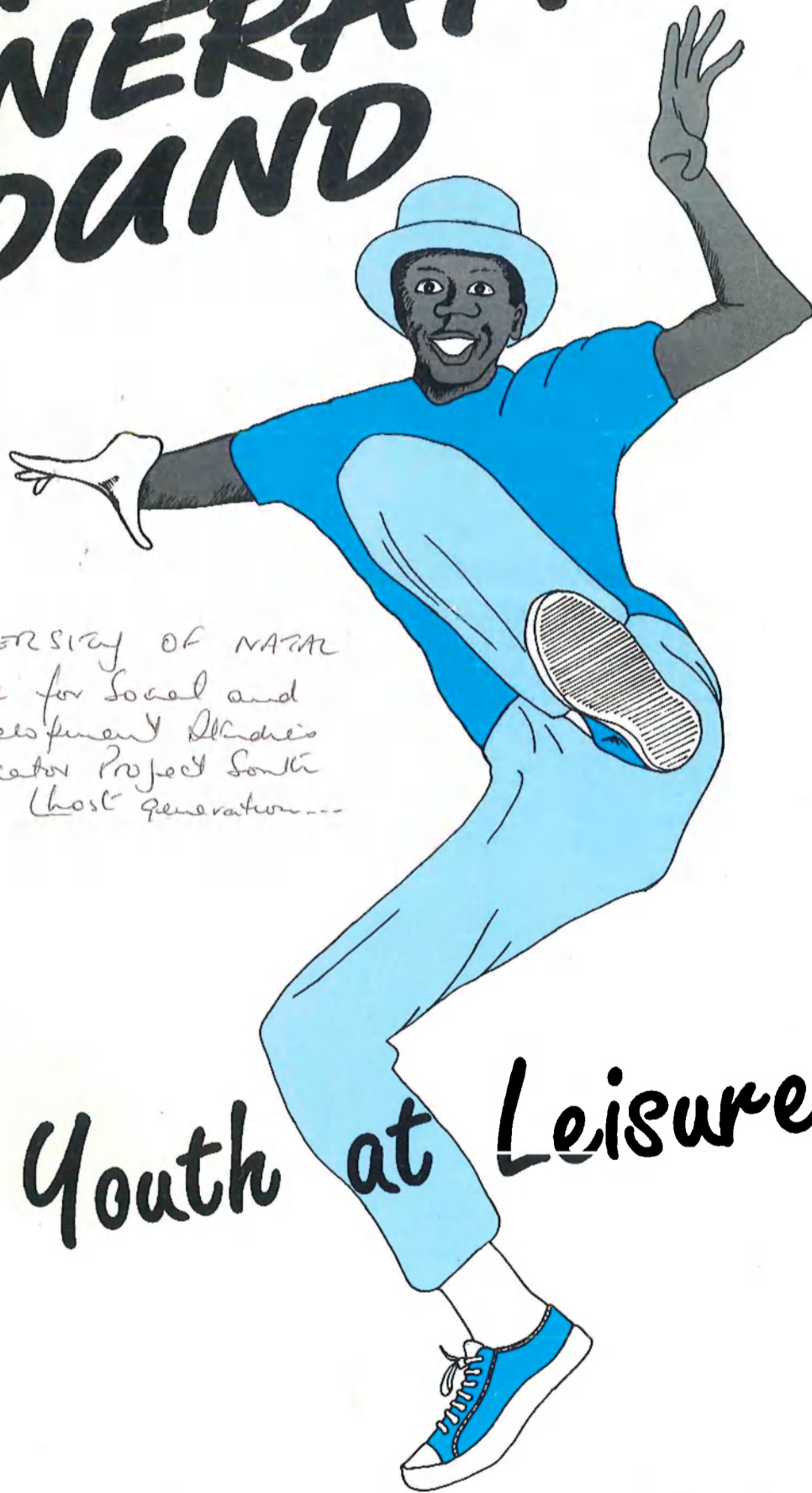


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Black Youth at Leisure

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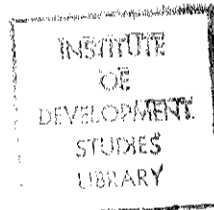
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Black Youth at Leisure



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May 1991

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However, the authors take full responsibility for the report and the ideas expressed in it which may not necessarily reflect the thinking of their sponsors or the persons acknowledged above.

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PREFACE

South African society has been preoccupied with educating and finding jobs for its volatile youth generation. This *Indicator SA* special report looks beyond the institutional settings of school and work, focusing instead on how young people use their leisure time.

The leisure prospects of black urban youth in their teens and early twenties has been researched by the *Youth Centre Project (YCP)* of the Centre for Social and Development Studies at the University of Natal. This seminal three year research and development project was carried out between 1988 and 1991 with sponsorship from Germany's Konrad Adenauer Foundation.

Leisure might be considered a lightweight issue compared to other pressing problems in South African society. Not so, the YCP research shows that leisure has an important role to play in developing the new South Africa. Indeed, leisure is a critical issue for the youth which can either spell hope and opportunity or frustration and regression into crime and violence.

Multiple phases of research were undertaken at the national and local level among rank and file black youth to address the many facets of leisure in township and peri-urban settings:

- A nationwide time use survey recorded the leisure activities of young people in the 16-24 years age bracket and inquired into attitudes towards leisure and lifestyles. The study for which participants kept activity diaries, may be the first of its kind in South Africa.
- Smaller scale investigations in the Durban Functional Region (DFR) looked into the leisure resources available and the human potential to make optimal use of leisure opportunities:
- Youth groups and clubs operating in the DFR were the focus of a special youth self-help intervention. A regional youth group, the YCP Working Group, formed to serve the training and development needs of existing youth clubs in the DFR.
- A special study was made of the particular leisure needs of young people living in four shack areas in the DFR.

- Several studies focused on venues for youth to meet, including the need for a regional youth centre in the Pinetown area. An inventory of DFR leisure facilities compiled for the project revealed the mismatch between existing leisure facilities and young people's views on ideal leisure venues.
- A nationwide poll among all population groups confirmed the need for multi-purpose neighbourhood youth centres which offer educational as well as recreational leisure outlets.

This special report addresses several leisure dilemmas facing South Africa today. Leisure is an elusive concept which is difficult to define. Our findings indicate that leisure means much more than recreation or play to young people. Educational and learning experiences are attractive but neglected leisure options which may have greater appeal than pure recreational pastimes. The evidence suggests that this is not 'a lost generation' but one starved for meaningful leisure outlets. *Semi-leisure* is the concept introduced to convey this more serious side to leisure activities. The inquiry concludes that marrying *semi-leisure* with *pure leisure* may go a long way towards meeting youth demands for constructive leisure at home, in youth groups, and in community centres and projects.

The research findings reveal tensions between the leisure needs of young men and women, between youth in and out of jobs, between church and politicised youth, and between township and shackland youth. The dilemma is how to apply an equity solution to meet the spare time needs of youth from these diverse backgrounds. Airing these leisure dilemmas represents an important first step towards formulating a leisure policy for the new era.

The case studies and commentaries in this special report demonstrate that rank and file black youth, in spite of the political violence, state repression during the emergency period, and social neglect, are amazingly adept at using their leisure creatively. Clearly, this potential calls for the formulation of an equally imaginative national leisure policy to enable South African youth to realise their dreams and aspirations.

INTRODUCTION

IN PRAISE OF IDLENESS

DILEMMAS AT PLAY



'The wise use of leisure ... is a product of civilisation and education'
(Bertrand Russell, 1935)

South Africa's black youth has been much in the news in recent times. We are overwhelmed with newsflashes of youth in action: protest marches, work stayaways, school boycotts, gang violence. Every age associates youth with rebelliousness against the old order. In South Africa during the past decade black youth have come to symbolise the restlessness which precedes a major change.

The most powerful images projected by the media are South African youth outside work and school. Extra-institutional youth are centre stage. Nevertheless, South African research and development experts tend to ignore the social implications of the extra-institutional setting. What young people do with their spare time and how they feel about their after hours' activities has not been a major topic of concern.

This special report is devoted to a study of black urban youth in their spare time outside school and work. Spare time pursuits gain a particularly significant perspective where young people reject the existing social order and seek to further their causes outside of the major social institutions. The study of youth leisure in South Africa is long overdue and one sorely needed to complement the well-documented inquiries into the educational and occupational advancement of South Africa's black youth. Leisure as a vehicle for social development has yet to be recognised in South Africa. The need for opportunities to use time meaningfully or constructively outside the work and school situation is a new challenge.

There are several reasons why leisure research and development programmes are underdeveloped in this country. South Africa comprises a mix of First and Third World contexts. In less developed contexts investments in education, health, and basic infrastructure needs are considered paramount. Where basic needs are considered the priority issue, provision for leisure tends to be neglected and leisure research may be considered a luxury. Nevertheless, it is widely accepted that leisure, broadly defined, can play a crucial role in the formation of young people's identity.

At certain stages in the life cycle, and under certain social conditions leisure may be the one sphere where people can essentially be themselves and by and large follow dictates of conscience, personal needs and visions. A case could be made for the importance of studying the leisure of black youth in South Africa, who are growing up in a socially divided society which has curtailed freedom of choice in most spheres of life.

In South Africa, as in other parts of the world, structural unemployment is a social problem which has resulted in a surfeit of meaningless spare time for the increasing numbers of black youth out of school, work seekers and those whose education has been disrupted because of the political tensions in the country. With rising unemployment and underemployment among South African youth, one can anticipate that larger numbers of black youngsters will be forced, of necessity, to further their education and training and personal development outside the world of work.

Spare time pursuits become particularly significant where young people reject the existing social order

Black youth are growing up in a socially divided society which has curtailed their freedom of choice in most spheres of life

Media images of youth violence reduce the entire spectrum of young people's experience to highly visible activities

Furthermore, the poor quality of schooling for black youth has meant that informal education after hours has become an increasingly important channel of self-development for many adolescents. It is anticipated that leisure, i.e. spare time activities, will assume a more important role in adult education in future.

Media images and the literature on youth culture tend to show youth at their most active and most destructive. This has had the effect of reducing the entire spectrum of young people's experience to highly visible activities. There is a need to balance the picture by exposing the full range of activities in which youth participate, action as well as idleness and daydreaming; creativity as well as destruction.

The media reports of the youth unrest conjure up images of the leaders of the mass movements, the judges and marshals of the kangaroo courts, the comrades running the street committees, the gangs of thugs which have closed the gaps created by the power vacuum since townships have become 'ungovernable'. Scant attention has been paid to the rank and file youth who make up the majority.

This special *Indicator SA* report opens up a window on the everyday lives of ordinary urban and peri-urban youth at the threshold of the 1990s and compares their lifestyles with their ambitions for the future. The focus on spare time is deliberate as is the focus on ordinary youth. Accounts of high profile youth leaders and spokespersons in mass movements are well documented. The behind-the-scenes stories presented in this report of the rank and file youth who make up the majority put into perspective youth leisure activities at all levels of participation.

This report opens a window on the everyday lives of ordinary black youth and compares their lifestyles with their ambitions

Township Leisure Styles

In South Africa little systematic research has been conducted to date into the leisure needs of youth and the opportunities for satisfying these needs. Indeed, little empirical research into leisure exists. In 1989 a database was compiled to fill the gap and to inform a research and development project - the Youth Centre Project - which aimed to promote leisure options for black urban youth. How young people use their time - their spare time as well as time

committed to work - and the motivations behind time use are powerful tools for gaining a better understanding of young people in their own world.

Reports from the various strands of research which contributed to the database make up the contributions in this special report.

- The chapters on time use and attitudes related to spare time activities give a broad picture of ordinary lifestyles of young people in a wide range of circumstances in black townships. The daily routine of 1 200 township youth selected at random in three major metropolitan areas is captured in activity diaries kept by the young people themselves on randomly selected days of the week. Each respondent kept a diary for one specified weekday and one weekend day. This sample of young people also gave their critical opinions of lifestyles, aspirations and expectations for what they called 'a brighter future'.
- Case studies which complement the nationwide study above are drawn from the Durban area. The first study (pp29-43) concerns human resources for constructive leisure. A participant observation study of youth clubs which operate outside of the major mass youth movements reveals that they have a positive impact on youth development. Informal social clubs, most of which were initiated by young people themselves, channel the restlessness and futility typically experienced when growing up. These clubs have the potential to further leadership and social skills on a fairly broad basis.
- The second case study (pp44-51) concerns the requisite leisure facilities to support human resources. The lack of suitable venues where young people can meet and the struggle for control of these scarce physical resources symbolises the major youth conflicts of recent years. The legacy of apartheid which underprovided for all aspects of black people's lives is most evident here.
- The third case study (pp52-57) looks into spare time use and lifestyles of young people living in Durban's shacklands and fringe settlements. The case study of peri-urban leisure balances the nationwide survey of

township leisure styles. The peri-urban study gives rare insights into the lives of young residents gained from in-depth interviews.

The most obvious contrast between young people living within township boundaries and without lies with the infrastructural constraints which impact on leisure styles. The peri-urban study reveals that social cleavages may keep township and peri-urban youth apart in leisure as in other areas of life.

The above studies were undertaken as part of a three-year research and development project initiated by the author and carried out in the Centre for Social and Development Studies at the University of Natal. The Youth Centre Project (YCP) aimed to increase the choices which young people have in their leisure. The YCP project combined basic research at the macro (the nationwide time use study) and micro (the Durban case studies) level of inquiry with applied research (the study of informal youth clubs). The practical intervention thrust of the project (see the story of the YCP Working Group) was low-keyed and youth-driven (pp38-39).

If sponsorship can be found, the practical thrust will be continued beyond the three year duration of the project which was determined at the outset. It is hoped that the theoretical and practical knowledge gained in the course of the project will lead to a better understanding of the situation of black urban youth in their spare time as it impinges on their life chances overall. The research which fed into the practical thrust of the project has already given the youthful participants a deeper understanding of themselves, an understanding which they wish to share more broadly.

In this introductory overview it may be useful to sketch some of the themes which are recurrent at all the levels of inquiry albeit with different shades of nuance. These themes highlight the common concerns of young people in this country which deserve careful consideration from youth work practitioners as well as the individuals and groups entrusted with shaping youth policy for the future. The conclusion picks up some of these themes when it offers practical advice on 'what should be done' to increase leisure opportunities for black youth.

Struggling with Politics

Our research has revealed that township youth are generally satisfied with their leisure although they experience constraints in fulfilling their aspirations. The most exciting events in their lives are few and far between. It is possibly the rarity of such events which makes them particularly attractive; a surfeit would make this rare type of leisure mundane.

However, some would argue that township youth are so isolated from the mainstream of South African society that their opportunity to experience the full range of leisure is very limited. They are too busy catching up with the necessities of life to indulge in non-essential leisure. The range of personal leisure preferences and popular pastimes and aspirations evidenced in the nationwide survey tend to support this conjecture. Others would argue that the youth express satisfactions which are shallow, a sure sign of resignation in the face of the obstacles which they face as a disadvantaged minority in a socially divided society.

The typical problems which youth face testify to this. Much of their leisure may be compensatory to make up for the neglect in areas of life which afford few channels for advancement. There is evidence that 'instrumental' leisure, which is a means to an end rather than an end in itself, plays an important role. Best events of the diary days covered in the nationwide survey included educational and money-making activities. In some quarters there appeared to be renewed faith that education provides a passport to freedom in a complete turnabout from the popular 'liberation before education' ideology of the mid-1980s.

Weekdays which will include more 'means to an end' leisure, such as homework, were considered more worthwhile than weekend days. This may be typical of developing contexts where *pure leisure* as recuperation or entertainment is the prerogative for the privileged few. Noteworthy is that over 25 per cent could not recall a positive event for youth in their township the year preceding the survey. Approximately 15 per cent could not name a positive aspect of being a young person in South Africa.

The current political tension in South Africa may also detract from leisure choices and thereby restrict opportunities

New research findings reveal that social cleavages may keep township and peri-urban youth apart in leisure and life

In a developing society, pure leisure as recuperation or entertainment is the prerogative of the privileged few

Black youth participating in a national survey cited violence and delinquency as serious disadvantages for young people

for fulfilment. Theoretically, rank and file black youth in South Africa lead very normal lives. They spend approximately one-third of their time sleeping, working in jobs or learning at school, and on leisure activities including obligatory domestic duties.

However, even the superficial indicators produced through the time budgets show the impact of political instability and violence on leisure options for black youth. Apart from the anxiety and moral dilemmas which these cause, the violence constrains freedom of choice and ties up leisure time which could be put to other use. Crime and delinquency - to a certain degree byproducts of the violence - were spontaneously cited as the single most serious disadvantage for contemporary black youth in South Africa.

Riots, school boycotts and being forced to become involved in the political conflict were some of the key issues which worried respondents. Minorities cited the end to strikes and boycotts, the resolution of gang warfare, or the decision to join a particular political organisation as the most pleasant events of the year in their township. Being back at school after the school boycotts was one of the best liked events of the diary day for a small group.

Other respondents stated they resented being involved in school strikes or having to study at home because of township unrest. But participating in the political debate was one of the most popular leisure pursuits in some of the surveyed areas. Taken together, these findings illustrate the impact of the political dimension on the daily lives of young people in the townships.

While political participation may be considered essential for contemporary youth, rank and file youth wish to avoid becoming involved in the violence accompanying the political tensions of the times. The case studies focusing on human and physical leisure resources clearly identify the yearning for peace. Ideally, young people see their youth clubs and centres as havens of peace and stability in the midst of the strife and confusion in their lives. A strong need for a new direction and morality is evidenced in conversation with young people.

Youth clubs and centres are seen as havens of peace and stability in the midst of strife and confusion

Youth Clubbing

Most would agree that youth initiatives at the grassroots need to be fostered not stifled. Participation in youth clubs is just one constructive leisure use which captures the imagination of a large section of youth. One in three young people in the nationwide survey reported that they were members of youth clubs in the stricter sense, and one in two were members of a wider range of clubs and associations which cater for young people including sports and women's clubs. The case studies revealed that rank and file youth see their clubs as vehicles for their personal development and the achievement of some of the most daring of youthful ambitions including stardom. En route to fame, hitching their wagons to a star, young people learn a great deal about themselves and age peers, positive social interaction, and responsibility and self-discipline which will stand them in good stead later in life.

Our research suggests that youth club activities may be all-absorbing and offer vicarious gratification for youth prevented from experiencing the 'real' world of higher education and work. The club which celebrates the success of the first member to find a job as their own achievement is one case in point. Through youth clubs, young people cultivate the social networks (youth club ties being more accessible than school ties) which may eventually assist them in finding jobs in factories and offices and joining the mainstream of society. Youth 'clubbers' are careful to select club leaders and mentors which can serve as their role models.

Lacking firm discipline and guidance in their school lives during the social upheavals of the last few years, there is evidence that young people seek to apply strict rules and regulations in their youth clubs and centres. Examples gleaned from our studies of youth clubs include keeping formal minutes of relatively informal meetings and imposing fines on latecomers to meetings. Such measures are harmless and might be viewed as character forming. Voluntary compliance is a key element in enforcing such measures. This in contrast to the reported excesses of discipline meted out by juvenile bodies imposing law and order through the people's courts.

Our research has also revealed that the spectre of teenage pregnancy weighs heavily upon the minds of young people embarking on their first social adventures. Young people are ill-equipped in every way - morally, practically and emotionally - to cope with the threat. There is a personal dimension to teenage pregnancy which gives it greater significance in the lives of young people even than unemployment and blocked educational channels. Young people are expected to take personal responsibility without adequate preparation for teenage pregnancy whereas education and unemployment are mass issues. Youth in South Africa have yet to demonstrate for sex education, changes to abortion laws and easier access to safe sex aids.

As with all South African youth issues, the political violence in the urban areas has aggravated the problem by constraining choice. Throughout the world young men find willing sex partners on the eve of war. Their appeal to women to sacrifice their virginity for the cause is compelling. In some of the worst affected unrest areas, young women reportedly volunteer to 'replace' the lives of their comrade boyfriends (private communication at YCP seminar, 12 December, 1989).

Teenage pregnancy is typically a 'girl problem'. Although teenage pregnancy tops the problem list for both girls and boys, significantly more young women (75%) than young men (56%) participating in the nationwide survey identified teenage pregnancy as a major concern in the lives of young people in their residential area. Until such time as teenage pregnancy and other leisure issues affecting young women are seen as mutual concerns of both genders, there is little hope that workable solutions will be found. A common starting point might be that teenage pregnancy jeopardises further education and entry into the job market. Fairly similar proportions of young men and women in the survey identified education and employment issues as major problems in their lives.

Broadening Horizons

The media plays a very prominent role in the lives of township youth. As in all modernising contexts television has a tremendous impact on lifestyles. Two-thirds of the youth in the

nationwide time use study lived in homes with television sets and a slightly lower proportion watched television on the diary days. Television is typically a daily leisure event. There are signs that township youth without access to television experience relative deprivation. The research revealed that living without television depresses the perceived quality of life. Needless to say, youth in non-electrified urban residential areas, predominantly shack areas and site and service housing schemes, may feel more excluded from the mainstream than their township neighbours if they have restricted access to television as well as to other leisure facilities.

In the time use survey, the media (television, videos, radio) and educational pursuits were ones which reportedly contributed more than any other activity towards feelings of freedom on weekdays. It is not clear whether the media fulfils mainly the needs for escapism on ordinary days, especially for young people forced by circumstances to stay at home. It is possible, however, that both the media and personal study are seen to broaden horizons. If this interpretation holds, moves underway to introduce educational slots on television for private consumption and distance learning may strike a responsive chord with township youth starved for knowledge.

A dominant theme emerging in all research thrusts for the YCP project is the central role of what is often referred to as *semi-leisure*. Semi-leisure is a hybrid, which might be described as time off from work activities which is consumed by activities one feels obliged to do. Our research reveals that semi-leisure is possibly one of the greatest leisure constraints which urban black youth are currently experiencing. By the same token young blacks also seem to use semi-leisure for personal development.

Leisure can be viewed in two ways: in terms of activities and as a state of mind. Black youth spend a considerable amount of their spare time on tasks which they feel obliged to do: domestic chores are the prime examples of less enjoyable but obligatory spare time activities. In an extreme case our peri-urban researcher came across a young woman who stated she had no spare time whatsoever; all her time was taken up by housekeeping and related tasks since her mother had died.

Both young men and young women identify education and employment issues as major problems in their lives

Media and educational pursuits contribute more than any other activity towards youth feelings of freedom

Township youth see their leisure as the vehicle for social advancement denied to them through regular channels

Leisure represents the off-chance that one will be able to break out of the poverty trap and social discrimination

Semi-leisure is also a state of mind. We find that black youth take their leisure very seriously. Some might say too seriously for it to be called leisure in the strictest sense of the word.

The United Nations Declaration of Children's Rights stipulates that young people have a right to play and recreation while growing up. Our research suggests that township youth see their leisure as the vehicle for social advancement denied to them through the regular channels. Thus, we come across what are best described as *inverted* or *displaced* leisure values. It often seems that township youth pursue leisure when they should be working, and work - or wish to work - during their official time off! Displaced leisure values may be a reflection of abnormal circumstances. The nationwide survey revealed that between 7 and 10 per cent of schoolgoing youth did not attend school on the diary days. The highest rate of absenteeism was on Mondays. On the other hand, weekdays, which are typically working and school days, were considered more worthwhile than weekend days.

The Durban case studies similarly indicated that spare time activities must be worthwhile to be attractive in the eyes of urban black youth. Wasting leisure time was seen as squandering precious opportunities. Ideally, youth centres are seen as centres for education and training rather than recreational and fellowship centres where young people hang out and boy meets girl.

Youth clubs operate under ambitious mottos which compete with those of higher educational institutes in the region. Youth clubbers hold aspirations of growing rich and famous as professional football players or entertainers through dedication and discipline in their spare time. In fact many youths hope that their spare time pursuit will one day have all the legitimacy of a regular occupation and reap its social rewards. Other unpublished research (Møller, 1990) suggests that professional sports is seen as a way out of unemployment.

The Poverty Trap

To sum up, in our research we observed that many young people were able to fuse their social and moral obligations with the obligations to themselves and

their personal development. Thus engagement in *semi-leisure* assumes many of the attributes of *pure leisure* which can be deeply personally satisfying and fulfilling.

The *semi-leisure* syndrome may be typical of ghetto teenagers and youth in developing countries throughout the world. Leisure spells encouragement and hope in a world of despair and gloom. Leisure represents the off-chance that one will be able to break out of the poverty trap and social discrimination. Therefore, stifling leisure opportunities, in particular the semi-leisure opportunities with an educational flavour, may have far-reaching consequences for youth morale. The time use study discovered that satisfaction with leisure time activities was a major distinguishing factor between black youth making optimistic and pessimistic assessments of their future.

The question which arises is whether or not semi-leisure, which may be a typical characteristic of less developed communities throughout the world, has been pushed into prominence by township violence and the political pressures on youth in recent years. The politicisation of black urban youth may have made them more critical of how they spend their spare time. Whereas free abandonment in leisure may be considered essential for gaining maturity in normal times, boy and girl soldiers are typically adult before their time.

It appears that semi-leisure, which needs to be justified in terms of the ends which it serves, is the township rule. To a certain extent township leisure styles which emphasise a relaxed pace of life soften this committed approach. However, other aspects of leisure styles suggest that township youth shy away from superficiality. Preference is expressed for commitment to few leisure interests and a tight circle of friends.

It is conceivable that leisure styles are influenced by the tension-ridden social climate of the times which dictates withdrawal into trusted cliques and restricts the range of leisure interests. A cool relaxed demeanour eases or at least masks the stress of everyday tension. If this interpretation is correct, then youth group members are among the few who have managed to break out of the vicious cycle of political intimidation. Youth club members appear to be more interested

than other youth in extending their circle of friends and their activity schedules.

An interesting variation of semi-leisure are spare time pursuits which represent free choices initially, but thereafter become personal commitments. For example, youth club members reported that they felt obliged to attend meetings regularly once they joined. Non-attendance signified lack of character, disrespect for the group's interests and well-being, and irresponsibility on the part of the absentee. There are signs that failure to meet leisure commitments by not showing up at club meetings or church may be viewed in a more serious light than absenteeism from work and truancy from school. Certainly young people who did not meet their leisure aims reported loss of confidence in themselves and their abilities to carry things through.

Missed Opportunities

Black residential areas lack the full range of leisure facilities which are taken for granted in white urban areas. Nevertheless, township youth have shown great resourcefulness in overcoming external constraints. Participation in music and the arts is predominantly active rather than passive. Young people sing, dance, stage their own plays, and form their own clubs. Young township dwellers are used to creating their own amusements and do not need to rely on ready made leisure products. When seeking to redress inequalities care will need to be taken not to stifle creativity in leisure.

Nevertheless, judging from leisure participation rates gleaned from the young people's diaries there is ample scope for talent promotion. Less than 3 per cent of the diarists sang in choirs, just over 1 per cent played music, and about 0,5 per cent were involved in artistic creation apart from women's crafts.

Leisure barriers appear to be even more formidable in the case of technical hobbies, which attracted participation from less than 0,2 per cent of youth and only on weekend diary days. It is possible that some technical skills are picked up while working around the house and in the limited informal jobs available to township youth. However, the lack of participation in technical

hobbies for young men compared to crafts for women is cause for concern. If technical leisure barriers are not broken down, black youth will be missing out on occupational opportunities in the technical and artisan fields which are only now opening up to them.

It has been convincingly argued that 'bantu' education has not prepared young black youth for jobs in the formal or the informal sector. The rule of thumb is a three year waiting time between leaving school and finding a first job. Our findings confirm that informal sector and other odd jobs are either very scarce or have little appeal to black youngsters. Whichever is the case participation rates are less than three per cent.

Opportunities for informal learning through adult education and training courses also seem to be limited judging by participation rates of only 3 per cent and the limited time spent on such activities. Clearly, leisure aspirations which stress the benefits of educational pursuits in one's spare time are not being met in these cases.

The leisure deficit appears to be most serious among the young homemakers. Young housewives, in contrast to the other unemployed youth, feel very negative about their future. Housewives appear to be caught up in a vicious circle of unfulfilment; they feel trapped in their career paths. Housewives report that they have too much spare time which they are unable to fill meaningfully. At the same time they do not seem to be able to give quality time to the children they mind and dislike their housekeeping chores as much, if not more, than other youth. Unemployed youth have long been identified as youth at risk of suffering from an overindulgence in leisure which does not meet their real needs. Our research suggests that young homemakers are an as yet unrecognised group at risk of a leisure feast they cannot consume.

The Boredom Curse

Boredom is the curse of youth all over the world. Our research has shown unequivocally that it is not enough for youth to be engaged in just any activity to pass the time of day. Activities must be seen to be worthwhile and fulfilling. In spite of their prominent place in township leisure patterns, semi-leisure

When seeking to redress leisure inequalities, care will need to be taken not to stifle creativity and resourceful participation

If leisure barriers are not broken down, black youth will miss out on technical and artisan opportunities

Youth policy for post-apartheid South Africa will need to address the boredom and restlessness of young people in their spare time

Bold and imaginative schemes which meet youth needs for meaningful 'semi-leisure' must bridge the gap between school and work

and committed leisure have not banished boredom and restlessness from the lives of young people.

One-quarter to one-third of the youth participating in the nationwide survey reported that they suffered from excessive boredom and restlessness. The unemployed and housewives, in spite of their relatively heavy burden of house chores, are most at risk. Research among the unemployed (Møller, 1990) has shown that the dividing line between socially acceptable and beneficial leisure, on one hand, and crime, delinquency and harmful or problem behaviour, on the other hand, is very thin. It appears that many young homemakers are bound by their apron strings to the home environment. However, young unemployed men do wander in search of excitement and adventure. It is mainly the lack of money which prevents them from finding amusement. Few informal jobs seem to come their way, or for that matter the way of any urban black youth.

In the absence of really worthwhile things to do, there is every reason to expect that juvenile workseekers will continue to make their own amusements which may not necessarily meet with societal approval. The tendency to hang out with friends who belong to deviant subcultures is confirmed in our inquiries.

Bridging the Gap

Our research indicates that material resources are needed to complement human aptitude for meaningful leisure. Given the relative deprivation experienced by rank and file youth in the central avenues of educational and occupational advancement, youth policy needs to consider carefully the after hours story. A substantial proportion of black youth may be seeking to achieve major life goals in the leisure sphere owing to blocked opportunities in regular channels of social mobility. The displacement of central life goals from the work and occupational to the leisure sphere has not been entirely successful. The frustration, hopelessness and boredom expressed by survey participants confirm this finding.

Youth policy for post-apartheid South Africa will need to address squarely the underoccupation of young people in their spare time. Schemes such as jobs corps and youth training programmes have had mixed appeal and only achieved limited success in other countries grappling with the problem of youth unemployment. Educationally and socially disadvantaged youth have proven to be discerning users who are extremely sensitive to the weaknesses of such bridging programmes.

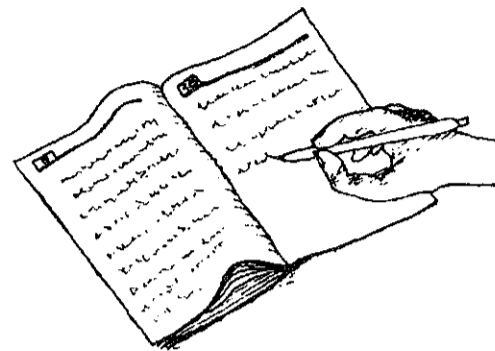
In South Africa jobs corps and similar schemes are being mooted as partial solutions to reintegrating young political exiles from abroad. While the needs of returnees are justified concerns, it would be shortsighted to overlook the plight of the youth who have grown up on the inside. By their own evaluation, insiders' chances of full integration into the mainstream of society are equally questionable. Bold and imaginative schemes which meet youthful needs for meaningful semi-leisure will be needed to bridge the gap between school and work. Further research is required to develop bridging the gap leisure packages which are acceptable to young people in different circumstances. Obviously the young people themselves who have shown great incentive in coping with the leisure deficits in their lives will have to play a major role in the research and development of such bridging programmes.

In conclusion, there are many lessons to be learnt from the leisure preoccupations of black urban youth. Under the abnormal circumstances of township violence leisure patterns may be even more indicative of youthful needs and aspirations than behaviour at school and work. Our research shows that spare time use is a valuable resource for mobilisation. It is therefore imperative that a youth policy takes shape which will promote leisure opportunities to enhance and support other avenues of social advancement for youth. The future of the new South Africa is in the hands of today's youth. **IDA**

ACTIVITIES

DEAR DIARY

BLACK YOUTH IN THEIR SPARE TIME



Valerie Møller

Time use opens up a window on lifestyles. An elusive concept, lifestyle is difficult to describe accurately. One means of approximating lifestyles is to examine different time uses during the course of a typical day. Time use is a reflection of hundreds of choices made by individuals daily to suit their own needs and aspirations and those of their social and physical environment.

In an attempt to describe youth lifestyles in South Africa's black townships, 1 200 young people in three metropolitan areas were asked to keep activity diaries for a specific weekday (Monday through Thursday) and a weekend day (Friday through Sunday) in 1989 (See box on survey method: pp22).

The diaries yield a rich database which can be used to answer a wide range of questions concerning lifestyles. This report addresses the following issues:

- How do young people prioritise their spare time? What are the most popular spare time activities? How much time is spent on them?
- How does spare time use differ on weekdays and weekend days?
- How compatible are spare time activities?
- How does spare time use differ between categories of youth: men and women, the employed and the workseekers, housewives, schoolgoers and youth club members.

The diary project used the main activity categories of the day (work in a job, and related activities such as travel to work and school) and basic needs (eating, sleeping) to define spare time. To gain a better overview, spare time is divided into categories of choice: committed and discretionary spare time. Activities falling under the former category carry

with them a certain degree of obligation, activities falling under the latter are assumed to be by and large freely chosen. This division corresponds very closely to the views held by the diarists.

Table 1 lists seven committed and twenty more discretionary spare time activities in approximate order of time consumption by the total sample of diarists. In some instances time use varies enormously between categories of users. It therefore makes good sense to report not only average times spent on a specific activity by all the diarists but also to note the times spent by the persons who actually engaged in the activity concerned on the diary day - the *doers*. The proportion of doers for any activity indicates how common or popular the activity is.

It is also important to distinguish between activities which are common to most young people but take up little time, on the one hand, and activities which are attractive to few but absorb a great deal of their time, on the other. Without noting the proportion of doers in the sample this distinction is lost.

Weekdays

Bearing these distinctions in mind, we can identify from Table 1 the dominant discretionary spare time activities on weekdays. In approximate order of average time consumption they are conversations, television viewing, listening to music, visiting, listening to radio, relaxing (which includes doing nothing and thinking things over), reading, sports and physical activities, and travel in connection with leisure. These activities are all popular ones engaged in by between one and three quarters of young people.

Time use reflects hundreds of choices made by individuals daily to suit their needs and their environment

Spare time pursuits differ between men and women, employed and workseekers, unemployed and housewives, and township and peri-urban youth

There is a leisure divide between committed spare time and freely chosen recreational activities

Leisure activities such as television, radio and sports contrast strongly with basic needs and work/school activities

Rarer events and more specialist activities include music and arts (mainly singing and choir practice), social outings, spectator and entertainment events, spending time with a boyfriend or girlfriend including courting, playing board or card games, and prayer services or other religious activities.

Very few youth are involved in or spend time on voluntary community service, youth club meetings, handwork, drinking or smoking, weddings and funerals.

Weekends

Young people unwind over weekends by pursuing the same types of activities as on weekdays. However, more people engage in each of these activities and invest, on average, more time in them. Clearly, spare time activities are more leisurely over weekends.

The trend is most evident in the case of church and religious events, social outings, spectator and entertainment activities, club events, leisure travel, music/arts, courting and visiting. Average time spent on these activities increases between 1,8 and elevenfold over weekends.

There are three exceptions:

- *Reading* is mainly a weekday leisure pursuit. Fewer people read over weekends.
- *Radio* time is fairly constant throughout the week.
- *Sports* activities are more leisurely but less popular over weekends. Fewer people do sports over weekends: 17% versus 24% on weekdays.

Drudgery vs Leisure

The leisure activities discussed so far contrast strongly with activities connected with work and school. The question is therefore, in how far do committed spare time and basic needs detract from recreation?

On the average weekday, sleep and work or school-related activities account for some two-thirds of time in the day, leaving approximately one-third as spare time. Meals and snacks, personal hygiene and grooming, and travel to work and school take substantial chunks out of the typical weekday, on average 3,5 hours.

Domestic chores in and around the house, shopping and running household errands and travel related to housekeeping chores are the most time consuming spare time activities for township youth.

The most time consuming household chores in which significant proportions of young people, especially young women, are involved include food preparation and washing up, indoor cleaning and making beds. Noteworthy is that young people are expected to tidy their own rooms and do their own laundry. Fewer youth are involved in household laundry, outdoor cleaning, and gardening.

On average, in the course of any day of the week, young people spend more time on home chores than any other category of activity besides basic needs and regular work or school activities.

Over weekends school and work-related activities decrease, leaving more time for recreation. Sleep and meals become more leisurely, but time devoted to personal care remains constant. The job search, a minority activity, is discontinued by most over weekends, but informal work increases when schoolgoers are free to take up odd jobs. Adult education, another minority activity, takes place on both weekdays and weekends.

Homework is mainly a weekday activity. Twenty per cent fewer youth study over weekends than weekdays. This partially accounts for the insignificance of weekend homework compared with other less discretionary activities such as domestic chores.

The average time invested by youth in housework is fairly constant throughout the week. However, the contributions made by different groups varies considerably on weekdays and weekend days. Employed youth and schoolgoers undertake additional tasks over the weekend, thereby relieving the housewives and the unemployed of some domestic work.

Persons engaging in household chores on Saturdays spend more time on them than on any other day of the week. Noteworthy is that housework is considered somewhat more enjoyable over weekends than on weekdays, possibly because it can be done under less time pressure from other school and work-related duties.

Box 1: Doing Your Homework

Approximately one in three youth among the diarists were still at school. All over the world homework is an essential aspect of schooling which is crucial to educational achievement.

For township youth homework is a typical weekday event with 71 per cent studying at home during the week compared with 33 per cent over weekends. Homework is taken very seriously by schoolgoers. Ninety-eight per cent of schoolgoers who did homework on the diary day entered the event as a primary activity.

Comparing average study time for the schoolgoing subsample as a whole, which is 90 minutes on weekdays, schoolgoers invest more time in home chores with 131 minutes and roughly as much time in television viewing (88 minutes). Three times as much time is devoted by schoolgoers to homework than to relaxation (29 minutes) and sports (28 minutes). Twice as much time is occupied with homework than with listening to the radio (36 minutes) or music from other sources (46 minutes).

Studying at home takes the schoolgoers, who actually do homework, just over 2 hours on weekdays - 2 hours and 6 minutes, on average, per doer to be exact. The average study time achieved by South African township youth compares fairly favourably with international standards in spite of the considerable amount of spare time committed to domestic chores. Caplan *et al* (1989:106) report that the children of the boat people in the United States, known to be highly motivated achievers, averaged some 3 hours 10 minutes homework at the senior and 2,5 hours at the junior high school levels on weekdays compared to 1,5 hours for American students. Japanese students, also known achievers, averaged 2 and 3,5 hours homework at comparative levels according to reliable sources cited by Caplan and colleagues.

There is, however, a problem of comparison which emerges from our time budget study. The 2 hours 6 minutes homework is recorded for only some 71 percent of schoolgoers. The overall average is 1,5 hours, which is still comparable to the lower US standard. Why did 29 percent of our schoolgoing diarists not do any homework on the diary day? One plausible explanation is that some schoolgoers are able to do their homework at school. Another explanation is that schoolgoers did not feel obliged to do homework. There is little evidence to suggest that the diary weekdays or the days following them were holidays. Diarists, for the most part, made no mention of the diary day being school free or unusual in any way.

However, it is possible that interruptions in education have become so commonplace in the townships that schoolgoers have become immune to them and no longer take notice. Time spent on all educational activities by persons full-time at school or technikon varied considerably, which strengthens this explanation.

There is an evident increase in average time spent household shopping and running domestic errands over weekends, which may be attributed to consumerism as well as domestic duty.

Mix & Match

People do not necessarily pursue one activity singlemindedly; they also combine compatible activities. We can learn a lot about lifestyles if we know which activities are mixed and which receive undivided attention.

Diarists in the survey were asked to record their *primary* activities and their *secondary* ones (see Table 1). Wherever activity times were boosted substantially by the inclusion of secondary activity times, the primary activity times are given in brackets for comparison.

The data reveals that secondary activities add spice to everyday life. Many spare time activities are mixed and matched. Results from the time use analysis suggest that secondary activities can enhance the quality of life. There is less drudgery involved in committed spare time activities if they are accompanied by more pleasant secondary activities.

Social interaction in conversation, laughing and joking, discussions and arguments, over the telephone and in personal contacts, is the most common leisure activity by far and figures almost exclusively as an accompaniment to other activities. Listening to music and radio are further very popular secondary activities among township youth which appeal to different age groups.

The data suggest that youth turn to singing as well as to background music to make obligatory spare time tasks such as domestic chores more enjoyable. Television viewing and light reading are further activities which are not all-absorbing.

It also appears that a wide variety of activities, including ones which may be duty bound, are turned into what are best described as 'social outings' for young people. Similarly, pleasure derived from activities may be enhanced if shared with a boy or girlfriend. For a small minority drinking and smoking adds to pleasure.

We can learn a lot about leisure styles if we know which activities are mixed and which receive undivided attention

The leisure pursuits of young township men appear to offer more opportunities for them to socialise than young women

**TABLE 1
SPARE TIME USE PATTERNS ON WEEKDAYS (MONDAY THROUGH THURSDAY)**

Activity category	Average minutes spent on activity (all youth)¹	Average minutes spent on activity by doers only³	Doers as percentage of total⁴
Basic needs			
Sleep and naps	507	507	100%
Meals	97 (63) ²	101	96%
Personal care	60	63	95%
Main activities			
Regular work	96	543	17%
Regular education	147	404	36%
Travel to and from work, school	53	90	59%
Informal work	9	367	2%
Job search	7	279	2%
Committed spare time			
Home chores	151 (137)	182	82%
Shopping, errands	14 (11)	83	17%
Domestic travel	12	63	19%
Childcare	11 (7)	93	12%
Homework	46	126	37%
Adult education	8	208	3%
Prepare to go out	1	35	3%
Discretionary spare time			
Conversation	119 (4)	162	73%
Television	86 (65)	137	63%
Listen to music	52 (8)	129	40%
Visiting	48 (44)	137	35%
Radio	44 (5)	112	39%
Relaxation	37 (31)	99	38%
Reading/writing	28 (16)	92	30%
Sports	26	107	24%
Leisure travel	26	62	41%
Music/arts	12 (5)	90	14%
Social outings	12 (8)	129	9%
Entertainment	9	185	5%
Boy/girlfriend	8 (5)	97	8%
Games	8 (4)	112	7%
Religious services	3	71	5%
Community work	3	125	2%
Drink/smoke	3 (0)	89	4%
Clubs/meetings	2	115	2%
Handwork	2	106	1%
Weddings/funerals	0	45	0%

NOTES:

1. Average time in minutes per day spent by total sample (n=1200) on primary and secondary activities. Time spent by each person on primary activities adds up to 24 hours for the diary day.

2. In the case of a discrepancy of several minutes between time spent on activities recorded as primary and secondary ones, time spent on primary activities are given in brackets.

3. Average time spent on primary and secondary activities in the activity category concerned by the persons who engage in the activity.

4. The persons who engage in each activity category as a percentage of the total sample (n=1200).

All values are truncated.

SPARE TIME USE PATTERNS OVER WEEKENDS (FRIDAY THROUGH SUNDAY)

Activity category	Average minutes spent on activity (all youth) ¹	Average minutes spent on activity by doers only ³	Doers as percentage of total ⁴
Basic needs			
Sleep and naps	523	525	99%
Meals	109 (68) ²	115	94%
Personal care	57	60	93%
Main activities			
Regular work	50	520	9%
Regular education	39	335	11%
Travel to and from work, school	22	89	25%
Informal work	11	365	3%
Job search	1	232	0,6%
Committed spare time			
Home chores	159 (145)	188	84%
Shopping, errands	22 (18)	94	23%
Domestic travel	14	67	21%
Childcare	10 (6)	92	11%
Homework	21	121	17%
Adult education	6	215	3%
Prepare to go out	1	43	4%
Discretionary spare time			
Conversation	165 (6)	207	80%
Television	105 (80)	164	64%
Visiting	87 (75)	171	51%
Listen to music	67 (10)	138	48%
Leisure travel	62	88	70%
Social outings	51 (38)	213	24%
Radio	42 (6)	111	37%
Relaxation	38 (31)	102	37%
Religious services	35	158	22%
Entertainment	30	208	14%
Music/arts	24 (6)	128	19%
Sports	22	126	17%
Reading/writing	21 (13)	85	25%
Boy/girlfriend	16 (10)	130	12%
Games	11 (4)	138	8%
Clubs/meetings	5	144	4%
Drink/smoke	5 (0)	105	5%
Weddings/funerals	4	261	1%
Community work	3	143	2%
Handwork	2 (1)	127	1%

In approximate order of number of diary entries over weekdays and weekend days.

- **Reading, writing** includes reading books; magazines, comic books etc.; newspapers; and private correspondence.
- **Music/arts** include singing, choir singing; playing music; artistic creation; dancing.
- **Social outings** include parties and braais; shebeens and social drinking; going for strolls in company; restaurant and meals away from home; window shopping; discos; parks; and excursions.
- **Entertainment** includes cinema; live sport events; concerts, theatre; amusement centres; fashion and beauty shows; dance competitions.
- **Boy/girlfriend** includes time spent with a boy or girlfriend; kissing, cuddling, sex.

Men spend almost three times as much time on informal work and adult education, and twice as much time on community service, than women

Time budget results show very clearly the greater limitations on recreation opportunities for young township women

Meals, most likely in the form of snacks, often accompany other activities. Meals, of course, go beyond basic need satisfaction and will also serve as vehicles for relaxation and social interaction. Thus, meals represent a borderline spare time activity.

There is a tendency to compress time spent on 'drudgery' spare time activities such as home chores, household maintenance, and childminding, by doing several of these activities at once or by combining them with cheerful secondary activities.

These time use results reflect the great capacity of young people to make light work of their least liked spare time tasks.

Leisure Profiles

Township youth are not a homogeneous group. Time use patterns differ widely between young men and women, and youth in different situations: in school, at work and at home. The examination of the time use profiles for distinctive categories creates a better understanding of young urban black lifestyles.

• Boys will be boys

Young men tend to be less homebound in their spare time activities as well as in work and school. They spend significantly more time on leisure travel throughout the week. Contrary to popular thinking, the leisure pursuits of young township men appear to offer more opportunities for them to socialise than young women. Weekday and weekend visiting, social intercourse, games and courting are cases in point. Over weekends men spend, on average, one-third more time on social outings than young women.

Young men appear to have more opportunities throughout the week to become involved in the rarer spare time events which ranked highest in terms of enjoyment, the 'go to' activities such as spectator sports and entertainment.

On the other hand, young men are also more likely to undertake leisure of a more serious nature, which is of limited appeal. Men spend almost three times as much time on informal work and adult education over weekends, and up to twice as much time on community service and meetings. It is noteworthy

that more young men than women are office bearers in their clubs and associations, and may therefore be required to invest more time in club meetings.

• A young woman's place is in the home?

Young township women are tied to hearth and home to a greater extent than their male counterparts. Home chores are the preserve of the women. They spend, on average, two and a half times more time on their domestic duties than men (cf. Table 2). Men contribute only 1 minute per day compared to the 20 daily minutes of childcare done by the women throughout the week.

The time budget results show very clearly the greater limitations on the recreational opportunities for women. It appears that women rely more on recreational outlets such as relaxation and sleep and napping than on socialising and entertainment to recuperate. Young women, in deference to the fairer sex, also spend more time on personal grooming than other groups, on average an additional ten minutes a day.

Music plays a very important role in township life. Women are avid radio listeners throughout the week, while men tend to listen to music from other sources. Over weekends women watch less television than men.

• Employed youth: All work and no play?

The spare time profile of employed youth is typically masculine and mature (54% of the employed are male and 79% are 21 years or older). There is 'leisure famine' on weekdays for the employed relative to other youth. The employed spend an average of 7.5 hours in regular and informal work and 1.5 hours travelling to and from work. In spite of their work commitments, the employed spend more time than any other group on adult education on weekdays.

The main time saving on weekdays is incurred by dropping out of home chores and social activities such as visiting and conversation and games. The employed spend the least time of all groups on passive recreation, such as watching television and listening to the radio and music, and just relaxing. There are also severe restrictions on participation in sports and music and the arts.

Box 2: Childcare Chores

Childcare is a minority activity involving only 10 per cent of young people and 11 minutes per day, on average. Childcare is not necessarily a full-time occupation for child minders but is often combined with other activities such as domestic chores or socialising. Childminding takes up half as much time as other domestic chores for those involved in such activities.

Women, housewives in particular, are mainly responsible for childminding. Unemployed persons also assist with looking after smaller children and toddlers. Young women spend twice as much time as other youth minding children, namely some 21 minutes per day. Unemployed persons spend some 15 minutes per day. By contrast, housewives spend close on one hour looking after children but five and one half hours on housework during the week. Over weekends all housewives do housework but their workload is substantially reduced by some 39 minutes.

There is also relief from childminding in sight for housewives over weekends. The burden of childcare is reduced by some 23 minutes from 56 minutes on weekdays to 33 minutes on weekend days for the average housewife. (Five percent fewer women need to mind children over the weekend, 29% versus 36%, and doers spend 43 minutes less per weekend day looking after children (113 minutes per weekend day versus 156 minutes per weekday).

Results suggest that children cared for by young people seldom receive the undivided attention of the housewives or their quality time. There is a tendency for the unemployed to be full-time childminders while housewives are more likely to divide their attention between children and other activities. It is perhaps significant that child-centred activities including play and stimulation of the child account for only 5 percent of all activities under the broad heading of childcare. Compared to other childminding activities, child-centred activities are considered more enjoyable and discretionary, which suggests that young housewives and mothers are pressed for time to provide quality care for their charges.

Over weekends employed youth do their share of home chores, but spend the least time of all on domestic errands and travel related to them. The weekend profile of the employed reflects their relative lack of interest in religious or church-related activities. In this sense the profile has a distinctly male flavour. The employed spend the least time of all groups on club events and in meetings. However, female elements are also evident in the weekend profile: the employed catch up on passive leisure over weekends but spend less time watching television than all other groups except housewives.

The employed show less interest in sports on weekdays and over weekends than the unemployed, young men and schoolgoers. This is a mature aspect of the profile. It is observed all over the world that people tend to reduce their sports activities after leaving school.

• Schoolgoers: In a class of their own

The schoolgoer profile conforms to the average in most instances. The emphasis is on school and related activities. During their spare time schoolgoers engage in homework and a fair amount of domestic work and far less entertainment and social outings than, say, the employed or the regular club members. Over weekends schoolgoers spend above average time doing more informal work and they spend more time than all other groups on adult education. It is perhaps symptomatic of the widespread township violence that schoolgoers spend more time, on average, than other youth at funerals.

It appears that schoolgoers compensate for lack of time spent during the week on reading (apart from set works for school) and watching television by spending the most time of all groups on these activities over weekends.

• Youth clubbers

The youth clubber activity profile, similar to the schoolgoer profile, is distinctly youthful. It is less masculine than the profile pertaining to regular club members.

Youth club members, who are younger than other persons who have joined a wide variety of organisations and associations, are more likely to be at school and involved in domestic activities in their spare time. Youth club members spend more time than other club members at church, weddings, funerals, on music and arts, and adult education, youth meetings and rallies. On the other hand, members of regular clubs, which will include sports clubs, spend more time on sports, entertainment and with girlfriends on all days of the week, and on social outings over the weekends.

• A housewife's work is never done

Housewives epitomise the mature housebound young women in the townships.

Youth club members spend their time at church, weddings and funerals, on music, arts and adult education, and at youth meetings

It is symptomatic of the widespread township violence that schoolgoers spend more time, on average, than other youth at funerals

Box 3: Funerals

The diary project revealed a specific indicator of political tension which affects leisure patterns among township youth: funeral attendance. In the current political climate in South Africa it may be assumed that most of the funerals attended by youth were held for persons who were victims of violence.

- The diaries kept by young township residents for the nationwide survey revealed that their reactions to funerals are ambivalent. It appears that attending funerals is considered a moral obligation rather than a free choice. The event is accompanied by mixed feelings. Therefore the diarists may have found it difficult and perhaps inappropriate to rate their funeral attendance on the standard enjoyment scale applied to all activities of the day. Funerals were rated on par with the least liked events of the day.
- The evidence suggests that funerals, which are usually held on Saturdays, are atypical leisure pursuits. Going to church, pre-funeral prayers and funerals services (a single coding category) were reportedly the second most common atypical events over weekends mentioned by 70 percent of persons who participated in funerals.
- Some 4 percent of the total 389 persons who kept diaries on a Saturday attended funerals. There was a higher number of persons attending funerals (17 persons) than those attending Saturday school (16), a live sports event (14), a youth rally or youth club meeting (13), a discotheque (10) and a wedding (3).
- During the two 24-hour periods covered in the survey the 1200 diarists spent a total of 243 hours on extra education and live sports events, respectively, 150 hours at youth club meetings and rallies, 91 hours at discotheques, and 24 hours at weddings, compared with 69 hours at funerals.

Since the survey was conducted in 1989, violence has escalated in some parts of the country, so that disruption of normal leisure patterns may have deepened rather than receded.



- 64% of housewives are over 21 years and 36% are married or living together with boyfriends.
- 44% have children of their own in the same household.
- 37% live with the spouses or partners. 14% live with their in-laws.

Housework is less time consuming than work in a job or study at school. Nevertheless, a housewife's work is never done. There is some relief from domestic duties and childcare over the weekend, but the burden remains substantial nonetheless (cf. Table 2).

Of all the groups in the survey, housewives spend the most time on home chores, childcare, and shopping and domestic errands and domestic travel during the week. Weekends are no more leisurely except that relatively less of the housewife's time is taken up by

shopping and errands and domestic travel. A minority of housewives use the weekend to engage in the job search, possibly because other members of the household can fill in for them at home. Job hunting is essentially a weekday activity for other youth.

Housewives invest more time than all others on sleeping and napping, meals, listening to the radio, and handwork throughout the week. On the other hand, housewives appear to have or make less time to watch television and listen to music of all groups except the unemployed. No access to television appears to be a critical factor in distinguishing the genuinely dissatisfied from other youth.

Like all women, housewives invest more time in personal care. They read more than other groups except the unemployed. They are the only group involved in handwork for any substantial period of time. On weekdays they relax for longer than others and invest more time on religious activities. Like other women few are involved in games and sports. Little time is spent on courting as many are married, or on drinking and smoking. Housewives spend the least time of all groups on entertainment activities over weekends.

Housewives participate least of all groups of youth in the arts, adult education, and volunteer work.

The time use patterns of housewives are most appropriately compared with those of the unemployed who have fewer commitments outside the home than other categories of youth. Housewives find less satisfaction in their daily routine than unemployed youth, mainly because of the large component of housework they are required to do. Housewives also tend to rate housework as a less rewarding activity than the unemployed.

Housewives may be less able to avail themselves of opportunities to enhance the work they classify as 'drudgery' (i.e. that is non-discretionary and not very satisfying) with secondary social interaction activities. It appears that housewives are less likely to have people to speak to while pursuing their tasks and are more reliant on non-personal company from the radio. Handwork, the specialist activity of housewives, may be one of the few means of relieving tedium.

Unemployed youth: Looking for kicks

Unemployed youth are somewhat less mature on average than housewives (58% are over 21 years versus 64% of housewives) and less likely to be women (41%). However, the two groups compare closely in terms of the surfeit of spare time at their disposal.

Like housewives, whose main occupation takes up less time of the day than working in a regular job or going to school, the unemployed can afford to spend more time on all their activities of the day. However, the typical activity profile of the unemployed is essentially masculine in character. The unemployed share with other mature young men the freedom to move beyond the constraints of the home for their spare time pursuits. This in itself may be their salvation which prevents them from complete demoralisation.

In contrast to the employed they are not forced to compress their leisure pursuits and are not let off their share of household tasks.

Both housewives and the unemployed expressed dissatisfaction with their overall quality of life. However, the unemployed appear to derive greater immediate satisfaction from their daily round of activities on diary days than their housewife counterparts.

The least enjoyable events on weekdays, in which the unemployed feel obliged to spend time, are the job search and informal work. Only 5 and 9 per cent, respectively, report jobbing or job hunting on weekdays.

The unemployed spend above average time, but less than housewives on domestic tasks, childcare and basic needs such as eating and sleeping. Of all groups in the survey, they spend the most time on specialist activities such as adult education on weekdays and community service, which includes running errands for neighbours and friends, over weekends.

The leisure pursuits of the unemployed on weekdays tend to be more gregarious, escapist, and less homebound than those of housewives. Weekend leisure conforms more to the general pattern. The unemployed appear to be restless as is particularly evident from the time spent on leisure travel. It may be that

**Table 2:
DOMESTIC CHORES: PARTICIPATION RATES AND AVERAGE TIME EXPENDITURE ON WEEKDAYS AND WEEKEND DAYS**

	Weekday doers ¹	Weekend doers ¹	Weekday minutes ²	Weekend minutes ²
Housewives (n77)	100	98	330	291
Young women (n593)	93	94	221	224
Unemployed youth (n277)	89	86	213	166
Youth club members (n380)	85	87	154	168
Schoolgoers (n571)	84	86	131	155
All club members (n668)	80	83	131	150
Young men (n607)	72	74	82	95
Employed youth (n263)	65	73	68	113

1. Doers: persons involved in home chores as percentage of category (i.e. housewives, young women, etc.)

2. Average minutes spent on home chores by all persons in the category

physical mobility provides some relief from the boredom expressed by the unemployed.

Social leisure as found in social outings, games, and visiting may provide the support which the unemployed sorely need. Social leisure of this variety costs little in comparison to entertainment such as cinemas and discos. The fact that shopping and domestic travel is relatively higher over the weekend is suggestive that the unemployed try to provide more assistance for housewives on days free from the job search. Volunteer work in the community, for the few persons who engage in it, may give the unemployed a sense of worth, responsibility and hope in the future.

Unlike housewives, the unemployed are free to spend their spare time away from the constraints of home

Feast or Famine

The leisure experience is not uniform for all township youth. While some youth feast, others experience famine.

The schoolgoers and the employed have far less time off than the unemployed and the housewives. Nevertheless, trends towards 'harried' leisure are not in evidence. The employed youth and schoolgoers who have the least leisure time seem to economise on variety rather than to crowd their leisure. There is a tendency to become involved in fewer free time pursuits rather than spending less time on more leisure outlets.

The employed seem to use their leisure for recuperation which will allow them to put their energies into their jobs. This is

SURVEY METHOD

The sample

Youth 16 to 24 years of age (n1200) were selected in three major metropolitan areas using an area-stratified quota sampling design. Three black suburbs were selected in each of three major metropolitan areas in South Africa: Dube, Moroka, and Pimville in Soweto near Johannesburg; Gugulethu, Khayalitsha, and Langa in the Cape Town area; and Clermont, KwaMashu, and Umlazi in the Durban area. To obtain a more diverse sample each of the nine suburbs was divided into approximately ten neighbourhoods. Each neighbourhood supplied approximately one-tenth of the sample drawn in that suburb.

Quota controls were applied in each metropolitan area for age, gender, occupation and socio-economic status. Only one person was interviewed in each household. Interviewees were usually contacted at home and participated in the survey with parental approval. Further diversification of the sample was achieved by locating some respondents outside of the home near shops, on street corners and walking in the streets. This procedure meant that marginal and non-conformist youth, e.g. thugs, and members of street gangs, were eligible to enter the sample. The refusal rate was less than 1 percent.

The fieldwork

The survey was conducted by Decision Surveys International (Pty) Ltd., Johannesburg, on behalf of the YCP project over a two month period from the beginning of March 1989 to the end of April 1989. Results indicate that the survey period coincided with one of relative calm during the political unrest.

The instruments

Respondents were interviewed individually at their homes or a place convenient to them. Standard questionnaire and time budget schedules were employed for the contact and recall interviews, respectively. Respondents were interviewed in their home or preferred language.

The contact interview

This inquired into the respondent's background and spare time behaviour and attitudes. Following conventional usage, leisure was operationalised as spare time outside of one's main occupation in school, on the job, or at home. No problems were encountered with this definition.

The diaries

At the end of the contact interview fieldworkers left two diaries with respondents for them to complete on a specified weekday (Monday to Thursday) and a specified weekend day (Friday through Sunday). Respondents were instructed to record in their own words their activities of the day from the time of waking until going to sleep at the end of the day. Interviewers revisited respondents on the day after the second diary day. During the recall interview the fieldworker went through the events entered into the diaries with the respondent and recorded further information onto the standard time budget schedule. For each event a record was made of starting and finishing time, secondary activities, presence of others, where the activity had taken place, degree of liking and perceived freedom of choice. Degree of liking was initially introduced as a surrogate measure of meaningfulness and fulfilment.

Respondents were instructed not to detail the activities of their main occupation. This meant that interstitial leisure during, say work or school, was not recorded. By contrast, the activities of the un- and underemployed, and in some instances the self-employed, could be recorded in greater detail throughout the day because the distinction between main occupation and spare time was more likely to be blurred in these cases.

an investment which may pay off in the early stage of the working career. There are worrying signs, however, that young people in jobs may be withdrawing from worthwhile leisure activities. Some would argue that the employed who eliminate creative pastimes and sports from their leisure diet will run the risk of experiential starvation in the longer term. Nevertheless, the employed, of all categories of youth distinguished in the survey are more satisfied with life and seem to experience few leisure obstacles apart from time, so one must assume that the choice is theirs.

Schoolgoers also have relatively less leisure than other youth but put their limited time to what they consider good use. The leisure expenditure of youth clubbers among the schoolgoers, who manage to combine homework with a variety of club activities, possibly represents the optimum case of worthwhile leisure as perceived by the young people themselves.

Relative to other young people, the unemployed and the housewives have the most leisure time on their hands. They spread their leisure time over the full spectrum of spare time activities available to township youth subject to money and gender-related restrictions. The unemployed are similar to the jobless all over the world and spend a great deal of time on housework, passive leisure such as watching television, and sleeping. Beyond these mainly homebound activities the unemployed, particularly the young men, seem to find more scope in activities outside the home than housewives and also report relatively greater satisfaction with their leisure activities.

There is the danger that some unemployed youth may spread their leisure interests so widely merely to 'kill' time that their focus in life is lost. The young people with the largest leisure ration do not seem to be able to consume it fully. One might speculate whether the unemployed and the housewives would not gladly sacrifice their extra free time and trade places with the employed who have too little free time. Unless school-leavers are served a more palatable leisure diet or help themselves to richer fare, spare time will increasingly come to signify emptiness and frustration for township youth. **PIA**

ATTITUDES

IT'S ABOUT TIME

TOWNSHIP LEISURE STYLES

Valerie Møller

In South Africa township youth have developed distinctive life and leisure styles. In comparison to their rural counterparts urban youngsters are thought to have a fair amount of time on their hands. They are freed from tasks such as tending cattle, fetching water and firewood. Modern conveniences in urban homes save time on domestic chores. The question is how do township youth spend this free time and how do they evaluate their use of time?

A time use study conducted in 1989 among 1 200 young people between the ages of 16 and 24 years, inclusive, in three major metropolitan areas gives insights into how young urban blacks spend their time after school and work.

Participants in the survey kept a diary on a specified weekday (Monday through Thursday) and on a weekend day (Friday through Sunday). Diary entries covered all activities undertaken from waking in the morning until going to bed at night. The completed diaries contained a considerable amount of information. Besides noting starting and finishing times for each activity of the day, diarists also indicated how much they liked doing each activity and if the activity was a free choice or obligatory activity for them. To complete the overall picture of the diary days and time use, participants gave interviews in which they described their lifestyles and life concerns, and in what ways their activity schedules brought them closer to fulfilling their ambitions in life. Selected findings from the survey describe the leisure scene for township youth.

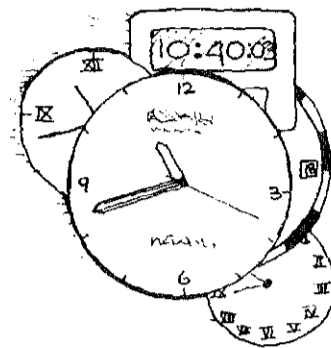
Young township dwellers feel the time pressure. Nine in ten young people in the survey reported that they keep track of time using their own (50%) or other peoples' watches. Weekdays start at 6 o'clock in the morning, on average an hour earlier than weekend days which start at 7 o'clock. The day ends at

10 o'clock at night. Bed time, on average, is slightly later on Saturdays and earlier on Sundays. Regional differences occur: Durban youth rise earlier and go to bed earlier; Cape Town youth rise later and retire later, with Soweto youth closer to the sample average.

On a regular weekday young people on average reckoned they spent 7,1 hours on their main occupation - either work in a job, school, housework, looking for work etc. - and had 5 hours off. Over weekends respondents estimated that they averaged 2 hours more spare time than on weekdays: 7,2 hours on Saturdays and 7,5 hours on Sundays. Only minorities felt either that there was too little time in the day or that the days dragged with too few worthwhile things to do. Weekdays are perceived as distinctly more worthwhile than weekends to young people. Over 84 per cent indicated that they did 'really important' or 'worthwhile' activities on the diary weekday, 78 per cent on the weekend diary day.

Bright Lights

Township youth are probably very similar to young people all over the world with regard to what they like doing in their spare time. Socialising and partying, music and sport, television and cinema, and reading are firm favourites. Listening to the radio and hobbying are more specialist activities (see table 1). Fun, popular 'in things' to do in the townships include the same set of favourite activities with greater emphasis on 'go to' and social contact activities (see table 2). Playing soccer is the prestige activity for young people according to the young men in the survey followed by partying, discos, social drinking and cinema. Young women emphasise partying and dancing to a greater extent than soccer events and drinking. According to the girls, beauty and



Urban black youth in South Africa have developed distinctive life and leisure styles compared to rural youth

In some ways, however, urban youth are probably very similar to young people all over the world in their leisure preferences

**TABLE 1
FAVOURITE OWN LEISURE PURSUITS**

'What do you do in your spare time that you enjoy very much?'

Participation rates of over 3 percent	Total (n1200)
	%
Socialising, parties	24,8
Listen to/play music	20,6
Play soccer	12,1
Television	10,3
Cinema	7,8
Magazines	7,0
Novels	6,7
Radio	5,9
Books	4,9
Hobbies	4,9
Exercise/physical training	3,9
Other active sports	4,0
Cards/draughts	3,2

Note: Respondents gave up to 2 responses

**TABLE 2
POPULAR YOUTH LEISURE PURSUITS**

'What do young people in this township do to have fun; what is the popular 'in thing' to do?'

Items named by over 3 per cent	Total (n1200)	Males (n607)	Females (n593)
	%	%	%
Play soccer	22	35	10
Social gatherings	19	16	22
Discos, night clubs, dancing	13	12	15
Drinking	11	10	11
Go to taverns, shebeens	8	8	7
Go to cinema	7	8	7
Beauty, fashion shows	6	4	7
Choir practice; gospel groups	6	4	7
Music festivals; concerts	5	5	5
Watch soccer	4	6	3
Play netball; basketball	4	3	5
Listen to music	4	4	3
Attending youth rallies; youth clubs	4	3	4
Play other sports	7	8	6
Don't know	4	2	6

Note: Respondents could name one or more items

fashion shows and competitions are also popular as is gospel singing.

In the contact interview respondents were asked to indicate how often they participated in a variety of leisure activities. Television viewing, and hanging out with friends in the case of young men are typically daily events. Reading newspapers is a more frequent activity than reading books with men but not women. Sports activities are weekly if not daily events for young men. Attending church is typically a weekly event for young women but more likely to be a monthly event for young men.

We discover that the typically urban leisure attractions which may keep township youth in town during their vacations have real rarity value. For the majority cinema is a monthly event if that. Live concerts occur only a few times a year. Visits to the beach are annual events. The amusement park, discos and night life attractions are even rarer events and the preserve mainly of young men.

Attending rallies, possibly the most publicised youth activity of the 1980s, is a specialist activity. Only one-quarter of the surveyed youth stated they went to rallies on a monthly basis. The remainder attended youth rallies less often than once per annum if at all.

If we compare the leisure participation rates reported in the contact interview with the actual leisure events of the diary days it is clear that the rarer entertainment events live up to their fun reputation (see table 3). Entertainment ranks highest in terms of enjoyment. Active sport follows right behind spectator and entertainment events on the enjoyment scale, and together these two events take up some 7 per cent of primary activity time. Passive leisure, such as television viewing and reading, and social leisure consume large chunks of spare time and have medium enjoyment values. The most time consuming and least enjoyable spare time activities include personal care, travel, and household chores. Of all the activities in the daily round, housework is least likely to be rated as enjoyable and a free choice leisure pursuit.

In the contact interview the respondents admitted to a clear urban bias in their leisure preferences: two-thirds stated a preference for spending vacation in town. Respondents opted for urban vacations

because they were more familiar with town life and had all their friends in town. Town is a familiar leisure setting: four in five respondents have grown up in town, and over 60 per cent have lived in the same township all their lives. More important for most, however, is the view that town has more to offer by way of recreational outlets. Sports facilities, discos and cinemas are cases in point. The urban vacation is seen as exciting and full of opportunities.

The most significant township events for young people are the popular fun events identified as spare time treats. According to the respondents events which attract large gatherings for pop concerts, live shows, fashion shows, beauty competitions and sports events are major highlights.

On a more serious note, small percentages referred to peace and normalisation returning to their residential area after years of political tension. Others noted with approval the events which assisted young people who wished to improve their education and matric pass level. Small numbers outlined youth community development efforts to create a neighbourhood park and clean up the township.

Noteworthy is, however, that one-quarter of the respondents could not recall a single pleasant event for young people in their residential area.

Finding Freedom

Against this background of popular leisure, it is very revealing to identify which types of ordinary activities young people like, which activities afford the greatest measure of freedom in their lives, and in which ones they would like to engage more often in their spare time.

The best liked activities of the diary day included social leisure and active sports, passive leisure such as watching television and listening to radio. On weekdays educational and school related activities including study and homework ranked higher than any other type of activity in terms of perceived enjoyment. Over weekends church and prayer activities also figured as preferred events of the diary days.

The criteria for assessing preferred activities are wide ranging (see table 4).

Interest, fun and enjoyment feature prominently in the list of 'best activity' criteria as do learning and novel experiences. There are signs that young people may value fitness and the need to show talent and earn recognition for achievement over relaxation of body and soul especially on weekdays.

Respondents reported that they were able to achieve a sense of freedom through a wide range of activities. The opportunity to gain knowledge at school instilled a sense of freedom on weekdays for a substantial proportion. Passing examinations at school evoked special feelings of liberation.

Turning to the more discretionary spare time activities, participants in the survey made special mention of leisure which allowed them to demonstrate their independence and adult status, to experience mastery, and to break away from the daily routine and confines of the township.

Freedom was typically experienced when watching television and videos or listening to radio, visiting with friends of the opposite sex, going out, sharing ideas with others, having money to spend and being out of doors. Creative leisure, for example singing and making music, which has a low overall participation rate (see table 3), is over-represented among the freedom inspiring leisure activities.

Laid-back Leisure

Leisure aspirations also vary widely and include availing oneself of opportunities for personal advancement through education, development of one's talent, travel and novel experiences, and various types of sport and cinema (see table 5).

Respondents were asked why they were not able to realise their leisure aspirations. The major perceived constraint cited was lack of money, followed by lack of facilities and few opportunities to access what facilities are available. Lack of facilities and inaccessibility was a common problem. Lack of time was more of a problem for employed youth; lack of permission from home was a barrier for the younger age groups and especially for young women. In view of the widespread violence one might expect physical safety factors to be a major constraint. This was not the case. Seeing that the majority named leisure

One quarter of survey respondents could not recall a single pleasant event for youth in their township

Black youth achieve a sense of freedom through the opportunity to gain knowledge at school and through creative leisure opportunities

TABLE 3
AFTER HOURS' PRIMARY ACTIVITIES

By time spent on them throughout the week, by enjoyment and by free choice (compiled from diary entries)

	Spare time allocation %	Enjoyment rank	Free choice rank
Entertainment (includes spectator sports)	3,4	1	3
Sports	3,7	2	5
Passive leisure (e.g. watch television, read, listen to music)	14,7	3	1
Creative leisure (music, drama)	1,1	4	4
Social leisure	13,9	5	6
Rest and relaxation	4,8	6	2
Participative leisure (church, clubs)	3,7	7	8
Personal care	17,5	8	7
Travel (including to and from work and school)	13,7	9	9
Household chores and childcare	23,5	10	10
	100		

aspirations concerning career and talent development opportunities, this finding is not surprising.

Leisure activities as described above are not always all-important. Leisure styles, i.e. how young people project themselves in their spare time may account for more.

Larger proportions of black urban youth than their parents express satisfaction with their quality of life

A distinctive 'laid-back' leisure style is the township rule. The preference is 'to take things slowly and relax', to concentrate on a few rather than on many activities and to cultivate a small circle of intimate, long standing friends. One in two young people in the survey (51%), slightly more young women (54%) than young men (47%), subscribe to this leisure style.

Approximately one-third indicated that their friends smoke cigarettes and hang around in groups. Thirty per cent reported that their friends drink alcohol. In contrast dagga and drugs were used by only 6% of friends, and less than 2% of friends pick pockets for fun or to survive. The reported incidence of problem behaviour among friends (substance use, pickpocketing) was lowest for young women, well below the sample average for the youngest age group in the survey, and significantly above average for the unemployed. Almost three-quarters of the surveyed youth stated they usually let their families know of their whereabouts when they go out. This is particularly true of young women.

Quality of Life

In a section on perceived needs, problems and opportunities for young people in South Africa the youth in the survey gave their perspective of the youth scene at the end of the 1980s. Teenage pregnancy is seen as a major problem which outweighs even unemployment and poor education and training prospects. Spontaneous mentions of *worst things about being a young person in South Africa today* were wide ranging and more numerous than *best things*. As might be expected the spiral of crime, delinquency and political violence in which young people are caught up is cause for grave concern. Lack of education and employment opportunities and discrimination which has aggravated life chances for young blacks are seen as serious depressing factors.

Despite the gloom, youth in the survey singled out positive aspects in their lives such as the increase in educational opportunities in recent years and new channels for talent development and personal growth in their leisure time. This contradictory response pattern which cites educational opportunities in the positive *and* negative side of the balance sheet may reflect the rising expectations of young people. Youth obviously hold hopes against hopes of achieving educational aims in spite of their socially disadvantaged background.

How do young township dwellers assess their lifestyles? Approximately half view their current lives as overall satisfying, rewarding rather than frustrating and exciting rather than boring. Larger proportions of black urban youth than their parents express satisfaction with their lives (Møller, 1989), but even the higher perceived quality of life levels reported by the younger generation is below the international standards. Youthful optimism abounds as well: over 60 per cent of the surveyed youth felt that things were getting better for them and just over half viewed the future with optimism (44%) or equanimity (13%).

The leisure component may be a crucial factor which contributes to feelings of well-being and a positive outlook on the future. The comparison between the profile of the satisfied and optimistic youth in the study, on the one hand, and the dissatisfied and pessimistic youth, on the other, is striking. Economic privilege is strongly associated with life

satisfaction and optimism. Keeping fit appears to protect from pessimism while boosting perceived well-being. In contrast, dissatisfaction with how one spends one's weekend leisure, isolation from social support groups, and limited access to television and telephone are characteristic of dissatisfied and pessimistic youth. The results suggest that compared to their age peers, the dissatisfied and pessimistic youth experience leisure deprivation which compounds social disadvantages such as poverty and unemployment.

Risk Scenario

Most studies of spare time make a distinction between the leisure behaviour of young men and women. The situation of township youth in the age group (16-24 years) under study varies enormously. Therefore it makes sense to distinguish between major occupational affiliations which to a certain degree circumscribe leisure and only partially overlap with age and gender distinctions.

Data trends show up the youth which are at risk of underutilising their leisure potential. The following points capture the risk scenario:

- It is the *quality* of spare time not its *quantity* which impacts on feelings of well-being. Employed youth and schoolgoers have relatively less spare time than most youth, yet their perceived happiness is above average. Leisure satisfaction levels on diary days run parallel to higher levels of well-being for the two groups.
- While employed youth experience leisure 'famine' - almost 60 per cent report too little spare time - unemployed youth sit before a leisure 'feast' which they cannot consume for the lack of money.
- Unemployed youth and housewives complain of boredom in their lives, and lack of excitement. Over half in these categories feel that days drag on without there being enough worthwhile to fill their time. This despite the fact that they sleep more than other youth. Unemployed youth and housewives are more likely than others to recall a particularly loathsome activity in their diary days.
- The unemployed and young women,

**TABLE 4
LEISURE MOTIVATIONS**

Reason for stating preference for a particular diary day activity	Weekday	Weekend
	Total (n1200) %	Total (n1200) %
Interest, enjoyment, fun	39,7	49,6
Learning experience, educational	18,6	8,3
Rare event, novel experience, new people	7,3	13,3
To keep fit and healthy	7,1	2,8
Sense of achievement, satisfaction	5,3	3,6
Rest and relaxation	5,0	3,2
Spiritual freedom, 'good for the soul'	1,9	4,9
To earn money	3,7	2,3
Social exchange, mutual support	1,9	3,4
To keep busy	1,5	0,8
Other	1,5	2,7
Nothing liked best	6,5	5,1
	100,0	100,0

**TABLE 5
LEISURE ASPIRATIONS**

'What else would you very much like to do in your spare time, that you are not able to do at present for some reason or other?'

Over 2 per cent mention	Total (n1200) %
Further studies/go to university, technikon etc.	9,3
Travel, visit places	7,9
Further interests, talents	6,9
Cinema	6,8
Play tennis	6,8
Visit friends, go to parties	5,6
Play music/become a musician	5,1
Dancing (ballroom, modern)/dance class	5,0
Play soccer	5,0
Income earning activities	5,0
Gym/body building/physical training/aerobics/karate	4,9
Go to entertainment centres	3,5
Passive leisure	3,0
Receive boy, girlfriend at home/courting	2,7
Drive around/own a car	2,3
Shopping/go to town	2,0
Other active sports	7,8
Nothing/don't know	6,8
Go to discos	

Note: Respondents gave up to 2 responses

particularly housewives, are least optimistic of all groups about their own future and the future of all youth in South Africa.

- There are subtle distinctions between weekday and weekend perceptions of time use between unemployed youth and housewives. Housewives tend to see their weekend activities as more

**TABLE 6
PERCEIVED NEEDS, PROBLEMS AND OPPORTUNITIES
FOR YOUNG PEOPLE IN CURRENT SOUTH AFRICA**

	Total %
Major problems for young people¹	(n1200)
Teenage pregnancy	65
Unemployment	37
Education and training	31
Political conflict	18
Housing	17
Inadequate leisure facilities	17
Crime and physical safety	15
Worst thing about being a young person in South Africa today²	(n1463) ³
Crime and delinquency	17
Aspects of political conflict	14
Lack of employment, economic resources	14
Poor education, few educational opportunities	13
Apartheid, discrimination	10
Alcohol, drug abuse	9
Generation conflict	9
Teenage pregnancy	6
Inadequate recreational facilities and services	3
Poor housing	1
Other	1
Nothing, don't know	3
	100
Best thing about being a young person in South Africa today²	(n1320) ³
Educational opportunities	44
Leisure opportunities	16
Personal growth, moral issues	7
Positive effects of reform initiatives	6
Community development	4
Career, job opportunities	4
Other	4
Nothing don't know	15
	100

1 Fixed response categories, respondents were required to select 2 options
2 Free responses; some respondents gave 2 responses
3 Percentages based on response total

enjoyable and worthwhile, while the unemployed similar to their employed and schoolgoing counterparts consider weekday activities to be more meaningful to them. This suggests that housewives see housework as a dead end career. They look to their time off over weekends - when they are relieved of their household chores to a certain degree by other household members - for personal fulfilment.

- Unemployed youth have an edge over housewives regarding leisure outlets. Gender differences play an important role here. Housewives are least likely of all groups to experience a sense of

freedom in any of their activities of the day. They are most likely to tell their families where they are going when they go out and to be refused permission to undertake the leisure in which they aspire. The unemployed are least likely of all groups to inform their families of their whereabouts.

In contrast to housewives the unemployed appear to do what they like and like what they do. Boredom and futility are their main problems.

- Club members, in particular youth club members, appear to make the greatest gains from their leisure. Their attitude towards life is positive and they appear to get as much out of life as they put in. They are convinced that their activity schedule is a worthwhile one. Above average numbers of youth clubbers are able to recall pleasant events for young people taking place in their areas. Some of these are club events. Club members are least likely to subscribe to the dominant 'laid-back' township leisure style. Joiners are eager to keep busy and active, to be involved in many activities and to mix in larger circles of friends.

Clearly, leisure is not acting as the vehicle for personal and social development which it should. The unemployed and housewives appear to be most at risk of suffering from leisure deprivation. It is evident that leisure opportunities need to be taken more seriously if the future generation of township youth are to break out of the cycle of poverty and unemployment, dissatisfaction and pessimism which feed on each other.

Leisure issues which have been neglected in the apartheid era need to be addressed imaginatively and constructively in the transitional period. The potential for leisure to provide meaning in the lives of young people is enormous. Youth clubs, sports and women's clubs are only one possibility of increasing the potential among a host of others. This research thrust and others reported on in this special report make it abundantly clear that constructive use of leisure is a high priority for young people who suffer from disadvantages in most other spheres of life. Leisure may be one of the critical choices for quality of life; one which gives young people the ability and confidence to cope with the future. **IPQA**

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AMBITIONS * * * *

STAIRWAY TO SUCCESS

YOUTH CLUBS IN GREATER DURBAN * * *

* * * * *

Theresa Mthembu and Valerie Møller * * *

Youth clubs are part of growing up. According to the preceding nationwide survey findings over one in two urban black youth in South Africa belong to a club or association, and nearly one in three belong to a youth club. Youth clubs fulfil many needs of young people which can best be met in leisure outside of work and school. Youth clubs cater for the need for fellowship and belonging, excitement and adventure, physical activity and emotional expression, recognition and development of talents, and personality development. Most importantly, youth clubs serve as a vehicle to channel youthful surplus energy, to give direction to the restlessness experienced by teenagers and to combat boredom, a universal youth problem.

Many youth drift into youth clubs, but they only become active members if their clubs manage to capture their imaginations. A judicious mix of routine and fun activities with a sprinkling of highlights appears to be the magic formula which keeps youth clubs alive and well. This is not easy to achieve even under normal circumstances. The state of emergency introduced in South Africa after mid-1985 posed severe threats to the operations of South African youth clubs in black urban areas during the latter half of the 1980s.

Nevertheless, youth clubs continued to operate and new clubs formed during this period. A study of 42 youth clubs operating in black townships and peri-urban settlements around Durban is indicative that youth clubs provided hope for the future and a secure base for youth threatened by the social upheaval in black townships during the transition period.

From Gospel to Spansula

The youth clubs included in the survey do not fit into any particular mould. Initially the analysis of their profiles was undertaken to identify common traits. However, it soon became apparent that it would be more revealing to study variations rather than uniformity in the data patterns. The youth clubs in the survey fall into four broad types:

- Church youth groups

Church groups operate with the blessing and support of their church with more or less independence in their activities. Their origins may be traced to an appeal for more active youth participation from the pulpit as well as to youth initiatives. Membership in church youth groups, at least initially, is usually restricted to church members. However, as one of the aims of church youth groups may be to attract new religious followers, the groups may welcome outsiders as well.

Age limits tend to be less restricted in church youth groups than other youth clubs and may include the 'young at heart'. Where the parish boundaries do not coincide with the neighbourhood boundaries, the church group may draw its members from a wider geographical area. The priest or minister often plays an important leadership role in mentoring the youth group. This person and other active members of the church often serve on the club's committee or are co-opted as advisors.

The church affiliation has many advantages for youth clubs. It is uncommon that church youth groups operate without parental support. The church group has a ready-made venue

Over one in two urban black youth in South Africa belong to a club or association, and nearly one in three belong to a youth club

Youth clubs may provide a secure base for youth threatened by the social upheaval in black townships

Church youth groups are politically non-aligned, which affords their members a special sense of security

free of charge. The church may provide equipment or advance a loan for the material resources needed by their youth club. The church congregation is a captive audience for talent demonstration and fundraising.

While the church affiliation gives legitimacy to most club activities, it may also bind members. In two cases, youth clubs which started as church groups sought to emancipate from the church dictate. A first step involved shifting their venue from the church hall to a neutral one such as individual homes. One of these clubs emphasised that it wished to be seen as a 'community' rather than as a church group.

The fully operational church youth group is typically medium-sized with 15-20 members of both sexes. The church youth group is a flagship and drawcard for the church; it brings youth into the fold and instills Christian values in them. The youth group members often make up the church choir or swell its numbers. Some youth groups provided the refreshments for the congregation after services. Church youth groups derive pride and a sense of belonging in serving fellow members.

Church group meetings are usually held on one weekday evening or more, but members also meet after the weekly service over the weekend. The groups typically engage in a variety of fellowship, religious and moral instruction and discussion, and recreation and community service. The Methodist youth, which engages in community service, outlined their balanced programme as *the three C's*: comradeship, creativity and concentration (on prayer, bible studies and gospel music).

Without exception church groups sing, usually gospel music. Most of the church groups in the survey aimed to achieve proficiency if not professionalism in singing.

A member of a church youth group defined church groups as being politically non-aligned, which afforded their members a special measure of security. In his view 'community youth groups are sometimes involved in politics, which is not safe at all.' However, it is uncertain whether this definition of a community group would be considered universally valid. It

appeared that many of the secular multi-interest groups strived to be non-aligned. Nevertheless, respondents indicated that youth clubs might include politically active members. Many youth clubs did not inquire about the political leanings of new members.

• *Multi-interest youth clubs*

This club represents the secular version of the parish or church youth group. It usually serves a fairly limited geographical area similar to single interest groups such as gospel singers, but usually operates with larger numbers, some 25 to 40 members.

Some of the multi-interest groups in the survey were sponsored by community organisations or business. The club serves a mix of recreational, fellowship, community service and educational needs as does the church group. The emphasis on continuing education for school-leavers was particularly evident in the survey. Due to the larger numbers attending multi-interest youth clubs, most are forced to find meeting places outside private homes.

• *Gospel and dance clubs*

Gospel singers represented the most popular special interest groups in the survey; dancers were in the minority. Although most youth groups include singing as an important activity, gospel groups specialise in this genre. They concentrate their efforts on promoting gospel music for a variety of aims.

Groups in the survey had achieved various degrees of professionalism when they were first contacted in 1988 and 1989. Most gospel singers and dancers seek recognition and popular acclaim in their neighbourhoods and beyond. They perform at private functions such as weddings, graduations and parties to raise funds for the equipment and dress uniforms for the group. The most coveted items are keyboards and other musical instruments, and sound equipment, such as microphones and amplifiers. The ultimate badge of achievement is to make a recording and to appear on television.

Popular local groups, which have established themselves, serve as reference models for fledgling groups. Many of the gospel groups are affiliated to a church and use church resources. However, one of

Gospel and dance clubs are popular, and members seek recognition and acclaim beyond their neighbourhoods

the most popular groups of gospel singers declared that they see themselves as a non-affiliated community group because we stage our shows in the community.

New gospel and dance clubs usually draw their members from households in the neighbourhood and may number anywhere from three to ten members. They typically operate from home. The better established gospel groups will have the full range of male and female voices and usually count some 15 to 20 members. The two dance groups in the survey specialised in *spansula* dance, a smooth urban dance style calling for great suppleness. Both groups were all-male ones. However, the members of the one group did not see any reason why girls should not take up *spansula* dancing. Just under half of all the groups in the gospel and dance category operated from venues outside the home.

• Sports clubs

Football clubs represent the most common specialised sports club. They are affiliated to a regional body and may have sponsors, although this is unusual at the amateur level. Membership is usually restricted to young men in the case of football and boxing. However, one club falling in this category called itself a football and social club when first contacted and included girls. By the time of the follow-up survey, it had become a regular all-male football club. Clubs meet at home for some aspects of training and club business, but use sports grounds for their practice meetings. In all cases the sports grounds were situated a long distance away from the homes of members and transportation was a fairly common problem for sports clubs.

Most football clubs go 'camping'. The practical purpose of the camp is to prepare the young men physically and morally the night before playing weekend matches. Given the transportation problems encountered by members coming from many different residential areas, assembling the team at the camp ensures that all players are on time to play for their team.

Other sports clubs offer a wider variety of sports, including mixed gender sports, and some operate as recreational clubs. The more successful clubs in the category draw their members from a wide area and may count over 50 members. All

football, sports and recreational clubs are reliant on larger venues than individual homes and require equipment, which makes them highly vulnerable operations. Affiliation to sports bodies is mandatory and the costs must be borne by the individual members or the club.

Sports clubs typically use school and sports grounds, and community halls as their venues and seek sponsorship or patronage from individuals and organisations. In some cases leaders and trainers reported that they dipped into their own pockets to meet club expenses. A common characteristic of all sports clubs is their lack of affiliation to the church. Many football players and boxers aim to become professionals. Football clubs reported that the loss of their better players to professional clubs was a problem.

• Hybrids

These represent a mix of the purer types listed above which defied exact classification. In the survey five youth clubs with a strong interest in gospel music shared many of the aims of the multi-interest secular groups or else had strong church links.

Response to Violence

During normal times, youth clubs have sprung up as a means to keep youth off the streets and to channel energies into constructive spare time activities. Both leaders and regular members of the clubs in the survey volunteered this motivation to form or join a youth club. Youth clubs which fulfil this mandate can be assured of parental approval, an important factor for most young people in spite of the so-called generation gap.

During the emergency period an even greater sense of urgency prevailed to keep youth off the streets. In some instances, it became a matter of life and death. Young people felt safer in youth clubs where they knew all the members. The emergent youth clubs of the 1980s were small in size and neighbourhood bound. Where young people met became all-important during the unrest. Suitable venues had not only to be convenient but also safe.

Youth club initiatives which took youth off the streets did not withdraw them from the political arena. The emergent

Youth clubs have sprung up as a means to keep youth off the streets and to channel energies into constructive activities

Youth club initiatives do not withdraw concerned young citizens from the political arena

YOUTH CLUBS

YOUTH RESPOND TO NATAL VIOLENCE

Case studies of 12 of the 42 youth clubs surveyed suggest that youth in the mid-1980s found a meaningful response to their predicament as pawns of the volatile situation in Natal townships. In stark contrast to the comtsothis, which formed gangs to terrorise neighbourhoods under the guise of political activities, the youth clubs formed with the special mission to promote havens of peace and social harmony in their neighbourhoods. The youth clubs promoted a positive orientation towards the future in the midst of strife and disorder.

Two years after the initial survey, nine of these youth clubs are active, one club has suspended activities and two clubs have disbanded because of the violence. Most of the nine 'healthy' clubs are transformed some beyond recognition - a sign of growth rather than regression. At least two of the groups were assisted in the process by the YCP 'Super' Club intervention (see box: pp38-39). The following eight stories tell the tale of some of the youth clubs formed in direct response to political unrest. The names of the clubs are not given here in order to protect the identities of their members.

	Number of clubs	Clubs formed in response to unrest
Church groups	12	2
Gospel & dance clubs	12	3
Sports clubs	8	-
Multi-interest clubs	5	3
Hybrids	5	4
Total	42	12

has received a church loan for a guitar. However, membership is not restricted to churchgoers.

Outcome: Unfortunately, the group's male members have been identified as targets by opposing political factions. Although this group manages to maintain its activities, another church group in the same area has been forced to abandon its operations due to the political unrest (see case study 7).

Township West Side Stories

CASE STUDY 1: SATURDAY SCHOOL

One church group started in 1988 in a shack area plagued by youth suicides. Suicide cases were thought to be related to school-leavers' perceived hopelessness when entering the job market. Parish youth found sponsorship for a Saturday school which attracted some 80 youth.

Outcome: The group ran a successful Saturday school for several years with a large membership of over 80 persons. It has transformed itself into a multi-interest recreational group with a tiered organisational structure. Each recreational interest group has its own leader, who represents subgroup interests on a core committee.

CASE STUDY 2: PASSING THE TIME

Another church group was started by two young men in 1986 in a shack area. The youth, who were unemployed, played cards and chess to pass the time while keeping away from the violence. They sang while concentrating on their next moves and their singing attracted other young men. Women joined the group later. The majority of members belong to the local church, and the group

CASE STUDY 3: SPREADING THE GOSPEL

A group of gospel singers which started in 1988, aim to bring a bit of sunshine into the lives of people in the neighbourhood. They formed after singing at a friend's funeral. 'In fact, as people prayed; we sang for the whole week before the funeral.'

Outcome: Club life has brightened considerably since members elected a committee to solve their internal conflicts. When first contacted the group operated without a committee and its members deplored their lack of internal cohesion and effectiveness. The decision to elect a committee was taken as a result of feedback from the YCP skills training weekend.

CASE STUDY 4: SHARING THE LOSS

Another gospel club was 'born' in 1986. 'There were too many deaths in the townships because of the unrest. Some of the deceased were our friends. The only thing we could do was to console the families by singing during the week just before the funeral and also on the funeral day.' The gospel singers hope to become stars one day and 'to have a record that we can play for our children when we are married with families.'

Outcome: This gospel group has increased its numbers and is gaining popularity in its neighbourhood. Some members have found jobs. Club members feel certain that the employment of their members will be of material benefit to the entire group.

CASE STUDY 5: LEARNING AT LEISURE

Two multi-interest groups were formed in Durban's formal townships in early 1986 to protect students and unemployed youth. 'This was started by a group of students... They were scared of hanging around the streets as young people who were not students were fighting, stabbing or even killing some of the students, calling them professionals. Club activities include educational and recreational pursuits: First aid, sewing, modelling, beauty contests, film shows, gospel singing. The groups receive the support of the Red Cross. When the researcher visited the club in 1988, members were being shown what to do if a club member should receive a stab wound during an attack.

Outcome: One of the two Red Cross groups decided to merge with its twin when its adult leader changed her job and could no longer assist the club. The merged groups have dropped first aid from their schedule of activities and are busy finding a new name to reflect their change of identity.

CASE STUDY 6: BUILDING YOUTH UNITY

A multi-interest hybrid, this club was started immediately after a period of unrest in the area. The group felt that young people had to come together to show their unity. 'Young men started stabbing each other month after month for no serious reason... After one of our colleagues was killed, we thought we'd better meet occasionally to talk about something that was going to keep us together as young people in this area.' The group attracts students in the area and has a wide range of educational and recreational pursuits, including gospel singing. Members aim to further their 'education for a better future'. They have co-opted parents into their committee and participate in many community events in liaison with a local burial club.

Outcome: The club members are seeking a new identity. They carried away the trophy for the best gospel singers at the talent day organised by the YCP Working Group (see box: pp38-39). They have recruited fresh blood, and a few graduates from their junior sister group have joined them. The club intends to change its name to emphasise its singing interest and to adopt a new uniform. Nevertheless, the members still pursue their neighbourhood networking activity which exposes local clubs to speakers who can assist with career choices.

CASE STUDY 7: MAKING THE PEACE

A gospel/church group hybrid based in a shack area traces its origin to a youth who fashioned a guitar from a cooking oil container in the late 1960s. The 1986 hybrid split off from descendents of this young man's gospel

group and became affiliated to an independent Christian church. The club aims 'to improve the character of young people by keeping them busy and getting to know each other, so that there is no killing and stabbing of young people around here. We believe this will eventually improve our area as a whole. Some of our friends from KwaMashu and Umlazi often say that they are afraid of visiting us because there is endless fighting in the area.'

Outcome: The group's venue may have been their undoing. The group was strongly affiliated to the local church and had access to the church hall in return for services in the church choir. However, members wished to retain their independence from church influence and chose to meet at home instead. Members were accused of holding political meetings when they were practising singing at the club leader's home. His home was burned down by the opposing faction and group members dispersed.

The story ends on a more cheerful note: Before going 'underground' the group passed on the t-shirts handed out to all the delegates to the first YCP workshop to another church group in the neighbourhood which was struggling to raise funds for uniforms for its gospel singing performances. With the inherited t-shirts to add to its own, the gospel group was able to dress its team uniformly for its performance at the YCP talent day and carried away a prize.

CASE STUDY 8: JAILHOUSE ROCK

Another multi-interest/gospel hybrid was started in 1982 by a former 'jailbird' who had terrorised the neighbourhood as a 'tsotsi' before he was 'born again'. He started a neighbourhood youth club named after a popular football team, the idol of young people in the area. The club's mission was to keep youth occupied and out of mischief so they did not get into trouble and land in jail like their leader. It aims to bring people together 'so they will know each other well and not kill or rape each other as is the case in the townships; to keep youth busy when not at school or work; and not to sit around street corners day and night.' Members would like to see a better community and they believe their club will assist them to become better parents.

Outcome: One of the oldest hybrids, this club now operates mainly as a gospel group. It was almost prematurely disbanded when it experienced 'girl' problems. The group was probably saved by a YCP Working Group intervention. A delegate attended the YCP leadership course and returned to her group with fresh initiative to recruit new members and a new leader. The group is now in full swing with its full complement of 30 members. One of its weekly meetings is reserved for sorting out internal group problems as they arise.

The youth clubs which emerged during the emergency restored order and normality to their members' lives

clubs were concerned young citizens. Their aim was to promote the common good while restoring direction and meaning to the lives of the young people in their areas during the turmoil of the late 1980s.

It is proposed that a special brand of youth club emerged during the emergency period to cope with the confusion and hopelessness experienced by township youth. Young people were attracted to youth groups which might restore order and a measure of normality to their lives. As one respondent put it their aim in starting a youth group was to promote 'healthy' youth. Driven by the need for a new morality, many of the new youth clubs regard themselves as 'community' groups and combine community service and social awareness with their recreational pursuits.

It is worth comparing the new youth clubs with the *comtsotsi* gangs which emerged during the same period. Both groups are youth-initiated and neighbourhood bound. However, activities and objectives contrast perfectly: The *comtsotsis* are on the streets, the youth clubs keep off. The *comtsotsis* 'use' the unrest situation to divide and exploit the community; the youth clubs seek to unite the community. Both groups seek material gain for themselves through their group: the *comtsotsis* through extortionism, the youth clubs through community service.

The histories of eight youth clubs in the survey which best characterise the youth response to the unrest situation are given in the database (see box: pp 32-33). The cases isolated include all categories of youth clubs but the multi-interest groups and hybrids dominate.

Club Membership

The profiles of the youth clubs of the church, multi-interest, sports and gospel variety have a small number of common characteristics. Most of the clubs cater for boys and girls. Some of the gospel clubs started off as uni-sex groups, but later extended membership to achieve a fuller balance of voices. For example, one of the church groups which started as a club of altar boys, gradually included girls when it became better established.

Another example is an all-girl gospel group, whose members will be promoted

to their sister senior club when they pass standard five at school. In the follow-up survey, some of the older members expressed their doubts about graduating to a mixed club. In view of the problems reviewed in the survey their misgivings may not be without foundation.

Many of the 1980s youth clubs operated as neighbourhood clubs. An obvious advantage of the neighbourhood club is that it offers greater security to its members, an important factor at the height of the unrest. Group members know each other and do not need to cross enemy lines to attend meetings. This is especially important for groups without transport. Numerous groups cited problems with walking through hostile environments on foot, especially at night.

The different categories of youth groups draw their members from different constituencies. The church groups have parish-defined jurisdiction. Where parish boundaries extend across neighbourhoods, the church group constituencies tend to cover a larger area.

Club turf can cut right across the formal/informal housing divide. Common religious outlook and sports interests may override any social differences between club members on either side. One church group counts fellow churchgoers from the adjoining township among its members. The township club members spend the night at the minister's home after meetings and only leave after church service the following day. This 'camping' arrangement affords safety for township members who do not have to travel home at night and leisurely contact periods for the club.

Two of the sports groups operating from a shack settlement draw their members from farther afield. The better established karate club, whose headquarters when first contacted was a precariously leaning wattle and daub structure in a shack area, is led by a sports enthusiast as trainer. He was inspired by the boxing clubs in the US ghettos and the South American *barrios* to start his karate school in the early 1980s. This successful operation drew its members from the nearby township and a site and service scheme up the road.

The survey suggests that mixed class membership is not always a recipe for success. A football club started for boys

Many of the new youth clubs combine community service and social awareness with recreational pursuits

...in middle class township housing ... admitted boys from non-electrified ... who were in the same school as the ... members. Class differences became ... of this club.

With the exception of the smallest performing groups, most clubs operate with some form of committee. The founding members or adult initiative behind the group will usually serve on the committee or be co-opted onto it. Adult committee members may include social workers, teachers, parish priests and ministers, and parents, especially if they possess organising skills, community contacts, or special expertise.

The typical core committee consists of some three to five officials: the chairperson, vice-chair, secretary and possibly a vice-secretary and treasurer. One gospel group in the survey had dispensed with a chairperson in favour of a two-person committee: 'The organiser finds places for us to stage our shows, and the treasurer works out the admission fee.' The treasurer is an optional committee member as most of the groups have few funds. The more informal and younger age groups may appoint a trusted person as their treasurer or bank. The survey revealed that a *manyana* (member of the women's union) served as treasurer for one church group. An older brother and an aunt acted as the banks for two of the younger teenage groups.

One enterprising gospel group might be cited as an example of a particularly successful organisation: its committee features an official organiser, whose task it is to scout for suitable venues for their performances. A spokesperson reported that his group had overcome the banking problem which vexes many of the clubs which have no affiliations to larger organisations. The club banked its irregular profits from fundraising efforts with the post office which stipulates no minimum deposit.

Funding

Some groups charge a joining fee and monthly or weekly dues. A R2-R5 joining fee was most common in 1988/89. Dues were usually 50 cents to R1 per month. Some of the sports clubs are forced to charge higher fees to cover the registration and affiliation fees on behalf of their members. Some few clubs have

introduced a sliding scale for earners and non-earners because most clubs cater for members in different stages of their working and educational careers. One of the community groups introduced a joining fee and issued paid-up members with membership cards to keep out unwanted elements which threatened to disrupt their meetings. Only two groups have membership cards to identify members; this community group and a church group.

The membership fee charged usually reflects the standard of living enjoyed by members as well as where they stand in their life careers. Some groups reported that their members found difficulties in even raising dues of 50 cents to R1 per month, especially the younger and unemployed members. Survey results suggest that overcharging (undercharging seldom occurs!) might be one of the factors which has caused members to lose enthusiasm for their youth club.

Some groups use the joining fee as their screening device to distinguish between serious members and persons who are unlikely to participate actively. However, a number of music groups do not charge joining fees and monthly dues. Instead, they audition potential members and rely mainly on their public and private performances to raise funds for the group. Music and dance groups are invited to perform at weddings, graduations, parties, conventions, etc. Charges for performances at wedding functions varied from R30 to R70 in 1988/89. One group had different tariffs if transport was provided for the group.

Performing groups complained that they often experienced difficulties in getting their clients to pay up. 'We have to chase after them to pay us our R30' (a dancer). The more enterprising performing groups rent venues and stage performances. In some cases the organising groups invite other groups in the area to join their performances and give a joint bill.

Football teams raise funds for members along stokvel principles by placing bets on their performances, say stakes of R50 for each competing team. The winning team takes all. The trainer of a sports group operating in a shack area reported that the members of his team expected to pocket the earnings as a merit reward leaving him to pay for subscription fees

In stark contrast to 'comtsotsis' which formed gangs to terrorise neighbourhoods, the youth clubs formed to promote social harmony

Neighbourhood youth clubs circumvent problems of transport, crossing hostile territory and deep social cleavages

A yearning for the restoration of virtues such as faith, hope and charity is suggested in club names featuring peace, faith, truth, genuine, comfort

In hard times youth clubs serve as beacons to guide youth out of the poverty engulfing them

out of his own pocket. He did not have the heart to disappoint the young lads.

It appears that the largest church group relies exclusively on church funds for its activities. However, church members are expected to tithe, so they contribute indirectly to their group's expenses. A smaller, less formal church group affiliated to an independent church invites its members to make a donation at the end of each meeting over and above their regular dues.

Some of the more enterprising church groups which do not collect dues from members organise jumble sales and raffles. The youth groups affiliated to churches, even some multi-interest community groups, play an active role in providing refreshments such as tea and scones for a small charge to churchgoers after services. The members of the church group in the survey who complained about having to hold their meetings immediately after the long morning service when they were ravenous might consider this solution to their problem.

Materialism vs Idealism

Youth clubs choose names for themselves which reflect their aims and ambitions. Many of the groups adopt the names of their heroes in sports or music. A community group named itself after the most popular football club in the neighbourhood at the time. The names of the gospel clubs have a distinctly religious ring to them, but also reflect the need to succeed to fame and fortune in spite of all odds. Youth clubs call themselves stars, heroes, challengers, supreme. A yearning for the restoration of virtues such as faith, hope and charity is suggested in names featuring peace, faith, truth, genuine, comfort and sunshine. Church youth groups are least likely to adopt special names. They seem proud to identify themselves as the parish youth.

It is estimated that at least three in four youth groups were formed as a result of youth initiative. Even the church youth groups which emerged in response to a challenge from the pulpit tend to rely on youth rather than adult efforts to start and maintain successful operations. The name chosen by one of the community groups, *Eyethu* (ours) is a reflection that youth are intent on self-reliance and doing their own thing.

Criteria of success reflect that idealism and lofty ambitions are the stuff which youth groups are made of. The footballers wish to attract sponsorship and become professional. The dance and gospel groups seek community recognition and national fame, with recording or television appearance the ultimate goal.

In the midst of idealism emphasising togetherness and community service, researchers came across a mercenary streak. For example, several youth groups, seeking to instil punctuality in their members, imposed money fines for latecoming. Even the groups whose specific aim was to provide community entertainment were not willing to perform gratis except at funerals.

Consider, however that in hard times youth clubs serve as beacons to guide youth out of the poverty engulfing them. Their leisure activities in the youth club must of necessity serve as a preparation for the harsh reality outside. Attuning recreational needs to material necessity may be typical of youth growing up in developing contexts. Material rewards are sure signs of the success which young people seek.

Although none of the youth clubs had formed around a group of informal sector workers, youth club activities aim to provide marketable skills and alternative earning opportunities for school-leavers with slim prospects of employment during the recession. The sewing lessons arranged for the members of a multi-interest/gospel hybrid are a case in point.

Other research has discovered that township youth measure their personal worth in monetary terms. Therefore, it comes as no surprise that youth groups subscribe to a material as well as a moral ethic and manage to combine the two. Possibly this mix represents reality testing, and as such should be welcomed rather than criticised.

Aims and Activities

All clubs seek to promote 'healthy' youth and to further young people's personal development through their activity programmes. Activities include singing, drama, and discussion groups. Speakers may be invited to address youth on educational and topical issues.

Youth clubs appear to cope well with contradictions. The club which covets modern hi-tech peripherals such as amplifiers and loudspeakers for its public performances subjects its girls to virginity inspections in a revival of a traditional custom. Another group includes gospel music as well as traditional Zulu dancing in its repertoire.

The youth clubs in the survey make considerable demands on the time of their members. Just under half meet more than three times during the week. The groups which meet less often tend to hold half day meetings.

A clear distinction is made between the club's regular business and its special activities. Most groups assign a specific day to a particular activity. For example, the sports groups keep fit on some weekdays, play sports on others and go to matches over the weekend. The performing groups practise and do business during the week and perform at church and other events over the weekend. The organising committee may meet outside of the regular meetings. Business meetings and committee meetings which involve smaller numbers are frequently held at private homes rather than the larger venue.

Special activities are highlights which allow groups to exhibit their prowess and talents, prove their worth by drawing audiences, and bringing in cash rewards for the group. Examples are the football match, the sports tournament, the staging of entertainment events in which the groups participate or compete, beauty shows, singing at weddings and funerals.

Camps and excursions are popular special activities. Eight of the 42 clubs, mainly football clubs, reported on such activities. 'Camping' is often makeshift at private homes or in a school rather than under the stars in tents. One church group established itself permanently as the outcome of a successful trip to the beach with young members of the congregation. Another community group was born out of the efforts of the two founding members to find alternative, less expensive recreation for the stay-at-homes who could not afford excursions. Apart from the element of excitement and recreation there are also educational aspects to camps and excursions which participants value. The football camps serve to prepare players

for the matches the following day. A multi-interest group consisting of youth in their twenties reported that they paid visits to community institutions to learn more about their needs and problems.

A church youth group listed the organisation of a trip which it shared with other youth in the neighbourhood as one of its major achievements. Members of the youth clubs delight in meeting their counterparts elsewhere, say at inter-club tournaments and church rallies and conventions. These excursions promise excitement and adventure for the groups as well as wider fellowship.

The 1986 President's Council report on youth cites Christianity as the common denominator for South African youth. The nationwide survey of township youth cited earlier revealed that 23 per cent belong to church youth clubs compared with only 13 per cent participating in other youth clubs apart from sports clubs.

Church youth groups operate under the auspices of their church. Most of the church groups include singing in their activity programme. The gospel groups which seek to promote this genre of music as an art form are often affiliated to a church.

Other clubs appear to be heavily reliant on church-owned resources. One in three clubs in the survey used a church venue. Some clubs reported that they paid rent for their church venue which was located outside of their area. Other groups paid in kind. Members of a community group took it upon themselves to sweep the yard in front of the church where they were allowed to meet in lieu of a donation which they could not afford. Interestingly, four of the 12 church groups in the survey use schools as their venues. Some of the schools are situated adjacent to the church. The largest church group had over 150 members and could not fit into its church hall.

To sum up, the church is an important resource base for youth clubs. Three quarters of the clubs in the survey reported a church connection: affiliated to a church, used a church hall as venue, performed or provided their services free of charge or to raise funds at church events, performed at weddings and funerals or engaged in a mix of these. The sports clubs and some of the multi-interest community groups were

Youth clubs combine a material ethic of starbound success with a moral ethic of community service

Research findings reveal that 23% of township youth belong to church clubs and 13% to other youth clubs (excluding sports)

A YOUTH INTERVENTION THE YCP WORKING GROUP

The objective of the YCP research and development project was to make appropriate interventions to assist youth initiatives, such as youth clubs and centres, to operate more effectively and to the satisfaction of those involved. The outcomes of any interventions would then be evaluated.

Club Workshop

The youth clubs contacted in the course of the YCP 1988/89 survey were invited to participate in a one-day workshop held at the University of Natal in December 1989 to make recommendations to the project team. At the workshop the youth clubs compiled an inventory of the problems they faced in their clubs. Each club in the survey sent four delegates, which usually included members of club committees, where available, to attend. The workshop was convened by one of the authors, a community organiser, who enlisted the assistance of facilitators, all concerned youth with interest and experience in youth work.

Out of this workshop and subsequent meetings of the facilitators to evaluate the workshop outcome, a working group evolved. It called itself the *YCP Working Group* and consisted of ten of the workshop facilitators and ten further persons elected from among the youth clubs in the survey. It gradually emerged as a regional superstructure or umbrella body serving the youth clubs in the survey. Care was taken to ensure that the *YCP Working Group* had a broad representation of members resident in areas to the north, south and west of Durban, who had intimate knowledge of local conditions for youth clubs.

The first task for this 'super' youth club was to review the problems facing youth clubs which had been identified at the December workshop and to isolate the top priority issues which required practical intervention. The members agreed that the problems relating to lack of resources, strained intragroup relations, and the need for political direction required urgent attention.

Leadership Camp

The *YCP Working Group* decided to tackle the problems relating to intragroup relations first. It was reasoned that if clubs gained sufficient social and leadership skills in their midst, they would better be able to cope with other practical and external problems barring their progress. Common practical problems included the lack of parental support for club activities, a shortage of suitable venues, and poor access to recording facilities for gospel singing groups. A plan was devised whereby the entire group would receive effectiveness training at two weekend camps and would seek to pass on what they had learnt to the other youth clubs in the survey.

After receiving training, the group members practised their new skills by visiting ailing youth clubs in the survey to learn more about problems first hand and to offer advice and sympathy. Members compared notes on progress in 'doctoring' youth group problems at their regular meetings. In September 1990, the *YCP Working Group* organised a leadership skills training weekend camp as their first entirely own effort. Members assumed roles as facilitators for different sessions and invited the interested youth clubs in the survey to send delegates to participate in the weekend. This intervention may have contributed to positive outcomes for some youth clubs in need of resuscitation (see text).

The 'girl' issues which were thought to be behind many of the internal conflicts experienced by youth clubs, had already been addressed at a one-day seminar held earlier in the year. The discussion at the seminar focused on boy-girl relationships and 'courting' insofar as these issues affected youth club operations. The forum included a sex education talk followed by question time and role playing to review practical questions concerning behaviour codes in youth clubs.

Talent Show

A second milestone in the life of the *YCP Working Group* was reached at the end of 1990 when they organised a talent day to which all participant youth clubs in the survey were invited. Approximately half of the groups surviving at the time gave performances. At the talent day teams competed in

four sections: soccer, karate, spansula dance and gospel singing. The gospel group with the youngest members gave a Zulu dance display because they felt they could not compete with older groups. The most advanced gospel group which has already cut records did not compete as it was considered to be unfair competition. However, the leader of the group contributed to the evaluation of performances.

The group called in experts, including professionals from the National Soccer League and a recording studio, to judge performances and give expert advice at the end of the day. After the talent day the YCP Working Group met with the experts from the recording studio to draw up a programme designed to give direction to the most promising gospel singing teams. (Earlier in 1990 four of the gospel clubs in the survey had been conned by a talent scout who disappeared with the clubs' money before they had cut records.)

The talent day gave youth clubs an opportunity to exhibit their talents in an atmosphere of friendly competition, which appealed to youthful ambitions. Throughout its first year of operation the YCP Working Group had urged the youth clubs in the survey to pool their limited resources. Several clubs assisted each other with fundraising efforts by organising joint events. The working group decided to extend its networking role in 1991 to promote a spirit of co-operation and greater understanding between different categories of youth clubs. It set about bringing pairs of youth clubs from different areas together to organise joint outings during the school vacation.

In 1991 the YCP Working Group has returned its attention to one of the needs identified at the outset and is inviting experts to give youth an update on the socio-political developments which have occurred since February 1990. The plans are for these issues to be discussed in small group sessions starting with its own members. If the first seminars prove successful they will be taken to the other youth clubs at their request.

Currently, the YCP Working Group is also considering an extension of its constituency base in view of the attrition in the ranks of the 42 youth clubs, which participated in the first round of research in 1988 and 1989. Since this time other clubs in the Durban area have made known their existence and have requested to participate in the YCP research and development project.

A 'Super' Youth Club

During 1990 the YCP Working Group evolved rapidly into a smoothly working unit which met twice monthly at a central University of Natal venue. It elected a small executive committee which co-opted the YCP community organiser as a resource person and through her liaised with the YCP project research team based at the University. The group's trainer in personal effectiveness and leadership skills became the group's mentor to whom members turned for advice and encouragement.

The group gradually developed its role as a 'super' or regional umbrella youth club. Its self-defined mission was to service the 42 youth clubs in the programme. It was well placed to become the region's 'super' youth club. It shared many of the characteristics of the clubs it served.

In its first year of existence the YCP Working Group also experienced many of the problems which the members of its constituency face. For example, it was faced with a leadership vacuum after losing its very active chairman in a fatal motor accident. The vice chair, preoccupied with starting her career, could not find sufficient time to take the deceased's place. Although the group had no official church links it found itself singing as a group at the funeral of its deceased leader and consoling the bereaved parents. The group also grappled with practical problems. It draws its members from all over Durban and has difficulty transporting members home after weekend or evening meetings even though it has access to a project vehicle.

The group has worked very hard to overcome any defects in its operations - to become a genuine 'super' youth club which can serve as a reference model for others. It knows that it must set standards of excellence if its advice and direction is to have any legitimacy and impact.

The YCP Working Group has come a long way in the short time it has existed. It has become independent of its mentors and developed into a valuable resource group in the region. It has considerable energy and many ideas it wishes to put into practice. One of its major concerns at the time of writing is that it may face an untimely 'death' if it is not able to gain sufficient strength to emancipate from the YCP research and development project which will wind down after a three year period at the end of June 1991.

Acknowledgement to the YCP Working Group Executive Committee:

Henry Masinga (Chairperson) Thandi Mthombeni (Vice-chairperson) Lwazi Shongwe (Secretary)
Velile Mdletshe (Vice-secretary) Ntombifuthi Zondo (Treasurer) (Group advisor: Hillary Morris)

Key problems for youth clubs concern the lack of suitable venues, scarce material resources and few leadership skills

Since the unrest began many schools are loathe to give space to youth clubs, fearing malicious damage to property

exceptions in that they appear not to have formal links to churches.

Problems for Youth Clubs

The key problems which youth clubs have in common are the lack of suitable venues, scarce material resources, and few social and leadership skills to cope with internal conflict. All these problems are exacerbated by the climate of violence in the townships.

- Venues

Young people can never come together in bigger groups because of venues. They can't share the skills they have. Young people decided to use the streets and streetcorners which has resulted in stabbing and killings' (15 year old girl).

Regarding meeting places, the church groups are better off than other groups. They usually have access to a church venue or through their church to a larger school venue and do not pay rent. Nevertheless, all groups that use churches and schools complain that they must yield whenever larger functions are held on the premises. It is noteworthy that some groups meet in the church itself where there is no church hall. A township gospel group which uses a church venue can meet only over the weekend during the day when there is natural light because the hall has no electricity.

Since the unrest began many schools are loathe to give space to youth clubs, fearing malicious damage to property. A gospel group reported:

When we started we met at the school, but the school committee made things very difficult for us and we could not cope with its regulations. We had to pay for broken windows and stolen books.

Even when groups find a suitable larger venue for their club their problems are not over. Only some three of the 42 groups in the survey had access to transport on a regular basis. One of these groups, a gospel group which draws its members from several township neighbourhoods, uses a company car on loan to an employed member. They fear that if this member were to lose his job, they would also lose their transport. A church group reported that their members were only provided with

transport on Fridays when the township streets are most dangerous. One group felt compelled to limit its jurisdiction for purely practical reasons. The boys in the group walk their girl members home to ensure their safe homecoming and cannot extend this service beyond the neighbourhood.

The camps organised by the football clubs might be seen as a means of overcoming transport problems. Home venues are convenient and often solve transport problems for neighbourhood groups but are not always entirely suitable especially when the club grows larger:

Because the dining room is not big, we go outside for practice. This attracts lots of people. But at the moment, we can do nothing about it, although we do not like people watching us when we practise.

- Resources

A resource gradient exists in the Durban area, which may be similar to that obtaining elsewhere. Townships falling under the Natal Provincial Administration enjoy the support of the Red Cross. The shack area youth have to make do with next to nothing, with other townships falling inbetween. Youth are aware of these differences and also express relative deprivation compared with their counterparts on the Reef:

A group of ten to twelve school boys living here (shack area) played imitation football on the gravel. They wrapped several plastic bags into a ball and used it as their football. One day four of them approached me to ask if I could buy a football for them.

I think we are very lucky to be in this township which is run by the Port Natal as it provides us with almost everything. I think that youth clubs from other townships struggle to get their youth clubs started.

There is more opportunity for Johannesburg talent groups (gospel singer).

The resources available to clubs vary enormously. Many of the fledgling groups lack the contacts which are crucial for gaining sponsorship. The adoption of a concerned 'auntie' or 'uncle' with community influence may not be a sign of dependence on the part of young

...so much as a deliberate strategy
...the club's social network. Only
...clubs, mainly sports clubs,
...sponsorship for their activities:

...managed to get a sponsor. I see it as a
...achievement. Teams in the second
...division hardly get sponsors
...player).

...brother and I thought we could do
... (dancing shown on television) as
... Not only Transvaal people could do
... We went to the shops one day and
... a good record. We started dancing
... and the shopkeeper was very impressed.
... He gave us a spare room at the back of his
... shop.

...multiple interest sports club reported
... it had the backing of several larger
... and non-profit organisations. A
... community club, on the other hand,
... expressed disappointment that its
... requests to business leaders to finance its
... community development efforts had
... fallen on deaf ears.

...one multi-interest group has been
... adopted by a community development
... programme and operates as a
... community project in its own right with a
... substantial monthly budget. The club
... also has access to a project vehicle.

Internal conflict

...Some of the youth groups which formed
... during the late 1980s were in response to
... the culture of violence and crime in the
... townships. The founders held high hopes
... of realising the shortcomings in their
... social environment inside their youth
... groups. Given the uncertainty and the
... threatening environment outside, groups
... expressed the need to be in harmony
... inside. The need to succeed in the small
... group was crucial for youth whose
... identities had been shattered.

...Failure to create a culture of tolerance
... within the youth group would only dash
... youthful hopes for the brighter future to
... which respondents so often referred.
... Some of the groups complained of
... apathy and misunderstandings between
... group members and insensitive handling
... of group conflicts. A club of young
... teenagers reported that they looked to
... adult leadership to overcome their 'lack
... of respect' for each other. Groups were
... shamed and disappointed with their
... poor track record in handling group
... relations - mindful of how easily internal

conflicts could spill over to society.
Clearly the club is seen as a miniature of
the real world. If social harmony cannot
be achieved on the football field, is there
hope for returning peace to the
townships? A club spokesperson cited
the following lesson from football:

*One thing that members should know and
always remember is that favouritism can
create endless conflict among members. If
a player gets a ball and runs around with
it until he reaches his friend and not the
nearest person, this conflict could be
carried from the field to the community
and it could involve a lot more people.
Sometimes people end up killing each
other, not only in the field; it could even
be in the train or in the street.*

One of the first interventions organised
through the YCP Working Group (see
box: pp38-39) to assist youth clubs was
social skills and leadership training. The
aim was to give groups the confidence to
handle their own affairs more effectively
and with less reliance on concerned
adults or sponsors.

• 'Girl' problems: West Side stories

Township problems are replicated in the
youth clubs. What youth referred to as
'girl' problems plague several groups.
Teenage pregnancy, rated unanimously
problem number one in the nationwide
survey of South African township youth,
is also a divisive factor in youth clubs.

One gospel group expelled some of its
girl members who fell pregnant. The
group felt the girls indulged in gossip
mongering and took unfair advantage of
their position in the group which needed
female voices.

Several groups complained of their girl
members using club meetings as a cover
for clandestine meetings with boyfriends.
Club committees find themselves in a
dilemma when called upon by parents to
vouch for the behaviour of girl members.
Boyfriends have been known to gatecrash
club meetings demanding to see their
girlfriends. Clearly a mutually acceptable
code of conduct is needed to guide group
relations. During the survey period an
intergroup workshop was organised to
discuss courting issues as they affected
clubs with sexually active teenage
members.

It appears that groups do not approve of
their club members courting each other.

*Faced with a
threatening
external
environment,
youth clubs
strive to create
an internal
culture of
tolerance and
harmony*

*In a practical
intervention, a
special working
group was
established to
assist youth
clubs in social
skills and
leadership
training*

Teenage pregnancy was rated unanimously problem number one in a nationwide survey of township youth

In another practical intervention, a workshop was organised to discuss courting issues among club members

On the other hand, relations outside the group may pose serious threats to the group if girls favour boyfriends who are suspicious, say of the political leanings of club members, or jealous of their girl friends' involvement in club activities. Clubs which provide escort services for their girl members after meetings are most at risk.

If we see girl members standing at a street corner with boyfriends during club time we dare not say anything; the boyfriends might end off stabbing us. (Member of a group which disbanded during the unrest)

Some of our members are members either of the UDF or Inkatha, we don't know which. On their way to meetings these club members are confronted by the opposition which identifies everybody in our group as either Inkatha or UDF and the club is neither.

Consider that 'girl' problems might be the result of the severe limitations placed on leisure activities for girls. It is no wonder that girls 'use' youth clubs as a vehicle to gain additional freedom outside the home.

It is also possible that 'girl' problems are in fact 'boy' problems in disguise. The nationwide survey indicated that girls are significantly underrepresented among office bearers in youth clubs and associations. It is possible that they receive no encouragement from young men to serve their clubs.

Consider the case of the gospel clubs in the survey which started out as uni-sex groups. Later, they discovered that they needed a wider range of voices. They wooed members of the fairer sex and made them feel precious rather than ordinary members who must prove their worth. The boys who failed to properly integrate the newcomer girls may be as much at fault as the girls who do not pull their weight. Clearly girls' roles in youth clubs is an important topic for further study by gender researchers.

Criteria for Success

What are the successful ingredients of a youth club? Groups contacted in 1988 and 1989 were asked to list their achievements. Some groups indicated that they were fulfilling some of their aims: performing in their chosen field, gaining the recognition they craved,

playing a role in their church or community. Some of the gospel groups referred to tangible rewards of their efforts which had allowed them to buy uniforms or instruments, or to record their songs.

A football group was proud to have found a sponsor although the group consisted only of amateurs. One of the groups formed in response to political violence had managed to bring together discordant parties in the neighbourhood to reach a working solution.

A music group which aimed to provide music literacy for its members reported that after two years members were capable of writing their own songs. One club had made strides in solving its own problems, thereby winning parental support for its projects. A sports club operating from a shack area reported a membership gain in spite of the negative political climate in its area.

Where do the 42 youth clubs stand after two years? Which clubs are successful, which ones have failed?

Some of the young people contacted during the first round of research had commented on how difficult it was for youth clubs to recruit members and keep going during the violence. They expressed concern that their clubs might experience what they referred to as an 'untimely death'.

When contacted during the first round of research, the youth clubs identified lack of venues and resources, internal conflict and the political climate as major threats to their existence. Their fears are justified as the follow-up study confirms.

At the end of the two-year period, 8 of the 42 clubs, had dissolved. Two further groups had suspended their activities and two clubs had suffered 'near demise' and been revived. Eight groups had been transformed involving identity changes and extensive revisions to their programmes. Only half had survived with their original organisational structure intact.

Mergers, rebirths and transformations may be signs of maturity and growth rather than failure. They prove the capacity of youth to adopt new means of expressing their aims and ambitions in keeping with their shifting interests. The evidence suggests that some of the new

clubs have learnt to more clearly define their priorities, interests and the direction in which they wish to develop. Many of the multi-interest groups and hybrids which were formed in response to the township violence are among the transformed clubs.

The follow-up study suggests that some clubs without in-built mechanisms for membership renewal will die a natural death as members lose interest and shift their commitments. The performing arts clubs are particularly at risk as members may suffer from burnout. In contrast, the youth clubs affiliated to churches can be resurrected as the need arises. Continuity rests with the larger organisation rather than with the youth club itself. Sports groups which are heavily dependent on resources which go beyond the capacity of the clubs to generate, appear to be especially vulnerable operations. During the survey period, two of the sports groups had disbanded and one had merged with another group. However, one case of demise also suggests that dynamic membership more than resources spells success for youth clubs. Groups without effective leadership are doomed to failure.

Some readers may argue that youth clubs are by definition day bloomers, thriving today, gone tomorrow. Day bloomers do not serve youth needs for only a short while.

While we may applaud the resilience of youth clubs - in particular the ones which were formed during the unrest and continue to transform themselves and move forward - we also mourn the passing of the eight clubs which started with great anticipation. What role have the day bloomers among the surveyed youth clubs played? Technically, even the clubs in the survey which lasted only two years during the height of the township violence may have saved lives - literally.

Although we have not achieved anything as a club, I think a certain number of young boys in X Section have managed to keep off the streets at night, which is the cause of so many fights in the townships (performing club member, 1989).

Some of the informal youth clubs of the township, many of them youth initiatives in response to the township violence, may be especially precious. They fulfil youthful ambitions, sustain youthful hopes for the future and for the duration they are fresh. It is possible that youth clubs are meant to

METHOD: THE YOUTH CLUB SURVEY

One research thrust of the Youth Centre Project (YCP) was to gain a better understanding of the role youth clubs play in the lives of young people. To this aim a survey of youth clubs operating in the Durban area was undertaken to develop profiles. In all, 42 youth clubs operating in the Durban region were contacted in late 1988 and early 1989 through a snowballing process which started with a Catholic youth group in the Umlazi area. Thereafter an attempt was made to include a wide variety of youth groups in the region with different interests, affiliations and methods of operation. The religious denominations represented in the sample in terms of youth club affiliations or club venues include the Catholic Church (8), other mainline Christian churches (5), and independent and evangelical churches (9).

Personal interviews to obtain details on clubs were conducted with spokespersons which included ordinary members as well as leaders. The investigator, the first named author who is a trained community organiser, visited many of the clubs and saw them in action during club meetings. Clubs consenting to give an interview were invited to meet the other participants in the survey to discuss common issues at a workshop held at a central venue at the University of Natal at the end of 1989. All but two groups participated in the meeting. The two non-participants were not permitted to attend by their church leaders.

The situation of all the 42 clubs included in the initial round of research was reviewed after a two year period at the end of 1990. The follow-up study produced the database for a preliminary appraisal of interventions aimed at promoting youth effectiveness through their clubs (see box on the YCP Working Group: pp38-39). The second named author, a trained social scientist, evaluated the data material from the first and second rounds of research and drafted the text article in close consultation with the first author.

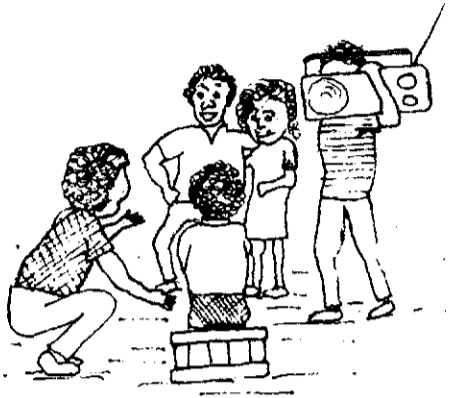
Acknowledgement

The authors wish to thank Catherine Woods and Tim Chilvers for their assistance with the compilation of data materials from the first round of research.

bloom and die in order to produce the fruit which feeds the nation tomorrow.

Perhaps young people need to grow *out* of youth clubs as part of growing *up*. Few of the informal clubs initiated by the youth themselves will go professional and be capable of fulfilling adult ambitions. Some of them will die natural deaths leaving young people to move on to other commitments in life. The clubs will have served their purpose. It is important, however, that clubs do not die prematurely leaving behind disappointed, frustrated young people. Youth-driven interventions which assist clubs to operate better have a useful role here (see box: pp38-39).

If youth have their way, their clubs will continue indefinitely to produce better parents, workers and citizens for tomorrow. **IPIA**



FACILITIES

HANGING OUT

BLACK YOUTH ON LEISURE VENUES

Robin Richards

Leisure activities involve a sense of free choice and enjoyment which an individual should experience

This report presents selected findings from research into the kinds of venues and amenities used by black youth in their spare time. The terms, leisure time, spare time, disposable or free time are used interchangeably. They refer to time which is used for relaxation or pleasure. Two important elements characterise leisure activities; they are a sense of *free choice* and *enjoyment* which an individual should experience.

This article is divided into three sections. Part one explores youth perceptions on the types of facilities and features an *ideal* youth centre should contain. Part two highlights the multi-purpose nature of existing leisure venues in the Durban Functional Region (DFR). Case studies are used to illustrate the variety of venues available to township youth and youth resident in the shack and peri-urban areas. Part three entails a discussion of factors which constrain the use of existing venues.

Community relations with the neighbouring areas and political unrest levels determine whether or not a particular leisure venue is accessible

Typical venues which the young people use for their recreation and leisure activities include: a church or community hall, a friend or parents house, a local tea room or shop, a street corner or street side, a school classroom or hall, a soccer field or school playground. In the formal townships, playgrounds may have been formally planned whereas in the peri-urban and shack areas, playgrounds are located on available open spaces. The space usually has no grass cover and often has residential units on its boundaries.

Access to a recreational or leisure site is influenced by a number of factors, which include: distance to the venue, the individual's capacity to cover the cost of transport to the venue, family

background characteristics and/or who the youth lives with. Community relations with the neighbouring area (if the venue is located there) as well as the general level of political unrest in the region are also factors which determine whether or not a particular leisure venue is accessible.

The absence of leisure and recreational sites which are accessible to the youth contributes to young people becoming dissatisfied and bored in their spare time. Inadequate leisure opportunities may result in the development of anti-social behavior including drug abuse, acts of violence and other criminal activities.

Ideal Centre Study

The purpose of this study was to see how young blacks conceptualised an ideal youth centre. A self-administered questionnaire was used, incorporating an essay competition. Respondents were asked to write a one page essay on what they thought an ideal youth centre should be like. The essays were judged by a panel and prizes were awarded to all participants.

The participants were 995 students attending the SA Black Social Workers Association (SABSWA) Saturday school in Umlazi. The sample comprised youth between 12-18 years of age. A majority of the respondents lived in Umlazi [71%]. The majority of respondents were young women [67%] and a majority belonged to youth clubs [78%].

The essays were content analysed, and the respondents' proposals for an ideal youth centre were grouped into 12 broad themes. Most ideas related to the themes:

CASE STUDY

Leisure Venues in DFR Townships

The Beatrice Road YMCA, Durban Central

One of the few venues situated within the centre of Durban which accommodates a range of activities for black youth falling into the 15-25 year age bracket. The centre serves as a venue for ballroom dancing, night school classes (ranging from basic literacy programmes through to classes up to the matric level) and a range of sporting activities including boxing, karate and judo. The centre operates as an evangelical or outreach venue which falls under the umbrella of the YMCA. The philosophy of improving the body, mind and spirit is therefore emphasised.

The Old Mill Club, Mariannridge

A multiracial venue situated in the Mariannridge area which caters for all ages. The centre is utilised mainly by residents in the surrounding areas of Mariannridge, Dassenhoek/Thornwood and St Wendolins. The facilities offered at the centre include: a day care centre, a small-scale furniture manufacturing industry, a television repair training centre, table tennis, a disco and a cafeteria. A football field is also located on the grounds.

The Umlaas Mariannahill Centre

Located in the Mariannahill area, it is situated very close to Kwa-Ndengezi. It functions mainly as a community centre although some youth activities are also catered for, e.g. discussion groups on religion and morality. Literacy classes as well as self-help sewing and handicraft classes are also held. The Dawah movement still runs large-scale youth camps and rallies although unrest in these areas has largely curtailed such activities.

The Lamontville Centre

Serves as a community hall and a library for Lamontville residents. During the latter half of the year, the library serves as a study room for students preparing for their

examinations. The side rooms attached to the main hall are used by various youth clubs and committee meetings are commonly held here. The actual hall has a variety of functions, ranging from film shows to weddings and other community gatherings.

The KwaMashu YMCA

Activities include boxing, karate, ballroom dancing, Latin American dancing, part-time study classes and a bible study group. The centre also provides accommodation and facilities for students on tour from other parts of the country. A yearly membership card costs ten rand for those wishing to use centre facilities. The philosophy which underpins all activities at this venue emphasises the enhancement of the body, mind and spirit.

The Lambert Zwane Memorial Church, KwaMashu D Section

A Methodist church open to the youth only on Tuesdays from 6-8pm. It offers various programmes for the youth, namely to promote a spirit of comradeship, to encourage creativity, to promote community development within the area and bible study towards formal consecration.

The Osizweni Youth Centre, KwaMashu C Section

Operates as a 'soup kitchen' for the destitute living in KwaMashu, also offers carpentry lessons for the unemployed. The centre is now run by the KwaZulu government and caters for the unemployed in the 10-30 year age bracket. Activities at the centre include karate, ballroom dancing, monopoly, table tennis, and other board games. The centre is open on weekday afternoons and on weekends.

The Sizagogo Amusement Centre

Located in the KwaMashu shopping centre. A variety of arcade games are available to the youth between 8.00am to 6.00pm and from Monday through to Sunday.

The Ntuzuma Society Centre

The venue is the Methodist church and the youth who use the church facilities belong to the Verulam Wesley Guild. The centre is only open for the youth on Sundays after the church service at 12.30pm. The aim is to train the youth in the Christian way of life which includes health, recreation and cultural development. Typical activities include bible study and prayer, excursions, parties, counselling services, poster making, silkscreening, writing poems, songs, hymns and plays.

The KwaDabeka Hostel Hall

A community hall built in 1978 which is used by hostel dwellers and youth in KwaDabeka. The hall is equipped with toilets, electricity, and a stage, with a tennis court located close by. Activities range from concerts, political meetings and practice sessions for *Isicathamiya* and gospel groups. Groups are required to book the venue in advance. The hall is administered by the NPA and is state property.

The Embizweni Secondary School Umlazi North

For the past four years the principal has allowed young people to use the school hall and classrooms as a venue for their recreational activities between 4pm to 7pm during the week days and on Sunday between 9am and 6pm. Activities include youth meetings, ballroom and modern dancing, karate, boxing, spiritual/religious group meetings, indoor games. Major drawbacks to the school as a venue for leisure activities include loss of school books and damage to equipment and furnishings.

* Drawn from 1989/90 survey

*** Acknowledgement**

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The semi-leisure activities preferred by black youth refer to those pursuits falling between pure 'work' and pure 'leisure'

In South Africa the term youth centre usually refers to multi-purpose venues which are used by many different interest groups in an area

semi-leisure activities, pure leisure activities, facilities and equipment. Ideas on semi-leisure activities were the most popular, whilst ideas grouped under facilities and equipment received the second highest number of votes. Pure leisure activities ranked third.

Semi-leisure activities refer to those pursuits falling between pure 'work' and pure 'leisure'. Such activities contain features which commonly characterise leisure activities but also contain elements which might be associated with work. 'Semi-leisure occurs when the world of work and primary obligations partially overlaps with the world of leisure' (Dumazadier in Weiskopf, 1982: pp18). Most mentioned semi-leisure activities were extra tuition [33%].

The respondents showed definite preferences for semi-leisure opportunities in ideal youth centres:

They should be a place where young people are educated. This must not be like a school, but young people must be given a chance to find out what they didn't understand in their schools, things that are difficult for them to understand.

I would like the youth centre to teach me how to study because no one can tell us at schools because they like to talk about politics.

A youth centre will be a place to learn and have a weapon to face our enemies in the future, youth must take it as the place to educate ourselves for the future.

They should be like a stadium so that many young people could attend.

It is important to have a place to study. What makes me say this is that there is no time for playing nowadays.

The most popular semi-leisure activities were debating and attending finishing school (social etiquette). In terms of actual facilities and equipment youth wanted a large hall or big centre and a library.

When it comes to pure leisure activities, sports in general received the highest number of votes (17%), followed by social activities (14%), and general recreational activities (12%).

In addition to the essay competition, respondents were asked to rank in order

of priority three roles for youth centres. These were listed in the questionnaire:

- a recreation and entertainment venue
- a venue for education and training
- a hall where youth clubs could book room and equipment for their own group's activities.

Of the respondents, 82% ranked education and training first and second, 63% of respondents ranked a hall with equipment first and second, whilst 31% of respondents ranked recreation and entertainment first and second as important functions of an ideal youth centre.

Venues in the DFR

Research into venues for young people's leisure and recreational needs exploded our belief that youth centres catering exclusively to the needs of young people are available in the townships. As such centres do not exist, the term youth centre usually refers to multi-purpose venues which are used by many different interest groups in an area.

The respondents in the ideal centre study often equated a youth centre with either a church hall, a youth club, or some other venue used by young people in their area. The western conception of a youth centre was foreign to many respondents. This finding was confirmed in further research which attempted to compile a listing of recreational venues for young people within the DFR.

The case studies (see boxes) highlight the multi-purpose nature of many of the venues available to youth living in the DFR.

Constraints on Choice

The findings from another survey (Richards and Møller, 1990) on the feasibility of a regional youth centre indicated the need for leisure venues for young people to be located in their own areas. This applies especially to those youth living in the peri-urban or informal areas who often have to travel to other areas in order to find venues suitable to their leisure interests. These youth are in most cases economically the worst off and yet ironically they must travel the greatest distances in order to reach leisure and recreational venues.

Economic factors
 The world is as wide as your pocket
 (18 year old high school student living in
 a shack area)

Economic factors are one of the most important determinants of which venue a young person uses for his/her leisure activities. Distance to a recreational site and the time taken to travel affects the choice and use of specific leisure venues.

An independent from a peri-urban respondent noted that soccer tournaments between the various clubs in the area had to be held in a neighbouring township. The major problem was the distance from the area and the time factor in travelling to the area. Advance bookings had to be made to use the ground. Sometimes a situation arose where a game went into overtime, resulting in the final match being postponed because the venue had opening and closing times each day. The final would therefore have to be played the next day. Transportation costs would thus be doubled (buses were hired to transport the players to the ground).

A young person's choice of and access to leisure venues outside his/her own area is often influenced by family background factors which are linked to economic considerations. One of these factors includes the parents' ability to cover the cost of transport of the child to the venue. Youth either remain in their own area or walk to the venue, while some try to find a free taxi ride from someone with transport. Faced with these constraints many young men and women choose to utilise existing leisure opportunities in their areas.

A 17 year old female respondent living in an area who attends the Good Shepherd church in her area pointed out that she would love to do ballroom dancing but that the nearest club was situated too far away. Even journeys to the city library for extra studies were restricted because of these financial considerations.

Social factors
 The problem of access to venues (especially in other areas) is compounded not only by the physical distance and the economic costs, but also by three closely linked social factors. These include: the social factors which might be linked to the family of the young person, youth

and community relations with neighbouring areas and the general level of unrest in the region.

In most cases, family restrictions and controls on young women are greater than the restrictions placed on young men. In addition to school homework responsibilities, young women also have to assist with domestic duties, more so than young men in the household. Young women therefore have less disposable time, with the consequence that more use is made of local facilities and opportunities which are readily at their disposal.

The perception (held by many of the youth who were interviewed) that it was mainly the young women who attended church functions possibly makes more sense in this light. Church activities are very often held at the house of a member of the congregation. Therefore, the church provides an accessible outlet for the expression of leisure needs amongst young women.

In some cases the family background of the young person can affect their access to leisure venues to such an extent that they are prevented entirely from attending a leisure venue. An 18 year old orphaned respondent who left school in standard 7, living in Dassenhoek with her Aunt and four other family members pointed out that she had no leisure activities. From Monday to Sunday she remained at home and did domestic work. She commented that her aunt did not like her even to visit friends.

Research findings also indicated that school-attending youth living with their parents tended to be subject to more family restrictions than non-school going youth and in some cases respondents reported that their parents did not like them attending certain recreational venues. This was especially so if their leisure activities involved travelling to other areas which impinged on time allocated for homework, extra studies or domestic responsibilities.

A 21 year old male living in the Mgaga shack area who practises karate at the Glebelands hall next to the Reunion Station pointed out that his parents were not in favour of his participation in karate. They felt that it contributed to children failing their exams due to returning home late, in an exhausted state and neglecting their homework. The

Youth in peri-urban or informal areas usually must travel the greatest distances to reach leisure and recreational venues

Distance to a recreational site and the time taken to travel affects the choice and use of specific leisure venues

CASE STUDY

Leisure Venues in the DFR Informal Areas

A survey examining the lifestyles of young people was conducted in the areas of Mgaga, Dassenhoek, Folweni (site and service settlement), Amawoti and Malukazi.

The study found that youth living in the informal and peri-urban areas must often use amenities and facilities in other areas, especially where specialised equipment, training facilities and trainers are needed. Karate, ballroom dancing, extra-tuition classes and league soccer are pastimes which involve travelling to venues situated outside one's own area. The findings illustrate the importance of the proximity to venues:

- **Karate**

Youth from Mgaga who wish to practice karate use one of a number of venues located in other areas, e.g. the Isipingo karate hall or the Glebelands hall near the hostels. School classrooms also serve as venues for informal karate practice sessions.

- **Ballroom Dancing**

Classes are held at the hall in AA section of Umlazi. Respondents from Folweni and Mgaga indicated that they attended lessons at this venue.

- **Soccer**

Some respondents living in informal areas indicated that they played soccer outside their own areas.

- **Extra-study classes/tuition**

Some of the respondents cited classes that they attend at the Natal Medical School over the weekends.

- **Leisure outings**

The Speak Easy disco at the Umlazi Executive Hotel was mentioned as a recreational venue for young people. One respondent said she attended the Rainbow Restaurant in Pinetown to listen to jazz music. Occasional trips to the beach, including visits to the Umgababa holiday resort were mentioned. Another noted that she occasionally attended the cinema in Pinetown.

- **Hanging Out**

Venues which are used by young people living in Dassenhoek include the tennis courts in Westville, the swimming pool at Mariannridge, and the karate dojo in Pinetown. Venues mentioned by respondents living in Mgaga included visiting the Umlazi shopping centre (a venue for meeting friends and using the public telephones), window shopping in town or watching films in Durban with friends.

Township/Shackland Comparison

There are fewer recreational amenities available to the youth within the informal and peri-urban areas than in the formal townships. The variety of amenities available to the youth within these areas is also limited. This reflects the shortage and inadequacy of formal leisure structures available to the youth.

With the exception of Folweni, (where two multi-purpose community centres are being built) leisure venues are usually unplanned and informal in nature. The only permanent structures open to the youth in the informal areas are the schools with their accompanying classrooms, playgrounds and school halls. Typical recreational venues for the youth in these areas include a friends house, a street or street corner, a school playground, a school classroom or hall, a tearoom, a beerhall, shebeen or a church hall.

Venues in Folweni

- **The Red Cross Hall**

Facilities available at the newly built hall include a kitchen, an administrative office and a stage. The size of the site on which the hall was built is large enough for further amenities to be developed. It is envisaged that the centre will be managed by the community with representatives from the Red Cross providing assistance. It is hoped that the hall will be used by all age groups and will also accommodate self-help clubs including sewing and knitting groups. Major problems with the centre thus far are the absence of running water and electricity. It is hoped that the centre will one day be expanded to accommodate a creche and a venue for sporting activities.

The Community Learning Centre

The KwaZulu Training Trust (KTT) provided the financial backing for the venue after having been approached by residents in Folweni to assist with its development. The centre is being built on the outskirts of Folweni opposite the Folweni High School. The community is to decide what the centre should be used for and it is envisaged that the venue will serve all sectors of the population living in the area. Close interaction between the Folweni High School and the centre is envisaged, e.g. the sharing of facilities. It is hoped that the youth in the area will use the venue for their activities which might include karate, gospel singing and youth meetings.

The Hlengisizwe Lower Primary school

The lower primary school serves as a venue for various youth activities. Classrooms are hired out to the youth and to youth groups. A fee of ten rand is charged to those who wish to use the venue. Some of the youth activities at the school fall under the auspices of the Zionist Christian Church. Some of the classrooms are used as venues for church sermons, particularly on Sundays. In the evenings, the hall is used for receptions and revival meetings.

Other activities which occur at the school are the 'cultural meetings'. These meetings are used by the youth for political mobilisation which reportedly has increased since the release of Nelson Mandela.

Folweni soccer ground

Used for both playing soccer and for holding political meetings. Cultural events or festivals are also sometimes held at the ground.

Venues in Mgaga

The Mgaga High School

This venue was initially used for a variety of different activities. However, some of the young people using the facilities broke equipment and furniture and did not keep the area clean. As a result the school now only permits church groups to use its facilities, and it requires them to pay R6 per month for the use of its premises. The school offers the venue and accommodation, with electricity and toilet facilities. The school has 17 classrooms and each church group is required to book a classroom. The most serious problem facing the school is the invasion of residents in Mgaga onto school land and the building of houses on the premises of the school.

Acknowledgement
Research Assistants:
Rose Shoba
Aubrey Simamane

Venues in Dassenhoek

The beerhall

This venue is primarily used as a beerhall, however, it serves other functions as well. Equipment and amenities include: a hall with tables and chairs, a storeroom, a tv set (this, however, has since been stolen). Activities at the hall include 'pick a box' competitions and beauty contests, social meetings and discos over the weekends. The equipment for the disco is hired.

The local tea room

This is a popular venue for the youth in the area. A jukebox is available which young people use in the shop. This facility is so popular amongst the youth that a respondent reported that youths used to bunk school so that they could listen to the juke box all day. An Executive Committee (comprising representatives from all the 'yards' in the area) eventually negotiated with the shop owner to only make the juke box available at specific times. One of the allotted times is Friday afternoons after school.

The Bekhukuhle Combined School

An additional hall is being built on the premises for the community. The school grounds are also used for soccer matches and The Junior Swallows netball (female) team uses the venue for practice sessions after school hours. This team is now four years old and was established from the female supporters of the Junior Aces Football Club. Members from this football club encouraged their female following to form their own sporting club.

Venues in Amawoti

There are no established venues for recreational and leisure activities in this area. The most important venue for recreation is a patch of flat land with no grass cover which serves as the local sports ground. The terrain at Amawoti is hilly, space for recreational facilities and amenities is therefore very limited. The sports ground at Amawoti is surrounded by homesteads. The ground is used for a variety of activities including soccer and community meetings.

A variety of church groups exist in this area. These include Methodists, their church meetings are held in a classroom at the Mandlethu High School. Zionist meetings are held at a congregation member's house whilst the Catholics have a church where their meetings are held. Community gatherings of a secular nature are also convened at this venue. The Church of the Good Shephard, a multiracial and interdenominational church also operates in this area.

* Drawn from 1990 survey

Parents resist leisure activities for youth where travel to venues impinges on homework or domestic activities

respondent noted that young people often have to walk long distances because of unreliable transport.

- *Community relations*

Relations between neighbouring areas sometimes affect the access youth and other members of the community have to neighbouring areas and townships. A case was cited where a local shack warlord mobilised members of his community (including the youth) to attack the headquarters of an opposing political group in a neighbouring township. As a result of this incident residents from the shack area were prevented from using the facilities in this neighbouring area because of the bad name they had acquired.

A 20 year old male high school student from the Mgaga shack area reported that soccer tournaments between clubs from Umlazi and Mgaga have been cancelled because of poor relations between the clubs from the two areas. When such tournaments were held it was customary for the losing team to make a contribution to the prize money for the winning team. On some occasions the winners happened to be the clubs from the informal areas (Mgaga). The respondent reported that the losers (from the Umlazi clubs) failed to pay their share of the prize money and honour the agreement.

The reason for the breach of contract was that teams from the formal townships looked down on teams from the informal areas and therefore could not swallow their pride and accept defeat. This became a source of conflict. The shack youth were victimised on their way to school. The respondent noted that the victimisation of the shack youth after matches became so bad that their parents called an end to the soccer matches. The local councillors were eventually forced to call a meeting and it was decided to ban soccer.

The breakdown of formal leisure activities had unfortunate consequences. Without regular soccer matches, the youth became bored and during their holidays the youngsters disappeared from their homes and crossed the Umlazi river. It was reported that some of them stole mangos from the residents in Chatsworth and then returned to their area to sell their stolen goods. The river was also used as a recreational site for

fishing and swimming. This despite the fact that parents had banned their children from using the river. Community elders were eventually enlisted to monitor the youth and ensure that they remained out of trouble. Tragedy finally resulted one day when a youth drowned in the river while trying to cross it.

- *Violence and unrest*

Violence and unrest in this context would also include acts of thuggery and intimidation. Research findings indicated that many young people had to curtail their leisure activities especially if these activities entailed travelling to venues outside their own areas. Some individual cases are listed below:

A respondent from Malukazi reported that thugs were responsible for vandalising and removing the goalposts from the local soccer ground. A respondent from Dassenhoek noted that his area is like an island between the strife torn areas of Tshelimnyama and Dube. He reported that residents in Dassenhoek constantly receive news of fighting and killing in their neighbouring areas and that Dassenhoek was itself now in danger of becoming an unrest area. In addition, refugees from the neighbouring unrest areas were moving into Dassenhoek. Cross country runners in Dassenhoek have limited their training programmes because of unrest in the area. Pinetown trippers have had to curtail their journeys and limit them largely to business trips.

A respondent living in Mgaga shack area noted that parents put pressure on their children not to attend recreational venues which are located either in other areas or are situated far from home. The respondent commented that members of his karate club walk home in groups after a practice session to ensure that they do not get mugged on the way.

In 1989 youth living in the formal settlement of Lamontville used the local community hall for their youth meetings. This venue served as a replacement to the original recreational centre which was burnt down during the 1985-1986 riots. The community hall falls under the jurisdiction of the Natal Provincial Administration (NPA).

Unrest which broke out in 1989 in Lamontville made the use of this venue

Research findings indicate that many young people have to curtail their leisure activities due to violence and unrest

by the youth problematic. The township was divided into two different zones, each zone controlled by a different faction of the youth. The two opposing youth factions were therefore not able to use the facility at the same time for fear of fighting breaking out and damage to NPA property being incurred. The two youth factions therefore had to book the venue to ensure that they did not use the venue at the same time.

Main Findings

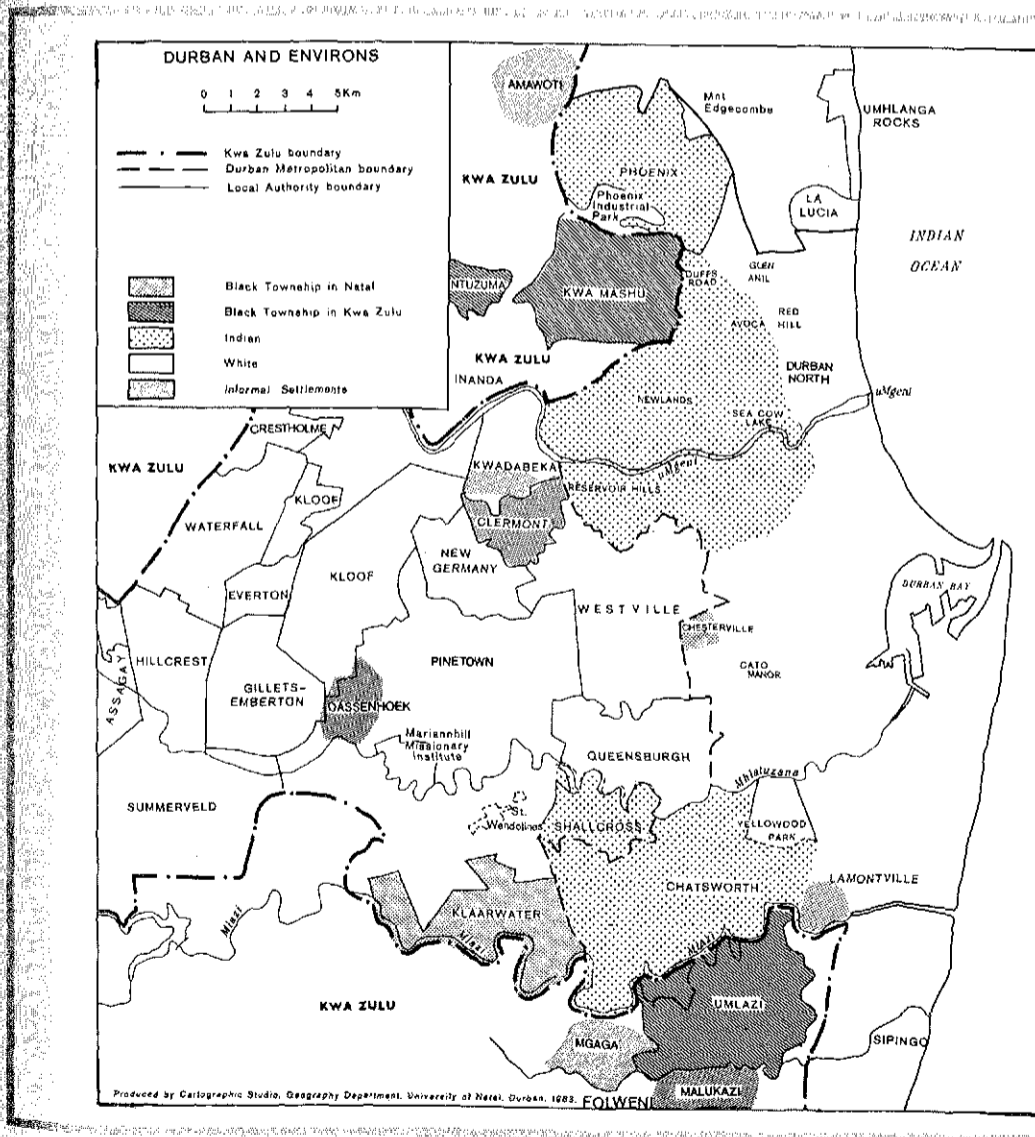
Our research findings highlight a number of important points:

- Youth centres operating purely for youth activities do not exist in the townships, shack and peri-urban areas in the Durban Functional Region (DFR).
- Fewer venues are available to the youth in the informal and peri-urban

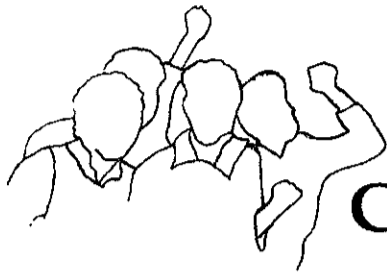
- areas than in the formal townships.
- There is a dearth of formally planned multi-purpose venues which could be used by black youth for their leisure activities.
- Church halls and the facilities and amenities which some schools make available to the youth for their leisure activities are amongst the most important recreational sites.
- Youth living in the informal and peri-urban areas will use leisure venues outside their own areas providing they have access to these venues.

An ideal youth centre should accommodate a number of features, including part-time study groups, sporting activities, a hall and a library with a study area

The shortage of space for recreational sites is most evident in the informal areas. Pressure on the land for housing and the need for basic infrastructure in the informal areas has meant that the provision of leisure/recreational amenities is of secondary importance to many of the inhabitants in these areas. **IPDA**



DFR map of shack areas where YCP research was undertaken (see text)



NEEDS

WORLDS APART COMRADES & COMTSOTSI IN SHACKLAND

Robin Richards

Many shack youth living on the urban periphery do not attend school, have no full-time or temporary jobs and are not self-employed

Young people living in the shack areas in the Durban Functional Region (DFR) are faced with an environment which restricts their spare time activities and shapes these activities according to needs which must be satisfied. Many shack youth living on the urban periphery do not attend school, have no full-time or temporary jobs and are not self-employed. Those youth who no longer live with their families are not subject to the stabilising influence which family life can provide. In many cases, teenagers living with their parents are no longer subject to the same family disciplinary measures practiced in former times. Parents are sometimes even intimidated by their offspring in an atmosphere which is characterised by political and social change.

The old order is being increasingly challenged by a new generation of frustrated youth who often seek new avenues to achieve fulfilment. Leisure needs and activities are shaped by socio-economic deprivation. They are often a function of the need for recognition and the desire to achieve personal success in whichever way possible.

The findings presented here are drawn from informal interviews and a questionnaire survey conducted during 1990 amongst 300 peri-urban and shack dwellers living on the fringes of the DFR in Mgaga, Amawoti, Malukazi, Dassenhoek and FoIweni (see map: pp51).

This report will illustrate the range of leisure activities which young people living on the urban fringe participate in. Case studies will be used to highlight particular activities which demonstrate the effects that socio-economic and political factors have on shaping youth leisure activities. Motivations for

particular activities will also be discussed in conjunction with some work and leisure aspirations.

An attempt will be made to show how young shack dwellers define their leisure activities. In this regard the world of *semi-leisure* will be discussed. Semi-leisure activities are those activities which contain some of the characteristics of *pure leisure* and *work*. Such activities might therefore not be totally free choice activities and might not be participated solely for the purpose of enjoyment.

It will also be illustrated that *pure leisure* is normally associated with the consumer definition of leisure which implies an outlay of money and usually entails 'going somewhere else' (away from home). This type of activity is dependent on the amount of time and money a person has at their disposal. Free time (*esikhululekile*) is a broader term which may incorporate *pure leisure* (*sokungcebeleka*) and *semi-leisure* activities.

Popular Pastimes

Respondents were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with a number of response statements concerning the meanings of leisure. In Mgaga and Amawoti, most respondents agreed that leisure implied activities which were optional, free choice activities. In addition, there should be no obligation on the person to participate in such activities.

Respondents were also asked to describe what the word 'leisure' meant for them (this was an open ended question). In most cases leisure was defined either as a particular kind of activity or the quality and nature of the leisure experience was described. For example, some

The old order is being increasingly challenged by a new generation of frustrated youth who often seek new avenues to achieve fulfilment

respondents defined leisure as involving free choice, to be free from work or school, resting time, time for relaxation and enjoyment, to relax mentally, to have fun, to have happiness. In contrast, other respondents described particular activities with which they associated leisure. Some of these activities included: shopping trips to town, attending places you enjoy, going to the cinema, going to the beach, visiting friends, playing music, playing games, dancing, going to new places, being with one's boy or girlfriend, attending a recreation centre.

Free time or leisure activities can be classified into two sub-categories:

- *Pure leisure activities*

Participation in *pure leisure* often requires money, time and mobility to gain access to a recreational site. Any definition of *pure leisure* should include two components; a sense of personal enjoyment when participating in an activity and time which is your own and in which you are free to choose your activities. Preliminary findings (see box 1) indicate that pure leisure and recreation are equated with activities which often do not occur within the immediate confines of the homestead. Travel to areas which have recreational sites is therefore usually a prerequisite.

- *Semi-leisure activities*

Semi-leisure activities can be viewed as manifestations of social, economic and political deprivation. Young people in the shack areas are often forced to develop alternative lifestyles to cope with their environment. *Semi-leisure* activities (see box 2) can include those activities which a young person in some cases may feel partially obligated to participate in, and when the free moments available are insufficient to warrant participation in a pure leisure activity.

An example of such an activity mentioned by a respondent was reading a book. Hanging around on the streets was a common activity amongst many unemployed and non-school attending youth. Although this activity was considered a free time activity, it was not necessarily a free choice activity (if the respondent had money for transport, for example, he might well occupy his time in another way) therefore this type of activity can also be classified as semi-leisure activity.

- *Leisure motivations*

Selected findings show that the leisure activities in which shack youth participate reflect an environment which is characterised by social and political unrest, educational deficiencies and economic hardship.

Findings from interviews highlight why respondents participate in various leisure and free time activities. Respondents were asked to rank order twelve statements which concerned possible reasons for becoming involved in free-time activities. The motivations which were ranked as the three most important reasons are listed below:

- young people believe that their participation in leisure activities will help keep them out of trouble;
- young people become involved in leisure activities to improve their skills and abilities;
- young people view their leisure activities as a way to improve their own position and status within their own area.

Leisure activities are participated in for personal development, to contribute towards community cohesion and spirit, and to unite youth from different areas. Respondents dream of becoming a famous soccer star or musician; the names of some of the sporting clubs which the youth belong to reflect aspirations to become 'celebrities', 'stars' or 'champions', for example, the *Heroes Champions* (a soccer club), the *Stars of the Summer Night* (a gospel singing group).

Keeping out of trouble not only included the avoidance of involvement in criminal activities but the avoidance of unplanned pregnancies. A 17 year old male respondent felt that belonging to a soccer club assisted in keeping young people off the streets as well as limiting the growth of street gangs. He hoped that a positive team spirit amongst club members would filter into the rest of the community thereby improving the spirit of the whole community. The shack youth said that they wanted to show that they were as good if not better than youth from other areas, especially those youth living in the formal townships.

Some youth felt that their participation in the political struggle provided an alternative route to improving their position and status within their community. The philosophy of liberation

Young people in the shack areas are often forced to develop alternative lifestyles to cope with their environment

Leisure activities are participated in for personal development, to contribute towards community cohesion and to unite youth from different areas

BOX 1: PURE LEISURE ACTIVITIES

The range of *pure leisure* activities in which young shack dwellers participate is vast. Some of the activities mentioned by respondents are:

- visiting and socialising with friends
- playing or watching a soccer match
- playing netball
- attending a concert
- listening to music
- ballroom dancing, *spansula* dancing and *maskanda* dancing (a traditional Zulu dance)
- participating in youth club activities
- attending shebeens and disco's
- playing 'casino'
- playing *malabalaba* (a board game played with counters)
- playing *magalopha* (a game played with a skipping rope)
- shopping trips with friends in the city
- attending parties and braais with friends
- going on picnics or going away for the weekend to a holiday resort
- watching television
- playing the juke box or table soccer at the local shop

Many youth from the poorest shack and peri-urban areas still express a positive attitude and are receptive to opportunities

before education was felt by some to be more preferable to the idea of liberation through education. It was felt that this route might be easier than continuing with studies or looking for a job. Once a new political order came about, recognition of their involvement in the struggle would automatically enhance their status regardless of educational qualifications.

Other respondents want to keep busy with church activities so as not to become involved with politics.

Respondents were asked to list those leisure activities which they would very much like to participate in but were unable to for some reason or the other. The reasons given for not being able to participate in these desired leisure activities, in declining order of importance, were:

- a shortage of facilities and venues for specific leisure activities
- no money and cannot afford transport costs to other areas
- family restrictions
- no experts, teachers or coaches to show them how to participate in particular leisure activities
- not enough time.

The range of leisure activities which young people wished to participate in but could not reflect leisure aspirations which youth from more privileged backgrounds might take for granted. For instance, some of the desired activities mentioned by youth from Amawoti and Mgaga shack areas are tennis, soccer, karate, athletics, volley ball, dancing, staging plays and learning to play the piano.

The Lost Generation?

Some of the current writings in the field of youth research in South Africa highlight 'millions' of urban black youth as being a lost generation (*Time International*, 18 Feb, 1991). Despite the hardships which many young men and women face today, many youth living in the poorest shack and peri-urban areas still express a positive attitude and remain receptive to opportunities which come their way. Some youth create their own opportunities in their drive to satisfy leisure and work needs.

Politics can affect free time activities in two ways. Political activities can serve to *restrict* young people when practicing their regular leisure activities or, participation in politics can serve as an *opportunity* for young people to satisfy their leisure and sometimes work needs.

• Politics restraining leisure needs

During times of political unrest youth are afraid to attend leisure sites in other areas. The presence of vigilantes can discourage youth from participating in free time pursuits. One respondent reported that the vigilantes discouraged youth from gathering in groups and therefore activities such as playing soccer were difficult to pursue. Another young person reported that sometimes political gatherings and meetings interfered with leisure activities. When a political meeting was held by the dominant group in an area, the young people had to attend even if they were engaged in some other leisure activity at the time. Some of the comments made by respondents included:

We cannot enter some areas to attend sports activities if those activities are situated in the area of the opposition political party.

In my area, youth are always marching on

the road and I think they've got better things to do than that.

Violence means we are not free to go wherever we like, buses are burnt by our enemies.

The Comstotsis

A respondent in one of the shanty towns pointed out that since the comrades had taken control of his area, unrest has increased and it had become unsafe to travel alone and participate in some leisure activities. According to a local resident, the comrades have split into groups; those who are the true comrades and a second group who call themselves comrades and who appear to follow the political cause but who are instead easily influenced by other groups who wish to cause trouble in the area. This latter group are known as the *comstotsis* and are often involved in criminal activities such as robbery and contract killings.

Most members in the community fear and dislike the *comstotsis*. *Comstotsi* gangs usually comprise young people who are either not attending school, are unemployed and who might be refugees from other strife ridden areas.

Disciplinary committees established to control these groups and gangs are reported to be a short term measure and not entirely successful. In another area a respondent reported that community activities had been suspended because of the killing of two comrades by youth who called themselves *comrades*. Fighting erupted in the area, but the conflict was eventually resolved through the intervention of the local grassroots political structure.

- *Politics fulfilling leisure needs*

Involvement in grassroots political movements can provide significant leisure opportunities for young people in shack and peri-urban areas. The level of political organisation and the general socio-economic environment determines the extent to which politics replaces other activities as an important leisure pursuit for the youth.

For some youth it is clear that their involvement in grassroots political structures gives meaning to life and forms an important component of daily free time activities.

One respondent reported that in her area

BOX 2: SEMI-LEISURE ACTIVITIES

Some specific examples of semi-leisure activities mentioned by the respondents are:

- attending part-time study classes
- participating in gospel singing groups e.g. singing at weddings, parties - often for a fee - or singing at funerals (free of charge)
- participating in church activities
- lay preaching
- attending funeral services (usually held on Saturdays)
- doing domestic work around the house
- fetching water from communal taps
- cultivating vegetables
- laying mud floors for people
- singing and composing political songs and toyi-toying
- attending community or family functions including political meetings, unveiling ceremonies, weddings, funerals
- participating in grassroots political structures including disciplinary, research, and executive committees
- attending cultural events including talent competitions (these are rare events)
- reading books or newspapers at home
- standing on the roadside watching passers-by; watching taxi commuters getting off taxis and; watching the movements of passing police and army vehicles

a youth wing operated under the mantle of a community organisation. This youth wing had several sub-sections including a 'cultural body' which had as its aims to promote leadership skills amongst the youth and to promote good communication between parents and children. An advisory body also functions under the umbrella of the youth organisation. It assists with the resolution of conflicts in the area and social problems such as drug abuse, unplanned pregnancies, and being absent without leave from school.

One 20 year old male respondent who attended school commented that he was responsible for monitoring and checking up on those children who did not attend school. He noted that he was elected by the parents and children at a mass community meeting to fulfil this responsibility.

In another peri-urban area, grassroots political activity also served as an important leisure outlet. The organisation in this area not only served to resolve common misunderstandings between the parents and the youth but also aimed to bring the youth from the neighboring areas together.

The aspirations of urban black youth do not match the media descriptions of them as 'a lost generation'

Involvement in grassroots political movements can provide significant leisure opportunities for young people in shack and peri-urban areas

Youth living on the urban fringe are sensitive to their geographical location, their physical environment and their marginality within urban society

The Youth Yards

The community has informally divided the area into *yards*, each yard has its own name and is controlled by people elected in that particular sub-area. The yard system is said to facilitate informal control by the comrades. Yard meetings are held three times a week. Mass meetings attended by representatives from all the yards are also arranged. Although each yard functions independently, an 'executive committee' comprising representatives from all the sub-areas or yards presides over the area-wide structure.

A youth organisation functions under the mantle of the executive committee. This organisation consists of sub-sections which include:

- a *research committee* which investigates newcomers and also monitors incidents and situations which arise in the area.
- an *entertainment committee* which arranges sports activities and other events in the area. The kinds of recreational events which are organised by the committee include beauty competitions and soccer tournaments.
- an *education committee* which investigates poor school attendance by some youth. The parents of the children who are regularly absent from school are visited to ascertain possible reasons for their absence. In addition, the committee assists parents in dealing with children who are difficult to discipline.

The youth organisation also participates in funeral services, which includes collecting donations for the family of the deceased and singing hymns at the funeral service.

When *inter-yard* competitions are held, each yard is required to contribute a sum of R50. This money is pooled and is used as prize money at the end of the competitions.

Fundraising campaigns are organised by each yards' committee. Pamphlets are made and distributed to customers at a local shop. These pamphlets advertise particular events or shows which have been arranged by the various committees (representing the different yards).

Typical events which are arranged include: 'Pick a box' competitions, beauty contests (adults and parents are sometimes invited to these contests, alcohol is also sold to bring in more money), film and video shows. When film or video shows are arranged, a television set, a generator, a video machine or film projector must be hired or borrowed. A respondent reported that film shows of a political nature are sometimes shown. These however are very often poorly attended because the films are often in English and many residents are unable to fully understand the content of the video or film.

Fundraising drives are held at the house of a local religious figure. One respondent reported that these fundraising drives are highly successful and that residents from his own yard had raised R700 through various fund raising initiatives. This money had been deposited into a banking account. Another respondent reported that as a result of fundraising efforts, his yard had been able to hire a grader for the leveling of a piece of land for a soccer ground. The grader cost R300 to hire. In addition to fundraising campaigns and inter-yard competitions, during the holiday periods, trips to the beach or the casino are also arranged.

Leisure for Upliftment

Shantytown youth who live in the DFR display a lifestyle which is unique and worlds apart from their counterparts residing in other parts of the city. Free time activities tend to be more 'work' related and many of their recreational activities are engaged in for many different reasons over and above the need for enjoyment and relaxation. In an environment characterised by social and economic deprivation, participation in a soccer club or involvement in a community organisation can serve as a valuable release valve for the expression of personal ambitions and goals.

Many youth living on the urban fringe are sensitive to their geographical location, their physical environment and their position of marginality (in all spheres of life) within urban society. Some of this sensitivity is expressed through a strong need to prove to their neighbours in the formal townships that they can also be achievers and succeed in life. Free time opportunities are therefore

often maximised through involvement in activities which are perceived by the young shack dweller to promote personal development, economic gain and social upliftment.

The research findings highlight a number of aspects which are pertinent to policy makers and planners who wish to resolve the predicament of those young people who live on the urban fringe and whose social and economic environment acts as an impediment to their personal development.

Respondents in the shanty towns and peri-urban areas have formulated their own meanings for leisure. Pure leisure activities were typically defined as including at least one of a number of characteristics which are listed below:

- a feeling of free choice
- freedom from work or school
- a time for rest
- time for relaxation and enjoyment
- time to relax mentally
- time to have fun
- to experience happiness

Participation in *pure leisure* activities was determined by access to recreational sites. These activities were often engaged in away from home in other areas. Travelling to new places and seeing new sites was viewed as part of the fun in participating in some of these activities.

A shortage of facilities and venues for leisure activities as well as a lack of money to travel to other areas were listed by respondents as the two primary constraints on participation in pure leisure activities. Violence and unrest also featured as important issues which respondents mentioned in the context of not being able to participate in some desired leisure activities.

Respondents perceived free time (*esikhululekile*) to be a broader term encompassing pure leisure and semi-leisure activities. Many free time activities despite containing some of the key elements of pure leisure, namely, a sense of enjoyment and free choice, do not fall within the jurisdiction of pure leisure. These other free time activities were participated in for many additional reasons aside from the pure pleasure which may have been derived from such activities. The most frequently mentioned motivations for engaging in such

activities are listed below:

- to improve one's skills and abilities
- to keep out of trouble
- to enhance one's personal status within the community
- to help fill the day
- to improve the community spirit

In many instances, these other free time activities reflected the social and economic deprivation experienced by the respondents. Such activities were often engaged in to counter the feelings of powerlessness which many shack youth experience. For the purpose of this study, other free time activities were labelled semi-leisure activities.

Many respondents viewed activities classified under semi-leisure as constituting their most important regular or daily activities. These activities very often helped to fill the day and therefore gave the young person a sense of purpose and a feeling of achievement. Furthermore, the range of pure leisure activities which respondents reported they engaged in, was not as wide as the range of semi-leisure activities which were mentioned.

Political activities play a significant role in influencing the leisure patterns of young shack dwellers. On the one hand, political activities participated in by some youth interfere with regular leisure activities practiced by other less politicised youth. On the other hand involvement in grassroots political structures can serve as an important mechanism for the satisfaction of work and leisure needs.

To conclude, despite considerable social and economic hardship, many young shantytown dwellers are not part of a 'lost generation'. Like ordinary youth throughout the world, they dream of success and self-fulfilment en route to adulthood. **UDCA**

Acknowledgement

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The Survey Team: Bongani, Dennis, Henry, Hilda, Musa, Nhlanhla, Phelelani, Tembi, Thami, Thandi, Victoria

Free time opportunities for shackland youth are used to promote personal development and social upliftment

Constraints on their leisure activities include a deprived environment, a shortage of facilities and venues, and violence

POLICY

EDUCATION BEFORE RECREATION

CRITICAL CHOICES FOR YOUTH CENTRES

Valerie Møller

*White youth
want youth
centres to cater
primarily for fun
and fellowship*

All over the world young people gravitate towards centres where they can 'hang out' and do their 'own thing'. Centres meet various descriptions which range from casual gathering places such as the corner shop to the established youth centres run by the YMCA. Youth centres may find space in community centres and schools. The Saturday night disco and the video game arcade become instant youth centres whenever their doors are open. Obviously, youth centres can mean different things to different sets of young people.

The Youth Centre Project (YCP) sought to establish the ideal concept of a youth centre serving regional and neighbourhoods needs. The research was carried out in three waves. First wave results suggested that neighbourhood centres would be preferable to regional centres for convenience reasons.

*Black youth want
youth centres to
cater for
educational
rather than
recreational
activities*

However, if transport problems could be overcome a regional centre which could serve as a non-racial gathering place would be welcome. Youth were prepared to make extra efforts to overcome distances to attend special events, such as the Saturday night disco. It was important that youth centres should operate harmoniously, reaching a balance between membership rates from the areas in its hinterland.

In the first wave of research, white youth emphasised the need for youth centres to cater primarily for 'fun and fellowship'. Extra-curricular educational and sporting activities were well catered for by school programmes and other resource centres and clubs.

As one group of white youth saw it 'the centre should be recreational in emphasis. A place to relax and forget about anything associated with school.' Another group of white youth similarly commented that they wanted to do 'fun things in their youth centre'; educational things were 'boring and remind us of school'.

The majority of the black youth participating in the first wave of research on youth centres proposed that the centre in question should have a stronger emphasis on educational than recreational activities. Black youth indicated that they were serious about their spare time activities. At least one black youth group maintained that a regional centre would have to offer 'worthwhile' activities, if it were to be attractive to them. 'One has to gain something out of it', they maintained, implying that pure recreation as an end in itself would be insufficient attraction.

Adults participating in the first wave of research on youth centres, mainly whites, advocated 'good, clean fun'. They also supported skills training and educational activities presented to young people in entertaining form.

Over and above the pure recreation and educational functions of youth centres, participants in the first wave of inquiry noted that there was a real need for venues for their special interest groups. Other research among black youth clubs in the Durban area (see article by Mthembu & Møller) confirmed the need for space which could be booked free of charge or for a small fee.

The first wave of research discovered three main functions which youth centres could usefully serve:

- a recreational and entertainment function with overtones of social fellowship;
- an educational and training function; and
- a 'booking' function (i.e. space for youth clubs and special interest groups to meet). (See methods for details).

Racial Divide

The critical choice of youth centre function may reflect the need for leisure time to be an extension of the school or working day or to contrast with narrowly defined work or school activities. The *spillover* and *compensation* hypotheses succinctly define these opposing choices.

The *spillover* thesis predicts that young people choose spare time activities which are similar to their work activities because they find such positive rewards in their working activities. Thus work carries over or extends into the leisure sphere; there is congruence between 'work' and 'play'.

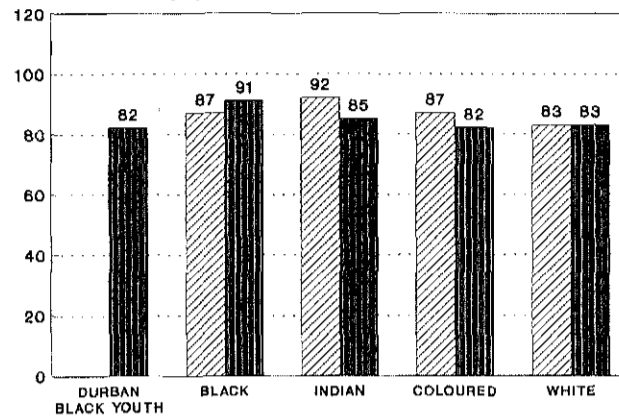
If the spillover thesis were to apply in the local context township youth in school or working in jobs would choose to pursue mainly educational and job skills training in their spare time.

The *compensation* thesis predicts that young people look for contrast or complementarity between their main occupation and their spare time activities. Young people seek out non-work activities and experiences which make up for the shortcomings of their main occupation. Physical activity and fun in one's spare time balance pen-pushing, sedentary work.

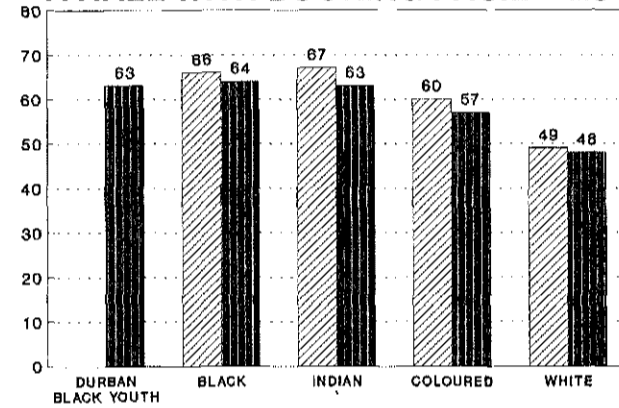
If the compensation thesis were to apply in the local context township youth in school and in jobs would look for recreational outlets to contrast or complement their working day activities.

The disparities of choices for youth centres emergent in the first wave of research - especially between *spillover* and *compensation* functions - called for further research. The priority of the three youth centre functions: educational (representing the spillover choice), recreational (compensation choice), and

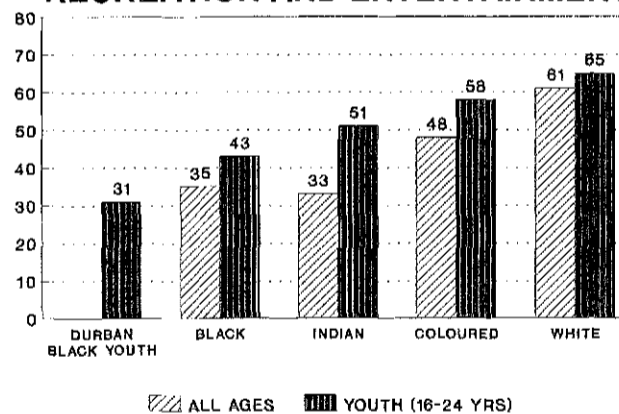
EDUCATION AND TRAINING



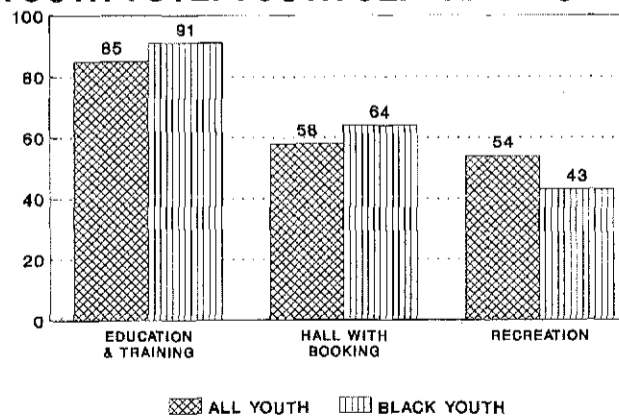
A HALL WITH BOOKING FACILITIES



RECREATION AND ENTERTAINMENT



YOUTH VOTE: YOUTH CENTRE PRIORITIES



RESEARCH METHOD

• First Wave

The research was conducted in three waves. The first wave carried out in 1989 inquired into the need for a regional youth centre which could be non-racial in character. The inquiry drew participation from small groups of young people from all population groups attached to schools, clubs and church groups in the region concerned. A subsample of adults wrote in their opinions in response to a notice placed in the newspaper. In the course of group discussions participants were asked whether they favoured an educational or a recreational emphasis for the proposed youth centre (Richards and Møller, 1990).

• Second Wave

The second wave of research was carried out in May 1989 among 995 black high school students aged 12 to 18 years attending a Saturday school run by SABSWA (SA Black Social Workers' Association). The students were asked to write a short one-page essay describing their 'ideal' youth centre. After completing the essay the students rank-ordered three functions which a youth centre ideally should fulfil (see research instrument).

• Third Wave

The third wave of research was a representative nationwide poll canvassing the opinions of persons 16 years and older living in major metropolitan areas of South Africa. An area-stratified probability sample was used which included 1 001 blacks (314 16-24 year olds), 504 coloureds (219 youth), 504 Indians (213 youth) and 1 001 whites (217 youth). In all, 3 010, including 963 16-24 year olds, were interviewed. The nationwide poll was conducted in June 1989 by Market Research Africa on behalf of the YCP project. The margin of error at the 95% confidence level is less than ± 2 percent for the subsamples. The participants in the nationwide survey completed the same rank-ordering exercise as the participants in the second wave of research.

RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

The item put to respondents in the second and third waves of research read as follows:

- *Here are some important functions or uses of a youth centre: Which function do you think is the most important? Which one is second? And which one is third? Are there any others you consider more important?*

A YOUTH CENTRE SHOULD PROVIDE:

RECREATION AND ENTERTAINMENT

(eg. games, disco, videos, coffee bar)

The youth centre should be a place where young people can meet and socialise

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

(eg. instruction in job skills, handicrafts, discussion groups, lectures, a place to study etc.)

The youth centre should be a place where young people can learn things together

A HALL WHERE YOUTH CLUBS CAN BOOK A ROOM AND EQUIPMENT FOR THEIR OWN GROUPS' ACTIVITIES

(eg. sports, drama, music, scouts, sewing, carpentry, women's interest groups etc.)

ANY OTHER?

venues for booking (compromise choice) were put to the test among a sample of black Saturday school pupils in the DFR and in a nationwide poll.

If first and second priorities are pooled, the results (see graphs) show that education and training is a definite optimal choice, more so among black youth than white youth, with Indian and Coloured youth falling somewhere in between. Saturday school youth in the DFR who are already actively pursuing educational leisure place greater emphasis on the educational than other functions (see preceding article). It is striking that black youth in contrast to all other youth, stress the educational role of youth centres to a greater extent than the older parent generation.

The youth centre serving as a community hall with booking facilities for youth clubs is an intermediate choice for all but white youth and their parents.

The recreation centre ranks last for all youth except white youth. The gradients in the critical choices are possibly a reflection of the spare time facilities available to apartheid youth. The gap between the black and white vote is greatest, which probably reflects the differential access to resources described by the participants in the first wave of research.

A comparison of the essays written by the Saturday school pupils on the ideal youth centre and their voting behaviour are telling. In their essays all pupils gave prominent mention to the educational pursuits of youth centre users. However, pupils voting for the recreational function as first or second priority were more likely than others to describe recreational activities in the centre. Sports club members were more likely to emphasise recreational pursuits in their essays. The youth centre as the home of creative arts featured in the essays of pupils selecting the venue function as a first or second priority.

Contrary to expectations, youth club members among the essayists, even those who met in private homes or in the open, tended to vote for the educational youth centre rather than the booking facility function.

In the post-apartheid era, youth centres catering for mixed neighborhoods and regional centres will need to compromise

on their role definitions. Graph 4 pulls together the priority votes to achieve a compromise on youth centre functions. The compromise solution means that white youth will have to forego some of their fun in the interests of their black counterparts catching up on education in their spare time. Alternatively education will have to become more fun for all!

The young people participating in the first round of research were optimistic about mixing functions in a youth centre, if necessary. In their opinion a well run youth centre could cater for a variety of needs through strict timetabling of events. Such a centre would, however, boast a number of separate rooms for the use of interest groups in the evenings and over weekends which is prime time. Many existing venues in the black townships such as churches or community halls feature only a single large venue which prohibits multiple uses. The situation of facilities in the shack areas is even more precarious.

ALL WORK AND NO PLAY MAKES JACK (JILL) A DULL BOY (GIRL)

The nursery rhyme may not apply to the township case. It appears that bright black youngsters crave education at the expense of their recreation. Their critical choices for youth centres are dictated by a displaced spillover motivation: It is not that they want their spare time to mimic school time. They simply have little choice in the matter.

It appears that neither the spillover nor the compensation hypothesis has strict application where spare time is concerned. The dominant choice of educational leisure is not a genuine spillover choice. It is not a reflection of satisfaction gained from school. Black urban youth are extremely critical of the education they receive and its delivery. School boycott action taken by young people to voice their grievances over educational and political issues during the eighties have meant that black youth may spend more time *out* of school than *in* school.

It is clear that the choice of educational leisure activities and education programmes for youth centres is a deficit choice. Black youth seek compensatory education rather than recreational outlets in their spare time because their regular educational opportunities are blocked. There are examples of regional youth recreation centres being 'taken over' for educational purposes at the height of the Natal emergency. The Beatrice Road YMCA in central Durban - which normally caters for special interest groups and serves the 'booking function' - is a case in point (see box: pp45).

In conclusion, there is an apparent anomaly in the critical spare time choices of black youth. Their *spillover* choice of spare time education is motivated by the need to *compensate* for the shortcomings in their regular education. Until South Africa's educational crisis is resolved the few existing youth and community centres serving black communities may be forced to provide alternative education rather than the recreation which all young people need and deserve. **IPWA**

Until the educational crisis is resolved, youth and community centres may be forced to provide alternative education rather than recreational activities

WHY YOUNG PEOPLE JOIN YOUTH CLUBS

'I like youth clubs, because they really build a person. You learn a lot provided the group is composed of mixed people. We have teachers and we have members who are about to finish their courses as social workers at universities.'

'You get to know more young people, especially now that people rely on other people to give them tips on jobs. These are also discussed at youth groups.'

'It gives me a break from housework. We don't write tests or exams as at school' (13-year old chairperson)

'To be able to defend ourselves from high school boys who seem to be telling us every day when to go to school and when not to go, and then hit us.' (9-year old karate brown belt who trains the younger members in his club)

'Youth groups are very important in any young person's life. You get to know old friends from school. You develop some skills. You keep away from trouble, especially in the townships where there are a lot of groups that could land you in jail.'

'It is essential that all young people, girls and boys, get involved in social clubs or sports because it keeps them out of mischief. Although our townships do not have any facilities, which I think is another cause of young people getting involved in fighting.'

CONCLUSION

We hope that these research findings convince our readers of the crucial role which leisure has to play in preparing South African youth for their places in society.

There are compelling reasons why leisure choices may be critical for the future of South Africa. Leisure may be one of the few domains of life where black youth have been able to demonstrate their creative and organisational talents. These will need to be carefully nurtured under a new leisure dispensation.

Unlike the education and work spheres which suffer from the legacies of *bantu* education and job discrimination, leisure has been subject to benign neglect rather than deliberate policy constraints. As a result of this *laissez-faire* leisure policy, leisure resources are underdeveloped in the townships and non-existent in the peri-urban areas.

Under the old dispensation, leisure choice and enjoyment were severely curtailed. In our research into what young people do in their leisure and where they do it we found that many of the leisure choices are *deficit* choices rather than *real* ones. Leisure values are inverted. Some of the fun has been taken out of leisure. The pursuits of black youth are dictated by the need to compensate for lack of opportunities to satisfy needs for self-esteem and advancement through the regular channels of education and work. A new leisure policy is required to open up genuine choice and enjoyment.

Heavy-handed leisure strategies which seek to over-organise and over-discipline will constrain rather than enhance leisure choice. There is a danger that they will result in an 'anti-leisure' sentiment among youth - akin to the anti-education ideologies of the past decade - which would only serve to constrain youthful energy rather than promote individual growth.

Meaningful leisure could be enhanced through a wide range of practical interventions. Experts attending a YCP workshop to explore 'ways and means' of promoting leisure opportunities for youth and removing constraints recommended the development of skills at various levels. These included:

- personal and interpersonal skills among rank and file youth to boost self confidence and promote constructive confrontation of problems;
- parenting skills to solve inter-generational communication problems;
- leadership and fundraising skills to assist clubs and centres together with programmes aimed at the enrichment of resources;

- practical technical and job entry training programmes geared to the needs of the informal sector, industry and community service; and
- greater involvement of youth in the planning and running of youth training schemes.

To complement practical strategies, a new moral imperative should be cultivated which will restore the crucial element of choice and enjoyment in leisure. One of the major tasks will be to create the kind of social climate in which leisure choices and the interventions aimed at restoring choice will thrive. The new moral order should inspire a sense of common purpose, social harmony and mutual respect, and above all, a spirit of optimism.

It will be essential that the new morality cuts across the many leisure tensions among youth in their quest for meaningful leisure choices. Our inquiries suggest that comrades and comrades are fired by the same energies and idealism but have made different leisure choices among the few available.

Popular leisure pursuits, such as educational *semi-leisure*, may act as rallying points for South Africa's deeply divided youth. Our research suggests that this type of 'means to an end' leisure, a leisure option born more of necessity than real choice, is attractive to youth of different social backgrounds.

The youth centre or club is by and large an integral concept for black youth which is capable of cutting across many of the leisure divides of age, gender, class, and religious and political affiliations. Our findings indicate that *youth centres* tend to be multi-purpose venues open to the entire community. *Youth clubs* cater to both school-goers and workseekers.

Our study shatters the image of destructive urban youth. In our research we came across shadows of violence, funerals, gang warfare and intimidation, and confrontations between privileged and less privileged youth. However, there were also signs that the search for a new morality has already begun.

The foundation stone of the new youth leisure dispensation has already been laid in the youth clubs and centres emergent in the leisure policy vacuum of the old era. Club names and mottos suggest that the new morality may already have captured the imagination of the lost generation. We hope a new leisure dispensation may come to symbolise the 'brighter future' to which all youth aspire.

Valerie Møller
Guest Editor, May 1991

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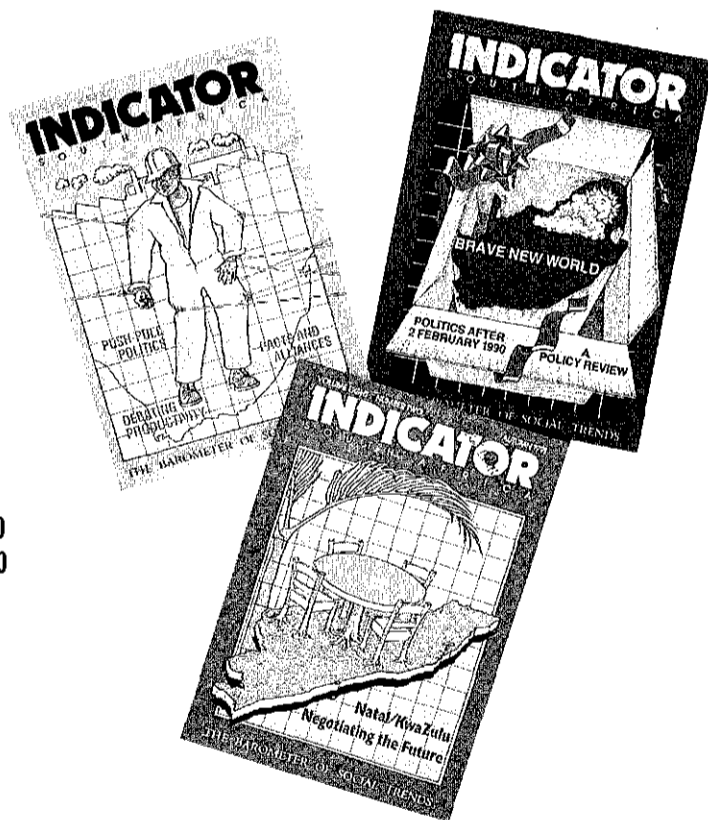
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