
The socio-political role of emergent trade unions: Perceptions of trade union leaders

Carol Allais



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Research Finding MN-113

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Carol Allais

Pretoria
Human Sciences Research Council
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Carol Allais, M.A., Associate of IRPASA, Senior Lecturer, Unisa

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

The number of labour organizations of Black workers increased significantly in the wake of legislative amendments in 1979 and 1981 arising from the recommendation that statutory trade union rights be extended to Black workers by the Wiehahn Commission of Inquiry into Labour Legislation.

Black membership of trade unions has increased considerably since 1981. According to statistics of the National Manpower Commission (1983 : xiii) Blacks constituted approximately a third of the total membership of registered trade unions in 1982 as opposed to about a quarter in 1981. Black membership of registered unions was approximately 395 000 in 1982 and membership of unregistered unions was estimated to be between 100 000 and 150 000 (National Manpower Commission 1983 : 112).

These figures may look impressive but the NMC calculates that in 1982 only about 14 % of the total work force belonged to registered unions. This is a small proportion when compared with the percentages for other countries in the capitalist world.

Webster (1983 : 3) points out too, that South Africa's unions are small compared with the "giant" unions of the United States and Europe. Of the 189 registered and unregistered unions operating in South Africa at the end of 1980, 73 % had fewer than 5 000 members and 38 % had fewer than 500 members. Jones (1984 : 50), however, observes that a notable feature of South African unionism is the prevalence, and continued survival, of very small unions with a membership of 1 000 and fewer.

Jackson (1982 : 1) says that although trade unions in many countries organize a majority of the population, the industrial influence of unions cannot be measured by the extent of their membership alone. If, for example, unions have secured bargaining rights in a particular sphere, the wages and working conditions, et cetera determined by these unions often extend considerably beyond the sphere of their immediate membership.

With the increase in Black union membership, despite the relatively small number of unionised Black workers, came an increase in the number of strikes and a significant increase in the number of Black workers involved in strike activity. Between 1979 and 1982 Black strike activity accounted for most of the total strike activity as may be seen from Table 1.1.

TABLE 1.1

DETAILS OF STRIKES AND WORK STOPPAGES (ALL POPULATION GROUPS), 1970 TO 1982

Year	No. of strikes and stoppages	Workers involved				Total
		White	Coloured	Asian	Black	
1972	71	410	103		8711	9224
1973	370	349	7947		90083	98379
1974	384	269	1319		57656	59244
1975	274	193	567		22546	23306
1976	245	1167	309	246	26291	28013
1977	90	244	59	51	14950	15304
1978	106	65	406	111	13578	14160
1979	101	5616	1425	268	15494	22803
1980	207		5275	224	56286	61785
1981	342		6271	1865	84706	92842
1982	394		17920	1170	122481	141571

Source: South African Institute of Race Relations (1983 : 200)

The trend towards strike action as a form of labour action and also as a form of expression of Black worker frustration and solidarity has its origins in the Natal strikes* of 1973 when, after a long period of relative quiet, strike action by Black workers erupted.

*The Natal strikes were seen by many as marking a watershed in South African labour relations, and Friedman (1981 : 9) sees the Wiehahn Commission recommendations which came six years later as a delayed reaction to these strikes.

Three hundred and seventy work stoppages involving 98 379 workers, of whom 90 083 were Black, were recorded in that year (Department of Labour 1974 : 10; South African Institute of Race Relations 1983 : 183). De Beer (1983 : 33) observes that in 1973, even before Black workers had the legal status they now enjoy, they learned and demonstrated the efficiency of the strike weapon.

The record of 1973 stood for nearly ten years and was only broken in 1982 when there were 394 strikes (South African Institute of Race Relations 1983 : 200). The weaker strike activity between 1975 and 1979 is ascribed by Nicholson (1983 : 7) to the lack of grassroots organization among Black workers and not to any major changes in the awareness of Black worker consciousness or aspirations.

The fall-off of strike action in 1983, despite the fact that labour action reached an all-time high in 1982 as is shown in Table 1.1, is ascribed by Nicholson (1983 : 7) to the recession which began to take effect in 1982, and by the fact that the unions, which had been encouraged by their earlier successes, suddenly faced enormous leadership and organization problems due to their rapid growth.

Stares (1977 : 14) refers to attitude studies conducted among Black workers in the early 1970s which highlighted the problem of low wages, unfulfilled expectations and a general inability to obtain any recognition or alleviation of their situation. These studies also indicated an incipient awareness of the growing extent of Black bargaining power and of the necessity of employing collective action to improve their economic situation.

Other changes were occurring which contributed to the Black's sense of frustration. "The plethora of new government regulations and controls on African residence and mobility introduced in the 1960s and the tightening up of existing mechanisms such as pass laws could only increase the long standing sense of insecurity. Beyond South Africa's borders the liberation struggles in Angola and Mocambique were also reaching a critical stage and beginning to impinge on the consciousness of younger, better educated Blacks" (Stares 1977 : 14). In this

situation it only needed a precipitating factor(see Smelser 1962) such as a sudden rise in bus fares, or the failure to receive an anticipated wage rise to trigger latent frustration into a stoppage or walkout.

A more recent study undertaken by Galin (1982) on determinants of Black strike activity in South Africa reveals that the most visible reason for the increase in strike activity is the growth of the Black collective power awareness* as reflected mainly in the increased number of Black trade union members.

Galín (1982 : 30) found that whereas formal demands for increased wages and salaries constitute a high percentage of the official reasons for Black strike activity, the findings suggest that increased wages and salaries are not likely to change the pattern of increasing strikes and may indeed have the opposite effect. The main reason for the pattern of strike increases could well be the new power consciousness of organized trade unions and not the formal claim for increased wages and salaries.

The late 1970s and the early 1980s saw the development of new trade union organizations, namely the emergent or independent union movement. These unions, as opposed to the already established trade unions consisting of White, Coloured and Asian workers, and the "parallel" union organized by existing White, Coloured and Asian unions, are characterized mainly by their commitment to the grassroots organization of the mass of Black workers.

*Galín (1982 : 29), however, sees the growing militancy of Black workers channelled through the trade unions in South Africa in the last few years as one sign of the normalization which has just started to take place in South African industrial relations and says further that considering that Blacks comprise most of the South African work force, the negligible occurrences of Black strike activity during the previous decades was not indicative of a normal situation.

The emergent unions are largely organized in two national confederations*, namely the Federation of South African Trade Unions (FOSATU) and the Council of Unions of South Africa (CUSA). Apart from these two national federations there are a number of unaffiliated unions which, together with FOSATU and CUSA, comprise the emergent Black union movement.

The most prominent of the unaffiliated unions are the General Workers' Union, the South African Allied Workers' Union, the African Food and Canning Workers' Union, the Motor Assembly and Component Workers' Union of South Africa, the Black Allied Workers' Union and the Media Workers' Association of South Africa (Jones 1984 : 57).

The affiliation of the various unions is shown in Table 1.2

TABLE 1.2
TRADE UNIONS ACCORDING TO AFFILIATION (AS AT MID-1982)

Umbrella organization	Number of unions		Membership	Composition
	Registered	Unregistered		
TUCSA	55	2	460000	120000 Whites 250000 Coloured 90000 Blacks
SACOL	12	0	127000	All White
FOSATU	9	1	100000	Predominantly Blacks
CUSA	8	3**	92999	Predominantly Blacks
Unaffiliated	107	20	607000	Registered: 230000 Whites 80000 Coloureds 87000 Blacks Unregistered: 210000 Blacks
TOTAL	191	26	1386999	

Source: Jones 1984:49

*The two other confederations in South Africa are the South African Confederation of Labour (SACOL) which has White membership only, and the Trade Union Council of South Africa (TUCSA) which is a multiracial confederation.

**According to information received directly from CUSA in 1984.

FOSATU, established in 1979, is the largest of the emergent union federations. Membership is predominantly Black although the union is committed to a non-racial policy. FOSATU's affiliates are particularly strong in the heavy industry sector, organizing workers in the motor, metal, transport and textile, and also food industries, and are organized in approximately 380 factories (TUCSA 1983 : 99). These unions have mostly opted to apply for registration and have insisted on seeking registration on a non-racial basis.

CUSA, born out of the old Consultative Committee of Trade Unions in September 1980, is based mainly in the Transvaal area. Its affiliates are all Black unions although membership is open to all races. CUSA has not advocated registration or non-registration to its affiliates and seeks to co-ordinate affiliates on certain principle issues only (Plaut and Ward 1982; South African Institute of Race Relations 1981, 1982).

The emphasis of the emergent unions is on grassroots organization, shopfloor organization and the development of shop steward structures. These unions have also rejected several facets of the industrial relations system. The most significant aspect has been the reluctance of these unions to enter industrial councils and thereby to make use of the "statutory" collective bargaining machinery. They have opted instead for a "non-statutory" system of plant-level recognition agreements ostensibly because, as Bendix, S. and Swart (1982 : 6) observe, at present the emergent unions, with few exceptions, have been able to organize only at plant-level and that is where their power lies.

Although the emergent unions have made a decision in favour of non-racial* trade unionism in principle, in practice they have accepted that the gulf between Black (and also Coloured and Asian) and White workers in respect of material interests and political outlook is so

*The distinction between non-racial and multi-racial organizations is that whereas the former demand a complete absence of any racial discrimination, the latter implies a membership that accepts all races, but which organizes them separately (Plaut and Ward 1982 : 7).

great at present as to rule out any possibility of short-term unity.

On the level of ideology and wider political outlook, the emergent unions share a general commitment to the idea of a non-racial democracy and a rejection of those structures and practices which entrench ethnicity and minority domination, but, as Lever (in Bosch (ed.) 1983 : 16) observes, there appears to be no consensus among these unions on issues such as the nature of the non-racial society and the role of the working class. The principle difference between FOSATU and CUSA as seen by Plaut and Ward (1982 : 11) concerns the question of race in the short and medium term. Both unions share the goal of the eventual creation of a non-racial labour movement. Whereas FOSATU believes that this can only come about by pursuing a non-racial labour policy from the outset, CUSA encourages a positive effort to construct an exclusively Black leadership.

The question has arisen to what extent the newly formed groupings among Black, and to a lesser extent Coloured and Asian trade unions, can be expected to follow the path of the established labour movement, and what the pressures inherent in the present situation are which may force them to any particular action.

Lever (1981) observes that although the practical division between political parties and trade unions has been a marked characteristic of South African trade unions, particularly over the past thirty years, in historical perspective, Black unions have tended to become a focus for wider social and political aims largely due to the fact that Black workers have been the lowest-paid, lowest status part of the work force. In addition they are subject to a network of controls that are a source of bitter resentment. Lever (1981 : 38) points out that in all industrial societies it has been those workers who have been most likely to link industrial action to political action.

As Schlemmer (1983a : 1) has stated, the traditional role attached to trade unions, that is to maintain and improve the working conditions of their members on the a priori assumption that trade unions are static bodies, has proved only too often wrong in the history of industrial

relations, and the question whether politics is an essential function of trade unions bears closer scrutiny.

The awareness that Black trade unions, while incorporated in the industrial relations system, are prevented by other aspects of policy from participating in the normal political activities of most organized groups has given rise to increasing speculation and concern regarding the definition by these unions of their socio-political role, and the extent to which the factory floor will be used to attain broader socio-political goals. Lever (1981 : 39) points out that the fact that Black and non-racial trade unions now enjoy the rights and obligations of the industrial relations system on an equal footing with the established labour movement, places them in an almost unique position within the urban Black communities in South Africa today. As organizations which are not only permitted to organize workers on the basis of their most pressing interests, but are also legally encouraged to do so, they have a distinct advantage over any other organizations in the Black community. In this vein, Godsell (in Bosch (ed.) 1983 : 22) observes that trade unionism already results in the enfranchisement of workers in the factory.

Friedman (1981 : 4) makes the point that while there have been other manifestations of Black discontent, for example, school boycotts, labour has become central because it is the area in which Black organization has appeared to show the most concrete results to its participants.

According to Lever (1981) the problems of the new unions merge with the overall problem of the direction of political change in the whole system itself in the long run. At the level of management, problems will concern not so much the customary industrial problems over wages and working conditions, although these are most likely to increase, but rather the problem of not being able to avoid completely being involved in the process whereby Black unions define their socio-political role when disputes and political trends in the Black community spill over into the work place, disrupting union/management relations.

In industrial society, trade unions form the major groups representing the interests of employees. According to Bendix (1978 : 26) trade unions exercise permanent pressure on society and consequently have a great influence on the economic and political systems. Jackson (1982 : 1) states that in most countries trade unions are important and influential bodies which are able to command the attention of the media over a range of social and political matters, and may be considered as central social interest groups. Clegg (1976 : 11) refers to trade unions as "one of the most powerful forces shaping our society and determining our future".

Essenburg (1981 : 92) notes that a knowledge of the machinery of government is incomplete without an evaluation of its relation to the interest group system in the society - the kinds of significant groups, their organizational patterns, their demands and their methods of influencing the decision-making process.

In terms of the relevance of the problem to society, therefore, the implications of the struggle of the emergent unions to define their socio-political role bears closer scrutiny.

The pursuit of industrial peace and minimization of industrial conflict are major goals in South Africa as in any industrial society.

The increase in strike activity - strikes possibly being the most visible and spectacular indicators of industrial conflict (Jackson 1977 : 164) - and the number of Black workers involved in strike activity since the extension of trade union rights to Black workers have given rise to increasing speculation on the role Black trade unions, particularly the emergent unions, will play in the current phase of South African industrial relations.

1.2 AIMS OF THE STUDY

Few studies have been undertaken from trade union leaders' perceptions of and orientations towards the role and function of trade unions.

It is therefore the aim of this study to investigate the shaping of trade union character by the conscious decisions derived from the subjective perceptions and orientations of trade union leaders.

The operational aims of the study can be stated as the following:

- to determine how the leaders of the emergent unions perceive the role and functions of unions;
- to discover how these perceptions find expression in the ideology, policy and strategy of the unions;
- to determine the leaders' perceptions of the role of strikes in achieving the objectives and goals of the unions.

1.3 DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS

The basic concepts of the study are the following:

1.3.1 Trade union

Trade unions are not homogeneous entities and four broad types of trade union may be distinguished: craft, industrial, general and white-collar (Jones 1982 : 1). For the purpose of this investigation the term trade union is used generically to refer to the entire range of worker organizations. No particular type - or stereotype - of trade union is being referred to.

1.3.2 Emergent unions

The term 'emergent' as applied to certain trade unions refers to a particular style of unionism rather than any particular type of union. In this study, emergent unions refer to those unions, both registered and unregistered, which cater mainly for Black workers' interests. The emergent unions are further distinguished from the TUCSA 'parallel' unions formed by existing non-Black unions for Black workers.

1.3.3 Leaders

Trade union leaders and representatives refer specifically to the General Secretaries of unions included in this study.

1.3.4 Perceptions

Hodgetts (1982 : 520) defines perceptions as "A person's view of reality". Implicit in this definition is the idea that subjective perception is one of the major motivators of human behaviour.

2 RESEARCH DESIGN AND DESCRIPTION OF THE RESEARCH GROUP

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Research is regarded by Schwartz and Jacobs (1977 : xiv) as an art form that requires the use of a large variety of very different research tools, to which one could also add ... or a combination of research tools. The main issue is using the tool that best suits the problem. The methods that can be used are often prescribed by the practical situation to which the researcher must adapt.

As far as could be determined the maximum number of emergent trade union leaders who potentially could participate in the research was about 30 but a quantitative method which lends itself to statistical analyses in which one looks for structures and possible relations between variables is not a feasible method.

In this specific study a qualitative approach was used because, within limits, the leaders' perception of reality and the conscious decisions they make will impinge strongly on union character.

2.2 SELECTION OF THE RESEARCH GROUP

Due to the cost factor the emergent trade unions in the Eastern and Western Cape were excluded from the study. Initially it was hoped to obtain a proportional stratified sample comprising units drawn from

CUSA, FOSATU, unaffiliated registered unions and unaffiliated unregistered unions (see Table 1.2), the population for the study being defined as the General Secretaries of the previously defined emergent unions. This strategy had to be abandoned when it became apparent that there was a lot of resistance from these unions to any attempts to elicit information from them. Responses to attempts to make appointments with the General Secretaries included "You might be from the Security Police" and "We have no objections to academic research but are not prepared to participate in any research done by the Human Sciences Research Council". In addition, several appointments were made with the researcher which were not kept by potential respondents.

Similar reluctance on the part of trade unionists to participate in any discussions or air their views was encountered by the Stellenbosse Aktuele Aangeleentheidskring when inviting speakers to the congress "Trade Unions and Change in South Africa" in October 1983. Very few trade unions participated in the congress.

Bosch (1983) explains that some trade unionists had stated their unwillingness to participate in a congress where representatives of the state and certain conservative trade unions would be speaking. Another reason given was that their prime concern is to work for and amongst the workers and talking to students would not realise this aim.

Another reason for the reluctance of trade unions to participate in any research on trade union matters was identified. The researcher was told by one of the respondents with whom an interview was conducted that this unwillingness to participate in any research has stemmed from the publication, on several occasions in the past, of confidential union information which had been made available to researchers.

The reluctance of trade unionists to provide information or to air their views has consequently resulted in a lack of reliable data and has also given rise to much speculation concerning these unions by many "authorities" in the field. Under these circumstances, any of the more "traditional" sampling techniques have been impossible to apply, and interviews were conducted with those leaders who were willing to grant them.

By the end of the period allocated for the interviewing, only 12 interviews had been completed with five CUSA unions, two FOSATU unions and five unaffiliated unions.

The decision to continue with the investigation in view of the small number of respondents was motivated by the argument of Patton (1980 : 95) who discusses the relation between strategies and trade-offs. Trade-offs are necessitated by limited resources, limited time, and limits on the human ability to grasp the complex nature of social reality. In this instance, a trade-off between breadth and depth - analogous to the trade-off between quantitative and qualitative methods is pertinent.

The major consideration, however, which motivated the decision to continue with the investigation is the dearth of data of a subjective nature on Black trade unions in general and the emergent unions in particular. In addition, while some studies on the subjective perceptions of Black workers have been undertaken (see for example, Schlemmer, Geerds and Van Schalkwyk 1983; Terblanche 1983 and Slabbert 1984) to the best of the researcher's knowledge, no research has been undertaken on the perceptions of the leaders of Black trade unions.

The object is, therefore, to provide context for the interpretation of data (Patton 1980 : 280) rather than reducing context to arrive at generalizations.

2.3 TECHNIQUES USED IN THE INVESTIGATION

The techniques used in the investigation were interviews and an interview guide. A detailed description of the interview guide is given in Appendix A.

Following the nature of the data sought in this study, a semi-structured interview, selected for its flexibility in eliciting data of a predominantly qualitative nature, was used as the basic technique. The decision to use a semi-structured interview in this study was prompted by the fact that much of the data sought is of a subjective

and sensitive nature and concerned the subjective perceptions and motives of the interviewees.

The interview guide used in this study was divided into three sections. The data required in sections (i) and (ii) were largely of a quantitative nature, whereas the main body of data required in section (iii) was of a qualitative nature.

- (i) Biographical data: This included questions on sex, age, education and trade union experience.
- (ii) Union information: Questions in this section dealt with affiliation, registration, number of members, membership composition, election of office-bearers, union publications, communication with members and community involvement.
- (iii) Substantive information: This section contained a list of topics and subtopics about which the researcher wished to elicit the subjective perceptions and meanings of the respondents. The four topics which provided the broad framework within which the questions were developed were: the role and functions of unions; the power structure or organized labour; trade unions and social change; and the functions of strikes.

Topics and subtopics were introduced according to the outline of the interview guide, but not necessarily in the order or sequence.

Each respondent was interviewed in his/her office at the relevant union headquarters. The interviews took between 90 and 120 minutes to complete and were conducted between September 1983 and January 1984. All interviews were conducted by the researcher.

Patton (1980 : 246) points to the necessity in qualitative interviewing of capturing the actual words of the interviewee, there being no substitute for raw data of actual quotations of interviewees. It was therefore intended to taperecord the interviews. However as most of the respondents expressed misgivings on the use of a tape

recorder during the interviews, it was decided not to tape any of the interviews and extensive notetaking was resorted to.

2.4 CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESEARCH GROUP

Information relating to both individual respondents and the nature of the trade unions is presented in this section. In the first part, the biographical characteristics of the respondents are presented. In the second part, information relating to the unions is presented.

2.4.1 Biographical characteristics of the respondents

A description of the research group used in the investigation is presented with reference to the respondent's sex, age, population classification, education and union experience. These characteristics are summarized in Table 2.1.

TABLE 2.1
BIOGRAPHICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESPONDENTS

Respondent	Sex	Age	Population classification	Time with present union	Previous union experience
1	M	32	B	3 yrs	6 yrs
2	M	33	W	1 yr	9 yrs
3	F	33	B	4 mths	5 yrs
4	F	45	B	3 yrs	9 yrs
5	M	31	B	1 yr	2 yrs
6	F	59	B	11 yrs	33 yrs
7	M	26	B	1 yr	1 yr
8	M	23	B	5 mths	1 yr
9	M	30	B	3 mths	3 mths
10	F	60	B	1 yr	26 yrs
11	F	47	B	4 yrs	19 yrs
12	M	27	B	2 yrs	5 yrs

(a) Sex ratio

Seven of the respondents in the research group were male and five were female.

(b) Age distribution

The ages of the respondents ranged from 23 to 60 years of age. Five of the respondents fell into the 30-39 year group.

(c) Population classification

The respondents were Black with the exception of one who was White.

(d) Educational level

The educational level of the respondents varied from Junior Certificate plus Teaching Diploma, Matric, Matric plus Teaching Diploma, B. Proc. to B. Proc. plus B.A. Honours. In addition, two of the respondents possessed a diploma in industrial relations, one respondent having obtained the diploma at Harvard University.

(e) Time with present union

The length of time the respondents had been General Secretaries of the respective unions ranged from three months to 11 years. Six of the respondents were founder members of the unions, and had held the position of General Secretary since the inception of the union.

(f) Length of union involvement

Previous union experience of the respondents ranged from three months to 33 years. The form of the involvement varied from union member, publicity agent, shop steward, organiser, general secretary (of other unions), and legal adviser to a union co-ordinating body.

2.4.2 Union profiles

A description of the unions involved in the study is presented with reference to the industries represented by the unions, size of membership, racial composition and skill level of members.

(a) Industries

Industries represented by the unions included the chemical, insurance, laundry, metal, mining and motor industries.

(b) Size of membership

The smallest union involved had 614 members and the number given for the largest union was 86 000*. Membership for the remaining unions was 1 200, 3 770, 6 000, 10 000 (x2), 16 000, 18 500, 22 000, 50 000 and 55 000.

(c) Racial composition

Four unions had Black members only. Five unions had a small number of Coloured and Asian workers in addition to a large number of Black workers, while two unions had a small number of White workers as well. One union objected strongly to the use of racial categories and refused to supply any information in this regard. Several unions emphasized that their membership was open to all who sought to join.

(d) Level of skills

Most unions had a majority of unskilled workers and a small number of semiskilled and skilled workers. Two unions had unskilled workers only. Three unions also had a small number of Whitecollar workers.

No attempt is made to generalize in this study. However, the wide range of industries represented in this study would point to a broad picture of the issues in which the emergent unions are involved.

3 THE OBJECTIVES OF TRADE UNIONS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The primary aim of this study was to determine the perceptions of union leaders of the role and functions of trade unions; and to discover how

*Jones (1984 : 49) says that the view is prevalent among some sections of the established union movement that several emerging Black unions are falsifying their membership. They very often claim membership but do not collect subscriptions. In this way, funds received from external sources are reflected in the books as members' subscriptions.

these perceptions find expression in certain aspects of the ideology, policy and strategy of the unions.

The data, derived from questions, developed within the framework of the following topics:

- (i) the role and objectives of trade unions;
- (ii) the power structure of organized labour;
- (iii) trade unions and social change and
- (iv) the functions of strikes are described.

The emergent union movement is characterized by its commitment to the interests of Black workers who are seen to have little in common with their White counterparts. In terms of "traditional" trade unionism, unions should pursue their economic and social philosophies only in the work place and should not concern themselves with issues or actions that are not directly concerned with the employer/employee relationship.

In order to determine the "pure and simple" (see Jones 1984 : 53) extent of their philosophies and the extent to which non-work-related objectives are perceived to be part of the role and function of unions, respondents were asked what they thought the primary functions of unions should be, and accordingly, what the immediate priorities of their unions were.

Concern with the welfare of union members appeared to be perceived by all respondents as the primary functions of unions: "Unions must try and protect the interests of members as far as possible", "We must strive for the highest possible living wages for our workers", "Unions must negotiate the best benefits for their workers", "Must build good relationships between employer and employees", "The unions should be the watchdog of the worker", "To explain the situation at work and relationships at work", "To regulate industrial relations."

Unions were seen to be "The major link between employer and employee" and the major instrument to highlight and protect worker interests, and the main duties of unions were seen to be the negotiation of improved wages, working conditions and standard of living on behalf of its members.

However, although the major concern of the unions was seen by all respondents to be with the welfare of union members, without exception, all respondents felt that unions should and do speak on behalf of non-members (that is all Black workers) as well. "Workers are all members of the same community." It was felt that Black people in general were ignorant of their rights, and needed to be made aware of the social and labour rights: "Workers are confused", "Workers must be taught to fight for their work and social security", "We must try and build up unity among workers", "The union must teach members to uphold democratic principles so that they will look at democracy in society as well", "Unions must represent, educate and lead workers in their relationship with any institution."

In view of their concern with the position of the Black worker, respondents were asked whom they thought best able to improve the position of the Black worker.

All respondents were of the opinion that the workers themselves, and workers' organizations, as opposed to employers, the state or any other organizations, were best able to improve their own position. Research conducted by Terblanche (1983 : 4) points to similar feelings among workers, who are of the opinion that workers themselves, as opposed to management, must start an organization to protect their interests. In two independent studies, therefore, both General Secretaries and workers have expressed the desire and necessity for workers to attempt to solve their own problems.

Although the improvement of wages and working conditions for members in particular and all Black workers in general are the major goals of these unions, it was apparent from the responses that work-related issues could not be separated from broader community and socio-political issues: "Everything boils down to politics", "Workers are members of a society therefore it is necessary to go beyond the work place", "Workers are entitled to freedom of movement". Respondents were asked which were the first issues beyond the factory floor in which unions should involve themselves.

Education, housing, rents and transport were identified by all respondents as the most important issues in which it was felt that unions should involve themselves beyond the factory floor.

The concern of union leaders with broader community issues may be compared with the findings of Schlemmer et al. (1983 : 4-5). A study conducted among Black workers found that the motivation of trade union association was predominantly practical and strategic, and an essentially pragmatic job-advancement oriented consciousness showed itself. Political and community issues enjoyed low priority, whereas more direct work-related issues, for example wages, worker-management relations enjoyed a high priority. One respondent cited the vote for Black workers as the most important non-work related issue in which unions should be involved.

In view of the concern of respondents with the social as well as labour rights for workers, and the need for involvement in community issues, respondents were asked about their communication with members of the unions, and the union's actual involvement in community issues.

Communication with members varied from union to union. Meetings were held by some unions on a regular basis, for example on a monthly or three-monthly basis, or as the need arose. One respondent mentioned that he had noticed an increase in attendance at these meetings which he ascribed to the recession and related problems.

It appeared that the discussion of current events, that is non-union matters, formed an important part of union meetings.

Only three respondents said that they never discussed current events with members at all.

Only two of the unions involved in the study published their own newsletter; one on a regular basis and the other according to resources and the time factor. All other affiliated unions relied on the Federation publication. Of the unaffiliated unions, one published a joint publication with another union and the other sent out pamphlets containing press cutting information on matters of interest.

Despite the concern with broader social and community issues, no unions were directly involved in any large-scale community projects. Lack of time and money were given as the major reasons for the absence of any large-scale involvement. Participation in community issues manifested itself in involvement with issues such as workers' transport, fares, rents, reallocations and old-age pensions. One union provided legal assistance in labour and community matters; another union established a library for members in the union offices.

Five unions stated their intention of becoming more involved in community projects in the future. The major focus of future union projects was on unemployment. In this regard future plans concerned the finding of jobs for the unemployed, and one union was involved in a project to establish a sewing centre whereby income could be generated. Day-care centres also appeared to enjoy a high priority for future projects.

Jackson (1977 : 81) states that one of the central aims of the trade union movement in most countries is to extend the control of members over their working conditions and working lives. This has in many instances led trade unions to support moves towards "industrial democracy", that is the participation by workers and their representatives in decisions concerning the running of the enterprise.

Respondents were asked whether they thought any progress had been made by Black unions and/or workers toward any participation in industrial management.

No respondent saw any demands for institutionalized participation in management (see Towers 1980 : 5) arising in the foreseeable future. The absence of demand for participation by workers at this stage was ascribed to several factors. Some obstacles cited were "Lack of training and experience of workers and shop stewards", "The present confusion of workers about basic issues", "Opposition from management", "The racial problems which divide people." One subject did not favour the idea of industrial democracy because of what he described as the "Inherent conflict of interest between worker and management."

Although participation in industrial management was not seen as an option at this stage, the general feeling was that as workers became more sophisticated, more demands would be made in this direction. Studies by both Schlemmer et al. (1983) and Terblanche (1983) on Black worker attitudes and perceptions point to the social, political and economic implications of the rising educational level of the Black labour force, and Schlemmer et al. (1983) conclude that it is the rising educational level of Black industrial workers, rather than unionization, that will introduce a new consciousness into the work place.

4 THE POWER STRUCTURE OF ORGANIZED LABOUR

The attempt to build a power basis sufficiently strong to negotiate effectively with employers is seen by Bendix (1978 : 28) as the overriding principle and rationale in the efforts of trade unions towards a high degree of organization. It is widely recognized that the preference of Black unions for organization along industry and general lines stems from the fact that their power basis is found in numbers rather than in skills.

Of the twelve unions involved in the study, eleven were industry unions and one was a general union. All these unions consisted mainly of unskilled workers. Respondents were asked whether they foresaw any division between skilled and unskilled workers in the future.

Ten of the twelve respondents did not anticipate any division between skilled and unskilled workers in the foreseeable future.

One respondent did believe that a division existed between promoted workers and other workers and another respondent accused management of trying to cause a split between skilled and unskilled workers.

The level of collective bargaining usually correlates with the degree of centralization of unions (Bendix 1978 : 32). However, notwithstanding the preference of the emergent unions for industry and general unions, all respondents stated their preference for plant level

bargaining, which was seen by them to be the most effective level for this.

Various reasons for this choice were given. The reason stated most was that the shop floor was where most problems started. It was felt that these problems could be solved by shop stewards, with union officials coming in at a later stage if these disputes could not be resolved. Other feelings were: "This level allows for the active participation of members themselves", "People who are directly involved know what is happening."

It was also felt by some respondents that plant level bargaining in combination with other levels could also be successful.

As many of the emergent unions have rejected the industrial council system and have opted for a strategy of signing recognition agreements with individual employers, respondents were asked what their objections to the industrial council system were.

Some views on the industrial council system were: "They nurse those companies whose profits are low", "Factories are not all the same and the big companies are getting away with murder", "The industrial council system is not negotiating or bargaining, it's a take it or leave it situation."

Only registered trade unions have automatic access to all the institutions and procedures created by the Labour Relations Act. Perhaps the most important is access to industrial councils (Jones 1984 : 39). Registration is not compulsory, however, and unions that choose to remain unregistered are not illegal.

Of the twelve unions involved in the study, six were registered in terms of the Labour Relations Act. Participation in the industrial council system was not, however, the main reason for having registered. Recognition from employers was cited in two instances as the reason for having registered. Fear of being banned and stop-order facilities were other reasons given.

Four respondents stated that they would not apply for registration of their unions: "Registration as it now stands entails too much control", "The legal bargaining system as it now stands is not conducive to Black workers' interests", "Registration is a statutory measure."

Of the remaining two unregistered unions, one respondent declared that the union would "Look to registration despite the disadvantages" while the other "Must still assess the pros and cons".

The fact that collective bargaining at the local level is seen by these unions as the most effective means of dealing with the particular needs and problems being experienced by the Black worker is seen by the National Manpower Commission (1984 : 355) as the manifestation of a new dualism based on the needs, attitudes and actions of the various parties, and which replaces the dualism deriving from the statutory framework for the various population groups in the labour sphere prior to 1979.

5 TRADE UNIONS AND SOCIAL CHANGE

Trade unions are usually the major groups representing the interests of employees in industrial societies and have proved to be not only products of social change but also powerful agents of social change.

Despite the prohibitions of political activity imposed on both registered and unregistered unions in terms of the Industrial Conciliation Act (see Jones 1984 : 43), the potential of unions as pressure groups and the potential role of the emergent unions is the subject of much debate.

Questions in this section were designed to elicit views on a range of issues relating to social change,* and included questions not only on the role of unions themselves but also on various external agencies.

*It was explained to respondents that the concept social change as employed in the context of this study referred to changes in social arrangements whereby the social distance between the dominant social group and sub-dominant groups is reduced, rather than changes which lead to the structural transformation of the entire society or comprehensive system.

Respondents were asked whether, in their opinion, social change in South Africa could only be brought about by evolutionary, that is by gradual changes in legislation, reformatory, that is with trade unions playing an important role as pressure groups, or by revolutionary means.

From the opinions expressed, it appeared that in general these unions were optimistic that social change could be brought about by evolutionary and reformatory rather than revolutionary means, with the unions playing a pivotal role: "At the moment unions are still opting for reforms", "If you want to succeed you must make people understand what should be done, and why you are doing it step by step", "Unions can bring about reform if properly organized." One respondent was of the opinion that "Institutions like unions can compel reform over time if necessary, but I don't believe that the present state is capable of the reform to give workers the vote, and workers will not be satisfied with anything less than the vote".

Two respondents discounted all other means other than revolutionary means because "The government won't listen" and "We have spoken to leaders who haven't listened, so what the hell, let them learn by experience".

Despite the desire for and belief in social change brought about by reformatory and evolutionary means, those respondents who prescribed to evolutionary and reformatory change did not discount the possibility of revolutionary action if other means failed to bring about change. One respondent said that he doubted the efficacy of evolutionary and reformatory processes as "New bricks cannot be put on old foundations". Only one respondent discounted revolutionary means altogether: "Our grandfathers waited for the revolution and our fathers waited for the revolution but nothing happened, it never will materialise."

Two respondents were not prepared to express any opinion on this matter.

As it transpired that most respondents did ascribe to evolutionary reform, respondents were asked whether the Wiehahn Commission and the subsequent changes in legislation could be seen as successful examples of evolutionary change.

Opinions on the influence of the Wiehahn Commission varied, and ranged from "It started the ball rolling", "It came at the right time", "Before it was not easy for unions to obtain a hearing but now they have a voice", "A lot happened after, it was the turning point" to "It would put the Black worker somewhere if followed to the point".

Some respondents expressed disappointment at the government's response to the Commission's recommendations: "The government ignored their findings and recommendations", "The Commission was sincere but the government did not approve." One respondent expressed the opinion that "Important changes have flowed, for example the non-racial openings of unions, but new means have been devised for controlling workers".

The opinions were also expressed that the Commission's recommendations "Did not bring about any major changes" and had "no significance to the worker".

In view of the central reformatory role that is ascribed to Black unions in bringing about social change, respondents were asked in which area - economic, community or political - they thought the emergent union movement had had the greatest influence to date.

All the respondents felt that the greatest inroads had been made by these unions in the economic sphere, for example the improvement of wages and the prevention of unfair dismissals. The observation was made that "Our largest advantages have been made in the factory and this will be the case for a long time to come". All respondents felt that the emergent unions had also made some, albeit minor, contributions in the social sphere, for example the urban rights reports in the newspapers. The fact that unions have not had any significant influence outside of the economic spheres was put down to the present concern of unions with consolidating their power base in terms of numbers and the opinion was stated that "At present unions are concerned with growth, but when growth has stabilised, the unions will have more muscle".

On the question of whether the emergent unions would tend, in the future, to become labour organizations in the "real" or "traditional"

sense, that are concerned with economic issues only, or overtly politically oriented, only four respondents saw a definite development towards involvement with economic issues only. The remaining respondents felt that time would tell, but as long as the political situation of Black workers remained unchanged, concern with socio-political issues could not be divorced from other issues.

The discovery of the ability of collective action to influence conditions, the awareness of Black labour as potential weapon and the perceived role of trade unions as pressure groups raises questions at the degree of cohesion of Black workers and to what extent a "working class identity" can be spoken of at present.

Respondents were asked whether they saw the Black worker movement in South Africa as an organized interest group at present, and whether a "working class identity" could be spoken of at present.

Opinions varied as to whether the Black workers could be spoken of as a homogeneous group at present. Seven respondents felt that there was little unity between Black workers at present. The obstacles to these workers becoming a united group were the confusion of workers about unions, lack of communication outside of the factory, fear of the Security Police, friction between unions on the shop floor, the different ideological stands between unions and the different origins of unions.

With the exception of two respondents who did not think that workers would ever form a united group in future, all the other respondents did, however, see an increasing awareness on the part of workers, and a trend towards the development of a united group in the future. Opinion was divided on whether this would occur in the near or distant future.

The five respondents who did see Black workers as a homogeneous group at present quoted dissatisfaction in the political arena, political oppression and the unique problems and interests of Black workers as unifying forces.

The study conducted among Black workers by Schlemmer et al. (1983 : 4) found that the motivation of the workers interviewed for trade union association was dominantly practical and strategic, and the more abstract or "ideological" factor of the promotion of "workers' rights" was far down in rank order. The presentation and/or negotiation of collective grievances was found to be the dominant reason for trade union association. In the study conducted by Terblanche (1983 : 53) the main reason for wanting to belong to a union was that unions will "Help with problems".

Unions require leaders in order to achieve the collective goals of their members, and trade union leaders are often seen as spokesmen not only for their own members but also for the labour force in general. This view that has emerged is particularly true of the spokesmen for the Black labour movement.

Respondents were asked how they perceived the role of union leaders (and by implication their own role) in social change.

Eight respondents felt that union leaders had an important role to play in this respect: "Union leaders are unavoidably involved in social change vis-a-vis their involvement in unions." It was also pointed out that "Shop stewards are also often community leaders." These views would tie up with the general view on the broader role and functions of unions. The feeling was that leaders had an obligation to look after the interests of workers and therefore to play a role in social change: "Workers expect it." It was also mentioned that leaders "Are able to link up political and economic aspects", and also have an important part to play "Because of their skills".

Two respondents did not ascribe to the "automatic" role of union leaders in social change, and felt that this was an issue that had to be decided by the members. The opinion was expressed that "Leaders may play a role depending on the nature of the issue, but only in his capacity as General Secretary, and because of the special skills he may possess".

Two respondents were not prepared to express any opinion on this matter.

The belief that union leaders are unavoidably involved in social change may be explained by the view of Schneider (1969 : 295) who says that the role of the labour leader or official may offer a type of immaterial reward for which there is no counterpart in industry. The role offers the satisfaction of attaining certain idealistic ends, for example raising the living standards and status of labour as a whole, or increasing its political power. Michels (cited in Jackson 1977 : 75) too, argues that whereas to the leader the organization has become the end itself, the rank and file member of unions view the organization as a means to another end.

It would appear that a higher level of political awareness exists among union leaders than among rank and file members. The level of political awareness of the leaders in the study may be explained partly by their level of education. In comparison with union members, who are for the most part unskilled, the educational level of the respondents ranged from Junior Certificate plus Teaching Diploma to B.Proc. plus B.A. Honours.

A distinction must therefore be drawn between the aspirations and political intentions of union leaders and their union membership. This view is corroborated by the findings of both Schlemmer et al. (1983) and Terblanche (1983) that Black workers by and large seem to be less politically aware and generally more concerned about day-to-day issues and the removal of perceived economic injustices.

Lever (1981 : 31), too, spells out the dilemma of Black trade union leaders to define their socio-political role under the new dispensation. On the one hand, these leaders are under pressure to articulate and to organize Black social and political aspirations. On the other hand, as Lever points out, Black union leaders for the most part are well aware that the authorities are not going to tolerate trade unions which they consider to be overtly "political".

Respondents were asked whether they thought that any conflict of aspirations existed between union leaders and union members.

It appeared that in general none or very little conflict of interest was perceived to exist between leaders and rank and file members: "Mass opinion has priority", "Leaders are part and parcel of workers." One opinion was that "Differences in perception may exist, but there is no conflict as such".

Some did admit to the existence of some conflict: "Conflict sometimes cannot be avoided, but it is our task to make them aware." Membership of the industrial council was mentioned as having been an area of disagreement between leaders and members.

In addition to the increasing customary industrial problems over wages and working conditions, Lever (1981 : 39) contends that management may find, on the one level, that disputes and political trends in the Black community spill over into the work place, disrupting union-management relations. On another level, management will be faced with the problem of deciding whether or not the private sector can play a more active role in promoting the welfare of Black community issues such as housing, education and social security.

The opinion was held by all the respondents that management had the potential to play an important role in social change in South Africa because "They have economic power" and "The state pays attention to the voice of management". It was felt, however, that "A few are prepared to push for social change, management in general is resisting change" and "Management is only trying to preserve the status quo". A negative view of management was also found by Schlemmer et al. (1983 : 11), namely, that workers' image of management in general is that it is part of a hostile environment.

Regarding work place issues all respondents expressed the view that a great need existed to establish better channels of communication with management. It was felt that "It is important to know each other's attitudes in the interests of good relations". It was stated that

"Large companies are usually co-operative" in this respect, but that smaller companies were not because "They were scared". Only one respondent was completely averse to establishing other channels of communication: "We are wary of any contact with management besides for the purpose of wage negotiations."

Respondents were asked how they felt about the responsibility programmes, literacy and numeracy training e.g., which were being instituted by some companies for their workers.

Four respondents were unreservedly in favour of such programmes and felt that unions need not necessarily be consulted in the design of such programmes. It was stated that "Any programme aimed at the upliftment of the worker is desirable". It was also mentioned that "Unions have no money for this type of operation", "Unions have no time to get involved in extra work". Some respondents felt that these programmes should be designed to run in consultation with the unions to avoid abuse.

One respondent conceded that literacy training was important, but felt that these programmes could be used "To blackmail workers to weaken union hold". One respondent felt that "These programmes are being used to hoodwink people - what is decided in the boardroom and what happens on the shopfloor are very different". The opinion was expressed by respondents that "These programmes are paternalistic and unnecessary", "The priorities of the companies should be to improve working conditions - if wages were improved workers could attain these things themselves".

Respondents were asked how successful they felt other factors such as the codes of conduct, disinvestment by foreign companies, and support from foreign unions had been as regards the position of the Black worker and social change.

In general the codes of conduct were viewed in a negative light, and most respondents were sceptical about the motives behind them. Only one respondent felt that the codes brought important moral pressure to bear on employers.

The ineffectiveness of the codes was ascribed partly to the fact that "Employers voluntarily subscribe to the codes" and "Compliance with the contents cannot be enforced". The codes were not rejected outright, but two major objections could be distinguished. The first objection was that the workers and/or unions are not involved in the drafting of the codes. The views were also expressed that the codes were "Too theoretical" and "They could be useful if the paternalism in compiling the contents ceased". It was also said that the codes of conduct "Don't cover all problems".

The second objection concerned the problem of monitoring. Most respondents felt that the codes could be more effective if they were monitored by the unions.

Only one respondent felt that the principle behind the codes of conduct had no merit whatsoever.

Disinvestment versus constructive engagement appeared to be a sensitive area and half the subjects were not prepared to express any opinion on the merits of disinvestment versus constructive engagement strategies of foreign companies. Four respondents felt that disinvestment by foreign companies in South Africa would put people out of work and "The workers are ultimately the losers". One respondent said that he felt that "Disinvestment has an important part to play in evolutionary change", and the remaining respondent said that he felt that "Neither disinvestment or constructive engagement will have any effect on the government".

Respondents were asked whether they felt bodies such as the Trade Union Congress in Britain which have taken up cudgels for the Black union movement in South Africa had had positive results.

It was generally felt that the only support these bodies could give was moral and that the effect of this type of action was limited. The opinion was stated by one respondent that this sort of action was effective in the sense that "They make the government uncomfortable because it is being watched". One respondent felt that "Interest in Black unions has helped Black wages".

Eldridge (1971) argues that strikes should not be seen as the inevitable result of structural developments but should rather be viewed as a consequence of the different interpretations and attitudes of participants.

Questions in this section dealt with the perceived functions and aims of strikes, and views on strikes not called by the union.

Respondents were asked what they felt the function of a strike was, and whether they felt strikes always realised their aims.

Various functions of strikes were mentioned: "To highlight grievances or the dissatisfaction of workers", "A powerful weapon to speed up progress", "To bring management to the negotiating table", "To pressure management into accepting workers' demands", "To get the message to other parties if other methods fail", "To get demands met", "To try and demonstrate to employers that you are not happy with the decisions they have arrived at." It was also stated that "Striking is the best weapon of trade unions" and "The only power we have as a labour movement".

Notwithstanding the general perception of strikes as potentially powerful weapons of unions, most respondents felt that strikes were not usually successful. Only two respondents felt that strikes usually realised their aims.

The success of a strike depended on a variety of factors such as "The product produced by the company", "The size of the company", and "The planning of the strike".

Respondents were asked how they felt about those strikes not called by the union, and whether it was felt that these strikes undermined union leadership.

Only two respondents disapproved of these strikes and ascribed them to lack of, or breakdown in communication between rank and file and leaders.

In general respondents did not disapprove of strikes not called by the union, neither was it felt that they undermined leadership. These strikes were seen as "A spontaneous expression of anger and frustration" as opposed to those strikes which were "A calculated, planned attempt to advance one's position". Other opinions were: "Many of these strikes are justified because of the difficulties involved in having a legal strike", "These strikes are positive because workers are responding to things which affect them." One respondent said that "There are some stupid strikes, but the union generally does not mind strikes not called by the union".

7 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The sample used in this study is too small to warrant the generalization of the research to emergent unions in general. Important pointers for the direction in which emergent unions could move were, however, obtained.

Evidence gathered in this study clearly indicated that although the perceived union objective of representing workers' job-related interests is primary to the more overt socio-political tasks, the leaders saw broader community and socio-political issues as inseparable from work-related issues. Consequently their interests are not limited to those spheres which are classically defined as trade union interests.

Concern with and involvement in broader issues which impinge on workers' lives may in Schlemmer's (1983a) terms, be viewed as reformist rather than radical in their effect at present.

At present these unions would appear to be concentrating on growth and the consolidation of their position in the factories rather than pursuing an overt political role. They are well aware that their power

base lies, for the present, in numbers and organization and that once they are well established the power of the Black worker will be a potentially powerful weapon with the ability to influence Blacks' work conditions through collective action.

This view is upheld by the contention of Friedman (1981 : 33) who says that as unions become increasingly established in the bargaining process and in the factories, socio-political issues will intrude increasingly on bargaining.

Notwithstanding the general perception of strikes as potentially powerful weapons of unions, the majority felt that strikes were not usually successful. Of perhaps more importance is the fact that 10 of the 12 leaders were not against strikes not called by the union, neither was it felt that such strikes undermined union leadership.

In general the respondents were optimistic that social change could come about by evolutionary methods although there was an indication of a feeling that the end of the road had been reached and that revolution was the only way out for Blacks.

The idea has been put forth that trade union structure is not a fixed phenomenon but a process determined by both structural movements and subjective perceptions of the actors. It is thus contended that the conclusions regarding the socio-political role of emergent unions derived at in this study describe the existing situation at present and are relevant to the new phase of industrial relations (De Villiers 1982) which has recently been entered. As structural movements and subjective perceptions change, so will trade union structure and strategy.

Certain areas for further research became apparent during the study.

Communication

Evidence gathered in the study indicates that an urgent need exists for research regarding the lack of communication between trade unions and management, and the way in which more effective channels of com-

munication may be established. The lack of effective, if any, channels of communication is particularly evident when one looks at some of the perceived functions of strikes given in the study. It is obvious that more effective communication would replace the need to strike in many instances in order to get a message across. This observation is enhanced by the view of Jackson (1977 : 208) that strikes are extremely complex and involve a variety of influences, and should be viewed as a consequence of the different interpretations and attitudes of different participants rather than from a purely structural viewpoint.

Consultation

In spite of the subscription by management to programmes concerned with the welfare and upliftment of workers such as the codes of conduct and the development of social responsibility programmes for Black workers, the absence of consultation by management of workers and/or unions when drawing up programmes which affect the worker is an area to which attention should be directed.

Differences in perception

While union leaders believe that very little, if any, conflict of aspirations exists between union leaders and rank and file members, evidence gathered in this study, when compared to findings of Schlemmer et al. (1983) and Terblanche (1983), would point to a difference in perceptions albeit in degree rather than principle. Further research may be directed to determining the extent of differences in perception between union leaders and union membership and the actual influence of these differences on union policy and strategy.

Involvement of more unions.

As only a small number of emergent unions were involved in this study, and no unions from the Western or Eastern Cape were involved, further research involving more unions should be undertaken.

In the light of different interpretations and attitudes of participants in a situation, there would appear to be cause for undertaking further studies within a qualitative paradigm which focus on the interface between worker and management. Findings of Golden and Parker (cited in Jubber (ed.) 1979 : 125) are that among the criteria for the causes

for industrial peace are: the full acceptance by management of the collective bargaining process and trade unionism as an institution; the view of a strong union as an asset to management; and the absence of interference by the company in union affairs and the workers' relationship to the union. It would thus appear equally necessary for studies to be undertaken within a qualitative paradigm to assess how managers perceive their interactions with trade unions.

APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW GUIDE

BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

- 1 Name of interviewee
- 2 Sex
- 3 Age
- 4 Population classification
- 5 Educational level
- 6 Trade union experience

UNION INFORMATION

- 7 Name of union
- 8 Headquarters
- 9 Affiliation
- 10 Reasons for affiliation to this federation
- 11 If not affiliated, whether union works in close association with any organization
- 12 If unaffiliated, why not?
- 13 If unaffiliated, whether union is thinking of affiliating to a federation in future
- 14 Whether union is registered
- 15 Why union has sought registration
- 16 If unregistered, why not?
- 17 Whether union intends applying for registration in future
- 18 Number of members
- 19 Skills composition
- 20 Racial composition
- 21 Whether union publishes its own newsletter

SUBSTANTIVE INFORMATION

A THE ROLE AND OBJECTIVES OF TRADE UNIONS

- 22 What respondent thinks is the primary function of a trade union
23 What the immediate priorities of their unions are
24 Who respondents thought were best able to improve the position of
the Black worker
25 What respondents thought were the first issues beyond the factory
floor in which unions should involve themselves
26 The nature and frequency of communication with members
27 Whether current events, i.e. issues not directly related to union
affairs, were discussed at union meetings
28 Whether union was involved in any community projects, e.g. youth
movements/fund raising/school boards/day-care centres/housing
projects/other
29 Whether respondents foresaw demands being made by Black unions for par-
ticipation in industrial management in the near future

B THE POWER STRUCTURE OF ORGANIZED LABOUR

- 30 Whether the respondents saw any division between skilled and
unskilled workers in future
31 What the respondent considers to be the most effective level of
collective bargaining
32 What the objections to the industrial council system are
33 What the reasons for the union having registered/not having
registered are
34 Whether unions would seek to register in future

C TRADE UNIONS AND SOCIAL CHANGE

- 35 Whether respondents thought that social change in South Africa could
only be brought about by evolutionary/reformatory/revolutionary means
36 Whether the Wiehahn Commission and subsequent changes in legislation
could be seen as a successful example of evolutionary change.

- 37 In which area - economic/community/political - respondents thought the
emergent union movement had had the greatest influence to date
- 38 Whether respondents saw the future tendency of emergent unions as
labour organizations in the traditional sense, or more politically
oriented
- 39 Whether respondents thought the Black worker movement in South Africa
was an organized interest group
- 40 What respondents thought the role of the union leader should be vis-a-
vis social change
- 41 Whether respondents thought any conflict of interest existed between
union leaders and rank and file members
- 42 What role respondents thought management should play in social change
- 43 What respondents felt about responsibility programmes being instituted
by companies for their workers
- 44 How successful other agencies such as the codes of conduct, disinvest-
ment by foreign companies, support from foreign unions have been/could
be as regards the position of the Black worker

D THE FUNCTIONS OF STRIKES

- 45 What respondents felt the function of a strike was
- 46 Whether respondents felt that strikes always realized their aims
- 47 Whether respondents felt that strikes not called by the union under-
mined union leadership

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