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ASPECTS OF UPWARD
OCCUPATIONAL
MOVEMENTS OF BLACKS

PART I : PROBLEMS EXPERIENCED BY
BOTH UPWARDLY MOBILE INDIVIDUALS
AND MANAGEMENT :
A BRIEF REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR PERSONNEL RESEARCH
COUNCIL FOR SCIENTIFIC AND INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH

SPECIAL REPORT

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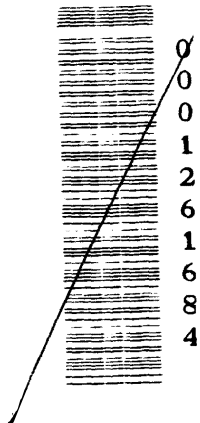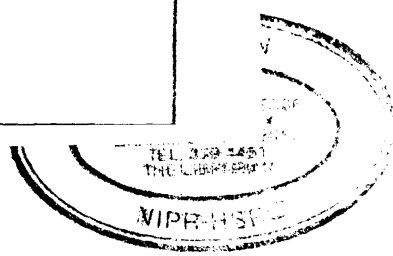
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A B S T R A C T

A brief review of relevant literature indicates that the upward
mobility of Blacks has gained in impetus, but is still not taking
place quickly enough to meet the economic demands of the country.
For at least the next two decades, it would appear that the brunt
of the up-grading of Blacks to meet manpower shortages will continue
to fall on industry. Factors which act as constraints to Black
advancement are discussed, with indications of areas requiring
further research. The aim of the project is to provide a strategy
whereby Black advancement can most effectivly be accelerated;
this literature survey forms the first part of the project as a
whole.

O P S O M M I N G

'n Kort oorsig van die relevante literatuur dui aan dat die opwaartse
mobiliteit van Swartes toegeneem het, maar dat dit nog nie vinnig
genoeg plaasvind om in die ekonomiese behoeftes van die land te
voorsien nie. Dit blyk dat, vir ten minste die volgende twee dekades
industrie genoodsaak sal wees om tot 'n groot mate self opwaartse
mobiliteit van Swartes te handhaaf om in mannekrag tekortkominge te
voorsien. Faktore wat Swart vooruitgang terug hou word bespreek,
met aanduidings van areas waar verdere navorsing benodig word. Die
doel van die projek is om in 'n strategie waarvolgens Swart
opwaartse mobiliteit mees effektief bespoedig kan word, te voorsien;
hierdie literatuuroorsig vorm die eerste deel van die projek as
geheel.

CONTENTS

1.   INTRODUCTION

In order to maintain a reasonable economic growth rate and to
keep pace with expected population increase in South Africa,
there is an urgent and increasing need for skilled Black manpower.
Even if all economically active Whites were to become managers,
professionals, senior clerks, skilled technicians etc., the supply
would be inadequate to meet the country's projected future needs
(Sadie in Barrett et al, 1974).

Rapid upward movement of Blacks is therefore essential - a movement
that is already too long delayed to avoid at least some economic
disruption in the future. Even immediate implementation of improved
education, both general and technical, would provide results only
after a considerable time lag - e.g. the effects of a policy of
equal education for all races would not be felt for 20 to 25 years.
Economically, South Africa cannot afford the delay and serious
shortages of skilled manpower are imminent (Pienaar, 1975; Swart, 1979).

In spite of the efforts of the Department of Education and training to
upgrade all aspects of Black education (Engelbrecht, 1979), South
Africa will, for the immediate present, have to continue relying on
industry and commerce to provide specific and general training courses.
Already, in many instances, employers are providing diverse courses
aimed at improving literacy, social skills and orientation to Western
business practice in addition to in-service skills training. Every
effort should be made to assist such endeavours and to aid and
encourage expanded training programmes.

Such training would not only have to attempt to compensate for basic
educational shortcomings, but would also have to be aimed at in-
dividuals now mobile from one level to another, or individuals
moving into jobs hitherto closed to them. The last two decades have
seen the greatest changes in the upward movement of Blacks. Internal
economic pressures, pressures from Black workers experiencing a
favourable demand situation, and expressing themselves increasingly
in strikes, have all had their effect. The Wiehahn commission's
report has made its impact, and other positive actions have been
taken - e.g. the introduction of the 99-year leasehold system and
registration of Black trade unions.

Many view industrial relations as the key agent for change in
South Africa. Magnum (1978) sees it as "one of the brightest spots
on the national scene", whilst in a recent speech Leistner (1979)
says : "More readily seen and understood than the host of common
values and ideals, is the interdependence of all South Africans in
the economical sphere......this economic interdependence which, to
my mind, holds the key to the future of our country. Without a
healthy growing economy, we cannot hope to evolve a stable social
and political order; but the economy cannot flourish unless the
various population groups co-operate harmoniously in production and
distribution; ..."

Present trends indicate that racial discrimination will, in time,
disappear from our economy. Apart from the growing shortages of
trained personnel, pressure for change comes from the fact that South
Africa's internal market can grow only by raising the purchasing
power and productivity of Blacks, and also from South Africa's
implicit choice of economic growth over full racial separation
(Leistner, 1979).

From available sources of information studied during the course of
this investigation, it appears that many South African companies are
already granting equal employment opportunities to all population
groups and are also subscribing to a code of employment practice
(e.g. Sullivan, EEC, Urban Foundation/SACCOLA). The introduction
of these codes was met with very little opposition from Whites,
whilst integrated pay structures (i.e. equal pay for equal work of
equal value) are becoming common.

It is hoped that this report will provide an overview of the situation
at present, as well as a basis for the co-ordination and forward
planning of further research and applied programmes. This forms the
first part of the project as a whole, which aims at determining a
strategy whereby Black advancement can be enhanced and accelerated.
This will involve reviewing current management policies, personnel
practices, training and development programmes, etc. and the develop-
ment of more effective stategies for the use of industry and commerce.

2.   HISTORIAL PERSPECTIVE

Although direct extrapolation is not possible when the upward
occupational progress of Blacks in South Africa is compared with
that of Blacks in the United States, many similar influences and
trends are evident. Prior to World War 2, Blacks in the USA as
well as in South Africa were mainly labourers, largely involved in
agriculture and with segration very much the order of the day.
In the USA Unions were mostly exclusive until the 1950's, and
operated on a seniority system - thus it was accepted that the
last promoted was the first laid off. Since Blacks in the USA
at that time were just beginning to enter industry, the results
were predictable and very discouraging to the Black workers.

In South Africa the status of Blacks in the Unions has been equivocal,
with some 'mixed' Unions becoming segrated over the years and with
Black Trade Unions not recognised until very recently (See Horrell,
1969, for detailed exposition). Although the majority of companies
surveyed recently felt that Blacks should have a collective bargaining
voice, there were (and in some instances, still are) reservations
about committing themselves to Black Unionism - probably for fear
that Black Unions would be open to political manipulation. The
committee system, which has served in the place of Unions, was viewed
by many as providing adequate representation of, and a forum for,
Blacks in industry, in spite of its shortcomings.

Both in the USA and South Africa, Black unemployment is nearly twice
that of Whites; in both countries this is partly attributable to
discriminatory practices in education which have resulted in few Blacks
being able to meet standards set by Whites for particular jobs. There
is also still a tendency to demand higher qualifications from a Black
than from a White for the same job (Purcell, 1972, Pienaar, 1975,
Cash and Oliver, 1975).

In the USA during the 1960's there was a more rapid upward movement
of Blacks, largely due to the activities of the Civil Rights and
Black Power movements. In South Africa during recent years there
has been a similar forward momentum as increasing numbers of academics,

economists, businessmen and politicians speak out for integration in industry and the repeal or modication of physical planning legislation and discriminatory legislation as a whole.

In the USA White reaction to integration tended to follow a pattern, especially in the manufacturing industry. Whites tended typically to react with shock, followed by resistance. Where management took a firm stance toward this resistance, it generally diminished and was followed by resignation. However, whilst integration on the shop floor was achieved in time, it was noted that social groupings at tea and lunch continued to follow racial lines (Purcell, 1972).

It was discovered that the abolition of discriminatory measures in the USA did not automatically lead to integration in industry. In an effort to overcome apparent inertia, the Affirmative Action programme was instituted. This form of reverse discrimination has made an impact but has also resulted in many cases in White 'backlash' (Purcell, 1972, Hill, 1978, Ackerman, 1973).

In the last decade, Black economic development as a whole, in the USA and Black Third World countries, has tended to follow the same pattern: "It is well documented that the problems common to the developing nations of the world are common to American Black society. In describing both of these societies, one finds parallels: a relatively low per-capita income, a high birth rate, and a small middle class. The population is composed mainly of unskilled workers with a high incidence of unemployment. Relatively little saving takes place and capital is scarce. External funds, i.e. welfare payments and other government transfers, are needed to meet the requirements of the area" (Cash and Oliver, 1975). Human capital investment is also low, because although formal education and training could enhance this aspect in developing nations and population groups, it forms only part of the total educative process.

The individual being educated is influenced by, and in turn exerts influence through, the following factors (Weisbrod, in Pienaar, 1975):

(a) Residence related benefits. These include the influence
     of educated parents on children, a favourable neighbourhood
     environment, the ability of mothers to be gainfully employed
     while children are at school, etc.

(b) Employment related benefits. Others, such as relatives,
     may benefit from the flexibility, adaptability and innovative
     capabilities of more educated workers.

(c) Social benefits. This relates to the existence of a more
     culturally, socially and politically aware population with
     a better understanding of the processes and priorities of
     development in the wider sense. Mass litaracy is important
     for the transmission of information and, for example, for
     the use of the monetary system in less developed nations.

In terms of educational programmes per se in the USA, investment
in Blacks has been significantly poorer than that in Whites. In
spite of strenuous efforts to the contrary, this imbalance persists
in many areas. Thus, in such areas teachers tend to be less effec-
tive, schools overcrowded and buildings and equipment of poorer
quality than those of Whites. Length of education also tends to
be shorter. In the view of Sowell (1975), vocational schools aimed
at helping the disadvantaged have, for the most part become 'dumping
grounds' for drop-outs. Colleges could usually only be attended by
rich Blacks, and Blacks also tended to lack 'know-how', i.e. how and
where to find help (e.g. vocational information) and generally didn't
have recourse to the same sources of information as most Whites.
This situation is lamentably true in South Africa, and sources of
vocational information for Blacks are particularly inadequate
(Lätti et al, 1978). In America a possible consequence has been the
tendency for Blacks to enter specific careers such as doctor or
lawyer, since they have either been unaware of, or disinterested in,
wider career fields.

Both in the USA and South Africa the proportion of Black students
in courses requiring mathematical and technical skills as well as
disciplined logic is low, in contrast to the high proportion found
in courses requiring the transmission of information and airing of

opinions or in the social sciences. Sowell (1975) speculates that
this could in part be due to second-class Black college education,
something that may well be so in South Africa as well. In South
Africa in 1976, 96 degrees were awarded to Blacks in the science
and commerce sections, whilst 359 were awarded in the arts and social
disciplines. Du Toit (1979) feels that this could be ascribed to
the fact that the Black languages are emotive and non-technical and
that learning techniques in the Black culture are traditionally by
oral repetition rather than by reasoning.

Parallels between educational practices and their results in the USA
and South Africa can obviously be drawn. There, as here, poor
educational investment in Blacks has had on-going negative effects
on their progress in industry. Among other things, consequences
include poor technical knowledge, lack of self-confidence, lack of
ability to apply theory practically, lack of business knowledge,
language difficulties and low literacy (Fine Spamer, 1979, Farrell,
1978, Verster, 1976). In South Africa the situation is considerably
more grave, however, since a large proportion of the Black group is
in the "explosive" phase of population growth, which makes existing
shortcomings in education even more serious.

The burgeoning numbers of Black children make massive state spending
on Black education mandatory, and recent steps have been welcomed to
upgrade Black education at all levels. The high rates of Black
population increase will, however, regrettably dilute the effect of
this expenditure as much of it will be absorbed in merely keeping
pace with growth rather than in upgrading the quality of facilities
and teachers. Furthermore, there is still very clear discrimination
in favour of Whites. During 1976/1977, for example, the amount spent
on educating every White child was very nearly three times the amount
spent on each Indian child, slightly more than four times the amount
spent per Coloured child, and thirteen and one-half times the amount
expended per Black child in the "common area" (i.e. the area other
than the Black States). Consequences include unfavourable pupil:teacher
ratios, with resulting negative effects on quality of teaching, and a
very high pupil drop-out rate. Of a total of just under one million
White children in schools in 1978, 116 590 (or 12,2%) were in the
matriculation year, but although there were more than 3 200 000 Black

children in schools the comparable figure for them was only
32 472 (or 1,2%). The position at the level of tertiary education
is as dismal: there are more than twice as many White students as
there are of the other three groups combined in Technikons, Teacher
Training Colleges and Universities (Government Statistics).

3.   OVERVIEW OF PROBLEMS EXPERIENCED IN AMERICAN INDUSTRY

The following section is a summary of some of the major difficulties
encountered by management in the implementation of integration
policies in the United States. Some of the points could serve as
guidelines which would hopefully be helpful in the South African
situation.

With the advent of integration in industry in the USA, it became
immediately apparent that existing management practices were not
geared to the special problems encountered with Black employees.
It became necessary to revise hiring practices, to train Black
personnel interviewers and considerably amplify existing induction
programmes. Blacks found it difficult to adjust to rigid work
schedules, and also found it difficult to relate their 'niche' in
the company to the general scheme of things. Whereas older Negroes
seemed easier to assimilate into the work force, a new generation
of young Blacks was encountered who felt that society was indebted
to them because of past wrongs, real or imagined. In order to cope
with their lack of motivation, new management styles had to be
developed. It was discovered that loyalties to persons (e.g. foremen)
were much more real to them than loyalty to the company.

The reactions of individual companies in industry toward integration
differed widely as well. Some managements resented having pressures
put on them to 'cure social ills', whilst others made great efforts
initially but then stopped, possibly because they did not make the
desired profits (McCall, 1973). Some companies felt that the
employment of minorities would affect efficiency, sales, etc.
(Ackerman, 1973). Integration into white-collar jobs was the
slowest and since the largest proportion of such jobs were men's jobs,
the indirect result was higher employment figures for women at lower

levels. In blue-collar jobs in 1969, 9,3% of the men were Black,
as opposed to 11,9% of the women. It was also discovered that the
time required for full integration to be achieved was greater than
initially thought.

White reaction to integration was mixed, but after initial shock,
most Whites were more amenable to change than management had
anticipated, and prejudices generally diminished with contact at
work. Where management had made efforts to prepare Whites for changes,
fewer difficulties were encountered. However, outside influences
and events tended to cause polarisation between Blacks and Whites.
Thus Black militancy together with some reverse discriminatory
practices tended to harden White attitudes. Middle-class Whites in
particular are now beginning to feel hard done by, with, as they see
it, all the power in the hands of the upper wealthy class on the one
side, and the Blacks on the other. Resentment of the more lenient
treatment given to the 'disadvantaged' is strong amongst White blue-
collar workers. Some integrated companies have had to face the
possibility that White employees would become fearful and avoid them
if their labour force became predominantly Black (Purcell, 1972).

It was discovered that all workers, White and Black, were more content,
productive and more likely to put up with the frustrations, if the
social atmosphere on the job was good (Purcell, 1972). This factor
was especially important where jobs were of a mechanical or repetitive
nature. Factors which upset the social atmosphere, poor supervision
or insensitive introduction of Blacks into an all-White group led to
difficulties - some Whites felt that the introduction of Blacks re-
sulted in a less relaxed and personal atmosphere.

With the introduction of Blacks, management found that among Blacks,
and especially among young Blacks, rates of turnover, absenteeism
and tardiness were higher than among Whites. These phenomena are
costly in terms of production, resulting in more overtime, the need
to hire extra personnel, etc. (McCall, 1973, Purcell, 1972). Further
young Blacks seem to be more prone to physical violence, since their
attitudes appear to have been moulded in the ghettos where power comes
through physical force. A distinct attitudinal generation gap came
to light.

Black expectations were often unrealistic and based on miscon-
ceptions, lack of information and misunderstanding of industrial
'ways' - e.g. they did not understand incentive pay, were resentful
of those who earned it, and jealous of others' advancement. Worker
and management expectation were often at variance.

With the advent of integration, promotion became a sensitive problem
area for management and a source of difficulty and frustration for
Black and White alike. Because jobs recently became available to
them, Blacks lacked seniority in such occupations and Whites were
promoted over them, which was viewed as discrimination. With the
implementation of the Affirmative Action programme, Whites in turn
resented the promotion of Blacks over them.

Whilst top management was generally positive about integration
policies, middle management was often resistive and did not promote
top management policies. Some companies embarked on very ambitious
integration programmes and found that they could not meet deadlines.
In the long run these companies experienced a stronger negative
backlash from Blacks due to disappointment than did more conservative
companies (Purcell, 1972).

It was expected that the appointment of the first Black foremen and
supervisors would meet with resistance, which it did. It required
a Black man of exceptional ability to spearhead and maintain his
position in a White company where people actively tried to make him
fail. The understanding and support of management was essential to
his success.

The appointment of Blacks to white-collar managerial jobs produced
similar basic problems, together with additional, more subtle,
difficulties: the "fit" of Blacks into a specific set, e.g. the
traditional WASP board of directors; subtle rejection because as
a result both of being Black and having a different background they
were in fact different (Jones, 1973).

With the advent of Affirmative Action there arose the further
difficulty of 'showcase Blacks', a development much resented by
Black men who were motivated toward genuine progress. In developing

high-potential Blacks, management had the best chance of success when they provided support, assured sound communication, and gave assignments which were a challenge and provided good experience without being overwhelming and too stressful (Jones, 1973).

It was generally found that policies which engaged supervisors and managers, both Black and White, in sensitivity training programmes were the most successful in promoting sound co-operation between groups (Cash and Oliver, 1975, Purcell, 1972).

3.1   Some Areas of White-Black Confrontation in USA

Anger and resentment at discrimination are probably the dominant attitudes of the militant Black. Segregration is still well remembered, as well as practices such as having to call Whites 'sir'. Black men feel 'emasculated' because of White attitudes in the past and also because they are 'powerless' at the present time - i.e. no Black president, few Black mayors, etc. Whites are always in positions of authority. Blacks perceive Whites as insincere, feeling that they are too hearty, too polite when dealing with Blacks. 'Do-gooders' in particular are disliked and viewed as being both insincere and patronising. Blacks still feel that they don't have equal opportunities with Whites - "Whites get all the breaks" (Chester, 1969), and they hate low-class Whites, especially if they look down on Blacks.

A large proportion of Blacks notably the young militants, feel that the Whites created the problems, so they should solve them. They feel 'owed'. This attitude is causing much resentment among Whites, who in turn feel that Blacks should 'deserve' before they 'receive'. There is White anger at riots and Blacks' 'give-me' attitudes. Some Whites tend to feel patronising toward Black colleagues, pitying them because of backgrounds, etc., and others express dislike of the Black tendency to apathy and lack of drive. Most Whites appear unable to view Blacks as exactly the same and remain prejudiced to a greater or lesser extent. Blacks are 'them' and inter-marriage is taboo, for example.

3.2   Pointers for South Africa

Many of the problems experienced in the USA have already been
experienced here and more or less successful strategies to cope
with them have been developed. Thus, for example, the need to
implement specific employment and personnel policies for Blacks
has long been recognised, especially in the light of the wide
spectrum of Westernisation which pertains from tribal man to
urban citizen. However, some of the signposts we can deduce from
the American experience are worthy of note in further development
programmes.

i)   The bleak aftermath of inferior education experienced in the
USA is yet a further warning that South Africa must move with
all haste to improve Black education at all levels.

ii)   The 'generation gap' (i.e. difference in attitude observed
between older and younger Blacks) and its implications for
industry must receive urgent attention.

iii)   Sensitivity training, especially at the Black-White interface,
has had promising results in the USA, and should be investigated
in the South African context.

iv)   Induction programmes are of paramount importance to subsequent
job-satisfaction.

v)   White attitudes require a sensitive and understanding approach
from management. Firm action coupled with clear explanation
for such action has been found to be less likely to result in
disruption or negative backlash. Affirmative Action programmes
must be approached with caution.

vi)   Supervisors and foremen together with middle-management, are
crucial to the implementation of integration programmes, and
can seriously hamper these if not properly handled.

vii)   Particular attention should be given to assisting upwardly
mobile Blacks to cope with stress.

4.   SOUTH AFRICA TODAY

The following appear to be the major variables impinging on the
upward mobility of Blacks in South Africa today. Although an
attempt is made to categorise these variables in this report for
reasons of clarity, it will be noted that there is considerable
overlap and interaction among them. The information reflects the
situation in South African industry during the period 1978/1979.

4.1   Cultural Background and Attitudes

Black industrial workers are drawn from a wide variety of back-
grounds, ranging from the purely tribal to the sophisticated urban.
The latter 'emancipated' Blacks are generally well educated and
working in the professional/administrative fields and are as yet
in the minority. The majority of Blacks' attitudes are still
shaped to a greater or lesser extent by their tribal/cultural
heritage - if not directly then indirectly by relatives and their
expectations (Backer, 1873, Becker, 1974, Matsheke, 1972, Mayer,
1971, Tiley, 1974, Verster, 1976). Blacks appear not to embrace
the concept of 'Westernisation' unconditionally - in many cases
they seem to accept the material and the academic without giving
up traditional beliefs and cusoms, whilst in extreme cases all
'Western' concepts may be rejected (e.g. Xhosa 'Reds', a section
of the Xhosa people who will not allow their children to attend
school and who adhere to tribal religion). The process of
'Westernisation' in the urban areas also does not appear to be
unlimited - a growing sense of awareness has resulted in the
demarcation by Blacks of the point up to which they wish to adopt
Western values.

In the cities Blacks are, in fact, now building a 'new' culture,
incorporating not only Western values, but also their own background
and the results of contacts with people from other tribal backgrounds.
In striving for identity in a rapidly changing world, and, in the
process, losing close tribal ties (e.g. a second or third generation
Soweton), Blacks are often 'lost' between the Western and the
Traditional. If not recognised as a person in his own right, the

urban Black is consequently proportionately more prone to feelings
of frustration and inferiority. Too often the Black man is penalised
if he follows the ways of the White, e.g. if he shows assertiveness
or initiative 'he is not keeping in his place'.

Certain attitudes and behaviour arising from the tribal background
have a direct impact on Blacks' effectiveness within, and acceptance
of, the capitalistic industrial system (it must be borne in mind that
behaviour can be copied outwardly, but inward change is more complex
and difficult with large variations from one individual to another).
Thus the adaptability of Blacks, especially at different levels of
sophistication, will differ widely. At the less sophisticated levels
(in which a large proportion of migrants would be found), the relation-
ship between the Black worker and the White supervisor is particularly
sensitive to the 'mix' of the worker's and the supervisor's backgrounds.
Verster (1976) lists the following areas where misunderstandings are
common:

(a)   The rural worker's first concept of Western time is often
        gained only on initial entry into industry and tardiness is
        consequently a problem.

(b)   Communication customs are different, e.g. it is impolite to
        look directly at someone for whom he has respect; important
        matters have to be discussed sitting down.

(c)   Mode of address is important and Blacks prefer to be called
        by their surname; being called 'Boy' is offensive.

(d)   The Black man traditionally does not greet someone for whom
        he has respect until greeted.

(e)   Discipline is understood and expected, but belittlement in
        front of others or derogatory references to parents are severe
        and damaging punishments.

(f)   A supervisor is respected as a 'father' and as such must
        maintain a certain stature - horseplay or dirty jokes diminish
        him in the eyes of Blacks.

(g)   Entering a room ahead of a superior is a sign of respect.
        Knocking on doors is a Western and not a tribal custom.

(h)   The Black man has a strong commitment to his extended family
        and religion. Funerals and marriages are important ceremonies.

(i)   Even in Soweto 'witchdoctors' still assert a strong influence.

A pilot study investigating 'modernity' in the urban setting was
recently completed (Thomson, 1977) and results suggested that modern-
ization is a multi-dimensional construct with 'new' experience as a
key factor. However, the approach brought to light some failings in
the model and does not provide as much new data as was hoped for.

At more sophisticated levels, attitudes are being shaped continuously
by past experience and on-going events. These attitudes materially
affect the upward mobility of Blacks and require intensive investigation,
expecially in the urban setting from where the greater part of the more
upwardly mobile Black workers appear to be drawn. Attitudinal change
becomes important in certain areas where the employment prospects of
Blacks and the country's general economic needs are adversely affected -
e.g. the lack of interest of Blacks in technical training, possibly
because the work of a technician is equated with 'labourer' or 'heavy'
work, whilst training in the social sciences, arts or commerce fields
enjoys greater status (Engelbrecht, 1979).

4.2   Educational Background

Although steps to improve the situation are now being taken - witness
recent increases in actual and anticipated expenditure (Engelbrecht,
1979) the regrettable consequences of previous policies and spending
patterns are considerable. Sixty-five percent of rural Blacks have
never attended school (urban 39,9%); of the rural, 1,2% completed
secondary school, (urban 4,7%), and ,3 to ,4% completed tertiary
level education. And even those who proceed to the higher levels most
frequently do so in institutions characterised by inferior facilities
and teaching. Consequently, Blacks are frequently less competent than
Whites with the same levels of education. In addition, they have to
function in a world which is essentially foreign to their own culture -

the Western world of industrial technology in which there is an emphasis on quantity and quality of production output, time and pace, numbers and the like. Further, they have to function in a language not their own and which may be imperfectly understood.

It is thus not surprising that Blacks often feel inferior to Whites, which in turn saps their self-confidence and ambition. They are also not adequately equipped to apply theory to practice, which reduces their chances to progress in industry even more. Literacy is a serious difficulty at all levels and obviously impinges on the effectiveness of their communication. Because of this and their feelings of inferiority, they do not like to ask questions, which again affects their effectiveness in the work or training situation (Farrell, 1978, Fine Spamer, 1979, Verster, 1976). Unhappily, this situation will remain with us for many years yet: even if a national policy of providing qualitatively equal education were introduced in the new year, the benefit to the country in terms of an increased supply of matriculants and graduates in the work force would not be felt for 20 to 25 years.

Many companies in industry are providing training courses, not only in specific job skills, but also in literacy, social skills, assertiveness, interpersonal skills, etc. These training courses are aimed at compensating very real inadequacies and will probably continue to be needed for at least the next two decades, when, hopefully, better-educated Blacks will be entering the work force. During this time industry will need every assistance in designing and implementing training courses to meet its needs in developing Black manpower.

.At the present time the Department of Education and Training is deeply involved in promoting formal and informal training programmes aimed at the creation of a climate which is conducive to upward mobility in the cognitive, affective and conative spheres and to the provision of specific skills training. New facilities are being provided and particular emphasis is being placed on the improvement of teaching skills. It is hoped that the minimum entrance qualification for teacher training will be matric within two to three years (Engelbrech, 1979). Unfortunately there is little to be done about the time lag before these policies can produce the desired result.

Improvement in the quality of labour is essential to the growth of industry. To facilitate improvement, training courses or methods need to aim at the following: getting workers to function effectively in doing more complex tasks and in requiring less supervision; increasing the awareness of opportunities, especially at management level; improving skills which could allow changes in the way in which production is organised. There has in any case been a trend towards the upgrading of educational requirements for jobs of constant content (Pienaar, 1975), and more sophisticated production processes - together with upward shifts in educational distribution - have all resulted in more educated managerial and supervisory workers. The simultaneous decline in the numbers employed in domestic service and the agricultural sector, is causing shifts in labour demand - i.e. a greater need for skilled workers, less for labourers.

Such shifts raise the question of whether it is feasible to apply cross-training programmes (i.e. training an individual at present in one occupational category in the skills needed to work in another occupational category). At the lowest levels of occupation, a large number of workers are found who are not endowed with the basic potential, numeracy or literacy necessary for transformation from labourer level upwards. There is also evidence that some companies view a commitment to training at the most basic levels as beyond the normal realms of business enterprise (Markgraaff, 1979).

At the higher levels of occupation the more specialised the education required for a given occupation, the less the flexibility of substitution between it and other occupational categories (Pienaar, 1975). Pienaar also states: "Only in the case of legally prescribed entrance qualifications to an occupation, strictly enforced hiring standards, or pure manual labour can it be assumed that certain educational preparation provides the skill and knowledge required for performance of an occupation. In most cases occupations are heterogeneous and contain a wide variety of jobs differing as to job content and educational requirements. There are in addition various ways of equipping a person with a specific set of skills (formal education, experience and on-the-job training)". He goes on to say that there appears to be

considerable substitutability between manpower groups, although it is also argued that while there may be considerable sustitution within the major occupational categories, there is little between occupational groupings.

By and large it would appear that the cross-training of Blacks to meet manpower demands in certain categories (as opposed to general manpower development programmes) can offer only a limited solution. However, the cross-training of Whites in certain sectors appears to be essential to allow Black advancement, especially where White security is genuinely threatened. High manpower needs could well have Whites in certain categories out of their jobs. A good example is the miner - most other skilled workers or artisans can move to other sectors of industry, but not so certain categories of miners. Until strategies can be evolved to promise him a sound future, he will resist Black upward movement strongly. One mining house has recently instituted an Employee Development Programme which they hope will help solve this very complex problem (Nathan, 1979).

In terms of Black education, another strategy, first attempted in the USA, requires further investigation: i.e. Operation Headstart which involved special treatment of disadvantaged children at the pre-school stage. In this strategy the premise is that children in disadvantaged homes receive little stimulation, discover that the best way of escaping displeasure is to be quiet and not bother adults who are too involved in subsistance activities. By providing such children with verbal stimulation, creative play opportunities and individual attention, it was hypothesised that their cognitive abilities would be enhanced and they would do better at school.

Some studies carried out in the USA support this hypothesis, and although the cognitive gains reported are open to question, the dramatic difference in school performances between the experimental and control groups is of vital significance. A preliminary investigation into the feasibility of conducting similar programming in South Africa has already been done by the NIPR: It was found that one of the greatest obstacles to its implementation is the need for large numbers of trained personnel. On a national scale, the sheer weight of numbers involved continues to make the implementation impossible, but a start could, for example, be made in urban day-care facilities.

4.3   Motivation

Because of the widely differing backgrounds of individual Blacks in
South Africa, wide differences in motivation occur. In general it
appears that motivation to work, job expectations and job satisfaction
vary in terms of degree of 'Westernisation', or, more simply, whether
Blacks are from an urban or rural background (Orpen, 1974). The
majority of the unskilled rural Black workers in South Africa are born
into and are raised within a subsistence economy, entering the work
force mainly to earn as much money as possible in order to return to
their families in the shortest possible time and do not become involved
in the work they do (Nathan, 1979, Farrell, 1978, Verster, 1976). This
often 'laissez faire' attitude of the Black man to his work has in the
past exacerbated negative White supervisory attitudes, and has given
rise to feelings that Blacks are 'just lazy', whereas the apparent lack
of drive is due to the fact that the individuals concerned are more in
tune with the agriculturally-linked tribal rythm than the ambitious
capitalistic system (Matsheke, 1972, Farrell, 1978). Apart from tribal
background, Blacks' lack of scholastic education, literacy and their
physiological needs have been postulated as factors limiting their
motivation (Wyndham and Kempen, quoted in Verster, 1976). It would
appear that unless Black aspiration levels in certain categories can
be raised, their levels of achievement will remain unsatisfactory
(Nathan, 1979, Farrell, 1978). At present 67% of a nationwide sample
of companies in industry are not satisfied with the productivity of
their Black workers (Farrell, 1978) on top of which South Africa is
acknowledged to have one of the lowest productivity levels in the world
(Sutton, 1979).

In spite of the factors mentioned above, however, lack of motivation
is not entirely the fault of Blacks. Often they are faced with poor
induction and management procedures and are given little opportunity
to develop or use their abilities to their full potential. It has
been suggested that the most important factor in respect of achievement
and productivitiy is Blacks' need to become aware of opportunities
in which, through work, an individual can be rewarded (Farrell, 1978).

There is, at present, considerable confusion in industry as to
the factors which motivate the Black labour force. The most widely
held opinion is that remuneration is the single highest motivator
and that workers will consequently be satisfied if they receive fair
wages. There is, furthermore, a lack of perception amongst many as
to what constitutes satisfaction: Black workers will often present
a satisfied facade because they feel that they dare not do otherwise,
since their mobility is restricted by legislation and they are afraid
of losing their jobs. Companies tend to assume that Blacks do not yet
aspire to satisfaction of higher order needs, and although a relatively
high proportion of Blacks appear to be content with the satisfaction
of primary needs, the satisfaction of higher level needs is becoming
increasingly important for ever growing numbers of Blacks (Verster,
1976, Farrell, 1978). More and more companies are trying to overcome
poor motivation and productivity by giving training in Western business
orientation or training designed to change attitudes. Fine Spamer and
Associates report that there is a considerable need for such training
and that there are several companies which have successfully carried
out such programmes during the past year. If Blacks are to move upwards
occupationally, it is, in fact, vital for them to develop qualities of
drive and achievement orientation.

Even without formal development courses, management can go a considerable
way towards increasing productivity and enhancing a 'climate' of achieve-
ment by seeing to the traditional motivators (e.g. hygiene and maintenance
factors) and by laying greater emphasis on the satisfaction of higher
order needs, even with less sophisticated workers. Productivity can be
increased by arranging work so that it is interesting and changing; by
giving the worker adequate support together with the tools and information
necessary to do the job; by delegating sufficient authority to enable him
to function effectively; by providing reasonable and fair remuneration,
the chance to develop new skills, security, and the opportunity to see
the results of his work. Training in itself is a strong motivator,
considered by many as the key to Black advancement and the development
of positive work attitudes.

Identifying Black leaders and motivating them to accept responsibility
is another means to develop Blacks.

Another aspect of Black motivation which provides new insights was highlighted by du Toit (1979): "I believe that in order to enable Blacks to be productive, we have at least to incorporate into our management philosphy some aspects of Black culture.... There is recognition of this view by two editors, Michael Z. Brooke and H. Lee Rennie, who recognise that multi-national companies cannot operate successfully in foreign countries unless they can make some adjustment to management philosophy and style to meet at least a minimum of basic cultural aspects of the host country".

4.4   Communication

Many persons active in the Black development or management fields are of the opinion that improved communications form the golden road to improved industrial relations. In South Africa, the complex and subtle process of communicating is further complicated by the mingling of many tribes, languages and dialects, different cultures, perceptions and prejudices. Verster (1976) discusses various possible strategies to overcome the language aspect of communication:

i)   Whites learn an African language. This would improve White/ Black communications and may make more positive Blacks' feelings towards Whites. A difficulty would be the choice of language, since at least two would be needed to cover the eight main tribal groupings in South Africa. Further, African languages are inadequate for conveying technological concepts.

ii)   Blacks learn an official language. This strategy would also improve communications and there are tax concessions for firms which provide training courses to improve Black literacy. There is a potential for friction with Afrikaans-speaking Whites, however, since urban Blacks prefer to learn English which is of use to them outside South Africa as well.

iii)   Blacks and Whites learn an amalgam of languages e.g. Soweton or Fanakalo. The difficulty here would be that these languages do not lend themselves to abstraction and the expression of complex concepts.

iv)   Firms employ Black supervisors and interpreters.

v)   Firms select and place only English- or Afrikaans-speaking
        workers. The drawback is that there are too many jobless
        Blacks. In Verster's view a combination of these strategies
        would provide the best solution.

Since accurate communication takes place optimally in a positive climate,
it becomes necessary for management to pay attention not only to the
more 'mechanical' (i.e. language per se) aspects of communication, but
to the entire personnel strategy. White attitudes are important and
it is necessary to establish an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect
between the race groups. In the USA very good results were achieved
with the introduction of sensitivity training programmes.

Supervision is of particular importance in the establishment of sound
communications. The supervisor is the channel through which management
policy is implemented downwards and feedback is given upwards. The
success of the supervisor in turn depends on how he is perceived as a
person and how he handles his subordinates. Frequently encountered
difficulties at present result from the fact that communication with
Black workers tends to be one-way, e.g. instructions, and that some
White supervisors tend to think in stereotypes, i.e. a Black man is
viewed as a representative of a Black mass and is not recognised as an
individual.

Another source of frustration to the Black man is that he is unable to
communicate his difficulties upwards. There is a great need, especially
in larger companies, with their longer 'line' functions, to institute
effective conflict resolution procedures. Certain problems require
immediate recourse to a mediator, and while the committee system may
be adequate where more general grievances are concerned, it may be
inadequate to cope with crises which cannot be deferred.

Whilst improved communication is of vital importance, it is not always
easy to achieve. Management tends to assume the willingness of the
workers to communicate and is then discouraged when confronted with the
passivity and fatalism of many Blacks. Management have also been
disappointed by the relatively small percentage of Blacks who have been

prepared to accept responsibility, as well as by the large numbers
requiring constant supervision. It would appear that this is again,
in part, of motivational and cultural origin, but more research is
required to understand fully the reasons for these behaviour patterns.
This is also true of the declining productivity characteristic of
recent years which is making the closing of the wage gap difficult,
if not impossible; this may be connected with the 'generation gap'
which is a relatively new phenomonon in South Africa but which has
had negative effects on communication and productivity in the USA
for some time.

4.5   Social Skills

As Blacks advance into areas of supervision, administration and
management, ever more conformity with Western social norms becomes
necessary. Even at the lowest worker levels, insight into the
differences between Western and tribal customs could help to avoid
much unnecessary misunderstanding and friction. Several companies
are already running social skills programmes to facilitate the
adjustment of their Black workers.

The ability to cope with, and fit into, an entirely new cultural
background should be fostered from the earliest opportunity, since
the inability to adjust results in many negative reactions. Chief
amongst these are loss of confidence, racial friction, loss of
motivation to achieve within the capitalistic system, and high levels
of stress in the work situation. Some consideration should be given
to the introduction of social skills programmes at schools, possibly
even at primary school level.

4.6   Stress

Literature suggests that the stress experienced by upwardly mobile
Blacks and the effects thereof on both their progress and general
well-being, has received little attention. It seems likely that
the Black's outward passivity has, in the past, masked their stress,
or that Whites have simply not interpreted stress responses accurately.
It is, however, a fact that Blacks in South Africa are subjected to
a great deal of stress over and above that experienced by their White

counterparts. When we consider the strain to which the average White
is subject (e.g. inflation, rising of oil and petrol prices) and then
add joblessness, physical planning legislation, adjustment to a new
environment, and the like, it is possible to form a concept of the
day to day tensions to which Blacks are subject.

It seems hardly surprising in this light that Blacks find it difficult
to progress, or that they are unable, or unwilling, to concentrate on,
or cope with, further demands in the work situation. Much needs to be
done to investigate stress, its influence in inhibiting Black upward
mobility, and to ascertain the coping mechanisms of occupationally
successful Blacks.

A company which became aware of the stress levels of its Black employees,
and which then instituted a programme in assertiveness training and
stress management reports excellent results. Sales improved and a
group sent on an academic course achieved an 80 percent success rate,
compared with candidates from other companies for whom the success rate
was below 20 percent.

The difficulties experienced by graduates in their adjustment to the
work situation, and their failure to keep pace with White counterparts
could partly be ascribed to these basic stress levels (du Toit, 1979).
The alleviation of such stress should be tackled on a national level
and will require the co-operation of both the Government and management.

4.7   White Attitudes

In the past White occupational skills were protected by law - a situation
which strongly influences White attitudes today. These attitudes range
from pleased acceptance of, to violent resistance to, new employment
practices, especially on the part of White individuals who feel that
their job security is threatened. A good example is that of the miner
who is captive to an industry - "there is no way that we are going to
make substantial changes in manning structures till we can convince the
miner that he has a place in the sun, underground" (Nathan, 1979).

Although a great deal of integration in industry has been quietly
taking place with only a small percentage of Whites causing difficulties
(Fine Spamer 1979, Farrell, 1978), White attitudes remain a major
problem area.   White prejudice against Blacks is strong in certain
sectors of the population and unfortunately negative attitudes are
readily perceived by the Blacks.   "They will pick up the undertones
of climate and mood more easily than they will pick up expressed verbal
instructions" (Magwaza, 1969).

Many solutions have been put forward and some companies have been
actively engaged in working out and applying strategies to combat this.
Industrial relations training is one method (Swart, 1979, Nathan, 1979),
whilst controlled mandatory exposure of the various racial groups to
one another is also mooted (Boshard, 1979).   The American experience
has shown the latter to be effective and it would certainly appear
that face to face contact in the 'neutral' work environment, where
the more emotional aspects of integration (e.g. social) are not so much
to the fore, pays dividends (Fine Spamer, 1979, Nathan, 1979).

Also essential to promoting positive White attitudes is sound manage-
ment policy in terms of equal pay for work of equal value (and the
concomitant aspect of sound performance appraisal systems), as well
as fair promotion systems.   The latter is a particularly thorny
problem in South Africa and, in fact, remains so in the USA where
Affirmative Action programmes have served to harden White negative
attitudes in many cases.   Sutton (1979) states that promotion on
merit has proved to be one of the most difficult principles of the
Saccola Code to implement.   He ascribes this to two factors:

(a)   a dearth of Black applicants with adequate experience and
        skills, and

(b)   the difficulty normally experienced in changing long-established
         practices and procedures which have the added disadvantage of
         being reinforced by deep-seated attitudes, prejudices and value
         systems.

The vital importance of forward planning is repeatedly stressed
by companies involved in implementing new employment practices.
Company culture and climate need to be prepared for change and
employee communications must be maintained at a high level. Where
this has been done, some very positive results have been achieved
and already we have some Blacks working in supervisory positions
over Whites (Fine Spamer, 1979).

4.8   Supervision

The supervisor plays a key role in the work situation, and his
importance is even greater in the South African context, where his
contribution, not only to the climate of the organisation, but also
to Black advancement as a whole, is critical. In South Africa this
is often the Black/White interface: attitudes and perceptions of
great numbers of Blacks are shaped by this meeting. The negative
ripple effects of a poor supervisor are manifold - not the least
of which are poor productivity and lack of motivation. Until very
recently the emphasis has been on the supervisor as a technician,
whilst the interpersonal aspects of his job have been largely
ignored.

The supervisor can be viewed as the 'gateway' between management
and the worker and often it is his task to reconcile the needs of
both. This tends to 'isolate' him in that he belongs neither to one
group nor the other (Farrell, 1978). The supervisor needs "people
handling" skills and must be able to motivate his workers to meet
the demands of management, whilst at the same time taking care of
the needs of his workers.

Traditionally, supervisors in South African have been White, but
economic pressure is again bringing about changes. Even in the mines,
where the 'stability' of the White supervisor, as opposed to the
changing migrant work force, has kept his job White mainly for
reasons of safety, changes are imminent (Nathan, 1979). The different
perceptions of Blacks and Whites have often had unfortunate results.
White supervisors have become frustrated by their inability to
communicate with the Blacks in their charge, and impatient with value

systems unlike their own. White complaints are, most often,
that Blacks are not interested in their work, require constant
supervision, produce poor results, are only interested in their
pay packets and are often late (Farrell, 1978, Verster, 1979).
Blacks on the other hand are frustrated by a system they do not
understand, by unsympathetic supervisors, often repetitive work
and little incentive to do better.

The gradual introduction of Black supervisors has resulted in
some backlash from White supervisors who feel that their traditional
positions are being invaded. Surprisingly there was also some
initial resistance from Black workers who did not trust the com-
petence of Black supervisors, felt they had less 'pull' on their
behalf with management and were prone to favouritism (Lotz, 1977).
Recently, however, Blacks have expressed very positive attitudes
towards Black supervision, citing understanding of their background
and ease of communication as the main points in their favour.

Apart from the economic needs of the country, the Blacks' ever
higher movement on the scale of needs make the creation of motivational
opportunities essential. The training and development of Black super-
visors is therefore an important aspect of Black advancement generally,
and as the negative outcomes of inadequate training in the past are
still being felt, mistakes of inadequate training should not be
repeated.

5.   SUMMARY

The upward mobility of Blacks has gained in impetus, especially during
the last two years. This upward movement is not taking place quickly
enough to meet the economic demands of the country and even immediate
implementation of strategies to enhance it, will only become effective
after a time-lag. A national strategy to improve education and
training is already underway, but for at least the next two decades
industry will have to up-grade Blacks in their employment to meet
manpower shortages.

Not only will it be important, in the provision of manpower development stategies in the immediate future, to pay attention to the factors impinging on Black upward mobility, but also to consider the evolution of new management philosophies e.g. philosophies that incorporate some aspects of Black culture. At this time productivity in South Africa is poor (amongst the lowest in industrialised countries) and this alone is a big factor holding Black advancement back - companies are understandably loath to close the wage-gaps under the circumstances.

Other constraints to job advancement are the following (Nattrass, 1979):

i)   Low average levels of education of Black workers in South Africa, coupled with poor facilities for training both on and off the job.

ii)   The attitudes of White workers and organised White labour to Black advancement.

iii)   Racial stereotypes held by management.

iv)   The apparent footloose nature of the migrant workforce.

v)   Legal barriers to Black advancement.

In this survey more detailed aspects are identified in addition to, and congruent with, the above:

a)   Cultural background and attitudes which are, especially amongst the less sophisticated workers, in conflict with the Western capitalistic system.

b)   Motivation to achieve or to work is often negative - a function of poor management, background and poor education.

c)   Communication which is not only made difficult by the language barrier, but is further distorted by inaccurate perceptions, prejudice and mutual lack of knowledge of each other's cultures.

d)   Inappropriate social skills which affect especially higher
        level Black workers.

e)   Basic stress levels which inhibit full utilization of basic
        abilities.

f)   Poor supervisory practices which have a negative ripple
        effect at the Black/White interface.

Some of these factors require further research and much work needs to
be done to establish and define basic dynamics.

One point that has been highlighted by this survey, is the very
heterogeneous nature of the Black work force and the fact that very
different strategies will have to be applied to the different
occupational levels. Initially it has been decided to focus on the
more sophisticated urban worker, mainly because the greatest manpower
needs are for skilled workers and it would be from this group that
they will largely be drawn. The next step in this project will be a
survey of Blacks in supervisory/managerial/administrative posts,
involving structured interviews with such Blacks and with their
immediate White supervisors. The results of this survey will be
analysed in a following report.

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