UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN

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ADULTS STUDYING FOR MATRIC: A SECOND CHANCE?

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ABSTRACT

This study focuses on a group of African adult students who were registered at St. Anthony's Adult Education Centre on the East Rand in order to complete the secondary education they did not complete at school. It investigates why adult students perceive education, and the matric examination in particular, to be of importance. To this end, an empirical survey was carried out to approach an understanding of the views and perceptions adult students had of themselves and what they were doing and why. The empirical survey looks at the question of matric "from below" so to speak, through the eyes of the adult students. In the belief that education is about people and their needs, it is hoped that the empirical survey will bring us closer to the adult students involved.

However, to examine the views and perceptions of the adult students in isolation would deny them the contextual richness that gives them life. For this reason, the empirical survey is preceded by a theoretical discourse which offers three perspectives or ways of understanding the education system for Africans: education as a means towards social advancement; education as the reproduction of cultural capital and education as social reproduction. It is hoped that these diverse explanations may not only give insight into the

views and experiences of the adult students who took part in the empirical survey, but also offer contrasting thoughts on the role of the education system and the matric examination in particular. Indeed, in the light of the question asked by the title, it is hoped that the contrasting perspectives will contribute to an understanding of the nature of the "second chance" adult students believe they have by studying towards matric.

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PART A

ADULTS STUDYING FOR MATRIC: A SECOND CHANCE?

INTRODUCTION

As the crisis in African education deepens each year and matric failure rates soar much attention has, quite justifiably, been given to the plight of African full-time scholars. However, there is another group of learners which is equally a victim of an inadequate and alienating education system and whose struggles are largely overlooked - the African adult students. There may be a number of reasons why so little is heard about this group. Their numbers, though increasing, remain relatively small. For example, in 1981, 401 part-time students gained matric exemption compared to 4 830 full-time candidates (see Appendix A). Another factor may the manner in which the matric studies for part-time candidates are structured, whereby adults register for two or three matric subjects per year until they have the required six subjects. A third reason may be the high matric subject failure rate. Table one shows a cross-section of higher grade subjects which were registered for, written, passed or failed by part-time

candidates at adult education centres in November 1987.

TABLE 1 (1)

SUBJECTS (HG)	REGISTERED	WROTE	% PASSED	% FAILED
ZULU 1st LANG	11 115	7 953	23.68 %	76.32 %
AFRIKAANS 2ND LANG	26 194	19 893	26.27 %	73.73 %
ENGLISH 2ND LANG	35 865	26 593	53.63 %	46.37 %
GEOGRAPHY	6 989	4 599	5.11 %	94.89 %
BIOLOGY	22 908	15 508	3.07 %	96.93 %
HISTORY	11 357	7 588	11.54 %	88.46 %

In the belief that all learners have the right to an equal and non-racial education, the above figures draw our attention to the students involved - real people who have not only invested their time, effort and money into their matric studies, but also whose studies form the fabric and weave of future dreams and aspirations. This research focuses on the matric examination in particular as it was perceived to carry such importance in terms of future careers. It intends to approach an understanding of the meaning of education for African adult students through their eyes. To this end a survey was carried out in August and September 1987 amongst African adults studying for their matric examinations at St Anthony's Adult Education Centre on the East Rand. The data were collected by means of a

questionnaire and interviews with adult students. It set out to find out first of all who the adult students were; why they had left full-time education; what had motivated them to return; what they perceived their matric would enable them to do or be and finally what obstacles they had encountered along the way. The purpose of the research is not only to draw our attention to this group of students, but also to factors hindering them from the examination success they rightly deserve. The empirical study is presented in Part B.

It is considered important to avoid an over-simplified view of the education system for Africans, yet nonetheless gain some insight into the social and economic factors which may have contributed to the perceptions of adult students regarding their education. For this reason, the empirical study is preceded by a theoretical discourse presented in Part A, which will consider the education system from three different perspectives - three sides of a multi-sided shape as it were. Individually the perspectives offer valuable insight into aspects of the education system, collectively they present a wider spectrum which is intended as a way to understand the meaning of education for the adult student. The first perspective offers the view that matric is an important avenue towards higher education and that this may be a means towards social

advancement; the second view suggests that the language and culture of the education system preserve the existing social order and thus may disadvantage and alienate African students; thirdly, there may be a connection between the education system and the workplace, whereby the education system serves primarily to satisfy labour requirements.

In one respect the provision of adult education centres may offer adult students the opportunity to complete their secondary education and in this way may be regarded by many students to be offering a "second chance". However, as will be suggested by the second and third perspectives the nature of this second chance needs to be examined more cautiously. This will be the task of Part C, which hopes to draw together some of the issues raised by the empirical study in Part B and comment on them in the light of the theoretical perspectives highlighted in Part A.

NOTE ON TERMINOLOGY

Since the majority of the respondents to the survey indicated that they intended to enter tertiary education, they would therefore have been aiming at Matriculation with exemption. Those who fail to achieve the standard required, but nonetheless pass their

standard ten examinations would receive a School Leaving Certificate. For the purposes of this study both Matriculation with exemption and the School Leaving Certificate will be discussed under the term "matric", although this distinction should be borne in mind. In order to clarify particular issues pertaining to specific social groups, it is necessary to explain the use of the terms "African" and "black" as they appear in this study. The term "black" is considered a political term, since as Molteno points out it "has been adopted by broad layers of those classified African, Coloured and Indian to symbolize their unity in opposing the Whites' system which oppresses them all albeit differently" (2) and where this definition is called for the term, black, has been used. However, since this study focuses on Africans as a particular group and the education system for Africans this term is felt to be more accurate. Nor is the use of this term intended to deny that the development of the education system for Africans may share many similarities with the education systems of so-called Colcureds or Indians. This, however, is not within the scope of this study.

NOTES

1. Vakstatistiek T.O.V. - kandidate by sentrums vir volwasse onderwys. EUIR046. Eksamens 1987/11. Standerd 10 Privaat. Bladsy 988-90.

2. D.F. Molteno, "The Schooling of Black South Africans and 1980 Cape Town Students' Boycott: a sociological interpretation". MA Thesis, University of Cape Town, (1983), p.21.

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PART A:

ADULTS STUDYING FOR MATRIC: THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

INTRODUCTION:

Part A intends to examine matric in the context of the education system for Africans from three perspectives: education as a means towards social advancement; education as the reproduction of cultural capital; education as social reproduction. It is hoped that in examining the role of the matric examination from these perspectives a greater understanding of the meaning of matric to the adult student, which forms the focus of this research and will be discussed in Part B, will be achieved. On the one hand education may be regarded as a means towards social advancement, which may enable the student to secure a better job or enter a profession and earn more money. On the other hand the education system may be regarded as a means of social control. In this respect the second and third perspectives are similar. Thus the second perspective takes the view that in order to preserve its position of power within the social structure, the dominant social group relies upon the education system to reproduce its language and culture. The third perspective suggests that educational

provisions for Africans correspond in the main to the needs of workplace and that changes in these needs correspond roughly with changes in the provision of education.

A closer examination of these views shows that the first perspective suggests that shifts in occupational distribution as a result of industrialization combined with the inability of the white population to reproduce its number may lead to social advancement for Africans. Improved and expanded facilities for education and training may accelerate this process. It is further suggested that these processes place increasing value on certification as a proof of learning and potential and may in part account for the importance attached to the matric examination.

Conversely, the education system may also be regarded as a means of controlling and limiting the social advancement of Africans in order to preserve the existing social, political and economic structures. The development of an education system which makes selection to higher levels dependent on competence in an alien medium of instruction and culture clearly disadvantages the African student. Whilst the adult student may have been selected as far as standard ten, he/she, nonetheless, remains part of a continuous process of

selection and elimination, based upon the level of cultural and linguistic competence demanded by the examination. A further aspect of the social control exercised by the education system can be seen in its relation to economic structures. It is suggested that the constant supply of cheap and unskilled labour required by the economy is facilitated as a result of the inadequate educational provisions for Africans, such as overcrowded classrooms, underqualified teachers and lack of facilities.

1. EDUCATION AS A MEANS TOWARDS SOCIAL ADVANCEMENT

Industrialization and urbanization have contributed to the popular view that education may be a means towards social advancement. Industrialization may lead to changes within the social structure and may affect the rate of upward social mobility given the correct conditions. Conversely, educational provisions may accelerate the rate of social change and the degree of social advancement (1). This would suggest that education both affects and is affected by changes in the social and economic organization. According to Havinghurst there are two basic conditions which are necessary for social advancement to take place: a shift in occupational distribution resulting in a greater proportion of middle and higher status positions

available, and the inability of the of the middle and upper classes to reproduce their numbers, thus necessitating these positions to be filled from below (2). The education system could, therefore, play a crucial role in promoting social advancement.

In using the above theory as a way to an understanding of the role of education in the South African context, it will be seen that the conditions for social advancement highlighted above have only been present since the 1970's and that prior to that date measures were taken to actively discourage it. However, since the 1970's in particular there has been an effort to increase and improve educational and training facilities. Together with the removal of statutory restrictions on labour this has enabled Africans to achieve a higher standard of education and secure better positions in industry and the professions. In order to appreciate the reforms in education as well as the degree of social advancement they have generated, and how these have contributed to the growth of the urban African middle class, it is necessary to consider the social and economic conditions which gave rise to them.

During the early part of this century migrant workers flocked to the cities from rural areas to secure jobs as unskilled labour on the mines. This process had been

given impetus by labour shortages in agriculture as a result of drought and mechanization. Schooling was not a priority for these workers because, " many blacks were not integrated into the capitalist economy and consequently schooling was less important" (3). However, the growth of an increasingly settled population in the cities by the 1930's contributed to the steady increase in the number of students attending school. This indicates that education was becoming increasingly important to the African community. In spite of the growth in school enrollments, most African students did not go beyond primary school in their education. In 1945, 76 % of Africans enrolled in schools were receiving primary education, whereas only 3,4 % were in post-primary classes (4).

After 1933 there was an unprecedented growth in secondary industries, which created a demand for more workers, and together with rural unrest and labour shortages contributed to the growth in urbanization amongst Africans. Between 1921 and 1946 the number of Africans living in urban areas almost trebled (5). By 1980, 33 % of Africans were urbanized (6). However, urban life was characterized by intense poverty, low wages and overcrowding. As increasing numbers of migrant workers sought employment in the cities, they threatened the stability of those already settled, by competing for

jobs and through their readiness to work for lower wages. During this period it would appear that the growth and development of new industries as well the increase in productivity should have fulfilled some of the general conditions for social advancement outlined above by Havinghurst. However, statutory restrictions on labour mobility, the reserves, racial segregation and the denial of political rights precluded most opportunities for social advancement amongst Africans.

Although the education system played an important role in facilitating the transition from rural to urban life, it was not adequate to cope with the increasing number of urban Africans who were enrolled in schools during the 1930's. The curriculum offered covered rudimentary instruction in reading, writing and arithmetic, as well as familiarisation with either English or Afrikaans. In addition to this, education was neither free nor compulsory. Most students attending school did not pass beyond primary education. Nonetheless, many Africans saw education as means towards social advancement. Molteno accounts for the growing thirst for education as follows: people wanted to be educated because they believed that social and economic change would come naturally thereafter, and whites enjoyed a comfortable living because they were educated (7). The Bantu Education policy introduced during the 1950's enshrined

education for Africans based on cultural and racial inferiority. One of the main aims of the educational provisions for Africans was to prepare its students to live in a racially segregated society and to believe that future opportunities for social advancement lay within the Bantustans. Enrollments at schools continued to increase during the 1950's, although this was in part due to the double sessions and platoon system, which stretched educational facilities to their fullest. The increased enrollments in schools reflected the growing importance of education amongst Africans. The 1960's and 70's, however, saw moves to uplift and improve the educational provisions for Africans, which were to result in opportunities for social upward mobility.

/Technological advancements in industry, increased growth and intensification of industrial productivity were required "in order to make South African manufacturing more competitive internationally" (8). This resulted in a demand for skilled and professional workers which could no longer be satisfied by the white population. Although the skills shortage had been of concern to industry since the 1960's, by the mid 1970's the problem had become acute. Other factors which intensified the demand for educational reforms were the economic recession; rising unemplcyment amongst unskilled workers; labour unrest and mass resistance to apartheid education which was expressed most forcefully during the

Soweto uprising of 1976. The initiative in the educational reform process was taken by the Chamber of Mines, Associated Chambers of Commerce and the Federal Chambers of Industry (9), who saw the removal of statutory restrictions on labour and the expansion and improvement of educational and training facilities as a way of addressing the skills shortage. Nor had these concerns been characteristic of the 1970's alone. Writers such as Hurwitz had criticized Bantu Education in the 1960's for "curtailing the flow of vitally needed skilled and professional manpower, and thereby impeding economic growth" (10).

It is significant that the thrust for reform originated primarily from the private sector and heralded an era of increased involvement in educational projects. In November 1976 the Urban Foundation was launched with the backing of every major corporation in South Africa. Its stated aim was to improve the quality of life for the urban citizen through projects relating to employment, education, housing and health. Amongst its most notable contributions in education were the expansion of facilities at Jabulani Technical High School in Soweto at a cost of R 1 million and the building of the R 3,6 million Funda Centre: a community, teacher upgrading and adult education centre (11). These projects provided one means of addressing the problem of inadequate

educational facilities and encouraged social advancement through education. The incentive to provide educational and training programmes was made more lucrative to employers as the finance invested in such projects was tax deductible.

1980 was characterized by widespread labour and student unrest. It was also a boom year in the economy and was accompanied by a sharp rise in the price of gold. This created a demand for greater numbers of skilled labour which could not be met because the educational reforms which had been called for had not yet taken place. Although state expenditure on education had been increased, it was still insufficient to cope with the demand. Industry increased the pressure for reform by the state.

By 1980 the unskilled labour available exceeded the number that could be absorbed by industry and this resulted in increasing unemployment amongst this sector. However, as a result of growth and development in industry, there was a greater demand for technical, managerial and professional employees. As Havinghurst pointed out, the second general condition for social advancement rested on the inability of the middle classes to reproduce their numbers. The declining birth-rate of the white population meant that the semi-

skilled, skilled and managerial positions which had once been exclusive to them could no longer be filled by whites. The tardiness in educational reform on the part of the state must be seen against the background of the threat to continuing white dominance in South Africa. Yet, in spite of fears for its own stability, it also recognized that the education system for Africans was limited in its ability to provide adequate education and training to meet the needs of industry.

Since the 1960's the state had increased its capital spending on education and had introduced a number of industrial training programmes in the schools, even though these measures were inadequate in addressing the skills shortage. However, the expansion and improvement of facilities in the post 1976 period occurred on a scale unknown before in South Africa. Some of the major educational changes included the repeal of the compulsory introduction of Afrikaans as a third language of instruction; the replacing of Bantu Education with the Department of Education and Training (the name was probably revised to suggest the new course which the education system would take); the salaries of qualified teachers were raised as was the expenditure on African education; more industrial training was to be introduced (12). Furthermore, reforms which facilitated the mobility of Africans in industry and commerce included

the removal of job reservation and the granting of concessions to African businessmen, as well as the growing recognition of trade unions.

In 1980 the state announced a commission of enquiry into all aspects of education. The Human Sciences Research Council was to undertake the enquiry under the chairmanship of J.P. de Lange. This followed closely on the heels of two previous state commissions of inquiry: the Wiehahn Commission on industrial relations and the Rieckert Commission which investigated manpower usage in urban areas. The former recommended the removal of the colour bar and the latter recommended increased training facilities for Africans. Both Commissions stressed the need for creating opportunities for Africans to assume skilled, management and professional positions in commerce and industry. State reaction to the Commissions was an agreement to provide more training facilities, though on a racially segregated basis.

The de Lange Commission tabled its report in Parliament in October 1981 and recommended the establishment of a single Ministry of Education and the introduction of compulsory and free education. It supported equal educational opportunities and rejected differentiation on a racial basis. The report criticized the existing

education system for being too academic and proposed the introduction of technical education and vocational guidance in order to integrate schooling more successfully with working life. The state accepted some of the proposals, whilst others were already being implemented. For example, 1980 saw the completion of four technikons and by the end of 1982 "a massive programme for transforming existing Bantu Education schools into technical and commercial high schools as feeders for technical colleges was introduced. Whilst subjects such as history, a highly contentious subject in African schools, are being phased out in some African schools, the rise of technical subjects in many others is noticeable. A National Technical Certificate now runs alongside the standard Junior Certificate and Matriculation" (13). In order to facilitate the expansion of education the state and the private sector introduced programmes directed at the upgrading and training of teachers. That educational reform has in some measure been effective is reflected by the growth in the number of African students attending university: in 1969 the number of male and female students enrolled at African universities and at UNISA was 3 730, however, by 1984 this number had risen to 33 469 (14).

From this it can be seen that the growth and increasingly technological nature of industry required a

higher proportion of skilled, managerial and professional labour. Since the demand for labour could no longer be satisfied by the white population, educational provisions for Africans were expanded and reformed accordingly with a view to filling these occupations with Africans. This enabled a small percentage of Africans to achieve social mobility through education; either through technical or on-the-job training or by means of a university or college course.

Any discussion of the emergence of an urban African middle class should be seen in the context of the changing nature of the industrial process and the creation of new occupations. In their analysis of the lower middle classes Simkins and Hindson include the following categories: professional and semi-professional; clerical, white collar, technical and other non-manual workers; supervisory occupations (15). The foregoing discussion suggests that reform measures in education and the removal of statutory restrictions on labour had the effect of drawing Africans into the lower middle classes categorized above. Between 1969 and 1983 the number of Africans in professions had trebled. African women, although still largely concentrated in the teaching and nursing professions, showed the greatest growth in the professions and in

1983 constituted 68 per cent of African professionals (16). Appendix B shows the significant growth of the African middle classes in comparison to the growth rate of the white population. Furthermore, Crankshaw's research reflects the following:

> Overall, the African "middle class" is not only increasing in size, but is also increasing faster than the African proletariat. The period 1979 - 1983 in fact represents a rate of growth greater than average, and slightly greater than the growth rate during the period 1973 - 1977. This is particularly interesting since it takes place against a decline in the size of the African working class (17).

This is supported by the fact that in the 1980's the real wages for Africans have begun to rise and the wage differential has begun to narrow: between 1976 and 1985 real wages for Africans averaged 3,0 per cent per annum, whilst the annual increase for white employees averaged 0,6 per cent (18). As a result of this, more funds have begun to circulate within African communities, which has given impetus to the growth of the tertiary sector.

A further consideration of education as means of social advancement should include the position of the adult learner. The expansion of education facilities since the late 1970's also included the expansion of adult education. The adult education centres provide an opportunity for adults to complete the formal education

they did not complete at school. The stated aims of the Department of Education and Training as regards adult education are "to upgrade teachers; to provide opportunities for adults to improve their levels of education and to provide literacy classes (19). Table two indicates the growth in facilities for adult education from 20 adult education centres with 52 satellite centres in 1977 to 257 centres with 114 satellite centres in 1987. Correspondingly, in the same period the student body rose from 27,546 students to 86,366 students enrolled in classes ranging from literacy to standard ten. An incentive for students to become involved in adult education is the provision of free study materials. The desire to improve facilities for adult education reflects the growing awareness that the levels of education with which students leave school are no longer adequate to meet the demands of an increasingly technological society. Whereas a Junior Certificate may once have been considered an adequate qualification for a teacher, this is no longer true today. The pace of change and development is such that many African adults today face the dilemma of either improving their levels of education in order to obtain better jobs, or accepting underpaid jobs with limited opportunities for social advancement. Whilst provisions for technical colleges, technikons and on-the-job training may offer opportunities for social advancement

through industry and commerce, adult education centres become the focus of attention for adult learners who seek social advancement by means of a profession - such as teaching, nursing, accountancy or law, none of which are possible without matric.

The increased demand for skilled and professional people has placed greater emphasis on the value of certification. Students who embark upon a course of part-time education appear to do so because their certificate is demanded by the government business and industrial world as a proof of ability. This is particularly the case in South Africa where racism continues to influence staff recruitment and promotion opportunities. Prosser writes:

> It may be regrettable that many adults are not seeking education from, perhaps, more altruistic motives such as mind improvement and self-fulfilment, but are simply after pieces of paper (20).

TABLE 2: (21)

THE GROWTH OF ADULT EDUCATION CENTRES

	ADULT EDUC. CENTRES	SATELLITES	TOTAL STUDENTS
1977	20	52	- *
1978	68	80	27.546
1979	84	94	44,984
1980	226	75	52,305
1981	243	126	- *
1982	225	118	- *
1983	228	118	38,079
1984	152	112	42,241
1985	190	105	43,169
1986	161	98	50,309
1987	257	114	86,366

* figures unavailable

For social advancement to take place Havinghurst identifies two general conditions to be met: changes and growth in industrial development must create demands for skilled, managerial and professional workers, and the inability of the middle class to reproduce its numbers to satisfy the demand for increased labour. Both these conditions have characterized industrial growth in South Africa since the 1970's: the expansion and increased technological sophistication of the economy demanding more highly skilled workers and professionals, coupled with the inability of the white population to maintain its numbers have created opportunities for upward

mobility amongst Africans. In order to meet these needs the government with the aid of the private sector has expanded facilities for technical, vocational training and academic education. This, in turn, has created opportunities for upward social mobility and contributed to the growth of an African middle class. The return to formal schooling by adult students, then, would appear to offer them a set of prospects which may improve their present social position.

2. EDUCATION AS THE REPRODUCTION OF CULTURAL CAPITAL

The education system for Africans may also be regarded as means of controlling and limiting the social advancement of the adult student. The second perspective suggests that the education system disadvantages the majority of its learners by selecting only those who meet its requirements in terms of the cultural and linguistic competence demanded by the dominant culture. The dominant culture may be described as the language, norms and values of the dominant social group in any social organization which holds political, economic and social power. In order to preserve its position of dominance and control, it relies upon the education system to reproduce its language and culture. It does this by defining what is knowledge and what is not, and what is to be transmitted and to whom and how. It is not

within the scope of this paper to attempt an analysis of the dominant culture of modern day South Africa with its complex interplay of Dutch/Afrikaans and English cultures and languages and its roots in European thought and tradition. The dominant culture as it applies to South Africa, will, therefore, be discussed under the umbrella term of 'European culture', in order to illustrate how it is transmitted by the teacher through the learning relationship in order to preserve its position of dominance.

In a monolingual society the education system is designed to build upon the cultural heritage transmitted within the family.

> This consists mainly of linguistic and cultural competence and that relationship of familiarity with culture which can only be produced by family upbringing when it transmits the dominant culture (22).

However, in South Africa the dominant European culture has determined the shape of the education system. It preserves its position of dominance by demanding a level of cultural and linguistic competence from its learners. Selection to the higher levels of the education system depends on familiarity with the dominant culture, which is transmitted mainly within the family and reproduced by the school. This clearly disadvantages African

students, including the adult student, whose culture is not European and whose mother tongue is not English. For many African students the only contact with the English language is in the classroom and this contact may be further distorted by the fact that many African teachers are not confident in their use of English. Evidence that the cultural and linguistic competence demanded by the education system may severely disadvantage the adult student can be seen by the high school drop-out rate and high examination failure rate. These factors may have contributed to growth of a counter-cultural movement in the form of People's Education, which challenges an arbitrary European culture.

In order to show how the dominant European culture is reproduced through the education system and how this may disadvantage the African child in his/her quest for education, Bourdieu and Passeron's framework of pedagogic relations will be used (23). They define schooling in terms of a system of pedagogic relations which work together to preserve existing social structures. The pedagogic relations include the following: pedagogic action, authority and the work of schooling. Pedagogic action may be defined as the selection, imposition and inculcation of certain meanings which constitute the norms and values of the dominant group or class. Teachers, who are in command of

pedagogic authority, transmit the dominant culture through their interaction with students. Their position of authority within the learning relationship legitimates the education system's role in the reproduction of the dominant culture and at the same time deflects inquiry into the hidden agenda of the education system.

In the South African context pedagogic action clearly serves the interests of the dominant European culture. It includes the inculcation and imposition of certain meanings about European culture and about African culture. The African student is given an education which is broadly European in character, building upon African culture only to the extent that it in no way threatens the dominant culture. Education for the African student is held out to be the property of all students, yet it systematically eliminates all but a few students who have been able to decode and appropriate the dominant European culture transmitted.

Primary school education to standard three builds upon the culture transmitted in the home, if for no other reason than that it is transmitted through the mother tongue. Thereafter, as the education transmitted at secondary school aligns itself more and more with European culture (crucial for acceptance into the

European dominated economic and political arena), its content necessarily distances itself more and more from African culture if for no other reason than that it takes place through the medium of English. Without a basic grounding in the European culture which is expected to be transmitted in the home through the family, the African student does not have the means with which to appropriate European cultural knowledge, which the education system assumes he/she has and which it demands from him/her.

In this respect African students are at a clear disadvantage compared to their white counterparts. They need to bridge the gap between the African cultural environment, language and norms they have been familiarized with at home and the European cultural environment of schooling, which presupposes that their family environment has equipped them with the instruments of appropriating it. This clearly lessens a student's chances of being selected to the higher standards of the school.

The teacher's relationship with his/her students manifests itself as the legitimate right to impose the dominant culture in so far as it is meted out by the teacher who is in command of the relation of pedagogic authority. This authority, however, only extends as far

as the fundamental principles that the dominant group or class deems worthy of reproduction "both by its very existence and by the fact of delegating to an agency the authority required to produce it" (24).

The success of any pedagogic action depends on the degree to which its addressees (students) recognize the authority of the agency (teachers) and the degree to which their family environments have endowed them with dominant culture. If the teacher is not recognized as an authority on the dominant culture presented through the school curriculum or the dominant culture is not recognized as legitimate, then these become targets for criticism from students. In recent years African teachers have found themselves in an increasingly difficult position. On the one hand they have been blamed for the high examination failure rates and poor performance in general. On the other they have been accused of being agents of an education system which disadvantages African students. A survey carried out in 1983 reflects the extent to which students were dissatisfied with teachers (see Table 3).

Many adult students may have been affected by their teachers' inadequate transmission of the dominant culture and may have failed their examinations as a result of this. It is hoped that the empirical research

will reflect not only to what extent having qualified teachers was a motivating factor for adult students, but also to what extent they recognized the legitimacy of the culture presented through the education system.

TABLE 3: (25)

IF THERE WERE BOYCOTTS OR DEMONSTRATIONS, WHAT DO YOU THINK WOULD BE THE THREE MAIN THINGS TO CAUSE THEM?
(Average of three answers)

Dissatisfaction with teachers	49 %
Excessive corporal punishment	10 %
General dissatisfaction	9 %
Bad school regulations	8 %
Lack of equipment	5 %
Embittered irresponsible students	5 %
Dissatisfaction with the principal	4 %
High school fees	4 %
Other	4 %
None	2 %

n = 151

The primary function of the classroom situation, which Bourdieu and Passeron describe as the work of schooling, is to reproduce the conditions for the transmission of the dominant culture. Neither the students nor the teachers are aware that the stringent selection process which takes place within the school depends upon the appropriation and accumulation of cultural capital. Successful transmission is measured in terms of the degree to which the culture has been inculcated; is transferable to a number of fields and its exhaustiveness in reproducing the principles of the

dominant culture (26).

The values and norms which define culture are not static, but are modified over time so that at particular points in time certain aspects are emphasized over others. This illustrates one of the ways in which cultural capital can be transformed into a means of social control. For example, during the 1930's and 1940's education for Africans was characterized by the religious and moral training of its learners and the inculcation of values such as "cleanliness, punctuality, honesty, respect and courtesy" (27). Since then the educational provisions for Africans have changed considerably and although the above values continue to be stressed in varying degrees, they have to a large extent been replaced by others. Some of the values stressed by education system today are the belief in the education system as a means towards social advancement and the belief that students have equal chances of success.

The transmission of the dominant culture takes place primarily through the medium of language. The more competently a student can communicate or manipulate words, the greater his/her academic success in subjects which demand a greater competency in language skills. The child learns these skills primarily outside the

realm of school within the family environment. Thus, it follows that a child's capacity to decipher words depends on whether he/she has a richer or poorer vocabulary. The less scholarly a child's language, the less likely he/she is to reach the higher echelons of the education system.

Since the education system selects students on the basis of their linguistic competence, this poses particular problems for the African student. It demands from African students a familiarity with the European culture, yet it fails to transmit the means to decode and appropriate the culture. The familiarity with the dominant culture is transmitted primarily outside the school within the family and peer groups. It is here that the transmission of the European culture through language is at its weakest, since it is here that the students speak mainly an African language which reflects the norms and values of the African culture. In short, the language of communication is not usually the language of schooling.

Although students receive and appropriate the language through the medium of English, many think in the vernacular, and experience difficulty in articulating themselves in English. The students are able to communicate their meaning, but their lack of proficiency

disadvantages them in many ways.

> To these children a second language is a definite handicap and has a permanent negative effect on intellectual development because there's a direct relationship between language competence and formal education. They often think in one language and speak in another with the result that they become mentally uncertain and confused (28).

In order to meet with the minimum requirements for higher levels of education, the adult student must have achieved successful acculturation as regards language. Bourdieu and Passeron have demonstrated that students from middle and working class backgrounds who have reached higher levels of education have been subjected to much more stringent selection in terms of their linguistic competence than students from the more privileged classes. They go on to show that when it comes to assessment less emphasis tends to be placed knowledge and more on the linguistic communication of it. The importance attributed to language skills begins when the student is in primary school (29):

> The influence of linguistic capital, particularly manifest in the first few years of schooling when understanding and use of language are the main points of leverage for the teachers' assessments, never ceases to be felt: style is always taken into account, whether implicitly or explicitly, at every level of the education system and, to a varying extent, in all university careers, even scientific ones.

The student's appropriation of the language depends largely upon the teachers who interpret the syllabus for their students. They play an important role in making an alien European culture (which has shaped the syllabuses and curricula of African education) accessible to students from an African culture. Their success in doing this will be determined by the extent to which their students internalize the dominant culture, which in turn will be reflected by the success these students enjoy in their school careers.

It should be borne in mind that not all teachers are adequately articulate and confident in teaching through the medium of English. In this way the barrier imposed by language can inhibit the effective transmission of the dominant culture. Needless to say, those students who are exposed to the European culture within the home through their contact with the English language by means of television, films, books, newspapers and contact with English speakers, have a much higher chance of being successful at school. Conversely the less contact a speaker has with the dominant culture, the greater his/her difficulty in understanding and communicating in English and the more restricted his/her access to the dominant culture.

The system of examinations which is given such

importance by the curricula is the education system's clearest sanction of cultural and linguistic competence. The dominant culture is given further legitimacy through the examinations (30):

> ... in imposing as worthy of university sanction a definition of knowledge and the way to show it, it provides one of the most effective tools for the enterprise of inculcating the dominant culture and the value of that culture.

If the process of class conservation is to be carried out effectively, then the examination must appear as "the moment of truth" (31). Elimination must seem to take place solely on the basis of educational equity and neutrality. The continued survival of the education system depends on the complicity it wins from students to whom it has granted access to the various echelons of its hierarchy. Only those students who demonstrate the social, cultural and academic requirements it demands will be accepted.

There are a combination of factors and relay factors as to why a student may fail his examinations or eliminate himself from the education system before presenting himself for the examinations and these will not be equally applicable to all students at all levels of their educational careers. In South Africa the drop-out rate from school and the examination failure rate

amongst African students are both very high and contrast strongly with the consistently high pass rate and low drop-out rate amongst white students. Hartshorne reflects the high drop-out figures in the following: of the students enrolled in Sub-Standard A in 1963, only 1.96 % enrolled for standard ten in 1975 (32). Moreover, in the same article Hartshorne has identified a trend which has continued well into the eighties: about half the African school children enrolled have dropped out by the end of standard two, thus leaving school functionally illiterate. In 1975 this affected some 60 % of African pupils (33) and had only dropped by ten per cent a decade later (34).

These figures clearly reflect how selection and elimination may to a large extent depend upon the successful appropriation of the European culture and language and that elimination is encouraged by the "effectiveness of a non-existent pedagogical practice" (35).

> It follows that working class children pay the price of their access to secondary school education by relegation into institutions and school careers which entice them with false pretences of apparent homogeneity only to ensnare them in a truncated educational destiny (36).

It was precisely this understanding of the education system's role in the reproduction of the dominant

culture, that lies at the roots of the counter-cultural movements which have become increasingly prominent since the late 1960's. Perhaps the most important contribution of the black consciousness movement was its challenge to the apparent supremacy of European cultural capital. It aimed at the psychological liberation of Africans from the yoke of European cultural dominance. It aimed to replace the negative conceptions Africans had of themselves (symbolized by the terms "non-whites", "non-Europeans") with "a positive self-awareness: pride in black culture, history and achievements and pride in being black" (37).

One of the most recent challenges to the reproduction of cultural capital through the education system is People's Education. It builds upon the process of psychological liberation begun by the black consciousness movement and aims to create an awareness of how the existing education system has disadvantaged black students. It focuses on three major areas of educational control: the right of blacks to have control over their education; the development of alternative syllabuses illustrating the cultural and historical contribution made by blacks and the right of free educational association (38). In the light of the education system's role of preserving the existing power structures, it is hardly a matter for surprise that the

Department of Education and Training rejected the National Education Crisis Committee's proposal for the introduction of People's Education into schools and took radical steps to prevent it (39). Restrictions of this nature may appear to be effective in short term, but may not halt the transition at grassroots level from passive acceptance of apartheid education to growing awareness of this method of social control.

In South Africa the dominant European culture is preserved because it is more successfully reproduced among Europeans than among Africans. In order to preserve the dominant culture the hidden agenda of the education system is to reproduce the existing social structures. It does this by means of a system of pedagogic relations, which define what is to be taught, to whom and where. The function of the school is to build upon the dominant culture transmitted in the family by ensuring that promotion is dependent on cultural capital. This clearly disadvantages the African student in that the culture he/she is familiar with at home is not the European culture demanded by the school. Furthermore, the transmission of the dominant European culture within the school takes place through the medium of English, which for most African students is a second or third language. If the African student is to be selected to the higher echelons of the education system,

then he/she needs to bridge the gap between the culture and language of the home and the dominant culture and language of the school. Since adult education centres function largely as an extension of the formal education system, the adult student continues to be disadvantaged by the inherent selection process. Therefore, success and failure for the adult student depend upon whether he/she has reached the level of cultural and linguistic competence demanded by the matric examination. It is hoped that empirical study will reflect the difficulties experienced by adult students with regard to the appropriation of the dominant culture and language.

3. EDUCATION AS SOCIAL REPRODUCTION

It has been demonstrated how the education system may be regarded as disadvantaging the African learner on the basis of his linguistic and cultural competence. The education system's role in reproducing the existing power relationships between classes, however, must also be considered in its relation to the economy. This perspective takes the view that in the main the education system for Africans has been developed to provide a continuous source of cheap labour. By adjusting educational provision to the needs of the workplace, the education system reproduces both the manpower needs demanded by the economy as well as the

correct "work ethic, attitudes and willingness to participate" in the system (40). As shifts in power occur in the workplace, parallel shifts take place in the education system by means of reform. The relationship between the workplace and the education system, however, is a complex one involving both contradiction and conflict.

The workings of the education system would become clearer if it were seen in relation to the capitalist system where the distribution of power relationships determines the distribution of economic inequality and personal development. For this reason the relation between capital and schooling may be regarded as neither simple nor static. Changes in the workplace will, therefore, be felt in education:

> Such changes in production - themselves a result of class conflict - determine the subsequent changes in the way schooling is called upon to reproduce the relations of production (41).

It has already been mentioned that since the 1970's the needs of capital have changed and have affected the education system in various ways. The emphasis is now placed on the technological function of education and reform measures stress the creation of equal standards and opportunity in education. In response to the skills shortage of the 1970's the government expanded

technical, vocational and academic facilities for education on a scale unknown before. Chisholm sees the purpose of the expansion as "an attempt to privilege and thereby win over a small number of blacks to the free enterprise system, while at the same time driving a deeper wedge between urban and rural workers, heightening controls over labour and continuing the vicious repression of those who resist" (42). In this way bitterness could be diffused without disturbing the balance of power or addressing the real issues of inequality. In short, the expansion of education facilities can be seen as twofold: on the one hand problems of the skills shortage and unequal education were addressed; on the other ideological control could be maintained over an increasingly militant army of school-leavers and workers (43). The intentions behind the expansions were to produce a motivated, stable workforce committed to the free enterprise system.

Although the demand for skills was an important consideration for the introduction of educational reform, it must also be seen in the light of other factors which affected South Africa in the 1970's. Economically there was growing inflation and an increase in the number of strikes accompanied by a loss in productivity, as well as rising unemployment amongst the unskilled. The collapse of the colonial governments in

Rhodesia and Mozambique, was accompanied by a rise in urban guerilla warfare and large scale revival of African Nationalism which threatened the South African state. The Soweto uprising of 1976 marked the beginning of almost a decade of school unrest making many schools ungovernable.

In short, reform strategies have been aimed at satisfying the needs of the economy. By introducing or proposing reforms which operate according to the selection and training of a few students the education system is continuing its function of producing and reproducing unequal education at the exclusion of the majority of students. This would encourage the selected group to become part of the emerging African middle class, which would according to Davies, " embrace the free enterprise system and work for its preservation" (44) as well as " serve as a counter-revolutionary buffer between continued white domination and black subordination" (45).

The reproductive function of the school has been characteristic of all phases of capitalist development. Bowles and Gintis describe the school system as follows:

> ... an institution which serves to perpetuate the social relations of economic life through which these patterns are set, by facilitating a smooth

integration of youth into the labour force (46).

The position of the education system as a cornerstone of the social network gives legitimacy to the educational inequality it produces by allocating students to distinct positions in the economic hierarchy based upon a pupil's social class; by reinforcing discrimination on the basis of race and sex; by fostering personal development which is compatible with the position of each student and by creating a surplus of skilled labour to put downward pressure on wages (47). Moreover, the certificates with which students leave school are used by employers as a proof of learning. Therefore, the education system plays an important role in the production of the necessary skills which will contribute to the accumulation of capitalist wealth.

The reproductive function of schooling in the supply of cheap labour can be seen clearly in the educational provisions for Africans. Furthermore, the high failure rate in examinations must be considered in the light of inadequate educational provision for African schooling. Whilst the budget allocation for African education may have risen in recent years, it is still hopelessly inadequate to cater for the increased number of pupils attending schools. This has resulted in its effects being little felt. Moreover, in comparison to

educational provision for whites, provision for African pupils is far less. What this means for African pupils is that seven times more money will be spent on a white student than will be spent on them (see Table 4). The inadequate budget allocation for African education has contributed to the shortage of teachers available, many of whom are still under-qualified. In 1984, 63 % of African teachers in "white" areas did not have matric (see Table 5) and there has only been a marginal improvement since. In addition to this, school facilities are limited: classrooms in general offer all but the barest necessities; there is a lack of textbooks, libraries, science equipment, laboratories and other educational aids which are taken for granted in most white schools. School enrollments have increased, but facilities have not increased sufficiently to cope with the demand. As a result classrooms are overcrowded with fifty to sixty children in a primary school class not being uncommon (48).

TABLE 4: (49)

PER CAPITA EXPENDITURE ON PUPILS OF ALL RACE GROUPS (INCLUDING CAPITAL EXPENDITURE)

	WHITES	COLOUREDS	INDIANS	AFRICANS
1974/75	R 605	R 125,23	R 170,94	R 39,53
1975/76	R 644	R 139,62	R 189,53	R 41,80
1976/77	R 654	R 157,59	R 219,96	R 48,55
1977/78	R 551	R 185,16	R 236,13	R 54,08
1978/79	R 724	R 225,54	R 357,15	R 71,28
1979/80	R 1 169	R 234,00	R 389,66	R 91,29
1980/81	R 1 021	R 286,08	unavailable	R 176,20
1981/82	R 1 221	R 418,84	R 798,00	R 165,23
1982/83*	R 1 385	R 593,37	R 871,87	R 192,34

* Estimate

TABLE 5: (50)

TEACHERS WHO DID NOT HAVE MATRIC (EXCLUDING BOPHUTHATSWANA, VENDA, CISKEI AND TRANSKEI) IN 1985

	PRIMARY	SECONDARY	TOTAL	%
UNQUALIFIED TEACHERS WITH STD. 8 OR LOWER	5 457	24	5 481	12,1 %
QUALIFIED WITH STD.6	3 350	19	3 369	7,4 %
QUALIFIED WITH STD.8	18 828	706	19 534	43,1 %
TOTAL TEACHERS			28 384	69,6 %

A study conducted by Monica Bot revealed that a major problem with having overcrowded classrooms was that teachers "are unable to get to know the names or monitor the individual progress of most of their

students, and seldom have time to find out why any particular student is unable to do his/her homework or what personal problems may be affecting his/her studies" (51). The ruling by the Department of Education and Training introduced in 1981 on age restrictions, alleviates the problem of overcrowding to some extent, but does nothing to address major causes of overcrowding. In the light of the inadequate provisions of schooling, it is hardly surprising that the many schoolchildren leave school illiterate. In 1985, for example, around 50 % of African schoolchildren left school at the end of standard two, in other words, functionally illiterate (52). The school's role in the provision of cheap, unskilled labour is clear.

It would seem that in the context of educational provision for Africans that those who survive the system to reach matric are in a sense the "lucky ones". However, the matric examinations themselves are subject to elements of control, not only because the structure of the whole education system has disadvantaged African students, but because pass/fail rates are dubious indicators of academic achievement. Although there are now more Africans writing and passing their examinations, the overall proportion of students passing is declining. This,in addition to the decreasing numbers of learners achieving matriculation exemption (the

standard required for admission to university,) is a serious cause for concern amongst educationists. The drop in the pass rates has in part been attributed to the increase in the student population. In 1980 the number of students writing their Senior Certificate examination doubled from the previous year (from 14 574 in 1979 to 29 973 in 1980). This came about because of the removal of primary school standard six year, reducing the period of African education from 13 to 12 years. This meant that standards five and six primary school pupils were joined together and would have reached standard ten in 1980 (53).

The matric examination has been criticized for being an element of control, because by determining pass/fail ratios the education system has greater control over the positioning of Africans in the job market. In a study of African matric results between 1955 and 1983, Mathonsi offers the theory that African matric results have been "manipulated in order to artificially control the output of African matriculants" (54). He notes that although African students have the same teachers and textbooks every year, the pass/fail rate during the above period was very irregular, compared to the pass/fail rates amongst white candidates, which were very stable. For example, in 1976 when South Africa witnessed the most violent resistance amongst African pupils, resulting in

a serious disruption of schooling the pass rate amongst African pupils rose from 63 % in 1975 to 83,4 %. Schindler throws some light on the matter (55):

> According to Mr Job Schoeman, chief public relations officer for the department, the reason for this sudden increase in the overall pass rate was that only the most determined pupils wrote the exam. At the same time some teachers and educationists suggested that the exam papers had been marked more leniently than previously so as to reward those pupils who braved boycotts to write the exams.

Mathonsi's research also reveals that in times of economic recession the matric pass rate declined, whereas during times of economic boom, when there would be more jobs available, the pass rate increased. In this way a situation of supply and demand was created between the education system and the workplace.

> So matriculation can be understood to be regulating the flow of cheap labour into the capitalist employment market, whilst simultaneously controlling and containing those whom the capitalist mode of production has no prospect of absorbing (56).

These are some of the many ways in which the education system is fulfilling its role of supplying the needs of capital. The provision for schooling for Africans explains why the adult student may not have succeeded at school first time around, but raises further questions to his/her ability to succeed second time around.

In addition to satisfying the manpower needs of capital, the education system also plays an important hegemonic role, which endows its students with a particular view of the world which mystifies existing economic power structures. Giroux defines hegemony as follows:

> ... a form of ideological control in which dominant beliefs, values and social practices are produced and distributed through a whole range of institutions such as schools, the family, mass media and trade unions. [... It] refers not only to those insoluble meanings and ideas that the dominant class imposes on others, but also to those lived experiences that make up the rhythm and texture of daily life (57).

The creation of the right attitudes to uphold the capitalist system does not take place consciously on the part of educators and administrators, but through " a close correspondence between the social relations which govern close interaction in the workplace and the social relations of the education system " (58). The replacing of African night schools with adult education centres run by Bantu Education and later the Department of Education and Training can be regarded as a further means of hegemonic control.

In reproducing skills along class and race lines schooling also reproduces the inequalities. Carnoy writes that the hegemonic role of the education system

is to socialize its members into a class structured and unequal production system; to inculcate them with an ideology; to define knowledge in various ways (the prescribed history textbooks for African students are a good example of this, as they present South African history almost entirely from the view of the white man); to convince students that success and failure are every man's responsibility (59). This is characterized by the following quotation from the 1984 DET Annual Report:

> Attitude is the hidden variable in any community activity. This is the factor which will determine the success or failure of the adult education programme (60).

In this way students are intended to believe that they live in a democracy and that the education system is a just and fair one. By working hard and getting to the highest level of education possible, students are encouraged to believe that social mobility through the education system is possible for all.

The hegemonic function of the education system for Africans is to be able to continue reproducing social relations of inequality in a "docile" form (61) so that it would appear part of the natural order of things. In this way it is hoped that conflict could be avoided. Racism, and hence separate development, is an important feature of this function. Apartheid ideology emphasizes

the differences of race, rather than the similarities, and the superiority of the white race over the others. The empirical research into why adults have returned to formal education to study for their matric may reveal the extent of hegemonic control.

In a general way the schooling system serves the interests of profit and stability in the workplace. However, neither the school nor the economy meet each others needs exactly and contradictions and conflict do occur, allowing room for the development of conscientization and attitudes which do not correspond with the above. According to Bowles and Gintis, this occurs when "the imperatives of profit pull the school system in opposite directions "and when forces from outside the school system "continually impinge on its operations" (62). Bowles and Gintis go on to suggest that when contradictions do arise they are not very successful in altering the existing shape of education (63). Unless the structure of the economy itself can be changed, contradictions in the educational arena will only have a marginal impact. Whilst this may be true, Carnoy goes on to suggest that the mediating role of the school should not be under-estimated and that struggle in the educational domain can contribute to the process of change. As was mentioned earlier since 1976 counter-hegemonic movements have been making an important

contribution to the struggle for change. They have demonstrated that the hegemonic function of the school can never be "totally overpowering" (64).

It is clear how hegemony acts as a means of controlling people to ensure the continued reproduction of labour in a stable form. However, when hegemonic reason cannot control conflict situations, then more repressive measures of control are used. In recent years these have included: army presence on school campuses; detention of student leaders without trial; banning of student organizations and protest marches.

It has been suggested here that the education system is not an autonomous institution, but rather that it satisfies the needs of the workplace. Changes in the economy influence changes in the education system. As more skilled and professional workers have been required, the education has adapted to this demand. However, educational reform must not detract from one of the primary functions of the education system as the largest supplier of unskilled labour and producer of the correct attitudes and work ethos. It should be borne in mind that what has been described here is a general process in which conflict and contradiction do occur. The adult student who returns to an adult education centre to complete his/her secondary education continues

to be subject to the same laws of hegemonic control. Moreover, if the matric examination cannot be relied upon as a true indicator of academic achievement and potential, this raises very serious concerns for the adult student and his aspirations.

4. SUMMARY

The perspectives presented offer diverse views on the functions of the education system and how these may affect the adult student in his/her matric studies. It is hoped that these will provide both a contextual richness and an understanding of the social and economic factors which may have contributed to the perceptions of the adult students detailed in Part B.

It will be recalled that the first perspective suggests that education was a means towards social advancement. Two conditions were necessary for this to take place, namely that the growth and increasingly technological nature of industry demanded greater numbers of skilled and professional workers, and that the inability of the middle classes to reproduce their numbers necessitated these positions to be filled from below. Given these conditions, the improved and expanded facilities for education can influence the degree and rate of social advancement. These conditions have been present in South

Africa since the 1970's, when the white population groups's inability to satisfy the shortage of skilled labour necessitated these positions to be filled from below. This placed pressure on the state to lift restrictions on African labour and expand technical and educational facilities to cope with the increased demand. The resultant increase in technical and educational provision, including a growth in adult education centres may, therefore, have contributed to level of social advancement amongst Africans. It is believed that in returning to complete their secondary education adult students regard this as means of making themselves more employable and ultimately improving their present social position.

The point of departure for the second perspective was that the education system, and examinations in particular, played an important role in reproducing and, therefore, preserving the culture and language of the dominant social group. Selection to and elimination from the education system depended on the level of articulation and appropriation of the dominant culture. It was suggested that this disadvantaged African students throughout their educational careers, since the culture of the school reflected the language, norms and values of the European culture. In this way it was alien to the African student whose contact with the dominant

culture was limited mainly to classroom interaction. The delayed introduction of English as a medium of communication in African schools fragmented the transmission of the dominant European culture and further disadvantaged the African student. In one respect the African students who have enrolled to complete their matric have survived the education system by being selected as far as standard ten, yet their continued selection depends upon the extent to which they have appropriated the level of cultural and linguistic competence demanded by the matric examination.

The third perspective examined the perceived relationship between the education system and the workplace and how this may influence the provisions for African education. On the one hand the education system exercised hegemonic control over its students by teaching the attitudes and ethos demanded by the workplace. On the other hand the continuous supply of cheap labour was secured as a result of inadequate financial provision for African education. It was further suggested that recent expansion of educational and technical facilities was a means to win over a small group of privileged learners to the free enterprise system and thereby deflect inquiry into the gross inadequacies of educational provision for Africans.

The adult student who elects to complete his secondary education not only carries with him the baggage of a deficient education system, but continues to be subject to its hegemonic control.

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59. Martin Carnoy, "Education, Economy and the State" in Cultural and Economic Reproduction in Education: Essays on Class, Ideology and the State, ed. Michael W. Apple (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1982), p.117.

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62. Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis, Schooling in Capitalist America (New York: Harper and Row, 1976), p.12.

63. Ibid. p.240.

64. Henri Giroux, "Beyond the Correspondence Theory: Notes on the Dynamics of Educational Reproduction and Transformation" in Curriculum Inquiry 10:3 (1980), p.232.

PART B:

ADULTS STUDYING FOR MATRIC : THE LEARNER PERSPECTIVE

INTRODUCTION

Part B intends to look at some of the issues raised in Part A but from the perspective of the adult student. In order to understand the importance of education and study for the African adult student, an investigation was conducted at St Anthony's Adult Education Centre on the East Rand (1). Its aims were to find out why adults had enrolled for evening classes to complete their matric and what they perceived this would enable them to do or be. Since the research was interested in the perceptions of the adult student, rather than testing performance levels, the research method chosen was designed to give adult students as much opportunity to express their ideas as possible. The interview data was, therefore, made up of interviews, a questionnaire and background information on centre activities and student enrollments, which were supplied by the principal of the Adult Education section of St Anthony's. The questionnaire and interview content were grouped around five main questions: who were the students? Why were they unable to complete their formal schooling? Why had they returned to complete their matric? What did the

adult students perceive their matric would enable them to do? What obstacles did adult students have to cope with in order to pursue their studies? It should be borne in mind that by limiting the empirical study to one adult education centre and one group of learners its scope is limited. The data gathered may not be applicable to all adult education centres at all times. This would necessitate a broader study. However, the scale of the research should not be allowed to interfere with or detract from the merit of the contributions made by the respondents who took part in the survey.

In order to understand more about the kind of student who opted to pursue his studies at an adult education centre, question one was designed to build up a learner profile of the students. The second question was designed to find out why students had been eliminated or had eliminated themselves from formal schooling. The third question intended to find out why students wanted their matric and what they intended to do with it. Question four intended to gain insight into the meaning and importance of matric to adult students, by gauging their feelings about others who had matric and how they thought others would see them once they had their matric. The final question dealt with the difficulties that students had to cope with whilst studying. In the final section of this study the findings of the

empirical study will be mapped against some of the theories about adult education raised in Part A in order to see what kind of second chance matric offers the adult student.

1. THE METHOD OF DATA GATHERING

The purpose of the research was explained to the principal of St Anthony's and permission was given. The principal then requested staff to give me permission to address students and hand out the questionnaire during class time. The questionnaire was administered to all matric subject classes over a period of two weeks. It was explained to students that I was particularly interested in their responses as to why they had chosen to return to formal adult education to complete their matric and that their responses would form a crucial part of this study. Students were assured that their questionnaire responses would be treated confidentially and that completion was entirely voluntary. This method of data gathering was advantageous in that it could be completed fairly quickly and there would be no difficulties in returning the questionnaire to me. Furthermore, it was assumed that there might be a fairly low response to the questionnaire if students took it home, because of their lack of time and because the questionnaire would not feature on their list of

priorities. On the other hand, this method of information gathering could have placed unfair pressure on students to respond even if they did not wish to and deprived them of valuable lesson time. There were 204 respondents to the questionnaire. Two students did not wish to complete the questionnaire.

Due to sensitivity about loss of lesson time, the questionnaire was kept to less than three pages (Appendix C).It was made up of fixed and free response questions designed with two aims in mind: firstly to gather quantitative information about the adult students, such as age, sex, occupation and reasons for leaving school. In this way it was hoped to establish general patterns about who the adult student was. The open-ended questions were designed to gather information about student perceptions with regard to why they wanted to pursue particular careers; how they thought employers felt about matriculants; how they regarded matriculants. By giving students the opportunity to respond to questions in any way they wished, it was hoped to avoid influencing the responses. To ensure that respondents understood the meaning of particular terms, it became necessary during the course of administering the questionnaire to explain the distinction between "unemployed and "at home" in question 3a, and "job" and "profession" in question 4d

and 5d (these terms will be discussed in more detail in the relevant sections).

Students were asked in the questionnaire to indicate whether they would be prepared to attend an interview to discuss their responses in more detail. Those who were prepared to come indicated their name and the time and day it would be convenient for them to attend an interview. The purpose in choosing this method of data gathering was dictated by a question of time. By addressing students in class, they were already familiar with me and what I was doing and, therefore, I did not have to encroach any further on their precious study time. Moreover, outside the classroom it was difficult to distinguish standard ten students from other students. However, whilst saving time on the one hand, this method may have biased the data precisely in its reliance upon students who attended class and were committed to their studies. It would have given a more balanced view of formal adult education, had there been time to interview adults who had eliminated themselves from formal adult education or who saw no value in it.

175 respondents volunteered to be interviewed. Due to the vast number, as well as the problem of not seeing students on a regular basis and fear of extending interviews into the examination period when students

would only attend the centre to write their examinations, it was decided to select a cross-section of people from the responses given in the questionnaire. In the selection of informants I wanted to include as many different view-points on the question of education and perceptions about matric. I also wanted to represent different age groups, sexes and social positions. Finally, thirty people were selected for interview, of which I expected and hoped that at least twenty would arrive. I had informed students whilst administering the questionnaire that I would post the names of those invited for interview on the staircase walls of the building as well as on my office door. The interviews were to take place between 5.30 and 7.00 p.m. in an unused, but central office which was heated and well lit. In addition to this, I wrote each informant a brief note informing him/her when and where to meet me. By maintaining contact in this way, I wanted to ensure that as many informants as possible would agree to be interviewed, particularly since the interviews were to take place over a three week period and two weeks after the completion of the questionnaire. Twenty of the original thirty students arrived for the interviews.

In structuring the interviews, Patton's "General Interview Guide Approach" was followed (2). This seemed the most effective means of gathering information in the

limited time available. Most informants were nervous and guarded at the beginning of the interview, so that after explaining the purpose of the interview there was usually a short general discussion on topics that the informants would be familiar with in order to help create a relaxed atmosphere in which informants would feel at ease. Each of the five questions areas were dealt with during the interviews, but not necessarily in the same order or detail as each informant stressed different ideas and revealed different experiences. Questions were worded in the context of each interview and in accordance with the language ability of the respondent. Informants responded differently to each question, whilst some gave very detailed answers to some questions, others gave short answers; whilst some respondents were very confident, others were more reluctant. By wording questions spontaneously on the subject under discussion, the interviews remained informal and yet to the point. The interviews lasted between thirty and forty minutes and took place before lessons, so that students would not miss classes or incur difficulties with transport arrangements. Ideally, I should have liked to have approached informants with the interview data after compilation and given them the option of deleting what they no longer wished to offer as information and discussed some of the perceptions about their studies in groups. I hold with

Rob Walker's view that people own the facts in their lives and, therefore, should have control over them (3). However, there were difficulties in doing this, because respondents could not be contacted easily once they left the centre; respondents attended the centre at different times and on different days; the examinations were less than two months away and respondents were under great pressure already. Given the time constraints, however, I attempted to adhere to Walker's code by giving informants the option of withdrawing any statement made during the interview - had there been a request to do this, the data would have been erased from the tape recorder there and then. Moreover, in order to protect the names of the students supplying the data, the names given here are fictitious. A tape recorder was used during the interviews in order to record accurately what was said, without disrupting the conversational style of the interview. Only two respondents objected to the use of the tape recorder on the grounds that it made them nervous. Their responses have been paraphrased rather than quoted as with other respondents. In some cases it has become necessary to give a brief explanation of words and phrases used by respondents. These appear in square brackets.

The relationship between the two methods of data gathering was as follows: the questionnaire addressed

each of the five questions briefly in order to gain a broad perspective. The purpose of the interviews was to discuss the issues arising from the questionnaire in more detail. The data presented will be grouped according to the five major question areas. The general trends arising from the questionnaire will be discussed first followed by appropriate comments from the interviews. In this way it is hoped to represent the widest range of responses to the questions (where this pattern is not adhered to, an explanation will be given at the appropriate place). The questionnaire/interview responses will be preceded by a brief comment on the Centre and its general activities. The questionnaire responses are tabulated at the end of Part B. In order to establish possible trends and opinions the responses to the questionnaire were categorized according to the following age groups: 18-25, 26-30, 31-35, 36-40, 41-45, 46-50.

The questionnaire and interview method of data gathering are not without their inherent problems. They involve selection at every point, beginning with the selection and phrasing of questions. Although care had been taken to avoid overly guiding the responses, whilst at the same time gaining a response as efficiently and quickly as possible, in retrospect this was not always the case. The phrasing of some of the questions may have

unwittingly guided the respondent into giving the expected response. The wording of the questionnaire was intended to be as simple and concise as possible, yet in some cases the questions were misunderstood or misread rendering the answers invalid. Also, the questionnaire set out to give respondents maximum opportunity to express and justify their views, yet few students chose to answer these types of questions comprehensively. It was decided to omit the analysis of questions 6b, c, d of the questionnaire regarding present employment because although these responses contributed to the reasons why respondents wanted to change their present employment, the responses contributed little to the perceptions about matric. In addition to this, the conditions under which the questionnaire was conducted as well as the classrooms where it was conducted may have biased the responses and encouraged respondents to give the kinds of responses they thought I wanted to hear.

The main difficulties which arose from the interviews (and which it later became clear must have influenced the willingness to respond to some of the questions in the questionnaire) was the problem of language. As the respondents were not first language English speakers, this affected students both in their understanding of the questions asked and in their ability to express what

they wanted to say. Also, the responses given may not have been exactly what the respondents wanted to say, e.g. a common response to the questionnaire was that adults were studying for matric in order to have a "better life", which could refer to a number of things. The interview method allowed one to probe such responses so that the intended meaning became clearer. However, when during the interview it was perceived that a question had been misunderstood, the question would be rephrased and returned to later on during the interview. When students had difficulty in expressing themselves, help was given depending on the English fluency of the speaker and the topic under discussion. In the cases where this occurred, the ambience of the interview situation was preserved at the expense of the information. It would have been interesting to see how and if the responses had differed if they had been conducted in an African language. Another consideration which may have biased the interviews was that of learner agendas - why did the adult learner want to share his views with me. On one occasion an informant had agreed to the interview on the pretext of obtaining career guidance - for this a subsequent appointment was made. However, most of the respondents were more than willing to share their experiences with me and for this I am deeply grateful. Additional difficulties arose when interview times had been arranged and students did not

honour them. No follow up was made in this case, because it was felt that students had been adequately informed of the time, place and date of the interview. The decision to honour the interview lay with them. On other occasions students arrived at the wrong time or day whilst other interviews were in progress. In these cases alternative interview times were set up, which were not always honoured and resulted in the loss of potentially good interviews.

2. ST. ANTHONY'S ADULT EDUCATION CENTRE

The survey took place at St. Anthony's on the East Rand. The centre functions as a Department of Education Training registered adult education centre for over a thousand adult part-time students who attend classes ranging from literacy to standard ten. Appendix D reflects the enrollment figures at the centre in recent years. The centre also offers a full-time standard ten course to 550 students on a daily basis. In addition to this, it is a registered examination centre and can cater for up to two thousand entrants per session. The premises are also used by VISTA, UNISA, Star School, PROTEC as well as a variety of smaller organizations. Being located in a so-called "Coloured" area, the centre also acts as community centre for the residents of Reiger Park and offers sports' facilities, a library,

community halls and a church. The centre is run under the auspices of the Roman Catholic Church and is unique in the facilities it offers to adult students as well as in the numbers it can cater for.

However, when the questionnaire respondents were asked how they had heard about the centre and why they had chosen to attend this centre rather than the adult education centres run by the Department of Education and Training in the surrounding townships, the responses fell into three broad categories: matric was a means to access university or college; the centre had a good reputation for producing consistently high examination results and it had good teachers (see Tables 6 and 7). 26 per cent of respondents were keen to come to the centre because they wanted to continue with their studies at college or university. This category of answers reflected a general urgency to obtain matric and a weariness with studying. The following categories, however, explain, why respondents chose this centre as opposed to another. 23 per cent of respondents came to the centre because it had a high pass rate in examinations and because they felt that it offered a high standard of education (The examination pass rate at St. Anthony's is generally higher than the national average reflected in the introduction). They felt that this centre would offer the them the highest return on

their investment in terms of time, money and effort. 22 per cent of respondents came to the centre because they felt that it had good teachers, that is, they were qualified and they attended classes regularly (most of the teachers at the centre are white and perhaps this influenced their perceptions). The remainder of the students came to the centre for a variety of reasons. For some the geographical location was convenient being within relatively easy reach of work and home (most of the respondents live in the townships surrounding the centre and travel to classes by means of an intricate taxi network). The position of St Anthony's outside the townships was important for some respondents because they would be "undisturbed by the boycotts". Other respondents came to the centre because it offered them ideal study conditions such as libraries and an atmosphere conducive to learning; fees were low and there was a wide choice of subjects.

Respondents revealed that the choice of centre was an important consideration when embarking upon a course of study. For students who were serious about their studies the centre had to be able to offer them a stable learning environment, which would not be influenced by external factors. It also had to have good teachers who were qualified and dedicated. The interview responses revealed the following:

Zacharia
In as far as that it concerned, I know each and every structure is provided for by the state. So we must use these government structures to acquire the necessary understanding of the nonsense we are being taught.

George
Maybe I can be included in the good results they got. And the second thing is the educational atmosphere is very conducive here. I think that the only problem with schools in the townships is that teachers are not qualified.

Mathilda
They got that encouragement here, the teachers, even when you look at them, they are so worried that you pass.

3. WHO ARE THE ADULT STUDENTS?

In order to gain a more detailed understanding about who the adult students were, this section set out to build a learner profile based on the age, sex and employment data gathered from the questionnaires. In addition to this, information was gathered regarding the number of subjects that respondents had written and enrolled for, as well as the level of schooling attained by the respondents compared to the level of schooling attained by their parents. The questionnaire data revealed that almost two thirds of the students (60 %) were women. The ages of the respondents ranged from 18 to 50 years. However, the majority of the respondents (61 %) were aged under 25 years and the number of the respondents

decreased as age increased. For example, only two respondents fell into the 46-50 age group (see Table 8).

The age of the respondents in relation to employment revealed that all the respondents over thirty years of age were employed. This figure contrasts with that of respondents under 25 years, where only 33 per cent were engaged in full time employment, and 48 per cent were either unemployed or at home (the distinction being that "unemployed" implies that students were looking for work). The fact that the latter group were not contributing to the family income, put additional pressure on them to complete their matric (see Table 8).

Half the respondents indicated that this was the first year that they were writing matric (see Table 9). It must be remembered, however, that many of the respondents particularly in the under 25 age group will have completed the standard ten course work but not written the examinations due to boycotts and school closures. 7 respondents (all under 25) were re-writing all six subjects. 17 per cent of the respondents were half way towards completion and had passed three subjects. Most of the respondents intended to complete their matric studies within a time span of two to three years, if they had enrolled for three subjects (as most respondents had done). This meant that the respondents

were expected to attend classes at the centre on two to three evenings a week (see Tables 10 and 11). This placed a tremendous strain upon those engaged in full-time occupations with families to look after.

More than half the respondents had left school after completing standard nine. A quarter had completed their standard ten year but may not have written the examinations. The remaining respondents had left school after completing standard eight. This meant that all the respondents had left school sufficiently well equipped to complete their matric within a relatively short period of time (see Table 12). In comparing the level of education reached by respondents to that reached by their parents, the data revealed the following: 19 per cent of the parents had received no schooling at all. Under 5 per cent of parents had matric. However, most of the parents had achieved standard six level of education. In most cases the level of education of the parents was lower than that of their children, which perhaps accounts for the reason why they form the single biggest group to encourage their children most with their studies (see section 5). Most of the respondents also said that they would encourage their own children to go beyond matric (see Table 13).

In short, the profile of the questionnaire respondents revealed that most of the respondents were under 25 years old. Of this group almost half were unemployed, whereas most of the respondents over 25 were employed. For half the respondents, this was the first year that they were writing matric (this number includes those who had completed the standard ten course work, but who were prevented from writing their examinations due to school closures and boycotts). Also, most of the respondents had obtained a higher level of schooling compared with that of their parents.

4. REASONS FOR LEAVING SCHOOL

When asked why respondents had left formal schooling the reasons given fell into three broad categories. Almost half the respondents said that they had had to leave school because their parents could no longer afford to support them with their studies. The second most common reason given why students did not complete their studies (14 per cent) was due to boycotts and the ruling on age restrictions which affected students mainly after 1980 and, therefore, affected the respondents aged under 25 years the most. Pregnancy was the third most common reason given for leaving school (11 per cent) and affected almost one in four females below the age of thirty (see Table 14).

Financial difficulties were one of the main reasons why respondents left school before completing their matric. In some cases respondents had been asked to leave to enable brothers or sisters to go to school or had had to leave if the breadwinner of the family had lost his/her job or was too old too work, placing the onus on them to find work. This was borne out by the following interview extracts:

> Patrick
> 1984, I was doing standard nine, so I had to leave school because of the riots in our location. So I started going to school back in 1985. Unfortunately the riots started again, so I had to look for work, otherwise my parents could not afford feeding me - a person who does not want to work or go to school.

> Zamekile
> I had no one to support me at that time, so I had to leave school and go and support the family with food and school. I supported about fifteen people.

After leaving school, finding work was not always easy:

> Joseph
> When I leave school I tried looking for work, but there was only regrets, only regrets. At times I applied, at times I went to the extent of going to the factory gates. The answer they was giving was the answer that was general to me.

School boycotts have been characteristic of schooling particularly since the Soweto uprising of 1976. However, in the 1980's when a conflict situation has arisen, the

Department of Education and Training has taken measures to close down schools, resulting in a total collapse of education for African students. This fact perhaps accounts for why the second most common reason respondents gave for leaving school was due to school boycotts, and the resulting enforcement of the ruling on age restriction and closure of schools. Some of the respondents had attempted to study for the examinations at home but had failed, whilst others did not write. The interview extracts reveal the following:

Dorah

> Even if you don't agree, there's nothing that you could do, because if you go to school, you are going to be thrashed, because they'll wait somewhere [...] I did not have time to study. We did not finish our syllabus. I did not study at home, I don't know why. I started studying very late [...] The boycotts were about age limits and Student Representative Councils, if I remember well. SRC was a good idea in some cases because sometimes students had some grievances but couldn't forward them. Corporal punishment was the first one - they hit us with a stick on our hand - boys and girls as well.
>
> We couldn't go back in 1983, even if we wanted to because it was the year of the age limit. Yes, I wanted to go back. There is nothing we can do. The principal told us that was age of 21 and I was 21.

Some of the respondents had been active as student leaders and campaigning for a revision of the education system. Some were held in detention and unable to complete their schooling.

Zacharia

We were the first ones to be detained immediately after '85. Actually we had people who were collaborating with the system within COSAS [Congress of South African Students]. I was detained under Section 15. Things were bad! [...] But when they took me they told my mother we are taking me for questioning and we bring him in two days' time. At first my parents said, " No, he'll come back " (they didn't know my activities by then, you see).

For other respondents the struggle for a new political dispensation which would end apartheid was secondary to education.

Patrick

At my school we were not involved in the boycotts, some of the schools in our townships they wanted us not to write our final examinations. But when I looked at the chance I had of furthering my studies at university level, I became radical to them because I didn't want to comply with their regulations to follow the struggle [...] Well firstly I was not free to move about at the township because, well I can say they have stamped us, so they knew us exactly, who this person is, where is he going to school, so I think I was partly not accepted by the community [...] Now the people who were telling everybody to boycott they are here [at St Anthony's], so I think they regret it.

Unplanned pregnancies were a third reason for female students to leave school. The reasons for this were that once pregnant it was embarrassing and unsightly to attend classes in school uniform. Furthermore, the women were often prevented from returning to school to complete their studies, because of pressures to find work and help support the family. In some cases the

fathers reneged on their commitment to support the child, placing an even greater burden on the mother.

Elizabeth

> I couldn't stand it. It was awful. Though I know I would have to leave school, because she told me [the stepmother], " After this you better forget about school." Then after the baby there was no school. I couldn't continue schooling in '77/'78. The following years I had to go and work, then I study privately to finish up my standard eight. I used to cry each and every morning when I had to work. I have to work, because I had to pay my studies. I have a responsibility at home, because I am no longer schooling. They wants their money, so I have to work.

Agnes

> I go to school in Transkei till standard eight in '83. Now I stay at home '84 and '85. You see, there you can't go to school when you are pregnant and now I stay at home. The pregnancy was an accident, but now I am careful [...] I stayed with my older sister. My mother wanted to kill me and now I run away to stay with my grandfather. Yes she say, now I already waste the money, now I was in boarding school and it was a lot of money.

The reasons given why respondents had had or had chosen to leave formal schooling may give an insight as to why they were so motivated to complete their secondary education. It is interesting that most of the respondents were prevented from completing their education due to factors beyond their immediate control, rather than due to a voluntary desire to leave school. Most of the respondents were forced to leave school because their parents could no longer afford to support them. The second most common reason for respondents to

leave school was due to the school boycotts and the resulting school closures and enforcement of the restriction on the maximum age limit of 21 years. Opinions regarding the disruption of schooling as a result of the school boycotts were varied: whilst some respondents were actively against school boycotts on the grounds that it had prevented students from completing their studies, others had played an active role in the protest movement and were prepared to sacrifice their Department of Education and Training education for the "struggle". Thirdly, almost one in four females under the age of thirty was forced to leave school due to an unplanned pregnancy. Prior to leaving full-time schooling all the respondents had intended to complete their secondary schooling.

5. WHAT MOTIVATED STUDENTS TO RESUME THEIR STUDIES?

It has already been suggested that most of the respondents intended to complete their matric studies prior to leaving formal schooling. However, their motivation to complete their studies had been tempered by their experiences since leaving school. In most cases their decision to return to evening classes was because they had first hand experience of how those who had not completed their secondary education often found themselves in underpaid occupations. They did not want

the same thing to happen to them and saw education as a means of social and economic advancement. Other respondents saw higher levels of education as a means of empowering students, so that they would be in a position to work towards dismantling the education system. Although they felt that the education system was a means of social control and, therefore, had no faith in it, they needed their matric to gain entrance to university where they felt they could campaign for educational reform more effectively.

This section corresponds to the questionnaire question 'When did you decide that you wanted matric?' However, since the question was ambiguously worded and could have misled respondents, only some of the responses from the interviewees will be presented.

Patrick

> Yes, but that [Working and being paid only R 12 a day] made me to be a little bit wise and know how other people in the factory are being treated. Yes, that really encouraged me to study hard and get enough education which I can get in life.

Dorah

> I want to do something in the future. I want a profession. I've had enough of looking for a job and I don't want it to happen again in the future.

George

> The most important thing is that blacks are underprivileged people, so in order to catch up

with the standard of living they need to be educated. I mean, some of us are poor, so we don't have things which make our standard of living to be high. We are forced to be poor because of the situation in our country here.

Zacharia

Actually I'm doing this to be in a position to criticize the system, because I wonder if you heard when they tell us of Nelson Mandela. You see, Mandela has got the necessary education - he is a lawyer. That is why he is in a position to criticize. And then with the right type of education, I will try as much as possible to hit back because I will have made a research out of that. [...] Matric is like an ass, a donkey, you see, once you have got a matric certificate you ride into B.Sc, B.Comm etc.

Christina

[a teacher with standard eight] What motivated her to resume her studies was that she felt inferior in the presence of her colleagues, most of whom had matric. When the salary cheques were handed out, she hid hers away, because she was embarrassed lest anyone should find out how little she was earning. She intends to study for her matric so that she will qualify for a higher salary. Then, she will not feel embarrassed about being a teacher.

Helen

Helen's decision to resume her studies was motivated by the fact that she did not want to "end up like her mother". She left school before completing her standard nine in order to assist her ageing mother after the death of her father, but was unable to find a job, since all the positions she applied for required matric. Her mother worked as a domestic cleaning flats and earned R 5 per day. Of the R 120 a month she earned she had to pay R 80 for rent. Helen did not have any luck in finding a full-time position, but supplements the family income by selling clothes and sweets on a part-time basis.

As has already been mentioned most respondents to the

questionnaire indicated that it was their parents or partners who encouraged them to study (see Table 15). As the age of the respondents increased parental encouragement was replaced by encouragement from husbands or wives. It is also significant that very little encouragement came from friends, although having friends who had matric was a clearly a motivating factor. Less that 1 per cent of respondents were encouraged by their employers. This is interesting particularly in the light of respondents' perceptions about their employers' attitudes towards matric. The encouragement and willingness to sacrifice is reflected in the following:

Patrick

I think my parents are doing everything in their power to help me get the education I want. My mother has got matric, she's a typist. My father is a clerk, he dropped out in J.C. I think he regrets it now because every time he encourages me to study, he talks about the past.

Faith

Oh, my mother she's going to be very happy. She do sacrifice that I must go to school. She will do the cooking, she will look after the son. She want to see me really having a profession. I think that if she die knowing I will have my profession, she will rest.

Cindy

[My husband] He motivate me a lot. Even if I don't want to study he tell me, " You must study, you must study. What's your problem?" In fact I want to buy him a car, if things go well. I owe him a lot. I must do something to appreciate what he has done for me.

Half the respondents from every group said that most of their friends had matric. Only two per cent of the total respondents said that none of their friends had matric. From this it can be seen that most of the respondents associated with people who already had matric. This would serve to encourage them further (see Table 16).

> Elizabeth
> Most of them [have matric]. Those people I was at school with - some of them are teachers, some of them are nurses now. That's what makes me angry. I can do it! Since I was at school all my symbols were first class. So that's why I'm so frustrated ...

Much of the emphasis upon matric as the first step towards a profession or better job stems from the social environment of the respondents. The views of parents, friends and partners coupled with their own experiences have to a large extent shaped the views of the respondents towards matric. The relative scarcity of matric exemption amongst African learners sets a precedence for its attainment. The fact that the friends of the respondents had matric was an additional motivation.

Since it was believed prior to this study that respondents were not studying for matric for altruistic reasons alone, this section also examines what students intended to do with their matric once they had completed

it. 37 per cent of the respondents felt that having matric would guarantee them a better and more secure job, earning more money, with better chances of promotion. They implied that if they did not have matric, they would not find a job. 29 per cent of respondents said that they needed matric in order to pursue their studies at university, college or technikon. 24 per cent of respondents said that having matric would mean having a better quality of life. It would be a means towards improving their standard of living. However, they did not specify how they believed that matric would help them achieve this. The last group (9 %) were studying for matric because they felt that it was important to be educated (see Table 17).

Table 18 indicates that the majority of respondents who were employed intended to use their matric either to gain entrance to a university course or to change their career paths. The majority of respondents needed matric because they wanted to enter a profession. Of the female respondents only 3 per cent were teachers, yet 34 per cent of the respondents said that they needed matric in order to be accepted at a college of education. Similarly only 5 per cent of the respondents were nurses, yet 33 per cent of the respondents indicated that they would like to become nurses. The third most common choice (16 %) was to go to university to read for

a degree. There was no such swing towards to the teaching and nursing professions amongst the male respondents. Here 18 per cent wanted to become teachers (there were no male teachers among the respondents). However, 46 per cent of the respondents indicated that they needed matric because they wished to enter university to read for a variety of courses ranging from medicine to law to nuclear physics. In contrast, only 7 per cent of females and 13 per cent of males saw matric as a means of gaining promotion or a better-paid job.

Lazarus

You know, mam, I've realized that most of my fellow brothers are suffering. Now if I will become a teacher, I can help the new generation as far as their circumstances are concerned. Now I've realized that our people are suffering because they're not educated. They don't get jobs. You see I will try to better their futures.

I think that work for the government is better than work for a company. When you work under a company any time that company can shut down, only to find you got no job. But if I am a teacher I know my job won't get finished. I'll work for the rest of my life earning a good salary. There are some people at home who worry me - one is a teacher. He comes to me and say, " Leave the government alone. Look how much [little] we are earning." Compared to my wages, I find I am earning less.

Zamekile

I intend to become a driving instructor for a driving school. Actually I intended to become a priest, but I cannot do so, because I have no money to support my family and at the same time study. So once I start the business I will attend to my ministry studies.

Elizabeth
I would love to study further. You see, like today, my heart is very sore, I see my friends they are writing for VISTA and I say to myself "Ooh! I wish it was me." I want to study. To me it seems like a very important thing.

In short, the majority of the respondents were motivated to complete their formal schooling because they felt that matric would lead the way to university, college o a profession. Some respondents felt that this would enable them to criticize the existing system and campaign for change, whilst others believed that this would lead to upward social mobility. The importance accorded to the matric examination has its roots in the social environment and has been passed on from parents to children. It was interesting to note that most of the respondents associated with people who already had matric and that this served as added motivation.

6. PERCEPTIONS ABOUT MATRIC

All the respondents had enrolled to complete their standard ten because they believed that it would be of value to them. This section deals with the learner perceptions about what respondents believed their matric would enable them to do or be. This is revealed both in how the respondents view others with matric and how they believe others would view them. It will examine perceived relationships between matric and intelligence

and matric and the world of work: the perceived advantages and disadvantages of matric in locating work and the perceived views and attitudes of employers. Perceptions about matric and its status value, as well as its effects upon children will also be discussed. Finally some of the perceptions about the education system in general will be addressed.

When asked whether respondents thought that people with matric were more intelligent than those without, the responses were divided. Only slightly more respondents thought that people with matric were more intelligent. Those who felt that matric made no difference to intelligence, said that older people without matric were still respected for their wisdom (see Table 19).

> Johanna
> No, I think it's not that way. Some of the people they couldn't get the chance to reach matric, but they are intelligent, like myself. I'm intelligent but I couldn't get the chance to write and pass my matric because of my background.

> Brenda
> Yes it's true, because all the people who got a matric, they are better people [...] I feel like they know better things than me. I am less important than them.

The majority of the respondents felt that they would have a better chance of locating a job if they had matric. Some expressed the view that a person was

"nothing" without a job and that people with matric found jobs more easily. 12 per cent of the respondents felt that having a matric was not the most important criterion in getting a job. They felt instead that experience was much more important; that matric was not an adequate qualification for a job. Besides, there were thousands of matriculants competing for jobs (see Table 20).

Dorah

> You won't get a job more easily with matric, but with a profession, yes. You can look for a job and don't find one having matric. I know a few who have a matric but they don't find a job, because they don't have experience. But for profession sake, yes.

George

> At this stage, yes, it is an advantage. But in five or ten years' time it will be like having J.C. So I don't think that any person who is wise must stop at having matric. He must proceed.

It is interesting to note that while the majority of respondents felt that it would be easier to secure a job if they had matric, they also saw matric as a means of entering a profession. If one maintains the distinction between job and profession (a profession being associated with a more advanced level of learning), the above perceptions are not contradictory. In most cases a job was regarded as a means to earn money and since matric was considered to be a symbol of learning and the

ability to learn, it was thought to be easier to secure a job if one had matric. However, having a job was not where the aspirations of the majority of the respondents lay. They were not studying for matric primarily to secure a job or to earn money, they wanted to enter a profession and for this a more advanced level of learning was a prerequisite. Matric was perceived as the first step towards a profession.

73 per cent of the respondents believed that people with matric earned more money than those without. The main reason given for this was the belief that people with matric were more educated and could understand the job better and, therefore, earn more money. For those who disagreed with this statement (23%), the reasons were that experience was a much more important criterion and that remuneration for Africans whether they had matric or not was too low (see Table 21).

84 per cent of the respondents felt that employers preferred their employees to have matric (The term "employers" refers here to providers of work in fields of employment where matric is preferred for its symbolic rather than its practical value). Amongst the reasons given for the above view were that a person with matric was better educated and more knowledgeable, and could, therefore, understand the language of his employer

better. These responses reflected the perceived expectations an employer might have in an employee. Hence it was easier to secure a job if one had matric. Other respondents believed that as long as one was doing one's job properly matric was not an advantage. This view presupposes that employees have already attained the level of language and proficiency required for the job. Another view put forward was that if all employees had matric, there would be nobody left to do "the useless jobs" (see Table 22). Moreover, some respondents felt that employers could become antagonistic if their employees had matric. The reason for this, it was felt, was that they might feel threatened by this level of education and that employees with matric might influence other workers into becoming less passive about their work situation.

Lazarus

I don't think [I would be promoted if I had matric]. You know, these people, they are jealous. Nobody is knowing that I am doing these things [studies]. I was doing them private, confidentially. I just showed them the [examination] timetables last week and they said I can go [...] The whites are jealous. Our technical manager is a "boer". Now, he find that if you are bright, you are going to influence the people. You know, most people working there they are stupid. Just labour. Even if they find they're oppressed, they can't see here is wrong, there is wrong. Now they don't complain, they are always quiet. So if they find you are clever, now you are trying to poison them. Now they are starting to hate you. If you are unlucky, they throw you out.

Zacharia
Matric is just a paper to prove yourself to the whites. You have reached that goal they have set for you. It's not right, because I think you are bluffing yourself.

The following deals with the perceived social importance of matric: how respondents thought others would see them if they had matric. It also reveals how they wished to be regarded by others once they had matric. 83 per cent of the respondents believed that people with matric would be more respected within the African community, because having matric meant that a person was more disciplined and more "dignified". Matric was thought to bring progress to a community. Furthermore, the younger members of a community would be inspired to improve their levels of education if the older ones had matric. When it came to the perceived response to African matriculants by whites the response to the questionnaire was poorer (143 responses). This perhaps reflected the lack of communication between Africans and whites, other than through an employer/employee relationship. The lack of communication is reflected by the comment of one respondent, "Well, I don't know their feelings, we are separated by a wall of shame." However, in spite of the poor response, 70 per cent of the respondents felt that they would be more respected by whites if they had matric.

17 per cent of the respondents felt that they would not be more respected within the African community if they had matric. The reasons for this were that matriculants did not use their knowledge to benefit the community and that matriculants were still people no matter what their level of education. 30 per cent of the respondents said that matric would not make them more respected within the white community and could, as was highlighted earlier, be a disadvantage (see Table 23).

> Zamekile
> He does not know I am studying. My boss, he is not a nice someone. He's a white man [...] He does treat me badly. [...] He will not treat me differently when I have matric. I am inferior. That is why I want to study.

The importance of matric was further highlighted by the views that respondents held regarding their children's education. 95 per cent of respondents wanted their children to get matric. The reason most frequently given to explain this was that if their children had matric they would have a "better life". This becomes clearer if one looks at another reason why they wanted their children to have matric: matric was required in order to go to university and/or to get a good job, which would be well paid. This implies that parents did not wish their children to struggle to find work as many of them had done. Other respondents did not wish to see their children having to complete

their secondary education on a part-time basis as they were doing and for this reason they wanted to teach them to plan for the future (see Table 24).

Respondents were also asked about the effect they thought that their studies would have on their relationship with their children. 94 per cent of respondents felt that parents were more respected by their children if they had matric. Of the reasons given the following were the most common: 24 per cent of respondents felt that their children would be more encouraged and motivated with their own studies if they saw their parents studying. 21 per cent of the respondents felt that by having matric themselves they could assist their children with their school work. Implied by this comment was that parents who had not been at school for many years felt helpless and frustrated when they did not understand the work their children were doing at school. This made them feel less respected. 16 per cent of respondents felt that it was important for children to know that their parents were educated and that being "uneducated" carried a stigma. 12 per cent of respondents felt that by having matric they would be able to help their children plan for the future. They would encourage them to stay at school and avoid some of the problems that had caused them to leave school. This consideration was particularly important

to the 25-30 age group. 16 per cent of the respondents felt that having matric would result in mutual respect between parents and children, making the children more obedient and facilitating communication. Many of the children of the respondents would have been directly affected by the school boycotts of 1985/86. Therefore, in their roles as parents and students respondents seemed to be generally more concerned with the uninterrupted schooling of their children than the issues involved. Having matric would put parents in a stronger position academically to exert authority over their children on the issue of education. 6 per cent of the respondents felt that they would be more respected by their children if they had matric because then they would have better jobs, earn more money and be able to offer their children a better standard of living.

Seven respondents disagreed with the above statement. They felt that parents were respected by their children whether they had matric or not. Furthermore, respect depended largely on upbringing and not on educational level. One respondent pointed out that matric could be reached anytime by their children, so that this view did not guarantee more respect (see Table 25).

The following maps perceptions about the matric examination against the wider context of educational

provisions for Africans. Most of the respondents were aware of the inadequate provision for African education and felt that this had impeded their academic progress. They believed that they had received an inferior education to other races and perceived university to be the only place where all races would receive equal educational opportunities. This in part helps to explain the importance of the matric examination as a means of getting to university.

Zacharia

Actually we are the product of Bantu Education system, we are polluted with most of the capitalist ideology. The interests of the capitalist system, not our idea, only their ideas are represented. To do that [change people's ideas] it will take us time, but first we must try as much as possible with the little things: I mean by making you aware of your tradition; making you respect everybody, not just your elders [...] So as a student I have realized that my strength, my power is limited. Most of the things are done by the workers, so what must I do? I must work in such a way that I support the workers. So if we are to help the cause, maybe it will be because the gold mines are on strike, then I will support that.

Lazarus

Even when you pass matric you are just like you never were in school.

Patrick

I think we don't have any option but to comply, because we are suppressed. The only chance we have of proving how good we are is at university level, because in my imagination I think that there they are all given the same opportunity.

Joseph

> At times I take these white student textbooks and compare. I found that these student textbooks are more advanced than the ones we are using. The standard of the teachers, I am told, they go to college for four years and ours go for three [...] I think the thing I sometimes tell myself, that if it wasn't because of being black I would have had a space [at college] long ago.

In short, the majority of the respondents felt that matric was a symbol of intelligence and that it was easier to secure a job if one had matric. Moreover, it was perceived that employers preferred their employees to be matriculated, because then they would be able understand the language of their employer better and learn the job more quickly. In contrast to this view, a small number of respondents expressed the view that matric could be a disadvantage if employers felt threatened by the level of education of their employees. Moreover, experience was often regarded as more important when seeking employment. Respondents felt that socially people with matric were generally more respected within the African community. If parents were matriculated they were more respected by their children. When asked about the education they had received, respondents felt that educational provision for Africans was inadequate and that their schooling had not equipped them sufficiently to compete with other races.

7. THE DIFFICULTIES OF PRIVATE STUDY

When asked about the kinds of difficulties adult students experienced when undertaking a course of study, the responses fell into two categories: difficulties caused by external factors, such as pressures from work or home and difficulties arising from the classroom situation itself. The majority of respondents felt that they did not have enough time to devote to their studies due to demands of the workplace and duties at home. This was made worse by the fact that respondents often had no place to study and no electricity. The only way some respondents managed to study peacefully was by getting up in the middle of the night when the rest of the family were asleep. Irregular attendance in class was often caused by the above factors as well as by a lack of money for transport to the centre. Bad weather and poorly lit streets made it dangerous for respondents to be out attending classes at night. Absenteeism from class created its own vicious circle, as it was difficult for respondents to rejoin a class after a period of absence having missed sections of classwork (see Table 26).

> Zamekile
> Yes, I do find time to study, but it's difficult to study in the hostel , because there are many people there making noises all over. But it is better to study in our library at St. Anthony's. There are two guys in our hostel who are also

studying, but it is difficult to study because of the other guys coming in and out.

Agnes

I earn only R 82 [a month], because it's a new house that one. So she says, my madam, she still [only] got a little bit of money, because she must pay all the things for the house. The mother does not pay me, but I stay freely and they give me food [...] You see, I study when they are sleeping. I can take the book and read. And at night when my child is sleeping, I can take the book and read again. I've got electricity. I share the room with my granny. It's my granny, the child and me only in the room. Got no bathroom, no sink, only the toilet. It's very hard. When the granny and the baby are sleeping I can read and I fall asleep. Maybe at night I can take the book again and read. I get very tired [...] No, I don't want any friends here. You know, with the friends you can't study. You see, when they've got that little time, they come here, now you can't take that book [and study]. I always stay in the room. I only go out when I go to the shop and to the church. That only.

Faith

I study with a candle, I'm used to it. You don't mind it, you know, if it's because I'm serious or aiming high. I don't care if it's a candle or what, I'll just do the job, do the studying. And maybe on a Saturday, I'll wake up at five or half past four, taking my book like this, lighting my candle, sitting up till half past six, when I must start with the washing, cleaning, (you don't have a chance during the week). If it's Sunday we are going to church.

Other problems were caused by the classroom situation itself. Some respondents said that they did not understand their subjects very well. Possible reasons for this could be that some respondents had not been at school for many years and were finding it difficult to

settle into a regular learning routine. This was made worse by the fact that some respondents could not afford to buy the necessary textbooks. 8 per cent of the respondents attributed their difficulties to not being able to understand the language of the teacher or the textbook. This resulted in fragmented learning and stifled their progress.

Elizabeth

[the school environment] It's wonderful. It's where I feel free. It's where I know there was something that was bothering me, that was locked inside me, that comes out and I like it.

Lazarus

Well, I got a problem as far as Afrikaans is concerned, because, you know, I don't understand the language. Because I find that I know the answers, but I don't understand what the question is all the time. So when I ask somebody who understand it, "What's this question?" only to find I know all the answers.

Brenda

At first it was hard. In January it was a little bit hard and as time went on things became a little bit clear. I didn't want to give up, because when I decide to do something, I usually stick to it, until I pass it.

Joseph

At times I feel inferior. Sometimes, suppose a teacher comes in the class and teaches something and says this and that. Then he is surprised and amazed about the class because they doesn't know what is he talking about. It simply means that he takes it for his own -he was educated in a white school, he doesn't consider we as blacks [...] No, I don't think I have a problem in understanding, the problem is to voice it out.

The difficulties of studying as an adult learner are closely related to the perceptions of why the respondents felt learners failed their examinations. This also highlights the respondents' own fears about failure. 79 per cent of the respondents indicated that they were afraid to fail their examinations. This became more pronounced the older a respondent was. There were many reasons given as to why respondents were afraid to fail, but the most common were that respondents did not have enough time to devote to their studies and that when they did have time, they were too tired (23%). The second most common reason (21%) was that by failing their examinations, respondents would not be able to enter university or college and so fulfil their ambitions. The third most common response (15%) was that by failing respondents would have wasted time and money. 9 per cent of the respondents were afraid to fail because they were afraid of being labelled "a failure" (see Tables 27 and 28).

21 per cent of the respondents said that they were not afraid of failure. The reasons for this were that they felt that they were studying very hard, and were, therefore, confident of passing; students who had failed previously felt that they had learnt from their mistakes. If they failed again they could rewrite the examinations the following year.

The most common reason why respondents felt that students failed their examinations was because they did not have enough time to study (32 %). 29 per cent of the respondents thought that students failed because they were "not serious" about their studies or they did not spend sufficient time studying. 14 per cent of the respondents said that they thought people failed their examinations because they did not understand the teacher or the questions. Similarly, 5 per cent of respondents said that the syllabuses were too long and too difficult (see Table 29).

Mathilda

> Maybe the problem [reason for failure] is the teachers. The problem in the location. We've got that problem. Let's say I've done commercial subjects at training college and then I come to a post. They say they've got a shortage of science teachers. Because they gave me the post, they say, "Mrs Sithole, just go to that class and teach the science subjects." I don't know anything about science and I must just cram and explain what I didn't even see at all. That's the problem for the teachers. You don't know if you are doing the right thing. Because there are some children who are so intelligent naturally. They've got the brain and they'll just ask you something you don't know about, but something concerned with part of the science subjects, and then you don't know anything about it, you cannot explain.

External factors such as pressures from work and home, and problems which arose from the classroom situation itself were considered main areas of difficulty for the adult student. These resulted in adult students not having enough time to devote to their studies and were

considered to be a major cause of failure.

8. SUMMARY

In order to establish why the adult student was completing his matric and what he perceived this would enable him to do, a survey was carried out at St. Anthony's Adult Education Centre on the East Rand. The data were gathered by means of a questionnaire administered to adult matric students during class time and twenty interviews of approximately 30 to 40 minutes long. The two methods of data gathering addressed five question areas and are intended to provide a means to understanding why his/her matric studies were so important to the adult student. The five areas of interest which guided the questionnaires and the interviews were: who were the adult students? Why were they unable to complete their secondary schooling? What motivated them to return to part-time adult education? What did the adult student perceive his matric would enable him to do? What difficulties did the adult student experience in pursuing his studies? Question one was designed to build up a learner profile of adult students; question two set out to find out why they had eliminated themselves or had been eliminated from formal schooling; question three intended to find out why respondents wanted their matric and what they

intended to do with it; by gauging the way respondents felt about others who had matric and how they perceived others might see them once had matric, question four looked the adult students' perceptions about the practical and symbolic value of the matric examination; question five dealt with the difficulties experienced by the adult student and reasons for failure.

The main problems encountered in using this method of data gathering were in the selection and phrasing of the questions on my part and the difficulty in understanding the questions and expressing their views in English on the part of the respondents. The former applied mainly to the questionnaire where the inaccurate phrasing of one question in particular misled some of the respondents and generated responses which could not be analyzed or where the phrasing of the questions may have pre-empted the response. If a response given in the questionnaire indicated that the respondent had misunderstood the question, the answer was considered to be invalid. However, if this occurred during the interviews, the question would be re-phrased and returned to later.

The findings of the survey revealed that the choice of centre was an important consideration for the adult learner. Most of the respondents chose to continue their

studies at St Anthony's because it had a reputation for producing a high examination pass rate and because it had good teachers. Almost two thirds of the respondents were women and the ages of the respondents fell between 18 and 50 years, with most respondents being concentrated in the under 25 year age group. Almost half the respondents were unemployed and of these the majority was aged under 25 years. The respondents did not complete their formal schooling for three main reasons: their parents could no longer afford to keep them at school and they were asked to leave to find work in order to supplement the family income; boycotts, school closures and the ruling on age restrictions; the third reason for leaving school was due to unplanned pregnancies - this affected almost one in four females under 30 years.

The survey showed that most respondents had always planned to complete their secondary schooling and that their experiences since leaving school reinforced this belief. Parents and spouses encouraged the respondents most with their studies. The reason for this perhaps lies in the fact that the education levels of most of the parents were below that of their children. Most of the respondents had friends with matric and this, it was believed, motivated them in their studies. Most of the respondents indicated that they needed matric in order

to complete a course of study at college or university. The majority of the female respondents indicated that they wished to pursue a career in either the teaching or nursing professions. Most of the male respondents said that they needed matric in order to pursue a course at university. A small percentage of the respondents required matric for purposes of promotion. In general, it was felt that a profession would offer relative stability, a better salary and greater social status.

Whilst most of the respondents were studying for matric with the aim of joining a profession, the majority also believed that matric would enable them to secure jobs more easily. This perception originates in part from the belief that matric was a sign of intelligence. Those who opposed this view pointed out that there were many intelligent people who had never had the opportunity to be educated. Moreover, experience was much more valuable when it came to securing a job. Most of the respondents felt that employers preferred their employees to be matriculated because then they would be able to learn the job more easily.

Socially, respondents felt that they would be more respected within the African community if they had matric. 95 per cent of the respondents hoped that their children would reach matric and go to university. They

also felt that their own studies would encourage their children to work hard at school and that they would feel more confident in helping their children with their school work. All of the interview respondents were aware that they had been disadvantaged by the African schooling system and saw their matric as a means of narrowing the gap and providing a way into a profession. None of the respondents felt that their present studies had been a waste of time.

The difficulties experienced by the adult student arose both inside and outside the classroom. Both were related to the fact that the adult student felt that he/she did not have enough time to study due to pressures from home and work. Overcrowded homes and noise forced some respondents to get up during the night to study whilst the rest of the family were asleep. Some respondents did not have electricity and studied by candlelight. Respondents experienced difficulties in the classroom when they did not understand the language of the teacher, textbook or subject they were studying. This was made worse by the fact that some respondents could not afford to buy the necessary textbooks. Most of the respondents, particularly the older ones, revealed that they were afraid to fail their examinations, because it would deny them the opportunity to go to university or college, and because their studies would have been a

waste of time and money. They also felt that the above difficulties were a major cause of failure in examinations.

Most of the respondents indicated that their motives in studying for matric were to gain a place at university or college. They believed that this would lead the way towards a profession. A profession would bring with it stability, a higher salary and social advancement - hence an end to poverty and unemployment. Even if a learner was not successful in securing a place at university or college, his matric, it was believed, would nonetheless enable him to secure employment. The matric examination also offered the adult student a sense of self worth and marked the difference between a "somebody" and a "nobody". The desire for social advancement through education is so powerful that it is passed on from parents to children to grandchildren. These perceptions must be viewed in the light of the very real difficulties which face an adult learner embarking upon a course of study.

9. TABLES OF QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES

The following tables reflect the responses to the questionnaire (see Appendix C). The responses are tabled in the order discussed above and not as they appear in the

questionnaire. Percentages are rounded off and are calculated on the basis of responses per question.

LIST OF TABLES **PAGE**

TABLE 6:
4a HOW DID YOU FIND OUT ABOUT ST ANTHONY'S?

SUMMARY OF RESPONSES	18-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	41-45	46-50	TOTAL
FRIENDS/RELATIVES	67	35	15	4		2	123
COLLEAGUES/EMPLOYER	3		1	1	1		6
WELL-KNOWN CENTRE			2				2
NEWSPAPER ADS.	8	2	1				11
TV		1					1
	78	38	19	5	1	2	143

TABLE 7:
4b WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO STUDY HERE?*

SUMMARY OF RESPONSES	TOTAL	% **
TO BE ABLE TO CONTINUE STUDIES AT UNIV./COLLEGE	64	26 %
CENTRE GETS GOOD RESULTS/HIGH STANDARD	58	23 %
GOOD TEACHERS/QUALIFIED	55	22 %
IMPROVE EDUCATION/KNOWLEDGE/SYMBOLS	25	10 %
CENTRE NOT AFFECTED BY BOYCOTTS	12	5 %
GOOD FACILITIES/LIBRARY/QUIET ATMOSPHERE	12	5 %
CENTRALLY LOCATED/ CLOSE TO WORK/TOWNSHIPS	7	3 %
HELPS ADULTS BETTER THAN OTHER CENTRES	5	2 %
LOW FEES	4	2 %
CAN ONLY STUDY NIGHTS BECAUSE OF OTHER COMMITMENTS	3	1 %
WIDE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS/CENTRE RECOGNIZED BY DET	2	.8%
	247	

* MORE THAN ONE ANSWER POSSIBLE
** ALL TABLES WILL GIVE ROUNDED-OFF PERCENTAGES

TABLE 8:
2 b AND c WHAT IS YOUR AGE AND ECONOMIC STATUS?

	AT SCHOOL		FULL-TIME EMPLOY		PART-TIME EMPLOY		UN-EMPLOYED		AT HOME		TOTAL		TOTAL	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	TOTAL	%
18-25	9	7	15	26	4	4	12	28	3	16	43	81	124	61 %
26-30			20	19		1	3	5		1	23	26	49	24 %
31-35			9	10	1						10	10	20	10 %
36-40			4	2							4	2	6	3 %
41-45			1	2							1	2	3	2 %
46-50			1	1							1	1	2	1 %
											82	122	204	

TABLE 9:
3a SUBJECTS WRITTEN PRIOR TO 1987

	18-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	41-45	46-50	TOTAL	%
0	60	26	10	3	1		100	49 %
1	2	4	3				9	4 %
2	5		1	1	2	1	10	4 %
3	15	15	3	1		1	35	17 %
4	4	3	2	1			9	5 %
5	5		1				6	3 %
6	33	1					34	17 %
	124	49	20	6	3	2	203	

TABLE 10:
3c WHAT YEAR DO YOU INTEND TO COMPLETE YOUR MATRIC?

	18-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	41-45	46-50	TOTAL	%
1987	50	17	3	2		2	74	36 %
1988	64	25	13	4	3		109	53 %
1989	10	5	3				18	9 %
	124	47	19	6	3	2	201	

TABLE 11:
3b NUMBER OF SUBJECTS ENROLLED FOR

	18-25	25-30	31-35	36-40	41-45	46-50	TOTAL	%
1	1						1	.5%
2	20	9	3	2			34	17 %
3	71	37	16	4	3	1	132	65 %
4	18	3	1			1	23	11 %
5	7						7	3 %
6	7						7	3 %
	124	49	20	6	3	2	204	

TABLE 12:
5a WHAT WAS YOUR LAST YEAR AT SCHOOL?

	18-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	41-45	46-50	TOTAL	%
STD 7		1					1	.5 %
STD 8	10	12	8	5	2	2	39	20 %
STD 9	69	29	8	1	1		108	55 %
STD 10	36	6	3	3			48	24 %
							196	

TABLE 13:
5b WHAT LEVEL OF SCHOOLING DID YOUR PARENTS REACH?

***	18-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	41-45	46-50	TOTAL	%
NEVER ATTENDED	27	20	14	2	1		64	19 %
SUB A/B		1	2				3	.8%
STD 1/2	5	4	6				15	4 %
STD 3/4	17	9	6	1		1	34	10 %
STD 5	12	13	1	1		1	28	8 %
STD 6	61	24	2	1	1	1	90	26 %
STD 7	16	5			2		23	7 %
STD 8	33	15	2		1	1	52	15 %
STD 9	16	2					18	5 %
STD 10	15			1			16	5 %
*** MOTHERS AND FATHERS							343	

TABLE 14:
5c WHAT WERE YOUR REASONS FOR LEAVING SCHOOL?

SUMMARY OF RESPONSES	18-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	41-45	46-50	TOTAL	%
COMPLETED SCHOOL	14		2		2	1	19	9 %
FINANCIAL REASONS	40	30	13	4	1	1	89	44 %
SCHOOL WORK TOO HARD	1						1	.5%
TO GIVE BROS & SIS CHANCE	7	2	1				10	5 %
PREGNANCY	15	7					22	11 %
NO SCHOOL IN AREA		1					1	.5%
FELL TOO FAR BEHIND			1				1	.5%
SCHOOL A WASTE OF TIME							0	
PARENTS WANTED ME TO LEAVE	2	5	2	1			10	5 %
BOYCOTTS	26	1	1	1			29	14 %
WANTED TO WORK	3	2					5	3 %
STILL AT SCHOOL	6						6	3 %
OTHER E.G HEALTH	10	1					11	5 %
							204	

TABLE 15:
4e WHO AT HOME ENCOURAGES YOU TO STUDY? *

	18-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	41-45	46-50	TOTAL	%
MOTHER	79	15	3				97	35 %
FATHER	60	11	2				73	26 %
SISTER	9	5					14	5 %
BROTHER	13	7	3				23	8 %
HUSBAND	7	8	2	1	1		19	7 %
WIFE	1	1	3	1	1	1	8	3 %
FRIEND	3						3	1 %
RELATIVE	5	5					10	4 %
EMPLOYER		1					1	.4%
NO-ONE	8	7	8	3	1		27	10 %
CHILDREN		1				1	2	.7%
							277	

TABLE 16:

4g HOW MANY OF YOUR FRIENDS HAVE OR ARE BUSY STUDYING FOR MATRIC?

	18-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	41-45	46-50	TOTAL	%
ALL	26	3	2				31	16 %
MOST	57	24	11	4	2		98	50 %
A FEW	38	15	3	2	1	2	61	31 %
NONE		3	1				4	2 %
							194	

TABLE 17:
4d WHY IS HAVING MATRIC IMPORTANT TO YOU?

SUMMARY OF RESPONSES	18-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	41-45	46-50	TOTAL	%
GO TO UNIV/COLL/ TECHNIKON	20	8	5	1	1		35	
MIGHT LOSE TEACHING POST		1					1	
GET CERTIFICATE & HELP OTHERS	5						5	
KEY TO FURTHER STUDIES	11	4		1	1	1	18	29 %
CHANCE OF BETTER JOB	10	4	1	2		1	18	
JOB PROMOTION		1	2				3	
JOB SECURITY	1						1	
CHANCE FOR CAREER/ PROFESSION	9	2	1				12	
NO MATRIC-NO JOB	16	5	2	1			24	
NO MATRIC- NO FURTHER TRAINING		2					2	
MORE CHOICE OF JOBS	9	1					10	
CAN EARN MORE MONEY	2	3	1				6	37 %
IMPROVE STD OF LIVING	4	3	2				9	
HAVE A BRIGHTER FUTURE	15	3	1				19	
KEY TO SUCCESS IN LIFE	5	4	2				11	
1ST STEP IN MODERN LIFE	1	1					2	
TO BECOME SOMETHING	6	2					8	24 %
IMPORTANT TO BE EDUCATED	3	1					5	
VITAL LEVEL OF EDUCATION	4	2	1				7	
TO BE MORE INTELLIGENT	2	1	1	1			5	
TO BE ADEQUATE	1	1	1				3	9%
							203	

TABLE 18 A: FEMALE RESPONDENTS
HOW WILL MATRIC BE OF BENEFIT TO YOU? (COMPILED FROM QUESTIONNAIRE)

PRESENT EMPLOYMENT	POST-MATRIC	TEACHING/ VISTA	NURSING	COURSE AT UNIV. (d)	SECRETARIAL/ CLERICAL	GOV'T/SAP	CAREER/ PROMOTION	TOTAL	%
AT HOME/ UNEMPLOYED		25	14	4	2	2	3	50	41 %
AT SCHOOL		3	1	3				7	6 %
TEACHING		2	2					4	3 %
NURSING			6					6	5 %
SOCIAL WORK				1				1	.8%
SHOP WORK(a)		2	6	7	1		2	18	15 %
OFFICE WORK(b)		4	5	2	1		2	14	11 %
SALES/BUYER				2				2	2 %
LAB WORK			1					1	.8%
FACTORY WORK		6	4		1	2	2	15	12 %
CLEANING(c)			2	1		1		4	3 %
TOTAL		42	41	20	5	5	9	122	
%		34 %	33 %	16 %	4 %	4 %	7 %		

(a) SALES ASSISTANT (11), HAIR STYLIST (1), CASHIER (6)
(b) RECEPTIONIST (1), CLERICAL (11), TYPING (2)
(c) CLEANER (2), DOMESTIC (2)
(d) NON-SPECIFIED COURSE (10), B.COMM (2), MEDICINE (4), SOCIAL WORK (4)

TABLE 18 B: MALE RESPONDENTS
HOW WILL MATRIC BE OF BENEFIT TO YOU? (COMPILED FROM QUESTIONNAIRE)

PRESENT EMPLOYMENT	POST-MATRIC	NURSING	COURSE AT UNIV. (c)	MARKETING/ SALES	ENGINEERING	STUDY ABROAD	BETTER JOB/ PROMOTION	SAP	COMPUTERS	SURVEYOR		TOTAL	%
AT HOME/ UNEMPLOYED	9		5			1	1	1	1		18	23	%
AT SCHOOL	2	1	2	1	1		2			1	10	13	%
NURSING		1									1	1	%
TEACHING													
SALES ASSIST.			2				1				3	4	%
CLERICAL		1	6	1							8	10	%
BUYER/ SALES	1		4	1							6	8	%
LAB WORK	1		3				1				5	6	%
FACTORY WORK(a)		2	9		1		4				16	20	%
LABOURING							1				1	1	%
COOK		1									1	1	%
SECURITY/SAP	1		2						1	1	5	6	%
SELF-EMPLOYED(b)			3	1							4	5	%
TOTAL	14	6	36	4	2	1	10	1	2	2	78		
%	18%	7%	46%	5%	3%	1%	13%	1%	3%	1%			

(a) STOREMAN (2), BOILERMAKER (3), TECHNICIAN (2), QUALITY CONTROL (3), PRINTING (3), PACKING (1), OPERATOR (2)
(b) TAXI DRIVER (1), PHOTOGRAPHER (1)
(c) NON-SPECIFIED COURSES (16), B.SC (2), B. COMM (2), B.A (2), MEDICINE (3), LAW (6), JOURNALISM (1), NUCLEAR PHYSICS (1), THEOLOGY (1), B.ADMIN. (2)

TABLE 19:

4f DO YOU THINK PEOPLE WITH MATRIC ARE MORE INTELLIGENT THAN THOSE WITHOUT?

	18-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	41-45	46-50	TOTAL	%
YES	70	25	9	4	2		110	58 %
NO	46	21	9	2	1	2	81	42 %
							191	

TABLE 20:

5d DO YOU THINK THAT PEOPLE WITH MATRIC HAVE A BETTER CHANCE OF GETTING A JOB?

	18-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	41-45	46-50	TOTAL	%
YES	106	45	17	6	2	2	178	88 %
NO	19	4	2				25	12 %
							203	

TABLE 21:

6e DO YOU THINK THAT PEOPLE WITH MATRIC EARN MORE MONEY THAN THOSE WITHOUT?

	18-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	41-45	46-50	TOTAL	%
YES	76	28	15	6	2	2	129	73 %
NO	31	13	4				48	27 %
							177	

TABLE 22:

6f DO YOU THINK EMPLOYERS PREFER THEIR EMPLOYEES TO HAVE MATRIC?

	18-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	41-45	46-50	TOTAL	%
YES	83	36	17	5	1	1	143	84 %
NO	19	8	1				28	16 %
							171	

TABLE 23:

5e DO YOU THINK AFRICAN PEOPLE WITH MATRIC ARE MORE RESPECTED BY (a) THE AFRICAN COMMUNITY AND (b) THE WHITE COMMUNITY?

(a) AFRICAN COMMUNITY

	18-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	41-45	46-50	TOTAL	%
YES	96	36	16	4	2	1	155	83 %
NO	24	6	2				32	17 %
							187	

(b) WHITE COMMUNITY

	18-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	41-45	46-50	TOTAL	%
YES	54	26	12	5	2	1	100	70 %
NO	27	13	3				43	30 %
							143	

TABLE 24:

7a DO YOU EXPECT YOUR CHILDREN TO GET MATRIC?

ALL EXCEPT SIX RESPONDENTS ANSWERED "YES". THE REASONS UNDER "YES" ARE GIVEN BELOW.

SUMMARY OF RESPONSES	18-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	41-45	46-50	TOTAL	%
TO LIVE A BETTER LIFE	22	17	6	1			46	26 %
TO PLAN THEIR FUTURE	15	2	1				18	10 %
TO HAVE A GOOD EDUCATION	15						15	8 %
TO CONTINUE STUDIES	16	4	6	1			27	15 %
SO THEY WON'T SUFFER	9	1		1			11	6 %
TO GET GOOD JOB - EARN WELL	22	6	1	1	1		31	17 %
THEY MUST BE LIKE PARENTS	8	3	1				12	7 %
MATRIC IS NECESSITY TODAY	8	4	1	2	1	1	17	9 %
TO KEEP CHILDREN OFF STREETS		2					2	1 %
							179	

TABLE 25:
7b ARE PARENTS WITH MATRIC MORE RESPECTED BY THEIR CHILDREN?

SEVEN OF THE RESPONDENTS SAID "NO". THE REMAINING RESPONDENTS SAID "YES". THEIR REASONS ARE GIVEN BELOW:

YES

SUMMARY OF RESPONSES	18-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	41-45	46-50	TOTAL	%
CHILDREN ARE ENCOUR -AGED BY PARENTS	19	6	4	2	2	1	34	24%
THEY CAN HELP CHILDREN BETTER	24	2	4				30	21%
CHILDREN KNOW PARENTS ARE EDUCATED	15	8					23	16%
PARENTS PREPARE CHILD -REN FOR FUTURE	5	11	2				18	12%
CREATES MUTUAL RESPECT - BETTER BEHAVIOUR	4	8	1				13	9%
PARENTS EARN MORE MONEY - PROVIDE BETTER	4	4		1			9	6%
CHILDREN ARE PROUD OF PARENTS	6		1				7	5%
ADULTS COMMUNICATE MORE EASILY	2						2	1%
							136	

NO

PARENTS RESPECTED ANYWAY	1	2					3	2%
RESPECT DEPENDS ON UPBRINGING	1	1	1				3	2%
MATRIC CAN BE REACHED ANY TIME	1						1	1%
							143	

TABLE 26:
4c WHAT DIFFICULTIES DO ADULT STUDENTS HAVE TO COPE WITH?*

SUMMARY OF RESPONSES	%
NO TIME TO STUDY PRIVATELY	69 %
TOO MANY PRESSURES FROM WORK	48 %
TOO MANY PRESSURES FROM HOME	48 %
CAN'T GET TO CLASSES REGULARLY	42 %
CAN'T UNDERSTAND THE SUBJECTS	14 %
CAN'T UNDERSTAND THE LANGUAGE	8 %
BOOKS ARE TOO EXPENSIVE	8 %
NO ELECTRICITY AT HOME	8 %
THE TEACHERS ARE BAD	4 %

TABLE 27:
3d ARE YOU AFRAID OF FAILING ANY SUBJECTS?

	18-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	41-45	46-50	TOTAL	%
YES	94	37	16	6	3	2	158	79 %
NO	29	11	3				43	21 %
							201	

TABLE 28:
3d WHY ARE YOU AFRAID OF FAILING?

SUMMARY OF RESPONSES	18-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	41-45	46-50	TOTAL	%
DON'T HAVE TIME/ TOO TIRED	20	11	8	1		1	41	23 %
WON'T GET INTO UNIV/COLLEGE	13	17	5	1	1		37	21 %
IF I FAIL - I'VE WASTED TIME	18	6		2	1		27	15 %
I'M AFRAID OF BEING A FAILURE	11	2	3				16	9 %
IF I FAIL - I'VE WASTED MONEY	6	5			1		12	7 %
CAN'T ATTEND CLASS REGULARLY	4	4	1	2	1		12	7 %
MATRIC IS VERY HARD	7						7	4 %
I GOT TEACHERS LATE	5	1			1		7	4 %
I TAKE A LONG TIME TO UNDERSTAND	5		1				6	3 %
DON'T UNDERSTAND SUBJECT	5		1				6	3 %
WORRIED ABOUT QUESTIONS IN EXAM	3						3	2 %
DON'T LIKE SUBJECTS I'M DOING	2						2	1 %
BOOKS ARE EXPENSIVE		1					1	.6%
MAY LOSE MY JOB AS A TEACHER			1				1	.6%
							178	

TABLE 29:
3d WHY AREN'T YOU AFRAID OF FAILING?

SUMMARY OF RESPONSES	18-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	41-45	46-50	TOTAL	%
I'M UP TO DATE WITH WORK	16	7	1				24	69 %
I DON'T HAVE DIFFICULTIES	3	3					6	17 %
I CAN TRY AGAIN NEXT YEAR	3		1				4	11 %
I AM READY FOR ANYTHING	1						1	3 %
							35	

NOTES

1. My interest in this topic was generated long before this project was undertaken. Whilst on a visit to St. Anthony's I was overwhelmed by the numbers of adults who frequented the centre to further their studies and I became interested in why their studies were so important to them.

2. Michael G. Patton, Qualitative Evaluation Methods (Beverley Hills: Sage, 1983), Third Printing, p.197.

3. Rob Walker, "The Conduct of Educational Case Studies: Ethics, Theory and Procedures" in W. Dockrell and David Hamilton eds., Rethinking Educational Research (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1980), p.36.

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PART C:

ADULTS STUDYING FOR MATRIC: A SECOND CHANCE?

Much has been written about the crisis in African education. However when theorizing about education, occasionally the students themselves are overlooked. In order to fully understand how education functions, the feelings, perceptions, thoughts and experiences of the students involved should be taken into consideration. This belief prompted the nature and presentation of this research. Its focus was the African adult students - a small, but increasing number of students, little heard about and with notoriously high matric examination failure rates. These students seemed of particular interest due to their dedication and commitment to their studies in spite of enormous difficulties. One of the main tasks of this research was to find out why an improved level of education and the matric examination in particular were so important to these students. To this end a survey was conducted at St Anthony's Adult Education Centre on the East Rand. The data for the survey were gathered by means of a questionnaire and interviews conducted with adult students at the centre and were dealt with by means of a number of smaller questions: who were the adult students; why they had been unable to complete their secondary education; what

had motivated them to return to complete their secondary education and what did they perceive their matric examinations would enable them to do or be. The final part of the survey dealt with the factors which had hindered their academic progress. However, it was felt that in isolation the views expressed by the adult students alone were not self-explanatory and that a theoretical discourse would provide a useful tool to approach an understanding of the views and perceptions of the adult students and the social and economic context in which these views live. It was also hoped that the theoretical discourse might offer an interesting contrast to the adult students' perceptions. For this reason the theoretical discourse presented in Part A examined the education system for Africans from three perspectives: education as a means towards social advancement, education as the reproduction of cultural capital and education as social reproduction.

The first perspective suggests that advanced levels of education could be a means towards social advancement. It comes then as no surprise that most of the adult learners who took part in the empirical survey had enrolled at St Anthony's Adult Education Centre because they regarded their matric as a means towards social advancement. In other words, the adult students were not in the main completing their secondary education for

altruistic reasons, but rather because the certificate was of social value to them. The majority of the respondents needed their matric in order to gain access to university or training college: 64 per cent of the female respondents wanted to become either nurses or teachers and 64 per cent of the male respondents intended to read for a course at university. A course at tertiary level was important to respondents because it was a means of entering a profession (a profession is distinguished from the term "job" in that it implies a higher level of learning). Being a professional person held particular significance for the respondents: it offered relative security and a higher salary which would ensure a higher standard of living. Moreover, the inability to achieve recognition at particular levels of employment may have contributed to the desire to complete their secondary education and enter a profession. These factors influenced which adult education centre was chosen by the students to complete their matric studies.

The value of matric seems to have been reduced to the exchange value of the certificate. The matric certificate was perceived by respondents to be a symbol of linguistic competence and learning potential which would enable them to enter the job market more easily. More than 70 per cent of respondents felt that potential

employers would look more favourably upon matriculants. Many respondents who held this view were unemployed and therefore had first hand experience of seeking employment. It was also pointed out that the symbolic value of matric could be disadvantageous if it were perceived by an employer to be a threat to his position of dominance. Common to both views was the perception that matric was symbolic of particular qualities which could make it easier to secure work providing that it did not challenge the authority of the employer.

So far it has been seen that most of the respondents were studying towards matric with a view to entering a profession. Apart from the financial security, a profession was also perceived to offer social status and self-confidence. These perceptions will be more clearly understood if mapped against the social and economic difficulties experienced by some of the respondents. It has already been noted that over a third of the respondents had had to leave school because their parents could no longer afford their schooling. The lack of finance continued to make itself felt particularly since almost half the respondents under the age of 25 years were unemployed and relied upon the financial support of family members, which placed an additional strain on the family budget. Financial difficulties were often aggravated by the demands of family duties and

child rearing. In addition to this, many respondents indicated that their home environment was not conducive to learning. This made it very difficult for adult students to devote adequate time to their studies and concentrate on areas of weakness.

The belief in education as a means towards social mobility is so powerful that it is passed from generation to generation. It seems that as each generation becomes more urbanized, a higher level of education is expected. Most respondents revealed that the level of education of their parents was below that of their own and that the majority of respondents expected their children to advance beyond matric. Many respondents said that their parents and families had supported them in their studies and had sacrificed a great deal to enable them to continue their studies.

It is necessary at this point to examine the effects of the matric studies on adult students. In other words, how would adult students regard themselves once they had completed their studies. The empirical survey revealed that matric afforded students a sense of self-worth and self-confidence. Some respondents further indicated that having a matric distinguished a "somebody" from a "nobody". This was supported by 83 per cent of the respondents who held that matric would make them more

respected within the African community. This sentiment was further expressed by the frequent association of the term "dignified" with higher levels of education. It was also believed that matric would restore the lack of self-confidence experienced by many respondents as a result of previous examination failures. It is a sad indictment of an education system which allows examinations to become valued as standards of personal merit and acceptability rather than academic merit. Implied in the above is that a lack of education is accompanied by a sense of worthlessness and inferiority. Advanced levels of education were regarded as important factors in restoring the authority of the parent over his/her child, which had been challenged by the school boycotts and demonstrations of recent years. Respondents also thought it was important for parents to be able to assist their children with their school work and it was also important for children to recognize that their parents were educated. This further reflects the stigma that is attached by learners to a lack of education.

To ask why education and why matric in particular were so important to adult students is in a sense self-limiting. We know why adult students have returned to complete their secondary education and why they regard this as a second chance. However, one is left with a

sense of "something is missing"; that the nature of this "second chance" needs to be evaluated more carefully. One is left feeling that adult students should receive just reward for their efforts, but that this is, in fact, not the case. Although it is not within the task of this research to stray beyond what the adult students revealed themselves, some interesting points were raised which lead us to issues discussed in the second and third perspectives.

The second perspective suggested that the primary function of the education system was to produce and reproduce existing social relations. It did this by means of a process of selection and elimination of students on the basis of the cultural and linguistic competence demanded by the dominant culture. The transmission of cultural capital takes place primarily within the family and is reproduced within the education system. The levels of cultural capital owned by students will determine the degree of selection to the higher echelons of the education system. It was further suggested that under its guise of "apparent homogeneity" and its presentation of the examination as the "moment of truth", this process of selection and elimination remained concealed from the students themselves.

It comes as no surprise then, that respondents seemed

generally unaware of the reproductive function of the education system and how this manifests itself not only in what is taught and to whom, but also where. The role of St Anthony's as a site of learning cannot remain neutral. Through its provisions of classrooms, libraries and an atmosphere conducive to learning, it facilitates the transmission of the dominant European culture and therefore, assists in the preservation of existing social relations. Furthermore, respondents stated that their main reason in coming to St Anthony's was because it offered qualified teachers and enjoyed good examination pass rates. It is suggested here that these reasons may have less to do with the fact that most of the teachers are white and are qualified, and more to do with a familiarity with the dominant European culture and language. Since most of the staff are mother tongue speakers of English they can perhaps transmit more easily the cultural background and linguistic competence demanded by the matric examination and hence help students achieve better examination results.

It was also suggested earlier that the education system may further disadvantage African students in that the European culture demanded by the school is alien to African cultures and languages. If African students are to be successful at school they must bridge the gap between the culture they are familiar with at home with

the culture demanded by the education system. After standard three education takes place primarily through the medium of English and the more competently a student can manipulate the language the greater his/her chances of selection. However, the appropriation of English is often restricted to classroom interaction and transmitted by teachers who are not confident in their use of English. The empirical survey revealed that many learning difficulties experienced by adult students stemmed from their inability to understand the medium of instruction. Some respondents also pointed out that whilst they understood various concepts that were taught they had difficulty in expressing themselves in English. The distance between the demands made by the education system upon its African students and the lack of educational provision it offers to enable students to appropriate the culture and language it demands is illustrated by this respondent's comment:

> Then he is surprized and amazed about the class because they doesn't know what is he talking about. It simply means that he takes it for his own - he was educated in a white school.

Although some respondents were aware of the difficulties they experienced with regard to the medium of instruction, this number was very small. Only 14 per cent of respondents felt that learners failed their examinations because they did not understand the wording

of the questions. Yet many of the written responses in the questionnaire clearly indicated that respondents had difficulty in both understanding the questions and articulating their thoughts through the medium of English. It seems that the lack of general awareness of the linguistic and cultural competence demanded by the matric examination illustrates the extent to which the process of selection and elimination remains concealed from the student and in this way functions as a means of social control.

In using English as the medium of instruction in African schools and not providing adequate means for the transmission and appropriation of the culture and language demanded by the examination, the education system provides an effective means of social control by ensuring that one of the criteria for selection is cultural and linguistic competence. Until the question of language medium and the culture embedded within it are carefully reviewed any discussion of equal educational opportunities will merely contribute to the preservation of existing social relations and the continued alienation of African students. Locating a medium of instruction that has unburdened itself of its European cultural baggage and represents all its learners equally is the challenge to language education specialists in a post-apartheid South Africa.

It will be recalled that the third perspective examined the relationship between the education system and the demands of the economy. It suggested that the primary function of schooling for Africans was to produce a source of cheap labour. The inadequate financial provision for African education bears witness to this. A further task of the education system was the hegemonic control it exercised over its students to produce the attitudes and beliefs that would preserve its reproductive function.

The extent of hegemonic control was revealed in the views and perceptions of many respondents. The most salient of these was faith in the education system as a vehicle towards social advancement, when it has already been demonstrated that this is exclusive to a minority of learners. Hegemony teaches students that educational failure and success are their own responsibility. Although there is evidence to suggest that the matric examination is a dubious indicator of academic achievement, most of the respondents felt that examination failure was due mainly to a lack of time or commitment on the part of the student. Conversely, the desire for success perhaps contributed to respondents' expectations about education at university level. Many felt that here all students would be treated as equals and that the scars of Bantu Education would be erased.

In addition to this, respondents reflected very little awareness of the high examination pass marks and subjects required in order to complete certain courses at university level. The acute lack of career information available to African students coupled with an education system which fosters the belief that hard work will be rewarded and that failure is the responsibility of the student, results in often unrealistic expectations on the part of the African student, including the adult student. The high examination failure rate reflects that many students will not achieve their aspirations.

Hegemonic control influences different learners in different ways, but as mentioned earlier, it can never be totally overpowering. Counter-hegemonic movements have made a contribution in creating an awareness of existing social relations. All of the respondents asked were aware that they had been disadvantaged by the education system for Africans. Some blamed the lack of qualified teachers, others pointed to the distinction in educational provision between black and white schools. Whilst some saw this mainly as a racist issue, others saw it in terms of capitalist relations. Most respondents had taken part in protest movements against Bantu Education with various levels of commitment. Indeed, although many had been eliminated from the

education system as a result of examination failures, school closures and the restrictions on age limits, others had decided not to write in protest or had been detained. Many respondents continued to uphold the principles which had caused them to protest initially and some continued to be actively involved in the fight for reform.

It was precisely the first hand experience of exploitation and unemployment that prompted respondents to complete their secondary education - to become a part of the very system which had disadvantaged them. Furthermore, the relatively high examination pass rate enjoyed by the students at St Anthony's strengthened the image of the Department of Education and Training. When approached on this issue the general response was that the education system was there to be used. This apparent contradiction characterizes the views of many respondents. On the one hand, respondents had faith in the education system as a means of social advancement: as a means of escaping poverty, unemployment and its attendant problems. This has placed a premium on certification. On the other, they did not recognize it as a legitimate representative of their needs. These views live side by side and bear witness to the complex and contradictory ways in which the education system for Africans both is sustained and collapses.

For adult matric students at St. Anthony's these studies form the fabric of their future dreams and aspirations. In one respect the adult matric students are in a sense the "lucky ones" and form only a small percentage of those who enrolled at schools. Having found themselves in a position where their lack of matric has prevented them from achieving the goals that they had set for themselves, they have returned to complete their secondary education in the hope of realizing their ambitions. In order to achieve the above, the adult student has to overcome an education system in which competence in an alien language and culture is demanded; in which lack of financial support has resulted in inadequate educational facilities and underqualified teachers; in which students are taught to be inferior, coupled with a socio-economic situation whose barriers to educational advancement pivot around a fundamental lack of finance. The degree to which the adult student can overcome the above is the degree to which his matric studies will offer him/her a second chance, and, ironically, the degree to which existing inadequate educational structures are perpetuated.

AFTERTHOUGHT: JANUARY 1989

St Anthony's Day School had admitted its full quota of students for the 1989 academic year and had closed its admissions. However students who had failed their matric and who had been refused admission at their old high schools continued to drift to St Anthony's in their hundreds. When it was explained to students that the Centre could no longer accept them, they continued to wait quietly. Later when it was again explained to the waiting students that there were no places for them, one voice was heard above the rest: " But, where are we to go?"

TABEL/TABLE 1.5.2.—MATRIKULASIE EN SENIORSERTIFIKAAT/MATRICULATION AND SENIOR CERTIFICATE: 1953–1982

AANVULLINGSEKSAMENS EN DEELTYDSE KANDIDATE INGESLUIT/SUPPLEMENTARY EXAMINATIONS AND PART-TIME CANDIDATES INCLUDED

(a) Voltydse kandidate/Full-time candidates.

(b) Deeltydse kandidate/Part-time candidates.

Jaar Year	Geslaag met Matrikulasie-vrystelling Passed with Matriculation Exemption				Geslaag met Skooleindsertifikaat Passed with School Leaving Certificate				Totaal/Total: Matrikulasie-vrystelling en Skooleindsertifikaat/ Matriculation Exemption and School Leaving Certificate	Geslaag met Matrikulasie-vrystelling en Wiskunde Passed with Matriculation Exemption and Mathematics			
	(a)	(b)	Aanvullings-eksamen/Sup-plementary Examination	Totaal Total	(a)	(b)	Aanvullings-eksamen/Sup-plementary Examination	Totaal Total		(a)	(b)	Aanvullings-eksamen/Sup-plementary Examination	Totaal Total
1953	*	*	*	157	*	*	*	175	332	*	*	*	*
1955	*	*	*	191	*	*	*	274	465	*	*	*	*
1957	*	*	*	232	*	*	*	352	584	*	*	*	*
1958	157	97	*	254	175	179	*	354	608	*	*	*	*
1959	72	65	*	137	152	141	*	293	430	27	*	*	27
1960	56	62	*	118	126	153	*	279	397	26	*	*	26
1961	76	39	*	115	136	202	*	338	453	39	*	*	39
1962	150	71	*	221	214	212	*	426	647	58	*	*	58
1963	245	39	*	284	286	155	*	441	725	46	*	*	46
1964	298	40	53	391	338	261	64	663	1 054	77	8	11	96
1965	323	26	74	423	504	150	68	722	1 145	106	5	15	126
1966	411	46	89	546	460	227	56	743	1 289	109	10	20	139
1967	485	38	60	583	482	346	172	1 000	1 583	125	6	7	138
1968	775	19	9	803	491	214	112	817	1 620	181	6	—	187
1969	877	49	59	985	865	530	129	1 524	2 509	206	8	13	227
1970	1 013	36	22	1 071	843	518	295	1 656	2 727	378	7	3	388
1971	1 326	63	29	1 418	1 062	636	165	1 863	3 281	392	7	5	404
1972	1 801	81	44	1 926	1 110	888	403	2 401	4 327	505	8	6	519
1973	1 899	51	23	1 973	1 327	758	210	2 295	4 268	642	11	15	668
1974	2 087	49	93	2 229	1 354	846	501	2 701	4 930	991	14	23	1 028
1975	3 520	93	102	3 715	1 880	501	624	3 005	6 720	1 224	38	32	1 294
1976	1 947	33	114	2 094	4 603	1 067	407	6 077	8 171	1 241	15	56	1 312
1977	2 294	236	46	2 576	3 605	1 477	360	5 442	8 018	864	*	*	864
1978	3 236	513	57	3 806	4 232	3 558	418	8 208	12 014	1 679	*	*	1 679
1979	4 136	356	23	4 515	6 570	4 154	398	11 122	15 637	3 130	*	*	3 130
1980	4 714	389	71	5 174	11 221	9 044	7	20 272	25 446	2 007	*	*	2 007
1981	4 830	401	71	5 302	15 314	9 648	8	24 970	30 272	2 084	*	*	2 084
1982	4 407	146	258	4 811	17 278	8 198	2 356	27 832	32 643	2 324	*	*	2 324

SOURCE: Department of Education and Training Annual Report, 1983, (Pretoria: Government Printers, 1984), p.155.

APPENDIX B:
EMPLOYMENT TRENDS OF BLACK WOMEN IN PROFESSIONS

Table 1
Employment Trends of Black Women in Professions, 1969, 1981 and 1983, Compared with Some Other Groups in South Africa

Profession	Black Women*			Coloured and Asian Women			White Women			Black Men*			White Men		
	1969	1981	1983	1969	1981	1983	1969	1981	1983	1969	1981	1983	1969	1981	1983
Medical, dental technicians	-	17	50	26	54	103	467	501	1 062	21	79	142	675	613	870
Chemical technician	9	16	6	6	28	94	365	419	363	105	170	162	2 319	1 605	1 033
Technical assistants	29	170	230	44	504	747	1 987	5 230	5 886	813	1 097	2 391	3 684	7 851	8 573
Medical, dental practitioners	6	17	39	17	153	85	373	1 500	1 512	63	144	225	8 741	15 227	16 096
Nurses and midwives	7 132	19 720	21 888	1 351	6 607	7 699	11 516	19 373	21 518	1 218	583	1 108	1 092	524	857
Pharmacist	-	17	17	-	31	33	272	1 486	1 216	3	24	36	2 287	3 842	3 643
Home economist/ dietician	-	13	10	-	3	18	148	307	336	-	-	-	1	3	16
Therapists and medical auxiliaries	123	217	540	60	251	356	1 754	3 623	3 493	90	86	188	206	240	289
University and college professors and lecturers	23	89	329	19	162	771	1 187	3 002	3.371	143	351	554	5 026	8 684	8 794
School teacher	18 532	41 303	59 279	9 432	22 818	22 622	24 582	43 246	44 390	18 377	23 964	30 237	18 284	24 253	20 302
Legal profession	0	13	40	7	26	20	79	624	592	41	88	214	5 987	6 362	6 055
Market researcher	1	7	173	1	-	3	64	178	133	1	31	50	262	531	414
Librarian/archivist	15	34	28	14	103	173	639	1 694	1 769	12	78	123	229	266	235
Psychologist	2	12	13	-	6	13	109	421	330	7	39	29	225	832	655
Sociologist	198	249	458	93	421	532	854	1 207	1 639	165	170	175	241	213	236
Public relations officer	-	149	19	3	5	24	108	742	795	47	336	136	460	1 153	989
Programmer/systems analyst	-	37	14	5	35	42	305	2 021	2 207	-	225	98	1 312	6 209	5 585
Total professionals**	33 613	75 503	95 251	13 059	34 918	37 743	54 799	107 513	112 958	24 037	34 506	44 906	113 399	201 621	201 798
Percentage increase in total professionals 1969-83 (1981-83)		183,4	(26,2)		189	(8,1)		106,1	(5,1)		86,8	(30)		78	(0,1)

* These statistics understate the increase in the number of professionals, particularly in the case of Black women and Black men, because owing to political developments between 1969 and 1983, statistics for Namibia, Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Ciskei, and Venda were excluded from recent surveys. Many Black professionals live in these areas.

** The totals of professionals in the various race and sex groups are larger than those listed in the table, since only those occupational categories in which Black women showed interesting trends were included in the table.

SOURCE: Manpower Surveys, 8, 14 and 15, (Pretoria: Department of Manpower) in Black Advancement in the South African Economy, ed. Roy Smollen (South Africa: Macmillan, 1986),p.35

APPENDIX C:

QUESTIONNAIRE ADMINISTERED TO ADULT MATRIC STUDENTS

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN

Department of Adult Education and Extra-Mural Studies

(please tick where you have a choice of answers e.g. [YES] [NO])

1) INTRODUCTION

a) Would you be happy to come for an interview? [YES] [NO]

b) What TIME can you come for an interview? [5.30] [6.00] [6.30] [other ....]

c) What DAYS can you come for an interview? [MON] [TUE] [WED] [THURS]

2. BASIC DATA

a) What is your name? .....

b) What is your age? [20-25] [26-30] [31-35] [36-40] [41-45] [46-50] [51-55] [56-60] [61-70]

c) What is your economic status? (tick one only)

at school		at home		old or retired	✓
employed full-time	✓	employed part-time		self-employed	
unemployed		other			

3. PRESENT STUDIES

a) How many subjects have you written at Matric level?

SUBJECT	YEAR	SYMBOL	SUBJECT	YEAR	SYMBOL
.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....

b) What subjects are you writing this year?

1) ..... 4) .....

2) ..... 5) .....

3) ..... 6) .....

c) By what year do you intend to complete your Matric? [19.....]

d) Are you afraid of failing any subjects? [YES] [NO]

Why? (give a reason) .....

.....

e) Why do you think that people fail their Matric? .....

.....

f) What do you intend to do when you have finished your Matric? .....

.....

g) When did you decide that you wanted to study for Matric? .....

.....

h) How do you think your life will change when you have your Matric? .....

.....

4. CENTRE

a) How did you find out about St. Anthony's? .....

.....

b) Why did you decide to come here? .....

.....

c) What kinds of difficulties do adult students have to cope with? (tick the ones you agree with)

	✓
they can't understand the subjects	
they can't understand the language	
the teachers are bad	
books are too expensive	
too many pressures from work	
too many duties at home	
no electricity at home	
not enough time to study privately	
can't get to classes regularly	

d) Why is having your Matric important to you? .....

.....

e) Who at home encourages you to study? .....

f) Do you think people with Matric are more intelligent than people without it? YES NO

g) How many of your friends already have or are busy studying for Matric?

ALL	MOST	A FEW	NONE

5. EDUCATION

a) What was your last year at school? (please tick)

never attended school	Sub A-B	Std. 1-2	Std.3-4	Std.5	Std. 6
Std. 7	Std.8	Std.9	Other		

b) What level of schooling did your parents reach?

MOTHER .....

FATHER .....

c) Why did you leave school? (tick one reason) ✓

completed school		no schools in my area	
financial reasons		I fell too far behind	
school work too hard		school was a waste of time	
wanted to go to work		parents wanted me to leave	
brother/sister needed a chance		school boycotts	
pregnancy		other	

d) Do you think that people with Matric have a better chance of getting a job? [YES] [NO]

WHY? .....

e) Do you think that people with Matric are more respected:

by the black community? [YES] [NO]

WHY? .....

by the white community? [YES] [NO]

WHY? .....

6. EMPLOYMENT

a) Describe the job you do now: .....

b) How long have you been doing this job? ..... Years

c) What are the two best things about the job?

1. .....

2. .....

d) What are the two worst things about the job?

1. .....

2. .....

e) Do you think that people with Matric earn more money than those without?

[YES] [NO]

WHY? .....

f) Do you think that employers prefer their employees to have Matric?

[YES] [NO]

WHY? .....

7. HOME

a) Do you expect your children to get thier Matric? [YES] [NO]

WHY? .....

b) Are adults with Matric more respected by their children? [YES] [NO]

WHY? .....

APPENDIX D:

ENROLLMENT FIGURES AT ST. ANTHONY'S ADULT EDUCATION CENTRE (ALL SUBJECTS)

YEAR	ENROLLMENTS STUDENTS	TEACHERS	TOTAL
1977	335	0	335
1978	963	243	1 206
1979	1 405	212	1 617
1980	796	84	880
1981	651	99	750
1982	787	102	889
1983	474	1	475
1984	456	2	458
1985*			
1986	645	163	808
1987	1 276	70	1 346

* FIGURES NOT AVAILABLE

SOURCE: ST. ANTHONY'S ADULT EDUCATION CENTRE (DET YEARLY RETURNS)

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