

Education under Apartheid

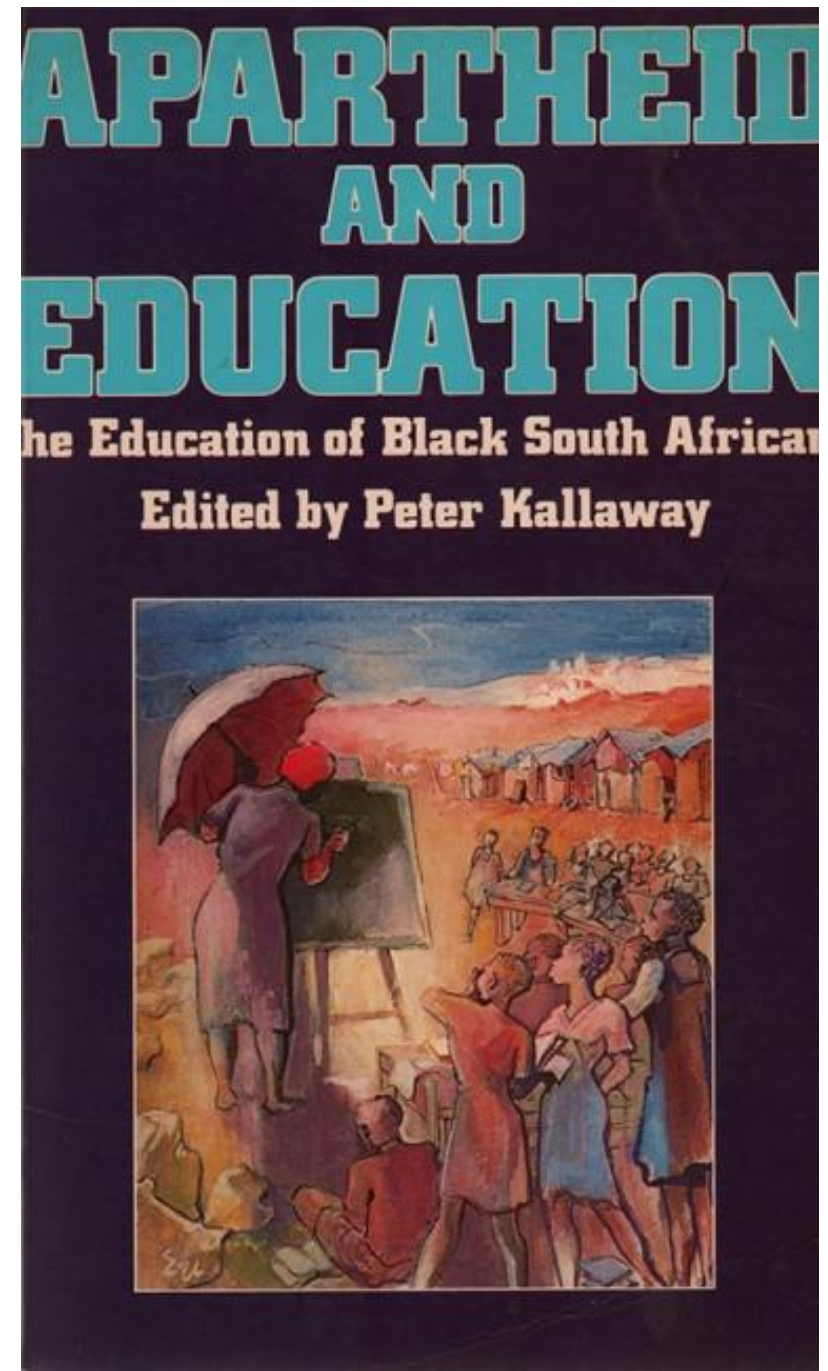
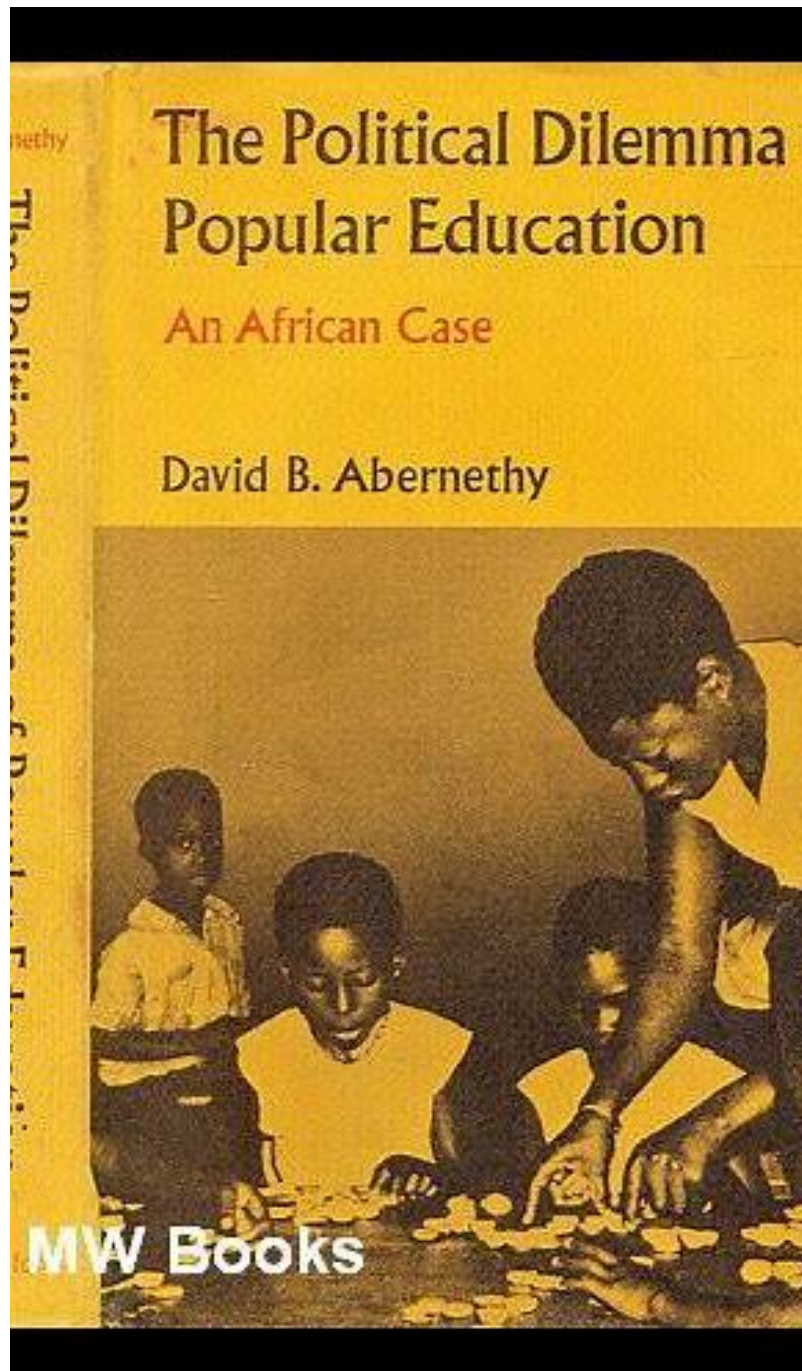
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Introduction

- Apartheid was a system of **institutionalized racial segregation** and discrimination in South Africa that began in 1948 and lasted until 1994.
- It was characterized by laws that enforced the separation of races in all aspects of life, including education, healthcare, and the public service.
- A range of Acts of Parliament between the creation of the Union of South Africa in 1910 up to especially **1948 when the National Party created the apartheid policy through its racist legislation.**
- Only whites could vote for white representatives and established a separate administration through legislation, and enforced a system of racial segregation in society which impacted severely on education.
- The system officially ended in 1994 with the election of Nelson Mandela as the first black president of South Africa, marking a momentous watershed in the country's history to a democratic multi-party state.



A brief background from the Apartheid days

The main legislation that changed education for the majority South Africans was the **Bantu Education Act of 1953** which established extended federal control to education for Africans, forcing Christian organized schools to give up control or close,

This was extended in the 1960s to include the educational institutions of all non-White students, through the **Coloured Education Act and Indian Education Act**

The end result was the expansion of large inequalities in education attainment by race. The creation of separate schools for students of different racial classifications was accompanied by very unequal regulations, curriculum, and funding

There were different mandatory levels of education, with much lower requirements for non-Whites during this period

Huge discrepancies in state support for different races across the board and especially in education.

Apartheid promoted race, class, gender and ethnic divisions and stressed separateness, rather than one nationhood.

Black teacher training was inferior, resources at black schools were limited with few needed support materials available.

The education policy and the curriculum in apartheid South Africa was in essence a sociopolitical state tool to promote the interests of the ruling white apartheid regime.

Inequality was connected to the goal of “separate development.”

A central feature of the apartheid ideology, this was the notion that all four racial groups should progress as separate and “comprehensive” societies

Separate spaces and services were created, extending from the establishment of different schools all the way up to the founding of separate political states.

In 1949 the Essellen Commission was tasked to deliberate on African education delivery. It recommended radical measures were needed to reform the 'Bantu' school system.

This resulted in a number of Acts such as the Bantu Education Act, 1953 (Act No. 47 of 1953) a segregation law that legislated for several aspects of the apartheid system. It brought African education under control of the government and extended apartheid to black schools.

It enforced racially-separated educational facilities and segregated South Africa's education system - dissimilar schools for dissimilar racial groups

The attrition and failure rate amongst a large number of learners are estimated at between 40 and 50% according to the National Policy Investigation into Education Support Services (National Education Policy Investigation: 1992).

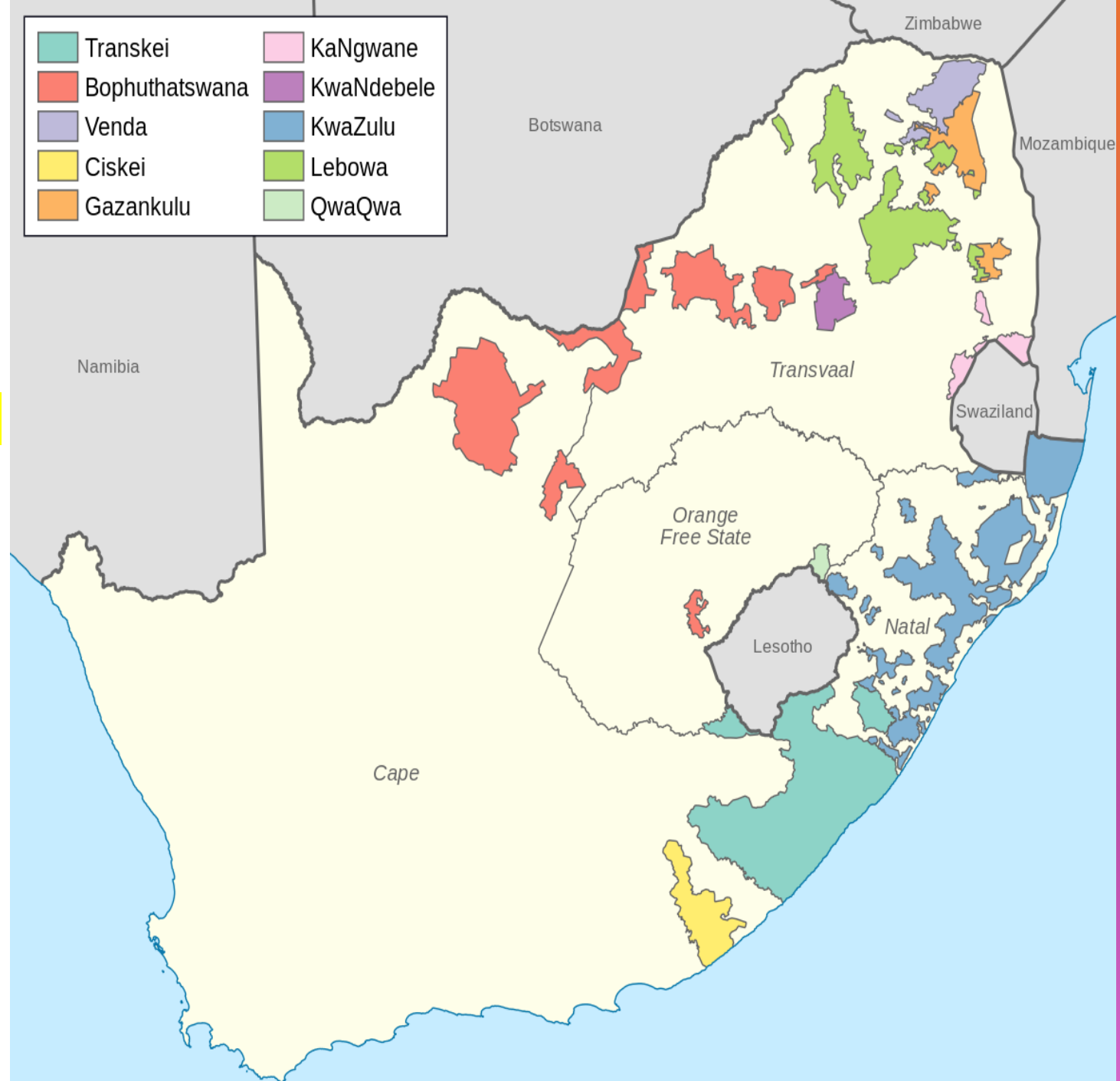
The government built no new high schools in Soweto between 1962 and 1971 and scholars were expected to move to their applicable homeland and had to attend newly constructed schools there.

- White schools accentuated academic subjects, while schools for Africans had far lower academic expectations, and emphasized more “practical” subjects that equipped their pupils for blue-collar work .
- Schools for Africans, Coloureds and Indians **received a fraction of the government expenditure** that were given to White schools. In 1946, the government was providing more than 20 times per capita for White education as for other races.
- African schools were largely overcrowded and their facilities were sub-standard
- Teachers in these non-white schools were **poorly qualified** when compared those serving in White schools

Black schools had large classes with poor resources and less skilled educators



- The Bantustans or homelands, were areas to which the majority of the Blacks population was moved to prevent them from living in the urban areas of South Africa.
- They were a major administrative mechanism for the removal of Blacks from the South African political system under the many laws and policies created by Apartheid.
- Blacks were separated from the Whites, and Blacks had the responsibility of running their own independent governments, denying them protection and rights of residence in South Africa.
- Bantustans were established for the permanent removal of the Black population in White South Africa.



- In 1961, only 10% of black teachers were in possession of a matriculation certificate thus blacks had a substandard schooling system.
- The philosophical base of the curriculum was fundamental pedagogics, and it served apartheid interests but ideological interests cannot provide satisfactory instruments of knowledge.
- Apartheid education fashioned a dual system of education which included a mainstream and special education component.
- At least 250 000 people in Soweto were involved in the resistance of the Bantu Education Act, which was designed to provide black people with the skills required to work in manual labour jobs under white control.
- Millions of people were deprived and underprivileged for decades, and the devastating personal, political and economic effects continue even today.

- Fee-paying schools further promoted the inequality between the majority of black learners and other races that were privileged enough to be attending well-resourced, fee-charging schools.
- Fee-paying schools attracted better qualified educators and schools with resources attracted more teachers. Staff got better salaries and had smaller size classes (25-40) and obtained incentives e.g. subsidised housing and fee exemption for their children.
- Poorer schools received mainly poorly trained educators that in the main had limited disciplinary knowledge and this promoted inequality even more.



There was racism, sexism, class divides and assumptions – no system-oriented approach was in operation.



The contents-based apartheid education system did not have an all-inclusive outcomes-based system and failed to promote equity through new practices and structures



A multi-faceted approach was absent in planning so racial equity was not envisaged. There was a need to combine government investment, curriculum reforms, drive better teacher training, and community engagement which were all absent.



MANY STUDENTS FACED EMOTIONAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL CHALLENGES, PARTICULARLY THOSE FROM DISADVANTAGED BACKGROUNDS, SUCH AS TRAUMA RELATED TO POVERTY, VIOLENCE, OR SOCIAL EXCLUSION.



VERY LITTLE SUPPORT WAS OFFERED THROUGH SCHOOL COUNSELORS AND MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMS WERE NOT AVAILABLE TO HELP STUDENTS COPE WITH THEIR CHALLENGES AND IMPROVE THEIR ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE.



INVOLVING PARENTS, TEACHERS, AND COMMUNITIES IN SCHOOL GOVERNANCE AND DECISION-MAKING WAS LIMITED AND COMMUNITIES WERE NOT EMPOWERED TO ACTIVELY PARTICIPATE IN THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS.



LOCAL COMMUNITIES CAN PLAY A VERY MINOR ROLE IN SUPPORTING SCHOOLS AND VERY FEW COMMUNITY-LED EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS, MENTORSHIP INITIATIVES, AND AFTER-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES, WERE AVAILABLE.

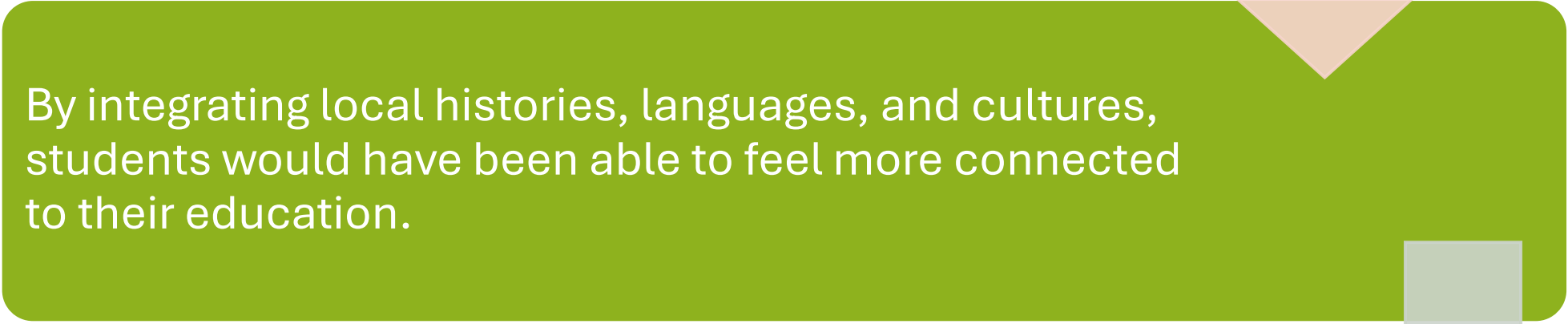
- Black students were often taught in their native languages but Afrikaans was made a compulsory language in schools through the Afrikaans Medium Decree of 1974).
- This resulted extensive protests, such as the Soweto Uprising of 1976



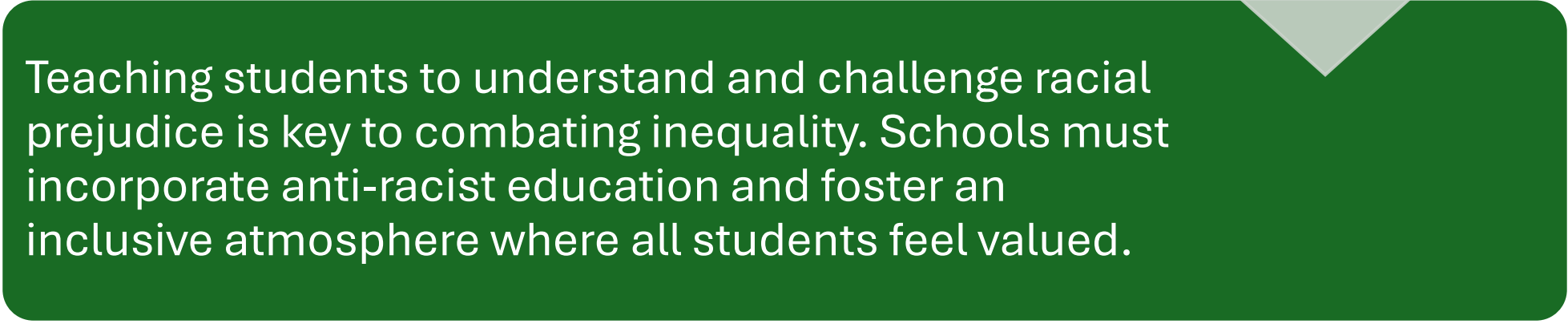
The curriculum did not reflect the country's diverse cultural and historical contexts, promoting inclusivity or offer a sense of pride in South African identity.



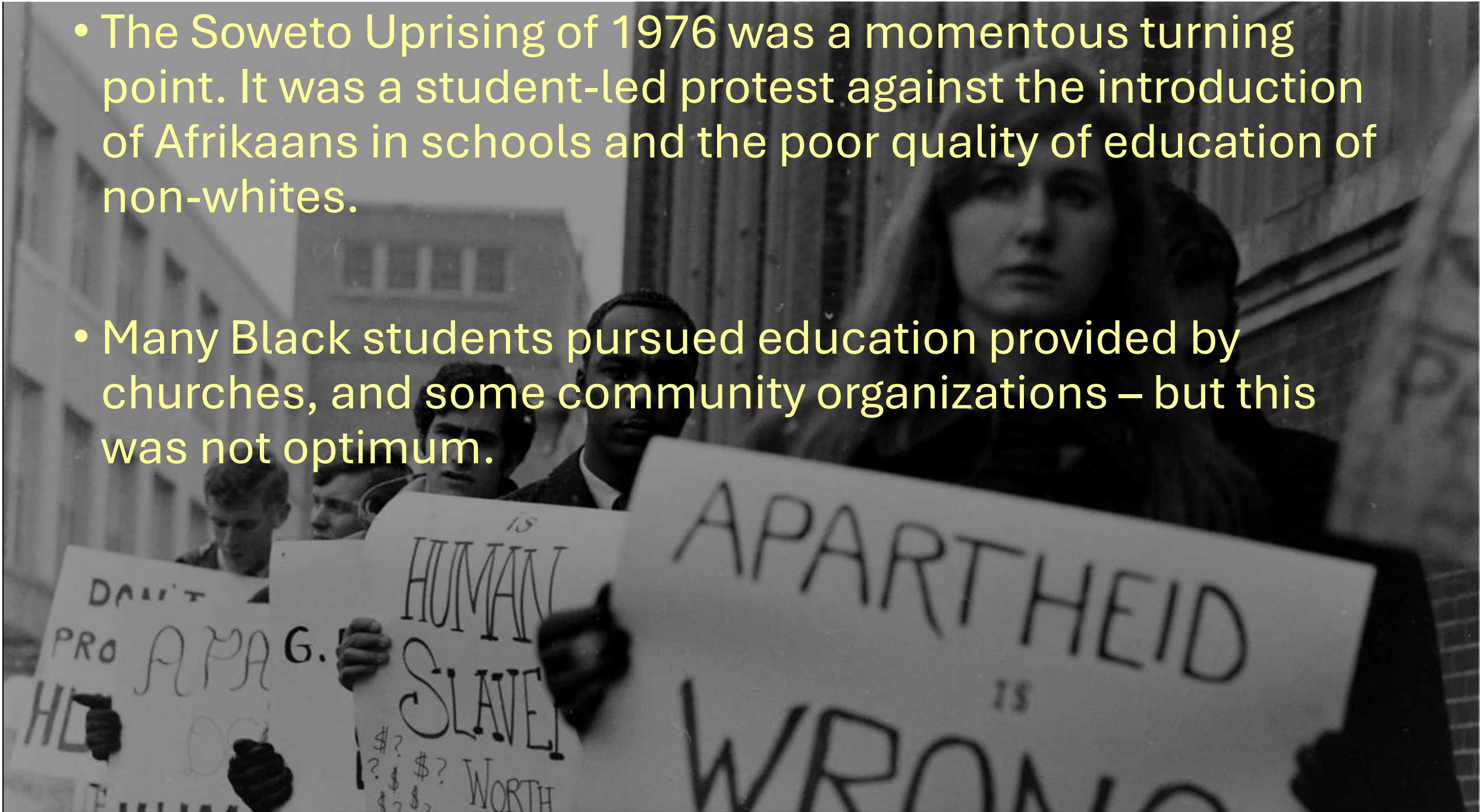
By integrating local histories, languages, and cultures, students would have been able to feel more connected to their education.



Teaching students to understand and challenge racial prejudice is key to combating inequality. Schools must incorporate anti-racist education and foster an inclusive atmosphere where all students feel valued.



- The Soweto Uprising of 1976 was a momentous turning point. It was a student-led protest against the introduction of Afrikaans in schools and the poor quality of education of non-whites.
- Many Black students pursued education provided by churches, and some community organizations – but this was not optimum.



Conclusion

- Apartheid was not a simple renunciation of education for non-Whites, but instead a system that led to only a few Blacks achieving a good level of education. Sadly, the **majority had very little opportunity for obtaining a good education.**
- Apartheid promoted unequal outcomes in the quality and quantity of education.
- The white minority had a huge advantage in society where Blacks, Coloureds and Indians were sidelined.
- A legacy of inequality endures within the labour market

- Attaining **unbiased school education for all races** in South Africa is a **multifaceted and enduring challenge**. It is important to promote social cohesion, drive economic development, and empower people through quality education.
- **Educational inequalities continue** in South Africa three decades on from 1994 into the democratic dispensation.
- The education system needs to be further improved to alleviate the socio-economic inequalities which persist.
- Although access to education has been generally granted to children the quality has not entirely been on an equal basis.

Thank you for your time

Any questions?