



PERS 246 THE MENTALITY OF PROGRESS AND THE BLACK WORKER:  
A LITERATURE SURVEY

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR PERSONNEL RESEARCH  
COUNCIL FOR SCIENTIFIC AND INDUSTRIAL RESEACRH

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SPECIAL REPORT

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THE MENTALITY OF PROGRESS AND THE BLACK WORKER:  
A LITERATURE SURVEY

MARIANNE JELLINEK



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### SUMMARY

The survey of mentality of progress was undertaken with the aim of ascertaining what activates Blacks in the industrial setting to achieve and progress irrespective of the current situation. Conversely, an attempt was made to briefly elucidate the barriers to or deterrants of progress, through examining the interaction between personality, cultural and generally social factors. Concepts central to the mentality of progress are that of achievement motivation, and the role of anxiety in determining the direction and quality of motivation and initiative. It is emphasized that the role of cultural factors in determining the mentality of progress of Blacks must not be underestimated. Possible future areas of research are identified.



## 1. INTRODUCTION

The concept "Mentality of Progress", one of the major determinants of labour productivity, has been described by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development as an attitude of mind. According to Vorster (1968) mentality of progress includes "the will to progress, to improve, and the certainty that future performance will be better than past. It is the constant adaptation of social and economic life to changing conditions and the continuous effort to use new techniques and methods. It is faith in progress ....."

The importance of mentality of progress lies chiefly in the fact that it is an integral dimension of the total framework of productivity. Since Black labour is playing an increasingly significant and irreplaceable part in South African industry, it was decided to concentrate solely on the factors which affect the Blacks' will to improve, although it is apparent that the concept of mentality of progress is equally applicable to Whites and Blacks.

The problems involved may be identified as follows: What are the particular psychological characteristics displayed by Blacks in the industrial setting which activate them to progress, to initiate change irrespective of the current situation? The corollary to the above question must also be investigated, i.e. it is necessary to elucidate the barriers to or deterrants of improvement or progress. The problem shall be approached through viewing the interaction between personality, cultural and social factors, since to gain an understanding of the individual, the assessment of him must be made against his cultural setting.

The above questions concerning the mentality of progress of Blacks are of ever increasing importance, particularly since it has been estimated, according to Wyndham (1973), that by 1980 50% of the 3,5 million skilled workers needed if the required growth rate of 5½% is to be maintained, must come from the non-white population. It is clearly recognized that motivating these men to greater productivity presents problems in South Africa. At present it is probable that to a large extent Herzberg's "hygiene" factors - particularly pay - motivate the non-white sector or are regarded by management as the only important motivators.

It is thus apparent that there is a great need to obtain a better and more comprehensive understanding of the mechanisms underlying the functioning of Black workers, in order to achieve the maximum utilization of South Africa's human resources.

Milner (1968) makes the significant point that the Western capitalist doctrine which maintains that anyone can succeed if only he tries hard enough, does not take into account the various economic and social factors which operate in preventing the success of many individuals. However, in the present paper, while recognizing that real social and political barriers do exist to impede the progress of Blacks in the South African industrial setting, the objective is to ascertain what the particular psychological attributes are which enable certain individuals to overcome these and progress, and those characteristics and factors which prevent progress from being made in others.

N.C. Manganyi (1973) points out that there exists a tendency amongst some observers of ascertaining that the Black is "by nature" without initiative and that he has a low aspiration level. Manganyi maintains that to the extent that such observations are correct, they may be seen as patterns of adaptation to "an unfriendly, always threatening environment." However the problem remains that it is essential to uncover the critical factors precipitating an either positive or negative attitude to change and the will to progress.

## 2. PERSONALITY FACTORS

In discussing the factors contributing to a mentality of progress and those militating against the latter with regard to the Blacks, the most appropriate starting point is an examination of the needs experienced by individuals and how these influence their mentality of progress. Needs may be defined as elements of an individual's personality which impel him toward one or another type of action or reaction toward his environment. The concept of a need relates only to a general tendency, such as a need to be aggressive, a need to organise order out of disorder, and so on. The objects against which an individual will direct his needs, for example, against whom or what he will be aggressive, will be determined by his values and world cognition. Thus, if it is said that a person has a

need for a certain type of action or behaviour, this means that he feels an increase in satisfaction if he acts in that way, and that he will perceive and interpret the situation in a way that will give him the maximum gain in satisfaction. Needs may be loosely categorized according to whether they contribute positively or negatively to constituting a mentality of progress.

## 2.1 Needs

Of prime importance are what may be called the manipulative needs consisting of need achievement, autonomy and order. According to Hagen (1962) these needs are present in an individual if he "has learned to find satisfaction in analysing and manipulating some element of his environment." Need achievement, which is the satisfaction in the process of achieving, will be discussed in detail further on. Need autonomy is an essential prerequisite for mentality of progress and represents the antithesis of the so-called authoritarian personality. This quality makes one prefer to be independent of control of one's judgement by others, to make one's own decisions. Such an individual does not have to rely on the evaluations of his efforts by others, but is satisfied with his own appraisal. The individual with high need autonomy, while willing to follow directions from superiors, does not automatically regard their decisions as infallible or as reflecting the best possible course. Furthermore, he will not necessarily accept present concepts, procedures or logic as given or correct, but will prefer to examine each situation for himself.

The third manipulative need is need order which has been defined by Hagen (1962) as the need "to put things in order; to achieve cleanliness, arrangement, organisation, balance, neatness, tidiness and precision; to achieve logical or aesthetic relationships within a whole." This need, while obviously not a sufficient condition to produce mentality of progress may be regarded, together with the above two, as a necessary prerequisite.

In order to achieve and progress, a certain amount of aggression is necessary, since its absence implies passivity which is not conducive to change. An individual characterized by need aggression who perceives relationships with other people as involving a danger

of conflict may want to dominate others as the solution to the perceived threat and as a means of releasing the anger which is within him. In order for this need to be satisfied the individual will have to advance to a position of some authority, where he can influence or direct the behaviour of others and where he can obtain performance from others by command.

Conversely, individuals may conceive of avoiding the danger of conflict, by yielding to the will of others, thus repressing the rage within them. This tendency, referred to as need submission, may be one common to the less detribalized Black who is still dominated by traditional values stressing obedience and passivity, or may be a response to the insecurity experienced by Blacks in a relatively new environment. Feelings of insecurity may be lessened if the environment can be made to appear more structured. Consequently, such individuals feel the need to receive directions from others, to be given explicit directions or instructions, and to feel that they are following a leader.

A further passive need, possibly also an expression of the insecurity and anxiety experienced by many Blacks, is that of need dependence. Need dependence implies that the individual will avoid making independent decisions and judgements and consequently will refuse to assume a position of authority, thus preventing the possibility of advancement. Such an individual feels the need to constantly receive guidance from and have ideas and attitudes approved by others. This individual may not, however, experience anger or rage, as the individual characterized by need submission, but his need may result from an overriding sense of insecurity. The latter person will select an occupation where he will not have to make decisions and will not have to question the decisions of others.

The so-called authoritarian personality may be said to be characterized by need dependence or submission, whereas the more innovational individual will be characterized by succorant-nuturant needs - the need to have someone love and value one and in turn the need to love and value another. High need succorance and need nurturance are associated with creativity.

In direct contrast to the authoritarian personality, in which passivity and reliance on authority are most dominant, the innovational individual desires to be active, to manipulate, explore, control and accomplish - in short, to have an effect on the environment, rather than being merely the passive recipient of environmental forces. D. Strümpfer, in his article "Autonomy and relatedness: requirements for psychological survival in the future," enumerates a number of characteristics, collectively referred to as personal autonomy, which may be seen as necessary prerequisites for a mentality of progress. These are field independence, flexibility in perception and thought, the ability to tolerate ambiguity, independence of judgement and progressiveness, as well as the desire to be competent.

One of the most significant personality factors for a mentality of progress is that of competence, defined by White (1959) as "the urge to be competent in dealing with one's environment and to manipulate it effectively to one's advantage". Competence motivation is closely related to achievement motivation since an individual so oriented strives to overcome obstacles and have an effect on his environment, and identifies himself with the processes of change and adaptation.

## 2.2 The Concept of Achievement Motivation

Those individuals positively oriented to achievement and progress may be said, following McClelland, Atkinson, and co-workers (1953), to have a strong motive to achieve success which is conceptualized as a relatively stable personality disposition. On the other hand, those low in achievement motivation may be said to have either acquired a motive to avoid failure producing the tendency not to undertake any new challenging task and a general resistance to achievement - oriented activity or to be characterized by a so-called absence of achievement motivation - neither positive nor negative - which may be conceptualized as a kind of neutrality or unawareness.

The next step logically presents itself as the identification of the antecedents of the personality dispositions called "motive to achieve" and "motive to avoid failure."



### 2.3 Anxiety

A concept central to and closely related to the mechanism of achievement motivation is that of anxiety, or the certainty of being able to deal with the problem in hand. The reaction of individuals to new situations differs in terms of the degree to which they experience anxiety or pleasurable anticipation. It is possible to range people along a continuum with respect to their reaction - at the one extreme individuals view most situations as a challenge, and are drawn to problems, and at the other extreme individuals regard new situations as presenting almost certain failure and frustration, and consequently are anxious. Atkinson (1974) refers to this as the tendency to avoid failure. Such a disposition to be anxious about failure may constitute an important negative factor in the mentality of progress of Blacks since it tends to make all activities in which performance is evaluated, threatening to the individual. Since actions which might lead to progress are then seen as a potential threat, they are avoided whenever possible.

Thus the person is negatively motivated or motivated not to perform or act or assume responsibilities, which might have, as a consequence, failure.

It is apparent that the expectancy of success is an essential prerequisite for the mentality of progress, since it produces positive interest and the active pursuit of success or improvement.

In considering how "anxiety about failure" should effect the over-all efficiency of an individual's performance or progress, it is possible to predict that the tendency to avoid performing actions which might result in advancement but also in possible unfavourable evaluation would consistently interfere with and prevent positive motivation. In sum then, the threat of failure is conceptualized as producing a tendency to inhibit performance that is expected to produce failure.

This inhibitory tendency operates in direct opposition to the positive tendency to approach success which does facilitate actions that are expected to lead to the goal, success.

In examining fear of failure as a special case of general anxiety a consideration of anxiety scales may prove useful. Atkinson and co-workers (1974) carried out research using the combination of need for achievement and Test Anxiety Questionnaire (TAQ) scores.

Atkinson maintained that low need - Achievement - high - TAQ should be the pattern most representative of fear of failure or "avoidance tendency." Atkinson's study confirmed the fact that in the most general sense the low n-Ach-high-TAQ subjects were behaving in a generally avoidant manner.

Reference must also be made to the possible utilisation of the Willemse Board (1934) in studying the relationship between level of aspiration, personal uncertainty and mentality of progress. Skawran (1962) used the Willemse Board Test as a means of measuring personal insecurity, the assumption being that the latter is reflected by "the degree to which an individual reacts realistically in relation to achievement in conflict situations where feelings of prestige are predominant." A further assumption was that personal insecurity can manifest itself in two ways, that is, in overcarefulness and underestimation, or in overconfidence and overestimation. It was found when testing this hypothesis with two Pupil Pilot samples, that correlations with Flying Course results were encouraging. Furthermore, an investigation of the scores used revealed that the test measures personality qualities to a significant degree.

As far as is known no research as yet has been carried out involving the application of the Willemse Board to Blacks. It is possible that very pertinent information could be gained on the mentality of progress in Blacks using the above test.

The possibility also exists that Blacks experience anxiety in achievement-oriented situations because, for them, there are negative consequences associated not only with failure, but also with success and the implications of success in competitive achievement situations. This latter type of anxiety is here referred to as motive to avoid success and may be a consequence of the complete cultural background of those Africans more deeply rooted in the traditional society.

### 3. CULTURAL FACTORS

In turning to a discussion of the influence of cultural factors in the mentality of progress, it may be, specifically, that the authority structure in the work situation is in direct opposition to that in the traditional tribal society from which they originated. The ascribed status system in which kinship position is given priority has to be substituted for an achievement status system, if there is to be any

mentality of progress. Thus for a particular individual positioned relatively low in the social scale in the tribal group, it would be extremely difficult to aspire to a position above that of a socially more senior man. This aspect has been stressed by Little (1965) who points out that the transition from the tribal way of life to a market economy involves the disturbance of traditional ideas of status. Different roles have to be assumed in which the interaction of individuals is determined by such factors as wages, education and position in the organisation rather than genealogical origin and descent. Thus the Black in transition experiences a conflict between his aspirations and loyalties as a member of a tribe and those resulting from his role as industrial worker.

The possibility therefore exists that among certain Blacks in competitive achievement situations, the expectancy can be aroused that success will lead to negative consequences such as ostracism from the group. The importance of group acceptance and consequent anxiety about social rejection may thus override the desire to progress.

In this connection a study by Hall (1971) on the motivation among an urban and rural employed group of adult Pedi males, may be cited. It was clearly illustrated that there are distinct differences in the motivations manifested by rural and urban Blacks. Two groups of men could be distinguished when the relationships between the motivation indices and the demographic factors of age, marital status, education and landownership were studied. There was a group of young, single, landless men who had attended school whose affiliation and esteem needs were strong and whose physiological and security needs were weak. In contrast there was a group of older, married illiterate landowners with strong security needs and weak affiliation and esteem needs.

It may be postulated that under achievement - oriented conditions which stress intellectual and leadership ability the expression of achievement motivation aroused in Blacks, may become inhibited by the concurrent arousal of fear of success and fear of failure.

The anxiety experienced by Blacks is thus not necessarily a result or direct concomitant of the nature of the work situation per se, but may be conceptualized as having several possible causes, of which the fear of failure and fear of success represent two causes.



A further cause may be a sense of insecurity, characterized by feelings of helplessness and inadequacy, resulting from the subservient position held by Blacks in our society. These reactions underline a feeling of isolation.

According to Manganyi, this anxiety is "the most dramatic expression of the sense of existential insecurity." The anxiety of such individuals not only limits their actions but also their awareness of problems, and functions in immobilizing them and preventing the full utilization and expansion of their abilities.

Reference may be made here to a study conducted by Brett and Morse (1963) which focused on the attitudes of a group of "middle class" Blacks in the Witwatersrand, Pretoria and Vereeniging. In order to examine the way in which middle class Blacks picture their environment responses to such questions as "What do you feel about your present job and future prospects?" and stories told in response to a version of the Thematic Apperception Test specially designed for use with Blacks, were utilized. The same type of picture emerged from both sources - an over-riding pessimism and dejection. For example, fifty of the fifty-six TAT responses containing themes relating to work showed insecurity or unfavourable expectations. When questioned directly, many respondents maintained that while they liked their jobs, they felt insecure about government interference.

In terms of the TAT stories themselves, themes associated with unemployment, work seeking, the work itself, often pictured as degrading and badly paid, and legal restrictions adding to the overall insecurity, frequently recurred. In a significant number of cases, "this total insecurity was seen as leading to personal moral breakdown, family disruption and crime." (p.157)

In a study on the self-attitudes of urban Blacks by Lobban (1975), it was found that subjects were fairly satisfied with their own personal qualities but dissatisfied with their current objective situation. A further significant factor was that the negative adjectives used by subjects to describe themselves all referred to unfavourable aspects of the external situation, such as the fact that they were "unfree". Lobban points out that the subjects

were probably aided in developing more favourable self-images by the fact that "the South African social system makes it easy for them to attribute any failures on their part to the system rather than to themselves." (p. 178)

Nevertheless, such attitudes, it would seem, could also operate in producing a negative mentality of progress since they obviate the necessity of trying to progress.

### 3.1 Role Conflict and Traditional Society

An important factor to be considered is the extent to which Blacks, low in mentality of progress, are removed from the traditional society. Wagem (1962) points out that in traditional societies more than elsewhere individuals feel anxiety in new situations. This stems from the fact that in these societies the hierarchy of authority and conduct are explicitly laid down, thus eradicating any possible ambiguity from a situation. It follows that new situations or new challenges particularly in the industrial setting, will create feelings of anxiety because of their being undefined. The anxiety of expectancy thereof is avoided by not attempting to achieve or progress, and by maintaining the status quo, thus constituting what might be termed a negative mentality of progress. They prefer to take the world about them as given and do not see the possibility of new ways of acting or coping with the world, because to do so would raise the question whether they can successfully adapt to the new situation, and this would arouse anxiety.

Inherent in any advancement made in an organisation is the assumption of more responsibilities and greater authority. By independent decision, even in petty matters, individuals still rooted in traditional society immediately feel anxious not only through the process of making a choice themselves but also through challenging the authority of a superior. By retaining one's assigned position and not aspiring to advance, one avoids anxiety and insecurity.

This is related to what D. Strümpfer refers to as "closed-mindedness" which is in part based on a conception of oneself as alone and helpless in a hostile and potentially dangerous world, resulting in a defensive dependence on authority. Conversely, the "open-minded" individual is one who sees himself as much more competent and who will consequently

be willing to assume responsibility and take on more demanding tasks, without perceiving new situations as potentially threatening.

A further significant concept is that of internal versus external control of reinforcement as put forward by Rotter (1962) and other writers, which refers to an aspect of a person's perception of his position in the world. In the case of people who believe in internal control of reinforcement, the reinforcement is seen as being dependent on some characteristic or quality of the person which can be labeled as a skill i.e. the reinforcement is understood as occurring because of his own behaviour. In the case of an emphasis on external control, the reinforcement appears to be a matter of chance controlled in some way by people or forces outside the individual. Thus it may be hypothesized that individuals with a high belief in the external control of reinforcement may be relatively passive in any attempts to progress or advance; that is, such individuals might not tend to actively seek to better their position or condition. On the other hand, those individuals with a high belief in internal control of reinforcement may be characterized by initiative, and generally a desire to progress. Thus, it is apparent that this concept could be a centrally operating factor in determining the mentality of progress in Blacks.

As mentioned earlier, the tribal society from which Blacks in industry originated, provides a clearly defined authority hierarchy which precludes any ambiguity. Such a cultural structure frequently facilitates the formation of the so-called "authoritarian personality", features of which have been touched on. A clearer insight is gained of many of the facets of the authoritarian personality if it is realized that as a child the authoritarian individual acquired no perception of the world as an orderly, predictable place. ".....he must have gained two other impressions of the world that were overwhelmingly important in disciplining his later behaviour. One of these is the perception of the world as arbitrary, capricious, not amenable to analysis, as consisting of an agglomeration of phenomena not related by a cause - and - effect network. The other is that the caprice of the world is not accidental but the play of willful powers far greater than his which serve their own purposes and disregard his unless he submits his will to theirs." (Hagen, 1963)

These perceptions will obviously have a significant influence on the individual's behaviour, since they create in him a fear of using his initiative, an uncertainty concerning the quality of his own judgement and decisions, and a tendency to let someone else evaluate a situation in order to avoid frustration and anxiety. This in turn discourages such an individual from relying on his own analysis in solving problems and he avoids anxiety by depending on the judgement or will of his superiors. Thus, to move upward in an organisation, assume responsibilities and deal with novel situations would be disturbing since when problems inevitably occurred, anxiety would be aroused associated with prospective initiative on his part.

Thus, while it is commonly held by many managers and behavioural scientists that man actively seeks and needs meaningful work, and that most individuals desire independence and responsibility, it is apparent that such a viewpoint must be regarded with reservations as far as indigenous Black culture in South Africa is concerned, which has an important negative impact on the development of a mentality of progress in its members.

This is supported by research carried out by Verwey (1968) on a group of 304 Black workers, of which only 20,4% of the group had reached a standard six or higher level of education, and only 22,4% were doing work which could be described as skilled. Verwey found little or no evidence for what he termed "positive work motivation" amongst the sample. Their wages was found to be the most important reward their work brought them, and none expressed the fact that they worked in order to achieve an ideal, or to develop their potential abilities or to realize their own ambitions.

This is because traditional child rearing does not facilitate the emergence of individual initiative and achievement - in fact through its stress on conformity, obedience and adherence to established customs, it appears to actively oppose it. This is reinforced by group pressure, since the Black is so strongly group bound.

Tribal traditions create a way of life in which there is no place for individual aspirations. It has been found that while tribal as well

as urban workers want their children to have as advanced an education as possible, they themselves are not strongly motivated to advance.

Thus it may be hypothesized that those Blacks who have strong ties with their traditional tribal society or who have only recently undergone the transition from rural to urban societies, will have a low or negative mentality of progress reflected by their being content with repetitive jobs and externally imposed controls.

In a sense, this is supported by the studies conducted by McClelland (1953) on need Achievement in different regions of the world.

McClelland demonstrated that those cultures emphasizing high self-reliance training of the child and high achievement standards lead to a personality type characterized by high need achievement. Furthermore, McClelland found high need achievement in societies which are less tradition-directed, where the authority of the father has been challenged and where childrearing practices are warm but firm and demanding of excellence.

A factor precipitating a negative mentality of progress which frequently characterizes the Black family structure, is one in which the father is absent or the son lives with the mother. It has been found that mother-child households are associated with low need-achievement. Presumably, polygyny promotes mother-son households in which the son remains dependent upon the mother for a longer period and misses the strong emphasis on independent achievement required to develop need achievement.

A similar phenomenon exists in the family type referred to as "serial monogamy" sometimes found amongst urban Blacks, where the mothers are the consistent breadwinners, and the fathers may come and go. The situation where the father is absent is also found in tribal societies because of the large number of fathers away for long periods as migrant labourers. The inference may be drawn that need achievement will be low since the institution of serial monogamy tends to favour the development of mother-son dependency, or at least discourage the formation of a strong father-figure model.

On the other hand, a rigid patriarchal family structure more common amongst the less urbanized Blacks may also prevent achievement motivation. This is a consequence of father dominance in which the son develops low self-reliance and need achievement because decisions are made by the father and little pressure is exerted on the son to work out high standards for himself.

### 3.2 Traditional and Western Value Systems

A crucial aspect of Black culture which must be focused upon is that of the value system. The particular values held by individuals are of central importance in determining mentality of progress since they govern the manner in which people's needs are channelled and expressed, which was discussed in the section dealing with personality factors.

One of the main problems in the motivation of Blacks in transition may be said to be that the worker is committed to a specific value system in traditional society which to a large extent structures and motivates his economic activities. Thus for adequate motivation and commitment to take place in industry the new value system has to be accepted and internalized. For example, the more traditionally oriented Black exhibits a passive and fatalistic orientation towards his environment and problems, in general, as a result of his value system, as opposed to modern man's belief that it is possible to dominate one's environment to a considerable degree.

It may be argued that the more recently urbanized Blacks have not yet assimilated Western industrial values, the latter often being in complete opposition or contradiction to those held by many Blacks. Blacks with a low mentality of progress have possibly not been exposed long enough to our culture, their frame of reference still being that of the tribal society. This is supported by the findings of research done by the National Institute for Personnel Research as referred to by Backer (1973), that the aspirations of the Black appear to be very similar to those of other Western groups "as he becomes integrated in the industrial scene."

It may also be hypothesized that those Blacks with a high mentality of progress and achievement motivation have assimilated the values of, or identified with, the so-called middle class, while those Blacks with negative attitudes towards progress have identified with blue-collar or lower class values. It has been demonstrated (Vinson and

Mitchell, 1973) that workers who exhibit low need for achievement generally display negative attitudes towards more complex tasks and positive attitudes towards less complex tasks. High need achievement workers exhibit the reversed pattern. Further it has been found that workers with white-collar work values exhibit positive attitudes towards more complex tasks, whilst workers with blue-collar work values are characterized by the opposite pattern.

These relationships may be explained in terms of Maslow's theory where workers on simple jobs who do not foresee much opportunity for self-actualization suppress their needs for achievement and place the greatest emphasis on security and social needs. These negative attitudes become the accepted norm of behaviour amongst the lower classes and attempts by individuals to advance within the work situation are frequently treated with contempt and derision. A further related factor operating against individuals aspiring to better positions is the frequent indifference encountered in parents, who view achievement in their children as a threat to their own insecure position in society. However, it must be emphasized that this is not the general pattern, since very often lower class parents project and attempt to realize their frustrated ambitions in their children, thus constituting an important positive motivation for their children's advancement. Thus white-collar values stressing the importance of advancement, recognition and challenge may also be internalized within the lower classes.

In this connection, reference must be made to a study by Hall (1968) in which class mobility was measured by comparing the class of the subjects in the sample, an urban African group, with that of their parents. In this way the class in which the former were born was compared with that of which they were members as adults. A considerable amount of real upward and apparent downward mobility was found. Forty percent of the middle class subjects had working class fathers, while 28% of the working class subjects had middle class fathers. Subjects who were upwardly mobile came from all levels of the working class hierarchy, whereas downward mobility occurred largely among men whose parents were apparently very borderline members of the middle class. Although definite conclusions could not be drawn, it appeared that downward mobility was related to the low educational levels of these parents. Lacking education themselves, they did not press their children to obtain the qualifications necessary for main-

taining middle-class jobs as an employee.

#### 4. SOCIAL FACTORS

In discussing the social factors determining and affecting mentality of progress it is apparent that group acceptance and membership represent extremely important aspects of the Black's way of life, particularly amongst those who are more recently "urbanized". This has been demonstrated by Litore (1965) in his study of the voluntary associations formed by Blacks arriving from the rural areas. Milner (1968) points out that, consequently, striving for success carries with it the implication of isolation from others. In fact if an individual succeeds to any measure, he threatens others who are similarly striving and who, "to preserve their delicate inner balance", have to withdraw from him. Thus although many Blacks desire to advance and succeed this is prevented by a fear that their feelings of insecurity and alone-ness in a strange environment will be magnified through the potential antipathy of their co-workers. This conflicting situation generates anxiety which cannot be alleviated.

On the other hand, strong group consciousness may evoke anxiety in individuals for an entirely different reason. That is, Blacks who are highly dependent on the group may desire to progress but fear the group's derision if they fail - the latter may be seen as constituting an important cause of the fear of failure which results in immobilization.

For individuals to advance and be occupationally and geographically mobile, it appears that less cohesiveness in interpersonal relationships is necessary. It follows that the achievement - oriented individual is able to cope with the loneliness resulting from lack of enduring relationships and is more socially independent and self-contained.

#### 5. CONCLUSION

The influence and continuing strength of these deeply set cultural and social traditions, values and attitudes, referred to throughout this paper, cannot be underestimated. From the research findings available it appears that the traditional value system and social structure of the Blacks are responsible to a considerable degree, in preventing mentality of progress from developing in many Blacks.



Thus it is clear that it is incorrect to assume that the needs, values and aspirations of a socially, economically and industrially sophisticated person will be automatically the same as a recently urbanized or more tribally oriented Black.

## 6. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RESEARCH

Different areas of research in the vast field of mentality of progress become evident.

Research priorities would be:

- (a) The first priority for research in this field is to formulate viable means of measuring mentality of progress. Furthermore, if the exact structure and dimensions of mentality of progress can be established, the possibility presents itself that firstly workers may be selected for particular positions with respect to their mentality of progress, secondly, if a mentality of progress does not exist within a particular sector of the workforce, or is manifested only slightly, in which respects their attitude and training are inappropriate, and thirdly in which way this deficit could be remedied, possibly through training.
- (b) Testing the hypothesis that mentality of progress is affected by such factors as need for achievement ( $n$  Ach) and anxiety. To investigate whether differences in motivation, aspirations and commitment to the job do in fact exist between the more urbanized and less urbanized Blacks.

To determine whether such differences, if they exist, are reflected in the degree of anxiety experienced by the two groups. It is hypothesized that the less motivated group with the least aspirations will exhibit extremes in their experience of anxiety - either a very high or a very low amount of anxiety; whereas the more motivated individuals will experience a moderate degree of anxiety, which is necessary for activation.

- (c) To assess whether Blacks, low in mentality of progress, hold values contrary to the so-called Western values stressing the importance of success and achievement.
- (d) To investigate whether those Blacks exhibiting a mentality of progress are more inclined to identify with white middle-class values rather than lower class values, such

as belief in deferred gratification; stress on long-term goals as opposed to short-term goals.

- (e) To examine the family structure of those Blacks motivated to progress as opposed to those who passively accept the status quo.
- (f) To investigate the role of adaptability in mentality of progress, since the former is essential in being able to initiate or accept changes. The concept of adaptability testing involves a learning component, but does not require any specific content in the test. According to Biesheuvel (1972), it is mainly concerned with adjustment to education and vocational requirements, but also to a lesser extent with acculturation in general. Tests such as the General Adaptability Test are relevant.

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