GETTING A GOOD EDUCATION?

THE EXPERIENCE OF NIGERIAN CHILDREN IN LONDON SCHOOLS

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by

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ABSTRACT

An examination of the experiential reality of schooling for Nigerian children in two inner London single sex comprehensive schools was carried out. Interviews were conducted with 45 children, 36 parents and 84 teachers. In addition, classroom observations were carried out on over two thirds of the children.

It was found that Nigerian parents sent their children to British schools in the belief that their children will not only get a 'good education', but will also achieve educational qualifications which will give them access to high level professional occupations. Rather than encourage children to pursue these types of employment goals, teachers tended to socialize children to adopt their own definition of what the children's aspirations should be. Through social and academic counselling teachers essentially became involved in the attempt to prepare children for particular roles in society constrained by their social class, family and ethnic backgrounds.

The lack of employment opportunities for young black and white adults in this country, however, did not work fully to dissuade Nigerian children from pursuing the acquisition of school knowledge. This was because Nigerian parents socialized their children to orientate towards an occupational future, not in Britain, but in Nigeria.

Although teachers refuted that they engaged in social and ethnic differentiation, it was found that the school careers of Nigerian pupils were characterized by a need to develop strategies to cope with an education system which was geared towards enhancing the educational progress of white middle class children.

In terms of curriculum content neither of the two research schools had taken on board their education authority's initiatives for multi-ethnic education. While most teachers were very critical of the overall management of their schools, some of them were found to be inept at organizing school learning programmes.

Despite these organizational shortcomings, the instrumental approach to schooling of Nigerian parents, together with their knowledge of the processes involved in schooling, ensured that most of them could persuade teachers (either directly through confrontation or indirectly through teachers' perceptions of the children's homebackground) to accommodate their parental ambitions. These, challenged the stereotype of the educational potential of black pupils. Hence, relative to children in ILEA schools generally, Nigerian children were found to be educational achievers.
Aiye ọlajú l'awa
Ekó ló ngbé ọmòdè gà
Bi ákọ ilé ógun, tābì ki ărà mọtó méjilà pàpọ
là i fi ówọ tọmọ siwajú, igbèhin ló mà dún wọn jú
Óbi tó bà bi ọmọ kó tọ.

To my mother, and
the memory of my father;
And for all parents who care
about the education of their children.
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Without the moral support of my mother, my sister and my relevant other this thesis would certainly not have been completed.

Finally, thanks to G. Williams for secretarial efficiency.

O. T. Ososanwo.
April, 1985.
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The first major manifestation of public concern for the education of the ethnic minority child in Britain appeared in 1969, when the then House of Commons Select Committee on Race Relations and Immigration acknowledged the receipt of unsatisfactory reports about the behaviour of ethnic minority school children. Since then educational research and official enquiries on ethnic minority pupils have tended to concentrate on Asian and Afro-Caribbean (West Indian) pupils (Swann, 1985; Tomlinson, 1983; Taylor, 1981; Townsend, 1971; see also Sivanandan, 1976) and have neglected other ethnic minority pupils who may have had totally different educational experiences. Hence, this present research set out to examine the schooling of Nigerian children.

Hitherto, studies of West Africans in Britain have been concerned with their families and their way of life in Britain (Craven, 1968; Goody and Groothues, 1977, 1979). Studies primarily concerned with the child have investigated the inability of the British system of social services to cope with the fostering of West African children (Holman, 1973; Ellis et al., 1978). In contrast, there is very little research on the African child in the British education system (Tomlinson, 1984). Apart from working towards filling this gap, this present research sought to discover, from a sociological perspective the social situational context of Nigerians living in Britain. By doing so it was hoped to provide a wider framework within which to examine the schooling of Nigerian children.

Research strategies employed in the study of ethnic minority pupils usually take the form of psychometric investigations. These have a quantitative, numerical basis and employ tests, the results of which are usually statistically quantifiable. In view of the relatively small numbers of Nigerian children in English comprehensive schools it was considered inappropriate to employ quantitative methods of educational research. Moreover, when investigating the schooling of ethnic minority children most researchers continue to use ability, attitudinal and achievement tests - the validity of which have been primarily established on a white population and the reliability of which is much questioned (see Section 2.2). In order to avoid the pitfalls of culturally biased tests, this present research sought to discover the experiential reality of schooling for Nigerian children by examining the processes through which they arrived at their understanding of what it means to be at school in Britain.

Educational research in Britain has been carried out primarily from a sociological perspective based on the structural-functional tradition (see
Chapter 2). With the writings of Young (1971) and Gorbutt (1972) there has emerged in Britain, a 'new' sociology of education grounded in the interactionist conceptualization of the social world (Karabel and Halsey, 1977). Blumer (1969) argues that social beings experience their everyday world as a socially meaningful reality. Schutz (1967) emphasizes that, apart from subjectively meaningful behaviour, actors orientate towards an intersubjective social world. In other words, actors experience the social world as 'common' and 'shared' so that through commonsense knowledge they interpret and make sense of their world. Proceeding from an acceptance of these basic tenets, this present research has been conducted within the framework of interpretive sociology (Wilson, 1971).

In order to understand, as Weber (1949) suggests, the behaviour of social actors through the analysis of their social construction of meanings (Berger and Luckmann, 1967), it was necessary to perceive the social world as it existed for the participants involved in the situation under examination. The discovery of the actor's intersubjective world requires the sensitive eliciting of information and the careful observation of the actor in his/her social milieu. Hence, this present research adopted some of the methodological requirements of ethnographic research (Spradley, 1979; see Chapters 3 and 4). The focused interview (Merton and Kendall, 1956) with Nigerian children, their parents and school teachers was the primary method of data collection. In addition, everyday school activities, such as lessons and registrations, were observed in order to complement the interviews. It was hoped to arrive at an understanding and explanation of the subjectively meaningful personal experiences of the social actors, not through hypothesis testing, but through an analysis at the micro level of the interactive process of schooling as it specifically related to Nigerian children.

Micro-sociological research is generally criticized for its tendency to neglect structural considerations in society at large. In agreement with Woods (1983) it is emphasized that interpretive educational research is not primarily interested in the testing and development of formal theory, but in the discovery of substantive theory grounded in the research data. However, in acknowledgement of the point that ultimately the ability of a social actor to interact solely according to his/her own understanding is hindered by the actions of other social actors, both within and outside his/her immediate social world, this present research reflects on the macro-sociological constraints of the actor's own commonsense interpretation of their world.
Chapter Contents

In order to place the presence of Nigerians in Britain in a historical context, Chapter 1 outlines the links between the two countries by discussing British colonial activities on the west coast of Africa from the early eighteenth century. Although Nigeria has gained independence from Britain it is pointed out that Nigeria, as with other less technologically advanced countries, is still very much dependent on more technologically advanced societies.

Particular attention is paid to the development of the Nigerian education system and the manner in which western (British) education has worked to create a small, but politically powerful and elitist social group. The Nigerian stratification system is different from that which operates in Britain. However, it is argued that as a result of the process of colonization and rapid industrialization the social inequalities in Nigerian society, when examined from a Marxist perspective, reflect to a more or less similar degree those in Britain. Finally, the child-rearing difficulties of Nigerian mature students is discussed in order to give insight into the situational context of Nigerian parents' attempts to cope with living in a different cultural environment.

Chapter 2 discusses the differences between the structural-functionalist and the interpretive perspectives of the education system. In addition, the literature on the education of black ethnic minority children is reviewed. There is an examination of the debates on the notions of cultural deprivation and negative self-concept. This chapter argues that it is quite apparent that past enquiries have dealt inadequately with the problem of the education of the ethnic minority child. It also argues that the Schools Council Pamphlet 18 (1981) is over-optimistic in its hope that its recommendations will be adopted. This is because teachers are notorious for failing to act upon educational recommendations - especially those which challenge the status quo.

The final section of Chapter 2 focuses on research which seeks to discover the manner in which the everyday activities, of schooling help to enhance or hinder children's educational progress. It is pointed out that researchers who examine the 'black box' of schooling, generally concern themselves with working class white pupils (Delamont, 1976a; Woods, 1979; Corrigan, 1979; Willis, 1978). A call was made for more research, similar to those of Furlong (1976; 1984), which specifically focus on the interactive situation of schooling as it directly relates to ethnic minority pupils.

The background to this present research is outlined in Chapter 3. It was initially proposed to measure Nigerian children's attitudes to schooling. After a critical examination of the two sociological methodologies (quantitative and qualitative), it was decided to abandon
positivistic based research in favour of an interpretive one. The central ideas and concepts together with the theoretical underpinnings of interpretive sociology are discussed. Finally, there is a presentation of the findings of an exploratory study carried out to gain insight into the contemporary situation of Nigerian children in London schools. It was found that the interactive nature of schooling involved varying levels of conflict, particularly between Nigerian parents and their children's teachers. In view of the lack of information about the educational experiences of African children, the exploratory study was particularly useful in identifying specific areas of research interest. For example, attention was drawn to the pro-school tendency of Nigerian children.

Chapter 4 goes on to describe the research methods employed for data collection in the main body of the thesis. The difficulties in conducting research in schools through the use of interviews and observation techniques are outlined. Despite taking measures to limit the obtrusiveness of the researcher, a deputy head asked me to wind up the research in his/her school.

Chapters 5 and 6 deal with language learning issues as they concerned Nigerian children who were learning English as an additional language. Chapter 5 concentrates on teachers' management of language learning programmes. It is pointed out that the organizational ineptitude of some teachers together with a lack of effective liaison between those involved in the teaching of school approved English, worked to limit the learning opportunities offered to some Nigerian children.

Chapter 6 demonstrates that while teachers are engaged in the assessment of children's level of language achievement, the children themselves are developing various strategies for coping with what they interpret as their teachers' language proficiency "standards". It is emphasized that children's inability to speak in a manner approved by the British education system is not indicative of their general educational ability.

Moving on from the examination of a single subject area, Chapter 7 discusses various aspects of the process of educational choice. Particular attention is given to school and subject choice strategies. For example, it is shown that the situational context of choosing subjects is characterized by intense competition between parents and teachers. Although the latter were in a more powerful position than parents to encourage particular subject choices, it was found that teachers' engagement in sales techniques sometimes worked to delay children's pursuit of their own academic ambitions.

In order to gain insight into the processes through which Nigerian children came to adopt particular styles of classroom interaction, their perceptions of schooling are discussed in Chapter 8. Nigerian children's school based actions are discussed in terms of three different, but not
mutually exclusive responses to being at school. Just over half of the children studied were found to be "loners", that is, they rarely initiated interaction with their peer group. In contrast, the "goodtimers" and "troublemakers" were popular and notorious, respectively. Despite the differences between these three types of pupils, their perceptions of schooling had much in common. They favoured the acquisition of school knowledge.

Chapter 9 focuses on inter-ethnic relations within the schools under investigation and outlines the strategies the children adopted for coping with being members of a minor ethnic minority group. It is shown that teachers' inability to tackle adequately inter-ethnic conflict resulted in the children developing their own sometimes subtle and sometimes very aggressive methods of confronting inter-ethnic hostility. It is argued that the teachers' belief in not differentiating between children is based on a naive understanding of what it means to treat children alike by giving them similar educational opportunities. In reality some teachers not only differentiated between children, but labelled them according to stereotypes of particular ethnic groups. Hence, the teachers unless they were otherwise informed, generally perceived the "goodtimers" and "troublemakers" to be of West Indian origin.

Nigerian children themselves (including those who had been born in Britain) tended to include being Nigerian in their self-identification. It is stressed that in a multicultural society and in particular, in an education authority which is at the vanguard of encouraging respect for other people's cultures and countries of origin, the level of awareness of teachers (especially those with direct pastoral responsibilities) about the correct ethnic background of the children in their care left much to be desired.

In Chapter 10, Nigerian parents' perceptions of schooling, the family and the London neighbourhoods in which they live are discussed in relation to the manner in which they socialize their children. Relations between teachers, parents and children are examined in order to provide insight into the perceptions of the social world of the school and the home held by the three main participants in the dynamics of schooling. While Nigerian parents were busy socializing their children away from what they regarded as the anti-school ethic of some of the British working class, teachers were found to be engaged in counselling activities which parents saw as undermining their relationship with their children.

The insistence of Nigerian parents on the possibility of returning to Nigeria worked to ensure that their children did not completely reject an educational/occupational future in Nigeria. It is argued that this "going home" syndrome formed the framework within which Nigerian parents and their children responded either confrontationally or stoically to the difficulties experienced in living in London.
Finally, Chapter 11 discusses the overall findings of this present research by linking the micro-situational world of the school to the macro-world of the education system as it operates in a class-ridden industrial society like Britain. It is pointed out that liberal educationists had a tendency to believe in the ability of the education system to reduce social inequality. It is argued, however, that expanded educational provision has not necessarily produced fundamental social change. Rather, it has worked to increase and improve the labour skills needed to enhance production while simultaneously working to maintain the essentially exploitative relationship between those who produce goods and the owners of capital.

The educational ambitions of Nigerian children reflect their wish to gain access to high status occupations. Their occupational goals are derived from the instrumental manner in which the Nigerian family at home and abroad, perceive the role of schooling in society. It is emphasised that the process of schooling is still essentially one of preparing children for particular occupational roles. Hence, the occurrence of parent-teacher conflict, where parents struggle to ensure improved educational opportunities for their children, makes teachers appear tacitly to condone the status quo. Hence, it is concluded that teachers have still to confront the question of whether their teaching obligation includes their active enhancement (or hinderance) of a pupil's social mobility, irrespective of his/her family, cultural and/or socio-economic background.
1.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the links between Nigeria and Britain in order to give insight into the socio-educational consequences of British colonial rule on the west coast of Africa. In particular, it examines the process through which Nigeria came to depend on British (and Western European) education as a fundamental prerequisite to industrialization.

After over 24 years of independence, many Nigerians continue to come to Britain for educational purposes. In Nigeria those who have acquired post-secondary Western educational qualifications have high social status. Many writers have described this social group as western educated elites (Smythe and Smythe, 1960; Lloyd, 1966; see also Imoagene, 1976; Osoba, 1977; Nduka, 1977). The examination of social groups in Western societies usually employs the concept of class as an analytical tool in the description of social stratification. For example, Marx (1976) discusses social classes in terms of their relation to the means of production while Weber (1964) concerned himself with the provision of wage labour.

Lloyd (1982) suggests that the western concept of class fails to adequately describe social groups in non-western societies. Subsequently, writers tend to use varying adjectives together with the concept of elite to home in on specific social groups. For example, Osoba (1977) discusses high status groups in Nigeria by referring to them collectively as 'power elites' (see also Mills, 1959a) and then differentiating between 'business elites' and 'technocrats' (see also Lloyd, 1966).

Apart from the general use of the concept of elite there is little consensus on the appropriate terminology to employ in the description of social groups in Nigeria. In contrast, in Britain, there is little question that the society is stratified along class lines (Westergaard and Resler, 1975). Over the years the dividing lines between classes appear to be getting increasingly blurred. However, Gintis (1970) points out that, essentially, new class boundaries are being drawn. Whatever, the case, Nigerians in Britain find themselves not only in a class, but "race" conscious society. Once they get through immigration controls, the final part of this chapter examines the manner in which Nigerians cope with living in Britain.
1.2 The Colonial Experience

Among the first European explorers on the southern coast of West Africa were the Portuguese, who came in the fifteenth century (Crowder, 1978). Between 1434 and 1482, these explorers were mainly interested in expeditions, although some trade usually took place. By the beginning of the sixteenth century trade in commodities such as gold, salt and spices had shifted to trade in human beings (Williams, 1964). British and other Europeans in the Americas, short of the indigenous labour they had almost annihilated (through cruelty and the transmission of European diseases) began to look for replacements of the native population of the Caribbean who had been engaged to help raid its mineral resources and exploit its agriculture (Gugler and Flanagan, 1978). Attention soon focused on Africans as suitable replacements and the trade in people soon became viable and lucrative for both European economic and African political and economic interests (Coleman, 1963).

The slave trade started in the early sixteenth century and was at its peak between the years 1712 to 1800 (Williams, 1964). Despite initial and ongoing conflict between prospective slave owners and the local inhabitants, the trade flourished and Britain exercised an almost complete monopoly (Smythe and Smythe, 1960). The slave trade resulted in the destabilization of what had hitherto been part of the focal point of West African enterprise and culture (Davidson, 1984). The southern parts of what is now known as Nigeria [1] was particularly pillaged during the slave trade period and was actually known as the Slave Coast until the middle of the nineteenth century (Coleman, 1963). In principle, the slave trade was abolished in 1807 for "humanitarian" reasons. In reality, the slave trade was now uneconomical and Britain turned to trade in palm oil and ivory. However, it was not until the middle of the nineteenth century that the slave trade completely ended (Williams, 1964). British trading interests were so profitable that it was thought necessary to appoint a Consular Officer in 1849 to oversee British interests along the Bights of Benin and Biafra in the then Niger Delta region of western Africa (see Map 1.1, see also Maps 1.2 and 1.3) (Coleman, 1963). Smythe and Smythe (1960) point out that the overseer status proved inadequate for the task at hand because the then British government wished for minimum interference from Africans. This resulted in the Consular Officer having additional authority not only to supervise British trading interests, but also to levy fines and take punitive measures to protect British commerce [2].

In 1885, the Berlin Conference which presided over the European 'scramble for Africa' (Betts, 1972; Webster, Boahen and Tidy, 1980) recognized Britain's "rights" (by what was termed effective ownership) to the area which encompassed the River Niger and the Niger Delta in the south. Britain promptly declared these regions as the Oil Rivers.
Protectorate (which was subsequently renamed the Niger Coast Protectorate). By 1893, Britain had created armed police and naval forces and had appointed consuls and vice consuls to assist the Consul General at Old Calabar (Coleman, 1963; Smythe and Smythe, 1960). The then British government capped all this activity by the declaration that 'her' protectorate also extended inland to include the northern parts of what is now Nigeria (Heussler, 1968) [3].

Meanwhile in 1851, Britain had captured Lagos with the aid of an

MAP 1.1: NIGERIA'S REGIONAL BOUNDARIES (up to 1966)

KEY: . Region's capital city.

MAP 1.2: NIGERIA'S STATE (12) BOUNDARIES (from 1967)


MAP 1.3 NIGERIA'S STATE (19) BOUNDARIES (from 1976)

agreement with Akitoye (a claimant to the throne in Lagos). The two main aspects of this agreement were the promises by Britain to give Akitoye British support in his quest to be the reigning monarch in Lagos and **effectively** to end the slave trade, although this had been legally abolished in 1807. Britain did not honour this agreement nor a subsequent agreement in 1854 with Kosoko (this time, Akitoye's opponent). Smythe and Smythe (1960) suggest that Britain switched allegiances and made false promises in order to maintain power in Lagos and thus ensure uninterrupted trading in an area (Northern and Southern Protectorates) which had now been amalgamated into the Colony and Protectorate of Nigeria. In order to administer the ever increasing area under British rule, a dual system of government based on a 'colonial superstructure' evolved (Coleman, 1963). This structure consisted of the police force, army, district officers, field staff of residents, colonial civil servants, lieutenant-governors and a governor. African rulers were subject to supervision by officers who were almost entirely British (Hailey, 1951). Thus, hitherto independent, traditional rulers who possessed a prestigious status among their peoples became puppets of the then British government. At the peak of British indifference to the cultural norms and values and traditional structures of the different peoples comprising **their** Nigeria, the then British government not only interfered, but collaborated with opponents of existing traditional leaders to usurp the latter. Moreover, they were able to dominate those they collaborated with by operating the 'divide and rule' strategy (Crowder, 1978).

Thus, some of the key rulers of Nigeria under the British were those who by force or willingness, effectively signed away the rights of their people for treaties of protection which were in any case rarely kept (Crowder and Ikime, 1970; Betts, 1972). The British tendency to abrogate promises together with what was being increasingly seen as unfair trading practices found immediate expression in popular resentment of colonial rule. In 1918, there were uprisings against the imposition of direct taxes, riots and rebellions to protest against interference with indigenous forms of government [2]. In addition to these political unrests there were also widespread religious protests against colonial developments which were putting a strain on the continuation of traditional religious practices (Asiwaju, 1976; Davidson; 1969) by those who had refused to accept Christianity (Coleman, 1963:172-173; Jones, 1957:1-5). World War I, brought a second wave of national unrest when Lloyd George, the then British Prime Minister, made it clear that when he proclaimed the need to recognize human rights, he had not been referring to African territories (Coleman, 1963:183-187; Betts, 1972).

While all these political developments were going on, the trickle of Nigerians travelling abroad, especially to Britain for educational purposes, was growing steadily. As they typically termed it, they were
going 'in search of the golden fleece' (Craven, 1968; Ellis et al., 1978). Some of the pioneer students formed political organizations with other Africans (Nkrumah, 1968; Azikiwe, 1974; see also Egbuna, 1971) and it was mainly as a result of such organizations that a slow, but somewhat effective attempt was made to curb the excesses of colonial rule. The late 1950s and early sixties saw the peak of nationalism in Nigeria (and other African countries) (Mazrui and Tidy, 1984; Awolowo, 1970). The then Nigerian nationalists saw 1960 as the beginning of a new era where, in principle, Nigerians could govern themselves without the controls of an overseer (Taiwo, 1975: Chapters 2 and 3). In other words, Nigerians would be responsible for determining the politics of their "own" country, economy, education and world image. However, a quarter of a century after independence (October 1st, 1960) the relationship between Nigeria and Britain oscillates between near absolute dependence and mutual interdependence.

Dos Santos (1970) differentiates between types of dependency — colonial, industrial/financial and industrial/technological [4]. He draws our attention to the differences and discontinuities between the internal structures that develop within countries and emphasizes the need to take account of the different historical and economic relations between less technologically advanced countries (LTACs) and more technologically advanced countries (MTACs). Palma (1981) argues, however, that dependency theory has so far enabled a critical appraisal of development strategies without at the same time offering suggestions for an alternative form of relationship between LTACs and MTACs. There has been considerable criticism of dependency theory because of its deterministic nature (Frank, 1967). However, it must be noted that the deterministic nature of the relations between LTACs and MTACs of dependency theorists cannot be dismissed outright. Up to the present day the MTACs whether capitalist, socialist or communist, still very much have an ability to influence in a structurally deterministic manner, events in LTACs (Gutkind and Watermann, 1977: espec. Part IV)[5].

While capitalism contributed to the further advancement of western technology (see Weber, 1976) it operated to continue the underdevelopment of LTACs (Rodney, 1972) [6]. Within the Nigerian context, as within other ex-colonial (neo-colonial) societies, socio-political issues need to be perceived in relation to the interactional consequences of colonial rule. Nigeria has a capitalist oriented economy (Hopkins, 1973). However, capitalist contradictions have manifested themselves in such a manner that an economically viable Nigeria has hitherto been unable to avoid the dominance of western interests [7]. Cardoso and Faletto (1979) argue that a dependent economy also nurtures in its people an attitudinal dependence (colonial mentality). Milewski (1981) suggests that the relationship between Nigeria and Britain is not so much a deterministic dependence
within which there is no room for manoeuvre, but one in which Nigerian leaders of the early twentieth century were already making suggestions for independent economic development. The subsequent increase from oil revenues, especially in the early 1970s made it possible to shelve previous economic plans, but subsequently increased Nigerian dependence on western foreign exchange earnings through one main source - oil (Panter-Brick, 1978).

The current theoretical approach which attempts to address the relationship between LTACs and MTACs is that of 'interdependence' (Seers, 1981). This attempts to take into account the fact that both LTACs and MTACs gain from their relationship with each other, whether in economic (trade) or human (labour) terms (Adler, 1977). It is argued that 'dependency theories minimize the room for manoeuvre' (Lamb, 1981:98) and thus do not take into account the ongoing process of negotiation and conflict between LTACs and MTACs. This point is acknowledged as a valid criticism of dependency theories, but it must be emphasized that the inability of dependency theorists to present an academically sound argument does not mean that interdependence is a more appropriate tool for analytical purposes. Although some LTACs are engaged in capitalist pursuits (based on the western model) and have modernized their technology, they have been unable to "modernize" the unequal relationship between LTACs and MTACs. It is this unequal relationship that facilitates the continued and almost absolute dependence of LTACs on MTACs. Of course there will be disagreements, even open hostility, but these do not essentially change the nature of the relationship (Keohane and Nye, 1973). Writers may argue about world interdependence (Adler, 1977), but the level of interdependence can be distinguished hierarchically.

Although Nigeria exhibits the trappings of a capitalist system, it does not necessarily follow that the process through which Nigerian capitalism developed is either similar to that of Western Europe or that it will have the same results. As Milewski (1981) points out, the Nigerian capitalism of today is not the development of an economic system grounded in particular aspects of Nigerian modes of production. It is a foreign system which, though similar to aspects of Nigerian traditional economic interchange, is essentially an importation of a particular style of economic individualism (optimum profit motivation). This not only contradicts the traditional expectation of overall social collectivism, but creates western style social conflict between those who own the means of production and those who produce the goods.

Marxist theories of imperialism base the relationship between groups not so much in terms of dependence, but exploitation. Lamb (1981:98) argues that a change in economic relations between LTACs and MTACs requires an alliance of 'anti-imperialist forces', that is, an 'alliance of both the national capitalists, patriotic intelligentsia and the ... masses'.
This does not seem as impossible or uneasy an alliance as at first glance, but as Lamb points out, the interests of national capitalists are in conflict with imperialism. The dominant role of the imperialist powers in economic affairs restricts the rapid accumulation of wealth by national capitalists (see for example, Federal Ministry of Information, 1970 on the Nigerian nationalization of key enterprises in Kirk-Greene and Rimmer, 1981). National capitalists are in a Catch 22 situation whereby the very nature of their relationship with MTACs make them both economically and politically weak. Lamb (1981) suggests that it would require the national bourgeoisie, who operate the bureaucratic apparatus to 'diffuse consciousness produced by foreign education' (p.99; see also Dore, 1976).

Palma (1981:31) points out that Marx saw capitalism as a process through which 'backward' countries would of necessity go through before achieving socialism. However, Marx's idea of capitalist development was, as Palma explains, based on the development of an indigenous capitalism whose rise, though influenced by the introduction of western style developed technology, was not to be totally dependent on it. Through western education Nigerians had gained access to western technology and although this has accelerated the process of Nigerian industrialization, dependence on western technology works to create a one-sided relationship.

Frank (1967:11) described the relationship between LTACs and MTACs as a satellite network whereby the countries peripheral to the network could not fully develop outside it. The relationship, though capable of conflict, would essentially remain one in which those at the centre of the satellite would also be more powerful than those at the periphery. This would continue to be so even when allowance was made for the ability of countries, if they wished, to renegotiate the terms of their relationship with MTACs (for example, Nigeria's nationalization and take up of up to 55% share holding in foreign oil companies, especially Shell-BP, Panter-Brick, 1978). These types of muscle flexing by LTACs present only a temporary setback for MTACs.

This section has focused primarily on the historical and economic relations between Nigeria and Britain. All aspects of the colonial and neo-colonial relationship are important to an understanding of Nigeria's contemporary situation. However, it was felt necessary to discuss the above issues first so that the arguments are borne in mind when reading the following sub-sections which examine the educational links between Nigeria and Britain.
1.3 The Educational Links

Educational provision in Nigeria turned into a conflictual one as far back as the early nineteenth century when the then British government, pointing to financial and administrative constraints, refused to increase the number of educational institutions in Nigeria (Taiwo, 1975). By the start of the 1860s the peoples of the southern coast of West Africa (the then British West Africa) were demanding the establishment of universities and other institutions of higher learning to serve West Africans on their own soil. There was in particular, a call for a University of West Africa which would use the Church Missionary Society's Fourah Bay College as a nucleus (Horton, 1868). The fulfilment of these requests did not begin to materialize until the 1920s and 1930s when there were near militant demands for access to university education (Okafor, 1971: Chapter 3).

A general re-evaluation of British educational policy in Nigeria finally resulted in the establishment of Yaba Higher College (now Yaba College of Technology) in 1934, over 70 years after the first call for the establishment of institutions of higher learning (Ogunlade, 1970). For the next decade this College provided several hundred people with post-secondary professional training, but not of full university standard. This provision, even during this period (1934-1944) was insufficient for the needs of prospective Nigerian students and an ever increasing number of students travelled overseas in order to gain varying levels of educational qualifications. Thus, as far back as 1860 the seeds of Nigerian educational dependency on Britain were being sown. Even when the University College, Ibadan (Western Nigeria) was established in 1948 and was offering external degrees of the University of London, Nigerian students still continued to travel abroad because the College at Ibadan did not have the capacity to admit the overwhelming number of eligible students. Perhaps more importantly, the internal production of university trained manpower was not encouraged by the British colonial rulers (Taiwo, 1975).

The need for western education (seen as a prerequisite to rapid industrialization) (Dore, 1976) was such that it was not only capable of undermining traditional institutional and cultural norms, but even causing discriminatory practices based on where an educational qualification was obtained. Thus more prestige was attached, both by the colonial rulers and by the students themselves, to educational qualifications gained abroad (Harbison, 1962:198-219). Nevertheless, any Nigerian who succeeded in attaining high educational qualifications was refused the opportunity of promotion if, for example, such a promotion meant that a British administrator would have to answer to a Nigerian one (Taiwo, 1975). Here again, Nigerian dependency on British skills was being systematically entrenched.
Nigerians could not gain the educational qualifications they wished for in Nigeria and so they turned to British educational institutions. When they did obtain western education their career prospects were limited. Since western education was only useful for western related employment, qualified Nigerians initially accepted a job role which was not commensurate to their qualifications. Despite subsequent dissent, conflict and calls for the then British government to allow Nigerians into top administrative posts, the government stuck firmly to its discriminatory practices. This ensured that Nigerians who so fervently sought western education would receive and use it on British terms.

In the 1950s more Nigerians studied abroad than at the University College, Ibadan (at the time the only University in the country). In the absence of solid data, Harbison (1962) in conjunction with the Ashby Commission on Higher Education in Nigeria (1960), estimated that in the year of independence (1960) the total number of Nigerian graduates was just under one thousand. Harbison also estimated that approximately 800 of these were overseas graduates with slightly under 200 being produced internally. According to Harbison's estimates, Nigeria's graduate needs at the time were at least twice as many as the total output of overseas and home graduates. Ajayi and Tamuno (1973) showed that at independence the number of degree recipients from University College, Ibadan (now the University of Ibadan) between 1950 and 1960 had been 605 (two students in 1950, increasing to 48 five years later and to 182 students in 1960). The report of the Ashby Commission on higher education and the labour needs of Nigeria, the phasing out of expatriates from top level administrative positions and the rapid transition towards self-government, gave a sense of urgency to the development of all levels of educational institutions in the country.

Self-government was not without its problems. Key posts that had previously been held by the colonial power now fell on Nigerians who had hitherto been prevented from gaining high level administrative experience. Moreover, the deliberate under-utilization of the Nigerian intelligentsia during the period of colonial rule had encouraged a predisposition to look elsewhere for a more obvious outlet for their skills and enhancement of their social status. It used to be adequate, for purposes of prestige, to be known as a 'been to' (been to London to gain educational qualifications) or an 'omowe' (Yoruba word for an intellectual). The establishment of universities at Nsukka (1960), Lagos, Ife and Zaria (all in 1962) increased the number of omowe to such an extent that social prestige could no longer be gained simply by being an omowe.

On the political front, western education not only enhanced prestige, but almost certainly ensured high status employment in the Nigerian Civil Service (Beckett and O'Connell, 1977). It must also be remembered that it was the western educated elite who had been able to put into motion the
move towards independence because of their familiarity with the ideological underpinnings of the western world. Thus western education had proved itself as a useful asset in the liberation of Nigeria and other African countries (Mazrui and Tidy, 1984). That, it would appear, is where the absolute gains from western education ended.

Prior to and with independence, the Nigerian omo oke had of necessity thrust itself into the political arena, but there had emerged not intellectual politicians, but a political elite whose interests, though ostensibly based on the 'Nigerianization' of Nigeria (Nduka, 1977), had embarked on a process of material self-indulgence by rationalizing their salary increases and employing British Civil Service arguments for posts to 'reflect the rate for the job' (Fulton Report, 1968; Section 214f, as quoted in Gutkind and Watermann, 1977:346). Even in the establishment of a salary structure Nigeria followed the example of Britain. More crucially, in all walks of life, patronage to politicians was unavoidable because the government (as the major source of employment and business contracts) soon discovered that it was in a very powerful position. Realization of this led British firms and other expatriate businesses (for example, Lebanese and Syrian) to engage in 'fruitful collaboration' with Nigerian businesspersons and politicians (Osoba, 1977:373). Thus they were able to maintain their business interests especially as with independence new regulations were being formulated in favour of Nigerian businesses. The colonizers, even at the end of their rule, continued to be in a position to manipulate the recently de-colonized.

In the sixties and right up to the seventies, Nigerians with western education (whether gained locally or abroad), saw it as their right to be either employed in the Nigerian Civil Service or in one of Nigeria's educational institutions. Prior to the graduate glut (late 1970s) this appeared to be the case (Beckett and O'Connell, 1977). Although there was continuous pressure by politicians and educational advisors for the establishment of more universities there was a considerable lull until 1970 when the University of Benin (mid-western Nigeria) was established. The creation of States by the military governments of the 1960s and 1970s (see Maps 1.2 and 1.3) led to the wish by each State for a University of its own. Some wishes were fulfilled and by the end of the 1970s the Universities of Jos, Maiduguri, Kano, Sokoto, Calabar, Port Harcourt and Ilorin had been established. Total enrolment in Nigerian Universities neared the 20,000 mark by 1973 (Okafor, 1971:200; Vice Chancellor's Memorandum, 1973; as quoted in Beckett and O'Connell, 1977). By 1981, thirteen Universities had been established and conservative estimates put the Nigerian student population at near the 65,000 mark. Between 1981 and 1983 a number of 'political' universities were established though some of these have since been closed down by the recent (December 31st, 1983) military regime in Nigeria (West Africa magazine, February, 1984).
However, the stagnation of the Nigerian economy and a corresponding stagnation in employment prospects for those with or without educational qualifications, has not reduced the competition for entry into educational institutions (especially technical colleges and universities). Despite the increase in university establishments and an even higher increase in feeder institutions (primary and secondary schools and further education colleges), Nigerian educational institutions are still unable to meet the demand for places. However, the historical stream of Nigerians studying in Britain (and elsewhere) has left an open route for students determined to gain educational qualifications.

Dore (1976) points out that ex-colonial countries experience what he terms the 'diploma disease', that is, education becomes a process through which the earning of a qualification becomes a ritualized activity in which quality gives way to the quantity of educational provision [8]. With the experience of Indian higher education in mind, Nigerian educational planners have attempted to stem the growth of 'mushroom' universities. From colonial times to the present day educational provision always has been a highly political issue. Nigeria is not different from other ex-colonial countries in that they are all undergoing a process of social change bedevilled by dependency and the need to establish viable industrialization programmes, while at the same time retaining essential societal and traditional norms. Over time 'enormous educational advantage' (cultural capital – see Bourdieu, 1973) has accrued to the children of university educated parents and this has led to class divisions similar to those in western Europe (Dore, 1976:79; see also Beckett and O'Connell, 1977). Nigeria has graduate surpluses similar to those in Ghana, Kenya, India, Malaysia, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. Each country has tackled this problem in a manner which reflects its own political and demographic characteristics.

In Nigeria, programmes for universal (free) primary education intensified in the late 1970s. However, this camouflaged the chasm that existed between the different states. For example, the southern parts of Nigeria had established universal primary education as early as 1965. In the late 1960s primary school attendance ranged from 30% in Northern States to 90% in Southern States (Nigerian Educational Research Council, 1972:15).

The process through which western education was established (Taiwo, 1975) and the subsequent chances western educational qualifications gave to the recipients in terms of prestige and job opportunities has almost certainly given rise to the formation of a middle class.

In Nigeria cultural capital ensures for "middle class" children (see Chapter 2) entry to elite secondary schools and this stands them in good stead for further and higher education. What is developing is a process of group (class) based educational advantage, strikingly similar to that of the former colonial power. So far the Nigerian middle class (western educated elites, businesspersons and so on – see below) are in positions
where they can ensure for their children the 'best' education money can buy, not just in Nigeria, but anywhere in the world (Osoba, 1977). This is not peculiar to Nigeria or India or any other ex-colonial country. It is not even peculiar to the education system of the former colonial power itself. The rapid expansion of education in its former colonies as compared to the much slower growth in educational provision in Britain, has given rise to enhanced social inequalities (Dore, 1976).

There have been changes and modifications and even a radicalization of the Nigerian education system but as with all systems, it has been designed to pursue specific goals. The goals remain the same, to fill ultimately high status positions by 'skimming off the academic cream' (Dore, 1976:156; see Taiwo 1975 on Henry Carr's contribution to the critical examination of the philosophy of Nigerian education; see also Du Bey et al., 1979; Turner, 1960 on sponsored mobility). The major change in the Nigerian education system in recent years has been the possibility that when academically unsuccessful children leave school they will at least have some pre-vocational skills which they can build on. It is to be hoped that Marx was not quite correct when he pointed out that MTACs are mirror images of LTAC's own future. Marx's correspondence model of development (Smith, 1973) cannot be completely ignored. It is primarily the children of the middle classes (however they are defined - see below) that benefit more from the education systems as they currently operate in all these countries. As long as education essentially operates to provide various levels of learning which correspond to different wage and status levels of employment, then it will continue to be a process of cultural reproduction (Bowles and Gintis, 1976).

1.4 **Nigerians at Home**

Most writers have attempted to examine Nigerian society using the western concept of social class but are unable categorically or theoretically to agree upon the existence of a social structure stratified along class lines (Imoagene, 1976; Lloyd, 1982). Hence, Smythe and Smythe (1960:74) argued that Nigerian society did not have any 'crystallised circle of elite families'. As with most writings of the time, account was only taken of the few individuals who possessed western education. Thus the prestigious status of traditional rulers and religious leaders, some of which were ascribed through hereditary ties, were neglected (Imoagene, 1976: Chapters 1 and 2). Smythe and Smythe typify the tendency of researchers to employ a concept of class based on the cultural peculiarities of western society which gave rise to its form of social
stratification (Westergaard and Resler, 1975:370) without examining the nature of the relations different groups have to the means of western capitalist production in Nigeria.

Some researchers believe that there are not so much group as individual differences in Nigerian society. Imoagene (1976:260), in a study of social mobility in western Nigeria (Ogun, Ondo and Oyo States), did not use class labels (upper, middle and lower) because he argued 'social classes are in their formative stage'. Imoagene recognized that class divisions were also an ideological matter and there would thus be validity problems if one elicited responses within a class framework based on western ideology. Thus he asked his respondents how many classes their community could be divided into and 41% of the sample rejected the idea that such a distinction was possible. It was not clear how he defined the term class and what his respondents' interpretations were. In the Yoruba language there are such terms as mekunnu (the poor), olola (the noble), alagbara (the powerful), talaka (the very poor), olowo (the wealthy) and oloye (the prestigious), which indicate that labels are given to people in relation to their status in society [9]. Although a number of distinct social groups were identified, Imoagene's respondents believed that membership of these groups was not socially fixed [10]. Imoagene argued that social labels were ascribed to individuals and not groups. However, his analysis failed to take into account the possibility that his respondents may still be of the persuasion that the initial enabling process of western education as an agent of upward social mobility still held true.

Peace (1974) reported in his study of industrial workers in Ikeja (Lagos town) that there was a recognition by the workers that those in positions of power (alagbara) who owned the means of production and/or determined wage levels did exploit them [11]. Osoba (1977) and Beckett and O'Connell (1977) have demonstrated the importance of western educational achievement as the main criteria for a high placing in Nigeria's contemporary occupational structure. The particular role of the western educated elite in enhancing independence also fostered the use of ascriptive criteria rather than achievement criteria in determining social advancement.

Hitherto, western education was a new social factor and initially all who experienced it did so through the missionaries (Taiwo, 1975; Ade Ajayi, 1965). In a sense all Nigerians were exposed to the same stimulus and had no particular advantage over each other in terms of the skills required to gain the ability to read and write. Once the western educational process was well under way, the new generation of children from non-western educated backgrounds increasingly became disadvantaged both in access to and achievement within western education. The foundations for social stratification by western educational criteria had been laid. Even
though there were adaptations, the system of educational provision in Nigeria was based on the British model (NERC, 1972). Western education was thus an external force operated by the minority who not only had access to it, but were able to consolidate their gains. All children were normally expected to take the Common Entrance Examination (CEE, similar to the British 11+). Inevitably, the children of those who had already acquired high level (polytechnic/university degrees or equivalent) western education (the educated elite) featured predominantly in the list of successful candidates. The power wielded by the educated elite ensured that even when their children failed the CEE they were still likely to gain entry into the school of their choice (Nduka, 1977; Osoba, 1977).

In an attempt to stem the "educational advantage" Southern States had over Northern States [12], a quota system was introduced whereby 20% of public secondary school places are allocated by achievement criteria irrespective of ethnic group, 50% of places are equally distributed among the States [13] and 30% are based on residence in a state (as differentiated from state of origin). In technical colleges, schools of art and science, teacher training colleges and polytechnics, 20% of places are allocated solely by achievement criteria and 80% of places distributed among the States. The application of similar rules is required in the universities, but they have a relative autonomy in deciding how to implement the need to reflect the federal character of Nigeria in their institutions (Oyovbaire, 1984:12).

Various Nigerian governments have been very concerned about 'national cohesion' (Oyovbaire, 1984) especially since the Nigerian Civil War (1967 - 1970) (Forsyth, 1969; Panter-Brick, 1970; Uwechu, 1971) and continually look for ways in which all Nigerians can feel that they have access to what is popularly referred to as the 'national cake'. (For accounts of the process and outcomes of 'egalitarian rationalization' in Nigeria, interested readers are referred to Nduka; Osoba; and Williams; in Gutkind and Watermann, 1977). Suffice it to emphasize that though access to the national cake has become less the prerogative of a few ethnic groups (Eleazu, 1984), social inequality in Nigeria has become very glaring.

Westergaard and Resler (1975:1-3) draw our attention to the different emphasis Marx and Weber put on their analysis of social class. Marx saw social class divisions as corresponding to the relation social groups had with the means of production. Thus the terms bourgeoisie and proletariat feature predominantly in Marx's writings while Weber saw social class as reflecting the manner in which wage earners provided (sold) their labour to employees (Bottomore and Nisbet, 1979: Chapters 4, 5 and 15). In Nigeria, at the time of independence, social conflict in the Marxist sense was between the indigenous bourgeoisie and the foreign owners of Nigerian capital. However, as discussed above the Nigerian bourgeoisie (business elite) joined forces with the expatriates to develop a formidable
position in the neo-colonial political economy of Nigeria (Woddis, 1977).

Patterns of social relations involve the dynamics of status differentiation. Lloyd (1966) suggests that the Nigerian elite can be broadly divided into three groups (a) those in possession of western education with wealth being an optional asset, (b) traditional rulers and religious leaders, who maintain the traditional symbols of prestige and enjoy elite status (Imoagene, 1976; Fadipe, 1970; Jones, 1957) and (c) non-western educated or self taught wealthy traders and/or politicians (who may also be found in (a) above) who are able to afford similar status symbols as the highly qualified and relatively wealthy elites. All these combine to form what Osoba (1977) labels the Nigerian 'power elite' which consist of the business elite (the self-employed in commerce or industry who are closely identified with governing parties at the federal or state levels) and the 'technocrats' (the academics and professionals - the 'diploma' holders) (Dore, 1976).

Lloyd (1966) further suggests that there is the non-elite, that is, those who do not enjoy elite status, whether traditional or contemporary. In western society they would be referred to as the working class (Goldthorpe et al., 1980; Westergaard and Resler, 1975). Lloyd (1982) after his earlier analysis (1966) points out that western conceptualization of social divisions is 'quite alien' and thus is only useful in a preliminary way in enhancing a vision of other societies. However, as has been discussed above, if emphasis is placed on the relationship between those who own capital and those who produce it it will be discovered that Nigerian society (as with other neo-colonial societies) has undergone a process whereby the divisions between the rich and the poor reflect the capitalist nature of the accumulation of wealth.

Since the fragmentation of the traditional social systems during the colonial upheaval, the practical, tested and so far primarily successful method of achieving prestige and maintaining some level of elitism is mainly by means of western educational qualifications. Thus Nigerians continue to define their goals in educational terms (Goody and Groothues, 1977). This is an important point to bear in mind in the next section which discusses the social situation of Nigerians in Britain.

1.5 Nigerian Migrants in Britain

Migration from Nigeria to Britain began as far back as the seventeenth century (seamen, individual pioneers and later war veterans) but did not become a regular flow until the early 1950s (Smythe and Smythe, 1960). Today Nigerians travel to Britain, the United States of America, Asia, West
and East European countries mainly for educational purposes. As they popularly term it, they go 'in search of the golden fleece' (Craven, 1968; Ellis et al., 1978). When discussing migration in Britain most researchers (Rose et al., 1969; Banton, 1973; Rex and Tomlinson, 1979) have concentrated on selected migrant groups from New Commonwealth countries. In emphasizing the migration of Afro-Caribbeans (West Indians) and Asians (Indians and Pakistanis) the tendency has been to neglect other migrant groups (Watson, 1977). As Lunn (1980) points out, sufficient comparative attention has not been paid to migrants from other parts of the world who, prior to and during the middle of the present century, also arrived in Britain (Jones, 1977). Table 1.1 shows the peak years of entry for a wide range of migrant groups in Britain. These groups migrated to Britain for varying reasons. Initial Irish migration was a response to the Potato Famine of 1846-1847 when one million people died of starvation [14].

**TABLE 1.1: SELECTED MIGRANT GROUPS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year of Entry (Peak Years)</th>
<th>Migrant Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ASIA</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950/1960</td>
<td>Chinese, Indians (mainly Sikhs) Pakistanis (including Bangladeshis)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EUROPE</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1869/1890/1930</td>
<td>Italians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1890/1930</td>
<td>Jews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930/1940/1950</td>
<td>Poles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950/1960</td>
<td>Greek and Turkish Cypriots</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>IRELAND</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1860/1950/1960</td>
<td>Irish Republic; Northern Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>THE CARIBBEAN</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950/1960</td>
<td>Barbadians, Jamaicans, Montserratians, Trinidadians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WEST AFRICA</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950/1960</td>
<td>Ghanaians, Nigerians, Sierra Leonians</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Italians, Jews and Poles migrated primarily because of political persecution while the others were mainly motivated by the opportunity to partake in Britain's industrial and economic boom. However, the motivating force of West African migrants was not so much related to economic as to educational opportunity in Britain [15].

Theories of migration have mainly concentrated on labour migrants, that is, persons who leave their home in order to gain employment especially in another country (Jackson, 1969; Jansen, 1970). In other words, the migrants primary aim is perceived as immediate monetary satisfaction or at least future economic advantage. It is argued below that this is a major area where the Nigerian migrant differs considerably from most of the other migrants frequently discussed in Britain (for example, Afro-Caribbeans, Asians, Greeks, Irish, Poles and Jews). The Nigerian migrant is essentially neither a labour migrant nor a political refugee. On arrival in Britain Nigerians are likely to perceive themselves as educational transients (Watson, 1977). They have come for specific educational purposes and, are likely to perceive themselves as having elite status (Section 1.3). However, the longer it takes to achieve their educational goals, the more likely it is that these Nigerians will become not only ex-students, but that their status may shift from educational transient to sojourners (people who intend to return to their place of origin, but do not set themselves a time limit - see Dayha, 1973) and perhaps they may finally become settlers and may not return to Nigeria except perhaps for family visits or holidays.

Currently, one of the most commonly used migration theories is that based on the 'push-pull' hypothesis. This hypothesis seeks to take account of all possible variables and thus considers migration as an action which is taken when there are socio-economic imbalances such that certain factors 'push' a potential migrant from a particular area of origin (for example, lack of economic or educational opportunity, political repression and so on). The destination the migrant chooses to go to depends primarily on certain factors that 'pull' the migrant, such as economic, educational or political refugee opportunity (Thomas, 1956).

Broadly, it can be argued that Nigerian migrants to Britain are 'pushed' from Nigeria and 'pulled' to Britain because of greater opportunities for economic enhancement after the acquisition of educational qualifications. However, if the argument rests there the push-pull model becomes an inadequate and perhaps even simplistic notion for analyzing and understanding the Nigerian migrant in Britain. This is because the Nigerian migrant does not so much migrate for immediate economic enhancement, but is prepared to defer this in order to pursue educational qualifications which it is hoped would give higher economic returns in the longer term. Moreover, one of the main setbacks in the push-pull hypothesis is that it polarises migration motivation such that
potential migrants play no 'active' role in the migratory process. In other words migrants are perceived as passive, puppet-like objects simply waiting for the right strings to be pushed or pulled. Taylor (1969:99) observes that the push-pull (hypothesis) assumes maximization of want-satisfaction so that the complex decision to migrate is reduced to a kind of mechanical balance of external and impersonal forces.

To counter the perception of the migrant as quiescent, Pourcher (1970) focused attention on the migrants' decision to move and the choice of destination. Pourcher, then grouped the motives behind the decision to move into (a) economic factors - pushes and pulls in the labour market and (b) non-economic factors - family welfare and other considerations such as studies, political events or war. Pourcher argues that apart from economic reasons migrants also move in order to enhance their children's opportunities especially in schooling and later employment. Pourcher's analysis is particularly interesting for the situation of the Nigerian family in Britain perhaps because, at the point of origin, it is the Nigerian parents' own education ('O'Levels, technical qualifications and professional expertise up to university degree level) that is one of the motivating forces behind the decision to migrate.

Contrary to popular belief (Jenkins, 1966), the British public and politicians have historically been intolerant of migrant groups whether black or white. Jones (1977) illustrates this point graphically by providing quotes on the reaction of the indigenous population to various migrant groups:

**The Irish**

The Irish in Birmingham are the very pests of society (p.49)

I am... led to attribute a great deal of the discomfort in the working classes in Manchester, and the adoption of an inferior diet, to the example of the Irish (p.49).

**The Jews**

There are some streets you may go through and hardly know you are in England (p.74).

I have had about 16 years connection with the Whitechapel Union, and I never met among the Irish people so much coarseness as I have met among these (Jews) (... previously the area was occupied by poor, but clean English and Irish people) now it is a seething mass of refuse and filth... and the stench from the refuse and the filth is disgraceful (p.75; comments made in 1902).
Edgbaston Road used to be a lovely road... you used to have nannies up that way, you know. Really good class people used to live there, and it was a pleasure to walk in that area. Now they've taken over and the place is a slum. It's horrible (p.137; comment made in 1961)

Castles and Kosack (1973:17) point out that hostility towards the Irish, especially in the 1850s, and later Jews (1875-1914) was 'whipped up' and used as a political tool. There were riots and pitched battles (Lunn, 1980) which culminated in the first restrictive legislation on immigration, the Aliens Act, 1905, which was followed by the Aliens Restriction Act of 1914. It is interesting to note that these Acts did not apply to societies under colonial rule (for example, India, various Caribbean Islands and African countries).

Castles and Kosack (1973:455-456) point out that inter-ethnic discrimination is usually attributed to the physical characteristics of a minority group. They argue that this is erroneous as physical characteristics are used only as a convenient tool to maintain the subjugation of a group. They add that when physical characteristics between majority and minority groups are not so obvious, the ruling class is capable of addressing other ideological justifications for inter-ethnic discrimination. They cite as an example, the more intense hostility of the French toward Algerians (see also Adler, 1977; UNESCO, 1982) than towards other Africans [16].

Various British governments have passed anti-immigration Acts (1962 through to 1981) which have been perceived as directed specifically at black migrants (Husband, 1982:Part Two). In the sixties and early seventies student entry visas were readily available to all prospective students. However, with the hardening of British government attitudes to immigration even students were subject to intense immigration control. Clear evidence of both admission into an educational institution and finance were required by the Home Office. Once in the country, Nigerians (as with others in the same predicament) suffered a double edged discrimination (as students and as migrants) especially in housing (Goody and Groothues, 1977). Some were self-financed students and had to work part-time in order to supplement their savings (Craven, 1968). The subsequent presence of a family made the situation worse for many students especially as they then required larger accommodation and a bigger income (see Castles and Kosack, 1973:231). It is within this context that some Nigerian students proceeded to acquire western educational qualifications.

Insufficient educational provision in Nigeria and the need for
skilled manpower made it inevitable that the Nigerian government should sponsor the education of Nigerians abroad. The neo-colonial and educational links between Nigeria and Britain makes Britain one of the favoured countries (Goody and Groothues, 1977). However, even in the oil boom period of the 1970s Nigerian foreign exchange constraints made it impossible for the Nigerian government to sponsor all applicants abroad (Okafor, 1971). This has predictably resulted in a substantial number of privately sponsored students. It is not yet clear what long term effect the rise in overseas students fees in Britain in 1980 (ostensibly full cost fees), together with the current military regime's regulations on study abroad will have on the number of Nigerians studying in Britain. The trend, though, appears to be a decrease in the overall number of overseas students in Britain (British Council, 1984).

Nigerian students abroad, especially perpetual ones who wish to gain just one more qualification, popularly refer to each other as 'lifers'. Craven (1968:ix) observes that

a man (from West Africa) remains a student as long as he wishes to obtain some qualification, regardless of the proportion of time actually spent on study.

According to Craven, if a West African is in full or part-time employment and is also studying or wishes to study in future, it is likely that the West African concerned would identify him/herself as a student, rather than use an identification which relates to the particular employment s/he currently enjoys (see also Goody and Groothues, 1977). This positive identification with studentship further confirms the status accorded by Nigerians to studying and by implication to educational qualifications. This is especially the case with those Nigerians who have to work in Britain prior to, during or after their study and who find themselves in semi-skilled jobs — a far cry from the white-collar jobs they had anticipated (Beckett and O'Connell, 1977; Craven, 1968).

Broadly, there appear to be two main groups of Nigerian students in Britain (a) Federal government, State government or other awarding body (for example, The Association of Commonwealth Universities) sponsored students who compete for scholarships for mainly postgraduate degrees and (b) privately sponsored or self-financed students. Within group (b) there appear to be three sub-groups: (i) privately sponsored students/pupils whose parents educate them abroad irrespective of their educational attainment (from nursery school to postgraduate degree level or somewhere along this continuum), (ii) students previously on scholarships whose awards have been terminated mainly because of unsuccessful completion of a given course and (iii) self-financed students who usually work and save (mainly those who have resident status and in appropriate cases are permitted by Home Office regulations to be part-time students). Apart from these variations there are also distinct age and marital status
differences. On the one hand there are the young and single and, on the other hand the older, more mature students who invariably are married and have children living with them either here or in Nigeria. In their research on West African students in London, Goody and Groothues (1977:169) found that 80% of husbands were over 35 years old and only 14% of wives were under 25 years old, but a greater proportion of their children were in the infant and pre-school category. This present research is concerned with Nigerian parents in any of the groups outlined above and who have children in London secondary (comprehensive) schools.

The British Home Office estimated that there were 5,600 Nigerian students including 'O' and 'A' Level candidates studying in Britain in 1980, while the British Council calculated that there were 5,468 Nigerian students in Britain in the 1980/81 academic year (see British Council, 1982). This figure however, does not include students who are paying the Home rate of fees (see British Council, 1984), who are in courses lasting under one month or who are in selected private sector institutions. All these are the "active" students. Judging from the literature there is a substantial number of "dormant" students (that is, ex-students who still intend to study further and those on short courses and part-time study) (Craven, 1968; Goody and Groothues, 1977; Ellis et al., 1978) [17].

While the children of West African students have received social services attention (methods of child rearing and the particularity 'high' incidence of child fostering (Ogbuibe, 1972; Holman, 1973; Ellis et al., 1978) there has been little published educational research on the schooling of Nigerian children. The tendency has been to perceive Africans as a marginal group. Applied social research focus has been on the collective group - West Africans (see for example, Ellis et al., 1978; Watson, 1977). Goody and Groothues (1979) attempt to redress this by focusing on Asante and Igbo ethnic groups in London. Although there is a growing awareness of the need to examine the family structure of the different peoples from West Africa, Ellis et al., (1978) point out that the diversity in culture, language and religion is not generally appreciated in Britain. Craven (1968:v) affirms that

it is a great responsibility to present clearly and without bias the situation of peoples from (three) nations in relatively specific terms based on a few individual case histories and many generalizations collected from numerous sources.

Anthropologists, such as Forde (1963:xvii) inform us that there is 'no single 'blue-print' that will apply to all African cultures and there is correspondingly no short way to the understanding of particular peoples', but almost as it were in the same breadth, she adds that there are 'recurrent themes and a number of main patterns of activity and interconnections which are valuable guides to this understanding'. In the
same way one might suppose that there are recurrent themes and so on between Britons, Germans, French and Italians [18].

The individuals that make up a family vary from one culture to another. Western style definitions of the family are usually in terms of the nuclear family - that is, a small unit incorporating one husband, one wife and their offspring [19]. This family unit is also considered as apart from the rest of the community (see Coser, 1974). However, when for example, some Nigerians refer to a person as a brother or sister, they may be referring to either members of their immediate family (the western nuclear family), a very close friend or a member of the same ethnic group (Uka, 1966). Ellis et al. (1978) observe that social workers here tend to regard the West African family as untruthful when it is discovered that a 'brother' or 'sister' turns out to be a non-biological relation. It must be remembered that for most Africans, English is another language and the terms 'brother' and 'sister' may be the most suitable labels to employ in order to convey the regard held for an individual. Of course in the people's own languages there are more precise and unambiguous terms.

West African families in Britain are initially at a loss as to what to do without other members of their family. It must also be pointed out that in West African societies it is relatively easy to have home helps (paid workers, teenage unemployed children of less well off relatives). Thus when abroad, parents tend to employ what they perceive as a substitute for home helps and family support, viz foster parents (Ogbuibe, 1972; CSCS, 1975).

The majority of Nigerians on arrival in Britain are either students or prospective students and Ogbuibe (1972) outlines the difficulties West African, especially self-financed students had to (and probably still do) go through before coming to Britain. She also examined the problems they faced (and probably still face) when they get here. Ogbuibe points out that while in their home countries many West African parents had to work very hard and save a substantial amount of their income for their fares, school fees and a greater part of their maintenance allowance - clear evidence of which has been required under the British immigration regulations. Most of the students in Ogbuibe's research were in their late twenties or early thirties and very often were married (see also Goody and Groothues, 1977). Ogbuibe suggests that those who were not married, probably because of the acute loneliness they experienced on arrival here, usually began arrangements for their marriage partners to join them. However, Goody and Groothues (1977) found that 15% of the West African women they interviewed had come on their own and subsequently married here.

It is worth noting that a Sunday Times report on 'Loneliness' featured (amongst others) a Nigerian postgraduate student who observed that 'loneliness was a new experience' for him (December 11th, 1983:59; see also Castles and Kosack, 1973:359).

Craven (1968) notes that the parental role is a very important one in
West African culture and thus the involvement of all members of the family in child care made it possible for children to be looked after by grandparents, aunts, cousins, other relatives, friends and paid home helps (Uka, 1966). As a result mothers were not generally speaking housebound and are free, if they so wish, to take up employment, trade or other pursuits which may interest them outside the home. As Goody and Groothues (1977:167) point out 'the question is not whether she (a mother) will work, but at what?' They found that none of the West African wives they interviewed were housewives only. About one quarter came to this country with the intention of studying and one third expected that they would both work and study. One fifth wished to go into nursing, another one fifth were doing secretarial work and a further one fifth were preparing to set up a small business (dressmaking, hairdressing and catering). Even those women who had come specifically to join their husbands and had no specific plans for study had taken courses in such areas as hairdressing, English and typing. Goody and Groothues (1977:167-168) point out that amongst the women they interviewed there was a determination to succeed educationally - 14 of the 20 wives they interviewed had completed qualifications in this country (see also Goody and Groothues, 1979).

Even though the care of the child rests squarely on the Nigerian mother's shoulders, it is unlikely that women, who are used to the freedoms of living in a society that does not stigmatize them for not devoting all their time to the care of their child, will give up either their studies (with all its perceived benefits - see above) or their work. Although some mothers may condone the perception by social workers in Britain that 'fostering is a traditional part of their (West African) culture' (Ellis, 1977), Ogbuibe argues that the fostering of West African children in British homes does not perform the same function as collective child care in the West African family. Uka (1966) confirms that the Nigerian family system is able to combine care for the child's needs together with a feeling of security in the child because the child is brought up within the same cultural framework as that of the parents. The child is thus able to identify with the norms and values of those around it. Furthermore, the child is unlikely to feel any sense of isolation or rejection because it is part of the society's norm for both biological parents and non-biological adults (or even older children) to contribute to child care (Uka, 1966, Fadipe, 1970).

Ellis et al. (1978) explain that fostering in British society takes place through local authority guidance mainly when there is a breakdown of the relationship between parents or when parents (physically handicapped, psychologically or socially unstable) are deemed to be unable to provide adequate care for their children. Prospective local authority foster parents are also vetted. However, when 'stable' West African student parents seek foster care for their children, social workers in Britain are
not only unable to comprehend their wishes, but tend to perceive West African parents as uncaring and/or irresponsible. There is no doubt that some such parents exist (Holman, 1973), but some caring parents unable to obtain local authority foster parents usually turn to private foster parents. In many cases these foster parents are not vetted by the local authority (Holman, 1973; Ellis et al., 1978). Additionally, some private foster parents do not inform their local authority that they have taken up 'professional' child care. Consequently, the private foster parents are ill-prepared for the task they have taken on and in turn West African parents, not fully aware of the emotional whirlpool they have placed their children in, tend to leave them to the near absolute care of the foster parent. Some student parents justify their apparent lack of concern and lack of regular visits to their children in foster care by quoting the cost of the journey, especially as most private foster homes (especially cheap ones) were usually outside London or the main city where the parents are studying (see Holman, 1973; Ellis et al., 1978).

Social workers here feel that the lack of contact with the biological parents causes West African children severe emotional problems and in a number of cases foster parents have won legal custody of the West African child in their care. In a few cases some children have died either at the hands of foster parents or soon after their biological parents have removed them from foster care (see Holman, 1973; Ellis et al., 1978). Some of these are obvious cases of neglect by the biological parents, but it must be noted that in West African society those who take on the parental roles are not necessarily the biological parents and yet the children generally develop into 'well adjusted' individuals (Uka, 1966; Ogbuibe, 1972; see also Goldstein et al., 1980). Moreover, the amount of security a child derives from childhood experiences does not depend on whether it is cared for by its biological parents, but rather on the quality of the parental figure in the child's life (see Bean, 1984). However, British society does place a very high premium on biological parental love for children even though British people do continue successfully to foster and/or adopt children (Holman, 1980; see also British Agencies for Adoption and Fostering, 1983). It must also be noted that the British system of social services is currently looking for ways to further communication between themselves and West African student parents. An example of this is Lambeth Social Services which has set up a unit to deal specifically with private fostering.

It is not the intention of this section to go into any more detail on West African families in Britain, but suffice it to say that child rearing practices have received most attention from social researchers in Britain. This present research seeks to redress the balance by examining the secondary schooling experiences of Nigerian children in London.
1.6 Noteworthy Points

In order to give an overview of the links between Nigeria and Britain together with some background knowledge of the social situation of some Nigerians in Britain, this chapter has taken the reader through the early history of West African relations with Europeans. It has covered, albeit briefly, British imperialism in Nigeria, the nature of social group differentiation in Nigeria prior to and after independence, the process through which Nigerians come to be educational transients, sojourners and settlers in Britain and the attendant problems of being student parents.

Essentially, this chapter has drawn attention to the process through which Nigeria is undergoing social change (Gugler and Flanagan, 1978). As Smith (1973:264) points out, nationalism can be both a progressive and oppressive force (see also Fanon, 1980). It can be creative and it can be destructive. He argues that traditional ways of life are not only undermined during the process of rapid industrialization, but that the peoples thrust into the process of change by forces external to the society come to have no other motivation but to approximate the life styles of the instigator of the change. In the single minded pursuit for material wealth Nigerian society has shown itself incapable of sidestepping the human 'dislocation and suffering' (Smith, 1973:264) that attends newly industrializing countries.

Theories of social change (Smith, 1976; Gugler and Flanagan, 1978) modernization (Smith, 1973; Black, 1972), development and dependency (De Kadt and Williams, 1974; Seers, 1981), all attempt to give insight into the nature of the process through which social groups (including nations) arrive at a given interactional strategy between each other. The application of these theories has helped give an insight into the complexity of the relationship between Nigeria and Britain. Although dependency theory has been heavily criticized in its original form, it is still a very useful tool in the analysis and understanding of the relationship between LTACs and MTACs.

The following chapter reviews the literature on the education of ethnic minority children in Britain as a prelude to the discussion of the aims and objectives of this present research on the educational experience of Nigerian children in two London comprehensive schools.
Notes

1. Thus Nigeria consists of an amalgamation of all the ethnic groups, irrespective of language, social structure or religion, that were subject to British colonial rule (Ade Ajayi and Crowder, 1974; Arikpo, 1967).

2. In 1929 there was a major tax revolt organized specifically by 20,000 Aba women, see also the Agbekoya Riots, 1969 (Williams, 1974).

3. There have been numerous calls since independence for Nigeria to alter its name. The most recent comes from Mazi Nkem Kanna C. Uche (Concord, 21 December 24th - January 7th 1984:21) who argues that the name Nigeria is derived from the label 'nigger'. In addition, he points out that whatever its sources it is time Nigeria shed its colonial name. Ghana shed the name Gold Coast at Independence and more recently Burkina Fasso shed its colonial name, Upper Volta (see Mazrui and Tidy, 1984:xxiii - xxix).

4. The dependency theory seeks to explain in a structuralist manner, the relationship between less and more technologically advanced countries (see Frank, 1967; Goldthorpe, 1984).

5. In Nigeria, for example, there has been western encouragement to specialize primarily on the production of oil. The subsequent personal wealth accrued from oil deals with western companies led to a neglect of agricultural projects. When agriculture is encouraged by the West, assistance is given mainly for export crops. Witness the ability of the USA to "encourage" the growth of such crops (for example, pineapple) in Kenya to the detriment of the growth of crops for home consumption. Asparagus is grown in Lesotho. It is a vegetable which is not part of the local diet yet they labour in Asparagus farms with the inevitable decline in local food production.

6. See Laclau (1971) for a criticism of dependency as a determinant of underdevelopment. See also Goldthorpe (1984) for an account of the outcomes of imperialism. Rodney (1972) argues that imperialism led to the underdevelopment of Africa.

7. The current military rulers are attempting to grapple with this by insisting on 'Nigerian solutions' to Nigeria's economic problems. However, in today's complex world which is dominated by western capitalism on the one hand and eastern communism on the other, this is a difficult path to tread. The question is whether the present military will have the will and self discipline to pursue an independent economic strategy grounded in the needs of Nigeria or whether like their predecessors
(politicians and military), they will succumb to the pressures of the super powers (see Fanon, 1980).

8. There has always been criticism that the Nigerian education system has not progressed away from its colonial structure which sought to provide a limited form of knowledge. Currently there is the development of a completely new system whereby secondary education has moved away from the imposed British structure to an American style system of junior and high school. The junior secondary school curriculum is to concentrate on pre-vocational subjects (agriculture, commerce, electronics, mechanics, woodwork) while the high school curriculum takes on the more traditional academic subjects. Each stage lasts for three years. Thus by the time children leave school those who are not able to pursue successfully academic subjects, leave school with a vocational skill (National Education Policy Implementation Task Force; The Fourth National Development Plan, 1981-1985).

9. A graphic definition of mekunnu is given by one of William's respondents (1974:134): 'those without money in the bank, those without money in hand, those who have to work (labour) before they can eat'.

10. Witness the popular phrase inscribed on lorries, buses and taxis in Nigeria, 'no condition is permanent', that is, an individual's social conditions are in constant change. Of course, this is true of all rapidly industrializing countries. However, this popular belief does not prevent the realization of economic exploitation (Peace, 1974). It needs to be emphasized that some of the mekunnu are related to the rich and the latter usually take their responsibilities to their poorer relations seriously, by providing, for example, funding for their education. Even though infrequently, they also meet socially.

11. This was particularly clear in the report of the Adebo Commission which was set up to look into and recommend a revised wage structure for all levels of public employment. Senior Civil Servants (and university academics), when presenting their case, wanted salary differentials altered - in their favour of course (Nduka, 1977:343-346).

12. This "advantage" rose out of the manner in which the missionaries concentrated more on the southern parts of Nigeria, thus giving the latter a "head start" in the acquisition of western education.

13. There are 19 States in Nigeria. During the period of British rule, Nigeria was divided into three Regions - Northern, Western and Eastern. After independence the Western and Eastern Region boundaries were
re-adjusted to include a separate region, the Mid-Western Region. In 1967 the Regional structure was abandoned in favour of 12 States which were later reorganized into 19 States in 1976 (see Maps 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3). Table 1.2 shows the major ethnic groups which comprise the 19 States of Nigeria.

**TABLE 1.2 ETHNIC COMPOSITION OF STATES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Major Ethnic Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anambra</td>
<td>Igbo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bauchi</td>
<td>Hausa (Fulani)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bendel</td>
<td>Edo, Urhobo, Igbo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benue</td>
<td>Tiv, Idoma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borno</td>
<td>Kanuri (Hausa)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross River</td>
<td>Efik-Ibibio, Ekoi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gongola</td>
<td>Hausa, Jukun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imo</td>
<td>Igbo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaduna</td>
<td>Hausa-Fulani</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kano</td>
<td>Hausa-Fulani</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kwara</td>
<td>Yoruba (Igala/Igbira)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lagos</td>
<td>Yoruba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Niger</td>
<td>Nupe, Gwari</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ogun</td>
<td>Yoruba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ondo</td>
<td>Yoruba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oyo</td>
<td>Yoruba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plateau</td>
<td>Hausa, Birom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rivers</td>
<td>Ijaw, Kalabari</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sokoto</td>
<td>Fulani (Hausa)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


14. Given the topicality of starvation and famine in Africa, it is interesting to note that in 1945 when there were food shortages in Britain there was a 'Food For Britain' campaign. The food was being imported from Africa. However, the relationship between Britain and 'her' colonies was such that not only was food demanded and commandeered, but the then British government had the temerity to be disappointed at the level of African food "donations" (sic) (The Guardian newspaper, January 25th, 1985:14).
15. A similar case can be made for Malaysia which has the largest number of students in Britain. Full-time overseas students numbered 108,610 in 1980/1981 (British Council, 1982). Some other Asian migrants (amongst others) also come to Britain for educational purposes but as Craven (1968) pointed out, the overwhelming majority of West Africans she interviewed were students or had been students. As a matter of general interest Table 1.3 shows the number of West African and selected groups of students in Britain in the 1980/81 and 1982/83 academic year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>West Africa</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1980/81</td>
<td>1982/83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gambia</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sierra Leone</td>
<td>296</td>
<td>223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>705</td>
<td>593</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>5468</td>
<td>4794</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**OTHERS**

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Malaysian</td>
<td>13157</td>
<td>8325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iran</td>
<td>6809</td>
<td>2853</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hong Kong</td>
<td>6697</td>
<td>6150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S.A.</td>
<td>6614</td>
<td>2697</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>4243</td>
<td>3610</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>3199</td>
<td>2866</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>3010</td>
<td>1516</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equatorial Guinea</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benin</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angola</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cuba</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Falkland Islands</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicaragua</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puerto Rico</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: British Council, 1982, 1984)

16. A woman ejected from a council house for inter-ethnic harassment pointed out that she did not really have anything against 'blacks', but did against Asians (Independent Television programme, 'T.V. Eye': January, 1985). However, it is acknowledged that in general all black people (Africans, Afro-Caribbeans, Asians and some whites, Cypriots, Irish, Jews) suffer varying levels of inter-ethnic harassment.
18. It is difficult enough to speak of Nigerians as a collective group. British colonial administrative requirements put together a country which comprises over 200 languages and over 250 ethnic groups. Little wonder that various Nigerian governments have found it difficult to develop a cohesive nation (Oyovbaire, 1984). Of course as with politicians anywhere, Nigerian politicians are apt to employ ethnically divisive actions in their attempts to gain the people's support. The whipping up of any form of inter-ethnic agitation is unlawful under the Nigerian Constitution (Eleazu, 1984). It needs to be pointed out that this present research deliberately does not differentiate between Nigerian ethnic groups in terms of their responses to coping with various aspects of living in Britain. This is primarily because the parents were mainly Yoruba (21) and Igbo (7). The remainder (8) came from different North and Southern States. Hence, there is an inbuilt bias in the sample (see also Appendix 14).

19. It appears that West African couples in Britain have monogamous marriages (see Goody and Groothues, 1979). Of course, husbands may have other wives still resident in Nigeria.
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The most important educational investigations carried out both in America and Britain in the mid-fifties and especially in the early sixties were predominantly concerned with the question of equality of educational opportunity (Coleman, 1966, Floud et al., 1957). These were informed by theoretical perspectives grounded in structural-functionalism and the norm of empirical survey research characteristic of the sociological framework of the period (Wilson, 1979).

Structural-functionalism, alongside positivism, with roots in early nineteenth century French and German thought, were sociological perspectives developed by Emile Durkheim (Coser and Rosenberg, 1976) within the framework of social realism and social reconstruction (Bottomore and Nisbet, 1979: Chapter 6). Although functionalism as a sociological perspective 'has become an embarrassment in contemporary theoretical sociology' (Moore, 1979:321; see also Nisbet, 1975: 250-251), prior to its demise functionalism and structuralism were two overlapping sociological perspectives at the forefront of sociological thought (Merton, 1967). The American, Talcott Parsons (1951) enhanced the prestige of the structural-functionalist perspective through his systems approach to analysing social organizations (Moore, 1979). Society was viewed as a system made up of parts - each part having its own unique function and each function performing for the operation of the whole (Spencer, 1897; Merton, 1967).

The systems approach to social investigation encompasses two main sociological perspectives - consensus (structural-functionalism in the Durkhemian and Parsonian sense; see also Comte and Spencer in Coser and Rosenberg, 1976) and conflict (Marxist - which is primarily concerned with the exploitative relationship between socio-economic classes). Weber (1949) offers an alternative conflict perspective which despite focussing attention on the development of capitalism offers an analysis of social action through the discovery of subjective meanings [1].

Educational researchers in the early post-war years were particularly interested in the structural-functionalist perspective because they believed that the structure of the school could be readily determined and analysed through the functions it performed in the society of which it was a part (Durkheim, 1956; 1961). Parsons (1951) enhanced this perception in his analysis of the inter-relationship between education and other 'sub-systems' such as the family, the economy and other strands of society.
Durkheim and Parsons saw education as performing a selective function such that society became dependent on the competence of the individuals who had acquired the relevant cognitive skills. Parsons argued that as a result education prevented conflict between social groups, thus supporting Durkheim's belief that formal education was the basis of the underlying structure, culture and social cohesion of any given society.

The then popularity of Durkheim's functionalist theory in educational research lay in its concern for the preservation of human resources. This concern led to the prominence of the human capital theory which was particularly concerned with the wastage of human resources (Clark, 1962; Karabel and Halsey, 1977). However, the 'input-output' analysis of education and the economy offered very little by way of analytical explanations of the correlation between education and income. The emphasis on selection and the role of technology left out the consideration of ideology and conflict (Bowles and Gintis, 1972). Bowles and Gintis (1975) point out that human capital theory is based on the erroneous assumption that the workers' skills and knowledge are synonymous with the ownership of capital. In making the conceptual leap from 'wage earner' to 'capitalist', human capital theory neglects the struggle and conflict between classes over the distribution of income [2].

The conflict theory of education emerged from the need to examine in greater detail the relationship between education and inequality (Bowles and Gintis, 1976) and was generally grounded in the Marxian perspective on society (although not all conflict theories are Marxist; for example, see Collins, 1975). In contrast to the Durkheimian consensus tradition where education was seen as functioning in the interest of society as a whole, the Marxian conflict perspective perceived education as functioning in the interest of a dominant class (Banks, 1978). Thus educational organizations are seen as reflecting the structure of society — a society which is made of groups with competing and conflicting interests (Reeves, 1979).

Althusser (1971) further argued that education is a means through which the relations of production can be reproduced through what he termed the 'ideological state apparatus' whereby 'submission to the rules of the established order' is enforced (1971:127). Althusser understands society to be organized in such a way as to encourage individuals singly and collectively to accept the existing social structure of worker on the one hand and capitalist on the other. Hence, schools are seen as organizations which exist to best serve a society whose interests are enunciated mainly by the ruling class (Marx and Engels, 1964, Shipman, 1972).

Rooted in systems perspective and without a focus on the specific content of education the Marxist conflict theory limits the development of a viable theory of social or educational change (Gouldner, 1970). The Marxist perspective is primarily based on a call for social change through the overthrow of capitalist society such that the means of production is
not left to a privileged few who determine the hierarchical division of labour [3]. Earlier Marxist thought on the economic context of ideological practice failed to take account of the fact that hegemony is culturally as well as economically based [4]. Bowles and Gintis (1971) point out that differential academic performance lies in uncovering the 'rules of the game' which work to the detriment of the poor and disadvantaged and favour the affluent. A Marxist theory of education emphasizes the relationship between school and society by focusing attention on subjective consciousness and acknowledging the dialectic between structure and action (Levitas, 1974). However, it is unable to provide a viable route for educational change because of its limitations in resolving the increasing problem of educating pupils with different social and cultural backgrounds (Willis, 1977). Moreover, by viewing the individual as a passive actor, the Marxist system perspective relegates the process of schooling to the background. Althusser (1971) and Bourdieu (1973) in their attempts to illuminate the process through which the education system helps to perpetuate social inequalities presented a system which was incapable of change and still very capable of continued exploitation.

Young (1971) argued that the theoretical postulations about education almost entirely neglected the importance of the teachers and pupils themselves within the education system. The appeal to fate, determinism, chance, conditioning and other accounts that place the action of the individual outside of the individual can only make the individual feel helpless and incapable of making 'self-directing decisions' or even calling for change. Bourdieu and Althusser presupposed the individual in society as a passive social being and allowed their arguments to be so intrinsically embedded in the pessimistic conditioning of the working class mind by the ruling class that there is very little, if any, room for negotiation and individuality [5]. As Erben and Gleeson (1977:73) argue, the analysis of

the ideological character of the schools as agents of cultural reproduction ... fails to adequately address the processes through which those who work in the schools may act to influence both the conditions of their work and the wider social context of which schooling is a part.

Erben and Gleeson (1977) further point out that the message one gets from Althusser, Bourdieu and to a lesser extent Gramsci (1971) is that the teacher is neither aware of nor concerned with the need for radical change [6].

A somewhat different, but complementary contribution to the conflict theory of education is that of Weber (1949; see also Parsons, 1964). Until relatively recently (Collins, 1975) Weber's work in relation to the sociology of education had received limited attention - at least in
comparison with that of Marx and Durkheim. Although Collins's (1975) use of Weberian theory led him to investigate the 'black box' of schooling, his research was very limited because his analysis was based on data collected on the level of educational qualifications required by organizations. Karabel and Halsey (1977) suggest that Collins should have examined how a dominant status culture is transmitted through employment needs. By leaving out a comparative analysis of those who accept and those who reject the dominant status culture, Collins appears to have misinterpreted the use of Weber's concepts of action because, as King (1980) points out, Weber's intention is to discover strategies for social behaviour. Although Weber was not primarily concerned with generating social theories of education, King (1980: 7-20) put forward the case for the 'endless possibilities' in the use of Weberian concepts in educational research. This is especially true of Weber's (1949) conceptualization of action. If account is taken of the actions of the individuals directly involved in the dynamics of schooling, it would become viable for the educational system to be examined at the level of the actor's own subjective meanings instead of primarily at the level of understanding of the researcher or policy maker (Barton and Meighan, 1978).

As early as 1955, Banks pointed out the need for a study into the 'black box' of education (see Banks, 1971). Two early British contributions to the examination of educational content were made by Hargreaves (1967) and Lacey (1970) (see also the American contribution by Waller, 1932). Examination of content was taken a step further by Young (1971) who questioned the content of education itself by examining what counted as knowledge. The 1970s brought into focus what is termed the 'new sociology of education' (Gorbutt, 1972; see also Bates, 1980) which was exemplified by the work of Young (1971) and Bernstein (1977). Wilson (1971) distinguished the old and the new by referring to the former as 'normative' and the latter as 'interpretive'. Thus the new interpretive educational perspective moved away from input-output structural-functionalist investigations and treated as problematic educational processes and the taken-for-granted assumption of what counts as knowledge.

Interpretive researchers proceeded from the assumption that actors (people in society) constructed their own meanings through their own interpretation of the world and it was on this basis that action took place (Blumer, 1969). Berger and Luckmann (1967) further enhanced the move from macro to micro sociology by arguing that the individual was capable of making discretionary choices among the vast number of phenomena impinging on an individual's consciousness. These views of the individual offered new and potentially revolutionary lines of enquiry viz symbolic interactionism, phenomenology and ethnomethodology. In the educational field these aspects of interpretive sociology are committed to the
discovery of the content of education based on a shared criticism of the findings of macrosociological analysis of education. However, Banks (1978) and Karabel and Halsey (1977) urge the need to explore the relationship between the micro and macro levels of sociological analysis and are concerned that interpretive sociology runs the risk of degenerating into 'sentimental egalitarianism'. They argue that in accepting all action as legitimate (pure relativism) and in describing the process of arriving at an intersubjectively constructed meaning (through negotiation) by the participants involved in a particular social action, the interpretive approach gives the impression that policies are an inadequate means of dealing with the problem of education [7].

The debates outlined above show the various attempts that researchers have made in seeking an adequate theory of the sociological implications of education. However, educational researchers essentially approach the problem from two opposing perspectives, that is, the systems approach (consensus and conflict) versus the action approach [1], (see below especially Section 2.2.3). At one extreme there is general disagreement as to how best to improve the education system and at the other extreme, there is a call for deschooling society. In an attempt to bring these schools of thought together, phenomenological Marxists seek to explain educational outcomes and occurrences from both an interpretive and a Marxist conflict perspective (Willis, 1977; Corrigan, 1979).

It is worthwhile to note that most theories of education are primarily concerned with educational outcomes and examine the failure of the education system successfully to educate certain groups of children in the process of furthering the ideals of an egalitarian society. The next section critically examines several examples of studies into education as they specifically concern ethnic minority pupils.

2.2 Ethnic Minority Education

The term 'ethnic' was used initially to describe a group of people belonging to a non-Christian nation. Contemporary usage by social and cultural anthropologists and sociologists extends the meaning to refer to people who share a common identity through the possession of their own cultural tradition (Baxter and Sansom, 1972; Cohen, 1974). The term 'ethnic minority' was adopted (from America) by Britain in the early seventies in order to replace the inaccurate use of the term 'immigrant' (Townsend, 1971; Bowker and Carrier, 1976). An example of minority group definitions shows that the numerical characteristic of the term 'minority' is usually left out. Simpson and Yinger (1965:17) defined minorities as
those who

(a) are subordinate segments of complex societies
(b) have special physical or cultural traits which are held in low esteem by the dominant segments of society.
(c) are self-conscious units bound together by the special traits which their members share and by the special
disabilities which they bring (as quoted in Tajfel, 1978:3).

Additionally, they pointed out that minority membership is transmitted by a rule of descent which is capable of affiliating succeeding generations even in the absence of readily apparent special cultural or physical traits. Finally, they argued that minority people, by choice or necessity, tended to marry within their group.

The underlying basis of minority group perception lies not just in its numerical aspect, but in its social position. Halsey (1972) and Halsey et al. (1980) showed that social positioning had far-reaching educational implications for children and perhaps more so for ethnic minority children (Taylor, 1981). Theories on the relation between minority and majority groups are usually based on a social psychological perspective (Billig, 1976). That is, they refer to the intervening relationship between the conditions in which social groups live. Wagley and Harris (1958) argued that minority groups tended to experience social disadvantage by virtue of the fact that they are recognized as different by the majority group. Rex (1970) pointed out that theories on minority and majority group relations referred to the subjective perceptions of social reality on which individual and collective behaviour is based. Furthermore, these relations reflected widespread subjective definitions, stereotypes and belief systems based on the ethnocentrism of the majority group (Levine and Campbell, 1972; Bagley and Verma, 1979 espec. Ch. 5). Tajfel (1978) distinguished between two systems of beliefs that informed the relationship between minority and majority groups: (a) categorization as separate by majority groups and (b) awareness of differences by minority groups. That is, majority groups categorized minority groups in terms of their membership of a group separate from their own. Although minority groups are usually perceived in terms of social position, individual social mobility appeared to be irrelevant to the majority group's perception of the minority group (Lemaine, 1974).

Sociologically, a minority is defined not just in terms of its relative size, but by the minority group's power relationships with the dominant group [8]. Within British society there is particular focus on minority groups who are distinguishable by virtue of their skin colour. These groups are not only easily recognizable, but are used as a 'scapegoat' group (Baran and Sweezy, 1968) by various political groups. This present research examines on a micro-level, teacher's perceptions of Nigerian parents and their children and juxtaposes these perceptions with those
found in existing literature on the relations between majority and minority groups.

In the early fifties ethnic minority groups, especially those from Asia and the West Indies, came to Britain for employment [9]. As most of them had little or no educational qualifications they were employed in low status jobs (Smith, 1977). The statutory requirement of schooling in Britain meant that their children attended British schools mainly in inner city areas (Townsend, 1971). The first official indication that there was cause for concern about the education of ethnic minority pupils came from the then Select Committee on Race Relations and Immigration (1969). The Committee stated that they had received several reports about the behaviour of ethnic minority children in schools. This was to mark the beginning of a seemingly endless series of reports and recommendations on the education of children of West Indian origin [10]. Townsend (1971) was commissioned by the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) to investigate these reports, which he corroborated. However, Townsend pointed out that the behaviourial misdemeanours of ethnic minority children were probably due to more basic difficulties than to the inability to be 'disciplined'. He referred to the language difficulties West Indian and Asian children experienced and suggested that provision be made for special teaching. Townsend concluded that the 'linguistic, cultural and social deprivation (of ethnic minority pupils) should be compensated for' (1971:110).

Prior to 1969, American education policy makers, in the wave of the Civil Rights Movement and the subsequent Civil Rights Act (1964), had already taken steps to investigate the problem of schooling children from different minority groups. In America a survey was commissioned to look into the 'lack of availability of equal educational opportunities for individuals by reasons of race, colour, religion or national origin in public educational institutions' (Coleman, 1966). Since the Coleman Report, the focus of educational research has shifted from unequal educational opportunity to unequal educational outcomes (see Section 2.2.2 below). The explanations for differences in attainment by middle class, working class and ethnic minority pupils have centred on the results of investigations relating to the function of the school (Jackson and Marsden, 1966; Kirp, 1979) and the influence of the home on the child (The Newsom Report, 1963; Douglas, 1964; The Plowden Report, 1967; Rutter and Madge, 1976). Although it was hoped that policies of positive discrimination (Halsey, 1972; see also Rampton, 1981; Swann, 1985) would lead to more equal educational outcomes. The broad conceptual field of the education of minority children has generated both complementary and contradictory studies. These may be sub-divided as explanations in terms of:

1) Race, Intelligence Quotients (I.Q.) and Tests of Achievement (Jensen 1969, 1971; Jencks, 1972, 1973; Bhatnager, 1970; Haynes, 1971; Bagley et


The first three divisions outlined above can be broadly referred to as motivated by and relevant to normative concerns with education, that is, educational outcomes tended to be explained through logical deductions based on theoretical premises (Wilson, 1971). Although the fourth sub-division has a theoretical orientation which is steeped in the interactionist conceptualization of the social world (Blumer, 1969; Schutz, 1967), it stems primarily from a methodological tradition which focuses attention on the content of schooling (Delamont and Atkinson, 1980). The following sub-sections of this chapter examine some of the studies cited above.

2.2.1 Race, Intelligence Quotients and Tests of Achievement

Education is very much concerned with the ability to achieve certain goals and achievement is described usually in terms of educational outcomes and the ability to perform school tasks (Rowntree, 1977). Drever (1964), for example, defined achievement in terms of the level of competence shown in pupils' responses to tests which seek to determine their educational knowledge. The concern with the education of ethnic minority pupils in Britain falls into three major areas of enquiry - achievement, ability and adjustment. Bhatnager (1970:111) expressed the view that the easiest and least controversial of these areas of enquiry was that of achievement. Since 1970 research findings based broadly on achievement tests show that achievement is, to say the least, one of the most controversial areas of ethnic minority educational enquiry (Taylor, 1981; Tomlinson, 1983; see also Bhatnager, 1981). Haynes (1971:15) pointed out that in the quest for the quantification of achievement, ethnic minority children who invariably come from different cultural backgrounds to that of Western Europeans were assessed on tests which resulted in the misleading comparison between
'European and non-European I.Q.' Hence, in the seventies attention was focused on race and genetic inferiority.

Pettigrew (1971) claimed that the 'scientific racism' debate was publicly instigated by Jensen (1969) in his article, 'How much can we boost I.Q. and scholastic achievement?'. Jensen, drew many highly controversial conclusions based on his identification of an average difference of 15 I.Q. points between black and white Americans. He then proposed that (a) individual differences in intelligence are attributable to genetic differences, (b) I.Q. differs among people from different social backgrounds and (c) there are well established differences amongst racial groups in the distribution of educationally relevant traits, particularly I.Q. Jensen's conclusion that black people had inferior intelligence to that of white people and that genetic factors were responsible for this trait cast serious doubts on the possible effectiveness of equalizing educational opportunity. The Council of the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues published a unanimously endorsed view:

Statements specifying the hereditary components of intelligence are unwarranted by the present state of scientific knowledge (and they further emphasized that) - a more accurate understanding of the contribution of hereditary to intelligence will be possible only when social conditions for all races are equal and when this situation has existed for several generations (Journal of Social Issues, 1969; 1-3).

The writings of Jensen (1971) in America and Eysenck (1971) in Britain by virtue of their scientific presentation appeared to give credence to the idea of educating black people in different schools from white people [11]. Furthermore, the proposals for sterilizing the 'stupider' classes to stop them breeding so much and polluting the gene pool (see Bagley, 1975;[12]) confirm Jencks' (1973) point that the issue of genetic differences between races is more political than scientific or educational. After all - white people still run the world (and) those who have power always prefer to believe that they deserve it rather than think that they have won it by venality, cunning or historical accidents (Jencks, 1973:83).

The intelligence quotient debate is relevant to this research only in so far as it gives a historical perspective and insight into the beginnings and subsequent proliferation of attainment and aptitude testing of ethnic minority children in Britain. What must be remembered is that - environmental factors play a role from the moment of a child's conception (and that) to construct questions about complex behaviour in terms of hereditary versus environment is to over simplify the essence and nature of human development and behaviour (Journal of Social Issues, 1969:3).
As Bagley (1975) further emphasized we thus have no alternative but to proceed on the assumption that racial groups possess the same basic intellectual capacities (1975:44).

Research on ethnic minority pupils needs to focus attention on different research concerns, for example, that of discovering processes or examining what constitutes knowledge (Young, 1971). The ambiguous measurement of the intelligence of different ethnic groups distracts attention from the real issue of inadequate educational provision.

Haynes (1971) expressed the opinion that in order to discover 'the role of cultural factors in human ability' researchers need to ask questions that result in a description of the 'patterns' of ability exhibited by people in different cultural environments. In essence, the major research question in the identification of patterns of ability would be 'which conditions give rise to which kind of learning?' (1971:16). Although Haynes acknowledges that 'culture fairness in assessment has proved a more complex notion than it appears at first sight' (1971:17). The idea of 'culture fair' or 'culture free' tests was mooted in an attempt to avoid some of the difficulties associated with the intelligence testing of ethnic minority pupils. But as Hegarty (1976) pointed out the diversity of cultural factors limits the discovery of an absolutely culture free testing procedure.

Verma and Bagley (1981) suggest that assessment of ethnic minority educational achievement can be divided into two types - those based on individual testing using conventional psychometric tests or those based on group tests using conventional tests of achievement. Although, they inform us that it is unlikely that there are adequate means by which both types of tests can be conducted with full control for the effect of individual reflexivity or teachers' expectations, they previously attempted to control for these by using, for example, an ethnic minority tester (Bagley and Coard, 1975) and by modifying some previous tests (Bagley, 1981). Nevertheless, Watson (1970) reiterates that it is difficult to disentangle cause and effect. Even more problematic is the possibility that the child's own expectations and assessments of his/her ability may have just as much influence on his/her test performance (Nash, 1973).

In an attempt to find some sort of solution to the problem of group and individually administered tests, Mabey (1981) carried out two sets of tests which showed that there was a high correlation in test results between group and individual testing. She concluded that socially disadvantaged white children are likely to be affected in similar ways as West Indian children in group tests. However, Rutter and Madge (1976) found that children of ethnic minority groups had lower average scores on achievement
tests than indigenous children of a similar age. Hegarty and Lucas (1978)
suggested that individual testing using verbal rather than non-verbal tests
is a more accurate method of examination. It is surprising that educational
research, especially that concerned with ethnic minority pupils, seems so
preoccupied with testing educational outcomes. Even in the face of
acknowledged inconsistencies and biases ethnic minority educational studies
still confront the issue from the same broad perspective of quantitative
examination which relies heavily on measurement tests.

Some educational research has attempted to discover what processes are
taking place in schools (Delamont, 1984; see also the collection of papers
in Stubbs and Delamont, 1976). Other research has examined teacher and
pupil attitudes (Corrigan, 1979; Furlong, 1976; Willis, 1977). However,
what most of these studies show are teachers' attitudes on the one hand and
pupils' perceptions on the other. Although firmly placed in the
interpretive ethnographic tradition they give very little insight into
classroom negotiational procedures between teachers and pupils. These are
recognized as crucial elements of schooling (Martin, 1976) which create the
atmosphere and setting in which learning and testing take place (Woods,
1983).

By employing qualitative methods of investigation and analysis the
present research will scrutinize existing methods of pupil assessment
within the schools under investigation and examine the implications of
these assessments for the subsequent placement of the Nigerian child into
particular learning groups. Once pupils have been allocated teaching
groups, they usually stay in these groups until their third year when
pupils begin to choose their public examination subjects (Woods, 1979).
These teaching groups, to a great extent, determine what subjects pupils
have access to and moreover, what general educational opportunity the child
will subsequently receive from the school (see Chapter 7).

2.2.2 Cultural Deprivation and Compensatory Education

In the late nineteenth century the idea of educational opportunity for
all came into prominence in the United States of America in an attempt to
provide a common curriculum and an education system in which children from
different backgrounds could attend the same school and have access to
similar educational provision (Coleman, 1966). In England, the existing
system of different educational opportunities (implicit in the Education
Act of 1870 — see Dale et al., 1981:Chapter 8) based on one's social class
background, continued relatively unchallenged until the 1944 Education Act.
Although this Act insisted on educational opportunity from elementary
school level, the tripartite system (public, grammar and secondary modern
schools) based on selection, social class background and curriculum
differentiation continued unchanged until the Department of Education and Science (DES) Circular 10/65 was sent to local education authorities. This requested those that had not already done so to submit secondary reorganization plans along comprehensive lines. Inherent here was the concept of equal opportunity as the guideline for local authority educational provision (Burgess, 1970; Evetts, 1973).

British educational researchers have carried out projects (see Rutter et al., 1979; Halsey et al., 1980) which have resulted in the exposition of the salient points and long term effects of educational policies drawn within the framework of equality of educational opportunity. Rutter's study was designed in the main to determine what effects the type of school a child attended had on the child's educational experience and attainment. There has been much criticism of some of the research findings from Fifteen Thousand Hours such as the confirmation that 'all other things being equal, bright and clean, well-ordered schools promote the production of well-behaved pupils with high academic attainment' (Heath and Clifford, 1980:3). Heath and Clifford (1980) argue that the establishment of an association between a school's appearance and the behaviour of its pupils does not necessarily indicate the direction of the cause and the effect.

In a shift away from Rutter's form of detailed examination of pupils and their schools (warts and all) Halsey et al. (1980) present the results of a cross-sectional study of social mobility based on the social class (origins) and subsequent educational qualifications (destinations) of 8,000 men aged between 20 and 60, who had completed secondary education by 1972. Changes over time were explored by the use of cohort analysis. Halsey et al. concluded that education has changed society (see also Dennis, 1980) and that one of the routes through which society can continue to be reformed (peacefully) is through more educational expansion. They warn that this should be based on a flexible system of internal organization with all schools aiming for high standards of achievement. Halsey's survey does show a 'trend towards expanding universalism' (see Blau and Duncan, 1967: 429, for an earlier American educational study similar to Halsey's), but the discernable patterns between total mobility and exchange mobility are not as explicit as Halsey suggests (see also Glass, 1954; Goldthorpe et al., 1969, 1980).

Halsey's survey does not conclusively show that education enhances the mobility of all the participants (total mobility) in the education system (see Halsey et al., 1980: 63, where it is shown that 20-29 year old working class men had limited chances of social enhancement). Rather, the survey confirms that education only significantly enhances an inter-generational mobility (exchange mobility) (see Hope, 1972). What Halsey et al. failed to develop was, as Bourdieu (1973) suggested, how cultural capital in the form of middle class values, replaced property inheritance and still efficiently performed the task of social class reproduction. Karabel and
Halsey observed that 'social inheritance, whether through the transmission of property or through the transmission of cultural capital is still social inheritance' (1977:19). Halsey et al. (1980) appeared to play down this earlier observation by relying heavily on the extent of educational opportunity without making adequate allowances for the effects of educational expansion (see Halsey et al., 1980:144).

Goldthorpe et al. (1980) argued that one of the most important aspects in the study of social class and social mobility is the examination of class formation in order to understand class action. Goldthorpe et al. using the same data source as Halsey et al. focused more attention on the analysis of class conflict and suggested that there was not so much social mobility between classes as there was a consolidation of inter-generational social class status [13]. Collins (1975) exposed the ability of the education system to limit social class advancement (unintentional though this may be) and Willis (1977) corroborated this view in his analysis of the way the culture of working class children promoted their continued propensity to working class jobs.

The major weakness of some of the studies on social mobility outlined above is that the explanations generated are not conclusively substantiated by empirical data (see Popper, 1961; Crowder, 1974 for a comprehensive criticism of the limitations of the conclusions drawn from quantitative data). Heath and Clifford (1980:3) in their criticism of Rutter et al.'s study (1979) argued that, apart from failing to take fully into account the 70,000 hours children spend outside the school (in comparison to the 15,000 hours spent in school), 'quantification only superficially changes the nature of the evidence'.

Jencks and Reisman (1968) suggested that quantitative researchers appeared reluctant to venture into the so-called 'soft' areas of educational enquiry. In an attempt to dispel such accusations Halsey et al. (1980:1) claimed that their survey combined 'value-laden choice of issues' together with 'objective measures of data collection'. Similarly, Rutter et al. (1979) put in numerous caveats to indicate that consideration was given to unquantifiable data such as the 'complex set of ecological interactions' and 'a variety of societal forces outside (the school's) immediate control' (p.181).

Heath and Clifford (1980) argued that Rutter et al.'s arrival at the conclusion that 'schools can do much to foster good behaviour and attainments' (p.205) are based on questionable statistical measures — especially as they made available limited raw data. In spite of these shortcomings quantitative studies have substantially contributed to the debate on the problem of opportunity and inequality. Studies like those of Willis (1977) add a qualitative dimension to this debate by showing that careful observation must be made of the education process, especially as it
concerns those at the bottom strata of society. Some of these as Tajfel (1978) argued are conceptualized not only in terms of their social class, but also in terms of their ethnicity.

In the early sixties research concern as it specifically related to working class children culminated in The Newsom Report (1963). It suggested that 'slum children' suffered from living in a 'disadvantaged environment' and that coupled with the initial handicap of 'cultural deprivation' these working class children were unlikely to have high educational outcomes. A number of recommendations were made, but it was not until the Plowden Report (1967) that action was taken in the form of substantive official empirical research on the education of working class children. Although the Plowden Report took after the Coleman study (1966; which was commissioned to expose the inconsistencies of the American education system) it was mainly concerned with children and their primary schools and the transition to secondary education. It was especially influential in that it appeared to confirm educational findings that parental background played a highly significant part in the educational outcomes of working class children and more particularly those from minority groups (see Taylor, 1981; Rutter and Madge, 1976; Townsend, 1971; Rose et al., 1969).

The Plowden Report identified educational priority areas (EPA) which were designated as areas needing 'compensatory education' in which 'positive discrimination' would be one of the main methods of 'compensating' children who were 'severely damaged' and 'culturally deprived' by their home and family conditions. The concept of cultural deprivation was mooted mainly by social psychologists (Riessman, 1962; Douglas, 1968; Watson, 1973b; see also Ginsburg, 1972) in an attempt to account for the educational failure of working class and minority children (Holt, 1969). These children did not exhibit what was considered appropriate middle class norms and values and it was thought necessary to provide them with the opportunity to become 'middle class' and by implication become educational successes (Tyler, 1977). In other words the shortcomings and limitations (deprivation) of these children's home and family backgrounds was to be improved (compensated for) by providing schools with extra resources (positive discrimination) to enable the school to perform its then unquestioned function of transmitting middle class values (Keddie, 1973; Robinson, 1976).

With a focus on equality and educational opportunity, the British strategy of educational reform was to carry out 'action research' in EPAs. Halsey (1972) who co-ordinated the EPA action projects, described them as 'radically democratic', but at the same time pointed out that they owed very little to Marxism. Halsey's investigations marked the shift of British educational research into the realms of quasi-experiment based on a concern for community schooling and the promotion of community action. In
other words the action based EPA projects sought to move away from academic theorizing and mere speculation on the problem of educating "the masses".

Stemming from the observations made by the Newsom Report (1963) and the recommendations of the Plowden Report (1967), Halsey's concern was with the educational disadvantage of pupils in a 'disadvantaged environment' and the primary aim of the EPA project was to discover ways of providing compensatory education. However, reservations were voiced about this form of educational research. Bernstein (1970) observed that it was difficult to offer compensatory education to children without first having offered them an adequate educational environment. The examination of environmental disadvantage and cultural deprivation becomes not only a meaningless and misleading activity, but legitimizes what are blanket stereotypes which conceal very important issues in the understanding of educational underachievement. Halsey (1972) did admit that there had been a tendency to see facts and values as different social objects with different procedures of investigation necessary to each. He further conceded that the EPA approach was not sustainable because of the weaknesses in the knowledge base from which educational decisions were made (Robinson, 1976).

Although the EPA projects had touched on the relevance of the Welsh Language Unit for providing insight into the teaching of Asian or West Indian children who had language problems, they made no distinction between native English pupils and pupils of Asian and West Indian origin in similar environments. However, West Indian parents in London had by the mid-sixties already expressed dismay at their children's low educational achievements. This dismay was given fervent credence by Coard (1971) who reported data showing that educational injustice was being done by educationists and teachers who, either through ignorance or intention, were having these children wrongly admitted to schools for the educationally subnormal (ESN). In 1971, the same year that Coard's pamphlet was published, the Department of Education and Science (DES) referred to 'evidence' of disproportionate members of immigrant pupils requiring education in schools for the educationally subnormal. Further to this, a House of Commons Report appeared in 1973 and observed that West Indian children had to contend with 'the educational disadvantages associated with an impoverished environment'. Together with the need for help in linguistic competence (see Bernstein, 1977) the recommendations were that all local education authorities with a sizeable immigrant child population should make plans to provide by an early date special facilities in ordinary schools to overcome the linguistic and adjustment problems of immigrant children with a level of ability higher than the general run of pupils in special schools for the educationally subnormal (House of Commons, 1974, Recommendation 19:12).
Although the question of the disproportionate allocation of West Indian children to ESN schools is not a contemporary issue the above quoted recommendation is really not substantially different from Little and Willey's (1981) more specific and extensive recommendations seven years later on methods of tackling the education of children from ethnic minority groups.

In 1979, ten years after the first official notice was taken of the education of the ethnic minority child in Britain, a House of Commons Select Committee on Race Relations (the Rampton Committee), recommended an enquiry into the underachievement of West Indian children in English secondary schools. The committee published an interim report which did not have anything new to say about the low level of educational outcomes of children of West Indian origin. The one breakthrough, however, was that for the first time a government publication identified what it termed 'unintentional racism' in the attitudes of teachers of ethnic minority children (Rampton Report, 1981:12). This was indeed a radical observation for hitherto government reports and enquiries had hesitated to confront the "delicate" issue of racism. Perhaps not surprisingly, the completed report, Swann, (1985) has attempted to side-step this issue by emphasizing, yet again, pupils' family and cultural backgrounds.

Little and Willey (1981) did not specifically set out to confront the issue of racism in their recommendation to the Schools Council, but they did offer what they described as a way forward to the dogged issue of educating ethnic minority children. It is pertinent at this point to present a number of these recommendations in order to give an overview of the contents of Little and Willey's suggestions and to provide insight into the areas of focus on past and present debates about ethnic minority education.

The comments at the bottom of each recommendation contained herein are paraphrases of views expressed by Little and Willey to indicate that they are aware of and are taking into consideration past and present difficulties in carrying out educational recommendations. Their first recommendation was 'for action by the Department of Education and Science' which they urged to make 'a clear statement of policy objectives on education for a multi-ethnic society with guidance to local education authorities and schools on how to apply these' (p.32). Hitherto there had been the Bullock Report (1975) - a DES report - A Language for Life which had stressed the importance of recognizing more advanced English as a second language (E2L) as part of the language across the curriculum strategy (p.17). Moving on from language to social needs the following recommendations were made 'for action by Local Education Authorities' who were urged to

increase provision to assess and meet the particular needs of children from ethnic minority groups...(and)... guidance on
identifying and countering direct and indirect discrimination in the education system against members of minority groups, and on combating any form of racialist activity in schools (p.33).

Little and Willey observed that despite the Bullock Report's (1975) recommendations and the 1977 EEC Directive on the education of children of migrant workers, there was only limited provision for varying forms of mother-tongue teaching (p.19). Thus they recommended the following 'for action by schools' who were asked to recognize 'the relevance of a multi-ethnic society to their teaching' (p.34). In addition, they were to focus on 'the relevance of a multi-ethnic society to the different areas of the curriculum' (p.34). These recommendations amongst others were made in the hope that they would help to alleviate existing situations in schools where 40% of head teachers and 50% of those with a concentration of minority ethnic group pupils reported that examinations restricted curriculum development in reflecting a multi-ethnic society. They also suggested that the content and nature of the examinations, almost all GCE and CSE Mode I examinations, were culturally biased in favour of indigenous pupils (p.21).

Despite reports from 1971 to the present day, especially the 1977 DES Paper urging the broadening of syllabi and a greater understanding of a multi-ethnic society, Little and Willey pointed out that teachers' attitudes still reflected complacency amongst staff who stated that 'we have no race problems here' or expressed views that were totally inimical to the 1977 Green Paper. For example, some teachers asked that if 'minority ethnic groups are here because they wish to be why should it be, incumbent on the indigenous population to make changes?' (p.23).

In order to counter these attitudes (together with limited responses from schools and local authorities which showed that there was a disproportionately low number of ethnic minority teachers - especially those of West Indian origin) Little and Willey made the following recommendations 'for action by parents and community groups' who were urged to identify 'the particular educational needs of minority ethnic group children...(and)... direct and indirect discrimination in the education system and of any form of racialist activity in the schools' (p.34). In conjunction with this they recommended the following for the Schools Council itself:

(the) identification and assessment of current 'good practice' in relation to curriculum development for a multi-ethnic society and to meeting the particular needs of children of minority ethnic group origin and dissemination of the findings (p.35).

Even Little and Willey observed that the Schools Council appeared undauntingly to produce pamphlet after pamphlet and although there
have been significant changes in people's attitudes, there has been little progress in terms of action and provision (p.10). Moreover, the few ethnic minority teachers that are employed were likely to be teaching in schools with a high number of ethnic minority pupils (p.24) thus making it appear that there is teacher segregation [14].

From advice to the Schools Council Little and Willey turn their attention to the Examination Boards which pointed out that at the present time there was the Certificate of Secondary Education (CSE) Mode III exam which provides certification in less traditional subject areas and as such there was ample opportunity for teachers to modify the curriculum (p.21)[15]. Not surprisingly they did not point out that the CSE Mode III examinations certificate indicates a low educational outcome in comparison to a CSE Mode I or II certificate not to mention the GCE 'O' level examination [16].

Finally, Little and Willey recommended the following 'for action by Examination Boards' who were asked to 'review all existing syllabuses to consider their appropriateness for a multi-ethnic society' and develop 'new syllabuses, which reflect a multi-ethnic society' (p.35). The latest Schools Council Pamphlet 18 (1981) presented a picture of no new 'way forward' - at least none that had not hitherto been identified. There is no doubt that the Schools Council and other institutional representatives disseminate their findings but it has taken over a decade for the introduction of a limited multi-ethnic curriculum as a permanent feature in the British education system (Tierney, 1982; Stone, 1981).

In view of the fact that so few teachers, policy makers and local councils have welcomed these modifications to the curriculum it is still claimed that 'the situation of West Indian children in schools is, if anything, getting worse, not only in terms of cognitive skills, but also in social adjustment' (Community Relations Commission, CRC, 1976:1; see also Tomlinson, 1983:44; Swann, 1985). In addition the House of Commons Report (1978:7) The West Indian Community observed that it was aware that, taken as a group, West Indian pupils failed to achieve their full potential in comparison to other groups in tests administered in schools. Yet again a statement was made, but on the whole no practical and collective action was taken on the matter of the underachievement of pupils of West Indian origin.

Official reports and recommendations show a lack of consensus on two levels (a) how to go about investigating the causes of ethnic minority underachievement in schools and (b) how to go about remedying the situation so identified. Jencks (1973) observed that there were strong indications that educational reform could only play a very limited role in the quest for absolute equalization and even if this were possible it would have limited effect on existing class structures (see Halsey et al., 1980; Goldthorpe et al., 1980). This is in spite of the recognized links between
the hierarchical character of the education system and the value system that underpins social inequality. In other words, educational reform is unlikely to act as a substitute for the need for more fundamental change in society (Bernstein, 1970). Illich (1973) argued that the economy was a key arena of struggle and that a possible strategy in dealing with the problem of inequality would be to do away with schools (see Shipman, 1972 for a counter argument).

Although educational opportunity has spread, formal education today has not substantially changed from Durkheimian times in the sense that those who gain most from the education system are those who are socialized into existing middle class educational cultures (Tyler, 1977). As long as we do have schools, researchers need to carry out educational investigations that take into account 'attitudes and values (as well as) the internal life of the schools' (Jencks, 1972:13). The limited number of theoretically informed analysis of what goes on in the "black box" of schooling not only results in a misrepresentation of the "facts" of schooling, but also hinders the understanding of the whole process of schooling.

The Schools Council's (1981) recommendations as with earlier reports (Newsom, Plowden) and projects (EPA) still proceeded basically from the assumption that the limited educational progress of whole groups of children is a fault that can be directly linked to the child either through the child's home background, culture or social environment (Keddie, 1973; Ginsburg, 1972). This present research will concern itself with the substance of education as perceived by pupils, teachers and parents rather than as perceived by educational policy makers and administrators.

The next section examines researches that have studied teacher-pupil relationships, but have analysed these without sufficient in-depth focus on the interactional process involved in schooling.

2.2.3 Self-Concept and Unrealistic Ambitions

Psychologists usually use the term 'self-concept' to refer to an individual's perception of him/herself (Child, 1981). Sociologically, especially as defined by Mead (1934) an individual's perception of the self is based on the individual's knowledge of him/herself as a social being (see also Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs in Child, 1981:41). Blumer (1969) in an exposition of Mead's writings suggests that through interaction the individual is able to take the role of the other and thereby form a conception of the self which is based upon the individual's responses to a 'generalized other'. This generalized other may be a parent, friend or any person the individual has regular contact with. The individual is seen as capable of internalizing various aspects of the generalized other's orientations. This process of internalization occurs mainly at the final
stages of the primary socialization of the child. In order to emphasize
the importance of the other to an individual, Berger and Luckmann (1967)
refer to 'significant others' rather than generalized others. It is these
significant others that form the basis of an individual's self-concept (see

Verma and Bagley define self-concept as 'a cognitive variable (that)
concerns what it is about himself (or herself) that an individual
recognizes as salient or relevant' (1979:177). In an attempt to find some
solution or answer to ethnic minority education teachers have latched on to
findings that indicated that West Indian children have negative
self-concepts or low self-esteem (Milner, 1975; Bagley and Coard, 1975).
Moreover, teachers and researchers alike appeared to proceed from the
assumption that the 'fault' must lie in the pupils and not elsewhere
(Tierney, 1982). Hence it is not surprising that children who underachieve
are seen as not only having low self-esteem, but "unrealistic ambitions".
Teachers perceived these as the outcome of the difference between parents'
educational/employment aspirations for their children and the children's
inability (however assessed) to acquire the necessary qualifications (Nash,
1973; Giles, 1977)[17]. Teachers considered that these ambitions were not
commensurate with the children's perceived low self-perception [18].

The concern with individual perceptions and attitudes especially in
relation to educational outcomes stems from the assumption that a negative
self-concept due to the internalization by the child of the attitudes of a
hostile society is a major contributor to a pupil's level of educational
out that research evidence does not conclusively support the causal link
between self-concept and achievement. She argued that self-concept
theories are inadequately conceptualized and should be regarded as such.

The idea that negative self-concept is likely to be a major element in
the unsatisfactory educational outcomes of ethnic minority pupils led to
self-concept testing. However, the varied reasons for the underachievement
of ethnic minority pupils be it in terms of negative or low self-concept,
cultural or adjustment problems or language difficulties, have prevented
the formation of an educational consensus on the strategies to employ in
order to deal with underachievement.

A vast number of the studies on ethnic minority pupils appear to
proceed from the assumption that educational variables can be manipulated.
For example, Bhatnager (1970:111) assessed the academic achievement of
minority pupils by examining 'the testees performance (at school) in all
his academic subjects which are those subjects normally assessed by means
of written examinations'. Using a random sample of 100 native English
children as a control group and all the West Indian and Cypriot children
(about 40% of the total number) at a London secondary modern mixed school,
which had a roll of just over 700, Bhatnager's research aim was to
identify educational variables that were related to the 'adjustment' of ethnic minority children (1970:68,74). These variables were grouped as socio-cultural, cognitive, dispositional and background variables. An adjustment scale was specially constructed to measure the level of adjustment (1970:88) and he came to the 'alarming (conclusion that) there appears to be a huge gap between the adjustment of English and (ethnic minority) children'. He suggested that teachers should advise children to adjust their vocational aspirations to a more realistic appraisal of their employment prospects (1970:144,155). This is a suggestion which Stone (1981) over ten years later, still found running through a substantial number of teachers' comments and advice on the unrealistic aspirations of ethnic minority children and their parents.

The difficulty in Bhatnager's suggestion lies in determining what is an unrealistic aspiration (Nandy, 1969). Secondly, Bhatnager observed that 'urgent measures' should be taken to 'resocialize' ethnic minority pupils in order to avoid 'an almost racial explosion in the next ten years' (1970:157). (Riots did occur in 1981, although no one is quite sure of the causes (Scarman, 1981).) Resocializing ethnic minority pupils, if at all possible, can only lead to ethical problems in terms of who socializes them and into what culture - white working class or white middle class? Inherent in this idea of resocialization is the need to 'make them like us' or as Bourdieu (1973) put it an education system which puts into practice an implicit pedagogic action requiring initial familiarity with the dominant culture, and which proceeds by imperceptible familiarization, offers information and training which can be received and acquired only (my emphasis) by subjects endowed with the system of predispositions that is the condition for the success of the transmission and of the inculcation of the culture (p.80).

Clark (1961) has shown how educational representatives perceived working class children as only suitable for certain types of careers and had succeeded in 'cooling out' (dissuading) the children from engaging in courses which were, in essence, "reserved" for middle class children [19]. Cicourel and Kitsuse (1963) point out that 'education decision makers' have "perfected" the process of 'legitimate labelling'. A point which Goffman (1962) emphasizes in terms of the process through which adjustments are made to a deflated self-image or stigma. Official sources appear prepared to make educational changes (Community Relations Commission, 1974), but as the Schools Council Pamphlet 18 (1981) shows these changes are not being fully implemented. Boudon (1974) observed that the manipulation of educational variables can only have a moderate effect on educational and social inequality.

Little (1975) suggests that certain aspects of the curriculum should be
'radically changed' not just to offer a more relevant education to ethnic minority children, but to offer a comprehensive education that is not riddled with 'xenophobia and cultural blinkers' (p.53). Although educational researchers like Little (1975) and Verma and Bagley (1981) recognized that aptitude and self-concept tests were culture bound - they operated on the belief that tests primarily established for a white ethnocentric culture can be modified sufficiently to take account of the possible biases inherent in these tests.

Stone (1981) lists a number of studies concerned with attitudes and self-concept which show that pupils, black or white, in a disadvantaging environment (for example, EPA areas as identified by Halsey, 1972) are likely to have even higher self-concept scores than pupils from more advantaged backgrounds (see also Mabey, 1981). Stone (1981) insists that there is no relationship between socio-economic status and self-concept scores and concludes that self-concept 'has yet to prove its relevance or usefulness in relation to the schooling of the black child in Britain' (1981:250).

Ironically, Stone's conclusion is based on using similar self-concept scales that other researchers have used to conclude that self-concept does make a difference. Stone took care to modify the Pier Harris and Ziller scales, but as pointed out above, even modified tests are of 'questionable validity' (Haynes, 1971:23). However, because of their seeming 'objectivity' through the use of quantification and statistical analysis these tests are taken as scientifically factual and are treated as such (when it is convenient to do so) by policy makers and teachers (see Taylor, 1981).

Self-concept appears to be a red-herring especially as it concerns schooling and educational outcomes. What may be more relevant is research which examines the interactive forces operating in the development of an individual's self-concept. Rosenthal and Jacobson's (1968) classic study shows that teachers hold certain (usually negative) perceptions of minority children or working class children in general. They argue that teachers' negative expectations are derived through a labelling process which subsequently acts as a 'self-fulfilling prophecy'. Thus it is feasible that through various negotiational procedures pupils inadvertently act out the teacher's expectations.

The inconclusive and sometimes contradictory findings of self-concept research leaves one in a dilemma over what really matters as far as educational outcome and experience are concerned - the pupils' self-concept, the teachers' expectations or parental aspirations for their children? Self-concept researchers show a lack of consensus in their findings, but they do appear to share a methodological consensus. Most self-concept investigations are carried out through psychometric tests in spite of the evidence that these methods are unable to produce a consensus
of results and despite the positivistic claim that scientific and therefore objective methods are being used to analyse and measure human activity (Giddens, 1979).

There are fundamental reservations about analysing data concerned with such complex phenomena as human behaviour in this way. The use of complex statistical methods of analysis in order to deal with the complexities of human data is acknowledged. However, it is difficult to account for all the immeasurable parts (unidentified intentions, unverbalized attitudes) that come together to comprise human action. Moreover, it is almost inconceivable that the process through which meanings are built up and used in reality construction processes (Strauss and Becker, 1956) can be captured by measurement even when working closely with the main participants in the dynamics of schooling. These immeasurable parts are just as problematic for qualitative research, but findings within this framework are not presented as scientifically tested and the reader is left in no doubt that qualitative arguments are based on the recognition of the researcher's own intersubjective values (Douglas, 1971). This is not to claim that all qualitative ethnographic research findings comprise a consensus, but to point out that research dealing with social objects capable of constantly defining and redefining their situation (Blumer, 1969) should be researched at the level of the processes through which a particular set of meanings and understandings are arrived at in order to determine what part these play in the individual's perception of the social world (Silverman, 1971).

2.2.4 Teacher – Pupil Interaction

The theoretical perspectives discussed in the previous section (equal opportunity, cultural deprivation, self-concept) can be termed as macrosociological approaches to education (see Karabel and Halsey, 1977). Their emphasis is on the determining effects of the education system on the pupil without fundamental criticism of what constitutes educational knowledge and educational experience. Young (1971) and Keddie (1973) argue that schooling consists of 'culturally specific' and 'socially constructed phenomena'. Thus, the universal acceptance of the validity of what constitutes educational knowledge was critically examined and challenged. It was at the peak of this form of criticism of the education system that the 'new' sociology of education emerged as an educational perspective worthy of serious consideration.

The 'new' sociology of education in contrast to macrosociological approaches which proceeded on the assumption that the individual's role in society is passive, examined educational issues from a microsociological perspective. Microsociologists argued that it was on the basis of the
actors' own understandings that action took place (Blumer, 1969). Berger and Luckmann (1967) further enhanced the move from macro to micro sociology with their treatise on 'the social construction of reality'. This put forward the idea that the individual was capable of making discretionary choice among the vast number of phenomena impinging on his/her consciousness. This view of the individual in society offered new and potentially revolutionary lines of enquiry influenced by the phenomenological writings of Schutz (1967). The works of ethnomethodologists (see Cicourel, 1964; Garfinkel, 1967) have also played an important part in the emergence of methodological and theoretical perspectives committed to the discovery of social processes.

The adoption of these "new" forms of sociological enquiry in the educational field led to a significant move away from the structural-functionalist social research paradigm which had its roots in policy making and teacher training. Bernbaum (1977) suggests that early research into the sociology of education was done by, at best, good practising teachers. It was therefore not surprising that their work was 'atheoretical', practice-oriented and concerned with policy decisions and social problems. Young (1971) and Gorbutt (1972) called for a reorganization of the sociology of education. Young claimed that it was becoming increasingly obvious that central questions crucial to the understanding of the education process were being left unasked. Unlike the positivistic concern with the macrosociological level of the structural relationships between schools and other social institutions, particularly those in the employment sector, interpretive theorists were more directly concerned with the internal operations of the schools themselves and emphasized the significance of 'everyday life'.

The theoretical perspective informing microsociological approaches is grounded (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) in three interrelated areas - the curriculum, educators' categories and conceptualization of education and teacher-pupil interaction. Young (1971) claimed that studies such as Lacey's (1970) that do attempt to investigate the process of schooling by examining grouping and selection procedures leave a vacuum because Lacey treated as unproblematic what it is to be educated. Young accused Lacey of inadvertently providing questionable legitimacy to the various pressures for administrative and curricular reform without having actually discovered what it was that needed reforming.

Bernbaum (1977) claims that Young's (1971) invitation to study the sociology of knowledge appeared to have failed in generating research which may have looked at the historical processes through which particular subjects have found their way into and been legitimized as part of the school curriculum. Nevertheless, Young's (1971) writings have generated analytically new insights into the education process. This is most especially exemplified in the work of Keddie (1971), who through a number
of investigations into language, reading and learning shows how teachers 'bastardize' knowledge to different categories of pupils (see below).

Furthermore, there are radical movements which are critical of schools and the process of schooling. Such criticisms run through the works of Holt (1969), Kohlberg, (1970), Goodman, (1971), Reimer, (1971), Freire, (1972), Illich (1973), to name a few. With these writers the emphasis of the sociology of education shifted from the "old" concern with the input-output models and the selection process towards a critique of schooling and society as a whole with an interest in 'progressive' teaching (see Bernbaum, 1977, who discusses the structural role of British teacher training establishments in enhancing an institutional base for the sociology of education; see also Morrison and McIntyre, 1973).

Esland (1971) through an analysis of the assumptions underlying pedagogy shows that the active character of understanding and the cultural competence of pupils are almost totally ignored. He posited that henceforth pupils' views were not to be dismissed in terms of their unintelligence, home background or even pupil-subcultures once they were different from the mainstream official culture of the school (see also Meighan, 1978:101-112 for a description of teaching through pupil consultations). However, Cohen, P. (1972) warns of the dangers involved in accommodating the views of all pupils (for example, views with anti-Semitic or bigoted leanings).

One of the areas the 'new' sociology of education investigates through the linked processes of action and knowledge is the rationale behind pupils' actions. Interpretive researchers proceed from the assumption that an actor in a given situation will act rationally and that the actor's rationality is derived from the actor's own competent reasoning - even though this action (usually manifested through appearance, attire and discipline in the school context) may be perceived as deviant by the dominant groups within the particular society (Hebdige, 1979; Esland, 1971).

This area of concern opens up two main research fields: (a) teachers' perspectives and classroom interaction (Hamilton, 1973; Delamont, 1984; Woods, 1980b) and (b) pupils' perspectives and classroom coping strategies (Hargreaves, 1978; Barton and Meighan, 1978; Woods, 1980a). Pupils' actions have an explanatory significance; thus pupils' perspectives and strategies are legitimate topics of enquiry (Woods, 1983). Despite their emphasis on the partial autonomy of school processes from the impact of the class structure Hargreaves (1967) and Lacey (1970) failed to explore fully pupil perspectives (see in comparison Willis, 1977; Corrigan, 1979), although Hargreaves et al. (1976) did attempt to remedy the earlier deficiency. Pupils' perspectives are important not just because they mediate the effects of the organization of schools and the actions of teachers, but also because their explorations can show the rationality or
intellectual competence of those dismissed as ignorant or incompetent by 'culturally imperialistic schools' (Meighan, 1978).

The British version of the new sociology of education is a modification of American classroom studies that date as far back as Waller's (1932) examination of the sociology of teaching, Becker's (1952, 1953) studies of Chicago school teachers and Rist's (1970, 1973) more recent investigations of 'ghetto' schools. Based firmly in the American tradition of ethnographic school centred research, the interpretive study of the sociology of knowledge is almost entirely a British phenomenon (Delamont and Atkinson, 1980), although classical sociologists like Everett Hughes and his Chicago School associates (for example, Cooley; see also Bottomore and Nisbett, 1979) had taught and written about phenomenology long before the British took over. This present research is not particularly concerned with examining why the 'new' sociology of education did not take root in America, but is concerned with examining what effect it has in terms of current British educational research.

Keddie (1971) exemplifies the research concern of the 'new' sociology of education. Her study consists of an examination of the teaching of a humanities course at a comprehensive school. It is concerned with the knowledge teachers have of pupils and with what counts as suitable knowledge for discussion and evaluation in the classroom. One of the aims of Keddie's study was to discover the processes involved in the production of academic 'failures'. By looking at teacher-pupil interaction she was able to show that teachers held concepts that were in contradiction with their aims as educationalists [20].

Keddie found that although teachers denied that ability was associated with social class their observable behaviour indicated that there was a definite relationship between social background and academic achievement. In other words, teachers were able to hold a theoretical perspective which contradicted their empirically observable action. Keddie (1971:43) saw this type of differentiation carried on into the curriculum. Teachers, who were mainly middle class, used essentially different pedagogical strategies for teaching children whom they identified as not belonging to mainstream (middle class) culture. Keddie's research thus confirmed that perceptions of who is 'educable' are socially constructed and have little to do with a particular child's ability, especially if that child comes from a working class background or is a member of an ethnic minority group (Labov, 1973).

Furlong (1976) carried out one of the first published interpretive studies of classroom interaction with specific reference to ethnic minority pupils in Britain. However, the account of her sampling frame suggests that this was accidental rather than intentional. Furlong taught at a school with a high percentage of children of West Indian origin so it was not surprising that 13 out of the 16 pupils studied are children of West Indian origin (1976:24). This does not affect the importance of this study
which shows that most pupils were interested in learning, but their willingness to sit down and learn was greatly derived from their assessment of a teacher's ability to teach. The pupil's assessment was arrived at through what they understood learning to be and what they perceived as the teacher's role (see also Blishen, 1969). One of Furlong's pupils stated that 'strict' teachers made them work because 'you can't talk in Mr. Mark's lesson... so after a while you work, and you enjoy it because you're learning a lot' (1976:35) 'Soft' teachers too were 'okay' as long as the pupils felt they were 'learning a lot': 'Mrs. Alan's soft, but I learn a lot from her' (1976:35). From the pupils' perspective problematic teachers were those whom the pupils were unable to understand. Even though some teachers were strict, pupils were unable to learn a lot from them because 'he don't make sense, I don't understand nothing (he) talks them big words' (1976:35).

Maizels (1970) confirms that pupils perceive bad teachers as using such tactics as fear and intimidation as a means of control and dominance. However, once the pupils felt they were not 'learning a lot' they became disruptive or just left the classroom (see also Hargreaves et al., 1976). Furlong observed that further research was needed in order to understand the pupils' abstract knowledge so as to discover the processes through which pupils classified situations and oriented towards their own definition of the situation (see Martin, 1976 on the 'negotiated order of the school'). Furlong further suggested an investigation into what constituted the learning situation as defined by the pupils in the hope of arriving at a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of schooling (Woods, 1980a; Furlong, 1984). This may then facilitate educational theorising grounded in the perspectives of those involved in the everyday activities of schooling and which may have implications for pedagogical strategies and ideological practice in education (Barrett et al., 1979).

The deschoolers and free schoolers of the late sixties and early seventies were regarded as romantic idealists (Hargreaves, 1967; Jackson, P. 1968; Gross and Gross, 1969; Lacey, 1970) and were largely ignored by mainstream educational research. However, these 'radicals' gained enough support to open up new areas of anthropological and sociological enquiry. Illich (1973) in his defence of the deschooling of society popularized the idea of the 'hidden curriculum' which is now one of the primary concerns of educational research. An early example of this is Webb's (1962) examination into the hostility between teachers and pupils at 'Black School' - a secondary modern. He took an ethnographic stance and researched from the point of view of pupils and teachers. He came up with a very interesting finding which suggested that the 'typical' teacher was not a person, but an abstraction (see also Blishen, 1969 who lists extensively the qualities pupils expect of their teachers [21]). It was some time before the holistic approach (mainly concerned with reaction to
2.3 **Concluding Reflections**

Karabel and Halsey (1977:57) have criticized the 'double-edged sword' of interpretive research which they saw as useless both to education policy makers and the disadvantaged pupils it purported to defend. Gorbutt (1972:6) suggested that the 'new' sociology of education tended to dismiss wholesale any attempt to measure human phenomena (see Goody and Watt, 1963). Despite these shortcomings the strength of the 'new' sociology of education lay in its ability to question the assumption that evidence that is quantifiable is automatically scientific and therefore valid. In addition, it emphasized that social reality is constantly in a state of becoming rather than being (Berger and Luckmann, 1967). As far back as 1959, Mills had questioned the tendency to allow the question of method to take precedence over the need to investigate pressing substantive problems. Henry puts its succinctly when he states that he does not use research as proof in any rigorous sense (and would) rather (settle) for the attitude that (interpretive research) materials reflect feelings, ideas and conditions that seem to occur often enough ... to merit (the) deepest consideration (1963:4).

In accordance with Henry's belief that as an individual he has an attitude towards culture and therefore discusses 'data as illustrative of a viewpoint and as a take-off for expressing a conviction' (1963:4), this present research is conceived within the interpretive research framework and addresses itself to the active character of pupils' understanding of schooling through an examination of teachers', pupils' and parents' perspectives. It will also attempt to identify teachers' and pupils' classroom coping strategies (Hargreaves, 1978; Meighan, 1978) and try to outline the negotiational procedures involved in teacher-pupil-parent interaction (Martin, 1976). Pupils' views will be treated as legitimate topics of enquiry and pupils' educational progress will be investigated primarily through the interactive processes involved in learning (Furlong, 1976). Their perspectives in relation to home and school interaction will also be taken into account (Hamilton, 1973). Finally, the actions and beliefs of pupils - whether deviant or not (Hargreaves et al., 1976) will be considered in terms of the meanings these actions and beliefs have for
the construction of the pupils' experiential reality of schooling (Woods, 1983). This reality will then be juxtaposed with an analysis of the assumptions underlying pedagogy and ideology in education in order to discuss the process of British education as manifest in the schools under investigation.

The following chapter outlines the background to this present research and, in particular, discusses the theoretical and methodological framework within which the research was carried out. In addition, it presents an account of the exploratory study which was conducted prior to the main research in order to gain contemporary insight into the dynamics of schooling especially as it related to Nigerian pupils.
Notes

1. Sociological perspectives, by their historical nature offer a paradoxical explanation of the relationship between the individual and society (Gouldner, 1970). Dawe (1970) argued that there are two mutually exclusive sociological perspectives. According to him the sociology of social systems is concerned with order and the manner in which the individual is controlled by the system such that human actions are determined by set social norms. In contrast, the sociology of social action was perceived as one which credited the individual with the ability to define, interpret and act upon an individual's own understanding of social interactive relationships (see Cohen, 1968 who earlier had identified the 'holistic' and 'atomistic' approaches to the study of society). Dawe (1979) revised his previously mutually exclusive analysis of sociological perspectives to take into account the relationship between the 'two sociologies'. He pointed out (as did Gouldner, 1970) that the historical manner in which problems of order and control were perceived made it inevitable that sociological explanations had resulted in two distinct, but interrelated moral and analytical traditions (see also Nisbet, 1967). As Berger and Luckmann (1967) show the problem of order and control in society need to be seen in terms of 'objective' and 'subjective' realities which impinge on the individual's consciousness in a dialectical manner. Hence, the role of sociology is not only to identify 'social facts' (Durkheim, 1956), but to discover the processes through which the individual attaches meaning to social phenomena and acts in relation to this interpretation and understanding of the social world (Blumer, 1969; Weber, 1949).

2. The relationship between education and the functioning of the economy is still a major issue in contemporary educational debate. There have been recurrent pressures on educational institutions based mainly on the human capital theory which urge the provision of appropriate types of educated labour for the benefit of industry (see Department of Industry, 1977).

3. Marxist writers have expanded their analysis of societal relationships from this mono-causal relationship to one which incorporates ideological practice and cultural production. Thus the process through which 'commonsense' comes to approximate the ideas or ideology of the ruling class in all fields of social relationships such as the church, family and school (David, 1980; Sumner, 1979; Hall, 1977) is seen as important to the explanation of the continued chasm between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat.
4. Kellner (1978:51) points out that hegemonic ideology is not static, but flexible. That is, it is capable of 'adapting to changing historical conditions and oppositional struggles, and is often full of contradictions as it makes concessions to oppositional groups' (see also Johnson, 1979).

5. Willis (1977:120) observes that the creativity which informs working class counter-school culture is not just an individual, but a collective act which is arrived at through the specific historical relations between class divisions and the occupational structure in British society.

6. In relation to one of the most recent attempts to radicalize educational provision by introducing multi-ethnic education into the traditional school curriculum it is consistently being found that a substantial number of teachers still find the innovation unnecessary (Little and Willey, 1981). Moreover, as Mullard (1980) and Stone (1981) argue the haphazard implementation of multi-ethnic education has become the process through which schooling is used not only as a means of social control, but as an instrument for maintaining the status quo whereby the majority of pupils continue to be educated for unemployment or at best low status jobs. (See also White 1980.)

7. Young (1971) does attempt to confront this issue by examining the organization of schooling and what counts as knowledge. (See also section 2.2.4.)

8. Although minority groups are indeed mostly numerical minorities who are dominated and politically and socially repressed in some way, the case of the white minority group in South Africa shows that it is the amount of power a group has which informs the group's social position (see also Luthuli, 1982).

9. The advantages of migrant labour to receiving economies was that the workers were seen by both governments and employees as a potentially disposable workforce (Rex and Tomlinson, 1979; Adler, 1977; Castles and Kosack, 1973).

10. The education of children of Asian origin was also examined. However, early reports concentrated on their language needs. In addition, they were generally perceived as succeeding better than West Indian children even though not as well as the indigenous population (Haynes, 1971). Contemporary research shows that when account is taken of caste, gender, religion and ethnic group (Gujerati, Bangladeshi, East African etc.), some Asian children are not necessarily as educationally successful as originally thought (Tomlinson, 1983, espec. Chapter 4; Swann, 1985).
11. There is controversy in a Bradford school with 86% of its population consisting of pupils of Asian origin. The Headmaster suggests that white children 'who are the real minority' are educationally disadvantaged because they are schooling with ethnic minority children for whom English is an additional language and who have one parent families (reference to Afro-Caribbean parents) (The Guardian Newspaper, 25th October, 1984, p.4). The Headmaster's statement, given to a right wing political group, shows a readiness to assign responsibility for the inadequacies of the education system not to government policies and inadequately implemented educational initiatives, but to the pupils themselves and their ethnic and family backgrounds (see Tierney, 1982).

12. Bagley and Verma (1979:194) observe that 'there is a coincidence, but perhaps not a causal one, between the publication of 'scientific racist' views on the natural stupidity of the Irish (Eysenck, 1971) and the rise of the joke about Irish stupidity'. Currently, (1984) the Irish in London, especially in Islington, are vociferously challenging discrimination and negative stereotyping. It was on the basis of the latter issue that the Greater London Council withdrew their advertising from the Evening Standard Newspaper in 1983.

13. See also Ogbu (1978) who argues that children with different social class backgrounds tend to aspire only as far as particular job ceilings (see Section 11.3).

14. There have been consistent calls by ethnic minority groups and official recommendations to monitor the employment of ethnic minority teachers. There is considerable concern that in teaching as well as in other public sectors black ethnic minority people when employed have limited promotional prospects (Hargreaves, 1984; Haynes, 1983; Little and Willey, 1981; Ouseley et al., n.d.).

15. A Times Educational Supplement (1977) correspondent addressed the concern over the internal responsibility by teachers over the CSE Mode III Examination and voices the "fear" of politicians and educationalists that Britain was turning into a 'CSE Mode III nation'.

16. Stone (1981:64) takes issue with what she regards as the poor schooling of, in particular, black ethnic minority pupils, through the provision of 'soft options' such as Black Studies which essentially operate to hinder the learning of more basic educational skills - especially those required by the employment market.
17. Stone (1981:226-32) found that the West Indian children in her research had high educational and employment aspirations. She quotes Beetham (1967) as finding that the aspirations of the indigenous white children were not as high as those of Asian and West Indian pupils (see Willis, 1977).

18. Stone (1981:86-87) argues that given the relationship between schools and the economy whereby schools performed the role of 'selecting and processing future workers' it is not surprising that black children were perceived as aspiring above their status. Dhondy et al. (1982) argue that black youth have not imbibed the working class ethic of their working class peer group (see Willis, 1977).

19. There is criticism that multi-ethnic education which is not based within an anti-racist framework results in cosmetic attempts at modifying the curriculum without in effect radically changing the process through which the education system "connives" with the society at large to maintain the status quo (Tierney, 1982).

20. Teachers were in essence operating in a similar manner to early sociologists who claimed to be researching in a "value free" manner, but were discovered to hold political and moral positions at odds with their professed research objectivity and neutrality (Horowitz, 1967). (See also Keddie, 1973.)

21. These are reminiscent of Weber's (1949) 'ideal types'. He urged the development of mental constructs of social phenomena which would describe their essential features through a 'one-sided accentuation of one or more points of view' - even if all these features were not empirically observable.

22. Such areas as the school socialization of pupils which were once considered as aspects of the hidden curriculum are now being incorporated within the traditional academic curriculum to form a new entity termed the 'whole curriculum' (Hargreaves, 1984 espec. Section 3.4).
3.1 Background to the present research

In the British educational context the term ethnic minority primarily relates to children of Asian and West Indian origin (Tomlinson, 1983; Tierney, 1982). An extensive literature survey yielded limited information about the schooling of African children in Britain. The neglect by previous researchers into the education of these children, the emphasis in existing literature on the fostering of West African children and the controversial debate on the educational underachievement of ethnic minority pupils greatly influenced the initial conception of this present research. The initial intention was to administer pre-coded questionnaires to elicit and, as with most psychometric research, to quantify, Nigerian children's perceptions of home and school. There were to be interviews and discussions, with teachers and parents, firmly focused on the child's home background, the child's membership of a "top" or "low" ability learning group and the child's achievement in school tests and public examinations.

This present research was to be primarily concerned with the effect of the fostering of the Nigerian child on later development, especially in terms of the child's educational achievement. However, further literature surveys on the education of ethnic minority children (Chapter 2), more critical evaluation of social theory and methodology (Section 3.2 below), and the findings of the exploratory study (Section 3.4) led to a complete shift both in the conceptualization of the research concerns and in its methods of investigation.

The aim of most educational research is to provide adequate theories for understanding and dealing with the complex social, psychological and sociological implications of formal education. Hitherto, explanations of differing educational outcomes were based on the assumption that the 'fault' of inadequate academic achievement lay in the pupils themselves and in their home background (Rist, 1978). As a result most educational changes (modifications) have revolved around the idea of equal opportunity and compensatory education (now referred to as positive discrimination and multiracial/multi-ethnic/multicultural education - see Stone, 1981, esp., Chapter 1). These modifications were welcomed, but appeared only to scratch at the surface of the problem (Tierney, 1982). In spite of two decades of intensive research and policy making the educational outcomes of ethnic minority pupils are still unsatisfactory to teachers, parents and educational policy makers (Swann, 1985; see also Rampton Report, 1981). Equal opportunity and compensatory education schemes, official reports and
enquiries, have all failed to yield definitive solutions.

Normative research tended to neglect the process of schooling especially as it concerned teacher's perspectives and classroom interaction. Although it is stated that statistics do not prove but only disprove the null hypothesis (Hughes, 1976: 251-261), the danger with quantitative analysis is that the presentation of results in a quantitative form, is generally taken to be "fact" and "proof" regardless of the limitations and inadequacies of the methods used [1] (see Heath and Clifford's (1980) criticism of Rutter et al's. (1979) study, 15,000 hours). Anderson (1968) points out that there appears to be, especially with positivists, a subcultural reservation about metaphysical theorising.

In the search for an alternative educational concern researchers and educational theorists (for example, Keddie, 1973; Young, 1971) examined formal education as a process which included the dynamics of day to day interaction. This is not to state that educational outcomes are unimportant, but to place emphasis on what is perceived as a more crucial aspect of education (Gorbutt, 1972).

Teachers' perspectives and classroom interaction have hitherto been considered by educationists whose aim lay in the improvement of teaching (Morrison and McIntyre, 1973; see also Bernbaum, 1977). The growth of sociological interest in this area, based on the interactionist stress on the 'emergent' nature of interaction, has led to the acknowledgement of the importance of the social situation and not just family background as one of the sources of educational motivation. Thus the school should be seen not merely as an arena where social, structural and cultural forces are played out, but as a situation in which the contingencies of interaction can lead to different pupil outcomes. Hence, an analysis of pupils' beliefs and actions is likely to have an explanatory significance for pupils' educational outcomes.

Ethnic minority children have been previously subjected to numerous normative investigations into their schooling primarily by indigenous researchers. The few educational researchers of ethnic minority origin have been largely swept along with the tide of psychometric and quantitative testing (see review of research in Taylor, 1981; Tomlinson, 1983). Those who do attend to some aspects of school processes and attempt a multifaceted methodological investigation soon get side tracked by the endless possibilities of data processing and elaboration (see Stone, 1981).

In contrast this research proceeds from the acceptance of the participants' (pupils, parents, teachers) orientations towards schooling as legitimate topics of enquiry. It is hoped that the participants' perceptions can mediate the effects of the structure of the school and the actions of those involved in the process of schooling. The exploration of
school processes especially from the pupil's perspective is likely to indicate the rationality and intellectual competence of those dismissed as ignorant or incompetent by 'culturally imperialistic' schools (Meighan, 1978).

3.2 Central Ideas and Concepts

The social construction of reality has become an important field of sociological enquiry since Berger and Luckmann (1967) offered a comprehensive account of the establishment of the sociology of knowledge based on social phenomenology. They distinguish objective and subjective forms of reality. Objective reality consists of our taken-for-granted knowledge about everyday life which is derived from the institutionalization and legitimization of what constitutes knowledge. Subjective reality on the other hand consists of the internalization of objective reality such that objective events become subjectively meaningful to the individual. This internalization of objective reality takes place through the dialectical processes of primary and secondary socialization whereby what is real 'outside' corresponds to what is real 'within' an easily translatable and symmetrical relationship between objective and subjective reality (Berger and Luckmann, 1967:83, 150-153). Thus an individual's reality of the world is based on the content of the social distribution of knowledge which that individual amasses through socialization.

Socialization is the process whereby both mental and physical human behaviour is shaped through experience in social situations, thus subsuming all processes of communication, enculturation and learning (Mead, 1964). Becker et al. (1961) point out that socialization is a continuous process whereby the individual learns through contact with others the art of acceptable and non-acceptable behaviour. Berger and Luckmann (1967) describe the differences between childhood and adult learning in terms of primary and secondary socialization:

Primary socialization is the first socialization an individual undergoes in childhood, through which he becomes a member of society. Secondary socialization is any subsequent process that inducts an already socialized individual into new sections of the objective world of his society (1967:150).

Although the 'systems' (Parsons, 1951) assumptions of the passive actor are inherent in this quotation, an awareness of the distinctions between primary and secondary socialization is important for this study because primary socialization usually takes place in the home. It is here that the
Nigerian child (like any other child) develops an awareness of the 'significant others' who shape his/her world through a selective process based on 'biographically rooted idiosyncracies' (Berger and Luckmann, 1967: 151). Through secondary socialization the individual is exposed to a 'sub-world' which consists of partial realities built up through tacit understandings of the knowledge available to the individual. The sub-world is differentiated from the 'base-world' of primary socialization which consists of pre-defined knowledge.

Situations, have a culturally transmitted significance in the sense that objects have a learned meaning—a meaning which may change over time because the actor has a 'self' which is the source of their sociability. Mead (1964) saw the self as essentially symbolic of a process rather than a structure. This is because the self can act towards or on itself. Consequently, the actor ceases to be simply a responding being because the complex process of social interaction requires the actor to define the world and construct his/her own meanings. In other words, actors have reflexive selves (Goffman, 1982; Strauss, 1962) which are constantly changing because they are maintained within particular social situations (Mead, 1964).

Becker (1963) and Berger and Luckmann (1967) stress the importance of change in human behaviour because any observation of social action takes place at some point along the course of a 'career of events' within a 'time perspective'. This is particularly relevant in describing the processes through which Nigerian pupils build up their understandings of schooling. One must take into account that Nigerian pupil's actions are relatively localized and that their attitudes and methods of negotiation are adopted at particular points in time.

The ideas of a 'career of events' and 'time perspective' have been derived from the concept of 'career' and 'status passage' as developed by Hughes (1937) and his associates of the Chicago School. Essentially, the term career refers to the movement of an individual from one status to another. This movement is related to what Becker (1963) refers to as a 'career contingency', that is the basis on which social factors and individual perspectives enhance the mobility from one status to another (status passage). Strauss (1962) notes that an actor's status passage may be formal or informal depending on the level of institutionalized social structure within which the actor operates. The career and status passage of Nigerian pupils are likely to reflect the social processes operating within the secondary school.

Using Hughes (1937) and Goffman (1982-latest edition), Lomax (1980) described school career as that which 'encapsulates the meaning that school has for that pupil' (1980:127). According to Lomax the pupil's own interpretations must be analysed in relation to the school as an organization. The pupil's status within the school forms part of his/her
perceptions of the school, including his/her identity. Moreover, in the case of the Nigerian pupil his/her ethnicity is likely to be an important element in defining their identity.

Lomax's (1980) description of school career incorporates two related components: (a) career segment and (b) career pattern. The career segment of a school career consists of the varying contents of schooling that are important to individual pupils. As such career segments should be seen not so much in spatial terms, but in terms of 'imputed knowledge about the organization member' (1980: 128). This knowledge is amassed from a variety of sources including official records, teachers' perceptions, peer group expectations and, most importantly, the pupils' own definition of him/herself in relation to the school. Lomax (1980) saw the pupil, that is, the 'career aspirant', as orientating towards a variety of career patterns available within the school. She perceived the pupil's career patterns as 'ideal typical combinations of career opportunity' (1980: 128) from which the career aspirant could choose. Career opportunity here refers to the interactionists conceptualization of career as a series of stages (Roth, 1963) in the move from one 'identity-given' status to another (Strauss, 1962). Although the outcomes of the pupil's negotiational procedures is likely to form part of the fundamental basis on which the pupil's reality of schooling is constructed, it must be noted that 'career stages' are not inevitable progressions. Despite having freedom to choose a career pattern, individual's also have a 'stake in conformity' and this acts as a constraining factor in what is a fluid process. In other words, an individual may withdraw from careers as well as pursue them.

Negotiation is a concept developed by Strauss, (1978) and it refers to the assumption that individuals in society are constantly and continuously organizing their social world in order to arrive at some form of social cohesion. This results in what Strauss, refers to as the 'negotiated order' of the social world. Martin (1976) with specific reference to the social world the school distinguishes between 'bargaining' and 'negotiating'. He points out that in a bargaining situation each participant in the interaction desires an object that can be provided by one or more of the other parties. An exchange of the desired object only occurs if the exchange is acceptable to at least one of the participants (see also Blau, 1964 on exchange theory). Martin (1976) suggests that negotiating is 'more inclusive' because it involves 'implicit or explicit bargaining' and entails the 'total set of the processes whereby actors in pursuit of common interests try to arrive at a settlement or arrangement with each other, or with a third party' (1976:6).

The processes of negotiating and or bargaining are likely to involve various forms of impression management (Goffman, 1982), ingratiation (Woods, 1979) and other forms of strategic interaction (Goffman, 1982; Hargreaves, 1978). Implicit in the conceptualization of negotiation is the
idea of accommodation and compromise (Dalton, 1959:6,7,167) because negotiation is usually undertaken in order to successfully manage social interaction (Goffman, 1982). As such there are likely to be rules governing what is an acceptable negotiational procedure or bargaining point. Within the school these rules are likely to reflect the power and status relationships between teachers and pupils. However, even within the school, not all areas of social action have well-defined rules in respect of all social behaviour. Even if there were, the ability of individuals to construct their own meanings and understandings of the social world implies that the management of a negotiation is likely to be based on the interpretations given to the social behaviour under discussion. Furthermore, these interpretations are likely to be formulated according to the power differentials and the various group cultures existing in the given social context (Woods, 1983).

Wolcott (1975:112) points out that the culture of a social group is a process which is 'ongoing, and elusive and always being modified'. Although culture can be thought of as a 'cognitive map', it is not a rigid map that members of the culture/subculture are obliged to follow. As Frake (1977) put it, culture is best thought of as a set of principles for creating dramas, for writing scripts, and, of course for recruiting players and audiences... Culture is not simply a cognitive map that people acquire, in whole or in part, more or less accurately, and then learn to read. People are not just map readers, they are map-makers... Culture does not provide a cognitive map, but rather a set of principles for map making and navigation (1977:6-7).

In other words, social behaviour is perceived as based on a culture that consists of a system of meaningful symbols which are exemplified through emotional states such as anger, fear or happiness and other feelings or through behaviours distinctive of the group under study. Frake's definition of culture differs from the more usual conservative and traditional conceptualization of culture as exemplified in Butts' (1955) definition as 'the whole way of life that is created, learned, held in common, and passed on from one generation to another by the members of a particular society'. This definition is based on a structurally deterministic non-negotiating conceptualization of human action which does not allow for the active process of innovation.

Over the years, the meaning of the term culture has modified and changed so that it is possible to use the term to refer to a broad category of social action by members of the same social group within the society or of society as a whole. Culture can also be used to refer to a narrow category of social action by a group of individuals within a social institution in a given society (Frake, 1977).
In order to avoid confusion in the use of the term culture as it refers to a broad category (for example Nigerian culture) and a narrow category (pupils' and teachers' culture in the research schools) this present study will adopt Hargreaves' and Lacey's solution by referring to the latter as subcultures.

3.2.1 Pupil Subculture

Hargreaves (1967) and Lacey (1970) describe two types of pupil subculture: (a) pro-school and (b) anti-school. The pro-school subculture consists of those who have positive orientations towards school values, that is, they exhibit a pro-academic subculture (see also Woods, 1979). Martin (1976), suggests that this group of pupils are the 'continuously negotiables', that is, pupils and teachers are able to interact within a framework of more or less mutual understanding. This is because these pupils share teachers' school values. The anti-school subculture comprises pupils who have negative perceptions of schooling. These pupils are referred to as 'non-negotiables' (Martin, 1976), because they do not share teachers' pro-school values. Hargreaves (1967) describes them as 'delinquent'. Apart from pupils who exhibit pro- or anti-school subcultures there are those who are ambivalent about their attitudes to school such that they exhibit certain aspects of pro- and/or anti-school subcultures. Martin (1976) refers to these as the 'intermittently negotiables'. Pupils' attitudes to schooling is likely to be constructed through the interactive processes within the school. Thus, a conceptualization of Nigerian pupils' subcultures must seek to understand the processes through which Nigerian pupils arrive at their own response to schooling.

3.2.2 Teacher Subculture

Lacey (1970:159-160) discusses teacher subculture in terms of official, semi-official and unofficial hierarchies within the school (see also Woods, 1980b). Lacey, points out that the official hierarchy is based on an income and status structure determined by forces outside the school. The semi-official hierarchy which is based on teacher roles (head of department, head of house etc.) is built up within the school and is to some extent influenced by the official hierarchy. The unofficial hierarchy is also defined within the school, but is based on the classification of teachers in terms of teacher age, experience, role, seniority or 'charismatic' authority (Weber, 1964). Thus one aspect of teacher subculture is based on the teachers' positions within these hierarchies.
Furthermore, the teachers' subculture is likely to reflect their identification and interpretation of the issues which are related to their hierarchical positions. Lacey (1977) suggests that a key issue facing teachers is that of promotion or teaching 'success' especially in terms of the ability to control pupils in the classroom (see also Hargreaves, 1980). Except for the head of the school, the deputy heads and to a lesser extent departmental and year heads, pupils do not appear to routinely categorize teachers in terms of official or semi-official hierarchies (Lacey, 1970). As such the promotional content of teacher subculture is not likely to form a major part of the pupils' perception of the teacher. However, this aspect of teacher subculture may be carried over to the classroom and reflected in teacher-pupil interaction. In terms of control, teacher subculture is likely to be an integral part of the relationship between teachers and pupils.

Hammersley (1977) identified two types of control within the classroom - that which is related to subject content and that related to discipline. He further pointed out that there were two main teacher attitudes to classroom control. In terms of subject content, formal (traditional) and informal (progressive) were distinguished. Secondly, teachers methods of discipline were categorized as authoritarian or liberal. Since teachers (like any other actors) bring their own unique meanings and understandings to the social world of the school it is likely that if the above categories are collapsed two main teacher subcultures are distinguishable: (i) conservative (formal and authoritarian) and (ii) radical (informal and liberal). It is possible that some teachers exhibit aspects of both conservative and radical subcultures to varying degrees. This present research intends to investigate the ways in which teacher subculture forms part of the Nigerian pupil's experience of schooling and furthermore to discover the interactional implications of teacher subculture especially as it concerns new initiatives in the education of ethnic minority children.

3.3 Methodology

This present research has adopted the methodological tenets of ethnography and applied the theoretical assumptions of interpretive study. Spradley (1979) informs us that ethnography means case study or picture with culture as its main concept. However, sociological researchers have to determine whether ethnography and the case study are interchangeable methods. Contemporary ethnography, though descriptive, leans towards discovering analytic explanations. Moreover, the ethnographer makes extensive use of participant concepts and categories (Rose, 1982:120-121).
The difficulty in determining whether or not one is doing ethnography or case study or merely using aspects of both arises from the derivation of both terms within the anthropological conceptual framework. If viewed as a process ethnography becomes the science of cultural description. In other words, case study has an 'ethnographic facet' (in terms of interviews and observational procedures), but not an 'ethnographic intent' (in terms of analytical explanations) (Wolcott, 1975).

As in interpretive research, the goal of ethnography is to discover the 'insiders view' and the focus of sociological enquiry within these frameworks must necessarily be the examination and analysis of behavioural variations which reflect their understandings and beliefs (Weber, 1949). This contrasts with the positivistic approach which advocates that 'the determining cause of a social fact should be sought among the social facts preceding it and not among the states of the individual's consciousness' (Durkheim, 1964:3-4). Interpretive researchers acknowledge that there do exist such observables as 'universal behaviour' (Giddens, 1979). However, rather than explaining human behaviour in terms of structural forces, interpretive researchers seek to explain human behaviour in terms of meanings.

Wolcott, (1975) points out that the ethnographer examines people and events in a total milieu. Thus, the ethnographer seeks to gain knowledge of the group under study such that an outsider may understand the idiosyncracies of the group and may, if s/he so wishes, know enough to pass as a member of the group. For example, in the school situation the ethnographer interested in the actors within the school system will also have to take into account events outside of the school which may impinge on the actor's consciousness (Willis, 1977; Corrigan, 1979). Strauss (1978) emphasizes that society is continuously being organized and therefore it cannot become the autonomous entity positivists see it as. This is because members of a society modify or sustain particular behaviours in order to achieve a 'negotiated order' of their social world.

In this present research a strategy based on grounded theory has been adopted. Glaser and Strauss (1967) suggest that the development of theories should be grounded in the empirical data of cultural description. Ethnography offers an excellent approach for developing grounded theory. As Spradley (1979:12) put it 'any explanation of human behaviour which excludes what the actors themselves know and how they define their actions, remains a partial explanation that distorts the human situation.' As an example, Spradley points out that the theory of cultural deprivation which emerged in the 1960's to explain the educational failure of children, particularly those from minority groups, was confirmed by studying children from different cultures, testing culturally bound hypotheses with them and analysing the results through the cultural barrier
of the researcher's ethnocentricity. Spradley suggests that if these studies had been carried out by ethnographic and/or interpretive researchers they would not have commenced with a theory of deprivation. Rather, they would have studied school events and investigated the process through which these were realized. Instead of confirming the theory of deprivation it is likely that ethnographic researchers would have developed a theory based on the complexities of different cultures and different methods of negotiation when forced to conform to an 'alien' culture (see also Hargreaves et al., 1976). The point to note is that the ethnographer is not required to examine only those aspects of social action that exist in the researcher's mind. It is however, acknowledged that it is difficult to achieve a theoretically unbiased work (Ford, 1975).

The difference between positivistic and interpretive research is that the ethnographer takes into account the abilities of social beings to behave differently in different social settings. For example, a pupil's behaviour needs to be perceived in terms of his/her relationship to a teacher - subordinate, although this pupil may, in another context, be peer group leader - superordinate and second youngest child at home. The pupil may choose any of the attributes within these different roles at any time to arrive at his/her understanding of a given situation. Thus the ethnographer needs to record and report not only the observed interaction, but the setting within which the interaction takes place together with the meanings and understandings the actors themselves have of their own actions and those of the other people they interact with. The ethnographer's primary aim is to understand, analyse and portray, as far as possible, a mirror image of a social group 'frozen' in action.

Ethnography does not totally escape the culture-bound snare, but it is capable of providing descriptions that put forward the range of explanatory models created by human beings (Denzin, 1970). Additionally, it is capable of showing up the researcher's ethnocentricism and the culture bound nature of social science theories. However, these can be masked quite effectively by, for example, using a presentational device which separates the "data" from the "analysis" (Willis, 1977). Spradley (1979:11) hopes that ethnography will lead to 'epistemological humility' as we become aware of the tentative nature of our theories.

The following section gives an outline of the exploratory study carried out prior to conducting the main research.
3.4 The Exploratory Study

The unsatisfactory assumptions (cultural deprivation, unrealistic ambitions, negative self-concept) and the usually contradictory findings (Taylor, 1981; Tomlinson, 1983) of ethnic minority educational research led to the desire to begin this present research with first hand background knowledge of the contemporary social and educational situation of Nigerian children in the British education system.

Literature searches have yielded little published research material in this country on Nigerian children's perceptions of growing up in and/or schooling in Britain. The material available is predominantly unpublished postgraduate research theses and occasional articles mainly concerned with comparative cognitive testing between children here and those in various parts of Nigeria. In view of this gap in the existing literature, an exploratory study was carried out. The main aim was to discover the perceptions of those who had direct contact with Nigerian families in London, viz. social workers, foster parents and teachers of Nigerian children. In order to provide an alternative perception, Nigerian parents and their children of secondary school age living in London were also to be interviewed.

The exploratory study focused both on childrens' attitudes and those of their parents and teachers. In particular, it could not be taken-for-granted that teachers' attitudes and expectations were similar for Nigerian children as for other minority children. In view of this the exploratory study sought as much educational information as possible on the schooling of Nigerian children from their teachers' point of view. The term schooling is used here in very broad terms to encompass all aspects of the interaction between teacher and pupil in the everyday concerns of schooling.

3.4.1 The Informants

The informants in the exploratory study were persons who were connected in one form or another with the Nigerian child's experiences in London. Amongst others, these included social workers, foster parents, guardians and secondary school teachers. Initially, four informants were located through contact with the Commonwealth Students' Children Society (now working under the auspices of Save the Children Fund) which had organized a seminar held in Ibadan, Nigeria on the African child in Britain (1975). This initial contact led to other informants mainly through the Society's identification of other official bodies concerned with fostering. The bulk of the informants (teachers, pupils, parents) came from the school in which the exploratory study was carried out.
3.4.2. The Location

London was chosen as the research location because approximately 65% of Nigerians in Britain lived in London. The 1971 Census [2] showed that there were 28,565 Nigerians in Britain and of these 18,540 were living in Greater London (see Appendices 1 and 2 for Census Figures, 1971, 1981). The Census figures were particularly useful in that they identified marital status (Appendices 1a and 2a). It was thus assumed that the greatest number of Nigerian children would be in areas where there were the greatest number of married Nigerians. The 1971 Census showed that the four largest concentrations of Nigerians in London were in

(a) South London
   - Lambeth : 2,700
   - Wandsworth : 1,800
(b) North London
   - Islington : 1,850
   - Hackney : 1,685

Despite being armed with this information it was difficult to identify which schools in these boroughs had the largest number of Nigerian children in attendance. This was because ILEA's Research and Statistics Unit had limited information on the numbers of ethnic minority children in any one school [3]. After numerous phone calls to schools, the school used for the exploratory study was identified through informal discussions with an ex-ILEA teacher who had taught previously in that school and knew that there were 'some' Nigerian children there. This lead was followed up and a letter containing a brief outline of this present research was written to the head of this school and subsequently an interview was arranged with him/her. Although the head could not tell the number of Nigerian children in this school, permission was given for the informal and confidential use of the school for exploratory study purposes.

Meanwhile, other leads from informal and official educational contacts were being followed. As far as could be ascertained from these sources, Nigerian pupils were small in number so that ten would be an optimistic estimate for the number of Nigerian pupils in any one school. The exploratory study was then carried out in the mixed comprehensive school in North London suggested by my informant.

The leads from the then Commonwealth Students' Children Society in relation to the identification of social services departments dealing with particular West African families, were also followed up. These culminated in the arrangement of interviews with three social workers in South London. All initial contacts with the families were made through the social workers or the school.
Data Collection: Method and Design

This study used a research method suited to exploratory investigations, that is, open-ended interviews with Nigerian parents and those social workers, foster parents and teachers who had contact with Nigerian children. Whenever possible a tape recorder was used. Otherwise notes were jotted down during the interview and fully written up as soon as possible after the interview. The open-ended interview schedules contained areas of enquiry which were designed to facilitate smooth questioning from one topic to the next. Although the schedules also contained specifically worded questions which were used to elicit factual information, their mainly open-ended nature enabled the respondents to offer additional information or initiate new areas of enquiry. Whenever this happened the schedules were modified to include these. Altogether four separate schedules— for parents, children, teachers and social workers and foster parents were designed (see for example, Appendices 3, 4 and 5). There were few interviewing problems, although it was necessary to continuously probe the respondents and encourage them to elaborate on their replies.

The Population

With leads received from the school and the Social Services Departments and the cultivation of informal contacts with other Nigerian families, and using snow-ball sampling methods, the total exploratory study population consisted of 49 informants (see Table 3.1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Children</th>
<th>Parents</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>Soc.Worker</th>
<th>Foster Parents</th>
<th>TOT.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Services</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Organization</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snow-ball</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>18</strong></td>
<td><strong>14</strong></td>
<td><strong>10</strong></td>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
<td><strong>49</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The teachers in the school whom I interviewed had been selected by a middle management teacher (Ms. MM) who in turn had been appointed by the head of the school to pander to my requirements. Four of the teachers, including Ms. MM, were middle management teachers while two were subject teachers.
with pastoral responsibilities (see Section 7.3.2). In the snow-ball sample there were three subject teachers (one with pastoral responsibilities) and one middle management teacher. The seven children in the school were those identified by Ms. MM. Of the eleven children identified by snow-ball sampling six were two sets of siblings while another four were children of the three parents in the snow-ball sample. One of the children had an elder brother who was acting as the guardian of his three younger siblings. As the interview focused more on his relationship with his parents he was classified as a child even though he was in his early twenties.

Seven of the children interviewed had been born and received all their primary schooling in this country and were now in secondary schools here. Three of them had been born in Nigeria and had completed their primary schooling in Nigeria before coming here to start their secondary schooling. Two had been born in Nigeria, completed their primary schooling there and had completed nine and 15 months of secondary schooling respectively in Nigeria before coming to London to restart their first and second years. The last child had been born in Nigeria, started primary schooling there but came to Britain to complete it and was now in the secondary school here. Nine of the 13 children were in the first to third years and three were in the fourth to sixth forms. One was preparing to attend an institution of higher learning.

The Setting

The exploratory study took place in the informants' homes or the comprehensive school concerned. After each interview the setting was described and the length of time the interviews took was noted. Although setting is referred to in the Goffman (1982) sense, it does not only refer to the physical description in terms of furniture and geographical location, but to other people present, time of day and what other activities (if any) were going on. When examining the transcripts at a later date, these were particularly helpful in bringing the interviews into sharper focus.

The Community and Home

Most of the parents interviewed lived within three miles of the school. The teachers referred to these areas as 'quite depressed' areas of North London. Unemployment was high and many parents lived in Council housing. The teachers also observed that there was a high percentage of minority groups, although they added that most of those of the Jewish faith
had moved out. Four of the ten parents interviewed were owner occupiers and six of them lived in Council accommodation. All the interviews with the parents and children took place at the parents' homes. The intention was to interview the children at school, but at that stage the research problem had not been sufficiently specified and formal permission had not yet been requested from the Research and Statistics Unit of the Inner London Education Authority (ILEA).

The School

The school was a mixed comprehensive situated in North London. It had on roll just over 1,000 children and the head estimated that there were about 60% ethnic minority pupils, mainly of Asian and West Indian origin. All the interviews with the teachers took place in the school - the classroom (if empty), the staffroom or the room of middle management teachers and the Head's office.

The Interviews

Having already sent a brief letter indicating the area of research interest, discussions with the head of the school at the first meeting centred around the purpose of the exploratory study, viz the discovery of the educational experience of Nigerian children. The head was interested in the fact that this present study was to focus on Nigerian children because the school, at the time, had difficulties with two Nigerian families. One parent was said to have 'unrealistic ambitions' for his child and the other's discussions with teachers usually ended up in open conflict.

In a sense the school was very welcoming in that I was perceived as someone who might be able to help with their current problems. Hence, the teachers selected by my contact (see above) were very interested in having discussions with me. They were most co-operative and two separate interviews took the form of group discussions. This proved quite useful as it triggered a discussion of "forgotten" events by one of the participants and the airing of conflicting points of view. All the teachers selected agreed to be tape recorded. A middle management teacher was also particularly helpful in writing to Nigerian parents, on my behalf, and informing them of the research interest (see for example, Appendix 6). Upon receiving a positive response, their telephone number and/or address was passed on to me.

In the initial telephone contact with the parents the confidentiality and the purpose of the exploratory study were stressed. One of the parents
was not on the telephone and had to be written to. Arrangements were made to see the parents usually within a week of the first contact.

The parents wanted to know if there were any specific reasons for their having been 'chosen' for interview. Two of them were worried that the research might have been connected with the then recent public debate on immigration. After allaying their concern and answering other pertinent questions as to the purposes of the exploratory study, the interviews began - usually within 10 minutes of my arrival. I was "fortunate" enough not to have to 'play cards' or 'dance highlife' as Craven (1968) claimed she had to do in order to establish rapport with West African families in London.

All the parents agreed to the interviews being tape recorded, but one of them had it switched off for a short period of time while she delivered a polemical statement on her perceptions of inter-ethnic relations in London and Britain as a whole. There were eleven separate interviews with parents and children. Three of them were conducted in the form of group discussions with parents and children. One was conducted with a child and elder brother while the other interviews were conducted with the parents first and then with the children while the parents listened with a few interjections. The interviews were of varying lengths and lasted an average of 45 minutes with the children and one and a half hours with the adults. The group discussions also lasted about one and a half hours. Two parents declined to be interviewed. After numerous attempts at arranging an appointment, a father stated that he was no longer interested in participating in the study. The other refusal came from a mother who would only welcome an "unofficial" visit from me. Two of the parents had agreed to be interviewed, but events in the school prevented the interviews taking place (see below).

References to parents does not necessarily include both mother and father. Five of the children interviewed lived with their mother while their fathers worked in Nigeria and came on 'regular' visits - two to four times a year. In two of the cases the mother and children had on one occasion gone on holiday to Nigeria. Table 3.2 shows the number of parents and children interviewed in relation to marital status. Each parent is counted individually.

Interviews with social workers and foster parents followed a similar pattern to those of teachers and parents. Two of the social workers were interviewed together and one of them was present at the interviews with two foster parents. One of these was also revisited, because of the numerous interruptions by several of the seven children in her care. Four of these were her own children.

Towards the end of the study one of the Nigerian parents (who incidentally was very 'suspicious' of the schools' activities) asked the head of the school questions about the level of confidentiality of the
study two days after I had interviewed her. The head was concerned and consulted the deputy head (who had not previously known there was a researcher in the school). The deputy head advised that the study be suspended until the hue and cry had subsided. Coincidentally, on the same day, I was informed that television reporters were due in the school to interview the head on 'multiracial' education (where at present each teacher did his/her 'own bit'). This probably heightened their anxiety, although the television interview had been arranged long before my presence in the school.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marital Status</th>
<th>Parent</th>
<th>Children</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>Daughter</td>
<td>Son</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living Together</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*'Living Apart'</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separated</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorced</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sub Total 6 4 5 6 21
No Parents Here - - 2 2

TOTAL 6 4 5 8 23

*'Living Apart' - two of these children were not members of a single parent family because there was no marital breakdown between the parents. Neither was it a situation of unmarried mothers. It was a mutually agreed solution to family goals and career aspirations. As one of the mothers put it 'we're living apart, but really together in spirit'.

Out of the total number of 49 informants identified, 37 were interviewed (see Table 3.3).
TABLE 3.3: EXPLORATORY STUDY INTERVIEWS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Children</th>
<th>Parents</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>Soc.Worker</th>
<th>Foster Parents</th>
<th>TOT.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Services</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snow-ball</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Six days were spent in the school (out of an arranged eight day visit) interviewing teachers, examining school files, pupils' school work, making notes and doing some unstructured observation of the everyday happenings of the school day.

**Transcriptions**

Four of the interviews were transcribed verbatim (including coughs, laughs, pauses etc.). This was done in order to assess interview competence and make appropriate modifications for the main study. Five broad topic areas were identified:

(a) schooling and the Nigerian pupil
(b) the ethnicity of the Nigerian pupil
(c) pupil perceptions
(d) teacher perceptions
(e) parent perceptions

These topic areas were crude divisions and there were occasions when it was difficult to separate, for example, (a) and (c). When this occurred cross references were made. Standard 'scissors and sellotape' procedures were used (Lofland, 1971).

3.4.4 The Findings

The exploratory study was not designed to lead to hypothesis testing. Rather it was hoped that hitherto unresearched aspects of schooling and Nigerian family life would emerge from the data. This would then enable a more insightful formulation of the research problem for the main study. In order convincingly to argue the emergent nature of the exploratory
study, there was limited reliance on existing theories and research on minority groups. Throughout the presentation of this present study the intention was to avoid being armed with too many preconceptions prior to the main study.

Subsequent organization of the data resulted in two main emergent categories:
(i) social relations and ethnicity, and
(ii) schooling and the curriculum

Social Relations and Ethnicity

An initial analysis of the data drew attention to the fact that all the Nigerian parents interviewed had spent at least ten years in London despite their expressed dissatisfaction with living in this country. The parents' experiences did not seem to coincide with their expectations of British society. On arrival they had expected a society where there was 'justice' with people being treated according to merit. After their arrival they had discovered a society where, as one of the informants put it:

because of your skin you can't do this,
because of your skin that can't happen,
because of your skin... (EXP. 3M).

As Milner (1983) points out, colour is a very crucial element in the relationship between groups with different skin pigmentation. Although colour has been used by political activists (Enoch Powell, 1971), the media (Hartmann and Husband, 1974) and the school (Laishley, 1975) to further differentiate whites and blacks, the parents did recognize that not all English people were racist:

there are many intelligent (English) people around (EXP. 7F).

I think the illiterate ones are those who are more prejudiced because they don't ... know what's going on in the world ... they don't know what happened before (informant's earlier reference to the then British government's call for cheap labour in the 1950s) (EXP. 1M).

Although these parents used the terms 'intelligent' and 'illiterate', the terms 'non-bigots' and 'bigots' may be more appropriate, because not all intelligent or literate people are non-racist (Fielding, 1981; Walker, 1977). Despite Nigerian parents' analysis of the differences in British attitudes to black people, they expressed surprise at the subtle and overt racist behaviour of the English by asking 'how can your colour be a barrier in life?' A Nigerian mother pointed out that the realization of prejudice and discrimination made her:
depressed ... and in no time it affects (the) home (when) it (the realization of prejudice) hits you, it hits you hard. It makes you mad... (EXP. 9M).

The discrepancy between Nigerians' expectations of a tolerant society and their experiences of colour prejudice led them, like other minorities (see Tajfel, 1978) to look for means whereby they could at one and the same time come to terms with British attitudes, retain their identity (as reflected by their colour) and successfully accomplish the goals they had set out with when they had left Nigeria. It must be stressed that the parents interviewed did not express any particular bitterness towards British society at large; rather they took a stoical stance.

English prejudice and discrimination made Nigerian parents very concerned about their nationality. They reiterated at every given opportunity during the interview that they are Nigerians. This reiteration worked strategically, perhaps as Tajfel (1978) suggests, to preserve their ethnicity. Apart from the concern with their own nationality, Nigerian parents also went to great lengths to preserve and confirm the ethnicity of their children

They (the children) went to Nigeria last year (for the first time)... am not depriving them of their origin (EXP. 3M).

It's there (points to head) stuck in - every day you (the child) are a Nigerian (EXP. 5F).

The first impression one obtained from these quotes was that the parents orientated strongly towards their ethnicity. Although Nigeria comprises a variety of ethnic groups, it must be remembered that when abroad a people's sense of nationhood is sharper (Smith, 1981). Bearing this in mind, the main study aimed to examine the Nigerian child's ethnic identification, especially as the exploratory study indicated that at least half of the Nigerian children in the school had been born in Britain. It was found that three quarters (9) of the children, including five of those born here, were ready to identify themselves as Nigerians [4]. Moreover, they pointed out that this act of identification was perceived by their peer group as negative self-labelling. Being African seemed to attract some form of 'stigma' (Goffman, 1968b). The main research aimed, therefore to discover school perceptions (pupil norms, teacher values), especially as they related to the acceptance or rejection of the identities of particular ethnic groups.

The teachers were aware that Nigerian pupils were 'teased' about their 'Africanness' but the teachers in this school had so far not dealt in any specific way, with the incidence of 'teasing'. They intervened in 'teasing' (inter-ethnic abuse) only when it resulted in a fight or argument which infringed on a school rule -
if they break the school rules by it (teasing) then they are dealt with accordingly... we try not to see colour (EXP. 2T).

The lack of recognition of colour by the teachers hindered them in taking any measures to confront inter-ethnic intolerance within the school. Three of the teachers interviewed expressed the view that we (teachers) tend not to look at that side of things (EXP. 4T).

Yet, by implication they were aware that 'teasing' might affect the children:

it (teasing) doesn't seem to affect them at all (EXP. 3T)

and at one and the same time were surprised that it did not come to think of it, it is really surprising how they cope with it (teasing) (EXP. 2T).

The main research, therefore, aimed to investigate why it was that teachers turned a blind eye to inter-ethnic abuse and dismissed what could be very damaging to a child as 'teasing'.

None of the teachers interviewed in this part of the study identified truanting as a problem area for Nigerian pupils in their school. They may occasionally be late, act out unacceptable behaviour like talking in class, fighting, being rude and unco-operative, but their negotiational procedures did not appear to include truanting, early leave taking or regular late arrivals. This is not to say that all the Nigerian children acted out such pro-school behaviour, but that when making generalizations about them, teachers seemed to think this was the case. With the knowledge that most educational research focuses on anti-school behaviour (Hargreaves et al., 1976; Willis, 1977; Furlong, 1976; 1984) the main research aimed to discover the school behaviour of Nigerian children.

Outside of the school the current early child care methods of Nigerian parents were considered. The interviews with foster parents and social workers showed that as found in the literature (Ellis et al., 1978; Holman, 1973) Nigerian parents, like other West African parents, still fostered their children at an early age. It was found that all the children born here had been, at some stage between the ages of five months and six years, daily minded and/or privately fostered. It was also discovered that social workers still found it difficult to understand fully the reasons behind the fostering of Nigerian children - especially as there was usually no marital breakdown between the couple (see Section 1.5).

The foster parents interviewed stated that they had amicable relationships with both children and parents, although there were the inevitable conflicts in terms of child rearing methods and regular payment of child maintenance. The social workers considered the incidence of fostering as 'very' high with Nigerian children and were concerned for
their care and safety.

By the very nature of their work it is not surprising that Social Services Departments mainly referred to 'problem' families. It is interesting to note that all except one parent stated that the social services were at no stage involved with the private fostering of their children. At the time of the exploratory study a South London Social Services Department was in the process of setting up a 'private foster unit' to provide appropriate advice to parents intending to foster their children. When conducting the main research the incidence of fostering will be borne in mind.

Schooling and the Curriculum

In spite of the fact that the exploratory study had been carried out in a mixed school, it was found that most (6) of the parents interviewed would rather have sent their children to single sex schools. The parents were also particularly concerned about the education of their children especially in terms of traditional educational outcomes. All the parents expected their children to proceed to institutions of higher learning. The main study sought to discover the implications of this desire especially in relation to teachers' assessment of children's ability (Hegarty and Lucas, 1978) and in particular to teachers' perceptions of the educational ambitions of ethnic minority children (Nash, 1973).

An issue related to Nigerian parents' ambitions for their children concerned the parents' relationships with the teachers. The latter found Nigerian parents who refused to accept the teachers' assessment of their children's inability to cope with, for example, an 'O' level syllabus, 'tiresome'. It was also discovered that parents and teachers had different definitions and interpretations of what it meant to be 'doing well' at school. Clark (1961) has shown how children are dissuaded from pursuing particular school 'careers' by processes of 'cooling out'. The main study therefore aimed to focus attention on Nigerian children's progression through school and sought to discover the relationship between teachers' attitudes and pupil outcomes. Related to this is the question of teacher pedagogy and pupils' interpretations of teaching methods (Furlong, 1976). The relationship between these may reflect, in particular, Nigerian pupils' motivations towards learning.

Some of the children were concerned about the correlation between class and educational outcomes:

Some teachers felt that because we are of working class background we should be put in CSE groups (fifth form boy).
In addition, they were unsure of their interpretations of teachers actions:

I tend to see it (discrimination) as maybe that's what he (the teacher) thought was right, not necessarily because we are a different colour

but then she adds a clause

obviously I can't know for sure (sixth form girl).

Although this child appeared to consider the question of discrimination in terms of the teacher's ability to act rationally, she at the end is ambivalent about her own analysis of the issue. It appeared that teachers themselves through their actions, made it difficult for the children not to perceive their actions in discriminatory terms:

Well he made it sort of suspicious ... There were two black girls and one black boy and there was this sort of Indianish girl - those were the people he kept on getting at, so he made it look as if he was discriminating (fourth form boy).

Brittan's (1976) study of teachers' feelings about teaching in multi-ethnic schools showed that a high percentage (71%) felt that ethnic minority children enriched their school. The exploratory study did not address this question, but the majority of the comments made by the pupils did not imply that the teachers perceived them in an enriching manner. As Deutscher (1973) has pointed out there is a difference between 'what we say and what we do'. The children put it thus:

Our Maths teacher makes you feel inferior (fifth form boy).

They didn't want to give us a fair chance (fourth form girl).

The main study therefore sought to discover teachers' perceptions of the presence of ethnic minority children in their schools especially in relation to current educational initiatives (Little and Willey, 1981; see also Hargreaves, 1984).

Teachers saw Nigerian parents as exerting a great deal of pressure on their children. The teachers claimed that in some cases the parents forced the children to do what was beyond their educational ability:

Both Mr. and Mrs. (X), have a very high expectation of education and their children getting the qualifications (but) we (the teachers) made the point clear that we did not think that (X) was going to get very good qualifications.

The teachers pointed out that in this respect Nigerian and West Indian parents were similar, although they added that some Nigerian parents were 'middle class really'. The question of class and high expectations will be examined later in greater detail. The main research aimed to discover the processes through which teachers came to define Nigerian parents' class membership and simultaneously defined parental expectations as 'unrealistic'.
Apart from issues specifically related to educational matters another area of concern for Nigerian children was that of discipline. Teachers described the parents as 'very strict' and 'authoritarian'. The parents' description of their disciplinary procedures appeared very stringent. For example, one mother refused to allow her 14-year-old son to attend a friend's party because she had not received adequate notification of the party. Neither did he have an invitation card to the party. Moreover, the mother required at least 10 days notice and the son had given her four. The mother did explain that she wanted him to learn the skill of 'planning ahead' and the ability to say, 'no'. As she put it, he must learn that you don't go to every party someone asks you to come to (EXP. M6).

Hence, the socialization methods used by Nigerian parents together with their children's response to these would be investigated further in the main study.

3.5 Concluding Reflections

The perceptions and understandings of schooling expressed by parents, children and teachers were mainly at variance with each other. The data from the exploratory study indicated that there were both overt and subtle negotiational coping strategies between the participants involved in schooling.

These findings led to the formulation of the purposes of this present research in terms of discovering the processes through which the Nigerian pupil within an English secondary school builds up his/her own reality of schooling. Meighan (1978) argues that the pupils' perspective is crucial to any real understanding of the interactive nature of schooling. Hargreaves (1978) goes on to suggest that classroom coping strategies are significant for an understanding of the dilemmas teachers face in the teaching situation. The concept of 'coping strategy' may be applicable on a more general level and can refer to the pupil's method of negotiation within and outside of the school.

Tierney (1982) argues that current attempts at dealing with the nature of educational provision especially as it concerns the schooling of ethnic minority pupils is based on erroneous assumptions. It is thus important to examine in detail the cultural and to a substantial extent the structural aspect of education as it specifically relates to Nigerian pupils.

The exploratory study was carried out without any particular focus except in so far as it was interested in identifying areas worthy of
critical investigation. The study was particularly useful in bringing to attention possible areas of enquiry. This was especially necessary since the research was concerned with a topic area where there was very little background information. The following chapter outlines the aims and objectives of the main research. Taking into account the methodological and theoretical framework within which ethnographic research is conducted Chapter 4, also gives an account of the research methods employed in the main study.
Notes

1. Of course, the deliberate manipulation of statistics would be a misuse of quantitative methods (Cicourel, 1964).

2. At the time of the exploratory study (May, 1981) the 1981 Census Figures were unavailable (see Appendices 2a and 2b).

3. Statistics which were readily available were those from ILEA's Language Survey (see Appendix 14).

4. As a member of the ethnic group under investigation the issue of reactivity was considered. In a study of the sources of error in research using the interview as an instrument of data collection, Hyman et al. (1954: especially Chapter 5) found that the effect of group membership similarity between researcher and respondent was insignificant. It is worth noting here that in the main study some (14) of the parents claimed that if I had not been Nigerian they would not have agreed to participate in the research. Others pointed out that they would have refused fully to answer a substantial number of 'private and personal' questions (see Appendix 9). A few were suspicious precisely because I was Nigerian (Section 4.6.5).
CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH PROCEDURES

4.1 Aims and Objectives

Bearing in mind the findings of the exploratory study, the central ideas and concepts informing interpretive investigations and the methodological considerations involved in carrying out ethnographic research, this present research was formulated with the aim of discovering the experiential reality of schooling for Nigerian pupils attending two London comprehensive schools. In addition, it was intended to explore the processes through which this reality is built up by the actors (pupils, parents and teachers) involved in the dynamics of a taken-for-granted activity - schooling.

One of the primary aims of education is for children to acquire such school knowledge (academic and social) as is made available to them by their teachers (Keddie, 1973). It is likely that the children interpret parent and teacher expectations of schooling in a manner based on their own understanding of what it means to be at school (Furlong, 1976). These understandings may have implications for the roles they act out in relation to different aspects of schooling. Hence, it was intended to map out the career, behaviour and friendship groups of Nigerian pupils in order to discover how these inform their methods of social negotiation, both within and outside of the school.

The exploratory study found that routinely applied school labels used by teachers to describe the educational progress of children have different meanings for the recipients of the label. Thus, when the label 'doing well' was applied to a child, parents' and teachers' expectations of the educational outcome of being at school were at variance. This present research sought to discover the implications of this area of adult-conflict on the child's response to the acquisition of school knowledge.

Finally, this present research aimed to discover the salient aspects of the Nigerian child's understanding of the relationship between different social groups in the school and community. Their interpretation is likely to form part of the manner in which they perceive themselves and respond to other social interactants. Hence, it was proposed to examine their method of self-identification in order to discover the relationship (if any) between teachers' perceptions of ethnic minority groups (Troyna, 1982) and Nigerian parents' understanding of the community in which they lived.

By examining the manner in which the different facets that informed the process of schooling were interpreted by the interactants, the overall objective was to obtain an account of schooling as it specifically related
to the education of Nigerian pupils in two single sex London comprehensive schools.

4.2 The Research Questions

Proceeding from the identification of the research aims and objectives outlined above, the following detailed research questions were developed and considered during the data collection period in both schools:

1. To what extent do Nigerian pupils' actions form part of the processes through which they build up their attitudes towards school norms and values as expressed by (a) their teachers (b) their parents (c) the various pupil subcultures in the school?

2. What implication does the Nigerian child's place of birth have for teachers' perceptions of Nigerian pupils and their relationship with peer group formation? (a) Is the distinction between Nigerian pupils' place of birth relevant to an analysis of their overall response to schooling? (b) Do they perceive themselves as part of the integral group of the school? (c) To what extent do they encounter social acceptance or isolation within the secondary school? (d) What does it mean to be 'Nigerian' within the context of an English school? (e) Does this meaning inform their methods of social negotiation? (f) What bearing does the early fostering of Nigerian children have on their interactive relationships with their teachers? (g) Is the question of fostering important to an understanding of the manner in which parents and teachers arrive at particular interpretations of the process of child care?

3. In what ways do the languages of the home and of the school inform the Nigerian child's response to language learning? (a) How do teachers perceive the linguistic abilities of Nigerian children, especially of those born abroad?
(b) Do these perceptions have any relevance to the process through which they acquire communication skills in an additional language?

(c) How do the parents respond to their children's attempts at language learning?

(d) Does this response have any implications for the strategies children employ in their attempt to acquire communication skills in an additional language?

4. To what extent is Nigerian children's understanding of schooling constructed through the juxtaposition of their 'Nigerian culture' with those prevailing within and outside of the school?

(a) To what degree does this understanding create the framework within which Nigerian pupils build up their attitudes to learning and behaviour in school?

(b) Does this framework form part of the processes through which Nigerian pupils arrive at their level of motivation towards the acquisition of school knowledge?

(c) How do Nigerian pupils, their parents and the children's teachers employ and interpret the label 'doing well'?

5. What implications does the probability of going back to Nigeria have for Nigerian pupils, their parents and the children's teachers especially in relation to their conceptualization of their participant roles in the process of schooling?

6. After school - what next?

The research questions outlined above were continuously being reformulated to reflect the information received during the process of data collection in the schools concerned (Wolcott, 1975; Spradley, 1979). It is acknowledged that it was necessary to operate flexibly and be prepared to venture into areas which originally had not been conceptualized by the researcher, but which had been raised by the respondents. Hence, these research questions were used primarily as an enabling instrument which assisted in the focusing of the interviews (Merton and Kendall, 1956). This worked in ensuring that all the initially developed topics were covered while the open-ended nature (Lazarsfeld, 1944) of the interviews allowed freedom to address topics introduced by the respondents (Schatzman and Strauss, 1973). Although a few of the interviews were particularly lengthy (over three hours; in a departmental seminar, E. Barker, reported nine hour interviews with members of a religious sect), they enabled a perception into the complex process through which the respondents arrived at meanings, understandings and justifications of actions (Scott and Lyman,
1968) as they related to the process of schooling.

4.3 **Gaining Access: The School and the Home**

Researching an organization usually requires official permission. The Inner London Education Authority (ILEA) was first approached with a brief outline of the research concern early in January, 1982. Permission to study Nigerian pupils in two schools was received in April, 1982. In the meantime the Research and Statistics Unit (RSU) of ILEA was helping to identify comprehensive schools attended by Nigerian children. In addition, the researcher was making informal, random approaches to schools and individual teachers in the London Borough of Wandsworth. The RSU had estimated that the maximum number of Nigerian pupils in any one school was likely to be less than 20. They suggested some schools which had between three and ten Nigerian pupils. These had been identified through the use of the ILEA's Language Survey (1981). In the event, the two schools studied in this present research had been suggested by an informant who estimated that they each had between ten and twenty Nigerian pupils.

In May, 1982 a letter introducing the research project and requesting permission to conduct the present research in his/her school was sent to the heads of the two single sex comprehensive schools. Six days later the schools were contacted by telephone and appointments were made to see the deputy heads of the schools — one of whom had telephoned ILEA to verify the approval. After discussion of the research concern the deputy heads agreed to allow the research to be conducted in their respective schools. A couple of days later the field work began. Through the use of school registers and my familiarity with Nigerian names 46 Nigerian children were identified. During the interviews with these children they were asked if they had knowledge of other Nigerian pupils in the school. Four previously unidentified children were discovered in this way. The teachers in the respective schools helped to identify a further seven [1]. Henceforth the two single sex comprehensive schools will be referred to as Sentar Garlz (SG; girls' school) and Meedool Boiz (MB; boys' school). The use of single sex schools was incidental and not a necessary part of the research design.

Informal meetings with seven teachers and five sixth form Nigerian pupils in the girls' school and one in the boys' school started off the field work. In addition a letter was written to all middle management teachers introducing myself and requesting permission to attend their next meeting. This was in order to meet the teachers and discuss the research concern. There was also the need to cross check my list of Nigerian pupils
with members of departments to ensure their accuracy. This was especially important as three of the children had Moslem names and could have come from other parts of Africa or Asia. After two weeks in both schools top management teachers wrote, on my behalf, to all the Nigerian parents and guardians so far identified. The letter introduced the research project and permission was requested from them to enable the researcher to interview their children (see Appendix 6). After ten weeks of field work interviews with 32 pupils and 25 teachers had been conducted. Three weeks after the school summer holidays began all the parents/guardians were recontacted (by telephone or letter) and asked if they would agree to be interviewed on their children’s schooling.

4.4 The Respondents

The respondents identified for the purposes of this present research consisted of all Nigerian pupils in both schools, their parents/guardians and all the teachers identified as having direct teaching contact or pastoral responsibilities for the pupils in their respective schools (see Table 4.1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Children</th>
<th>Parents/*Guardians</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sentar Garlz</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meedool Boiz</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>212</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Two children were with guardians and two were in local authority care - these were included as having guardians (counted singly) as this was the essential function they performed (Holman, 1980). However, particular references to these children are explicit. The children's natural parents were 63 in number. Each parent was counted singly. The parents (10) who had more than one child in the school were counted only once. For example, there were three brothers in MB with two parents while there were ten groups of siblings (23) with 19 parents in SG; two parents had four children and another two had three.
4.4.1 The Children

There was at least one Nigerian child in each school year in both schools and their ages ranged from 10 years 6 months to 18 years old. From school records it was discovered that they had all spent at least nine months in the school except for one pupil in MB who had only recently (three months) arrived in England. He started school (two days a week) towards the end of the field work and had previously been attending a language school.

Just under seven-eighths (36) of the girls and four-fifths (11) of the boys had been born in England, had all their primary education here and were now in secondary school here (see Table 4.2). One girl and one boy had been born in Nigeria and had completed primary schooling in Nigeria before coming to Britain to start their secondary schooling. Four girls and two boys had been born in Nigeria completed their primary schooling there and had completed between nine months and five years of secondary schooling in Nigeria before coming to Britain to join the first, second, third, fifth and sixth years of secondary schooling here, respectively. Two of these girls had come to retake their 'O' level examinations with the intention of proceeding to 'A' level study. Two-fifths of the girls (17) and half of the boys (7) were in the first to third years of schooling and the remaining pupils in the second half of schooling (fourth to sixth form) (see Appendix 7 for the tabulation of this distribution).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place of Birth</th>
<th>Sentar Garlz</th>
<th>Meedool Boiz</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Britain</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-total</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undiscovered</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

During the analysis of the data it was important to bear in mind that over four fifths (47) of the children were second generation. The "short" stay intention of Nigerian parents needs to be juxtaposed with this high incidence of British born Nigerians in any explanation of the children's perception of themselves in relation to the community they live in. It is worth noting that more than half of the girls (23) and one-fifth (3) of the boys had at least one sibling in the school. This may be an important
factor in teachers' perceptions of Nigerian families (see Seaver, 1973 who showed that the response to schooling of older siblings formed part of the teacher's perceptions of younger siblings in the school).

4.4.2 The Parents

The number of "parents" identified as living in Britain with their children (including guardians and local authority care) in SG was 50 and that in MB was 17 making a total of 67 parents. There were 63 natural parents (47 and 16 in SG and MB schools, respectively). References to parents does not necessarily include both mother and father. Six of the boys and five of the girls lived with either their mother or their father. Although in essence these were one parent families the reasons for this marital status ranged from death of a spouse, spouse employed in Nigeria, spouse's return to Nigeria to make arrangements for the return of the rest of the family, to separation pending divorce. There were no unmarried parents. Two of the girls each lived with a guardian, one girl had left home and one boy and one girl each were in local authority care. All but two of the parents interviewed (34 - see Section 4.6.5) had spent at least eleven years in this country and the remaining two mothers had spent six and eight years, respectively. The dates of arrival in Britain of the parents interviewed ranged from 1954 to 1976. Without exception they all stated that they had come to this country with the intention of engaging in some form of educational activity. However, not all of them had been successful in their initial goal which was mainly to gain high educational qualifications. The ultimate aim for most of them was to work in the Nigerian Civil Service or obtain high level employment in institutions of higher learning or private companies (see Chapter 1). One third of them were interested in setting up their own business.

Three quarters (28) of the parents interviewed had achieved educational qualifications in this country ranging from City and Guilds Certificates, 'O' and 'A' level qualifications to University degrees. Two thirds (15) of the mothers and just over half (8) of the fathers were presently employed in Britain. Three mothers and five fathers were self-employed (mainly running small businesses in relation to the sale of goods in Nigeria). Four mothers and two fathers were unemployed. Five parents were owner occupiers, seven lived in privately rented accommodation while 23 lived in council housing. Two of the "parents" were local authority care homes (see Table 4.1). Although three quarters of the parents had achieved some form of educational qualification, 19 of them had not achieved the educational qualification they had originally intended. It will be considered later whether the parents'
intention to return to Nigeria (the going home syndrome) is a reality or an illusion. The implications of this will be examined in relation to Nigerian children's attitudes to the community they live in. Moreover, it is intended to discover if the going home syndrome plays a part in the children's response to schooling.

4.4.3 The Teachers

There were 109 teachers in SG and 103 in MB schools. Fifty seven teachers in SG and 49 in MB schools were identified as having direct teaching contact and or pastoral responsibilities to Nigerian children in their respective schools. By the end of the field work period 46 teachers in SG and 42 in MB schools had been approached for the purpose of being interviewed (see Table 4.3). Of these 84 were interviewed (see Table 4.5). They were needed to help illuminate the process of schooling as it directly related to the education of Nigerian children in their school.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>Sentar Garlz</th>
<th>Meedool Boiz</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number in school</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>212</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identified for Interview</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*No previous experience in multi-ethnic school</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Had seen school become multi-ethnic</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The figures here relate to the 84 teachers interviewed (see Section 4.6.4 below).

The teaching experience of those interviewed ranged from 16 months to 24 years of teaching in their present school. All the teachers (excluding the top management) had had at least eight months contact time with all the children under discussion (except the child who had recently arrived in Britain). Apart from the school where they were presently teaching 19 of those interviewed in SG and 22 in MB schools respectively, stated that they had not previously taught in what could be described as a multi-ethnic school. Twenty teachers in SG and fourteen in MB schools had observed
their present school "become multi-ethnic" (see Table 4.3).

In SG there were over three and a half times as many female as male teachers and in MB there were over twice as many male as female teachers with corresponding proportions holding positions of authority. The teachers in both schools were predominantly white. As far as could be ascertained through asking teachers and examining staff lists there were four Afro-Caribbean (including African) and eight Asian (including Afro-Asian) teachers in SG. In MB there was one Afro-Caribbean and seven Asian teachers (see Table 4.4 below). Altogether there were 20 black teachers in both schools; none were top management teachers. There were two black middle management teachers in each school. Four ethnic minority teachers in SG and two in MB schools had pastoral responsibilities for children in specific school years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic Group</th>
<th>Sentar Garlz</th>
<th>Meedool Boiz</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afro-Asian</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afro-Caribbean</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>8</strong></td>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Educational research and policy recommendations have consistently called for the employment of more ethnic minority teachers (Little and Willey, 1981; Hargreaves, 1984) in the belief that this will enhance the educational progress of black ethnic minority children. Smith (1977) has shown the extremity of employment disadvantage experienced by black people (see also Wallman et al., 1982). Attention has been drawn to the gender and ethnic composition of the schools primarily to give an insight into the pattern of teacher distribution in both schools.

4.5 The Setting

There are ten educational divisions in Inner London and this present research was conducted in Division 10 (Wandsworth) (see Figure 4.1)
The London Borough of Wandsworth was created from the old Boroughs of Battersea and Wandsworth in 1965 [2]. Presently it consists of Battersea, Central Wandsworth, Nine Elms, Putney, Roehamption, Southfields, Tooting and parts of Balham (see Fig. 4.2). It is a large borough in Inner London with a population of 252,240 (1981 Census Figures, see also Appendix 2b). Although Wandsworth is a busy commercial area, the economic depression in the country as a whole has played a part in the closures of numbers of factories and businesses.
FIG. 4.2: DISTRICTS IN WANDSWORTH

Source: Adapted from ILEA Division 10 Booklet, Secondary Schools in Wandsworth, July, 1981: inside front cover.
Research on ethnic minority groups in Britain has focused almost exclusively on conflicts between black and white ethnic groups. This present research focuses on a black ethnic minority group which is not usually selected for analytical purposes. The tendency has been to suggest that since Africans in Britain are relatively small in number, it is not usually statistically appropriate to apply rigorous analysis on their particular relationship with the indigenous population (Wallman et al., 1982). It is acknowledged that in terms of opportunities in housing, employment and other areas of social life black people as a whole (Africans, Asians, Afro-Caribbeans) experience a similar level of negative discrimination (Haynes, 1983). What is important for the particular concerns of this present research is to discover the social relationships that exist between Nigerian families and their neighbours be they black or white.

4.5.1 The Schools

Both schools have been given pseudonyms in order to preserve their anonymity. Figure 4.3 shows the location of all schools in the London Borough of Wandsworth.

As with most schools in ILEA Division 10, SG and MB contain some modern buildings. Each school has at least two staffrooms. The deputy heads of each school suggested I make use of the main staffroom during my period of field work. After three weeks in SG it was discovered that there was another staffroom in the school. This led to a related enquiry in MB where a second staffroom was also identified. The staffrooms were used predominantly by teachers for informal departmental meetings and casual conversation during break and lunch times. After school the main staffrooms in each school were used for more formal staff meetings. Both schools had assembly halls which were used frequently each morning. During the lunch break these halls were used for dining purposes and after school they were used mainly for Parent-Teacher Association and public meetings, and for staff parties or 'socials' (a teacher phrase). During the research period (1982/1983) there were frequent public meetings to discuss proposals to close down or merge a number of schools in Wandsworth [3].
FIG. 4.3: SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN THE LONDON BOROUGH OF WANDSWORTH

All but one of the interviews with Nigerian parents took place in the living or dining rooms of their homes. In 18 of the 26 homes visited there was present at least one item of furniture which the parents indicated as being destined for use when the family returned to Nigeria. The size of the furniture in relation to that of the room made it appear that seven of these parents envisaged living in bigger accommodation if and when they returned to Nigeria. Other items consistently found in the living and dining rooms were such things as display cabinets (mainly containing glass, china and decorative ornaments), enlarged family photographs, television and/or stereo sets and piles of magazines and books which were usually situated in a prominent part of the rooms. The newspapers and magazines read ranged from various Nigerian daily and weekly papers, to *The Guardian*, *The Times*, *Financial Times*, *West Africa*, *Africa*, *Time*, *Newsweek*, *The Sun*, *The Mirror* and *News of the World*.

The interviews were conducted by appointment and all but three of these were after 4 p.m. In just over one third of the homes both parents worked between 10 and 12 hours a day. Four parents stated that because of financial difficulties they had worked for 14 - 16 hours a day over a period of one to two years. Although the children were usually present on entry into their homes, just under three quarters of them "disappeared" only to re-appear again at the end of the interviews with their parents who had called them in to indicate my departure. In one quarter (6) of the interviews the children were within ear shot; so too was the television, radio or stereo set. In these interviews the parents usually called upon the children to contribute to or verify a statement being made so that they turned into group discussions with their children.

The parents lived in various parts of the borough, though two clusters of three and two homes were found on two different housing estates. Here, the parents were acquainted with each other and at least one other Nigerian family on the estate. Nigerian families had Nigerian friends in and around the borough. In addition, they had infrequent social gatherings (once or twice a year) primarily based on Nigerian ethnic group membership. The intended 'transient' (Watson, 1977) nature of their stay in the community is likely to preclude Nigerian families from forming their own community organizations (see Chapter 1) in a similar manner to, for example, Asian, Chinese, Irish, Jewish and West Indian groups (Rex and Tomlinson, 1979; Castles and Kosack 1973; Allen, 1971; Jackson, 1963; Gartner, 1960).

The children were expected to contribute to the running of the homes and usually had at least one household chore to perform. Seventeen of the children were expected to do their share of work before they left home for
school in the mornings. Although the children did not always do this the chores ranged from washing up, clearing, and dusting sections of the house, to making breakfast for their younger siblings. Five of the children were considered to be 'regular late comers' by their teachers. All of these children travelled over three miles to school. Fifteen of the children had never been absent from school and 23 of them had never been late. From their attendance alone Nigerian children showed a pro-school tendency. The extent to which they engaged in other pro-school activity, especially in their motivation towards the acquisition of school knowledge was also explored.

4.6 Data Collection

In this present research the interview was the main method of acquiring information about the educational experience of Nigerian pupils in the two single sex comprehensive schools under study. In addition, there were observations of school activities in such areas as the classroom, staffroom, playground and corridors. Through the use of focused interviews (Merton and Kendall, 1956) and direct observation (Lofland, 1971:93) it was hoped to collect qualitative data which would assist in the understanding and analysis of the educational experience of Nigerian pupils.

Adherents of qualitative research are apt to make the distinction between 'participant concepts' and 'theoretical concepts' (Rose, 1982). Participant concepts are those concepts based on the terms of reference of the group under study while theoretical concepts are those which the group under study would not immediately identify as part of their terms of reference (Schatzman and Strauss, 1973). The limited number of interpretive studies on the perceptions of schooling of ethnic minority children led to the decision that interviews supported by observation would make for the most appropriate method of gaining an insight into participant concepts. Although the level and rigour of analysis may overshadow participant concepts, these can usually be located within theoretical concepts (see Becker, 1953).

4.6.1 The Interview

In order to elicit information from respondents about their social experience, the researcher faces the dilemma of what language to employ. Although the respondents may appear to use a similar language to that of
the researcher, semantic variations are likely to occur. The researcher has to be aware of this and attempt to develop the ability of what Spradley (1979) refers to as 'translation competence'. He suggests that the researcher must strive to translate cultural meanings without losing the respondent's frame of reference. The respondent's response may contain both manifest and latent implications. Thus the researcher may be able to construe and make inferences not just from what the respondent says (overt verbal behaviour; see Deutscher, 1973), but also from covert non-verbal behaviour such as avoidance of eye contact, facial expression or body movement (Garfinkel, 1967). This is one of the areas of interviewing where observation becomes an extremely useful complement.

By juxtaposing accounts of the parents', children's and teachers' perceptions of schooling in a one-to-one or group interview it was hoped that allowance could be made for the recognized variations in accounts of action (Scott and Lyman, 1968; Deutscher, 1973). Knapp (1981) warns of the limitations of the accounts of everyday life and Gilbert and Mulkay (1983) also suggest that it is very difficult for the researcher to establish definitively, the respondents' accounts of his/her actions and verbalized beliefs. As Scott and Lyman (1968) advise the distinctions between accounts of events and justifications of actions need to be borne in mind. In order to verify, as far as possible, the accounts of actions by the teachers and children, observations of classroom and other school activities were also undertaken. Since the parents were not direct participants in the everyday social setting of the school they could not be observed in a similar manner to children and teachers. However, observations were made of parents present at school Open Days, public meetings and Parent-Teacher Association meetings.

4.6.2 The Interview Design

The exploratory study (Section 3.4) had identified areas of enquiry which it was felt important to follow up. In order to allow for the emergence of other areas of enquiry the interview guides (modified from those used in the exploratory study) were semi-structured (see Appendices 3, 4 and 5). This enabled intensive discussion of various topics germane to the main study and which were of special interest to the respondents. The interview guides helped to ensure that the factual information required for the subsequent analysis of the data was asked of all the respondents. For the children, this meant asking their school year, the school subjects they were taking, the number of other Nigerian pupils they knew of in the school, their date and place of birth and the number of siblings they had (Appendix 8).

There were two types of factual questions. One dealt with areas of
enquiry which it was felt the respondents would not feel uneasy about responding to at the start of the interview. For example, the parents were asked questions relating to the subjects their children were studying, their school career, and the number of children in the family. On the other hand "sensitive" questions relating to their length of stay in Britain, their occupation and educational qualifications were asked towards the end of the interview or at an appropriate time during the interview when it was felt that the respondent had adjusted to being in an interview situation (Appendix 9).

Apart from these factual questions the interview guides contained specific categories of interest which were designed to enable the researcher to focus on areas of enquiry brought to my attention during the analysis of the exploratory data. For example, one of the categories of enquiry on the children's interview guide, the curriculum, was designed to elicit information from them on their methods of subject choice and preference for particular subjects (Appendix 3).

The teachers were asked factual questions relating to the subject(s) they taught, their length of stay in the research school and the number of Nigerian children they could recall having taught in their present school. After intensive discussion about the children's schooling, especially in terms of the children's motivations towards the acquisition of school knowledge and their patterns of classroom action, teachers were asked general questions on their perceptions of the running of their schools and their interpretation of their role as teachers (Appendix 10). The interview guides were especially useful in coping with 'runaway' interviews (Schatzman and Strauss, 1973:74).

The intensive nature of the interviews limits a complete rendering of all the questions asked during each interview. However, Appendices 8, 9 and 10 give a fair idea of the questions asked of each group of respondents. In order to allow for a reciprocal flow of information the respondents were asked if there were any questions they would like to ask of me. Most of those who did usually asked about the purposes of this present research.

4.6.3 The Children's Interviews

The main purpose of these interviews was to gain an insight into Nigerian children's response to schooling. In addition, it was intended to discover if their perceptions of schooling had any implications for their attitudes to, in particular, the acquisition of school knowledge and to their membership of the different types of interactional groups which existed in their schools (Purlong, 1976).

The interviews with the children usually began from just outside their
classroom from where most of them were collected. While proceeding to the spare room (where the interviews took place) the opportunity was taken to ask them about the lesson taking place, the topic they were doing, what they did before, their favourite subject (if any), the weather, the school assembly, the lunch etc. This introductory strategy was also used prior to the interview taking place if the children made their own way to the spare room.

After this preamble there was an explanation of the research concern. The children were told that this present research was being undertaken in order to discover what subjects they were studying, what they thought of their school, how they got along with other children and teachers in the school and their parents. They were also told that previously other studies had been undertaken in relation to Asian and West Indian children and that in this case educational research as formulated by me was focusing on Nigerian children. Over one third of the children responded to this latter explanation by making comments which indicated an understanding of this point. As one of them put it,

Yeah, they (teachers) only talk about West Indians
(Chinwe : 7G6)

The children were then asked if they would like to take part in the research by being interviewed. If they declined an attempt was made to discover why. It had been decided prior to the start of the study that just as it could not be insisted that teachers and parents take part in the research so too would the children's refusals be respected. Of the total number of 57 children two girls stated that they were not interested in taking part and one boy expressed the desire to proceed with studying for his 'A' Level examinations without being disturbed. It was impossible to get in touch with four pupils - one fourth year boy, one sixth and two fifth form girls who spent most of their time at home preparing for their examinations (one of these girls had also left home). It is worth noting also that interviews with these children's parents did not take place. All except one were refusals. A girl's mother put off being interviewed. After the fifth unsuccessful attempt it was decided not to get in touch with her again. Just as I was rounding up the interviews three girls informed me that their parents had not wanted them to be interviewed, but that they had insisted on taking part. Only one of these three parents agreed to be interviewed.

Permission was asked from the children prior to using the tape recorder. Two girls refused and notes were taken down. Fifteen of the children appeared pleased to know that special interest was being taken in them and their educational experiences. It was recognized that some may have used participation in the interview as a means of avoiding classroom work. Overall, an impression was gained that the children welcomed the opportunity to talk about schooling to someone different, to an 'outsider'
who lay stress in not being a teacher or other representative of the school. The confidentiality of the interviews was also emphasized.

There were a few interviews (five; two boys and three girls) in which it was difficult to establish fluent verbal interaction. These children gave mainly monosyllabic responses and did not appear at all interested even though they had agreed to be interviewed. The shortest interview obtained with any of the children took just over ten minutes. The other interviews ranged from 20 to 90 minutes. The longest interviews of 60 minutes and over were mostly with the fifth and sixth formers [4]. Out of a total number of 57 children (43 girls and 14 boys) 45 were interviewed (33 girls and 12 boys). In order to avoid the possibility of an irate parent (Section 3.4.3) interrupting the field work it was decided to interview most of the children before interviewing their parents. Constraints of time necessitated interviewing the teachers during the same period of field work as the children. However, this proved particularly useful because it enabled cross checking of information from both parties. It also made it possible for the researcher to have recourse to different perspectives which could then be used in clarifying what appeared as contradictory and/or inconsistent narratives of past events. It must be stressed that at no point during the interviews did the researcher reveal the source of any information even though the knowledge gained from the source was used to put questions and probe other respondents.

4.6.4 The Teachers' Interviews

These interviews usually began with fact finding questions (see Section 4.6.2.). Teachers were also asked to elaborate on their relationship with Nigerian parents and on the teacher's own relationship with the school as a whole. The latter information was required in order to gain insight into the interactional framework from which to analyse teachers' perceptions.

The interviews with the teachers took place mainly in their rooms, the schools' spare room (where most of the interviews with the children also took place), on a few occasions in empty classrooms, corners of the library or 'quiet spots' in the staffrooms. The interviews ranged from isolated comments and/or guided short conversations of about ten to fifteen minutes to full focused interviews of between 35 minutes and two and a half hours [5] (Merton and Kendall, 1956). Guided conversations and intensive interviews were conducted with about two fifths of the teachers in both SG and MB schools. All middle management teachers and those with pastoral responsibilities were approached with the intention of conducting interviews with them (see Table 4.5).
### Table 4.5: Interviews with Teachers*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Interview</th>
<th>Sentar Garlz</th>
<th>Meedool Boiz</th>
<th>Total No. of Teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accepted note-taking, but refused tape-recording</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isolated comments</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short/Infrequent conversations</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long/Frequent conversations</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focused tape recorded interviews</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total No. of teachers spoken to</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refused any form of interview</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Put off being interviewed</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not approached for interview **</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total No. of teachers identified as having direct contact with Nigerian children</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Including three non-teaching staff

** By the time this teacher was identified events in the school prevented me from approaching her (see Section 4.7)

Both teachers who refused to be interviewed sent me a note to indicate their refusal. When approached for clarification one declined to give any reasons and the other pointed out that she did not believe in differentiating between children. This is a point worth bearing in mind especially in Chapter 9 which deals with teachers identification of Nigerian children.

One third (28) of the teachers interviewed were teachers with lower management pastoral responsibilities. Two fifths (32) were middle management teachers. Eleven were subject teachers only and three had
varying levels of school/local authority liaison responsibilities. Ten were top management teachers (including senior teachers). Each school had two deputy heads and one head teacher. The four deputy heads were spoken to for varying lengths of time including focused taped interviews with one in each school. Both head teachers were spoken to over lunch, at meetings, staff parties and along corridors.

4.6.5 The Parents' Interviews

Through parents' interviews it was hoped to gain an insight into the interactional relationships that existed between them, their children and their children's teachers. This was particularly important as the exploratory study showed that teachers' and parents' expectations of schooling were at variance. Based on a letter I had drafted, the deputy head and head teacher of SG and MB schools, respectively, wrote to Nigerian parents with children in each school informing them about this present research (Appendix 6). Having gained permission [6] to interview their children, the parents were then contacted directly (mainly by telephone) in order to find out if they would assist by agreeing to discuss with me their points of view about the education of their children. As pointed out in Section 4.6.3 the parents were interviewed after the children in order to avoid the possibility of a concerned parent disrupting the field work. Thus by the time the interviews with the parents began, the researcher had already spoken to three quarters of the children and their teachers. The knowledge gained from these interviews was very useful in identifying areas on which to focus attention during the interview with the parents. If it was thought that a parent was with-holding information relevant to the research then 'informed' probing could take place (Lofland, 1971:81-84; see also Douglas, 1976).

The total population of Nigerian parents, including guardians, in both schools was 65 (50 in SG and 15 in MB) and 36 of these were interviewed (27 in SG and 9 in MB). Thirty-one of the parents interviewed agreed to the use of a tape recorder. Sixteen parents (13 at SG and 3 at MB) declined to be interviewed and eleven (8 at SG and 3 at MB; see Table 4.6) could not be contacted. In view of a bereavement (death of child's father) it was decided not to pursue one interview although it had been agreed. Information received from middle management teachers, in each case, about the situational context of two children in care mitigated against approaching the homes they were in.
**TABLE 4.6: INTERVIEWS WITH PARENTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response to Interview</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sentar Garlz</td>
<td>Meedool Boiz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agreed</td>
<td>29*</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unobtainable</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Declined</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>50</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Two of these were not interviewed because of a bereavement in the family.

All the interviews with the parents took place in their homes and most of them were conducted in the evenings. On average, the interviews lasted 90 minutes. The two shortest interviews took approximately 40 minutes each and the two longest took three and a half hours each. All the parents interviewed agreed to be revisited in case there was a need to clarify some of their accounts. Six homes were revisited in order to have further discussions with the parents in relation to particular behavioural issues that were of concern to teachers. In one instance I acted in a consultative role during a conflict between the school and the home. Another two parents were revisited because the first interview focused more on Nigerian cultural norms and the economic situation in England than on their children's educational experience. Although all the interview guide topics were covered, the second appointments were only marginally more successful than the first. Brown's (1973) warning of the dangers of obtaining 'rapport' with respondents were borne in mind, but it was difficult with these parents to maintain a sustained focus on the research questions.

Just over two fifths (29) of the parents were not interviewed and five of those interviewed were reluctant. Twenty of the parents interviewed specifically pointed out at some point during the interview that they had agreed to be interviewed and furthermore to answer what they thought were very personal questions (for example, dates of arrival in the country, salary range, ownership of accommodation etc.) only because I was also a Nigerian citizen. Nine of the parents interviewed referred to me as their 'sister'. In contrast, the five parents who had reluctantly agreed to be interviewed were suspicious of the researcher precisely because she is Nigerian. Two of the parents narrated stories of how they had been let down by 'fellow Nigerians' they had trusted and confided in. Thus it was not surprising that they hesitated to be interviewed by a total stranger.

Group discussions with children and parents occurred (by accident rather than by design) on five occasions. During about a third of the
interviews parents called in their child/children at various points in the interview either to verify or elaborate on the particular topic being discussed.

4.6.6 The Interview Transcripts

Each taped interview was listened to at least three times. Having noted the most salient aspects of each interview, the constraints of time allowed for the verbatim transcription of three quarters of the total number of interviews. The remainder were summarized with lengthy quotations. Using the scissors and sellotape method (Lofland, 1971) the informants' statements were then grouped under more detailed, but similar categories to those contained in the interview guides. This was to enable accessibility of the data according to research themes. For example, response to peer group interaction within the schools came under the theme "school scenarios" while their response to the acquisition of school knowledge came under "learning career".

All the respondents were given code numbers. For easy identification in the thesis these were simplified. Thus teachers are referred to as top or middle management, pastoral or subject teacher. Whenever appropriate teachers are identified as female (Ms.) or male (Mr.). During references to their responses the initials of their school role and a number is added on to their gender identification. For example, a female middle management teacher is identified as Ms.MM:6.

Parents are identified as Mother/Father and when necessary a letter of the alphabet distinguishes one from the other viz Mother C; Father D. If both parents were interviewed they shared the same alphabet code.

The children are identified according to gender of school and their school year (G6 and B2 refer to sixth form girl and second year boy, respectively). In addition, a number preceded these (7G6) in order to differentiate one child from another. Pseudonyms were also given to enable easy reference to the children when elaborating on their responses.

In dialogues the researcher is referred to as R.

4.7 The Observation

Observation methods involve a number of techniques, for example, acting, listening, questioning and watching (Spradley, 1980). Gold (1958) identifies four types of observer roles: (a) complete participant, (b) participant-as-observer, (c) observer-as-participant and (d) complete
observer (see also Becker and Geer, 1972:102). There are difficulties in each of these observer roles and for the purposes of this present research the complete observer and the complete participant roles were rejected because of their limitations both in terms of methods and feasibility.

The complete participant role involves pretence, that is, the researcher pretends to be a member of the group under study. Furthermore, it is only the researcher that is aware of playing a dual role. The danger here is that the researcher may subsequently be unable to distinguish between the two roles and so runs the risk of 'going native'. The shortcoming of the complete participant role in schools is that the formal requirements of conducting research in schools cannot preclude the knowledge of it from at least the head of the school and possibly other teachers as well. In contrast, the complete observer is set apart and is incapable of being involved in any manner in the social action of the people under investigation. As Blumer (1962:18) suggests, taking the role of the 'objective' observer is 'to risk the worst kind of subjectivism'. The complete observer role per se is as limiting as positivistic procedures and can only really be useful in terms of gaining insight into the negotiational methods of an interaction in order to become familiar with them. This knowledge can then subsequently be used for participant observation in a similar group of interactants.

The role of participant-as-observer does not involve any pretence as in the complete observer role. All the actors involved in the interaction are aware of the researchers intentions (however vaguely) and a relationship is usually built up between researchers and informants. Although this greatly enhances the researcher's understanding of the social knowledge of the informants, there is the danger of the researcher becoming "native" or too intimate with the informants or vice versa. Both instances are likely to lead to a loss of sociological conceptualization of the research. The limitations of the observer-as-participant role is that the researcher runs the risk of perceiving the situation too much from the researcher's perspective and too little from that of the informants'.

Most interpretive research in the sociology of education attempts to find some sort of balance between participant-as-observer and observer-as-participant roles (Furlong, 1976; Willis, 1977; Corrigan, 1979; see also the collection of works in Delamont, 1984). I distanced myself from involvement in any role which might have been interpreted as a teaching one even though three teachers had asked if I would like to take one of their lessons. This was because one of the methods of eliciting information from the pupils lay in the stress on the researcher's identification of herself as an 'outsider'.

The intention was to observe all teaching groups that contained Nigerian children. It was thought that a successful monitoring of possible
differences and similarities between observations in the two schools would be achieved by observing each school on alternate weeks. That is, observation of teaching groups in Year One in SG would be followed by observation of teaching in Year One in MB. Since the intention was to observe each teaching group for at least two school days (from Registration in the morning to closing time in the afternoon) problems related to commuting between one school and the next were minimized. Unfortunately, it was impossible to carry out this proposed observation in full due to unforeseen problems in SG (see below).

Just under half of the pupils at SG and all those at MB were observed for at least two complete school days. One quarter (11) of the girls only were observed for one day and a significant number of the boys (6) were observed for four days. A case study was carried out on one of the boys (see in particular Chapters 6 and 10). This was undertaken in order to gain on-going insight into the schooling experience of a Nigerian child recently arrived in England. This lasted for eleven weeks after the completion of the field work in MB. After this stretch of time the relationship built up with teachers at MB was such that irregular contact was maintained over a period of seven and a half months after the completion of the field work.

In SG the relationship between the researcher and the school was less happy and a top management teacher asked me to wind up the research. The teacher explained that 'some' teachers had expressed concern at my length of stay in the school (thirteen and a half weeks) excluding six weeks school summer holidays when the opportunity was taken to go through the children's files. I suggested that I would approach no other teachers except those who had already agreed to be interviewed and to the observation of Nigerian children in their lessons. He refused this suggestion and gave me one day in which to gather the remainder of the data. The teacher stated:

You've been here long enough. Surely you don't need much longer to see what we're doing (paraphrase from notes jotted down within three minutes after the exchange).

I pointed out that the original time scale of six to eight weeks was based on the schools estimates (12 to 15) which fell far short of the 43 girls found in the school. I emphasized that it might be appropriate for the school to contact ILEA (who had authorised this present research) to inform them of the school's reservation. The teacher argued that concern for the feelings of members of staff was paramount. Again I suggested approaching teachers who had already agreed. The teacher again refused. After successfully negotiating an extra three days I asked if during the analysis of the data I could get in touch with previously interviewed teachers to clarify or follow up their accounts. Again the teacher refused.

Before going on to discuss observation techniques and describe the observation instruments used it must be remembered that observation in this
present research is used to further understanding of the schooling process as it relates to the Nigerian children interviewed. Although observation may be used to acquire additional research data, it was primarily employed in this present study to clarify and verify the respondents' accounts of actions.

4.7.1 The Observation Instrument

The observation instrument was developed after spending a total of about four weeks in both schools. It was felt that there was a need to familiarize myself with the everyday programme of the schools and more especially to begin general observations of the Nigerian pupils that had so far been identified.

Moreno (1953) developed the sociometric test which is an instrument for identifying association preferences. In the context of the classroom the observable behaviour of pupils sitting next to each other may be construed as a preference for associating with particular members of the class. The idea of preference suggests that some amount of choice is exercised by the initiator of the association. However, as Proctor and Loomis (1957) point out, the basis for 'choice' may be that of attraction, indifferece or rejection (see also Lewis and St. John, 1975).

The researcher wished to observe the classroom situation and record the observable 'choices' the pupils had made rather than simply asking them what choice they would make. The intention was to allow the observation to inform the observer of the criteria for making association preferences. That is, instead of asking the pupils such questions as "who would you like to sit next to?", "who would you choose to walk to the dining hall with?" or "who would you like to go to the next lesson with?", the phenomenon of 'sitting next to' and 'walking with' would be observed in an unreactive way in an attempt to discover both the procedure and the criteria for making these preferences. It was also necessary to take into account the power exercised by teachers in 'choosing' where pupils may sit. As always and as far as possible in this research, the primary aim was first of all to let the data inform the researcher before an attempt was made to interpret and ultimately bring one's own subjectivity into the analysis of the data. However, in recognition that a method of recording is required in order successfully to discover the processes involved in classroom associations, other classroom observation techniques were examined.

The most widely known form of classroom interaction observation is based on the American research tradition of interaction analysis. Flanders (1970) amongst others set out to reduce the stream of classroom behaviour
to small-scale units for easier tabulation and analysis. The system developed, known as Flanders' Interaction Analysis Categories (FIAC) enables the observer to record information about the types of interaction taking place in the classroom and the sort of relationship between teacher and pupils. For researchers interested in the interpretation of an actor's engagement in a particular style of action this numerical system has substantive shortcomings which make it impossible to use in the original form. As Stubbs and Delamont (1976:8) observe, the FIAC system of dividing teacher and pupil talk into response, initiation and silence and then ticking them off in set time intervals 'ignores the temporal and spatial context' of the classroom. Furthermore, like the sociometric test, the interaction analysis system uses only pre-specified categories and explanations arising solely from pre-specifications may turn out to be mere reflections of the researcher's own subjectivity.

One other area of research methods was examined, namely observation based on an anthropological perspective which uses a holistic approach and acknowledges the complexities of the situation under observation. As McCall and Simmons (1966:112) point out

>a human being has sense limitations, but he has even greater limitations on the number of things he can consciously entertain simultaneously... (thus) we simplify the waves of incoming perceptions by recording their contents into summary categories.

Although the ethnographer becomes selective (Lazarsfeld, 1972) the ethnographer's results are less formally structured at the point of observation. As Stubbs and Delamont (1976:13) point out 'ethnographic research clearly dissociates itself from the a priori reductionism inherent in (classroom) interaction analysis'.

The less systematic and open-ended anthropological framework is well suited to this present research. However, it was felt that various aspects of the sociometric and interaction analysis techniques could be modified and utilized successfully in conjunction with ethnographic methods. Instead of developing a sociometric diagram the seating arrangement in the classroom was recorded as it was actually being formed and reformed. That is, as pupils came in and sat down their first choice of 'place to sit' or 'who to sit next to' (these are referred to as 'sittings') was recorded (Fig. 4.4) and if this changed an arrow showed where the pupil moved (Fig. 4.5).
FIG. 4.4 Pupils' Initial Seating Arrangements

![Diagram showing initial seating arrangements]

FIG. 4.5: Pupils' Moves

![Diagram showing moves]

KEY: *AC - Afro-Caribbean origin  
E - European origin  
MP - Mixed parentage  
N - Either or both parents Nigerian  
W - West Indian Origin  
T - Teacher  
R - Researcher  

*This label was used when it could not be determined whether a child was African or West Indian.

Since one of the research objectives was to discover Nigerian pupils' relationships with their peer group the main focus of the observation was on them. Thus extensive notes were written about their movements. That is
not to say that the other pupils were ignored. If other children changed 'sittings' this was also recorded, but what was more important for analytical purposes were 'sittings' as they related to the Nigerian pupils under observation.

Teacher's movements in the classroom were also recorded (Fig. 4.6). As far as possible all the pupils' movements were recorded. These observations were not timed. Rather they were recorded as they occurred.

**FIG. 4.6 : Teacher's Moves**

Notebook... teacher
gets up - walks around
-attempts to stem tide
of 'sittings' changes-
is not very successful-
says 'No more changes' -
goes back unheeded.

**KEY:**

*AC - Afro-Caribbean origin
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The arrow leading from the teacher (T) indicates that the teacher went to pupil E for a specific communication. The spikes on an arrow indicate the number of times the teacher made a specific communication movement towards pupil E [7]. In Fig 4.6 the teacher made one specific communication movement each towards, for example, pupils E, E and W. The notebook speaks for itself.
The diagrams in Figs. 4.5 and 4.6 (see also Fig. 4.7 and 4.8 in Appendix 1) are used (in much the same way as a video recorder might have been) for the purpose of reminding the researcher of the level of activity within the classroom at the time of observation.

In order to complement the data derived from observations of 'sittings', a record was also kept of the formal and informal verbal exchanges that went on in the classroom during and between lessons. Informal verbal exchanges between pupils were those not intended for the teacher. In addition, they had little to do with the particular lesson at hand. These were written down in note form. The formal exchanges between teacher and pupil were recorded in an interaction analysis manner, but the recordings were made not so much to enable a "count of interaction", but (as with the 'sittings') to remind the researcher of the level and type of activity in the classroom. Formal exchanges were those identified as questions asked by the teacher or pupil which required a response by the teacher or a pupil. Requests by the teacher to the children to keep quiet or get on with their work were also included as formal exchanges (see Appendix 1).

Since the observation schedules were used primarily as a shorthand for recording formal classroom observation, it was possible to record extensively other classroom activities which deviated from the formal, for example, pupils' whispered and/or loud discussions of various topics which ranged from sport, discos, parties, films, the opposite sex, teachers, parents, food and illness. The complementary data of formal and informal classroom interaction was invaluable in the analysis and understanding of what constituted the Nigerian pupil's educational experience in an English comprehensive school. It is worth noting that in spite of using similar techniques to FIAC, the observation schedule was used for more than one lesson and took account of the fluidity of the classroom interaction observed. Furthermore, observations other than those designed on the observation schedule were recorded (see the criticism of FIAC in Stubbs and Delamont, 1976). Observations made of other school areas such as the staffrooms, corridors and playground were recorded in note form as soon as possible after the observation.

In order to camouflage the presence of a researcher in the schools, especially as there were so few ethnic minority adults in both schools, clothes similar to those of each school's uniform were worn (see Photographs 4.1 and 4.2). It was hoped that by wearing the school colours, observation, especially outside the classroom would be less obtrusive. Being in "school uniform" worked remarkably well - both in the boys' and the girls' school - even inside the classroom. On a number of occasions I was asked to answer questions, give out paper and pay attention. In SG I was twice initially refused entry into a staffroom, because pupils were not allowed in staffrooms and on at least five occasions I was asked if I had
permission to be in the staffroom. In MB a teacher reprimanded me for being one of the 'troublemakers'. He added that he had often told me to be better behaved. I was quietly waiting outside, but a few feet away some boys were being very noisy, so I got "told off". A Maths teacher began to question why I was not taking part in a Maths test and a female teacher in MB, wanted to know the whereabouts of the school tie which I obviously was not wearing (see Photograph 4.3). Two boys and three girls wanted to know if I was a new pupil just arrived to join their class, but most pupils thought there was a student teacher in their midst. Apart from these "mis-identifications" the wearing of the school colours made it easier to reduce the "obtrusive" presence of an isolated black adult sitting or standing around the schools which both had very few ethnic minority teachers (see Section 4.4.3)[8].
I was unable to take photographs in SG because of the unanticipated termination of the field work. However, Photograph 4.1 shows me at home in a set of clothes I wore while at SG.

**Photograph 4.3: Researcher as Participant Observer**

** These photographs were taken after the formal observation period.
4.8 First Impressions

The above sections have outlined in detail the interview and observational techniques used in this present research. Appendix 13 gives a description of the first three days (Wednesday to Friday) in each school. Suffice it to say here that these days primarily consisted of informal meetings and discussions mainly with top and middle management teachers. They were very helpful in providing school registers and identifying teachers who had direct contact with Nigerian pupils.

Overall the first three days were very useful and enabled a gradual introduction to the framework within which each school was organized. The weekend in between the third day and the Monday following allowed a careful examination of teachers' frames of reference especially as it related to Nigerian pupils.

4.9 Concluding Reflections

Conducting research in schools involves a more complex series of interactions than the simple use of techniques designed for use in data collection (Wilcox, 1982:457). One must be constantly aware of the social meanings involved in the process of schooling; meanings which might not be readily available to the researcher. It could not be taken-for-granted that the information received and the observations made had explicit meanings which required no further explanation or elaboration.

The organization of the respective schools had to be borne in mind especially in terms of the hierarchical roles of the teachers. Rules of engagement in discussion especially at lunch and break times had to be discovered and attempts were made to use these appropriately. Although evesdropping is a legitimate method of collecting data (Schatzman and Strauss 1973:70) it was more usual to engage in 'incidental' discussion or questioning (Ibid.:71). It was also necessary to be aware of teachers use of space especially in the dining or staff rooms. Although there were no formal signs indicating teachers seating positions it soon became clear that teachers usually sat according to departmental or school friendship groups. After this discovery I was careful not to intrude on their space as there was usually "free" space in other parts of the room. However, on numerous occasions "free" space had been taken up by other teachers and thus it was not always possible to avoid sitting in a "designated" space.

I was also careful to gain permission from the deputy heads before embarking on any aspect of the research. For example, permission was separately gained to write to middle management teachers and at a later
stage to begin classroom observation, even though all aspects of the research had been agreed to within the first week of field work.

The aim of the field work was to ensure that as much data as possible was gathered from the setting (Lofland, 1971). Nevertheless, care had to be taken to ensure that the researcher's presence did not produce a 'reactive' effect (Webb et al., 1967; see also Hyman et al., 1954). Thus the making of extensive notes in the staffroom or other public areas of the school premises were kept to a minimum. Access to a spare room used for the interviews in each of the schools enabled the quick recording of information without being obtrusive (Lofland, 1971: espec. Chapter 5). On fifteen occasions it was found necessary to use the ladies toilets to record information. This was because on four occasions the spare room was in use. On the other eleven occasions it was decided that rushing to the spare room to record an observation might be more reactive than leaving the setting to "go" to the toilet. Care was taken not to hinder the teachers in their own work. Hence, school files were examined during the school holidays.

In spite of all these considerations my presence in SG met the disapproval of 'two or three' teachers (top management teacher's phrase) who expressed their disquiet forcefully enough to make a top management teacher ask me to leave the school. The particular areas of the research which so offended these other teachers could not be elicited from the teacher. However, it must have been issues peculiar to SG as there was no such hostility in MB and similar research methods and approaches were used in both schools.

This chapter has outlined the research procedures used in data collection for this present study. The following chapters analyse the research findings within the framework of interpretive research.
Notes

1. It is worth noting that four and a half months after the field work had been completed during infrequent contact with the boys' school, especially in relation to a case study being carried out, I was informed by a teacher that a sixth form boy of mixed parentage had a Nigerian father. This sixth former was the head boy of MB.

2. The Borough of Wandsworth is an inner city area in South London (see Wallman et al.'s. 1982 research on the historical process of change in one of the areas (Battersea) which now forms part of Wandsworth). This should not be taken to mean that this present research was or was not carried out in this area.

3. ILEA (1982) reported that 2,968 children were admitted into secondary schools in Wandsworth in 1981. It was estimated that by 1991, there would be a drop of about 30% bringing the intake of secondary school children down to about 1,990. SG and MB schools each had a pupil roll of over 1,000 at the time this present field work took place.

4. It was also discovered that the fluency of the interviews was greater with the girls than with the boys, although good rapport was established with two of the boys. Since there were so few boys it was difficult to ascertain whether the difficulties in engaging in fluent conversation were due to their own individual personalities (six of the boys were referred to by their teachers as quiet, studious, introvert) or due to the fact that the researcher was female. It is worth noting that one third of the staff at MB was female with over half of these involved in the teaching of humanities subjects and/or the less able children.

5. Eileen Barker in a departmental seminar talked of 9 hour in-depth interviews with Moonies.

6. Only two thirds of reply slips were returned. Teachers in both schools pointed out that most parents in their respective schools needed constant reminders prior to returning any school forms sent home.

7. Of course teachers may keep moving as a method of classroom control. If this was observed to be the case it was recorded in writing (see Appendix 11 for more 'sittings' diagrams).
8. It is worth noting that in SG three white teachers at different times on different occasions wanted to know if one Afro-Asian and three Afro-Caribbean females talking together in the dining hall were in the process of forming a 'West Indian Club'.
5.1 Introduction

It was pointed out, briefly, in Section 4.2 that the analysis of the data drew attention to language learning issues as they specifically related to Nigerian children born abroad [1]. The development of the research concern (Section 3.1) had given rise to particular research questions in which language issues were implicit rather than explicit. For example, one of the research concerns (Section 4.2) was to discover if it was necessary to distinguish between Nigerian pupils in terms of their place of birth when considering their overall response to schooling. At the time of developing the research questions it had been anticipated that one of the most obvious areas of difference between children born here and abroad would be in terms of language skills (Townsend, 1971; Brown, 1979). Guided by the literature it was borne in mind that Nigerian children born abroad, having learned English as an additional language in a socially and linguistically different setting may have acquired English language skills different from those of children born here. The latter, through attendance at English schools would have learnt English in conjunction with native speakers. Moreover, as Rosen and Burgess (1980) point out they are likely to have had more access to British Standard English (BSE; for a criticism of this see Section 6.1) as spoken by their teachers who are predominantly native speakers.

Despite this awareness it was not until the data analysis was well under way that it was decided to examine language related issues as they specifically concerned Nigerian children born abroad. It was discovered that teachers consistently referred to the English language problems of children born abroad while they tended to dismiss the language difficulties of British born Nigerian children. The teachers claimed that the language problems of Nigerian children born and schooled here were similar to those of native English children. Hence, this chapter (and Chapter 6) concentrates on children who were born in Nigeria and had received most of their primary schooling there. For ease in identification these children will be referred to as EAL (English as an additional language) speakers (Chaper 6 argues that this is more accurate than the label ESL (English as a second language)).

The following discussion draws in particular upon the experiences of five Nigerian EAL speakers - three girls and two boys - with varying levels of competence in reading, writing and speaking English. The focus is on the manner in which the situational context of language assessment in the
schools hinders children's language learning progress. Teachers' perceptions of the social status and personal attributes of the children's parents are considered in order to discover their implications for the provision of language learning opportunities within each school (see also Chapters 7 and 9). The children's perceptions of their new social environment (a school in London) are outlined and employed in the description of the methods of interaction they adopt with other participants in the social situation of the school. Finally, the process through which children's language learning problems are identified and dealt with by the two schools concerned is outlined. At this stage the point to note is that Sentar Gardz (SG) had specific teachers responsible for EAL while Meedool Boiz (MB) did not. In both schools all children on entry were assessed for their level of competence in English.

It needs to be stated at the outset that this chapter is not concerned with the mother tongue teaching debate [2] but with exposing the school situational context within which additional language skills are expected to be enhanced. Most educational research (see Chapter 2) tends to explain children's progress in socio-cultural and motivational terms. In other words the child, his/her family, home, culture and social class are perceived to be responsible for what is assessed as his/her underachievement in school. In order to redress this tendency to 'blame the victim' (Tierney, 1982) educational thought has focused on curriculum content and has argued for both multi-ethnic and anti-racist educational practice. However, very limited attention has been paid to the everyday running of any particular school programme designed to enhance a specific type of learning. Brown (1979) shows descriptively how with the best of intentions a school's EAL learning programme is doomed to failure if teachers themselves are unsure of how to organize the time available for additional language learning. Hence, this chapter outlines the processes through which the two schools examined organized EAL learning programmes.

In terms of the attitudes and motivations of ethnic minority children to learning, it is generally believed that children of West Indian origin give most cause for concern (Swann, 1985) even though current research now focuses on West Indian children (especially the girls) who do well (Driver, 1980a; [3]). Generally speaking the teachers spoken to in this present research observed that Nigerian children were 'well motivated' and assessed them as 'doing well' in school (see Chapter 7). Thus, in order to reduce the possibility of explaining EAL speakers' lack of educational progress in terms of their anti-school tendency this chapter focuses on the language learning experiences of five EAL speakers who were described by their teachers as 'well motivated' towards acquiring school knowledge and who 'desperately wanted to do well'.
5.2 First Impressions

All the Nigerian born children in this present study had lived for at least seven years with relatives (usually grandparents or aunts) in Nigeria. On average the children had seen either one or both of their parents only five times during that period. Although they had all been very excited, neither their parents' accounts nor what they had seen on Nigerian television quite prepared them for the immediate reality of being in England. For instance, they could not believe it could be so cold:

When I put my head on the pillow it was so cold that I thought that the pillow was wet...but it was not wet so I went back to bed (girl, age 13;[4]).

Another girl had not anticipated that there would be any difference between the two countries:

I thought that the weather and the surroundings (of London) was going to be like that of Nigeria (girl, age 14;[4]).

Thus, literally within their first moments in England these children experienced a conflict between their expectations and the reality of being in another country. At this stage it would be stretching the analysis to refer to this conflict as a 'culture shock' (Triseliotis, 1968). The experience of 'culture shock' and 'culture clash' imply an experience over time which involves the interaction between the norms and values of at least two different cultures (Ellis et al., 1978; Watson, 1977). The initial experience is indeed a shock for the children, but it is one involving an unanticipated reality. It is hoped that this phrase captures the short period of time (six months) these children are describing. These unanticipated realities were predominantly concerned with experiences of their new surroundings they found amusing:

... it was so cold that smoke came out from your mouth and I did not know what that was...I was playing with the smoke...my sisters were watching and then they said to me, "Come! you have had enough of air", and then I knew that it was air (girl age 12;[4]).

They found other experiences alarming:

I notice how the houses was build here was different from Nigeria. Because here, houses look alike and if you do not know where you are going one would get lost, but for Nigeria, houses does not look alike (girl, age 15;[4]).

Another alarming aspect for recent arrivals in England was the need to move away from a mere recognition that different people had different skin pigmentation:

C: If a go to the doctor's or clinic and a see them everybody's all white.

R: Does that matter?
C: (shrugs) It's strange.
R: Why do you think it's strange?
C: A don't know.
R: What did you feel when you first met (teacher's name)?
C: A think am going to be the only Nigeria person. When a reach the class a saw other ones (pause) a think they come from Nigeria, but they didn't come from there.
R: Mm.
C: They say am black bulla, but a say no am from Nigeria.
R: Who said so?
C: My classmates.
(interview dialogue with boy age, 12)

'Black' as the primary term for describing himself was not only unusual, but confusing. He rejected the label 'black bulla' as an incorrect identification without knowing that it was a term of abuse (see Chapter 9 where it is argued that being 'black' is a consequence of being in a 'white' dominated society). In a written composition an older child described the awakening of colour consciousness thus:

What is this National Front? What is happening here?
In Nigeria we liked everyone and never saw them as black or white. We were people. After six months in England, I suddenly find there is something wrong in being black. Something inferior. Why? (sixth form girl, [4]).

Although it is debatable whether all Nigerians like each other, the point to note is that in her experience of a country which comprises mainly of 'black' people it was superfluous to describe them as black. In addition, as far as the child was aware, there is no organization in Nigeria whose aim is to 'get rid of black people' (a child's phrase) or discriminates negatively against people on the basis of their skin pigmentation. This is not to imply that there is no discrimination or conflict between social and ethnic groups in Nigeria (see Goldmann and Jeyaratnam, 1984), but to draw attention to the point that one of the first negative aspects of social relations these children experience in Britain has to do with their colour. The issue of colour consciousness and ethnic identity is dealt with in detail in Chapters 9 and 10. Suffice it to point out here that within a few months of arrival in London Nigerian born children move away from a "natural" acceptance of theirs and other peoples' skin colour and begin to attach a specific type of social meaning to being black in England.

At this stage of colour awareness Nigerian born children are unlikely to have developed a method of response which deals effectively with a new and negative social meaning of being black. As the 12 year old boy quoted in the dialogue above shows a mere repudiation of the label 'black bulla' seems sufficient to cope with what he considers an incorrect label. This
overt attention to colour forms the initial basis of interaction between recently arrived Nigerian children and some of their new 'classmates' (peer group). Teachers too discovered that they 'stand out' (teacher's phrase) mainly because their spoken language was not only different from those of most other children in their class, but was also difficult to comprehend. This discovery was also made by their peer group, some of whom made 'fun' of Nigerian children's spoken English (see Chapter 6).

The teachers pointed out that one of their first responsibilities was to enable the children to speak English in a manner which would be more easily understood. Rosen and Burgess (1980) observe that the teaching of English within the British education system has been predominantly perceived as a method through which school children could become literate in their mother tongue (MT), English, as compared to teaching it to children for whom it was a foreign language. Chapter 6 treats teachers' attempts to teach English as problematic by outlining the process through which EAL speakers proceed to acquire a particular form of English. This chapter concentrates on teachers' organization of EAL learning programmes within their school.

Before going on to discuss the manner in which teachers set out to fulfil their stated aim to teach 'the English skills that they need to be able to succeed in this country' (Ms.PT:8G) it is worth examining Nigerian born children's perceptions of the relationship between teachers and pupils:

At school how the students behave in this country is different from Nigeria because students here do what they like, telling the teachers off at times, shouting inside the classroom, but in Nigeria one cannot do that (girl, age 15;[4]).

It is unlikely that there are quiet, docile and obedient children in all Nigerian classrooms at all times. The point being made here relates to the consequences of being rude and noisy in a Nigerian classroom. As one of the pupils described it:

Huh! if d'teesha catch you lak dat (being noisy) - trouble. Dey can jus' beat you h'or dey can tell you toe write letter to h'ail d'teeshas dat you are sorry for dat (making noise) (pause) (Shakes head) In Nigeria you 'ave to h'obey d'teesha oderwise big trouble. Hm! big big trouble o (2B3).

So children do get disruptive in Nigerian schools. The difference is that these children, according to this child, do not escape punishment in the same manner as it appeared to him that they did in his London school. As the children explained, in their Nigerian classrooms it was rare to argue with, shout at or be rude to a teacher. In an attempt to make sense of
London school social relations the children continually employed their Nigerian based understanding of social relationships as a means of interpreting and forming opinions of their new school environment. It is within this context that the concept of culture clash is useful as a means of explaining the children's subsequent experience of schooling.

It must be stressed that the difference here between Nigerian school subcultural norms and values and those operating in London schools is not perceived within the cultural deficit model that pervaded initial explanations of the cultural conflict that ethnic minority children experienced. Rather, 'culture clash' is used to draw attention to the most impressionable aspects of the children's observation of the difference between their Nigerian experience of teacher-pupil interaction and that which they find to be operating in their London school. None of the children could remember any of their Nigerian peer group 'commandin' the teacher lak to say 'shut up!' or 'h'ordarin' d'teesha h'about h'all ofer d'plase'. As they take in these new school possibilities these children began (tentatively at first) to reassess their own relationship with their teachers and the school in general.

Teachers were aware that there were differences between, Nigerian and British teacher-pupil relationships and saw these in terms of authoritarian (Nigerian) and liberal (British) and suggested that the children experienced 'cultural shock' (phrase used by six of the nine "language" teachers interviewed) when faced with the seemingly endless leeway given to disruptive pupils. Teachers reported that recently arrived children were usually very polite and rarely initiated talk with adults or other pupils. They attributed this to the pupils 'shyness' in a new environment. In other words, they were 'outsiders' (Becker, 1963) who had not yet learned the rules of London school social interaction. However, they did observe that within what the teachers described as a 'relatively short time' (about two months) in school, some of the EAL speakers became disruptive and engaged in 'over the top' actions such as shouting, being deliberately disobedient and causing trouble - especially that which resulted in fights.

There was no substantial difference between the reports of teachers in SG and MB. One MB teacher was so concerned about these unexpected actions by one Nigerian child that he wondered if fighting was a part of Nigerian cultural norms particularly in respect of Nigerian friendship making processes. In other words, in seeking an explanation for the incidence of fighting by an EAL speaker, he employed a frame of analysis for disruptive social action on the part of an ethnic minority child, in terms of social/cultural acts which he believed could not be found among the majority group. A reading of some English story books, especially those set in school, usually contains a passage or whole chapter about fights especially in relation to children who have just moved to a new school [5].

The genuine concern of the MB teacher to discover the reasons behind
school interactional conflicts would have led to a less improbable speculation if he had sought to understand the interactional norms operating within the school (see Chapter 6). A more plausible explanation grounded in the events that actually took place would have drawn the teacher's attention to the possibility that the EAL speaker had begun to internalize and adopt what he perceived as the subcultural norms of his London school (Woods, 1983:97). He had not participated for a significant length of time in this new interactional situation. Thus, it is not surprising that although he had employed the appropriate interactional act in the situation, he had lacked the skill to engage in disruptive action and at the same time avoid detection or receive minimum warning from the teacher.

It was found that teachers in both schools tended to employ what I shall term "outside school" explanations of children's actions rather than make "inside school" analyses of the interactional relationships within the confines of their school (see Chapter 9). This is not to claim that teachers should never take "outside school" considerations into account, but that a more immediate and useful purpose will be served on these occasions by first creating a classroom atmosphere in which teacher-pupil relations, though liberal (as differentiated from authoritarian), are not taken or misinterpreted by children as a licence to 'do what they like'.

I have not at this stage focused on the child's peer group because a very complex relationship existed between Nigerian pupils, whether born here or abroad, and other pupils (see Chapter 10). Here, attention is drawn to the situational context within which the children were expected to take up language learning programmes as instructed by teachers who, from their point of view, had no control over their pupils.

Before going on to examine the organization of learning programmes the next section provides an insight into the schooling history of the children who will be discussed within this and the following chapter.

5.3 Profiles

5.3.1 The Children (all names are pseudonyms)

Bosede, Edet, Segun, Omozoje and Uzoaku came to Britain to reunite with their parents. They had each had varying lengths of schooling in Nigeria and at the time this present research was conducted were in the 1st, 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 6th years of secondary schooling. Edet and Segun went to Meedool Boiz (MB) and Bosede, Omozoje and Uzoaku went to Sentar
Garlz (SG). None of the children are related.

**Segun and Edet**

Segun (11 years old) and Edet (13 years old) had been living with their grandparents. For various reasons, ranging from the grandparents inability to exercise sufficient "parental" control over their grandchildren to the parents dissatisfaction with the educational progress of their children, Edet and Segun had been taken away from Nigerian schools. At the time of the interview Edet had been in the country for three years. Due to Home Office regulations [6] it had initially been difficult to get him into a school. He was concerned that if he was not in school he would have to return to Nigeria and his friends would make fun of him for failing to gain admission. One of Edet's teachers explained that there had been a delay in placing him because an overseas child is apparently not entitled to educational facilities until approved by the Home Office [7].

Segun did not face the same delay, although education officials were not certain that Segun was really his mother's son. His surname was different from that of his mother's and his two other siblings in primary school. They had been born here and it was very difficult for the teachers to understand why Segun had only just arrived. Segun's parents were upset that a top management teacher in their other children's school kept asking them if Segun was really their brother. After taking up the matter with the siblings' school Segun's parents now had the task of reconciling Segun and his siblings. Even though the latter had always known they had a brother in Nigeria, the incessant questioning by this teacher had caused them to begin doubting the validity of their parents' statements. Amidst all this Segun was required to take some tests in order that an assessment could be made of his level of educational ability. Segun had done particularly badly and exhibited some mannerisms which were difficult to explain. They could have meant anything from discomfort to poor sight or hard of hearing. The teacher concerned thought it would be sensible if he had a medical examination, although s/he was aware that it might be that he had not yet adjusted to his new environment.

Segun and Edet were perceived by the teachers to have difficulties with speaking and understanding English and moreover Segun could hardly read. Both children had language problems and it was agreed that they needed to attend a language school which catered for EAL children. They attended lessons in this school for two to three days a week [8]. The remainder of the time was spent with a home tutor. When they were considered to have made sufficient progress Segun and Edet gradually began attending lessons at MB school.
Bosede, Uzoaku and Omozoje

Bosede was born in this country and had spent her first three years here before her mother returned with her to Nigeria. After five years in a Nigerian primary school Bosede returned to London with her mother and stepfather. Bosede's mother had given up her work and was about to begin a course for beauticians and hairdressers. Bosede had no school placement problems. She had arrived towards the end of the school academic year and spent a term in a primary school here. She then moved on to SG school. The teachers were worried about her speech. It was not very easy to understand her, but her reading was good and her mathematics was even better. Bosede remembered how proud she felt to be doing better than the rest of the class. She began secondary school on this high note.

Uzoaku was born in Nigeria and came, at the age of 14, to rejoin her parents, who had migrated to Britain over a decade ago. She had received all her primary and two years of secondary education in Nigeria. Her parents had delayed going back permanently to Nigeria for so long that they decided all their children may as well be together. Uzoaku was assessed as needing help in her language. Her reading was good, but her speech was unclear and her written English weak. However, Uzoaku did not perceive herself as needing any extra English lessons and said as much to her teachers. Based on test results the teachers convinced her parents that she did and they in turn persuaded her to attend the language school for 'a few months' before starting full time secondary schooling.

Omozoje had taken the West African School Certificate (WASC) examination and had come to London in order to prepare for her London General Certificate of Education (GCE) 'A' level examinations. She had gained three WASC credits (a WASC credit is equivalent to the GCE 'O' level grade C), but the school advised her to retake GCE 'O' levels in two Humanities subjects. She had gained a "pass" ('O' level grade D or E) in English and a top management teacher at SG agreed to Omozoje beginning courses leading to 'A' level examinations in two Social Science subjects and English Literature.

5.3.2. The Parents (all names are pseudonyms)[9]

Mr. and Mrs. Fashola have lived in London for 17 years and 14 years respectively. Mr. Fashola has a Higher National Diploma and works in the Civil Service in London. Mrs. Fashola has three City and Guild qualifications in courses relating to hairdressing and book-keeping. She runs her own small business and this entails up to four annual visits to
Nigeria.

Mr. and Mrs. Ogiamen have lived in London for 15 and 13 years respectively. Mr. Ogiamen trained in law and Mrs. Ogiamen has a nursing qualification and a middle level diploma in Catering.

Mr. Alade currently lives on his own with his daughter (of secondary school age). He has lived here for 17 years and had originally come to study medicine, but for various socio-economic reasons was unable to qualify in this field. He declined to say what he was engaged in at the present time, but informed me that he had a Technical Education Council Diploma 'in something or the other' (his phrase). He travels to Nigeria four to five times a year and it is suspected he runs his own small business. He is also a School Parent Governor.

Mrs. Harrison has been here 9 years and has two City and Guilds qualifications. She has worked as a punch-card operator and is still interested in furthering her education. She is at the moment trying to improve her typing skills. Her husband is presently on a Management Studies course. He has lived here for 13 years and works with a British public corporation.

Mrs. Smith has lived here 7 years and according to her 'may as well be divorced' from her husband. He returned to Nigeria a few years ago while she insisted on remaining to complete a postgraduate qualification.

It is worth noting that when four of these parents arrived in England the highest educational qualification they had was four years of secondary schooling. 2 of them had one 'O' Level equivalent pass and one had an 'O' Level equivalent credit. One had attempted, but failed an 'O' level equivalent examination. Two of the parents were satisfied with their present qualifications, but wish they could still study further. Three of them were considering taking further educational/professional courses and had sent off for syllabi and prospectuses. One of them is currently in an Institution of Higher Education. Only one of the parents admitted to having 'given up' studying.

When the parents of the children discussed in this chapter first arrived they had expected to spend not more than five years here. Allowing for unforeseen circumstances four of them had added a couple of years on to this estimated time of departure. As some of the parents who have been living here for 13 and 17 years, respectively, put it:

When we came we thought we were only going to stay for 5 years, or longest six or seven.

I came to go to College... I did a Management Course and was going to go back and start a business with my father ... and then he died... my plans changed.

Their time schedule was based on the number of years they expected to spend
in order to gain the educational qualifications they had initially set out for.

These parents had arrived here in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The husbands had usually come first. In three cases the wives had only intended to come on holiday to visit their husbands. However, the financial plight they found their husbands in caused a decision to be made whereby the wives stayed to support their husbands. As one of the husbands put it, on arrival in this country he had discovered that:

things were hard, no accommodation. I was in one little room. No friends... I was going to school in the morning, then ...working at night, then studying ... Sometimes I sleep two or maybe three hours. I couldn't eat. I was cold... I sent for my wife... By that time I fail my exam two times (shakes his head)...I promise my wife when I finish she can do her own qualification like Typing or Book Keeping (laughs) you know how you Nigerian women are. Sometime you want to learn more than your husbands (laughs) (S1:325).

So the wives had come. The lack of accommodation and financial difficulties together with the belief that they would soon return, had encouraged the parents to leave the children in Nigeria - mainly with grandparents and aunts - to continue their schooling. Only one of the women had met her Nigerian husband here:

...When I got to know him he was living in one small hole. It was terrible... I was living wit' ma senior sister an' her husband... looking after their baby and then when the baby start school I go to learn Dressmaking for Adult Institute...I didn' like it though. I want to go to proper College an' learn real book. But then we started having children (S1:273).

Her husband already had children by another wife in Nigeria and it was decided not to send for them until their circumstances in London had improved (see Ellis et al., 1978 for a description of West African families in Britain; see also Goody and Groothues, 1977, 1979).

The parents of the five children focused on in this chapter became reunited with their children for personal reasons particular to their individual and family circumstances at the time. In one case the child's grandparents had died. In another, the child's grandparents were beginning to find it difficult to exert sufficient "parental" control over the child. Furthermore, the child was 'too playful' (parent's phrase) in school and the parents were concerned that there would be educational discrepancies between their 'playful' child and their other children who were 'doing well' (parent's phrase) in London schools. It was hoped that by bringing the child here he would become 'more serious' (parent's phrase)
educationally. One couple had finally managed not only to save enough for their children's air fare, but were now in 'better accommodation with enough rooms' (parent's phrase). In another case, the parent had refused to return to Nigeria with her spouse and their daughter had insisted on coming to live with her mother. In the final case the parent had returned to Nigeria and after a few months discovered that he 'couldn't live there (because he would) have to re-educate himself'. As far as he could ascertain the customs he knew had not only changed, but had become 'Americanized' (his term). Since he couldn't live in Nigeria, the basis for keeping his children there to 'grow up in our customs' pending his return, had gone. As a result he brought his children back with him.

Now that the children were here the parents would prefer that they were all together wherever they decided to 'settle permanently' (parent's phrase). As one of them put it:

We're not staying here forever. When we are ready to go we all go (S2:061).

However, as another parent explained:

These things can't be decide in advance because these days children have their own mind (S1:511).

In the meantime the parents have to find schools for their children. Nigerian parents choice of schools is discussed in Chapter 7.

5.3.3. The Teachers

The term teacher covers all those with educational responsibilities within and outside of both MB and SG. The teachers quoted in this chapter include a deputy head, four language teachers, one educational psychologist, a welfare officer and two form tutors. These teachers had most contact time with the pupils on their entry and up to the first two years of their schooling. They had a complex array of beliefs about what steps to take to ensure that an adequate EAL learning programme was provided for the children. Two of the teachers thought it was not necessary to take any special steps outside of the children's attendance at the Language School, four were ambivalent and unsure about what to do to enhance the children's learning progress, and three were sure what not to do, but found that the organization of the relevant departments hindered the consideration and possible implementation of their initiatives. Departmental organizational constraints affect all children, but the interest here is to show how these affected, in particular, the Nigerian children under investigation.

Three of the teachers spoken to made it quite clear that they were faced with 'tremendous' (teacher's phrase) organizational hurdles when considering the most appropriate course of action to deal with the social
adjustment and learning problems of the children. In particular, two of these teachers consistently looked for ways to help the pupils, but the knowledge of the school's inadequacies caused them to defer action on the children's problems. They had little confidence in the ability of the schools to take adequate note of the complexity of the interactional situation involved in schooling children in an unfamiliar cultural setting. One of the teachers described the dilemma faced thus:

I don't want to refer X to the educational psychologist. I don't know quite what to do because I think X probably is a lot brighter... Well, I don't want to draw attention to X as a behavioural problem... It puts X as a problem and X isn't a problem. They would talk about child guidance. X doesn't need that. X needs a specialized kind of teaching just to bring out what is there and more perhaps...X is highly motivated and makes me think there is a lot there that can be brought out. I know I must find out the channel through which to do that (7 years experience)[10].

X constantly got involved in fights in the school. This teacher (T) who was directly responsible for X discovered that X's tendency to fight was a response to being 'teased' (see Chapter 9) by other children, about X's colour and continent of origin - Africa. Moreover, T put X's disruptive classroom behaviour down to frustration based on X's own realization that his/her educational progress was being hindered by his/her language difficulties. However, T felt that the avenues available for dealing with this child's difficulties were inappropriate. Lacking the authority to effect change or even modify existing routines, T procrastinated. The child got into further trouble which eventually came to the notice of middle and top management teachers who took the "normal" avenue and called in the educational psychologist.

An important point to note here is that although T was aware of the child's social adjustment difficulties, the primary concern was to enhance the child's learning ability. However, it was found that both schools' strategy of child management was one which did not fully take on board peer group interactional conflict - especially when it was related to 'teasing' (inter-ethnic abuse; see Chapter 9). As has been pointed out above, an understanding of "inside school" interaction is useful to an explanation of school labelled deviance. Here again, it was found that both schools tended to focus mainly on social problems that were not always particularly relevant to the case in hand. The schools appeared to have a social problem "chest" which contained a limited variety of "solutions":

If a child is disruptive we call in the ed. psych. (educational psychologist). If a child is underachieving we call in the ed. psych. Our ed. psych. is quite understanding really, but all problems seem the same to them. They always
come up with the same old solution - child guidance (middle management teacher). Within the framework of group interactional conflict child "guidance" of only one of the group is not a solution which can guarantee non-deviant behaviour. Neither will it enhance the means whereby the child can acquire school knowledge in an atmosphere of interactional understanding rather than hostility.

The other seven teachers were not as critical of the system as the two teachers quoted above. Six of these 'systemizers and routinizers' (Dalton, 1959:7) felt that their school took the 'proper' lines of action when tackling the problems of recently arrived children:

The (Language School), which do a good job, is there to help (if there are any language difficulties), but beyond that the Welfare Division takes charge (middle management teacher).

These teachers were 'cloaked in conformity' (Dalton, 1959) and used established procedure as an adequate response without allowing for differences between theory and practice. It is worth pointing out that two of the teachers perceived research into the education of ethnic minority children as a counter productive exercise:

There's an awful lot of people around trying to do things and perhaps it'll be a good idea if they left well alone (over 15 years teaching experience).

Although the other teachers did not state their views quite so precisely, it was felt that they too sympathized with the notion that cultural diversity and the inherent implications of a need to be aware of the cultural context within which children grow up was not a part of a teacher's responsibility. Stone (1981:248-249, see also Chapter 3) states firmly that teachers should not dabble into ethnic minority cultures especially as issues related to, in particular, 'West Indian family life is portray(ed)...as a pathological variant of the European middle-class family'. She urges instead that teachers should concentrate on the teaching of the three 'Rs'.

The distinction that needs to be made here is that between the appearance of concern with cultural context which mainly manifests itself in the form of steel bands and other cultural fringe concerns, and the need to develop strategies for drawing out children's learning skills through an awareness of the types of cultural difference that exist between the school and the homes of its pupils. In the case of Nigerian children born abroad, the part of the difference that should concern teachers is that which manifests itself mainly in terms of differences between adult and child relationships. It was discovered that the teachers consistently tried to "show off" to the children by setting up one culture against the other. That is, they were at pains to point out to the children the
differences especially in adult-child interaction:

I have to keep telling her that she is now in England and doesn't need to be so formal. I encourage her to speak up and make her own choices (Ms. PT:13G).

What this teacher has not 'accommodated' (Dalton, 1959:167) is the need to gradually bridge the gap between the child's previous experience and this new situation.

Kitwood and Borrill (1980:241) point out that one of the key concepts used in explaining difficulties experienced by ethnic minority pupils was that of 'cultural confusion'. It was believed that social interaction within two conflicting meaning systems (home and school) made it difficult for children to 'develop consistent guidelines for their conduct'. As Kitwood and Borrill insist, ethnic minority children are not confused. Neither should they be seen as being 'between two cultures' (Watson, 1977). It is acknowledged that they are in the midst of two cultures, but the children should not be seen as being unable to cope with different meaning systems. Rather, as social actors they are undergoing a process whereby they adopt the observable interactional strategies within their new environment and attempt to use to their own advantage the inconsistencies and differences between the two cultures in which they find themselves.

Children are capable of making their own choices and are very well aware of the "do's" and "don'ts" that operate within home and school norms. Of course they may apply newly discovered interactional strategies incorrectly, but this is a temporary difficulty on their way to achieving interactional competence in a new socio-cultural setting. The real problem is not the achievement of these skills, but in constantly being confronted by teachers like Ms. PT:13G who, in essence, adopted a sustained attack on the interactional skills they were familiar with by urging them to discount these skills. It is when this happens that children become not so much 'culturally confused', but interactionally inadequate in their new setting because they are forced to employ unfamiliar strategies without being allowed to undergo a less conflictual process of change based on their own initially tentative involvement in school social interaction.

The point to note is that teachers felt that certain "cultural areas" of current educational innovation (Little and Willey, 1981; see also Section 2.2.2) were outside of their responsibility. This chapter is not so much concerned with this issue as to examine how the teachers specifically concerned with language provision set about fulfilling what they did think was their responsibility.
5.4 Language Provision Programmes

5.4.1 Sentar Garlz

In SG all pupils regardless of their primary school assessment and which country they had previously schooled in were given the same "standard" test. The children's results in this test determined whether they would be withdrawn for EAL or given extra English classes designed for native speakers who had still not acquired adequate English language skills. In order to reassess the children's ability in English the same tests were used. Thus, in order to determine the children's learning progress the results of the first and subsequent tests were compared. As far as could be ascertained from the teachers interviewed, this was an undisputed teacher responsibility. However, right from this stage of assessment children were hindered not by cultural issues, but by teacher-related obstacles which prevented an accurate assessment of the children's ability. The following is an extract from notes given to me and written by a teacher (12 years experience) in SG:

The (school) tested all girls, regardless of whether they knew English, on the (name of test). This should have been open ended so that 'on the bedside table' or 'in the bedside table' were both acceptable but (teacher responsible) insisted doing it closed. Consequently, native speakers lost by using 'was' instead of 'were' and the 'deserted castle had a garden full of ' - ' required "weeds". "Brambles", "dandelions" etc. gained a '0' (zero) and could mean a difference of 3 months less on the Reading Age. The last page of the test was so blurred nobody could read it and it remained like this for the 5-6 years the test was used; it was never retyped!! Girls had the identical test everytime they were tested.

One of the Nigerian girls who was born in England, but had spent over five years in Nigeria before returning here and was now more fluent in Yoruba than English was given this test. Her test result was described as 'below average'. As Dearden (1984:124) points out, 'assessment is necessary not for learning to occur, but for us to know that it has occurred', but judging from the test responses expected, the school sought knowledge of language use in the narrowest of senses. In the case of the 'deserted castle' example, children recently arrived from abroad (and indeed children born here) were essentially assessed on the extent to which the child had been programmed to reproduce the "right" answer. There was no room for crediting a child's broader repertoire of knowledge and imagination.

The process through which children obtained EAL teaching ranged from
withdrawal from such lessons as Art, English, Religious Education (R.E.), Music and some practical subjects such as Needlework, to being in separate teaching groups designed for children with limited ability. With the 4th, 5th and 6th years EAL periods were time tabled, but the periods for this were progressively reduced such that one of the EAL teachers was now used to cover the lessons of absent colleagues. Hargreaves (1984:47) too found that EAL teachers were not always being used in their appropriate capacity. Needless to say this caused a major conflict between those concerned.

It was intended that the school would have close co-operation with the Language School as some of the children still made use of it for a few hours or days a week depending on their assessed level of competence in English. When Bosede was in her first year there was a discrepancy in assessment between SG's Language Department and the Language School. After seven months in the country an EAL girl had been assessed by the former as 'conversing fluently' and using her tenses correctly while the latter described her effort as 'painstakingly slow'. Following this conflict the Language School requested that those children attending its EAL lessons were not to receive EAL teaching while they were at SG.

Alongside the use of the Language School, SG had a procedure whereby new entrants who needed help with their English 'served a period of acclimatization' in a particular teaching group (of low ability children) until 'confident and judged ready' (teacher's phrase) to join in the normal timetable. Some of these children also attended a Language School. Another discrepancy in assessment between the Language School and SG resulted in a National Union of Teachers (NUT) protest and SG, temporarily stopped sending their EAL children there. At the time of this present research EAL provision in SG was about to be reorganized. However, the children concerned here had gone through the scheme described above.

These two organizations (SG school and the Language School) were operating in the same subject area for the purpose of enhancing children's English learning abilities. However, the conflict in assessment between the two was such that there were marked differentials in the grading of the English progress the children had made. Moreover, the conflict was not simply an issue between organizations, but was made known to the children. Thus at the Language School one of the children was told that she still needed more EAL lessons while SG school felt that she had had 'enough of EAL' (teacher's phrase) and subsequently passed on this assessment to the child. As long as the child was attending both organizations it was thus up to the child to discover a means of coming to terms with these differing assessments:

My Dad told me not to worry. That these teachers don't know what they're doing. That I should just do what the teacher tell, told me and not say I'm good in this or I'm good in that. So I just did the work they gave me (Omozoje: 266).
This account by Omozoje of what happened three years ago gives us (just) a hint of the dilemma she must have faced when teachers gave her opposing grades in the same subject. The other important factor which numerous researchers have shown (see Section 2.2.2 above) is that teachers base the level of school work they give pupils on the teacher's assessment of their educational ability. With particular reference to EAL teaching, Little and Willey (1981:17-18) have been critical of the standard of EAL teaching which they found did not go beyond the 'first phase' level of English language use. In Omozoje's case the two organizations did not work together to enhance an agreed level of EAL skills. It is reasonable to assume that in SG she received school work that demanded more of her than she received at the Language School. In other words, she was not being constantly stretched and since she was not making "good" progress in her acquisition of English language skills, the school's system of liaison and assessment was at the roots of her "underachievement". As one of her teachers put it:

I used to dread getting her after she'd been there (Language School). She'd come in and refuse to do the work - "too hard, Miss" and then I'd have to spend half the lesson getting her to do work she could do perfectly well on her own (Ms.PT:11G).

Section 5.5.1 shows how Omozoje makes sense of the conflicting assessments of her progress in acquiring skills in English, but first let us examine language provision programmes in MB.

5.4.2 Meedool Boiz (MB)

In MB all new entrants were tested for their language ability. The following are examples of the sentences the children had to read. There were 33 sentences altogether.

Sentences:

1. The dog got wet and Tom had to rub him dry.

2. He was a very good boy to give you some of his sweets.

11. Elizabeth had her hair thoroughly combed and her fringe cut.

17. Leonard was engaged by the Irish Linen Association to act as their London agent.

25. The Borough Council decided to celebrate the occasion by organizing a gigantic sports festival.
32. These documents constitute an authoritative record of a unique colonial enterprise.

33. Psychology is a science which seems to fascinate both the adult and the adolescent student.

Children's performance in this reading test and a mathematics test together with their primary school profiles were used to determine their placement in a particular teaching group. An example of one primary school's marking procedure in a comprehension exercise which struck the researcher as rather severe is given below:

**Question:** Name the two main species of elephant.
**Child's Answer:** The two main species of elephant are Africa and India.

The answer was marked wrong (with a loss of 2 points) as the child was expected to write African and Indian. Considering that this was not classroom work, but a final assessment of the child's primary school achievement which was to be passed on to his prospective secondary school, it is no wonder that there is criticism of the techniques of assessment (Gipps et al., 1983) and the process of education (Peters, 1980). A top management teacher at MB did point out that his/her school was not always satisfied with 'primary school profiles' (gradings of achievement in social and academic skills, particularly in Mathematics and English) so MB always gave tests in these two subjects. As with SG the secondary school test was used as a means of determining a child's teaching group placement (see Chapter 7).

EAL speakers whose language problems were deemed to be 'acute' (middle management teacher's phrase) were sent to a Language School. These were mainly children recently arrived from abroad. The other children were distributed into teaching groups and native speakers who had English language problems were placed in teaching groups for children with limited ability or given extra English lessons. An EAL child whose language problems were not assessed as acute followed a normal timetable and was also given extra help within the English Language Department. An EAL child who had had 'intensive' (teacher's phrase) language teaching at a Language School, but had not become competent enough to follow a normal timetable was 'gently eased' (teacher's phrase) into the curriculum of the secondary school by having lessons with children the school had assessed as having limited ability. This group of children contained both EAL and native English speaking children. Hargreaves (1984:45) criticized this practice as 'inappropriate' but felt that it was something done 'in the past'.

Although the data for this present research was collected between 1982
and 1983 prior to the publication of Hargreaves' 1984 ILEA Committee Report
it does appear rather complacent of the Committee to think this an outdated
practice in ILEA schools. As they point out a couple of paragraphs later
'it is essential that no teacher should be allowed *unconsciously* (my
emphasis) to confuse linguistic handicap with mental handicap' (p.46). MB
had no EAL teacher at the time of this present research and it was found
that this encouraged the practice of putting EAL speakers with 'acute'
English language difficulties with limited ability indigenous children.

It is acknowledged that economic constraints and the need to keep to ILEA
defined staffing ratios and other organizational requirements may preclude
the appointment of an EAL teacher. However, it is precisely these sorts of
constraints that make it crucial that language programmes should be
carefully organized. As in SG, MB's EAL speakers initially had to divide
their time between the Language School and MB. In the first instance EAL
children who were spending two to three days at MB attended practical
lessons such as Art, P.E., Games and so on. In order to partake in these
lessons every time they were in school, an EAL child sometimes found
himself taking these subjects not only with different teaching groups of
the same year, but with different year groups. This was done so that the
school could make an on-going assessment of the child's skills within
different ability levels. Upon full time attendance at MB an EAL speaker
would then be placed in a permanent teaching group. This practice showed
an attempt by the school not to rely solely on test results. It also
communicated to the parents that the school was making a serious effort to
discover the child's skills and place him in an appropriate teaching
group.

An EAL parent had been impressed but puzzled by the amount of planning
MB had undertaken on behalf of their son:

He started with only woodcraft and erm games an' something
else an'... they have to take him to either class one or two
sometimes or three sometimes till he's okay before they will
put him in his own class (mother :S1:318).

It appeared to this parent that MB had a complex system of child placement
which she hoped would eventually 'benefit' him. MB even consulted me on
the issue. In the circumstances the school was operating as best as it
could within its own organizational structure which was not geared to
coping with children recently arrived from abroad. How long should they be
kept at the Language School? When should they start full time schooling?
How do you assess the skills acquired within a different education system?
I have commended the school for what it attempted to do. However, the
theoretical underpinning of a practice though sound may be operationalized
in a counter productive manner. The decisions reached were mainly as a
result of a trial-and-error process and the child's access to EAL learning
was one characterized by confusion. More importantly, the child
interpreted this process of schooling him as one which reflected his own 'stupidity':

Me, am jus' stupid. De teesha doesn' know where to put me.
He try me in class t'ree. Den class wan an' two. Den a go to
class two or maybe t'ree to do somet'in' wan day, den anoder
class anoder day. A don' know anyt'in' (2B3).

As pointed out earlier the school attempted to discover his skills by placing him in different teaching groups and years. The purpose of this exercise had not been communicated to the child. Even if this intention had been conveyed to the child, the process of additional language acquisition itself (see Chapter 6) would have reinforced the child's belief that all his previous learning had provided him with no useful skills in his new school. Apart from drawing attention to the manner in which children internalize and come to act out teachers' beliefs about their learning abilities (Rosenthal and Jacobson, 1968) it is necessary to stress that I have no evidence to suggest that any of the teachers at MB or the Language School directly informed the child that he was stupid. However, as the interactionist position makes clear, an actor's understanding of a social situation is arrived at through his/her own interpretations and definitions of the situation.

An anticipated shared meaning does not always occur even among those who have been interacting in the same setting over a period of time. One of the teachers expressed dissatisfaction at the school's methods of assessment and the language programme provided for another of the EAL boys:

(He had) home tuition at one point - two days a week. Went
to a Language School - another two days a week. While all
that was on he started here. It all seems a bit disorganized
actually. It seems to me he has suffered through the system.
He isn't a particularly remedial child at all (7 years
experience).

Another teacher felt that the Language School did not always attend to the specific learning problems each child had and was critical of the level of liaison between the Language School and MB. This teacher felt that the appointment of an EAL teacher at MB would be a step in the right direction. However, as has been shown in Section 5.4.1, having EAL teachers at SG did not necessarily result in the children receiving instruction within a well managed programme. Although I do not agree with Rutter et al's. (1979) findings in their entirety (see Section 2.2.2 above) the disorganized nature of language programmes does leave room for improvement.

There was no reported major conflict between MB and the Language School in respect of either the children under study or other pupils. However, an apparent air of consensus worked to camouflage from the main operators of the EAL programme the overall effects of their policy.
5.5 The Children's Placement

5.5.1 The Girls

In order to assess their current level of educational attainment Bosede and Uzoaku were given verbal, reading and spelling tests. Bosede and Uzoaku 'did reasonably well overall' (a teacher), but both were assessed as needing extra help with their English. The teacher also observed that their parents had 'good' educational qualifications (see Chapters 7 and 10 for the importance of this comment to the general perception of the Nigerian child).

(a) Bosede

When Bosede began at SG her written competence in English was illustrated by the following extracts from her written work and given to me by one of her teachers:

1. I wish I haven't given up.
2. Time for play tennis.
3. Give me prove.
4. It's time I leave.

In addition, her Junior School reading age was below the average for her 11 year age group. One of the teachers (9 years experience) pointed out that Bosede was born here and thus felt that it was not advisable for her to be given EAL. Another teacher (7 years experience) set out the following options:

Implication - to be given no help and left with low R.A. (reading age)? or... to be treated as remedial native speaker? (Neither would have taught her tense usage) (teacher's parenthesis).

After much discussion in the departments responsible, it was agreed that Bosede should have EAL lessons. Her parents were not consulted about this placement nor were they asked about her schooling in Nigeria. Bosede received a full school year's EAL teaching. The following are extracts from her final primary school report and her first two years reports in secondary school:

PRIMARY REPORT

She likes to talk which improves her English. She listens hard and understands most of the instructions given... She attends remedial classes... Reading Test: 7.06...She is an intelligent girl who has naturally experienced frustration due to the language difficulties she has had.
SECONDARY REPORT

She has made reasonable progress... but special help is being given in English... (1st year report).

She had (additional language learning) help during her first year... Yoruba was (my emphasis) her dominant language. She needed help with her tense structure and usage... Although she might not have a full understanding of all subjects, she has made enormous progress in most areas since last year (2nd year report).

After her first year 'special help' in English was withdrawn even though one of her language teachers thought she still needed it, because she was still having problems with her tense usage and idioms. It is worth noting that after two years in this country the teacher now assessed that Yoruba was not Bosede's dominant language.

Bosede's parents had been dissatisfied with the school's language provision and had augmented this with private tuition. Thus Bosede's subsequent progress in English was a result of the combination between state and private tuition. It is worth noting here that over three quarters of the children born abroad had private tuition, especially in English, during their first two years in this country. In addition, just over two thirds of British born Nigerians had also had private tuition in at least one school subject. The EAL parents (and others; see Chapter 7) wanted their children to 'do well' in school, but as one of them put it:

The teachers have too much in their hands. They can't control the class. Instead of teaching something useful they have to be wasting time controlling the children. In that case I have to make sure she has better teaching sometime else (Father:S2:177).

The parents who voiced the same sentiments as above paid to ensure their children's success in school. The organizational context within which learning was expected to take place (Section 5.4) confirmed the parents' lack of faith in the school's ability to create an atmosphere conducive to learning.

(b) Uzoaku

Uzoaku spoke with an accent and coupled with her written English it was decided she needed EAL lessons. The following is an extract from one
of her school compositions:

About the school premises, the school have 5 building each for each forms, but for the 5th year's student's their's are build with the Headmissress with the teacher's too. We also have Library in the school, Chemistry lab, Garden, Daining hall. Trees, Flowers. We play Netball at times. Do spots (wrote this in her third year).

According to the parents, one of the teachers had promised to arrange extra English lessons for her and was to inform the parents of the arrangements in two to three weeks time. Here again, the parents were not impressed by this promise and they arranged for private tuition in English. Her father also gave up some of his 'free time' (his phrase) so as to give Uzoaku 'attention and help in her English' (father's statement). The parents were asked why they were prepared to pay for private tuition when the school had promised to organize extra English lessons. The father pointed out that he had little confidence in schools in general:

I'm not going to rely on that (teacher's promise) because she might just be going through the motions because I know what the teachers can say to you to make you feel - not to worry them too much. They give you any excuse (father:S1:503).

According to one of the teachers, due to time tabling problems, out of a possible 31 weeks Uzoaku had received only 12 weeks of EAL teaching. Uzoaku's school reports for the first two years in the school read thus:

SECONDARY REPORT

She is impatient and rather unpredictable and this may be due to her language difficulties...She is an intelligent girl who is determined to do well and deserves good results...To improve her vocabulary she is always reading but this is making her rather a loner. The social life of the school is just as important as a means for her to use her English and increase her vocabulary (1st year report).

She must be prepared to work very hard next year. (She) must improve her English which appears to be affecting much of her written work in most subjects. (She) is a slow worker and made no attempt to answer questions. (Her) essays are of a reasonable standard, but she will probably find the CSE course more suitable as it does not require essay answers and the examiners are more lenient about the standard of English used (2nd year report).

Uzoaku explained that she did not answer questions in class because the other children laughed at her speech and she always had to repeat her
answers because 'the teacher can never understand me'. Her difficulties in English were assessed as hindering her progress in other subjects. In order that she would not be 'out of her depth' (teacher's phrase) in the subjects she was taking, Uzoaku was placed in a teaching group with girls of limited ability. Some of the teachers felt this was an inappropriate placement and it took them two years to get her out of the limited ability group she had been placed in. One teacher describes the situation:

We fought for two years to try and get her out (of limited ability group)...and people just wouldn't allow it. They wouldn't let her move... Somebody somewhere was putting a barrier up. I don't know why. Maybe they felt she still hadn't picked up enough English. Although (laughs) the sorts of conversations in form time she's a lot better than some of the English children. You know children born in England. Erm I think personally she could have coped with mainstream. She could have moved further on than she is... (Ms.PT:8G).

Organizational procedure was such that even when an error was recognized it took rather a long time to correct it.

(c) Omozoje

Omozoje had quite different problems. She had taken some 'O' level equivalent examinations and though she had not done exceptionally well in these, one of her teachers insisted that because she came from a 'cultured home' she be allowed to take the 'A' Level course in English Literature. Thus, it is not surprising that she 'stormed out' (teacher's phrase) of EAL classes when her English was marked wrong. The following are examples of her written English:

1. Each man when she is with them.
2. Instead of been truthful.
3. She has no reason for this her attitude.
4. He so much love her.
(taken from written work provided by a teacher)

Her first school report at SG reads thus:

She has settled into school and her 'A' Level course extremely well and quickly. She has made a determined effort to master the work and has shown herself to be a commendable student. She has good ideas and has greatly improved her understanding of the work. She now needs to concentrate on her written English and by regularly attending (EAL) she should overcome any difficulty. She is to be praised for the effort she has given her work.
One of Omozoje's teachers suggested that she should have retaken her 'O' Levels in English before going on to the 'A' Level stage. She had no conceptual difficulties with her social science subjects and one of her teachers felt that if she failed her 'A' Level in these subjects it would be because of her written English. Omozoje did begin taking EAL lessons but it meant her taking lessons with a range of pupils from the first to the sixth form. However, there was disagreement as to whether such a 'cultured' girl should be made to continue with EAL. Omozoje also felt that her English was better than that of some of the girls with whom she was taking EAL lessons and according to her she was not going to attend lessons with someone to whom she could teach English:

I can teach (her) English. She doesn't know any English...

An EAL teacher pointed out that Omozoje's work was marked for 'content only'. Omozoje was aware of the different attitudes teachers had towards her work and she exploited this conflict in order to do what pleased her. As can be seen from her written work she did need more language help than she was receiving. Moreover, she needed a consensus of opinion which would have at one and the same time been sympathetic to her belief in the adequacy of her English, for conversational purposes, but also firm enough to insist that it was inadequate for the 'A' Level examination that she wished to take. In their attempt to identify with and be positive about children's skills, teachers appeared prone to temporary amnesia. As Dearden (1984) suggests one of the essences of teaching is to get children through the education system at as high a level as possible. Teachers would do well to remember this.

Apart from this role conflict SG was beset with EAL timetabling problems, lack of resources and lack of co-ordination between some of the teachers involved. During my stay in the school two teachers gave me the following written messages:

Teacher A: I am desperately short of books... I don't feel I'm using my skills in the lessons...

Teacher B: I've now been handed a third year beginner to fit in with (a) semi literate with pidgin English (b) far too weak for EAL (beginners) (c) preparing for stage 2 and trying for 'O' (levels) - this mixture must take the biscuit.
These notes show how organizational confusion together with inadequate resources work to prevent children having adequate access to school knowledge (see Rutter et al., 1979; Hargreaves, 1984). A statement of hope received from one of the five teachers spoken to about EAL provision in SG was in the form of the cliche phrase 'it can only get better' (5 years experience).

5.5.2 The Boys

Prior to entry into MB Segun and Edet were given reading tests. Edet at 13 years of age could hardly read. He knew the alphabet, but could not spell the words the teacher had asked him to spell. However, he did spell Nigerian place names correctly. His reading age was assessed as that of a six year old. Segun (11 years old) had similar problems. His writing was hardly decipherable and his reading was below average. He was assessed as having the reading age of an eight year old. The teachers were unable to reconcile the children's ability in reading and comprehension with their insistence that they had attended English speaking schools in Nigeria. Segun's mathematics was assessed as 'average' while Edet's mathematics was assessed as 'good'. On the basis of their test results and in consultation with their parents Segun and Edet began attending a Language School. Here, they would get extra help in English until they were considered proficient enough to attend MB. Edet and Segun spent a few days a week at the Language School and this was supplemented by local authority provided home tuition. After a few months they started attending MB for a couple of days a week. At the time of the interview Edet had already spent three years at MB and Segun had spent just over six months in this country and was about to start full time schooling.

(a) Edet

Edet's parents wanted him to begin in the first year, but he was 14 months older than the 'average first year' (teacher's phrase) so he had been placed in the second year. In some Nigerian schools children are not allowed to move up a year until they have achieved a set level of skills. Edet had repeated his last year in a Nigerian primary school. Before it was decided which of the limited ability teaching groups he would be placed in, Edet had registered with a second year group on the mornings he was at school and took various practical lessons with the second and third years. When he eventually stopped attending a Language School he began taking all his lessons with a second year limited ability teaching group. After a year with this group Edet's school report read as follows:
SCHOOL REPORT

(He) is generally a pleasant, friendly boy. He must continue to take his school work seriously and learn not to worry when he makes mistakes...He has climbed a mountain (reference to his gaining three years on his reading age in nine months), but still has a few reading and spelling difficulties.

Although Edet's reading had improved dramatically one of his teachers pointed out that his speech was still unclear:

His way of speaking is sometimes difficult to understand, but he understands English and his reading is very good. It's just the actual way that he speaks the words. The other children find it difficult to understand.

When Edet moved on to the third year he remained in a teaching group for limited ability children. The teacher who had most contact time with him pointed out that Edet was not 'a particularly remedial child at all' (Ms.PT:IB).

(b) Segun

When Segun started at MB he could hardly read (see below), his spelling was poor and according to his teachers, his speech was difficult to understand. He attended a Language School three times a week which was supplemented by home tuition. When he started full time at MB he was placed in a teaching group for children with limited ability. This teaching group was predominantly for native speakers of English who could not cope with secondary school level work. Their time in school was spent mainly with two or three teachers who gave them extra tuition in English and Maths. A teacher described these limited ability teaching groups as 'primary school units within a secondary school'. At the time of this present research Segun had not been in the school long enough for a school report to have been written. The following is an extract from an interview which focused on a teacher's perception of Segun's general learning problems:

I haven't yet sorted out what his problems are - whether his previous education has been lacking...I think that is the case rather than that he just found learning very difficult ...I would say he has higher academic ability than the rest of the people in the class. I would say that he has probably got quite a lot of ability, but it's not being discovered...I would say that - this may be purely an impression, but I think the child has just been in the wrong situation at the wrong time - rather than that he just cannot pick up things (Ms.ST:40B).
It is to be hoped that organizational constraints operating in the school will not hinder the ability of teachers to embark on a strategy which will allow for an understanding of the children's learning difficulties and at the same time enable them access to adequate educational provision.

Both Segun and Edet's parents had considered private tuition, but had decided against it. One of the parents pointed out that she had decided to 'let the school get on with their job'.

5.6 **Noteworthy Points**

There is no doubt that the children examined in this section had difficulties with acquiring English language skills. As far back as 1963, the Ministry of Education had produced an advisory pamphlet concerned with teaching English to 'children of immigrants'. Throughout the 1960's the provision for the teaching of English as an additional language (EAL) was given continuous attention. During the 1970's there were further reports and numerous researches on the children's language learning problems (Bullock Report, 1975) and the facilities that should be made available, including teacher expertise for effective EAL teaching.

Although in this present research, observations were carried out in classrooms, it was not possible to observe the EAL lessons in which the Nigerian children discussed in this chapter were involved. Firstly, three of the children were not then having 'special English' lessons separate from other children. Secondly, the one language school pupil that could have been observed was deemed by one of the teachers to be already receiving 'too much attention' from other educationists concerned with the child[1]. Thus it is not possible to provide a detailed description of an EAL lesson and the methods employed in teaching it. However, examples of such lessons and methods can be read in Brown (1979); see also OECD (1983a).

It has been shown that tests of achievement alone when used to elicit what Peters (1980:23) describes as 'indoctrinated information', can prevent adequate access to particular levels of school work (Keddie, 1973). It has also been shown that 'cultural understanding' is misinterpreted to mean a relaxation of expectations. In addition, teachers' attempts to explain school deviance focused mainly on cultural issues outside of the school and it was suggested that teachers may discover more relevant explanations for unacceptable school behaviour by examining the interactional relationships operating within their schools. Moreover, the assessed high social status of a child can work to that child's educational disadvantage in enabling access to a level of work
beyond the current skills of the child. It is acknowledged that the child still has a "better" "head start" to one whose assessed low social status prevents access to 'demanding' work (V.K. Edwards, 1979). At least the high status child is given the opportunity to attempt to acquire high level educational skills. On the other hand, even children who were not perceived as remedial ended up in limited ability classes because of the organizational constraints operating in the schools. It was found that in respect of EAL speakers, teachers could not provide adequately what they themselves agreed was their responsibility.

The children of parents who were disillusioned with the ability of the schools to provide sufficient EAL learning facilities, were those who emerged as 'successful' (teacher's assessment) English language learners, that is, those children who supplemented their school based learning with private tuition. Stone (1981:Chapter 4) discussed within a different context West Indian parents' decisions to send their children to 'Saturday Schools' because they, too, were dissatisfied with their children's learning progress. This is an even more worrying response to the school system as most of the West Indian children were born here and had received all their schooling here.

The major conclusion of this chapter, therefore, is that a combination of school interactional relationships, a rigid assessment procedure and a disorganized school programme, together with one that has not fully taken on board the challenge of a comprehensive multi-ethnic education (see Section 7.5), provides a counter-productive educational atmosphere. When schools show that they cannot adequately organize the framework within which learning is to take place, it seems unlikely that they can grapple with the complexities of curriculum content (see Section 7.5).

This chapter has outlined EAL organizational frameworks within the schools researched and treated as problematic the school knowledge teachers wish children to acquire. The following chapter examines the strategies children employ in order to convince the teachers that, at least in the spoken form, they are acquiring skills in the English language.
1. In this chapter the term language is employed in its everyday usage as a means of communication. A more detailed examination of 'language' as it operates within a given social context is carried out in Chapter 6.


3. Driver's conclusion is more optimistic than his data suggests (Taylor 1981:113-122; see also Spencer, 1983). Kirp (1979) and Troyna (1982) analyse the manner in which those who are in positions to effect educational change end up marginalizing issues and hope to 'do good by doing little'.

4. These writings were made available by one of the teachers at SG.


See also Woods (1983).

6. Although a teacher first drew attention to this clause it was later discovered that a similar point was made in writing in the boy's file by a representative of the local authority dealing with the case.

7. A telephone enquiry to the Home Office revealed that cases were treated individually, but that this indeed was likely to be the case.

8. The days of attendance changed according to a variety of reasons ranging from the language learning progress of each child to administrative constraints.

9. The parents educational qualifications are as exact as possible without making them identifiable from school records or other sources.
10. A strikingly similar situation occurred in both schools. Thus, in order not to draw unfair attention to one particular school neither the school nor the sex of the child has been identified.

11. This information was passed on to me by one of the teachers who had direct contact with the Language School. In view of this response I was advised by another teacher not to contact the Language School 'when they were in that mood'.
6.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter we showed that the organization of language learning programmes offered little to facilitate the enhancement of children's acquisition of language skills. In this chapter we examine the manner in which Nigerian born children cope with speaking a British Education Approved Dialect (BEAD). It takes the language learning issue away from the structural concerns with organizational matters to an analysis of language learning within an interactionist framework.

The following discussion is concerned with the learning and speaking of BEAD by recently arrived Nigerian children. The Bullock Report (1975) implored that

no child should be expected to cast off the language and culture of the home as he crosses the school threshold, nor to live and act as though school and home represent two totally separate and different cultures (para 20:5).

The pros and cons of mother tongue (MT) teaching or the value of the availability of such facilities within schools in general will not be argued here. Interested readers are referred to Rees (1983), OECD (1983a:espec. Chapter 15); James and Jeffcoate (1981:espec. Section 2) and Stubbs and Hillier (1983). Although these are areas of educational concern for ethnic minority pupils for whom BEAD is not one in which they are fluent, this chapter concentrates on the children's coping strategies as far as spoken language is concerned and places the children's experiences in a micro-situational context.

The teachers spoken to (Section 5.3.3 above) were almost all convinced of the ability of children to 'pick up' the English language in an English school setting. Brown (1979) argued that although it may be easier for primary school children to 'pick up' English, their skills would remain inadequate if the children did not have an organized BEAD teaching programme [2]. This chapter is not so much concerned with outlining the overall BEAD skills attained by the children, but in focusing on their verbalized form of language (speech).

Sociolinguists make distinctions between types of verbalizations. 'Dialects' are generally defined as varieties of a language and 'accents' as the manner in which words are pronounced (Trudgill and Hughes, 1979). 'Speech style' refers to 'how (their emphasis) a message is said rather than what (their emphasis) is said in terms of verbal content' (Giles and
St. Clair, 1979:4) and 'register' predicts the use of a particular speech style (Halliday, 1978). Thus, speech can be produced in a particular dialect with a particular accent while a given verbal exchange informs the speech style used (Giles, 1973).

Although it is worth bearing these differences in mind, the focus of this chapter is not on identifying each of these. The complexity of the task at hand is to draw attention to these distinctions, and emphasize that they combine to produce speech which is used for verbal exchange, in this case, between teacher and pupil. Sociolinguists have argued the existence of particular types of verbal modifications within their conceptualization of speech style—dialect shifts (Trudgill and Hughes, 1979), speech convergence (Giles and Smith, 1979) and metaphorical switching (Fishman, 1972). These are used as analytical tools in the examination of Nigerian children's attempts to verbalize in BEAD.

The literature on language and education in Britain focuses on the notion of bilingualism—one mother tongue and one English language. In order to be aware of the complexities facing both teacher and child in the quest for BEAD language competence, it is necessary to point out that all the children discussed in Chapter 5 were in reality learning BEAD as a third or even fourth language. Thus it would be more appropriate to label them as speakers of English as an additional language (EAL). This would also do away with language ranking implicit in the use of "second". The children spoke one Nigerian ethnic based language and a Nigerian dialect of English (NDE) which is similar in concept to Patois or Creole (V.K. Edwards, 1979, 1983). Thus, English words and phrases were not always used in the BEAD manner. However, these made sense in NDE while teachers heard them as incorrect forms of BEAD—especially as the children usually maintained that they spoke English and no other language—even at home [3]. Though the teachers accepted this with some scepticism, they attempted to improve the children's BEAD. Unknown to them they were attempting to correct the children's NDE. The following discussion shows how this teacher task not only created a conflictual learning situation, but made the children's learning a more difficult one by insisting that aspects of the children's dialect which adequately served them as a means of communication was incorrect. In addition, the implications of the messages passed on to children by teachers in their attempt to teach the children BEAD is outlined.

Apart from NDE, the children also spoke a Nigerian ethnic based mother tongue (MT). Day (1982) has shown that prevailing attitudes to a child's MT by the dominant group has implications for a child's attitude to its own language. Furthermore, the attitude of the child's parents to their MT is also an important aspect of the overall response of a child to the learning of a given language (in this case, BEAD). Thus, parents' attitudes to their own language are examined in conjunction with existing
literature on teachers' attitudes to children's speech (J.R. Edwards, 1979; V.K. Edwards, 1979) [4].

Most research on the social aspects of language learning acknowledge the interactive process between school and home attitudes and offer explanations which consider the dynamics between the two (Ryan and Giles, 1982). The immediate aim of this chapter is to present a detailed description of the school experiences of Nigerian born children based on the process through which they arrived at verbal exchange coping strategies.

6.2 **Laughing, Nodding and Saying 'Yes'**

Language may be spoken, written or read and these three forms have varying degrees of social acceptability within particular social situations. Berger and Luckmann (1967:57) assert that language in the form of 'a system of vocal signs, is the most important sign system of human society'. Giles et al., (1980:2) point out that language behaviour... is the product of individuals who are actively engaged in the construction of social reality (...and who...) use language to create and manage situations and impressions.

Through verbal expression (speech), language is not only a communicative tool, but is 'essential for any understanding of the reality of everyday life' (Berger and Luckmann, 1967:52).

 Bernstein (1972) emphasized that though his linguistic codes may reflect social class divisions he does not imply that these codes are the exclusive linguistic repertoires of particular social classes (see Coulthard, 1969 for a criticism of Bernstein's work; see also Bernstein, 1977). In the context of this section what is of central concern is not so much the codes which children employ or their communicative performance per se, but the nature of their spoken responses to particular verbal exchanges which occur within a school setting. Giles and St. Clair (1979:2) point out that speech variables are not only important to the manner in which we perceive others, but that we intentionally or unintentionally modify our speech style or make dialect shifts (Trudgill and Hughes, 1979)(see Section 6.3) in different social contexts. Berger (1979) suggests that when individuals communicate for the first time, one of their immediate concerns is to acquire knowledge of the other person. This is done not only to reduce uncertainty, but also to discover certain characteristics about the person which is deducible from the person's speech. The interesting point about this process of character assessment
is that what matters most is not so much the content of the conversation, but the speech style (and accent) of the communicator (see also Giles and St. Clair, 1979).

The first encounter the Nigerian born child has with a teacher (or other person with educational responsibilities) is remembered primarily as an amusing situation. They described the teachers as speaking to them as if (they) had butter in (their) mout's (laughs).

The teachers had behaved true to expectations. The manner in which English would be spoken had been the subject of incessant teasing by Uzoaku's friends in Nigeria. Not only did the teachers speak with half shut lips as if trying to prevent something spilling out, but dey (the teachers) speek Eengleesh too fass h'an' too low...

When dey speek dey don' h'open deer mout' (Edet)

This would not be so amusing if the teachers speech did not correspond so closely to the television films the children had watched in Nigeria. The people in those films spoke so fast that there was hardly enough time to understand what was being said. It was the same with these teachers; by the time the children had worked out the first part of the verbal communication the teacher had moved on. (Of course this is a general problem wherever there is unfamiliarity with the local language.) Rather than trying to catch up - which they never succeeded in doing while watching those films - the children just waited for the next section of talk they could understand or, as was usually the case, they were so fascinated by this encounter that they just looked at the teacher in amazement. They may as well have been looking at the television screen.

While the children were busy watching a real live movie unfold, the teachers were busy trying to assess the children's level of competence in English. A teacher found one of the children difficult to understand. Another one, did not really think that the child was speaking English and had wondered if the child was speaking some form of 'Nigerian Creole' interspersed with 'the odd English word' (teacher's phrase). The child's English had 'for some reason reminded (him) of Jamaican Creole' (middle management teacher). For some reason both these teachers after making their observations, had chuckled. They, too, found the situation amusing.

After the initial fascination with the teachers' spoken language the children soon became alarmed and anxious when they realized that they were expected to speak English like the teachers. The teachers had not said so in so many words, but this was the impression the children got:

Dey (the teachers) h'always want me toe say sometin' again. Enytam a say enytin' a 'ave toe say it lak two, t'ree or h'even four tams bet a carnt spik Eengish lak dem (Segun).

Segun was accustomed to communicating in NDE. He was also accustomed to hearing, but not quite understanding Anglo-Television English (ATE) and
this, as far as he was concerned, was what the teachers' expected him not only to understand but to speak. Attempts to understand the teacher's speech was thus based on a combination of the amount of previous experience the children had with ATE and NDE. While not invalidating attempts to teach BEAD and so facilitate British based verbal communication the teacher strategy of continuously eliciting repetitions gave rise to an interactionally stressful situation for the child.

Chomsky (1965) takes it that each individual has access to the creative act which is language and that they are thus linguistically competent in a language they are fluent in (usually their native language). However, linguistic competence (conformity to a language's rule system) needs to be contrasted with linguistic performance, that is, the employment of language in particular social settings. Hymes (1967) points out that in a speech encounter the social setting, including social, cultural and psychological constraints on speech, is crucial to an individual's communicative competence (the knowledge of and the ability to use a language in its appropriate manner).

The initial strategy the children adopted in order to cope with the teacher's almost unintelligible English while at the same time hoping they were managing the situation in such a manner that the teacher would think they understood what was being said, was that of nodding, looking, smiling, laughing and saying 'yes':

Sometime a wud jus' la rff or smal...Sometime a wud smal if a cudn' hear (understand) her, sometime a wud laugh bicoz d'way she speek is funny.

A wuz jus' sayin' yes, yes, yes. A cudn' hear (understand) what he wuz sayin'.

The fest time I went to school, a had forgot'n how they speak ... A remember a bit but I was jus' looking at the teacher.

We thus had situations in which both parties who were soon to have daily contacts with each other hardly understood what the other was saying. Moreover, both parties considered themselves speakers of English while at the same time finding the utterances of the other party amusing. At this stage the implications of the reality of the situation had not been assessed by the school or interpreted by the children. This is the fun stage. The following section examines the serious stage, that is, when the children assess their English as inadequate.
6.3 Accent / Dialect Shifts

When an individual's dialect or accent is modified such that it is similar to that of others contributing to the verbal exchange, verbal shifts are said to occur (Trudgill and Hughes, 1979). Speech divergence occurs when an individual's speech style shifts away from the operating style within a particular verbal exchange context. Giles and Smith (1979) suggest that speech convergence signifies the motivation to express or receive social approval and that speech divergence expresses disapproval of the situational context or an unwillingness to conform or seek social approval through speech. A similar process takes place with accents and dialects. These occurrences may be interpreted as the wish of the speaker to avoid the 'stigma' (Goffman, 1963) attached to speaking in a socially unacceptable manner (Trudgill and Hughes, 1979).

Nigerian children who have recently arrived in this country soon realize that their spoken English is quite different from that of the native speaker. With this recognition is the implication that in essence

H'oll mar English iz useless.

Not only does their repertoire of English now appear inadequate to them, but the limits of their ability in BEAD are constantly exposed by the teachers who with every good intention want to enhance their ability to speak, read and write BEAD:

As an English teacher my job is to give them the English skills that they need to be able to succeed in this country. Although this desire is commendable (Jeffcoate, 1984), Rees (1983:86) points out that this type of teacher's belief tends to lead teachers into thinking that 'bilingualism (or multilingualism) is detrimental to a child's intellectual development' [5].

V.K. Edwards (1979) has shown that in the school learning situation a child's verbal performance, especially when produced in a dialect different from that operating in the school, can be crucial to the decisions teachers make about pupils (see also Trudgill and Hughes, 1979). These decisions were significantly associated with children's educational success. J.R. Edwards (1979) in a study of teachers' reactions to disadvantaged speech (i.e. the speech of working class Irish pupils) argued that pupils' reading styles were employed by teachers as cues to pupils' potential educational success. Scherer (1979) also suggests that if perceptions of an individual's language behaviour are negative, the response to the individual is also likely to be negatively consequential. Thus in the school situation a pupil's verbal performance coupled with a teacher's negative perception of a child's social background does not only encourage in teachers a general downward stereotyping of the child, but also acts as a self-fulfilling prophecy if the child does fail to succeed (J.R. Edwards, 1979; V.K. Edwards, 1979; see also Rosenthal and Jacobson,
1968). In other words, teachers create for the child a cycle of educational failure.

Banks (1981:159) observes that problems occur when a pupil's communication system conflicts with those of the school. He further suggests that 'instances of miscommunication can lead to larger problems of student alienation, discontent and academic failure'. For these Nigerian children instances of alienation had already begun. When their speech was not corrected they found they had to repeat themselves several times before being understood. By the time they had gone through this several times a day they suffered from what can only be termed speech fatigue. With reference to one of the children a teacher admitted to letting a child go because she could see that the child was tired

not physically tired... There were long pauses between her words. It was an effort for her to speak. Mind you the way (X) spoke it's no wonder.

Both communicators in a teacher-pupil situation make use of a process of verbal utterance assessment, but in educational assessment terms, the result of the teachers' assessment has far reaching implications for the pupil. Nevertheless, the pupil's assessment of the teacher's speech may have even more serious implications for the pupil's motivation to learn. Day (1982) in a reappraisal of Cremona and Bates' (1977) examination of children's (age six to ten) attitudes towards standard Italian and a southern Italian dialect, affirms that children speaking a minority dialect, whether it is creolized or geographic, apparently enter school with a preference for or at least a neutral attitude towards their speech code, but as they grow older, tend to acquire the language attitudes of the dominant culture (Day, 1982:120).

Garcia (1981) observes that members of a particular ethnic group who speak the same language or dialect of the language share values and attitudes which may conflict with the norms and values of other speakers of the same language base who belong to a different ethnic group. He further points out that when teachers and pupils have different communication systems, the greater the degree of difference is, the greater the likelihood that there will be miscommunication between them. Day (1982) in his own study of children's attitudes toward language found that children between the ages of five and seven were not only aware of language differences in their community, but also that their attitudes towards these language differences reflected the attitudes held by society at large. The same applies to adults [3].
Mother Tongue (MT)

Four of the children stated that their parents spoke to them both in their MT and in English. Edet, could not speak the parent's MT, Efik, as he had gone to school in Lagos where he had become fluent in the local language, Yoruba. He spoke to his parents as he describes it in 'pidgin English' and they spoke to him in English even though they too understood and could speak Yoruba. The mother could also speak another Nigerian based language. Edet did not at first admit to speaking or having knowledge of any Nigerian based language. He insisted that he only knew and spoke English [3].

Bosede and Segun's parents spoke Yoruba at home, but mainly spoke to the children in English. Segun and Uzoaku were both more fluent in Yoruba and Igbo, respectively, than in English. At home both Uzoaku and Segun spoke their MT 'often'. This did not please their parents as the latter wanted the children to become more fluent in English. Bosede and Omozoje spoke whichever language was suitable for the particular topic of conversation and from their account this was usually their MT. According to them they used to get 'fed up' with speaking English all the time. At first Bosede was quite reticent about admitting this to me during the interview and like Edet, had at first only admitted to speaking English at home (see Appendix 14).

It was found that two main spoken language atmospheres existed in the homes. In one of these MT, BEAD or NDE were spoken interchangeably and in a complementary manner. In this atmosphere there was little or no parental pressure for the child to speak exclusively in BEAD. As one of the parents put it:

Well, to tell you the truth I get fed up of speakin' English all the time. So I have to speak my language...Well she (daughter) can speak whatever she like, even French (laughs). After all some of those children larn two or even t'ree of those other languages in school... Her English is alright. Only her pronunciation. I tink the teachers want her to talk like dem (mimicks an English accent and laughs). I know she will be able to do dat later, but now am not worried... Her English is alright. Her readin' is good. Only I want her to concentrate on her reading and get it even better (Mother1:S1:042).

Even though this parent wanted her child to improve her English she did not insist on this at the expense of the MT: 'she can speak whatever she like'. Moreover, the parents also spoke to their children in MT and not exclusively in BEAD. Such a spoken language setting is labelled a mother tongue approved (MTA) one.

Alternatively, there were home atmospheres in which parents forbade
their recently arrived children from speaking their mother tongue. In these cases, the parents did not speak their mother tongue to the children and frequently insisted on the child’s almost exclusive use of BEAD. However, they spoke to their spouses in their MT and/or NDE or BEAD:

They (children born here) understand, but can't speak it (MT) very well. But in his case he has just come an' his English is bad... He comes in now. If everybody are speaking English you can't see him speaking' English. Is only (MT). When you're talking he says "I speak English in school". Yes, but when you speak English in school can't you speak it at home? He says "if a want to speak it a can speak it". He said "I shouldn't talk" (complain) so I won' talk. I have to leave it ...Everytime I have to tell him not to speak (MT). What I want is for him to learn his English... I bought about t'ree dictionary. One is an advance one. There're some children ones with pictures an' everyt'ing that simple for him (Mother2:S1:078).

This shall be referred to as a mother tongue disapproved atmosphere (MTD). The point to note here is that this parent wanted the child to speak English at home, not because the MT was not valued, but because the ability to speak BEAD was seen as the key to the child's educational success. Rees (1983) argues that this is not necessarily the case and suggests that bilingualism is an educational asset. However, the parents felt that the more he practised English and the less he spoke MT the better his English would be. The MTD parents voiced the belief still held amongst many of the teachers interviewed that MT hinders the learning of another language. However, as Chester (1976) has shown MT ability enhances additional language learning especially with pre-school children.

Although we are concerned here with secondary school children, research has shown that prevailing attitudes towards various dialects are important aspects of a child's language learning progress (see Thomas, 1985). Moreover, minority children also tended to hold language attitudes which reflected the dominant attitude to language held by the majority group. Thus in the context of language learning in the school, minority children may not only wish to adopt the accent and/or dialect of the majority group, but may also reject their own form of verbal utterance. Minority group parents too can contribute to the speech style assessment process of the child by the manner in which they rationalize their perceptions of different dialects - especially those of the home and of the school [3]. Labov (1973) has shown that when ethnic minority children are in situations where they consider their dialect to be of little value they restrict their verbal output. The consequences of this in the school situation are that the child is assessed as not only verbally inadequate, but also educationally weak (Rist, 1973; Keddie, 1973; V.K. Edwards, 1979;

Those teachers who were responsible for placing the children in a teaching group almost invariably placed them with slow learning native children (Chapter 5). As a result the children's learning ability was not being stretched and they knew it:

I done all dis in Nigeria before.

They also knew that for some reason their speech was inadequate. With the critical examination of their speech comes the realization that a task needs to be accomplished:

E: A use toe go to the tooshun sentar... A go an' larn how to read and write an' how to pronounce. Lak the teacher.

R: So what do your teachers say about your work?
E: They said am quite good at it. That's what (teacher) said.

...

R: Do you have any difficulties in English?
E: No. Yeah a found some ov dem difficult. Some ov them.
R: Like what?
E: How to pronounce. But a larn how toe do it an' ma miss she say am alright wit' ma studies. Ma English is good now.

Edet's reading had improved by three years in nine months, but according to the teacher his speech was still difficult to understand. A similar observation was made about Segun. To someone who is familiar with various types of Nigerian speech styles, he seemed to have neither a Nigerian accent nor a local English one. After a few sessions with him it was realised that he was basically trying to combine the accent of his teachers (and peer group) with his own NDE accent. What came out was an NDE trying to lose itself among BEAD.

Edet had been here three years and had 'lost' most of his Nigerian accent. He even claimed to find it difficult to pronounce the name of his primary school in Nigeria:

R: Where did you do your primary schooling?
E: In Nigeria.
R: Do you remember the name of the school?
E: Well, it's too hard to pronounce. It's too hard
(hesitantly names school)
R: You said it was too hard to pronounce. What was hard about it?
E: The way to pronounce. Pronunciation.
R: What? It's difficult for you?
E: Yeah. A bit difficult.

It is most unlikely that a child who has spent over ten years of schooling
in Nigeria will remember the name of his primary school, write it down correctly and at the same time find it difficult to pronounce. Bosede, too, mispronounced two Nigerian place names and even pronounced her surname in the same manner as some of her teachers. Uzoaku, being much older and more confident in herself, refused the teacher's request to shorten her name. Another Nigerian girl had arrived about the same time as Uzoaku and because the teachers had been 'unable to get (their) tongues round' her name, this girl had used her other name which the teachers found 'much more comfortable to use' (see Section 9.3.2).

The children were thus under considerable pressure to conform to the school's dialect and accent as verbalized primarily by the teachers [6]. As a consequence some of them, for example, Edet attempted to take on the local accent. In the following extract what is interesting to note about Edet is that from time to time during the interview he momentarily drops his newly acquired accent. Prior to the following discussion Edet had appeared uninterested in the interview. In fact he seemed bored and answered mainly in monosyllables and occasional phrases. Then he was asked if he would like to go back to Nigeria when he finished his secondary education:

E: Yeah. Yeah. A'd a wud love that.

R: How do you feel about living in this country?
E: A tink it's alright.
R: If you had the choice would you leave this country to go back to Nigeria?
(Edet begins to slowly move away from his newly acquired accent (NAA))
E: Yeah.
R: Why?
E: 'Cos itz ma countri.
R: Any other reason?
E: Am dar-yin' toe see it ar-gain.

R: Do you miss it?
E: (nods in response)
R: What sort of things do you miss?
(Edet moves further away from NAA, but closer to NDE)
E: A miss ma frendz...'ere smells diff'ren'.
It smells diff'ren in 'ere. De groun' in Nigeria smells nice.
R: And what about here?
E: Itz smelly! It smellz 'orribool! A don' lak it.
(Edet's accent is now more NDE than NAA)

... 

R: Do you take school dinner?
E: Yeah.
R: Do you like it?
E: No. Sometams a don' eat it.
R: What don't you like about it?
E: A don' lak it. Itz smellin' in your breadth. A don' lak it. It smells one kind in de food. Eefoon de dinna
('One kind' is a phraseology used by some Nigerians to describe the indescribable, that is, it is used when they are at a loss for a suitable adjective.)

While albeit infrequently using his NDE he is asked about his MT:
R: What language do your parents speak at home?
E: De-They speak Efik, but a don' h'understand it proparli.
R: So what do you speak to them at home?
E: A spik pidgin Eenglish or as some English like d-this (the nearest approximation he can get to RP (received pronunciation).

On most occasions Edet is able to stage manage his accent shifts towards BEAD, but when he drops his guard because the topic of discussion is more germane to him personally, he reverts to an accent which is dominated by NDE. He is even able to admit to speaking NDE and an MT. He had previously consistently denied to his teachers any knowledge of his MT or other Nigerian based language. In fact he did not speak his MT fluently because he had been brought up in another Nigerian State and spoke the local language of the latter.

It is worth noting that on other occasions earlier in the interview Edet was quite capable of pronouncing words such as 'lak' as like and 'eefoon' as even. He had the BEAD skill, but at these points in time he was not calling upon it. During this piece of conversation he was relaxed and was interested. Constant replays of the interview showed that his speech had not once been corrected nor had he been asked to repeat anything. This was purely coincidental and it did not mean that all he said was understood. However, I could follow what he was saying and there had been no need to correct his English. This may have led him to believe my earlier statement that I was not a teacher in his school. This could also have contributed to his ability to relax during this interview and use his NDE skills.

It is likely that Edet arrived at his use of BEAD through a process of accent convergence. In another context, Giles and Smith (1979) have
pointed out that speech convergence occurs when an individual wishes to convey approval or seeks acceptability from other individuals in a communicative context. In Edet's case accent convergence not only meant attempting verbally to lose himself in his peer group, but also fulfilling the expectations of the teacher. Once these conditions were absent and he was in a situation in which he began to feel relaxed and talked about issues not directly to do with school learning, his NDE began to override his BEAD. A similar phenomenon was detected in Segun's speech:

A lak it 'ere. A pray toe God am 'ere. 'Cos in Nigeria -huh- everyday itz rain, wet. Sometam a will no go to school. Itz sweepin' h' all your floor - water! Raining all de er er de roof... A don' min' winta bicoz we 'ave er coat.

(Segun arrived during the rainy season in Nigeria)

He drops his 'h's, his 's' becomes z, he omits the last sound in words like don'(t) and min(d) and introduces an aspirated 'h' before the word all. He inserts expressive sounds -huh- and his speech is much quicker than in the next piece where his NDE is almost inaudible:

R: How did you feel when you first came to this school?
S: I feel a bit shy. I didn' know anyone in this school.

Again a similar example from Edet. We are talking about friends towards the end of the interview. Here again his agitation at the topic of discussion overrides any BEAD skills he has:

(We are talking about fights in the school)
E: Iz h'oll diz bawz. Dey kip h'askin' iv a fight. (pause)
   Dey kip h'askin' faw fights!
R: Who keeps asking for fights?
(slowly moving away from NDE)
E: The boyz in dis school.

The question I asked stopped the flow of his agitation and he begins to move towards BEAD. One of the teachers in SG also observed this phenomenon and described it thus:

She's quite capable of expressing what she wants to say, but if she's upset or angry erm she does revert back to not speaking Nigerian, but what I'd call pidgin English. Erm its the only way I can describe it (chuckles) and when she's angry or upset the grammar goes and she starts to speak English and the accent comes out as well and at that point you cannot understand what she's saying. Once you can get her to calm down her English is fine (Ms.PT:8G).

This distinction between 'fine' BEAD and presumably not so fine 'pidgin English' runs through the observations of the teachers. J.R. Edwards (1979)
has shown that teachers' perceptions of a child's dialect have far-reaching implications for the teachers' assessment of the child's learning potential. It is granted that at the time of their entry into the school these Nigerian children did 'poorly' in their tests, but their initial placements in teaching groups for children with low educational ability acted as a self-fulfilling prophecy. The two boys were kept in these groups and the two girls were moved out of these teaching groups only after the teachers had fought a two-year inter-departmental battle to get one of them out. Armed with a BEAD together with language skills gained from private tuition one of the girls was able to move up into the middle band ability teaching group.

By being placed and kept in limited ability groups when their skills showed that they could move on, teachers were directly involved in preventing these children from gaining access to higher level school knowledge. If organizational constraints prevent teachers from implementing their professional judgements at appropriate times it is little wonder that children are said to underachieve (see Phillips, 1979).

6.4 Metaphorical Switching

Fishman (1972:50) observed that speakers of the same language move from one variety to another, say Cockney to RP (received pronunciation). However, if this is non-reciprocal, then the move that has occurred is metaphorical in nature. When this one-sided switch occurs, the individual initiating it takes a risk as such switching may be uncalled for and therefore rejected by other participants. Thus, according to Fishman, metaphorical switching can only comfortably occur when the individuals engaged in a verbal exchange share the same understanding as to the appropriateness or inappropriateness of such switches in the context of a particular conversation. Individuals thus have a repertoire of verbal utterance which is called upon as occasion demands.

During the interviews it was noticed that there were idiomatic as well as accent shifts which oscillated along the continuum BEAD to NDE. Metaphorical switching occurred when both idiomatic (dialect) as well as accent changes could be detected. For example, as quoted above, Edet used the phrase 'one kind' when attempting to describe the smell of English food:

It smells one kind in de food.

Giles and Smith (1979:46) argue that individuals involved in social interactions which rely predominantly on speech modify their speech in order to minimize speech differences within particular verbal exchange
contexts. Speech is thus an important element in impression management and attitudinal formation (see Giles, 1973). It must be remembered that the researcher spoke at all times during the interview in a dialect which was more BEAD than NDE. Thus, there were no dialect cues to the children and metaphorical switching only occurred when the children chose to take that risk. The children had no explicit reason to believe that we shared similar pronunciation repertoires. A possible explanation as to why metaphorical switching occurred may be due to our sharing the same nationality. However, if this were the case one might have expected that there would have been numerous instances of metaphorical switching. It appeared that the children concentrated more on convergence towards BEAD and made use of their metaphorical switching skills during sections of the conversation where the topic was of more interest to them than previous ones. At this point their interest in the topic overtook the need to keep up their impression management performance that they could speak BEAD.

It was noted that whenever the topic focused on recounting any incident that happened in Nigeria Segun would occasionally insert a Yoruba word or an 'o' sound at the end of a phrase or statement: 'a can do it o'. The addition of an 'o' sound in order to emphasize a foregoing statement is adopted by a number of Nigerians. In the Nigerian context, as in any bilingual or multilingual context, the use of two languages during a particular conversation is not uncommon, that is a single conversation can be conducted in both MT and, in this case, English. The language which dominates the conversation ranges from the topic being discussed to the level of competence in one of the languages.

Many Nigerians, whatever their MT, are able to hold bilingual conversations. When this occurs the MT may be substituted for English words they cannot readily recall. In some cases the description of an event may be captured more eloquently in the MT. Sometimes a direct translation from the MT to English or vice versa may occur. More usually, from personal experience, MT and English are used complementarily and interchangeably. The following is a transcription of a "conversation" conducted specifically to provide an example of bilingual interchange. As with most experimental situations it is difficult to accurately render a natural occurrence:

B: Mo fe se ki ni yi so that ma tete lo sun.
R: Orun? Nine o'clock ma se se lu ni.
B: Kilo ti e wikpe we have to do?
R: Lets just talk ba se manse.
B: How long is this going to take (laughs).
R: Ko le ju iseju marun.
B: Gosh it's hard when you have to think about it.
R: I know.
B: Je ka gba gbe kiniyin jare (laughs).
R: Be patient (laughs).
B: Wahala (laughs) Eleyi no tito, abi?
R: I don't think we can do this. Okan rerin. Let's try again later.

Ryan (1979:145) points out that not only do language varieties 'enjoy differential prestige', but that language varieties which have been socially assessed as having low prestige are also viewed unfavourably by some speakers of that dialect. Lambert (1967), in a study of French and English speaking Canadians, found that English speaking Canadians (EC) assessed French speaking Canadians (FC) as shorter, less trustworthy, less intelligent and less attractive than when these same speakers spoke English. It is interesting to note that FCs too gave low assessments to FCs and did not give low assessments to ECs as they did their own ethnolinguistic group. Lambert (1979:188) argues that such negative perceptions encourage socially important shifts away from the use of one's own language or dialect to that of the more prestigious group's language or speech style.

Kendall (1980) in an examination of grammatical interplay in multilingual speech identifies the presence of code switching in multilingual conversations, that is, switching from one language or dialect to another during a given period of verbal exchanges. Even in the same linguistic community a plurality of code varieties exist and these form a linguistic repertoire which Gumperz (1964:137-138) describes as the totality of linguistic forms regularly employed in the course of socially significant interaction (including) all the accepted ways of formulating messages.

Gardner (1979) in a Canadian study of the effects of social attitudes and individual motivation, considered whether bilingual or monolingual settings had any effect on the correlation between second language achievement and language aptitude, motivation and situational anxiety (i.e. anxiety reactions aroused in specific language learning situations such as the classroom). He concluded that social context influences the relationship between individual differences and achievement. However, it did not eliminate, but magnified the relationship between individual differences and second language achievement (see also Rees, 1983).

To all intents and purposes the language in the two schools was monolingual except perhaps when instruction was being given in the mastery of another language - usually European. Nigerian and probably other bilingual children, did not have the opportunity to display the language skills which they already had. They also had to curtail, both in school and at home, the use of their MT. After being in a multilingual society
these children were now faced with carrying out verbal expression in a monolingual one.

In order to experience directly Segun's competence in reading in English, three reading sessions were arranged. It was also during these sessions that metaphorical switching occurred most. During the first session Segun was very aware of the tape recorder. He kept looking at it and observed that it was much smaller than the one his Dad had:

S: A don' tink it can wuk proparli.
R: Why?
S: Itz small. Too small "gan" (Yoruba word similar in meaning to 'very') Iz it wuk ba eelectrik or battaree?
R: By battery.
S: Let me see it.
(We spend some time examining the batteries and the tape recorder. He thinks the batteries are too small. His Dad has bigger ones. He switches it on and asks what the red light is for...)
S: Let me 'ear ma seff.
R: I'll have to rewind it first.
S: Rewine, rewine "abi"? rew...(he laughs) rewine, rew...
(at the sound of his voice he laughs and observes that his Dad only plays music with his tape recorder)

The Yoruba word abi is similar in meaning to 'is that correct?'.
The interesting thing here is that this question is not directed at me. He is essentially asking himself if he has got the word right either in terms of pronunciation or learning a new word.

The following extract is from the third and final reading session with Segun. As soon as he came in he showed me a book he had brought with him:

1. R: Do you want to read this?
2. S: Yes.
3. R: (turning over the pages of the book) Do you know how to read plays?
4. S: (mumbles then pauses) Let me see. (Looks at the book. Opens it up and looks at the contents. Turns over a few pages) Okay. (Gives it back to me) Okay.

... 

11. R: So (reading) The Hospital Visit
12. S: (reading) Fisitor, hom, ha (stops reading) wharz dis? hom?
(The rudiments of reading a play are explained)

19. R: Now it's your turn.
21. R: I have (reading) Eh?
22. S: No. You didn' call dis ones (referring to the name of the character).
23. R: You don't
25. R: No, because you're reading a play. It's telling you who you are.

31. R: What are those letters?
32. S: E, e, g, r, e - g r double e n
33. R: And what's that?
34. S: Jerawz, jerawz.
35. R: What is that colour over there?
36. S: Green. Mr. Gran Green "o". Mr Greeen.

During the session Segun was spoken to as to a native speaker. There was no undue repetition of instructions and he could understand most of what was said to him and his response to questions was quick. When he was concentrating and not looking at the tape he could follow the reading. He was confident enough to point out a perceived omission in my reading: 'you 'aven' reed dis' (Lines 20-23).

The purpose of the sessions was to gain insight into his level of competence in English. In the first reading session whenever he came across a word he could not decipher he was asked to spell it. He almost always got the spelling absolutely correct, even though as he was spelling the word he was pronouncing them with an NDE accent. For example, he pronounced remember as 'reemem'a' and chair as 'sheer' and spelt both correctly.

After we had had several goes at deciphering 'it's a good thing' Segun appeared to be tiring and when asked if he wanted to stop reading he replied:

A want toe reed. A must reed. Iv a want toe do anytin' in life. A can pronounce h'oll d' lettarz h'unless a pronounce a b c d toe z den a can pronounce h'oll de lettarz lak 'r' lak 's' lak 'c'. A can't pronounce 'em' 'ee' or 'oo' daz why.

Segun was aware of exactly where he was having problems with his reading, but after six months he was beginning to be very anxious about his inability to read and was interpreting this as a stumbling block to his future educational prospects. Judging from the reading sessions any "standard" reading and verbal test given to Segun could only have resulted
in the assessment of Segun's reading and verbal ability as poor. Indeed they were, but only in BEAD. His BEAD reading was very poor, but he had verbal ability in NDE and his MT.

The teachers in both schools expressed the view that they believed other languages and cultures were just as important as theirs. However, it was felt that these opinions were only ritual utterances of current "progressive" educational thought. They appeared to have learned to express what they considered the "right" responses to issues related to bilingualism and multi-ethnicity in schools. That is, they enthused about the 'richness' and 'colourfulness' of other cultures, but were not able to translate their verbalized enthusiasm into their teaching practice.

Twelve Nigerian reading books in English currently in use in Nigeria were sent (through a teacher) to the Language School. These had stories and pictures of Nigerian scenes. A top management teacher at MB was so keen and positive towards these books that he wanted to buy them off me. However, the Language School whose responsibility it was to facilitate the child's reading sent these books back without any comment and without using them. It was expected that a Language School within a local education authority that not only has the highest number of ethnic minority children, but is committed to multi-ethnic education would have seized this opportunity to use these books to help a child who could hardly read in English, but was a more competent reader in his MT. It requires an instance like this to show how some teachers still have to go in organizing their pedagogy such that pupils can be helped to progress from where they are at, by using relevant teaching aids (see Ward, 1977; Wright, 1980; Wilding, 1981).

Segun knew that his real problem was his inability to read in English. Consequently, he took one of his Yoruba books to school. This time it was the child who was "showing off" that he had reading competence in an area the rest of his peer group did not. This is not to say that Segun was not keen to learn BEAD. On the contrary, even at the point of exhaustion Segun wanted to continue reading. Instead of sending him away we sat and talked about the games he liked playing and different sporting teams in Nigeria. I could recognize the teams by name, but apart from that knew very little about the personalities he was describing. This did not matter as he talked almost non-stop and with a lot of confidence. It was not BEAD, but this did not seem to matter to him any more. There were some phrases I could not quickly understand but what was both interesting and important was that Segun appeared very comfortable and relaxed and moreover his speech was fluent. The more he talked about his likes and dislikes the more NDE his speech became. However, whenever there was the opportunity for me to contribute to the conversation he adopted some of the grammatical structures and word pronunciations I used. He was not asked to do this, but he did it with relative ease compared to when he was in the
formal reading situation. This is how children do pick up a language, but as Brown (1979) argues this skill will remain at the most basic level if more precise learning programmes are not utilized (see also Little and Willey, 1981; Cheshire, 1981; Hargreaves, 1984).

Teachers also found Edet's reading poor and he had, on the basis of his tests and initial slow progress in the Language School, been placed in a teaching group for the least able children. Right at the beginning of the interview with him he had expressed surprise that I had spelt both the name of the Nigerian town he came from and his surname correctly. It was a combination of pleasure at meeting someone in school who had the skill to do this, but also a chance to verbalize his assessment of the teachers with whom he had come into contact:

E: How can you spell ma name? Only ma Mum and Dad can spell it. Nobody 'ere can spell it.

R: But you've been here three years now I'm sure your teachers can spell your name by now.

E: (Emphatically and consequently loses his ability to pronounce 'th') Dey can't! Dese teachers don' know anyt'ing how to spell Nigeria name.

R: I'm sure they can.

E: H'only when they look in d-the book.

(His mother showed me his last three reports and his name was spelt differently five times. She also showed me a recent letter from the school. She had been given a completely different ending to her surname (see Section 9.3.2.). It must be pointed out here that MB did make a special effort to avoid situations like these occurring. School Reports were sent back to teachers if it was noticed that there were spelling discrepancies in the names of any of their pupils).

Edet had gone through three years of secondary schooling in this country with his name consistently being spelt wrongly. His parents had mentioned this to one of the teachers, but attempts to 'correct' the name had resulted in an alternative incorrect spelling and the parents had 'got fed up with it' (mother's phrase). The ethnic identity relevance of this is treated elsewhere. The point to note here is that it is only during conversations on similar personal topics that Edet regains enough confidence, albeit briefly, to speak in the manner he is accustomed to in the home situation (even though his parents constantly implore him to speak less NDE) (see Section 6.3).

The boys' speech has been used because their accent shifts and idiomatic interchanges were more pronounced than the girls. Also at the time of the interview the girls had spent longer in this country than the boys. Although traces of NDE could be found it was subtle and more covert than overt. It is suspected that in a couple of years Segun and Edet will
converge more in the direction of BEAD and their NDE will become almost undetectable.

In general teachers perceived Nigerian parents as 'middle class really'. Since the children discussed here were all placed in remedial departments and it was a 'battle' to get one of them out of such a teaching group, it is suggested that accents and dialects are likely to override class labels in the educational opportunities offered in this case, to Nigerian children within the British education system [7].

6.5 Fighting

Apart from their spoken English, the other area that was of concern to the teachers was Nigerian children's involvement in fights. Teachers had mentioned somewhat casually that the children were involved in 'a number of fights' especially during their first year in the schools. This had not been taken to be an exceptional occurrence until a teacher put the following proposition to me:

*T: Could you tell me. Don't think I'm being rude, but I just wondered - well its (X). We're having a bit of a problem with (X). (X) is always getting into fights. I just wondered if it has anything to do with his Nigerian culture?

R: I wouldn't have thought so.

T: Well, its just that (X) seems to think fighting is a way of making friends and I just wondered. Well, never mind we'll just have to tell him he can't make friends that way (chuckles).

(*not direct interview quote, but written down within five minutes of the conversation with a teacher.)

The child we are talking about here had recently arrived from Nigeria and had gone through the laughing, nodding and saying 'yes' stages of his initiation into secondary school life. He had also made attempts at accent convergence, but when in a relaxed, interested or agitated state he adopted metaphorical switching. It was obvious that he tried hard to conform to the local accent, but had not yet succeeded in camouflaging his difference. This child is still an 'outsider', a 'stranger' (Schutz, 1967) who is trying to gain acceptability in his new social setting as quickly as he can by attempting to adopt the local accent and approved dialect. Prior to "success" in this task it is possible that attempts at developing a friendship will be made. This attempt may be initiated by the Nigerian
child or member(s) of the school peer group. The following is an extract from the interview with Edet in connection with the above:

R: How did you feel when you first came to this school?
E: I feel a bit shy. A didn' know anyone in dis school.
One boy in ma class make me feel happy (names him)(pauses)
R: How did he make you feel happy?
E: 'e keep ticklin' me.
R: How do you feel now?
E: A get on wid'em propaali.
R: When you say you get on with them properly how did you use to get on with them?
E: D-They don' use toe be frendz, but now we are ...
R: How do you decide to be friends with someone?
E: A jus' chat to dem.
R: So what do you do together?
E: We play together.
R: What sort of things do you do?
E: Play games. Like boxing games.

At this stage Edet is concerned with successfully managing an almost non-existent relationship with his peer group to one in which friendship can be said to have occurred. However, something was not quite right. Another of Edet's teachers had also been concerned about his behaviour. He was a pleasant enough boy, but...

He is strange. A loner. He doesn't get on with the rest of the class at all for some reason... There has been a lot of trouble since he has been here. Fighting. He always reminds me of a quiet little boy, but... He has got this rather strange way. He doesn't socialize very well. He hasn't yet. He doesn't attract people to him and you don't know why not (Ms.PT:1B).

This teacher could not quite work out why Edet got into so much trouble. Edet's relationship with his peer group has yet to be defined. Yet by being in a social setting some form of interaction with those around him is bound to take place. Woods (1983) has drawn attention to the complexities of pupil school subcultures. Although still an 'outsider' and naive in the use of "new" school interactional strategies (Section 5.2), Edet finds himself adopting these strategies in an attempt to become an active part of the peer group. These interactional strategies are 'games' to him. In a sense, they are. Asking if someone can fight and then enabling that person to show his fighting ability is a totally different type of social interaction to fighting as a result of a disagreement. Of course if one of
the fighters in the "game-fight" should exceed an individual or collective meaning of "game-fights" these are likely to turn into "real" fights. Fighting then becomes not just a display of prowess, but a reinforcement or redefinition of existing status relationships (Woods, 1983).

While I was in the school Edet was involved in two fights that I was made aware of. It was after one of these fights, and probably at a loss for how to deal with the reoccurrence of fights involving Edet, that a teacher had asked if fighting was a way of making friends in Nigerian culture. In Chapter 5 I suggested that teachers should first examine "inside school" interactional relationships before addressing the cultural norms of an ethnic minority group. This is further illustrated in the following conversation with Edet about his behaviour in school:

R: Do you get into trouble in school?
E: No.
R: No?
E: No. Yes. Yeah I do.
R: What sort of trouble do you get into?
E: Iz h'oll diz bawz. Dey kip h'askin' iv a fight (pause). Dey kip h'askin' faw fights! Dey kip h'askin faw fights.
R: Who keeps asking for fights?
E: The boyz in dis school.
R: Mm. In what way do they ask for fights?
E: Dey kip h'askin' am a good fighter? A say well a don' know. Dey say do you wanna try me? A say no. He push me (pause).
R: And then you start fighting?
E: Yeah.
R: What happens when you fight?
E: D-Their boyz start bleeding an' dey 'ave toe go t' d' teasha.

From Edet's account we can begin to pose questions away from Nigerian cultural norms to questions about elements of the subculture which operates in schools. Although Edet's account shows that he wants to distance himself from fights (they (my emphasis) keep asking for fights), the interactional norm encourages him to draw closer to already defined pupil action. Thus, his engagement in fights has a school subcultural transmitted significance grounded in the interactional network of the school. Teachers need to perceive such social action as fights as localized happenings that occur at particular points in time. By seeking to understand how and when these occur teachers may discover much to their advantage.

Woods (1983:97) notes that fighting can be a form of posing (showing off), or winning admirers. Moreover, weakness in a fight can lead to teasing (see Chapter 9). Thus, fighting is an interactional technique which, as Woods points out, is a strategic move within friendships and used
as checks and balances to restore pupil accepted order. It is considered that anti-school pupils engage in fighting as a status indicator in a similar manner to which pro-school pupils use academic achievement to gain status (Woods, 1983). It must be remembered that one of Edet's teachers had pointed out that he was inappropriately placed in a remedial group. Woods suggests that fighting among boys is more status orientated. I would further argue that in the case of Edet, as an 'outsider' it is incumbent on him to move away from his undefined status to one in which his status is grounded in the interactional norms of his new social group. Only by a successful negotiation of his interactive position can he gain acceptance in the interactional world of his peer group: 'D-They don' use toe be frendz, but now we are'.

Edet is aware of the need to map out his school peer group 'career'. Is he to shy away from fighting and thus be labelled 'weak'? If he is so labelled by his peer group it is unlikely that he will successfully manage the move away from being an 'outsider'. His spoken language already identifies him as different. Berger (1979) has argued that when individuals meet they make character assessments based on a person's verbalizations. In the social world of the school Edet's language only confirms him as a stranger and does not confer him with any academic or physical status. Thus in the atmosphere of the boys' school it is not surprising that character assessment procedures include fighting. This can be described as a prowess or status establishment fight which allows social ranking (the conferment on Edet of a particular status with his new 'classmates') to occur. This is not to excuse or justify fights, but to show that an understanding of pupils' subcultures is likely to enable teachers to deal more effectively with what they label disruptive behaviour (see Chapter 8 and 9).

Fighting for recently arrived Nigerian children is not only confined to the boys. The girls too get involved in fights (Meyenn, 1980) but these are fights used for strategically different purposes. In the case of the Nigerian girls, fights were used mainly as defence mechanisms. As we shall see later (Chapter 9), boys also used fighting in this way. It will be remembered that both the boys and the girls were in teaching groups which some of the teachers acknowledged were below their ability. A teacher pointed out that one of their stumbling blocks had been their speech:

She used to get very frustrated .... her language was holding her back and really she shouldn't have been in (low ability teaching group) and a lot of problems was caused because (she) was getting very frustrated with the low level of work. She could be - she has been (in serious trouble) for fighting. It all stemmed down to this frustration because she was fairly bright. Not sort of average and she could've coped
Coupled with this academic frustration this girl was also being 'teased' about her speech and harassed about her surname:

Child: They were playin' with ma fardarz name. A told 'em to stop, but they wouldn't so a slap her face.

This retaliatory action in defence of her surname led to trouble. The need to prove something to the peer group or defend insulting remarks about a name runs through the children's accounts of their experience of schooling. This area is considered in more detail elsewhere (see Chapter 9).

For the purposes of this chapter it is worth noting that apart from coping with accent differences in a frustrating environment the children also had to cope with elements of a school subculture which the teachers were apparently unaware of or did not want to know about. In other words, they were left to their own devices. As one teacher observed:

I think kids are - they're very resilient - good at adapting themselves to whatever situation they find themselves in (Mr.MM:9B).

Only one of the teachers volunteered any information to me about the causes of the fights or the reasons behind their observations of these children constantly being in trouble. The reason a teacher gave, 'frustration at the low level of work', did not take into account relationships with the peer group.

6.6 Noteworthy Points

Labov (1973) has argued that lack of skill in one dialect should not be taken to mean lack of skill in all dialects. Cooper (1984:117-192) points out that Labov's position is the new orthodoxy on the issue of language varieties with particular reference to what Labov labelled Non-Standard Negro English (NNE). Cooper goes on to ask a pertinent question: 'having appreciated the logicality and linguistic aptitude of a child's dialect, what do we do about it - leave it alone? or modify and correct it?' Labov himself does not tell us what to do. The foregoing discussion has outlined what the children do. Chapter 5 showed what the teachers did. If EAL speakers are to succeed within the British comprehensive system, it is the manner in which their verbal repertoire is assessed and corrected that first has to undergo major reform (Gipps et al., 1983). Sociolinguists have argued that the source of school failure should not be blamed on the child's linguistic code or cultural background.
(Mehan, 1984; Bernstein, 1977).

The learning problems children face need to be perceived as a consequence of inadequate institutional arrangements that hinder children by not recognizing that children display verbal skills differently in different situations. It is up to teachers to provide a learning setting which helps to bring out these skills. Although the problems of teaching BEAD to non-native speakers of English has always been recognized, it was not until links began to be made between language and educational underachievement that the issue of BEAD learning for children for whom English is not a MT came to be of general educational concern.

The teaching of English to black ethnic minority groups as a general educational policy began as far back as 1963. However, then (as now) the provision for English language learning was inadequate in scope (Rose et al., 1969; Townsend, 1971) as well as in quality (Derrick, 1977; Little and Willey, 1981). Perhaps more importantly, EAL provision focused predominantly on children of Asian origin. Children of West Indian origin were perceived to speak a dialect of English and it was thus considered inappropriate for them to receive EAL (Wight, 1976; V.K.Edwards, 1979). However, it is now generally accepted that various forms of West Indian English based dialects have their own syntactic and lexical structures (Sutcliffe, 1982). Even when there was special language provision for ethnic minority pupils it was found that teachers' negative perceptions of ethnic minority languages not only hindered the English language learning progress of the children concerned (Trudgill, 1978) but also affected pupils' confidence (Goodman and Buck, 1973).

The Nigerian born children who are the concern of this chapter possessed a first language other than English; in addition they spoke NDE [8]. Thus, they faced a linguistic situation where teachers encouraged them to produce accents and dialects different from those with which they were familiar. Gardner (1979:193) points out that schooling entails the acquisition of knowledge or habits which are already part of the make up of the culture with which the student identifies.

Thus, in order to achieve BEAD skills the children were encouraged to abandon their existing skills for one which was foreign to the child's culture. Pupils learning an additional language are not only faced with the acquisition of information which is designed essentially to enhance the existing language knowledge of native speakers, but are also faced with acquiring symbolic elements of a different ethnolinguistic community... (and) ... make (these) part of (their) own language reservoir... (and thus) imposing elements of another culture into one's own life span (Gardner, 1979:193).

The value of multi-ethnic education (which encourages positive teacher
attitudes and sensitive teaching strategies for all pupils in a multicultural society) has been emphasized by a number of researchers and educational advisory bodies (see ILEA Multi-Ethnic Education Reviews, espec. Summer, 1982; Schools Council Programme 4, 1982; Schools Council Pamphlet 18, 1981). In view of this policy stance, it was expected that schools would be alert when faced with teaching ethnic minority children who have been born abroad. Yet, it was shown above that the two schools examined in this present study conducted their EAL teaching programmes in an atmosphere of theoretical uncertainty and practical chaos.

The educational focus on the teaching of English to ethnic minority pupils has shifted from concerns about teachers' negative stereotyping of speech styles and accents different from received pronunciation (RP) to an emphasis on "educating" teachers about the value of black ethnic minority bilingualism (multilingualism) and the richness of language diversity (Little and Willey, 1981; Hargreaves, 1984; Thomas, 1985). However, judging from the data presented above, a substantial amount of such "progressive" thinking is falling on deaf ears. Moreover, teachers who did attempt to exercise their professional judgement discovered that organizational constraints (teaching group inflexibility) and management intransigence ('somebody somewhere was putting a barrier up') prevented them from providing adequate educational opportunities to the children concerned.
6.7 Concluding Reflections

Language has a socially constructed meaning. Within the society at large it derives its meaning in a number of ways which reflect the way in which both cultural and political overtones impinge on the role of language. We have seen the manner in which language operates in the micro-world of the school. However, language use goes beyond the immediate experience of the child.

Although these children are at a stage where they are already aware of the world 'out there' they have to adjust to a "new" world in which language (including dialect and accent) has a socially significant meaning different from that which they are accustomed to interpreting. In all societies it is likely that some form of stigma will be attached to verbal utterances that deviate from the accepted norm of that society. Having gained access to a new social world these children have to face an unusual type of stigma grounded in the society's orientation to language varieties. Moreover, language is one of the processes through which access is gained to school approved knowledge which is derived from the culture of the society. Thus, those who are not part of a culture are not immediately privy to the rules of verbal activity in that society.

Once interaction in school begins the teachers and peer group, in terms of verbal utterances, become more significant than the parents. The children perceive members of their new social world as holding the key to their access into the skills required for participation therein. One of the initial skills the children seek to acquire is that which will enable them to stage manage their verbal utterances such that they are not immediately identifiable as 'outsiders'. This may explain why children speak less like their parents and more like the majority of those in their immediate social setting. Of course there is also the stigma that is attached to non-socially approved dialects. Children quickly 'internalize' (Berger and Luckmann, 1967) group norms and values (Day, 1982) and these Nigerian children show that they are no exception. However, as 'strangers' (Schutz, 1967; see also Banton, 1973) they undergo a more difficult process of cultural adjustment.

Although both teachers and the peer group become significant others, it is the teachers who carry the effective weight in providing a social world in which the children wish to become a part. The children seek to camouflage their difference [9] and therefore acquiesce to the rules and routines of language as laid down by their teachers.

Marxists believe that social existence determines man's consciousness while phenomenologists emphasize that an individual's consciousness and ideas underly social reality. Both are forms of dialectical reasoning which examine the manner in which social constraints, social conditions and the overall structure of society determines (Marxist) or impinges on
In school, as in most areas of social life, legitimation and control are secured by those with the social position and authority to define and enforce the ground rules for human action. Gramsci (1971) suggests that the dominant social group does not 'rule' cultural production directly (Bourdieu, 1973), but covertly dominates by formulating the grounds on which policy is formed. A dominant social position also enables the effective definition of what constitutes socially approved knowledge (Young, 1971) as embodied in the school curriculum. On the macro-level, cultural hegemony may indeed be covert. However, as seen above on the micro-level it is overt in terms of the "ease" with which recently arrived children begin to pick up the cues and produce verbal utterances that are approved by those in positions to directly encourage a particular type of social act. Thus, accent and dialect shifts, speech convergence and metaphorical switching become rites of passage.

Education is one of the processes through which cultural production takes place and language becomes a tool of this process because of the inextricable link between language and social action (Berger and Luckmann, 1967; Althusser, 1971). Language cannot even be said to be a miniscule part of the process of encouraging particular types of socially approved action because it is within the framework of verbal exchange that social reality comes to be defined.

Richmond (1979) points out that failure occurred in West Indian children's language assessment because the school did nothing to accommodate the primary system of the black working class child. Neither does it of the white working class child (Trudgill, 1975) and we should not be surprised that it does not. Education as it is operationalized does not seek to provide radical change. Rather, it serves to maintain the status quo (see Chapter 11). Of course some will experience social mobility (Halsey et al., 1980), but this does not change the hierarchical and exploitative relationship between social groups.

Finally, it must be emphasized that BEAD is essentially a minority dialect employed by those in social positions of authority. Thus middle class children (both black and white) are at an educational advantage. The middle class is a minority group. However, school knowledge is not based on the needs of the numerical majority, but on the socially generated needs of the middle class minority who as members of the ruling class have greater opportunity to negotiate a high status for the type of knowledge they find acceptable (Young, 1971). A move towards egalitarianism, in the real sense of the word, requires institutions such as the education system to drop the facade of their function as enabling social mobility and critically to examine their role as maintainers of the status quo. Chapters 5 and 6 have examined the experiential reality of schooling for recently
arrived Nigerian born children. It was mainly in the areas of language and adjustment to a new socio-cultural environment that these children differed from British born Nigerian children. However, whenever necessary the following chapters differentiate between the two.

Chapter 7 outlines the process through which Nigerian parents encouraged their children to make particular educational choices.
Notes

1. This phrase is used in this chapter to draw attention to the implications of referring to British Standard English (BSE). As pointed out in the previous chapter the teachers' intent to teach English was treated as problematic. The reference to a standard form implies the existence of a non-standard one (Labov, 1973). If Labov and other linguists are correct in their claim that the Afro-American dialect of English is a language in its own right, then it cannot be a non-standard one. By referring to a dialect as non-standard we are making a subjective assessment of its relation to another dialect which is incompatible with the linguistic assessment of languages and their dialects as different, but equal in their function as communicative tools. Professor Peter Trudgill describes the situation thus:

Speakers who would generally be regarded as 'educated' typically speak the dialect (my emphasis) that is widely known as standard English. This is the dialect that is normally used in the writing of English throughout the English speaking world. It is possible to regard this form of English as a single dialect even though it is subject to a certain amount of regional differentiation (Trudgill, 1983:51).

I would thus suggest that each dialect has its own standard form. In order to take account of this, linguists such as Dillard (1973) use the label Black English. This label is incongruous and suggests a uniformity which does not exist. For example, the Jamaican dialect of English is likely to be different from the Indian dialect of English or indeed the Nigerian one even though they may have features in common (as they do with British (white?) dialects of English) (see Stubbs and Hillier, 1983). If there is a need for collective reference to different types of English, the label Commonwealth English with its associated meaning of variety may be more appropriate.

2. Local accents and dialects are the sorts of skills children pick up easily. What is more useful is a concentration, as Trudgill (1975) and Richmond (1979) suggest, on the children's written language structure. After all, even indigenous children have different accents and dialects which they employ in different social situations. Not infrequently, these are erroneously believed to impede their overall language progress (Trudgill and Hughes, 1979).

3. Consecutive ILEA Language Surveys (1981,1983) have drawn attention to the particular difficulties they experience with the identification of Nigerian based languages (see Appendix 14). The Nigerian parents spoken to readily identified their MT. However, over three quarters of them stressed
that they usually conversed with their children in English because they did not want their MT to impede the children's BEAD learning progress. As has been consistently shown this is an erroneous belief which is also held by teachers (Rees, 1983; Trudgill and Hughes, 1979; see also Stubbs and Hillier, 1983). One-eighth of the children interviewed could not readily recall the name of their MT and required my help to identify their own MT. This shows how far their parents were prepared to go in order to create a language barrier to their own MT so that, as they saw it, their children's BEAD progress would not be impeded. Little wonder that the children could not speak their own MT, but identified their parents' MT as "Nigerian" - a non-existent language. The prevailing attitudes to ethnic minority languages have implications for both children and adults understanding of the role of their language in society.

4. Not all Nigerian children who have had all their primary schooling in Nigeria have major language adjustment problems, but as usual those with obvious problems gain more attention.

5. V.K. Edwards (1979) suggests using BEAD as an addition to the child's dialect rather than concentrating exclusively on correcting so-called errors which works indirectly to inform the children that they have no language skills at all.

6. Teachers basically challenged the validity of the children's existing verbal knowledge. As Labov (1973) shows, the verbal deficit controversy focuses on dialect.

7. Five of the nine teachers who had direct contact with the children specifically used the label 'middle class' to describe four of the parents (see also Chapters 7 and 10).

8. This is to be differentiated from BEAD which Nigerian born children are also capable of speaking fluently. It is those who had not yet acquired BEAD skills that were examined.

9. However, as discussed in Chapters 9 and 10, having gained these skills and gone through this process of normalization children begin to reinterpret their relationship to the society.

10. These dialectical (dualist) positions need to be differentiated from monist explanations deriving from, for example, linguistics and behavioural psychology. These focus mainly on the individual in an experimental setting.
CHAPTER SEVEN: THE PROCESS OF CHOICE

7.1 Introduction

Chapters 5 and 6 focused specifically on Nigerian born children and discussed their school experiences as they concerned language learning issues. It was mainly in their English language skills that these children differed considerably from British born Nigerian children. This and subsequent chapters discuss issues that are pertinent to both groups of children.

In this chapter the process through which Nigerian parents choose the schools which their children attend are considered. Research on various aspects of schooling usually side step the issue of choice of school (Banks and Finlayson, 1973). This present research will not take for granted that a choice of school has been made (Rutter et al., 1979:1), but will seek to discover the processes through which children come to attend particular schools. The concern is not just to list general criteria which make a school a popular choice, but in demonstrating that the manner in which schools presented themselves to the public formed an important part in the parents' and children's decision making process. Children (and to a considerable extent, parents) drew attention to the point that schools' examination results were not the only criteria they used when making their choice of school (see Rutter et al., 1979). The observed behaviour of pupils already attending the school together with the school's neighbourhood reputation (strict or lax) were major concerns for the parents.

The fact that the schools under investigation are both single sex schools is incidental (Chapter 4). Not surprisingly, however, the parents and children's views reflect this bias. Teachers attitudes to the schools they taught in varied. Over half of those interviewed were 'not happy' teaching in a single sex school and over two thirds of them were critical about the organization of their school. Thus teachers' interpretations of the structure of their school are juxtaposed with their obligation to perform teaching duties within the existing organization of their school.

Although they do not state it quite so forthrightly, Woods (1979) and Ryrie et al., (1979) point out that a considerable amount of teacher manipulation of pupil's subject choice goes on in schools. Reid et al., (1974), Ryrie et al. (1979) and Woods, (1979), suggest that the level of parental influence on pupils' subject choices could be analysed on class lines. Thus the higher the parents' socio-economic status the more involved they were in their children's subject choices.
This chapter examines the children's actual freedom to choose. It will be shown that subject choice was a shared experience between teachers, pupils and parents. However, the pupils' role was that of pawn in a closed contest between parents and teachers, and arbiter in an open one. The open contest was one in which pupils could exercise their own discretion in making a subject choice while in the closed contest teachers and/or parents put pressure on the children to take up particular subjects. Closed contest subjects ranged from those "advised" by parents and/or teachers as being necessary for a given career to those in which the child was making good progress. Subsequently, parents and/or teachers focused on these subjects as being good subject choices. All other subjects were in open contest.

Having said this there were two types of overall restrictions which applied to both contests. These were compulsory subjects such as Mathematics and English and timetabling constraints. The timetable was a superstructure within which subject choice was highly rule-bound (Hargreaves, 1984). Thus a child had to choose between, for example, economics or religious studies. In some cases the opportunity to study a subject depended on the child's ability in another subject. For example, a child with limited success in French could not drop French and study German. This was because German was being offered as a 'second foreign language' for those with the ability to cope with learning two "foreign languages". Richardson (1973) points out that it took her nearly a year to grasp the details of a school's banding and subject groupings.

Ryrie et al. (1979:76-78) identified various "advisory" strategies employed by teachers in the matter of subject choice. These are juxtaposed with those of the children's parents in order to consider the overall effect of subject "counselling" on the child's final subject choice.

School subjects having been chosen, the schools' response to curriculum innovation is examined within the framework of the ILEA's commitment to multi-ethnic education (see ILEA resource booklets, for example, Willey, 1982 and ILEA's bi-annual Multi-ethnic Education Review booklets; see also Little and Willey's (1981) Schools Council pamphlet). Moreover, teachers' assessments at different stages in the children's school career are examined and discussed in relation to parents' understanding of the workings of the education system. Clough and Davis (1984:11) point out that the role of assessment is not only tangential to the manner in which assessment procedures are carried out, but obscure.

Having examined the nature of language learning programmes in Chapters 5 and 6, this present chapter moves on to discover the relationship between teachers' general assessments of children's educational progress and the manner in which parents interpret teachers' comments, especially in school reports. In particular, the phrase 'doing well' is examined in relation to the reality of the children's educational progress.

Finally, as in the previous and following chapters, interview data are
used to indicate the manner in which each group of respondents (pupils, teachers and parents) made sense of the school situation in which they were involved.

7.2 Choosing a School

Over three quarters of the parents interviewed stated that their children indicated which secondary school they would like to attend. However, this choice closely approximated that of their parents:

Well, I knew my parents wanted me to go to a girls' school so I chose (SG)... Then my mother went to have a look at it (laughs) my mum's always checking things out (fifth year girl).

In five cases where the children's choice did not coincide with that of their parents', the latter's choice overrode that of the children. There was one set of three brothers in MB and ten sets of sisters in SG. Thus over three quarters of the siblings simply stated that they wanted to go to their siblings school. In only one instance did the child first attend a school her parents disapproved of. However, by the end of the second year the girl 'agreed' with her parents that her own single sex school choice was not a good one. She then left this school and started at SG - a school she "chose" and which her parents approved of. Apart from this case none of the children stated that they adamantly insisted on going to a school of their choice.

The children's responses generally showed how well they had internalized their parents' criteria of school assessment. They had acquired skills of school differentiation and used their expertise to justify their school choice. Even the girl who had insisted on a school of her own choice rationalized her acceptance of her parents' instructions to 'choose another school' by drawing attention to two school issues (no homework, 'soft' teachers) which one would generally expect children to take advantage of (Furlong, 1976). Rather she stated a preference for strict teachers and there was no regret that she had left her previous school.

Nigerian parents, like most other parents, are concerned that their children attend 'good' schools. It is worth mentioning here that nine of the parents interviewed had a Nigerian teacher training certificate which at the time (1960s) enabled access into further education in a similar manner as GCE 'O' Levels currently does [1]. While in this country all the parents, without exception, had attempted to gain some form of educational certification ranging from City and Guilds' qualifications to University
postgraduate qualifications (see Section 4.2.3; see also Section 5.3.2). It is not surprising, therefore, that the parents were pro-schooling.

Rutter et al., (1979:18) point out that there are considerable differences between schools and that particular types of schools foster a high level of pupil outcome. Although they itemize such school variables as size and organization (p.10) we know very little about how the children came to be in the schools under study. The following discussion addresses this issue.

Nigerian parents used various information gathering techniques prior to making a final decision as to which school their children should attend. These techniques ranged from informal neighbourhood contacts to formal enquiries at schools and the local education division office. Informal decision making was usually based upon parents' perceptions of the behaviour of secondary school pupils. This they interpreted as reflecting the image of the pupils' school:

Mother A: There was a girl in dis area an' she's a bit quiet
...so a h'asked har "which school do you go?" H'an she said she's going to (SG)... R: Had you heard about (SG) before you saw the girl walking down the street?
Mother A: No. Never. H'only from de girl...De way a see de behaving of de girl it seems, you know, she's well trained...So that is why we decide dat er we should go far off (to SG) where dere's discipline!

Although there were secondary schools within a mile radius of this home, the child went to SG which was over five miles away. Another parent was more concerned about the ease with which his daughter would settle down in a new school environment.

Having sent one of their children to a particular school it was usual to send subsequent siblings to the same school. Although a particular parent's decision to send one of their children to a secondary school may be based on this informal strategy it is worth noting that ILEA acknowledged and legitimized this technique [2]. ILEA (L, 1982:2) states that

priority within each band of ability will be given to: applicants who have a brother or sister already at the school (at first preference stage only).

ILEA thus institutionalized the process of choice by identifying particular school choice strategies and making them part of the rules and routines of ILEA policy on children's transfer into secondary schools. ILEA's legitimation of the sibling strategy adopted by parents worked to avoid a potential area of parent-local authority conflict by reducing the
possibility of a parent's need to negotiate their children's secondary school transfer. The children of parents employing the sibling strategy had a relatively smooth entry into the secondary school of their choice. This, amongst other reasons outlined below, accounted for ten sets of sisters at SG and one set of three brothers at MB. In cases where the sibling strategy could not be employed, children, together with parental approval, "chose" which school to attend:

I tell (him) pick which school you want to go (Mother D).

In practice this "free" choice rested on the outcomes of parents' investigations into school variables. For example, the parents were very concerned about schools' teaching aids:

I went there to see the place... There was an open day and the school (SG) is quite good. It's well furnished with, you know, up-to-date equipment (Mother E).

By eliciting from the parents information about how their children came to attend SG and MB schools it was discovered that the free choice strategy generally occurred only after the parents had ruled out certain schools as inappropriate.

ILEA's policy on secondary school transfer attempts to ensure that ability groupings in each school are comparable (see ILEA, L, 1982:2). Despite this Nigerian parents believed that the intake in some schools favoured children with high level abilities. As would be expected of other concerned parents, they wanted their children where they thought they would receive an 'academic push' (exploratory study, teacher's phrase).

Rutter et al. (1979:154) confirm that, there are disparities between schools in terms of the proportions of top and limited ability pupils. They found that only one of the 12 schools they investigated had the expected 25% of its pupils in the top ability band. Seven of the schools had 5% to 10% top ability pupils while bottom ability pupils consisted of 25% to over 50% of the intake. Although Rutter et al. point out that ILEA policies on the ability mix between schools have been modified (ILEA, L, 1982:2) it was found in this present research that the parents did not believe that "equal distribution" of ability groupings took place. Their disbelief in ILEA's official policy ('paper talk') encouraged them to want to clarify the situation regarding the ability of their children's prospective peer group:

H'after reading de publicity leaflet (ILEA, L, 1982) about de school a went to divisional h'office bicoz dat (leaflet) is jus' paper talk... It doesn't tell you de real ting, de real information h'about de school. Dey (ILEA) have up to t'ree Band for de h'ability of de chill'ren. H'all ma chill'ren are h'alwayz in de Band 1 so a want to make sure which school dey go to... De primary headmaster h'advise me bet am not h'only going to take 'is h'advice. I know 'e can't
mislead me, bet sometimes dey (teachers) just tell you anyt'in. You see a myself a believe dat some schools take more 1/1 (above average) chill'ren dan h'oders, bet dem for divisional h'office say "no". Bet a know what a know. So, nevertheless a went to de school to h'assess de stature (status) (Father G).

The important thing to note here is that Father G makes a number of distinctions between official policy and what he believes goes on in practise ('a know what a know'). He is adamant that some schools take more above average pupils and he sought to discover which ones by consulting the administrators who are responsible for overseeing general educational practice.

If some schools, contrary to ILEA policy, carry out differentiation strategies based on a bias towards top ability levels, it is unlikely that this negation of the comprehensive principle (see Thornbury, 1978) will be admitted to a parent. It is possible that Father G misinterpreted what he read. However, ILEA did anticipate areas of conflict arising from the distribution of pupils and proceeded to caution parents:

Some schools may, however, have more applicants than places in a particular band of ability and if you selected such a school it might not be possible to offer a place (ILEA, L, 1982:2).

When two groups of Nigerian parents found that they neither had priority one (sibling already at school) or priority two (living nearest to the school preferred) advantage they moved from one borough to another. ILEA (L, 1982:3) makes the following point:

If it is necessary to make a second preference, the position of the home in relation to the school is the main guideline.

Although at the time of the interview these parents stated that they had moved 'to live in a better area' and 'to cut short' their daughter's travelling distance to school, they may have moved in order to ensure that the ILEA guideline did not restrict their choice of school.

Another group of parents sent their children to schools outside the educational division they lived in because they were dissatisfied with the schools in their division:

There are no more good schools around 'ere. No discipline. I h'always see the boyz and garlz hangin' round. I don't think they 'ave homework to do (Mother A).

In order to send their children to a school outside their educational division, the parents claimed an ILEA entitlement:

You are entitled to ask for a place for your child at a school in the area of another local authority, but you should seek advice from that authority about the likelihood of admission before making the school your preference (ILEA, L,
1982:2).

As Father F pointed out

If they (ILEA) can agree to send children to another authority then another division is no problem.

Another parent did not want his daughter in a school which was going to be reorganized [3] before his daughter had a chance to settle down to secondary school life.

In addition to acquiring knowledge of secondary school transfer procedures and employing school choice strategies designed to facilitate entry into selected schools the parents also considered the academic 'status' of the schools within and outside of their education division area.

Nigerian parents perceived SG and MB schools as offering admission to more above average pupils. This was mainly because the parents were aware that these schools had once been grammar schools (see Thornbury, 1978; Fenwick, 1976; Burgess, 1970). Over three quarters of the parents made this observation. Father C describes the situation thus:

(SG) is one of the ideal schools. One of the best schools for girls because its not mixed and two (it) is actually a grammar school. It's only they call it (SG) comprehensive, but its not... because its in greater depth like what we call independent or government school or grammar school (in Nigeria).

Renaming a grammar or secondary modern school comprehensive, does not alter the reality that these schools will, for a considerable time to come, remain essentially unchanged (see Thornbury, 1978; espec. Ch. 5). The Nigerian parents interviewed here were not only concerned with the original label of the schools, but were also particular about the schools educational facilities, public examination results and perceived discipline in the schools:

F: There's one school behind here (less than a mile away from residence) which is not a disciplined school...the output yearly is appalling. It doesn't give any good encouragement.

R: When you say their performances aren't up to expectations
F: (cutting in) that is when they come out of fifth year.
R: How did you know what their performances were?
F: Erm. There's always a result gazette in the paper or if you go to divisional office you know the performances of each school

Prior to the final selection being made, the schools needed to meet one more requirement:

Although they attended primary school and that was mixed we prefer to send them to a single sex school (Mother I).
It must be remembered that the two schools examined in this present research are both single sex schools. Thus it is not surprising that all the parents, without exception, stated that they preferred single sex schools for their children. Although the parents recalled their knowledge of some mixed school educational situations in Nigeria, this was not enough to convince them to send their children to mixed schools in London. Father F expanded on the reasons why he considered that teenagers in London, as differentiated from teenagers in Nigeria, paid more attention to boy-girl relationships and thus became distracted from rigorous educational pursuits:

Once a child is growing up you have to help them...I don't know if you study these people (whites) like that - up to that level - but erm anything like love is just like er cake selling to them. They jus' take it for a - they don't take it as an important thing...But in our own area (in Nigeria) we are mindful of that.

It must be noted at this stage that Father F has been living here for 'at least 17 years' (his phrase) and is relying on his memory of Nigerian teenage relationships. Various Nigerian novelists [4] have touched on Nigerian teenage and adult attitudes and norms (both traditional and contemporary) to "love" which, though perhaps not as openly flaunted as in Britain, nevertheless exist. Smith (1981) draws our attention to the point that people who have left their country of origin for a considerable length of time exhibit a tendency to idealize aspects of its cultural norms and values. For example, one of the fathers interviewed stated that on his visit to Nigeria, he found that he needed to 're-educate' (his phrase) himself about the current 'Nigerian way of life' [5].

After further discussion with Father F it was discovered that his wish for single sex schooling apart from protecting his daughter from teenage promiscuity ('cake selling') was grounded in a desire to gain and maintain prestigious social positions for his children on their eventual return to Nigeria:

We (in Nigeria) are all looking forward that (our) children will become so, so and so in the future. I will like my child to be something in the future (Father F).

Nigerian parents had strong upward mobility aspirations for their children and these were based on their belief that their children should be 'better off' socio-economically than them [6]. Pryce (1979) found similar attitudes in West Indian parents. The point to note is that Nigerian parents were not seeking upward mobility from unskilled and semi-skilled occupations. Over three quarters of them were in white collar occupations or had qualifications which would give them entry into such jobs. In addition, most of the parents running their own small business were mainly in such sectors as the import and export of goods. This applied to both
Men and women.

Father F expressed the view (commonly held by the parents interviewed) that his daughter's educational ambitions were likely to be hindered if the children got involved in emotional relationships. They felt that these 'distractions', especially for the girls, may lead eventually to pregnancies. Father F pointed out that he had his name to protect:

Of course if she want she can do that (get pregnant), but fest I must know I have tried my best for her. If I've done my best and she becomes a wayward child, well, that's it there's nothing I can do. I can only advise her...She'll become working class like these other people around here (inner London neighbourhood). (See Chapter 10 for Nigerian parents attitudes to the neighbourhoods they lived in).

Nigerian parents were found to be very status conscious and continually justified their actions by making inferences to the possibilities of being socially stigmatized by their reference group (village, family, friends) if their children did not succeed educationally. Perhaps more importantly, Nigerian parents generally wanted to do what they considered their 'best' for all their children and were, in particular, very concerned about their girls.

Stanworth (1983:10) points out that, in Britain, the education of women was not so much part of a meritocratic ideal, but a means whereby the wish that women - especially those from the working class - would devote their lives to domestic duties as servants, and as wives, was translated into a school curriculum designed to ensure that very outcome.

It can be argued that "even" working class women are to be found in white collar jobs, but as Willis (1977) shows, the tendency is for working class children (boys) in Britain to get working class jobs. The point Stanworth (1983) emphasizes is that the basis of educational provision for girls did not initially accommodate the possibility of joint (male and female) access to particular types of skills, especially of the technical type. Neither did the occupational structure allow for the probability of women competing directly with men for jobs (Deem, 1978, 1980)[7].

This type of occupational structure is one which was anathema to Nigerian parents' aspirations for their female children. Their aspirations for both male and female children were not only defined in educational terms, but were grounded in the occupational opportunities which they felt existed for their children on the family's return to Nigeria. Of course there is a difference between aspirations and reality. The children might not be educationally successful or, if they are, they might not gain high level employment. The point to note is that the parents' aspirations for their children go beyond what is generally believed to be those of the
British working class (see Barton and Walker, 1981: espec. Part I). Thus they were very strict with both male and female children (see Chapter 10).

One of the ways they could focus, at least to some extent, their children's attention on educational matters, that is, the acquisition of school knowledge, was by subtle and more often overt and explicit presentation of the positive aspects of single sex schooling (opportunity to concentrate on studies) and unfavourable assessment of mixed schools (opportunity to get pregnant or get someone pregnant). At a time when parents are still significant others, Nigerian parents worked hard to ensure that their children internalized their expectations:

I don't mind it being a single sex school... I prefer it anyway (sixth form girl).

Single sex schooling was not merely an issue argued out in the confines of the home and family. Whenever the parents could put their views publicly they did so. I attended three public meetings held in the division on the issue of forthcoming secondary school reorganization and on two of those occasions, a Nigerian parent as a member of the public argued for the maintenance of single sex schooling.

None of the parents specifically referred to their marriages and subsequent child bearing as reasons behind the encouragement of 'first things first', that is, educational qualifications before social and family concerns: 'do anything you like'. It would be interesting to discover if this deferred gratification process reflects a 'protestant work ethic' (Weber, 1976). The following question was put to a mother with experiences of domestic disruption to her educational and employment ambitions:

R: You seem to stress single sex schooling for (daughter) what about your son?

MK: Yes a want de same t'in for him. Now he's going to (boys school). Going to a school wit' garl there's plenty distraction....He will become interested in those kind of t'in's...like all dis love rubbish you see on television (laughs)... A know not all of dem (whites) behave like that. A mean it could be a black garl. If you're not ferly careful in dis country your children will just be like dem ("promiscuous" children of whatever skin colour) so boy and garl I want dem in boyz only or garlz only school. Dat's de best t'in g [8].

Although the parents were equally keen for their male children to attend single sex schools they were more accommodating towards mixed schooling for them. However, the same tenacity and effort was made in selecting 'good' schools for both sexes. Mother K pointed out that she was more concerned for her female children because she felt that men did not experience, to the same extent, a disruption to their lives if they got distracted by women.
The question of who distracts who needs to be perceived as a reciprocal action for men may and do 'distract' women and vice versa. Woods (1979) has shown how both boys and girls who are not interested in the acquisition of school knowledge define their school status by the success of male/female relationships (see also Willis, 1978). Most research on the education of women shows how both the anticipation and reality of marital experience work to marginalize women (Stanworth, 1983; Purvis, 1981; Deem, 1978, 1980).

It is worth mentioning that over two thirds of the teachers interviewed had reservations about single sex schooling:

I personally don't think they are helpful. I can see the reason for them - that girls aren't retiring and that they do better at Science and Maths and are more articulate and this sort of thing, but those same girls are the women of society that don't stand up for themselves ....I personally feel that all schools should be mixed.... If I had a daughter I wouldn't want to send her to a single sex school - put it that way (Ms. PT: 1G; four years teaching experience).

Another teacher described his feelings thus:

I said when I started teaching that I would never ever teach in a single sex school ...The idea of a single sex school is utterly (ridiculous)... Every country has its own idiosyncracies. It's concerned with the social and historical make up of the way education grew up here. Totally misguided and unfortunately we had the use of the British education system which went round the world and was respected for reasons which are difficult for me to understand. It's a legacy from the past. An outmoded and outdated form of education (Mr. MM: 2G; 13 years teaching experience).

Only five of the teachers spoken to expressed a specific liking for single sex schooling. However, their feelings were not grounded so much in terms of the positive aspects of this type of schooling for pupils (Blackstone, 1976), but in terms of their satisfaction with the general organization of the school:

I'm very sort of content really in my own niche. We have a good department that works well. You don't feel alone when you have problems. I know I can approach (middle management teacher). In terms of day to day events I feel quite content really (teacher at MB, 8 years experience)[10].

Although Purvis (1981:98) focused on educational provision for working class girls, she draws our attention to the point that working class pupils were offered 'differentiated' and 'inferior' schooling to that made available to middle class children (see also Delamont and Duffin, 1978;
Deem, 1980). Deem (1978:81) points out that educationally differentiating practices as they currently exist in schools function to hinder women's educational progress.

The parents had anticipated that the children could pursue their school careers without the distracting influences of the opposite sex, but apart from selected compulsory subjects (Mathematics and Science) the optional subjects offered were predominantly oriented towards the traditional distinctions between girls' subjects (Needlework, Domestic Science) and boys' subjects (Woodwork, Metalwork). Little wonder that present day teachers who taught in single sex schools were frustrated at how closely their schools approximated the ideology of late eighteenth and nineteenth century educational provision (Stanworth, 1983; Barton and Walker, 1981: Part I; see also Dale, 1974). Of course as Deem (1978) points out, making boys take needlework and girls metalwork does not alter the inequalities inherent in the occupational structure of the society. The teachers dissatisfied with single sex schooling saw their role as more than career orientated (the performance of a specific duty) (see Musgrove and Taylor, 1969; Woods, 1980b), but as addressing current educational thought and legal practice which eschews the equality of access to amongst other things, education (Stanworth, 1983; Sex Discrimination Act, 1975).

Teachers who shared Mr. MM:2G's point of view displayed an unwillingness to take on roles which they considered anathema to their understanding of the manner in which they should carry out their duty to impart school knowledge (see Young and Whitty, 1977) [11]. Teachers dissatisfied with single sex schooling were not really able to resolve the conflict between their beliefs and current educational practice in their schools. Those who were able to left the school. Those who did not were waiting for an opportunity to leave:

I'm here because I cannot get out...Ever since I've been here I've been trying to get out...Well I haven't been trying all that hard to get out because in a sense it's convenient for me - but no - the few opportunities I've had I've applied for (this teacher has since left SG).

Those who stayed were pragmatic:

This is a job in a school and so I just get on with it (Ms.PT:1G).

There is no evidence from the data that teachers conveyed their feelings about particular types of schools to the parents. However, some of the parents were astute enough to realize that something was not quite right:

All the good teachers are leaving (Mother E).

It is unlikely that, prior to sending their children to a school, parents have knowledge of the school staffing morale. Thus parents sent their children to 'good' schools while 'good' teachers attempted to leave these 'good' schools for better ones.
The schools having been chosen the parents now began to monitor their children's educational progress. The next section examines the manner in which the children came to decide on the subjects to be taken at the start of their fourth year of secondary schooling.

7.3 Teaching Group Organization

7.3.1 Banding

The ILEA (L, 1982:2) points out that a system of banding is 'designed to provide each secondary school with a balanced intake of all abilities'. Thus primary schools immediately prior to a child's transfer to secondary school assess children's verbal reasoning, ability in Mathematics and personal development. Hargreaves (1984:24f) points out that ILEA secondary schools have up to 40 feeder primary schools which makes the schools task of assessing children's overall level of academic ability a difficult one. He further pointed out that some primary schools tended to send in school profiles after term had started. In view of the lack of co-ordination between some primary schools and the secondary schools and a further lack of an agreed system of final primary school assessment, secondary schools usually gave pupils their own test (see Chapter 5). In both SG and MB the results of these tests were the main determinants of a child's teaching group placement (band).

Although ILEA guidelines emphasize that the proportion of children in each ability band should be normally distributed Rutter et al. (1979:154) point out that, in practice, this did not always happen. They stated that some schools had an intake of over 50% in the bottom ability range (Band 3). Teachers, especially in SG, felt that the school's reputation as a 'good' one ensured that top management teachers could, in essence, cream off the 'best' of each ability group while at the same time remaining within ILEA guidelines. Although teachers at MB did not think their school had a particularly high reputation, they felt that the school attracted quite a few 'good first choice pupils' (teacher's phrase)[12]. Thus schools that could attract the highest number of first choice pupils were at an "advantage" because they were not left with the 'dregs' (middle management teacher).

Having accepted pupils, schools then had the task of placing the children in teaching groups which were intended to reflect the children's level of academic ability and the pace at which the children were assessed as being able to pursue the acquisition of school knowledge.
7.3.2 Teaching Groups

The ILEA Division booklets have a glossary of terms which describe the essential elements of the structural organization of the school curriculum. These describe three main types of teaching structures viz. streaming (see Rutter et al., 1979:13-14), setting (see Richardson, 1973:71-74), mixed ability (see Kelly, 1974).

These varieties of teaching group organization are designed essentially to facilitate pupils acquisition of school knowledge. There have been ongoing debates about the most suitable method of dividing children into teaching groups in order to ensure that all children are given the opportunity to succeed according to their ability (see Newbold, 1977). It is not the intention of this section to delve into the teaching group debate (see Richardson, 1973; Clough and Davis, 1984). Suffice it to say here that even though Hargreaves stops short of prescribing mixed ability teaching, the current progression in ILEA schools is towards this type of teaching (Hargreaves, 1984:41). If schools have only two form entry, even with mixed ability teaching, unintentional (sic) divisions may still arise between different mixed ability groupings in the same year. It is worth noting here that the teaching groups children are placed in have overall implications for their academic and social response to schooling (Woods, 1979; see also Chapter 8).

Pastoral Care

Under this organization children's social and personal welfare are monitored and taken into account especially when the child exhibits anti-school behaviour. There is usually a teacher in a top management position who is in charge of this welfare aspect of the learning situation. However, middle management and other teachers are expected to take an active interest here to provide a settled atmosphere in the school.

The use of the term pastoral is currently being questioned by educational researchers who argue that it is a retrogressive label (Best et al., 1980). Best et al. (1983:32) point out that pastoral care has become an institutionalized process whereby a hierarchical 'chain of command' is established. Thus, each teacher in the chain performs a specific role which is both connected with child care and with the receipt of instructions from middle management teachers who, though relatively autonomous, receive instructions from the top management teacher in charge of pastoral care. Hence, teachers who have the most direct contact time with pupils have the least authority to exercise care grounded in their relationship with the child. Of course there are consultative meetings and these teachers can even make recommendations, but the eventual
responsibility for decision making rests on the teacher at the top of the pastoral care hierarchy. Best et al. (1983:16) suggest that, in practice, pastoral care is not so much concerned with pupil welfare as with legitimizing the development of a pastoral care system. Generally, the teachers at MB were 'satisfied' with their pastoral care system while those at SG were more critical. They tended to suggest that the whole pastoral care system needed overhauling (see Chapter 10). Marland (1980) suggests that pastoral care needs to be perceived as part of and not separate from the school curriculum.

Support Centres

These are usually used by schools in order to assist teachers by removing from the school and giving short term 'intensive' help and more individual attention to children who exhibit learning difficulties and/or behavioural problems. These centres are quite separate from the school and may be as close as one hundred yards and as far as two miles away from schools. However, they function as aids to the pastoral care systems operating in the schools. Since disruptive pupils were removed from their lessons, it is not surprising that teachers at MB were generally satisfied with their support centre. However, three visits to the centre showed that its essential function was social control through play (table tennis and so on).

'Paper Talk'

One of the parents (Section 7.2 above) had aptly made the distinction between 'paper talk' (theory) and practice. Thus the above teaching organization strategies have been described in order to juxtapose 'paper talk' with the reality of teaching in the schools under investigation.

7.3.3. The Curriculum

In the first three years of schooling both Sentar Garlz (SG) and Meedool Boiz (MB) offer to all their pupils subjects such as Art, Drama, English, Geography, History, Mathematics, Music, Physical Education, Religious Education, Science and a foreign language (European). In addition to these, SG offers such stereotyped subjects as, for example, Home Economics and Needlework while MB offers Woodwork and Metalwork.

In the fourth and fifth years, pupils in both schools take courses leading either to a Certificate of Secondary Education (CSE) or to a
General Certificate of Education (GCE) 'O' Level examination. The public examinations taken depend on their assessed ability and a number of children take a combination of CSE and GCE 'O' Level examinations. A grade 1 CSE (Mode 1) is equivalent to a Grade C GCE 'O' Level result. CSE Grades 2 and 3 are generally believed by the teachers interviewed not to have equal educational achievement status with any GCE 'O' Level grading except perhaps Grades D and E which are considered by teachers as 'low level pass(es)'.

Rutter et al. (1979:38) point out that until recently, GCE Grades D and E were classified as failures. However, they are not considered passes for Higher Education entrance purposes. CSE Grades 4 or 5 were considered by the teachers interviewed as 'failures really'. It must be pointed out here that only four of the teachers interviewed volunteered this information freely. The other eleven teachers asked specifically about the relationship between CSEs and GCEs were very reluctant to offer such stark assessments. They usually stopped at telling me CSE Grade 1 was equivalent to GCE Grade C. A possible explanation for this may be that these teachers did not wish to admit to the reality of the lack of status of CSE qualifications below Grade 1. ILEA Divisional Booklets (1981) also stop at this point of comparison: 'Grade 1 CSE is equivalent to Grade C or above at ordinary level of GCE'.

In the sixth form both schools offered courses leading to GCE 'A' Level examinations. The pupils could also retake previous public examinations or take up a new City and Guilds Vocational Preparation course, CSE or 'O' level courses. Both schools offered individually and in a consortium of local schools, 'A' level courses in a range of subjects and various Vocational Training courses leading to a City and Guilds Examination. In addition, SG offered Certificate of Extended Education (CEE) and Royal Society of Arts (RSA) courses. In both schools up to 60% of their fifth formers were expected to take CSEs while only 25% were expected to take GCE 'O' Level examinations (see Hargreaves (1984:8)[13] and Rutter et al. (1979:10,106,154).

Sentar Garlz (SG)

In the first year of schooling at SG three main teaching groups operated - one for the most able of the above average pupils (Band 1), one for the least able of the below average pupils (Band 3) and hierarchically organized teaching groups for all the pupils who do not fit either of the above two categories (Band 2). In the first year all pupils, regardless of their Band (teaching groups), studied the same subjects except for Band 1 pupils who are given the opportunity to study a second foreign language (European). In the second year these Bands are reorganized on the basis of
teachers' assessments of their school knowledge acquisition potential. In essence, the top teaching groups are streamed and contain the most able Band 1 pupils. The middle bands are streamed within that band and the teaching groups contain a hierarchical ability level of Band 2 pupils. The Band 3 pupils are divided into mixed ability groups within that band and are taught in smaller teaching groups of less than twenty pupils. However, all pupils are 'constantly monitored' (teacher's phrase). In other words, there is provision for mobility between teaching groups (see below).

Overall six girls did experience upward mobility. Two of these had sisters in Band 1 (see Table 7.1; see also Seaver, 1973). A Nigerian girl was tested to see if she was a 'gifted child'. However, it took teachers two years to ensure upward teaching group mobility for another girl.

At the end of the third year, pupils with the help and advice of teachers and parents choose the subjects they will study in the middle years (fourth and fifth) of secondary schooling. They take up courses leading to GCE 'O' level or CSE examinations. However, all pupils still have to study English, Mathematics, an Arts and a Science subject in addition to whichever subjects they choose to study further. There also exist some pupils who, for various social and/or academic reasons, do not take any exams at all at the end of their fifth year.

Pupils, parents and teachers together are expected to decide upon the most suitable level at which a pupil should take (or retake) any of the public examinations in the sixth form.

_Meedool Boiz (MB)_

Upon entry pupils are divided into three main teaching groups and follow similar Band groupings as SG. All Band 1 pupils are theoretically academically at par, but the general feeling expressed by teachers and pupils was that there were top and bottom Band 1 teaching groups. As at SG, Band 2 pupils were divided hierarchically into teaching groups according to their assessed school knowledge acquisition potential. The Band 3 pupils were taught in "mixed ability" teaching groups with an average of 18 pupils.

In the first to third years of schooling all pupils were taught the same subjects. However, in the second year, Band 1 boys could add a second foreign language (European) to their existing subjects offered in the first year. In the third year Band 1 pupils could drop one of three selected subjects. For Mathematics and English pupils were set according to their ability. In essence, within-Band streaming occurred in Bands 1 and 2. As in the girls' school, pupil progress was monitored in order to ensure mobility between teaching groups. Six Nigerian boys experienced upward mobility. Three of them were brothers (see Table 7.1). In the middle
years and sixth form the same basic organizational structure operated as in SG.

Research evidence indicates that mobility between bands occurs for only about 5% of pupils (Hargreaves, 1967; Lacey, 1970, 1977). Clough and Davis (1984) showed that some schools made no reference to educational principles nor curricular objectives in their description of school assessment procedures. Even when teachers wanted children moved, administrative constraints were likely to prevent this from happening. In comparison to the estimated average mobility, Nigerian children did "rather well" in being given the opportunity for upward mobility into a higher teaching group. However, generally, as Richardson, (1973) suggests, banding systems which are designed to reduce the 'streaming element' in teaching group organization, have not yet realized their aim. Ryrie et al. (1979) discovered that there was a correlation between pupils' bands and their fathers' occupation levels. Thus, it is not surprising that researchers consistently find that various school processes, in this case banding, gives the appearance of educational change while essentially working to continue pupil differentiation and subsequently maintaining the status quo.

**Noteworthy Points**

When choosing which school to attend, pupils were in effect simultaneously "choosing" which subjects they would take in the first three years of secondary schooling. Although both schools maintained that pupils were offered the same subjects, the learning contents of particular subjects were significantly influenced by the band being taught. For example, a Band 1 French language lesson was quite different in content from a Band 2 or 3 one. Band 1 French lessons contained the learning of French grammar while 'holiday' conversational abilities were emphasized in Band 2 lessons. In Band 3 French lessons the pupils did more drawing, colouring and copying of material than learning the French language. It was hoped that by pitching the work at this level Band 3 pupils would pick up French words and phrases. Similar arrangements occurred for most subjects in both schools. Keddie (1971:133-160) describes this process as 'the differentiating of an undifferentiated curriculum'. Hargreaves (1984:128) points out that the school curriculum is generally approached in a fragmented manner and suggests that subjects should be block timetabled for the whole year group. This would enable a more flexible approach to subject content grounded in the interests of the children. As pointed out earlier, there was still considerable sexual stereotyping in the optional subjects offered by each school. Rutter et al. (1979) argue that teachers are not always good judges of children's potential. Neither do they seem to
have the management skills to cope adequately with the ever growing complexity of teaching in the later part of the twentieth century (see Section 7.5; see also Hargreaves, 1980, 1984).

In their first years of schooling children generally take up all the subjects offered on a particular school's curriculum (see Hargreaves 1984:8-10,52,72). The next section outlines the strategies involved in making subject choices.

7.4 Abilities and Motivations

7.4.1 Child, Parent and Teacher Consultations

Obiageli, a fifth form girl, describes the process through which she chose her subjects thus:

The reason I picked them subjects was because I was good at them and I understand them...They (form teacher and another teacher) call you and your parents to come 'n' they (teachers) sort of say you're good at this, you're good at that and they say the teacher recommended you for this 'n' that 'n' you just pick the ones you think that you can do.

Gbolahan, a fourth year boy describes his choice thus:

G: I knew what I wanted to do...Architecture...and so I chose the subjects I wanted.
R: What did your parents say about your choice?
G: They said it was okay...My mum said if that's what I wanted to do that's what I should do.
R: What did your teacher's think?
G: I didn't tell Mr. X.
R: Why?
G: I know he would laugh. He says we are no good in T.D. (Technical Drawing)
R: So how did you know which subjects to do for Architecture?
G: My mum told me.

There are considerable elements of similarity between Obiageli's and Gbolahan's accounts. The following discussion focuses on these in order to tease out the complex processes operating prior to a subject choice being made. At first Obiageli stated that she had complete freedom to choose whichever subjects she wanted. Further probing resulted in the addition of teacher recommendations to her account.
Ryrie et al. (1979:78-79) discovered that teachers' advisory strategies were usually concerned to enable children to make appropriate subject choices in relation to their career ambitions and school assessed ability. However, they came up with the following teacher strategies: touting ('deliberately competing to get the more able pupils into their departments'), currying favour, campaigning, canvassing, recruiting and using sales techniques. The common element in these strategies was the teachers' need to strategically negotiate with pupils, a subject choice. Martin (1976:6) points out that negotiation involves the attempt to arrive at a mutually acceptable agreement. Woods (1983:143) emphasizes that negotiation includes conflict as well as consensus. Thus teachers may employ either persuasion (warming up) or dissuasion (cooling out) strategies (Hopper, 1973; Clark, 1961).

The conflict between Gbolahan's intended subject choice and his interpretation of his teacher's attitudes to all pupils taking T.D. was such that he avoided mentioning his ambition to the teacher. He turned to his mother for advice. As Woods (1979) and Ryrie et al. (1979) have shown, children discuss their intended subject choices with their parents. In addition, they discovered that there was more parental involvement in middle class homes than there was from working class ones. When Obiageli was asked what her parents thought of her subject choice, she replied:

My daddy didn't mind; he just said to pick the ones that I wanted. The ones I could do. He didn't really say anything about it really.

From this part of the account it may safely be inferred that her father played a minor role in her subject choice. Her mother was in Nigeria at the time and so, according to Obiageli, at this point in the interview, she did not play any role in Obiageli's subject choice. However thirty minutes later the interview focuses on Obiageli's parents' attitudes to schooling and their ambitions for her:

My dad is the big one (most ambitious for her). He wants me to be something really high, you know, get all the 'A' Levels, go to University, get a degree 'n' everything.... Ma mum jus' says do whatever you can...If a wanted to do fashion ma dad would just go nuts...Catering - my Mum said, "Brilliant do it", but he goes "No. It won't pay anything"....Then when I said I wanted to do Banking he went "Oh! that's very good". And then he was telling me 'bout this college I could go to - all the people he knew. I think he wants something so that when a do some work it'll give me enough money to maintain maself. That's what he's basically worried 'bout.

Here we find Obiageli having to make a choice between doing what she *thinks* she would like to do (Fashion or Catering - a possible conformity
to women's work (Stanworth, 1983) and picking a career which her father would approve of. Moreover, she recognizes the basis of her father's utilitarian aspirations. For most of the children there was a continuous interplay between what they wanted to do and at least one of their parent's educational ambitions for them. The father's utilitarianism lay in the manner in which Nigerian parents believed education facilitated upward social mobility (Chapter 1). A point worth mentioning is that the parents' occupations at the time of the research did not necessarily reflect their level of educational qualifications. The most cited reason was discrimination in employment opportunities [15]. However, the fact that just over one quarter of them had working class as differentiated from white collar jobs (see Westergaard and Resler, 1975) had little bearing on their level of involvement with their children's attempts to make subject choices. Although there was a tendency for Nigerian parents (especially the fathers) to make sexist remarks about girls' subjects, girls' careers and the 'place' of the woman (in the kitchen), in practice, the parents (again especially the fathers) single-mindedly pursued "scientific" [16] and generally male dominated careers for their daughters. The teacher of another Nigerian pupil made the following observation:

T: I know (she) is under a tremendous amount of pressure to do well in the sciences, because her father believes she should do — that that's the best thing for her. She's got no exceptional talent in science and my advice when she was making her options... was that she shouldn't do more than one science. But her father insisted against (another teacher) and my advice that she should... The best she is going to come out with is CSE — middle grade CSEs. Maybe that's okay. I don' know.

R: Did the father give any reasons why he wanted her to do the sciences?

T: No. It just seemed to me very sensible that any parent who encourages their children to do the sciences means their kids are going to have a better chance of er jobs in the end. That's how he saw it. As plain and simply as that. You couldn't blame him for that. It's just that he wasn't being realistic about (her) abilities...

This teacher's observations about another father coincides with Obiageli's interpretations of her father's ambitions for her. It will be remembered that in Section 7.2, Nigerian parents had voiced their opinions about wanting their children to study without distractions to ensure educational success. Subsequently, they asked for regular homework and bought books and other learning materials for their children:

I've already got all books necessary for her 'O' Level... since she was 12 or so' (mother).
M: It is very important for a child to read every day. At least one or two hours on her own apart from that in school.

F: She will read over her notes because there is no need taking notes when you can't, you know, read them over again.

He says he wants to be an architect...I buy everything to encourage him (mother).

The Nigerian parents interviewed believed that the main key to educational success was hard work and a belief in the importance of education. However, they did not just leave it at that. Over three quarters of the parents interviewed consistently provided educational resources (books, subject learning sets and in two cases, computers) in the home. At this stage it appears that previous educational research theory on the mediating effect of the "culture" of the home and that of the school is applicable here. (Woods, 1983; Tomlinson, 1984; see also Taylor, 1981; Tomlinson, 1983). However, this theory only scratches at the surface of the relationship between home and school and a child's educational motivation and even success. It must be remembered that the views of Nigerian parents on single sex schooling were diametrically opposed to those held by most of the teachers interviewed. Thus the point to note is not so much the cultural convergence between home and school, but the manner in which the teachers' perceptions of socio-economic status leads them to accommodate the wishes of the parents of the children they teach.

Apart from parental advice, guidance and/or pressure there was also a choice intervention by teachers:

My teacher wanted me to do (a language)...I know she did (laughs). She was always telling me how good I was in it...I like her...(sixth form girl).

The teacher here 'curried favour' and it worked, but according to her mother, it did prevent her from doing a subject more relevant to her career choice. Her mother describes the situation thus:

You know how these teachers are. Once they get a child they like they just want to keep her. She wanted to do nursing [17]. She should have taken another science - making three - She's good in all the sciences. She went and choose (a language)...I know its because of that teacher. Every time she comes home she goes "Miss say this, Miss say that about my work"...I had to force her to do (a second science). She even wanted to give that up and she knows it very well... She got 78% in her last report and she was going to give it up.

As one of the teachers pointed out:
When children are good - I mean really good - in a subject it's very difficult not to want them in your group...You don't make them do your subject. You advise them...they (pupils) may think you want them to do it because you're advising them generally to do subjects they're good in. If they're good in your subject then it's difficult...I was pleased to have her in my group. She's good for the group - they take the cue from her.

The process of choice becomes particularly difficult if the child is good at most if not all the subjects. There were eight such cases and in each the children chose the subjects they interpreted the teachers as wanting them to do. If this choice corresponded to the parents long term educational ambitions for the child, then there was no conflict. However, when, as in three of the cases, this choice went against the parents' plans, there was parental pressure on the child. In the case cited above three subjects were involved. The parent succeeded in one, but failed in getting her child to do the subjects which she thought were more suitable for the child's own chosen ambition - nursing. It is worth noting that if the child had not interpreted the teacher's advice in the manner she did, she would more likely have chosen the third science subject. This is because she went on to apply to do nursing. The science subject she dropped would have enhanced her chances if she had gained an 'O' Level pass in it and she was 'quite capable of' (a teacher's phrase) achieving this.

As with Woods' (1979) and Ryrie et al's (1979) research findings, Nigerian children's subject choice usually approximated that of their teachers. However, a distinction needs to be made between subjects in open and closed contests. Subjects in closed contests were not necessarily the traditional academic subjects, but those that a teacher specifically wanted a child to take or not to take. All other subjects were in open contest. The more subjects that were in the closed contest, the more likely it was that there would be conflict in arriving at a subject choice if any one of the subjects was disapproved of by the parents. Even though subjects were set against each other, for example, the choice between economics or religious studies [18], it was found that most of the subject choice conflicts were between those in the closed contest. The closed contest was one characterized by teachers' sales or "ego bashing" strategies and parents' utilitarian appeals. In Gbolahan's case the teacher ridiculed (ego bashing) the whole class in the hope that they would not take up his subject. In another case the successful employment of the currying favour strategy resulted in misguiding the child. Woods (1979:27) describes these subject choice processes as those of 'institutional channelling' (see also Ryrie et al., 1979:70).

Although the children mentioned what subjects their peer group (friends) chose, this did not appear to form part of their subject choice
process in as influential a way as Woods (1979) and Ryrie et al., (1979) describe. It was found in only three cases that the children's choice was mediated by the peer group. In all but one of these, the subjects were in open contest and had no bearing on the children's chosen careers. Strong peer group influence was only detected in the context of teaching ability groupings where two girls in different years wanted to move down one teaching group level to be with their friends. The teachers refused. When questioned, one of the girls pointed out that she was just 'being lazy' because she did not want to do the hard work involved in 'O' Level study. The other girl simply wanted to be with her friends, but she further pointed out that she first wanted to do CSEs 'because they're easy'. After this she wanted to go into the sixth form and take 'O' Levels in the same subjects because she 'would have done most of the work already'.

Having drawn attention to conflicts arising out of the process of subject choice, it must be pointed out that generally teachers got on 'reasonably well' with the parents. However, teachers resented very much the attitudes of some Nigerian parents:

It wasn't a happy meeting unfortunately. He came to the parents' meeting. This is usually a five minute thing. It (parents' meeting) is not very satisfactory really, but it's better than nothing. He had me there for about 15 minutes virtually telling me how to teach - but that's beside the point. He used to be a teacher so he obviously knows the importance of education.

As pointed out above nine of the parents had been school teachers prior to coming to this country. It is therefore not surprising that they were concerned about teacher pedagogy. Although not all teachers reported that Nigerian parents tried to teach them their job, it was found that the parents teachers cited as being 'unreasonable', 'aggressive', 'over-ambitious' and 'authoritarian' were those who had had verbal confrontations with at least one teacher in the school:

I had a singularly unpleasant interview with Mr. X.... He insisted that she do 'O' Levels and was quite unprepared to listen to me.

The mother turned up at his open day once. Completely out of touch. She's quite well off. The father's completely left the scene. She couldn't appreciate the situation. She wanted homework for him....

When teachers were asked specific questions about their perceptions of the attitudes of Nigerian parents they tended to employ family background details as "evidence" to support their accounts of the parent's actions. Reference to a parent's economic status or marriage situation did nothing to explain why the teacher thought the mother wanted homework for
her child. The quote above shows how teachers almost inadvertently juxtapose family background information with issues concerning children's schooling. These "gossipy" details need to be differentiated from the need, when appropriate, to understand the social situation of children. This teacher appeared to be making theoretical links between the home and the school, but the manner in which this potentially interesting point was discarded showed that the teacher's understanding of current educational debates was shallow.

Hargreaves (1980:130) draws attention to the historical process through which teachers were trained where 'the graduate has been almost always in a minority'. Even though increasingly more teachers are graduates, Hargreaves suggests that teachers themselves believe that their repertoire of knowledge is 'essentially intuitive' (p.132). He goes on to quote Jackson (1968:143-144) who points out that 'teacher talk' is characterized by its 'conceptual simplicity' [19]. These points are dealt with in more detail in the following chapters. It is worth noting here that we again find the tendency for teachers to focus on "outside" school explanations rather than concentrate on how school processes (in this case the non-provision of homework) hinders or enhances children's response to the acquisition of school knowledge and moreover, encourages parents to perceive negatively the professional (sic) judgements of some teachers.

The next section examines the teachers' general assessment of the educational progress of Nigerian children.

7.4.2 Doing Well

Broadly speaking, Nigerian parents considered that any examination result over 60% in the first to fourth years of schooling and at least four 'O' Levels and/or five CSEs in the fifth year indicated that a child was doing well at school. The children were keen to do well, but they were ambivalent in their assessment of their own school progress:

I think it's been fairly constant...Well, the teachers, especially my (2 subject teachers), say so (fifth year: Band 1 boy).

My teacher says I'm doing well. Sometimes I'm a bit lazy in doing the work (third year: Band 3 girl).

My teacher says I'm doing well. My mum says I can do better so does my (subject) teacher...I just do the work...I don't mind. I enjoy it (first year: Band 1 girl).

The children generally accepted that they were doing well if the teachers told them so (see Ryrie et al., 1979). Only three children assessed their
academic progress without specific reference to a teacher's assessment:
I'm in the middle band so I know am not really doing well. The work is not so hard...Not so much essays and things and lots and lots of homework....I'd say I was doing okay (fourth year girl).

As far as the teachers were concerned it appeared that most children 'do well' as long as they 'work hard' and are not behavioural problems (see Chapter 8). Both teachers and parents valued hard work:
If a child is born in a family where everybody is struggling, studying, [21] then her own must follow. She must imitate her parents by working hard (Mother J).

When you get as far as doing 'O' Levels in this sort of atmosphere (school) you need to work hard. In fact you need to work very hard... Well, most of the kids here don't give a hoot about education. It's a laugh really. They just don't care... Those (pupils) that want to get on must work extra hard... I keep telling them (all pupils) this. Sometimes I say, "Just because you're in the top band here doesn't mean you're the best in the country". It's cruel really, but I think I owe it to them (Ms. MM:12G).

The standards, hopes and ideals set by the parents usually reached fruition with Band 1 pupils. However, with Band 2 (especially middle and bottom) and 3 pupils the parents consistently misinterpreted teachers' observations that their children were 'doing well'. When asked about the educational abilities of a particular Band 2 pupil, a teacher replied as follows:

(She) has handed in some bits of really excellent pieces of work. She's gone away almost without help and done tons of work....I believe her father has very high expectations of her. Perhaps unrealistic...(Mr. MM:2G).

The teacher goes on to provide evidence for this belief which conflicts with the earlier part of his statement:
I do not think she's got great ability. She is certainly, more able than most if not all of her class.

Woods (1979:170ff) suggests that the apparently contradictory statements made by teachers should be perceived as 'teacher typifications' which are grounded in the teacher's definition of the situation. Hargreaves (1972:161) suggests that teachers' process of matching children's progress with suitable assessment labels reflect their orientations towards particular grading methods. Hargreaves (1984:16) points out that school reports tend to be confusing. The first part of one pupil's report reads thus:

(She) has made excellent progress this year. She has
matured and settled down well. She has adopted a responsible and hard working attitude to all of her subjects.

It is apt to juxtapose this statement with the range of marks received: Religious Education (47%), History (40%), Science (31%), Home Economics (27%) and Mathematics (14%).

The second part of her report reads

(She) still has some areas of difficulty in that she tends to work very slowly, does not always hand in her homework on time and needs to revise topics more carefully. She must always ask for help immediately particularly with revision for exams.

The child's parent interpreted this part of the report as follows:

What she (teacher) is saying is that if (child) hand in her homework on time and ask for more assistance with her lesson then she'll be alright.

As far as this parent was concerned her task as a parent revolved around the need to 'encourage' (her terms) the child to work quicker, hand in her homework on time, revise her topics more carefully and ask for help more frequently. In other words, she saw her role as ensuring that (X) modified her behaviour to conform with her interpretation of the teacher's comments. Even though the mother recognized that her daughter's examination results were 'poor' (her term) she pointed out that the teacher had described her progress as 'excellent'. She explains away the poor examination results as part of the teacher's overall educational strategy:

Sometimes they can mark her down (give her low marks) so that she can try to do better next time.

Essentially, the teacher has not allowed for a critical examination of the child's ability:

It has given me great pleasure to watch her succeed (my emphasis) this year and I find her a most responsible and helpful member of the form (final part of report).

As was shown in the discussion on subject choice, teachers drew attention to Nigerian parents' unrealistic expectations of their children's educational progress. It is argued here that parents' "unrealistic ambitions" are fuelled by the teachers' concern to present a favourable account of a pupil's educational attainment especially when the pupil is not a behaviour problem.

When asked about a parent's attitude to their child's work the teacher gave this account:

She (mother) couldn't understand. When she was in school in Nigeria she was having to write essays... They (parents) seemed out of touch with the fact that (child) is a (Band 3) boy and were judging him as somebody, you know, by their own standards they may have had at school.
Upon entry into school all parents are told what Band their children are in. A teacher describes the procedure thus:

We tell them (parents) that their children need help in basic understanding like in Maths and English... There'll be an emphasis on numeracy and literacy... We try to tell them the positive aspects of it... just because they're in Band 3 now (first year) doesn't mean that (they'll)... be stuck there. If (they) make sufficient progress (they) will be moved up... The advantage in (Band 3) is that the classes are smaller and so pupils receive the attention they need... Having said that I know that out of (an average of 20) pupils only two or three maybe four will move out of there (Band 3)... but you've got to give the parents some hope.

As discussed below, previous research does show that there is limited mobility between teaching groups. Woods (1979:204) cites parents' 'hurt feelings and sense of helplessness' at the reports they receive about their children's progress. However, as long as teachers keep giving 'some hope' the parents are likely to continue making high level educational demands on their children:

His parents have these high expectations. They just want to see books and books and books... They want him to do homework every night and are bewildered by the fact that he doesn't always have homework to do... (When I set homework) he is the only boy in the class that returned it... Mum is anxious and father is, but they don't seem to realize that (he) has specific learning problems in the field of fluency and verbal expression really (this child was born here).

The teacher was then asked what was the pupil's response to this form of parental interest:

(He) does try... doesn't give up. I think a lot of it is due to parental pressure. Although... it's very difficult to say. At school when (he) is on (his) own (he) does say "Come on miss please, let me get on. I just want to finish this..." (He) does want to work, but... not terribly consistent... Sometimes (he) just wants to play with... calculator... (He) is bewildered by school and academic things.

The teacher found the parental attitude difficult 'to tune in to (and found) a lack of appreciation of the situation'. The parents of another child (Band 1) with similar school experiences, on a different school academic level, interpret the situation thus:

F: I do not accept reports on their face value... There is an element of dubiousness in some of the comments especially when the comments do not reflect the marks or
vice versa. ...It's one of the professional tricks of the trade.

These parents justify their insistence on what is 'good' for the child by drawing attention to the discrepancies between the comments teachers make and the marks they award. Though teachers do not put it in exactly the same manner, this teacher did recognize that there were indeed 'elements of dubiousness' in the relationship between what the parents were told and what the child's actual learning ability was:

Perhaps I should have said to Mrs (X), "Look (child) is functioning below average. He is not the child who's going to be able to write essays. (He) just can't do that. (He) can barely do the comprehension you and I would have done when we were nine" — I mean that sort of thing.... It wasn't quite right to tell her.

Even after going through the lines with me in an imaginary conversation with Mrs. (X), this teacher still felt hesitant about conveying the truth of the matter to the parent. The teacher here is waiting for an appropriate time to inform the parent of the pupil's limitations: 'the gap was too big at the moment'. This is a third year pupil who is about to make subject choice decisions based on a complex process of parent and teacher canvassing (Section 7.4). With this pupil's parent being so 'out of touch' with the reality of the child's capabilities, it is little wonder that conflicts occur between what teachers perceive as parent's unrealistic ambitions and what parents analyse as teacher's 'professional tricks of the trade'.

Teacher strategies contain not so much 'elements of dubiousness', but an attempt to steer a safe course through potentially volatile situations. However, for teachers who are aware of the emphasis Nigerian parents put on educational achievement, one would have expected that they would have developed some more appropriate coping strategy (see A. Hargreaves, 1978). Woods (1979:205) suggests that parents need to have the skill of 'filling in' information that teachers have left out in their children's reports. Out of 60 parents he interviewed he found only one parent who had the ability fully to contextualize the report by reading between the lines. Interestingly enough over half the Nigerian parents interviewed made comments which inferred that they were aware of the need to recognize the 'tricks of the trade' such as the teacher strategy of 'fobbing off' (see below). The remainder of the parents who kept faith with what the teacher told them not surprisingly were alarmed when it was eventually revealed that their children would not be entered for public examinations at the level they had anticipated.

By the time the teachers get round to informing the parents that 'doing well' and 'excellent' meant in some cases 'middle grade CSEs' (teacher's phrase) or no examination at all, the gap between parents'
expectations and teachers attempts to "come clean" had widened to the point where parents, sensing something in the air, began to anticipate and prepare for conflict:

They (teachers) tend to give you the impression that they are in control of the situation...If you've been watching the system...you prepare yourself in case of confrontation. I don't mean physical confrontation. You want to make them realize you know what you are saying...I told (the teacher) that I'm not going to let my child do CSE...Instead of wasting time doing that (child) had better go to Nigeria[22] (Father B).

It is important to emphasize that a gap in communication and attitudes did not exist with all Nigerian parents who had high educational aspirations for their children:

Parents have to accept that their children are in the ability range that they will not be able to do GCE. We all have grand ideas about what we would like to be. I'd like to be a surgeon (laughs), but I can't so that's it. Most parents would love their children to say "Oh! they'll do this", but the child has no ability to do this, so why? All you have to do is to find out what the child is interested in (Father H).

Despite this understanding of the differences between reality and aspiration Father H also expressed concern at the turn relationships between teacher and parents take:

Sometimes they (the teachers) just fobs you off...They (think) "If I tell the parent the parent is going to kick up a fuss. I might as well let (child) drift in there. Sooner or later (parent) will find out".

From the above it appears that teachers do what they can to avoid confrontational situations especially when they believe that the parent is likely to take them up on their comments and assessments. These are short-term coping strategies which will neither resolve nor provide a forum for discussion on the "real" abilities of the children. Father H thought that the manner in which the education process worked was responsible for the situation whereby the amount of hard work and effort a child put into school work did not always correspond to a child's educational achievement:

Two things is happening in school. There are the old type teachers who have the grammar school mentality and there are these young ones which is called trendy left...The problem is that children that are exceptionally good cannot be made better. The ones in the middle range cannot be made to improve further and the one at the bottom cannot be helped at all [23].
In other words, Father H believes that no one really does well in school. Nigerian parents still remember very vividly their own time in secondary school and are not impressed by “progressive” educational methods especially when they assess them as being unable to cope with the range of ability within comprehensive schools.

The next section examines Nigerian children’s educational progress in terms of their teaching groups (Bands) and their public examination results.

7.4.3 The Children’s Band

Table 7.1 shows the teaching bands in which Nigerian pupils were grouped upon entry to SG and MB and those in which they were at the time of this present research.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Band</th>
<th>Sentar Garlz</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>At entry</td>
<td>At time of study</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Top</td>
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<td>Middle</td>
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<td>Bottom</td>
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<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>43</td>
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</table>

The Bands of pupils in the fourth to sixth years were based on the level at which they were expected to take or, as in the case of sixth formers, had taken their public examinations when they were in the fifth year. Thus, those who were entered for 'O' Levels were included in Band 1. Those who were entered for CSE examinations were included in Band 2. Within Band 2 CSE candidates were further differentiated by the results of their school examination together with a teacher’s assessment of their expected grading. There was no Nigerian pupil who did not enter for an examination in at least one subject. There was a total of 14 Nigerian pupils in the sixth form—eleven girls and three boys.

In MB six out of 14 boys moved up to a higher level teaching group. Three of these were brothers in different school years. Similarly, in SG
six out of 43 moved up. Two of these had sisters who were already in Band 1. Seaver (1973) in a study of siblings attending the same school, showed that if children of the same family attend the same school and the first child to attend did well in school, it was likely that teachers would have high expectations of the younger sibling. However, this does not fully explain why, at the time of this research, 42% of Nigerian children were in Band 1. Even at entry 30% of the children were in Band 1, while only 7% were in Band 3.

Bearing in mind that ILEA guidelines suggest a 25% Band 1 intake for each school it would appear that both MB and SG were able to admit 'good first choice (Nigerian) pupils' (see also Rutter et al., 1979:154). Furthermore, teachers at both schools did point out that they had always had a 'steady stream' of Nigerian pupils who tended to 'do well' in school. Thus teachers may have had high expectations of Nigerian pupils which in turn may have acted as a self-fulfilling prophecy. Moreover, teachers tended to perceive Nigerian parents as 'middle class really' (teacher's phrase) (see below). As indicated above, research has shown that middle class children are educationally advantaged (see Chapter 2).

In order to gain insight into the children's actual educational "success" in terms of their examination results Table 7.2 shows the grades obtained by Nigerian pupils at the end of their fifth year. At the time of the research the children were in the sixth form. It is worth noting that all of the Nigerian fifth year pupils either remained at school and entered the sixth form after reaching the minimum school leaving age or went on to further education colleges. None of them left school at 16 in order to go directly into employment.

On average 20% (one fifth) of the most able ILEA pupils in each subject were expected to take GCE 'O' Levels while 60% (two thirds) of those in the middle ability group were expected to take CSE examinations. However, Hargreaves (1984:1) suggests that these examinations are not designed for up to 40% of ILEA pupils who take 'few (three) or no public examinations'. Only pupil B who took three CSEs fell into this category. As shown in Table 7.2 just under three quarters (9 out of 13; 70%) and just over seven eighths (12 out of 13; 92%) took 'O' Levels and CSEs respectively. One child took only 'O' Levels whilst four children took CSEs only. Pupils D, I and L had the strongest results (five or more higher grade passes at 'O' Level or CSE) and five pupils had one or more higher grade passes. Higher grade passes are 'O' Level grades A-C and CSE Grade I (Hargreaves, 1984:9). Table 7.3 shows ILEA public examination averages between 1978 and 1981.
TABLE 7.2 NIGERIAN PUPILS' FIFTH YEAR EXAMINATION RESULTS

SENTAR GARLZ

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pupils</th>
<th>Exams taken</th>
<th>'O' level grades</th>
<th>CSE grades</th>
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<tr>
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<td>A 1 5 1 1</td>
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<td>M</td>
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<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
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KEY

U = Unclassified.

* = entered school in sixth form and had taken WASC examinations in Nigeria.

TABLE 7.3 ILEA EXAMINATION AVERAGES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GRADES</th>
<th>AVERAGES</th>
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<tr>
<td>No grades</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 or more higher grades</td>
<td>40.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 or more higher grades</td>
<td>13.7%</td>
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Source: Hargreaves (1984:9)

Hargreaves (1984:9) does point out that ILEA standards of examination results are rising and suggests that ILEA is beginning to reap the benefits of high expenditure [13].

In an assessment of SG's public examination results the school found that '(their) fourteen children of African origin' scored an average of
24.9 points compared to 23.1, 16.7 and 16.4 average points for children of Asian, West Indian and 'white children', respectively. The school goes on to point out that our white children had opted out of examinations by leaving at Easter or virtually leaving far earlier than that (Only three "West Indians" took no exams and no "Asians" or "Africans") (school's parenthesis and quotation marks) Our African community is generally middle class while our West Indian parents have a very similar range of employment to our white parents. Class would seem to affect examination results far more than ethnic origin (School communication to the ILEA Research and Statistics Unit, 1981).

In SG, the "middle classness" of African parents appeared so general that the school employed this label to explain the incidence of their 'high' educational achievement. It is of no real bearing if this was not an accurate label; the point to note is, as Thomas (1928:572) suggests, if (people) define situations as real, they are real in their consequences.

A wide range of educational research which examines social class positions in relation to school outcomes (Taylor, 1981; Tomlinson, 1983; 1984) invariably point to a tendency which shows that middle class children benefit more from the education system. It was suggested that children's dialects and accents overrode class positions (Chapter 6). Hargreaves (1984) suggests that working class children find it more difficult to concentrate for long periods of time on any one school subject. Willis (1977) has shown how some working class kids develop an anti-school subculture (see also Lacey, 1970, Corrigan, 1979). Dhondy et al. (1982) discuss the development of black (West Indian) children's response to schooling in terms of a culture of resistance. Tomlinson (1983) accounts for the achievement of black (Asian) children by citing the early recognition of their language problems and subsequent programmes designed specifically to help them acquire BEAD skills [14]. It was shown that a similar language difficulty recognition occurred in the case of Nigerian children, but that administrative constraints hindered their progress. From an analysis of their distribution in teaching Bands and the subsequent educational outcomes it appears that Nigerian children, in this present research, generally are educational achievers in a similar sense to those attributed to Asian children. Having pointed out the educational 'success' of Nigerian children it must be remembered that we may be dealing here with 'good first choice' Nigerian pupils whose parents are in addition, perceived as 'middle class really'.

Over the past decade educational thought has focused on the provision of a relevant curriculum for all pupils in a multi-ethnic society. The next section discusses teachers opinions on this issue.
7.5 Managers of the curriculum

At the time of this present research, neither SG nor MB had developed a policy on multi-ethnic education [24]. Thus it is not possible to provide any pupil, parent or teacher response grounded in practice. However, one of the parents in the exploratory study (Chapter 3) did strike a cord when, in response to a question about school projects his daughter had undertaken, he expressed displeasure at the time his daughter was spending on a project on Rastafarianism. It was not so much the content, but the utility of the topic that worried him: 'Where will it get her?' he asked. Implicit in this question is another one - Does the school offer 'O' level examinations in Rastafarianism?

Current research shows that the implementation of a multi-ethnic curriculum lays stress on learning topics for ethnic minority groups (Tierney, 1982). Stone (1981:Ch. 3) points out that topics that are chosen are generally fringe ones which have no academic status. She urges that teachers should stick to the task of teaching the three Rs as they lacked the skills to grapple adequately with the complexities of educating children from different ethnic groups. Over two-thirds of the teachers spoken to in both research schools were unsure about the way their school should proceed to implement the ILEA guidelines on multi-ethnic education (see also Little and Willey, 1981). One of the teachers at SG suggested that the school was just 'pontificating':

There is no real step forward to say let's really get under the skin of this...I think the multicultural thing isn't just a black, white thing. There're groups within groups... (but) honestly a lot of teachers here think "Oh! well, we're going to provide something for those black girls".

A teacher at MB expressed the view that multi-ethnic education should be incorporated into the curriculum principally in areas which had a Eurocentric view. ILEA side stepped the multi-ethnic debate quite nicely by referring to the 'whole school curriculum' (Hargreaves, 1984). The multi-ethnic debate is relevant to this present research in so far as it relates to educational provision for all children. It is acknowledged that a multi-ethnic whole school curriculum needs to include an anti-discrimination perspective (Tierney, 1982). Side stepping the multi-ethnic curriculum debate is unlikely to change the reality of the experience of schooling. Sooner or later pupils become aware of social differentiation either in school or in society at large.

Three teachers at SG expressed their surprise that a Nigerian girl was taking part in the discussion leading to SG's Anti-Racist Day Conference. As one of them put it:
I was surprised to see her there. She's becoming aware of things other than work (she's a Band 1 pupil). I know racism affects all pupils that aren't white in one way or another, but I didn't think she would have taken it on board and played an active part somehow (four years experience).

It may be less stressful in the long run to confront an issue which has been recognized as needing to be accommodated in the traditional school curriculum. Two of the top management teachers spoken to stated that their schools were taking note of 'aspects' of multi-ethnic education and implementing it in such areas as Religious Studies and History. A teacher at MB described the situation thus:

I think they are aware that something should be done. What exactly is another matter... (at the moment) they're not doing a great deal (Mr. PT:2B; over 20 years experience).

Troyna (1982) argues that the implementation of a multi-ethnic curriculum for all pupils has become a process of social control for black pupils. Since neither school had devised a multi-ethnic curriculum, I have no evidence to refute or support Troyna's assertion. However, current thinking is very critical of the manner in which the multi-ethnic curriculum is being developed (Tierney, 1982; see also Stone, 1981).

An area related to that of curriculum development is that of the general organization of the curriculum itself. The teachers spoken to had reservations about the organization of the curriculum and of their school in general. In SG, the reservations focused on the head and two deputies. An SG teacher has the following to say:

I'd like to see someone appointed in charge of curriculum. Though its the job description of the first deputy I've never heard him/her talk about the curriculum since I've been in this school (just over four years)...The head has taken over the curriculum, this year, but she hasn't given any lead.... Somebody ought to be doing (my emphasis) that job which would also take responsibility for language, the possibility of multi-ethnic education and anti-sexist curriculum; including the whole revamping of a curriculum which is inappropriate for many, many of our girls... They just do what we offer them and its limited, too limited (13 years experience).

Generally, the teachers at SG were critical of top management whom they thought were not doing the best they could in terms of managing the school's affairs. They pointed out that a few teachers worked very hard whilst the rest just 'drifted' from one day to the next. To say that over half of the teachers spoken to at SG were demoralized is to put it mildly.

Morale at MB was not as low as that at SG, but here again teachers wanted 'positive leadership'. At MB criticism of the school centred around
the head of the school [25]:

I need more guidance. I think that's what's lacking in this school — perhaps guidance for teachers (seven years experience).

Another teacher at MB pointed out that the head
tends to stand in the background while (other top management teachers) sort of take the front...(but)...give him his due.
He does come out of his study and does teach too (over 18 years experience).

Although teachers recognized what was lacking in their school, they had a sense of powerlessness to correct it. Thus the tendency was for small groups of teachers to get together and attempt to address pertinent educational issues with or without the support of top management:

Why hasn't she said at the beginning of the year — "Right its your brief to do something about this (multi-ethnic education)" ...a group of people had come back from a conference and gave an excellent report...but there was no follow up (Mr. MM:2G).

A teacher at MB expresses a similar view of the school's inability to tackle problems:

I think there's a long way to go as regards curriculum... I think its optimistic. I don't think its hopeless...
Sometimes I think I'm bashing my head against a wall er I don't do as much as I should do (Ms. PT:1B).

Hargreaves (1980:146) describes the occupational structure of teaching as one which is bedevilled by impotence. He draws attention to the 'multifaceted' (p.136) role of teachers where there is so much pressure on teachers (for example, to conduct lessons that have 'gone well') that they avoid open discussions of their problems. Teachers wished for more communication between them and top management. But as Hargreaves pointed out

like sexual activity, teaching is seen as an intimate act
which is most effectively and properly conducted when shrouded in privacy (p.141).

It is these introverted teachers that, after a period of socialization (Lacey, 1977) are "chosen" to become top management teachers. Having internalized the salient aspects of the teacher subculture of 'individualism', they can hardly be expected to be 'approachable'.

Hargreaves (1980) points out that the most 'startling' aspect of teacher subculture is their 'sensitivity to observation'. It would appear that top management teachers are not only sensitive to the observations of the 'outsider' (for example, a researcher, see Section 4.7), but are concerned to shield themselves from the observation of their colleagues lower down the hierarchy. If, as Lacey (1977) suggests, recently qualified
teachers are socialized into an existing subculture characterized by, amongst other matters, status divisions, some teachers may be looking at a mirror image of themselves. Hargreaves (1980) argues that teaching is a low status job in which teachers as aspiring professionals lack the skill successfully to negotiate an expertise-oriented perception of their occupation. It is little wonder that top management teachers, too, are unable effectively to manage their schools.

One of the teachers at SG stated bluntly that s/he had a low opinion of one of the deputy heads, did not trust the head and wanted the other deputy head sacked. S/he felt that one of the deputy heads was 'racist', 'exist1' and 'strongly in favour of ...streaming'. Teachers at both schools felt that top management were not 'clued in', inefficiently managed their schools and 'lacked ideas'.

Lacey (1977:152) argues that teachers need to learn that 'social reality is constructed through the interplay of individual actions with changing roles and purposes'. He suggests that teachers need to acquire knowledge about the socialization of teachers. In this way they may avoid tying the noose around their own necks.

It is up to teachers to choose the means through which inadequate management can be censured. Confiding to a researcher may be part of the process; however, it is felt that a more direct strategy may be required if the crisis in schooling is to be not just contained, but eliminated (see Chapter 11).

7.6 Summary

Nigerian parents saw schools primarily in utilitarian terms. Thus at their children's point of transfer from primary to secondary school, they employed various assessment strategies to ensure that their children went to 'good' schools. The children themselves had usually undergone a process of socialization in which they had internalized (Berger and Luckmann, 1967) their parents' wishes. Thus their school choice tended to coincide with that of their parents. At this stage of entry into school the 'significant other' status of the parents generally encouraged the children to conform to their parents' wishes.

The process through which schooling itself was organized consisted of a variety of differentiation strategies. Banding systems were utilized as a means through which teachers could make sense of children's varying levels of ability. Teachers were aware that their initial assessment of a given child's ability might be erroneous and so created provisos and the possibility of mobility between teaching groups. In comparison to existing
research which suggests that on average only 5% of pupils experience upward teaching group mobility, Nigerian children, did rather well. Some of these were siblings. Seaver (1973) has shown the self-fulfilling prophecy of teachers expectations of siblings.

Having been placed in teaching groups, the children were expected (in their third year) to choose the subjects that they were interested in studying for the next two years prior to taking public examinations in some of them. It was found that both teachers and parents competed to ensure that the children's subject choice approximated their own. Sales and canvassing strategies were employed by teachers while parents tended to employ appeals to the utilitarian aspects of particular subjects. The children then had to negotiate a subject choice which was acceptable to both parents and teachers. Although this chapter focused mainly on areas of conflict, these were rare, but interactionally important for the consequences of schooling. The general consensus between teachers and parents could be accounted for by the fact that just over 40% of the children were in Band 1 by the time they were in their third year of secondary schooling. Thus children were 'doing well' in enough subjects in both open and closed contests to avoid conflict over subject choice between teachers and parents. When there was conflict, teachers were able to call on their "professional judgement" and thus legitimate their position on which subjects a child should take. However, some Nigerian parents were not so easily deterred and in a few cases teachers were forced to compromise.

Teachers believed in being positive in their assessment of children's learning progress, but this teacher strategy obscured the reality of the level at which children could acquire school knowledge. Thus teachers inadvertently contributed to creating conflictual situations between themselves and some disappointed parents.

While teachers were busy assessing the children's educational progress teachers themselves were found not to be making good progress in terms of curriculum development and organizational coherence. They were scathing about the organization of their schools, but as social actors capable of being socialized into an existing subculture, it was argued that teacher's optimism in the possibility of effective educational change through merely a change at the top was naive.
7.7 Concluding Reflections

The process of education is characterized by differentiation and stratification. Parents rank schools according to their own criteria of the 'good' school. Once pupils are in school, they are ranked by teachers, into different teaching groups which contain a ranked order of children's school knowledge learning abilities. Educational provision and educational outcomes are usually examined in relation to different ethnic groups and different social classes. Thus educational research findings are also characterized by differentiation and stratification. Even though interpretive research recognizes the ability of the individual to choose his/her own lines of action, we find that invariably research reviews cite educational responses according to (amongst others) social class and ethnic group criteria (Woods, 1983; Tomlinson, 1984). Thus we find that middle class children are generally more educationally successful than working class children.

With particular reference to Afro-Caribbean children, educational research suggests that their family's position in the labour market coupled with inter-ethnic discrimination cause them to be educationally "disadvantaged" (Rampton, 1981; Swann, 1985). Writers debate whether Afro-Caribbean children's response to schooling is a form of resistance or one of social conditioning (Dhondy et al., 1982; Cashmore and Troyna, 1982). On the other hand the occupational position of Asian families appears to be spread along the middle class/working class continuum. Thus Asian children, when treated as a homogenous group are found to be educational achievers, but when differentiated by social class criteria, the usual dichotomy between working and middle class groups emerges (Tomlinson, 1983). Nevertheless, over time, teachers have come to have higher expectations of Asian pupils than they have of Afro-Caribbean pupils. Hence, in the educational success ratings, Asians are ranked higher than Afro-Caribbeans.

It can be safely generalized that teachers in this present research must have had high expectations of at least 40% (those in Band 1) of Nigerian (African) children in their schools. The pertinent question is how this came about. Is it the result of a grudgingly given middle class label to Nigerian families ('they are middle class really'), or are there other processes involved in the making of the relative success of Nigerian children? Nigerian parents' aspirations for their children are similar to those of other black ethnic minority groups (Saifullah Khan, 1979; see also Pidgeon, 1970). If the explanation for the children's achievement cannot be located in terms of parental aspirations, then one of the other areas to focus on is that of the interactional process of schooling.

By focusing on Nigerian children, this present research has also been concerned with differentiation. However, the purpose here is not so much
with attempting to rank Nigerian children on the educational success scale, but to suggest that in their need to avoid conflict, teachers were prepared to acquiesce to Nigerian parents' definition of the situation. This process of parental accommodation works to encourage educational success in some children—whether they be working or middle class, black or white.

Goody and Groothues (1979:58) point out that West African families 'who are not part of a mass chain migration' come from 'relatively privileged backgrounds'. It is suggested that though "middle classness" may play a role in teachers' expectations of Nigerian pupils, it is more likely that the Nigerian parents' ability successfully to negotiate (either through consensus or conflict) what they want for their children, plays a major part in the educational progress of their children.

It has been suggested that the old colonialist equation of EDUCATION = POWER (their capitals) explains why so many black parents passionately wanted for their children the education they never had (Organization of Women of Asian and African Descent, as quoted in Cashmore and Troya, 1982:97; see also Dore, 1976).

Although this explanation cannot be ignored (see Chapter 1), it implies that black parents have little or no formal educational qualifications. A few Nigerian parents interviewed in this present research had not achieved high level educational qualifications, but most had achieved qualifications above 'O' Level gradings. Five out of 36 had achieved polytechnic and university degrees and two were undertaking postgraduate qualifications (Chapter 4). Thus their aspirations were not grounded in something they had not themselves received and now wanted for their children, but were based on the felt need to continue and maintain an already existing educational status (Chapter 1).

The finding that this small group of Nigerian children are educationally "successful" should not be taken to mean that black ethnic minority groups are no longer being discriminated against. Rather it emphasizes that the success of a minor minority group does not alone 'alter the structural principles that determine inequality' (Westergaard and Resler, 1975:20), in this case of educational provision. To be fully appreciated, the education of Nigerian children in British comprehensive schools needs to be perceived as part of a process of social containment in which pressure from 'interest groups' (even though loosely structured, such as Nigerian families) is accommodated. Their numerical "insignificance" in relation to Afro-Caribbean children, for example, does not pose a threat to the established social ranking of ethnic minority groups in general.

When recent educational research (Tomlinson, 1983) on Asian children is examined closely, it would appear that the educational success of the middle class Asian children has distracted attention from other Asians who
do not succeed in the British education system (for example, Bangladeshis—see Swann, 1985). It is unlikely that overall Nigerian families are homogenous in terms of their socio-economic status. Hence, a similar trend to that of Asian children may occur. In view of the manner in which working class radicalism has been contained by elevating/sponsoring a limited number into the middle class, it is suggested that a similar process of containment could be taking place in which a limited number of black ethnic minority groups also are being sponsored for mobility into the British middle classes. Having been thus labelled, they, too, may reassess their social position in relation to the means of production. They may discover, as the new middle classes have done, that it is in their interest to maintain the status quo. However, Westergaard and Resler (1975:276) suggest that 'dissent has not been fully tamed by the institutionalization of conflict'. We have yet to discover if the accommodation of parents' wishes will work to develop a black middle class group which acquiesces with the existing practice of social differentiation.

In view of the part played by social status and ethnicity in teachers' perceptions and subsequent educational encouragement of children, it is suggested that a factor worth more detailed examination is that related to the manner in which teachers accommodate or reject parental expectations.

The following chapter takes us away from structural concerns and focuses on interaction in the classroom.
Notes

1. In the 1960s Nigeria had three categories of teacher certificates: (a) Grade III, for teaching in the lower primary school years, (b) Grade II (of which there were four levels) for teaching in the middle and upper primary school years and (c) Grade I, for the lower secondary school. In addition to the Grade I there were also non-graduate (NCE—Nigerian Certificate of Education) teachers and graduates with teaching qualifications (NRC, 1972:85-88).

2. Here legitimation describes the manner in which bureaucrats, having recognized school choice patterns, ensure that the freedom to choose comes under their jurisdiction. Berger and Luckmann (1967) suggest that legitimation is inextricably linked to social control. However, ILEA's legitimation of the siblings strategy is not so much a one-sided process of social engineering (Bowles and Gintis, 1976:104), but a dialectical one in which an institution (ILEA) seeks to manage anticipated areas of potential conflict by stating from the outset the rules of secondary school transfer. Of course these rules in turn become part of the parents' frame of reference within which choice is exercised (Silverman, 1971).

3. At the time (1982) of the interview ILEA schools were being reorganized because of falling pupil rolls.


    Nigerian researchers (Oloruntimemin, 1970; and Ogionwo, 1978) have examined various aspects of the Nigerian family structure in order to discover the role of individual and collective attitudes in the development of juvenile behaviour within the framework of social change.

5. Although Chapter 1 concentrated on the process of social change (economic and political) it mentioned the manner in which previously held traditional norms and values come to be neglected in the single-minded pursuit of the accumulation of wealth (Osoba, 1977).

6. Chapter 1 discussed the process through which western education came to be employed as a means of upward social mobility. Thompson (1981) found that education was highly valued by poor and rich alike and that there was empirical evidence to show that western education was a rite of passage
into prestigious occupations (see also Dore, 1976). Thus the social goals of Nigerian families both at home and abroad are defined in educational terms (Goody and Groothues, 1979; see also Roberts and Akinsanya, 1976).

7. It is usually argued that Nigerian cultural traditions prevented the early schooling of Nigerian female children. This type of argument does not take into account the fact that reference to education is essentially reference to western education as initiated by the missionaries (Section 1.3). In the past the Nigerian propensity to send predominantly male children to school was a reflection of their strategy to experiment with some aspects of foreign influence. Moreover, in an attempt to avoid the total "pollution" of the family, it was more usual for a family to send only one of their sons to the early mission schools (Taiwo, 1975). The outcome of the process of social change predominantly initiated by western imperialism worked to encourage a similar educational differentiation to that in Britain (see NERC, 1972:129-150).

There are current arguments as to the manner in which Nigeria can redress the imbalance of women in positions of power and authority. Of course the equality (sic) of women is enshrined in the Nigerian Constitution (Eleazu, 1984). This aspect of the Constitution amongst others, has so far not been affected by the 1983 military coup d'etat.

8. "Promiscuity" abounds in most cultures (see Cyprian Ekwensi's novel, Jagua Nana). On a tangential point, various Nigerian governments have attempted to dissolve the Nigerian Union of Prostitutes.

9. Stanworth (1983:10) argues that statistics which focus on the numerical increase in girls' attainments mainly focus on school leavers with qualifications. Even though there is room for optimism, significantly more boys still gain higher level educational qualifications. Stanworth quotes examples from the years 1976-77 which show that 14,800 girls as compared to 21,000 boys had suitable qualifications for entry into universities (see also Halsey et al., 1980).

10. It is worth noting that this teacher has since left the school and one of the reasons was frustration grounded in an inability to effect change.

11. At the moment current educational innovation does demand of the teacher skills in sociology, applied social work, psychology and a host of other specialized areas (counselling, pastoral care, et cetera see Chapter 10).

12. In all ILEA schools children who choose a school as their first choice received first consideration provided their ability group is not over
13. Among local education authorities ILEA spends the most per pupil, £1234.1. This is followed closely by Manchester, £1065.3. The lowest spender is Wolverhampton, £912.2. Nevertheless as Rutter et al. (1979) show, a range of school variables impinge on pupils' outcomes.

Hargreaves (1984:7) points out that inner London boroughs suffered severely from a wide variety of social disadvantages ranging from unemployment to high mortality rate. In addition 'there is greater deprivation in inner London than in Birmingham, Liverpool or Manchester.'

14. The researches cited here indicate the general trend. Tomlinson (1983) shows that there are exceptions to these.

15. See Smith (1977) and Haynes (1983) for discussions on the levels of employment experienced by ethnic minority groups.

16. For example, when Obiageli suggested that she would take up banking after she left school her father did not have visions of her as a bank cashier. He saw banking as a stepping stone to going into higher educational institutions to study accountancy.

17. Here again the parents ambitions were not just for the child to become simply a State Enrolled Nurse, but to pursue nursing up to university level.

18. There are ongoing debates as to whether schools should offer a 'large common curriculum' or specialized subject options. Although Hargreaves (1984:52f) favours the former it is worth noting that subject learning in institutions of higher education are very specialized. As currently happens, curriculum differentiation may work to ensure that only less able pupils enjoy a broad based curriculum while the remainder are taught in a specialized manner.

19. It is worth noting that teachers rarely read academic journals. Neither of the two schools had any of the British education journals in their library. The teachers methods of keeping up with current educational thought was primarily through reading articles in teacher magazines/papers such as ILEA Contact, The Teacher, and The Times Educational Supplement. These are informative, but like most magazine literature, are hardly able, within their brief, to go into detailed analysis of conceptual issues. Hargreaves (1984:108-113) suggests that teachers should go on more in-service training and have more school time in which to debate issues.
20. In SG the first week of the third term was fraught with organizational difficulties as the school's timetable was 'not quite ready' (middle management phrase).

21. All the parents interviewed stated that their primary motivation for coming to Britain was to study (Section 1.5).

22. The issue of the children (and parents) return to Nigeria is examined in more detail in Section 10.4.

23. For an almost identical statement see Hargreaves, 1984: Section 3.5.3.

24. During the period of field work at SG, several meetings (three of which I attended) were held in order to organize an anti-racist conference.

   SG has subsequently appointed a teacher responsible for overseeing multi-ethnic curriculum practice. MB has set up a committee to look into the feasibility of developing a multi-ethnic and anti-prejudice curriculum.

25. This head has since left the school.
8.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter we discussed the process of schooling as it related to amongst other issues the organization of teaching. This chapter examines classroom action as it specifically relates to Nigerian children. The children's actions will be discussed in order to gain insight into intergroup classroom relationships. It is worth noting that the following chapter expands on some of the accounts of action given by Nigerian children in this chapter by examining inter-ethnic relations in the schools concerned. Although these two chapters are concerned with classroom (including school) action, it was found necessary to distinguish between within-group action (interactional styles discussed in this chapter) and inter-group strategies (as examined in Chapter 9).

It will be remembered that in addition to interviews with the children, observations were also carried out in the classrooms, in particular, and in the playground and school corridors (Chapter 4). It is stressed again that the recording of observations was intended to provide independent evidence related to the children's accounts of their behaviour and attitudes to schooling. The graphic and quantitative methods of recording observations, such as classroom "sittings" and teacher-pupil interactions within the classroom, were not employed in any quantitatively conclusive manner. Rather they were used interpretively almost in the manner in which artist's impressions of, say, courtroom interaction gives an insight into the situational context of court proceedings.

The following discussion is concerned with the exposition of the children's adoption of particular styles of classroom action. Furlong (1976) used the term 'interactional set' to describe specific, though temporary, interactional changes in classroom group membership. Within particular classrooms children learned to live with, accommodate or come into open hostility with other children and/or their teachers. The classroom is an environment in which children mainly "do their own thing". It is acknowledged that children, as social actors who are capable of defining and redefining social situations, are also able to adopt a complex array of classroom interaction at particular points in time (Woods, 1983; Strauss, 1962). However, enough children take part in similar activities and interact within or outside particular groupings for an identification of three types of classroom actor:
(a) the loners, who initiated little interaction with other pupils sitting adjacent to them even though at least one of the adjacent pupils was described as a friend. When talk was initiated by the loners it usually took the form of asking questions, mainly in relation to the task at hand. Outside the classroom context, such as in the playground and/or corridors (going to the next lesson or to the dining/assembly hall), the loners invariably remained within their teaching group. They were rarely found in groups of more than three or four and when this did occur they frequently appeared to be simply an appendage to the group. They rarely dominated pupil talk. Within the group of loners, two subgroups were found in relation to the loners' interaction with teachers - the passive and active loners. The passive loners interacted with their friends in a similar manner as they did with their teachers. They rarely initiated interaction with the teacher in terms of volunteering responses, asking questions or requesting explanations. In contrast, active loners initiated and even dominated interaction with their teachers while 'marginalizing' (in Woods, 1980a:66) interaction with their friends and/or peer group.

(b) the goodtimers, who consistently initiated interaction with other pupils sitting adjacent to them. These too, as with the loners, were usually their friends. In addition the goodtimers had "friendly" relationships with most of the pupils in their peer group. Outside the classroom context they mingled freely with other pupils in their own or another peer group. The goodtimers were usually found in larger groups than the loners and were observed not only to initiate, but also to vie with others to dominate pupil talk. This propensity for incessant verbal utterances was also perceived in the goodtimers' interaction with their teachers.

(c) the troublemakers, who not only consistently initiated interaction with other pupils and their teachers, but also dominated the interaction in such a manner as to create interactional conflict. In such cases the authority of the teacher was required to re-establish classroom order. Initial teacher strategy took the form of warnings. These were usually disregarded by the troublemakers. Outside the classroom context troublemakers employed similar interactional styles to those engaged in in the classroom. If a teacher was present they were asked to modify their behaviour. Persistent 'disruptive' behaviour led teachers to adopt stricter forms of pupil control ranging from detentions to suspensions. As with the loners, the troublemakers' group rarely consisted of more than three or four other members. Unlike the loners, they were rarely observed to be appendages to a group. Where there was the possibility of their being appendages to a
particular on-going interaction they were capable of inviting
themselves, even though only temporarily, to participate in the talk of
other groups. Troublemakers were not popular in the sense that goodtimers
were. Rather they were notorious and tended to be avoided by other pupils
except, of course, those in their 'interactional set' (Furlong, 1976).
Table 8.1 shows the number of children teachers classified in each of
the three categories in the two research schools.

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<th>TYPE</th>
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<td>Troublemaker</td>
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<td>All Types</td>
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Nowhere is it argued that the types of actor discussed below are
mutually exclusive (Woods, 1980a: Chapter 5). It is acknowledged that
social actors are capable of moving from one status to another (status
passage; Strauss, 1962; Hughes, 1971; see also Lomax, 1980). Rather, the
categories identify the children as they were perceived by their teachers
at the time of the research.

The discussion which follows is based on general observations of 32
Nigerian children who were observed for a minimum of eight lessons and two
registration periods. Ten of these moreover, were observed for a total of
28 lessons and seven registration periods. Each single lesson lasted just
over half an hour and registration lasted for between ten and thirty
minutes depending on whether the children remained with their pastoral
teacher or assembled in the hall with other pupils for assembly.

8.2 The loners: to be a part or apart?

It must be borne in mind that available space in the classroom and/or
a teachers' specific seating arrangements for pupils, usually prevented the
loner from sitting in isolation. Even when there was the possibility of
sitting completely alone the loner did not always take up the opportunity.
What marked the loner out was that s/he rarely initiated interaction with
other pupils, including those they described as their friends. The diagram
below in Figure 8.1 shows the sitting positions of a loner from registration.
FIGURE 8.1  LONER SITTING POSITIONS

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KEY

A of Asian origin
E of European origin
LO Nigerian loner
EF Nigerian loners friend
W of West Indian origin
T Teacher
R Researcher
X empty space
in the morning to the final lesson of the day. As can be seen, the Nigerian loner (LO) never actually sat on his own. He sat next to the same boy on every occasion except during the registration periods when all pupils had "sittings" set by their teacher. LO described EF as his friend (Figure 8.1). However, LO rarely initiated interaction with EF nor with other pupils sitting immediately adjacent to him or in the class in general. He rarely volunteered to answer the teacher's questions. This could not be interpreted as ignorance of the required response because he almost always responded to the teacher's satisfaction whenever he was asked a direct question. Due to his desire not to initiate interaction with pupils or teachers in the classroom, corridor or playground, LO is classified as a passive loner (see Photograph 8.1).

A contrast to this aspect of loner behaviour was found in pupils who though they rarely initiated interaction with those in their peer group, initiated comparatively more interaction with their teachers by being amongst those who consistently volunteered responses to the teachers' questions. This latter group are classified as active loners. Table 8.2 shows pupil-teacher interaction during a history lesson in which an active

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KEY:
TDQ: Teacher asks pupil direct question
CVA: Child volunteers answer
CAE/R: Child asks for explanation or makes a request
TRSQ: Teacher requests a specific child to keep quiet
TRNSQ: Teacher requests class in general to keep quiet (non-specific)
TNQ: Total number of questions teacher asked and I interpreted as requiring a specific response from pupils.
A: Pupil of Asian (Indian sub-continent) origin
E: Pupil of European origin
W: Pupil of West Indian origin
L1, L2: Nigerian loners
Loner (L1) dominated the initiation of interaction with the teacher while passive loner (L2) only responded when asked a direct question. There was a total of 21 pupils, including two Nigerian pupils (L1 and L2) in the history lesson. The teacher asked direct questions (TDQ) of seven pupils including the two Nigerian loners (L1 and L2). L1 volunteered answers to the teacher's general questions aimed at anyone who cared to respond (CVA). In addition, L1 was prepared to make requests (L1(r)) and ask explanations (L1(e)) of the teacher. The teacher asked a total number of 14 questions to which, as I interpreted it, she expected answers (TNQ). Maclure and French (in Woods, 1980a) and Hammersley (in Woods and Hammersley, 1977) have shown the complexities involved in teacher question and pupil answer sequences. It is not the intention to address these here, but to draw attention to a classroom situation which consisted mainly of 'quiet' pupils. The teacher made only one specific (TRSQ) and one non-specific (TRNSQ) request for children to keep quiet during the course of the single period History lesson.

Table 8.3 shows three parts of a double period (over one hour) Biology lesson. There was a total of 19 pupils in this lesson including three Nigerian pupils (L3, L4 and L1 of the History lesson tabled above).

In the first half of the Biology lesson L3 and L1 dominated the individual initiation of interaction with the teacher. The third Nigerian pupil L4 did not volunteer responses or initiate interaction with the teacher. Neither did the teacher initiate interaction with L4. It is realized that the teachers may have initiated interaction with L1 and L3 because of the researcher's presence. However, the teachers consistently initiated more interaction with the active than with the passive loners. During the second half of the Biology lesson, pupils were asked to read quietly to themselves for about ten minutes. There followed a three minute discussion prior to the end of the lesson. Here again L3 and L1 actively contributed to the lesson by volunteering responses, making requests and asking for explanations, while L4 who does not feature at all in Table 8.3, did not participate in such an overt manner. She took down notes and read the passage and joined in some of the chorused responses. In this Biology lesson the observed method of responding to teacher talk by other members of the teaching group was by volunteering responses jointly as a group (chorus).
In terms of classroom interaction the loners interactive behaviour ranged from consistent participation to little or no participation. When asked about his classroom behaviour a sixth form Band 2 loner, Nnanyelu, replied thus:

N : I am quiet in class... Just quiet in general within the class itself.
R : Have you been always quiet...Right from your first year?
N : Yeah.
...
R : Do you get into trouble in school?
N: No. Not very much...When I say that well I mean - when you say trouble I don't get into very serious trouble. Like they'll (the whole class) - like there'll be detention for us like when we're talking in class. That kind of trouble yeah, but serious trouble? No.

R: What would you define as serious trouble?

N: A serious trouble is whereby if your misbehaviour in class - the teacher won't deal with you. She won't discipline you, but will refer you to a teacher above her. The head - probably deputy head or (a middle management teacher). I call that serious trouble.

The point to note here is that the children who were classified as loners, irrespective of their ability Bands, had one aim in common and that was to avoid disciplinary measures which would require the involvement of teachers in top and/or middle management positions. In both schools being in serious trouble invariably meant that the pupil's parents would be informed of the misbehaviour. When informed of this the parents were concerned that by getting into trouble, their children were disregarding the parents earlier warnings of the types of pupils to be found in schools:

The school is where you go to learn...If you want your child to gain something from it you have to knock it into their heads that they are not to join those groups who are not there to learn (mother)[1].

This mother aptly described Nigerian parents' strategy of socialization for school by drawing attention to it as a process of 'knock(ing) it into their heads'. If a child happened to make friends with pupils uninterested in the acquisition of school knowledge, the parents soon found out either through school reports or through the parents' assessment of the friends the children invited home. The parents deduced this by closely observing and monitoring the activities of their children's friends:

Sometimes he has friends that only want to go out... There's one friend he has now. He's a very good boy. When he comes they come here (front room) and do their homework. That's the friend I like. Not all these ones running around (mother).

Once 'going out' outweighed 'doing their homework' the parents soon communicated their disapproval, not just to their own children, but also to the children's friends. In nine cases, the disapproval was also communicated directly to the friend's parent. A mother described the situation:

Jane (daughter's friend) said she was taking her CSE... that (CSE) put me off a bit...Jane likes going out... but I didn't mind (her going out) because I wouldn't let Ngozi (her daughter) go anyway. But what made me stop Jane (coming
here)...Ngozi started getting home at half past four within a matter of a week (of knowing Jane)...(I told Jane), "I don't want to see you with Ngozi and don't come to my house again... Jane didn't seem to listen so I went to her house and told her Mum. I said,"Tell your daughter to leave my daughter"...I thought (Jane would) be the type that would come and then sit down and read with Ngozi and do their little homework together and then go out and play. Not standing out at half past ten, eleven at night in little corner. No. It's too early yet' (mother of 14 year old girl). (See also Chapter 10)

Although these events occurred outside school they had implications for the child's in-school strategies, the primary aim of which was to avoid 'serious trouble'.

Not surprisingly the loners were perceived as being quiet, pleasant, keen, enthusiastic, helpful but introvert members of the class:

In a way she is far too reticent. Will not ask for help. She is losing touch rapidly... One thing I will say for her she is very - extremely helpful. I can always count on her to help in class... Giving out books and doing little jobs (teacher).

Woods (1979:71-72) places these types of teacher approved pupils on a conformity - cum - ingratiation scale. He explains that conformists do not invariably 'suck up' to teachers, but as with ingratiators aim to maximize their benefits by earning the favour of those with power and are usually undisturbed by unpopularity [2] among their peers. Often they are individuals operating alone.

The Nigerian loners trouble-avoidance strategy, though characterized by varying levels of ingratiation, is primarily a response to the need to 'get on' with school work and also avoid trouble at home:

(He's) very good. He's well motivated... There's no problem with him... He's just a quiet lad. Get's on with it. He is very quiet in fact. He doesn't make his presence felt... I find him quite satisfactory...He's delightful (teacher).

Some of the teachers expressed the view that they wished the loners could be less introverted and thus attempted to 'get them out of (their) shell' by counselling them and encouraging them to interact more with their peer group. In three cases this backfired and the children began to adopt troublemaking interactional styles. The counselling was either faulty or the children had already begun redefining their school status and the counselling had acted as a catalyst. However, for most of the teachers the loners were 'ideal', especially in relation to classroom control:

(Seven of the nine Nigerian girls in a year group) are
fabulous. They've never missed school or been late in their three years here and they are ever so helpful. They are an asset (teacher).

In so far as the loners were interested in the acquisition of school knowledge, they could be described as 'instrumentally compliant' (Woods, 1979:72). However, this strategy was arrived at through interactional stages in which the receipt of teacher approval identified them to teachers as compliant. Teachers in turn tended to seek out pupils they had thus labelled, and in turn the pupils sought interactional compensation from teachers for their lack of interaction with their peer group. In respect of teacher-pupil interaction the children were very aware of their classroom strategies. When asked how she thought her teachers would describe her behaviour, Sabikat, a fourth year pupil, replied:

They'd say she's a nice quiet girl. She's alright, but she goes on to point out that
the teachers only see one side of me. The good side of me
...If they get on ma nerves I jus' keep quiet. I jus' don't talk to 'em.

Woods (1983) has pointed out that children are very adept at managing their actions. As social actors involved in the process of impression management, they adopted particular styles of social action which they employed in front regions (classrooms with a teacher present) or back regions (classrooms without a teacher present, playgrounds, corridors, toilets and so on; see also Furlong, 1984; Goffman, 1982).

One of the loners pointed out that he specifically went out of his way to avoid confrontation with his teachers:

Some children let it all just go out and they're rude to teachers, but I don't do that. I don't think it's very nice because if I do that to them it'll be like doing it to my own parents and that's not very nice (fifth year boy).

The underlying and perhaps most crucial aspect of teacher-pupil interaction which accounted for loner classroom action was the loner's analysis of teacher-pupil relationships in terms of teacher power and pupil subservience. Part of the loners' conformity was arrived at through the adoption of a primarily subservient role which they utilized in order to negotiate a mutually acceptable relationship with their teachers:

They've always been nice to me 'cause I obey them (fifth year girl).

Pupils were not only able to recognize the power relationships between teachers and pupils, but were prepared to succumb to it in order that they might avoid school learning differentiation (Keddie, 1971) by teachers who tended to ignore disruptive children:

If you're good, teachers give you more work, hard work to help you in future. Like exams. Some children don't care
what they do. They just want to be noisy in class and play about. So the teacher just don't bother them... Like Mr. (X) he'll come in and say "Okay who's ready to work today?" We say "Yes", but some don't really mean it. It's just a joke, but me and my friends just get on with the work. If we don't pay attention Mr. (X) won't help us. He goes, "You're too noisy. Not interested. I'm not wasting my time with you" (Abiodun, fourth year middle Band 2 pupil).

Thus, Abiodun's conformity was based on both an instrumental interest in the acquisition of school knowledge and her analysis of teacher pedagogy. A teacher described his classroom learning differentiation strategy thus:

I work on the principle that if they leave me alone, I'll leave them alone (over 15 years experience).

Hence, pupils who were not interested in acquiring school knowledge were left to their own devices while the teacher concentrated on the conformists. As mentioned above, social actors are capable of redefining their roles. Thus disruptive pupils who became 'good', however temporarily, are likely to "benefit" from teacher differentiation some of which is based on a pupil's readiness to acquire school knowledge.

Loners also tended to consider interaction with their teachers in terms of formal status relationships:

They behave towards you as teachers. We are not on an equal basis with each other (Oluwaseun, fifth form girl).

This realization makes it difficult for Oluwaseun to communicate with the teachers. When she does communicate, she does this for the sole purpose of 'pleasing' the teacher.

I only chat to them 'cause they ...like us to talk to them... One of our teachers she's a bit weird... She asks like "do you smoke?" She goes round the class "How many people fight? Fight in the family?" One minute she's saying someone does this or that...(Teacher) is okay...She likes us to say anything to her like about our family. She says we should be free with her. Sometimes I go and tell her what my Mum said... Something funny or where she went like when she went to Nigeria. But I don't tell her if I get into trouble at home. She (teacher) is always talking about fights. We're always writing about our family...She's just weird.

Although Oluwaseun adopted ingratiating strategies, her conformity to her teachers 'weird' conversational expectations was one in which she drew a line in relation to the lengths she would go to 'please' her teacher. Thus even when ingratiating occurs, it takes place within a situational context in which some dignity is retained. It is thus unlikely that her peer group would define her as a teacher's 'pet' or 'creep' in a similar manner to which Woods (1979:72) suggests ingratiating pupils might be perceived.
The loners were aware that the teacher held the trump card in the school context and were therefore prepared to 'sit there and take anything that comes' (sixth form pupil) and pander to the teacher's whims. Except for pupils who were described as 'reticent' and/or 'too quiet', the loners were not referred to in any other negative manner by their teachers. Yet every single one of the loners was critical in their assessments of schooling and their teachers:

They don't know how to control the children (third year girl).

Sometimes the children just go wild and he can't do anything (fourth year girl).

He's too soft anyway. He tries to shout but he can't (third year boy).

These children perceived their teachers in the commonly identified roles of being 'strict' or 'soft' (Furlong, 1976). Those who had strict teachers preferred them:

She's strict and she's good. Strict teachers are the best (fifth year girl).

The most critical of the loners informed me thus:

I don't know what a good teacher is because I've never had one (fourth year boy) [3].

Yet this pupil was always 'helpful in class' and 'very quiet and pleasant'. In essence he was 'going through the motions' (a parent's phrase describing a teacher strategy for avoiding confrontation—see Chapter 7). Thus in the school situation both children and teachers adopted the same basic strategy in their need to cope with the complexity of the relationships they were involved in. These pupils, having identified what they believe is expected of them, dance to the teacher's tune.

In as much as both active and passive loners avoided the overt initiation of interaction with their peer group, schooling was perceived by them as a very formal business. It must be stressed that the loners' overriding concern was to behave in a manner which, as they saw it, recognized teacher-pupil relationships. The strategy thus developed to cope with the power of the teacher ensured that the children were perceived favourably by them. The spin-off of this interactive process which was focused predominantly on the teachers, encouraged the motivation of the loners towards the acquisition of school knowledge. That is, introvert pupils who were not actively involved in peer group interaction and thus not party to the peer group gains (such as popularity or notoriety) from being members of a 'delinquescent' peer group (Hargreaves, 1967), achieved "social" gains from being perceived positively by their teachers.

It needs to be emphasized that being a loner was not synonymous with
being a retreatist in Woods' sense (1979:73-74). These loners were not indifferent to nor did they reject the 'goals and means of schooling'. Woods suggests that retreatists are 'in the society (school) but not of it' (his emphasis). However, Woods' analysis is bounded by the actor's disaffection with the process of schooling. Thus the retreatist is almost always bored and schooling has none of the expected meanings for him/her. S/he 'does nothing', 'day dreams' and engages in unofficial school behaviour (playing cards, smoking).

In adopting loner style action these Nigerian pupils had decided that the best strategy for coping with the dynamics of group interaction was not to be a part of it. Having made the decision to keep themselves apart from their peer group (in contrast to the goodtimers - see below) loners who still felt the need for some form of social interaction turned to a socio-academic relationship with their teachers.

The next section examines children who are more extrovert than loners, but like the loners favoured the acquisition of school knowledge. It focuses, in particular, on the manner in which they were able to receive both social and academic gains from adopting goodtime interactional styles.

8.3 The goodtimers: being a part

The main aspect which differentiated the goodtimers from the loners was that they constantly initiated interaction both with their teachers and other children in the classroom. In contrast to the loners, the goodtimers were prepared to get involved in the degree of trouble that may involve middle, but not top management teachers. The goodtimers were also astute enough to have worked out the number of times disruptive classroom offences could be committed prior to negative reports about their behaviour reaching their parents. When asked what had happened when she was sent to a middle management teacher for having a water fight, a goodtimer replied thus:

Nothing. They (teachers) just warn you. They tell you not to do it again or they'll send a letter to your parents. They just try to scare you...If you do it about three or four times then they will (third year pupil).

The goodtimers did not always get this prediction right for two of them had received one day suspensions from school. Unlike the loners, rather than standing back and dissociating themselves from disruptive classroom action, the goodtimers not only joined in but initiated some of the disruption:

When something's happening I just have to know about
it...Sometimes the lesson is boring...like Mrs. (X), I do things to make her angry (laughs) - not really angry like.
Then we all laugh about it...Like throwing the rubber and books (fourth year boy)

Even though over two-thirds of them were described as in favour of the acquisition of school knowledge the goodtimers longed for lessons that would stimulate them and hold their interest:

My subject teacher - all she does is write on the board and say copy that...If I say I don't understand it she just says I'll explain it to you later. She just puts me aside. "Sit down there", an' she doesn't come back. So I think it's not really worth it. I just talk to my friends (second year girl).

Although goodtimers were in favour of acquiring school knowledge they did not get satisfaction from merely copying down. They wanted to 'understand' what was being taught (sic). Woods (1979:106-107) has shown how school work is indeed characterized by the boredom of copying exercises some of which the children had done previously. It is not surprising that this goodtimer would rather talk than 'waste' time copying something she did not understand. As she was not interested in complying with the rituals of classroom "learning" activity she adopted the talk strategy to cope with the boredom of school work.

The teachers perceived the goodtimers as wanting to be popular with their friends and one of the ways to achieve this was to be disruptive in class:

One of the important things for her is to have friends and be popular. So she has to play the clown (a teacher)
Playing the clown and involvement in disruptive classroom action ranged from flicking bits of paper around and deliberately making noise with classroom instruments such as chairs, desks, writing materials etc., to talking incessantly to friends and being "silly":


Teachers, too, operated on the basis of a differentiation between getting into "goodtime trouble" and getting into serious trouble. Hence, we have interactional situations when children can be 'silly, but not directly rude' (goodtime trouble). We can take it as given that if pupils engaged in directly rude styles of interaction and their teachers so defined it, they would get into "serious trouble". It is important to note that in practice the teachers' definitions at a particular point in time might not correspond to that of the pupils. This gives rise to conflictual definitions of the situation. When this occurs a solution has to be negotiated. Meyenn (1980) has shown how children (girls) expect
'punishment' when their definition of the situation approximates that of the teacher's. When this is not the case children are resentful of the teacher and those who are able to, challenge the teacher's definitions. If unconvinced of the teacher's right to adopt corrective tactics, they might refuse to carry out a punishment. In confrontational situations (see below) teachers do not have the same degree of power (as they may have done in the past) in enforcing their definitions of the situation (Hargreaves, 1967). Thus the ground rules on which interaction takes place are continually defined and redefined.

Goodtime interactional situations rarely reached the total conflict stage (challenging the teacher), rather a negotiated settlement is arrived at:

R: What happens when a teacher tells you off in class?
C: Well, they usually say don't do it again.
R: What if you did it again?
C: If it's not bad, like being rude, they just say "Stand outside or you'll get detention".
R: What do you do then?
C: Sometimes I don't mind standing outside so I'll go.
R: What about detention?
C: That's boring so I promise not to do it again.

Lacey (1977) and Woods (1983) suggest that teacher-teacher relationships go through a process of strategic redefinition or situational adjustment. These terms are also useful in illuminating teacher-pupil interaction. Though there are substantial power differentials (Hargreaves, 1967, 1972) between teachers and pupils, the goodtimers were not really interested in challenging the power of the teacher to act in accordance with his/her definition of the situation.

The disruptive behaviour of goodtimers was mainly carried out to see how far they could go with their teachers. Nevertheless, like the loners they were anxious not to incur the wrath of their parents [4]. They were not so much in awe of their parents or teachers, but acknowledged that 'having a good time' was not much fun if one got into serious trouble for it. As one of the goodtimers pointed out:

You have to be wary of them (teachers)....You have to kind of dodge them (fifth year girl).

As Furlong (1984:229) shows, dodging the teachers was a skill and pupils who wished to do so became increasingly adept at circumnavigation (see also Willis, 1977).

The goodtimers, especially the academically able, steered a complex route between having a goodtime and maintaining their school academic progress:

(Omolola's ) very interested in having a good time...She
doesn't pay attention in class. Possibly because she doesn't want to be sort of seen as bright, clever or anything. I'm surprised how much she picks up...They (other pupils) kind of like her and they like to cultivate her. She helps them with the answers (a teacher).

Omolola (third year) also steered clear of getting into serious trouble. Woods (1979) suggests that peer group subcultures resent conformists, but when the latter adopt goodtime action (Furlong, 1984), the peer group is likely to accommodate conformism. In this case, Omolola not only provided socially interesting classroom distractions from the boredom of school work, but was also able to 'curry favour' with her peer group by enhancing their own academic "dignity" by allowing them to copy her work. Subsequently, the peer group could present teachers with completed and, usually, correctly done school work. However, in their attempt to be a part of their peer group, the goodtimers were not always able to maintain the balance between never being directly rude and being cheeky, silly and disruptive enough to impress their friends:

She's been coming to class late and about two weeks ago she came in really quite late and I said "Go away and come back when you've got a written excuse by a teacher saying why you've come late" (quarter of an hour)...She just sat down. Did not apologise or say why she was late or anything. So she went in a huff. Slammed the door and everything (middle management teacher).

This teacher was so taken aback by this behaviour from this Band 1, pupil whom he had previously considered as 'just talkative and playful' that he reported this incident to the parents - not just as a corrective measure, but because:

I felt if I let this one go it would get worse. I don't know what's happened to her, but just recently I've had two complaints about her. I was absolutely astonished.

Information gathered from three teachers showed that existing teaching group arrangements had recently been changed so that this child was now in a teaching group apart from her friends. The frustration involved in this together with 'easy work' (girl's phrase), made her not only 'slightly lazy' (teacher's phrase), but progressively uninterested in the acquisition of school knowledge:

She feels she can so easily cope with it (science subject) and she can generally. You can interpret that as we're not pushing her sufficiently but in that particular class I push them fairly well (a teacher).

It is worth pointing out here that teachers in the exploratory study drew attention to the fact that one Nigerian couple had withdrawn their child from the comprehensive school and sent him to a private one. When asked
why they thought this had happened a teacher replied thus:

We were very upset when they (the parents) took (him) away...(they) wanted an academic push for him (perhaps) a more rigorous academic training for their son.

As was shown in the previous chapter, Nigerian parents were keen for their children to succeed and tended to confront the teacher if they felt someone was threatening the possibility of their children achieving 'O' or 'A' Levels (exploratory study teacher).

Thus they were not very pleased if their children excluded themselves from acquiring school knowledge by getting into serious trouble. However, even knowledge of her parents' displeasure was becoming discounted by Omolola:

I wanted to do CSE (in science subject) - that's what my friends are doing [5] but they (teachers and parents) say I can do 'O' level...Well, I can; you just do lots more work and it's not fun. It's boring when I can't just have a chat with my friends. Anyway Mr. (X) says CSE is the same as 'O' Level like if you get a high mark. He says I can get a high mark in it (CSE) ... At breaktime or dinner time we just talk and talk. Sometimes we forget the (pips) have gone. Sometimes when my friends tell me I just say "So?".

We have here a previously conformist pupil adopting non-conformist strategies and who is now only marginally interested in the acquisition of school knowledge. In other words, she is well on her way to becoming an 'intransigent' (and possibly, rebellious - totally anti-school). Woods (1979:76-77) suggests that intransigents, more than any other type of pupil occupy most of teacher's time because

They are the most immediate threat to the institution and must be neutralized for it to survive.

Thus it is not surprising that a teacher's 'astonishment' at Omolola's behaviour translated itself to taking immediate corrective measures.

In the top bands it was less acceptable to the peer group to be a goodtimer if this meant continuous disruption of lessons (see Willis, 1977 on 'ear'oles' (conformists) and 'lads' (non-conformists)). Band 1 goodtimers rarely elicited friendship or popularity through the exhibition of classroom disruptive behaviour. Rather the exhibition of goodtime behaviour was used primarily as a break or a form of relaxation during formally structured lessons:

Sometimes the work is so hard that we need a break. Someone might start singing. Sometimes I just tell a joke real loud so everyone can hear (third year girl).

Even though the teachers did not approve of this goodtime behaviour when 'serious work' (teacher's phrase) was taking place, teachers did recognize that even children who were in favour of acquiring school knowledge, on
occasion, needed a break from it:

If I feel they've worked really hard they have five minutes off at the end of the lesson. They just talk. Some finish off the work. They never really go wild... I wouldn't do that with (a particular Band 3 group). They'd go absolutely beserk. They do anyway.

A goodtime Band 3 girl was asked about what her teachers thought of her work:

(Teacher A) says I do well sometimes,' but sometimes I get behind. She rushes us.

(Teacher B) is always saying I could do better. I don't like doing the work. We're just doing the same things all the time. We do boring things.

This goodtimer also felt that the teachers would say that although she was 'good and helpful' she also 'argue(d) back at' them. These arguments usually focused on the boredom of the work being done. It was observed that lessons of children assessed as having limited ability invariably centred on drawing, copying and colouring activities. Teachers explained that these children could not cope with much more than this and that this was one of the ways in which they kept the children occupied:

They can get into groups and work together. They can be noisy, but as long as they're doing the work I overlook it... Now Gbemi is always on at me to give her homework. I think her parents are behind this. She's not very popular in class, you know. The others don't want to do homework. You give it to them, but they won't do it. So you stop doing it. When Gbemi asks, you have to give it to all of them - not to differentiate you see - but that gets Gbemi into trouble with her friends (pastoral teacher).

Particular attitudes to schooling were essential for the maintenance of friendship groups and some goodtimers were unable to arrive at a strategy which could accommodate good timing to the acquisition of school knowledge:

My friends say I shouldn't do the work. That the teachers don't mark our work because we're you know (Band 3) .... Sometimes they don't, but not always. They say I want to be like Mrs. (X's) favourite, but I don't. Sometimes she gets on my nerves. Sometimes she doesn't explain properly. I'm always mucking about with my friends, but I do the work so sometimes if they keep going on at me not to do the work I don't (third year girl).

By acquiescing to peer group pressure this child was able to maintain her 'dignity' (Furlong, 1984:225) within the group by avoiding being seen as a teacher's pet (conformist or ingratiator). However, as Furlong further suggests, children who succumb to being 'got at', but are interested in the
acquisition of school knowledge, do not completely reject school 'because...they were always tied to a recognition of its importance'.

Teachers did enjoy being in the company of some goodtimers but only as long as they kept their goodtime behaviour under control:

It's a treat to have them (two Nigerian girls) in my (pastoral group). There's never a dull moment when they're around. They like being in control. I just leave them to it. They're much better at it than I am. They like being the centre of attraction. I think all the class likes them. They are fun. Clowns really...I can't see them getting into trouble - any real trouble (pastoral teacher).

The goodtimers could just about 'get away' with being helpful and 'bright' without losing their popular classroom status. They were able to use their interactional style as a path through which they could maximize their popularity with both teachers and peer group.

The goodtimers ensured that they took advantage of the less formal atmosphere in the schools and thus engaged in behaviour they knew they could not get away with at home:

They (teachers) aren't like my parents. I don't have to be really polite. I can shout at them or tell them off...I argue with them (parents) but it always has to be really polite like (fifth year girl).

These pupils did not see teacher-pupil interaction simply in terms of power relationships where they just 'sit there and take anything that comes' (a loner). The goodtimers were prepared to confront the authority of teachers, albeit relatively amicably. Their ideal teacher was one who could straddle the two roles:

Mrs. (X), she's really good. She explains everything and encourages you. If you think you can't do it she'll just tell you you can and she'll show you. We have a good time in her lesson. Like she'll let us talk, but not much. Sometimes she'll let us play cards, but like she'll make us do hard work and then more hard work (laughs). That woman she makes us work so hard.... She doesn't really like it when we make noise [6]. I feel sorry for her. She's helping us and we're just messing about - not always because she's a good teacher (fourth year girl).

Despite themselves, goodtimers were prepared to work hard, but as far as they were concerned, it was up to their teachers to arrive at a teacher pedagogy which maintained the balance between being 'strict' and being 'soft' [3] (Furlong, 1976).

Though they appeared uninhibited and carefree, the goodtimers were wary of discussing family matters with their teachers. This does not imply
that they did not confide in their teachers, especially those directly concerned with pastoral care, but that despite their extrovert nature they generally kept family affairs out of their repertoire of topics for discussion. It has already been pointed out (Chapter 7) that teachers appeared interested in the "gossipy" details of family background (see Section 8.5 and also Chapter 10).

This section has focused on the goodtimers who accepted that schooling was mainly about the formal acquisition of school knowledge, but considered having a good time to be just as important. Schooling for them was about ensuring that teacher-pupil relationships were negotiated on the pupil's own terms. This worked as long as the goodtimers were able to operate without getting involved in serious trouble and as long as they avoided this they were able successfully to stage-manage peer group popularity and teacher 'delight' (see Photographs 8.2 and 8.3).

The next section examines children who could neither be described as extrovert or introvert in the goodtime or loner sense, respectively. A few of them could belong uneasily in the goodtime group of pupils. Their teachers usually described them as 'troublemakers'.


PHOTOGRAPH 8.1: LUNCH AT MB

Nigerian Loner having lunch.

PHOTOGRAPH 8.2: CHATTING WITH FRIENDS

Pupils slowly making their way to classroom 10 minutes after lessons have begun.

PHOTOGRAPH 8.3: GOODTIMER INTERACTIONAL SET

Goodtimers having final 'laugh' before going home.

* These photographs were taken after the formal observation period.

**I was unable to take photographs at SG because of the unanticipated termination of the field work.
8.4 The troublemakers: being apart

In terms of initiating interaction, the troublemakers were similar to the goodtimers. They were involved in goodtime classroom activities such as flicking paper and making noise. However, troublemaker interaction with teachers and/or their peer group invariably ended up in serious trouble which involved top management teachers. The troublemakers were so busy nursing grievances against teachers or members of their peer group that all rational thought about the consequences of their actions receded into the background:

C : I always get into trouble (laughs) real trouble, like I do things like when I hit Susan....She took my pen and I told her I'd get her for it, but I forgot. So I hit her... (later).

R : Why didn't you report it to the teacher?
C : Mrs. (X) ? (laughs) She never does anything. She'll only tell (middle management teacher). When I'm angry I just do it like hitting or shouting...If them teachers annoy me I just argue back.

R : What does a teacher do to annoy you?
C : Like always picking on me...

Classroom interactional relationships were made even more volatile by the almost total alienation of the troublemakers from their teachers:

C : She (teacher) gets on my nerves.
R : What does she do?
C : She doesn't give us a chance to explain (on occasion when child and friend were late for the lesson)...

R : What happened?
C : We got sent to Mr.(X).
R : What did you feel about that?
C : They just side up with each other, teachers.

When teachers engaged in such unacceptable behaviour as 'siding up with each other', troublemakers not only resented this (as most other children did), but progressively moved from ambivalence about their feelings towards the teacher:

C1 : I used to (like him). I don't know. I don't really like him. Sometimes I like him. Sometimes I don't.

C2 : I think she's a bit mad. She doesn't know what she's doing sometimes. She gets on my nerves.

...to an unambiguous dislike:

C1 : I just hate her.
Troublemakers got on teacher's nerves, too:

She's one of these girls that can destroy any lesson by constant needling. She goes on and on and on and on and not being able to respond to being disciplined.

Thus we have a situation where both actors perceived each other negatively. Although the troublemakers were capable of analysing their relationships with their teachers they had become so entrenched in adopting particular styles of interaction that their ability to make an "objective" analysis of the situation did not alleviate their negative feelings towards their teachers:

C1 : Mostly the teachers I don't like are mainly in the subjects I don't like (laughs).

C2 : Mm. (in agreement).

C1 : Maybe it's because you don't behave so well in the subjects you don't like 'n' the teachers don't like you not behaving so well and you don't like the teachers (runs out of breadth and laughs).

C2 : Yeah.

C1 : It probably works out like that.

This needs to be perceived not so much as a cause and effect situation, but a dialectical one in which both groups undergo a process of interaction which culminates in their dislike of each other.

When loners and goodtimers did not like their teachers they either completely ignored them:

I don't take any notice of him

or resisted passively:

I just sit there and mope all day (laughs). I don't ignore them, but I'd rather not talk to them. I just sit there. Hm. Yeah. Do everything 10 hours later. Just go slowly.

In contrast troublemakers made their feelings known:

I told her to shut up.

Part of one troublemaker's school report read thus:

Enjoys playing a leading role whenever the opportunity arises and is never reluctant to voice her opinion... (She) must avoid the tendency to dominate (pastoral teacher).

Despite this pupil's tendency to 'bully others' (teacher's phrase), troublemakers were relied upon by their peer group to exhibit behaviour other pupils (such as the goodtimers) would shy away from:
She is rude and disobedient... Her classmates are silly enough to find her amusing so (she was) sent out of the classroom (teacher).

Troublemakers took their roles seriously and thus rarely missed an opportunity to be rude and/or daring:

I told her she was an old cow (fourth year pupil).

Various things annoyed troublemakers about their teachers. These ranged from their methods of teaching or attitudes to pupils to the manner in which they comported themselves. Again troublemakers were those who were prepared to voice their condemnation of a teacher:

Cl: I'll tell you who I hate. Erm what's that (subject) teacher with the - that old one who's got (description of hair style generally associated with young teenagers).

C2: I don't know.

Cl: (pause) (Names her).

C2: Oh! Yeah (laughs).

Cl: (laughs) She's so old and she's still got (hair style) (laughs)

C2: Is she Mrs.?

Cl: No. I don't - yeah she is Mrs. actually.

C2: Is she? Oh! (laughs)

Cl: I don't know how it happened. It must have been when she was nice (laughs).

C2: (laughs) She is wicked. I told her one day she was a wicked bitch.

Cl: (laughs).

Troublemakers' opinions about a teacher were based primarily on an accumulation of a "dossier" on the teacher through observation and/or experience in the school environment. When expressing their own opinions on the children they had contact with especially troublemakers, teachers invariably employed their knowledge of the child's homebackground in an attempt to analyse a particular school based situation:

We've never really known what Linda is thinking. She would explode every now and again and as quick as it happened she would calm down again. We sort of got the idea that she wasn't happy at home (pastoral teacher).

Teachers lacked insight into the troublemakers' thoughts and feelings about the school environment in which the children were expected to acquire school knowledge. They never really knew enough about the interactional relationships in their school and were completely dumbfounded by outbursts and other unexpected behaviour.

While this present research was being conducted three troublemakers (one boy and two girls) were involved in fights (see Chapters 6 and 9). In
all three cases, the information teachers gave about the events that led to the fights were limited. They just did not know and according to one of the middle management teachers 'didn't want to know'. The teachers pointed out that the most significant aspect of a fight was that it had occurred at all. Thus they focused specifically on that issue. According to a middle management teacher the reasons for the fight were immaterial:

They (the children) know they musn't fight in school. If a fight occurs we deal with that. There is no excuse for fighting.

Although school happenings were said to be irrelevant, there was in comparison considerable reference to the children's home background:

He's been in trouble...Emotional things I suppose affects his progress. His is a story of a child who had a dreadful home (pastoral teacher).

It (reasons for problems) probably comes back to the family. What parental guidance they've got and the stability they've got in the family (middle management teacher).

Current educational thought recommends links between the home and the school (Hargreaves, 1984; Tomlinson, 1984), but from the accounts given by these children, some of their teachers were not so much interested in understanding the 'culture of the home', but in discovering 'private' family affairs, especially conflicts (fights). No wonder a loner thought her teacher 'weird'. Hargreaves (1980) has pointed out his unease about the level of teachers' theoretical knowledge of current educational innovations. If, as Hargreaves suggests the tendency is for teachers to resort solely to 'intuitive' beliefs when attempting to apply educational theory (for example, those based on pastoral care techniques (see Best et al. 1983)) then I share that unease.

It is not being argued that family circumstances do not play a part in the adoption of particular types of classroom action, but as discussed in the following chapter ongoing school incidents such as teacher perception and peer group acceptability were found to be more pertinent to the explanation of the interactional styles adopted by the children. The important point here is that fights occurred and teachers did not fully investigate the causes of the fight.

The examination of interactional relationships amongst children in school from the Nigerian child's point of view showed that a pupil's home background does not necessarily fully explain the behaviour of the child. Suffice it at this point to note that half the troublemakers and just under two-thirds of the goodtimers were thought by the teachers interviewed to be of West Indian origin.

Prior to discussing the misidentification of some Nigerian pupils, it is interesting to note that as with the loners and goodtimers, teachers
also perceived the troublemakers as being interested in the acquisition of school knowledge. However, their troublemaking tendencies hindered their school progress. The School Report on a Band 2 girl reads thus:

She is a bright and capable pupil, but has put very little effort into her school work. She has always been too busy distracting others. She can be quite a pleasant and helpful girl. She is also a reliable person and has helped in some of the form activities. Her attendance is average, but her punctuality is below average and has often been at school and not turned up for registration (pastoral teacher's comment).

A very strong personality. This has worked for the good and detriment of others (middle management comment).

The Subject Report on a Band 2 boy reads thus:

French : Highly rated, but fast becoming impossible to teach in a normal group.
Geography : Good, but must exercise more self-discipline.
History : Perceptive and good presentation, but far too noisy.
Maths : Capable of good work, but is too busy talking to learn.

The troublemakers were, in other words, regarded as underachieving (see Section 2.2.2.).

When teachers were not describing Nigerian parents in social class terms they described them in terms of their keen interest in seeing that their children made such progress that eventually their children would proceed to further and/or higher education:

They (15 parents whom this teacher has had contact with) are generally supportive of the school. They'd always come if you sent for them. If you wrote to them to come to discuss progress or behaviour. Most of them are very polite... Their aspirations are a little over the top because they're domineering on the whole as parents and not very understanding when a kid can't live up to it (middle management teacher).

However, their keeness for their childrens' educational progress did not necessarily mean that the parents were perceived as socially supportive of the school:

They (11 parents) never come to do anything - to volunteer for anything (middle management teacher).

I don't know if it was because of me personally, or if he was being derisory of the English education system, but he felt
that Ngozi wasn't doing as well as she should be... I've just said, you know, that she gets 80s and 90s in her exams. I mean what more does a kid need to do? (pastoral teacher).

Thus, when attempting to modify troublemaking behaviour, teachers were particularly exasperated when Nigerian parents responded in an unexpected manner:

He kept going on about wanting (Seyi) to do well in her exams. He didn't understand that if this child wasn't going to conform (my emphasis) she wasn't going to get anything out of the lessons (pastoral teacher).

As Woods (1979) has shown, conformity is one of the main prerequisites of educational success. It also enhances social control. In one instance, a parent's attempt at 'repairing the damage' her son had done by being rude to a teacher was misunderstood because the strategy adopted was different from that of English cultural norms:

Mother was weird... There was one awful scene when he'd been rude and Mother came to school and made him get down on his knees and ask forgiveness (pastoral teacher).

Apart from teachers being perplexed by being made privy to unfamiliar social norms they became reticent about informing Nigerian parents of the depth of their children's behaviour:

When I've sent letters complaining (about troublemaker) they've gone overboard and said they'll send them back and that's not what you want at all. So you tend to go easy. You don't want this to happen especially with poor old Agnes. We were really worried, about her progress because she's a (Band 1) girl... Terrible letters came from home. It really puts you off trying to involve the ... parents if that's the only way they feel it can be dealt with (middle management teacher).

We gain a little insight into the manner in which the teachers' role as the caretaker of children impinges on their decision-making process. It is not known if teachers would have been as worried if Agnes was not a Band 1 pupil. But as shown in Chapter 7, teachers jealously guarded the interests of their 'good first choice' pupils.

Nigerian parents (like most other parents; see Tomlinson, 1984) were concerned when informed about their children's unacceptable school behaviour:

F : They (teachers) told me that (daughter) was ... just shouting in class for no reason.
R : Does she do that at home?
F : No. Never. If she shout it must be for reason. Maybe she's calling the brother downstairs or something like that, but to just shout anyhow?... In this house we have
discipline. There is no chance for all that kind of nonsense they allow them in school. I have been in the school myself and seen it...I tell (daughter) not to bring that kind behaving here (home).

It could be argued that children take advantage of their ability to get away with certain types of behaviour in school. However, the teachers' concentration on what they perceived as negative aspects (authoritarian) of family background overlooks a substantial element - the school context - in the explanatory model they adopt for the analysis of pupil's behaviour, attitudes and responses to schooling:

M : The teacher told me that he can be very stubborn. That's my boy. I know him. Even to me he is like stubborn goat (laughs). But when he use bad language (shakes head) they must have provoke him. I don't know. When he's talking to anybody in this house he doesn't use bad language. So how come he use it with the teacher?

R : What did Kole say about it?
M : To tell you the truth he say to me that he use this bad language. He say everybody in the school is using it. So I tell him so therefore that doesn't mean you should follow bad example like that.

R : How did he respond to that?
M : Nothing from the teacher up till now.

R : Did you say anything else to him?
M : No. I just warn him if he say anything like that next time I'll send him to Nigeria (laughs). He doesn't like that so he behave himself.

R : Why doesn't he like that?
M : (laughs) He will be the only one going. No Mummy. No Daddy. All her* brother and sister will be here.

R : Will you send him to Nigeria if he misbehaves again?
M : I only say that to caution him.

(* A number of Nigerian parents intermittently interchanged gender during the interviews).

Although this mother used sending home as a disciplinary threat, it was one that she had no intention of carrying out. However, seven of the parents spoken to stated that they would send their children 'home' to Nigeria if they continued to misbehave:

Yes. I said I would send her home ... To my mother. At home there is discipline. When Chinwe do wrong in school there is nothing these teachers can do except talk. In Nigeria they (the teachers) will discipline them....I myself I don't like
to beat a child. She is fourteen now. Nearly fifteen. As the saying says "Spare the rod and the child will be rotten"... Here, they can't control the children. Imagine small, small children like that can just do anything...they say...come to school to talk on her behaviour. If I talk from morning till night there can be no change unless the teacher...can discipline all the girls. In Nigeria she will be well disciplined. She will know not to waste her time in school (mother).

As far as Nigerian parents were concerned the teachers were responsible for the discipline of the children in their charge and they (the parents) for that in the home. They agreed that home and school did overlap, but were in general agreement that parental support of the school was ineffective if the school had not got its own "house in order". Nigerian parents saw teachers as being unable effectively to chastise children for their engagement in unacceptable school behaviour. This teacher inadequacy was also linked to, as they saw it, their children's ultimate "failure" in school:

It will be better for him. No need of him being here and doing nothing except that CSE. Who knows CSE in Nigeria? It's 'O' Level they want. Me myself I'm going home - maybe two or three years time. That's what I've been telling him... Let him be patient with his teachers which annoy her*. Or sometime its her* friends or just anybody in school. But no. That boy (son) everybody does something to him. I tell him I can't be going to school everytime. So he better behave himself. Otherwise I send her* home (father).

(*gender interchange)

Some Nigerian parents were at a loss as to what to do when faced with the fact that some of their children were underachieving, that is, in the sense that the children appeared likely to gain educational qualifications which they considered unacceptable (CSEs). It must be remembered that only a few (five) of the parents stated that they did not think that they would be returning to Nigeria (see Goody and Groothues, 1979). Similar to educational achievement aspirations, attitudes to and suggestions for dealing with their children's school behaviour were inextricably linked to their eventual return to Nigeria:

The (school) system tends to allow you to do what you like, you know, western freedom. I don't think it's quite what we try to bring up our children in at home (in Nigeria)(father).
Although Nigerian parents constantly compared the two societies it was within the troubled-making context that teachers were particularly at a loss as to how to interpret the behaviour of parents who threatened to send their children back to Nigeria. Teachers saw this primarily in terms of the parents shedding their responsibility for the child. Other Nigerian parents, too, perceived these parents in a similar manner:

R: Some teachers say that Nigerian parents are ready to send their children home if they misbehave in school.

M: What for? I never heard that... Send them to Nigeria? For what? How can you erm - that doesn't make sense. You mean send them to Nigeria?

R: Yes.

M: Is that where they will be well behaved then?

R: Some say there's a lot of discipline there.

M: What type of discipline? Unless you're about 21 and come here and I'm spending money for you to go to University and you're not behaving then I can send you home to get a job. But not like these (reference to her 11 and 13 year old children). If they are not behaving - and I've been away from home now for some time (15 years). They're born here. They know no other custom or other people except what is happening in this country. And then if she's not behaving in school? Where will I? To whom? Who is better equipped to make her behave? No. I'll go and find out why she's behaving like that, you know, there must be a reason.

This parent along with others believed, as did the teachers, that sending the children home to Nigeria was not a helpful suggestion. However, this parent did think she might take a similar course of action if her children were older and she was paying for their school fees. The crux of the matter lies here. Some parents are unemployed in this country and have limited funds here. Some of those who are employed are working in jobs not commensurate with their qualifications and are thus on lower incomes than is necessary for them to live 'decent lives' (parent's phrase). In order to alleviate their financial difficulties they may take on unskilled work or apply to the Central Bank of Nigeria to remit a maintenance allowance for their children. Thus when the children of this group of parents appear to be 'wasting time' it is not surprising that they resort to 'desperate' measures:

When you are in desperation what can you do? I've talked to her. I've hit her... I don't like to hit her. She's a big girl now (15 years old), but she won't listen to me... I can't be here going to work. Suffering for her and all she can do is cause trouble. If not for them (his children) I
won't be in this country by now (father).

Apart from the fact that every single one of the parents interviewed cited their children's education as one of the reasons for their prolonged stay in this country, Nigerian parents expected their children to appreciate the 'importance of education' and were deeply vexed when their children appeared to be oblivious and/or indifferent to their wishes. One of the avenues open to them was to send them to a different environment where other members of their family might be more successful than they have been.

From the point of view of these Nigerian parents this line of action was 'far superior' (mother's term) to that operating in this country where uncontrollable children are sent into care. As far as two of the parents of troublemakers were concerned, social services care for teenage children was an option they could not even contemplate:

I don't like to talk about that. When my family is in Nigeria? Which kind of social welfare? I tell you they (social services) cannot care for my child. I will never let them (mother).

Apart from dealing directly with parents, teachers had in two cases to deal with guardians. The teachers also observed that the guardians were not particularly helpful and that their solution too was to threaten to send the children to their parents who were in Nigeria:

C : She (guardian) says if I don't like it here then she'll send me to my Dad (in Nigeria).
R : How do you feel about this?
C : I don't know
R : Have you been before?
C : No. She (guardian) says it's hard over there.
R : How?
C : Like there's a lot of discipline.
R : What do you feel about this?
C : Well, I won't be bad will I?

Although this fifth year girl did not sound particularly upset about being sent to Nigeria, a teacher informed me that two other troublemakers had got themselves into such a state about their bad behaviour both at home and at school that one child had taken an overdose of tablets. The other one left home because the situation at home had become 'unbearable' (teacher's term) (See also Chapter 10).

The troublemakers were notorious. Three of them (girls) were described as 'bullies' by their teachers and although the troublemakers recognized the existence of status and power relationships within the school, they had little respect for it. They disregarded school etiquette and went several steps further than goodtimers in the manner in which they proceeded to disrupt lessons, antagonize their peer group and confront
teachers. They thrived on such confrontational situations as involved their parents "against" the teachers:

I really like my Dad. He argues with the teachers and they can't say nothing to him because he knows what he's talking about (third year girl).

The troublemakers were almost totally anti-social in terms of the manner in which they behaved towards other people. Yet five of them (one boy and four girls) were described as being 'very helpful'. Troublemakers rarely distinguished between 'soft' and 'strict' teachers. Teachers were teachers and when angry or annoyed about something all teachers had an equal chance of facing the wrath of the troublemakers. From what could be gathered from four of the troublemakers they favoured the acquisition of school knowledge, but resented coercive authority (Willis, 1977). As with the loners and goodtimers, troublemakers also tended to keep family matters away from teachers. It was discovered that parents were also very reticent about taking teachers into their confidence:

You know what these people are like. All they want to know is about your private details. They'll ask the children, "What is Mum doing? Where is Dad?" and so, so and so... Me myself I just think they're poking nosing. What do they want that information for? If there's anything they want to ask about me, let them ask me, not my son in school (father).

Nigerian parents thus encouraged their children to refrain from detailed discussions about their family life. However, as shall be argued in the following chapter it was not so much family concerns, but ethnic group identity that played a significant part in Nigerian children's adoption of particular types of classroom action. There was so much pent up anger within the troublemakers that there was little room for negotiation and compromise. Although they interacted profusely (Furlong, 1984:229) with other children, their interactional style ensured that they were a group apart from the general run of pupil groups.

Loners and goodtimers were essentially pro-school enough to allow the acquisition of school knowledge to constrain their classroom action. Though in favour of acquiring school knowledge, troublemakers were unable to contain their response to a range of, what they saw as, unacceptable aspects of schooling (boring work, teachers' methods of impression management - attempting to identify with the children by adopting teenage fashion). With all this impinging on them, school learning came to be relegated to the background and they almost willed 'serious trouble'.
8.5 **Noteworthy points**

Troublemakers and goodtimers found school boring, but used different strategies to "liven up" the context within which school learning took place. Loners had so internalized the norms of the culture of the school that they were prepared to acquiesce to any given school situation. Woods (1979, see also 1983) suggests that middle class children's response to schooling is characterized by conformity while those of working class children is innovative. Teachers did get on the nerves of loners, but the latter's strategy was to ignore the teacher in the event of a situation of conflict. On the other hand, the troublemakers confronted the teachers and took them to task for their assessed frailties— inability to teach, inability to provide new and demanding work, adoption of youth subculture through fashion and types of teacher— pupil communication. As Rosser and Harre (1976:172) point out, 'trouble in school is a case of divergence (whereby) pupils have their own complex system of rules by which they account for their behaviour'. The goodtimers developed a response midway between being loners and troublemakers. They "chatted up" the teachers and made schooling a fun situation whatever the degree of boredom or nerve racking interaction. The goodtimers wanted to 'have a laugh' (Woods, 1979; see also Willis, 1977). However the enjoyment they derived or created from schooling was not so much a reaction against authority— that was left for the troublemakers— but a strategy for coping with what they considered to be dull routines.

In their attempts to discover explanations for particular types of school action, teachers focused primarily on issues related to the children's home background. As Chessum (1980) suggests, teachers were wont to employ a family pathology explanation for unacceptable school behaviour (see also Stone, 1981). Teachers were aware that there were pupils who were more interested in being popular with their friends than in the adoption of pro-school behaviour. Nevertheless teachers were more inclined to highlight the behaviour of goodtimers and troublemakers. Loners were not troublesome so they were relieved to have one less 'problem child' (teacher's phrase) to deal with.

8.6 **Concluding Reflections**

Martin (1976), in an interactionist examination of the social order of the school, pointed out that from the teacher's point of view there were three basic categories of pupils— the non-negotiables (anti-school), the intermittently negotiables (ambivalent towards school), and the
continuously negotiables (pro-school). Martin perceived teacher-pupil relationships within a bargaining and negotiating interactional framework in which both parties were constantly engaged in various forms of impression management (Goffman, 1982), ingratiation (Woods, 1979) and other forms of strategic interaction, including both 'genuine' and 'fraudulent' expressions of affect and solidarity (Martin, 1976:12). The interesting difference between Martin's categories and the interactional styles discussed in this present research, is that Martin perceived each of his categories in terms of a particular attitude towards schooling (see also Woods, 1979). As has been shown in this chapter, schooling, at least for Nigerian pupils in these two comprehensive schools, is not so much about engaging in particular types of classroom action which enable the determination of their attitudes towards the acquisition of school knowledge, but about stage managing their relationships with teachers and/or pupils.

Furlong (1976:163) argued that there is 'no consistent culture for a group of pupils'. It is agreed that loners, goodtimers and troublemakers may take on roles spanning the three styles of interaction. Judging from the children's accounts, teachers were unappreciative of the complexities of group interaction. Though they made passing comments on peer group pressure, they seemed to dismiss this in favour of home pathological explanations.

Teachers want in class pupils who are at one and the same time interested in the acquisition of school knowledge and are goodtimers. Where there is an abundance of goodtimers and troublemakers the teachers' task of social control is increased and loners are appreciated as requiring less control. However, the professional ideals of teachers require some of them to encourage loners to be goodtimers, that is, more sociable. When children engage in particular types of behaviour it is usually because they have primarily chosen to do so. Of course some children may be 'easily led' by what is going on around them, but here again 'easily led' is a matter of the teacher's perception.

When the complexities of the process of education are considered (Hargreaves, 1984), we wonder how teachers can effectively provide adequate educational opportunity for children if they are unable to manage classroom action. Of course, as Woods (1980b) has shown, part of teachers' school survival strategies involve the differentiation of pupils. Thus as long as there are enough loners and/or other pupils prepared to acquiesce to teachers' definitions of what is to be learnt at school (Young, 1971), whether it be stimulating or repetitive, teachers will continue to take the "easy" way out by employing family pathological explanations (such as single parenthood, low socio-economic status) for disruptive behaviour. It is interesting to note that in respect of loners and other 'well behaved' children, teachers rarely made reference to the children's home background.
Account needs to be taken of school "pathological" situations such as boring lessons, and a shallow understanding of what it means to identify with pupils. Certainly, the children whose behaviour required teacher pedagogy to adopt pupil identification strategies were not impressed by 'old cows' (and bulls) engaging in teenage subculture. It is one thing having knowledge of teenage subculture in terms of the latest records, fashion, and so on, and being able to engage in informed discussion of such matters. However, children look upon it as an intrusion on their subculture when teachers overtly (through attire and hairstyle) attempt to identify with them. This is likely to be regarded as even more 'weird' if the teachers concerned have little or no knowledge of the subculture they are attempting to identify with.

If as current literature suggests, white working class pupils adopt anti-school strategies (Woods, 1983; Willis, 1977) and black pupils (with specific reference to boys of West Indian origin) adopt a 'culture of resistance' (Dhondy et al., 1982; see also Furlong, 1984), teachers are likely to find that the more they attempt overtly to identify with teenage subculture, the more effort the children will put into devising new and teacher immune (even though temporary) subcultural activities. The development of Patois is a case in point. The numerically "insignificant" number of Nigerian pupils is likely to hinder the development of a Nigerian based subculture. Even if one did develop it, as far as the data in this present research suggests, unlikely to be an anti-school one.

Teachers generally have high expectations of Nigerian pupils (or more vaguely African children - see Section 7.4.3). Hence a Band 1 troublemaker is not dismissed or ignored. As Ryrie et al., (1979) have shown, the more able pupils receive additional help whether academic or social. If teachers' positive expectations work to encourage a self-fulfilling prophecy, then for the generality of Nigerian pupils the process of education works (as it does for the British middle class) as a means for either the retention of a middle class status and/or for upward social mobility. Of course there will be Nigerian children who fail to achieve educational "success" (just as there are middle class children who do not live up to expectations). The point to note is that within the British educational system these are likely to be the exceptions that "prove" the rule (see Halsey et al., 1980; see also Chapter 2).

This chapter has shown how children act together or alone within a broad 'repertoire of classroom behaviour' Furlong (1976:164). The following chapter argues that when an ethnic group is numerically smaller than other minority groups, membership of such a group has far-reaching consequences for the adoption of particular strategies to cope with inter-ethnic interaction.
Notes

1. This quote is from a parent in the exploratory study (Chapter 3). Many parents in this main part of the research also voiced views similar to this.

2. Chapter 9 discusses Nigerian children's coping strategies when faced with an unfavourable assessment of their ethnicity by their peer group.

3. Blishen (1969) points out that pupils construct teacher 'ideal types' whose characteristics are unlikely to be found in any individual teacher.

4. Furlong (1984) shows how 'disaffected' (underachieving and disruptive), but pro-school West Indian pupils also made reference to the home in explaining why they avoided initiating serious trouble.

5. Note here that reference to friendship group influences is not in terms of the actual subject she is studying, but the level at which it is to be studied. As pointed out in Chapter 7 friendship group norms did not generally have a critical influence on the children's subject choices. This is not particularly surprising if we note that half (29 out of 57) of the children were loners.

6. Denscombe (in Woods, 1980a; Delamont, 1984) points out the importance of noise in the classroom, but warns that it can be counter productive for both teachers and pupils.

7. Here again parents resort to idealistic memories. Although few, there are Children's Homes in Nigeria which cater for disruptive and or abandoned children. However, it is more usual for parents to solve their children's difficulties within the family context. Chapter 10 examines the rationalizations behind the strategy of fostering children (see also Section 1.5).
9.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the incidence of "name-calling" and examines the children's accounts and responses to being members of a minor minority ethnic group [1], that is, a group which is numerically smaller than the other two black ethnic groups found in the schools examined for the purposes of this present research. One of the issues with which Nigerian children schooling in Britain have to contend is that of their nationality [2]. It will be recalled that at the beginning of this research, teachers were unaware of the number of Nigerian children in their respective schools or in year or pastoral groups (Chapter 4). However, as numerous studies have shown, teachers differentiate on social class and ethnic group criteria (see review of research in Taylor, 1981; Tomlinson, 1983). It is shown below that in order to appear to have an undifferentiated perception of the children they taught, teachers adopted a procedure of colour categorization which approximated the stereotypical perceptions of particular ethnic groups (Milner, 1983).

The schools aimed to educate children to the best of their ability [3] and to encourage in children respect for other people's cultures. Teachers tended to feel that knowledge of children's ethnic group membership was not a part of their teaching obligation. It is argued below that teachers are unable to maintain an undifferentiated ethnic perception of the children they teach. Thus it is incumbent on teachers to have this knowledge.

An averaging out of teachers' estimates showed that teachers perceived there to be about two-fifths black and three-fifths white pupils. Their estimates ranged from 30% to 60% for black [4] pupils and as low as 25% for white [5] pupils. A middle management teacher pointed out that SG was 'a very black school'. The concern here is not the examination of the accuracy of teachers' estimates, but to give insight into teachers' perceptions of the ethnic mix in their school.

Over three quarters of the teachers interviewed firmly believed in 'not distinguishing' between the children in their charge [6]. As one of them put it,

I don't distinguish between kids. I treat them all the same and they know it (pastoral teacher).

Paradoxically, the children themselves acted in a manner which indicated that they perceived differences between each other. As Cohen and Manion (1983:100f) point out, children recognize colour differences and tend to develop peer group relationships based on ethnic (colour) homogeneity.
While teachers were busy engaging in what they believed to be non-discriminatory action towards children, the children themselves were relentlessly being made aware, by their parents and their peer group, that their ethnic identification was important to their identity within the school. This school identity revolved around Nigerian children's need to negotiate peer group social acceptance and simultaneously identify themselves in the manner in which they had been socialized by their parents.

The incidence of name-calling with particular reference to Nigerian children is outlined and discussed in conjunction with Nigerian children's methods of coping with ethnic differentiation. Additionally, teachers and parents perceptions of inter-ethnic relations are examined in order to gain insight into the interactive processes involved in arriving at the use of a particular strategy to cope with what is essentially inter-ethnic abuse from numerically larger ethnic groups. Finally, this chapter outlines the manner in which teachers responded to inter-ethnic conflict within their respective schools.

9.2 Telling the difference

The official collection of statistics relating to ethnic minority children had stopped in the respective schools in the mid 1970's [7]. Initially, only one quarter of the children were identified specifically as Nigerians, by one eighth of the teachers. It was more usual for teachers to have knowledge of the children's backgrounds in a wider collective sense, for example, African, West African or West Indian. Some teachers made no response which could be analyzed as reflecting their current knowledge of the children's ethnicity. In total, 32 teachers out of 39 at MB and 35 out of 45 at SG made specific references to their previous ethnic identification of the children. Of these, at least two-thirds had pastoral responsibilities including middle and top management teachers. The following are examples of the manner in which teachers arrived at an ethnic label for children in their charge:

I knew she was Nigerian. Well, not Nigerian - African or something (this type of response was coded under African/West African) (middle management teacher).

I'd never have realized she was Nigerian. You can't tell the difference can you? She goes around with the West Indian kids (this was coded under West Indian) (pastoral teacher).

I would have known that (X) was - just from facial, you know,
from body build and whatever that she wasn't West Indian and facial as well. There is a difference ... There are certain things about a West Indian that you can tell like their gait, the way they walk, the way they express themselves and (X) doesn't do any of that. (Y) speaks patois sometimes because of the West Indian girls that she deals with. I wouldn't have known she was Nigerian (pastoral teacher).

Well, the African kids walk differently. They take more pride in the way they walk. They are a proud bunch and you can tell. They comport themselves differently (subject teacher).

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of teachers' identification of the ethnic groups of the children they taught was that just under two-thirds (8) of the 14 female goodtimers and half of the eight troublemakers were thought to be of West Indian origin. In MB the situation was similar, even though in total, there were far fewer Nigerian children. In comparison, over two-thirds and half of the loners in SG and MB respectively were identified as Nigerians/Africans/West Africans (Table 9.1). A further point needs to be made. The parents and/or guardians of all the troublemakers identified as Nigerian/West African had visited the school at least three times. In their attempt to find ways of dealing with the teachers' dissatisfaction with their children's/ward's behaviour, the parents/guardians had specifically suggested sending the child 'home' (to Nigeria) as one of the possible solutions (see Sections 8.4 and 10.3). It is strongly suspected that if this were not the case more of the

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troublemakers may have been misidentified. As one teacher put it:

They're all bundled up together, you know. They're all black kids. They're not Nigerian or — they're black and to be honest that means West Indian. It's probably not right — well, it isn't right, but that's the way it is (middle management teacher) [8].

It is within this 'bundled up' context that the following discussion examines Nigerian children's experiences of being a member of a minor minority group in two London single sex comprehensive schools.

The teachers who expressed surprise at the fact that the children they had previously perceived as West Indian were in fact Nigerians, were at pains to point out that Nigerian children rarely mentioned this fact in class — at least not in their hearing. Whenever the subjects of countries of origin, other parts of the world and other related topics were being discussed, especially in History and Geography, Nigerian children were said to be reluctant to identify themselves with Nigeria and/or Africa. Nigerian children who were born in Nigeria were perceived by teachers as being more ready openly to identify themselves as Nigerian than were Nigerian children born here. Hence, teachers felt that it was very difficult for them to tell the country of origin of children who were reluctant to identify themselves as members of a particular ethnic group. However, as will be shown later, 'keeping quiet' about their ethnicity was a coping strategy used to manage the 'stigma' (Goffman, 1968b) attached to their membership of a minor minority group. Before going on to discuss Nigerian children's coping strategies it is apt to consider the manner in which they identified themselves.

9.3 **Self-identification**

9.3.1 *I am Nigerian, but...*

Over one-third of the Nigerian children born in Britain and who had received all their schooling in this country stated that they would respond, in an unqualified manner, that they were Nigerian if asked where they came from:


This form of identification was expressed throughout the secondary school age range. However, just under two-thirds of those born in Britain
qualified their response:

It depends on who says it. If any English person asks me where I come from I'd say Nigeria, but if a Nigerian person asks me - let's say I was in Nigeria 'n' they asked me, "Where do I come from?" I'd say, "London", but then if they want me to go into much more detail then I goes - to the white person, I'd say, "I was born here, but I come from Nigeria" (sixth form girl).

Those children who responded in this way interpreted the question 'If someone asked you who you were and where you came from what would you say?' in two ways. 'To come from somewhere' was literally translated as 'where have you journeyed from?' or was metaphorically taken to mean 'what is your ethnic group?'. This latter interpretation was extended to include the identification as a member of a particular country:

I'd say my parents came from Nigeria and erm I don't know really. I'll probably say I came from Nigeria, but I was born here (third year boy).

Nigerian children born here perceived their ethnic group and country of origin synonymously. They did not primarily perceive of themselves as being, for example, Hausa, Igbo or Yoruba. Not only had they not experienced being part of this more specific socio-cultural group, but they believed that only Nigerians knew of the different ethnic groups and places in Nigeria:

If I say my Mum comes from Ondo, they'd (teachers) say "Where is that?" so I just say Nigeria (fourth year girl).

My teachers don't know anything about Nigeria (laughs)...Lagos - that's the only place they know - but Mrs. (X) she thinks it's in Ghana. I've told her before it's in Nigeria, but she always says, "I'll get it right this time - Ghana?" and I go "No miss, it's Nigeria". Then she'll laugh and go "Oh, yes". So I just don't bother telling her anything about that anymore (fifth year girl).

Nigerian children who identified with being Nigerian resented it when their teachers' knowledge about their country of origin seemed not only narrow, but incorrect. It is thus not surprising that over two-thirds of the teachers spoken to observed that Nigerian children were very reluctant to talk about cultural aspects of 'being Nigerian':

I noticed that we hear very little about the Nigerian culture (pastoral teacher).

The children's lack of motivation to talk to their teachers can be appreciated if we note that some teachers were not interested in having a repertoire of knowledge about the different ethnic groups in their schools
[10] and those whom the children did attempt to inform about subjects related to Nigeria never did quite remember what they were told. This is not to say that teachers did not make any effort to incorporate in their teaching elements of interest from other countries and in this particular case Nigeria. They did, but only one teacher of the six that mentioned doing class work that specifically related to other cultures, described it as successful in terms of children's interest and participation in the topic:

We were talking about diseases and population growth, you know the sort of thing and they (an Asian and African girl) were so full of ideas (subject teacher).

Other teachers descriptions of their 'multicultural' lessons were in terms of 'failures':

Well, I thought I'd introduce - read them a story set in a different part of the world. There was this lovely book on an Indian boy on a farm. I said to them, "You'll enjoy this" and some of them (Asian pupils) looked so embarrassed. I had a bad response from the class as a whole - they started teasing them (Asian pupils) (pastoral teacher).

Although these examples are not related specifically to Nigerian children it is worth noting that in their enthusiasm to keep up with current educational innovation, some teachers displayed a lack of sensitivity in their approach. Apart from not being able to avoid material with stereotypes of people from other cultures, the concentration on topics such as 'diseases' and 'overpopulation' in other countries without a comparative focus on diseases in Britain, for example, discouraged some of the children from being interested in the acquisition of school knowledge:

C : Science is rubbish.
R : In what way?
C : Well, a don' like science. All d'disease. A don' like it (pause)
R : Mm.
C : It's rubbish. Dey show all disease, but we don' have all that kind disease in Nigeria.

(C = second year boy)

Classroom observation of lessons which focused on topics specifically related to the way of life in other countries, showed that teachers lacked the skills needed to introduce what were, in essence, "unusual" school topics. School learning material usually centres around issues related to "white" topics. Saunders (1982) suggests that in order successfully to introduce potentially "radical" topics, teachers need to be more tactful and make advance preparations for such "deviant" teaching (see also Jeffcoate, 1984). Since neither school had yet established a coherent curriculum based on the principles of multi-ethnic education, it is not
surprising that individual teachers' attempts at taking on the task of curriculum innovation were haphazard and mainly counter-productive in terms of the response teachers received from pupils.

Having knowledge of a child's ethnicity does not necessarily mean confronting that child with his/her ethnicity in a situation where ethnicity related topics are being discussed, usually, for the first time. Banks (1981) points out that teachers need to examine their understanding of the manner in which multicultural teaching can successfully take place. Hargreaves (1980) has drawn attention to the manner in which teachers' progression through individual status passages and collective professional school careers is characterized by increased mediocrity:

One just plods along, hoping for the best (as quoted in Hargreaves, 1980:136).

A teacher at MB put it thus:

(We) are aware of it (the need for multi-ethnic education), but (we)'re not doing a great deal - not that I know about. (In our department) we don't make a great deal of fuss about (it). We just get on with the job of teaching (middle management teacher).

If some teachers are unable to recognize the links between performing their 'job of teaching' and the incorporation of local education authority initiatives on curriculum content, then it is not surprising that their teaching career is fraught with difficulties. Lacey (1977) suggests that teachers are under tremendous pressure to keep up with educational innovations and experience frustration when their attempts to be 'creative' are unsuccessful. It is shown below that teachers themselves create mental stumbling blocks which hinders their ability to adopt successful teacher pedagogy.

An impression was gained that one-third of the teachers could not quite see why children from different parts of Africa were quite so insistent about which particular country they came from. They operated within the framework that Africa is a small homogenous "country". Even though we were discussing Nigerian children's experiences, these teachers made references to Africa as a whole rather than particular countries in Africa. Some even found it difficult to name the countries they were referring to. Put another way, it was easier to talk about 'bits', 'parts' and 'sections' of Africa than about particular named countries. The following is an extract from a pastoral teacher who felt that children from Africa should not get so upset about being identified as coming from a country other than their own - especially if they are neighbouring countries:

T: Those who come from Africa are very particular about what part of Africa they come from. They come from **this** (teacher's emphasis) part. It kind of amazes one. If
you come from Africa you come from Africa.
R : Mm, but Africa is a big continent.
T : True.
R : I mean very few people would say they come from Europe.
They'd say they came from a particular part of Europe.
T : Yeah. I mean er it was just that sometimes they used to get cross if I - I mean I can't remember now, but it'd be something like two bits side by side and you'd accidentally put down, shall we say, the right hand side and they come from the left hand side and they'd get very cross about that and yet you'd think it's in the same section of Africa. That's what I meant "No! we don't come from the same part". Yet the dividing lines - it might be two miles or ten miles between what they're arguing about.

This teachers' attempt at explaining her 'amazement' that African children insisted on correctly being identified highlights the attitudinal framework within which some teachers operated.

The teachers spoken to argued that it was impossible to know the socio-cultural and economic details of the countries of all the children they taught. It was not clear whether this was an excuse or a justification for their ignorance. Scott and Lyman (1968:47) distinguish between two types of accounts and suggest that

Justifications are accounts in which one accepts responsibility for the act in question, but denies the pejorative quality associated with it... (while) excuses are socially approved vocabularies for mitigating or relieving responsibility when conduct is questioned.

It was found that teachers' statements on the identification of children's ethnic origins revolved around making both justifications and excuses for their inability to identify correctly children's ethnic origins even after they had been told.

In large schools with over 1,000 pupils on roll, it is not expected that individual teachers should have knowledge of the ethnic origin of all pupils. However, it leaves much to be desired when pastoral teachers who have daily and direct responsibility for children are unable to appreciate children's stated wish to be correctly identified.

Nigerian parents (like other migrant parents, see Watson, 1977; Saifullah Khan, 1979) were actively concerned to promote in their children the acceptance and identification of themselves as Nigerian. As one parent put it:

I tell them every day you are Nigerian, Nigerian, Nigerian (father).

Another parent pointed out:
Wherever they are they must be ready to say they are Nigerian. Officially they are British, but really they're Nigerian (mother).

All the parents made a similar point to the above which reflected an insistence between an 'official' identification as British and a 'real' identification as Nigerian. This was best accounted for by another parent who described the situation thus:

My children are Nigerian. Okay, they are born here and good, officially let's say, in school form or anything like that, they are British. That's the law here [11]. But really all this Black British business is not for us. It is for those ones who are going to stay here. We're not staying here. I've told my children that hundreds of times. Our country is Nigeria which we are going to. So they are Nigerian... If they are staying here then they are British. I agree to that position because then they must be entitled to everything like any other British citizen. Even in Nigeria we have something like Lebanese and all those people with Nigerian passport. They are born in Nigeria. Maybe their parents nationalize and so they are officially Nigerian. In their mind my children must know where they come from because they are going back there [12]. Not like some of these people who have taken this place as their home.... We too are settled here, but not for ever (mother).

It is thus not surprising that for one-third of Nigerian children, being born here was not tantamount to being British:

Even though I was born here I don't regard myself as being English, British or whatever ... I just don't (sixth form boy).

I'd say (I come from) Africa. I tell them (friends) my Dad comes from Nigeria and my Mum from (another West African country). I take my Dad's nationality of course and so I say I'm Nigerian (Nigerian girl recently left sixth form and waiting to gain admission into a higher education institution)

Nigerian children who were born here had a mixture of gut, traditional and conservative feelings about their ethnic identification. For these children whatever the circumstances, being Nigerian was not something to be ashamed of:

Some of them (friends) can't believe it and they say, "You're not. No. You're not". And I say "Yes I am"...They don't want me to say it. Some people aren't proud of being African
because people go around saying bulla, bulla. But I'm proud to say I'm African and if they say "No," I say "Yes, I am" (sixth form girl).

Tajfel (1974:69) pointed out that an individual's social identity is that part of an individual's self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership of a social group...together with the emotional significance attached to that membership. These children were indeed emotionally attached to a country only one quarter of them had visited during school holidays (see Chapter 10). It may have been that the children were more prepared to express these feelings because the researcher herself is Nigerian, but as shall be seen below, the process through which these children come to identify so definitely with being Nigerian is one which is influenced by other criteria apart from researcher reactivity (Hyman et al., 1954).

Only five of the children (two boys and three girls) who were born here unreservedly identified themselves as British:

I'd say I come from England. My nationality is British (fifth form girl).

Moreover, this girl stated that she would not necessarily offer information about her parents' ethnic group membership because she was 'not interested in talking about where they came from'. It was discovered that this girl's parents had cautioned her about giving out potentially "sensitive" information about their background which may subsequently be misused by teachers:

If they think this one's (daughter) not British they may think she's not entitled to something good [13] or put her in bad class. Sometimes they may not even help her if she can't do her work [14](mother).

This fifth form girl was a goodtimer (see Section 8.3) who had been constantly bored with repetitive classroom work [15] and she had conveyed to her parents her understanding of teacher pedagogy and the manner in which the teaching group system operated in SG. She put it to me thus:

C: It's like if you're having a lesson and one white girl goes up to the teacher and she explains everything to her an' tells her everything and a black girl comes up to her an' she just ignores her or just tells her a little bit.

R: Has this happened to you?

C: Only about er three or four times, but my friend it's happened loads of times. Not enough attention is given to black girls, especially (names girl) when she doesn't know what to do.

R: Maybe she doesn't listen. Too busy talking when the teacher's explaining.
C: I talk more than her. Loads of girls talk more than her and white girls. Anyway, Mrs. (X) is prejudiced. We're in (Band 3) all the black girls are in (Band 3).

R: All?
C: Yeah. Most of them. Sometimes I think it's cause we're lazy an' don't do the work, but we always get the same work and I get fed up of doing it [14]. If you look in all them bottom classes like (names four groups) they're all black girls in there.

The point to note here is not so much the accuracy of this child's observations, but that her understanding of the process of schooling as conveyed to her parents gave rise to the latter taking steps which it was hoped would counteract the effects of a school system which was seen as differentiating between pupils (see Keddie, 1971). Another mother explains why she encourages her son to say that he is British:

You know they (media) are always talking about immigrant, immigrant. I am immigrant, but my child is not. He knows he's Nigerian, but in here (Britain) he must say he is British. I don't want them to treat him like immigrant child. He has all the rights like any other. Only her (his) mother is immigrant. He is not (mother).

Having accepted the reality of the possibility of discrimination this mother took steps which she hoped would enable her child to be given equal educational opportunity (see Chapter 2).

In general, Nigerian parents qualified their use of the term 'British' to identify their children. Acknowledging their children as British depended on the circumstances in which the information was required:

They are born here so if I have to fill in a form I'll put Nigerian and add British by birth. They are officially British (mother).

As far as the parents were concerned there was a difference between being British by birth and being Nigerian by parents' country of origin. The latter overrode their children's place of birth:

They (children) are Nigerians aren't they? They have not nationalized (naturalized) as British - even though they are born here (mother).

This mother understood it as given that her children were Nigerian. By virtue of their place of birth they were also British. However, this "Britishness" was not regarded as total. For her children to become "fully" British she erroneously thought that her children would be required to go through a naturalization process. At the time of the interviews children born here still had automatic rights of citizenship. This has now been removed by the most recent Nationality Act (1981)[11].
In addition, the parents were asked how they would respond to being asked where they came from:

Nigeria, of course...Well, I'll say, "I'm from Africa." Then they'll say, "Which country?" and I'll say, "Nigeria". It's up to you. If it's somebody you know that knows Africa already - that Africa is a continent - then you say you're from Nigeria. It depends who. Some of them - they'd say, "Nigeria? Where's that?" I'd say "It's in West Africa". When you say Nigeria some of them (acquaintances) keep mixing it like er East Africans who dress you see when they are dancing on television. And you try to explain to them that we don't really dress like that. We are from West Africa. We are a bit different from people from East Africa (mother).

As with their children Nigerian parents found that they had to break down the media stereotype of Africa as one homogenous "country" (Milner, 1983; Hartmann and Husband, 1974).

Those children who were born in Nigeria and had received all their primary schooling there not surprisingly identified with being Nigerian more strongly than those Nigerian children who were born here. However, in one instance a boy who had been in the country for two and a half years offered the information that he was 'half-British' prior to being asked any questions related to his ethnicity:

R : As we were coming up the stairs you said that you're half-British
C : (interrupting) I am.
R : In what way?
C : Yeah. I'm half-British because my little sister was born in here. So I come in here when I was 'bout 11.
R : Mm. And you think that because your sister was born here it makes you half-British?
C : Yeah.

Having prior knowledge (through a top management teacher) that this child was born and lived his first ten years in Nigeria, it seemed that this child had an identity crisis (see Milner, 1983: Chapter 6; see also Mullard, 1973). In order to verify this possibility the question of ethnicity was brought up again:

R : Is there any time that you would say you're British?
C : Not really. Not pure.
R : When you say not pure British
C : (interrupts) Am not really (his emphasis) British only half.

Further examination of these two extracts showed that his claim to be 'half-British' may not so much revolve around an identity crisis, but a
desire to relate to his sister and perhaps identify with the country where he was now living (see Mullard, 1973). There were moments when he was prepared to claim that he was Nigerian or that he was 'half-British'. These moments were not felt to be mutually exclusive as they appeared to depend on how he interpreted, at particular points during the interview questions about ethnic identification - even when unsolicited:

R: Have you told your teachers you're half-British?
C: No.
R: Mm.
C: I only say that to my sister and the boys (peer group).
R: You said it to me.
C: Yeah.
R: Why?
C: I don't know.
R: You say it to your sister and the
C: (interrupts) They (MB boys) are always asking me where I come from.
R: And what do you say?
C: I use to say am from (State in Nigeria) but they don't know it. So I say Nigeria.
R: Do your teachers know you're from Nigeria?
C: Yeah.
R: How did they know?
C: I don't know. They only guess. They say "Am I Jamaican?"
I say "No". They say, "Am I Nigerian?" I said, "Yes".

Here again we have him affirmatively identifying himself as Nigerian. He was then asked to clarify why he claimed to be 'half-British' to his sister and peer group:

Child: I say that to them (peer group) because they say am not British. That am only African. So when I say am half British they say "Okay".

Hence, the self-identification as 'half-British' was a strategy for coping with particular peer group attitudes which rejected an African child.

The school can thus be seen as an arena in which ethnic identities are proclaimed, rejected and compromised about. For this child the "half solution" worked to reduce his peer group's negative labelling (see Section 9.4 for other coping strategies). The children had to manoeuvre a complex path between being proud of their country of origin and living in a country where all around one appeared to be British (black and white). Tajfel (1978) suggests that an individual's identity has a socially significant meaning. Thus members of different ethnic groups constantly make comparisons between theirs and the groups of others. These comparisons are likely to focus mainly on attributes which each group considers necessary to be considered as a member of their group. Individual's who do not have
these attributes are subsequently perceived as 'outsiders' (Becker, 1963). Moreover, the meaning attached to membership of a particular group can be either positive or negative. With Nigerian children, their self-identification as Nigerian was a reinforcement of an already existing social stigma attached to being African in British and other Eurocentric societies (Milner, 1983).

There have been numerous researches (Bagley and Verma, 1979; Milner, 1983:132f) on ethnic minority children's identity and cultural 'confusion'. Nigerian children themselves do not have an 'identity crisis'. However, the social environment in which they lived (in this case in London) put pressure on them to reject or at least shed part, if not all their identification with their country of origin (Mullard, 1973). Moreover, in the school situation we find that relatively larger ethnic groups have also internalized the negative labelling employed by society at large. Hence, in the micro-world of the school both black and white ethnic groups demand of minor minority groups a re-definition of their identity. Thus children engaged in a variety of strategies designed to cope with what was, essentially, an "ultimatum" to identify with relatively larger ethnic groups or remain 'outsiders'.

Before going on to discuss Nigerian children's strategies for coping with ethnic differentiation, it is worth taking a brief look at the issue of Nigerian names.

9.3.2 Nigerian names

Teachers pointed out that they found Nigerian names difficult to pronounce and thus pronounced them the best they could. It is worth noting that teachers did expect and encourage children to speak and pronounce English words in the "standard" form (see Chapters 5 and 6). A fourth year boy pointed out that

teachers can't pronounce Nigerian names. They can't say it properly...Nigerian names are really difficult to pronounce.

Teacher influence was such that all but four of the children adopted the teacher's pronunciation in preference to that of the parents'. The children's acceptance of the Anglicization of their names ensured that everyday name references by teachers did not result in constant corrections and pronunciation modifications.

A Nigerian mother stated that she could not understand why the English people she had contact with at work seemed to have this insurmountable difficulty in the pronunciation of her name:

They're so funny. That is why I don't understand them sometime. We could call their names, but when I say my name...
Folake they don't want to bother until when I say *Mary. I'm always going mad and I say, "Oh! come on, you've been with me for many years you should be able to call Folake by now" (*pseudonyms).

In 11 cases, parents had felt it appropriate to offer or agree to their children being called a shortened form of their first names. In five instances the children's Nigerian names had been substituted with an English name. The parents had got so frustrated with the inability of teachers to pronounce their children's names that they had succumbed and given the teachers what they wanted - an "easily" pronounceable name. This type of one-sided negotiation reflected an intransigence on the part of teachers to make the effort to address children's names appropriately.

It is a little surprising that teachers in multi-ethnic schools, working in a local authority committed to eradicating inter-ethnic discrimination, should respond in this manner to names which, because they are not European, are thought to be less worthy of the effort needed to arrive at as near a correct pronunciation as possible. Children are sensitive enough to pick up the rejection of their names even if couched in such platitudes as 'nice' and 'exotic'. This type of teacher attitude on a relatively simple issue such as the pronunciation of names does not encourage in one the feeling that teachers will be able to tackle adequately the complexities of teaching a multi-ethnic curriculum to heterogeneous ethnic groups (see Cohen and Manion, 1983).

Nigerian first names like most other names have short forms. For example, the name Uzoaku can be shortened to Uzo or the name Ayodele to Ayo or Dele. Nigerian parents did not object to their children being referred to by the shortened form of their names. They too rarely called their children by their full names, but what they objected to was the teachers' tendency to ask for these shortened forms with the inherent implication that they could not be bothered with the pronunciation of the full name:

Immediately I told her (the teacher) the name she said, "Oh! what's the short one". I told her and then she say "Aha that's better". So I know they weren't going to be calling her the correct name so I warn her (daughter) if she's doing any examination she should put her full name on the paper (mother).

Perhaps the most infuriating aspect of teachers' attitudes to Nigerian names, for the parents, was when teachers asked them if there was an English alternative to their Nigerian name or if there was a shortened form of their surname. At least one quarter of the parents had experienced this latter request while over two-thirds had been asked for English alternatives or shortened forms. There is the current case of a Nigerian whose football manager cannot pronounce his name and has thus
given him an English one. Some of the children had so understood their school's attitude to non-European names that they, without being asked, had adopted English names. Some of these were on their birth certificates others were made up. Of course, the colonial experience made it inevitable that some Nigerian children had English fore and surnames. Until about the 1930s it was obligatory to adopt an English name when christening a child or being baptized in church (Coleman, 1963; Sofola, 1973). Old "habits" die hard.

Sofola (1973:117) draws attention to change of name advertisements in Nigerian local newspapers such as the following:

I formally known and called Mr. Sylvester Egbuna wish to be
known and called from henceforth Mazi (for Mr.) Nkemka
Egbuna.

Sofola also points out that this change of name is not just a replacement of the English with the Nigerian, but that in the Igbo language 'Nkemka' means 'my own is greater'. Name change advertisements can still be found in Nigerian newspapers.

Nigerians give names which reflect the events leading to or surrounding the birth of their children. Names are thus important labels which are not picked haphazardly for their exoticism or nicety. Sofola (1973:117-118) points out that

To us (Africans) names are cultural... We do not wish to have them changed and exchanged with others that do not have meanings to us.

As Tajfel (1978) points out an individual's identity is ultimately the basis for his/her emotional stability. Nigerian names, in a similar manner as, for example, Asian names, are enshrined in their cultural identity (Ghuman, 1980). So too were? English names (Lassiter, 1983; Dunkling, 1974).

When examining Nigerian children's coping strategies in the following sections it is worth bearing in mind the issue of names and the process of self-identification as discussed above.

9.4 Coping Strategies

9.4.1 Name - calling: a 'tease' or an abuse?

The teachers interviewed were very quick to point out that school children were well known for calling each other names. Name-calling usually took the form of a personal characteristic or attribute being used in a negative and/or derogatory manner to refer to a particular individual.
For example, during observations in both schools, children were heard referring to each other as 'bent nose', 'dopey', 'smelly', 'stupid', 'big head', and 'forehead'. In addition labels included references to children's membership of a particular ethnic group: 'African', 'blackie', 'bulla', 'Kunta Kente', 'honky', 'Irish', 'Jew', 'nigger', 'paki', 'whitie', 'wog' and 'Zulu'. Name-calling usually took place between white and black children. However, there was also name-calling within groups. Interestingly enough name-calling by the same colour group sometimes employed different labels - 'slave', 'West-Indian', 'curry goat' or 'Irish', 'Jew', 'Nazi', 'Yid'. Although where appropriate the following discussion will make references to name-calling between different white groups, the main thrust of this section is name-calling as it is particularly relevant to Nigerian children.

The response to a name-call was grounded in the circumstances surrounding the use of a particular label:

C: Sometimes when we are joking he can say like "You nigger", but he's only joking...Sometimes, someone can say "Come on, Zulu". Sometimes a black person can say it, but it's only just joking kind of.

R: How can you tell that they're joking?

C: Just like, you just know. It depends like if we're just teasing it's a joke. Nobody'll take it serious.

R: How do you know when it's serious?

C: Like somebody'll say it angry like. Or just say it when you done nothing to 'im. Some white people just say it to impress their friends, like their gang. Black people say like Zulu when they're mucking about or we done something on Africa. West Indians say like bulla or booboo when they're angry with you or just want to tease you.

R: Tease you?

C: Wind you up. Like calling you names. They'll just call you anything when they want to wind you up.

(C = 14 years old)

It is important to note that towards the end of the discussion name-calling had been interpreted in three different ways. Name-calling could progress from a mutually accepted joke, to a one-sided tease which might subsequently be interpreted as a wind-up. When the wind-up goes beyond what the receiver can accommodate, the name-call is likely to become an abuse. It must be emphasized that as far as the children who were being called names were concerned, there was very little distinction between being teased and being abused. Receivers of name-calls did not always enjoy the joke. Neither did the name-callers themselves when they were on the receiving end:
We were just talking. She said, "You African booboo", but she was just joking. I called her, "curry goat". It was just for fun, but she said she didn't like it.

Name-calling did not just involve the use of labels, but the use of stereotypical, cartoon mannerisms which were acted out much to the amusement of most of the class. The exceptions were those who were members of the group being 'teased'. Sometimes non-group members, did not find the joke funny and said as much:

Shut up you (white boy). You can't even do it (mimic an Asian accent and mannerisms. The initiator of the mimicry had clasped his hands together and was moving his head from side to side). That's just rubbish (taken from classroom observation notes).

The relationship between groups in each school was generally agreeable. However, a sixth form girl pointed out that conflict between groups were at their most antagonistic in their 'lower' years. By this she meant the third, fourth and fifth years of schooling.

Becker (1963) and other labelling theorists tend to focus on labelling and deviance as they relate to particular types of social action which an individual engages in and is subsequently labelled as deviant (for example, smoking marijuana or being a mental patient). In other words, deviance is social action thus labelled by members of a particular society. However, the deviant person is 'one to whom that label has successfully been applied' (Becker, 1963:9). In order to grasp fully the implication of name-calling as specifically related to Nigerian children, labelling theory together with the associated concepts of deviance and stigma, will be used in the exposition of Nigerian children's coping strategies. Suffice it at this juncture to point out that a particular label is invariably grounded in an existing stereotype of a given social act or group. When there is differentiation between black ethnic groups (African, Afro-Caribbean and Asian), it is likely that within the context of a general negative labelling, each group will struggle to achieve higher status than the other. In other words, each group might attempt to establish itself as being less stigmatized than the other.

It will be shown below that when black children and adults (Chapter 10) grow up and live in an environment characterized by a consistent attack on any group that deviates from what the society labels as normal (that is, 'white, Christian, male' (teacher's phrase)), even those who experience negative labelling (in this case Afro-Caribbean children and to a lesser extent Asian children) join with the original initiators (whites) to stigmatize a black group which they initially reject as members of a collective black ethnic minority group.
The point to note as we examine inter-ethnic conflict in the following sections, is that in British society, black groups do not have the power to attach successfully a permanent, negative label to members of any group. In other words unlike white groups, black groups are unable to legitimize their negative perception of different social groups.

9.4.2 Experiencing social stigma on the macro-level

It was found that all Nigerian parents as with other ethnic minority groups (Jones, 1977; Saifullah Khan, 1979), had at one time or another experienced what they felt to be inter-ethnic prejudice and discrimination. As one of the parents observed: 'You can't escape it (inter-ethnic hostility)'. It was pointed out in Chapter 3 that Nigerian parents found the inability to go about their everyday business without experiencing some form of harassment very depressing (see Tajfel and Dawson, 1965). In order to cope with these depressing situations, they tended to turn a blind eye to being called names. To ensure the effectiveness of this strategy, Nigerian parents limited their social contact with white groups. Their rejection by white society led to their re-examination of a hitherto taken-for-granted label of themselves as Nigerians:

Sometimes I don't know why these people (whites) behave like this. They abuse you because of where you come from. Why? They are proud to be English. So am I proud to be Nigerian. I'm a Nigerian. There's nobody who can change that... If they want they can call me anything. I don't take any notice. I haven't time for all that nonsense (father).

When discussing issues related to ethnic identity, it was found that Nigerian parents constantly reiterated to themselves (as they did to their children) that they are Nigerians. Tajfel (1978) suggests that the reassertion of membership of a particular group works to preserve and project a positive re-evaluation of their ethnicity.

Walvin (1973), in summarizing the foundations of prejudice through tracing British colonial history, points out that caricature, rather than truth was the hallmark of the English impression of the Negro (p.174).

Laishley (1975:75) further discovered in her survey of children's comics that the picture given of the world was that of a white world (with) black characters...limited to unfavourable and foolish roles.

It is not surprising then, that as Africans, Nigerian children were called names. Goodman (1952:252) suggests that different groups learn to distinguish between themselves through
the dawning and sharpening of consciousness of self and others.

This awareness is likely to be
an aggregate of experience...of perceiving people, objects and events, discriminating between them, evaluating them and reacting to them...within a symbolic representation of the world coloured by attitudes and beliefs about the world (Milner, 1975:37).

The following section examines Nigerian children's understanding of ethnic differentiation.

9.5 Understanding Ethnic Differentiation

It was discovered that over three quarters of the parents interviewed adopted a ritual of ethnic identification which was designed to ensure that their children identified themselves in a manner which the parents would approve of:

It's there (points to head) stuck in - every day - "You (the child) are a Nigerian".

In order further to press the point home, those Nigerian parents who could afford to had taken their children on holiday to Nigeria. As this same mother put it:

I'm not depriving them of their origin.

Thus the children were socialized into recognizing their "Nigerianness". From the children's accounts of their self-identification (Section 9.3) they generally appeared confident in their knowledge of their origins. However, the children had to adopt various strategies, apart from ethnic assertion, to cope adequately with negative labelling from their peer group. As one sixth form boy put it:

They seem to categorize people very quickly. Once you're black, you're a nigger or wog.

The following sub-sections outline various strategies employed to cope with negative categorization.

9.5.1 Correcting and Reversing the label

The strategy children employed reflected the manner in which the child concerned interpreted and identified the cause of being negatively labelled. For example, Nigerian children born abroad rarely interpreted
name-calling as a tease. It was an abuse and they neither experienced it nor analyzed it as a joke:

C: They always call me name. Sometimes African or Zulu.
R: Well, are you an African?
C: Yes, but am not a Zulu. They abuse me with it.
R: How?
C: Like they say, "African bulla".
R: What does that mean?
C: They just abuse you like that.
R: Who?
C: Many times white. Sometimes West Indian. White ones only call you something they call to West Indian like, "nigger".
R: Nigger?
C: Yeah. They call me that because they think I'm West Indian. Sometimes they say, "blackie" or "African".

This child's repertoire of name-calling knowledge did not include name-calling terminology relating to ethnic groups in Britain. He did not realize that being called a 'nigger' was a form of inter-ethnic abuse for all black people. Since he did not understand the meaning, he did not interpret this label as an abuse. However, being called, 'Zulu' was interpreted as a misidentification of his country of origin. Hence, in both instances his primary concern was to correct a label he understood to be incorrectly applied.

Even after two and a half years in this country, a Nigerian girl of 16 still found it difficult to understand why her country's membership of a particular continent should be used to 'insult' her:

They call me African and I say "Yes, what about it?" They think if they call me African it will insult me...It doesn't bother me. These people have no sense.

Although this girl was able to dismiss a negative label, other children were not as confident. A Nigerian girl who was born here, but had received four years of primary education in Nigeria, had been apprehensive about being called a name on her return to England. She had spent her first five years here and had recollected, even though only vaguely, incidents which had triggered off an anxiety about being black in this country:

They (neighbours children) used to make me cry....When I first started school, I thought they'd be calling me names, but I was always lucky. The class I was in, the girls were all very nice to me.... Nothing about my being African. My colour - yeah. They were always going on about that, but I didn't mind. There was lots of us black people there (sixth form girl).

It is worth noting that at the time, as far as she could remember, this
Nigerian girl was the only African in her class. According to her she could accommodate being called, for example, 'wog' or 'blackie' because these terms were used on other black children. Her perceptions of herself as a member of this group of children enabled her to 'ride the tide' (a parent's phrase). As far as she could ascertain she was not being singled out for a specific type of negative labelling. This accommodation of a collective label enabled this sixth form girl to cope with name-calling without much overt effort.

The children's accounts of inter-ethnic conflict referred mainly to their white peer group, especially 'skin heads'. However, inter-ethnic conflict also existed between members of the "same" group (see Section 9.6.2). The following discussion is with a Nigerian fifth former who had experienced negative labelling from a West Indian child:

C: ...When I first came to this school....I used to have my hair in plaits...You get West Indians calling you booboo and some English, but more West Indian I think.

R: What did you do when they called you that?

C: Booboo? I just laughed.

R: Why do you think they called you booboo?

C: It's just some way of, you know, if it hurts you, they'll call you. If they think that calling you a pig would hurt you, then they'll call you that....They think if they call you booboo it'll hurt you, but if you show them that it doesn't hurt you... it doesn't really make any difference what they call you...they stop after a while and actually you make some few friends (my emphasis).

Now I don't get any names called to me because I can do as bad as they can... but now if we're having an argument they won't call me anything to do with my race. They'll just call me, you know, things that they'll call anybody else.

Here again, we have the child drawing attention to the point that name-calling had different levels of meaning and in some cases it even performed the function of making friends. It must be emphasized that this function was cited only when discussing inter-ethnic conflict between black groups, namely African and Afro-Caribbean. As one of the children explained (see Section 9.5.5) name-calling which has to do with someone's 'race' when one is a member of another 'race' is difficult to forget. Another point worth noting is that this fifth form girl was also prepared to accommodate negative labelling if the labels used were extendable to other children as well. In other words, negative labels were tolerated if they did not mark one as an 'outsider'. Hence, negative labelling which concentrated on membership of a particular ethnic group (obviously not
shared by many other children) gave rise to the need to 'show them that it doesn't hurt you'. Translated into a coping strategy, this involved correcting the label and showing that the label could be reversed and applied to the initiator of the negative label. This was done through giving an on-the-spot history lesson:

R: Why did you think more West Indians called you booboo?
C: I'm not really sure. Well, I know er I don't know. Maybe its just their way of getting back at you, but I mean (we're) both from the same race. You know, if you work it out from the beginning... I don't know if they are ashamed of it or something... She said to me I'm an African this and that and... I'm a slave and everything and she was West Indian (child's emphasis) and I said to her that, you know, "I'm not the one who is a slave because you're the West Indian they took from Africa in the first place to do the slavery. In my history I haven't had any history of slavery. You're the one that should be calling yourself a slave". And ever since that (laughs) she's been (giggles) one of my best friends (laughs)...So, when they call you names like that and you can show them that they are really wrong, they don't trouble you any more.

The strategy of confronting the label-initiator with negative self-labelling discouraged the label-initiator from further negative labelling - at least with the individual child concerned. The spin-off from the use of this strategy was the development of friendship between two previously antagonistic individuals. This girl was able to negotiate a revised image of herself while simultaneously showing that she, too, could engage in negative labelling. The label correction strategy worked to ensure that this girl had no need to undergo a process of 'situational adjustment' (Becker, 1964; Goffman, 1962) through which she would come to accept the label thrust on her.

It is, perhaps, not surprising that this girl was one of the goodtimers. As was pointed out above (Section 8.3) the interactional style of goodtimers ensured that they were popular with their peer group. It is suggested that members of a minor minority group which is generally negatively labelled, are likely to undergo a process of negotiating acceptance of their ethnic group membership prior to achieving popularity with their peer group.

Reversing the label also worked to discourage white children from engaging in negative labelling:

One day she came home and say someone called her black stick and monkey. So I tell her to call them white stick and pig. (mother).
However, judging from the children's accounts, this was only a temporary set back for white negative label initiators. It was discovered that in cases of white-black labelling conflict, some of the children appeared at a loss to know how to counter negative labelling from white children:

When they call you names you can't call them anything, anything that'll hurt them. They're white so you can't say anything bad to them that'll hurt them (third year girl).

What this girl and other children understand is that they live in a white society which is characterized by discrimination against black people (Milner, 1983; Zubaida, 1970). Some of the Nigerian children were astute enough to draw attention to the over representation of black children in Band 3 teaching groups. They knew that discrimination took place. Whether it is intentional or unintentional (Rampton, 1981) is immaterial. The point to note is that they have interpreted the situation as one in which the "power" of whites (both schools had predominantly white teachers, see Chapter 4), also manifests itself in the micro-world of the school. While inter-ethnic conflict between Africans and Afro-Caribbeans can relatively easily be resolved, that between whites and blacks cannot be because the children feel powerless to initiate an appropriate type of negative labelling towards white children. Little wonder that inter-ethnic conflict between blacks and whites usually resulted in fights (see Section 9.5.4).

Before going on to discuss the aggressive strategy, it is apt to examine another relatively passive form of coping with inter-ethnic conflict.

9.5.2 Ignoring the situation

When asked about their response to name-calling, about one-quarter of the children could not remember 'doing anything' in particular about being negatively labelled:

I just ignore them. I take no notice of them. When you just take no notice they leave you alone (sixth form girl).

This girl's response was strikingly similar to that of Nigerian parents who had also been asked about their response to being called names. Nigerian parents pointed out that name-calling was an expected occurrence:

Calling people names will always happen ....People will call you names or cars will go past you and they'll call you names (father).

Subsequently, they were not surprised when their children reported that they had been called names with specific reference to their ethnicity and/or colour:

I tell him I can't be going to school because of that. So he must just look the other way and not listen to them (mother).
So far, we have seen how the children employed different strategies to cope with negative labelling. With a little help from their parents some of them exercised enough self-control and ignored the situation.

Teachers, too, tended to ignore the situation. However, theirs was not so much an effective strategy for dealing with inter-ethnic conflict, but an avoidance of the situation strategy which in some cases was tantamount to a shirking of responsibility to reduce inter-ethnic conflict in their school (see Section 9.6).

The teachers were aware that Nigerian pupils (amongst others) were 'teased' about their "Africanness". As with the teachers in the exploratory study school, teachers at SG and MB schools seemed to feel that the most appropriate method of dealing with inter-ethnic conflict was to confront it only if it led to the breaking of a school rule, for example, by fighting. As a teacher pointed out

"we don't really like to deal with this issue. It's very difficult for us... We just try to treat the children the same and not notice colour (middle management teacher)."

Teachers' attempts to be colour blind rested on the assumption that a colour blind stance was equivalent to a non-prejudiced standpoint. However, Milner (1983) points out that a black person's colour is crucial to that person's self-identification and as such the pretence of colour-blindness is more detrimental to the child.

Teachers' lack of awareness that they do not operate an undifferentiated pedagogy, hindered them from taking adequate measures to cope with inter-ethnic intolerance within their school (see Section 9.6). However, the children who had to bear the brunt of the social stigma attached to being, in this case, African, continued to look for ways with which to cope with inter-ethnic abuse.

9.5.3 Accent Shifts

In order to avoid unpleasant incidents, those children who were born in Nigeria and, in particular, spoke with a Nigerian accent, adopted an accent shift strategy, that is, they sought to reduce the social stigma attached to their accent by modifying it. Examples of this have been discussed in Chapter 6. It is worth pointing out here that in terms of cloaking their identity, the children perceived the accent shift strategy as effective:

"They don't tease me any more because my accent's changed (third year girl)."
A sixth form boy put it this way:

Half the guys I know don't even know I'm Nigerian. They think (laughs) I'm some sort of, you know, person with a very nice voice.

This boy also pointed out that he used to 'take the micky' out of a friend with a similar 'posh voice' by calling him a 'posh wog'. Three Nigerian children who might be assessed as having 'posh' voices pointed out that they were incessantly teased, about their 'posh' accents. From the children's accounts it appeared that a social stigma was attached to 'posh' accents as well as to 'foreign' accents. Thus any form of speech deviation generated negative labelling.

In contrast to children discussed in Chapter 6, the children with posh voices felt no need to modify their accents. Of course there is likely to be a different degree of stigma attached to a 'posh' "inside" accent than to a 'foreign' accent which immediately marks one out as an 'outsider'. As shown in Chapter 6, recently arrived children with 'Nigerian' accents, were employing the quickest possible route to reduce the degree of stigma attached to them through their accent. Those children who did not employ this strategy were aware that the stigmatization of accents was geographically located:

I don't live in this area, so I don't speak like they do (second year girl).

As discussed in Chapter 6, research has shown that an individual's accent, dialect and speech style are important elements in the process of social evaluation within a given social group. While accent shifts can be described as subtle and almost covert strategies, other children adopted more overt strategies for dealing with children who 'dared' to call them names.

9.5.4 Aggression

In order to cope with inter-ethnic conflict Nigerian children sometimes resorted to the use of aggressive strategies:

I got so angry (with being 'teased') I hit him (fourth year boy).

This strategy also appeared to work:

Since they know that I could do some damage, they don't come and trouble me any more (sixth form girl).

It is worth noting that children who looked physically big and strong generally did not experience 'teasing':

I wasn't teased because I was pretty big then and they thought I could beat them up (fourth year girl).
Those who did not have such physiques attached themselves to others for protection:

You won't get teased if you move about with the bigger boys.

They kind of support you (second year boy).

This use of physical strength for purposes of defence needs to be differentiated from the use of physical strength as a strategy for 'indulging in fisticuffs to win admirers' (see Woods, 1983:97). As one sixth form boy pointed out:

I ignore it (name-calling) until to a certain extent when they really get on my nerves 'n' I usually go up to them...threats usually do it, because they don't usually mess around with a guy who's angry.

However, when threats do not work a fight is likely to ensue and this inevitably came to the attention of teachers.

Teachers' accounts of their attempts to resolve inter-ethnic conflict showed that apart from a few cases (see Section 9.6) they preferred to subsume inter-ethnic conflict and deal primarily with the physical aggression that had given rise to their having knowledge of an unapproved school incident. Before going on to examine in detail teachers' methods of coping with inter-ethnic conflict, it is worth noting the response of Nigerian children to being asked if they had ever initiated negative labelling on other ethnic groups.

9.5.5 Initiating negative labelling

After identifying the different labels children employed in order to stigmatize Nigerian children, the latter were asked what labels they used to respond to a negative label:

R : What about you, what names do you call people?
C : Not anything associated with their race. I wouldn't kinda say "Oh! you pakistani something"... I wouldn't say that because I know that it must hurt them and once you've said that you can't kind of undo it....I would just say if I don't like the person that I don't like them. I wouldn't really go round calling them names. First of all it's childish and second of all after you've said it - sometimes you say it and don't really mean it. You can't really go to them and say I don't mean it because they kind of remember that even if they say it's alright, they'll still remember that you called them that and they go around thinking that that's what you think of them.

Having herself received negative labelling it is not surprising that this fifth year girl stated that she would not engage in inter-ethnic labelling.
It might have been expected that children who experienced negative labelling may seize the opportunity to create a negative label situation for others. However, the membership of a minor minority group ensured that some Nigerian children avoided the risk of having members of larger ethnic groups individually or collectively re-applying negative labels to them. In contrast, children who could muster aggression were able to take this risk with impunity:

C: They wouldn't dare call me (her emphasis) a name.... They're just too frightened of me (laughs) because of the way I act in school. I do (her emphasis) act really bossy and really big. None of them has ever come up to me and called me names. None.

R: What about you, do you call other children names?
C: Er (giggles), white people, yes. Some blacks, yes, but Asians? No. They're too quiet. Loads of white people. Yeah. I do I can't help it.

R: What names do you call them?
C: (Laughs) I call them (laughs) white shits or call'em cunts or call 'em bastards (laughs). Basically, anything to do with their colour. But some of my friends I only call it for fun...In arguments or when I see some white people doing, picking on other people, I just lose my temper...White girls just don't like Asian girls at all.

This sixth form girl saw herself as someone who could throw her weight around in order to get away with initiating negative labelling. Perhaps more importantly, she also saw her role as using her 'strength' to protect less physically strong children from inter-ethnic aggression. It was found that Nigerian children tended to cite name-calling incidents that predominantly concerned white children. To a much lesser extent they cited incidents as it concerned them and Afro-Caribbean children. They rarely cited incidents which involved Asian children as initiators of negative labelling for they perceived them as weak and in need of protection:

They (name-callers) usually pick on the gentle, poor Indian person, you know, who doesn't know how to defend himself (fifth form boy).

Saifullah Khan (1982) has pointed out that British society in general, has the stereotyped perception of Asians as weak. It will be interesting to discover the manner in which other children cope with inter-ethnic abuse.

Although Nigerian children adopted a variety of strategies to cope with name-calling, they generally experienced a sense of frustration which
centred around their inability to discover a negative label which could stigmatize white children:

'Skinheads', they call black people names all the time... They all go round in groups... They usually abuse (a black person): "Get outta th' way you nigger, get outta th' way you wog", or something like that... But what can you call a white person? Because well, you can't say white honky because it doesn't hurt them so you don't say nothing (fifth form boy).

The point to note is that in a white dominated society in which inter-ethnic discrimination is enshrined in the very fabric of the society's development (Milner, 1983) it is not surprising that ultimately children feel unable to inflict a similar degree of hostility as that inflicted by 'skinheads' who are perceived as overzealous representatives of resentment towards various minority groups (Bagley and Verma, 1979; Bowker and Carrier, 1976; see also Section 1.5).

The next section outlines the manner in which teachers' own ambivalence towards inter-ethnic conflict, leads them to make judgements which, though overtly insisting on the inappropriateness of negative labelling, appears at the same time to sympathize with the perpetuators of inter-ethnic conflict.

9.6 **Coping with inter-ethnic conflict**

9.6.1 **The teachers' views**

Prior to this present research, the heads of SG and MB had each taken a stand against National Front (NF) activities in the school. Despite this the general impression gained from those teachers who discussed the issue at length was that they were displeased by the manner in which their respective schools, under the direction of the heads of each school had dealt with this issue:

We're lacking in direction. We're lacking in a big, big way... (We need to know) how to react in certain situations... You can do an awful lot of damage... Like my (pastoral group) when they cut their hair off and came in Union Jacks. Some of them were British Movement. Some of them were evil, anti-black, you know, but most of them were alright. But to make a stand against it was wrong somehow. It gave the black kids this sort of carte blanche, you know.
They were just beating up the skinheads. It was horrible. It was mismanagement... (Top management) made a very valid stand, but it didn't work. There are ways of doing things. But I honestly think if there had been a campaign against graffiti and not swastikas - leave that for small groups. You can't start (shouting) at 360 kids. You can do it in the classroom. In small groups where there's a relationship between the (pastoral) teacher and the (class) ...That's where it should happen .... You can't have aggressive black kids feeling they can go up and box - you know, beat up (white) kids. It's not fair. (They were) not all skinheads...That caused bad feeling because parents came in ... It was awful. It was terrible (middle management teacher at SG).

As a result of black response to white negative labelling, this teacher became sympathetic towards those children who had haircuts resembling those adopted by skinheads, but whom s/he believed were not 'anti-black'. This teacher's account shows the dilemma some teachers face about the manner in which inter-ethnic conflict should be handled. On the one hand s/he perceived skinheads as 'evil' while at the same time being able to recognize those skinheads that were 'alright'.

Goffman (1982) points out that as social actors we are all engaged in the art of impression management. Hence, we go to tremendous lengths to project a particular image of ourselves and our own definition of the situation when we interact with others. There is a particular social meaning attached to being a skinhead. It is likely that children who grow up in Britain are aware of this meaning. Children who present themselves as skinheads are likely to be, at least vaguely aware of the 'anti-black' sentiments of the identity they have chosen to adopt through for example, having a particular type of short hair cut. Thus, in terms of inter-ethnic relations these children are taking a risk in being perceived as 'anti-black'.

Another point needs to be made. 'Swastikas' and 'graffiti' have totally different social and literal meanings. The social implications inherent in daubing swastikas on a wall is completely different from those of say, for example, writing a rude (usually with sexual overtones) message on a wall. According to the teacher quoted above it would have been more appropriate for inter-ethnic conflict to have been dealt with within pastoral groups where teachers have a 'relationship' with their pupils. It is worth noting that further on in the interview, this same teacher claimed that s/he had neither the confidence nor the technique to engage children in discussions concerning the historical and social reasons for various types of inter-ethnic conflict (see below).

Before going on to examine particular incidents of inter-ethnic
conflict, it is apt to present the views of a teacher at MB:

It was a time when there were various boys sporting NF badges. So the staff as a whole had to make a decision that they would disallow all badges because we didn't support the wearing of any racist badge. It provoked thought for about a month. People thought we must be more positive against any form - you know, against this sort of attitude....There was trouble ...people bringing in those horrible magazines (NF or British Movement). One teacher received a threatening letter because her name was mentioned in the magazine. They said she was a communist or something ridiculous... At that time there was a lot of quite fruitful discussion at the staff meeting, but since then that has died... (The head) said, by not wearing any badge we would disallow racist badges.... Many teachers - we found it disgusting. Why do we have to put up with boys wearing that kind of badge? To cover himself he just disallowed all badges... He didn't say, "No (teacher's emphasis) racist badges" - badges with any kind of racist connotation... There were very heated discussions...

It was positive really - about the things we could sort of do to combat erm make the world within the school - even though it is a pretend world - a bit more comfortable and try to...show the children that wearing NF badges - that we weren't prepared to tolerate it. That we didn't support them one bit. That way I think he made a couple of announcements in Assembly about it which was quite good, but... (sighs) (pastoral teacher at MB).

In contrast to the teacher at SG, this teacher thought that it was 'quite good' for the head to make an announcement, in Assembly, deploring 'racist badges'. However, s/he felt it was 'disgusting' that all badges were disallowed. S/he wanted a specific 'stand' made against particular types of badges which s/he felt should not be tolerated in school. Here again, it appears that sometimes those in positions of authority to lay down the ground rules for social interaction within their schools are ambivalent about their own definition of the situation. This teacher felt that the head's decision to disallow all badges was based on a need to 'cover' himself, that is, to avoid specific conflict with parents whose children wore NF badges. It can be implied from the teacher's account that during the period when NF badges were worn in MB school there was social unrest. What gave rise to collective inter-ethnic school conflict (as distinguished from the types of individual inter-ethnic conflicts experienced by the children described above) was not just any badge, but a particular type of badge with a very specific social meaning. The enormity of the situation was such that a white teacher received a threatening letter after her name
was mentioned in an 'anti-black' magazine. Yet the head thought that the most appropriate way of dealing with the situation was to make a short-lived stand against 'racist badges' and then ban all badges. Despite the threat to a teacher, the school's collective concern gave rise to discussions which lasted 'about one month'.

Once some semblance of social order had been established it seemed superfluous for teachers to continue concentrating on the issue of inter-ethnic conflict. As another teacher pointed out too much is trying to be done about it. Perhaps a good idea is to let things take their natural course. The more you try to do, the more you tend to stir things up and upset what you're trying to settle down - that's the impression I've got. Perhaps I'm living in cloud cuckoo land, but erm there's an awful lot of people around trying to do things and perhaps it'll be a good idea if they left well alone (middle management teacher).

The incident with 'racist badges' occurred before this present research was undertaken. However, during it two incidents of inter-ethnic conflict were brought to my attention by middle management teachers at MB. As shown above, children usually managed to cope with inter-ethnic conflict without getting into 'serious' trouble, that is, without getting involved in fights. It is these conflicts that invariably come to the attention of the teachers. Thus they may be lulled into thinking that inter-ethnic conflict is rare. Teachers may indeed be living in 'cloud cuckoo land'.

Judging from the children's accounts there was a steady flow of white children's negative labelling of black children. In some cases, negative labelling, of Nigerian children came from West Indian and occasionally, Asian children. Some Nigerian children also initiated negative labelling. It is not clear what letting 'things take their natural course' would entail. The teacher at SG described the uncontrollable anger of children who experienced negative labelling. As Peter Newsam, Chairperson of the Commission for Racial Equality pointed out, in the context of whites' harassment of their Asian neighbours, the alternative may be even more horrendous (Independent Television programme, 'T.V. Eye', shown in January, 1985).

It must be pointed out that both schools have since developed guidelines to deal with 'racism' and 'prejudice'. However, an impression gained through informal contacts with both schools was that only 'a handful' (teacher's phrase) of teachers are committed to tackling inter-ethnic conflict. In other words, most teachers still adopt a strategy of avoidance.

Teachers tended to rely heavily on top management teachers who were in any case considered by them to be 'grossly inefficient' (see Section 7.5)
and lacking in leadership qualities. Hargreaves (1984:113) quotes an HMI report:

The most important single factor in the success of... schools is the quality of leadership of the head.

Thus schools which do not have heads with good leadership skills are likely to be not very successful schools in both academic and social terms (see also Rutter et al., 1979). The hopes teachers have in the possibility of change through the removal of inefficient heads is naive. It may be a step in the right direction, but more importantly, as Lacey (1977) and Hargreaves (1980) point out, all teachers are likely to benefit from training which enhances their management skills and which, in addition, enables them to examine their own definition of the situation and to juxtapose this with the definitions of black and white children. An ability to understand the interactional implications of negative labelling may prove to be of help in their quest to maintain social order in their school.

The following section outlines the manner in which teachers attempted to deal with inter-ethnic conflict in a setting where there were no clear guidelines.

9.6.2. The Conflicts

Previous studies (Bagley and Verma, 1979; Miles and Phizacklea, 1979; Husband, 1982; Milner, 1983) have concentrated on inter-ethnic conflict between whites and blacks. Teachers' and pupils' accounts showed that this was still very much the case. However, as shown in Section 9.5, other types of inter-ethnic conflicts existed, namely those between black and black and white and white:

When you've had a Jewish child in the class and they've gone, "You Jew", I don't go into what it is to be a Jew. It's often the kids themselves don't know - if they don't come from an orthodox background... One of them might say, "Oh! my grandmother was a Jew" and you'd say, "Oh! is that your Mum's Mum?" and they'd say "Yeah" and that, you know, means you - the lines through you, you know. You must be very careful (middle management teacher at SG).

This teacher was wary of dealing with this conflict because of the possibility that the initiator of the name-call, 'Jew' could also be a Jew without knowing it. In order to avoid being party to a re-appraisal of the child's identity, this teacher was so careful s/he avoided dealing directly with this particular instance of inter-ethnic abuse. A similar situation occurred at MB:

I was absolutely amazed when I heard a West Indian boy
saying, "You, you effing, something Zulu" - great antagonism between West Indians and Africans...(anyway) (names the child) can give as good as he gets (pastoral teacher at MB).

Here again, this teacher avoided dealing directly with the issue of name-calling and by doing nothing about it left the child to employ his own coping strategy.

When identifying inter-ethnic conflicts teachers tended to emphasize those between black and black. An impression was gained that some teachers were trying to justify and excuse (Scott and Lyman, 1968) white initiation of inter-ethnic abuse by pointing out that inter-ethnic abuse was also initiated by black children and addressed to other black children. Only two teachers drew attention to inter-ethnic conflict between white ethnic groups while 26 teachers spoke more on conflict between black children than between black and white children:

T : I'd go as far as to say there's open hostility between the African girls and the West Indian girls. There's an awful lot of prejudice there.

R : What do you think accounts for this?

T : Oh! gosh. I don't know. But what I do know is that in the 3rd year when we were to do the syllabus on the slave trade the West Indian girls don't like being told that they started in Africa. They say,"I'm West Indian. My parents are from Jamaica" or whatever. It's very - you've got to be very careful.

R : Have you ever discussed the particular reasons why they feel this way?

T : No. No. No, I haven't. I don't think I've felt confident enough to do that.

R : ... how do you mean?

T : Well, myself. My own personal discussion technique...and often the Nigerians are in the minority. It's not fair.

... 

T : (When) I've heard (name-calling) I haven't dealt with it African versus West Indian. I've dealt with it person versus person, you know, "You don't do things like that", you know just respect for each other really...

Teachers avoided confronting issues which they thought were sensitive. It is not clear how children can learn to respect each other if they do not know what it is they should be respecting. Stenhouse (1975) points out that teachers in a multicultural society need to prepare children for
living within that society. Hall (1980) suggests that teachers need to acquire skills in relation to dealing with inter-ethnic conflict. He points out that avoiding the issue will not resolve it. On the contrary, teachers' avoidance of confronting inter-ethnic conflict allows it to smoulder until it eventually erupts into an uncontrollable rage. As part of their avoidance strategy, teachers tended to deal with inter-ethnic conflict only when it resulted in a fight:

T: Seven girls after their Maths exam went to the classroom where the white girl was. They're all black and they got rid of everybody except the girl and they terrorized her and kicked her. And we're not quite sure exactly what happened, but they did make this girl kneel...and we only knew this because the mother of the girl rang us and told us. And the girl's so frightened she can't step outside her front door. A member of staff did stop it and did tell us as much as s/he could and we've since got written statements from all the girls.... We just feel that it's so disgusting and it was well planned. It was horrible. If they'd gone and thumped her I could have coped with that. We could have understood that, but we're not willing to tolerate that...and (Nigerian girl) was part of it.

R: Do you have any idea what led to the incident?

T: No. No. But I don't think we want to. Our part is that that happened in school to one of our 4th years by a group of largely 5th years and we deal with that... and that's how we deal with that sort of behaviour.

This teacher was concerned about the white girl that had been 'terrorized' by seven black girls. However, nowhere in her account is there a desire to discover what the white girl might have done, intentionally or unintentionally, to these black girls. It is clear that by getting 'rid of everybody except' her, the black girls had a particular case against this white girl. This teacher went so far as to point out that she could have 'coped' with a 'thumping', but the act of making the girl kneel was so abhorrent to the teacher that nothing appeared able to explain such action. At another stage in the interview this same teacher had pointed out the 'evil' inherent in inter-ethnic conflict based on 'anti-black' sentiments. It is not known whether this girl had any 'anti-black' sentiments. However, the point to note is that inter-ethnic abuse can be carried out as a 'normal' (everyday) part of children's interaction with each other:

Whites, they're so dumb, they think they're tough. They just call you names. They know you can't call them anything—anything that'll really hurt them. So they just do what their parents tell them (sixth form boy).
The nature of the white girl's parents' sentiments towards black people is not known. However, it is clear that the teacher quoted above thought it was unfair that seven black children should beat up one white child. In concentrating on physical aggression this teacher appeared to ignore the possibility that verbal aggression can be just as powerful in igniting inter-ethnic conflict. A teacher felt that some children sporting 'anti-black' paraphernalia were 'alright'. Black girls obviously did not share this definition of the situation. If, as Hall (1980) suggests, teachers do not deal adequately with inter-ethnic conflict, then it is likely that this will allow the growth of a situation where the children take the "law" into their own hands.

Three other teachers were approached in respect of this fight, but no extra information was gleaned from them. A top management teacher informed me that the conflict had been taken care of. From what could be gathered from staffroom conversations some of the girls were suspended. It is worth noting that the Nigerian girl involved here was known to her teachers as a troublemaker (see Section 8.4). Moreover, this was one of the girls that had not been interviewed because of my inability to make contact either with her or her parents.

Chapter 8 focused on children's engagement in particular styles of classroom action. It was suggested that membership of particular interactional groups lay in the children's skills at developing and maintaining particular projections of their self-image. As one of the goodtimers put it:

Teachers only see one side of me - the good side of me (sixth form girl)

Judging from the children's accounts, it appears that they adopted an aggressive strategy as a last resort. Teachers may find it useful to realize that some children cannot sustain a projected image of themselves as 'good' especially if they experience particular types of negative labelling which they understand their teachers as tacitly condoning:

Teachers don't do nothing. They just tell the white girls not to do it again...If there's a fight the black girl gets into trouble as well, but really the white girl started it (fifth form girl).

Meyenn (1980) has shown how children are prepared to accept punishment when it is given out in a manner which they consider to be fair. However, if children perceive teachers as being 'soft' on negative label initiators, it is likely that the children will resent the situation. Even-handed justice may not be as fair as some teachers tend to believe.

Teachers in positions where they had direct responsibility for dealing with inter-ethnic conflict failed to deal adequately with it. A pastoral teacher at SG describes the situation:

A black girl and a white girl had a fight. Now the root of
the matter was that it was because of some racist comment that was passed between - I don't know if it was black to white or white to black, but anyway this happened. Obviously a fight ensued and the girls were suspended and I said to the teacher, "Was there anything said about the reason for the fight or was it just the fight that was dealt with?" and s/he said "Oh! Oh!". It made (him/her) think...In the end s/he did a big questionnaire to find out about racist incidents in the school.

As the pastoral teacher at MB pointed out, after a while new initiatives to tackle inter-ethnic conflict peter out. Although there were individual teachers and even groups of teachers (four to ten) prepared to arrive at a consistent method for dealing with inter-ethnic conflict within each school, on the whole both schools appeared apathetic and indifferent to this issue. An impression was gained that, rather than deal with the more insidious aspect of conflict between white and black groups and even between white and white groups, teachers tended to emphasize the part played by black children whenever inter-ethnic conflict ensued. The point to note is that teachers who state that they believe in not distinguishing between pupils are unable to convince children that they are not partisan.

It was noted in Chapter 4 that the teachers in both schools were overwhelmingly white. It is perhaps not surprising that they were 'amazed' at inter-ethnic conflict between Africans and Afro-Caribbeans [16]. Milner (1983) has discussed how children, irrespective of their colour, adopt at a very early age the dominant stereotypes of the society they live in. If teachers really believe in the aims and objectives of their respective schools which include respect for other ethnic groups and their cultures, then, as Hall (1980) suggests, understanding one's own prejudices is a prerequisite to the adequate tackling of inter-ethnic conflict.

9.7 Summary

Irrespective of where they were born Nigerian children tended to include being Nigerian as part of their self-identification. However, teachers found that Nigerian children were very reluctant to offer information during discussions about cultural aspects of being Nigerian. The children pointed out the failure of their attempts to enlighten their teachers about their cultural backgrounds. Moreover, they were particularly resentful that their pastoral teachers did not make the effort
to remember their exact country of origin. One teacher in particular felt that children who came from Africa should be satisfied with being identified as coming from any part of Africa, especially if they were neighbouring countries.

Teachers tended to misidentify Nigerian children. As one of the teachers pointed out, being black was synonymous with being West Indian. When asked about the manner in which they related to children, teachers were at pains to point out that they treated all children alike. While teachers believed that this was what they were doing, it was found that in fact they adopted a simplistic process of differentiation through the use of stereotypes. Hence, Nigerian loners were more likely to be perceived as African while the goodtimers or troublemakers were more likely to be perceived as West Indian.

The stereotypical perception of black people, especially Africans, in the wider society led to Nigerian children experiencing negative labelling from both white and black ethnic groups. Children interpreted name-calling in a variety of ways ranging from a 'joke' to an 'abuse'. While children adopted overt and subtle, calm and aggressive strategies to cope with being negatively labelled, teachers tended to deal with inter-ethnic conflict by focusing on issues peripheral to its cause. Thus, teachers concentrated on the physical aspect of aggression. They appeared not to have the skills nor the confidence to attempt to discover the content of the verbal aggression that may have led to fights in their respective schools.

Teachers in both schools were concerned about maintaining social order, but they made their own task even more difficult by adopting even handed analyses of particular inter-ethnic conflicts. As far as those at the receiving end of verbal aggression were concerned, teachers' attempts at being seen to be 'fair' were interpreted by the children as a condoning of white verbal aggression towards them. Nigerian children pointed out their frustration at the impotence of black verbal aggression towards whites.

When recounting inter-ethnic conflict, teachers tended to emphasize negative labelling especially when it occurred between black ethnic groups. The children's accounts showed that this emphasis was misplaced. It was suggested that teachers examine the process through which they come to define inter-ethnic conflict in their school.

9.8 Concluding Reflections

Teachers support equality of treatment, yet at the same time respond to interactional aspects of schooling in a manner which appears tacitly to
condone inter-ethnic negative labelling. The belief that one ethnic group is superior to another one is still very much alive. Moreover, this belief permeates into the micro-world of the school. Saifullah Khan (1982:197) points out that this in itself should not be surprising because the relationship between dominant and subordinate ethnic groups is a relationship of power which is manifest and maintained by the economic and social order. Sherman and Wood (1982) argue that the dominant ideology in any given society is shaped by economic relations. They suggest that the belief in a particular ideology is the most important factor in the reinforcement of the relationship between groups of people in the economy. Saifullah Khan (1982) emphasizes the point that very little attention is focused on the power of the dominant subculture together with its symbolic strategies and institutions.

Teachers interviewed in this present research have shown that, as a subcultural group, they are unable to shift the focus of inter-ethnic conflict away from that which reinforces their own stereotypes of black children to one which adequately addresses the manner in which white children harass black children in their schools. This harassment is instigated not through any haphazard form of negative-labelling, but through one in which there is support for these labels from organizations outside the school. A teacher's ability to recognize the 'evil' in 'anti-black' sentiments is clearly not enough to overcome the partisanship discovered in the process through which some teachers operationalized discipline in their school. Teachers have been socialized in a society which believes that black people are a deviant group. As Becker (1963) points out, label initiators continue to look for criteria which further enables the label to stick. A reinforcement of black stereotyping appears not only necessary, but crucial to teachers' evaluation of their own prejudices. Rather than discuss the reasons behind a black child's engagement in physical aggression, some teachers appeared to allow only the fact of physical aggression to inform the manner in which they dealt with inter-ethnic conflict.

It is necessary to note that teachers have a particular relation to the economic structure of society. One aspect of this relation is derived from their role. They are actively engaged in the running of an institution, that not only differentiates between social groups, but carries out educational practices which essentially prepare children for particular social positions (Bourdieu, 1973; Bowles and Gintis, 1976; Halsey et al. 1980). Although they do not own capital, teachers are members of the middle classes whom Osoba (1977) refers to as technocrats. Hence, they operate the social system in their own and in the interests of the owners of capital (Westergaard and Resler, 1975). In relation to the education system, this requires teachers to accept the existing order as a
prerequisite to maintaining their own social position.

The teachers' emphasis on inter-ethnic conflict between black ethnic groups only helps to distract attention from the more socially pervasive hostility between black and white ethnic groups, especially in relation to the labour market. As Castles and Kosack (1973) point out, prejudice is a product of socio-economic conditions and serves, primarily, the interests of the dominant class. They argue that the dominant class exaggerates real or imaginary differences (in their own interest) and to the detriment of (the) victim in order to justify (their) privileges and (their) aggression (p. 456).

Moreover, they point out that the existing social order has been so thoroughly internalized (by the working class) that to reject it would come close to self-rejection (p. 451).

Although teachers are generally labelled middle class (Westergaard and Resler, 1975; Sherman and Wood, 1982), Gintis (1970) has argued that teachers, amongst other white collar workers, are essentially a new working class because of their frequent engagement in trade union activity. This more than anything else indicates their level of alienation from the owners of capital. In contrast, the entrepreneurial middle classes share a greater degree of consensus with the capitalist system of economic exploitation (Westergaard and Resler, 1975:13-29).

It appears that teachers have begun to question their position in the economic structure of society (for example, the drawn out pay dispute; see The Times Educational Supplement and The Teacher, especially the weekly editions in the months of January and February, 1985). However, it would be optimistic to believe that this constitutes the beginnings of a full scale challenge to the existing social stratification system. The teachers' concern is primarily to enhance their own social position and thus distance themselves from the traditional working classes.

A genuine belief in equality is likely to require teachers to give up their role as maintainers of the status quo. I have come across no evidence in this present research to indicate that as a subcultural group teachers are prepared critically to examine this role. Neither was there any evidence to suggest that as a subcultural group teachers were prepared to challenge the manner in which they had been socialized. Teachers may tinker with change and profess to believe in a radicalization of the system they operate, but their social position appears to make it imperative for them to limit their action to that which does not challenge the very foundations of the process through which they have come to acquire the social privilege of being, at least, tenuous members of the middle class. Hence, teachers' internalization of the dominant ideology is likely to remain intact.
Notes

1. The term ethnic group is used loosely here to refer to a national group which, by virtue of being in another society, tends to be perceived as homogenous (Saifullah Khan, 1982). It has also been pointed out in Chapter 1, that the relatively small numbers of Nigerian children prevents the analysis of the data in terms of the different ethnic groups in Nigeria. Any specific reference is likely to mislead.

2. Nationality is used here in the sense of the child's parents' country of origin.

3. Chapters 5 and 6 showed how teachers' perceptions of verbal utterances and the organization of language learning in both schools hindered the education of children to the best of their ability. Chapter 7 also examined the different levels at which children could be described as 'doing well' in their attempts to acquire school knowledge.

4. Black is used as a concept which embraces Africans, Afro-Caribbeans (West Indians) and Asians (Indian sub-continent). Parekh (1974) uses the concept collectively to describe the experience of New Commonwealth migrants to Britain.

5. White is used as a concept which embraces all Europeans including North and South Americans. It is worth noting that teachers tended to categorize children according to the colour of their skin and hair texture prior to acquiring specific information about the child's ethnic group:
   
   Well, she's really white, you know, skin, hair, everything.
   When I saw her father I was, well, surprised... He was ever so black (laughs) (pastoral teacher).

6. Two teachers at MB refused to be interviewed specifically because they did not approve of differentiating between children. At this stage, interviews with teachers had not yet begun so their refusal was not based on knowledge of the particular questions they might have been asked.

7. The DES stopped collecting 'immigrant' statistics in 1973. The researcher had been informed by ILEA's Research and Statistics Unit that the collection of the numbers of ethnic minority pupil's in ILEA schools had been stopped primarily because various party politically motivated statements and policies based on distorted interpretations of the statistics were being made.

   Rampton (1981) has recommended the recommencement of the collection of statistics of the different ethnic groups to be found in schools (see also
ILEA's Language Census (1983) showing that there were 147 different languages spoken by London school children gives an insight into the variety of ethnic minority children in London schools (see Appendix 14).

8. There is still public controversy over the inclusion of Asians within the black collective conceptual identity.

9. As mentioned above (Chapter 4), previous research has shown that the reactivity effect on statements made by respondents were generally found to be insignificant (Hyman et al., 1954).

10. Little and Willey (1981:23) point out that teachers still made the observation that if 'minority children were here because they want to be, why should it be incumbent on the indigenous population to make changes?'. Yet, it is expected (Hargreaves, 1984) that teachers who hold these views will join wholeheartedly with those who are determined to operate within a framework which takes account of the ethnic diversity within schools and the society at large.

11. Children born in Britain are no longer automatically entitled to British citizenship (see Dunnett and Martin, 1982).

12. The going home syndrome is examined in Chapter 10.

13. A middle management teacher did observe that a social worker had described a Home found for a Nigerian pupil as being 'alright for a Nigerian'.

14. As discussed throughout this present research, teachers perceptions of children have implications for the manner in which teachers assess their educational ability.

15. Hargreaves (1984:119) reported a similar finding and urged teachers to provide more varied classroom work.

16. The manner in which some white teachers focus on black interaction is exemplified by three teachers who asked a group of four black adults (one Asian, one Afro-Caribbean and two Africans) having lunch together at SG, if they were in the process of forming a club.
CHAPTER TEN: DIFFERENT SHADES OF BLACK AND WHITE

10.1 Introduction

The previous chapter focused on inter-ethnic conflict as it specifically related to Nigerian children and their peer group. In the following discussion a different type of conflict is examined—that between Nigerian parents and their children's teachers.

Teachers maintained that they wished to treat all children 'normally'. Thus they were angered when Nigerian parents suggested unusual solutions to various school-defined social problems. It is shown below that the teachers' inability to maintain an undifferentiated perception of the children they taught extended from academic to social areas of schooling. Although teachers were eager to state that the last thing on their minds was the children's ethnicity, it was argued above that this teacher position was unsustainable because teachers, through assessments of children's interactional styles, hair texture, skin colour and posture had already allocated ethnic group membership to the children. This chapter seeks to demonstrate that ethnic group membership is crucial to the manner in which all actors in the dynamics of school interaction respond to each other.

Saifullah Khan (1979) points out that it is necessary to address the 'mutual misunderstandings' which cause conflict between representatives of majority group institutions and minorities, both as individuals (social actors) and collectively as ethnic minority social groups. Despite the teachers' general perception of Nigerian parents as 'middle class really', it was found that in situations concerning Nigerian parents', methods of child upbringing, notions of their "middle-classness" were relegated to the background. In these cases teachers tended to concentrate on what they perceived as the 'deviant' manner in which Nigerian parents socialized their children.

Goody and Groothues (1979:59) point out that 'West African couples in London come from relatively privileged backgrounds (and) were not part of a mass migration'. In contrast to the general level of education of other black minority groups (Smith, 1977; Rex and Tomlinson, 1979), Goody and Groothues point out that virtually all those (West Africans) who come here have attended secondary schools or the equivalent (thus) they represent a highly selected group....Economically they come from families of merchants, civil servants, clerks and professional men and they grew up in relative (my emphasis,
see Chapter 1) affluence, living in large houses, often with servants to see to the domestic chores and heavy work about the house and grounds (pp.66-67).

In making any comparisons between West Africans and other black ethnic minority groups in Britain, this selectivity must be noted. However, this should not be taken to mean that all Nigerians in Britain are affluent or come from affluent homes. The point to note is that in terms of educational capital, only one quarter of the parents interviewed had parents who had themselves never received any type of formal schooling.

It was pointed out in Chapter 1 that Nigerians come to Britain not to gain a better standard of living through employment, but to amass educational qualifications for use in their home country. It is worth noting that only one of the parents had a British passport. Thus the overwhelming majority of them had arrived in this country on student visas. According to the parents, up to the mid-1970s it was 'relatively easy' for them to 'convert' their student visas to 'resident status stamps' after having spent five continuous years in Britain [1]. With the tightening of immigration controls since the 1981 Nationality Act, Nigerian students who wish to remain here indefinitely are likely to find it more difficult to convert their student visas into resident stamps in their passports. All, except five of the parents interviewed, had resident status. In other words, they had no employment or length of stay restrictions provided they returned to Britain within two years of any given departure.

Perhaps more importantly, British immigration regulations essentially worked to ensure that the bulk of West Africans in Britain already possessed 'cultural capital' (Bourdieu, 1973) in the sense that they had not only acquired a minimum level of British style secondary education (Chapter 1), but were en route to acquiring even more 'cultural capital' in the form of higher level educational qualifications. All the parents interviewed had been on at least one post-secondary course designed to ensure access into a higher level course. For example, a father having gained an OND (Ordinary National Diploma) certificate went on to obtain an HND (Higher National Diploma) qualification. Having completed his B.Sc. (Bachelor of Science) he is now waiting for his wife to complete a nursing qualification. According to this couple, they intend to return to Nigeria as soon as their two children have completed their secondary education. There is no legal pressure for these parents to leave Britain, yet over three-quarters of them stated that they planned to return to Nigeria.

Craven (1968) suggested that 'failed' parent students were more likely to remain in Britain than those parents who had achieved their educational goals. Saifullah Khan (1979), in agreement with Anwar (1979) on the mythical quality of what I shall term the going-home syndrome, points out that having been socialized into the English way of life, it is unlikely that substantial numbers of ethnic minorities will go
home. As Castles et al., (1984) point out, Britain is now their home. Bearing this in mind, the final part of this chapter discusses Nigerian parents' and their children's views on the possibility of returning to Nigeria.

10.2 Differences: Real or Illusory?

10.2.1 Helping in the home

Nigerian parents believed that it was in the best interest of their children to be aware of their "Nigerianness" even if they did not proclaim it at every given opportunity. The following discussion sets out to show that the ability of teachers to cope with the presence of ethnic minority children is hindered by their emphasis on ethnic membership blindness when in reality they are very conscious of ethnicity.

In the context of the home Nigerian children were socialized to distinguish between themselves and other ethnic groups, in particular, white ones:

My Dad thinks that British children are just left to grow up without any consideration for their family. Like we (other siblings) help around the house. Do our own washing. Sometimes we cook. I always cook English food (for herself) because my parents don't like English food....I don't like Nigerian food all the time, but my Dad loves it. We go shopping an' all. We used to hate it, but now I'm glad 'cause when I go to university I can take care of myself properly (sixth form girl).

The boys too were expected to do their share of housework and this did not always leave time for Nigerian children to go out and play as much as some of the other children living around them:

I cook, clean everything. My Mum says she knows cooking, cleaning and housework is girls' work, but that boys have to do it, learn it as well. That it's all part of home training ... My friends used to laugh if I said I can't go to play with them. Like I can't go out on Saturday if I haven't washed or ironed my uniform for Monday. I have to do that on Saturday because Sunday we're in church for a long time; then we go visiting (fourth year boy).

Goody and Groothues (1979:59) point out that 'traditionally West African (with particular reference to the Asanti and Igbo) marital roles
are sharply segregated...with clearly defined areas of "men's work" and "women's work". Although this indeed appeared to be the case with the parents in my sample, there was a lack of rigidity in terms of bringing up their children to acquire 'domestic skills' from an early age. However, the older the boys got, especially if they had female siblings, the less domestic help was demanded of them. Nevertheless, by this time they would have acquired sufficient domestic skills to 'see (them) through college' (mother).

Nigerian children were brought up to acquire home keeping skills which the parents saw as both a useful expertise to have as well as a method of establishing family cohesion:

She (15 years old) used to come and tell me that "Oh, I do a lot of work for you". That some of her friends telling her that "You're very good 'cause if I did that to my Mum I would charge her money" (mother).

This mother explained to her daughter that it was appropriate for them to do things and help each other without expecting payment for it:

*If I'm going to give you money I will - for pocket money, but not for helping at home like a family (mother).*

Behind the parents' insistence on the early home skill independence of their children lay the belief that the community in which they lived failed to prepare young people for adult life. In particular, they did not believe in the child-centred practice of 'waiting on children':

You see these people (whites) they just do everything for their children and they don't get no thank you for it. How can a woman cook, iron, washing up all the time when she has two grown up children (14 year old boy and 16 year old girl) in the house... They don't give their children training... Sometimes they say "Oh, Mummy lots of homework" so I let them off... But to go out to play? They must do their work (homework and household chores) first... If they don't learn now they will never learn... Once in a while I clean their own room properly because they never do it the way I want it. If they know that cleaning isn't easy job then they will be careful how they mess things up (mother).

Nigerian children believed that only black parents were so particular with their children:

All my white friends, they don't do nothing - like washing up or cooking....(X) - she's Indian and (Y) she's from Jamaica - they work in the house as well. Only white girls don't do any work (third year girl).

Pastoral and middle management teachers were aware of Nigerian family interactive relationships as regards housework. However, their interpretation and analysis of the acquisition of home skills by
Nigerian children focused on what they considered to be the strict and authoritarian attitudes of Nigerian parents.

Grant (1984) shows that teachers were prepared to accept the maturity and self-sufficiency of black female Americans but at the same time felt that helping to feed and take care of siblings did not give them much time to concentrate on school work. Although Grant's research was concerned with primary school children, it is of particular interest here. She found that children's social skills, as learnt in the home, were considered by teachers to be a hindrance to learning because less time was available for the acquisition of school knowledge.

C. Ballard (1979) points out that once there is an apparent conflict between the 'culture' of the home and that of the school, British values are set up as a standard against which to measure the worth of particular cultural activities (see also Tomlinson, 1984). Young (1971) argues for a re-examination of what constitutes school knowledge. At SG there are subjects on the curriculum such as Child Development, Home Economics and Social Studies [2]. Schools in Britain teach domestic skills; thus the so-called 'cultural conflict' is not so much the result of cultural differences between the home and school, as in the school's timing of when domestic (social) skills should form a legitimate area of school knowledge.

A Nigerian mother whose daughter's educational progress was such that her teachers agreed that she was likely to achieve her (and her parents') ambitions of becoming a doctor made the following observation:

She says she wants to do medicine. To do medicine - I mean, Home Economics and cooking?... She can learn that later on you know... Let's say she done her 'O' Levels and (is) doing her 'A' levels - she can choose any little **recreational** (my emphasis) thing which may be cookery, sewing... At the moment I wouldn't want her to come home and then instead of reading her physics or chemistry - she's in the kitchen mixing flour? Those (medicine and cookery) they don't go together do they?

Although in reality this girl did cook at home, her mother perceived this as different. According to her, learning domestic skills at home was a different experience from learning it as part of school knowledge. Perhaps more importantly, is the point made on the learning of social skills as a 'recreational' activity - something to relax with after arduous and intensive 'A' level study.

It must be pointed out that not all Nigerian parents saw learning social skills in school as unimportant, but they did draw distinctions between various school subjects. Those who did accept social skills as legitimate areas of school knowledge saw this as a stepping stone to higher level interests. For example, a mother who had accepted that her daughter lacked the ability to gain university level educational qualifications, suggested that after leaving school she go on a vocational training course
to learn sewing and fashion designing. After this she intended to encourage her daughter to go on a business management course so that she would have the skills to set up her own 'boutique' when they returned to Nigeria (see Section 10.4).

Nigerian parents' awareness of the process of acquiring educational certification lies in the fact that they have all attempted to gain at least one post-secondary educational qualification. Tomlinson (1984) cites various researches which show the general lack of understanding of the process of British education by Asian and West Indian parents (see also Rex and Tomlinson, 1979). Of course, this is a generalization which distracts attention from the fact that there are Asian and West Indian parents with high level educational qualifications. The point to note here is that the 'culture' of Nigerian homes in London is one in which, though characterized by 'cultural capital', the parents perceive their family interactional relationships as different from those of the white majority. As has been the experience of other black ethnic minority groups (Saifullah Khan, 1979; Tomlinson, 1984), tension arises between the home and school when each group of actors hold firmly to their separate beliefs and values.

Goody and Groothues (1979) suggest that family interaction, with specific reference to the parental division of labour, in West African homes in Britain, has to be understood within the context of the demands made on couples by the presence of children. As these couples would at some point during their stay here have been students, it is not surprising that some of them interpret the presence of children as 'crippling'. Although most of the parents interviewed for this present research were no longer students, the impression was gained that encouraging their children to develop domestic skills reduced the level of tension which might otherwise have resulted if the parents, in addition to coping with full-time employment, were to look after every aspect of their children's needs. This was especially the case where the parents defined their children as having reached an age (from about ten years old) when they believed they could be of help in the home doing 'little jobs like dusting the furnishings' (mother).

It must be emphasized that the children were not used as substitutes for home helps. Rather the emphasis was on the children's acquisition of domestic skills which the parents saw as being an important part of the process of socializing their children. Furthermore, Nigerian women were not prepared to allow the presence of children to tie them down to the home. As Goody and Groothues (1977:167) point out: 'the question is not whether she (a mother) will work, but at what?' Thus parents with young babies turned to fostering (Holman, 1973; Ellis et al., 1978; see also Section 1.5). Before going on to discuss the implications of the child rearing methods of Nigerian parents in relation to the schooling of their
children, it is pertinent at this stage to consider the perceptions of Nigerian parents about the society in which they live.

10.2.2 **Interacting with the locals**

It was discovered that teachers were very concerned that Nigerian children were not given enough opportunity for social interaction with their peer group outside school. The children confirmed that their parents were very reluctant to let them go out - especially to parties or discos:

My father'll only let me go out like to a party if I give him like two weeks notice (laughs), tell him where it is, the address, phone number. And if the party is at night he'll have to come and take me home (14 year old girl).

Once my Dad gets all the information he lets me go..., but sometimes he might say - he won't say, "Don't go out". He'll just say "You're going out too much". Like just slow down you know (17 year old girl).

The boys' movements, too, were carefully monitored. A 17 year old boy described the situation thus:

R : If you wanted to go out to visit a friend, go to the cinema or disco etc. Would they (parents) let you go?
C : Usually, but I'd tell them before going out.
R : What do they feel about your wanting to go out?
C : It depends really, I mean they don't mind me going out. They don't like it if I was going out consistently all the time.
R : When you say consistently.
C : That's like everyday or every weekend. Let's say everyday consistent which I won't do though.
R : Why do you think they feel this way?
C : Well, in case I get into trouble I suppose.

... 

R : How would you describe your mother and father in terms of the way they behave towards you?
C : My mother is the one who controls me. My father and I get on cool which I like because she disciplines me. She tells me if I'm doing something I shouldn't do. I should be careful. It's mother who tells me. My Dad and I just talk cool.
Although the accounts of these children showed that Nigerian parents had similar expectations of their children irrespective of their sex, they were more 'lenient' with their male children (see Saifullah Khan, 1979; Watson, 1977 for similar findings in relation to other ethnic minority groups - Afro-Caribbean, Asian and Cypriot).

Nigerian parents were particularly concerned that unchecked social interaction might result in their daughters becoming pregnant. Weinreich (1979) suggests that the propensity of some West Indian girls towards early child-birth may be a response to the constricting nature of their parents' orthodox methods of child upbringing. On the other hand, Driver (1979) argues that West Indian girls understand the support inherent in their family orthodoxy and subsequently become interested in longer term social goals. Although Asian girls wished for more independence and tended to defer getting married, they usually conformed to their parents' overall wishes to get married soon after completing their secondary education.

Over half the Nigerian parents spoken to did not encourage their children to visit their school friends nor did they encourage the latter to visit them, especially if they were not interested in the acquisition of school knowledge:

F: These children (school friends) are corrupt.
M: Sometimes they fall into bad company going out with them.
    You don't know what they can do.
F: The sort of freedom they have
M: is too much.
    It's against our
F: own interest.
M: It's against our own family upbringing.
F: It's too, too exposed - they just run around like they have no home. And once they fall into that trap you can, you can hardly correct the situation.
M: It will go out of hand.
F: And immediately you want to arrest it, it becomes the school's concern.
M: The police or the er, all this welfare people.

Nigerian parents were concerned to protect their children from what they saw as the permissive nature of the community they lived in. C. Ballard (1979) notes that Asian parents too were concerned about what they regarded as the low standard of morality in British society. Even though British born Asian children questioned their parents' strictness, they too were 'shocked' by various aspects of the British 'way of life' (Helweg, 1979; Saifullah Khan, 1979). Judging from the literature on Asian and West Indian girls and indeed white working class girls, it would appear that
marriage or child-birth by the ages of 18 and 20 is not uncommon [3]. In contrast, the educational ambitions of Nigerian parents for their children ensured that the children were not socialized into what the parents perceived as aspects of 'British' culture:

I'm not interested in getting married till I'm 23 maybe 22—basically I have to finish my education first (sixth form girl).

Thus when Nigerian mothers stressed that they would support their daughters 'if anything went wrong', it was in terms of taking over the role of mother in order to ensure that their daughters completed their education:

She will have more freedom when she's 18. I have told her what could happen to her. So I tell her to tell me when she's going out with boyfriend in case anything happens. Then as her mother I will know what to do (mother).

Nigerian parents justified their fears by drawing attention to the manner in which they interpreted the socio-educational activities of those living around them:

What actually happens in this country is that only the West Indian people do suffer because they (teachers) don't feel that they (West Indian children) have the knowledge to cope with education, but not with the African children. You see that is the difference. They've (teachers) taken them (West Indian females) as not for high education [4]. Because at the age of 18 or when immediately they leave the CSE class if they have boyfriend and get pregnant they (DHSS) give them flat, they give them money... So they become housewife or factory worker. That is West Indians. Nigerian children will definitely go away (return to Nigeria). So those people (Nigerian children) will definitely face educational study. So this is the difference between black and black (father of 13 year old girl).

The labelling of social groups by Nigerian parents was not confined to members of the black community. They saw both black and white groups in their neighbourhood as acting in a manner which they would not wish their children to do. Here again they insisted that their children's home was in Nigeria and as such 'irresponsible' behaviour was sanctioned:

At any time I must know where my children are. They can't just go out like they have nobody to ask about them. Like all these white children and even some black ones. These white people just—the children just hang around like they have no house to go to. So we tell them (their Nigerian children) that this is their (West Indian and white children) home. They know what they're doing, but them (his children)
their home is in Nigeria. So they have to be careful of their behaviour. They mustn't compare themselves with these children. White children are different. They're all working class in this area. I tell my children that they are different working class from these children. We are working class in this country, but when we get home even we will still be working people, but not low class like these ones here. I tell them all this difference between black and black and between white and white in this country. Can they see like any white working person's child, like Doctor's child or Accountant's child, walking up and down the street at night? No. It's these working class black and white ones. It's only them that are irresponsible like that. We are not like that (father).

This father's account was typical of the explanations in terms of social class differences which Nigerian parents gave to justify why they were very strict about their children's friendship group and whereabouts. A teacher in the exploratory study observed that Nigerian children go one of two ways. (They either become) serious academic students aiming towards 'O' and 'A' levels (or) they drop their standards and join up... with the West Indian majority whose aims on the whole aren't as ambitious.

The teacher who made this statement added that it was a 'sweeping generalization'. When asked about their friendship group Nigerian children listed friends from varying ethnic backgrounds. However, as shown in Chapter 9, teachers had wide ranging stereotypes of African and West Indian children. The idea that Nigerian pupils may 'drop their standards' to the level of West Indian pupils is difficult to substantiate. Although Ryrie et al. (1979) have shown the importance of peer group pressure (see also Willis, 1977; Corrigan, 1979; Woods, 1979), Pidgeon (1970) argues that the less ambitious aims of West Indian pupils is a reflection of teachers' expectations. A teacher in the main study observed that 'bright' Nigerian children tended to have 'white middle class' friends. This is, of course, not surprising when it is considered that most of the children were not only interested in the acquisition of school knowledge, but were in Band 1 and the top end of Band 2 teaching groups which consisted of mainly white children. It is interesting to note that in most of the Band 1 teaching groups observed most of the black children were of either Asian or African origin.

In terms of their response to schooling, Nigerian parents have shown a propensity to challenge effectively the process of schooling as it affects their children. Tomlinson (1984), focusing on Asian and West Indian parents, found that generally this was not the case despite their continued protest against wide ranging aspects of schooling which worked against the
educational progress of their children. Thus as with the Nigerian parents, these parents do not acquiesce to school and other social processes in the same manner as we are led to believe indigenous working class parents do (see Johnson, 1979; Willis, 1977; Westergaard and Resler, 1975; Castles and Kosack, 1973). Considering the differences that exist between Nigerian and British 'cultures' and subsequently, their methods of group socialization, it is indeed inappropriate to label Nigerians as members of a particular British based social class system. If labels must be used a more accurate one would be that grounded in Nigerian parents' perceptions of themselves in relation to the society in which they live.

Nigerian parents were critical about the methods of child socialization in Britain. Though tempered by an appreciation of the manner in which the education system discriminates against West Indian children, their analysis of the social position of West Indian people in this country reflects an internalization of British negative perceptions of West Indians. It was suggested in Chapter 9 that both children and adults were susceptible to adopting the dominant stereotypes in a given society (Milner, 1983). The Nigerian parents interviewed had spent the formative and impressionable part of their lives in a country of black people where it is gratuitous to describe people solely in terms of their skin colour. Being black per se is a consequence of being in a white dominated society. Therefore, Nigerian parents have had to learn to perceive themselves as black together with the social meaning attached by the British to that label.

It was pointed out above that some teachers considered that being black meant being West Indian. Those Nigerian parents who had internalized this meaning were ambivalent about the direct relevance to themselves of issues concerning the black community. As one mother asked:

What do they mean black people? They (media) think all of us are stupid. Some of us know what the system is here....
I don't know how much I can trust the school any longer (parent's reference to the Rampton Report, 1981)...probably they (teachers) think all the black parents are daft.

Nevertheless some of them appreciated that as long as they were in this country the collective perception of them by the indigenous population would be as 'black people'. They thus felt it incumbent upon themselves to 'prove' that they were not what they were stereotyped as:

You have to prove to these people that you are not what they think you are (mother).

It is ironic that the differences Nigerian parents perceived between black and black and the generalizations they made were based on British negative stereotypes. Despite this, Nigerian parents stated that they were 'not unduly' (father's phrase) concerned about the ethnic composition of their children's friendship group. The only criterion of friendship they
insisted on was that of 'decency' and being interested in the acquisition of school knowledge:

I don't care who they are, green, blue, white - as long as it's their friends and they're decent friends who can come here and they can read together, do their homework and then go and play. What I don't want is ... riff-raff ... Anybody who comes to the door and I don't like, I'll send them out (mother).

Nigerian parents showed a firm and consistent tendency to be prepared to take immediate steps to prevent the continuation of any association they disapproved of (Section 8.2). Even those parents who were not so particular were, as a final resort, prepared to prevent a friendship they disapproved of. Nigerian parents were not only anxious to control their childrens propensity towards interacting with "the locals", but were concerned about their safety especially in terms of what they described as the general deterioration of the relationship between black youth and the police. Nigerian parents pointed out that they came to this country believing that the British police were the epitomy of justice and fair play (see Tajfel and Dawson, 1965). However, as the years have gone by they have come to revise this belief.

Over two thirds of the parents were concerned about police public relations and the possibility of racial harassment both by the police and the public in general. They resented very much what they saw as police complicity and/or indifference towards groups such as the National Front. In particular, they felt that the police had double standards when carrying out their duties. They believed that this was not only unfair, but that police behaviour towards black people in general was not conducive to good public relations. Although Nigerian parents were able to point out that the police were 'doing their job', they felt that the manner in which they operated could be improved.

Nigerian children, too, had reservations about the police's ability to administer justice fairly. Having been directly involved with the police on issues of obstruction, non-payment of bus fare and suspicion of intent to commit a crime, two of the children described their encounter thus:

I couldn't believe it. They were just shouting at me and telling me off. Then they started saying things about my colour and my family...I think the police are racist and wicked. They just want to get us black people into trouble. They didn't give me a chance to explain (15 year old girl).

The police are all nice like when you ask them, "What's the time?" or you can't find somewhere, but when there's a little trouble, they just start attacking you. They said I was a thief, but they didn't see anything on me. They said I was a
bastard. They handle you harshly.... I didn't do nothing. They just picked on us (three boys). They said, "Okay, you're lucky this time wogs, but we'll get you" ...I didn't tell my Mum (15 year old boy).

Most of the children spoken to had not had such direct contact with the police. Though their impressions of the police were more 'objective' they were regularly qualified with either an example from a friend's experience or an article read or programme watched on television. It has been well documented that the interactive relationships between the police and the black community in general have been and still are in a crisis (Smith, 1985; Gordon, 1985; Scarman, 1981).

It is hoped that teachers who stated that they did not perceive any differences between children and thus treated them alike are aware that children bring different experiences into the classroom - experiences which reflect both the "culture" of the home and their interpretations and understandings of the interactional relationships operating in the neighbourhood where they live. Although they wished that their parents were not so 'possessive', Nigerian children sought a compromise between what they wanted and what their parents thought was 'good' for them:

I think my Dad is too - I wouldn't say too strict, but too possessive 'n' protective. That's the only problem with ma Dad. Mum's alright. She understands, but my Dad - he just won't understand.... That's what's wrong with ma Dad. He won't listen...Like when ma sister had a party. He was going to end the party at two o'clock (a.m.) ... At the end a friend of ma Dad managed to convince him 'n' he goes, "Calm down they're only kids. Let them enjoy themselves". If it wasn't for that man I tell you the party would've been over ages ago... 'n' ma Mum managed to talk him out of it so he just went to bed (sixth form girl).

The point to note here is the manner in which this child (and her sister) used their father's friend and their mother to effect not just a compromise, but what Martin (1976) would describe as a 'successful' negotiation (see also Saifullah Khan, 1979). In other words, they got their "own way". Even though they would be the last to admit it, Nigerian parents tended to indulge their children especially if they were 'doing well' at school. In the Nigerian social milieu most child-parent conflicts are settled within the family (this may also include close friends (Uka, 1966)). This method still works effectively to calm a wide range of family conflicts and provides the basis for an intimate process of family cohesion (Sofola, 1973; Fadipe, 1970). When child-parent conflicts are such that they cannot be settled informally, and the school becomes aware of the situation, the British social services including educational welfare officers and educational psychologists become involved. The next section
discusses school intervention in child-parent conflicts.

10.3 Home-School Liaison

10.3.1 Fostering

All parents whose children are born in this country have immediate contact with the social services in respect of child care, health and benefits. With Nigerian parents contact with the social services also involved issues in relation to child minding and fostering. Over three-quarters of the children who were born here had experienced at least one of these forms of early child care in Britain (see Goody and Groothues, 1979). Just under half of these had been fostered by the time they were six months old. Ellis et al. (1978) have given a descriptive account of the fostering of West African children. Most parents provide child care in a manner which they consider in their children's best interest (Goldstein et al., 1980). This present research is not particularly concerned with the private fostering aspects of Nigerian children's relationships with their parents. This is because at the time of the research none of the children were being fostered or daily minded, although three of the children were living with guardians and two others were in local authority children's homes.

The primary reason Nigerian parents gave for adopting this method of child care was that it had been hoped it would enable them to concentrate on their studies, and work (usually part-time) in order to become more financially stable and thus be ready to return home as soon as possible after obtaining their qualifications. They also pointed to the difficulties in finding suitable accommodation. Over two-thirds of the parents who had fostered their children had, after considerable searches, found accommodation in which the proprietor had insisted on no children or had only one room (see Goody and Groothues, 1979). They felt that the only way they could cope with that sort of situation was to foster their children:

We got a flat in Earls Court, but the landlord said, "No children". So when this one (daughter) came along we had to foster her for a short time... (with English foster parents) for about three years (in an area of Surrey just over 20 miles away) (mother).

M: He was fostered for er about two years... I took him there (foster parents) when he was around three months.

F: To give us time. I was studying and working. The mother was working and it's easier to keep him there.
M: That time we only had one bedroom.
F: Even if we have two at that time because of concentration on other things we couldn't have time to look after him properly.

As Ellis et al. (1978) point out, West African families in London are unable to fall back on traditional forms of family support. Thus they look for ways in which they can achieve their own educational goals as well as fulfil their wish to have children. The primary method of coping with these two goals was to foster the children.

Five of the parents who had fostered their children had not been pleased with the manner in which their children had been cared for. Seventeen of the 23 fosterings had been done privately without the knowledge of the social services. In the other cases, the social services had helped to arrange private fostering, but had been unable to provide local authority foster care. A social worker described the situation thus:

It's an unusual situation for us. Fostering as an aspect of child care is recommended when parents cannot cope with child-rearing. They (Nigerian parents) haven't even made an attempt to do this. They want to foster their children because they want to work or study. In such situations we can only advise private fostering. We haven't got the facilities to provide fostering in these circumstances....

Most of them don't come to us anyway. We only hear of it when there are problems and they do have tremendous problems (social worker).

Holman (1973) has shown that the incidence of private fostering is very high amongst West African families. He drew attention to the lack of sympathy received from the social services. Moreover, he showed that where there had been long term private fostering of 10 years or more, some West African parents had found themselves involved in court cases when foster parents had applied for the custody of the children they had taken care of for so long. Reports about such cases had worried Nigerian parents and whenever it was thought that the foster parent was getting 'too fond' of the child, the child was moved to another foster parent. Eight of the children had stayed with only one foster parent, 11 had been moved three or more times and the rest had been moved from one foster parent to another twice. Apart from the perceived "fondness" which they were concerned might lead to a custody case, Nigerian parents also moved their children when they were dissatisfied with the foster parents' child care methods:

We fostered her to (X). She stayed there about - I think she was a year. She stayed there about nine months. She suffered smallpox, everything. When I went there she was
always hungry and there were so many - more than ten of them.

Well, she was fostering about five with her own five children... I brought her back. Then I sent her to (Y). At a year and nine months she expected her to almost wash herself by going to toilet and everything....She suffered measles there. Then I took her home and was taking her to daily minder (mother).

This mother had got in touch with the first foster parent through 'the friend of my friend' and the second had been through an advertisement placed in a local paper. Problems related to private fostering have now been recognized both by the natural parents themselves and the relevant social services departments. Although it is known that Lambeth Social Services [5] have taken a keen interest in this aspect of West African ethnic minority life, it is felt that there is still a wide gap in the knowledge base from which social workers proceed to give advice on such issues (see Ellis et al., 1978).

The five social workers spoken to in two different local authorities showed that they were very concerned to give professionally appropriate advice to the Nigerian parents they were then liaising with. Nevertheless, as with some teachers, these social workers too created mental stumbling blocks to the understanding of the fostering needs of Nigerian parents. In the British social service context, fostering is a strategy for dealing with crisis in a family. Nigerian parents (and other West Africans) are likely to choose foster care for their children in anticipation of a possible family crisis due to the presence of their child(ren). Goody and Groothues (1979:77) point out that in family situations where each spouse is aiming to achieve his or her own goals 'children represent an added complication and fostering (is) a welcome situation'. In their study of 'stress in marriage' Goody and Groothues (1979) found that the presence of children was not in itself responsible for particular levels of stress in West African marriages. However, there was one instance in which a mother who, after taking her son away from foster placement, returned him because the couple felt that he had 'crippled' them. In other words, their son's presence had placed an unacceptable level of stress on them.

This shows starkly the difference between child care norms in Britain and those of West African parents here. Not long ago the British (traditional) middle classes had a tendency to send their children off to boarding school. Others got (and still get) au pair girls and/or nannies to take the edges off the 'crippling' effects of child rearing. Most of the parents interviewed had grown up in environments where they would not have been solely responsible for their children's initial care (Ogbuiibe, 1972). They would have been helped by a wide range of family members (for example, grandparents, sisters, nieces) or paid home helps (Uka, 1966; Fadipe, 1970). Thus giving up one's own ambitions in order to take care of
one's children is not a traditional part of Nigerian parents' repertoire of child care options. As parent-students they had limited incomes. The bureaucratic, inefficient and time consuming process of transferring funds from Nigeria to Britain further compounded the parents' financial difficulties. Judging from their accounts, if they could have afforded it, paid home helps, daily or weekly child minding (in that order) would have been the preferred options. As Saifullah Khan (1979) points out it is rather ironic that the 'liberated' West fails to understand a mother's wish not to be tied down in the home.

The particular concern of the social services is in terms of the harmful effects of fostering. Ellis et al. (1978) and Holman (1973) have given accounts of the adjustment problems fostered children have to cope with. Hence, the very nature of their concern ensures a bias towards foster placements which 'have gone wrong'. Although they cited obvious cases of parental neglect, the parents involved in this present research were concerned enough to ensure that they were aware of the child's progress and took steps to correct unsatisfactory situations.

Gandy et al. (1983) have pointed out that the watchword of social workers should be 'preventive care'. Thus social work intervention with West African parents is likely to succeed if social workers accept that fostering is a useful child-care strategy even though there might not be a breakdown in the marital relationship of the couples concerned. Based on research in Israel carried out to discover the 'meaning of help' with particular reference to 'role-relations' (kin, peer group, social services - for example, teacher-pupil, doctor-patient) Shapiro (1983) suggests that the recognition of particular types of help strategies employed by different social groups will only be effective if at the same time methods of designing and presenting help match the social groups' definition of the situation. Corrigan and Leonard (1978) have discussed how preventative family difficulties with the indigenous population have been inadvertently allowed to deteriorate.

In this present research, the impression was gained that three of the social workers spoken to felt that Nigerian parents did not really care about the welfare of their children. One of them put it thus:

Really refusing to take care of him just because he wants to study and she (her emphasis) wants to work is rather selfish and uncaring.

When carried out appropriately with both foster and natural parents aware of their responsibilities to the child, and where the child is socialized into understanding that foster placement is not synonymous with parental rejection, it is likely that fostering as a strategy for child rearing, is not in itself harmful (see BAFF, 1983; Bean, 1984).

There was no evidence in the children's responses to suggest that they felt they had suffered emotionally from being fostered. When asked, they
could hardly remember the details of being fostered. It is suggested that the social work emphasis on the harmful effects of fostering arises as a result of the nature of social work practice which invariably deals with 'problem' families. If fostering is to be used, West African parents are increasingly being advised to get in touch with their local social services who, though they cannot offer local authority foster care, can help arrange for suitable private foster parents or child minders (Ellis et al. (1978); Lambeth Social Services have set up a private fostering unit [5]).

The dilemma Nigerian parents faced was either to keep their children and by so doing become involved in an action which they considered would not be in the best interest of their children or to foster their children so that they could, in future, after achieving the necessary qualifications, provide a 'better life' for them:

M: Oh yes. She suffered a lot. She suffered because we were living in one room and he was going to college, studying... We didn't have enough space so we fostered. That time I didn't even know about daily minding. I was in need. I was desperate. I wanted where to put her so that I could go to work... There was no money coming from Nigeria - that our government is terrible. No money for six months. I had to work. My husband was in his final year. If he pass his exam - he can't pass his exam if there is one small child waking up at night crying everytime. In the end it's her (daughter) who will benefit from it. She'll have good home. We can buy her everything she need for school. Even though you don't pay for education in this country sometime they don't allow the children to bring the school book home. So we have to get it for her. She has to revise at home otherwise there's no need her going to school...

F: I've already got all books necessary for her 'O' Level since she was 12 or so.

M: Yes 12.

F: If at that time we hadn't foster her I don't think I could have pass that exam.

F: When we finish all this - by that time she was four.

These parents would have preferred to care for the child themselves, but their first and foremost concern was for them to be in a position to provide the best possible facilities for their child's educational development. A cause and effect link is not being made here, but it is worth noting that this child at the time of the research was on course to take seven 'O' Levels and two CSEs. In her last examinations the lowest mark she had received was 68%. Halsey et al. (1980) have traced the link between parent's socio-economic status and children's educational progress.
and found it to be an important factor in children's eventual educational outcome. In this case, at least, it would appear that the parents' concern to provide a suitable socio-economic base for their daughter was well-founded.

It is important to note that the manner in which the process of schooling differentiates between or 'cools out' (Clark, 1961; Cicourel and Kitsuse, 1963; Hopper, 1973) what are assessed as "uneducable" children plays a significant part in the educational "success" of a child. Thus if parents can demonstrate that they have 'cultural capital' it is likely that teachers will perceive their children as being "educable" (see Bourdieu, 1973). Moreover, the children themselves will not only be interested in the acquisition of school knowledge (Furlong, 1984), but are likely, in general, to engage in interactional styles which will ensure that they, at least, attempt to acquire educational qualifications (Chapter 8).

10.3.2 Parent-teacher interaction

One child in each school was in local authority care at the time of this present research, but the arrangement had been arrived at under circumstances unrelated to fostering. Both were cases of single parent's inability to cope with the care of more than two children. Two of the children interviewed were living with guardians pending the completion of their secondary schooling here. According to the guardians, the parents had returned to Nigeria, but had not wanted to disrupt their children's schooling. In one of the cases the guardian was a friend of the family and in the other case the guardian was the then foster parent of the child from the age of about 'four months' to five years:

We've been on good terms like. When 'er was 'ere like a had trouble with ma phone and electric bills. I couldn't manage it so they paid it...Mind you a wasn't charging much 'bout £5 (early 1970s). A fostered all their children (three). 

...They used to buy 'er clothes... When they were going back they asked if a could look after (X) until she finished (her secondary education). Well a couldn't say "No"...A've had no big problems. They send money when they can. They have problems with sending money from Nigeria [6], but (X) does Saturday jobs 'n' that to give 'er spending money like (White Guardian).

The other guardian did not have such a mutually acceptable relationship with Nigerian parents especially when the child was also a 'troublemaker' (Section 8.4). This guardian not only had to cope with caring for the child, but also had to deal with teachers' complaints about the child's behaviour. In addition, this guardian, too, had financial problems in
respect of the irregular payments of child maintenance by the girl's parents:

I advise her... but when I keep getting all these letters I say to her teacher to write to her father. That is the person who is responsible for her. I'm only her guardian. I done my best. Even, the father never sent me her money (for maintenance) for about two years now... I get fed up so I tell her teachers to write to (her father) about all these things... All this problem with her is not for me alone to solve (Black Guardian).

This guardian felt the need to draw a line as to how far her responsibilities were to her ward, especially as she had only agreed to keep an eye on her for a few years pending the completion of her secondary education. The teachers were aware of the situation at home, but were affronted when the guardian asked if they could write to her ward's father for the maintenance allowance. A middle management teacher thought that this was not her responsibility. However, her responsibility as a teacher, as she put it, required her to inform the relevant social services department. This was done in the hope that the ward might qualify for financial help. Eventually this middle management teacher wrote to the father in Nigeria about his child's school behaviour, but this had '(un)satisfactory' results.

After over a year of writing, the father had come from Nigeria, decided to take his child back with him, had changed his mind and had pleaded with the teacher to keep the child in school:

It's a nonsense when you can't treat people normally ....(He) then more or less begged us, begged us - it was pitiful. You know all this money had been spent on her... She was the chosen one from the family to represent the family, to get a good education and he didn't understand that if this child wasn't going to work, wasn't going to conform, she wasn't - she was going to go back with nothing anyway (middle management teacher).

The school was aware of the case history of this child. She had not only been expelled from her private school, but as a direct result (because her father was in Nigeria) had for a couple of years been living in a local authority home. This teacher was worried about the child and concerned for her welfare and had been upset at the attitude of the child's social worker:

She got a social worker who put her in crummy digs somewhere erm and made some sort of comment like, "Well it's alright for a Nigerian", which really upset us all (middle management teacher).

This teacher considered the whole situation 'a nonsense'. It was indeed a
complex family situation to be faced with, but at the same time there was
an insistence that the child's case should be treated 'normally'.

It is acknowledged here that teachers should attempt very seriously to
treat children 'normally', but as Stone (1981) points out, this should be
in the classroom setting in connection with such matters as the general
provision of educational opportunity. However, when parents of whatever
social class or ethnic grouping are consulted about their children's
behaviour, knowledge of the circumstances surrounding the case needs to be
used as part of the solution.

There are educational guidelines on the steps required to be taken to
solve children's behaviour problems. These guidelines become ineffective
if they are rigidly applied to all cases irrespective of the circumstances
(R. Ballard, 1979). This does not suggest that the child's behaviour be
excused, but that it should be understood. It was discovered that this
child very much wanted to be with her father wherever he was. She did not
like being separated from him. Thus from the child's point of view, the
father's suggestion to take her back with him would have been most helpful.

It is not being suggested that in all cases such suggestions are
appropriate, but that children's emotional ties with their parents might
override the need to stay in a place they have been born and schooled.

An impression was gained that teachers involved in cases similar to
this one were concerned to "protect" the children from being sent to
Nigeria because they considered that children who had been born in Britain
would have 'tremendous' social adjustment problems and that this would
eventually make the sending home strategy counter-productive. In cases
where the children's parents are in Nigeria, teachers need to be aware
that British born Nigerian children may not wish to stay in Britain. C.
Ballard (1979:128) suggests that British understanding of relations between
ethnic minority children (with particular reference to Asian children) and
their parents 'is a gross oversimplification of a wide range of complex
personal experiences'. The teachers' wish to protect Nigerian children
from a Nigerian "fate" emphasizes the negative perceptions teachers have of
the children's country. Moreover, to think that in all cases British
born Nigerian children would rather stay in Britain than take on the
"challenge" of living in a less technologically advanced country is grossly
naive (see Section 10.4).

Nigerian parents employ the suggestion to send their children home to
Nigeria and the idea of a subsequent separation from their parents as a
method of child control. This method of child control is used in a similar
manner as indigenous parents threaten their children that they will call in
the police or social worker. Generally, teachers interpreted Nigerian
parents solutions as unhelpful. This is primarily because the Nigerian
parents they have difficulties with do not offer the more familiar types of
solutions teachers are accustomed to. Neither do they readily accept
teachers' solutions as the most appropriate.

It has been shown in Chapter 7 that teachers resented Nigerian parents who challenged their professional competence. Nigerian parents' repertoire of solutions include those that are not merely culturally based, but informed by the very nature of their belief in their transient domicile in this country (Section 10.4). Whether the parents actually leave or not is immaterial. The important point to note is that their definition of their relationship with this country is based on a transient one. In 11 of my 36 cases, one or both parents had returned and their children had been left with guardians or had become temporary members of a one-parent family in order that the children might complete their education. However, if an arrangement which they considered to be in their children's best interest was crumbling around them due to a wide range of unforeseen difficulties, it is perhaps not 'a nonsense' that parents and guardians, perplexed by the unusual behaviour of their children/ward, suggest as a final solution the return to Nigeria.

Rather than examining the difficulties individual families experience, social service representatives tend to perceive the ethnicity of ethnic minorities as the problem. C. Ballard (1979:120) suggests that once the cultural gloss had been removed, the real problems may be seen to be fundamentally no different from those of many British families in the case loads of social workers.

Of course the greatest part of the responsibility for ensuring that Nigerian children are adequately cared for lies with the Nigerian parents themselves. What they consider to be in the best interest of their children may not necessarily be so. Leaving their children here to complete their education while they return to Nigeria to look for employment and provide suitable accommodation for their children's return may not always be the appropriate course of action. In not wishing to disrupt their children's education they may be putting their children through such a quagmire of emotional strains and upheavals that they, for example, act out their frustrations in school:

She came here... to live with us when she was about 13. She never behave nasty at home. She's alright... but we keep getting her report about her (bad) behaviour (Black Guardian).

Nigerians in this country are well aware of the difficulties inherent in transferring money here. Hence, it is advisable for them to make adequate provision for their children's maintenance. It is realized that Nigerian parents also have difficulties in saving enough money for the air fares of themselves and their children. One of the parents has been saving for the past seven years for the air fares of a family of six. Although the Nigeria High Commission and the Nigeria Welfare Office in this country can
be infuriatingly slow in dealing with cases, they do provide a range of financial help and counselling to 'stranded' students. The more they become aware of the difficulties of ex-students the more hopeful it is that they will extend their financial support to these students. In the meantime it cannot be stressed enough that parents about to return to Nigeria should have close and careful consultation with their children about whether they should leave them here or take them home.

It must be pointed out that this lack of consultation was evident in only a minority of the cases. In most cases a mutually agreed solution had been arrived at whereby one spouse stayed with the children or the whole family returned together. Although over two thirds of the children stated that they would prefer to finish their education here, the remainder pointed out that they would prefer to return with their parents and complete their secondary education in Nigeria. This was especially so for children of 14 years and younger. Fifth and sixth formers tended to prefer to join their parents in Nigeria after completing their present educational career here.

In their attempts to liaise with the children's homes teachers tended to make decisions which were likely to aggravate the situation. This was primarily because they wanted to base the liaison solely on their own definition of the situation. Teachers may feel that it is not part of their job to deal with particular types of family problems. If they are able to use their position to discover if a guardian's ward is entitled to educational welfare, all the concern and emphasis on pastoral care (Best et al., 1983) and home-school liaison (Tomlinson, 1984; Johnson and Ransom, 1983) becomes 'a nonsense' if teachers are unable to direct families on the path to a negotiated settlement of their problems. By not helping the custodian of a child, teachers' efforts to help the child, as an individual, are likely to be counter-productive:

In the first year she was really quiet and we couldn't get much out of her. She was a very frightened little girl (she had been in care and thrown out of a private school for non-payment of fees). And then what she did was do what we all wanted her to do which was to come out of herself and then she went overboard. Very rude, very aggressive, very disruptive in lessons, and we found that the guardian, whoever this lady was, wasn't prepared to do much about it (middle management teacher).

As in most problem cases the causal links are debatable. Nevertheless, it is likely that a less antagonistic relationship would have existed if those teachers responsible for the pastoral aspects of schooling had not felt insulted when parents, whether biological or not, turned to them for help. This teacher felt that having been through such emotional situations this ward needed 'compensatory education'. So did the teacher.
Having made these comments it needs to be pointed out that an impression was gained that this middle management teacher was essentially a caring teacher who did not have the skills to deal with what s/he perceived as unusual family problems. Neither did s/he feel that the school gave teachers enough guidelines or room to deal with important issues:

It seems to me that the way we run this place changes every five minutes and that we are not really very consistent. (Middle management) teachers are running around, you know and dealing with litter and graffiti and lavatories, but not more important things.... I see my job much more in terms of the development of the kids as they move up through the school. Liaison with the parents and all the external agencies and being free to do that. Being free to go out to case conferences. To attend court...To be involved in exam time (tabling)...big decision-making time — options, careers...

It is likely that having expended energy and time on what they perceive as unimportant schooling events, teachers are unable to deal adequately with what they believe to be more important areas of schooling. It is up to teachers to make known their definition of school priorities.

There were two suicide attempts in the girls' school prior to the start of this present study. One of the girls was living with her mother while her father had returned to Nigeria. The other girl was staying with a guardian. Her family was in Nigeria. Although there are plausible grounds for thinking that one situation led to the other, it is clear from the accounts received that the children's interactional relationships with their teachers and peer group also contributed to the children's difficulties. After getting into trouble with her teachers at school one of the girls had decided to find her own "solution" to her problems:

She couldn't face the consequences of her actions last year so she swallowed — another girl talked her into swallowing some sort of poison. She was in hospital for a week. She wasn't remorseful at all and she wasn't given any proper help afterwards really and she certainly wouldn't take it from us. We offered her counselling, all sorts. She didn't want that and then she just sort of got more and more out of hand. I think she felt she was so bad anything she did from now on wouldn't make any difference. We let her come back to school this year, but she's very weak (middle management teacher).

This case emphasizes the desperate measures children resort to when all those involved in child welfare (teachers, social workers and parents) fail to agree on a mutually negotiated (see Gandy et al., 1983) course of action. Despite being a 'troublemaker' one of the 'suicide' girls, according to this middle management teacher, had not only 'saved a life'
but had 'some incredibly good qualities'. With a little more appreciation of the family situation in which this girl was involved the social sector of the educational services may have been able to build on these 'good qualities' and thus prevented the occurrence of a potentially tragic incident.

10.3.3 Home-school conflict: a case study

Nigerian parents were, generally speaking, satisfied with the relationship they had with their teachers and, where relevant, social workers. Their main grievance with both professional groups was in terms of the manner in which they counselled their children. Nigerian parents consistently expressed the view that teachers, educational psychologists, and welfare officers counselled their children in a manner which did not lead to compromise, but open conflict.

A Nigerian mother whose son had arrived in the country nine months prior to the start of this fieldwork at MB described her feelings after a home visit had been made by two representatives of the local education authority:

They said they were coming to discuss about (X's) work, but they only came to insult me - what a cheek!... They were talking rubbish and I just didn't want to be rude. They were asking me if I'd been to the zoo. If I'd taken him to the zoo and park and all sorts of other places. That I didn't let (X) join a club. That I didn't let him go and play downstairs .... I'm just shocked towards their attitude. They took things too deep and too far... If I tell you that it didn't pain me I'll be telling you lie...If they think they can control other families they can't control mine (mother).

This mother was upset by three aspects of the home visit made by these school representatives. Firstly, she felt that they had not been totally honest with her as to the purposes of their visit and secondly, she felt that they were interfering unnecessarily in the internal affairs of her home. Finally, she felt she had been spoken to in a manner which suggested that they looked down on her. These representatives made the home visit with the "good intention" of discussing the child's learning problems and suggesting ways in which the mother might enhance his knowledge of his new environment. They also felt that as a young boy of 14 he was not being given the opportunity to go out and play with boys of his own age. In other words, they thought that his mother was hindering his social and educational development.

It has been shown above how wary Nigerian parents were of letting
their children mix with children they neither knew nor approved of. Her son had "just" arrived from Nigeria and she felt he did not have the social skills to cope with unguided interaction with the local children. However, she had not isolated her son from all children. He had met other children in their church and had visited family friends. As far as the mother was concerned she was slowly introducing him to English society. However, what the school representatives had succeeded in doing was sowing the seeds of discontent in the child:

Dey (school representatives) h'only want to 'elp me. Dey want me to go out h'and play, bet ma Mom say, "No, itz too bad h'outside". I 'ave to stand h'under de window where she can see me (14 year old boy).

His mother wished to keep an eye on him while he was out playing and in some instances prevented him from going out if she thought there were 'irresponsible' children around. This boy felt very strongly that the school representatives were trying to help him overcome his difficulties. Indeed they were, but in making this observation his next step was to contrast this to his mother's attitude which he now interpreted as her unwillingness to enable the school to help him. In this case, those who had direct responsibility for home-school liaison showed that they lacked the skills to bridge the gap between the home and the school.

R. Ballard (1979:157), within the context of cultural misunderstanding between Asians and British social workers, has noted the manner in which outsiders who lack the necessary cultural competence may not only be baffled by what they hear, but may proceed to struggle to quite inaccurate conclusions about what is happening.

The educational representatives considered it an unsatisfactory situation that this mother did not allow her son the freedom to join clubs and socialize in a manner generally associated with British children. However, as pointed out above Nigerian parents perceived some of the children in their neighbourhood as 'low class' 'ruffians'. As mature students these parents usually could only afford accommodation in 'shabby' areas (see Goody and Groothues, 1979). Their belief in the transience of their stay in this country ensured that they stayed in areas with cheap housing or in council accommodation. Thus when social workers and other educational representatives visit them at home, they may draw inaccurate conclusions about the parents' social status.

The turn of events emanating from the visit of two educational representatives led the parents to wish to break off contact with the school and its representatives. This included me even though it had been explained that I was acting independently. I was not there at the time of the visit, but having heard of the soured relationship, I ventured to visit her. By this time (four days later) she had calmed down and was able to
perceive me as an independent person. A top management teacher then arranged a school based meeting (just over a week later) with the mother and one of the school representatives. I was invited to attend subject to the mother's agreement. During this meeting the discussion centred around clarifying the misunderstanding between the intent of the home visit and its outcome. The researcher avoided taking an active part in this discussion until the three parties had been able, relatively successfully, to iron out their grievances and began to approach the child's schooling from a different perspective. Towards the end of the meeting the researcher pointed out that the mother had observed that in the school's attempt to help her son, they were in essence turning him against her. The mother had put it to me thus:

It's (X - son) they want to help. So O.K. they should talk to him. I don't want to know about it...I've been hearing before how these people behave...Small time now they will want to take him away...I'll send him back home before they can do that (from notes taken as it had been considered inappropriate to use the tape recorder after she had included me among the people she did not wish to see at the height of her annoyance with school representatives).

It may be argued that the mother's intransigence was now a part of the child's problems. Even though the school felt that she had unrealistic expectations of the educational progress of her son, this mother was considered by the school as being prepared to co-operate with it.

The conflict between the home and the school had arisen primarily because the educational representatives concerned had been tactless with their approach to the mother. Judging from the manner in which the mother responded to the possibility of having another meeting and her conduct during it, it was clear that had the initial approach been more sensitively carried out, she too would have been sensitive enough to appreciate the representatives' concern.

MacBeth (1983:243) points out that the commitment of school management to home-school liaison is essential. If leadership is half-hearted, cynical or hostile, the worthiest efforts of those in the school community are bound to be damaged (as quoted in Tomlinson, 1984:123).

The school representatives in the case cited above did admit that they had approached the mother in an inappropriate manner. There had been open conflict and it had been resolved - at least for the time being. Tomlinson (1984:123) argues that teachers' repetition of recommendations and exhortations to action, while at the same time taking a cynical or dismissive attitude towards homes and parents ( - ) will not solve the crisis of confidence
between minority homes and schools.

10.3.4 **Teacher counselling**

Nigerian parents felt that teachers' counselling methods were invariably designed to 'take' their children away from them. Two children stated that they were receiving, from teachers, informal counselling in respect of how to manage their relationship with their parents. Both girls were over 16 years old and although the advice given was confidential between counsellor and counselled, the information received was used by the children to confront their parents.

A sixth form girl had pointed out that she was having problems with her father because he did not understand her. She liked going out, but he always insisted that she be back by 9 p.m. on weekdays and 11 p.m. at weekends:

One day (pastoral teacher) asked me what the matter was because I was in a bad mood...My Dad had an argument with me... (Pastoral teacher) told me I can leave home if I want to. That I shouldn't have to do all the work and stay at home and not be with my friends...I told my Dad (later) that I'd just leave him and that there's nothing he can do about it because I'm sixteen now (sixth form girl).

The father was furious about this. Not knowing that his daughter had spoken to me about this particular subject he informed me that he was having some difficulties with bringing up his daughter on his own:

She's growing up. She wants to act big, but she doesn't realize that life is difficult out there... I don't know the families of (her) friends so I tend to be strict with her and I explained it to her. Sometimes she understands. Sometimes she just gets it into her head to misbehave. Once I start letting her go out (too much) I may not be able to keep control of it...She knows she's free to ask me (to go out), but she knows I will say, "No". It will always be no. If I receive a letter from the school I'll let her go to school party or disco, but not later than 11(p.m.) (father).

From information gathered school sixth form parties ended about 10.30 p.m. and this was what this father based his time limit on.

The father's main concern was for the safety of his daughter. Hence, he sometimes went to bring her home or gave her enough money to take a taxi home, but he did limit the extent to which he was prepared to accommodate the late night aspect of youth subculture. He realized that his wish to protect her from outside influences needed to be tempered and so he made up for his strictness by giving her extra money and indulging her in most of
the things that she wanted - except of course if it was to go out. He felt that in this way he was able to 'soothe' her and succeed in arriving at a 'balanced' relationship. He also perceived her wish to be out at parties and discos as a hinderance to the organization of her school work. He insisted that a possible deterioration of their relationship was no excuse for interference by what he referred to as 'busybodies' and that in the event of his daughter walking out on him he would go and bring her back. This was because he would never send her out of their home:

"We've been getting on fine all this time. So now because you're 16 and some busybodies in that school tell you something you want to do it". All that advice in any case is for these white children and maybe West Indian, but our children are part of the family even if they're 30, 40 or 50 (years old) they must still respect their parents. I want us to discuss like father to daughter or friends, but these people especially (names teacher) I think she's the one putting all these ideas in her head (father).

C. Ballard (1979:121) has shown that Asian girls have similar problems with their parents. She adds that critics of Asian culture object to the restrictions placed on Asian girls without allowing for the fact that parent-child conflicts are common in all cultures. In the case cited above, advising the child (even though she is over 16) to move away from home is not only a professionally inappropriate counselling strategy, but a perverse and incompetent one.

Only one teacher reported a successfully negotiated settlement between child and parents:

You could see she (15 years old) didn't have opportunities to go out. The father was so strict about meeting boys and so on... I advised her to go and talk it through with her parents and apparently she did and not long after that they came to an agreement and the whole pressure sort of eased off... they accepted her as a growing up person.

Although not all parent-child conflicts can be resolved within the family, the point to note is that this teacher counselled the child in terms of perceiving the situation from the parents' point of view and then encouraged her to discuss the matter with her parents. Her ability to convey to her parents that she understood their need to 'protect' her worked to soften their response to her requests to go out. The two girls discussed here did not leave home, but another girl (18 years old) did eventually leave and her parents were frantically trying to discover where she was. She had, however, asked her teachers not to inform them of her whereabouts.

The full details of the case were not made available, but as far as
could be gathered the child-parent conflict centred on the child's unsatisfactory relationship with her step father. It was not made known what avenues had been pursued before the complete breakdown of the family relationship. It was obvious from the accounts of a middle management teacher that she was not only protective and concerned about this sixth form girl, but that one of the teachers was involved in the eventual strategy employed to help alleviate, the young person's distress.

In their justification of their actions, Nigerian parents were always concerned to emphasize Nigerian-based cultural attitudes towards specific social phenomena. Minority children experience primary socialization within their own cultures. Hence, growing up in a minority culture 'does not itself cause stress' (C. Ballard, 1979:124). As pointed out above, Nigerian children were usually able to negotiate a compromise without recourse to representatives of the school or social services. The conflicts they had were similar to those most children have with their parents. It was the solutions offered and the manner in which the conflicts were tackled that were different. It was this difference that teachers could not comprehend and thus labelled 'a nonsense'.

Teachers pointed out that their responsibility was to give the children the necessary skills to succeed in this country. Since all the children were socialized at some stage or the other into being aware of the family's eventual return to Nigeria, it might be more constructive if those counselling the children took account of this possibility. It needs to be remembered that the rest of the children's family are in Nigeria and if there was conflict in the family they literally had no other member of the family to turn to. As one sixth form boy put it:

All my family's over there. If my parents go back I'm going back with them... I have friends here, but they're not the same as family (sixth form boy).

10.4 The going home syndrome

10.4.1 A myth?

As discussed in Chapter 1 Nigerians travelled to Britain mainly for educational purposes. Watson (1977) describes overseas students in Britain as 'educational transients' who need to be differentiated from those who come here for employment purposes, even though these too do not initially plan to settle here (Anwar, 1979). For Nigerian parents being in Britain was a 'sojourn' from which they intended to return:
F: You always have it in mind that you are in sojourn.
M: One day you're going back where you come from.
F: At any time.
M: We plan to go back, but we don't know when.

It is possible that having spent over 15 years in this country these parents may not return to Nigeria [7]. A father describes the situation thus:

Well, you see people tell you about your custom, but I find that the custom which I believed in in being a Nigerian has left me by ... Everytime I've been in Nigeria I've found out that they (the customs) are no more in existence ... People say they've kept to it, but actually its lost (father, who has been living here for 20 years and has gone back to Nigeria only three times).

This parent, along with five others, discovered that on a short holiday to Nigeria that he had lost the skills of living there. They had all been here for at least 15 years and had gone back not more than three times. They were surprised to discover that while they were nurturing the traditional customs and ways of life of the Nigeria of the sixties, Nigeria of the late seventies and eighties was a changed social entity (see Saifullah Khan, 1979 who shows that Asian returnees, with particular reference to Mirpuris (Pakistanis), also experienced similar disillusionments).

Not only were these parents unable to accommodate these changes, but were concerned that they, in effect, had no country to engage in adequate social interaction:

I've been here 17 years now, but I know this is not my country. My sweat and blood is here. I pay tax - everything so no problem for me to stay here, but home is home. The only thing is when I go to Nigeria - that time I have intention of staying there - I couldn't. I'm still here now. My friends, my people - the way they think is different from me. If you haven't got money to build a house you can't go back to Nigeria. All I can do is go for holiday.... Nigeria is my country. It's my children's country. It's our real home, but I'm too used to English way of life (mother).

Apart from financial restrictions to the eventual return of some Nigerian parents, they found on their return to Nigeria that the attitudes of public officers were difficult to adjust to. The mother quoted above was very upset that the country she had idealized and had gone back to in order to make arrangements for the family's eventual return, had not only received her badly at the airport, but had shown itself to be grossly inefficient. Despite these negative experiences, over three quarters of the parents had set their sights on an eventual return. At the time of the research (1982)
one-third of the parents planned to return within the next five years.

It is interesting to note that over two-thirds of the homes visited had packaged items or furnishings which would ordinarily be considered too big for the rooms they were in. Over half of the parents in these homes pointed out that such items were destined for eventual use in Nigeria:

- You know in Nigeria houses are very big with many rooms. We already start buying things since er six, seven years now. You know you just can't buy everything you need one time. Not enough money for that...Now we're just waiting for the children to finish their education... When we are ready to go we all go (mother).

It is likely that the intentions of some Nigerian parents to return to Nigeria may be a myth, but their insistence on defining their situation in these terms ensured that they and the members of their families orientated towards Nigeria and away from Britain.

10.4.2 After school – what next?

When asked about their parents' intentions to return to Nigeria, all except three of the first to fourth year pupils were unsure of their parents' plans. What they were sure of though was that their parents expected them to return and would not leave them behind. However, there were two cases where Nigerian parents had left their children with guardians because they had not wished to interrupt their children's schooling. Although all the children were expected to return, the older ones had a little more room for manoeuvre:

- My Mum says you could live here if you want to, but you've gotta get a good job that'll maintain you so that you can come home on holiday. But my Dad says, "No". He goes, "If you get your degree come back. What am I going to do here?" (16 year old girl).

The father's inability to understand what his daughter would do here once she had got her degree reflected an awareness of the employment difficulties faced by black ethnic minority groups in this country (Smith, 1977; Haynes, 1983). Although there are employment difficulties in Nigeria, another father pointed out that his children would be unlikely to face, in Nigeria, a similar type of inter-ethnic job discrimination as that which exists in this country. Moreover, since most Nigerians in Britain come from a 'privileged background' it is likely that in Nigeria most parents have the social and business connections to ensure that their children stood more than a fair chance of gaining employment commensurate with their educational qualifications (Nduka, 1977; Osoba, 1977).

When asked what his plans were when he finished his education, a sixth
form boy replied:

Go back home - where else?

Both the 16 year old girl and this sixth form boy had been to Nigeria on holiday - the boy twice and the girl three times. They described their stay thus:

Nigeria is really good 'n' exciting. It's really fun. It's different, but the only thing a don' like about it - there's too much cars. Too much noise... A think there's too many rich people in Nigeria, as far as I'm concerned, rich people on this side 'n' poor people over there. I don't really like that. I think they (the government) should mix it a bit (16 year old girl).

I loved it. The people - mainly, because my family's over there. It's a good feeling. The weather was lovely. I just loved it in general. The feeling that this is my country. Even though I was born here I don't regard myself as being English, British or whatever (sixth form boy).

This boy's parents have now left after 23 years of living in this country. He is determined to join them once he has completed his course at a further education college.

Nigerian children who had been home usually enjoyed their stay and looked forward to going back - even if only for a holiday. Of course there were those children who were not at all impressed with Nigeria:

I didn't like it one bit...My family were okay. My Dad's house in Nigeria is bigger than where we live now. It's nicer too, but Nigeria is so boring. There was nothing to do - everybody just stayed at home.... They only listen to records, radio and read... When we went to see my grandparents - that was nice, but after two days I got bored - no cinema, the parties were good, but different. Even though my relatives were there I didn't really know anybody. .... I thought it would be all built up, but some parts just looked derelict (fifth form girl).

Despite these complaints, all the children who had been home felt that it was of particular significance to them to meet the rest of their family.

Most other migrant groups in Britain who came here for economic and/or political reasons ended up settling permanently and sending for their families, including their grandparents (see Watson, 1977). In the case of Nigerians and other Africans (excluding Afro-Asians) there was little or no movement to bring all the members of their families here. They were students and as such needed all the time possible to concentrate on their studies. The family was seen as potentially creating a distraction and so, even when the family was sent for, it was invariably the spouses that came
and usually without their children.

Even when overseas students were able to obtain employment during holiday periods, the financial position of students was such that they could not afford to have other members of their family around. Moreover, since the parents' intentions was to be here only for the duration of their studies having other members of their family here was not given much thought:

My mother? Here? What for? If she want to see me then I go to Nigeria to see her. My mother can't live here. It's too cold (laughs). What will she do here? She just can't sit at home doing nothing. All our relatives are at home. No, there is nothing for her here. In any case I'm not here forever so no need for her to come here. I send her things and I've taken the children over there to see her. Bring her here? (laughs) We, Nigerians don't do things like that (father).

None of the children interviewed had a grandparent living with them or staying in the country on a permanent basis. There were two cases in which the grandparents were on holiday. Judging from the parents' accounts, it is unlikely that these grandparents would stay here longer than a few weeks.

Nigerian parents were convinced of the need to get their children acquainted with other members of their family and the country itself. As one mother put it:

They've been home. I'm not depriving them of their origin. I took them there last year. I told them life is hard in Nigeria, but they have to be proud of where they come from. After all its all these black West Indian people that help these white people build up their country. We in Nigeria have no slave to help us so we have to do it ourself.

When we went to visit my grandparents ...you had to go and get water from outside. I used to go with the other girls. My grandmother said I shouldn't go she thought I wouldn't be able to carry the bucket of water. But I showed her I could (fourth year girl).

Apart from their preparedness to accept Nigeria as it was, the difficulties in adjusting to a new environment did not dissuade some of the children from wishing to go back:

I don't really know Nigeria that well to talk about the people in detail.... I find that Nigeria is still developing. They had done so much since the last time I was there (1978). They're trying to rebuild it. When I went (1980) I found that it had really changed. It had improved. They'd built
roads which weren't there before and because of that I felt this is a new country really. It's my (his emphasis) country and I'm going back there. They're building it up and it's really nice – that's why I've come to like it so much (sixth form boy).

Perhaps what struck the children most was that they were in a country mainly made up of people who had the same colour skin as they had:

R : How do you feel about living in this country?
C : It's alright. It's just that it's a white man's country ain't it? You can't really win anything around here, can you? The police are after you – things like that – so I might as well just go back home.

R : Having said that would you leave this country to go and live either in Nigeria or (another West African country)?
C : Yeah. I wouldn't mind living there...

... 

R : How did you feel about being in Nigeria as compared to how you feel about being here?
C : I felt calmer kind of. I dunno. I just felt kinda calmer – peaceful inside, if you know what I mean?
R : Why did you think you felt this way?
C : I dunno. I just did.

(C = fifteen years old)

Even though the children experienced the less cordial aspects of Nigerian public officials attitudes, they felt that they were treated the same as everybody else:

Lagos looked more like London sort of except it was all blacks living there. Sometimes they shout at you like in the market, but everybody gets shouted at (sixth form girl).

Some of the children had not anticipated that there were quite so many white people in Nigeria [8]:

I only thought there was white people – few like three or four like when they show Survival or Disappearing World (Television programmes). When we went to the beach there were lots and lots of them (third year girl).

The children, including those who had never been to Nigeria were asked about how they felt about living in this country. Most of them replied, 'alright'. But those who had been to Nigeria were more critical of relationships between ethnic groups here than those who had not been:

R : How do you feel about the white people in this country who don't like black people living here?
C: I think they're stupid. As far as I'm concerned - I mean there's loads of white people in our own country. What about South Africa? They're controlling the whole country, you know. It doesn't belong to them...It's the same thing we could say to them - to get out of our own country. And they're gonna lose more than we've got to lose. We don't really need their help basically...They (whites) don't know what they're saying. They don't think (sixth form girl who has been to Nigeria three times).

Although the issue of dependence and interdependence are debatable (see Chapter 1; see also Brandt Report, 1980; Hayter, 1983 gives an alternative view to the Brandt Report), the point to note is that Nigerian children perceived the conflict between ethnic groups in terms of some white peoples' lack of awareness of the implications of the populist belief that things would be better in Britain for white people if black people were not here. Westergaard and Resler (1975) have discussed how this attitude has worked to enhance the belief, especially among the working class that they are better off in comparison to black people and as such fail to perceive the inherent inequality and exploitation of themselves by those in positions of power and authority (see also Castles and Kosack, 1973; Sherman and Wood, 1982).

Only one fifth form girl answered in a non-committal way to a question about inter-ethnic conflict:

I'm not interested. Racial discrimination is boring.

In contrast Nigerian parents, especially, did not think that inter-ethnic relations was a boring topic. Although their views were similar there were quite interesting variations on the theme. They all agreed that there was inter-ethnic discrimination in this country and felt that it was impossible that any black person living here would not have experienced inter-ethnic discrimination in one form or another:

If anybody says there's no discrimination then you're just deceiving yourself (father).

The experience of inter-ethnic discrimination could be in overt manners such as job discrimination or direct abuse:

There are things that are obvious like people will call you names or cars will go past you and they'll call you names (same father as above).

Nine parents reported violent acts towards them in terms of physical aggression and towards their homes and cars in terms of graffiti. In contrast some parents recounted subtle instances of what they felt to be negative feelings towards them. For example, a mother pointed out the manner in which change was given after a purchase:

I take no notice of it, but sometimes when they're giving
you change they try not to touch your hand (laughs) as if the black of your hand will get on to their own.

A couple described how an otherwise "innocent" conversational topic may carry negative overtones:

F : Haven't you been asked? Haven't you been asked that question where you come from? When are you going back?
M : That's the first thing they will ask you...
F : Haven't you been asked? You haven't yet?
M : Haven't they asked you yet in the school?
R : Well, I've told them where I come from - when I was introducing myself and the purposes of the research.
F : Did they ask you, "When are you going back?"
M : Or "How long have you been here?"
R : Yes, they asked me that question.
M & F: (laugh)
M : You just can't escape without being asked one of these questions.
R : How do you feel when you're asked these questions?
M : It depends on the attitude. The mood you are in.
F : It depends on the cue. The cue you get from the person asking you the question. In most cases...(after) you answer you know what is behind the asking of the question. So from the cue or surrounding circumstances
M : (interrupts) Then you will know the answer you are going to give.
F : If they know you very well and are just asking then you know they are asking genuine question. If that's the first question they ask you then you know they might be thinking you're one of these people who stay here forever.
M : Forgetting that their own people are in our own country for longer time than we [8].

Although it is unlikely that all Nigerian parents and their children will return eventually to Nigeria, Tajfel (1978) has drawn our attention to the manner in which inter-ethnic discrimination, whether real or imaginary, leads to ethnic minorities reassessing their self-identification. C. Ballard (1979) points out that the experience of inter-ethnic discrimination creates a 'reactive ethnicity', that is, minority children stop short of 'total Westernization'.

Nigerian children who did not identify totally with Nigeria were ambivalent about their relationship with both countries:
I feel strange about it. Like I don't really feel as if I
belong to England or to Nigeria at the moment... I don't feel like I belong anywhere really (sixth form girl).

Another sixth form girl emphasizes the point:

Children who were born in this country who have parents from another country - I think they should have a sense of identity.... I don't think it should just be for those children that do (her emphasis) have parents from abroad. I think it should be for everyone including those that have English or home parents - those who were born here. I think it would help them to make their minds up about situations and have their own opinions.... You don't get globular information in this country. My parents get West Africa magazine. You don't get information unless something drastic happens or it actually involves Britain.

An impression was gained that some of the parents themselves were so busy accumulating British 'cultural capital' that they had little time to give their children in-depth information about their own backgrounds. It was obvious from the children's accounts that holidays did not give them the range of information that they would have liked to have had about Nigeria. In particular, two thirds of British born Nigerian children wished that they could speak their own mother tongue just as fluently as they spoke English. This wish reflects the current mood of ethnic minority children who are moving towards a reassessment of various cultural aspects of their ethnicity.

Stone (1981) argues that some West Indians are likely to 'return to Africa' or to the Caribbean (see Mullard, 1973; Pryce, 1979). However, it is unlikely that there will be large scale emigration from black ethnic minority groups as a whole. For those who do, their decision is likely to be an individual rather than a collective one. In agreement with C. Ballard (1979) it is suspected that black ethnic minority groups will seek to have more knowledge of their history and background and use this as a shield to protect themselves from the more insidious aspects of inter-ethnic discrimination.

Nigerian children in this present research have shown that ethnic self-identification is one of the effective strategies for coping with school based inter-ethnic discrimination. If they choose to remain in Britain, it remains to be seen how they will respond to inter-ethnic discrimination in the society at large.
10.5 **Summary**

Aspects of Nigerian culture make it imperative that children acquire domestic skills in order to ensure that they partake in various family roles. The non-child-centred attitude of Nigerian parents also made them seek outside help especially in their children's early years. This was particularly because their initial role as mature students required them to adopt strategies which would not interfere with their own educational goals. They were aware of the difficulties involved in fostering, but felt that the end justified the means. In contrast, social workers who had to deal with private foster care problems could not begin to understand the parents' definition of the situation.

Having come from 'relatively privileged' backgrounds, Nigerian parents socialized their children in a manner which insisted that there were social differences between them and some members of their local population. They were especially concerned that their children would engage in interaction with 'low class' children who were not interested in the acquisition of school knowledge. Hence, they tended to restrict their children's movements.

In their attempts to solve Nigerian children's social and academic problems, teachers and other educational representatives proceeded from an ethnocentric standpoint. Rather than diffusing the situation, their method of dealing with Nigerian children's problems usually aggravated the tension between teachers and parents. In their concern for the children's welfare teachers tended to believe that Nigerian children who experienced conflict with their parents would be better off not living with them or not returning to Nigeria. This type of negative counselling was counter-productive, particularly because the children had been socialized into an expectation of an eventual return to Nigeria. Although a few of them had not internalized this hope, the children, generally, perceived their future as linked to their parents' eventual place of abode.

Despite recognizing the social adjustment problems of living in a less technologically advanced country, most of the children were prepared to give living in Nigeria 'a try' especially as the rest of their family was there. Moreover, some of them felt it was 'their' country and that they were able to interact with people without being conscious of their skin colour.

Having lived in this country for an average of over 15 years it was thought unlikely that most parents who had resident status would return to Nigeria. However, the employment situation and the children's move towards a re-assessment of their self-identification gave the impression that some of them would indeed return. Eleven parents had already done so, permanently. It was not clear how Nigerian children who choose to stay here, especially after their parents had gone back, would cope without
relatives in Britain.

10.6 Concluding Reflections

Numerous studies have been carried out on the family background and home conditions of black ethnic minority groups living in England (Section 2.2.2). The tendency of most of these has been to show how cultural differences account for the conflict between children born and/or schooled here. Saifullah Khan (1979) points out that the assumption that cultural conflict is at the root of ethnic minority children's conflict with their parents places an exaggerated emphasis on the children themselves as 'problems' (see also Tierney, 1982). C. Ballard (1979:100) argues that the concept of culture conflict:

- assumes that cultural values are fixed and static and that there is no possibility of adaptation, flexibility or accommodation between one set of values and another.

As shown in this chapter, Nigerian children did not necessarily wish to reject all aspects of their "Nigerianness". West Indian children who had hitherto considered themselves as having a culture almost synonymous with that of the indigenous population have begun to revise their self-identification (Tajfel, 1978; Stone, 1981). Having been born and socialized in Britain, black ethnic minority children may continue to identify themselves as Black British (Mullard, 1973; Haynes, 1983), but it is becoming increasingly obvious that this self-identification will include not only a recognition, but also an assertion of their roots, that is, their country of origin. It needs to be realized that ethnic minority cultures will not disappear into oblivion (see Cohen and Manion, 1983). Hence, as Tomlinson (1984:123) suggests:

- effective home-school liaison and positive partnership between teachers and parents, should become a professional goal of senior school management and not an optional extra to be left to chance (see also Johnson and Ransom, 1983).

Corrigan and Leonard (1978:129) point out that the advent of black ethnic minority groups in Britain has emphasized the fact that different forms of family structure exist, of which the British nuclear family is but one. They go on to discuss the manner in which British social workers can engage in 'successful intervention' practices when dealing with these different forms of family structure. They argue that a 'simple relativism', that is, the perception of different types of family as 'merely ...different cultural configurations', only gives a partial
understanding of the reasons behind the development of particular types of family structures. They argue that the primary reason for these differences lies not only in cultural/traditional practices, but in the 'different bases of material production in the societies from which different families come'. In addition, they suggest that the demise of the extended family in Britain has resulted from the development of a capitalist mode of production which requires increased mobility between various centres of production [9]. Thus the British family needed not just to produce

the physical human beings who will make up the labour force, but...the social (their emphasis) human beings who will be motivated themselves for production and reproduction (Corrigan and Leonard, 1978:133)

As they go on to argue, it is in this sense that the family acts as an Ideological State Apparatus (Althusser, 1971; Gramsci, 1971; see also Chapter 2) because 'the family retains a major responsibility for socializing children in preparation for their roles in the economy' (p.133).

Westergaard and Resler (1975:196) point out that State welfare services are 'essential to the maintenance of the complex capitalist economy and society'. Thus the manner in which teachers, social workers and other arms of the welfare state concerned with family intervention carry out their duties reflects their uncritical acceptance of their role in reinforcing the 'continuing structure of class dominance' (p.197).

Stanworth (1983) points out that the role of women in the socialization of the family into the capitalist mode of production is crucial to an understanding of the relationship between the family and the owners of capital. Sherman and Wood (1982:105f) argue that women's status is weakened because of the functional roles they have to play. These range from being 'socializers of children for the labour market' to 'indispensable housewife and stabilizer of the family' as a unit of production (Corrigan and Leonard, 1978:134). Moreover, within the capitalist mode of production these very important women are discriminated against in the employment market in favour of men. In other words, 'women have still to make a reality of the right to be exploited equally with men' (Corrigan and Leonard, 1978:134). Women's social status works to create a social group committed to the furtherance of the capitalist mode of production yet they are exploited by the very system they sustain.

Castles and Kosack (1973:57) argue that the status of any social group is reflected in its relation to the means of production. Thus ethnic minority groups who experience employment discrimination find themselves as having low social status irrespective of their levels of educational qualification (Smith, 1977). Consequently, limited avenues to social mobility creates a concentration of ethnic minority groups in particular
geographical areas which already have social problems (Rex and Tomlinson, 1979; Rose et al., 1969). As Rex and Moore (1967) show, these 'twilight zones' are often run down inner city areas.

It has been pointed out that, as a group, Nigerians in Britain perceive themselves as having some form of elite status, but their role as students made it inevitable that they live in cheap accommodation as near their place of study as possible. Buchi Emecheta, a Nigerian novelist resident in Britain points out that in Lagos you may be living like an elite, but the day you land in England you are a second-class citizen (see Emecheta, 1983, Adah's Story).

This emphasizes the popular notion of England as 'a leveller', that is, if you are black your social status is reducible to the lowest common differentiation characteristic - your skin colour. Due to various financial reasons (saving for air fares, low level employment, wish to amass wealth), some Nigerian parents find that they cannot move out of these 'less desirable' inner city areas. Their belief in their own elite status encourages them to socialize their children in a manner which prevents them from allowing too intimate an interaction with 'the locals'. Although Nigerian parents recognized their children's need for play, they did not wish their children to be socialized into British working class culture. As Corrigan and Leonard (1978:136-137) argue:

> the shallow 'radical' response of always identifying with the child against (my emphasis) the parent or the woman against the man; where all family members are oppressed both outside and within the institution of the family under capitalism

is to ignore more complex social processes. In other words, social intervention needs to concern itself with the development of a family's critical awareness of its relation to the means of production.

Even though Nigerian parents did not explain their actions within a Marxist awareness of the relationship between the family and the means of production, it is clear that their methods of socializing their children took account of the particular position in the labour market that they wanted for their children. Thus the suggestions of social workers that they give up their work or study and subsequently reduce their chances of increasing or at least maintaining their 'cultural capital', was anathema to the parents.

It must be remembered that Nigerian parents, along with other ethnic minority parents have not been socialized within the British family and social class system. Thus they are likely to be more critical of a system whose beliefs they have not internalized. As one couple put it:
F: ...as far as the school is concerned they just want to push them (children) into certain pigeon holes

M: They (teachers) are good at doing this.

Parents who are aware of the manner in which the system of education differentiate between children and who define their children's future in terms of Nigerian high status jobs are unlikely to sit back and accept the education system's (as represented by teachers and so on) definition of the situation - especially if it conflicts with their ambitions for their children. If teachers wish to reduce the conflicts between them and ethnic minority parents in particular, it is up to them critically to examine their role as perpetuators of a system of domination and exploitation.

It is clear that the British education system is designed to carry out an intensive process of differentiation and selection - not just according to children's levels of "educability", but according to social class, sex and ethnic group criteria (see Chapter 2; see also Cicourel and Kitsuse, 1963; Keddie, 1973). This being so, Nigerian parents and other ethnic minority parents are likely to continue taking teachers to task on the manner in which they attempt to socialize their children, in particular, through counselling them into various social class based aspects of British culture.
Notes

1. This information and the subsequent comments on immigration restrictions have been confirmed with the Home Office (see also Dummett and Martin, 1982).

2. Theoretically, in a mixed school, boys would have access to these types of subjects, but as discussed in Chapter 7 both SG and MB had traditional sex differentiated school subjects on their option courses.

3. Seasonally adjusted rates of live births for women between 15 and 19 are estimated at between 13,000 -14,000 live births per quarter (OPCS, 1985).

4. Driver (1980 a and b) has shown that West Indian girls do better than West Indian boys, but as a group they still appear to underachieve in the British education system (Swann, 1985).

5. The reference to the London Borough of Lambeth should not be taken to imply that the social workers quoted in this present research were or were not in the same borough.

6. Most of the private foster placements had been with white foster parents. There is current debate on the inappropriateness of fostering black children with white foster parents because of the subsequent self-identification problems black children have. There is no evidence in this present research to suggest that Nigerian children’s self-identification problems were directly linked with their being fostered with white parents. It must also be remembered that most of the children in this research had returned to their parents by the age of five years.

7. An OPCS official (telephone conversation, 1982) informally estimated that over a six year period the balance (that is, the difference between the inflow and outflow) of Nigerians in Britain was about 2,000. This figure is based on the International Passenger Survey.

In their booklets, the OPCS do not give individual country breakdowns of migration movements. However, they do identify continents and types of Commonwealth groups (that is, Old, New and African). Any interpretation of the migration figures relating to the African Commonwealth needs to take into account the fact that these figures include a substantial number of Afro-Asians, in particular, from Kenya and Uganda who were expelled from these countries in the early seventies. They have since taken up their British citizenship and are now resident in Britain (see Appendices 15, 16 and 17).
8. Television News reports (January, 1984) stated that there were 20 - 25,000 Britons living in Nigeria. The 1981 Census shows that there are just over 30,000 Nigerians living in Britain (see Appendix 1).

9. See Young and Wilmott, (1973 for a counter - argument based on the notion of the symmetrical family.
11.1 Overview

Chapter 1 reviewed the links between Nigeria and Britain by focusing in particular on the quest of Nigerians for educational qualifications. It was argued that Nigerian migrants differed from other black ethnic minority groups (for example, Asian and Afro-Caribbean) primarily because their migration was motivated not by employment 'pulls', but by educational ones. The child-care problems Nigerian parent students found themselves confronted with were discussed with specific reference to foster placements. It was argued that as mature students, Nigerian parents in Britain were torn between following the child-centred approach to child-rearing as advised by their social workers or temporarily to foster their children. Most Nigerian parents chose the latter option in the hope that their acquisition of educational qualifications would ensure the future educational success of their children.

A review of the literature on the British sociology of education was carried out in Chapter 2. Particular attention was paid to research findings on the education of black ethnic minority children in Britain. It was pointed out that despite numerous calls for a fundamental change in both the content and process of schooling, the education system still failed to enhance the educational achievement of, in particular, Afro-Caribbean children (see Swann, 1985). Although educational research has moved away from a sole reliance on test results, the continued emphasis on the results of psychometric testing still served to blame the child for his/her educational underachievement.

The simplistic examination of the education system as characterized by the input-output model of educational research was criticized. It was suggested that more research proceeding from an interpretive framework was needed in order to analyse the processes involved in various aspects of schooling. Hence, this present research focused on the process of schooling as it directly related to the education of Nigerian children.

The central ideas and concepts informing this present research were discussed in Chapter 3. There was an examination of the shortcomings of positivistic methods of social research. It was pointed out that the testing of hypotheses developed through the researcher's own commonsense understanding of a given social situation usually precluded the discovery of the actor's own definition of the situation. Subsequently, the decision was made to adopt the methodological procedures of ethnographic research in two single sex inner London comprehensive schools and couple this with the
analytical requirements of interpretive research. The final section of Chapter 3 briefly outlined areas of interest generated by an exploratory study carried out in a mixed comprehensive school.

Chapter 4 gave a detailed account of the research methods employed in the collection of data for this present research. Focused interviews were used as the main source of data collection. These were supplemented by, observations of classroom interaction as they primarily related to Nigerian children's relationships with their teachers and peer group.

Most of the Nigerian children interviewed had been born in Britain. However, the language learning problems of those born abroad were examined because of the emphasis teachers placed on these difficulties. Chapters 5 and 6 concentrated on the provision of language learning programmes and the children's attempts to acquire a dialect of English approved by the British education system. It was found that teachers still adopted teaching strategies which rejected the existing language skills of the children. Moreover, the organization of language learning programmes were inadequately managed. Hence, organizational constraints in both schools encouraged the placement of the children in remedial teaching groups. The one exception to this was a child who was perceived as being 'cultured'. This finding confirmed existing research which shows that teachers' perceptions of children's home background are crucial to the educational opportunities children are offered (see Section 2.2.2).

With the focus still on Nigerian children born abroad, Chapter 6 described the strategies the children adopted in their attempt to "go native" by speaking English without an easily recognizable "foreign" accent. This had hitherto designated them as 'outsiders'. It was argued that language as a vehicle of communication was not only important to the establishment of a basis for verbal interaction in the school, but had wider social implications. In view of the importance of language in the acquisition of school knowledge it was suggested that teachers, especially those in positions of authority to effect change, needed to give up the tendency to interpret the language difficulties of children born abroad as insurmountable.

A little-researched part of the process of schooling relating to the choice of school itself was examined in Chapter 7. There was also a discussion of other areas of school decision-making. It was recognized that children needed guidance on the subjects necessary for particular occupational careers. However, teachers' guidance strategies had a tremendous influence on the final subject choices a pupil made - even if this had little bearing on the pupil's further educational ambitions. The examination of the term 'doing well' revealed an interactional arena between teachers and parents which was guaranteed to be conflictual. This was especially the case where the parents' understanding of what it meant for their child to be 'doing well' ('O' Level candidate) was far removed
from the level at which the teacher expected the child to take his/her examination (CSE Mode III candidate).

The teachers' own definitions of their role was also examined, briefly. Apart from being dissatisfied with single sex schooling, some teachers were very critical of the manner in which their schools were managed. It was suggested that teachers' grievances in relation to the organization of schooling needed to be made more public.

Chapter 8 moved away from structural concerns and focused on the processes through which Nigerian children came to adopt particular interactional styles. Although most Nigerian children were found to be interested in the acquisition of school knowledge some of them, in particular the 'troublemakers', became so involved in the creation of conflictual situations that their interest in school receded into the background.

Having considered general peer group interactions, Chapter 9 examined the manner in which Nigerian children coped not only with being different from the main black ethnic minority groups found in their schools, but also with the experience of inter-ethnic discrimination from both white and black children. It was argued that teachers' belief in colour-blindness was misguided and counter-productive.

It was shown in Chapter 10 that Nigerian parents' concern for their children's educational progress did not just rest on their preparedness to discover the structural processes of schooling. They confronted the teachers if they were displeased with their children's level of educational achievement. Outside of the school Nigerian parents insisted on socializing their children in a manner which recognized the differences between the social class and cultural group membership of the people living in their neighbourhood. Although Nigerian children's friendship groups consisted of a range of children from different social class and cultural backgrounds, it was found that the children had internalized some of their parents' definitions of the situation. This was especially the case where it concerned the parents' belief in the eventual return of the family to Nigeria. Even though they did not always overtly associate themselves with their country of origin the children tended to include in their self-identification a recognition of themselves as Nigerian. It was suggested that even if they did not return to Nigeria, the current tendency of ethnic minority children's assertion of their roots was likely to ensure that in general, Nigerian children would continue to identify themselves as British born Nigerians.
11.2 Penultimate Reflections

This present research has examined in detail the experiential reality of schooling for Nigerian children in two inner London comprehensive schools. We have discussed the interactional processes experienced by Nigerian children in order to manage, on the one hand their relationship with their teachers and, on the other, their interaction with their peer group. It was pointed out in Chapter 1 that the rapid expansion of universities and other places of learning in Nigeria has had a tremendous impact on the Nigerian interpretation of the role of schooling in society.

In general, Nigerians believe that educational qualifications at whatever level, but most especially at the higher education level, are a useful asset in gaining those types of employment which would enhance their social prestige (see Beckett and O'Connell, 1977; Peil, 1976: Chapter 1). It will be remembered (Section 10.4) that Nigerians in Britain orientate very strongly towards a return to Nigeria. Although they may not fulfil this ultimate goal their children were socialized to take account of the "going home" syndrome. Hence, Nigerian children were under pressure from their parents to conform to traditional responses to schooling. While this conformism from some Nigerian children tended to endear them to their teachers, it alienated them from some of their peer group who in general were not as keen to acquire school knowledge - especially that which required the doing of homework (Section 7.4.2). Given this conflict, it is not surprising that over half the Nigerian children were "loners" (Section 8.2).

The experiential reality of schooling for Nigerian children was one characterized by an interest in the acquisition of school knowledge. Subsequently, they were found to be "doing well" in the British education system. However, rather than discovering that the process of schooling was now grappling adequately with the education of black ethnic minority pupils, it was found that in order to ensure their children's "success", Nigerian parents not only had to be interested in their children's schooling, but also had to demonstrate to teachers that they had sufficient cultural capital to convince teachers that their children had educational potential.

Various writers have shown that negative responses to schooling, both by working class and ethnic minority children, need to be understood as cultural responses to the conflict inherent in a class-based society (Willis, 1976; Hall and Jefferson, 1976; Clarke, 1979; Hebdige, 1975; 1981) which assigns low status to the working class, ethnic minority groups and women (Boudon, 1974; Sivanandan, 1976; Rex and Tomlinson, 1979; Deem, 1980; Stanworth, 1983). The relatively positive responses of Nigerian children to the acquisition of school knowledge is firmly grounded in their parents' ability to remove themselves from the reality
of British based social differentiation. As one father put it 'we are not low class' (see also Section 10.2.2).

This removal of the self enabled them to 'ride the tide' of, in particular, inter-ethnic negative labelling. Even though only at the micro-level of the school, Nigerian parents were able to build up a resistance to those social processes which tended to reproduce the existing pattern of social stratification. Although they participated in the society, they did not consider themselves as being an integral part of it. The extent to which their children had internalized their parents' coping strategies was shown in Section 9.3 where over two-thirds of the Nigerian children born in Britain were unable totally to dissociate themselves from their parents' country of origin. Because Nigerian parents did not think of themselves as part of the society in the same manner as, for example, we are led to believe some ethnic minority groups do (did?) (see Castles et al., 1984), they appeared more able to challenge effectively the manner in which the education system works to hinder upward social mobility. In other words, social groups within the same society do not have the same power, at both the micro and macro levels, meaningfully to influence change or challenge effectively their oppression.

The relative success of Nigerian parents in negotiating better career-related opportunities for their children within the schools, is a consequence of the cultural capital which they brought with them and have accumulated in this country. In view of the instrumental and elitist approach of Nigerian parents to schooling (Chapter 7) it is not surprising that the career intentions of Nigerian pupils focused on highly skilled professional occupations.

Teachers perceived and assessed children using a complex variety of ability and home background cues (for example, family stability, culture, wealth and parents' educational achievement). Although differentiation was not simply based on skin colour and ethnic group membership, teachers tended to hold on to particular stereotypes of black, in particular, West Indian pupils. Hence, a substantial number of the "goodtimers" and "troublemakers" were perceived as West Indian while the "loners" were generally perceived as African. If teachers' expectations of West Indian children is that they are generally behaviour problems and/or are more interested in having a good time than in the acquisition of school knowledge, then it is not surprising that when teachers discover 'quiet' black pupils they make the generalization that the children are 'either African or not the general run of West Indian kids' (teacher with 10 years experience). In other words 'quiet' black pupils are regarded as a deviant group. In the case of the Nigerian children studied in this present research, this behavioural deviancy worked to ensure a deviant educational progress - one characterized by relative success rather than failure.
There is a commonsense understanding of education as the sum total of the acquisition of the various types of knowledge that is offered in schools (Young, 1971). Ogbu (1978) suggests that we cannot arrive at an adequate explanation of educational outcomes unless we examine the instrumental role of education (see Peters, 1970; Wilson, 1979). Although schooling is generally perceived as promoting a process of social change (Wilcox, 1982; see also Chapter 1), it is essentially a form of social control (Bowles and Gintis, 1976; Simon, 1978). Althusser (1971) identifies the education system as an Ideological State Apparatus (ISA) which works to reproduce the existing social order in a Marxist, deterministic manner (see also Gramsci, 1971). However, there has been a move away from Marxist determinism to social analysis which recognizes the individual's ability to negotiate his/her own social career (Section 3.2). This acknowledgement allows more room for the possibility of social change by social actors themselves. Nigerian parents have shown that this task is not an easy one. They have had to pitch their own personal resources against a system that is entrenched in preparing children for particular class-related roles in society (Evetts, 1973).

With specific reference to the American occupational structure, Ogbu (1978) points out that there are particular 'job ceilings' for ethnic minority groups. In other words, they have restricted occupational opportunities. In the sense that Britain and other Western European countries are essentially capitalist in nature (see Westergaard and Resler, 1975), the same can be said of the British occupational structure (see Smith, 1977). Ogbu (1978) argues that the educational underachievement of minority children is an adaptation to these job ceilings. Thus minority children see little point in aiming for high level school knowledge if they cannot achieve access to corresponding employment opportunities. Ogbu further argues that both schools and parents socialize children in terms of particular occupational roles based on an appraisal of the job opportunities available to them in a given society.

Pryce (1979) and Stone (1981) would refute this argument and point out that West Indian parents, for example, want an improved social status for their children. Thus they are unlikely to socialize their children to orientate towards low paid jobs. However, it must be noted that there is differentiation of occupational goals within the working class. For example, Troyna (1982) has argued that West Indian children have not (yet) adopted working class acquiescence to their social status (see also Pidgeon, 1970; Willis, 1977). Nevertheless, the occupational ambitions of working class West Indian children appear essentially to be of a working class nature. For example, Pryce (1979) cites West Indian boys who reject factory work and other 'nasty' jobs such as mere labouring as distinguished from learning a skill as an apprentice. In contrast, not one of the Nigerian children interviewed in this present research cited anything but a
white collar occupational goal. The point here is not whether they will achieve this aim, but that their job ceiling does not reflect the constraints of those occupational roles minority groups are normally expected to fill (Castles and Kosack, 1973). As pointed out above, this is primarily because Nigerian parents' socialization of their children encourages them to define their ambitions in terms of the "ceilingless" occupational possibilities in the Nigerian occupational structure (see Chapter 1).

Teachers' responses to the education of children have tended to submit to existing patterns of social differentiation within the western capitalist educational system (David, 1980). Hence, their orientation towards educating children is based on an apparently complacent acceptance that the social situation of children must necessarily determine their educational progress. Ogbu (1978) argues that this complacency has led to an overdependence on the cultural conflict explanation of educational underachievement. When faced with a "deviant" group that challenges this cosy theory, the immediate response of teachers is to resist and only later to accommodate the possibility of black achievement by acknowledging (even though grudgingly) the middle classiness of some Nigerian parents. Once thus labelled, Nigerian children become one of the middle class groups that confirm that, in general, middle class children succeed in the British educational system (Halsey et al. 1980; Goldthorpe et al., 1980). In this way the educational "success" of Nigerian children is neither alarming nor exceptional. Rather, it is as commonplace as the educational success that is expected of middle class children (Chapter 2; Section 7.4).

The often quoted objective of schooling as the process of educating children according to their ability neglects the responsibility of teachers to **improve** the knowledge base of their pupils. As Spindler (1982:492) points out, 'the school transmits what *is* and not what *should* be' (his emphasis). By their apparent complicity in this process teachers allow themselves to become pawns in a system which encourages only selective and very limited opportunities for sponsored upward mobility (Turner, 1960). Moreover, as Freire (1972) insists, teachers need to move away from the belief that education is a neutral process. On the contrary, he argues that it is an intensely political and ideological process (see also Evetts, 1973; David, 1980).

The results in academic terms of the comprehensive system, though commendable (Halsey et al., 1980), still show a high correlation between social class and educational progress. Some of the teachers interviewed in this present research were obviously not content with their role as perpetuators of a system of domination. Despite this, teachers have, in general, shown an incapacity to reject cultural deficit explanations of educational outcomes. Although the school cannot be held responsible for social prejudices grounded in historical experiences, teachers are likely
to continue being held responsible for the underachievement of particular groups of children (see Stone, 1981). This is because teachers have still to make their position clear. Is it their task to enhance or hinder social change? We may celebrate the educational "achievements" of Nigerian children as we do those of Asian children (except, of course, Bangladeshis—see Swann, 1985), but as the evidence in this present research confirms, minority children who are likely to be successful are those whose parents have already acquired a certain level of cultural capital, educational respectability and/or middleclassness. Nigerian children may be doing well according to current comprehensive school standards (13.7% gaining 5 or more GCE 'O' Level passes at Grade C or above—see Hargreaves, 1984:9). If we take this as our yardstick, then Nigerian children in general, eventually acquire good (as defined by their parents), but organizationally restricted educational opportunities.

In general, teachers tend to be inconsistent about the prerequisites of good educational practice. For example, in this present research, we have noted the following:

a) teachers claiming not to notice ethnic group membership yet relying heavily on family and ethnic group pathological explanations for educational underachievement (Chapters 7, 8 and 9);
b) believing that all cultures should be respected, yet showing by their attitudes and actions that as a group they are not really interested in the cultures of the ethnic minority children in their charge (Chapters 9 and 10);
c) paying lip service to the belief in the validity of other peoples' cultural norms and values yet holding up their white middle class cultural values as a standard for evaluating other cultures (Chapter 10; see also Chapters 5 and 6);
d) claiming to treat children alike yet being vigorously involved in curriculum differentiation which corresponds to the manner in which British social groups are stratified (Chapter 7);
e) stressing the importance of teaching ethnic minority children the skills to succeed in this country, yet turning a deaf ear to children's educational ambitions once they aspire above a particular job ceiling (Chapter 7; see also Section 6.3).

Despite these structural and attitudinal constraints grounded in the operationalization of the education system by teachers socialized into processing children according to their family and ethnic background, Nigerian children tended to be given (not without a struggle) the opportunity to acquire high level school knowledge. However, the tendency of teachers to ignore the interactional context of schooling leads one to conclude that Nigerian children could have been schooled under a more favourable educational environment.
What could be termed good educational practice as it specifically concerns the education of ethnic minority children has been indicated above (Chapter 2; see also Little and Willey, 1981). However, no appreciable educational change appears to have occurred. Nearly two decades after the first official enquiry into the educational underachievement of ethnic minority children, Swann (1985) confirms that West Indian children are still doing badly at school.

ILEA (amongst others) prides itself at being at the vanguard of progressive educational practice. It's Hargreaves Report (1984) contains very practical suggestions for improving the process of secondary schooling. For example, in terms of banding and subject choice Hargreaves (1984:36) argues for 'whole-curriculum planning' which takes into account the need to establish coherence and balance both within and between subjects. It is hoped that this will reduce the number of subject choices children have to make and simultaneously enhance their access to broader based school knowledge. Clough and Davis (1984) believe that interdepartmental consultations, especially on organizational matters related to assessment, will encourage the development of a more coherent process of assessment which will reflect more accurately what the pupil has learned. Furthermore, Hargreaves (1984:108) suggests that teachers need regular in-service training to enable them to respond adequately to current educational thought and innovation. In addition to these micro-structural improvements to the situational context of schooling, there needs also to be a more critical evaluation of the role of education in an industrial society such as Britain.

Those interested in enhancing social mobility for all children irrespective of their family and/or ethnic background need to discover a means, not just of tackling differentiation within the education system, but within society at large. In the absence of any evidence of fundamental change in British society (see David, 1980; Goldthorpe et al. 1980) it is unlikely that teachers can achieve a radicalization of the education system in a manner that will challenge the very foundations on which their society is based.

It is felt generally, that research findings rarely have much effect on teacher subculture because teachers tend not to read academic research (Spindler, 1982; Hargreaves, 1980; see also Wilson, 1979). Moreover, some teachers find it difficult to discover ways in which they can best adapt research findings and recommendations to their own particular school situation. They typically cling to the liberalism inherent in 'doing your own thing' in the classroom. However, the political nature of education (Freire, 1972) requires teachers to approach their jobs in a less intuitive manner (Hargreaves, 1980). Many teachers are very quick to criticize both
children's home background and incompetent school managers, but fail to evaluate their role in the operation of the education system. Hence, the education crisis is not only a reflection of the political mood of the time, but an indictment of the ability of teachers to challenge inadequate educational practice.

We have seen how one teacher was capable of dissuading members of his teaching group from taking a particular subject (Section 7.4) and how another, through the adoption of sales techniques, was able to delay the academic and occupational progress of another pupil by persuading her to take a subject far removed from her intended career. While teachers reasons for engaging in such practices are understandable, their need to achieve some level of job satisfaction (by teaching bright pro-school children) needs to be achieved through other means.

The ILEA is committed to multi-ethnic education in the belief that this will provide a relevant and interesting curriculum which will enhance the educational motivation and achievement of all children who live in a multicultural society. Yet at the time of this present research (1982), neither school had a multi-ethnic school policy. Both schools did have a list of their aims and objectives which included amongst other items, the education of children to the best of their ability. However, the process of schooling is geared towards educating children within specific organizational limits (for example, timetabling constraints) and the teachers' own subjective assessment of children's educational progress.

The particular role of education as a means for the acquisition of the skills/qualifications needed in any industrial society ensures that children will continue to be prepared for particular occupational roles. Given that this is the reality of the relationship between education and society, it is argued that the belief in schooling as an egalitarian process is over optimistic. It is suggested that one of the few avenues for tackling the rigidity of the process of education is for teachers to be actively engaged in ensuring that all those children who wish to acquire school knowledge are helped in every possible way to do so. This, of course, means that as a group teachers will have to resocialize themselves so that knowledge of a child's family or ethnic background does not serve as an impediment to the acquisition of high level school knowledge.

Liberal teachers may be critical of the single-minded, instrumental perception of schooling that Nigerian parents have, but educational qualifications and employment opportunities are still inextricably linked in both Nigerian and British societies. As long as this is the case, Nigerian and other instrumentally minded parents are likely to continue coming into open conflict with teachers who, through their teaching pedagogy, convey the impression to parents that they are in some way hindering the educational progress of their children.
Nigerian parents' insistence on a class, occupational and status conscious process of socialization worked to increase some Nigerian children's educational ambitions. Without this parental zeal Nigerian children might have adopted subcultural attitudes which while rejecting an education for menial jobs would have looked to occupational roles firmly embedded in semi-skilled work opportunities (Willis, 1977; Pryce, 1979).

The good news is that most of the Nigerian children examined in this present research are "doing well" in school. The stark reality is that this present research confirms, along with other educational research, that there has been no fundamental change in the manner in which children are processed through, in this case, the British education system.

11.4 Suggestions for further research

The overwhelming educational research focus in Britain on Asian and West Indian children has left a gap in the knowledge we have of the educational experience of other ethnic minority children. This present research has attempted to redress this imbalance by investigating the schooling experiences of Nigerian children. It has also demonstrated the level of insight into social processes that qualitative research can achieve. In particular, it has shown that children approach the learning situation according to a complex process of interpreting, in their own unique manner, what it means to be at school.

Perhaps more crucial to a further understanding of the processes within schools that give rise to different educational outcomes is the ambiguity that surrounds what it means to be 'doing well' in relation to the acquisition of different levels of school knowledge. Hence, further research is required to discover how teachers come to assign the label, 'doing well' to particular pupils.

The interactive nature of schooling involves building up an understanding of and negotiating a response to the struggle inherent in the process of acquiring a "good" education. If teachers' awareness of the situational context in which they teach is to be enhanced, further research needs to examine the experiential reality of schooling for other minority children. For example, it is generally believed that Chinese and Greek parents (see Tomlinson, 1984) are not particularly concerned about their children's educational achievements because their children, on leaving school, tend to join the family business. In another context, a teacher quoted a Chinese boy who wrote in a school composition that when he gets home, his real life begins. It is hoped that the more educational research focuses on social processes and the manner in which actors'
interpretations of social situations are arrived at, the more teachers will recognize that they need to be armed with knowledge that will enable them to cope better with the complexities of teaching in a class-based, multicultural society.

In view of the comparatively small numbers that will be involved in research into the educational experiences of other ethnic minority children, it is suggested that the main tenets of ethnographic research methodology (see Chapters 3 and 4) together with interpretive analysis, be adopted. It is acknowledged that quantitative research methods are necessary to explore wider educational issues or to achieve some form of representativeness, but it is difficult to understand the outcomes of schooling without at first gaining knowledge of the specific processes involved in schooling children from a wide variety of ethnic, family, socio-economic and historical backgrounds.
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ABBREVIATIONS

AEPJ Association of Educational Psychologists' Journal
AER American Economic Review
AERJ American Educational Research Journal
AJS American Journal of Sociology
ASR American Sociological Review
BAAF British Agencies for Adoption and Fostering
BERJ British Educational Research Journal
BJEP British Journal of Educational Psychology
BJER British Journal of Educational Research
BJES British Journal of Educational Sociology
BJS British Journal of Sociology
BJSE British Journal of Sociology of Education
CCCS Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies
CE Comparative Education
CERI Centre for Educational Research and Innovation
CIAED Centre for Information and Advice on Educational Disadvantage (now defunct; library stock transferred to London Institute of Education)
CPAG Child Poverty Action Group
CRC Community Relations Commission
CRE Commission for Racial Equality
CSCS Commonwealth Students Childrens Society
CSPSSI Council of the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues
CSSH Comparative Studies in Society and History
DES Department of Education and Science
EEC European Economic Community
EJSP European Journal of Social Psychology
HER Harvard Education Review
HMSO Her Majesty's Stationery Office
ILEA Inner London Education Authority
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<td>NCCL</td>
<td>National Council for Civil Liberties</td>
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<td>Nigerian Educational Research Council</td>
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<td>OECD</td>
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<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization</td>
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</table>
### Population Present on Census Night 1971-81: Country of Birth

The table below shows the population present on Census Night 1971-81, classified by country of birth and sex for Great Britain. The figures have been rounded to the nearest 5 and are as presented in the 1971 Country of Birth tables.

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<th>Country of Birth</th>
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<th>1981</th>
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<td>Women</td>
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<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>2,359,510</td>
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<tr>
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<td>3,061,932</td>
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</table>

**Notices:**

- Figures for 1971 have been rounded to the nearest 5 and are as presented in the 1971 Country of Birth tables.
- The source is OPCS (Census, 1981) Country of Birth, Table 8, p. 166.

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**Notes:**

- Figures for 1971 have been rounded to the nearest 5 and are as presented in the 1971 Country of Birth tables.
- The source is OPCS (Census, 1981) Country of Birth, Table 8, p. 166.
# Appendix 1a: Census figures (1971) Nigerian population in Greater London

| a                | AN | TM | S   | M   | W   | D   | TF   | S   | M   | W   | D   |
|------------------|----|----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Greater London   | 18545 | 10385 | 2730 | 7540 | 35  | 80  | 8160 | 1685 | 6365 | 65  | 45  |
| Barnet           | 495  | 280 | 120 | 160 | x   | x   | 215  | 95  | 120 | x   | x   |
| Brent            | 940  | 550 | 150 | 395 | x   | 5   | 390  | 75  | 300 | 5   | 5   |
| Bromley          | 170  | 90  | 40  | 45  | x   | x   | 80   | 50  | 30  | x   | x   |
| Camden           | 700  | 425 | 170 | 250 | x   | 5   | 275  | 90  | 180 | x   | 5   |
| Croydon          | 290  | 155 | 55  | 105 | x   | x   | 135  | 60  | 75  | x   | x   |
| Ealing           | 230  | 135 | 40  | 95  | x   | x   | 95   | 25  | 70  | x   | x   |
| Enfield          | 110  | 65  | 30  | 35  | x   | x   | 40   | 15  | 25  | x   | x   |
| Greenwich        | 195  | 110 | 30  | 80  | x   | x   | 85   | 25  | 55  | x   | x   |
| Hackney          | 1685 | 920 | 175 | 735 | x   | 10  | 765  | 100 | 655 | 5   | 5   |
| Hammersmith      | 745  | 420 | 90  | 320 | x   | 5   | 325  | 45  | 275 | 5   | 5   |
| Harlingey         | 1290 | 735 | 200 | 530 | x   | 5   | 550  | 115 | 425 | 10  | 5   |
| Hounslow         | 100  | 60  | 25  | 35  | x   | x   | 40   | 15  | 25  | x   | x   |
| Islington        | 1850 | 1015| 220 | 790 | 5   | 5   | 835  | 120 | 700 | 5   | 5   |
| Kensington and Chelsea | 690 | 385 | 130 | 755 | x   | x   | 305  | 95  | 205 | x   | x   |
| Lambeth          | 2700 | 1475| 320 | 1135| 5   | 15  | 1225 | 190 | 1020| 5   | 10  |
| Lewisham         | 1105 | 595 | 140 | 450 | x   | x   | 510  | 90  | 415 | 5   | x   |
| Merton           | 140  | 80  | 25  | 50  | x   | x   | 60   | 15  | 45  | x   | x   |
| Newham           | 480  | 270 | 60  | 210 | x   | x   | 210  | 25  | 180 | 5   | x   |
| Southwark        | 1165 | 685 | 125 | 505 | x   | 5   | 525  | 65  | 450 | x   | x   |
| Tower Hamlets    | 170  | 105 | 20  | 80  | x   | x   | 65   | 10  | 55  | x   | x   |
| Waltham          | 325  | 185 | 40  | 145 | x   | x   | 135  | 25  | 110 | x   | x   |
| Wandsworth       | 1800 | 1025| 240 | 775 | x   | 10  | 775  | 120 | 650 | x   | x   |
| Westminster      |      |     |     |     |     |     |      |     |     |     |     |
| City of          | 670  | 405 | 135 | 255 | 5   | 10  | 265  | 75  | 185 | x   | x   |

**KEY:**
- **AN**: All Nigerian persons
- **TM**: Total Male
- **S**: Single
- **M**: Married
- **W**: Widowed
- **D**: Divorced
- **TF**: Total Female

Source: OPCS (Census, 1971) *Country of Birth*, Table 3, p.83.
### United Kingdom

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<th>Single</th>
<th>Married</th>
<th>Widowed</th>
<th>Divorced</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Single</th>
<th>Married</th>
<th>Widowed</th>
<th>Divorced</th>
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**United Kingdom**

Source: OPCS (Census, 1981) Country of Birth, Table 1, p. 2.
### Appendix 2a

**USUALLY RESIDENT POPULATION: country of birth by marital status by sex**

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<th>Single</th>
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Source: OPCS (Census, 1981) Country of Birth, Table 1, p. 28.
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Appendix 3: CHILDREN'S INTERVIEW GUIDE

Introduction
Relevant preamble
Research concern
Elicit permission to conduct interview and use tape recorder

Factual
School subjects taking
Names of teachers and subjects taught
Performance in school subjects e.g. results of last test/exam
Age
School Year
Positions of responsibility
Place of primary schooling
Place of secondary schooling
Place of birth
Number of siblings
Place of residence
Parents' place of residence
Parents' language
Parents' Nigerian ethnic group
Visits to Nigeria

Schooling
Choice of subjects
Intended career. Parents and teacher expectations
Thoughts about coming to school
Choice of school
Child's perception of teachers
Child's interpretation of parents' perceptions of teachers
Child's analysis of own behaviour
Child's friendship making strategies
Child's perception of relationship with peer group
Parent's response to school friends
Views on multi-ethnic education

Social/Cultural
Relationship with parents and siblings (if any)
Responsibilities in the home
Food eaten at home
Language spoken at home
Ethnic/national identity - by self, by parents
Perceptions on parents' disciplinary methods
Contact with friends after school
Perceptions on living in London
Thoughts on going to /living in/returning to Nigeria
Child's interpretation of parents' statements on return

Give opportunity for reciprocal questioning
Appendix 4: TEACHERS’ INTERVIEW GUIDE

Introduction
Relevant preamble
Research concern
Elicit permission to use tape recorder

Factual
Number of Nigerian children taught
Length of teaching career
Length of teaching in school
Teacher's position of responsibility

Schooling
Perceptions on each child's academic motivation, ability and educational progress in specific subjects where applicable
Knowledge of child's previous school career
Assessment of educational progress of children born here or abroad
School's multi-ethnic composition
Interpretation of teaching role
Thoughts on meeting a Nigerian parent(s)
Interpretation of parents' hopes for their children
Assessment of each child's behaviour
Interpretation of parents' response to child's school behaviour
Ethnic minority children and special educational needs. Language
Expression of school's policy towards multi-ethnic education
Personal view of above
Personal operationalization or not of above
Aims and objectives of school
Assessment of the way school is run

Interactional
Perceptions on each child's social adjustment
Perceptions on each child's friendship group
Perceptions on child's relationship with teachers
Assessment of child's peer group role

Cultural
Knowledge of ethnicity and family background
Assessment of 'Nigerian family'

Give opportunity for reciprocal questioning
Appendix 5: PARENTS' INTERVIEW GUIDE

Introduction
- Relevant preamble
- Research concern
- Permission to use tape recorder

Factual
- Child's school subjects
- Child's place(s) of schooling
- Child's place of birth
- Number of children
- Their place of birth and schooling
- Parents' length of stay here
- Occupation
- Housing ownership
- Employment
- Languages spoken
- Visits to Nigeria

Schooling
- Choice of school
- Choice of child's subjects. Methods. Feelings
- Child's attitude to school, to teachers
- Parents' interpretation of child's attitudes
- Parents' attitudes to teachers, to education process in school
- Views on CSE and 'O' levels
- Attitudes to child's school friends
- Child's reports on social interaction in school
- Parents' understanding of peer group relationships
- Views on multi-ethnic education

Social/Cultural
- Perceptions on teachers' knowledge of their ethnicity
- Interpretation of child's attitudes to ethnicity
- Parents' own attitudes
- Language spoken at home to spouse, to child
- Food eaten at home
- Methods of discipline
- Social relations with neighbours
- Assessment of relationship with child
- Child care - especially fostering/daily minding
- The going-home syndrome

Give opportunity for reciprocal questioning
Dear [Name],

Ms. Remi Ososanwo is a research student at the University of Surrey, Guildford. She is examining the educational experience of Nigerian children in the British education system; this research has received approval from the I.L.E.A.

Ms. Ososanwo has visited the school and met some of the staff here. She will be carrying out research in the school for a period of 6 - 8 weeks. In order to broaden her research she is very interested in meeting Nigerian children in the school, to hear their views and ask their opinions.

Ms. Ososanwo is herself Nigerian and the research she is doing is likely to be beneficial to us and the children. If it is agreeable to you, she would like to speak to your child/children about matters relating to their schooling. Obviously, you are not under any obligation to agree to this, but your support would be appreciated and very valuable to all of us concerned with the education of children. If you are willing to let your child/children take part in the research please let me know as soon as possible by filling in and returning the section below.

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]

Head (MB) Deputy Head (SG)

*Wording variations within each school were not significant.

I shall be pleased to let my child/children take part in the research.

I shall not be pleased to let my child/children take part in the research.

Signed [Name]

Name of Parent/Guardian

(MB) Son's Name ___________________________ Form ________

(SG) Daughter's Name
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Appendix 8: TRANSCRIPTION OF MOST QUESTIONS ASKED DURING AN INTERVIEW WITH A SIXTH FORM GIRL

Hi, I'm Remi from the University of Surrey. Do you know where Surrey is?... Well, it's... I'll just tell you a little about the research and you can ask me whatever questions you like. You can also tell me if you'd like to take part. You don't have to say 'yes'. If you say you don't want to take part that's fine. Your teachers or parents won't know your reply. It's nothing to do with them whether you want to or not. It's just between you and me O.K.?...

Mainly, I would like to ask you about this school et cetera. But first of all I would like to ask you about the subjects you're doing:

1. Which subjects are you taking at the moment? Uh-huh. How did you decide to do these? (probing)

2. What are your feelings about the subjects you are taking?
   Mm. Let's take each of the subjects you are doing. What does (teacher) think of your performance in Maths? How do you feel about these (teachers comments)? (further probing)

3. What do you think about coming to school? Really? (laugh) What makes you describe it like this? (probing)

4. Oh! by the way how old are you?..You're in the sixth form aren't you?

5. Have you any brothers or sisters? How many? Are they all still at school? What is he (brother) doing? Which schools did they go to?

6. Where did you do your primary schooling? Have you schooled anywhere else in this country or elsewhere?

7. How did you decide to come to this school? (probing)

8. I can't remember how I chose my school. I think my Mum and Dad wanted me to go there. I wanted to go there too, but in those days you had to pass an exam first. The school I went to was supposed to be the best... I came to this country after I'd done my first University Degree. I grew up in Nigeria. Where were you born?

9. Where do you live?
   Are your parents here with you?
   I've only got my brother here with me and we've been here for about six/seven years now. Do you know how long your parents have been here? My brother and I have been studying all this time. Are your parents working or studying? (probing)

10. If someone asked you who you were and where you came from what would you say? Why would you say that? (probing continued)

11. What do you think your parents would say if they were asked the same questions about you? (probing)

12. What do your parents think about the teachers in this school? (probing)

13. Apart from Open Day and Parent-Teacher Association meetings have either of your parents come to school to see any of the teachers about your school work or behaviour? What happened? (probing)
14. What did you feel about her coming to this school? (probing)

15. What do you think about... (I name teachers in different positions of responsibility and we also discuss subject teachers)?

16. What happens if you have to go and see (top and/or middle management teachers)? (probing)

17. What do you do when you have difficulties with your school work? (probing)

18. Could you write down the names of your teachers and the subjects they teach you? (paper and pencil provided)
As she wrote these down, she was asked what she thought about each teacher and subjects not previously discussed.

19. How do you behave towards your teachers? (probing)
How do they behave towards you? (probing)
What do you think about this? (probing)
Do you and your friends talk about these things?
What do they think? (probing)

20. What sort of disciplinary procedures are used in this school? (we discuss lateness, disruptive behaviour and non completion of homework).
What do you think about these sorts of punishment? (probing)
Have you ever been punished?
What did you think about it?

21. If you were a teacher and you had to write a report about your behaviour in school generally how would you describe it? (probing)

22. How do you get along with other children in your class? (probing)

23. Are all the children in your class British? (probing)

24. How do you decide to be friends with someone? (probing)

25. Do you get into fights or arguments with your friends?
What about?
What happened?
What about with other children?
What name was she called?
Can you remember any other names used? (probing)
Why do you think this (name-calling) happens?
What do you do?
What names?
Why? (probing)
How would you describe the way children from different places get on in this school? (probing)

26. What would you like to do when you finish in the sixth form?
What do your parents think you should do? Why?
What about your teachers? Why?

27. Have you been to see your Career's Adviser?
What did you think about the advice given? (probing)
Appendix 8 contd.

28. What type of employment would you like to be in when you leave school?

29. Have you ever thought about going to Nigeria to finish your education? (probing)
   What do your parents think?
   Do you know if your parents will be going back to Nigeria? (probing)

30. What part of Nigeria do your parents come from? (probing)

31. Have you ever been there?
   What did you think about it?
   What about the people you met? (further probing)

32. Have you seen any films or television programmes about Africa in general or Nigeria in particular?
   What did you think of it?
   Did you get the same impression from the programme as you got when you visited Nigeria? (probing)

33. How do you feel about living in this country and your parents coming from another country? (probing)

34. What language do your parents speak to each other at home?
   What language do they speak to you?
   What do you feel about this? (further probing)

35. What sort of books do you like reading? (probing)
   Have you read any books by an African or Nigerian author?
   What did you think of it? Where did you get it from?
   What sort of impression did it give you about Africa?

36. Have you heard about 'Black Studies' or 'Multi-ethnic education'?
   How did you hear about it?
   What do you think it means?
   Do you have this sort of idea in this school? (probing)

37. What do you do when you get home after school? (probing)

38. What would your parents say if you wanted to go out to the cinema, disco or park et cetera? (probing)

39. How would you describe your parents in terms of the way they behave towards you? (probing)

40. If you had a personal problem and you had to tell someone who would you tell? (probing)

41. What are your feelings towards your parents? (probing)
   How do you think they feel towards you? (probing)

42. What do you do when your parents say something that you do not agree with or tell you to do something you don't want to do? (probing)

43. Is there anything that you would like to tell me about you and your family or friends, the school, anything at all?
44. How did you feel when you first came to this school? (probing)

45. Do you take school dinner? (probing)
What sort of food do you eat at home? (probing)
Who does the cooking? (probing)

46. Does the school organize any after-school activities?
Which ones do you attend? (probing)
Do you have a hobby? (probing)

47. Have you held any positions of responsibility in this school? (probing)

48. Is there any other thing that you would like to tell me about or ask me - about myself, the research, Nigeria, this country?

Thank you very much for answering my questions. If you do have any other things to say to me or ask me about I'm usually here or in the staffroom. I'll be here for the rest of the term and some of next term so I'll probably see you around before I leave. In any case I hope you enjoy the rest of your stay in this school and thanks once again.
Appendix 9: TRANSCRIPTION OF MOST QUESTIONS ASKED DURING AN INTERVIEW WITH A PARENT

As I said I'm doing some research on the education of Nigerian children in London. Most of the questions I'll be asking you are to do with (X's) experience at school, but in order to get an overall picture I hope you won't mind my asking you some questions about the family as a whole. Please feel free to tell me if you don't want to answer any of the questions.

1. First of all how would you describe (X's) school performance and behaviour in the school? (probing)

2. What subjects is she taking at the moment? How did she come to be doing these? (probing)

3. What does she want to do when she leaves school? (probing)

4. What are your hopes for her? (probing)

5. How do you think the school is helping to fulfil, helping her on her way? (probing)

6. How did she come to attend SG? (probing)

7. What do you think of the school now? (probing)

8. Did she have all her schooling in this country?

9. By the way where was she born?

10. Were all your children born here?

11. I see. So how long have you been here? Did you come at the same time as your husband? (probing)

12. I don't want to stray off the point, but why did you leave Nigeria to come here? (probing)

13. So what are your plans? Are you going back? (probing)

14. Are your children going to finish their education in Nigeria then? (probing)

15. Have you met any of (X's) teachers? (probing)

16. What do you think about discipline in the school? How do you discipline your children at home? (probing)

17. Have you always lived in this house? What do you think about living in this area of London? (probing)

18. When (X) comes back from school what does she do? What does she think about having to help in the home? (probing)
Appendix 9 contd.

19. How do you divide your time between looking after your children and going to work? (probing)

20. Was she ever fostered or daily minded? (probing)

21. What was your husband doing at the time?

22. Do you have people you would describe as friends living nearby? How did you come to know them? (probing)

23. If someone asked you what your nationality was what would you say? What about if they asked you about (X's) nationality? (probing)

24. What sort of social functions do you attend? If (X) asked you if she could go to a party or disco, visit a friend - what would you say? Does she visit school friends? Do they come here? What do you think of her friends? (further probing)

25. Has she been in any trouble outside school, for example, with the police? What about in school? Does she come to tell you about things that happened in school? (probing)

26. What language do you speak to her at home? (probing)

27. How many times has she been to Nigeria? What did she think of it? What about you what did you think? (probing)

28. How do you feel about being Nigerian and living in this country? What do you think (X) feels about it? (probing)

29. Do you know of any incidents of a racial type that have occurred in the school? Was (X) involved? (probing)

30. Have you personally experienced any forms of racial prejudice? What happened? (probing)

31. Is there anything that you would like to ask me about or tell me?

Thank you very much for giving me so much of your time. Would it be acceptable to you for me to get in touch with you some other time to clarify some points? ... and please don't hesitate to get in touch with me if you have anything more to say. Thanks once again.
During this interview I would like to ask you questions about Nigerian children in your school and in particular about Nigerian pupils that you have direct contact with, that is, both academic and pastoral or in any other manner. I would like to start first of all by asking you about Nigerian pupils in relation to their school work and school behaviour. Right.

1. Could you tell me how many Nigerian children you have taught during your teaching career in this school? How did you know they were Nigerian? I have a list here with me. Have you taught any of these children? Is there any child whom you know or think is Nigerian, but is not on this list?

2. How long have you been teaching in this school?

3. What are your perceptions of the academic motivations of the pupils you have taught? (probing)

The following questions were asked about each child this teacher had contact with:

4. How would you describe his ability in English - spoken, written, reading? (probing)

5. So how would you describe his educational progress in English? (probing)

6. Do you know if (he) began his secondary schooling in this school? Did (another child) have all his primary schooling here?

7. Did you notice any differences or similarities between them (those who had their primary schooling here and those who did not)? (probing)

8. From your own experience are these differences maintained? (probing)

9. How would you describe the relationship between the Nigerian pupils you know and other pupils? (probing)

10. How would you describe this school's multi-ethnic composition?... Just your perception as you come in and go to classes and move around the school.

11. Have you taught in any other school that you would describe as multi-ethnic? (probing)

12. How would you compare that school to this one? (probing)

13. What do you think about teaching in this school? (probing)

14. Have you met any Nigerian parents? (probing)

15. How would you describe (name of child) parents' interests in (X's) school work behaviour? (probing)
Appendix 10 contd.

16. How would you compare these interests in relation to those of other parents in the school? (probing)

17. Could you describe your experience of the Nigerian parents you have met when they have come to school either on the school's request or their own initiative? (probing)

18. What sort of educational or behavioural difficulties did you have with these children? (probing)

19. What sort of expectations then would you say the parents have of the school?

20. What do you think about the suggestion that ethnic minority children have special educational needs? (probing)

21. What is this school's policy towards multi-ethnic education?(probing)

22. What are your personal thoughts on multi-ethnic education? (probing)

23. How do you operationalize these in your teaching? (probing)

24. Oh! by the way how many years teaching experience have you? Do you mind telling me how old you are?

25. What do you think the aims and objectives of this school are? (probing)

26. What about the way the school is run? (probing)

27. Would you like to see any changes in the school? (probing)

28. Are there any questions that you would like to ask me or any points you would like to make?

Thanks very much for making time available for this interview... When I play back the interview there may be some points that need clarification. Is it okay if I get back in touch with you?... Thanks very much.
Appendix 11: 'SITTINGS'

FIG. 4.7: Maths Lesson 'Sittings'

Notebook extract
...children carried on with their work ...
'top group'. Mostly attentive - slight bit of
chattering, but not enough to be defined as
distracting attention. Chatter
mainly purposeful to
task at hand.

Notebook extract
Talk mainly initiated
by teacher. Talk to
teacher at start of
research revealed
s/he pro grammar
school education.
... Teacher comment
"you (E) are not
expected to make
mistakes like that
which (A) makes.
(A) = Asian pupil
just promoted from
'middle band' to
'top' band.

KEY
A - Asian origin
E - European origin
N - Either or both parents Nigerian
W - West Indian origin
T - Teacher
X - Empty space
R - Researcher
### Appendix 12: FORMAL CLASSROOM EXCHANGE

<table>
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<tr>
<th>T.D.Q.</th>
<th>C.V.A.</th>
<th>C.A.E./R.</th>
<th>TACKQ (SP)</th>
<th>TACKQ (N-SP)</th>
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</table>

P.3 & 4  FRENCH LESSON: Reading / Comprehension

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| E      | /     | /     | /     | /     |
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| W      |       |       |       |       |
| A      |       |       |       |       |
| E      |       |       |       |       |
| E      |       |       |       |       |
| A      |       |       |       |       |
| NI     |       |       |       |       |
| E      |       |       |       |       |
| E      |       |       |       |       |

chorus

chorus

**KEY**

- **T.D.Q.** - Teacher asks pupil direct question
- **C.V.A.** - Child volunteers answer
- **C.A.E./R.** - Child asks for explanation (e)
- **TACKQ(SP)** - Child makes a request (r)
- **TACKQ(N-SP)** - Teacher asks a specific child to keep quiet
- **T.N.Q.** - Teacher asks the class as a whole to keep quiet
- **T.N.Q.** - Total number of questions asked by teachers

The above table shows that during the first two lesson periods (P.1 and P.2) the teacher asked a total number of ten questions to which answers were expected. Seven of these questions were asked in the first period.
Three pupils volunteered answers to these questions and the teacher directly asked one of the pupils to answer one of the questions. During the second period the teacher asked only three questions and two pupils volunteered answers to these questions. However, the second was different in activity from the first because nine pupils initiated communication with the teacher; eight of these were to clear misunderstandings and one was a facilitating request, for example, "can I have a pencil?"

The Maths Lesson can be compared with the French Lesson (P.3 and P.4) where the teacher initiated all the communication with the pupils. In 14 instances out of 18 these questions were directed at specific pupils. Two questions were answered in chorus (three or more pupils at a time) and two pupils volunteered answers. As the Keys to Figures 4.7 and 4.8 (Appendix 11) show pupils in Appendix 12 are also identified by their perceivable ethnic origins. This was primarily to facilitate subsequent analysis of the data since the research focus is on children from a particular ethnic group. Appendix 12 also shows that during the French Lesson the Nigerian pupil made one formal verbal contribution to the lesson, even though this was initiated by the teacher. During the Maths lesson the Nigerian pupil was not asked nor did the pupil volunteer to make a verbal contribution to the lesson. This does not necessarily mean that the pupil did not partake in the lesson. If this was observed to be the case, a note was recorded to that effect but on a separate sheet of paper which was later attached to the observation schedule.

The observation schedules were used as reminders of 'classroom interaction'. Additionally, they were particularly useful in clarifying and verifying the accounts of actions made by Nigerian pupils and their teachers in respect of classroom behaviour.
Appendix 13: First Impressions

The following account gives a detailed description of the first three days in each school.

Sentar Garlz School

Day One

With the help of directions from a pupil I found my way to the school secretary's office and waited to meet the deputy head (TM:18G) with whom I had a 9.30 a.m. appointment. TM:18G said s/he was interested to hear about the research, but s/he had been cautious enough to telephone the ILEA to verify the approval even though a copy of the approval had been attached to my first communication with him/her. The next half an hour was spent on a 'familiarization' tour of the school. We interrupted a few classes of teachers whom TM:18G thought might have some information on Nigerian children. This resulted in an introduction to a fourth year Nigerian pupil (Yemisi) in an English lesson. The English teacher, PT:39G suggested that I would 'like Yemisi', but before s/he could say why TM:18G interrupted with 'we don't have many Nigerian pupils do we?' PT:39G did not have any idea how many and TM:18G estimated that the school probably had about 'twelve, perhaps fifteen'. PT:39G smiled and nodded. At this point TM:18G thought it might be sensible to try and find out the number of Nigerian pupils at the school in a more structured manner. S/he was not quite sure how this was to be done, because, according to him/her the school did not keep records of pupils' ethnic origins. I suggested looking at the register of pupils' names and that it might be possible to identify some Nigerian pupils by their first or surnames. TM:18G suggested we do this after break. In the meantime we walked round the school and met three other teachers with whom we had a coffee break. TM:18G noticed one of the social science teachers (PT:37G) and invited the teacher over. We had a general discussion on how this present research was to be carried out in the school.

The discussion touched on the numbers of Nigerian pupils in the school. PT:37G did not know and did not wish to hazard a guess and TM:18G admitted that it was something s/he had never really thought about. I sensed that TM:18G did not feel comfortable about this admission and therefore twice sought reassurance from the other teachers at the table about the non-keeping of ethnic records. Comments were muttered, but nothing was said for or against. Two of the teachers got up and left. An appointment was made with PT:37G for the coming Friday. TM:18G went to return our trays, but got caught in a short conversation. One of the teachers at the table seized this opportunity to inform me that s/he was already aware of this present research from one of the teachers at MB. TM:18G came back and we went to his/her office to look through the form lists.

Definitely identifiable Nigerian names were written down (together with suspected Nigerian names) and listed according to their year. At the end of the hour 31 names were on the list. I suggested meeting each form teacher and going through their form lists to ascertain if these were all the Nigerian pupils in the school. TM:18G did not seem to approve of this idea and observed that there were enough names on the list to get on with. As s/he saw me to the door TM:18G spotted another top management teacher (TM:3G) who definitely knew that there were three Nigerian sisters in one particular year and possibly three or four others. An appointment was made with him/her for the very next day and I left to keep an appointment at MB.

Day Two

I arrived just before 11 a.m. and even with the help of two pupils got 'lost'. Finally I managed to get to TM:3G with the aid of the careers
Appendix 13 contd.

teacher who expressed interest in this present research. S/he described
where his/her office was and invited me to come and see him/her whenever
possible. TM:3G and I spent about an hour going through the strengths and
weaknesses of three sisters and one other Nigerian pupil. There were still
seven other girls to talk about and a second appointment was made for the
next day. After this I wandered around the school and went into the
cafeteria for lunch. One of the teachers I had met the previous day asked
how the research was going. The other teachers at the table pointed out
that they did not know that a researcher was in the school. After lunch I
went to inform TM:18G of my presence in the school since I had been
conducting an interview all morning. I then went and sat down in the
staffroom for about one and a half hours. During that time eight teachers
came in and out of the staffroom. Two ventured half-a-smile and none said
a word to me. I thought of introducing myself, but those who did stay in
the staffroom were in groups of two or three. I hesitated to interrupt and
decided to leave just after 2.30 p.m.

Day Three

On arrival here at 9 a.m., TM:18G informed me that s/he had an
'interesting bit of information' for me. A teacher had sent him/her a
note which said, 'an interesting observation - there has been one Nigerian
on each of the last three school committees'. It was agreed that this was
indeed interesting. Permission was sought to take another look at the form
lists. It had occurred to me that some Nigerian pupils might have English
surnames, the most common of which I guessed (from personal knowledge) were
surnames such as Jones, David, Smith and Johnson. The names of children
with Nigerian Muslim sounding names were also noted. There were now 23
other names to verify in addition to the original list of 31. A list of
these names together with the names of their form tutors needed to be
compiled for easy reference. Meanwhile, I left to keep an 11 a.m.
appointment with PT:37G. We had a thirty minute discussion which centred
on the pros and cons of qualitative and quantitative research. Looking
through the list of 'Nigerian' names, he discovered that he had pastoral
responsibilities for two and was currently teaching another one of the
girls. He pointed out that he had suspected that one of the girls was not
West Indian because of her surname which he had guessed must be African.
He cautioned that I should not be surprised at his ignorance, because most
of them (teachers) 'did not have a clue' and he went on to apologize for
any embarrassment caused by TM:18G's lack of knowledge on Day One. After
this meeting I went into the staffroom which was empty and quickly made
notes on the recent discussion with PT:37G. At 1.40 p.m. TM:3G and I
continued our discussion of the Nigerian pupils in the sixth form. In
describing the non-academic aspects of the Nigerian girls under discussion
TM:3G used such adjectives as 'friendly', 'well-liked', 'very popular',
'quite delightful', 'outspoken', 'very quiet', 'helpful', 'tremendously
popular', 'a bit of a devil', 'always on the defensive', 'good leadership
quality', 'dresses in amazing attire', 'seduces people - especially me',
'very keen on sports' and 'great character'. Academic descriptions of the
girls were less colourful: 'border line O Level material', 'limited
ability', 'serious language problem', 'unrealistic about her ability',
'high hopes', 'academically bright', 'very intelligent', 'works hard - is
frightened of (her) father' and 'good ability'. It was noted that TM:3G
seemed to have quite a friendly relationship with the girls. It was
arranged to meet as many Nigerian girls (in a particular year) as came in
on Monday. I then left for MB to keep an appointment.
Meedool Boiz School

Day One

Although this was the first visit to the school, one of the teachers had been met informally to discuss the research proposals. It had been arranged to meet MM:37B who first introduced me to the head of the school (TM:36B) and then to one of the deputy heads (TM:41B). TM:36B spoke very briefly and wished me well. It soon became obvious that TM:41B had overall responsibility for my presence and actions in the school, but that MM:37B was in charge of organizational matters in respect of this present research. Thus MM:37B acted as a testing ground for my ideas before they were presented to TM:41B for approval. All the five teachers (four of them were middle management teachers) I met that afternoon had direct teaching responsibilities for some Nigerian pupils. This was more by accident than design. One of the teachers commented that he did not wish to be tape recorded unless he had a copy of the tape. He said something about not wishing to be misquoted. He also was 'not impressed' with current educational research and expressed reservations about research into the schooling of ethnic minority children.

Here, as in SG no one was quite sure of the number of Nigerian pupils in the school. Figures from five to ten were suggested and MM:37B was reminded by a middle management teacher of the language survey the school had undertaken the previous year. The results were retrieved from MM:37B's file. The results of the survey had indicated that eight boys spoke at least one Nigerian language. We thus began with the assumption that there may be up to eight Nigerian boys in the school. Two appointments were made to have informal discussions with teachers on the research concern. Another one of the teachers wanted to talk about one of the boys he was having problems with, but he wanted to do this before we had what he termed as a 'proper interview'. This was agreed to and it was hoped that this might begin to yield information about the particular concerns of MB as it related to Nigerian pupils.

Day Two

At 9 a.m. there was a brief discussion with MM:22B who wanted to know more about the research. He especially wanted to know what I was expecting to find. He was informed that this present research was not testing hypotheses. Rather, by using the method of discovery, the data was to be allowed, as it were, to speak for itself. The expression on his face suggested that he was used to research with more specific hypotheses. His verbal response was 'Humph!' After the discussion, I wandered around the school in order to become better acquainted with its geography. I noted that it was quite well spaced with a small playground. Older style buildings overlooked a deserted quadrangle. I left the school just after 10.15 a.m. in order to keep an appointment at SG.

Day Three

After spending the whole day in SG I arrived at MB at 3.30 p.m. to keep an appointment with MM:14B. This was to be an introductory meeting, but as the discussion went into more detail than originally arranged, he accepted the use of the tape recorder. He used the following terms to describe three boys and the school situation: 'limited speech', 'casual appearance, but neat', 'slow response to questions', 'occasionally disruptive', 'took long to settle down', 'gentle giant', 'strong', 'charming', 'caring home', 'Africans and Asians are the stable groups', 'Irish and especially Jamaicans are most unstable (in school)', 'has made considerable progress', 'high ability', 'needs to be pushed' and 'can do better'. This discussion lasted just over an hour and another appointment was made to complete the interview. After this I went into the staffroom and was surprised to see five teachers in the staffroom. I had assumed
that at 4.45 p.m. all teachers would have left the school. This was expressed to two of the teachers who pointed out that teachers were not always credited for the amount of time they spent in the school. It was later discovered that although a handful of teachers did stay behind after school it was more a process of unwinding before they went home rather than a commitment to the school. This excludes year, staff, departmental and other 'school' meetings which were usually held after the pupils had gone home.

Interim Reflections

Comparisons were made between the interviews and discussions with MM:14B and TM:3G and the short discussions with three other teachers. MM:14B appeared at ease when discussing Nigerian children and the concept of ethnic minorities within an English comprehensive setting. He also seemed to accept the need for research into the education of ethnic minority children and stated that he was 'keen' to help. The other teacher spoken to MM:22B struck me as "the sort of person who would try his best to give what he thought was the 'right answer" (from my field notes). He had pointed out that he did not have any personal viewpoints about multi-ethnic education, but that he understood that ILEA was 'doing something about it'.

The educational experience of Nigerian children was not a subject matter that the teachers I spoke to in both schools had given much thought to. They had thought about ethnic minority children, but according to MM:37B they had not been 'that specific'. It was felt that MM:37B might turn out to be a primary informant. He appeared very open and a considerable amount of background knowledge about the school had been gained. Conversely, there was no prior knowledge of any teacher in SG. Although TM:18G made me feel welcome, introduced me to various teachers and took me round the school, there was a more formal atmosphere than when 'doing the rounds' with MM:37B. Thus far TM:18G had taken charge of the organizational details of carrying out this present research in his/her school and it was assumed that s/he would continue to do so. The most unexpected happening had been the discovery of over 50 possible Nigerian girls in SG. This was indeed a windfall, but it also meant that the time scale of the research had to be adjusted to take in the extra number of pupils.

As my thoughts moved on from the pupils back to the teachers it was observed that the meeting with the head of MB had lasted only a couple of minutes and that although TM:18G had taken me to meet the head of SG school, there had been no verbal exchanges between us because a telephone conversation was being conducted. I had expected to speak to both heads for lengthier and more detailed discussion about this present research, but after three days in each school it seemed that the deputy heads were to handle the organizational aspects of the research.

The field work in the schools had begun and I looked forward to speaking to the children and eliciting their perceptions and understandings of schooling.
Appendix 14: Nigerian Languages in ILEA

TABLE 14.1: NIGERIAN BASED LANGUAGES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LANGUAGE</th>
<th>NO. OF CHILDREN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1981</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yoruba</td>
<td>757</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Igbo (Ibo)</td>
<td>525</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Efik</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hausa</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urhobo</td>
<td>23</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fulani</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ijo</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edo</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ishan</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nzema</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tiv</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unclassified</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1602</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In Division 10 where this present research was carried out, there were 89 Yoruba and 85 Igbo speakers in 1983. In 1981, there were 105 and 81 respectively. Only these two Nigerian based languages were specified.

Although the 1981 Survey was able to categorize most Nigerian based languages it received insufficient information for 160 Nigerian children who maintained they spoke 'Nigerian' - a non-existent language (Table 14.1). However, this was an improvement on the ILEA 1978 Language Survey where 580 children made a similar type of identification. The guidelines to the 1981 and 1983 surveys had emphasized that teachers should probe further if children named their country of origin instead of a specific language. Thus the 1983 Census showed that only 51 Nigerian languages were unclassified (Table 14.1). This is rather worrying as a substantial number of children are still not making precise identifications.

The ILEA Language Census (1983) recorded a total of 147 (131 in 1981) different languages spoken by ILEA children. These 147 were represented by 16% (50,353 pupils compared to 13.9% or 44,925 pupils in 1981) of the total ILEA school population. The census found that the level of competence in English varied between different languages and age groups. Thus, at five years of age only 20% (22.2% in 1981) of EAL speakers were rated as fully competent in English while 70% (71.4% in 1981) of 15 year olds were so rated. In 1981, 78.4% of German speakers as compared to 17.1% of Bengali and 8.9% of Vietnamese speakers were classified as fully competent in English.

The 1983 Census showed that Bengali and Vietnamese speakers still had the lowest proportion of fluent English speakers and suggested that this may be due to their relatively recent immigration.

Although the 1983 Census claimed to use the same coding system as that of 1981, to facilitate comparisons, there was not a break down of English language proficiency for African based languages. In 1983 language proficiency was classified by Division and shown in a histogram (p.13) Table 14.2 shows the 1981 survey breakdown while Table 14.3 shows that 83% of EAL speakers were represented by only 12 languages (p.7).

In a smaller scale language study Rosen and Burgess (1980:76) found that 97% of German and 94% of Yoruba speakers, in their research sample of 28 schools (Inner and Outer London areas), were fluent in English. The only West African based language Rosen and Burgess specified was Yoruba.
### TABLE 14.2: NIGERIAN BASED LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY IN ENGLISH BY PERCENTAGE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Beginners</th>
<th>2nd Stage</th>
<th>3rd Stage</th>
<th>Fluent</th>
<th>Total in Lang. Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yoruba</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>23.6</td>
<td>59.3</td>
<td>757</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Igbo (Ibo)</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>22.9</td>
<td>53.3</td>
<td>525</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other North African</td>
<td>21.7</td>
<td>25.9</td>
<td>24.3</td>
<td>28.0</td>
<td>189*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other West African (excluding TWI &amp; FANTE)</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>20.9</td>
<td>24.3</td>
<td>46.4</td>
<td>580</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Includes 50 speakers of Hausa - a northern Nigerian based language.

Source: ILEA Language Survey, 1981:27

### TABLE 14.3: SPEAKERS OF ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE IN ILEA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bengali</td>
<td>9098</td>
<td>18.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkish</td>
<td>4316</td>
<td>8.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gujerati</td>
<td>3632</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>3466</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greek</td>
<td>3410</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urdu</td>
<td>3326</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punjabi</td>
<td>3022</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>2825</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italian</td>
<td>2421</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>2345</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>2167</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portuguese</td>
<td>1861</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>8464</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>50353</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ILEA Language Census, 1983:7
## International migration: United Kingdom
Commonwealth country of last or next residence, England and Wales
1973 to 1982

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>All Commonwealth countries</th>
<th>Australia</th>
<th>Canada</th>
<th>New Zealand</th>
<th>African Commonwealth</th>
<th>Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka</th>
<th>Caribbean</th>
<th>Other Commonwealth</th>
<th>Old Commonwealth as a percentage of all Commonwealth countries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>103.4</td>
<td>31.5</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>22.7</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>40.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>101.4</td>
<td>30.3</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>21.7</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>40.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>102.5</td>
<td>29.5</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>21.3</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>40.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>96.4</td>
<td>25.7</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>19.3</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>39.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>96.7</td>
<td>25.1</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>38.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>83.8</td>
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<td>37.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>91.0</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>17.9</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>34.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>71.2</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>11.4</td>
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<td>5.2</td>
<td>17.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>67.8</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>18.0</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>30.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>67.8</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>17.3</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>29.9</td>
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### Balance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Balance</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>-3</td>
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<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>-7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>-28.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>-76.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>-21.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>-21.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>-30.2</td>
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</table>

## Appendix 16

### Migration by citizenship and sex

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Citizenship</th>
<th>Mid 1983 to mid 1984</th>
<th>Mid 1982 to mid 1983</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Inflow Persons</td>
<td>Males</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All citizenships</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-British</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European Community</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rest of Europe</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>North America</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rest of America</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australasia</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian sub-continent</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle East</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Old Commonwealth                   | 13             | 8     | 5       | 9            | 4     | 6       | +4               | 11             | 13               | -2               |
| New Commonwealth                   | 33             | 16    | 17      | 15           | 7     | 8       | +18              | 28             | 18               | +10              |
| Foreign                            | 63             | 33    | 29      | 38           | 20    | 18      | +25              | 60             | 35               | +24              |

Note: European Community includes Irish Republic; North America comprises USA and Canada; Australasia comprises Australia and New Zealand; Indian sub-continent comprises India, Bangladesh and Pakistan.

### Appendix 17

**International migration by citizenship**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>All citizenships</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inflow</td>
<td></td>
<td>183</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>194</td>
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<td>199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outflow</td>
<td></td>
<td>255</td>
<td>261</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>235</td>
<td>257</td>
<td>222</td>
<td>167</td>
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<tr>
<td>Balance</td>
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<td>-72</td>
<td>-70</td>
<td>-23</td>
<td>-29</td>
<td>-36</td>
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<td>-6</td>
<td>-79</td>
<td>-86</td>
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<td>+32</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>British citizens</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inflow</td>
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<td>87</td>
<td>80</td>
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<td>77</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outflow</td>
<td></td>
<td>186</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>122</td>
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<td><strong>Non-British citizens</strong></td>
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<td>109</td>
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<tr>
<td>Outflow</td>
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<td>70</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance</td>
<td></td>
<td>+40</td>
<td>+36</td>
<td>+43</td>
<td>+26</td>
<td>+29</td>
<td>+51</td>
<td>+57</td>
<td>+21</td>
<td>+22</td>
<td>+32</td>
<td>+46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: OPCS (1985) OPCS Monitor, MN 85/1, 29 January, p. 4.*