# A STUDY OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT NEEDS AND MORALE AMONG AFRICANS IN A NON-FARM RURAL EMPLOYEE COMMUNITY IN NATAL

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## PREFACE

This study was undertaken at the request of a private high school in Natal. The aim of the study was to examine factors relevant to the morale and community development needs of the African community resident on the school estate.

The authors wish to express their appreciation to the school authorities for their willing co-operation and for their initiative in sponsoring the study. We would particularly like to thank the Headmaster and his wife for their kind hospitality and enthusiastic interest. Grateful thanks are also due to the Estate Manager who gave much of his time to assist us in our investigation, for the information he made available and for his helpful interest. We would like to thank most sincerely a school Matron who at many times, and at short notice, accommodated the co-author; the Headmaster of the African school, his wife and the teachers who accommodated the research assistants; and the administrative staff who assisted in many ways during the fieldwork, particularly the school Secretary and the Bursar.

This difficult study could not have been conducted without the enthusiastic commitment and intelligent and painstaking labours of the research team employed on the project: Miss Beata Mbanda, Mr. Judson Kuzwayo and Mr. Dumisani Nduli. We also wish to thank Mr. Neil Alcock, Director of Church Agricultural Projects, Maria Ratschitz Mission, Natal, for his invaluable insight into the agricultural aspects of the study. We gratefully acknowledge the willing efforts and co-operation of Mrs. Patsy Wickham, Miss Ann Morton and Mrs. Daphne Hosken for typing this report in some haste.

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# CHAPTER I

# INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 THE DESCRIPTION OF THE RESEARCH SETTING

This study has a dual focus. It is an investigation both of an employment situation and a community situation. The circumstances of the community, both material and non-material, derive mainly from the employment situation, but problems are reflected in and, indeed, reinforced by the ways in which the community has responded to the employment situation. Before proceeding further, we will attempt a broad description of the community.

The 'employer' is a large private white high school situated in rural Natal. The school is situated on roughly 3 400 acres of broken countryside. Apart from white teaching staff and other employees, the school employs broadly 220 Africans, of whom just under 90 are women employees. In addition, 50 African domestics are privately employed by white staff resident on school premises, of whom only 6 are men. Some teenage children are also employed privately by white staff. The African labour force is largely unskilled, although there are a handful of semi-skilled and skilled manual African employees.

With the exception of 12 weekly paid male employees, all the African staff live on the estate, most of them in an 'African Village' situated on 300 acres[1] of very broken land. It is the village community which is the major focus of this study. The village contributes 109 men and 79 women to employment in the school and 6 men and 36 women to employment as domestics. Hence the school is currently dependent for 85% of its labour needs on the African Village.

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1) Three hundred acres according to an official letter from the Headmaster. However, the Estate Manager claims ±150 acres.

The village comprises 91 homesteads, 10 dwelling units in a multi-unit structure and 4 units for single men. In the village there are 97 family units of which 10 are 'extended' multi-generational or complex family units, 20 single people or lodgers, all adding up to 588 individuals.[1)]

The structure of the homesteads is mainly wattle and daub, but there are 40 concrete houses. The wattle and daub houses are spread unevenly across two facing slopes of a fairly steep valley. The village is a 10 to 20 minute walk from the school, which is situated on an elevated plateau overlooking broken countryside, which contains the African village. The African village is flanked by wattle forests and a farm, both belonging to the school.

The atmosphere of the village is rural and very reminiscent of some tribal areas. There are few livestock since the employer's policy is not to allow the keeping of cattle and goats. A small minority of homesteads show evidence of some interest in gardening activity and a larger group has chickens.

The broad employment situation is a complex mixture of adapted migrant labour and labour-tenant systems. Some 19% of heads of households are people who know no other home and can be regarded as indigenous to the estate. Roughly 36% are Zulu-speaking people from other parts of Natal, and 45% are drawn from other parts of the country. The composition of the labour force, therefore, is unusual in that it includes an abnormally large proportion of non-Zulu-speaking labour. Only some 9% of employees are single migrants with families in other parts of the country. One of the reasons for the high proportion of non-Zulu workers is the fact that the present Estate Manager on assuming duty brought with him a proportion of a farm labour

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1) This is somewhat higher than the 'official' figure given by the school since it includes an estimate of unofficial temporary and undisclosed residents isolated during a census of the village. This 'raised' estimate is congruent with employment statistics.

force from East Griqualand. The previous Estate Manager had a policy of recruiting people from other parts of Natal and from elsewhere.

It would seem, very broadly, that about half of the village community identify the village as home and consider that they have no other place to go. The situation, then, for almost a majority is one of dependency on the employer not only for work but for residential security and security in old age. The proportion with this problem is likely to expand.

## 1.2 THE NATURE OF THE PROBLEM.

This institute was approached to undertake this study of the African community on the estate with the view to providing insights into the causes of poor morale. Problems of low morale had presumably been present well into the past but, recently, progressive and forward-looking thinking on the part of the school authorities had led them to consider that upliftment of the human community was necessary. The problem of poor morale is manifested in a variety of ways. Firstly, there is evidence of low worker productivity; secondly, there is ample evidence of apathy and listlessness in the collective social life of the community. Furthermore, in its physical appearance the community seems run-down and neglected, houses are in poor repair, gardens are untended, and there is evidence of malnutrition. Some of these symptoms may in themselves be causes of low morale; elements in a vicious circle of social debilitation.

## 1.3 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH.

This study has been approached broadly within a framework of Community Development research. Several constraints existed in the community situation which made the most appropriate

research procedures impossible to implement.

Ideally, Community Development studies should not be hurried; should engage the full co-operation of the local community or at least key members within it, should allow the community to formulate its own research problems after reflecting on their needs, and should be phased into community action programmes involving the groups and individuals from the community who had been involved in research activity. Specifically, 'Community Self-Surveys' are perhaps the form of research most likely to perform a dual task of providing research data and motivating communities to reflect on and want to deal with their problems.

The situation on the estate made this approach impossible within the relatively short time available for the project (less than one year was available for the entire exercise). The community is not in any sense an autonamous social entity. Many aspects of community affairs are regulated by the school authorities through an Estate Manager, and this powerful external influence has tended to erode any 'responsibility to itself' in the community and any likelihood of a 'self-help' orientation in community action. Furthermore, the situation of total dependency of the community on the employer made it necessary to study the entire situation and its interrelationships, including the employer-employee aspects. While not wishing to anticipate our conclusions, it seemed quite evident from a cursory initial view of the situation that some important aspects of the underdevelopment of the community are no more than a response to the dependency of the community on the employer and the conditions imposed on the community. These features made a rather more structured research approach necessary, as a basis for the formation and implementation of community betterment schemes. One of the research priorities was to discover ways in which the community would have the freedom to participate in its own improvement.

Very broadly, community development research aims at:

1) identifying and describing community problems;
2) assessing community resources, both human and physical;
3) tracing patterns of community leadership and influence;
4) identifying groupings or cleavages in a community which are likely to hinder (or facilitate) community development;
5) identifying external constraints or opportunities as they affect the community; and
6) experimental surveillance of community-based improvement programmes flowing out at easier stages in the research.

This report covers steps 1 to 5; it is, therefore, the basis for the recommendation or encouragement of programmes to improve community conditions and morale. Hopefully further reports will flow from an evaluation of developments subsequent to the submission of these findings.

## 1.4 DETAILED RESEARCH PROCEDURES.

Four main operations were involved in the research. A sample survey, with lengthy semi-indepth interviews was undertaken among a representative cross-section of 61 respondents in the community. These respondents were selected randomly within categories representative of different sections of the labour force and the origins of community members. Secondly, a complete census of households and family composition was carried out.

Thirdly, group depth interviews were undertaken involving 7 carefully selected groups of villagers, with an average group size of 5 persons. The groups represented recent migrants, people born on the estate, village committee members, and age-groups among men and women. Fourthly, one of the authors who is a Nguni linguist, interviewed selected African informants, including interviews with women on women's interests and problems, white members of the school staff who come into daily contact with the Africans as supervisors, and collected information from the school authorities. Copies of the sample survey interview schedules and the census form are given in the Appendix. During the periods of fieldwork the four African research assistants lived close to the village and were able to deepen their understanding of community problems by participating in community life.

The research programme was very seriously delayed by a lack of accurate statistical information on the African community and labour force. The most complete information was in the records of the Estate Manager, but these data were slightly out of date, families were not always recorded according to surname making cross-referencing of survey data and statistical records very difficult, and some of the information was contradictory. School pay records are by number and not by name of employee and details of sex and age, etc., do not appear. It proved impossible to obtain a completely accurate count of employees by residential origin (village, farm, outside) and sex. The census had to be undertaken in order to fill this gap at a late stage, consequently delaying the completion of the fieldwork. However, the fieldworkers enjoyed excellent co-operation at all stages of the research, both from the Estate Manager and school staff and from the African community members themselves.

The study incorporated, inter alia, the following types of enquiry:

- factors relating to the background of respondents;
- work satisfaction and dissatisfaction;
- attitudes to work, motivation and work aspirations;
- communication with authorities;
- work frustrations;
- community needs and problems;
- community satisfactions/dissatisfactions;
- attitudes to colleagues;
- family commitments and family life;
- regional-homeland and rural-urban orientations;
- income and expenditure patterns and aspirations;
- social values and work related values;
- tensions and cleavages in the community;
- recreational gratifications and frustrations;
- group formation in the community;
- perceptions of the work force by supervisors;
- community leadership, both formal and informal.

In presenting our results we make extensive use of quotes by individual employees or village members. Two things need to be noted about these quotes. Firstly, they give the Africans' perceptions of their situation and are not necessarily factually correct. Our interest in these quotes was for the insight they provide into perceptions and attitudes; we do not assume that complaints and grievances illustrated by the quotes are factually valid. Secondly, nowhere have we presented statements by individuals unless the content of the statement was supported by a larger body of opinion. We drew no inferences from the replies of single individuals.

## CHAPTER II

## THE MATERIAL SITUATION OF THE COMMUNITY: WAGES, SUBSISTENCE, BEHAVIOUR AND MATERIAL GOALS.

As is evident from the discussion in Chapter I the circumstances and morale of the community cannot be seen in isolation from the employment situation of its members, since the community only really exists to furnish the school with labour.

The employment situation should be seen in a context of employment circumstances for Africans in white rural agriculture. As is common throughout the world, wages in agriculture tend to be relatively low, and working conditions similarly at variance with conditions in the urban industrial and commercial sectors. No recent information on farm wages in Natal is available, but as a broad frame of reference, figures for 1971/2 suggest that the total wage in cash and kind of African regular full-time farm-labourers in Natal was roughly R19-50 per month.[1)]

It is abundantly clear that wages tend to be very low on white farms. The school estate is subject to the same forces of supply and demand as operate in the surrounding agricultural sector and hence wages and working conditions on the estate cannot be compared with urban wage levels without qualification.

### 2.1 WAGES.

Information on the wages of the entire labour force was obtained from the employee records at the school. The information is presented in Table I below.

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1) Provincial Results of the 1971/73 Agricultural Census, Government Printer, Pretoria.

**TABLE I**

DETAILS OF WAGES PAID AT THE SCHOOL.
AFRICAN STAFF, MAY 1974.

| School Employees From Estate Adult Regulars | MONTHLY WAGE | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Basic Wage Cash and Regular Ration (at cost to School) | Basic Cash Wage | Regular Overtime | Number of Employees |
| All Estate Employees-mean | R21-94 | R18-08 | R19-59 | 187 |
| Male Estate Employees-mean | R27-36 | R23-50 | R25-75 | 110 |
| Female Estate Employees-mean | R14-21 | R10-35 | R10-80 | 77 |
| Minimum Male | R16-26 | R12-40 | - | - |
| Minimum Female | R11-51 | R7-75 | - | - |
| Semi-skilled and clerical-mean | R45-00 | R41-14 | | 12 |
| Male unskilled - mean | R25-20 | R21-34 | | 98 |
| Male unskilled - maximum | R40-86 | ± R37-00 | - | - |
| OTHER EMPLOYEES | | | | |
| Outside weekly paid skilled and semi-skilled males-mean | R78-82 | R78-82 | Nil | 12 |
| Teenage employees from estate-mean | R9-36 | R6-20 | Nil | 4 |
| Casual male employees-mean | R21-71 | R17-85 | | 10 |
| Domestics employed by white staff-mean | Not Available | ± R17-00 | Nil | 50 |

From the results in this Table it would seem that the wage levels on the estate are roughly equivalent to farm wages. Even semi-skilled African workers drawn from the estate receive wages well-below the urban rate. The wages of Africans who work informally as skilled workers and who are drawn from outside the estate earn wages which come closer to urban standards for semi-skilled work, although even here the comparison is somewhat unfavourable.

Of interest and importance here is the extent to which the wage structure at the school is likely to be causing feelings of 'relative deprivation' among employees and the extent to which wage ranges reflect opportunities for material advancement. From the table we note that the gap between unskilled and 'skilled' workers is particularly large. Furthermore, the extent of overlap between wage ranges for unskilled, semi-skilled and skilled workers is not sufficient to provide the lower paid workers with long-range expectations for significant material advancement. Furthermore, the absence of any policy of fixed annual increments in wages must be a powerful demotivating factor among workers.

Employees are remunerated for overtime work. Any employees working on Sunday receive double pay on that day. For example, a man earning 50 cents a day will receive R1-00 on Sunday even if he does not work a full day. Approximately 50% of the school's African employees earn overtime money every month. The total amount paid out in overtime in May 1974 was R287-35 an average of R1-37 per employee per month. All kitchen staff work extra hours and the average monthly overtime amount earned in this department in May 1974 was R4-66. All staff employed in the transport section also earn overtime money and the average montly amount for May was R5-33.[1)]

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1) The average overtime for Drivers specifically was roughly R12-00.

It appears from interviews conducted with the kitchen staff that many do not realise that they are paid double every Sunday (on which day they are compelled to work). Consequently, it seems that they are discontented because they feel that they do not receive overtime pay.

Many of the complaints regarding overtime pay seemed to stem from misconceptions on the part of workers. A few felt that farm employees enjoyed better overtime privileges, and the kitchen staff often seemed ignorant of the fact that their wage packets included an overtime component. These misunderstandings cause great resentment and have a negative effect on morale despite probable lack of validity.

There is also no clear and consistent policy regarding annual bonuses and only the most senior African staff receive a bonus at Christmas. The ordinary labourers receive no such benefit. The Clerk of Works gives his six senior African workers a bonus while the Estate Manager pays drivers R25-00, clerks R20-00, R10-00 or R5-00 according to seniority at Christmas. In one department there was a system by which each staff member was given a bonus in kind valued at about R1-50. This has been discontinued.

More generally the employees of the school have complained most bitterly about their wages. One respondent said, "What makes a man like and respect his job is money. Not the situation where, when you are about to be paid, you cry hot tears knowing your money will be gone in a moment. If there is money you are jubilant and work well. It kills my heart to think that my niece gets R20-00 - a disgrace of disgraces when I, a man, carry bags and get less".

Another said, "Money is very important to us - it creates dignity". Yet another said, "There is nothing

which gives me pride. I worry at night. I came here with the idea that there was money - I am earning as though I arrived here yesterday".

One woman confronted our fieldworker saying, "People are really not satisfied with the money here. Even those who have told you they are happy with their pay say that because they are afraid the whites will hear they have complained and tell them to go away from here".

Further, older employees are dissatisfied by the fact that they have not had substantial pay increases over a number of years. The fact that younger men "to whom we have taught the job" earn the same as they do, has caused resentment.

Most respondents displayed a resigned attitude towards their poverty and most said they were afraid to approach the whites regarding wages. They feel aggrieved and also see the white school authorities as damaging their own reputation by paying low wages. One employee said "It would be beautiful if the school would make itself famous in that they pay workers well. Now they are just famous for nothing". Another said, "We have no money. Even the white school prefects sometimes ask us how much we earn and we tell them and they say 'Awu, Auntie, do not tell us that this is so!'".

Another said "The whites have no sympathy for a person because if they did have sympathy they would consider that the wages they give us are not enough to live on. If we Blacks were one, we would leave the college and let the Whites remain alone".

"The whites are hypocrites, they deceive us with their teeth because we laugh with them but when it comes to

money, nothing happens," said another.

Others are both resigned and resentful. One man said "The only thing I will succeed in doing is burying my children one after the other because I do not have a cent in my pocket". Yet another said "I am thinking of getting myself a 'bheshu' (traditional skin loin-cloth) because I do not have proper clothing. I wear tatters. My sister once gave me some soap and after she had given it to me I thanked her. I even thanked her children. Imagine the disgrace of being given something at the place where your sister is married".

These quotations, taken from a random variety of respondents, give a fair picture of the quality of the grievances experienced in regard to remuneration on the estate.

## 2.2 WAGES IN RELATION TO EXPECTED WAGES.

Many respondents expressed definite views on what they thought they ought to be paid. Carefully structured probes were introduced on this topic with care taken to encourage realistic and responsible answers. The results of this exercise give a very clear indication of the extent of feelings of relative deprivation among the employees. The results, for those who answered our probes, are provided in Table II below.

The weighted averages at the foot of the table provide a broad indication of the relation between expected and actual wages. The ratio of 2·25 to 1 is very informative. Firstly it indicates quite clearly that a widespread sense of relative deprivation exists. Secondly it tells us that the expectations of the employees are relatively slightly lower that what one would expect in an urban area.

TABLE II

EXPECTED WAGES AND ACTUAL WAGES
ACCORDING TO OCCUPATION

| Average Wage Received | Monthly Wage thought to be Appropriate | Number Specifying Appropriate Wage | Occupation |
|---|---|---|---|
| R9-23 | R10 - R16 | 6 | 2 Laundry Assistants, 1 Groundsman, 2 Domestics, 1 Graveyard Attendant. |
| R11-94 | R20 - R25 | 13 | 7 Houses Staff, 1 Domestic, 3 Grounds Staff, 1 Laundry Assistant, 1 Labourer (transport) |
| R17-56 | R30 - R35 | 6 | 2 Houses Staff, 2 Laundry Assistants, 1 Cleaner, 1 Boiler Attendant. |
| R19-26 | R40 - R50 | 11 | 4 Labourers, 2 Cleaners, 1 Mechanic, 1 Boiler Attendant, 1 Waiter, 2 Houses staff. |
| R24-62 | R60 | 12 | 8 Labourers, 1 Waiter, 1 Tractor Driver, 1 Library Assistant, 1 Cleaner. |
| R28-00 | R70 - R75 | 2 | 1 Cook, 1 Gardener. |
| R26-75 | R80 | 2 | 1 Cleaner, 1 Pool Attendant. |
| R46-50 | R100 - R120 | 2 | 1 Driver, 1 Messenger |
| R59-70 | R130 - R150 | 2 | 1 Telephonist, 1 Driver. |
| R112-23 | R200 - R300 | 3 | 3 Artisans. |
| R25-12 | R56 - 53 | | Weighted Average |
| Ratio | 2.5 to 1 | | |

In our experience and from the tentative results of an ongoing study at this university, a ratio of nearer 3 to 1 between expected and actual wages would be the case in an urban environment. A comparative study conducted on another private school estate [1] produced a ratio of expected to actual wages of 1·8 to 1. The difference between the two ratios is to be explained by the fact that the wage structure at the other school is different from that pertaining among the group studied. It needs to be noted that the level of expected wages emerging from our present results are significantly lower than the comparable figure at the other school.

These observations lead to the conclusion that the level of wages generally felt to be appropriate is not unrealistic in comparison with other results. The expectations of employees in regard to wages cannot be lightly dismissed, therefore, and have to be considered in relation to future wage policy. It is not suggested that these expectations be simply accepted as benchmarks; we would merely draw attention to the fact that the ratio of expected to actual wages gives an indication of the extent of feelings of relative deprivation and material discontent, and that in any assessment of worker morale, such feelings have to be taken seriously.

## 2.3 WAGES IN RELATION TO FAMILY STRUCTURE AND MINIMUM SUBSISTENCE NEEDS.

We have noted the subjective responses of employees to their level of wages. However, an objective appraisal of the adequacy of wages is necessary. Wages should be assessed in relation to the family structure and to an appropriate scientific benchmark of minimum subsistence needs.

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1) L. Schlemmer and M.J. Oosthuizen, A Study of Employee Morale among Africans in a Rural Non-Farm Employment Situation, Institute for Social Research, Durban, 1974, p.15.

The following are details of the family structure in the African village:

| | |
|---|---|
| Average Family size (including large 'extended' families)[1] - with lodgers: | 5,96 persons |
| - lodgers excluded: | 5,86 persons |
| Average size of 'nuclear'[2] family units - with lodgers: | 5,46 persons |
| - without lodgers: | 5,36 persons |
| Average number of adults per family (includes working or unemployed teenagers) - with lodgers: | 2,51 persons |
| - without lodgers: | 2,41 persons |
| Average number of school children per family: | 1,56 children |
| Average number of pre-school children per family: | 1,40 children |
| Average number of earners per family: | 2,17 persons |
| Average number of dependants per earner: | 1·52 to 1 |

From these figures we can conclude that the average size of 'nuclear' (conjugal) families is no larger than it is in a typical urgan area. In 1973, the Bureau of Market Research [3] established that the average size of African families in Durban (single person units excluded) was 5·68 persons; slightly higher than our average in the village.

The results for the village also show very conclusively that the average number of earners per household is significantly higher than in urban areas. According to the study conducted in 1973 by the Bureau of Market Research

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1) Extonded families were broken down into the two or more 'nuclear' families of which they were comprised.

2) The 'nuclear' family is the most elementary form of the family.

3) P.A. Nel, et al, The Minimum Subsistence Level and the Minimum Humane Standard of Living of Non-Whites living in the Main Urban Areas of the Republic of South Africa, Bureau of Market Research, University of South Africa, Pretoria, Research Report No.33, 1973.

there were 1,71 earners per African household (with male breadwinners) in Durban in 1973. This compares with the village figure of 2,17 per family. The higher number of earners in the village partly reflects the lower wage structure on tbe school estate, but partly also the ready availability of employment for wives.

In the village there are 1·52 dependants per earner, which, due to the large number of earners, is a relatively low figure by African standards.

In the village the main earners contribute 65% of total household income whereas in African households in all major urban centres, male main breadwinners contribute 70% of household income.[1)] Hence this provides some further evidence that households in the village are more dependent on extra earners than is the case in urban areas.

The average 'nuclear' family income in the village (composed of the wages of main and secondary breadwinners and contributions to the household from lodgers and other additional earners) is R34-10 per month. However, even the main breadwinners and their wives do not necessarily contribute their total earnings to the household budget. The average total contributions to the household budget of nuclear families is R26-31 per month. Hence R7-79 per month (or some 23%) of total family income, is retained by (mainly) husbands and wives for personal expenditure. This proportion is alarmingly high considering the low level of household income in relation to family needs.

The most adequate criterion of minimum family subsistence needs is the so-called Poverty Datum Line. In

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1) P.A. Nel. op cit.

calculating this benchmark we selected the most conservative method currently in use; that of the Bureau of Market Research of the University of South Africa. The figure derived from the use of this method is termed the 'Minimum Subsistence Level' (MSL). A slightly higher figure allowing for certain additional essential requirements is termed the 'Humane Standard of Living' (HSL).[1)]

The MSL comprises the following components:

(1) Minimum monthly food requirements of Africans of Different ages and sex (based on the lowest scale of minimum diet specified by the State Department of Health);

(2) Minimum clothing requirements;

(3) Minimum fuel and lighting requirements;

(4) Minimum washing and cleaning materials;

(5) Transport costs for essential work and shopping journeys only;

(6) Replacement cost of the barest essentials of household equipment.

We did not calculate the full Bureau of Market Research Humane Standard of Living (HSL), but, for our 'humane' figure included only the following additional items[2)]:

(1) A small amount for recreation (R3,28 per family per month);

(2) Items for personal care (R3,25 per family per month);

(3) Average costs of attendance by families at the village clinic;

(4) Costs of education for children.

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1) P.A. Nel, op.cit.

2) The Bureau of Market Research allows in addition, extra clothing, food and washing and cleaning materials.

We are, therefore, in a position to provide two estimates of the cost of minimum family needs, the M.S.L. and a modified lower H.S.L. Costing of the component items was carried out at the nearest supermarket for food and household equipment and in the nearest urban centre for clothing and larger items of household equipment. We assumed that villagers would walk to the nearest supermarket (a distance of 4 miles each way) and take train journeys to the urban centre. The barest minimum of travelling for shopping purposes was assumed. It was also assumed that all earners in an average family received school rations or, in the case of domestics working on the estate, roughly the equivalent of school rations. The M.S.L. and modified H.S.L. were reduced by what it would cost the villagers to purchase the rations. Monthly rations are:

21 lbs of Meal per week per employee;
1 lb of Sugar per week per employee;
2½ lbs of Offal per family per month.[1)]
A small amount of Salt.

Certain of the standard items in the M.S.L. and H.S.L. could be eliminated for village residents; these being workers' transport and rentals. As a consequence the figures are much lower than equivalent urban figures.

The M.S.L. and H.S.L. figures for an average "nuclear" village family resulting from the calculations outlined above are given in the boxes below:

| Minimum Subsistence Level for average Nuclear family, July 1974: R57-25 p.m. |
|---|

1) The ration of offal was assumed to be regular but the interviews conducted on the estate suggested that families could not rely on a regular ration.

It should be remembered that the M.S.L. allows not a cent for recreation, education, medical expenses, personal care, and savings. With the exception of the latter, (savings), these additional items are included in our modified H.S.L. below:

| HUMANE STANDARD OF LIVING for average nuclear family (but including only M.S.L. food, clothing, washing and cleansing requirements) July 1974: R66-27 p.m. |
|---|

Comparing these figures with the total household income in the homes of nuclear families, we note that the average monthly income is R23-15 per month lower than the average M.S.L., and R32-17 per month below the modified H.S.L. Only 10, or 9% of the household incomes of nuclear families equal or exceed the village average M.S.L. (fewer of these incomes would exceed the M.S.L. appropriate to each family since the families in question were usually larger, with more earners but also more dependants). On average, the total family income of some R34-00 per month exceeds the minimum amount determined for food alone in the M.S.L. by only R1-00.

We must conclude, therefore, that judged by the most conservative modern scientific standard available, the overwhelming majority of village families live below the minimum material standard required for the maintenance of health, morale and decency. Indeed the depth of poverty is considerable.

## 2.4 PATTERNS OF EXPENDITURE.

In view of the objective situation of poverty which we have demonstrated to exist in the village, it is of interest

to consider aspects of the pattern of expenditure among village residents. In Table III below we present an analysis of expenditure patterns. Before considering the results in the table we should refer back to the finding presented in Section 2.3 that nearly R8-00 per month per family is retained for personal expenditure despite the fact that family incomes are well below the minimum subsistence level.

Concluding broadly from the results in the table, we may say that the expenditure by adults on clothing almost matches the equivalent component for adult individuals in the M.S.L.; i.e. R6-46 per month expenditure versus R7-50 per month allowed in the M.S.L. Expenditure on doctors, traditional doctors and medicine exceeds the amount determined in the M.S.L., which was based entirely on clinic fees. Obviously villagers perceive a need to turn to facilities other than the clinic to some extent. Expenditure on tobacco is roughly equivalent to the M.S.L. allotment. The figure of expenditure on liquor is probably unreliable and cannot be used for comparative purposes. Apart from certain items included in the "Miscellaneous" expenditure category, all other expenditure is below the M.S.L. requirements.

Bearing in mind the fact that family incomes are so much lower than the average M.S.L., it seems clear that families are economising stringently on food in order to spend normally (in a relative sense) on clothing, tobacco, and to some extent, health. (To this list liquor should be added although it did not appear prominently in the list of expenses, as was to be expected.)

TABLE III

PATTERNS OF EXPENDITURE ON SELECTED ITEMS BY INDIVIDUAL RESPONDENTS IN AN AVERAGE MONTH

| Item | Proportion Who Purchased | Largest Amount Spent by Individual | Lowest Amount Spent | Average Amount Spent | Description/Comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Clothing | 54% | R35-00 | R2-00 | R6-46 | |
| Furniture and Equipment | 11% | R30-00 | R2-00 | R0-88 | Couch, coal stoves, blankets, etc. |
| Hire Purchase Durables | 30% | R7-00 | R5-00 | R0-20 | R7 - deposit on sewing machine; R5 - deposit on radio, etc. |
| Cleaning and Personal Care | 56% | R1-42 | R0-60 | R0-21 | 20% of respondents said they received a soap ration from the school. |
| Transport | 28% | R9-00 | R0-80 | R0-89 | Including a small number of weekly labourers paying R3-00 monthly for transport. |
| Fuel | 80% | R18-80 | R0-07 | R0-69 | Candles, paraffin, coal. |
| Doctor(clinic) | 18% | R15-00 | R0-20 | R0-54 | The % attending the school clinic will be higher; |
| Doctor(elsewhere) | 10% | R10-00 | R0-60 | R0-40 | Private practitioners. |
| Traditional Doctor | 3% | R5-00 | R1-20 | R0-10 | To cure "traditional" diseases. |
| Tobacco & Snuff | 62% | R3-00 | R0-06 | R0-58 | |
| Liquor | 34% | R6-00 | R0-40 | R0-47 | This is a conservative figure & also does not include amounts which are spent on homebrew. |
| School Fees<br>School Books | N/A | N/A | N/A | R2-00<br>R4-08 | Per annum<br>Per annum |
| Tax | 94% | R20-00 | R2-50 | R3-35 | Per annum |
| Other Miscellaneous expenditure | 10% | R63-00 | R1-00 | R2-18 | R63 - debts;<br>R44 - deposit on car;<br>R12 - petrol;<br>R8 - chickens;<br>R4 - present for girl friend;<br>R1 - babysitter;<br>R1 - crèche fee, etc. |

## 2.5 GENERAL ATTITUDE TO SAVINGS AND MATERIAL CONSUMPTION.

When enquiries were made in interviews about whether or not respondents had been able to save money, the following broad trend emerged from answers:

65% claimed that they had never been able to save;
8% had saved between R10 and R50;
10% had saved between R50 and R100;
17% had saved R100 or more.

Obviously, some of these amounts saved took years to accumulate. Particularly the higher amounts tended to be the return on sales of cattle rather than savings from wages. A broad impression gained is that the pattern of saving has been continued over recent years. The nature of accumulation tends to be more of a 'target saving' nature than saving for a long-term future. Broadly 60% of savings tended to be for specific targets like 'lobola', purchase of cattle, expenditure on traditional rituals, purchase of household equipment, clothing, etc. The remainder of the total extent of saving was for security in old age and for children's education. A relatively small proportion of 'target' savings (10 - 20%) was for the purchase of clothing and other items of commercial personal expenditure.

A specific enquiry was directed at the extent of current savings. Here again some 60 to 65% were unable to save on current earnings. The remainder said that they save a little from wages and a very small proportion accumulate a little money from selling handicrafts and vegetables. No clear estimate could be made of the amounts saved, but our impression is that the average, among those who save, is between R1 - R3 per month.

It should be borne very strongly in mind that the pattern of wages in relation to minimum subsistence needs is such that, on average, any savings are directly at the cost of family maintenance. At present, saving is not possible in theoretical terms.

In general, attitudes towards savings expressed in response to questions reflected a responsible orientation. Overwhelmingly, respondents said that they admired a person who saved his or her money. Only 4% of those interviewed saw the saving of money as a way of achieving specific short-term material gratification. The responses of all others interviewed reflect security needs. Eighty-seven per cent said that a man who saved was looking after his future. Fifty-six per cent of respondents (including many of the 87% above) said that a man who did not save was foolish as he would find himself in dire difficulties if he were to fall ill. Twenty-six per cent stated that a person who did not save would be a burden to his children and to others who would have to take responsibility for him if he was in difficulties. Seven per cent stated that a man was obliged to leave money to his children when he died. Another 6% gave answers such as "one must not get carried away with enjoyment", "A man who does not save will end up commiting a crime", and "A person who saves will help me when I am in need". Three per cent said that a man who saves is intelligent and thinks about money "in the correct way".

It is of interest to note the strong anxieties about the consequences of illness which emerge from these results. Generally, the results thus far suggest a security rather than a "consumption" orientation among villagers.

In order to gain further insight into the orientations of villagers in this regard, they were questioned as to the ways in which they would spend an unexpected R100 win. The responses appear in Table IV below.

TABLE IV

| Proportion of Respondents (More than one response was given hence %'s exceed 100. | Ways in which R100 would be spent |
|---|---|
| 11% | Money would be saved in a Bank. |
| 30% | To open a business. |
| 28% | To meet urgent immediate needs. |
| 13% | To support children on parents' death. |
| 12% | To acquire livestock (some for Lobola. |
| 11% | On clothing. |
| 8% | To build a house. |
| 8% | To buy good food. |
| 7% | To educate children. |
| 3% | For old age security. |
| 6% | Miscellaneous other. |

The pattern of responses, once again, suggest a non consumer-oriented approach to money. A small minority mention the purchase of consumer items for personal use and enjoyment. The high proportion desiring to open small businesses is interesting, and has been encountered in other studies conducted by this Institute as well. This reflects a desire for independence and freedom from wage labour. The desire is undoubtedly utopian but is indicative of a strong wish to escape the 'system', which may be fairly widespread among Africans in low-wage labour.

Those interviewed were also asked to consider the way in which they would spend an extra R10 a month if this were to be added to their earnings. The following pattern of response emerged:

TABLE V

PROPOSED EXPENDITURE OF AN ADDITIONAL R10 MONTHLY EARNINGS.

| Responses* | Percentage Distribution |
|---|---|
| Bank it and get interest | 18% |
| Save it/Bank it | 16% |
| Use it for household needs/to ease current urgent problems | 25% |
| Save it to start a business | 16% |
| Save it for education of children/ their future | 13% |
| Buy clothes for self/children | 11% |
| Buy extra food | 10% |
| Save for old age | 5% |
| Save to buy cattle/to lobola | 5% |
| Save it to eventually own a car; house; farm equipment | 8% |

(* Note: Percentages exceed 100% as more than one answer could be given.)

Much the same value-system emerges in response to the question about an additional R10 per month. Luxury expenditure hardly figures in the results. The one or two individuals who wished to save to buy a car usually had a taxi enterprise in mind. In view of the very shabby tattered clothing which seems typical of the apparel on the estate, expenditure on clothing for self can hardly be considered as a self-indulgent desire. Here again, a strong desire for independence of the wage-labour system emerges from the not infrequently expressed utopian desire to start a business.

The village sample was also asked about the type of household or personal articles which members considered to be urgently required but which they were unable to purchase. The responses appear in Table VI below.

TABLE VI

PERSONAL & HOUSEHOLD ITEMS DEEMED ESSENTIAL BUT LACKING IN HOUSEHOLDS

| Items | Percentage Distribution |
|---|---|
| Furniture | 44% |
| Clothing | 34% |
| Stove | 16% |
| Smaller household equipment | 7% |
| Radio | 7% |
| Sewing machine | 3% |
| Bath | 2% |
| Bicycle | 2% |

(Note: Percentages exceed 100% as more than one answer could be given.)

Observations in the homes of village residents certainly bear out the strong need expressed for household furniture. Homes were generally very bare, although, rather too small to accommodate more than a very few items of furniture. From the inside appearance of homes we may safely conclude that most of the furniture considered to be urgently needed would consist of basic items such as tables, chairs and beds. We should add that desire for standard western-type furniture is now so widespread among Africans even in rural areas in South Africa that the desires reflected in the table must be considered fairly normal or typical. As already mentioned, the typical state of clothing in the village would also make the high level of desire for additional wearing apparel quite a 'legitimate' aspiration.

The questions on savings and household needs were intended to obtain insights into the values of village residents, and certainly not to predict actual behaviour. In fact, we have good reason to suspect that the correspondence between values and actual behaviour might not be very close. One example of this is to be found in the considerable extent of heavy drinking in the village. This was observed and inferred indirectly as well as in response to specific questions in the interviews which will be discussed presently. With the community in its present state of morale, a high proportion of men in particular are likely to exhibit patterns of 'recuperative' or 'escapist' behaviour in their limited leisure time. This is fairly typical of traditional or semi-traditional communities (white rural communities included) which have sunk into the so-called "culture of proverty". Traditional community-oriented and family-oriented values remain, but behaviour, due to the stress of their daily existence, deviates from the basic beliefs and values which the people retain. This form of value-behaviour dissonance in itself can aggravate the often pathological states of mind which come to exist in severely demoralised communities. Attempts at reinforcement of the traditional values or of a 'standard of respectability' through pietistic religious exhortation can often do little more than produce a guilt syndrome which, in the absence of structural improvements in the community, can exacerbate problems of lack of community identity and purpose. The nature of the problems in the community will be discussed in due course. At this stage it is important to take note of the relatively constructive 'ideal' value-systems which the community exhibits. The depth of poverty which both the subjective accounts of villagers and our own objective assessments reveal, is not only extremely serious in itself, but must be considered in the light of its potent contribution to social pathologies which, in fact, aggravate the poverty.

## CHAPTER III

## THE EMPLOYMENT SITUATION

As emphasised in the introduction, the community under consideration in essence is a dormitory community attached to an employment situation. The characteristics of the employment situation and the qualities of the villagers as employees loom large, therefore, in any assessment of the overall circumstances of the community.

### 3.1 JOB ASPIRATIONS

We will begin the assessment by considering the employees job values and aspirations as a background to the actual job circumstances. It is often assumed that African employees in low-wage employment have extremely limited work horizons, and that they are basically content with low-paid menial and closely supervised work. This is more often than not a stereotype, and many studies undertaken by the National Institute of Personnel Research have shown clearly that the aspirations of African employees correspond closely to what one would expect of manual employees in most Western countries. Glass, for example, says that attitudinal surveys have indicated that the black workers require from their jobs, their firms, and their supervisors substantially the same satisfactions and attention as operatives and manual labourers in Britain and the United States. When differences in behaviour or attitude do occur, these are generally found to result from particular aspects of managerial policy, or from the traditional work patterns which have evolved in South Africa.[1)]

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1) Y. Glass, Industrial Man in Southern Africa, National Institute for Personnel Research, Johannesburg, 1961.

All those interviewed were extensively questioned on their attitudes towards their present jobs, including job qualities to which they aspired; perceptions of work at the school and current job satisfaction and dissatisfaction; their perceptions of alternatives and their personal work history at the school.

Initially respondents were asked what features and conditions of work would make a man like and appreciate his job. The question was, "What are the important things which make a person respect and appreciate his/her job - what makes a job a good job?" The results form the following pattern.

TABLE VII

DISTRIBUTION OF JOB QUALITIES ASPIRED TO AMONG SCHOOL EMPLOYEES

| Quality of Job | Proportion Selecting |
|---|---|
| Good pay | 79% |
| Polite fair supervision | 43% |
| Good food/rations | 23% |
| Good relations with co-workers | 21% |
| To be able to derive intrinsic satisfaction from ones work | 16% |
| To be trusted/respected by whites | 10% |
| Good accommodation | 8% |
| Sufficient free time/holidays | 7% |
| Non-strenuous work | 5% |
| Job which enables one to achieve specific material desires | 5% |
| To have one's work appreciated | 3% |
| Not to be confused/to be given clear instructions | 2% |
| To be secure from dismissal without notice | 2% |
| To have uniforms | 2% |
| Not to work where certain groups are favoured | 2% |
| To have a job with status | 2% |
| Other | 13% |

(Note: Since multiple answers could be given percentages exceed 100%.)

The heavy emphasis on pay and rations is understandable in view of the material deprivation experienced in the community. It has been argued that only once basic material needs are gratified can other levels of aspiration in regard to employment come to the fore.[1] In view of this it is quite surprising that so many other job qualities were mentioned by employees. The strong emphasis on sound human relations in the workplace is noteworthy (43% mentioned polite/fair supervision, 21% good relations with co-workers, and 10% revealed a desire to be trusted and respected by supervisors).

From these results one must assume that the school has a labour force which is sensitive to the climate of employment and communication as well as to the conditions of em ployment.

## 3.2 ORIENTATIONS REGARDING PRESENT EMPLOYMENT.

Having looked at ideal aspirations among employees, we turn to more concretely-based orientations in regard to the present job. Employees were asked "What made you seek work here?" The results appear in Table VIII below.

From these results a clear pattern emerges. Those who had heard of the job from friends and relatives, and who wished to improve their jobs constitute a group which might be regarded as having been 'attracted' to the school estate. Clearly this group emerges as a minority of roughly one-fifth. The major reasons given, substantiated by informal probing following the question, suggest that no real alternatives were perceived by a majority of respondents. The high proportion stating that they had been born or brought up at the school is indicative of a sense of 'captive' allegiance since informal discussions around this topic and other results show quite

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1) See references quoted in Chapter I of Schlemmer and Oosthuizen, op cit.

clearly that the measure of residential security offered on the estate is a powerful incentive to continue working at the school.

TABLE VIII

REASONS FOR SEEKING WORK AT THE SCHOOL

| Unprobed Responses Given | Percentage Distribution |
|---|---|
| Needed Money | 34% |
| Heard of job from friends/relatives | 16% |
| Came with Estate Manager | 3% |
| Last job too strenuous | 3% |
| Moved from home because of quarrels/faction fights | 3% |
| Wanted better paying job | 3% |
| Born/brought up at the school | 30% |
| Husband found job at the school | 8% |
| Influx control restrictions in town | 5% |
| Expelled from neighbouring farm | 2% |
| Tried to find a job elsewhere but could not | 2% |

(Note: Percentage exceeds 100% due to multiple response)

Employers were also asked "What makes you keep your present job?" It appears that the number of positive reasons only barely outweighs negative reasons which, once again, reflects a strong pattern of "captive allegiance' to employment at the school.

TABLE IX

REASONS FOR KEEPING PRESENT JOB

| Major Reasons for Keeping Job | Percentage Distribution |
|---|---|
| Positive Reasons | |
| Like the job/used to it | 33% |
| Not too strenuous | 18% |
| Good supervision | 13% |
| Get better paid than others | 7% |
| Good relations with co-workers | 5% |
| Used to farms | 2% |
| Negative Reasons | |
| Fear of starvation of family | 26% |
| No alternative jobs available/fear of finding no alternative job | 25% |
| Job reservation/influx control restriction | 8% |
| Waiting for possible change in wage policy | 5% |
| Fear of unstable job record in 'pass' | 3% |
| Leaving in forseeable future | 3% |

(Note: percentages exceed 100% due to multiple answers)

However, the pattern reflects more positively on the school employment than that emerging from the previous question. A slight majority of actual respondents gave first spontaneous answers which reflect an appreciation of desirable aspects of employment at the school. However, the large minority of responses indicating a negatively-based commitment to or temporary acceptance of employment at the school gives cause for concern.

When asked whether or not they would be able to find other jobs easily if they were to leave the school, 40% of male respondents gave some indication of optimism about alternative employment. The remaining 60% and all the female respondents gave answers which indicated a feeling of being bound to the school, willy-nilly.

Those who felt insecure regarding the possibility of finding other jobs gave reasons such as the following:

- influx control restrictions would eliminate possible employment in town;
- "Afraid to ask for a transfer";
- "Too old to be taught a new job";
- "Everyone here must work and all vacancies are filled";
- "must have a job organized - afraid to leave/ afraid to hunt for job";
- "too many people want jobs in town";
- "couldn't take family to town";
- "don't want to commit myself/don't know".

It is clear that some of these answers reflect not only a sense of being captive at the school, but also of being tightly bound to one particular job at the school, allocated by the authorities.

Those who felt assured that they would find jobs (40% of men) if they went elsewhere gave reasons such as the following:

- "I would have good references";
- "I know my work well";
- "I've never had trouble finding a job";
- "I am trustworthy";
- "I am still young".

In order to ascertain further to what extent employees felt a sense of 'captive allegiance' to the school,

they were asked whether they felt they had any power to improve or change their jobs. The results which appear in Table X below show that the majority of employees did not feel they were able to improve or change their jobs and mostly because they were either afraid of the white authorities or saw them as too powerful to confront on the issue of alternative work in the school.

TABLE X

EMPLOYEES PERCEPTIONS OF POSSIBILITY OF IMPROVING OR CHANGING THEIR JOBS

| | Percent Distribution |
|---|---|
| There is nothing I can do to change it | 44% |
| No communication with whites/approached them to no avail | 13% |
| Am under whites/their job/resigned to it | 10% |
| Afraid to approach whites/might be expelled | 7% |
| Job will never change - has been like this for years | 5% |
| Only those who are liked will be transferred on request | 2% |
| We must ask for better wages | 16% |
| Authorities should be told how badly we are treated | 2% |
| Will ask for a transfer | 3% |
| Other (Miscellaneous) | 10% |
| Know work well and have never thought of changing it | 13% |

(Note: Percentages exceed 100% as more than one answer could be given)

These answers also give an insight into the climate of employer-employee communication in the workplace. There appears to be fairly ample evidence of a certain sense of intimidation by the employing authorities; whether such responses are justified or not will not be discussed at this stage.

Employees were questioned regarding the favourable and unfavourable characteristics of their own jobs; whether they would like to be employed in them for the rest of their lives and whether their jobs had status in the work situation and were aspired to by others. Initially those interviewed were asked if they would like to do their present jobs for the rest of their lives.

We note that, in the context of this type of question, a majority of both men and women indicate a willingness to remain as employees at the school for the rest of their lives. The results suggest, however, that this orientation may in many cases rest upon a realistic appraisal of their chances of finding alternative employment.

Approximately 75% of the responses in the table below indicate a decision to stay at the school. However, it will be noted that 34% of responses among the 75% were qualified answers, e.g. "I will work here <u>if</u> wages are raised"; "I like my job <u>but</u> hours are too long"; "I will stay <u>as long as</u> I am not expelled", etc.

The results are presented in Table XI below.

**TABLE XI**

EMPLOYEES REASONS FOR WISHING/NOT WISHING TO WORK AT THE SCHOOL FOR THE REST OF THEIR LIVES

| | |
|---|---|
| Those who wished to work at the school: (67% of male respondents, 76% of female respondents) | |
| Job not too strenuous | 21% |
| Need a job and money | 18% |
| Will stay if better paid | 18% |
| Like job but wages too low | 11% |
| Know job well/like it | 11% |
| Good job for uneducated person | 5% |
| Will stay as long as I have strength | 5% |
| Better paid than most | 3% |
| Will stay as long as don't get expelled by white | 3% |
| Not closely supervised/no induna | 3% |
| Well treated by supervisor | 3% |
| Like school but hope for transfer to less strenuous job | 3% |
| Appreciate rations | 2% |
| Must work near husband and family | 2% |
| Intrinsic satisfaction derived from job | 2% |
| Enables me to see my family | 2% |
| Like job but hours too long | 2% |
| Those who did not wish to work at the school. (33% of male respondents, 24% of female respondents) | |
| Wages too low | 13% |
| Job too strenuous | 10% |
| Would like to own a business | 7% |
| Dislike job but too old to change | 3% |
| Hours too long/no free time | 2% |
| Would like to educate myself | 2% |
| Would like to be a domestic | 2% |
| Other | 2% |

(Note: Percentages exceed 100% as more than one answer could be given.)

In order to ascertain further what employees felt about their own jobs those interviewed were asked, "The job you do at the school - do other men like it? Why?" From this indirect question the following favourable and unfavourable characteristics of the respondent's job 'as perceived by others' emerged.

TABLE XII

FAVOURABLE AND UNFAVOURABLE ASPECTS OF EMPLOYEES JOBS AS SEEN BY OTHERS

| Favourable Characteristics: (Mentioned by 51% of respondents) | Percentage Distribution |
|---|---|
| Less strenuous than other jobs. (Mainly semi-skilled or indoor-employed respondents) | 26% |
| Better paid than others. (Mainly semi-skilled respondents and often better-paid workers) | 18% |
| Have to be educated/job has status | 3% |
| Interesting job | 3% |
| Have uniforms - others do not | 3% |
| Hours better than in other departments | 3% |
| Other favourable characteristics (diverse) | 18% |
| Don't know why others like it | 7% |
| **Unfavourable Characteristics: (Mentioned by 36% of respondents)** | |
| Strenuous/unhealthy job | 15% |
| Poor pay in department | 10% |
| Long hours/little free time/no holidays | 7% |
| Impolite supervisor | 2% |
| Other unfavourable characteristics (diverse) | 8% |
| Don't know what others feel about the job (answer given by 15%) | 15% |

(Note: Percentages exceed 100% as more than one answer could be given.)

These replies do not show an overwhelmingly negative image of the work. The 36% of employees who saw their jobs as perceived by others in an unfavourable light were largely drawn from the lower-skilled ranks or those doing outdoor work. It can be assumed, however, that a slight majority overall are not 'ashamed' of their work as regards its image in the eyes of people with whom they would compare themselves.

Certain job characteristics which are salient in the minds of employees emerge from the table. The most important being how strenuous or not the work is followed by relative remuneration and hours of work.

Three direct questions were asked regarding current job satisfaction. These were, "What things make your job a good job? Why?", "What things make your job disagreeable?" and "In doing your work is there anything which you find tiring, uncomfortable or irritating? What are they?"

The pattern of response to the first question is presented in Table XIII below.

The 13% of respondents who displayed intrinsic work-satisfaction gave replies such as the following:

- "I really enjoy seeing the results of my handiwork";
- "I have acquired knowledge that will help my people";
- "I enjoy using my head and initiative".

TABLE XIII

DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYEES' PERCEPTIONS OF FAVOURABLE CHARACTERISTICS OF PRESENT JOB

| Job Characteristic | Percent Dist. | Comment |
|---|---|---|
| Not strenuous/easy/inside | 26% | Those working indoors, drivers, pool and tennis court attendant, water attendant. |
| Work freely/without constant supervision | 25% | |
| Know it well/used to it | 23% | |
| Polite/fair supervision | 18% | |
| Better wages than others | 15% | Drivers, senior waiters, indunas, mechanic, tractor driver. |
| Better hours than others | 15% | |
| Good relations with co-workers | 13% | |
| Those displaying intrinsic work-satisfaction | 13% | Artisans, semi-skilled workers, domestic, gardener, cleaner, pool attendant. |
| White appreciates me | 11% | |
| Employers generous | 5% | Domestics. |
| The fact of earning money | 5% | |
| No favourable characteristics | 8% | |

(Note: Percentages exceed 100% as more than one answer could be given)

Factors which employers found unfavourable about their jobs are reflected in Table XIV below.

TABLE XIV

DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYEES' PERCEPTIONS OF UNFAVOURABLE/ DISAGREEABLE CHARACTERISTICS OF PRESENT JOB

| Unfavourable Characteristics | Percentage Distribution |
|---|---|
| Poor wages | 36% |
| Strenuous/unhealthy/dangerous | 26% |
| Very long hours/no free time | 15% |
| Whites rude/unco-operative | 7% |
| No uniforms/clothes get damaged | 5% |
| No significant pay rise with long service | 3% |
| No pay in school holidays | 3% |
| Indunas unfair | 3% |
| Other unfavourable characteristics | 10% |
| No negative characteristics | 31% |

(Note: Since more than one answer could be given percentages exceed 100%)

Finally a number of those interviewed were asked if there was anthing in their work which they found tiring, anything uncomfortable or irritating. The results are presented in Table XV below.

The proportion giving no aspect of work regarded as tiring, disagreeable, etc., is fairly high at 35%. Many of the specific answers arose out of particular types of work which have unpleasant aspects which are unavoidable. Significant answers of a general nature are those referring to the strenuous nature of work and unco-operative co-workers.

TABLE XV

TIRING AND UNCOMFORTABLE ASPECTS
OF EMPLOYEES' JOBS

| Tiring etc. Aspects of Job | Percentage Distribution |
|---|---|
| Strenuous | 15% |
| Unco-operative co-workers | 12% |
| Working at night | 8% |
| Heat from boilers | 4% |
| Smoke from boilers, etc. | 4% |
| Lack of mechanical equipment | 4% |
| Unpleasant job (e.g. cleaning lavatories) | 4% |
| Not being given a fair hearing regarding work complaints | 4% |
| Unco-operative supervisor | 4% |
| Other (diverse) | 8% |
| Nothing tiring, etc. about job | 35% |

(Note: Percentages exceed 100% as more than one answer could be given.)

Taking an overall view of the last three tables given in the preceding text allows a broad assessment to be made of the relative salience or importance for workers at the school of different dimensions of the work situation. If the results are broadly integrated, the following features of work emerge as being of high salience:

degree of exertion required;
wages;
polite and fair supervision;
hours of work;
lack of close, punitive supervision;
sound relations with co-workers;
familiarity with work.

Relating these results to those obtained in the comparable study of another private school, suggests that the element of exertion in work (strenuousness of work) is accorded relatively much higher priority in the attitudes of workers in the present study. The level of remuneration also seems more salient in the present work-setting. The reasons for the latter difference relate to income differentials between the two situations. There is no obvious reason for the relative importance of the physical exertion factor; the nature of the work in the two situations is remarkably similar. It would seem that a distinct aversion to physical exertion is a feature in the present study setting, and from additional answers and nuances in the answers this aversion is for some bound up with fears in regard to health.

The emphasis placed on the desirability of light work has been noticed generally among African workers. It seems to be a fairly wide-spread belief that doing hard physical labour is detrimental to ones health. However, this perception seems to take an exaggerated form on the estate. One respondent explained this by saying "There is nothing which motivates a man to work harder because it kills his blood. It invites illness. You realize you are worn down before time".

Another respondent said, in regard to working for white employers, "It is worth working hard if you know you will get money. I will kill myself working if money comes in easily. If you work for a white you will 'kill' yourself in order that your name becomes good and yet at the month's end you get nothing". Another said, "The work of a white man never comes to an end so why not save energy? There is no reason to work harder, for, in the future, what is going to bring back your strength?"

Since there is no reason why the present respondents should differ in basic attitudes from other African workers in Natal, the possibility springs to mind that the employees on the estate suffer a degree of physical debilitation. The pattern of results in regard to income and expenditure has suggested that families economise on food in order to retain a measure of discretionary income. The probability that part of the general problem of morale in the estate community stems from adult under-nourishment cannot be discounted.

Having been questioned on perceptions of their present work situation at the school, African employees were asked, "If it were possible - would you have liked to work elsewhere or not?", "Where would you have liked to have worked?" and "Why would you have liked this?" In answer to the first question it appears that only roughly 23% of respondents would not prefer jobs elsewhere, while 72% of respondents indicate broadly that they would consider leaving the school. Five per cent of respondents said they did not know whether they would leave or not given the opportunity.

The distribution of respondents' answers is presented in Table XVI below.

TABLE XVI

EMPLOYEES REASONS FOR WISHING/NOT WISHING TO CONTINUE WORKING FOR THE SCHOOL

| Reasons for Wishing/Not Wishing to Work Elsewhere | Proportion of Respondents Selecting |
|---|---|
| Those not wishing to seek employment elsewhere: (23% of respondents) | |
| Family here/born here | 16% |
| Only know farms | 5% |
| Have friends here/life good here | 5% |
| Like my supervisor | 3% |
| Other (diverse) | 7% |
| Those wishing to seek employment elsewhere: (72% of respondents) | |
| Need to earn more | 23% |
| Would like to go elsewhere but influx control is a problem | 11% |
| Would like to work in town | 7% |
| Would like another job but have not found one | 5% |
| Would like to leave but cannot as family is here/ was born here | 5% |
| Would like to work nearer home | 2% |
| Would like to leave but too old | 2% |
| Have already resigned | 2% |
| Other | 8% |
| Don't know/don't care | 5% |

(Note: Percentages exceed 100% as some respondents gave more than one answer.)

When those who wished to work elsewhere were asked where they would like to work, they gave answers which are presented in Table XVII below.

TABLE XVII

PREFERRED PLACES OF EMPLOYMENT SELECTED BY AFRICAN STAFF WHO WISH TO WORK ELSEWHERE

| Places Selected | Proportion Selecting |
|---|---|
| Towns/cities in Natal | 83% |
| Johannesburg/mines | 12% |
| Any town | 4% |
| Near my home (mostly homelands) | 14% |
| Don't know/don't mind/anywhere where there is money | 12% |

(Note: As some respondents made alternative choices percentages exceed 100%)

Quite clearly these results reinforce the earlier impression that the labour-force includes a large majority which considers their present situation to be less than ideal. What also emerges is a very strong attraction for urban work, with over 90% of women giving an urban area as a first choice for alternative work.

Those who would prefer to work in towns gave reasons such as the following for their choice:

- "Better wages in towns";
- "better facilities in town";
- "could have my own business in town";
- "there are many jobs in town".

Those who preferred to stay at the school gave reasons such as the following for their choice:

- "Must stay here as working far from family causes problems";
- "afraid of town/tsotsis/don't know town";
- "town is expensive";
- "can't go to town because of influx control";
- "too old to change jobs";
- "too risky leaving here without having another job".

One should note in the listing presented immediately above that positive attractions in the present workplace do not figure very prominently in the answers; rather the reasons reflect a negative perception of alternative places of work or of social life in cities, or of the opportunities to gain alternative employment. This reinforces the pattern observed in the light of earlier tabulated results. The reactions to present employment will be referred to again in the conclusion to this chapter.

## 3.3 LABOUR TURNOVER, LABOUR STABILITY AND RENEWAL

Exact figures were unfortunately not available regarding labour turnover of African staff. It has been informally indicated that a number of people have recently left the estate. It appears that this may have been due to job dissatisfaction.

According to figures obtained from a census taken of the African village it appears that the average length of time spent at the school by employees is 15 years. This figure does not necessarily reflect the number of years spent working, as several respondents gave the response of having "spent my whole life on the estate", i.e. childhood included.

From information obtained from interviews where respondents specifically stated how long they had worked for

the school, the following pattern emerged.

TABLE XVIII

DISTRIBUTION OF LENGTH OF SERVICE AMONG AFRICAN EMPLOYEES

| Length of Service | Proportion |
|---|---|
| 1 year and less | 5% |
| 2 - 5 years | 30% |
| 6 - 9 years | 15% |
| 10 - 15 years | 16% |
| 16 - 19 years | 4% |
| 20 - 25 years | 13% |
| Over 25 years | 7% |
| "Whole working life" (actual number of years not known to respondent) | 10% |

The large proportion of people having worked at the school from 2 to 5 years could be due to the fact that some migrants came with the present Estate Manager on whose farm they had previously worked, four years ago.

Despite the fact that no statistics of recruitment, dismissal or resignation of employees are available, our impression, reinforced by the results in Table XVIII above, is of a high degree of labour-stability. Previous results have shown that this stability is somewhat artificial, since access to alternative employment is limited.

Alternative employment, however, will not necessarily be unavailable to the children of present employees.

If the school is to maintain labour stability and draw its future employees from those indigenous to the estate, more favourable employment opportunities will have to be made

available for young adults leaving school. It appears at present that youngsters are not keen to be employed on the estate - one of the reasons being that there are few job opportunities for those with aspirations typical of those with an education of standard 6 or above.

Many parents state however, that they do not want their children to work at the school. As many as 54% said that they wished their children to be well-educated and roughly 70% of all those interviewed were anxious that their children should have well-paid jobs and a high standard of living.

Nevertheless 25% of respondents acknowledged that their children would probably work at the school when they, the parents, had retired. Opposed to this, 30% felt that their children would definitely not want to work at the school. Our distinct impression is that a minority among the younger generation will seek work at the school, and a very small minority will do so willingly.

Respondents were asked if they had any children working elsewhere and why they had not chosen to work on the estate. The reasons given for children or relatives leaving the estate are presented in Table XIX below:

TABLE XIX

REASONS GIVEN FOR CHILDREN OR RELATIVES LEAVING THE ESTATE

| Reasons | Percentage Distribution among Respondents with absent working-age Children or Relatives |
|---|---|
| Left because of low pay/wanted better-paid job | 40% |
| Dismissed from job | 13% |
| Deserted families/evicted for witchcraft/bad behaviour | 23% |
| Children reside in homelands (Migrants) | 24% |

Of the 15 children having graduated from Standard 6 in the last two years it appears that roughly 13 left the estate, of which roughly 4 continued their educations at secondary schools in nearby towns. Only 2 out of 15 went into employment at the school.

Approximately 25 children from all classes leave the village school annually. Through informal discussion it appeared that most young men leave the estate because they feel that wages paid by the school are too low.

These trends suggest that the labour-force at the school will not be self-renewing and that the semi-skilled occupations are likely to attract the only members of the younger generation remaining on the estate. It would seem that no shortage of labour exists at the moment, and the problem of retaining a higher proportion of the emerging generation is not critical at this stage. However, current trends in agriculture throughout Natal suggest that labour shortages will appear in the not too distant future. The implications of these diverse impressions and facts will be more thoroughly discussed in considering the future of the village community.

## 3.4 BRIEF ASPECTS OF EMPLOYEE MOTIVATION

Employment situations like that on the estate are not usually characterised by high employee motivation. The employment pattern (on farms, rural estates, etc.) is usually labour-intensive. Due to low rates of pay, recourse to labour-maximisation is always the 'production strategy' most readily adopted. In such employment situations the low remuneration and relative absence of work-tempo supervision can produce a characteristically sluggish work-pattern. Indeed, the low wage rates and nutrition-related stamina problems make a sluggish work pattern unavoidable. Understandably, in such situations,

the work-tempo can become a deeply ingrained aspect of life, and be reflected in the attitudes towards work.

To assist in exploring this broad issue some questions on work motivation were included in the schedule. The following question was asked: "What would make you feel it would be worthwhile to work harder?" The results are presented in Table XX below.

TABLE XX

DISTRIBUTION OF FACTORS WHICH RESPONDENTS FELT WOULD MAKE THEM WORK HARDER

| Motivating Factor to Work Hard | Percentage Distribution |
|---|---|
| Positive Factors: | |
| Earning good wage/receiving increments | 51% |
| Independence/working for self | 18% |
| Earning employer's trust/recognition | 18% |
| One cannot get anything without working | 10% |
| Knowing one's job well | 8% |
| Pays someone uneducated to work | 3% |
| Avoiding dismissal | 3% |
| Earns one status | 2% |
| Other positive factors (miscellaneous) | 7% |
| Negative Answers: | |
| Bad for health/lose strength | 30% |
| No satisfaction if uneducated | 2% |

(Note: Since some respondents gave more than one answer, percentages exceed 100%)

The distribution of results in the table suggests that the bases for employee motivation in the attitudes expressed are very tenuous indeed. Only the answers: "earning employer's trust/recognition", "knowing one's job well", and a

few other miscellaneous positive responses indicate anything like an intrinsic productivity orientation, and this is present among a small minority. Generally responses are largely similar to those obtained in the comparable school-employment situation studied earlier,[1] except that spontaneous answers negating the question given by the present respondents indicate a high level of concern for health and strength. As said before, these types of responses may indicate a high level of debilitation among the employees. Broadly, the answers suggest strongly that within the present wage and work system, any attempts to motivate employees to work harder will almost certainly fail.

The majority of respondents conceded that it was worthwhile to work hard but only if one was paid well. One man said "Working hard is painful but in this way (with high wages) it is enjoyable - if you work hard and an employer kicks you with his shoe and does everything unpleasant, by the end of the month you will laugh and forget".

A minority saw laziness as being wrong. One man said "A person must teach himself not to be lazy. In that way a person may develop skill in his job. Laziness is the cause of a person's downfall in life". A woman said "One should always work hard as everyone must eat his own sweat".

Sixteen per cent of those interviewed said that it was worthwhile to work hard for oneself as one reaped rewards whereas working hard for other, particularly whites, was not satisfying because "at the end of the month I get something which does not make me happy".

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1) L. Schlemmer and M. Oosthuizen, op.cit.. p.39.

TABLE XXI

IDENTIFICATION WITH IDEALS OF DILIGENCE OR CONSERVATION OF EFFORT

| Reasons for Choosing the Hardworking or Energy-Conserving Friend | Proportion of Respondents Selecting |
|---|---|
| Those Choosing the Diligent Friend: | (73%) |
| The lazy friend will overload others with work | 33% |
| The hardworking friend will succeed | 16% |
| The hardworking friend is not lazy/one should not be lazy | 16% |
| The lazy friend wants to get things for nothing | 13% |
| The hardworking friend has determination | 13% |
| The hardworking friend will not be fired | 11% |
| One is supposed to work hard if paid | 11% |
| The whites will trust a diligent man | 8% |
| Whites will raise the wages of a hardworking person | 3% |
| One cannot earn beautiful things without hard work | 2% |
| Other (Miscellaneous) | 8% |
| Those Choosing the Friend who Conserves Energy: | (25%) |
| A person who overworks "kills his blood"/ does not consider his health | 20% |
| A person who overworks will have no energy to attend to his own affairs | 3% |
| A white man's work never ends so why sweat | 3% |
| No one should have to work harder than others | 2% |
| One should not concern oneself with others - even if they are lazy | 2% |

(Note: Percentages exceed 100% as more than one answer could be given).

African employees were also asked a question in which they had to indicate which of two friends they would respect and admire - one who worked hard and was tired after work or one who conserved his energy and was still fresh at the end of the day. Most respondents chose the man who worked hard but made this selection for reasons which were instrumental and which do not reveal a 'productivity orientation'. Only 13% admired a man who worked hard for intrinsic reasons, e.g. "a man who works hard is a man of determination ". It is also interesting to recall that only 13% of those interviewed derived intrinsic satisfaction from their own jobs.

The results in Table XXI follow the expected pattern with the majority of respondents selecting the 'respectable' answer. Even in this, however, the high percentage of respondents (33%) who indicate fear of overwork if friends are lazy, shows the strength of the motive to conserve energy. Among those selecting the second alternative (25%), women were more prominent than men. A firm impression was gained that women, even more than men, tended to fear debilitation as a consequence of work.

The Estate Manager, who is in charge of the African labour-force and the village community, has formed a very distinct impression that those employees drawn from the 'indigenous' village community are less-highly motivated and of lower worker calibre. In his view the more traditionally oriented migrants with roots in tribal areas are significantly superior as employees. His perception of this difference is that the detribalisation which has occurred in the village community and this community's separation from what he regards as the sound traditions of authentic rural culture lies at the root of the poor motivation among the village residents.

While these observations may indeed be valid in part, we would suggest that additional explanations have to be sought. On the basis of results yet to be discussed, our comparative

study in the 'other' school, and initial impressions from other studies being conducted in rural employment situations, we would posit that the reasons also have to be sought in the community-life and orientations of the estate employees. Migrant workers possibly with land rights and probably with residential security in the African reserves are in a totally different basic situation from the indigenous village population whose members, as we will see, have a pervading perception of dependence and insecurity. The migrants may have motives for accumulation of resources - as we have seen from expenditure results, savings are accumulated for the purchase of cattle and building of houses in the reserves. The village residents, comparatively, live in somewhat of a limbo, on the 'white man's place' without any incentive to acquire resources and security for the future. Furthermore, as we will also discuss presently, the indigenous village people are heavily under the influence of a rather unfortunate history of African administration on the estate, which has deeply undermined morale and motivation.

We are quite confident in stating that the problems of employee morale cannot be solved without prior attention to levels of remuneration and without the 'social' reconstruction of the village community occurring.

# CHAPTER IV

## EMPLOYER-EMPLOYEE COMMUNICATION AND BLACK-WHITE RELATIONS

### 4.1 GENERAL.

We have chosen to discuss both supervision and black-white relations under a common heading because the two topics are super-imposed analytical categories and as problems on the estate they reinforce one another. The importance of these general topics hardly needs emphasising.

It has already been noted that 43% of those interviewed said that to enjoy good and polite supervision "makes a man like and appreciate his job". Some of those who said this qualified their statements by saying that they did not appreciate being "scolded", "shouted at" or "bothered" by whites which is some indication that employees occasionally do experience such negative treatment.

Similarly it will be remembered that 18% of those interviewed stated that they perceived their present jobs as favourable because of polite and fair supervision, while 7% stated positively that whites were "rude" and "unco-operative".

These responses, however, were obtained in the context of questions on job-satisfaction and the proportions do not necessarily give a valid estimate of the distribution of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with supervision. Respondents were specifically asked to describe their employers by selecting from a list of descriptive words. This structured set of questions was unsuccessful due to a highly defensive or evasive attitude among respondents. The rate of non-response was fairly high and an impression gained was that

respondents were inclined to select favourable descriptive words at variance with their authentic feelings as revealed in informal comments and in group discussions. A fairly valid impression of true feelings emerges if we accept the proportions giving certain unfavourable responses (i.e. selecting negative words) as a minimum indication of disaffection with the white employer group.

Forty per cent, for example, selected the descriptive word 'cruel'; 23% considered whites 'selfish'; 27% felt that whites 'dislike Africans'; and 20% selected 'hypocritical'. Hence we can say that between 20% and 40% of Africans on the estate are prepared to openly describe 'whites' in unfavourable terms. This is a minimum - 'tip of iceberg' - indication of a very severe problem of race-relations and employer-employee relations on the estate. A more valid impression of the problem is obtained from the tone and concensus emerging from the group interviews, which is broadly reflected by the quotations which follow.

One man said, "the whites do not help by talking to us in a way that upsets the spirit". Another said, "I have never heard of kind whites. Most of them have 'bad spirits' because they never have done any good to us. They don't care about our comfort. Look at our houses and the fact that we have no transport. They are very selfish". "If I have a complaint I take it to the whites but they have never taken any notice of my requests", said another.

One man whose supervisor is generally seen as harsh said, "People born at this school do not like to work in this department, near this white man. They would rather be expelled than work for him. He is rough and we tolerate him merely because we are migrants". Another said of the same man, "This man is rough and does not speak in the right way to blacks. He is provocative and vulgar". Another man said, "My

job is tough and the white says he pities me but he still does nothing. This is one reason why he likes me - just to enslave me".

Employees are very fearful of complaining especially about wages. One man said, "In my opinion sending people away is used as a threat resulting from complaints about money - they want people to be scared".

Others feel that there is no way of putting their requests to the real authorities. Said one man, "The Estate Manager tells you he is also an employee and cannot just give you a pay rise," while another said, "The Estate Manager treats us humanely but those above him are hard-hearted to such an extent I would say they do not care about Blacks at all".

Older employees complain that their opinions are not given due consideration. For example one old man who has worked at the school for many years said, "I am insecure and it is due to some whites in this place. We are just put aside and yet we are old here. If these whites were all like the headmaster it would have been much better".

Others are afraid to complain because of possible rebuke. One employee said, "If I asked to be changed to another department I would be asked why and I cannot say because I may not be understood and the misunderstanding of black people in a job is an ugly thing. It does not sound nice to the ears if an employer makes you a laughing stock as if you were a baby". Another man said, "We should have representatives to take our requests to 'Somandla' (the powerful) because a white man is a frightful thing. You will find yourself in danger of being sacked if you go before him. I am afraid of telling my complaint to him because he will say I am preaching a bad gospel. A white is weighty and fearful because he is your employer". Another man said, "Even the money I earn - I must thank Boss - (Estate Manager) for that because he has

tried. But the ones above - they are very difficult".

Another said, "To say the whites ill-treat us would be a lie - but if you do something wrong they are merciless".

The long history of fear and anxious dependency experienced by many employees is illustrated in the following remark: "I was forced to work and represent my family here as my father died when I was young. It was the former Estate Manager who worked here at that time. He used to assault us for a small offence and he would make us lie down before him as he said that we did not show enough respect to him as a white man".

A majority of employees is under the impression that the white authorities are callous and indifferent, for example: "Whites do not care for black men. Look at the compound. The people stay in rooms that are earthern and the floor is dust and holes. They eat dry porridge and mahewu (sour gruel). Where have you ever seen a compound where people are treated this way?"

However, not all feelings regarding the white authorities are negative. There are certain individual whites who are seen in a favourable light. The Estate Manager with whom Africans have most contact is popular with employees except, as will be discussed, in connection with what a certain section of the work-force and community perceive as his favouritism towards 'his own men'. He is known to be kind and friendly. Of those respondents who have a more favourable view of whites, some four out of ten specifically mentioned the Estate Manager by name. Although many saw whites as cruel, hypocritical, etc., the Estate Manager's name did not appear whereas it did in connection with whites who were considered sympathetic and warm. One respondent said, "The Estate Manager treats us well. If we have a problem, he helps and if we are sick he takes us to the doctor. He will also lend

you money if you are in need". Another said, "The Estate Manager is friendly to everyone but mostly to his own people, but they buy his love by reporting things to him".

Some Africans feel that the Estate Manager is not to blame for unfavourable conditions and that he too is an employee of 'them' (the authorities - 'Somandla') and thus does not have the power to change conditions. Others fear he will lose his kindness through 'their' (the authorities) influence. Said one man, "A person who does have sympathy is the Estate Manager. When he arrived wages were very low but he raised them. However, he is at a standstill now. Perhaps he has sipped their influence".

Employees also seek the Estate Manager's advice if they have complaints about their supervisors, e.g. workers in a certain department continually complain about unfair treatment. It has been said by some of them that the Estate Manager "should not fail to correct" the supervisor in question. One man said, "When we report how badly we are treated to --- (Estate Manager) he goes and talks sweetly to our supervisor. Our supervisor becomes soft for a while but then he just starts his old ways again".

The general feeling among African employees is therefore, that there is little they can do to change their employment situation or the nature of supervision and that this is to a very great extent due to lack of effective communication between black and white authorities. It should be noted that only approximately 5 whites on the estate can communicate with Africans in an African language, and that a heavy onus is sometimes placed on the Estate Manager for sorting out misunderstandings between parties who cannot understand each others languages.

We have no hesitation in concluding that the <u>general</u>

perceptions of white attitudes and of supervision as a totality by African employees is largely unfavourable. 'Whites' are very often seen as intimidating, or unsympathetic, or insensitive and rude. A climate of fearfulness and anxiety and a pervasive feeling of hostility characterises the perceptions of the Africans. Even where some acknowledgement is made of white friendliness it is often seen as hypocritical; one person said "they only smile at us with their teeth".

We must add immediately, however, that the picture becomes much less unfavourable when particular representatives of the authority structure or particular whites are considered. Attention has already been drawn to the fact that the Estate Manager is bracketed as being an exception to the broad stereotype. The Headmaster himself, the senior master, many white teachers, the Farm Manager and the schoolboys were also very often singled out for favourable mention. We were also struck by the fact that very few unfavourable comments were directed at individual Matrons in the hostels.

Briefly summarised, we infer from these patterns that the overall climate of race and employer-employee relations tends to be produced or aggravated by the perceived stance of individual white authority figures. This perception takes root in a very fertile collective memory of past patterns of supervision which appear to have been a highly unfortunate, indeed tragic, characteristic of a pervious era. We are dealing with what appears as a traditional popular belief about white hostility, rooted in concrete memories of the past, and easily perpetuated by the awareness of particular indiscretions by individual whites in the present. It is almost like a micro-manifestation of the well-known colonial 'legacy' which characterises our plural society in general.

## 4.2 LABOUR RELATIONS, EMPLOYEE INTEGRATION AND RELATED ISSUES.

In view of the very distinct cleavage along racial lines on the estate, and the manifestations of strain in employer-employee relations, the question of the extent to which any means exist to encourage a countervailing sense of affiliation to or integration into the overall work situation among the employees becomes highly relevant.

This can be achieved by benign attention to the employee as an individual. or by the integration of the worker group as a corporate body by means of some form of worker-representation which is recognised by employers and regarded as legitimate and authentic by the employees themselves. In view of the problems of race relations on the estate, it would not appear as if the former approach has been successful, due to historical if not to present circumstances. Furthermore, it would not appear as if any means have evolved for the 'incorporation' of the employee group as a collectivity by any other means. We must assume, therefore, that all the preconditions exist for a serious problem of employee alienation to exist and to assume more drastic proportions in the future.

There is no works committee for African staff at the school and consequently there is no way that, as a group, they can bring complaints about their work to the attention of the authorities.

A village committee whose function is to mediate in community disputes does exist and will be discussed in a later section of this report.

Those interviewed were asked "What do you think of this new system of Works Committees?" The overwhelming majority thought it desirable that a committee should operate

at the school. Only 2% said they did not favour the idea and 5% of those interviewed said that since they had not even heard of committees they could not give an opinion.

Ninety-three per cent of those interviewed said emphatically that they would welcome a works committee and gave the following reasons for wishing one to he established : "Everyone will be represented", "we must have a group to make complaints to the whites", "Afraid to go alone to whites in case I am scolded or expelled", "Whites are not easy to approach, we should have a committee", "every complaint will reach the authorities and we'll get what we want", "we will complain until they are forced to listen", "the whites are afraid of us, they know we are angry. If we have a committee they will listen".

Others said that it was important that those elected should have the confidence of the people or that some of those elected should be Africans born and bred on the estate.

Another said "A works committee would be a very good thing. This committee will ensure peace and stability by elevating us to be like whites". Another man said "We still work for very little because we have no knowledge to attract the white man or with which to confront him, in which case we could say 'You are paying unsatisfactory wages - yet we are educated'".

Many of these quotations reflect a view that if employee representation could be instituted, the vulnerability of individual employees would decrease. The need for a system of employee representation is underscored by the suggestion of job insecurity which appears in these findings and this introduces the following section.

Some of the respondents' comments about the utility of a works committee may suggest to the reader a danger of a highly

confrontationist situation arising if a Works Committee were to be established. We need to add, immediately, our general observation, based on careful observation by this Institute of Works Committees functioning in urban areas, that more often than not Works Committees can be argued to be inadequate from the worker's point of view, precisely because they tend to 'defuse' and reduce even constructive conflict between management and workers in a variety of ways.

## 4.3 SECURITY OF JOB TENURE

Those interviewed were asked directly whether they felt secure or insecure in their jobs.

Seventy-five per cent said they felt secure. They gave the following reasons :

"I know my work well";
"I am not too closely supervised";
"I work freely";
"The whites trust me";
"I get on with everyone";
"Others would not like my job" (i.e. not threatened with competition);
"My working conditions are good".

Twenty-five per cent said they felt insecure for the following reasons :

"I don't earn enough to support my family";
"My work is too strenuous";
"I am afraid of being dismissed without being given notice";
"Whites put us aside" (those born and bred on the estate).

It is apparent from these answers that the concept of

job security was given a somewhat wider definition than expected. Some of the answers reflect feelings regarding emotional security and job satisfaction rather than security or otherwise of job tenure.

In instances where less direct questions were asked or in the informal group discussions, however, most respondents expressed some fear that they could be "expelled at any moment" and as has already been stated most are afraid to approach the authorities - particularly in connection with pay, in case they are fired. Some have even stated that one is summarily dismissed if one complains about wages.

The Africans' general perception of whites as being 'Somandla' (the powerful) bears this out. They are captive and their employment at the school depends on the whites' goodwill and the Africans' compliance and obedience. One of the greatest fears of African employees is that they could be dismissed without being given sufficient notice. A number of respondents claimed that only four days notice was sometimes given. Others said that the former Estate Manager was known to dismiss people "even if he had just heard something bad about you".

The insecurity of job tenure is more specifically felt by those indigenous to the estate. One man said "I was born here and I am already 50 years old. I have already served the school for 32 years but I am nothing in this place. They can do as they please and just decide to expel me and I will receive not a penny".

We conclude that problems of job insecurity are perceived as serious, particularly by those who are dependent on the estate for job and residential security. Security, where it is felt, is qualified by the perceived need to maintain not only obedience (which is necessary) but also docility and acceptance of powerlessness. These results tend to reinforce our postulate at the end of 4.2, that a subjective sense of alienation from the overall system exists among African employees.

## CHAPTER V

## WORKING CONDITIONS AND BENEFITS

### 5.1 HOURS OF WORK

It has been stated by those in authority that hours of work are not rigidly standardised and that employees may be called upon to do more or less, according to the needs of the department in which they work.

In Table XXII below the usual daily hours of work as well as the number of days worked per week by African employees in different departments of the school are presented.

TABLE XXII

HOURS OF WORK

| School Department | Daily Hours | Weekend Hours | Days Worked Per Week | Comment |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Transport | 9 | | ±6 | On call at weekends, every third weekend on duty |
| Headquarters (Clerks Police etc.) | 8 | 5 | 5-1/2 | |
| Telephone Exchange | 5-2/3 | 5-2/3 | 6 | One day off a week |
| Kitchen | 10-1/2 | 10-1/2 | 7 | No days off |
| Laundry | 9 | 3 | 5-1/2 | |
| Boys' Residences : Mon | 8 | 8 | ±6 | Sat.: 6.00-10.30 a.m.<br>Sun.: 6.00- 9.30 a.m. |
| Boys' Residences : Women | 7 | 4 | ±6 | Sat.: 8.00-10.30 a.m.<br>Sun.: 8.00- 9.30 a.m. |
| Grounds Staff | 9 | 7-1/2 | 5-1/2 | Sat.: 6.00-10.30 a.m. |

(Note: Lunch hours and kitchen staff's 'free' hours are not included in the above table).

Fifty-six per cent of those interviewed said they were not satisfied with hours of work because of the following reasons :

- "hours too long";
- "irregular";
- "too long considering the low pay";
- "we get little time off";
- "no time to attend to one's own affairs".

Those working in the kitchen expressed extreme dissatisfaction regarding hours of work. They have no days off and although they have 'rest periods' during the day, these are not sufficiently long to enable them to attend to their own affairs, e.g. to go shopping, or to return to their homes and gardens.

In objective terms, the hours of work are long compared with standard urban norms. However, the hours of work may be fairly typical of those in the agricultural sector.

Since the jobs performed by some of those working particularly long hours, i.e. kitchen staff, laundry staff and residence staff, are not particularly strenuous, the problem associated with hours is not necessarily one of fatigue (although we have noted signs of debilitation) but of inroads into leisure time and the effect this has on morale and inputs into community life.

## 5.2 FRINGE BENEFITS

Certain fringe benefits are available to African workers. These include weekly rations for every employee and annual leave.

5.2.1 **Rations**

Every school employee receives 21 lbs of mealie-meal, 1 lb of sugar and a small quantity of salt weekly. Each village family also receives what amounts to roughly 2 to 3 lbs of offal every one or two months. The total value of a month's ration, per employee is ± R3,86 at the rate of cost to the school.

Whole milk and skim milk are available at 9c and 2c a litre respectively and are issued free of charge during school holidays. It appears that those living in the village resent buying milk as some friends and relatives on the school farm have cattle and consequently have their own milk supply.

The overwhelming majority of those interviewed were extremely dissatisfied with their rations. Only 7 people (some of whom were domestics and who presumably receive food from employees) expressed satisfaction. Eighty-nine per cent of all respondents complained about the quality and quantity of the rations issued. The following were their reasons, in order of priority, for their dissatisfaction with rations received :

- rations insufficient for family needs;
- no variety (there should be additional items such as beans, meat and vegetables);
- salt is not always supplied;
- meat issued is bad and insufficient;
- mealie-meal alone is not considered a fitting ration (some of these sentiments presumably deriving from health education at the clinic);
- should be given money instead of rations.

Many stated that they cannot reconcile the type of ration received with advice given at the clinic regarding what foods are healthful.

There is evidence of some families selling rations. This could be because small families receive an excess of meal, or because meal is sold to buy more varied products.

Further, when asked whether they would prefer money to rations if they had the choice, only 16% said they would like rations, but of these 31% qualified their answers by saying that rations given should be better and more plentiful; 25% of these said they needed both more money and more food while 19% of these respondents said they would prefer rations so they could use their wages to pay for children's education and other necessities.

Those who said they would prefer money to rations qualified their answers with reasons such as the following :

- "I would like to buy food of my own choice";
- "We need more money for both food and other necessities".

Many saw the rations as being both "unnutritious" and "bad for children".

Others felt that rations were not always fairly weighed. One man said "They give us food but they are playing the fool with us. What they record as being supplied does not tally with the actual quantity we get". Another said "They wrote down that we get meat but in fact it's just intestines which we get once every three months. These are things which are an embarrassment to the school".

"We only get dry mealie-meal and we have a sorrowful feeling when we think of the children at home", said one woman. A man who grows vegetables said "The problem here is starvation. I say this because as I produce and reap cabbages, people come to me and want the discarded outer leaves to eat". Another said, "I don't want them to dish up food for me. I want to do the dishing up myself".

Some are aware of the fact that the nutritional value of rations received is not high. One man said "Where is the

goodness in this food? It is just heat and swollenness".

The resentment regarding rations is underpinned by a general grievance which stems back to a promise which was apparently given to those who worked at the school in the fairly distant past. Up till 16 years ago Africans were allowed to own cattle. In 1958, on instructions from the authorities, all cattle were sold off and in return workers were promised, as many remember it, "well-paid jobs, housing and good food including meat, milk and vegetables". One old employee said "When they took our cattle they promised us milk and meat but all they have given us is the intestines and head and that is nothing".

In a book recently published on the history of the school it was written "One of the major steps taken to combat soil-erosion was the division of the African labour on the estate. The school labour was housed in a well laid out village ... where they were no longer allowed their own cattle or land for cultivation, but were compensated by increased wages and rations".

Throughout discussions with employees the same complaint was raised "They have broken their promise to us". The 'uncompensated' ban on the ownership of cattle is a shock which has gone deep and we seriously consider that it is one of the most significant factors in the cause of a breakdown of relations between African and white on the estate. "Cattle were our pride" said a villager. "A man is nothing without cattle", said another born on the estate.

Although whites interviewed stated that no 'grand' promises were made regarding wages, rations and housing when the cattle were sold, all Africans consulted on the issue revealed a sense of the most acute disillusionment.

Those in the village are also resentful because workers

on the school farm receive a meat ration weekly while they "only get meat once a month and even then it is only offal and usually bad. It is like eating dung. You get such a small piece of meat that even the children grumble".

The kitchen staff are considered by many to be most fortunate because they may have the left-overs from the schoolboys' lunches. However, kitchen workers have complained. One waiter said "We know what food the boys eat and yet we workers are given very unbecoming rations. Besides these, we are offered the boys' left-overs and we are like 'pigs' in that case".

It is not unlikely that the fact that employees work a full day without having eaten adequately either before coming to work or during the day is a contributing factor to poor production and low morale.

5.2.2 Leave

Every African employee of the school is entitled to 14 days' fully-paid leave per annum. However, the school is closed for almost three months a year. During this period a large number of the staff are unpaid. This policy causes anxiety among employees. Workers who are paid during school holidays are those who generally have high-status jobs. Drivers are paid in the school holidays (however, they are called upon to work for much of the time). Clerks and 'headquarters staff' e.g. telephone operators and police, etc. are also paid during the holidays and they too have duties at this time. Only kitchen staff who have worked in this department for over 3 years are paid when the school is closed. Grounds staff, laundry workers and those employed in the houses receive no wage. These people usually take 'togt' jobs in the holidays to supplement their incomes. It has been indicated that there are not enough jobs to absorb the 'unemployed' during these months. Consequently, periods when the school is on holiday are dreaded

by many. One woman respondent said, "holidays are Satan".

Only 7% of those interviewed said they were satisfied with conditions of leave and except for two of these respondents the rest are paid during school holidays.

Migrants (particularly those from the Transkei) complained that 14 days' leave was not long enough to enable them to go home and attend to family matters since most of their time was spent in travelling (± 5 days' travelling time).

It has also been noted that some people are afraid to ask for leave and do not feel they have a choice in deciding when they may take it. One man said "the white decides on your leave so you can't do anything".

Sick leave on full pay is granted on receipt of a doctor's certificate; no information on the maximum sick-leave allowed was able to be obtained.

5.2.3 Pensions

The school faces a serious problem regarding the future of pensioners. Since roughly,19% of people working at the school consider the estate to be their only home, their future, once they have retired, depends very much on the goodwill of the school. It appears that no fixed policy regarding the future of pensioners has been formulated.

In May 1974 there were 6 men and 1 woman who were pensioners. Most of these pensioners perform odd jobs and receive a wage. There are 11 men and 11 women (5% of whom are married) nearing pensionable age. Of the total of 17 men and 12 women, 3 will return to their homelands while the rest will have to look to the school for their future security. At this stage it is presumed that they will be eligible for Government pensions.

Old people have been allowed to stay on the estate but since this policy was perhaps not consistent in the past, older employees fear possible eviction upon retirement.

Employees were asked "What will happen to you when you are too old to work at the school?" The results are presented in Table XXIII below :

TABLE XXIII

| Perceptions of Future on Retirement | Percentage Distribution |
|---|---|
| Have a home in the homelands | 37% |
| Live at the school and have Government pension | 18% |
| Get a Government pension (place of residence unable to be stated) | 12% |
| Try to acquire land in homelands (all the respondents were indigenous to estate) | 11% |
| Insecurity expressed by those who see no future - "don't know where I'll go", "don't know what I'll do if the school won't give me a pension" | 11% |
| Children working at school will support parents | 9% |
| Relatives elsewhere will help with support | 9% |
| Those born here can retire here | 2% |
| Other | 11% |

(Note: Percentages exceed 100% as respondents could give a number of alternatives).

Those who were interviewed when a census of the village was taken were also asked "Who will work here when you are too old to work?" Forty-four per cent said their children or wives would probably end up working on the estate as "one cannot stay unless someone in the family works". There were notably men and women who were either born on the estate or had lived there many

years.

Twenty-eight per cent said their "children will be educated and will get better jobs than they ever could at the school" or "my children will not want to work here" or "we intend moving away from here".

The rest of the respondents were migrants and did not necessarily see their families as having future connection with the school.

One man born and bred on the estate said "The white man says that people must have their own homes because this is not our place - it's a compound for working people". Another said "I will just have to work till I am worn out, I am the Government's orphan". A migrant who has worked at the school for many years said "I will go home to Lesotho when I am old. I am annoyed by the regulations here. Aged men are not cared for like people who have worked here a long time. This place must give people a pension and accommodation because some no longer have homes in the reserves".

In a situation of low-wage estate employment it is commonly assumed that many of the employee disadvantages are compensated for by comprehensive fringe benefits which sustain the working population and support the quality of life. It would seem, however, that this assumption cannot be made with regard to the school estate, without some qualification. Figures at our disposal suggest that the value of rations provided on the estate is roughly only one-half of the value of rations supplied to African employees on farms in the Natal area, although cash wages may be higher. We cannot regard the rations as being generous. In regard to other benefits, quite apart from judgements as to adequacy in absolute terms, the

inconsistency of benefits as between different sections and between the farm and the school quite obviously aggravate the sense of grievance already felt by employees. The fact that some employees do not receive wages for a period of the year during school holidays would make our comparisons between family income and the Minimum Subsistence Level even less favourable than it appears to be.

Whatever the objective state of affairs might be, an important relevant consideration is that the employees themselves are quite clearly dissatisfied with fringe benefits in general, rightly or wrongly. Since our major concern in the study is the morale and spirit of the African community, this broad finding must be taken into serious consideration in arriving at practical insights for future policy.

# CHAPTER VI

## PROBLEMS AND PROCESSES

### 6.1 THE NATURE AND IMPORTANCE OF THE COMMUNITY ASPECT

In this chapter we turn to subject matter which is the major focus and thrust of the investigation. The main reason for this research project was a concern on the part of the school authorities for the future welfare, morale and development of the African community on the estate. The preceding chapters on the work situation have been important, not only in their own right, but because the employment situation, as we have seen, generates a range of problems which are bound to find an echo in the life of the community. Furthermore, the nature of community life is closely circumscribed by the working conditions - rates of remuneration, hours of work and fringe benefits. However, in many ways it was our separate investigation of the village community as a small social system which brought to light the most commanding facts bearing upon the quality of life of Africans on the estate.

Before proceeding to an anlaysis of specific problems and processes in the community life, it is necessary to form a very broad picture of certain characteristics of the people in the community: their aspirations and personal values. Only against a background of this type of insight can one arrive at a correct perspective on the social patterns and problems of the village.

#### 6.1.1 Life Aspirations and Values

Employees were interviewed in relation to their general aspirations, their personal aspirations and their aspirations for their families. For general aspirations they were asked what would make them contented. They were then

questioned regarding what they most desired in life for themselves and, in a separate question, for their families. The results are presented in Table XXIV below.

TABLE XXIV

GENERAL, PERSONAL AND FAMILY ASPIRATIONS OF AFRICAN COMMUNITY MEMBERS

| Nature of Aspiration* | General | Personal | Family |
|---|---|---|---|
| Money/standard of living | 77% | 39% | 46% |
| Livestock | 39% | 31% | 13% |
| House/own home | 33% | 41% | 26% |
| Marriage/family life/harmonious relations | 23% | 8% | - |
| Ability to support family well/ not to starve | 21% | 11% | 13% |
| Furniture and equipment | 15% | 23% | 7% |
| Fields/crops | 13% | 10% | 3% |
| Own business (taxi, shop, ploughing, sewing) | 11% | 18% | 8% |
| Good job/high salary | 8% | 3% | 31% |
| Not to live in a white area where threatened with eviction | 8% | - | 2% |
| Good clothing | 8% | 10% | 23% |
| Education for children | 7% | 2% | 54% |
| Religious beliefs/Christian understanding | 3% | 3% | 3% |
| Education for self | 2% | 3% | - |
| High status jobs (already achieved) | 2% | - | - |
| Jobs with less status (e.g. domestic work) | - | - | 3% |
| Good health/long life | 2% | 4% | 13% |
| Motor vehicle (largely for use as taxi) | 2% | 20% | 3% |
| Not too large a family for economic reasons | 2% | 2% | - |
| Good behaviour/respectability/self-respect | 2% | 2% | - |
| To save/to save money for future | - | 18% | - |
| Companionship | 2% | - | - |
| To be supported by children in old age | - | 20% | - |
| Other | 5% | 7% | 5% |

* Since more than one response to the question could be given, the sum of percentages exceeds 100.

The aspirations reflected here are not to be regarded as predictive of behaviour. The responses very definitely reflect idealised standards and their value lies in the insights they provide on the 'social character' of the village residents, without reference, for the moment, to the ways in which behaviour deviates from the social values.

It is possible to discern a distinction between general and personal life-aspirations, on the one hand, and aspirations for the family on the other. The former two dimensions can both be taken to be broadly reflective of the personal values of residents. We may summarise and depict the relative importance of different personal values and aspirations for families as follows :

Personal Values

High Importance - material improvement;
- livestock;
- security of property/land rights;
- dedication to family welfare and harmony.

Importance - possession of household equipment;
- independent entrepreneurship;
- material security for future.

Aspirations for Families

High Importance - material improvement;
- education for children;

Importance - security of property, land rights;
- clothing.

It is interesting to note that aspirations for

education are almost completely deflected on to children. The aspirations for children's and family clothing reflect a desire for an outward manifestation of family welfare.

More broadly, however, these results reveal very clearly the overwhelming concern with material improvement. A fairly substantial proportion of people expressed this in stark terms, i.e. "not to starve", "so our families will not starve". This extreme expression of material security fears seems to be more marked on the school estate than elsewhere where similar investigations have been conducted. Also, the results reveal a very typical concern for security of land-tenure and ownership of homes, as well as for cattle and agricultural opportunity. Among those expressing the possession of livestock as an important value, people with land rights in the homelands comprised a majority, presumably because the notion of cattle ownership is unreal to those whose only home is the estate village. The same pattern applies to the aspirations for land and crops, whereas among those expressing the value of home-ownership and residential security, a majority were lifelong residents of the estate with no homes elsewhere. Therefore, it seems that the expression of these values is conditioned to a large extent by what is perceived as realistic or even imaginable. In group interviews, however, those who know no other home than the estate tended to place as much emphasis on the issue of livestock as did others with land-rights in the homelands. Notable statements made by lifelong village residents were phrases like "they have snatched away our cattle".

Even more generally, these results reflect a concern with and dedication to family life and to the welfare of children which is fairly striking. Equally striking, however, is the extent to which behaviour deviates from these values, as we will describe presently.

These broad patterns, then, reflect the values and aspirations of village residents. As far as community morale is concerned, a question of great importance is the extent to which village residents perceive possibilities of achieving their aspirations.

About 56% of respondents were extremely pessimistic about the possibility of achieving their personal aspirations. Some 10% thought it possible but unlikely while 26% thought it possible if they were paid more, or if they had more support from their families. Only 18% displayed unqualified optimism about achieving their aspirations and among this 18%, only 2% said that their aspirations were all but achieved.

Regarding the prospects of realising their aspirations for their children, 22% were extremely pessimistic mostly because of financial considerations. Thirteen per cent expressed a hope that "God will help us"; 60% thought it would only be possible to realise their aspirations for their children if they were paid more, or if their children co-operated or if the family were prepared to make sacrifices, etc. Only 10% expressed unqualified optimism that their children would realise the aspirations their parents held for them.

Hence we perceive a situation in which a community broadly feels that its aspirations are blocked by lack of opportunity or resources.

It has been noted by many observers of African communities that one of the reasons African people perceive for the underdevelopment and lack of opportunity in their communities is low educational qualifications. We have already noted that many members of the African community on the estate transfer their educational aspirations to their children. Their own educational qualifications are very low, on average, as appears from Table XXV below.

TABLE XXV

DISTRIBUTION OF EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS
AMONG AFRICAN EMPLOYEES

| | |
|---|---|
| No education | 49% |
| Sub A - Sub B | 3% |
| Standards 1 - 3 | 23% |
| Standards 4 - 5 | 10% |
| Standards 6 - 7 | 3% |
| Standard 8 plus diploma | 2% |
| No information | 10% |

Although these are very low educational standards, members of the African community are very much aware of the importance of education although, as we have shown, most have transferred any educational aspirations to their children (cf. Table XXIV).

Of those interviewed, however, it emerged that :

56% would have liked to obtain Matric, university or professional qualifications;

18% would have liked to reach Junior Certificate;

18% would have liked enough education to enable them to read and write and to understand English;

10% wanted to go "as far as I possibly could";

2% said they had a satisfactory education (these respondents were skilled or semi-skilled workers).

(Percentages exceed 100 as a few respondents gave alternative choices).

It seems, then, as if an additional factor possibly contributing to poor morale is a widespread sense of personal

failure to achieve aspirations. Possibly working in such close proximity to the process of secondary education has made African residents more aware of their own educational disadvantage than would be the case in other rural employment situations.

Those interviewed were asked two questions which provide a broad picture of their perceptions of themselves and their situation. The questions were "What things you do make you proud to be a man?" and "What things you do or have to do make you a little ashamed?" The results are presented in Table XXVI below.

TABLE XXVI

VILLAGERS' PERCEPTIONS OF WHAT MAKES THEM PROUD TO BE A MAN OR WOMAN: EGO-EXPANDING

| Nature of Ego-Expanding Role | Percentage Distribution of Responses |
|---|---|
| Positive Responses: | (64%) |
| Ability to support or help support family | 15% |
| Working well/knowing job well | 10% |
| Farming/growing crops or a garden | 8% |
| Being religious | 8% |
| Having a home | 5% |
| Having children | 5% |
| Having been able to educate children | 8% |
| Having been able to save money | 5% |
| Having been able to 'lobola' a wife | 3% |
| Being able to offer hospitality | 3% |
| Having a well-clothed family/self | 3% |
| Being houseproud | 3% |
| Other single positive responses | 18% |
| Negative Responses: | (23%) |
| Nothing - too poor | 15% |
| Nothing - have no family/family have deserted | 3% |
| Nothing - have no home of my own | 3% |
| Would like to be proud to be a man but have nothing | 3% |
| Nothing - own no livestock | 2% |
| Nothing - old and have never had anything | 2% |

(Note: Percentages exceed 100 as more than one answer could be given).

Thirteen per cent misinterpreted the question and seemed to see 'pride' as a negative quality.

TABLE XXVII

VILLAGERS' PERCEPTIONS OF WHAT MAKES MEN ASHAMED

| Response | Percentage Distribution |
|---|---|
| Nothing to be ashamed of | 67% |
| Having no money/not being able to pay debts | 11% |
| Not being able to support family adequately | 10% |
| Drinking too much | 3% |
| Fighting with others | 3% |
| Having illegitimate children/living with a lover | 3% |
| Other single responses | 8% |

Obviously, a segment of the community with extremely low morale is roughly the one-quarter of the community members who feel that they have nothing to be proud of - no ego or dignity-expanding role whatsoever. Generally, however, the responses reveal the broadly material-security basis of assess ments of personal worth and dignity.

Respondents also expressed their disapproval of the behaviour of others in the community. Fifteen per cent said they disliked those who quarrelled or were "careless talkers"; 13% disapproved of those who drank; 10% did not approve of those who were "liars", "conceited" or "did things which are not likeable"; 7% disapproved of those who co-habited with lovers or who married relatives; 5% did not like those who wer "unhelpful" or "would not take advice or advise one". Fifty-seven per cent, however, either said that they despised no one or that "most people do bad or silly things at some time".

In general, it seems clear that as far as idealised value orientations and aspirations are concerned, the communit is typical of a poor rural group. Major emphasis is placed on

material security, family life, and security of land and property. Hopes are deflected on to children and the basic perception of community members is one of restricted opportunity and prospects. In terms of their expressed values, community members also tend to be rather moralistically inclined. There is very little evidence of an urban-consumer orientation among the residents. These results tend to qualify earlier findings reported in Chapter II, 2.4. (Expenditure Patterns) in the sense that it would seem that aspirations for the acquisition of consumer durables are more often than not formulated with the desire to improve the appearance of family welfare rather than with personal gratification in mind.

## 6.2 THE STANDARD OF LIVING IN THE VILLAGE

As regards standards of living in the village, much can be inferred from our earlier chapter on family incomes. Some additional observations are necessary, however.

As many as 46% of people interviewed expressed extreme dissatisfaction regarding their housing and accommodation. Apart from housing, poor wages, poor rations and poor transport are the chief community problems as perceived by the people themselves.

From informal observation during fieldwork, it was evident that many of the houses were in a critical state of delapidation. The school authorities themselves view housing as one of their chief priorities in attempts at improving the situation in the African employee community. A scheme is currently in progress to repair or replace houses which have become uninhabitable.

Generally, houses were kept as clean as possible considering bad ventilation, lack of adequate space for cooking facilities and overcrowding.

Relative to the general situation in the village, only 21% of those houses visited could be considered large enough for the families living in them, on grounds of space per person, quite apart from sex-separation of older children, etc. One man said "In the evening everyone sleeps with his partner at that corner and another one at that corner - just sleeping as if you were animals in a stable".

Only 11% of the houses visited were relatively well furnished - i.e. had stoves and essential furniture, while a further roughly 16% had some furniture including possibly a table, a cupboard or one bed. Forty-one per cent of houses were extremely poorly furnished or practically bare. Descriptions of remaining houses were not available.

Most household utensils were very rudimentary, it not being uncommon to find a family using old tins as kettles, mugs, etc. Only about 41% of the houses visited had some household equipment including, for example, a plate for each member of the family, a kettle and other bare essentials.

Further, the lack of water, or the distance of water points from many homes has resulted in discomfort and inconvenience.

Employees have complained that having to share yards with other families leads to quarrelling and results in a lack of privacy.

Within the last year, two attractive and well-constructed houses have been built for the African school teachers. Although some resent the fact that these were given to the teachers, most villagers hope that this means that new accommodation, which has been promised, will shortly be built for them.

During group discussions one man said "Now, what we need are houses just like the teachers have with rooms inside". In other informal discussions others too expressed the desire for "beautiful houses like the teachers". While these aspirations are fairly unrealistic under the circumstances, there is no doubt that a great deal of anticipation about new housing exists in the village.

## 6.3 COMMUNITY PROBLEMS AND ISSUES

There are fairly clearly identifiable groups living in the village :

- those indigenous to the estate;
- Zulu migrants from elsewhere;
- Xhosa, Mpondo and Sotho migrants who have lived on the estate for many years;
- Xhosa migrants who arrived with the present Estate Manager some four years ago.

There are also four African school teachers - the headmaster and his wife and two other women teachers who live in newly constructed cottages near the village.

### 6.3.1 Cleavage Within the Village Community

It was evident from the beginning of this study that a possible cleavage might exist between recent migrants and those either born and bred on the estate or resident there for many years.

Initial impressions were that many of the migrants who have been at the school for a number of years tended to align themselves with the indigenous population against the new arrivals. This seemed to be primarily because the Estate Manager was perceived to "favour his own men".

However, in the survey interviews, it was stated by 67% of villagers that they have good relations with everyone on the estate. No one said that they did not like or did not mix with Zulu-speaking people. Seven per cent of those interviewed said they disliked the Estate Manager's men because "they tell tales to the boss", "they are favoured", "they rule us". Five per cent stated that they did not like Mpondos or Xhosas and 8% said Sothos and Hlubis had bad manners.

Respondents were asked to give the names and origins of their four closest friends. The results of this question reveal that none of the members of the different 'groups' on the estate specifically chose to name people exclusively from their own group. However, a very small degree of discrimination did emerge when asked who they would choose as leaders; a very slight tendency emerged for those indigenous to the estate to choose only those who were also indigenous to the estate and for those who were Xhosa migrants from East Griqualand to show a preference for their own 'homeboys'.

In the group interviews, however, a clearer picture of the nature of tensions between groups in the community came to light. We will attempt to give an outline of the results of the group interviews by quoting from the group interview transcripts.

One man said "We are unable to advance because we are not united and because of this we are not able to combat problems". Another said "I dislike these men of the Estate Manager. They are better paid than us who have been here a long time. They do better jobs than us and though we keep doing hard work they still get higher salaries". Yet another informant said "When the old Manager came he brought his people. He did not like us who had always lived here. This second manager also brought his people. He did not like us - or the people of the first manager. These men of the manager are made kings in spite of their uselessness". Other examples are

the following: "The bringing here of these people has created such conflicts that we just work not because we are happy at work but because we have to earn a living and therefore we try to please our masters"; "Xhosas are made kings by this Estate Manager and the people born here are mere nothings"; "The whites discriminate against those born here. A person comes here, you teach him a job and after a time you find he is earning more than you. He will come along to you saying 'The white says you must do this and this' and you are just stunned".

An old man who was born on the estate and who has worked for almost 40 years at the school said "To be an old member of this place and to be born and bred here is a curse to the whites. Even when your child makes a mistake they capitalise on the fact that he was born here and he is told to leave because many people want work".

Some indigenous men accused the migrants of bad behaviour and of not observing traditional customs although similar 'breaches of tradition' have been recorded among those born on the estate. However, whether these accusations are justified or not, they emphasise further the cleavage between the groups. One man said "These single men who came with the Estate Manager take women without paying. Some came with women even though they were not married. One man died but his 'wife' did not mourn. She had to be advised to do so. The Estate Manager has come with traditions and introduced them here. This place has become corrupt".

Similarly, migrants have accused the local people of incest and other forms of untraditional behaviour. Both sides accuse each other of causing the high rate of illegitimacy. Migrants say it is the "unprincipled local people" while those indigenous to the estate claim that the sudden influx of men has caused their daughters to "fall in love indiscriminately". They claim that there is nothing they can do because

"these people belong to the white man".

Although many have said that the 'manager's men' have been given better jobs than others, the Estate Manager states that employees are promoted on merit and indeed many of the most senior African staff are men who have worked at the school for years and who could not be described as the 'manager's men'. In section 3.4 we referred to the Estate Manager's perceptions of the difference in morale between migrants and those indigenous to the village. As we indicated reasons additional to those advanced by the Estate Manager have to be sought for this phenomenon, but we would see it as consistent with the social system on the estate that Africans indigenous to the estate would evince lower morale than migrants and that differential treatment of the various groups results from differences in employee motivation. Those quoted in the group interviews are probably quite correct in their perceptions of discrimination, but incorrect in their perceptions of its underlying causes. In fact, the perception of discrimination against them by many indigenous villagers or long-term residents probably leads to day-to-day responses on their part which make some form of discrimination inevitable. There are signs, therefore, of a vicious circle of cause and effect present in the area of group-morale in the village.

Taking all the results into consideration — the survey as well as the group discussions plus general observation — we would conclude that no serious problem of inter-tribal tension, as such, exists. Abstract stereotyping of Zulus by Xhosas or vice-versa, is not present and there is popular acceptance of colleagues and co-villagers from different tribal origins. Tensions of a very serious order do exist, however, but these arise out of problems in the community. A state of suppressed generalised hostility, of pervasive aggrievedness, of tensions due to social 'delinquency', and of pervading

insecurity exists on the estate due to the circumstances of the community. Any small sign of differential or preferential treatment is likely to be perceived in a distorted fashion. A process of what is popularly referred to as scapegoating, seems evident. Hence the divisions in the community are at basis, to be ascribed to the social pathology and demoralisation which exists rather than to any extraneous or tribal factor. The fact that the divisions coincide with migrant - non-migrant status and with length of residence in the village is due to the particular problems of insecurity and low morale experienced by the longer-term residents and to their poorer motivation. We would argue that some form of community cleavage or cleavages are inevitable, and that these problems will continue to undermine morale until the general circumstances of the community can be improved.

## 6.4. STATUS AND COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

### 6.4.1 Status

Those interviewed were asked a number of questions to ascertain the emphasis they placed on the importance of status and status-oriented goals. Villagers were asked, "What gives a man status and standing in the community?" and "Give five qualities (or things) a man should have in order to be a respected person". The following emerged from both probes as very important, important or fairly important status indicators :

| | |
|---|---|
| Very Important | Money;<br>House, home of own;<br>Livestock and land;<br>To be respected/have self respect;<br>Good behaviour |

| | |
|---|---|
| Important | Having respectful family/ harmonious relations; |
| | Car; |
| | Kindness, generosity, sympathy; |
| | Furniture; |
| | Ability to support family |
| Fairly Important | Clothing; |
| | Education; |
| | Business; |
| | Intelligence/ability to speak well; |
| | Diligence |
| Less Important | Religious beliefs; |
| | Good job |

Several other single responses were given, such as "having a horse and cart", "spending money wisely", "not to be conceited about riches", "having servants", etc.

What is important to consider about these results is that, in general, members of the community simply do not possess or have access to those important attributes which in their eyes, impart status and esteem. The indigenous village residents in particular, have neither money, homes of their own nor livestock and land. The patterns of supervision which we have already discussed deprive some of them of feelings of self-respect which could grow out of their treatment as workers. Social pathologies in the community, which we have yet to discuss, must contradict for some the status-related aspiration of 'good behaviour'.

6.4.2 Leadership and Community Organisation

There is no organised leadership at the school apart

from the village committee which, as we will see, is unpopular.

Originally a chief lived on the estate. He dealt with most community matters. However, he has moved to a homeland and the indigenous population no longer pay allegiance to a tribal authority. Several people expressed regret that there was no longer a chief or headman living on the estate.

Those interviewed were asked a number of questions regarding their choice of leaders and their perception of desirable leadership qualities. Only one man emerged as significantly more admired than a range of others mentioned. He is a progressive individual and holds the high-status job of being a senior driver. He was not born on the estate but is a Zulu and has worked at the school for over 20 years. Several respondents remarked that of all the village committee members he was the only one not afraid of telling the truth.

The next most admired man was the Estate Manager's clerk. He is most popular among his fellow migrants. Other members of the village committee emerge as more admired than other community members. It is interesting, therefore, that as a committee, they are not popular but as individuals, they are seen as leaders. It would appear that the fact that the committee was introduced by the authorities is the main reason for its unpopularity and relative ineffectiveness.

Of the 9 most frequently chosen men who are seen as leaders in the community, 4 have high status jobs, i.e. two drivers, a clerk and the head of the police. They were mostly admired for their "intelligence", "sharp minds" and because they "are real men". It is significant that only one respondent referred to a teacher in the community as having leadership qualities. Except for this instance, the African teachers were never mentioned throughout the whole range of interviews which is surprising considering that teachers, in most African communities, are regarded as a reference group. It is also

surprising because such a large percentage of the people interviewed said they either wished their children to reach an educational level which would enable them to be "a teacher or clerk" or had themselves aspired to an educational level which would have allowed them to have become teachers.

In the comparative study conducted at another school, covering a similar community, it was noted that the role of African teachers was very important in community life and that they were considered as being important community leaders by most people. In the other situation, however, the teachers had shown considerable interest in community affairs, whereas in the present study the African school teachers emerged as being almost completely indifferent to community issues and problems.

However, it should be remembered that the headmaster of the African school on the estate has no other male colleague. It appears from informal discussion with him that he is frustrated by a very real sense of social isolation and is demoralised by what he perceives as ineffective communication with his superiors as well as members of the community.

6.4.3 Village Committee

A village committee was established by the present Estate Manager. Its function is to mediate in any dispute that might arise in the community, to be responsible for the cleanliness and order of the village and to receive and investigate any complaints.

The present Estate Manager established this committee and asked Africans on the estate to nominate members. However, they did not seem eager to elect anyone. Consequently, the Estate Manager appointed two men and villagers were told to elect another three.

Three men, none of whom were indigenous to the

estate but all of whom had worked at the school for many years were nominated. It has been claimed by some Africans, however, that the Estate Manager and his two appointees selected the three additional members among themselves when the community indicated its reluctance to participate. No one indigenous to the estate serves on the village committee.

Those interviewed were asked "What do you feel about the village committee? Are you satisfied or not?" The following pattern emerged :

| | |
|---|---|
| - those who were dissatisfied | 38% |
| - those who were satisfied | 26% |
| - those who were not sure of its function or did not want to commit themselves | 21% |

Ten per cent of respondents were workers who were not resident in the village and therefore could not answer the question and 5% gave no information.

Those who were dissatisfied with the village committee gave answers such as the following :

- "they never seem to solve problems without help from the white";
- "they fight amongst themselves";
- "their decisions can lead to your expulsion";
- "they are partial, unjust and only deal with friends' cases";
- "tell the whites about your problem without consulting you first";
- "some tell tales to the white";
- "they should involve the community when discussing problems - not the white".

Most of those who said they were satisfied liked the committee because "they can sort out people's problems before

the white hears about it".

Two respondents said "There is no committee - only the Estate Manager's clerk" (and his appointee to the committee). Another man said "You will never see someone who can straighten things out better than the white and now, since these five people are his 'big men' they can always disagree with you and cause you to be expelled".

Two others said "The white man is getting angry because this committee does not sort out our problems but keeps bringing them to him and he is right because they should be able to sort out our problems by themselves". Another man with a particular grievance said "The white said we must report to this committee but after I was assaulted by some people and robbed, I reported the matter and nothing happened. When the committee was due to discuss my case only one member turned up while the others hid". An old community member said "This committee is no good, it has links with the white man and is composed of crooks". One of the committee members also expressed dissatisfaction by saying "This committee could have been a beautiful thing if it had been formed by truthful people with maturity. Sometimes when we are still trying to sort things out we get confused because we find the Estate Manager knows about it already. When you speak the truth others resent you and then if a person is found guilty, other committee members will say it is due to you". A villager said of the committee member quoted above "because — speaks the truth, the others dislike him so he no longer wishes to appear at cases".

What seems to emerge is that the village committee is representative of the more-respected men in the community and therefore could acquire legitimacy. Problems affecting this committee are fairly typical of weaknesses which arise in the works committee system generally. One problem is that it is too closely associated with the Estate Manager and, by the

same token, with white authority. Another related problem is that it seems to have become disassociated from the village community. A further problem is that too many villagers do not regard the committee as having been elected or nominated along lines which could represent community wishes. This was probably unavoidable; it has often been noted that Africans are extremely reluctant to nominate representatives in situations where general suspicion or insecurity exists.

The Estate Manager is aware of some of these problems and has mentioned his regret that the committee is too dependent on him. It would seem that a further problem is that members of the committee themselves feel vulnerable and uncertain as to their role, and that, in their attempts to safeguard their own positions, avoid taking controversial decisions.

## 6.5 COMMUNITY SECURITY

As has been made evident, the African community, particularly those born and bred on the estate experience insecurity of both residential and job tenure. Although when asked directly whether they felt secure or insecure at the school 70% of people stated that they felt secure in their jobs, an underlying sense of insecurity is evident in responses to many other questions and in information obtained during group discussions.

A substantial proportion – over 30% of those questioned about whether any members of their families had been sent away from the estate – said that friends and relatives had been dismissed.

Most answers indicate that the dismissal of their relatives was seen as unjust and that the incidents have caused a measure of shock in the community. The chief concern appears to be that cases are not given a fair hearing. One man said, for example, "I felt very bitter when my brother was

chased away but there was nothing I could do - if I'd complained I would also have been fired".

Another 21% of the African staff among whom additional interviews were conducted in order to build a complete census, claimed to know or to be related to people who had been dismissed. Some of the perceived reasons for the dismissal of relations were given as follows. Most of the reasons date back to incidents many years ago.

"Brother was expelled for asking for better wages";

"My brother was expelled for losing a cow";

"My cousin was fired from the kitchen. I felt bitter";

"My son was expelled for fighting";

"My brother left after quarrelling with the white who beat his son".

All those who were asked if they knew of others who had been sent away from the school recalled several instances of people being dismissed. They were dismissed for reasons which were perceived as the following:

"for selling dagga";

"for fighting with knives";

"for assaulting women";

"for being lazy or drunk";

"for asking for pay-rises";

"for arriving late at work";

"for being visited by a relative who had already been expelled";

"for refusing to accept transfer to another department";

"for quarrelling with whites";

"because of children's bad behaviour";

"for no good reason";

"because of the supervisor's whim".

(Obviously, some of these transgressions would more than justify dismissal).

As many as 27% of the 51 people interviewed said that people had been fired in the last ten years for merely asking for pay-rises.

African employees appear to be concerned about the ease with which whites are able to dismiss them. One man saw this as "a way to enslave and threaten us and make us stop complaining about wages", while another said "The whites will find any excuse to send away those they hate". Another said "Our supervisor is mad. He throws people out of his department for nothing, even those who have worked for a long time". A man said "The present Estate Manager will fire a man if he has done something really bad; the last one would kick you out for nothing".

Employees do not feel that if they have made a mistake their cases are fairly considered. One man said "Your case should be talked out and one should be warned and told 'You who have made a mistake, you have a home here so it would be better if you did not do this thing'".

During a group discussion one man said "When Mr. —— (a previous headmaster) was here, no one was fired unless he had personally discussed the matter. The case was deliberated in public and a decision was reached. But then these last two managers came and oppressed people with harsh talk and expulsion". During the same discussion another man said - and this was reiterated by others - "When they say to me 'You go away' I must go. No matter what they can build for us, or how they can raise our pay, but this is a sore thing that my mistake is not investigated".

A man complained that a person could "even be expelled if his child has made a mistake. We are here because of our children. If we did not have them we would be elsewhere - we are working for them, but when we die, our children might still

be sent away from here". Another said "We get chased away and yet we were born here and we are not given time to find a place for our children. From here - where to?" A further respondent said "Something a man should have in this life if he is to be respected on earth, is a place that is secure and in which he stays with no fear of eviction. I do not want my children to suffer this insecurity and fear of being sent away but there is really no future for us here".

An old man said "I am old and have wasted my strength working here yet I will not be given a house but just this tin of mealie-meal and a Government pension. I will get no money from this place that has sapped my strength and I may even be thrown out". Others told of men who had been asked to leave "even though they had served for many years" because of the misdemeanours of their children.

During a group discussion men told of youngsters who had been expelled for fighting with knives. "One of them died because he was destitute and had nowhere to stay. He just died like a dog. Had he not been expelled he would have been alive. It is very bad that they force us to live apart from our children".

Those indigenous to the estate claim that they will never win a case against one of the "Estate Manager's men" as they "will never be fired". However, we should add immediately that the Estate Manager has a firm disciplinary policy and people guilty of certain offences, no matter who they are, are dismissed.

The indigenous community also complained that the new migrants are causing a job shortage and that indigenous people are being "done out of work". One man said "The white says there are no vacancies for local people while they do exist and there are women who need employment. But these

other people just keep coming from the Cape like sheep - one after the other".

Respondents were asked "Would you like your family to live here or not?" The following pattern emerged :

| | |
|---|---|
| "Family lives here now/has always lived here" | 59% |
| "Would not like family to live here/ have a home elsewhere" | 26% |
| "Would like family to move to estate" | 2% |
| "Have no family" | 2% |
| No response or would not commit themselves | 11% |

Those who said they would not like their families to live on the estate gave the following as their reasons:

- housing, food, facilities considered bad;
- the estate belongs to whites/can be easily evicted;
- not able to own cattle at the school;
- desire to live in place of birth.

Only one man said he would like his family to move from the reserves to the school estate.

We have given these quotes in order to convey a climate of feeling which exists on the estate. We have no doubt that the quotations reflect distorted perceptions in many instances. They also reflect a somewhat distorted time-perception in that events which occurred many years ago during the regime of past authorities are incorporated into perceptions of the present situation. We have noted this same phenomenon in regard to views on relations between whites and blacks; the villagers have a sense of history as being pervasive and ever-present. They live in a social

climate shaped over decades. This is particularly true, and understandable on psychological grounds, among older residents.

While we have little doubt that the present disciplinary code is not arbitrary and punitive, we know that it is strict, and unavoidably so, bearing in mind the social pathologies which exist in the village (yet to be discussed). The strict disciplinary code is sufficient to perpetuate the perceptions of discipline which were formed in past decades, and this accounts for the climate of insecurity.

The perceptions of insecurity on the estate are complex. While a minority experience tangible threats to security in their present jobs, a pervading deeper sense of insecurity makes villagers feel that their immediate security is ephemeral and conditional upon factors over which they have incomplete control. Part of the deeper insecurity seems to stem from an awareness of their own inability to manage their own lives and particularly those of their children in such a way as to ensure stability. This is fairly typical of people enmeshed in a 'culture of poverty', one of the characteristics of which is a feeling of being at the mercy of the vicissitudes of fate. This syndrome relates to our next section on community pathology.

## 6.6 COMMUNITY 'PATHOLOGIES'

### 6.6.1 Excessive Drinking

It appears that excessive drinking is a serious problem in the community. During the course of this study fieldworkers who had occasion to be resident in the village over weekends noticed that many people drank heavily. Those interviewed also acknowledged that heavy drinking was common in the village. As many as 31% actually said that drinking was their most pleasurable pastime, and drinking was the

second most frequently recorded 'recreational' activity.

This proportion of people acknowledging drinking as a recreational pursuit is the highest that we are aware of in any study conducted among any group. It undoubtedly falls short of the true proportion but it leaves little doubt as to the true extent of the problem.

During the course of the interviews, interesting comments were recorded such as, "I deceive my heart with drink, it is a little thing but it brings me joy", "There is nothing to enjoy here except when a person goes and hunts for beer and sits down and has some noisy excitement around him. He then forgets the misery that eats his heart". Another said "It pleases me to have visitors that we may drink together and have cordial moments. It's so enjoyable to hear people admiring you". An old man said "The only thing that makes me happy is being drunk. I am not happy when I am not drunk because then I tend to think about painful things".

When questioned about who they despised on the estate and why, only 13% said they scorned people who drank. There seems to be widespread acceptance of the drinking pursuits in the village, since this proportion is lower than other research experience would lead us to expect.

According to clinic records made available, the incidence of alcoholism in the community is increasing yearly.

The response of one villager illustrates to what extent the community sees itself as having degenerated. "All people here are alike. We all drink. We all live with women to whom we are not married. This is a loathsome thing because as time goes on it just collapses. If I leave here, the woman stays behind. We are just working backwards like fowls".

In fairness to the community we should note that regular social drinking is characteristic of any rural African community. The question is to what extent the drinking has become so excessive as to debilitate a majority of men in the village. Reports from our fieldworkers and from the present and previous Estate Managers suggest that the nature of the drinking behaviour is a cause for concern. As the quotations given above suggest, the motive for drinking is probably escapist in nature rather than social or recuperative. We consider that the problem is serious.

6.6.2 Illegitimacy

Although actual figures were not available, it has been noted that the incidence of illegitimacy is very high on the estate. Reliable information was very difficult to obtain. It appears that those indigenous to the estate blame the migrants who came and "spoiled their daughters" while migrants scorn the indigenous population who "will just marry relatives and not see anything wrong in that".

Parents complain that young girls drop out of school because of pregnancy while boys deny paternity. Clinic records also reveal that the incidence of Venereal Disease is increasing in the community.

One worker complained "It even happens to these young girls who we send to church. It appears that boys dislike the idea of them going to church". When asked why the rate of illegitimacy was so high, one woman explained by saying "This is a new thing to us parents because when we grew up nothing like this happened - we were examined by our mothers and it was very disgraceful to get a child out of wedlock. But now our children are making this thing a fashion".

Parents express concern at not being able to afford

the support of their young daughters' children whose fathers deny responsibility. A woman said "As a parent you think you have your child in the house, but she is really an old experienced woman. And what is worse, girls don't learn from the mistakes of other girls. That is why I say this is an indication of the beginning and end of the world here at the school". Another said "Men don't sympathise. The very men who father our children say we must bear the consequences of our bad behaviour".

Another reason perceived by women for the high incidence of pregnancy among young girls is the fact that there are so many unmarried people living together, many of whom have large families. Children are taking their example from adults who often have open love affairs. Men occasionally leave a woman and their children and take up residence with someone else. An actual instance of this was observed during fieldwork.

More insight into the question of illegitimacy was gained during group discussions conducted with unmarried mothers. It appears that these young women are keen to learn about contraceptive methods; their knowledge is evidently very limited. It seems that men are against the idea of birth control even though many will deny paternity when a child is born. One woman said "You meet a man who doesn't like pills so you stop taking them and in no time you are pregnant".

In order to try to limit the number of illegitimate children born on the estate, the authorities have tried to insist that men marry women who bear their children. Similarly many women claimed (incorrectly) that it was possible that one could be evicted for having more than one illegitimate child. Said one woman "If you have one child then it is a mistake but if you have a second then you must pack your bags

and go". Another said "Boys deny they are the fathers and they run away because they will be made to marry us". A young woman said "We don't have anyone here who can help us. We should have a senior girl who can advise us".

Older women tended to be confused regarding the illegitimate children of their daughters. They seemed to feel it was mostly due to the girls going "bad" and because the old traditional sanctions on illegitimacy no longer seemed to operate. However, they did not condone the use of contraceptives either. One woman said "It's no use closing a girl with pills. You cannot demand 10 head of cattle for a girl who is no longer a virgin". Another said "Only people who have had children can use these pills - how can you have your daughter get married when she is full of pills?"

Others feared that the use of contraceptives would cause their children to be barren because of "God's anger". One said "I would like my daughter to have children but perhaps God will not allow it because she has been using these pills. Now what are we going to do because we want to kiss our grandchildren". Others complained that daughters were undisciplined and disobedient. One woman said "Discipline has failed. I know a man who really was tough on his daughters. But these girls are still bad! Bad!".

### 6.6.3 Delinquency

The extent to which delinquency might be a problem on the estate could not be ascertained. Many villagers, particularly women, said that one good thing about life at the school was the fact that "there are no tsotsis here" or "we are not likely to be molested".

However, through informal discussion with both African and white staff, it appears that occasionally an

instance of delinquency does occur. Young men not eager to go to school frequently spend time loitering round the valley. Occasionally thefts are reported.

Parents complain that children are undisciplined and show lack of respect. Fighting is common although anyone caught using a knife is summarily expolled. This too has caused great concern in the community, especially to parents whose young sons are forbidden to return to the estate. Said one man, "If you fight with knives the authorities will send you away from here. You may not even visit your parents. One young man, born and bred at the school, came to visit his mother who was the only one left in the family. His mother was also ordered out of the place". One of the effects of delinquency, coupled with the disciplinary code, therefore, is to increase the general insecurity of tenure characteristic of the estate.

## 6.7 COMMUNITY HEALTH

Information regarding the health of the community was largely obtained from the sister at the African clinic which is open three times a week. The school doctor visits the clinic weekly. A nurse-aide assists the nursing sister.

Roughly 200 to 250 consultations are made every month although attendance is greater during winter. Those consulting the doctor pay a nominal fee of 25c. All medicines cost 10c per course (e.g. injections, vitamin syrup, influenza medicine, etc.). Expensive antibiotics cost 3c per tablet. The clinic is supplied with approximately 100 different kinds of medicine.

The diseases and complaints most frequently attended to are the following:

- Tonsilitis in the young;
- Cystitis associated with pregnancy;
- Gastro-enteritis mostly in the young but also in other age groups;
- Venereal Disease (increasing in number);
- Burns (especially small children);
- Septicaemia following childbirth (decreasing in incidence);
- Pellagra (incidence increasing);
- Alcoholism (incidence increasing);
- Scurvy (incidence decreasing);
- Epidemic conjunctivitis among school-children;
- Trench-mouth;
- Infectious diseases of the young.

Other less-common complaints are :

- Epilepsy;
- Heart conditions;
- Injuries from assaults;
- Congenital abnormalities;
- Fractures;
- Feeding problems of infants.

It appears that the incidence of malnutrition has not declined over the past two years; in fact the opposite seems to be true. However, the worst cases are those of new employees and their families who have come from elsewhere.

It appears that many women are interested in family planning and contraceptive methods. However, men are conservative and many prevent their wives from using contraceptives.

Recently the nurse-aide participated in a family planning course but it is too early to gauge the extent to

which she has been successful in convincing more conservative members of the community about the need for contraception.

Suggestions made by clinic staff regarding methods of generally improving the standard of health in the community have been the construction of toilet facilities and ablution blocks, a programme of talks and lectures on Venereal Disease and family planning to teenage Africans and others, and the construction of fire-guards in homes where there are small children. These suggestions have not yet been implemented.

Most expectant mothers prefer to go to town and have their children in hospital. The infant mortality rate on the estate is very low in the opinion of the nurse. Exact figures were unobtainable, however.

## 6.8 RECREATION

African employees were asked "What things are you able to do during the week or weekends which you really enjoy?" The rank ordering of recreational activities most enjoyed emerged as follows :

| | |
|---|---|
| - church-going | 34% |
| - drinking | 31% |
| - gardening | 20% |
| - talking to friends, visiting | 20% |
| - staying at home, resting, being with family | 18% |
| - watching or playing soccer | 15% |
| - doing odd jobs at home, housework | 11% |

Five per cent or few respondents each mentioned craft work, playing or listening to music, sewing, cooking, doing 'togt' work, reading, selling handicrafts, sacrificing chickens and tending fowls. Eight per cent of people said there was nothing they enjoyed doing and 3% said they had no

free time for leisure pursuits.

When asked "What do you and your friends usually do when you are not working?" (whether enjoyed or not) the following rank ordering emerged :

| | |
|---|---|
| - household chores | 41% |
| - talking to friends, visiting | 31% |
| - drinking | 30% |
| - gardening | 21% |
| - church-going | 20% |
| - discussing ways to make money | 11% |
| - resting, staying at home with family | 10% |
| - watching, playing soccer | 10% |

In addition, the following activities were each mentioned by less than 5% of respondents: sewing or knitting; 'togt' work; visiting girls; going shopping; buying and re-selling clothes; grass-weaving; beer-brewing; playing music and doing laundry; making furniture; doing handiwork; quarrelling; going to town/the cinema; playing games and a small number of other varied activities.

While this study was in progress, a programme was initiated by the white school boys in order to raise funds for the building of a soccer field and community centre for the Africans on the estate. The haste with which this programme has gone ahead has impressed the villagers. One man said "The whites must like us after all because they are making a sportsfield for Africans so that we may enjoy ourselves".

There is a village soccer team which is anxious to play matches both away and at home. They would also like to charge fees to spectators so that a fully operational club could exist. Other respondents expressed a desire for a hall

where concerts and dances could be held. Bands occasionally come from urban centres to play at dances in the village.

During informal discussions with several women, it emerged that many of them would welcome the establishment of sewing, knitting and cooking classes.

Parents also expressed a desire that their children should take more part in extra-mural activities arranged by the village school and that other parents should participate fully and take more interest in their children's organised school activities.

As one can glean from the frequencies of activities mentioned, the major leisure pursuits tend to be unstructured (social activities, drinking, being with family). There are, however, signs among a minority of community members that more creative and structured pursuits attract some interest. Generally the distribution of leisure activities indicates a need and scope for expansion of constructive recreational pursuits, given the time and resources among members of the village community.

## 6.9 CHURCH ACTIVITIES

The Africans in the community give the appearance of being church-goers. Only 7% of those interviewed said they had no belief or said they follow traditional religious practices. As many as 34% of respondents said they enjoyed going to church in their free time.

It appears that 25% of those interviewed are Catholics, 20% belong to sects such as the Ethiopian, Nazareth, Kushi and Jerusalem sects; 16% are Anglicans; 15% Zionists; 11% Methodists; 3% belonged to other denominations such as the Congregational and Dutch Reformed Churches and 2% gave no

information. Only 21% of the community said they either went to church very irregularly or not at all.

Sunday school classes have been organised and have had a favourable response from the African children.

The amount of church-going reported should not be confused with religiosity. Organised religion is one of the very few organised forms of collective activity available on the estate and a lower incidence of church-going would have been surprising. Furthermore, it is our view that the availability of church services without any practical and supportive follow-up in the form of pastoral work and pastorally-based community development programmes is unlikely to benefit the community a great deal. All too often in poor, demoralised communities, religion without supportive assistance generates either fatalism or guilt; both tending to exacerbate community problems.

## 6.10 OTHER COMMUNITY FACILITIES

### 6.10.1 Crèche

A crèche has been established to ensure that small children are properly cared for while their parents are working at the school. The building of the crèche has been tremendously beneficial to the community as the general care and health of a number of pre-school children has been improved since it was started.

The crèche is staffed by three African women who care for fifteen infants, these constituting roughly 10% of the pre-school children living on the estate. It appears that room and facilities for more are not available. The children are given a nutritious meal at midday which includes meat (three times a week), fish (twice a week), and vegetables. Milk and brown bread are also served. The crèche exists

because of generous donations by schoolboys and staff, and it is guided by a group committed to the well-being and health of the village children.

Any new innovation such as the crèche is bound to cause varying reactions both negative and positive; for example a few parents have said that crèche food disagrees with their children. There have also been signs of disturbed relations between community members and the crèche staff. In the recent past, community members have been aware that the dedication of the crèche staff could improve, which it no doubt has by now. If crèche facilities can be extended to more children and the confidence of villagers won, this service will be of inestimable value in the community.

6.10.2 Feeding Scheme

Every child at the village school is given soup and brown bread daily. The establishment of this feeding scheme has been extremely necessary since many children do not have a substantial breakfast at home.

Nutritious low-cost foods are also available, for purchase at the school although this facility is not used as much as the organisers would like. Beans, powdered milk, fish, ProNutro, soup mix and other commodities are on sale.

6.10.3 Bursaries

Although it has not been possible to establish the exact number, it appears that certain members of the white staff at the school assist African scholars by financing their education either fully or partially.

6.10.4 The Village School

There is a higher primary school in the village, staffed by a headmaster and three women teachers. The school provides education up to Standard Six. The total number of scholars is roughly 180 to 190 at present, of whom only 8% to 10% are in the final class. The majority of pupils drop out at the Standard Two to Three level.

Hence the school is generally providing a level of education suited to semi-skilled and unskilled labour. Those children who do manage to proceed to Standard Six acquire aspirations for work in urban areas. Even those who emerge from the school with lower education are by no means oriented to rural life. It can be stated with some confidence that even those scholars emerging with Standard Three qualifications do not see their future as employees on the estate. Opportunities to work in the city will be sought after, despite influx control prohibition. This could change for a substantial proportion of the scholars if wages and working conditions on the estate were to approximate to urban wage levels and conditions.

The presence of an African school on the estate could have certain additional hidden benefits. In our comparative investigation on another school estate we found that school teachers played a prominent part in the life of the village as leaders and to some extent as informal adult educators. This type of input from teachers was not in evidence on the present estate studied. The African headmaster spends a great deal of his free time away from the school, and neither he nor the other teachers are particularly

involved in the community life of the village. The mode of living among the teachers is also not such as to present the villagers with examples of living appropriate to the upliftment of the community. In 6.4.2 we have discussed some of the problems encountered by the African headmaster which may contribute to the relative lack of constructive influence on the adult community emanating from the African school.

6.10.5 Other Benefits

White scholars go down to the valley weekly to coach African school children at games. It seems that this venture is not entirely successful because of the lack of a common language and also because it appears that the Africans are afraid to take initiative in playing games in the presence of young whites, which would be essential to the success of this type of activity.

Adult education classes for African are not unknown at the school but do not seem to function on a fully organised basis.

During 1974, the head boy of the school organised a campaign to raise funds for the construction of a sportsfield and club house/community centre. The campaign was highly successful and the villagers have expressed their appreciation.

6.11 COMMUNITY RESPONSES

Since this is a study of community organisation and community needs within the perspective of the feasibility of a community development programme, it is necessary to consider carefully the types of initiative and self-help response which has emerged within the community thus far. Overall, as we have noted rather repetitiously, the community shows an abundant variety of signs of lack of constructive self-interest

apathy, considerable social pathology, and poor morale. There are individual exceptions to this pattern, however.

6.11.1 Handicraft Activity

It appears that a few members of the community are interested in handicrafts and related activities (see section 6.8 for fuller details).

One man interviewed makes shoes as a hobby while another is interested in metal work. Many of those interviewed had made their own rudimentary furniture.

Some women sew, knit and crochet and one woman interviewed did fine grass weaving. Small sums of money are earned from these activities. Women interviewed in group discussions said they would like to spend more time sewing and knitting and that they would be able to earn extra money by selling the finished garments. However, many said they had too little time to pursue these interests. One said, for example, "If we want to sew we have to squeeze it in on Sundays after church. At other times there is so much cooking and cleaning to do and water and wood to fetch". Another woman said "there is no man who can stomach an empty pot just because you are sewing".

6.11.2 Agricultural Activity

The school authorities have stated that, at present, about 40 acres of land can be used by African villagers for cultivation. Although the country is broken and reclamation of eroded land has had to be carried out over the last ten years, it is possible that the amount of land made available to African villagers could be increased.

Village families are entitled to grow a field of mealies and to cultivate a vegetable garden. Although 90% of villagers grow mealies, only 40% of these weed their fields, while only 20% of these really care for their crops.

A very much smaller proportion of villagers grow vegetables. Of the 20 to 25 families who appear interested in cultivating vegetables, only 7 or 8 families have really well-developed gardens. Approximately two of these families grow enough to sell. Most families keep a few fowls.

Many complained that they did not have enough time to attend to their gardens and that the scarcity of water and inadequate fencing made gardening difficult. Others complained that the tractor, which is provided for the ploughing of fields was not always available when needed. One man said, "The tractor often arrives too late to plough other people's fields".* Another said, "They promised to cultivate our fields but you talk till you are hoarse and still the fields lie fallow. The whites will tell you to come for the tractor on Saturday and then on Saturday you are given some work, and the time for ploughing and planting runs out". Another said, "What we want the whites to do is give us water and to plough some ground and fence it for us. Then whatever I want to do, I will be free and happy to do it - I will eat, and be satisfied. If the white will help me in this way I will try to help myself. Before we never had to buy vegetables. We used to dig with our strength".

Conversely, however, the Estate Manager states that he has had many fields ploughed in the past which have been left untended and as a result he had to consider a new policy regarding the allotment of land in the village. Since it has been observed that only 7 to 8 families really care for their fields and gardens, the Estate Manager has decided to grant land, which will be ploughed, only to those individuals who agree to grow and tend their crops with care. They may only continue to have rights to cultivate if they show sufficient interest and diligence. Others, who show no interest will not have their fields ploughed for them. Roughly an acre will be allocated to those who meet the requirements.

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* Perhaps unavoidable since not all fields can be ploughed at once; ploughing is done by rotation.

As already mentioned, in 1958 the labour on the estate was divided and those employed at the school were separated from the farm labourers and moved to the present village. At this time cattle were forbidden. Village men have stated that to have livestock re-introduced – even if it were one cow per family – would be a great joy to them. One man said "We could have milk for our children and sell the cow to the school butchery and keep the calf and in this way we would be helping the school and ourselves". Another man said "If we had cattle we would bring our cattle together and plough our own fields satisfactorily". Another said "I want a cow so badly that I don't mind if it lives in my house with me".

Some of the Africans resident on the school farm are envied. Said one man "They have cattle, none of them have to buy milk". It is also of interest to note that most of those resident on the farm have well-developed fields and gardens.

### 6.11.3 General Comments on Community Response

Two things seem clear from the information we have given on community initiatives. Firstly, there is generally a very low level of independent initiative in the village. Secondly, however, there is a scattering of individuals whose response is such as to indicate possible directions in community development. A major question is what factors are associated with personal initiative and effort.

In our interviewing, we were at pains to form a comprehensive impression of each respondent in terms of self-esteem, initiative, pride and morale generally. Among those born or raised on the estate, 6 women respondents showed evidence of initiative but no men at all. All older men, indigenous to the estate, appeared to be extremely demoralised, and the same applied to a lesser extent to younger indigenous

men as well. Only four of the 'migrant' men interviewed – a small minority – displayed signs of demoralisation equal to that among indigenous men, and this also applied to two migrant women interviewed. It is significant that the four migrant men had extremely low-status, low-paying jobs. One of the migrant women was the sole supporter of a large family on an income of R10 monthly, and receives pathetic rations as a private domestic (she said she had not seen meat for seven months). The other woman also had an extremely low status, poorly-paid job.

As far as agriculture is concerned, among the men there is a broad relationship between interest in agriculture and somewhat more senior or semi-skilled positions and high status in the village. Those who show an interest in agriculture are disproportionately represented on the village committee, for example. There is also abundant evidence to suggest that they tend to be people with land-rights elsewhere. Private vegetable-gardening activity presents a less clear-cut picture, but once again, migrants and prominent people in the village who demonstrate high morale and possess high status are also outstanding in this area of activity. Only one old man, indigenous to the estate, among those interviewed, had a well-developed vegetable garden.

Among women there is a greater variety of social types tending to respond with some initiative. There are, for example, women indigenous to the estate who sew, knit and take an interest in handicrafts. If anything, those women who have a more 'Western' orientation seem to be more prominent in this regard, as are women tending to have lower-middle-class Christian values.

Among both men and women, a major factor circumscribing the independent response of the community is the amount of leisure-time available. From a perusal of our earlier results on working hours it is quite obvious that a large

proportion of village people have very limited consolidated blocks of time. This factor is of primary importance. It must also be recognised, however, that the indigenous segment in the village, particularly as far as the men are concerned do manifest the least initiative, on average. There is a striking difference, as we have noted between the 'school village' and the farm labour community; in the latter there is greater evidence of community pride in the form of better-kept gardens. There is also a pattern of low labour-turnover, high employee loyalty and markedly lower level of delinquency and drinking on the farm.

Generally, our results lead us to the conclusion that a majority of village residents, in one way or another, reflect the presence of a syndrome of social problems which undermine the social vitality of those affected. However, the core of the problem lies in the indigenous estate community. The degree of apathy and hopelessness reflected in many of the interviews with village-born men was dramatic. Some of our indigenous respondents seemed to verge on the suicidal.

# CHAPTER VII

## CONCLUDING ASSESSMENT AND DISCUSSION

The previous chapters have been very largely descriptive of problems and processes occurring both in the work situation and community circumstances of Africans on the school estate. Before drawing the threads of our findings together, and subjecting them to an inter-related analysis, it is appropriate, for interest and insight, to present the ways in which the African community itself sees the need for change and reform on the estate.

### 7.1 PRIORITIES FOR CHANGE AS PERCEIVED BY THE AFRICAN COMMUNITY

Those interviewed were asked to consider what they felt to be the most important aspect of their situation requiring change. Initially respondents were asked to consider what the school should provide in order to improve the lives of African employees and, much later in the interview, they were asked what they thought were the main problems they experienced at the school.

In reply to the question as to what they thought the school should provide in the way of improvements, the following suggestions emerged, listed in order of priority :

- improved wages;
- provision of transport to the neighbouring village;
- better housing;
- improved rations;
- shopping facilities;
- more polite/fair supervision;
- better facilities for gardening (especially the provision of water and a tractor for ploughing;
- better hours, days off;

-provision of ablution blocks;

Other suggestions made by a minority included the provision of bonuses; overtime money; longer paid holidays; provision of uniforms; adult education classes; establishment of a works committee; permission to undertake business activities in leisure time; desire for no further 'discrimination' between migrants and those indigenous to the estate; "cleaning up filth in the village"; provision of financial aid for the education of children and a number of other minor suggestions. The first four priorities were given significantly more importance than the rest; being mentioned by between 40% and roughly 70% of respondents.

In response to the question "What do you consider to be the main problems that people at the school have - problems for themselves and their families?" the following problems were listed in order of priority :

- poor wages;
- starvation/insufficient rations;
- poor housing;
- lack of transport;
- lack of shopping facilities;
- inability to keep livestock;
- lack of water;
- not given sufficient notice when dismissed;

The following were suggestions mentioned by low proportions of people :

- no uniforms;
- no bathrooms and lavatories;
- no time to attend to one's own affairs;
- high rate of illegitimacy;
- disobedient children;
- no meat ration.

- lack of family privacy due to overcrowded houses;
- discrimination between migrants and indigenous Africans;
- insufficient money to educate children;
- impolite white supervision;
- no bonus;
- insufficient paid leave;
- working in uncomfortable conditions;
- no stoves provided;
- no soap ration provided to some staff;
- no works committee;
- bad roads;
- drinking;
- not being allowed private businesses;
- no community hall;
- insufficient land for cultivation;
- old men neither consulted nor respected;
- unpaid during school holidays;

as well as a number of other minor problems.

During a group discussion one man said, "If only the whites could give us more money and enable us to build better houses ourselves we would be very grateful. The thing that would be a hindrance is that they could refuse because this is their place. They should not keep saying they are not going to give us money because they are planning to give us this and that and yet never get round to doing it".

One man appealed to the researcher saying, "We must turn to you for assistance. Our pay is low, food is negligible and our houses are collapsing. Since it seems unlikely that the school will do anything we would be grateful if you can find out what the Government can do to improve things". "This kind of life - we reject it - all we ask is to live with freedom and happiness", said another.

Naturally, members of a community like that on the estate are not likely to be sufficiently reflective to make an objective assessment of their own needs and priorities for change. The collective opinions of the community are nevertheless a useful guide which we will bear in mind. Certainly, we cannot gainsay the importance of the needs given high priority by the villagers, i.e.

wages;
standards of living and diet; and
housing.

## 7.2 BROAD CONCLUSIONS

### 7.2.1 Major Factors Associated with Poor Morale

In conducting the study we obtained ample confirmation of the basic reason for the study being undertaken in the first place, i.e. the poor morale among Africans on the school estate.

Grievances and Morale:

While the overwhelming majority of members of the African community seem to experience a sense of grievance, either in general or with regard to specific issues, problems of demoralisation are particularly compelling among roughly one-fifth to one-quarter of the community. This proportion is largely composed of those villagers indigenous to the school estate or who have spent most of their lives on the estate and know no other home.

The nature of the consciousness of their situation among this segment of the community is reflected in very stark expressions of their plight. Fears of starvation, of dying like dogs, desires to commit suicide and feelings of deeply

threatened social identity and helplessness were not uncommon in this group.

As we will see in 7.2.2, the problems of this segment of the community, like many others on the estate, are self-reinforcing. The extreme nature of the problems experienced by this group leads inevitably to relative failures in work and community performance, which in turn lead inevitably to differential treatment of its members by the school authorities. This, in turn, produces an artificial cleavage between this group and the remainder of the African community, which is partly co-incidental with an ethnic cleavage and with migrant/non-migrant status, but in which ethnic hostilities as such play only a very limited role. This social cleavage is visible in the community and facilitates an unfavourable stereotyping of the indigenous section of the African community. Differential treatment of the indigenous section becomes more and more appropriate as their morale deteriorates over the years (which has been the case, presumably). The effects of the cleavage in the community and the different treatment by the authorities, in leading to overt signs of demoralisation, reinforces the problems and a typical circle of reinforcement results.

The nub of the problem of low morale on the estate can be found in the indigenous group. While this problem exists, a re-orientation of policy, both as regards employment and community living, is made extremely difficult. The need to deal with one problem-ridden segment in the labour force contaminates policy in many ways. Rules and standards have to cater for the weakest members of any group, and we find it impossible to conceive of creative policy adjustments without the state of social depression in the indigenous segment being dealt with first as a high priority.

In their origin, the problems which 'depress' the indigenous members of the community are very closely related

to land rights, property rights and residential security. The sense of security, esteem and self-worth flowing from ownership of cattle, security of land-tenure, the identification with an inalienable homestead and with a secure community, etc. is denied this group. It needs to be stated that virtually all members of the African community seem to place basic value on this type of life accomplishment. The situation of the community, as we will note presently, has not allowed alternative basic gratifications to take the place of values which are still fairly substantially traditional in tone (with important qualifications which we will make presently).

This fundamental lack of sense of rootedness, with its inevitable corollary of dependence on the school estate for total life security - an uneasy encapsulation - might not have the negative consequences it has been demonstrated to have if the dependence was within a context of supportive and benign administration by the school authorities. However, the perception by the African community of the administration of their affairs is one of anti-African hostility and harshness on the part of white authorities. This perception is rooted in a past era of estate management, and the perception is strongest among those with concrete memories of that era of estate management - the indigenous group. Therefore, there is a sense of dependence on a somewhat malevolent white administration. The combination of dependence and apprehension is fatal to morale - a perception of a benign paternalism, negative though that may be as well, would not have the same deleterious effects.

There are other problems, however, which affect not only the indigenous group but the bulk of the African community.

Black-White Relations:

The perceptions among the African community of the

motives and attitudes of the white school authorities at present appear to be so negative that they distort the way in which discipline is perceived. There are few specific allegations able to be made by the members of the community against the present Estate Manager. One of the most consistent was that he favours the migrants from the Transkei over and above the long-term village residents, which, in the light of the typical responses to their work and community situation among the latter, is hardly surprising. Generally, however, the Estate Manager and the Headmaster, Senior Master, and some of the white supervisors are looked upon favourably.

The origin of the disturbed relations on the estate lie in the collective belief among older residents that they were betrayed when their cattle were taken away, and in the collective perceptions of the era of the previous Estate Manager, and possibly before that. At present, the way in which members of the African community see black-white relations is also to be seen in symbolic terms; by their answers in our interviews they were signalling a subjective sense of alienation from a 'system' seen as exploitative and impervious to any influence from themselves. The system has, therefore, acquired an 'image' in the eyes of the Africans which will have to be altered before a climate of co-operation and mutual understanding can be created, and before basic loyalty to and identification with the estate will emerge.

Material Needs:

Using the most conservative benchmark of minimum subsistence needs available, that of the Bureau of Market Research of the University of South Africa, we have calculated that the average family income among the elementary 'nuclear' families on the estate is 68% below the minimum average family requirement, taking into account the full value of rations, housing and other benefits. The benchmark used, the MINIMUM

SUBSISTENCE LEVEL, allows for survival in health and decency in the short run only, however. The average family income is 94% below the more adequate benchmark , the HUMANE STANDARD OF LIVING. The total average family income of R34,10 is only R1,00 in excess of the amount calculated as being necessary for average food requirements alone. In practice, however, the situation is even worse since the average monthly budget for food and other daily necessities of living is R26,31. Our considered conclusion, therefore, is that, on average, the village is under-nourished.

In view of the situation as regards cash incomes, the rations provided are inadequate, assessed both in absolute terms and in comparison with broad assessments of the benefits provided in the agricultural sector in Natal.

The material situation of the villagers has obvious implications as regards their productivity and morale, and also, very importantly, as regards their general health. There is evidence that the work force is somewhat debilitated; employees place a relatively high emphasis on the conserving of energy and strength. Also, the incidence of nutritional disorders among children is high for a community of the type studied; i.e. resident under surveillance on a white non-farm estate.

The material deprivation of the village is keenly felt by its members who consider, on average that wages of broadly 2,3 times the present level would be appropriate. In comparison with the results of other research, these wage expectations are 'responsible'. They place the collective wage aspirations of villagers at somewhat below current levels of remuneration for Africans in urban areas. There is, therefore, a widespread and very real sense of relative deprivation on the estate.

The material situation is also to be seen in the very

poor standard of household furnishings and equipment and clothing in the village, which has the appearance of deep poverty. This is aggravated by the dilapidated appearance of houses, most of which are in poor repair and too small for their occupants. Family sizes are not large, however, being well below rural levels and approximately equivalent to urban family sizes.

The Employment Situation:

The nature of the African employees' aspirations as workers are broadly typical of those of unskilled workers universally, with the exception, already mentioned, of fears of loss of strength and health as a result of strenuous work. The undernourishment of workers may have a great deal to do with this. Their emphasis on material needs is understandable in the light of the fact that these basic needs are far from gratified, with the result that higher-order productivity-oriented motivations have had no opportunity to develop. One non-material need which is prominent, and which is also not gratified, by and large, is the need for recognition as workers - a self-esteem need. This is crucial in view of the poor morale generally.

The structure of employment on the estate leaves much to be desired, even apart from the aspect of wages. Even though not all supervisors were perceived as antagonistic or punitive, there is little evidence of positive non-material rewards like recognition, praise, etc. Furthermore, substantial proportions of employees gave evidence of a climate of job insecurity (the word 'expelled' was used with boring regularity throughout the fieldwork), and of fear of approaching white superiors with complaints, requests or grievances. All too often even where workers felt secure, this security was linked with a perceived requirement of docility and subservience. The hours of work and leave benefits, in terms both of standards of adequacy and their lack of consistency and standardisation, aggravate worker

grievances. Furthermore, the absence of regular increments, opportunities for job advancement on merit, and the general ceiling on prospects for self-advancement for most employees depress motivation.

The employee morale is further undermined by the fact that the workers tend to perceive themselves as being in a situation of captive allegiance - a majority would like to seek superior employment but a majority also realise that influx control laws and other impediments, not to mention the dependency of many on the estate for residential security, defeat their aspirations.

Employer-Employee and Village-Authority Relations:

We have seen that no adequate systematic attempts have been made on the estate to integrate the individual employee or villager into the estate system by means of personnel or welfare policies which give the Africans a sense of importance or of being cared for. The relative failure of this - a 'human relations' approach - is not counter-balanced by any systematic attempts in the employment sphere to integrate the African employees as a collectivity. No Works or Liaison Committee system exists which could create a sense of at least partial 'incorporation' into the system. Such a policy, which, by today's standards, would be regarded as conservative, would, at least, help to overcome the complete atomisation of the labour force which exists at present. This atomisation, in the context of lack of prospects for individuals, poor wages, living and working conditions, serves to increase the demoralisation of employees. There is an overwhelming desire for a works committee among the employees themselves.

There is, however, a Village Committee which is aimed at the problems of the residential community. This committee

although composed of individuals who undoubtedly are authentic village leaders, to a large extent lacks legitimacy in the eyes of the villagers because it is seen, correctly or not, to be under the influence of the authorities. No adequate system of answerability to the village has been created for the committee. There is evidence to suggest that members of the committee, despite their status as representatives, have not lost the feelings of vulnerability which characterise the ordinary worker or resident. In the context of the very unfavourable perceptions of white attitudes on the estate, the weaknesses in the committee system are particularly unfortunate. A climate of helplessness pervades the African community. At present there is an effective vacuum of leadership for the community, both from the ranks of community members themselves and from the African school teachers in the village.

Community Deviance:

Up to now the tone of the concluding discussion has suggested an all-suffering African community, virtuous in its patient endurance of deprivation. More accurately, the picture of the African community is one characterised, it would seem, by heavy drinking, high rates of illegitimacy, many unstable informal marriages, and more than a hint of evidence of child neglect. That a large measure of these 'pathologies' are conditioned by the 'culture of poverty' imposed on the community does not alter the fact that at the present time, the community itself is in many ways unresponsive and self-indulgent within the limits of its means.

This extent of 'social deviance' is understandable within a group with limited or no prospects for advancement or progress, considerable day to day frustrations and low levels of self-esteem. The fact that the collective experiences of the majority of members of the community have offered no encouragement for setting long-term life goals, for accumulating resources, or for deferred gratification

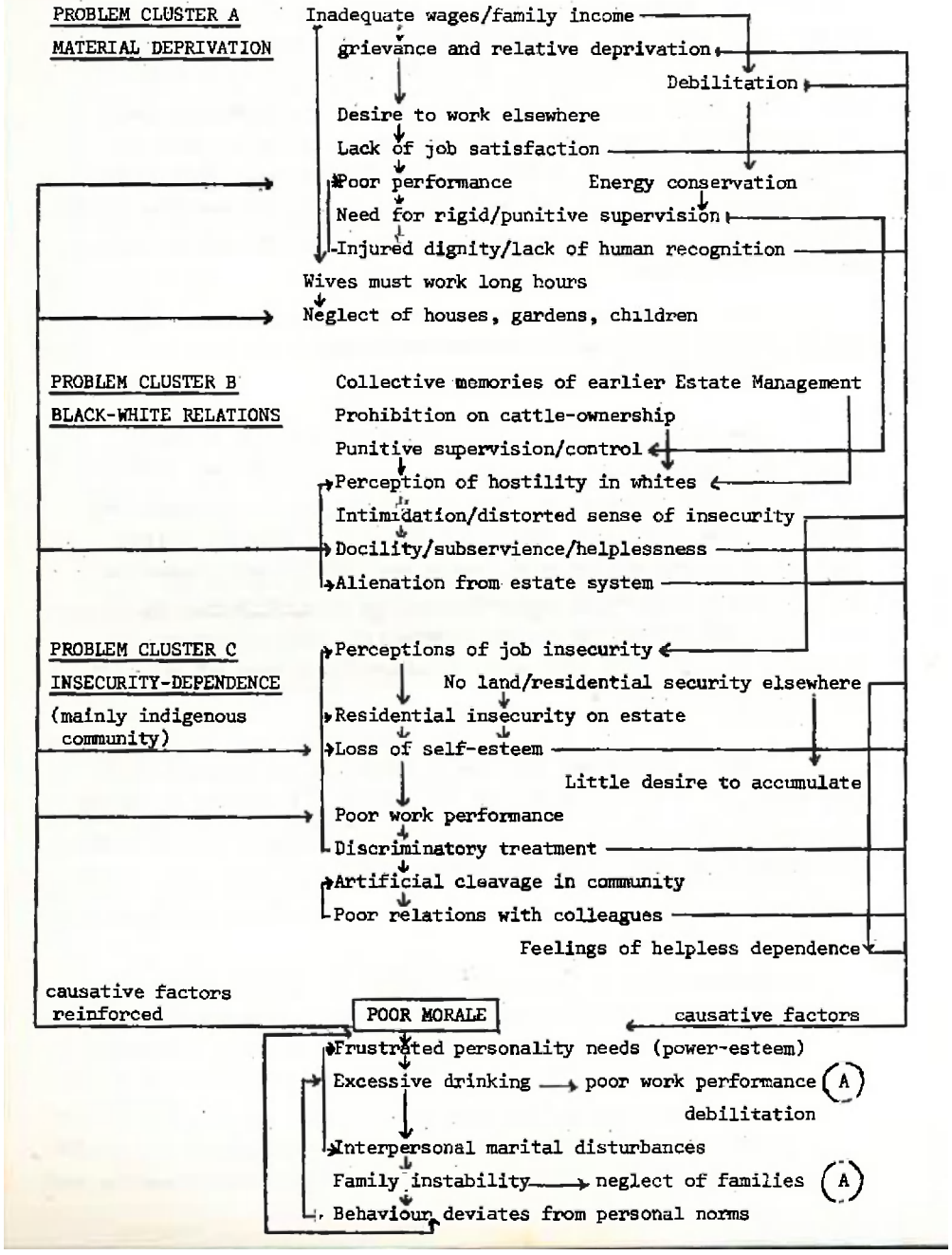
makes it surprising that not more people in the community are prone to escapist drinking behaviour and other attempts to maximise immediate gratification at the cost of (unrewarded) social stability. However, the picture is somewhat worse than this, for the members of the community have not jettisoned traditional moral values, and hence many of them probably perceive themselves as 'deviants'. This moral 'dissonance' is one of the factors which, by undermining self-esteem, further reinforces poor morale and perpetuates community pathologies.

### 7.2.2 Poor Morale as a Self-Reinforcing Process

We hope that in the preceding discussion we have given some idea of the inter-relatedness of problems affecting the African community. The situation of the village and employee community also should be seen as a process rather than as a series of isolated cause and effect relationships. The following schematic presentation is an approximation of the processes operating in the community, and we present it in order to highlight the self-reinforcing nature of many of the problems present.

These processes and the discussion in section 7.2.1 represent the major findings of the study. A number of other specific results in earlier sections are reflected in some of the recommendations made in Chapter VIII.

SCHEMATIC OUTLINE OF THE INTER-RELATIONSHIP
OF PROBLEMS AFFECTING MORALE
( ⟶ - lines of influence and effect)



## 7.3 EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT OF THE FINDINGS

On looking back at all our findings, we are aware that the tone of the results appears to reflect unfavourably on the school estate. Certainly, the larger proportion of African opinion surveyed in the villate and among the labour force is strongly coloured by protest and lament. This may be interpreted to mean that the Africans who were interviewed approached the contact with our research team strategically, determined to wring every ounce of sympathy out of the investigations in the hope of achieving reforms in the situation.

We cannot deny that some of our respondents may have hoped for an improvement in their situation while they were providing information - this is a common feature of interviews with less well-educated people, black or white. However, we are certain that their subjective viewpoints and emotions were not exaggerated unduly or distorted by the research situation. Readers may recall that many respondents were as forthright about their own weaknesses as about their perceptions of their situation; for example, one can think of the high proportion of people who acknowldged that drinking liquor was their favourite pastime. Furthermore, the mood in the group interviews, where most of the stinging criticisms of the estate were made, was usually one of slight suspicion to start with, gradually becoming more spontaneous and cathartic. Never was there any suggestion of a self-conscious manifestation of the fieldworkers by the respondents. We are completely convinced that our results are authentic; in fact, gratifyingly so, and that if many of the interviews registered a protest, that the protest was a real reflection of the burden of emotion carried by the villagers in their day to day lives on the estate. Because we came from outside, our fieldworkers were able to obtain more forthright answers than would be given to anyone on the estate. Some of the responses may appear to be

unexpected, unusual or exaggerated for this simple reason.

We have presented these findings, many of which are poignant and emotive, with as much objectivity as possible. We would like them to be interpreted in a similar spirit of objectivity, and in this regard offer the following thoughts.

The findings should not be seen as an indictment of any individual on the estate. Least of all should they be seen to reflect upon the present Estate Manager, whose task places him in a position of great responsibility for the African community. We can say quite confidently that the Estate Manager emerged as the least unpopular white role-incumbent on the scene. Similarly, no adverse comments were directed against the Headmaster of the private white school. In a sense, our respondents understood the problem too well to project feelings unnecessarily on to individual whites. In interviews the word 'they' was used when blame was apportioned and the target was 'somandla' - the authorities, or, in a more sophisticated conceptualisation, the 'system'.

This is the major point we want to make. It is the system which must be evaluated, not the individuals within it. The present Estate Manager, (and possibly those before him) has inherited a role in a labour situation which is an anachronistic remnant of a past order of colonial and a post-colonial society. The imperatives in this long-enduring but increasingly inappropriate system tend to shape the responses of white superiors as much as they condition those of the black 'servants'. Within the constraints of the situation, the present Headmaster and Estate Manager have done much to alleviate negative aspects of the labour situation.

Perhaps the cardinal weakness in the type of labour system which exists on the estate is the complete powerlessness and almost complete voicelessness of the African labourers. They are unable to sanction the administration, and this very absence

of sanctioning power and the blocking of feedback from the labourers to the administrators makes efficient and equitable administration impossible. We will give just one example.

The example is that of the enforced sale of the cattle of the indigenous community many years ago. This single event damaged the image of the authorities in the eyes of the indigenous community almost beyond repair. For the Africans concerned, it represented a complete and utter betrayal of their interests. They believe that they were promised milk and rations in compensation for the removal of their cattle; an undertaking which they believe has never been honoured to the full. Their loss was not only a loss of material wealth as represented by cattle, but also a loss of a symbol of their status and a component of their self-esteem. Rations worth R3,86 per month and cheap milk can never compensate for this loss and in this sense we accept that the Africans are right. Yet, the authorities probably did not intend this betrayal. Removal of the cattle may have been necessary for soil conservation purposes, and a well-intentioned decision was probably made regarding compensation. There may even have been the appearance of consultation but if this was so it was very likely consultation on very unequal terms with great impediments to communication. Effective feedback on the decision was therefore impossible, and it is quite conceivable that the authorities, reasoned by the support of a few African 'yes-men', blundered innocently into a programme which has cost the Africans dearly, but which has been much more expensive to the authorities in terms of loss of trust and goodwill. It is impossible to administer any group which feels itself too vulnerable to provide honest and accurate feedback on the effects of that administration. On the basis of our results we consider that this situation still exists today.

## 7.4 POSSIBLE GOALS AND PROSPECTS FOR THE FUTURE

Having evaluated the system as it exists on the estate in such negative terms, it behoves us to indicate in broad terms what kind of changes should be striven after; what type of community could emerge which would be more in keeping with modern employment practices and standards of community welfare. Before proceeding to specific recommendations, it is also necessary to assess the prospects of achieving reasonable goals, bearing in mind the injuries to community morale and organisation which have occurred in the past.

As regards the employment situation, we would like to offer the view by Mr. D.C. Sinclair, President of the Natal Agricultural Union: "The farmer, it is apparent, will have to pay wages and other service conditions at least equal to those offerred by other industries".[1)] It is becoming apparent to rural management generally that agricultural and other rural employers have to think in terms of offering rewards and benefits to employees which compare as favourably as possible with urban employment. In this attempt rural employers can benefit from the opportunities which exist on farms and estates to offer a variety of non-cash rewards. However, in view of the pervasive influence of the consumer orientation and the unavoidable attraction this is becoming among rural African employees, the importance of cash wages should not be overlooked.

Over the past two to three years, employers in urban centres in South Africa and South West Africa have just started to face the consequences of a surgence of

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1) D.C. Sinclair, "Agricultural Labour in Natal". Paper presented at a symposium of the South African Institute for Agricultural Extension (Natal Branch), Durban, 29th August, 1974.

worker-consciousness among Africans. Labour unrest, disputes and other events are occurring at a higher level currently than they have in past decades. This basic change in the balance of forces and in employee-consciousness on the labour scene, we would assert, has even affected migrant labour groups among which one would not expect to find strong patterns of urban or radical influence. In some cases, incidents among migrant workers have taken forms of inter-group and inter-tribal conflict which may not appear to be connected with worker action as classically defined. However, even these events can be seen to represent inchoate or deflected manifestations of frustations and insecurity existing both in the workplace and in the increasingly overcrowded (and politicised) rural territories from which the workers are drawn. The aim of this diversion is to suggest that outward manifestations of black worker-frustration are on the increase in South Africa, and that even where the relative isolation and limitations on group organisation make it difficult for workers to engage in normal disputes and strike action (as in some migrant labour compounds or on rural estates or farms) 'deflected' or mutant forms of expression of frustration can emerge which are in some ways even more damaging to labour relations than the classical forms where even this type of 'deviant' labour action is impossible due to tight administrative controls, apathetic withdrawal of commitment to work or other covert expressions of frustration could occur.

There seems ample evidence that a sense of grievance and frustration is spreading throughout the country, and it will affect rural labour settings sooner or later. Among urban employers marked responses to this are occurring; a few are recognising or entering into agreements with African trade unions, and most are attempting to introduce effective works or liaison committee systems so as to regulate conflict and contain it within institutional limits. Our conviction is that in the interests of worker morale and productivity, and

of integrating the worker group into the employment situation more completely, if not in the interests of labour peace, similar adaptations will have to occur in rural employment settings, like the school estate, for example. There is abundant evidence of the need for such adaptations on the estate even at present, both in terms of objective factors and the subjective desires of the employees themselves.

On the community side, we envisage the goal of a RESPONSIBLE village, able to co-operate collectively with the school authorities in the betterment of its own circumstances, so as to avoid the demoralising effects of either continuing community decay or patronising imposed welfare schemes. However, the community is as yet one stage removed from responsible participation in community development. Let us briefly assess the 'social psychological' state of the village community.

The village community, theoretically, has what one might refer to as 'good, solid' moral values, aspirations and commitments: security of tenure, stable harmonious family life, progress for children, accumulation of property, material progress, and what most would regard as 'upright' personal conduct. However, a large majority feels that most of these aspirations are effectively blocked by their current circumstances. There is a widespread sense of alienation from the estate as an encompassing life and employment situation, yet there are widespread feelings of forced dependency on the estate, coupled with insecurity and vulnerability. Existing leadership, although comprising the right people, does not enjoy legitimacy in the eyes of most of the community - a further source of alienation.

A majority of the community reflect these deep contradictions in their apathetic response to community life and

improvement or in 'deviant' drinking patterns and other forms of behaviour which are seen by the community as 'pathological'. Self-esteem and feelings of personal power and status are tenuous. Two very prominent objective factors reinforce the malaise - long hours resulting in lack of time for community pursuits and what might be a not inconsiderable extent of debilitation due to undernourishment.

Yet a favourable response from the point of view of community development is present in a minority. This is manifest in concern with houses, gardening activity and handicraft pursuits, as well as in a more positive optimistic approach to life and employment prospects. Significantly this response tends to occur among those who have land and security elsewhere and/or who have higher-status jobs on the estate.

With community development one anticipates a spirit of optimism and self-help producing co-operative activities under effective community leadership. Certain basic improvements have to take place in the circumstances of the community at large before the basic psychological pre-conditions will emerge. Leadership also has to be strengthened and made 'legitimate' and the deep sense of cleavage in the community has to be overcome. The insecurity-vulnerability-forced dependence syndrome has to be alleviated. Only when these problems are less prominent than they are at present will the community be able to participate responsibly in its own development, as a cohesive collectivity.

# CHAPTER VIII

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations which follow are not motivated in any detail. They flow from the discussion in the body of the report, if not from the major conclusions just presented. They are also not specified in great detail since it is felt that the exact implementation should flow from discussions held jointly between the authors, the school authorities, and, as soon as possible, representatives of the African community. It is essential, however, that piecemeal reform be avoided as much as possible. Improvements should be offered in major packages to derive maximum benefit in terms of goodwill and a changed image of the estate.

### 8.1 HIGH PRIORITY IMPROVEMENTS WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED FOR IMMEDIATE IMPLEMENTATION.

#### 8.1.1 Material Concerns.

(a) Wages should be raised to MSL average levels for main breadwinners as soon as possible. Where the main breadwinner is a female a C.O.L. component could be added to what may be a lower wage to bring it up to the required level.

If this target cannot be attained soon then a 25% to 30% increase in wages is an immediate necessity to allow families at least to spend adequately on food and some basic household requirements.

A longer-term aim should be that breadwinners receive HSL level wages and that wage rates be

corrected for increases in the consumer price index as a result of inflation.

The benefits resulting from such improvements, particularly as regards productivity of labour, will probably allow some degree of labour-saving on the estate.

(b) A system of regular increments should be instituted which would not only allow wages to keep pace with inflation but also allow for steady material progress with long service, so improving employee motivation.

(c) A clear and consistent policy of overtime pay should be introduced, which is carefully explained to all employees.

(d) An annual bonus which is not simply a token should be paid to all employees.

(e) Rations provided for employees should be improved to include more protein; i.e., beans and meat once a week. A type of meat additional to offal should be considered. The amounts distributed should be consistent and equal. A soap ration for every employee should also be considered.

(f) A morning meal for employees, consisting of protein and bulk (circa 8.30 - 9.00 a.m.) would most probably improve employee performance and health. (Waiters could receive this meal a little later.) If meat cannot be provided a protein gravy or soup of the Kupugani variety should be considered. (The authorities should consult the 5 point plan of Dr. G.D. Campbell, inter alia for the Sugar Industry, for guidance in regard

to employee feeding).[1)]

8.1.2 Working Conditions

(a) All employees should have one full day off per week. This may require some rotation of staff within types of employment.

(b) A clear policy on overtime pay should be formulated, so that all employees receive overtime pay on a basis which is clearly explained to each section. The particular requirements of each type of work should be taken into account.

(c) All employees should be paid during school holidays. As far as possible 'togt' work presently undertaken by those who do not receive wages during holidays should be integrated into the job description. Those currently not paid during school holidays may also be used as leave replacements. However, since there is evidence that some employees do not apply for 'togt' work, they should be given the option of unpaid leave during school holidays, on a formal basis.

(d) As much flexibility as possible should exist as regards when leave may be taken. It should be made clear to employees that they are entitled to leave since some evidence suggests that a few female employees perhaps incorrectly believe that Matrons expect them not to take leave.

(e) If at all possible, the period of leave should be increased by one week to enable migrants to spend a more satisfactory period in their areas of origin.

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1) G.D. Campbell, "A 'Five-Point' Plan for Improving and Maintaining Health of Farm Workers and of Increasing Work Output". South African Sugar Journal. Vol.58, 1974, pp.435-443.

(f) Every employee should be issued with a uniform or overall.

(g) Types of work on the estate should be graded into clear status levels. Employees at lower status levels should all be eligible for promotion on merit. This would increase employee motivation. All eligible employees should be considered when an opportunity for promotion falls due. (We recognise that the incidence of promotion would not be high since labour turnover is so low).

(h) Applications for transfer from one job to another at the same status level should be sympathetically treated.

(i) Wage differentials between different status levels should not be altered over time, since this is a very common cause of discontent among workers throughout the world.

(j) There should be a formal period of notice when an employee is dismissed or retrenched. For the latter a one-month period is indicated, and for the former a two-week period unless a very serious disciplinary infringement has occurred.

(k) Distinctions between different types of disciplinary infringements should be made clear to workers.

(l) The employment of school-age children under sixteen (a minor incidence) should be discontinued.

8.1.3 Private Domestic Employment

A Code of Employment Practices should be drawn up for

private employers of domestics on the estate. This code should stipulate wages and conditions of work which are as similar as possible to those in the school, even down to quantities of rations, etc.

8.1.4 Supervision.

(a) All Supervisors should be requested to read this report and to discuss it with the Headmaster and the Estate Manager.

(b) All forms of favouritism should be scrupulously avoided.

In particular many decisions should be taken in full consciousness of the poor morale and disadvantaged position of those employees born and bred on the estate. For a while, whenever it will not cause other problems, these employees should be given the 'benefit of the doubt' as it were.

(c) Decisions affecting the future of employees in any way should finally be taken by the Estate Manager or the Estate Manager in Committee (see ahead). 'Hiring and firing' should be the responsibility of the Estate Manager or Estate Manager in Committee.

(d) A clear and consistent policy as regards supervision should be followed throughout the school. Employees should not be confused by arbitrary or ad hoc rules formulated by a particular supervisor. Supervision should be carried out in terms of a clearly formulated job definition which each employee is fully acquainted with.

(e) The immense importance of recognition of an employee's

achievements should be realised. Supervision should aim at rewarding an employee as well as controlling. The low self-esteem and sensitivity to insults and personal slights among employees should be borne in mind constantly.

(f) Efforts to improve communication should commence immediately. Supervisors who cannot speak Zulu should be encouraged to learn at least Fanakalo, and the African school teachers should be encouraged to run evening courses in English and literacy for employees.

If and when some employees start to learn English, careful attention should be paid to terminology. Terminology like 'native clinic', 'boy', 'girl' (when used to refer to adults) should disappear completely.

8.1.5 Housing and Amenities.

(a) Repairs should be undertaken immediately on homes on the school side of the valley.

(b) A basic plan for 'closer-settlement' housing should be drawn up for the school side of the valley.

(c) Planning should commence very soon for the erection of solid structures (at least estate-made bricks) in a closer-settlement pattern.

(d) There should be no shared yards, but there should be a space with a roofed shelter as an informal gathering place in the centre of the village.

(e) A water outlet with a spring faucet should be provided for every 3 or 4 homes.

(f) Ablution blocks with showers should be constructed in a central place, with concrete tubs outside for the washing of clothing, etc.

(g) Villagers should all dig pit latrines which should then be fitted with box toilets. Material for a lavatory shelter should be provided and the construction of these supervised and inspected.

(h) Planning should commence soon for the construction of a community centre/clubhouse next to the sportsfield (already under construction).

(i) Loans should be made available to employees for the purchase of coal stoves in every house. Apart from other reasons, this would significantly reduce the existing fire and burn hazards in the homes.

(j) Priority should be given to the expansion of the crèche to include more children. The crèche could function under a committee, the members of which could take turns in visiting and inspecting the crèche, etc.

(k) Transport should be provided, at a modest fare, to and from the nearest business centre. Similar transport should be provided for weekly-paid employees who commute to the school.

The school should consider acquiring a small bus (Kombi) for this purpose. Such a vehicle could also be used by the African school for excursions, etc.

(l) The road to the village should be improved, at least by grading and laying down crushed stone.

(m) The store on the estate should be made fully operational at lowest possible cost and with a useful range of items.

NOTE: At this point it is necessary to state that we realise that the suggested improvements so far listed in this chapter cannot all be implemented at once. It is our firm conviction, however, based on the results of the study, that these specific suggestions deserve serious consideration with a phased programme of implementation for the near future in view. Improvements should not be implemented singly but in phased 'packages'. This brings us to the next important recommendation.

8.1.6 Employee and Village Representation.

Immediately preceding the first 'package' of improvements, a Works Committee should be established and the Village Committee should be re-established. Some outside person with no connections with the school, and preferably an African, or at least a Zulu linguist, should go round to each section of the school and ask for nominations for the two committees. The nominees should be photographed, the photographs mounted on small boxes with slots for the insertion of anonymous voting tokens (even matches will do). In this way all people working on the estate will be able to vote without irrational fear of victimisation.

A Works Committee should consist of one representative of every section in the labour force (very small sections can be combined), and should elect its own Chairman and Vice-Chairman.

The Village Committee should have at least 7 members, and should also elect its own Chairman and Vice-Chairman.

The functions of both committees should be clearly explained. It should be pointed out that the functions will embrace not only control and discipline, but also consultation on all new programmes and regulations before they are finalised, channelling complaints from Workers/Villagers to the authorities, making suggestions as to improvements and changes desired on the

estate and (particularly the Village Committee) in due course taking the lead in community development programmes.

Formal interaction between the committees and the authorities should be at regular intervals or when requested by either party, and should be between the committees and a sub-committee of the Board of Governors, consisting of the Headmaster, the Estate Manager, one senior white teacher with an interest in the affairs of the African community. Day to day interaction should be conducted through the Estate Manager.

Both the committees should be required to report back to their constituents in a meeting at least once every three months, in order to obtain comments and reaction from the community at large.

By the time the authorities are ready to implement the first batch of improvements, the details of these improvements plus a formal disciplinary code should be submitted to these committees for their comments and evaluation. This will represent, hopefully, the first concrete example of a 'new deal' and should make a large impact on the African community.

Disciplinary matters should be dealt with by a committee composed of the Estate Manager, the Headmaster (or the Bursar), the Chairman of the appropriate African Committee (Works or Village Committee, depending on the nature of the infringement) and a white teacher. In the case of the Village Committee, minor infringements should be dealt with by the Village Committee itself. The important role of the Committee composed as suggested, would be to provide effective reassurance to employees that no arbitrary disciplinary action is possible.

## 8.2. LONGER-RANGE PLANNING

### 8.2.1 The Future of the Indigenous Section of the Community.

This section of the community, wiich has particular problems of morale and performance as we have seen, is a slowly dwindling proportion of the labour force. Since it represents a particularly unhealthy state of dependency on the estate, which lies at the root of its problems, it is our considered view that a major reorientation is required as regards this particular group.

One suggestion for consideration and careful exploration, is that attempts be made to place this community on the same footing as the other employee group, namely the migrants. (We should, perhaps, make it clear that the migrant pattern on the estate is not similar to the unfortunate system which operates in the economy at large. The 'migrants' on the estate may have their wives and families with them if they wish.) Preliminary enquiries with the authorities of KwaZulu suggest the following possible course of action.

Arrangements might be made to have the indigenous community formally re-accepted as subjects of Chief K. Mkhize, formerly a traditional chief on the estate and now situated in a part of KwaZulu bordering on Pietermaritzburg. If Chief Mkhize is willing to accept this arrangement, the necessary assistance should be given to allow him to re-establish contact with the indigenous community.

More importantly, however, are the arrangements that might be made for members of the indigenous community after retirement. Through negotiation with the KwaZulu authorities it might be possible to obtain a tract of land as a place of settlement, where the school could assist pensioners in the

erection/maintenance of houses and with other community facilities. If this could be in the area of jurisdiction of Chief Mkhize so much the better, but it seems unlikely since land is at a premium in the area in which the Chief resides.

However, the main purpose of such a scheme would be to give the indigenous estate community and their offspring some community base and land rights (however limited) off the estate and independent of the estate. Children of indigenous community members could be engaged as if they were migrants from the area. On retirement or dismissal and resignation, the understanding would be that the person leaving the estate would have a base elsewhere. For this arrangement to be viable, the settlement rights would have to be on the basis of the land tenure system operating in the area of the settlement, otherwise it could not offer security for children and kin; an important consideration among members of the indigenous African community.

This suggestion is made against a background of the legal impossibility of allowing Africans to acquire any residential security in any so-called white area like the area of the estate or elsewhere.

The authority to consult in regard to this possibility is the KwaZulu Department of Community Affairs in Pietermaritzburg.

For the settlement scheme to be viable there would have to be a pension scheme for all employees, carefully designed, with some benefits in kind, to be supplementary to the government pension scheme (unless, of course, the school considers that its scheme can be sufficiently generous to disqualify pensioners for the state old-age pension).

8.2.2 Community Development.

(a) Social Development:

The Village Committee should be asked to arrange for a series of meetings to be held with villagers, with an outside Community Development consultant in attendance. This could be someone from the Community Development staff of the Zululand Health and Welfare Association - HELWEL - or perhaps someone else nominated by Bishop Zulu of the Diocese of Zululand (Bishop Zulu has a very keen interest in Community Development) or it could be someone from the staff of this Institute.

The purpose of the meetings would be to canvass the community on their problems, on their priorities for development, and on their interest, enthusiasm and willingness to participate in community activities.

Arising out of the impressions gained during the meetings, the outside consultant, in consultation with the Village Committee, could arrange for resources or resource people to be made available to groups in the community, and could offer guidance on progress.

Possible activities could include:

health and nutritional education programmes;
family planning programmes;
film clubs;
hobbies and craft activities;
savings and money-lending clubs;
buying co-operatives;
literacy and English tuition;
mothers' unions, scout clubs, and
other social club activities.

The need for a Community Centre/Clubhouse becomes obvious with these sorts of possibilities in mind. It is important to bear in mind that such activities should not be imposed on the community but should arise out of community interest, after some of the very basic problems of the community have been solved. Community Development programmes along the right lines will not succeed with the village in its present social condition.

(b) Gardening and Agriculture:

Land on the far side of the valley could be considered as a site for a rationalised maize cultivation and vegetable gardening area, with water provided for the vegetable gardening area. For those who are interested in sustained agricultural activity, hopefully a growing proportion as the health of the community improves, really effective back-up assistance should be provided; i.e., ploughing assistance at the right time, fencing assistance, fertilizer, seeds, pesticides, and assistance with the transportation and marketing of produce which cannot be sold through the estate store. The main point here is that with a community in a better state of morale, a few successful gardeners will have a powerful demonstration effect on others who have hitherto shown little interest in gardening.

What the school might also consider in collaboration with the estate farm, is the establishment of a small 'co-operative' cattle herd in which members of the indigenous community own 'shares' and obtain certain benefits like free milk provided they are willing to milk the cattle. The herd could be culled to keep it at a constant and manageable size, but the sale of animals would increase the stock of individual shareholders so that on retirement they could be paid out a lump sum which they could possibly re-invest in cattle elsewhere. Although we realise the great practical difficulties

of such a step, it would provide an enormous boost to the morale of the indigenous community. This might be particularly appropriate if no suitable arrangements can be made for the acquisition of residential rights in a homeland.

8.2.3. General.

If financially possible in due course, the school might consider the appointment of either an African welfare officer with interests in Community Development or else an African Village Chaplain with similar interests.

No more detailed recommendations will be made in regard to Community Development since much of the content of any programme should flow out of the interests and concerns of members of the community.

8.3 Final Comments.

It must be realised that all changes and innovations may take a while to start to bear fruit. The community as it exists at present is in such a poor state of morale that time must be allowed for suspicions to be overcome and a new tempo of living to emerge. We are convinced, however, that the basic pre-conditions can emerge for a very successful programme of community betterment and job enrichment to take place.

Despite the generally critical tone of some of the discussion in the earlier chapters of this report, we have the greatest confidence in the future of the estate. By commissioning this project, the school authorities have demonstrated their sincere interest in the advancement of the African community on the estate. Our contacts with the representatives of the school authorities - the Estate Manager, the Headmaster and others, have served to convince us even

further of the fundamental goodwill and progressive outlook which is present. We have little doubt that any follow-up study in a few years' time will show that dramatic improvements have taken place.

# A P P E N D I X

ISR.27/73

TRANSLATED SCHEDULE

OCTOBER 1973

OFFICE USE:

SALARY : _____

RECORD : _____

**Introduction**

I come from the big school in Durban which we call in English "University of Natal". We teach the students there about Africans. We have talked a lot to black people in towns to try to find out about their lives - their work, their families and their problems. Now we are talking to the people here. We write books - we never mention people's names.

1. How old are you?

   ---

2. What is your religion?

   ---

3. What is your occupation? (Give precise details).

   ---

4. Do you stay in the compound; with your family?

   ---

5. How long have you worked at the school?

   ---

6. What made you seek work here?

   ---

7. If it were possible, would you have liked to seek work elsewhere, or not?

   Yes / No / Possibly

   ---

8. Where would you have liked to work?

   ---

9. Why would you have liked this?

---

10. Where do you feel your home to be?

---

10a. (People living in single quarters only) Would you like your family to come and live with you here at the school or not?

Yes / No Why?

---

11. (See page 92).

12. Why did you leave school?

---

13. How far would you like to have gone with your education?

---

14. (If further) Why would you have liked this?

---

11 A) We would like to know something about your family and your household. (Include migrants absent temporarily).

| Relationship to Kraalhead | Sex | Age | 1. Occupation (Give details) 2. Scholar 3. Housewife 4. Retired members of family | Highest School Standard Passed | Dependent on Kraal-head or not. (Give details) | Income per month if any | Money Given/Sent to House-hold per Month / Money or Food, etc. | If Respondent is not Kraal-head, give his relationship to Kraalhead |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | |

11 B) Are there people you support or help to support who don't stay at your home? Even friends?

| Relationship to Kraalhead | Sex | Age | Occupation Scholar Housewife Retired | Amount of Money Given Monthly by Respondent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |

15. Could you tell how your household spent your last wage packet? (Single quarters - How did you spend your last wage?) (Suggest items).

| Food | Amount Spent | Where Bought |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | | |
| 2 | | |
| 3 | | |
| 4 | | |
| 5 | | |
| 6 | | |
| 7 | | |
| 8 | | |
| 9 | | |
| 10 | | |
| 11 | | |
| 12 | | |
| **Clothing** | **Amount Spent** | **Where Bought** |
| 1 | | |
| 2 | | |
| 3 | | |
| 4 | | |
| 5 | | |
| **Household Goods** | **Amount Spent** | **Where Bought** |
| 1 | | |
| 2 | | |
| 3 | | |
| 4 | | |
| 5 | | |
| **Cleaning Materials like Polish, Vim, Soap etc** | **Amount Spent** | **Where Bought** |
| 1 | | |
| 2 | | |
| 3 | | |
| 4 | | |
| 5 | | |

| Wood/Coal/Candles | Amount Spent | Where Bought |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | | |
| 2 | | |
| 3 | | |

| Transport (Details of who and to where) | Amount Spent | Where |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | | |
| 2 | | |
| 3 | | |

| Doctor (When?) (How often?) | Amount Spent | Where |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | | |
| 2 | | |
| 3 | | |
| 4 | | |

| Traditional Healer | Amount Spent | Where |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | | |
| 2 | | |

| Tobacco/Snuff | Amount Spent | Where Bought |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | | |
| 2 | | |

| Spending on Leisure and Entertainment - like beer etc. | Amount Spent | Where Bought |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | | |
| 2 | | |
| 3 | | |
| 4 | | |

| Hire Purchase Payments (Give details) | Amount Spent | Where Bought |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | | |
| 2 | | |
| 3 | | |

| Other | Amount Spent | Where |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | | |
| 2 | | |
| 3 | | |
| 4 | | |
| 5 | | |
| 6 | | |

16. (Single quarters only) How much money do you usually send home every month?

---

17. What are the really important things that make a man contented in life? (Probe) Anything else? etc.

---

18. What are the really important things which make a man respect and appreciate his job - things which make him feel his job is a good one? (Probe) Anything else? etc.

---

19. What things would you personally like to achieve for yourself in your life? (Probe) Anything else? etc.

---

20. What things would you like your family to achieve? (Probe) Anything else? etc.

---

21. Which of these things (take each in turn) do you feel you will or will not achieve in your life? (List in order) Why do you feel this?

19. Yes / No
Why do you feel this way?
1.
2.
3.
4.

20. Yes / No
Why do you feel this way?
1.
2.
3.
4.

22. What things you do make you proud to be a man/woman?

---

23. What things you do or have to do make you feel a little ashamed?

---

24. What things are you able to do during the week and weekends which you really enjoy? (Probe)

---

25. Would you like to do this job for the rest of your life or not?
Yes / No (If not) Why do you feel this way?

---

26. Among the Africans who work at the school - I do not want to know a name —— think of one you admire and trust. Why do you admire him?

---

27. Again no names. Who do you despise? Why do you despise him?

---

28. If you had two friends, one works hard and is tired after work, while the other saves himself and is fresh after work, which one would you admire most? Why?

---

29. If you had another two friends, one saves his money for a later day while the other spends his money and enjoys himself, which would you admire most? Why?

---

30. The job you do at the school - do other men like this job or not?
Yes / No Why?

---

31. What things make your job a good job? Why?

---

32a. What things make your job disagreeable?

---

32b. Is there anything you feel you can do about these things - to improve your job? Why? Why not?

---

33. Have you ever considered changing jobs? Yes / No
What job have you thought of? Why?

---

34. What type of job would you prefer to do? (Give details) Why?

---

35. (If not doing the preferred job) What is the reason for you not doing this job?

---

36. Would you like to do this job for the rest of your life or not?
Yes / No Why?

---

37. What would make you feel that it would be worthwhile to work harder? (Probe) Anything else? If more money - how much?

---

38. Where would you like to work - here, in Durban or Pietermaritzburg or another city, or in the African reserves?

---

38a. What makes you keep your present job?

---

38b. Do you feel secure or insecure in your work or not?

---

38c. Would you find another job easily or not?

---

39. What do you feel the minimum pay a man like you should get?

---

40. Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with your present hours of work?

(i) Rations
(ii) Leave

---

40a. If you were offered more rations or money equal to the value of the rations - which would you prefer?

---

41. If you were to win R100, what would you do with it?

---

42. If you were to have a job with R10 extra per month, how would you spend it?

---

42a. Have you ever saved any money? When? How much? Do you save money now? What for?

---

43. What facilities should the school provide for African workers which would make life better or more enjoyable?

---

44. Do you have Indian supervisors at work? How do you get along with them? (Probe)

---

45. If you have a complaint about work, who can you tell?

---

46. All over Durban and Natal there are Works Committees. What do you thing of the new system of Works Committees?

---

47. Are you satisfied with the method of choosing representatives on your Works Committee or not?

---

48. Do you know who are your representatives on the Works Committee or not?

---

49. Are there any people or groups with whom you do not mix here at the school? Why?

---

50. What gives a man status and standing in the community?

---

50a. Give five qualities a man should have in order to be a respected person.

---

50b. Are there people at the school who have these things or not?

---

51. What do you and your friends usually do in your free time?

---

52. Could you tell me what you consider to be the main problems experienced by people at the school? Problems for themselves and their families? (Probe) Anything else?

---

53. Think of the goods you and your family lack. What do you feel you and your family are short of?

| Need | What Respondent Lacks | What Family Lacks | What/How Much |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | | | |
| 2 | | | |
| 3 | | | |
| 4 | | | |
| 5 | | | |
| 6 | | | |
| 7 | | | |
| 8 | | | |
| 9 | | | |
| 10 | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

54. (Village residents only) What do you feel about the Village Committee? Are you satisfied with it or not? How does it cause you problems?

---

55. Now finally, we have been asking people all over about their bosses - the people who own the factories they work in - or the farms. Think of the people in charge at the school. I will read you a list of words. Could you tell me when a word fits the people in charge at the school? You can use any number of words that fit.

- friendly
- sympathetic
- they like Africans
- selfish
- understand Africans
- reliable
- generous
- hostile
- strange
- dislike Africans
- hypocritical
- lenient
- not dependable
- strict
- cruel
- honest
- rich
- untrustworthy
- don't understand Africans
- unjust
- strong
- weak
- fair / just
- dependable
- warm
- demanding

56. Make notes on house and garden. Make notes on impressions of respondent - his major problems and concerns, etc.

---

---

---

57. Where have your older children gone to work? Why did they choose to work there/here? (PROBE)

---

---

---

58. Have any of your family been sent away from the school? Why? What do you feel about it?

---

---

---

59. Do you know of other people who have been sent away? Why were they sent away?

---

---

---

60. Your four closest friends - who are they? Where do they live? How long have you known them? Are they related to you or not?

| Friend | Live Where? | How Long Known? | Relatives or Group (Interviewer find out which group they belong to - indigenous, Xhosa migrants, other migrants, people elsewhere) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | | | |
| 2. | | | |
| 3. | | | |
| 4. | | | |

61. Which four people would people like you want to see as leaders at the school? Why?

---

---

---

62. In doing your work here is there anything you find tiring, uncomfortable, or irritating in your work? What are they?

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ISR.18/74

CENSUS OF VILLAGE

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Amount Spent on School Books | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Amount Spent on School Fees | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Tax | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Tribute to Chief | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| District of Origin | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Starting Salary of Kraal Head at the School | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Number of Years Spent at the School | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Income in Kind (Rations etc.) | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Money Paid into Household Budget/Sent to Household Monthly (Total) | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Money Sent Away/ To Whom | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Dependent or Not on Kraal Head | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Where Living | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Monthly Income of Each Member | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Occupation and Where | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Relation to Kraal Head | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Sex | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Age | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Full Name of Kraal Head, Household Numbers, Family + Dependents | | | | | | | | | | | | |

1. Has anyone been expelled from the school who is a member of your family? Why? When?

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2. Are any of your children working away from the estate? Why did they choose not to work at the school?

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3. (IF INDIGENOUS TO THE ESTATE) What was your wife's maiden name? Was she any kind of relation to you?

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4. (IF INDIGENOUS TO THE ESTATE) What happened to your parents when they retired from work?

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5. (IF BORN AND BRED ON THE ESTATE OR BEEN THERE MANY YEARS) What will happen to you when you are too old to work? (PROBE)

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6. (IF INDIGENOUS TO THE ESTATE) Who will work at the school in your family when you are too old to work?

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7. (INTERVIEWER - DESCRIBE IN CAREFUL DETAIL: Number of huts per household, condition of house, furnishing,and equipment, garden, what grown, etc.)

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