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THE 'TRUCKING AND BARTERING SPIRIT': FORMS OF ENTREPRENEURIAL PERFORMANCE IN RURAL KWAZULU

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THE 'TRUCKING AND BARTERING SPIRIT': FORMS OF ENTREPRENEURIAL PERFORMANCE IN RURAL KWAZULU

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"The search for the source of dynamic entrepreneurial performance has much in common with hunting the Heffalump.

The Heffalump is a rather large and very important animal. He has been hunted by many individuals using various ingenious trapping devices, but no-one so far has succeeded in capturing him. All who claim to have caught sight of him report that he is enormous but they disagree on his particularities. Not having explored his habitat with sufficient care some hunters have used as bait their own favourite dishes and then tried to persuade people that what they caught was a Heffalump. However very few are convinced and the search goes on."

(P. Kilby, 1971, Hunting the Heffalump)

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INTRODUCTION

The initial interest in a study of black entrepreneurs in the developing black sugar industry was prompted by a consideration that a large measure of work done in planning and executing the promotion of entrepreneurs in agriculture has hitherto ignored, or paid insufficient attention to, some important aspects of entrepreneurial activity; broadly the local social, political and economic context within which entrepreneurs operate, making the decisions and choices which affect the success or failure of their respective enterprises. Reasons given for success or failure in this field are often poor generalisations with both cultural and racist overtones.

Such perceptions are clearly manifest in early efforts at planning growth and development in KwaZulu. For example one plan, 'Towards a plan for KwaZulu' (1975) has as listed objectives:

1. to promote individual income, and

2. to promote private enterprise within the framework of Zulu tradition (sic) (p1).

However the same document notes that 'the concept of self-sustained growth to even higher levels both for the nation as well as per capita is however foreign to traditional Zulu society' (p.88) and 'the notions of a free enterprise society are not generally found among the rural Zulu' (p.119).

Attitudes or principles such as the above obviously imply a need for a greater emphasis to be placed on so-called micro-level studies which hopefully might contribute to the establishment of appropriate and effective policies and programmes.

Writers have approached the issues contained in the above quotes from many different disciplinary perspectives. Amin (1977, p.21) in a criticism of micro-economic analysis in developing countries, elaborates elements of the problem;

> "there is however a close relationship between economic operations and other aspects of social life. A good example of this is the frequent mistakes made by technocrats and planners when dealing with rural life. They make calculations about the improvement in yields which would follow the introduction of a new input or an increase in the quantity of work. They then put into effect policies based on the results of those profitability calculations. In nine cases out of ten they come up against the resistance of the peasantry (sic). Why? Simply because ..... peasants do not separate the aspects of the so-called economic life from other aspects of social life."

For this pilot study some issues of entrepreneurship in the developing black sugar industry are considered. Section One describes the setting of the investigation, outlining the context or milieu in which our sample of black contractors operate. Section Two then considers theoretical approaches to entrepreneurship in the literature and details the approach taken for this study. In Section Three we begin with a note on research methods, followed by a description of the research design and fieldwork methods undertaken, and then set out our research aim and working hypothesis.

Section Four documents the data; selected case studies which are analysed and interpreted in Section Five. Conclusions from the study are made in Section Six, followed by suggestions regarding future research into the issues raised by our investigation.

SECTION ONE : THE SETTING

Field research was undertaken in the Mapumulo and Ndwedwe districts of KwaZulu, about 100 kms from Durban.

Black commercial sugarcane production on 'traditionally' allocated land has, over the past fifteen years developed into the single largest commercial agricultural scheme in KwaZulu, and possibly in South Africa. However gross land use at 51 000ha is not extensive, with growers supplying about 5 percent (a regulated quota) of the total of raw cane received by sugar mills in white Natal.

Only a minority of growers can expect to obtain a monthly income from sugarcane equivalent to the household subsistence level. Net incomes from the crop remain essentially a supplement to migrant remittances, local wage labour or salaried employment and private enterprises such as storekeeping, speculating, building and so on. Individual holdings of cultivated land range from less than 1 ha to 8 ha (Cobbett 1984, p.369) with an average of 2 ha (*Natal Mercury*, 7.1.1985).

After some hesitance to the overall aims of the scheme, formally introduced in 1974, a large part of the communities visited are now keen to establish land holdings to sugarcane. Considerable assistance is supplied by the sugar millers, and obtaining quotas for increased throughput of cane in an industry whose product is over-supplied locally and internationally is the only limiting factor to the continued rapid expansion of small-holder production.

Gilbert (1981, p.136) notes some reasons for people wishing to become involved in the scheme in a nearby location. These include: a desire for social status as a field of cane symbolises a wish to become involved in the community through membership of the farmers' association; cane development would bring a road to one's homestead, or prevent a township encroaching, and obviously the possibility of an increased income in the future.

Most growers have had limited capital, capital equipment and expertise in the production of cane and thus the Financial Aid Fund, in conjunction with the millers, provide an extensive package of services to the aspirant growers. These include land preparation, seed cane, fertiliser and planting operations. Loans of about R1 000 per ha are granted for an ideal ten years (or four cuttings) at ten percent interest. Deductions for loan costs and services rendered are made from proceeds of sale of cane to the millers. Cane harvesting and transport costs, which is work undertaken by 'private sector' contractors are also deducted from crop proceeds.

Many contractors also grow cane and have procured finance for trucks, tractors and mechanical harvesters from various sources including savings, private sector banks, the KDC and the Financial Aid Fund (FAF).

In some areas contractors were appointed to undertake work, but with the expansion of the scheme the number of contractors proliferated, due to the perceived rewards of the work, and an oversupply developed, forcing some out of business. In the course of my visits I was told 'contractors are always trying to destroy each other' as they compete vigorously for labour, work and profits in face to face communities where everybody knows everybody else's business.

The following anecdotal description of a typical contractor's working day is included in order to set out some dimensions, structural and otherwise, of our subject's position and role as entrepreneur in a modernising community, where commercial relations of production and exchange are rapidly intruding upon relationships formally bound by limited subsistence production, extensive migrant wage labour and authority delegated through traditional institutions including chiefs and the established churches.

A typical day begins at about 5 am when our contractor drives his truck to an area anything from 5 to 30 km away to recruit labour to assist in the day's task. It is largely unmarried girls and women between the

ages of sixteen and thirty who volunteer for a day's labour cutting cane for wages between R3 and R4 per day, although I was told that married women are increasingly going out to work.

Recruitment is from relatively far away from the contractor's base, as those living close by are often in close contact with the contractor's residence through links of kin, residence or association in the same neighbourhood under a chief or induna. Contractual relationships involving daily wage labour could impinge on these relations, as, firstly, the local community stand to gain from the contractor's successes and status. Contractors seem intent on dispensing largesse or patronage in the form of goods and services. Secondly, success in contracting can be invested in enterprises locally, which could threaten or create commercial dependency among neighbours and kin (see Section Five).

However, by the same token women prefer to work long distances away from home as they meet new people, especially men, and find out what other women are doing! Some contractors have difficulty securing a full labour complement for a day's work for a number of reasons. One is his reputation, which travels far and wide. Another is a combination of the above as many girls and women prefer to work for white farmers in adjacent districts who, while paying less, have reputations for treating workers more fairly. Certainly the disparagement directed by the contractor towards his labour force is exceeded in its intensity only by its repetition, notwithstanding the ideals of cooperation and reciprocity, announced and practised frequently.

After pointing out work to the labour force a contractor will attend to business at home, at the bank, the mill or in the nearest town, or pursue important community matters such as farmers' association meetings or church matters. Involvement with the farmers' association or association of contractors is important for it is here that reputations, as well as requests for his services are made.

The relationship between contractors and growers is a difficult one for a number of reasons. One is because formal channels for the recruitment

of a contractor to cut one's cane (and hence to take a more than sizeable portion of one's final cheque) are not always clearly established.

The frequent complaint of growers is that contractors fail to ensure that their labour cut the cane stalks at ground level, which involves back-breaking work, the neglect of which is reflected in the grower's final cheque. Thus choosing the right person is important as work well done protects one's investment in one's crop. Another reason is that contractors are perceived to becoming wealthier and attaining more prestige, status and privilege at the expense of growers. In many instances this appeared to be the case. Successful contractors do not have to migrate to Durban, Stanger, Johannesburg or the Free State gold fields and they enjoy, potentially or actually, the benefits of an independent life with all the associated risks.

Interestingly Gilbert (1982, p.182) describes contractors as being people more integrated into the modern world, showing a more positive self image than growers, and a desire to change (see Section Five).

At various times during the day a contractor will return to the field of operations, supervise loading of cane and either drive the truck or instruct his driver to deliver the product to the depot or mill. After the final load has been transported, mishaps such as mechanical breakdowns, drunken drivers, recalcitrant labourers or growers notwithstanding, he transports workers to their home areas and drives home in the late evening.

SECTION TWO : THEORETICAL APPROACHES

Theoretical approaches to entrepreneurship can be placed into two broad groupings - those economic, sociological and psychological approaches developed from the study of western industrial societies and economies, and the later economic, sociological/anthropological theories developed from field investigation in developing countries. A brief examination of the first group of general theorising reveals a number of approaches to entrepreneurship and/or the role of the entrepreneur.

The early classical economic Adam Smith saw the source of entrepreneurial action in a

> 'trucking and bartering spirit.' (Gurzynski, 1976:p.19)

Other classical economists located entrepreneurs in a class position, acting as a combination of capitalist and manager. However Kilby (1971, p.4) notes that

> 'John Stuart Mill, in a restatement of classic economic theory separated the entrepreneurial function from that of providing capital.'

While neo-classical theory has

> 'tied the entrepreneur to profits ..... the neo-classical entrepreneur appears to produce nothing and at best 'manages' resources.' (Gurzynski, 1976:p.28)

In Marxist analysis the entrepreneur as a separate category appears to be submerged in the division between workers and capitalists, but is generally located alongside capitalists (see Hart, 1975:p2).

In 'The Fundamental Phenomenon of Economic Development' Schumpeter (1934, p.68) sets out a range of psychological motives for entrepreneurial behaviour, typifying our elusive Heffalump thus:

> 'The typical entrepreneur is more self-centred than other types because he relies less than they do on tradition and connection and because his characteristic task, theoretically as well as historically, consists of breaking up the old and creating newer tradition. Although this allies primarily to his economic action it also extends to the moral, cultural and social consequences of it.'

Kilby (1971) describes Schumpeter's economic leaders as:

> 'individuals motivated by an atavistic will to power, who occur randomly in any ethnically homogenous population. Their special characteristics are an instrumental capacity to see things in a way which afterwards proves correct, an energy of will and mind to overcome fixed habit of thought, and the capacity to withstand opposition.'

Another psychologically based explanation for entrepreneurial motives and behaviour has been set forth by McClelland (1961) in 'The Achieving Society'. A development of Weber's tenet which set a direct link between ideological values and entrepreneurial behaviour, McClelland, after empirical testing ascribed the learning of the achievement motive to child-rearing practices which stressed standards of excellence, maternal warmth, self-reliance training and low father dominance. In a later work McClelland *et al.* (1969) changed his position about the importance of child-rearing with motivation seen to be the result of an

> 'ideological arousal of a latent need for achievement among adults, typically associated with a new sense of superiority.' (Kilby, 1971:p.10)

For Max Weber economic behaviour is seen to be inseparable from the ideas with which men pursue their economic interests. The entrepreneurial motive is seen as an atavism from the influences of protestant doctrines:

> 'the idea of duty prowling about in our lives like the ghost of dead religious beliefs.' (Weber, 1930:p.182)

This eclectic excursion into approaches to entrepreneurship illuminates Hart's (1976, p.86) wisdom:

> 'the term 'entrepreneur' is used in social science and history to denote a bewildering variety of persons ... It is clear that the word is normally used by analysts to mean whatever they like.'

However two broad themes may be discerned. One is the identification of values, attitudes and behaviour which act as incentives for, or determinants of 'entrepreneurship' and the other is attempts to locate entrepreneurs in or from a social and economic stratum in society. These themes have a bearing on this paper as we turn to approaches towards entrepreneurs in the third world, particularly in the discipline of anthropology.

The emerging importance of anthropological approaches towards issues of development in the 'third world', such as the entrepreneurs of this study, have been promoted by the increasing inapplicability of dominant paradigms of thought, analysis and consequently, planning. The obvious and apparent distortion of plans and programmes conceived and executed with an intellectual ethnocentricism which has dominated 'development' theory for the past three decades has led to new theories which attempt to both explain and locate 'contemporary circumstances' in the third world in terms of these regions historic and particular conditions as well as their position relative to dominant 'western' economies. (See Rogers, 1976: p.121-135.)

In the search for some essential attributes of our elusive Heffalump, (who doesn't live in Europe or America) it is pertinent to see how 'underdevelopment' theory locates our category of person.

In developing countries both capitalist and non-capitalist 'modes of production' frequently co-exist with increasing interaction and inter-

dependency. The 'underdevelopment' school maintains that the penetration of metropolitan-controlled capital and technology force social and economic relations of 'dependant' countries to become structured to suit metropolitan interests.

At the regional and local level increasing interaction and exchange is undertaken by groups and individuals. In terms of the underdevelopment thesis these people are variously 'comprador bourgeoisie' or incipient capitalists. Analysts (Frank, 1969; Laclau, 1971) tend to locate individuals within an economic and class structure stretching from the metropolis to the local situation. However anthropologists tend to focus attention on such people as entrepreneurs, and political and cultural brokers or big men, as they take a lead in entering into new and different forms of production and exchange.

In terms of the above the two major approaches are the transactional approach, which concentrates on identifying the types of exchanges which occur between such entrepreneurs and their social environments, and the decision-making approach which analyses the process by which entrepreneurs make or are constrained to make decisions relating to the mobilisation of resources and questions concerning investment and a market strategy. As Long (1977, p.106) notes:

> 'the overall analytical objective of both these approaches is to show how various restrictions and incentives, both instrumental and moral operate to affect economic behaviour and performance and to show why it is that particular individuals or social categories may come to monopolise entrepreneurial positions.'

In a study of rural entrepreneurs in Ghana, Keith Hart (1976,p.2) elaborates thus:

> 'social life, unlike the simplified reduction found in ideology and theory, is a dialectical process in which individuals and groups seek to resolve fundamental

contradictions operating as opposed pressures on their behaviour and thought. The process of personal enrichment highlights the contradiction between self and other, individual and society, private and public interests. At the bottom lies the contradiction, at least in the short term, between accumulation and consumption. Conflict, both within the individual himself and in his exchanges with those around him is the inevitable product of this clash of interests, but this may be offset by compensating measures which allow the individual to maintain viable solidary relationships with his fellows and which will reduce the antipathies and social conflict generated by his personal success', and

'The central paradox of Frafra entrepreneurship is contained in the struggle of each individual to resolve the conflicting demands of personal accumulation and social equity. Entrepreneurs of this kind are not stable psychological or sociological types, but individuals enmeshed in a variety of exchanges with their social environment throughout their fluctuating careers.' (p.33)

Thus the theoretical framework used as a background for this study encompasses the exchange approach which covers a variety of dimensions under consideration. Elements of return migration theorising are also included in the analysis.

SECTION THREE : RESEARCH

3.1 A Note of Methods

A central debate in the social sciences has evolved around the relative merits of two major approaches to the study and interpretation of social phenomena.

Mouton (1984, p.5) defines scientific research as

> 'a collaborative human activity whereby a certain aspect of reality is investigated in an objective and critical way with the objective of collecting and gathering valid information in order to support or refute a particular proposition or set of propositions so as to describe, analyse or predict a certain aspect of reality.'

In adopting a theoretical approach and research methodology for this pilot study a choice between two schools was apparent. On the one hand logical positivists look for 'facts' and 'causes' in order to derive verifiable theories or explanations by a process of logical deductivism. (See Black, 1983:p.389.) Beginning with preconstructed schema and using questionnaires, schedules, tests or scales, the quantitative information obtained is used to statistically prove relationships between defined variables. The aim is to

> 'deduce testable research hypothesis from existing theories which can be supported or refuted by quantitative data.' (Mouton, 1984:p.11)

Further, the process involves a split. The initial construction of schemata of the phenomenon is usually done independently of the research method used for testing the 'perspective' and

> 'conventional research procedures are seen as neutral ways of confirming or supporting the view.' (Phillopson, 1972:p.75)

In contrast 'phenomenologists', for want of a better word, attempt to begin from the Lebenswalt of people as subject matter and to move from here to some kind of interpretative scheme (see Mouton, 1984:p.11). Research methods involve participant observation, indepth and open-ended interviewing with an associated emphasis on insider rather than outsider perspectives. Approaches are emic rather than etic and data is more often than not qualitative and descriptive. Ideally the

> 'development of analytical, conceptual and categorical components comes from the data itself.' (Filstead, 1970:p.6)

In many instances the nature of the subject matter for investigation determines approach and method. Large-scale studies covering limited variables, or easily noted attributes such as attitudes, are capable of being undertaken by more structured and manageable techniques, and a positivist emphasis will predominate. Smaller studies, where time can be spent uncovering the ramifications of complicated and obscure interacting variables of social and other phenomena are more amenable to the phenomenologists. Often a combination of both methods can be used to good effect.

Finally at the end of the day a researcher's own personal predilections, interests and attitudes form the basis for choice of methods and hence results; a course of events which stokes the fires of the social sciences continually as the nature of evidence becomes contentious, and in this country, highly politicised.

Further, Black (1983) notes some constructive and destructive implications of both approaches:

> 'the adoption of a participative observation technique may render a well intentioned positivist study highly meaningless... if the participant observer were able to identify such a large number of significant variables as to destroy the operational value of his proposed theory altogether. However it may enable the creative scientist to devise

> a truly explanatory and verifiable theory by selecting the most appropriate set of significant variables from among the multitude of real world data .... or it may provide him with the 'non-ad-hoc' assumptions necessary to enhance the status of existing theories.'

3.2 Research Design and Fieldwork Methods

For this study the research methods employed involved a combination of participant observation and the use of a set of pre-prepared, open-ended questions. This approach was determined by the subject matter - isolated individuals at their homesteads, as well as the need to have a limited structure with which to approach the matters being considered. These included both intimate biographical details and sensitive issues about the nature of the person's relationships with his surrounding community. Neither areas of information would have been forthcoming from a structured questionnaire schedule. Indeed the necessary probing, together with the degree of empathy required with respondents was both stimulating and exhausting.

Interviews lasted between two and six hours each, with field notes taken during and after each session. No tape recorder was used, as the author felt this technique would impinge on a rapport essential to an enquiry of this nature, and also because he was able to cross to the vernacular in conversation to highlight an issue or question.

Assistance was given by two black extension officers attached to the Glendale Stanger mill who were intimately involved with the circumstances of both growers and contractors. The choice of these assistants, rather than using somebody from outside the district was prompted by a number of criteria. Firstly the two men, obviously people of calibre, had been chosen by the Sugar Millers from the ranks of KwaZulu Government service. Secondly, both were working in areas away from their homes, and in the course of day to day work became intimately involved with, and confidants of, the affairs of individuals whom they advised. Certainly their frequency of daily visits to different households, the need to fit in, and their own

personal ambitions of becoming successful businessmen in their own right one day, all contributed to the aims and substance of this study. In a sense they were sociologists of the community they served, a fact no more apparent in the manner in which they approached me, their subject matter! I was watched, observed, imitated, challenged and dissected as 'this person from the university' went about his rather obscure business.

One limitation emerged however, after a number of interviews, when the assistant felt he understood the substance of the questions. A tendency emerged for him to attempt to dominate proceedings, and direct enquiry away from issues in which he had had some sort of involvement. However, by maintaining a persistent and empathetic approach to the interviewee this element was easily overcome, and often after the interview I was able to question the assistant about certain matters, which he then was only too interested to elaborate on, responding to myself in a totally different context.

3.3 The Sample

The choice of contractors was done with the assistance of the manager of Glendale mill, Mr. Gavin Wiseman. Our criteria of choice was determined by the need to be able to interview contractors exhibiting a range of circumstances, or degrees of success in their enterprises, as well as to have people in different stages of their 'life cycles' or development cycles. To this end choices were arbitrary and subjective, based on Mr. Wiseman's and the two assistants' detailed knowledge of financial circumstances and length of time spent contracting. Thus 'good', 'poor' and 'medium' contractors were chosen. In all, twelve contractors were interviewed. Three were from the area around Mapumulo town, three from Maqodini, two from Maqumbi, two from the Umvoti valley and three from the Newspaper area of both Mapumulo and Ndwedwe districts of KwaZulu. Six case studies of the twelve have been presented, as they represent the degree of heterogeneity of the whole sample (and are not ideal typical). The remaining cases do not differ radically from these presented, and since our objective is not a quantitative analysis of a list of fixed attributes, have been omitted to avoid

repetition.

3.4 Research Aim and Working Hypothesis

My intention, having read the literature (Long, 1977; Hart, 1977; Møller, 1984) was to attempt to explain the performances of contractors, not in a conventional economic analysis of inputs, work, output and so on, but in an examination of a contractor's multiple relationships, both in the course of his individual career, as well as during his tenure as a contractor. Such an approach was felt to be able to throw more light on the 'dynamics' of this category of person. As discussed in Section Two the analytical approach used is exchange theory.

Our working hypothesis is defined thus:

> Success in contracting (the ability to continue an enterprise indefinitely) cannot be measured in terms of conventional economic criteria, i.e. the ability to make profits and repay loans in the market place.
>
> Rather, a contractor's operation needs to be viewed as part of a process of individual accumulation through self initiative in a community undergoing changes in forms of production and exchange. The individual management of this process involves the adoption of strategies of a personal, social and economic nature, with contracting being one of a possible variety of economic ventures.
>
> A consequence of accumulation is both increased social status and social conflict which requires resolution at the level of ideology and in relationships with the ordinary community.

Thus, through a study of personal histories combining material transactions, social relations and ideological statements, it was hoped that

a pattern, sufficient in substance, from which to make generalised explanations about this type of entrepreneurial performance might emerge.

SECTION FOUR : THE DATA - CASE STUDIES

A was born in 1924 in Kranskop, the third son of a labourer. Illiterate, he worked until 1955 at a timber concern's garage, learning mechanical work and obtaining a heavy duty driver's licence. Moving to rented single quarters in Stanger he then drove trucks for an Indian cartage contractor. In 1960 he obtained rights to land from the induna at Maqumbi, building his first and only modest home. Feeling that 'Indians take blood from your throat' he joined the NPA as a labourer in 1962 and over the next two decades has accumulated a modest workshop of tools and his first secondhand truck. He also remarried after the death of his first wife, and became Bishop of a Zionist church which he started. By 1979 he was in a position to buy a new truck with the help of the KDC and his son and he began contracting. Initial modest success was ascribed to hard work and a solid faith, and contacts from his informal workshop services. In 1983 he bought a tractor and trailor (secondhand) going heavily into debt. At about the same time a KDC garage and workshop was established not far from his home, taking business away. At the time of my visit he faced a declining flock, a declining garage business and costs of heavy repairs to his tractor. By his own admission his spread of interests, including church, workshop and contracting, were proving too difficult to manage, reasons being attributed to an incorrect mental attitude - 'I am now an old and stupid man.' (A is best described as a 'poor' contractor.)

B, born into the Nazareth Church, left school in 1953 and worked in Durban until 1961 when face to face racial discrimination led him to return to the Umvoti valley to assist in expanding his father's sugar-cane lands. With the help of his father's brother and a BIC loan in 1969 they bought their first tractor. The period to 1978 was one of expansion, obtaining more land from a deceased brother of the grand-father, and beginning to contract land preparation services. B took a leadership role in a sect of the church, established a farmers' association of which he was chairman, bought his own truck and in 1978 bought a shop, to be managed by his second wife. In 1981 he obtained

more land on the death of his grandfather. By 1982 he needed a new tractor, bought on credit, like the store. Contract land preparation work was reduced by the mills's involvement here, and at the same time his sect were involved in a split from the main church and he became, and still is, embroiled in a leadership struggle. Together with the drought, problems with obtaining labour, and repairs to his truck, B faces a period of consolidation as he tries to marshall shop, contracting, growing and leadership roles which together are draining his energies. (B's performance is considered 'medium'.)

C, a younger, cheerful man with six children, at 44, began work as a driver at Ridgeview quarries in Durban for seven years. Living in a single-men's hostel in Umlazi, he changed his ways after conversion to the body of the Twelve Apostles Church, which ensured that he stopped drinking and smoking. Another ten years were spent driving heavy duty trucks in the 'white' sugar industry, not far from his home. During this period he acquired a van, began growing his own sugarcane and 'assisted the community' by carting poles, firewood and riversand.

In 1982, with the expansion of sugar growing in his area he quit full-time employment, obtained a KDC loan for his first tractor and began contracting. In 1983 he obtained his second tractor. His venture seems secure, although embryonic, and the pragmatic, well organised but modest man attributes his luck and success to moderation, keeping a close watch on his assets, and a desire to 'serve' the community. (A medium contractor.)

D, born a Lutheran, spent six years in a KwaMashu house while driving buses for Putco, and then returned home to Maqumbi with his wife and two children to drive taxis for 15 years. In 1980 he planted 7 ha to cane with a FAF loan, and with savings bought a truck, beginning his contracting by carting firewood and building sand for his neighbourhood. With the permission of the farmers' association he has recently begun contracting, hauling cane by day and ploughing land at night, supplementing income by growing potatoes and maize for sale locally. While living on credit he realises the need to manage separately,

income and expenditure from his various enterprises. His recently acquired stature is attributed directly to his faith and perseverance. He intends ensuring that the 'community' benefits from his rewards by obtaining a borehole to be installed nearby, from which water can be gravity fed to surrounding homesteads. (Medium to good.)

E, sporting Rastafarian dreadlocks and an outgoing personality to match, is something of the proverbial entrepreneurial whizzkid at 24. The second son of the second wife of a man (no doubt of similar nature) with two households 300 km apart, E began saving from doing interior decorating jobs to homesteads as far afield as Msinga and Greytown, as well as fixing watches - all in his school holidays. At 15 he bought his first Toyota (in 1975). He left school in 1980 for two brief stints as a labourer in Durban. Returning to Newspaper, where he had already planted 2 ha to cane he sold his car and with R1 000 from his sister and a FAF loan he bought his first truck and began contracting. By May 1982 he had bought a second truck and by May 1983 his first tractor.

The pace of his accumulation has been matched by his tendency to capsize his vehicles. The narrow feeder roads to land holdings claimed a victim in November 1983, a feat E managed to reproduce in July 1984. He had in the meantime obtained finance for a second tractor in January 1984.

With a very contemporary sense of social responsibility E is close to the people he employs, many older than himself. A perpetual banter between himself and his labourers ensures a day's work done.

He sees to needs such as procuring coffins if one's nearest has died, and helps out with a variety of necessities for his labour, stating emphatically that one must assist those who work for you.

By the age of 30 E hopes to have paid off his trucks and tractors, hand the business to someone he can trust and then concentrate on hauling cane from the depot to the mill in a large, articulated, 'Hino' horse and trailer. He has no religious affiliations. (A 'good' contractor.)

F, an astute and modest man of the Full Gospel church in Newspaper, has played a leading role in the development of his area. Starting work as a farm labourer in Seven Oaks, he began his career in business by procuring a secondhand van and carting power-paraffin and firewood for sale on weekends. Along with a little speculation in goats, as well as growing and selling quality beans and maize to people in his area, he increased his savings to the extent he could buy a maizemill. At about the same time, having planted 2 ha to cane with a FAF loan he bought his first tractor with a KDC loan, and began contracting. With a substantial income from milling services he bought a second tractor and drew in his two brothers as assistants, not wanting to employ others. They brought very little capital between them yet by February 1984, with the help of private sector banks and income from the other ventures they bought their first Kombi taxi, and in April the second taxi.

F provides a milling, contracting, taxi and food service to a diverse community. With so many people coming to him, he also goes to the people. Holding office in the church, he helped build a chapel and donates a tithe. He holds an annual party at the end of each cutting season to which all neighbours, growers and church members from afar afield as Durban attend. Patronage is dispensed through the waivering of fees for work done, where people cannot pay. Success is mildly recognized, yet uncertainties, debt, and expenses keep K aware of the need to keep money circulating from one enterprise to support and prop the other. While milling is consistently more lucrative than anything else F feels he can maintain his burgeoning balancing act. (A 'good' contractor.)

SECTION FIVE : ANALYSIS

These cases represent the degree of heterogeneity within the whole sample, and as such provide an illustration of the type of person selected for study.

In order to be able to make any generalised explanations we need to find if any internal consistency exists within the data. In terms of the working hypothesis it now seems worthwhile to look at the substance of the variety of relationships in a contractor's career in terms of seven dimensions. These were chosen on the basis of issues raised in the literature, the working hypothesis and from the data. They include:

(i) space, in this case the nature of links between town and country, which occur over time;

(ii) the development of 'change' in local economy and society;

(iii) kin - the extent to which these relationships impinge or assist an individual's career;

(iv) neighbourhood and community, similar to (iii);

(v) both methods and facilities assisting an individual's process of accumulation;

(vi) management practices and procedures.

5.1 Space

Our contractors may be described, ambivalently, as fortunate. Briefly, on the one hand the dominant state has historically limited the expansion of 'traditional' patterns of land allocation - the results of which affects an individual's potential for developing an estate of any significance, as well as the form and extent of his inheritance. On the other hand young men have been able, or forced, to move to the developing 'white' commercial and industrial centres. Durban and surrounding areas have provided both an area of opportunity and an escape from the constraints upon an individual or enterprise, (particularly

the dominance of the aged).

In South Africa's context the conventional liberal/radical generalisation which maintains that

> 'the restrictions on the mobility of black people imposed by the influx control system curtailed migration to the towns and inhibited the acquisition of skills necessary for full participation in a modern technological society,'
>
> (Chaskalson and Duncan, 1984:p.88)

does not apply to our data. Of the sample B, C and D moved as young men to Durban, worked in formal sector jobs and gained expertise later to be used in the developing sugar industry. Both A and F moved into the 'white' rural sector and our peripatetic E sought avenues for advancement providing services in his own community, albeit at some distance from home. Most had fairly long periods in wage labour before deciding, around early middle age to return to a home area, (except A) cut ties from secure wage employment and concentrate on developing their own ventures. Four men attempted to build their home-based enterprises from a distance, remaining in employment before making a final 'break'. None had migrant careers of a really fluctuating nature.

To a considerable extent, the limitations of the above quote do not apply to our sample, and studies of return migration assist in locating their circumstances. In Turkey, for example, Penninx (1982, p.797) notes that

> 'a significant part of (remittances and savings) are used for investment in future businesses. Those who wish to return to agriculture invest in land and equipment, others buy shops, vans, taxis, buses or petrol stations to establish themselves in the service sector and a small part invests in small workshops.'

Closer to home Schlemmer and Møller (1979) note generally that cane farming, taxi driving and retailing are perceived as viable options on return from urban employment. In an overview of return migration

literature, however, Møller (1984, p.8) summarising, considers that

> 'in short 'return migration for development' has proved a myth in the view of many migration researchers,'

and adopts Cerase's (1974) typology to distinguish types of return migration, namely failure, conservation, retirement and innovation. In terms of this typology our contractors could be placed in the small grouping of innovative returnees, capable of making a positive contribution to development of sender areas, usually timing return in mid-career. As noted, most have remained wage earners as long as feasible, building enterprises from around the workplace, and attempting to get necessary skills like truck driving and mechanical work.

5.2 Change in the Countryside

The utilisation of savings and skills obtained in other sector employment, with a view to making an independent living on return, needs to be seen against the extent of 'change' in the countryside.

The Small Cane Growers Financial Aid Fund has contributed considerably to the 'opening up' of Ndwedwe and Mapumulo, resulting in potential for diversification and the commercialisation of production and exchange. Along with the development of the KwaZulu administration and all the ancilliary services, (health, infrastructure, education and so on) the area now has relatively more avenues for endogeneous forms of social mobility and accumulation. Also, with increased demand for a variety of minor small scale services (the goat trade, maize milling, interior decorating, vegetable and cereal selling, firewood and sand carting and commodity and passenger transport undertaken by our sample) which have been promoted by both the absence of household heads and their remittances, opportunities for entrepreneurial activities are promoted by the provision of credit from the State (the KDC).

Such a milieu provides for easy entry to men and women with an 'eye for the main chance'. Our sample have responded principally in areas where the use of transport affords a diverse and various return - sugar-cane contracting, goat selling, carting essentials and so on. Previous

mention has been made of the initial rush by people to get into contracting, and the extent to which contractors appear bent on destroying each other. However overall levels of development remain relatively low, primarily due to an absence of a market in land, land pressure and the limited size of local demand; while entry into forms of entrepreneurial activity may be relatively easy in this milieu, a quick or slow exit is just as likely. Summarising, our main point is that 'other sector' experience, and 'new' rural opportunities offer a pit-filled avenue for the expansion of endogenous forms of accumulation and social mobility for men of enterprise. In combination and in association with the dimensions to be discussed, we may find some essential elements of successful entrepreneurship.

5.3 Kin

Hart (1976) succinctly notes the extent and influence of kin on the course of an entrepreneur's career. On the one hand,

> 'it is virtually impossible to accumulate riches .... without creating antagonisms within one's circle of immediate kinsmen. Younger men are likely to offend their elders by spending too much time working exclusively for themselves, mature men are almost always in competition with their brothers and near agnates for control of scarce lineage resources in the form of land, labour and livestock; as fathers and lineage elders themselves they are prone to being accused of exploiting the labour of their womenfolk and adult children without sharing the rewards, or of diverting joint property to their own private ends. These conflicts make the management of domestic social relations an extremely difficult art for the agricultural entrepreneur. On the whole the blackest accounts of an individual's path to riches are to be heard from his nearest relatives, most of whom can usually point to some way in which the accumulator overrode their interests for the sake of concentrating resources in his own hands,' (p.25), and

> 'where the conflicts really started were over the destinations of the entrepreneurial surpluses and the mechanisms developed by entrepreneurs for dealing with their close kin' (p.27).

Conversely Hart maintains that intra-lineage sources of

> 'inheritance, gifts and loans play a negligible role in the generation of entrepreneurial surpluses', the

the Frafra accumulator essentially 'making it' on his own.

In contrast our data indicates more than half the sample obtained material and other support from sources within the immediate family. A was assisted by his son, B gained land from elder kinsmen, and put his second wife to manage his shop. D returned to exploit lineage held land commercially while driving a taxi. E gained a substantial cash injection from his sister and F drew in his brothers to assist manage his expanding enterprise. Only C managed alone.

In Mapumulo and Ndwedwe it can be said that familial resources contribute to both the institution, and promotion and continuation of a contractor's career. Returns from sugarcane production on 'lineage lands' assist considerably, being one of the major sources of entry into contracting. Assistance from family in the form of labour on associated enterprises and the homestead contribute to the career. The extent to which kin act as a drain on a career was not sufficiently queried however, but it is assumed that consumption requirements and demands increase with the expansion of the use of the conjugal family, with particular stages in the cycle of such a family making excessive demands on returns from individual accumulation. Within this group the substance of the first quote in this sub-section would require, obviously, long term fieldwork.

5.4 Neighbourhood and Community

Almost universally the 'individualistic' pursuit of profit in poor rural communities is viewed as anti-social and dangerous, undermining an ethic

of shared, routinised and unavoidable poverty. With regard to this feature of accumulation, in this country conventional (white) disparagement is of the order of 'if a black man succeeds, the others will try to bring him down'. Contextualized explanations for the resulting witchcraft thesis are made in terms of the

> 'belief system providing a measure of security against intra-community exploitation .... in a situation of relative deprivation.' (Derman, 1983:p.11)

Part of the working hypothesis of this paper is that success in contracting is likely to generate social and ideological conflict within the community that provides the resources and demand facilitating individual enrichment. For the contractor and the community, this requires a practical and ideological resolution involving various (what are at best termed) strategies. The previously quoted paradox (p.11) between private accumulation and some sort of social equity is manifested in a variety of forms in our sample.

In response to queries of 'what is likely to stop a contractor being successful?' and 'to you, what makes a contractor successful?' answers were invariably and unsurprisingly couched in terms of ordinary personal (moral) attributes such as hard work, abstinence, and also in terms of the basic cost-benefit factors facing small businessmen (particularly the high cost of vehicle repairs). However further queries about 'what has made you, in this area, successful?' elicited responses justifying marginal successes or progress in terms of 'service to the community'.

Beyond these ideological justifications however, further probing revealed a range of practical activities which we argue take the form of a limited redistribution of resources, intended primarily as a strategy to resolve social conflict. Minor activities include the waivering of fees for work done, particularly in carting essentials like firewood and building sand, backing down when disputes over rates of payment threaten to become socially disruptive, and voluntarily providing for important life cycle/life crises situations such as coffins, or free transport to pension

payout points. None of these activities however, are any different from what our average 'small' Durban businessman would provide for his staff and/or clients.

Further, more complicated forms of a socially acceptable redistribution occur, (which may involve a fairly substantial distribution of our contractors' available assets or income) taking place in the form of 'displays' intended as a means for the achievement of social or political prestige.

In the absence of any real avenues for obtaining political power (chiefships being awarded in terms of lineage succession rules, and our men are small fry relative to other competitors for political office in, say, Inkatha or the KwaZulu bureaucracy) my probing revealed a propensity to invest in church groups or 'public works' as a legitimate avenue for obtaining both a forum and a following. Of our sample A, B and F were heavily committed to providing and maintaining a position of power/prestige/ status or service within their respective church groups. This took the forms, variously, of providing a place of workship, meals, transport and a bed, or tithing, annual, biannual or occasional parties, and building chapels in a spiritual community located both locally and in Durban and Inanda.

The desire to reverse the relationship outlined here, and conceptually link church membership or leadership as a factor directly promoting 'success' in contracting would be both naive and premature. Further sustained fieldwork would perhaps reveal a variable and fluctuating relationship between church membership and commercial career. Taking this point further, all our sample, with the exception of E, had strong religious affiliations. A started his own Zionist Church, B was born into the Nazareth Church, C converted to the Twelve Apostles Church, D was born a Lutheran and F joined the Full Gospel Church.

The desire to link conceptually, entrepreneurship and, in this case, religious non-conformity would be naive for the following reasons. Firstly we don't have comparative evidence from a random sample of other return migrants (who are not entrepreneurs) in the same area researched.

Secondly, to assume a link would be attempting to transport to the third world Max Weber's ideal typical analytical link between Protestantism and Capitalism in the West. Thirdly we have tried to show that involvement with a religious congregation (notwithstanding personal protestations about religious affinity) is of a variable and fluctuating nature, almost ad-hoc and overladen with elements of both social and political prestige.

Practical resolution by the poorer community of conflict arising from individual accumulation took the form (in instances) of demanding and expecting work done and then refusing to pay. Such 'stances' are taken in full knowledge of both moral and practical consequences, yet invariably our accumulator cannot make legal claims for such losses incurred, since he adopts the position of public benefactor in many commercial relationships. No doubt the more astute accumulators build a loss factor in their tendering prices or the cost of goods they sell!

Ideological expressions, when I was in the field, took the forms of virulent swearing and disparagement towards employers or owners of stores; certainly not in their presence however! The 'public' idiom given to our men of enterprise, it is suggested, is probably a wealth of symbolic statements, indicating the extent of social and economic 'distance', notwithstanding interdependency and fluctuating status on the basis of personal relationships. Instances of the renowned witchcraft thesis were not encountered however, perhaps due to limited time spent in the area. Further community responses to accumulation require more attention than I have been able to give in this study.

5.5 Methods and Facilities Assisting Accumulation

From our data it is possible to order, generally, the steps, methods and facilities adopted by our sample on the route to becoming contractors.

Firstly while migrant workers in wage labour in the urban industrial or 'other' sector context, skills, albeit limited, are attained to be used later and developed further in private enterprise.

Secondly from this base minor enterprises are initiated at home, usually after attaining personal transport and, obviously, some savings.

Thirdly a diversification of these limited interests becomes possible only with the introduction of two factors in the 'home' context. One is the increased demand for transport services, the other is the increase in a single crop technology (sugarcane extension) and a guaranteed market. The possibilities for increasing returns, actual or potential, are thus available and are achieved invariably with the aid of kin based labour and cash reserves.

Fourthly, having achieved a measure of success so far the entrepreneur is in a position to consider leaving full-time wage employment. With the expansion of the cane growing scheme, contracting offers an avenue for the expansion of existing savings, interests, capital equipment and experience, but it is only through financial services provided by the State (the KDC) and the Financial Aid Fund (FAF) that allow the purchase of the necessary capital equipment for final entry into contracting. (We suggest here that these agencies have a limited set of screening criteria for selecting applicants.)

Finally, having begun the major enterprise the onus immediately falls upon the entrepreneur to successfully manage his diverse portfolio of activities in the context of the social milieu detailed in 5.4.

5.6 Management

> 'The biggest problem with contractors is budgeting. They don't do it, and the result is they extend themselves. Why? Because they want to be big men.'
>
> (Extension Officer, November 1984.)

Personal management of the diverse and somewhat idealised career path detailed above has four main stages.

Initially our men of enterprise need to withdraw, relying on themselves to attain the necessary basic resources for a commercial career. A

middle stage is a period of both consolidation and diversification of minor enterprises, attempting to maximise the rate of 'capital formation' or savings, with some men having a combination of both high and low risk enterprises. At any of these stages many aspiring entrepreneurs may have failed to attain the necessary combination of skills, social and economic resources necessary for the next stage. This is the 'make or break' phase when entry into contracting is attempted and attained, a step requiring considerable expenditure and debt.

The fourth stage is dominated by the necessity to manage the combination or portfolio of enterprises successfully, within the context of diverse interests and aptitudes as well as differing rates of return for different levels of effort. Obviously this is the most crucial stage in a career, subject to the vagaries of economic competition and social desires and demands.

At the outset, and with reference to the above quote, the most crucial feature of this stage is the necessity to successfully allocate income between the demands of:

(a) (i) capital investments

(ii) interest bearing loans

(iii) fixed costs of each operation, and

(iv) running costs (particularly vehicle and equipment repairs),

(b) the requirements of personal and domestic consumption, and

(c) the demands or perceived necessity of a socially acceptable form of redistribution of actual, embryonic or relative wealth.

That these requirements are invariably not achieved by our sample could conveniently be attributed, in ordinary management terms, to a lack of appropriate technical and financial management skills, shortages of time and perhaps an inappropriate extension service. However these explanations would deny the social and historical/personal operational context I have detailed in this section.

Turning to the data A, a 'poor' contractor, is at the end point in a declining career. His supplementary sources of income are drying up, (the workshop), running costs are proving insurmountable and social prestige and status is waning. Presently dividing his time between church group, workshop and driving his truck he is overwhelmed by the prospect of a successful resuscitation of a viable business. Indeed from our analysis he is unlikely to be able to succeed without:

(i) drawing in more family labour

(ii) expanding a supplementary operation, or

(iii) reducing his number of vehicles.

B, a medium performer, successfully entered our 'fourth stage', and over the years expanded his portfolio to include a shop, more land to sugarcane (totalling 14 ha) and land preparation services. A complicated combination of enterprises, drought, vehicle replacement costs, the drying up of a supplementary source of income and personal social demands in his church means

(i) cutting back on income draining activities such as the church, or

(ii) a reduction of lands worked and perhaps

(iii) selling the shop.

C has recently entered the 'fourth stage' with a limited portfolio of minor enterprises not substantially detracting from his central contracting operation. While still managing considerable debt he has not ventured into a further income draining enterprise, nor is he investing in any form of conspicuous personal or social expenditure. It remains to be seen whether

(i) he over-extends his portfolio, or

(ii) generates insufficient returns to maintain and replace his assets.

D, a medium performer, has also recently entered contracting from a relatively strong position as taxi driver and farmer (7 ha in a consolidated block). While well extended in season with contract land preparation at night, he gains a quick return on capital invested. Personal consumption is limited to improving his family home but he anticipates considerable social expenditure. Further progress may be boosted by

(i) substantial returns from ancilliary enterprises or alternatively, limited by

(ii) increased personal or social expenditure and

(iii) expanding capital and interest requirements.

F, definitely 'successful', followed the classic path from small beginnings to better things. From a diverse but limited portfolio of enterprises his venture into maize-milling successfully promoted his entry into contracting and he has since expanded into taxi-operating. Only recently has he seen the need for management along the lines of criteria outlined above, and notwithstanding potential mishaps with regard to

(i) filial and domestic relationships

(ii) physical accidents

(iii) excessive personal and domestic consumption and

(iv) intensified commitment to status of both a religious and social/political nature he seems to best fit our conception of a truly 'big man'.

5.7 Discussions, Conclusion and Recommendations

This paper began with the opinion that early attempts at planning growth and development in KwaZulu paid insufficient attention to the local context in which forms of rurally based free enterprise activity take place, and a micro-level study might contribute towards more effective policy packages. Noting the limited applicability of theoretical approaches

to entrepreneurship in the established and eurocentric academic disciplines, as well as the increasing tendency for the operationalisation of development programmes undertaken within these dominant theoretical paradigms to yield unexpected and sometimes negative results, we posited that an exchange approach to the analysis of entrepreneurship in the 'third world' involving a processual type analysis of material, social and ideological transactions would yield a better understanding of the forms and content of rurally based free enterprise activities.

Our findings suggest that black contractors in the emerging black sugar industry need to be viewed as a small proportion of return migrant workers who attempt to build their major enterprise from the base of a range of small scale, risk spreading operations. The major factors without which this process could not be achieved are family resources of cash, labour and land, state and private sector credit, as well as the expanding development of sugarcane in the area.

As we purported in our working hypothesis, the path of accumulation for an individual is likely to raise conflict, which requires resolution at the level of both self and society, finding a practical expression in forms of redistribution of wealth. Overall levels of wealth achieved are, however, invariably low and contractors are involved in a balancing act while attempting to marshall the resources from the sources outlined above. Management is thus the most crucial aspect of a career, requiring recognition of the need to allocate all income between capital, interest and recurrent cost requirements, personal and domestic expenditure, and what we call social expenditure, in a manner not detracting from the continued performance of any of these necessary aspects. Success in contracting them is only likely to be achieved by an individual who firstly has a secure base in ancilliary ventures and secondly, manages his 'mixture' of enterprises with recognition of the above principles.

That this is often not achieved is, we argue, due to a previously limited recognition of these dynamics by institutional promotors of free-enterprise activity. Thus we suggest that in the recruitment and screening of contractors, organisations like the KwaZulu Development Corporation and

the Financial Aid Fund pay significantly more attention to the diverse nature of an entrepreneur's portfolio of enterprises as a means of evaluating

(i) past performance, and

(ii) potential success, as well as a tool for diagnosing poor performances.

Such approaches would not be difficult, only requiring limited time spent in a processual type evaluation of an individual's personal history, and his various public and private transactions both at home and in the market place.

Finally the reality of successful entrepreneurial performance can best be said to be (rather than a linear progression of capital accumulation in the market place), a fluctuating status over time involving a range of diverse and sometimes conflicting exchanges undertaken in a social and economic milieu both rural and urban.

SECTION SIX : RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This paper has highlighted some essential elements of entrepreneurial performance in rural KwaZulu.

We suggest that the work requires elaboration, both in terms of sample size and in order to develop further important variables of entrepreneurship. Two scenarios are considered feasible; firstly a more extended period of fieldwork in the Mapumulo/Ndwedwe area directed at evaluating entrepreneurship in terms of both return migration factors, as well as the considerable development and change presently taking place in the context of increased sugarcane production. Secondly, perhaps a more empirical study, directed at entrepreneurs in agriculture generally, could be initiated, covering individuals in areas of KwaZulu both North and South of Durban. The author feels that both would be important, considering the significant institutional investment in the promotion and management of rural men of enterprise.

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A COMPLEMENT TO FORMAL EDUCATION: A BRIEF STUDY OF AN INFORMAL ADULT TUITION CENTRE FOR BLACKS IN DURBAN

Lawrence Schlemmer
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July 1980

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1. INTRODUCTION:

The Emmanuel Parish Educational Centre has been in operation since 1968. It was first started by a student group and then taken over by SACHED in 1975. In 1976 a black Committee of Control (many of whom were matriculated students from this centre) took over the running of this Centre under the co-ordination of Sr. Gabriel who has given up convent duties in order to assist in the running of this Centre.

About 300 students, all of them black (largely adults of over 18 years) attend the Centre regularly, receiving tuition in eight subjects. Thirty seven teachers (26 of them white qualified teachers) share the teaching on four evenings a week in two-hour sessions.

Forty two percent of the students reside in the Umlazi township but the remainder come from a large variety of widely dispersed areas, including Kwa Mashu, Lamontville, Chesterville, Clermont and the peri-urban areas of Inanda, Dassenhoek, Umbumbulu and Mariamhill. Some 15% are domestics who live in the more central areas of Durban.

This Centre offers tuition classes only and it is the individual student's responsibility to register for the examination at the local township examination centres. The syllabus at this Centre adheres to the requirements of the National Senior Certificate. The Centre has eight classrooms, two of them hall-size, equipped with blackboards, chairs and tables. The pupils have at least eight toilets and washing facilities. Sr. Gabriel is in full-time attendance to maintain supervision. This Centre has now been ordered to close down by the Department of Education and Training and it is presumed that the reason for this is that sufficient alternative centres and facilities are in fact offered.

Sr. Gabriel and the Committee of Control approached the University of Natal (through the Vice Principal, Professor P. de V. Booysen) to investigate the need for the Emmanuel Parish Educational Centre and the suitability of alternative services. A random sample of students, stratified by area of residence, was drawn. Interviews of approximately 30 minutes duration each were conducted by student volunteers after briefing and under the supervision of one of the authors from the Centre for Applied Social Sciences. The replies were classified and coded for computer analysis, carried out by the University of Natal Computer Centre.

In an investigation of this kind, the possibility always arises that some form of systematic bias occurs in the results —— deliberate attempts by those interviewed to create an impression. For this reason great care was taken to leave the students interviewed as uninformed as possible about the nature and purpose of the investigation. Our overwhelming impression is that the answers were given in innocence and that sincere, if at times, confused replies were obtained. The students generally did not have the sophistication to express preconceived motives through their replies.

2. FACTOR OF PHYSICAL CONVENIENCE:

Members of the staff of the Centre claimed that they were able to offer a service to students which met with practical needs more readily than possible alternatives. In order to assess this factor questions were posed relating to movement to and from the Centre and related considerations.

2.1. The Location of the Centre in relation to Transport.

When students were asked why they came to this particular Centre:

48% Answered that the Centre was convenient both in terms of it being in the centre of Durban and therefore useful to city workers as well as being en route to the transport services used by most of the students (Market St. bus rank and the new Berea Station.)

28% mentioned (in this question) that the official Adult Education Centres they had tried were full or, in some cases, they had failed the previous year and were not allowed to return to the centres they had been attending

24% came to this Centre because it operated in the evenings and they could work during the day, come to classes in the evenings and still be home by 8 p.m. (Township schools only finish classes at 9 p.m.)

Hence the students' claims certainly would suggest that the service is more convenient and accessible than alternatives. This point emerges more clearly when the specific transportation patterns of the students are taken into account:

Fifty-seven percent of all students, when coming to the Centre, use nearby transportation routes, i.e. those ending or commencing at the new Berea Road Station or the contiguous Market Street bus rank, both within a stone's throw of the tuition Centre.

Additionally, 28% of all students use exactly the same transport pattern whether they come to the Centre or not. Therefore, attendance at the Centre involves no change of route for a substantial proportion. This proportion rises to 44% of the employed students (i.e., using the same transport whether attending the Centre or not).

When attendance at the Centre involves a change of transportation pattern the change is of a minor order: i.e., students are either walking or catching buses from other centrally situated employment areas to the Centre. Only a very few come to the Centre from the townships. Even in the case of the unemployed students (46% of the total) the dominant pattern appears to be that they come daily to centrally situated areas to look for work. Hence, the Centre is not attracting people to central areas, away from the townships.

The pattern of transportation is in the mainstream of normal black employee movement from boarding points to places of shopping and employment. This Centre is situated between the Indian Trading Area and the Durban Cemetery. As such it appears to be located in a small traffic zone of uncertain classification in terms of the provisions of the Group Areas Act. If this zone in fact is "white" then it comprises no more than the building in which the Centre is located. It is obvious that by virtue of its position it does not entail students walking through white areas on their way to transport services at 7 p.m. after their classes.

From the students' point of view, the transportation pattern to the Centre is very convenient when compared with what it would be if they attended a township centre.

The number of vehicle changes for a single day for students going to work and then coming to this Centre in the evening before going home are:

46%, 2 vehicles, one into town and one home (no change).
36%, 4 vehicles, two into town and two home (one change).
10%, 3 vehicles, one into town and two home (which includes a taxi).

(The rest require either 6 vehicles or they walk to work because they live on the premises - which would be the case with domestics).

In order to get to the local township centre in the evenings after going to work, on the other hand, it was found that:

3% would require no extra vehicle change in order to get to the Centre (although the late hours were still a point of concern);

19% would require an extra bus/train/taxi there and back;

8% would require two extra buses/trains/taxis there and back; and for

58% it was irrelevant, because either there was no centre available or transport was non-existent or so irregular that respondents would not consider using it at night at all.

From this it is evident that at most 3% of the respondents would have convenient access to one of the official study centres in the townships. A further 9% could actually walk the distance to these centres, but in every case they expressed concern about the danger of doing so and would avoid it at all costs.

2.2. Transport Costs.

Much the same conclusions can be drawn about transport costs. When investigating the costs of transport for a single day going to the respondent's place of work and then coming to the Centre before going home, costs were as follows:

3% paid under 20c per day,

54% paid between 21c and 50c per day;

39% paid between 51c and R1.00 per day; and

4% walked to the Centre.

However, in order to get to their local township centres after work, costs were found to be a great deal higher.

2% could use the same amount on transport;

11% would spend up to half the amount of money again;

15% would have to spend more than half the amount of money again;

4% could only walk to the Centre; for

58% it was irrelevant because either there was no centre available or transport was non-existent or so irregular that respondents would not consider using it at night; and

10% could give no information.

Therefore only 2% of the sample would spend less or the same amount of money to go to a centre in the townships.

2.3. Hours of Work.

The 46% of students who work a regular 8-hour day are able to be at the Centre by 5.00 p.m. for a two-hour lesson and then be at home by 8.00 p.m. Township centres only begin at 7.00 p.m. which suggests that if students leave town at 4.30 or 5.00 p.m. and arrive in their townships by 6.00 p.m. they have an hour to wait for classes or they have to spend extra money on going home for their evening meals and then catching a taxi back to the Centre at 7.00 p.m. Considering the heavy load that most of these workers carry in terms of a full-time job plus regular evening classes plus homework plus (in many cases) running a home, this waste of time or money is a good reason for them to find the Catholic Centre a valuable alternative.

2.4. Safety Factor.

Even more than convenience and the time-factor, the issue of safety is a crucial consideration. Sixty-eight percent of the students travel home together after classes and although it is convenient, 24% specifically stated that they travelled in groups because of the danger of travelling in the townships alone at night. In most questions dealing with why respondents come to this Centre or why they are not studying in townships there was specific mention of these dangers. The fact that evening classes in townships finish at 9.00 p.m. accentuates this problem.

3. AVAILABLE ALTERNATIVES:

When asked about the available alternatives in the form of actual night schools in their local townships:

2% gave no information;
14% did not know of one;
18% quoted the Emmanuel Centre as the most convenient centre for them;
23% answered that no centre at all existed close to their homes; and
43% answered that there were township schools and centres near their homes.

Of this 43%, only 7% had in fact attended these centres. The reasons for the other students either not attending these centres in the first place or leaving them since were as follows:

35% of respondents had transport difficulties;
20% mentioned extra costs involved;
8% mentioned the danger of travelling to these centres at night;
23% said that they were all full;

10% replied that this Centre offered better educational guidance; and 11% could give no reply.*

Of all respondents who knew of other centres under 20% do not have a practical problem preventing them from actually attending a centre in the townships. Alternative calculations show that if the students were able to absorb the increased costs, cope with the transport difficulties and with the dangers of night travel in townships, there would still be some 68% of the sample unable to find a possible alternative due to sheer non-availability and impractical distance.

4. A BROADER ASSESSMENT OF THE SITUATION AND ASPIRATIONS OF THE STUDENTS:

The brief statistics presented in the previous sections seem to show that the Centre has such great practical advantages that its existence may make a critical difference in the educational activities of the students involved. It is perhaps appropriate, therefore, to attempt a brief sketch of the background, aims and goals of the people involved.

While some 56% of the students had attended normal schools in the previous year, the remaining substantial proportion of 44% had last been in school up to 15 years previously. Needless to say, all the people interviewed felt that their education had been prematurely interrupted. Some 29% had to cease their schooling for financial reasons or due to responsibilities to their families. These and 17% more (i.e., nearly 50%) claimed to have to work and therefore had no alternative but to attend night school if they were to continue their education. Nearly 16% could not gain admission to schools because of failure, full schools or the unavailability of required courses or standard. A few fell pregnant or had other health problems.

The students generally had their education interrupted at what is for blacks a fairly advanced stage. One-third are studying for their Junior Certificates and two-thirds for Matriculation. Whether realistic or not, it is commendable that eight out of ten of the students intend studying after Matric, either at Teacher's Training Colleges, at University or at centres for Technical Training.

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* Answers sum to more than 100% since more than one answer was given.

When questioned on their job aspirations, 51% intended going into the helping professions (i.e. nurses, teachers, social workers, etc. plus 4% into the police force) and 15% would choose to go into independent professional positions (lawyers, doctors, accountants). Aspirations are high, therefore, and fairly firmly decided since when asked what they would choose "if anything were possible", 55% still chose the job they had mentioned before. They appear, then, to be both ambitious and well-decided. When asked for reasons for future job-choice, an expression of community concern was the most frequent single reason given.

Slightly over 60% of the employed respondents are dissatisfied with their present jobs and see education as the only avenue to career advancement; in some of their own words:

"In these days if you are not educated you are just nothing. You can't work"

"Because there is nothing that can help me except education"

"People are not employed with only Std. 10"

We see, therefore, that the tuition service that these students receive is crucial in their lives. Obviously, there must be alternatives but the pupils themselves, quite apart from the practical factors analysed earlier, would see the alternatives as a loss to themselves. For example, right at the end of the interview, they were asked, hypothetically of course, what they would do if the Centre was not available, and without prompting, over 20% stated that they would probably stop studying, while nearly 30% said that they would have to work on their own, through a correspondence college or that they would try to find a similar centre elsewhere.

The Centre, then, is seen as having very specific advantages. Apart from the practical benefits, the quality of the 37 volunteer teachers, twenty-nine of whom are fully qualified in their subjects, is highly valued. When asked to outline their "ideal" teacher:

13% insisted on the importance of teachers being qualified;

29% mentioned the importance of the method used by experienced teachers (individual attention, the ability to impart knowledge successfully, the ability to teach large groups and the ability to work with people)

28% wanted "mild tempered" teachers who DID NOT BEAT THE STUDENTS!

These replies and answers to many other questions showed that the teaching at the Centre was perceived very positively in the terms outlined above.

One must conclude, then, that the Centre has both practical and strong intrinsic merits as far as the students are concerned. It might be felt, however, that these students are an atypical group with an unco-operative basic attitude towards the official educational system. This does not appear to be the case generally, to judge from the replies to a question on their perceptions of the Kwa Mashu pupil boycott:

22% genuinely were simply puzzled about the boycott;

20% saw the cause of the problem as being due to lazy, naughty or "coloured" agitators;

11% thought that school conditions were the cause; while

36% perceived the root problem as being one of political discrimination at the educational level.

The students who quoted dissatisfaction with the system or conditions qualified their statements with criticism of the behaviour of students or the means by which they saw fit to complain about the issue:

"Students want equal education but some just enjoyed making the unrest and not studying"

"They said they were dissatisfied, but I think it is just an excuse for riotous behaviour"

"It's the standard of education...but some were afraid of agitators so they stayed away"

"Only a few children are influencing and disturbing the other children"

"It is dissatisfaction, but they are over enthusiastic to change things"

"Naughty children....no need for them to become political"

"They did not know what they were doing...they were being told by others to boycott"

"They were listening to someone else...they don't have to pay for their own schooling"

"I don't know why, because I believe if you are not satisfied you can always go through the right channels"

"They wanted equal education with whites...but they just destroyed everything"

"Being influenced...by politicians from this country and other countries...they are communist...they demolishing our things"

These contradictions clearly show that although they might be aware of a problem, they are in no way motivated to deal with it as students in Kwa Mashu have done. In fact this sort of response perhaps suggests that students at this Centre, finding no cause to complain about the tuition they are receiving, do not identify with students in Kwa Mashu schools.

A small percentage mentioned that the teaching of Afrikaans, unequal salaries for teachers and various other reasons could be the cause of student boycotts. Guaging from the often genuine puzzlement as well as the contradictions within their responses and non-alignment with methods students have used in Kwa Mashu, however, it would appear that subversion certainly does not exist amongst students at this Centre. In fact the general response to the Centre is positive and "protective" and students in no way equate it with the schools in the townships where dissatisfaction is so apparent.

Broadly, then, the students in the Centre are not a uniformly politicised group. Their attendance at the Centre is born of genuine and intense sets of needs and aspirations which the Centre manages to meet by virtue of its location and quality of service.

5. OVERALL ASSESSMENT:

If the reason for ordering the Centre to close down is based on the fact that alternative night school facilities and centres are available in the townships, then this is not evident to the students, the organisers of the Centre or the investigators. This is not to say that formal Adult Education centres do not serve a valuable purpose. It must be remembered, however, that internal transportation within townships is generally poor. Therefore a township centre may be far less accessible than one on a central transportation route.

It is clear from the report that in terms of time and transport cost savings this Centre is of untold value to all city workers in particular and offers the only alternative to domestic workers in the city. Even for workers on the fringes of Durban who might pay extra in transport costs to get there, the fact that the Centre runs its classes from 5.00 p.m. to 7.00 p.m. not only allows them to get home earlier, but also saves the wasted hour that is spent waiting for township classes to start at 7.00 p.m.

Again, considering the Centre's close proximity to the Berea Road Station and bus rank, no extra transportation is required for students to come to this Centre if they work in the city and also no white area is traversed when classes are over and students leave to catch their buses and trains. Considering the large number of formal consents obtained from the surrounding community, the Centre enjoys support and is in no way causing any disturbance or difficulties for the nearby shopkeepers.

A large percentage of students enjoy safety when going home in the evenings as they can travel together. The group travel also encourages regular attendance.

Students at this Centre are not only satisfied with the physical convenience of this Centre, but are very happy with the high quality of tuition offered them as well as the calibre of teachers who volunteer to tutor in the evenings.

The fact that less than one-quarter of the sample would consider going to local township centres (which would involve increased costs and difficult transport problems) and almost one-half claim they would either give up studying or have to study commercially or on their own if the Centre were to close suggests the high value placed on this Centre by students. Add to this the high occupational aspirations of these students and it is very evident that to deny these students this existing source of education would be retrogressive.

In view of the serious shortage of schooling at the present time (reflected in the large percentage of students who found possible alternative schools full or who could not be re-admitted due to failure) to deny this fully functioning and well-supported Centre to the students now attending it would only increase the already existing disillusionment amongst black students.

More broadly, it must be considered that the popular support that the recent boycotts received from students reflects some form of anxiety or aggravation of feelings regarding education and its present capacity to meet the aspirations of students. It is our view that it will be some time before development in the formal black educational system will be such as to eliminate the tensions within the system. During this period of development it is and will continue to be highly necessary for informal services to exist which, as it were, can take some of the tension out of

the black community situation. The most obvious safety valve of this kind is an opportunity for a "second chance" after having left school. The more such avenues exist the better. The Adult Education Centres in the townships serve a valuable function in this regard but are simply not convenient for everyone. The type of alternative offered by the Emmanuel Parish Education Centre should be uniformly welcomed as a valuable addition to the range of facilities available. Clearly its operation does no harm of which we are aware. Its closing however, will be a fundamentally radicalising experience for the 300 people who presently see it as a lifeline to their futures.

APPENDIX A

AREA DISTRIBUTION

Umlazi	49
Kwa Mashu	22
Lamontville	7
Inanda	12
Inner Durban	17
Dassenhoek	3
Chesterville/Clermont	5
Other	2
	117

AGE DISTRIBUTION

	%
0 - 16 years	1,7
17 - 20	46,2
21 - 25	29,9
26 - 30	11,1
31 - 50	11,1
	100,0

76% of students between the age of 17 and 25.
1,7% of students aged 16.
This Centre does not compete with full-time day schools for young teenagers, but is predominantly an ADULT education centre for workers.

MARITAL STATUS

	%
Married	8,5
Unmarried	91,5
	100,0

DEPENDENTS ON INCOME

	%
None	47,0
Self	9,4
2	10,3
3 or 4	12,0
5 or 6	6,0
7 or 8	7,7
9 or 10	6,0
11 or 12	1,7
	100,0

RESPONDENT'S INCOME

	%
Unemployed	46,2
0 - R50	15,4
R51 - R100	15,4
R101 - R150	9,4
R151 - R200	4,3
R201 - R250	1,7
R251 - R300	1,7
R300 +	4,3
No information	1,7
	100,0

78,6% earn less than R100.
88,0% earn less than R150.

OCCUPATION

	%
Unemployed	46,2
Domestic/Labourer	29,1
Driver	3,4
Clerk/Nurse	5,1
Sales	4,3
Temporary	5,0
Office	4,3
Supervisory	2,6
	100,0

100% do not have their own transport

APPENDIX B

24/80

FOR REGISTRATION:

EMMANUEL CATHEDRAL ADULT EDUCATION CENTRE SCHEDULE:

1. What things make you come to this Centre for evening classes?

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2. Area of residence:_____

3. Age:_____

4. Are you married?_____

5. (If married, divorced, separated) how many children do you have?_____

6. How many members in your household in Durban?_____

7. How many members of your household in Durban work?_____

8. All in all how many people in Durban or elsewhere depend on your income?

---

9. What is your monthly income? (weekly x 4,3)_____

10. What would you estimate would be the total monthly income in your household?_____

---

11. Where are you employed? (We need to work out distance so could you give the Company and the address?)_____

---

12. What kind of work do you do? (Give details)_____

---

13. How satisfied are you with your work at the moment? Explain_____

---

14. What are your hours of work?_____

15. What is the nearest education Centre providing evening classes to your home? NAME:_____

16. Have you ever attended this Centre?_____

17. What were your reasons for leaving it?_____

---

18. Do you have your own transport?_____

19. Where do you catch your bus/train on evenings when you do not come to the Centre?_____

20. From this Centre where do you catch your bus or train in town to go home in the evenings? (Berea Road Station/Berea Road bus rank/Queen Street/ Soldier's Way)_____

21. What does your transport cost per day (on days that you come to this Centre?)

---

22. How many changes of vehicle do you make in a single day going to work, coming to evening classes and then going home in the evenings? Describe:

---

23. After you leave the Centre in the evenings how long does your transport take to get home?_____

24. Do you have companions travelling home with you in the evenings?_____

Who?_____

Why?_____

25. Is there any transport provided from your home to the Centre closest to your home, and then home again in the evening? (7 p.m. - 9 p.m.)_____

Describe:_____

26. How many changes of vehicle would it take to attend the education Centre in your township nearest to your home?_____

---

27. What would it cost in transport in a single day if you went to work, then to evening classes at the Centre nearest your home and then home again?

---

28. How long would it take to get to this Centre in your township?_____

---

29. What would you do if this Centre were no longer available?_____

---

30. What standard are you studying for now?_____

31. (If Std. 8) do you plan to do your matric?_____

32. Do you plan to further your education after matric?_____

---

33. If so, what are ALL the reasons for continuing your education? (PROBE)

---

34. Where did you do your last schooling?_____

35. When did you do your last schooling?_____

36. (If it was some time before...) Why did you not finish it then?_____

(PROBE FOR REASONS)_____

---

37. Since then have you tried other Centres or schools to do your matric or Std. 8?_____

Which?_____

38. What sort of job are you aiming for?_____

39. If anything were possible, what sort of job would you most like to have?

Why?_____

40. If you were to choose 6 subjects to include in a syllabus for black education which of the group below would you choose?

Mathematics	Physics
Typewriting	Shorthand
Biology	Music
Other African languages	Mechanics
English	French
History	Geography
Domestic Science	Physical Education
Afrikaans	Agriculture
Art	Zulu
Bookkeeping	Electronics
German	Chemistry
Economics	Metalwork
Business Economics	Accounting
Carpentry	Building

Are there any other subjects that you think would be important to include in the syllabus?_____

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41. What do you think is the main purpose of education today?_____

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42. What things do you think could be done right away to make education available to more students?_____

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43. What things could be done in the future to make education available to more students?_____

_____

_____

44. In what way could black education be improved in terms of:

a) what you learn_____

b) how you learn it_____

c) when you learn it_____

d) where you learn it_____

45. Do you have any hobbies?_____

If so, what are they?_____

46. How would you describe your ideal teacher?_____

_____

_____

47. Why do you think opportunities in education for blacks are so limited?

_____

_____

48. What does education doe for a person?_____

_____

_____

49. Why do you think so many children joined in the boycotts in Kwa Mashu?

_____

_____

50. Are you interested in training to be a skilled artisan? (carpenter/ boilermaker/fitter and turner)_____

Why?_____

Why not?_____