- 5) Under the guise of fun and joy, elements of university residence life undermine academic perspectives of all students and promote customs or values which at best make Black students uncomfortable, or at worst, alienate them,
- 6) Some Black students infer from such support systems as the Academic Support Programme the message that its tutors see Black students as inferior,
- 7) Academic departments and staff do little in the current practice of orientation week to define for the incoming student an appropriate view or set of expectations of university life or to describe useful sources of skills or resources, or to help students formulate goals and objectives that will fuel their academic commitment,
- 8) There is currently no objective assessment of the present strengths and weaknesses of the residence tutorial scheme, but there is a well managed budget and a committee which is open and available for ideas and initiatives that strengthen academic life within residences.

9) It may be useful to sketch out some levels at which a complete intervention will be operational in view of cultural, sociological and psychological issues which affect learning, orientation week, residence life, content and skill repertoires, student perception of course material, diversity and choice of learning strategies including group and individual approaches to learning, time management, meeting deadlines and computer skills (Dunne, 1990: 1 - 11).

Against this background, it is notable that most Black students at the University of Cape Town are academically under performing by comparison to White students. Their under achievement could be presumed to be influenced by several policy related problems including being disadvantaged by apartheid as well as inadequate preparation for university level work. Mismanaged study routines, poor study methods, disorganised priorities, poor orientation, lack of motivation, peer pressure, lack of emotional and financial support, laziness, negative attitudes towards study, institutionalized leisure and a culture of partying seem to be some of the problems affecting learning for several Black students. These will, for the purposes of this study, be discussed as factors contributing to the present academic underachievement by some Black students. A critique of the "Impressions of disadvantage" cited above will also be done with a view to appreciate some of the factors affecting learning for Black students.

It may be relevant for the purposes of this thesis to note that when Tim Dunne wrote his paper in 1990, he had no sample available or instrument through which he could test the validity of his observations. For that reason, I have assumed it vital to test and confirm or reject some of the affirmations and claims or arguments he advanced.

As a matter of interest, in September 1993, after reading through "Impressions of Disadvantage", I approached Prof Tim Dunne and discussed the content of his paper and the crisis of disadvantage for Black students at the University of Cape Town. During this discussion he pointed out clearly " No matter from which angle you approach it, it is an established fact that Black students are academically under performing. When I wrote "Impressions of Disadvantage" in 1990, I had hoped that someone would take it up from there and explore the problems I raised in greater depth". It is on the basis of this challenge that this thesis attempts to examine the problem of Black students" academic under performance which obviously is caused by some factors which will be probed here.

A point of difficulty, though in this discussion is that while the majority of Black students are academically under performing, there is a minority of Black students who are above average or outstanding in their academic work. The question is, were these not disadvantaged as their peers or they went to private multi-racial schools or they are simply hard working?

This study also addresses itself to this point in relation to the major research question and objectives already cited.

1.3 Rationale of the study

The rationale of this study is to provide information relating to the problems faced by some Black students in their learning at UCT. It is hoped that when these problems and factors are uncovered, the university administration will be able to put in place arrangements suitable to ensure an effective learning environment for disadvantaged students. Secondly, the study seeks to provoke discussion on how quality learning output can be achieved especially by eliminating the factors which affect or impede all efforts to effective academic performance.

CHAPTER 2

SOME GENERAL FACTORS WHICH AFFECT LEARNING FOR STUDENTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

2.1 Introduction

Earlier studies in the field of educational administration have shown that students in higher education face critical problems which affect their learning output. Such studies as will be indicated in this chapter, have been carried out in some European, American and African countries. This chapter aims to provide a picture of the previous and current research and work already done in the field. Also of great importance in this chapter is an indication of how such literature relate to the present study. It should be acknowledged however, that reference to material on residence *life* was difficult to come by given the fact that not much in this area has been published to deal directly with the research question raised here. The factors to be discussed here include:-

2.2. Pre-university educational experience

2.3 Lack of adequate support

2.4 Locus of control

2.5 Study approaches and methods

2.6 Motivation to learn

These factors have been selected as key areas for several reasons. First, they provide a vital link between Dunne's work on impressions of disadvantage for Black students and the

problems which the current research is addressing. Second, I have Personally faced some of these problems such as lack of adequate support and motivation in my postgraduate studies both at the Universities of Zimbabwe and Cape Town respectively.

2.2 Pre-university educational experience

Out of the many who have examined problems faced by students in higher education or universities in Africa and abroad, none has as yet produced a conclusive answer to the question of what factors negatively affect learning for university students. African scholars and researchers in this area have found out that factors which affect learning for university students vary according to context. This section will deal with the following pre-university educational experiences.

In the South African context Dunne (1990) observed that Black students coming into university face critical problems related to social and academic adjustment. In his observation as a warden of one of the residences at UCT where Black students resided, he had an impression that many Black students experienced a culture shock and a lot of inferiority complex (1990:1). In his view Black students come to university with expectations of being taught rather than being given an opportunity to learn and become self-taught. The main difficulty with Dunne -s impressions is that they raise a lot of complex questions. They are untested claims and as such are not free from generalization. However, the article does raise key issues and points the way for further

research. For example what does it mean to say that Black students experience culture shock when they come to university? What shock and to what extent is that shock only cultural and how? An elaboration on this claim could have been extremely informative. Another impression raised by Dunne was that Black students come to university with expectations of being taught and not being given an opportunity to learn and become self taught. This claim carries with it the assumption or meaning that Black students expect to be academically spoon fed all the time.

If this is true, does it apply to all Black students or to postgraduates or undergraduates? Does it apply to all faculties and departments? The claims deriving from his impressions raise a lot of unanswered questions and clearly further research is indicated. Some of these issues had been taken up elsewhere.

In the context of Southern Africa, similar research with respect to socio-political, learning and maturity levels has been done (See, Behr (1985), Bokhorst et al (1992), Honikman (1992), Huddle et al (1992), McGill (1992), Moletsane (1992), Neer (1989), Pastoll (1992), Potter et al (1993).

For example Bokhorst et al (1992:59-64) have researched issues associated with the academic performance of 1 974 first year psychology students at UCT between 1974 and 1987. They concluded that socio-economic problems such as poverty and political unrest as well as financial difficulties to a very large extent affect the academic work of university students. Their study **is** limited

in the sense that it generalized the factors affecting learning on first year students of one department. This critique is not suggesting any invalidation of their findings, but rather pointing out that limiting the general factors associated with lack of success to psychology students only may not be conclusive. It would have been informative to expand their study to other departments and postgraduate students.

The study by Bokhorst et al (1992) has not clearly identified how socio-economic factors such as poverty affect learning at first year level. Whether problems of first year students are the same as those of second or third year or post-graduate students has not been addressed. In the same vein information on whether Black students are affected by social problems in the same way White students did not receive any substantial attention.

In a related study done in 1992 by Moletsane, other factors emerged. The research done by Moletsane focused on adult learners (college students above the age of twenty) in tertiary education. From his findings it was concluded that external forces such as stress, level of maturing, degree of receptivity and curriculum changes are almost prominent factors affecting learning for students in higher education. Moletsane (1992:105-107) has noted proper time management of study as a vital ingredient of successful learning. He seems to suggest that time mismanagement negatively affects learning output. Moletsane's view is supported by McGill (1992:66) who has concluded that when students arrive at university, they are faced with new ways of

learning approaches. From this perspective pupils coming from secondary school have a crisis of new and challenging sets of instruction approaches with a lot of assumed independent study. These new approaches were found to affect learning substantially.

The study by McGill appears to suggest that the shift from being a spoon-fed and dependent learner to a self taught and independent learner at university may be a factor which slows most first - time entering students" learning output. While this sounds an interesting detail on some factors affecting learning for some students at university, McGill does not appear to indicate the new learning patterns and methods which directly impede success in university work. It of course does not follow that given adequate orientation on what academic expectations the university require students may not adjust to new instructional patterns. The issue of orientation will be taken up elsewhere in this thesis.

On factors which affect learning, Neer (1989) in a Master's thesis on pupils' curiosity in learning found out that those with low curiosity in academic work are low achievers. Her study was concentrated on the relationship between enquiry and learning performance in young pupils. Her point was that pupils who were not curious about learning ended up becoming low academic performers. Applied to adult learners or university students, this has been noted as one of the factors which affect learning for some students whose independent study is low as they lack

self-esteem in academic work. Though applicable to university students it is not clear to what extent Neer's conclusion can be applied for postgraduate students since her focus was on young pupils.

In relation to Neer's research on curiosity, Karen Honikman (1982) researched UCT Black students' learning activity. Her study showed that historical background contributed significantly to the current academic under performance by Black students. She has concluded that negative attitudes such as tendencies to perceive UCT as racist and feeling inferior about the quality of their academic competence expected by the institution all affect learning.

Further to this conclusion Honikman argues that less confidence about success, too much expectation from lecturers and fear of failure influence Black students' negative attitudes to learning. Honikman's work concluded that fear of failure and lack of self confidence, threaten any effort to self motivation to learning. This threat has been identified as affecting learning for university students.

In relation to the above, Black education in Africa has faced almost identical problems. These were noted at the historic UNESCO conference on the development of education in Africa in Addis Ababa in May, 1961, where an inventory of educational problems and needs was established (Greenough, 1961:14-15).

Identified problems of African education were among others:

poor building infrastructure, poor production of teaching material, problems related to recruiting and training of teachers, shortage of books, poor methods of financing and planning. These problems 35 years on seem to have found limited resolution.

The above problems for Black education in Africa have been identified as worse in such African countries like Zimbabwe and South Africa, as noted by Mungazi and other scholars. For example colonial education in Zimbabwe was segregated with best schools designed for white children and less equipped ones meant for black children. The rationale for this segregation in the colonial set up was that natives were allowed access to schools or education in order to provide cheap labour (Mungazi, 1961:8-9). It was suspected that if they were better learned they would become politically subversive.

In South Africa the entire education system was divided into four subsystems namely White, Black, Coloured and Indian. The White system served to a greater extent as a model for the other three although of late non-white have shown increasing signs of making use of the opportunity of developing a system peculiar and suited to each separate cultural community (Rupert, 1971:30). The system dictated that all blacks have their own system of education under the Department of Education and Training. It was under this system that Black education in South Africa suffered problems which were consistent with those of other parts of Africa cited above. But further to such problems, South Africa

faced a worse situation in that apartheid made oppressive demands on the already ailing system. In the system of apartheid, Black schools were underfunded the teacher-pupil ratio was unmanageable, the infrastructure was not comparatively better than that of white schools, the teachers were either unqualified or underqualified or both and as a result of this Blacks received second class primary and secondary education.

The state of education policy in South Africa as viewed by Sammuel (1990:17) was that the state intended to maintain an educational system which insured the vast majority of Black pupils had an inferior schooling. In this background the fact that armoured vehicles, riot police, fences and patrolling soldiers became a regular part of the educational scene in many Black schools and universities in South Africa constituted an educational crisis (Sammuel, 1990).

Black education suffered a deliberate lack of state funding **as** noted before and a pervasive poverty and this resulted in a massive drop-out rate in Black schools (Sammuel, 1990:18). This means that apartheid ensured the majority of Black pupils received an education which did not equip them for anything other than unskilled manual labour while Whites were prepared for an almost complete monopoly of the dominant positions in society (Sammuel, 1990:19). The system ensured that they were few Black pupils who would go to secondary school and as such many Black children were forced into the labour market prematurely. While teacher pupil ratios stood at 1:54 or even 1:100 (Sammuel,

1990:20), teachers were in short supply and underpaid as well. These problems in pre-university education affected the advancement of Black education.

Gilmour and Soudien (1994:129) appear to submit that the failure of Black children to make good at work and in further education maybe attributed to the policy of apartheid as a social system which provided a macro framework in which inequality has been inscribed into virtually every facet of South African life. They further note that the school has saved a key role in socialising Black pupils into a specific time of subject and kind of job. In relation to the current study the work by Gilmour and Soudien is helpful in one's understanding of the problems affecting Black education. Notably any current policies to be developed in the South African Education system may need to address these previous imbalances in order to achieve equality in education.

All the above factors **affected** the quality of Black education in the sense that most Black schools did not effectively impart quality **learning experience** prior to university entry. Teachers were not as effective as they were supposed to be because they were mostly involved in political struggles and fighting for their own better working conditions and pay rises. As such there **was** no positive ethos in the schools to develop a well disciplined pupil whose curriculum and environment prepared him or her well for university work. The classroom climate was not conducive to effective learning. Infact the Black schools lost control of pupils and teachers as some principals were

overwhelmed by the concept of freedom now, education later which was politically motivated. Some principals were accused of siding with the oppressive system of apartheid resulting in the breakdown of communication between them and their teachers and even pupils. These problems affected the smooth-running of Black education in South Africa such that the pre-university educational experience of Black students often viewed learning that as entirely disrupted. To this end Black students show clear signs of underpreparation for university work. Poverty Political disruptions and many other problems affected learning to a very large extent for Black students.

2.3 Lack of adequate support

Some studies have shown that students in higher education face problems related to lack of adequate support. Such support is usually in many forms such as financial support, moral support, institutional support, peer support and even emotional support.

The reason why all these forms of support are viewed as critical in relation to successful learning is that in their absence, interest and motivation to learning collapse. Mager (1984:57-68) showed that fear, tension, anxiety, frustration, stress, humiliation, worry, boredom and embarrassment affect learning very much. What Mager seems to suggest is that when a student has within himself a lot of stress or tension caused by any form of humiliating or frustrating experience, it becomes very difficult to study and learn successfully. Mager appears to be

advancing the theory that fear and stress for a student as well as worry and boredom effectively destroy both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation to learning. Applied in several contexts Mager's theory concludes that when a student does not have financial support as well as peer and family support his chances of success in learning are not as good as those of a student, whose support in these areas is good. Obviously the difference in the forms of support will to a very large extent affect the manner in which comprehension, comfort and stability in one's study is governed. It may follow therefore that the student with many problems will fail examinations and even course work because of circumstances surrounding his social and even moral life. The theory assumes that not many students if any are able to succeed inspite of problems and factors which cause stress and frustrations on their life.

In terms of emotional support, Dunne (1990), has suggested that proper orientation and meaningful academic and social support systems should be in place to assist students coming to university to settle down with comfort and readiness for effective studies. In the British context, Wankowski at the University of Birmingham has found out that lecturers can assist the settling down of new students (Beard and Senior, 1980:11). In their view, lecturers and tutors must give emotional and institutional support to incoming students. The reason why this process is crucial for a student's orientation is because they are best placed to monitor the students' abrupt change of learning and social environment. Also, theoretically, it is

assumed that the period of orientation into university life is important because, for the student, it is a confidence - gathering exercise. What Beard and Senior seem to suggest is that proper and meaningful orientation for university students implies crucial oriental and institutional support for the student's learning efforts. Lack of such support has been found to affect their confidence in learning.

2.4. Locus of control

in the African context, earlier studies by Behr (1986) have shown that loss of locus control in learning affects university students. Writing from the context of the University of Durban -Westville, Behr has observed that a poor self-management of one's learning is sometimes caused by loss of locus control. By locus control, Behr meant a construct of intellectual achievement responsibility. This refers to a type of belief by the student himself or herself that he or she is fully responsible for, or in control of achievement outcomes. Behr has actually distinguished two forms of locus control. These are the internal and the external locus of control. In the former (internal locus control) the student believes in his ability to exercise full control over his own learning. In the latter, the student believes in external assistance as significant. The difference between the two is critical for this study. In the latter, it appears that the student does not rely on his own ability because he does not believe in it as effective enough to pass essays or examinations. This study by Behr has been

supported by Spence (1983:88) in the U.S.A. Spence goes further to suggest that locus of control is critical for successful learning because without such belief in one's ability, one finds it difficult to be an effective and successful student for university studies.

The problem with Behr writing from the Southern African context and Spence writing from the American context is that they seem to assume that when a student possesses locus of control, success in learning becomes automatic. If this is what they are saying, then their assumption, it seems, is relative because some students may still fail even if they believe in their ability. It may not apply to lazy students, who wait to be spoon fed by lecturers. Of course chances for academic success for those who possess the locus control are higher than for those without it. So their point remains valid and critical.

In the light of the theory of locus control, it should also be noted that Spence and Behr's work could have addressed the issue of to what extent the students who possess the locus of control excel in their studies and what study approaches the use by comparison to students who do not possess it. Another missing dimension in their conclusion about locus control is question of what circumstances influence one's development of the locus of control? Samples to answer these questions out of the age groups and programmes involved appear to be a missing dimension in their work although this may not have been their intention.

Related to the above theory is the concept of motivation raised by Edward and Scannell (1968:146). Their research has concluded that under conditions of motivation, students learn more quickly than in the absence of it. This is connected to the locus of control theory that students who are in possession of the locus of control are the ones who are easily motivated. Also these are the students who are able to resist negative factors which affect learning in most cases. In support of this theory is De Cecco (1968:180) who concludes that when students are well motivated they make the strongest response to things they learn. The issue these researchers and scholars on factors which invigorate students' learning behaviour appears to be pointing towards is the fact that in higher education self motivation is as critical a factor that affects learning as locus of control.

Adding to the above research and conclusions, Cronbach's (1977:557) theory relates to factors of determination and reading style. For him a university student who has low self determination to study creates below standard success in undergraduate or graduate work. In addition, poor styles of reading and studying can affect learning in the sense that the student will not be self determined. This theory seems to suggest that students in higher education whose educational goals are not governed or motivated by increased commitment will find their learning negatively affected. Cronbach, working in an American context from which these conclusions were made agrees with both Spence and De Cecco's earlier studies as noted in this review.

Another observation by Meyers (1986:1) in the USA has concluded that educators should refocus and rethink their roles in higher education by concentrating on teaching students the skills needed for students' self directed inquiry. For this researcher, self inquiry is a crucial learning method which is directly related to self motivation and locus of control. Both conclusions are related to self motivation and locus of control. Elsewhere, Cabrera et al (1992:162) are in agreement with the above points of view by maintaining that learning persistence and commitment are helpful in terms of successful learning. Persistence in this case would be consistent with self motivation. The conclusion reached by these scholars seems to suggest that in the absence of persistence in learning as well as commitment and self motivation, a student's work may be affected. In relation to factors which affect learning, Thompson and Fretz (1991:437-448) in the USA concluded in a study of Black students at predominantly White universities that racial tension and hostility affected their learning. Their study revealed that Black students felt greater levels of isolation. They also felt less identified with the institution than White students. This feeling of alienation on the basis of race or colour affected learning for some Black students in the USA in the sense that they felt inferior both to the institution and to other White students that their level of participation in class projects and activities was below standard. Secondly they became extremely demotivated in their learning because they were made to believe that they were at the bottom of the pile no matter what amount of effort they exerted in their studies.

2.5. Study approaches and methods

In relation to some factors which affect learning for some students in higher education, many study approaches and methods can be thinkable. Among them are tutorials, lectures, seminars and group work. There are some scholars who have concluded that when the above approaches and study methods are poor, students' learning is affected.

In relation to study approaches affecting learning some researchers claim that teaching staff govern the effectiveness of students' learning process. Ayres and Bennett (1983:528) in their article on university characteristics and student achievements have concluded their findings by saying that the quality of lecturers and professors in an academic department is the single most vital characteristic of a university performance and achievement. They further state that the methods of imparting knowledge to students by professors influence learning approaches significantly. What appears interesting with their study of university characteristics and student achievement is that they are assuming that the study and learning approaches employed by professors in approaching tutorials, lectures or seminars will be the same for students when they sit down to study. If this assumption is correct then the quality of teaching methods directly influence the way in which students will do their research and prepare for lectures, tutorials and seminars.

Sadler (1983:60) advances the argument that critical evaluation

of course content or material in a learning process immensely contributes to high university performance. The point here is students must be critical in their approaches to learning. If they are not, their learning will not be effective. If learning is not effective one of the problems may be that it will be affected negatively by particular wrong approaches and methods of learning. The connection between Sadler's work and that of Ayres and Bennett is that they view learning approaches and methods as issues that affect learning in the sense that perhaps if students do not employ the methods of learning they are taught by their professors, learning may be affected especially if their methods of exploring course content are not thoroughly critical. What appears to be problematic with the above conclusion is that the quality of students and their level of communication have not been addressed. The point is that even if lecturers, and academic departments are very good, their methods and approaches to learning excellent, this may not work if the students themselves lack commitment and self motivation. Spence's (1983) theory of intrinsic and extrinsic value supports the above view. In Spence's opinion, intrinsic motivation, the type of motivation originating from within and extrinsic value, which is the type of motivation to learning which originates or operates from the students' own learning environment such as social background or peer support are indispensable components of learning success. Lack of them affect learning according to this theory.

In terms of effective learning approaches and methods Barnes (1992:2-10) says that the students must be in charge of their own

learning. This implies that when preparing for a lecture or tutorial, students must take pains to study ahead of the lecture. Meyers (1986) supports this view by saying that educators must rethink their roles and concentrate on teaching students the skills and attitudes needed for self directed study and inquiry. The importance of what both Barnes (1992) and Meyers (1986) are saying for this study is that if students lack the strength and ambition to be in tight control of their study efforts and are not advised on the importance of self directed inquiry and learning, their work or studies at university may be negatively affected. Their academic performance may largely be below standard. Barnes' perception is derived from a British context from which he concludes that at every stage of the student's learning life, the feeling of being in charge of one's own work is crucial. His study is supported by Pastoll (1992) in South Africa who highlights the importance of tutorials for university students. For Pastoll learning in groups is vital for better achievement.

The strength of this theory is that when students learn in groups they develop a positive attitude and feeling that says if others can do it, I can also manage academically as they do. What appears to be the problem with Pastoll's theory of group work is that the relevance of individual participation in groups has not been addressed. That needs to be researched further and critically assessed to ensure some clarification is made as to what happens to a group, some of whose members do not work as hard as others. In these circumstances, would group work continue

to be as effective as assumed by Mastoid? Again does group work **create** competition or laziness? In relation to various approaches to learning, Jaques (1991:64) in the context of university learning in South Africa says that poor study approaches is misdirected if study approaches are poor. Although Jaques has not sufficiently probed which poor learning approaches, it seems she is expressing discomfort to ineffective methods of learning which frustrate the development of positive attitudes to learning. It therefore could be said that negative attitudes to learning in this view affect learning negatively. Miller (1981) at the University of Wyoming, U.S.A. has concluded that students need to develop sound habits of study if they should expect to live a balanced life and to survive in the competitive academic world today. According to Miller (1981:21) in a study of programmes for effective study, students must provide time for both academic requirements and social opportunities.

Miller submits that to avert learning being negatively affected by lack of good and effective study approaches, many universities in the U.S.A. are attempting to help their students with classes in "Study Skill Techniques". The most intriguing part of Miller's study on effective study methods is the fact that many students spend many hours in study but seem to get little out of the time spent. In the majority of cases they have developed study techniques that are laborious and time consuming. They frequently complain about difficulties in certain courses and the only remedy they can suggest is to put in more time on the subject. But it has been noted that in such circumstances, students appear

to ignore basic principles about fatigue and span of interest. In Miller's view, students need to get the best possible good out of each hour spent on a course and this is what is meant by "effective study".

Another important point on study methods is the fact that students need a realisation that effective study entirely depends on the student himself or herself. As such, self control and self discipline are the student's responsibility. To provide adequate time for study may help avoid the embarrassment of failure. As Miller (1981) puts it, some students realise it too late that they have been neglecting their studies and try to cram all their study and review into the last few days before examinations. This often affects their work. When they fail the examinations, they frequently rationalize and blame the lecturer or their friends for their inability to keep up with the requirements of the course. What this suggests is that with the keen competition present in college and university, poor study habits can undermine or affect the entire learning process for undergraduate or postgraduate work. In many universities students have fallen into the predicament of poor study habits and as such further research in this field should suggest ways of solving this problem which Miller (1981) does not seem to have adequately addressed.

Other students have problems related to an accurate use and budget of time to study. This is often caused by lack of planning for one's study. In most cases some university students cannot

balance their time between work, study and recreational activities (Miller, 1981:22). Miller suggests that a time budget sheet should be made to ensure good and effective management of one's study time. This plan then protects the student's time mismanagement and late submission of assignments. Proper planning of one's studies should enable the student to balance his activities such as eating and sleeping, classes and personal affairs; work and study; recreational activities and attending student organizations as well as church and relaxation (Miller, 1981:26)

The above claims by Miller are supported by Kolzow and Lehmann (1982:209-210) in the U.S.A. in their work on strategies for success in college reading and studying. Their study has revealed that one of the most common causes of poor concentration is fatigue. In this view, careful study requires a great deal of energy and when energy levels drop, concentration drops as well. Fatigue affects learning in the sense that it may be a result of boredom or depression or avoiding reading work which must be covered. Another problem related to methods of studying cited here is that some students find it difficult to concentrate when studying, they are used to passive reading or reading superficially. When this occurs then concentrated study should be attempted. According to strategies for effective learning approaches and methods cited by these scholars the most effective ways to improve concentration is to have some knowledge of the topic before reading it. Also of importance is reading around the topic before covering it. The student should establish a purpose

by asking questions related to what is being read. For example if one sits down to look for something; he will find it, but if he sits down to look for nothing, he will find nothing . This means without a focus of one's attention, the mind wanders from one idea to another and eventually wanders right off the page.

The point is with a purpose in mind when reading and studying, concentration is achievable.

The work by Kolzow and Lehmann (1982) is vital for this study in the sense that in many universities, students lack proper approaches to successful study. They have problems related to concentration since most read without understanding. That has remained a problem for too long. In line with the work done by Kolzow and Lehmann in 1982, in the American context, Carl A and Helen E. Lefevre (1984) developed some work on study skills for college work at Temple University, U.S.A. Their research concluded that students must know how to effectively use textbooks as tools for getting information. These tools are different from every other tool. Their purposes vary. The students' great task before using such tools is to discover the purpose and methods of such a textbook. Some textbooks have a purpose of only to inform, others only seek to persuade, so, as such, understanding their purpose will help the student to concentrate on the right direction (Lefevre 1984:49).

This is critical to proper methods of study because where concentration is at fault, effective learning has been found to

be affected. Indeed this claim seems to suggest that in many universities some students do not know how to use the books they use and therefore they loose concentration which often affects learning.

In a related study on critical thinking in reading and studying as a method of learning, Miller (1984:281) in the U.S.A. says that students must from time to time evaluate their reaction to what they study and read to ensure quality and accuracy of material. In the same strength students must develop an insight and understanding of what they study. This process helps as an effective method of study and learning. Anne Bradley (1983:2) at Monterey Peninsula College U.S.A. submits that establishing one's study priorities right is extremely vital for college success in relation to effective methods of studying. Bradley's study has also shown that regular attendance to lectures is one critical method of study which keeps the student in touch with the required course material and the course direction. This is important because continued absenteeism has been found to affect learning success significantly. Together with this, a student needs a strong desire for success (Bradley 1983:2).

2.6 Motivation to learn

Mitchell and Larson (1987:154) in the U.S.A defines motivation as the psychological process that causes the arousal, direction and persistence of behaviour. It involves persistence of voluntary actions that are goal directed. In the context of

university education one of the most striking factors which affect learning for university students throughout the world is lack of motivation. Some studies have shown that effective learning depends on the level of both institutional and individual motivation. Powell and Mangum (1971:194) have advanced the argument that motivation is a basic phenomenon to all human activity. It can be said to be an integral part of learning. In the absence of it, learning may be negatively affected. As Smith (1969:47) puts it the student needs to internalise the desire for high academic standards. Both Smith and Powell and Mangum confirm the importance of motivation as vital for successful learning. They say that the absence of motivation may affect learning.

In the context of the U.S.A, the earliest attempts to explain the nature of motivation was done by Hull (1943). In Hull's theory of motivation, drive was critical to success because it energizes behaviour. According to this theory, some drives are based on need. For example if a student has well defined academic goals, to achieve such goals he must motivate himself to study harder. The goals in this case become the practical drive to constantly energize for example his or her reading behaviour. Hull's theory was extended by Spence (1958) who added the concept of incentive. Just like drive, incentive energizes behaviour as argued by Carlson (1966:446-447).

Also, motivation occurs when it is reinforced by institutional support. Lack of both sometimes affect learning. In some cases when university students are self-motivated there may be nothing

institutional in place at their university to reinforce their motivation.

At Fordham University, U.S.A, Anne Anastasi (1979:100) has concluded that it is well established that motivation helps learning. Anastasi's theory has gone further to suggest that motivation other than that in learning can be in the form of higher pay, security, promotion or recognition of status. Also to be effective the anticipated reward must be one that is significant for the particular learner. According to this theory two things must motivate the student to hard work by giving him a sense or feeling of accomplishment. These are : first, learning must be broken down into achievement units and second, performance standards should not be set either too high or too low. The conclusion reached by Anastasi is that unrealistic goals may produce frustration and resentment and retard learning.

From the above theory, Anastasi seems to suggest that proper university training itself may provide intrinsic motivation through definite realistic goals. This also appears to suggest in some situations that exaggerated demands in assignments or exams may frustrate or affect success.

In relation to motivation, stress has been viewed by some researchers as one of the many factors which affect or demotivate learning. Stress is said to hinder learning because of its high level of distraction to learning processes such as problem solving and critical analysis of data (Anastasi 1979:101).

Stress affects learning adversely as it disturbs any attempts for self motivation in effective learning.

In a related study on the importance of motivation to learning, Dilner and Olson (1977:204) in the U.S.A, have observed that motivating the student may be done in a number of ways. They have identified the simplest way as "to make the subject matter as relevant to the needs and interests of the students as possible". In many universities, students, it appears are engaged in studies for which they are not interested. Other subjects or even degrees are studied without students knowing what exactly they want to do with them in future. This loss of focus or lack of properly set aims of study eventually results in the loss of self determination and motivation. There appears to be nothing that drives the student to study hard.

The relevance theory as explained here is associated closely with earlier work by Starke and Gray (1977:81) in the U.S.A. who studied the relationship between motivation and productivity. For them, high motivation causes high productivity and vice versa. Their context was derived from a motivation performance relationship. The connection between what they claim and the latter perception is that where relevance is minimal in any study effort, the students' motivation to learning is eventually weakened and then the desired results will not always be achievable.

However, the presentation above by Gray and Starke leaves many

questions unanswered. First, the relationship between motivation or the lack of it and productivity is dependent on many factors such as one's self-perception of the importance of learning and also one's attitude towards projected academic goals. Second, the assumption that there is a direct positive relationship between motivation and productivity appears not always valid. This is so because sometimes one will face a situation where the two are not related. For example a student may have motivation to learn, but other problems related to financial and emotional crisis may sometimes affect efforts to desired results. (See Dunne, 1990 and Mager 1984).

In 1986, Dunne and Sydney Schultz at the University of Florida made a contribution to the importance of motivation as a factor in learning activity. They have concluded that learning will not take place unless the person really wants to learn, and this is true regardless of ability". Their conclusions have gone further to suggest that to some degree, a high level of motivation can compensate for somewhat lower level of ability. These conclusions concerning the importance of great value in learning tend to support the work done by Haring (1978:189) in the U.S.A. In a study of the expansion of motivational repertoire, Haring suggests that apart from good grades, praise and recess, students may need prizes as a motivation package for them to work harder than usual.

The point is situations where the absence of motivation is felt by students, learning may be affected in the sense that students

may not work as hard as they should.

In their study of the role of guidance and counselling on the early life of high school pupils preparing to enter college and university, William H. Van House et al. (1973:14-49) have submitted that students should be guided and counselled in such a motivated way that the link between formal instruction and orientation is supportive of the entire process of effective learning. According to this thinking, guidance requires the involvement of instruction staff, administrative personnel and parents. As such in the context of student life, the need to understand students and their developmental requirements is of paramount importance. The said involvement motivates them to effective learning and the lack of involvement of these personalities may affect learning to a very large extent.

While as above, some authors view motivation in an institutional frame, others see it **as** a function of individual behaviour. Mitchel and Larson (1987:154) for example submit that motivation is an individual phenomenon. In this view each individual is viewed as unique and all the major motivational theories allow in one way or another for this uniqueness to be demonstrated. For example different people have different needs, expectations, values, attitudes and goals. On this issue, the question that needs to be addressed is whether groups or peer influence cannot motivate learning. Raymond J. Wlodkoski (1985:55) submits that adults tend to be motivated when effectively learning something they value. They can influence each other in their learning

effort. Positive peer influence can therefore be a helpful experience for a learning process. Although internationally there are more than twenty theories of motivation which are recognizable, it is important to note that if two people of the same exact ability are given the same exact opportunity and conditions to achieve, motivate the person will surpass the unmotivated person in performance and outcome. In higher education this is crucial for success.

2.7 Conclusion

This literature review has attempted to put in picture some selective work and research which has been done already in relation to factors which affect learning for students in higher education. To date there are several factors which affect students in higher education depending on their social and even political environment. However, lack of motivation, loss of locus control, lack of adequate support, some methods of studying and some problems related to pre-university learning experience as well as problems of alienation stand out as some of the general factors found to be affecting learning for some students in higher education.

The assumption that factors which affect students' learning are similar in most contexts may not be overemphasized. Whether social or financial; emotional or psychological factors affecting students in higher education constitute a critical area of policy research and formulation. This is so because it is from such

research where problems facing university students can be addressed and solutions and suggestions put across to improve learning quality. In relation to the present research, the above issues remain extremely vital for education policy researchers. This thesis does not address this problem, but aims to examine each of these key areas:-

1. Black students' adjustment difficulties,
2. Inferiority complex
3. Black students" dependence syndrome,
4. Residences as places of joy rather than study,
5. Orientation week problems,
6. Strengths and weakness of academic support programmes. In Chapter 4 a confirmation of these problems faced by students in higher education is made.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODS

3.1 Introduction

Educational policy research is a very wide discipline and as such not only one method of inquiry can be applied to merit credible findings. In an investigation such as this one, many possible methods may be used (Isaac and Michael, 1981:41-55).

While Bell (1987:4) suggests that knowledge of different approaches will *give* an insight into different ways of planning an investigation, she also notes that "it is perfectly possible to carry out a worthwhile investigation without having detailed knowledge of the various approaches to or styles of educational research..."

Having noted this, it is useful to briefly consider some alternative approaches to research method selection.

The first method that can be used is the historical method which focuses on a reconstruction of the past as objectively and accurately as possible in relation to a given hypothesis. Another possible method is the descriptive method whose purpose is usually to describe systematically a situation or area of interest factually and accurately. Less static developmental methods seek to investigate patterns and sequences of growth or

change as a function of time. The case study method is another. It is a study of a single individual or discrete social unit such as a family, club or gang (Ary et al 1990:451). Its purpose is normally to study intensively the background, current status, environmental unit for example an individual, a group, an institution or a community.

The causal-comparative method is one where cause and effect relationships are observed by use of existing consequence and searching back through the data for plausible causal relationships. The quasi-experimental method focuses on approximating the conditions of the true experiment in a setting which does not allow the control of all relevant variables. In this method the researcher must clearly understand what compromises exist in the internal and external validity of his design and proceed with these limitations.

More qualitatively, action research seeks to develop new skills or new approaches and to solve problems with direct application to the classroom or other applied setting. Bell notes that action research is essentially an on the spot procedure designed to deal with a concrete problem located in an immediate situation. A clear limitation here is generalizability beyond the immediate situation.

Also in the qualitative domain is the approach originally developed by anthropologists, termed ethnographic research. It is a form of participant observation where the researcher is

enabled to share the same experiences as the subjects to understand better why they act the way they do. In this case the researcher has to be accepted by the individual or groups being studied. This may mean doing the same job or living in the same environment and circumstances as the subjects for lengthy periods (Bell, 1987:8). The ethnographic approach is characterized by a concern to chart the realities of day to day institutional life (Comma and Woods, 1993:25). The limitation of this approach is time, and again the problem of generalization.

Finally, the survey approach may be used for research such as the one at hand. The task of a survey is to obtain information which can be analyzed, patterns extracted and comparisons made. Clearly, elements of the other methods described can be incorporated here.

Surveys attempt to ask the same questions in the same circumstances and careful piloting is needed to ensure that all questions mean the same to all respondents (Bell, 1987:8). Surveys deal with large numbers of people who will enable the researcher to describe and compare; relate one characteristic to another and to show the varying features existent in certain categories.

Overall, "the fundamental questions to ask about all research techniques are those dealing with the precision, reliability and relevance of the data and their analysis." (Goode and Hatt, 1952:313).

While the above methods of educational research are considerably helpful to the researcher depending on the depth of investigation and the nature of the research, the list is not exhaustive. Furthermore, as indicated these methods have their own fundamental limitations depending on the parameters of their frameworks. The survey method adopted here makes use of questionnaires, interviews and participant observation, and apart from the problem of sample representativeness, these methods raise their own difficulties.

For example, questionnaires do not account for the opinions of non respondents. Not only that, questionnaires present problems of interpretation where the respondent may not fully understand what the question requires. There will be no one to further explain or expand on some questions. This is particularly a problem or a limitation because questions do not read the same to every respondent. Apart from these technical issues, a further difficulty, especially in dealing with sensitive racial issues is the problem of bias where the researcher finds it difficult to distance himself or herself from the problems affecting his or her own race or ethnic group.

Taking into account the advantages and disadvantages of each research method, it is relevant for the purpose of this study to note that no single method is necessarily appropriate. For that reason some research may require the use of more than one method. This becomes an integrated approach where for example a survey leads to a case study.

As indicated in this investigation the survey method has been used to facilitate data for a case study. Questionnaires and interviews have been used to gather information on the background, current background, current status and environmental interactions of a given social unit or group or institution or community ie. Black students in residence at the University of Cape Town. This case study was originally intended to encompass an entire life style of a social unit, that of some Black students in residence from arrival at UCT to graduation with a detail of some of the factors which affect learning.

3.2 Procedure and instruments

After approval of the research project by the Research Committee of UCT through my supervisor, I had ample access to three residences ie. University House, Varietas and Liesbeeck Gardens. With such access I was then able to conduct interviews and administer a questionnaire. In other instances I used participant observation.

i. The sample

The three residences were chosen for various reasons. University House and Varietas were chosen for reasons of accessibility and familiarity. I stayed in the former residence during the research while Varietas students had their meals at University House providing me with ample access to them for participant

observation and interviews. Liesbeeck Gardens was chosen because of the many students' problems such as drunkenness and lack of academic and social discipline. The most important reason however **was** that most Black students stayed in these residences.

At the outset of the investigation the following sample was used.

Below is a table showing the sample selection.

Table 1 : Sample selection

Residence	UH	VT	LG	TOTAL
Personal Interviews	15	15	20	50
Questionnaires	20	20	60	100
Total	35	35	80	150
Total No. In Residence	113	150	392	655

While an attempt was made to involve wider participation by many Black students in the three residences, all the ten faculties were generally represented as indicated in the table below.

Table 2 : Inter - faculty distribution and representation

(Source : Registered students

statistical summary , 03.06.93,

PP. 2 - 18)

Faculty	Total University Enrolment	%	No. of Black Student	Students Interviewed
Arts	1 404	10	271	19
Commerce	2 680	18	293	15
Education	688	5	212	26
Engineering	1 830	13	414	12
Fine Arts & Arch	723	5	75	2
Law	635	4	76	8
Medicine	2 259	16	216	10
Music	269	2	19	2
Science	1 641	11	284	15
Social Scie & Hum	2 268	16	660	41
Total	14 577	100	2520	150

The total number of black students is 2520 (17,3% of the total), of whom 655 (26%) were in the 3 sample residences. The sample size of 150 mean that 23% of the residence students were sampled.

ii. Pilot Study

In order to determine the time span for each interview and questionnaire sequences of the questions of both instruments, a pilot study was carried out on 4 BED and 2 BCom. students

residing at University House. I chose only 4 students because of the time left. The former helped me to determine meaningful sequence of the questions in the questionnaire. The latter assisted me to refine the wording and determine clarity of questions being raised.

iii. Questionnaire

A questionnaire was devised to follow up the interviews in greater depth on some Black students at UTC. This instrument was an 8 page and 60 questions questionnaire, a copy of which appears at the end of this thesis. This questionnaire relates to the literature we review in Chapter 2 in that it addresses the issues concerned such as pre-university educational experience (2.2) which is addressed by questionnaire Section A, questionnaire Nos. 3,4,5 and 6. Lack of adequate support (2.3) is addressed by questionnaire Section E, questionnaire Nos. 37 - 44. Other issues such as locus of control (2.4) and study approaches (2.5) are addressed by Section F, while motivation (2.6) is addressed by Section D, questionnaire Nos. 30 - 33. The questionnaire was not anonymous because I assumed most respondents, some of whom were my colleagues would be open enough to tell the truth about some factors affecting learning for Black students at UTC. A potential disadvantage of this move was that some would not provide me with true information in an attempt to please me as their colleague. But this disadvantage fell off as it was not a personal project and I also explained to them when I handed the questionnaire down to them that I was not the only one working

on the project. From this point on I assumed the best input from them. The return rate of responses was 100% exactly as planned. The reason owing to this response rate was that I negotiated the submission deadlines with respondents and visited them more than thrice per week for collection. Several respondents shifted their submission deadlines while I attempted to maintain pressure on them amicably. The most complicated part of the exercise was when some students lost copies of the questionnaires while others just disappeared into the vacation with no trace of where they had placed the questionnaire.

However, inspite of this constraint, I had originally distributed 110 copies of the questionnaire by hand in anticipation of 100 responses. Twenty of the questionnaire copies were either lost or misplaced by the time I went to collect them for a third time. To avert this frustration of disappearing questionnaires, I reprinted and redistributed another 40 copies out of which I got only 10. I would conclude that the distance between the researcher and the respondents as well as the hand - posting method of distribution and the insistence on strict deadlines contributed to the present response rate although I had problems with time consuming negotiations relating to submission.

While there was nothing much I could do about this complexity I realised that this problem slowed and disadvantaged my field work and this affected the project in relation to completion .

iv. One to one interviews

After the pilot study, I engaged myself in the interviews. I personally managed to interview all the 50 Black students as intended from three residences. No serious problems were encountered apart from intermittent disruptions by friends of interviews. At most, I visited each respondent more than thrice given that they were busy with their own assignments and tutorials.

v. Group Interviews

At Liesbeeck Gardens students were interviewed in groups of between 3 and 5. I did this in an attempt to, first, involve wider participation in discussion and interaction of Black students and second, to avert time constraints since most students had started writing their final year examination. It had become apparent that I would not complete the field work on time if I had not interviewed them in groups.

It must be acknowledged, however, that this approach had its own disadvantages. The first disadvantage was that within group context wider participation was still disappointing because some students were not actively involved during discussions. I failed to interpret their silence. The other disadvantage was that the views and opinions was not always possible. However, this disadvantage did not invalidate their opinions and views on some factors which affected their learning as Black student. Of course

it could be criticizable that content validity on a large scale was limited, but this being a case study where the focus is on a single group, large numbers would require more time and money. Validity of content therefore in this study is based on specific and actual problems seen and spoken about by a target group of students as they affected their learning.

3. Limitations

While my response rate was 100%, I could not contain three limitations. First, the project was approved by the university authorities very late thereby delaying me in the execution of the field work. This created a second problem in that the field work part of it was carried out during a time when students were writing their end of year examinations thereby frustrating free interaction and participation of respondents during field work. My efforts to extend time for interviews and distributing of more copies of the questionnaire were often frustrated by a very serious shortage or scarcity of time on the part of the students. Thirdly many students demanded that I pay them for their time and input into my research. These students were eliminated from the sample and certain questions. As consequence only five (5) factors related to the main ones in the literature review have been followed through to Chapter 4 under key findings of the research and there were selected because of their outstanding nature and frequency amongst major factors which affect learning for students both in higher education generally and of UCT in particular.

These were:-

1. consequences of a poor school system.
2. orientation week problems
3. poor methods of studying
4. negative attitudes to academic support programmes and
5. some aspects of residence life which affect learning.

University of Cape Town

CHAPTER 4

KEY FINDINGS OF THE RESEARCH

4.1 Introduction

The major purpose of this research was as described in chapter 1 to identify some of the factors which affect learning for some Black students at the University of Cape Town. It originated as a follow up study to the work done by Tim Dunne (1990) who made some general impressions of disadvantage on Black students at UCT which affected their academic performance.

In the literature reviewed in Chapter 2 of this presentation, some researchers and scholars have indicated what they saw as factors which affect learning for students in higher education. Their work directly relates to this study in the sense that the present results largely appear to confirm existing knowledge on factors that affect learning for students in higher education.

In this chapter, only five (5) factors have been isolated and identified to be directly affecting learning for some Black students in residence at the University of Cape Town. These factors are:

- 1) consequences of a poor school system,
- 2) orientation week problems,
- 3) poor methods of studying,
- 4) negative attitudes to academic support programmes and
- 5) some aspects of residence life which affect learning.

The data deriving from the results of the interviews and questionnaire used as instruments for collecting information in this study are discussed in a descriptive form. In some instances, the inferential method is used where tables and percentages are related to the statistics gathered during the research. The descriptive statistics aim at providing a full picture of some of the factors which affect learning for some Black students at UCT. It is hoped that the data analyzed in this section of the report will inform and provide a basis upon which policy decisions within UCT may be made with a view to addressing the problems of Black students' academic disadvantage.

Also as a follow up study of the impressions of disadvantage expressed by a UCT professor in 1990 for Black students, a demonstration is made of whether or not the present evidence support such observed impressions.

4.2 Consequences of a poor school system

Introduction

In the first section of a questionnaire (section A) students were asked if there were any factors in their home and academic backgrounds which affected their learning.

In response to this many issues were raised including responses to question no. 3 which requested them whether or not the

schools they attended prepared them for their university education.

The following table shows their response to this question.

Table 3: High school preparation for university education

Response	n	%
Yes	37	25
No	82	55
Not sure	31	20
Total	150	100

From the table it is notable that 55% (82 students out of 150) actually felt that their High schools did not prepare them for university education. Only 25% (37 out of 150 students) actually felt that on the contrary, the high schools they attended prepared them for university education. Asked further on question no.4 to explain the reason for their respective responses, the 55% cited that they went to Black schools which in their opinion did not provide meaningful preparation for university education. Although the word prepare in question no.3 appeared unclear, for some students in terms of its meaning, during interviews it was explained and understood to mean whether or not schools provided adequate schooling in the form of enough teachers, conducive learning environment, enough text books, libraries and laboratories. Apart from these, Black schools which provided adequate guidance and counseling to their pupils in preparation for university entrance and choice of course and

careers at High school age are understood in this discussion to have well prepared their pupils for university education. In terms of courses and technology such as computers and word processing and commercial courses such as *Commerce*, Economics and Accounts, not many Black schools provided them. When they came to university Blacks took longer than usual to catch up with especially Science courses. It is this form of preparation which many Black students during interview confirmed as not being provided by their High schools. Most Black students participating in the case study confirmed earlier reports and research into Black education that students coming into university from such a Black school background suffered a great deal in terms of their schools having not prepared them for what to expect at university. In relation to this under preparation, most Black students interviewed pointed out that their schools failed to coach them on managing their free time in relation to study time and self discipline. For that reason, they said, some of their peers, though with potential to *pass*, failed possibly because of inadequate preparation. Black school learning experience did not do much to prepare Black students for meaningful university education.

While the above constituted an opinion by those who felt their High schools never prepared them for university education, 25% felt their schools prepared them for university education. In their various explanations both on the questionnaires and interviews, students confirmed beyond any reasonable doubt that their High schools administered public examinations for them of

which they passed and came to university as a result of that preparation. According to this opinion, no other preparation could have ever been better than being moulded into a successful examination candidate by a High school.

The problem presented by the position taken by the 25% who said their schools prepared them for university education is that they appeared (most of them) to have attended private multi-racial High schools where academic standards and facilities matched those of White schools which had everything in place to fully prepare successfully a pupil for university education. Another interesting dimension of this feature was that out of the same sample, 20% (31 out of 150) of the students said they were not sure if their high schools prepared them for university education. It was not possible to interpret their position of not being sure because most of them never responded to question no.4 which required them to explain their responses in question no.3. Overall the majority of Black students taking part in this case study, submitted that the High schools they attended did not prepare them for university education.

Given the circumstances, it can reasonably be argued that their school system and background were poor.

Another important aspect of the poor school system which was cited by Black students in relation to factors affecting their learning was the "unacceptable" teacher-pupil ratio which many students described as "frightening." During interviews several

students quoted varying ratios ranging from 1:45 to 1:75. This indicates that Black education was operationally unmanageable in terms of ratio as evidenced by responses in questionnaires which cited that "we were too many in class." - Gilmour and Sodien (1994:123-129) as well as Nasson and Sammuel, (1990: 18-23) confirm the large teacher-pupil ratios as areas of great concern which contributed to the educational problems of Black pupils in South Africa. Indeed this is concluded as a contributing factor to poor schooling in university because pupils were not given adequate attention and time during their school days. They were too many for fewer teachers to manage.

In a related question still on background factors related to a poor school system affecting student learning, a question was asked in which students were to identify in question no. 5 what they were doing before coming to OCT. The following table constitutes their responses to that question:

Table 4: Student activities prior coming to UCT

Response	n	%
In school, college or university	90	60
Employed	38	25
None of the above	12	8
Other	10	7
Total	150	100

From the above table, it can be highlighted that the majority of

students, 60% (90 out of 150) were in school, college or university before coming to university. It was not possible to identify how many students out of 60% were actually in school and not in college or university because the instrument at use here did not go that far and, also the isolation of this category was not possible. However, the interesting point to note here is the fact that those who were in school still were facing the problems *facing* Black schools cited above while those who were in college and other universities had their work affected by a historical disadvantage of apartheid.

Another important aspect of this problem was the issue revealed during interviews at University House. Out of those who were in college and university before coming to OCT, several had dropped out of school and college to seek employment. These were not employed at their time of admission.

The question is, after not having been in school or at work, for a long time, how much success in university work would they be expected to yield? Also how would their period out of school not affect their university education?

A further highlight which merits explanation on the above table is the group of students who were working or employed before coming to OCT. Several of these students revealed that they had problems related to a long stay away from schools which were poor in terms of academic standards. These found it difficult to reconcile academic concentration after a long break. That was not

their only problem. They also faced the problem of coping with modern technology such as computers and modern laboratories which did not exist in their schools during their school days. For these particular students who constituted 25%, learning was affected by this problem.

It was not possible to interpret the position taken by 15% (22 out of 150) of the students who were neither in school, college, university nor employed although it is assumed that wherever they were before coming to UCT nothing substantial was evident to suggest that they had an advantage when they entered UCT and that their education at university would not be affected.

The variation regarding the type of programme one was engaged in (question no. 8), the year in which a student was (question 11) and the number of years a programme would take (question 12) as well as whether or not it was the student's first choice has revealed that most students at UCT make uninformed choices. This conclusion was arrived at after conducting interviews with junior students in Varietas. Although it was not possible to identify how many students were affected the impression I got from both formal and informal discussions with them revealed that some students were engaged in study programmes whose purpose they had no idea about at all.

Further to that the choices they followed were in my opinion, institutional rather than individual or personal ones. Several students revealed that they were given options by their departments. This was especially for undergraduates. Also they

had no idea of how they would bridge what they wanted to do in future and what they were studying. I would call this a crisis of objective or purpose. Although this crisis can be blamed on schools, the university would do a great deal of service to undergraduates to help them identify as early as possible their actual aims for doing courses they try to elect. This is important because then such aims would help them to get motivated by what they want to do in future. So, now that it is established that most Black schools did not provide the counselling required along the lines of what a student should choose to do in future, the university must fill in this *gap* to help the student to understand that the choice of a course should not be dictated upon him but that he is responsible for not only electing a course, but also ensuring that the responsibility to pass it rests within himself and not the lecturer. This could be called a confidence building process especially for undergraduates.

In relation to the university's admissions procedures and regulations students were asked to say whether or not they were admitted through the Alternative Admissions Scheme (question no. 13). The table below shows the number of those admitted through this scheme.

Table 5: Black students admitted through the AAS

Response	n	%
Yes	38	25
No	112	75
Total	150	100

This scheme though meant to assist disadvantaged students to gain entry to university education presents serious problems and even complications for the student himself. Although it may be a helpful admission policy, it is at the same time emotionally damaging to some Black students' learning efforts. One can say it affects their attitudes to learning for the following reasons as some Black students revealed during interviews. They acknowledged it as a sympathetic admission policy in their favour. But for some of them it created unacceptable levels of inferiority complex for some Black students. It also created an immediate feeling of inadequacy and academic insufficiency. Under such conditions of concern, institutional motivation has been found terribly missing. Self-motivation, too, is ruled out. There has not been anything meaningful put in place by the institution under investigation to emotionally support these students who feel perhaps discriminated by their inability to enter the university through normal entry. This study has therefore established that while the AAS is a positive affirmative action admission policy, helpful to some Black students, it has not done enough to further assist them to be fully emotionally integrated into the learning community of those with normal entry.

Conclusion

In relation to a poor school system Black students need a lot of meaningful academic assistance in order for them to appreciate UCT efforts to improve their learning. A well followed motivational plan needs to be put in place in order for effective learning to take place.

As a follow up study to Tim Dunne (1990)'s work, this part of the thesis supports the impression expressed by Dunne that Black students come to university with an attitude that Black is inferior and that Black students cannot manage without help and must seek a hand out trail. It is established that a poor school system has contributed significantly towards this scenario of an inferiority complex.

4.3 Orientation week problems

Introduction

The previous section of this chapter concluded that a poor school system in the opinion of many Black students is one of the factors which affects learning for some Black students of UCT. This section addresses itself to the issue of how poor orientation affects student's learning.

The hypothesis in this section of the thesis in relation to the main research question is that poor orientation of Black students

coming onto campus is one of the factors which affect learning for some Black students.

On question no.15 of section B of the questionnaire, students were requested to show whether or not they attended the orientation week. The following responses were made in relation to this question.

Table 6: Orientation week attendance distribution (including those who attended it before 1993)

Response		
Attended	56	37
Absent	94	63
Total	150	100

Attendance figures for orientation week as shown above indicate that more than half, 63% (94 out of 150) of the students did not attend orientation week in 1993 and even before for those who were in their second or third years of study. Responses on the questionnaires and interviews indicated that students viewed orientation week programmes as perhaps insignificant. Only 37% (56 out of 150) of them attended the programme for orientation week.

In response to question no.16 which requested students to provide their thoughts about orientation week fewer than half of the respondents (37%) said the programme was helpful. During

interviews various reasons were provided in support of the usefulness of the orientation week programme. Some of the reasons were that it helped students to effectively familiarise them about social life on campus. They were able to know and understand better the social environment into which they would be expected to be staying and studying. Pressed for specificity on why actually students, the 37% of them viewed orientation week as helpful nothing more specifically significant was said apart from them knowing places they did not know before. Perhaps a more specific instrument could be used to probe this issue in greater detail.

But some of the students who attended, 56 out 150, expressed concern on problems confronting the programme as they saw it operative. Although there was no question on the questionnaire to probe how many students out of those 37% who attended actually viewed it unhelpful, formal interviews showed that the majority about (40 out 56) of the students felt orientation week programmes at UCT were "socially fine" but "academically defficient" in the sense that they provided social orientation with unprecedented bias.

Academic orientation such as introducing Black students into modern technology such as computers and modern laboratory equipment were lacking. As most of them put it, it was "not knowing major places of entertainment at UCT" that they had come for, but "to be equipped academically and to be introduced to important aspects of the academic life of the university" that

they needed most. In the absence of proper academic orientation, Black students took too long to adjust and learn modern trends in computers and other technology, thus affecting their learning pace.

As a matter of urgency, UCT policy on orientation week programmes must address the crisis caused by the imbalance between social and academic orientation. As they clearly expressed during interviews, many Black students said that they hoped through this research into factors affecting learning, the bias towards social orientation would be addressed immediately to provide equal opportunity and time for academic orientation. It is relevant at this point to note the fact that Black students were not underestimating the importance of social orientation. But their point was that equal emphasis if not more should be placed on academic orientation because it was their academic aspirations for which had applied to come to UCT and not to be entertained. For this reason, some of the students even suggested that the budget for their entertainment in terms of transport, food and welcome parties, as part of social orientation into UCT "should be cut, not erased, to allow more funds for academic orientation such as for example providing three students per computer in the first three months of arrival at UCT." This would be helpful for a Black student coming to UCT from a Black school experience where computers were never accessed by pupils.

This point of the need to improve the impact and meaningfulness of the orientation week programmes, though expressed by 40 out

56 students, was also approved by the students who felt they benefited from the orientation week programmes they attended.

Although Dunne (1990) did not go as far as suggesting a cut in the budget for social orientation at UCT, this study confirms his impression that academic departments and staff do little in the current practice of orientation week to define for the incoming student an appropriate view or set of expectations of university life or to help students formulate goals that fuel their academic commitment.

This conclusion relates directly to question no.14 of section B of the questionnaire which asked students what their expectations of UCT were when they came. Students' responses pointed towards the same direction. Most expected high academic standards although their responses to question no.17 of the same questionnaire revealed 80% of them rated their personal academic ability as only average and only 20% as above average. None rated themselves below average. Those who rated themselves above average were mostly the ones taking postgraduate courses across all faculties (questionnaire no. 7) and they resorted mainly to individual study (questionnaire no. 45) and additional reading (questionnaire no. 20). The same students were the ones who perceived their workload as manageable (questionnaire no. 18) and they took longer (depending on the depth of project) to prepare their assignments (questionnaire no. 22), while they never failed to meet submission deadlines (questionnaire no. 23). Those students who rated themselves average were the ones who worked

hardest throughout the year (questionnaire no. 27) and viewed individual study as one the most important methods of study. Again these were the ones who did prescribed reading (questionnaire no. 20). Notably these students were the ones who possessed the locus of control (Spence, 1983) in the sense that they were in charge of their own learning ability as they would voluntarily resort to additional study. The issue of performance may well therefore be related to how students study, and their issue is dealt with in the next section.

There were no variations related to age or gender in response to questions 14 and 17. Those who rated themselves below average constituted an insignificant number by comparison to the ones who rated themselves average and above average. Finally it was not possible to obtain reasons or significant data connected to the reasons why 63% (94 out of 150) of the students were absent from any of the orientation week programmes. The reasons could not be assumed too because the instrument did not request an explanation regarding this variable.

Conclusion

UCT orientation week programmes, though good in themselves as preparatory programmes, still need a lot of improvement along the direction discussed above. The main point raised in this section is that poor orientation affects student learning in the sense that it has not achieved much academically and as such more discussion regarding UCT's orientation policy should be opened

up if it has to be a policy to benefit Black students. Also, orientation programmes significantly need to instil a positive perception of learning for students as they get adjusted into a university setting. Orientation programmes would need to also motivate students in their learning.

4.4 Poor methods of studying

Introduction

The basic assumption in this section of the discussion is that for university students, poor methods of studying affect learning. Pastoll (1992) submits that learning in groups is vital for better achievement. Barnes (1992) and Meyer (1986) support Pastoll by saying that students must have ambition and strength to be in tight control of their own learning. Miller (1981) says students must develop sound habits of study in order to survive in the competitive academic world today. As such, poor methods of study may result in learning being negatively affected. A demonstration of this is attempted below.

On question no.45 of section F of the questionnaire, students were asked to identify in order of importance which of the four methods of study they saw as best. These study methods were: individual study, lectures, group work and tutorials. Out of those who responded to this question, a substantial number, 44% (60 out of 136) of students viewed individual study as the most important, with only 13% (18 out of 136) of the students viewed

tutorials as most important. The rest of the responses were as illustrated below.

Table 7: Study Methods

Response		
Individual study	60	44
Lectures	38	28
Group work	20	15
Tutorials	18	13
Total	136	100

A relevant point to note here is the fact that all the above four methods of study were viewed relevant in a university setting such as UCT. What was ironic however, was the fact that group work and lectures did not constitute a majority in terms of those who used these as methods of study. Of course this does not suggest or infer that both of them and tutorials, as methods of study were useless, it means that some Black students found studying alone as most important. The most striking variation in this section was that these choices of study methods were influenced by course and age. Mature students especially those residing in University House and Liesbeeck Gardens were mainly the ones who constituted the group that saw individual study as most important. Again it was mainly postgraduate students across all faculties who viewed individual study as more important than lectures, tutorials and group work (75%).

Interviews with postgraduate students in the three residences revealed that the way postgraduate courses are structured or organised at UCT influenced their decision to view individual study as most important possibly because of the amount of individual study and independent work required of postgraduate level study. During the same interviews, postgraduate students indicated that they were used to working on their own and also that their lessons were administered in the form of seminars. As such they did not view working in groups as ideally the most important. On the other hand most undergraduates viewed individual study approach as a "selfish approach to learning" and as such they had the opinion that group work and tutorials were ideal and important methods of study. From the table, second in importance for most Black students were lectures. Again it may be said that lectures were a popular structure at UCT in that all undergraduates have to compulsorily attend them and for this reason most undergraduates rated them as most important.

As it stands now, it can be noted that mature students viewed studying alone as most important while some junior students felt working with others in groups, tutorials and lectures was most vital. Given the circumstances explained above, how can these methods be related to factors which affect learning for some students?

Interviews with some Black students on why each of these methods were rated first and most important or last and least important, have unfolded in the following direction. Studying individually

does not provide sufficient confidence for the student according to most undergraduate students. At the same time postgraduate students have argued that group work encourages laziness in the sense that some students came for group discussion unprepared.

Those students who argued in support of individual study as the most important study method further argued that even if a student attends group work or tutorials or lectures, still there was a time he needed to study alone.

If this did not happen, the student would fail. In relation to this point when students were asked on questions 50 and 51 respectively to identify factors which contributed to academic success or failing, they cited during interviews that lack of individual commitment to one's studies contributed to failing. Other reasons were laziness and waiting to be spoon fed by teaching staff in lectures. Questions 46-49 were responded to under the discussion on the importance of study methods under question no.45.

A further aspect of study methods which was crucial for this thesis was the type of extra study carried out by students for their own benefit. On question no.20 of section C of the questionnaire, students were requested to identify additional methods of study done apart from the four methods discussed above. These were additional and prescribed reading as well as course hand outs.

The following table illustrates how many students did a particular method of additional study to improve their learning.

Table 8: Extra study methods

Response		
Additional reading	63	42
Prescribed reading	62	41
Course handouts	14	9
None	11	7
Total	150	99

The statistics on the above table show that 42% (63 out of 150) of the students were well in the right direction because they did not rely only on lectures and what university teaching staff prescribed for them to study. This is consistent with the previous trend whereby some Black students indicated that individual study was for them most important.

It is difficult to understand why Black students' academic performance is lower than their White peers if they rate individual study and additional study as a priority. Interviews with some Black students have shown a certain tendency in their study methods and reading habits which were at fault. Among them were the following problems in their study patterns:

- i) lack of individual study plan (83%)
- ii) disorganized study routine (67%)
- iii) ineffective study techniques (70%)

These tendencies have been identified as some very clear factors of study methods which largely affected learning for some Black students at UCT. The issue of how exactly they affected learning is discussed below.

Specific problems which affect learning

i) Lack of individual study plan

Although it has been shown above that most Black students engage themselves in individual study and prefer additional reading as supportive to their usual lectures, both participant observation and interviews revealed that many Black students did not plan their individual study programmes.

For example at University House, out of the 15 students I interviewed, only 2 had a study programme of their own which guided them on their use of free time. Their time tables were not the same but what was very impressive with their individual timetables was that each subject had an equal time during the week slotted with the rest. These two students were postgraduates, one in the Faculty of Social Science and the other in the Faculty of Education. At Varietas most students interviewed did not have any individual time table which they made out of the one handed down to them by their departments.

At Liesbeeck Gardens several students said they continued studying the subject for which they would have attended lectures that particular

morning. But what was outstanding with this arrangement was that many lack students considered themselves "free" when they didn't have any lectures or tutorials. Indeed many said they would never go to the library if they had no assignment to submit. Asked on question 22 of section C of the questionnaire about how much time they took to prepare an assignment for submission most of the junior students doing undergraduate programmes took less than a week, of course depending on the project. For senior students, two, or more weeks were common, again depending on the requirements of the type and demands of the assignment. But the most common feature on this aspect **was** that the majority of Black students interviewed expressed the fact that they worked on their assignments -at the last minute, usually a day or 4 hours before the submission date. - Last minute submissions were not due to pressure of work - but most times we forget these due dates and our priorities are mixed up". This trend clearly demonstrated their lack of planning and individual organisation of their own work or study programmes. This lack of planning affected their learning in the sense that they never put careful concentration into their studies. They also never handed in required work on time. For the same reason, others (29%) forgot to hand in their assignments for marking as reflected on the next table when they were asked on question 23 as to whether or not they had failed to submit an assignment.

Table 9: Submission of assignments on time (Questionnaire only)

Response		
Yes	29	29
No	71	71
Total	100	100

A follow up during interviews to some of those who said they forgot to submit their work on time showed that they forgot not because they were unable to do it, but it was because of lack of proper planning_ The explanations on responses to question 24 reflected this trend very significantly.

ii) Disorganized study routine.

It is not only poor planning of one's study or the lack of it which affected Black students learning, but also disorganization of their study routines. Asked on question 18 of section C of the questionnaire about their perception of the available workload in relation to its organisation, 37% (55 out of 150) of the students felt their work was too much or a burden. That they perceived it as a burden maybe explains why their study routine of such too much work was affected. Evidence of disorganization was noted when assignments were forgotten and others hurriedly done. Others (63 %), (95 out of 150) felt their studies were manageable. This impression was explained during interviews to mean they were satisfied with their performance although it was

not always above average. Perhaps these were able to organize their work properly, but none of them viewed his own work as above average. This appeared to suggest that they did not aspire an above average academic performance. This was consistent with their response to question 19 where they were asked to show how many hours per day they spend consulting books. In response to this, Arts and Social Science students as well as those in other faculties such as Education and Commerce put in lesser hours than Science students. In line with the same trends, not many students put in any time for academic discussions with peers. Responses to question 21, reflected that most students preferred not to set time for sharing and discussing academic business with other students. This is viewed as affecting their work because they lost a vital aspect of learning, that of sharing learning experiences and problems. This trend where sharing learning experiences and problems is absent in student learning at UCT confirms earlier theories about organised studs. It appears that where students are too individualistic about learning, peer motivation is absent. This affects learning success negatively (Anastasi, 1979; Powell and Mangum, 1971). Jaques (1991) confirm this problem or factor by noting that poor study approaches affect learning outcome. This is supported by Miller (1981) whose research has found out that learning is negatively affected by lack of effective study approaches in many universities in the U.S.A. Group learning appears to provide peer academic support to weak students and it provides academic confidence in some students.

iii) Ineffective study techniques

Through the interviews carried out at Varietas especially, it was found that most Black students did not utilise the library when they had nothing to submit. Responses to question 25 indicated that they did not do any study if they were not submitting any work or preparing for tests or examinations. Further responses to question 26 on how many hours students spend in the library reading and researching work related to their course revealed that most libraries at UCT though well stocked, were being underutilized. Students at Liesbeeck Gardens cited problems connected with using the main library as "too far from their residence especially during the night". They were not the only ones affected by distance, Varietas students although living within walking distance also viewed this as a problem.

In addition not many Black students did preparatory reading or study before they attended their lectures and tutorials (questionnaire no 28 and 29 responses). The specific problem under ineffective study patterns, here is that because of the nature of how most UCT residences are located in relation to the main library, it is difficult to do effective follow up studies to their lectures. Libraries are located too far from where students stay. To avert this problem, perhaps the main library should revise the periods allowed for a student to have more time with a book if they have borrowed one. Alternatively, residences perhaps need to have their own library facilities. If a residence can afford space for a bar, a tuckshop as most

residences have, why not a small residence library?

Another important aspect of effective study which affected student learning at UCT was that some students spend more time studying material in an ineffective manner and about which they were less sure. For example several Black students told me their concerns during interviews in response to questions 28 and 29 in which they were asked about forms of preparation for lectures before attendance. They said that they "revise what was previously covered". This affected learning because students did not read ahead of lectures and they would not understand when the lecturer gave them a skeleton or outline of main concepts. Others claimed that "it's them, the lecturers who know it all, let them tell (teach) us. - They wanted to be spoonfed. This confirms the impression observed by Dunne that Black students come to university with expectations of being taught, rather than being given an opportunity to learn and become self-taught (Dunne, 1990:4). It also confirms Dunne's perception that Black students feel they are inferior and can not manage without help and must seek a handout trail. They did not realize the fact that it was their responsibility to study and understand, they did not strive to get the most data or information out of each hour they spent on a course. That was ineffective study.

Although students worked hard; they indicated that they read without understanding and that rote taking particularly in lectures, was indiscriminate. This appeared to be the reason why they did individual study and additional reading but still failing.

Conclusion

It was clear that many Black students' learning is negatively affected by poor methods of studying such as poor planning, disorganization and ineffective study techniques.

4.5. Negative attitudes towards academic support programmes.

Introduction:

Realizing the academic problem faced by most Black students at UCT in relation to their being disadvantaged programmes have been put in place to try and bridge the gap between their poor school system and the academic expectations of the university. Two of these programmes i.e. the Academic Support Programme (ASP) and Residence Tutorial Scheme (RTS) will be discussed *here*. The main point in this section of the discussion is that some Black students have a very negative attitude towards these ASP and RTS.

The academic support programme seeks to support the usual teaching programme of the university. It was established in 1980 by UCT to assist disadvantaged students with an academic potential to succeed. Since that year the ASP has grown and extended its range of services of helping Black students with the problems related to transition from a poor school system to university. Asked on question 39 of section E of the questionnaire if Black students knew about the ASP, 83% said they knew about it, while 12% said they did not, only 5% were not

Conclusion

It was clear that many Black students' learning is negatively affected by poor methods of studying such as poor planning, disorganization and ineffective study techniques.

4.5. Negative attitudes towards academic support programmes.

Introduction:

Realizing the academic problem faced by most Black students at UCT in relation to their being disadvantaged programmes have been put in place to try and bridge the gap between their poor school system and the academic expectations of the university. Two of these programmes i.e. the Academic Support Programme (ASP) and Residence Tutorial Scheme (RTS) will be discussed here. The main point in this section of the discussion is that some Black students have every negative attitude towards these ASP and RTS.

The academic support programme seeks to support the usual teaching programme of the university. It was established in 1980 by UCT to assist disadvantaged students with an academic potential to succeed. Since that year the ASP has grown and extended its range of services of helping Black students with the problems related to transition from a poor school system to university. Asked on question 39 of section E of the questionnaire if Black students knew about the ASP, 83% said they knew about it, while 12% said they did not. The 83% of students who

said they knew about it expressed their feelings about this programme in no uncertain terms. Both responses in the questionnaire and interviews revealed that some Black students had a *negative* attitude towards the ASP. During interviews they expressed that the ASP treated them as if they "were children." Others felt that the ASP carried within it negative racial connotations such as "African Stupid Person" which demotivated them. Whether or not this interpretation of the ASP was genuine or a joke is not certain but its connotation was unacceptable for some Black students. Informal interviews and some questionnaire responses revealed very clearly that the ASP though a noble idea, left a lot to be desired. Those in-charge of the programme, with all due respect tried their best throughout the years to paint a positive picture of what the ASP stood for in terms of academic support but its beneficiaries, at least some of them, viewed it as if it was saying to them that they were "miserably inadequate." Some lecturers involved in this programme, perhaps not purposefully, but naturally, portrayed to Black students the implication that without such support Black students would not make it at UCT. The attitude to Black students during ASP classes was defined as saying that they were in fact empty and the ASP does try to fill them up with an acceptable standard. Eighty-three percent (83%) of Black students felt "downgraded" or "humiliated" by such an attitude. Others described it as "pompous" and "full of unnecessary pride." These feelings were not expressed only by a few students who knew about the ASP, but a majority of the 83% of them who were in the ASP even prior to 1993.

Few students viewed the ASP as helpful; even those who had a positive attitude towards it agreed that it had not done much if anything at all to motivate student learning, in fact it talked more about their being disadvantaged and their inadequacies than their potential to excel in their studies.

All the above views were expressed by a majority of students in response to question nos 40-41 of section E of the questionnaire which required them to state their views on the ASP.

However it must be acknowledged that Black students were not saying the ASP is not helpful. Rather they were sending signals to the administration that more could still be done for the betterment of this policy. Asked on what the ASP needed to do to improve its service (question 41 of questionnaire) some students said some publication can be made to spell out the goals of the ASP. This can also change one's perception of it. As it, is now, it is seen as racist and there is no documentation to suggest the contrary. The programme was viewed as having a negative attitude towards Black students. A point not to forget is the issue of how this negative attitude towards the ASP affected learning for some students. It affected their learning in the sense that their level of academic receptivity was largely disturbed. Black students would not learn and understand as much as would be expected because they felt -alienated- for their academic inadequacy." Not only that, a feeling of being degraded demotivated their effort to effective learning. Finally, some Black students ended up feeling as if they were -rejects-. This final point here is closely connected with responses made on

questions 35 and 36 of section D where students were asked to give their opinion on whether they thought UCT discriminated against Black students. Seventy-five percent (75%) of the students interviewed in the three residences felt UCT discriminated against Black students.

A very illuminating connection was found on students' responses to questions 37 and 38 of section E where students were requested to reveal where they went to seek for some academic help if they faced an academic problem such as not understanding an essay topic or question. A large majority (77%) said they preferred another student in the form of a tutor instead of a lecturer. Only 18% preferred consulting a lecturer, with 5% saying they would not go to anyone for such assistance. The following table demonstrates this picture.

Table 10 Academic assistance provision (Questionnaire only)

Response		
Tutor	40	40
Fellow student	37	37
Lecturer	18	18
Nobody	5	5
Total	100	100

Follow up interviews to questions 35 and 36 in relation to question 37 revealed that not many students went to a lecturer for academic assistance because several of them felt some white staff members were inaccessible for racial reasons. Other

reasons of course were that tutors and fellow students were available when a student in need of help came. As a matter of policy, perhaps more Black students should be appointed tutors and more funds provided to them for the purpose of strengthening this academic support service.

The second academic support service for which some Black students had a negative attitude was the residence tutorial scheme (RTS). This was established in 1985 by UCT as an attempt to promote a culture of learning in the residences. Prior to the establishment of this policy, residences were actually perceived by the majority of students as places of partying.

In order to bring the learning environment to their place of residence, the RTS was put into place. Asked on questions 43 and 44, section E of the questionnaire, whether or not students used the RTS, the following responses were obtained. Sixty percent (60%) of them knew about the scheme while 22% said they did not know about it. Only 13% of those who knew it used it. This means that only 12 of the 150 students interviewed used the system. This is a clear indication of the lack of value placed by students in the system as currently operationalised. Furthermore, the comments made by some of those who used it revealed that they had a negative attitude towards it. They described it as -useless- because it promoted laziness. Many students did not work hard waiting to be assisted by a tutor. Operationally therefore UCT perhaps needs as a matter of policy to ensure a tight supervision of the scheme if its original

objectives are to be realized. More funds should be released for the training of tutors and students benefiting from the scheme should also evaluate their tutors by filling in performance evaluation forms. This was what most Black students expressed during interviews.

Conclusion

Both the RTS and the ASP should be reviewed and their progress strictly monitored. Apart from providing actual academic support service, those in charge of them should ensure that their other task is to motivate Black students into developing positive attitudes to learning. Although consulted authors are divided on the issue of learning in groups, it does seem that learning in groups helps to provide peer motivation and confidence (Pastoll, 1992) to academically weak students. At the same time individual effort must be realised even within group participation.

4.6 Some aspects of residence life which affect learning.

Introduction

The main task of this section is to show some aspects of residence life which were viewed as affecting learning for some Black Students. Of particular interest is how these aspects directly affected learning in relation to previous specific problems or factors.

On questions no. 52 and 53, section G of the questionnaire students were requested to say what their feelings were about UCT residence life in relation to their studies. The following represents their responses.

Table 11. Feelings about UCT residence life (Questionnaire only).

Response		
Satisfactory	43	43
Good	37	37
Poor	13	13
No Response	7	7
Total	100	100

What the above table shows is that the majority (80%) of Black students who participated in the questionnaire response felt UCT residences provided a satisfactory service. Only 13% were dissatisfied with the service. Follow up interviews and participant observation both showed that many Black students had not much to blame on their residence as they provided well furnished and maintained student flats which were conducive for successful study. By good and satisfactory they also meant that their residences provided a well balanced amount of entertainment and they enjoyed a flexible time schedule for sleeping, personal affairs, relaxation and study though they were not able to balance it with a more fixed one for meals, classes and attending to student organisations.

In line with residential satisfaction, some of them made positive

comments in response to questions 59 and 60 which asked them about the type and quality of food served in residence for those in catering accommodation. The majority of students in Varietas and University House classified their meals as good and satisfactory, although some said an improvement was needed. For example some of the current dishes served at University House were in the opinion of some Black students "too western and too regular" and variety could be an area urgently needing attention. By too western they meant the food was "too alien" to them. They preferred more of their local traditional dishes, but these opinions should be viewed as relative because others noted that the food was of international standard. So the issue of the type of food served in the dining halls of studied residences was inconclusive. But of course it was noted that with more local Black students registering to study and stay in UCT residences the food served in these residences must reflect the majority of its consumers.

This point is simply suggesting that the UCT Residence Committee should operationally rethink its food policy in relation to the type of students that now largely occupy its residences to cater for the interest of all ethnic groups that dine from them. However the issue of food consumed in the residences did not constitute the most serious of factors affecting student learning. Other problems were raised which were much more important.

First, **was** the problem of squatters in some of the Black student residences, the most affected being Liesbeeck Gardens. In Varietas and University House squatters, usually relatives and

friends of students were disturbing. But the presence of squatters in these residences was not as notorious as in Liesbeeck Gardens. The difference was striking. In the two residences squatters would stay for up to three weeks at most while at Liesbeeck Gardens squatters were "permanent visitors". In 1993 many students at Liesbeeck Gardens stayed with their siblings, while others cohabited with -spouses- and it was a common secret to the residence authorities. The problem of squatters at UCT residences was a common feature at the three residences with Liesbeeck Gardens almost fashionably becoming like a squatter camp or more of a shebeen than a student residence especially during weekends when students drank beer to unacceptable levels. Evidence of this problem was fighting, smashing of windows, vomiting on corridors and throwing of used condoms in visible places. These were common sights especially during weekends and such days as Saturday morning after usual Friday parties. Perhaps as a matter of policy a new moral ethic of personal responsibility needs to be a priority orientation for more Black students in affected residences where residence authorities possibly can counsel students on these matters.

When I spoke to some Black students in Liesbeeck Gardens on these visible sights, some of them told me that their understanding of "freedom- was that they would do anything anytime as long as they were happy with it. Also I could see for myself that some students who came to stay at Liesbeeck Gardens were still too young to control their own freedom in relation to what they saw adult students doing. When students responded to questionnaire

nos. 54 and 55 and also during interviews most expressed their dissatisfaction about the squatter situation as well as the deteriorating moral ethics for many young adults at Liesbeeck Gardens. Indeed in the light of these problems, group counselling would go a long way to help the students refocus their goals for being at UCT and in residence as well.

Asked on question no. 57 on what the most disturbing thing in residence was, all groups interviewed cited squatters and the deteriorating moral behaviour especially in Liesbeeck Gardens as outstandingly notorious. Responding to how (question 58) these issues affected their learning (academic life) most said they could not reconcile their academic life style in residence with what they saw prevailing in residence. The social environment was not conducive to effective study in residence. As such a substantial number of students found their academic work deteriorating because their academic concentration efforts were thwarted by an unsupportive social environment.

The second factor cited about residence life which affected student learning was the issue of social security in residence. This was with particular reference to Varietas and even Liesbeeck Gardens. During the time I was conducting field work at Varietas, a story was revealed about a female medical student aged 21 who was raped by a 26 year male student who lived in the same residence. I interviewed the rape victim not because I had read the story from a student newspaper, but she happened to be one of my interviewees and she told me her story as a response

to question 57 about the most disturbing thing in residence and how it affected her academic life (question 58). The incident affected her learning, in the sense that she lost a lot of learning time attending the university court in connection with rape case. Again her academic performance in three assignments out of four **was** below average as she could not concentrate on her work. As such, the disturbance directly affected her learning. For other female students too it was fear of personal security in their residence which affected their learning. For example during separate interviews many female students in Varietas related this story to me and concluded that it was not safe for them to go to the library during the night for fear of being raped. They would not even go out to consult a tutor late in the evening for the same reason. Male students in this residence did not feel their learning affected, though they felt embarrassed by the rape issue. Another problem connected with reproachable residence morals was revealed during interviews at Liesbeeck Gardens where a Science student was stabbed by another in the upper arm. They were both drunk after having gone to a party in the same residence. I failed to interview the stabbed student because he was still in hospital when I conducted my field work. When I phoned the hospital matron in connection with this matter, she said it was a security matter and she preferred a university official to access the student than myself. However, the sub-warden on duty when this incident happened described it as a "very disturbing thing in residence" (question 57). He could not elaborate on how disturbing this was going to be on the victim in hospital although he assumed that student's

examinations were going to be deferred.

Both incidents were very common in student residence at UCT and their impact on the social life of Black students was very significant in the sense that there was no guarantee from anyone that such incidents would not happen in future. Perhaps such assurance and putting in place visible security measures in these residences in the form of campus control police during parties and late hours may ensure social security. Police patrols may need to be stepped up to assist the students regain their confidence in the university authorities in relation to Black students" life in residence.

The third problem cited as affecting learning in the residences was the level of noise. Students expressed feelings during interviews that there were some of their colleagues who were quite unconscious of the fact that "radios were meant to entertain them within reasonable volume -. This problem was particularly cited in all the three residences and it was felt that a penalty fee for such unwarranted noise during study or late hours in residence should be levied on such -unruly behaviour of disruption. The penalty fee should be meaningful and of course not meant for fund raising, but it should be viewed as a deterrent measure to avert further disruptions. Asked how these noise levels affected their learning most Black students pointed out that they failed to concentrate or study or write an assignment under such conditions in residence. As such they felt the residences should really have some measurable amount of

quietness that would allow a positive combination of study and socialization. In response to questions 32 and 33, many Black students noted the above three problems or factors as demotivational to their learning, passing essays and studying ahead of lectures and tutorials. This feeling was a common trend in terms of age or gender or course. There were no very significant responses to question 30 of section D of the questionnaire on anything in residence which motivated Black students" learning.

Conclusion

Finally, the current aspects of residence life cited above as factors which affect learning were not the only ones which Black students have identified as problematic, but these constitute the main ones shared by a significantly substantial number of Black students residing on campus. In relation to the cited problems in residence, UCT needs to revise its housing policy administration in favour of the alleviation of squatters, unacceptable noise levels and social insecurity in the residences. At most, students felt these factors disrupt learning and UCT authorities must get rid of them as soon as possible.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS

5.1. Introduction

The task of this case study was to investigate some of the factors which affect learning for some Black students in three residences: Liesbeeck Gardens, University House and Varietas. The research question was: What are some of the factors which affect learning for some Black students in residence at UCT? Specific objectives of the research were to identify problems which affect learning for some Black students; assessing the scale of the problems and how they affect learning directly as well as identifying any positive aspects of residence life which motivated learning. This research was a follow up study to "Impressions of disadvantage" by Tim Dunne (1990). For that reason many conclusions reached here confirm his impressions on Black students.

5.2 Summary of specific factors which affect learning.

In the main research question on the identification of some of the factors which affect learning for some Black students: (1) A poor school system; (2) weak academic orientation; (3) ineffective methods of studying; (4) negative attitudes to academic support programmes and (5) some aspects of residence life such as notorious squatter presence and social insecurity and unprecedented noise levels have been found as some of the factors. The same five (5) factors relate directly to what the specific objectives of the study were. An assessment of how each

of these problems affected learning for some Black students has been attempted as follows:-

- a. The majority of Black students at UCT in the residences studied felt that their High schools did not prepare them for university education. They were not referring to public examination preparation, but they meant being able to have access to meaningful teaching and adequate counselling in relation to *being* able to be self-disciplined in study. Inadequate school facilities such as laboratories, libraries and modern technology as well as poorly qualified teachers and large pupil-teacher ratios were part of the poor High school preparation which some Black students referred to. In terms of these factors, this research found out that Blacks took longer than usual to catch up with other races whose schools had better facilities and education than them. The slowness of receptivity and comprehension was attributed to their poor academic background. So in response to question (1.1 (a) on causative factors for a deteriorating academic performance for some Black students, this remains one of the factors. Taking too long to catchup with others was viewed not only as being caused by poor educational systems. It was also viewed as being caused by the social environment. Most Black students found it difficult to manage their own freedom at university which they did not have at high school. This being the case, UCT could do a great service to Black students if it puts in place a policy which ensures

that Black students are advised on how to manage their "freedom" in relation to study.

This is crucial for their success in learning because poor school systems did not provide this.

- b. The second factor which was affecting learning for some Black students was that they were not given meaningful academic orientation. In what way? Students took too long to learn how a computer operated for example. Such students could not do meaningful research if academic sources they needed for their essays was from a computer or sources such as BORIS or ERIC. Not only that, Black Science students took too long to learn how scientific machines operated unlike those White students who went to good schools that had adequate laboratory equipment. Orientation week programmes should therefore balance their emphasis between social and academic orientation of Black students.
- c. The third factor which has been found as one affecting some Black students' learning was that they used poor methods of studying. It has been revealed in this study that some Black students were doing additional and individual study, but they faced three problems namely; lack of individual study plan, disorganisation of study techniques and poor methods of study. This contradicts the study by Ayres and Bennett (1983) that the quality of lecturers and professors constitute the most single characteristic of university academic performance. In this study, it is

concluded that when the above three issues are addressed, even if lecturers and professors are not constituting quality, students' work may not be negatively affected.

This research supports the theory by Spence (1983), Behr (1985) and Barnes (1982) on locus control. Some Black students at UCT do not possess the locus of control which happens to be crucial for successful learning. The evidence for this conclusion is that they never study when not submitting any assignments. They wait to be spoon-fed by the lecturers. Apart from that, some of them never study in preparation for lectures or tutorials. Reading ahead of schedule is very important and some Black students do not possess the locus of control which happens to be vital for university work. This study confirms earlier research in the U.S.A. on Black students who studied at predominantly White institutions of higher learning. In the context of the U.S.A Black students experienced greater levels of alienation (cf. Thompson and Fretz, 1991). They felt isolated by predominantly White learning institutions. At UCT, as revealed by this research, several Black students interviewed said they felt extremely alienated against by some White lecturers. They termed this attitude racism. At UCT, it was not all, but some White lecturers who showed racialist tendencies in their approaches to teaching some Black students. The problem here identified with the ASP showing racial tendencies was that some lecturers got some Black students in the programme to "feel

extremely inferior" to the system or standard of education at UCT. This thesis has revealed that instead of the ASP being viewed as supportive academically, the majority of Black students felt it was a "degrading experience to be in an ASP class". It is not an assumption that the ASP carries with it this attitude, but a reality that some Black students felt it (ASP) was meant for students who were not supposed to be in any university.

Some Black students' perception of the ASP was that it was therefore to fill them up "with sense, data, methods and academic maturity". From some Black students' experiences and feelings, the above constituted a serious feeling of alienation which was concluded as a factor which affected their learning in the sense that it was demotivational to their learning efforts.

To avert being felt or viewed as racist, efforts to improve its image may need to be put in place. This is crucial for successful learning for some Black students at UCT as a previous White institution. This feeling of alienation together with the notion expressed by some Black students that "you can't get a distinction unless you are a White student", may, if not addressed urgently, get UCT to be thought of by the community at large as not serious with affirmative action. Some Black students view UCT as not genuinely committed to assisting disadvantaged Black students academically.

d. The last factor seen to affect some Black students' learning was the presence of squatters in Liesbeeck Gardens. In other residences, the practice was not as evident as in Liesbeeck Gardens. As such the level of noise was viewed as not conducive to effective individual study in the residences. To get rid of problem of the squatters, it may be helpful to students if tighter measures can be put in place both by the Residences Committee and the House Committee of Liesbeeck Gardens to ensure that the squatter situation does not deteriorate into a drop-in centre for unofficial permanent visitors. The tighter regulations should address the issue of maintaining the residence as a place of study and not merely partying. If this problem is not urgently solved, the quality of learning and motivation to study may be compromised. Squatters, as has been discovered, erode any effective *learning* efforts in residence because of their noise. Again, a definite policy regarding students who invite squatters should be put in place to curb the influx of squatters into student residence.

If an immediate change for the better is not addressed, residence life will not in anyway be always supportive of academic efforts. This is one of the aspects of residence life needing attention as revealed by this case study. Again social security should be stepped up in places such as Varietas because insecurity was revealed as creating fear in some Black female students thereby effecting their learning because of loss of meaningful concentration.

5.3 Recommendations

i) Further investigation

Some Black students participating in this case study have expressed the need for the expansion of this study in order to know exactly "how students really feel". They have suggested that in the expanded investigation, more students should be involved and a more comprehensive questionnaire should be constructed as an instrument. Further to this, some students complained that surveys and research were done on them but they have not made any contribution to the transformation of students welfare". It is therefore recommended here that this investigation be expanded.

A comparison of problems that affect learning for post graduates, undergraduates, male and female students would constitute an illuminating result. More time should be given for such an expanded study to allow more involvement by a larger sample and the research should be funded or sponsored to avoid problems of finance as this current study faced.

ii) Review of the academic support programme and the residence tutorial scheme.

It is recommended that these academic support systems be reviewed regularly and continuously to allow for improvement of the attitude of Black students.

Previously this did not effectively take place.

Further to that, academic staff should heavily be

involved in its supervision by their various forms of input. It is recommended that Black students, as beneficiaries of the systems should fill in some evaluation forms or a questionnaire to allow for a feed back to the supervisors of the programmes to keep pace with any short comings of the programmes. More room should be given for students to make some suggestions for improving the programmes. It would be helpful if the budget is increased for the programmes to expand. In terms of tutors for the RTS, training should be thorough and monitoring more strict. Perhaps appointing a full time lecturer for this function will help many in the form of effectiveness and support.

Finally the ASP and RTS should address at once, in addition to their usual functions, the problem of poor methods of studying by a majority of Black students. Each faculty should produce a publication of "Effective Study Techniques - in its departments for Black students coming to UCT for the first time especially for those who will join the ASP and the RTS. This booklet; should be accessible just the way a faculty prospectus is and can be given to students during orientation. The publication should spell out its goals. It is true to say that there are some many books in the Jagger Library on study techniques, but many students do not know them. If the publication of

material of this nature is costly, departments may run courses on study skills for their own students. If this recommendation is carried, then disadvantaged students would benefit substantially as they would learn about how to avoid failing an essay or an examination even when they do additional studying. This is crucial for their learning because some Black students study, but their study methods are not always effective. Faculty or departmental orientation then should assist not only ASP and RTS students, but also other students at risk of failing or victims of a poor school system in general. The publication should also address effective use of textbooks (of, Kolzow and Lehmann, 1982; Miller, 1981 and Meyer, 1986)

iii) Decentralization of orientation week.

Further to the above, it is recommended that orientation programmes be decentralised to academic departments to ensure effective participation of departmental staff. (of, Dunne, 1990).

The importance of this policy shift is that it is departmental staff that will interact with students throughout their university life and therefore they are the ones who should be best placed to help Black students define their academic goals effectively.

This recommendation addresses the need raised by Prof Dunne (1990) at UCT that "academic departments and staff do little in the current practice of orientation

week to define for the incoming student an appropriate view or set of expectations of university life or to describe useful sources of skills or resources, or to help students formulate goals or objectives that will fuel their academic commitment". This decentralization should also address the impressions that the imbalance between social and academic orientation should be immediately addressed.

In fact it may be desirable to have residences administer their own orientation to first time entering students while academic departments do the same for their students. This is important because residences cannot define academic goals for Black students as social orientation can not address adequately academic expectations of the student. such an integrated approach has not been quite helpful to some students.

Also, to date, UCT residences enjoy a traditional culture of partying which can perhaps be replaced by a tradition or culture of serious study. This shift must be addressed by a decentralization of orientation processes to ensure a beneficial academic ethos exists in the residences. Orientation programmes should also ensure that they build a capacity of academic commitment and confidence in Black students (cf. Honikman, 1982; Cronbach, 1977 and Mager, 1984). Students must also be helped to develop a hard

work ethic at UCT by motivating them into a culture and tradition of prioritizing study as critical for their future.

While this case study has attempted to show some of the factors which affect learning for some Black students, a further detailed study in the same direction involving all departments could help the university administration greatly to appreciate the importance of certain policy shifts that ensure quality learning at UCT.

University of Cape Town

REFERENCES

- Aitken, N., (1982), College Student Performance, Satisfaction and Retention: Specification and Estimation of Structural Model. **The Journal of Higher Education**, Vol.53, No.1, pp.32-50.
- Anastasi, A., (1979), **Fields of Applied Psychology**, McGraw Hill, U.S.A.
- Ary, D., Jacobs, L.C. and Razavieh, A., (1990), **Introduction to Research in Education**, Harcourt Brace College Publishers, U.S.A.
- Ayres, Q. and Bennett, R., (1983), University Characteristics and Student Achievement. **The Journal of Higher Education**, Vol.54, No.5, pp.528.
- Barnes, R., (1992), **Successful Study for Degrees**, Routledge, London.
- Beard, R. and Senior, I., (1980), **Learning and Motivation**, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London.
- Behr, A., (1985), Academic Achievement of University Students: the effects of interest, mental health and attitude on the relative performance of males and females. **Bulletin for Academic Staff**, University of Durban-Westville Press, Vol.6, No.1, pp.62-64.
- Behr, A., (1985), The Learning Processes of University Students. **Bulletin for Academic Staff**, University of Durban-Westville Press, Vol.6, No.1, pp.36.
- Behr, A., (1986), Contrasting Perspectives of Student Learning. **Bulletin for Academic Staff**, University of Durban-Westville Press, Vol.7, No.2, pp.64-66.

Bell, J., (1992), **Doing your research project: A guide to first-time researchers in Education and Social Science**, OUP, U.K.

Biggs, J., (1985), The role of meta-learning in study processes. **British Journal of Educational Psychology**, Vol.55, No.3, pp.185-212.

Bokhorst, F., Lea, S. and Foster, D., (1992), Factors affecting academic performance in first year education. **South African Journal of Higher Education**, Vol.6, No.1, pp.59-64.

Bradley, A., (1983), **Take Note of College Study Skills** Foresman and Company, U.S.A

Cabrera, A., Castaneda, M. and Hengstler, D., (1992), The Convergence between Two Theories of College Persistence. **The Journal of Higher Education**, Vol.63, No.2, pp.143-162.

Cronbach, L., (1977), **Educational Psychology**, Harcourt Brace, Jovanovich, U.S.A.

Dawes, A and Donald, D, (eds), (1994), **Childhood and Adversity Psychological perspectives from South African Research**, David Philip, Cape Town.

De Cecco, J., (1968), **The Psychology of Learning and Instruction: Educational Psychology**, Prentice Hall, USA.

Dunne, T., (1990), **Impressions of Disadvantage**. University of Cape Town.

Edwards, A. and Scannell, D., (1968), **Educational Psychology: The Teaching and Learning Process**, International Textbook Company, U.S.A.

Gay, L.R., (1976), **Educational Research Competencies for Analysis and Application**, Charles Merrill, U.S.A.

Goode, W.J, and Hatt, P.K. (1952) **Methods in Social Research**, McGrow Hill Book Co., New York.

Goodwin, W. and Klausmeier, K., (1982), **Facilitating Student Learning: An Introduction to Educational Psychology**. Harper & Row, U.S.A.

Gomm, R. and Woods, P., (ed.), (1993), **Educational Research in Action** Vol. 2, Open University Press, U.K.

Gray, J.L. and Starke, F.A., (ed.), (1977), **Readings in Organizational Behaviour: Concepts and Applications**, Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company, U.S.A.

Greenough, R. (1961), **Africa calls... Development of Education, the needs and problems**, Unesco, Paris.

Haring, N., (ed.), (1978), **Behaviour of Exeptional Children**, Charles E. Merrill Publishing Co., U.S.A.

Honikman, K., (1982), **Processes and Problems: First-Year Students at a South African University**, Unpublished M.A. Dissertation. University of Cape Town.

Huddle, P., Bradley, J. and Gerrans, G., (1992), Towards a more effective tutorial system. **South African Journal of Higher Education**, Vol.6, No.2, pp.11 -15.

Hursh, B., Haas, P. and Moore, M., (1983), An Interdisciplinary Model to Implement General Education. **The Journal of Higher Education** Vol.54, No.1, pp.42-59.

Isaac, S. and Michael, W.B., (1981), **Handbook in Research and Evaluation for Education and the Behavioural Sciences**, EdITs Publisher, U.S.A.

Jaques, D., (1991), **Learning in Groups**, Kogan Page, London.

Kolzow, L.V. and Lehmann, J., (1982), **College Reading: Strategies for Success**, Prentice Hall, U.S.A.

Lefevre, C.A. and Lefevre, H.E., (1984), **Reading Power and Study Skills for College Work**, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Publishers, U.S.A.

Mager, R., (1984), **Developing Attitude Toward Learning**, Pitman, USA.

McGill, D., (1992), Students' attitudes regarding a lecture - tutorial system. **South African Journal of Higher Education** Vol.6, No.1. pp.66-69.

Meyers, C., (1986), **Teaching Students To Think Critically**, Jossey-Bass, USA.

Meyer, J., Parsons, P. and Dunne, T., (1990), Study orchestration and learning outcome: evidence of association over time among disadvantaged students, **The International Journal of Higher Education and Educational Planning**, Vol.20, No.1 pp.245-288.

Miller, L.L., (1981), **Personalizing Reading Efficiency**. Burgess Publishing Company, U.S.A.

Miller, L.L., (1984), **Increasing Reading Efficiency**, C.B.S College Publishing, U.S.A.

Moletsane, R., (1992), Academic support for adult learners in tertiary institutions, **South African Journal of Higher Education**, Vol.6, No.1, pp.105-107.

Mungazi, D.A., (1991), **Colonial Education for Africans, George Stark's Policy in Zimbabwe**, Praeger Publishers, U.S.A.

Nasson, B and Samuel, J, (eds), (1990), **Education: from poverty to liberty**, David Philip, Cape Town.

Neer, S., (1989), **The relationship between curiosity and academic achievement**, Unpublished MEd. Dissertation. University of Cape Town.

Nettles, M., Thoeny, A. and Gasman, E., (1986), Predicting Analyses of Black Students' College Achievement and Experiences. **The Journal of Higher Education**, Vol.57, No.3, pp.289 -290.

Parsons, P., (1992), **An Investigation into the Association Between Qualitatively Different Perceptions of the Learning Context and Students' Approaches to Studying**. Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Cape Town.

Parsons, P., (1993), The Student at risk. **South African Journal of Higher Education**, Vol.7, No.1, pp.24.

Pastoll, G., (1992), **Tutorials That Work: A guide to running effective tutorials**, Arrow, Cape Town.

Potter, C. and Van der Merwe, E., (1993), Academic Performance in Engineering. **South African Journal of Higher Education**, Vol.7, No.1, pp.33.

Powell, L., (1992), **Residence Tutorial Scheme**, Report, University of Cape Town.

Powell, M. and Mangum, R., (1971), **Introduction to Educational Psychology**, Merrill, New York.

Ramphela, M., (1993), **Standards - The Loaded Term**, Occasional Papers, No.1, University of Cape Town.

Rupert, R.M. (1976), **The Education System in Southern Africa**, National Book Printers, Cape, R.S.A.

Sadler, D., (1983), Evaluation and the Improvement of Academic Learning. **The Journal of Higher Education**, V01.54, No.1, PP-60.

Saunders, S., (1990), **Academic Support Programme**. Vice-Chancellor 8 Annual Report, University of Cape Town.

Saunders, S., (1992), **Academic Support Programme and Alternative Admissions Research Project**, Vice-Chancellor's Annual Report, University of Cape Town.

Schultz, D.P. and Schultz, S.E., (1986), **Psychology and Industry Today: An Introduction to Industrial and Organisational Psychology**, Macmillan Publishing Company, New York, U.S.A.

Shaw, L. and Bucwa, N., (1993) **Adjusting to life at UCT... a black perspective**, UCT News Alumni, Vol.20, No.1.

Sherman, T., (1985), Learning Improvement Programmes: A Review of Controllable Influences. **The Journal of Higher Education**, Vol.54, No.1, pp.85-100.

Smith, C., (ed.), (1969), **Achievement - Related Motives in Children**, Russell Sage Foundation, U.S.A.

Spence, J., (ed.), (1983), **Achievement and Achievement Motivation: Psychological and Sociological Approaches**, W.H. Freeman & Co. U.S.A.

Thompson, C. and Fretz, B., (1991), Predicting the Adjustment of Black Students at Predominantly White Institutions. **The Journal of Higher Education**, Vol.6, No.4, pp.437-445.

Trigwell, K. and Prosser, M., (1991), Improving the quality of student learning: the influence of learning context and student approaches to learning on learning outcomes. **The International Journal of Higher Education and Educational Planning**, Vol.22, No.3, pp.51-266.

Van Hoose W.H., Pietrofesa, J.J and Carlson, J., (1973), **Elementary School Guidance and Counselling: A Composite View**, Houghton Miff in Company, U.S.A.

Wlodkowski, R.J., (1985), **Enhancing Adult Motivation To Learn: A guide to improving instruction and increasing learner achievement**, Jossey-Bass Publishers, U.S.A.

Wlodkowski, R. and Jaynes, J., (1990), **Eager to Learn: Helping Children Become Motivated and Love Learning**, Jossey-Bass, U.S.A.

INSTRUCTION Please put an X or write your responses in the spaces provided.

SECTION A.

Home and Academic Backgrounds Please do not write in this space.

1. Age:

- 1. 17 - 20
- 2. 21 - 25
- 3. 26 - 30
- 4. 31+ _____ 1.

2. Gender:

- 1. Male
- 2. Female 2.

3. Did the High School you attended prepare you for university education?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. Not Sure 3.

4. Please Explain

4. _____

5. What were you doing before coming to UCT?

5. _____

6. Why did you decide to come to UCT?

6. _____

7. In which Faculty are you registered?

- | | | |
|--------------------|-------------------|----|
| 1. Arts | 2. Commerce | |
| 3. Education | 4. Engineering | |
| 5. Fine Art & Arch | 6. Law | |
| 7. Medicine | 8. Music | |
| 9. Science | 10. Soc. Sciences | 7. |

8. What degree or diploma are you doing? 8.
9. Was this your first choice? 9.
1. Yes
2. No _____
10. Why? _____ 10.
11. What year of academic study are you in? 11.
1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____
4. _____ 5+ _____
12. How many years is the degree going to take you? 12.
13. Were you admitted through the Alternative Admissions Scheme? 13.
1. Yes
2. No _____

SECTION B:

Preparation and Adjustment to a new Learning Environment

14. What were your academic expectations of UCT? 14. _____
15. Did you attend the orientation week? 15.
1. Yes
2. No. _____
16. What do you think about this orientation week? 16. _____
1. Helpful. Why? _____
2. _____ Unhelpful. Why? _____

17. How do you rate your academic ability?
1. _____ Above Average
 2. _____ Average
 3. _____ Below Average
- 17.

SECTION C:

Perceptions of Workload and Learning Styles:

18. What is your overall impression of your workload?
1. _____ Manageable
 2. _____ A Burden and self-imposed slavery
 3. _____ Too Little
- 18.
19. How many hours per day do you spend consulting books and articles related to your courses?
1. _____ 0 - 1
 2. _____ 1 - 3
 3. _____ 3 -
 4. _____ 6+
- 19.
20. What type of reading do you exactly do?
1. _____ Additional reading
 2. _____ Prescribed reading
 3. _____ Course handouts
 4. _____ None _____
- 20.
21. How much time per day do you spend discussing academic work with your friends?
1. _____ None
 2. _____ 5 - 10 mins
 3. _____ 11 - 30 mins
 4. _____ 31+ mins
- 21.
22. How much time do you take in general to prepare an assignment for submission?
- 22.
23. Have you ever failed to meet the submission deadline?
1. _____ Yes
 2. _____ No _____
- 23.

24. If Yes, Why?

24. _____

25. If you are not submitting any work, do you do any reading at all?

1. Yes
2. No _____ 25.

26. How much time do you spend in the library reading and searching for relevant work?

26. _____

27. Which part of either semesters did you work hardest?

1. Throughout
2. In the last 2-3 weeks before exams 27.

28. Do you do any preparation before attending your lectures?

1. Yes
2. No _____ 28.

29. If yes, how do you prepare? If no, why?

29. _____

SECTION D

Self-Management of the Reading and Learning Situation.

30. What factors motivate your learning experience?

30. _____

31. How does this motivate your learning?

31. _____

32. What factors demotivate your learning?

32. _____

33. How?

33. _____

34. Have you encountered any learning difficulties at UCT?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

34.

Explain

35. Do you think UCT discriminates against Black students?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. _____ Don't Know

35.

36. Explain

36. _____

SECTION E:

External and Internal Support Systems

37. When you face an academic problem such as not understanding an assignment question, where do you go for help?
1. _____ Tutor
 2. _____ Fellow Student
 3. _____ Lecturer
 4. _____ Nobody
- 37.
38. Why would you prefer to go to that person and not the rest?
- 38.
39. Do you know about the Academic Support Programme?
1. _____ Yes
 2. _____ No _____
- 39.
40. If yes, what are your views about it.
- 40.
41. Have you used the ASP?
1. _____ Yes
 2. _____ No
- 41.
42. If Yes, what more does the ASP needs to do to be more supportive to students?
- 42.
43. Do you use the Residence Tutorial Scheme?
1. _____ Yes
 2. _____ No _____
- 43.

44. Please explain what you think about it.

44.

SECTION 44

Patterns : Study Methods and Approaches

45. Please position the following in order of importance to you in a 1 to 4 sequence.

Individual Study _____ Group Work _____
Tutorials _____ Lectures _____ 45. _____

46. Why do you consider 1 (one) as most important to you?

46.

47. Why do you consider 4 as least important to you?

47.

48. Of all these learning methods, which one do you like most? Why?

48.

49. Which one do you dislike most? Why?

49.

50. Please mention 2 most important things which contribute to academic success.

1.

2.

50.

51. Please list 2 things which contribute to failing at UCT.

1.

2.

_____ 51. _____

SECTION G:

Residence Life Influence on Academic Performance:

52. What is your feeling about residence life?

1. Satisfactory

2. Good

3. Poor _____

52.

53. Why?

53.

54. Do you share a room or a flat with someone?

1. Flat

2. Room _____

54.

55. What problems have you faced in this sharing of living and learning space?

55. _____

56. What do you like most about sharing a flat or a room?

56.

57. What is the most disturbing thing in residence?

57.

58. How does this affect your academic life?

58.

59. Comment on the food (for catering students only), its type and quality.

1. _____ Good
2. _____ Satisfactory
3. _____ Poor
4. _____ Not sure

59.

60. Why?

60.

NOTE:

1. Thank you very much for taking your special time to answer these questions.
2. Feel free to make comments about the questionnaire.