AN INVESTIGATION INTO SOME BASIC

VALUES OF PEOPLE RESIDENT IN

THE RURAL AREA OF

NDLANGUBO, KWAZULU

PENELOPE GEERDTS

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PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Early in 1985 the Natal Town and Regional Planning Commission requested the Centre For Applied Social Sciences to undertake a focussed study of people's basic values in Natal and KwaZulu. Two broad aims were proposed :

1. to investigate people's general orientations to life with a view to identifying those which facilitate or impede development, and

2. to determine people's perceptions of how to improve life in their communities i.e. strategies for development.

This is an ongoing study. Personalised interviews are being conducted amongst all race groups within metropolitan Durban by means of a pre-designed questionnaire. Research in the rural areas is, however, complete. Although information was gathered from the districts of Ndlangubo and Zwelithule in KwaZulu, this paper will concentrate on data obtained from the former.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

In the sociology of development there are two broad theoretical
perspectives :

1. the modernisation school which takes values and attitudes as the
    central determining factor of underdevelopment,

2. the neo-marxist conflict school which disregards culture and looks
    at structures viz. capitalism as the factor impeding and undermining
    development.

Horowitz (1970) regards the above as representing either an intrinsic
standpoint, where a theory of values is favoured, or an extrinsic one,
where a theory of structures is supported.   Few theorists attempt some
kind of synthesis between the two.

Ever since the pioneering work by Max Weber (1904) in the field of the
impact of Protestant values and the growth of capitalism, sociologists
have been concerned with the inter-relationship between value systems
and socio-economic achievement in communities.   Max Weber was particu-
larly fascinated by the process of rationalisation taking place in
western Europe, believing that the application of the principle of
rationality was a dynamic force behind capitalist behaviour.   In his
study of European capitalism he attempted to trace the origins of
rational conduct to a religious ethic practised by certain middle-class
ascetic Protestant sects, an ethic which stressed among other things
the value of hard work combined with an austere style of living.   In
the same way as Weber attributed the beginning and subsequent spread of
industrial growth to an ethos, Bellah (1968) attributes it to a specific
motivation and behaviour.   He talks about a spiritual phenomenon, or a
kind of mentality, a strength of the individual to extend outwards, to
calculate and to plan.

Another group of writers such as Hagen (1962) and McClelland (1962) have reformulated Weber's argument in psychological or social-psychological terms and have hypothesised that certain attitudinal or personality changes precede and accompany development. A major theme in McClelland's thesis is that the entrepreneurial spirit of men is ultimately responsible for the pace and extent of development. What matters is how people respond to challenges, and how they respond depends on the strength of their concern for achievement; setting realistic goals, taking calculated risks, assuming personal responsibility and evaluating and following up on work done.

Other social scientists have been primarily concerned with the process of modernisation, assuming that it is essential for development and a preferable state towards which a nation must strive. They distinguish between what have been termed pre-modern (or traditional) and modern values, and attempt to test the effect of changes from the former to the latter.

In South Africa there has been an increase in the popularity of the structural school of thought. This follows from a growing awareness that the dominant modernisation paradigms which emerged from the study of Western industrial societies and economies are inapplicable to developing Third World countries. The Dependency (or Development of Underdevelopment) School takes an historical analytic approach, explaining how the causes of poverty and underdevelopment stem from the exploitation of the people by the colonial powers. The wider capitalist politico-economic system has shaped and is shaping the circumstances and values of the majority of the people, entrenching a system whereby the overprivileged benefit at the expense of the poor.

This paper proposes to :

a.   provide a brief analysis of the major line of thought amongst

modernisation theorists,

b.   investigate some basic values of rural black people, and

c.   critically assess the modernisation paradigm, particularly in

the light of these findings.

Whatever the results, the author believes that any study of people's

values is important.   The failure to fully understand basic human values

or to have preconceived ideas based on hearsay rather than on fact, has

been and still is, responsible for errors made in decisions regarding

the development of a society.   This is particularly so where particip-

ation by, and an understanding of, the people of the community concerned

is given second place.

Little research in this area has been conducted in South Africa and a

study such as this can provide useful insights into people's values

in the local context.

SECTION ONE : THEORETICAL APPROACHES

1.1 The meaning of values

There is no specific agreement as to the meaning of values. On a broad
level Kahl provides a typical definition when he describes values as
"general orientations toward basic aspects of life : abstract principles
that guide behaviour" (1974 : 8). However the traditional usage of
the word value commonly applied by social scientists closely allies itself
with the conception of worth. In this sense values describe principles,
standards, courses of action or qualities considered useful or worthwhile
(Kahle, 1983).

Definitions of value often cover consciously held values, but values do
not have to be conscious. People are rarely aware of the motives that
direct their behaviour, even in important moral situations. Many
sociologists identify the values of a given group with those practically
implemented by that group, but factors such as coercion may lead people
or whole societies to behave contrary to their deeply felt value-
principles and ideals. It is dangerous to describe evaluative systems
solely on the grounds of external symptoms such as behaviour because it
may show ethnocentrism or culturocentrism.

1.2 The meaning of development

The term development has elicited a variety of definitions which reflect
diverse attitudes. The trend today, however, is to perceive development
as extending beyond economic growth alone.

Seers has put forward a widely accepted definition :

"Development means creating the conditions for the realization of human personality. Its evaluation must therefore take into account three linked economic criteria : whether there has been a reduction in (i) poverty; (ii) unemployment; (iii) inequality." (1972 : 21).

According to Nattrass (1983) there is some agreement that the following conditions constitute development :

a. a reduction of poverty,

b. an increase in political participation,

c. an increase in popular access to economic resources,

d. a reduction in the difference in life styles of the poor and rich,

e. an improvement in human capability through the provision of education and health care,

f. an increase in the degree of self-sufficiency at both community and national level,

g. an improvement in the quality of life of the majority,

h. social change,

i. an increase in the freedom to choose.

To Lauterbach (1974) the concept of development has expanded beyond economic growth to political and social levels. Social concerns embrace population control, public health, education, planned urbanisation, community organisation, welfare policies and a drive for greater social equality and mobility. In addition to this, development has come to include a change or adjustment in many accustomed cultural patterns, and in some cases the structure of the traditionally accepted and internalised values of individuals have been effected.

Zulu (1985) states that development is a <u>process</u> which necessitates a maximisation of opportunities to allow people to satisfy basic needs such as food, clothing, sanitation, shelter, health, education, some transportation and drinking water. He strongly believes that this development process also involves an activation of political variables - participation by the people at the grassroots level and their ability to control their own affairs in order to improve their quality of life. MacDonald also views development as a change process "<u>... which takes place in groups of people as they improve their quality of life seen not only in terms of increased wealth but also of increased well-being.</u>" (1981 : 74).

In this paper the term development will be taken to mean a process of transformation from one set of conditions, or state, to another, through action. This process may have positive or negative dimensions, but ideally it should improve the levels of living of those involved, economically, politically, socially and psychologically. The ultimate goal could be, for example, the mobilisation of the people to determine the conditions in which they live, the maximisation of opportunities to allow people to realise their basic needs (Zulu, 1985), or the reduction of poverty, unemployment and income inequality (Seers, 1972).

1.3 Modernisation Theory

The major line of thought amongst modernisation theorists is that akin to development is the process whereby societies move from a traditional to a modern state. Most commonly the term <u>modern</u> is dealt with on a macro level and refers to structures, giving an emphasis to patterns (e.g. of urbanisation and industrialisation) and institutions (e.g. political, economic, religious, familial and organisational) occurring at a national level. It is not the intention of this paper to detail

the various studies which propound theories on the process of
modernisation at the macro level, although some consideration will be
given to the perceived dichotomy between traditional and modern or
urban and rural societies.

Many of the propositions put forward by modernisation theorists coincide
or overlap with general distinctions which are made between rural and
urban society.   These distinctions are also contained in Tŏnnies'
discussion of the institutions of gemeinschaft and gesellschaft.   Since
Redfield (1956) many sociologists have become interested in the notion
of a rural-urban continuum, oriented towards constructing typologies
of rural and urban communities (Nash, 1958; Kennedy, 1962; Geertz, 1963;
Smelser, 1963; Chodak, 1973; Long, 1977).   These theorists generally
suggest the following broad characteristics of each community type :

Rural :

a.   a subsistence economy which ideally tends to produce everything it
     needs, and almost exclusively for its own direct consumption.   It
     is based on small-scale, technologically simple agricultural pro-
     duction, mostly on a farm-group basis.   The increase of its output
     depends on the increase of its internal needs, usually in connection
     with the number of dependents in each household,

b.   the people have a semi-worshipping attitude to the land,

c.   the familial group is the basic economic unit of production.   Family
     and productive roles coincide.   There is a persistence of extended
     or joint family organisation,

d.   kinship constitutes a primary organising structure within the
     community.   For example, recruitment of labour is along kinship lines,

e.   there is a sharp division of labour between the sexes,

f.   little emphasis is given to personal choice in the selection of a
     marriage partner,

g.   each member of the society is subject to the strong controls of the
local community. Hereditary lineage elders exercise authority,

h.   there is strong attachment to the locality, and a powerful sense
of belonging and group solidarity when competition or threat is
encountered from other communities. Allied to this is a distrust
of strangers,

i.   there is an ascriptive allocation of roles and positions,

j.   the society is homogeneous,

k.   the sacred prevails over the secular,

l.   a strong respect for tradition is shown.

Urban :

a.   specialised, autonomous social units exist e.g. the nuclear family,

b.   the family's consumption and production activities are separated.
Familial activities concentrate more on emotional gratification
and socialisation,

c.   wage labour predominates as people become involved in a money economy,

d.   emphasis is given to personal choice in the selection of a marriage
partner,

e.   women are more independent economically, politically and socially.
They are less subservient in their behaviour, particularly to their
husbands. There is a reduction in the sharp division of labour
between the sexes,

f.   recruitment to occupational, political and religious positions
depends on achievement criteria, wealth, education, qualifications,
experience and leadership in associations,

g.   multi-functional roles are replaced by more specialised ones,

h.   individual mobility increases,

i.   people develop new types of social relationships through participation
in co-operative enterprises e.g. trade unions, churches,

j. people are more individualistic in their behaviour.   Urban society
is therefore heterogeneous,

k. a desire to maximise one's material prosperity predominates.   There
is a rational pursuit of self-interest.

The theories of modernisation make a distinction between the value-
orientations and motivational states of modern and traditional forms of
social organisation.   At the heart of these theories lie Parsons' (1966)
pattern variables, namely value patterns governing the behaviour of one
actor to another.   Parsons contrasts the modern and the traditional
as follows :

a. universalism (regarding individuals as members of classificatory
groups) vs. particularism (treating individuals as individuals),

b. achievement (responding to an individual because of what he has
achieved) vs. ascription (responding to an individual because of
his given attributes),

c. specificity (regarding an individual as the provider of specialised
services) vs. diffuseness (regarding him as the provider of many
services e.g. that of a farmer, community leader, parent, religious
functionary),

d. self-orientation vs. collective orientation,

e. affectivity vs. affective neutrality.

Hoselitz (1960) applies Parsons' pattern variables to the study of the
development process.   He argues that developed societies are characterised
by universalism, achievement orientation and functional specificity.
Undeveloped societies have the opposite variables of particularism,
ascription and functional diffuseness.   He conceptualises the change
to a modern society as entailing the eventual modification or elimination
of traditional pattern variables.

A contrasting line of analysis concerns itself specifically with the individual and with individual development; changes in their attitudes, values and behaviour.

Inkeles and Smith (1968; 1973; 1974) developed a conceptual model of individual modernity based on analytic, topical and behavioural considerations in an effort to define the type of personality one would expect to predominate under conditions of advanced modernisation. From evidence based on interviews with 6000 men from six developing countries they hypothesise that there is a set of personal qualities which cohere as a syndrome and which identify the concept of a modern man against that of a traditional one.

Qualities defined within the framework of their analytic model are :

1. Readiness for new experiences and openness to innovation and change. Traditional man is less receptive to new ideas, new ways of operating and to new experiences with people than modern man.

2. Growth of opinion. This area is divisible into three subthemes :

    (i) Modern man has a disposition to form and hold opinions on a wide range of issues that arise in and outside of his immediate environment. Traditional man takes an interest in fewer situations and events, and mainly those that affect him personally. When he does hold opinions about matters external to himself he is more wary of expressing them.

    (ii) Modern man shows awareness of the diversity of attitude and opinion expressed by others. He can acknowledge and tolerate differences of opinion and respects the right of every person to express their views. Traditional man approaches opinion in an

autocratic way, automatically accepting the ideas of those more powerful than himself and rejecting those below him. He denies different viewpoints out of fear that they will upset his concept of the world.

(iii) Being modern means being more enthusiastic in gaining facts and information on which to base opinions. In comparison with traditional man who concerns himself with local issues, modern man strives to keep up with news and has a greater preference for items of national and international importance.

Generally traditional man's lack of involvement and participation in the wider world, in civic and community affairs and in local politics is reflected in his limited range of opinion.

3. Time. Two issues are relevant :

(i) Traditional man has a past orientation as against one of the present and future.

(ii) In comparison with traditional man, modern man has a strict sense of time and an insistence on the careful scheduling of events i.e. he is punctual and regular and shows an orderliness in organising his affairs.

4. Efficacy. Modern man has broken away from passivity and fatalism in the face of life's problems. This implies a mastery over nature and the environment, and a belief that man has the ability to control and organise his life, overcoming the challenges it presents at all levels, whether alone or with others.

5. Planning. Careful planning is highly valued by modern man as a way of attaining his personal goals and those of the community.

6. <u>Calculability and trust</u> (closely related to the sense of efficacy).
    Modern man regards the world as lawful, predictable and under human
    control. He feels confident that people and institutions are
    reliable and will fulfil their obligations and meet their respon-
    sibilities. Traditional man is less prepared to trust strangers
    and he believes in the influence of fate.

7. <u>Distributive justice</u>. In traditional society rewards are largely
    determined by power, special status, or haphazardly by those who
    control the distribution of the benefits. Modern man believes in
    distributive justice; the structure of rewards should be in accord-
    ance with skill and social contribution and be part of a formal
    system governed by rules universally applied.

8. <u>Aspirations, education and learning</u>. Members of traditional societies
    strongly believe in traditional wisdom. Where formal schooling
    exists it is often used for religious instruction and for inculcating
    and preserving traditional values. In contrast modern man places
    high value on formal education where skills such as reading, writing
    and arithmetic are taught. Faith in science and technology pre-
    dominates.
    Modern man has greater ambition for himself and for his children, to
    achieve high occupational and educational goals.

9. <u>Awareness of, and respect for, the dignity of others</u>. Modern man
    is more aware and respectful of the dignity of subordinates, not
    only in the work situation but in his relations with all those
    inferior in status and power e.g. women and children.

As a supplement to the analytic model of individual modernity Inkeles
and Smith identify factors which they regard as either preconditions
of modernisation or accompaniments to the consequences of modernisatton
(i.e. the cost of becoming modern). These they include in their
topical model :

1. Family and kinship. Increased urbanisation and industrialisation
    tend to diminish the strength of extended kinship relations while
    increasing the degree of responsibility to the immediate nuclear
    family. However industrial employment can strengthen some extended
    family ties because, with a steady job and income, the worker is in
    a better economic position to accept kinship obligations.

2. The status of women in society. Traditional societies are usually
    male-dominated whereas the liberating effect of modernisation
    influences men's attitudes towards recognising equality between the
    sexes.

3. Religion. The individual's adherence to the doctrine of his
    traditional religion is somewhat undermined by modern living. But
    at the same time the fulfilment of these religious obligations may
    increase in practice as more facilities are available and more
    money is at hand to pay for services.

4. The aged. In traditional societies there is a great respect for
    the elderly. It is widely believed that modernisation leads to an
    erosion of such respect. Inkeles and Smith feel that the structural
    changes accompanying modernisation may undercut the position of the
    aged; the youth become independent from their fathers' authority
    and the influence of the media makes it difficult for the older
    generation to enforce traditional values and norms. However urban

living and its benefits (e.g. wages and stable life conditions) enable the young to more easily fulfil obligations to the aged.

5. Politics. In contrast to the traditional man, modern man participates and takes an active interest in issues which are both personal and which effect his community. Allegiance extends beyond his family and friends to the state, the nation and its leaders. He discusses politics, joins political parties, supports candidates and votes.

6. Information media. Modern man exposes himself regularly to mass communication (newspapers, radio, movies and television), but not necessarily to the exclusion of the less modern sources of information and advice. Traditional man regards mass media with scepticism, as possibly dangerous and harmful.

7. Consumerism. Modern man's stable financial position, his easy access to credit facilities and his belief in the abundance of merchandise stimulates a consumption ethic whereas traditional man considers frugality as good and consumerism as immoral.

8. Social stratification. Traditional societies usually have closed class systems in which mobility is minimal. Men are born into their positions - sons succeed their fathers. Status and prestige are assigned mainly on the basis of long-established, hereditary family connections. Authority is respected and feared. In an open, modern society attitudes and values about stratification change. Prestige is assigned more on the basis of education and skill and there is a belief in the opportunity of mobility for all.

9.   Psychic adjustment.   There is a widespread conviction that modern-
isation and urbanisation disrupt basic social ties and social controls
and produce personal disorientation and maladjustment.   The impression
of Inkeles and Smith is that exposure to the influence of modern
institutions does not lead to significant psychic distress, except
in the cases of the unemployed and new arrivals to the city.   The
shift to industrial work is conducive to greater security through
higher incomes and greater opportunities for advancement, and a
sense of personal worth increases.   On the other hand it is strenuous
to survive in less modern societies where making a living is difficult.

A basic assumption to the work of Inkeles and Smith is that modernity is
learned in modern situations.   The implication is that men are not born
modern but are made so by their life experiences.   Education and occupat-
ional experience within large-scale organisations contribute significantly
to the schooling of people in modern values and attitudes.

To elaborate on this theme they talk about early and late socialisation.
The school is believed to be the most important early training ground
for inculcating the values of modern society;   it teaches methods of
conduct and orientation to others.   These effects are inherent in the
school as an organisation, and they follow from its informal, implicit
and often unconscious programme.

Factories are distinctive institutions of modern society which train
people in appropriate attitudes, values and behaviour.   With exposure
to factory work substantial changes can be made to a man's value system
long after his most informative years.   Thus individuals with little
formal schooling can still become modern under the right circumstances.

As with other modernisation theorists, Inkeles and Smith assume that modernisation is essential for development and that it is a preferable state towards which a nation must strive. They in particular regard the <u>individual</u> as an essential element in this development process i.e. a society is not modern unless its people are modern. The effective functioning of such a society requires that its members have certain qualities, attitudes, values and dispositions. For example, it requires a readiness for new experience and an acceptance of innovation, a concern with public issues at both community and national levels, and a sense of efficacy that encourages and supports programmes of social change. More specifically they believe that the development of industry will be interrupted or arrested if not accompanied by changes in the values and attitudes of the population operating the new industry, consuming its products, dealing with its demands etc. A nation will not be truly developed unless all its citizens are incorporated into the modern sector of society and have experienced fundamental changes in their personal qualities.

Inkeles and Smith caution of the danger that within the definition of <u>modern</u> some more powerful group may impress its own values on a less powerful group as if it was bestowing a <u>benefit</u>. The definition should not arbitrarily impose Western customs or standards of value on people in developing countries.

Other proposed models of modern man have elements in common with the preceding theory. For example, among the more specific values appropriate to modernisation, Moore (1963) lists rationality in problem-solving, punctuality, recognition of individuality, and achievement aspirations. Ward (1964) presents a list of eight features of what he calls <u>intellectual modernisation</u>, among which are items similar to Inkeles and Smith's themes of aspirations for learning, acceptance of change, and growth of opinion.

Pool (1963) also defines the modern in terms of values and modes of
behaviour, among which are efficacy and openness to new experience.

Kahl (1974) contrasts traditional and modern societies, specifying
the characteristics of each according to various categories; division
of labour, state of the technology, degree of urbanisation, the economy,
system of social stratification, education, communication and values.
He writes about values :

> "Traditional values are compulsory in their force, sacred in their
> tone, and stable in their timelessness. They call for fatalistic
> acceptance of the world as it is, respect for those in authority,
> and submergence of the individual in the collectivity. Modern
> values are rational and secular, permit choice and experiment,
> glorify efficiency and change, and stress individual responsibility."
> (1974 : 6).

The value syndrome of modernism which Kahl proposes has been supported
by evidence from studies he undertook in Brazil and Mexico. This core
syndrome consists of seven closely interrelated variables :

1. Activism. Modern man uses technology to shape his world the way
    he desires. He realises that control and change are both desirable
    and possible, thus he becomes an activist. In contrast, the whole
    structure of traditional man's experience makes him a fatalist.
    Lacking sophisticated technology he is dependent on nature (the
    weather, soil etc.). He adapts to life as it is, accepting rather
    than challenging and changing, often resorting to the comforts of
    religion as an escape.

2. Low stratification of life chances. Closely associated with activism
    is modern man's belief in the opportunity to change his status, to

achieve individual advancement.   In traditional societies status
is ascribed rather than achieved.

3.   <u>Low urban community stratification.</u>   Modernists tend to perceive
the local community in democratic terms and therefore see themselves
as able to influence public policy.   Traditionalists perceive their
community as dominated by those with higher status, an elite that
ignores the opinion of the people.

4.   <u>Low integration with relatives</u>.   Traditionalists are deeply involved
with their relatives and kinfolk, with whom they usually live and
work.   Modernists view the extended family as a block to individual
freedom and initiative.

5.   <u>Individualism</u>.   Those classified as modern wish to be independent
of their workmates and free to move forward individually in their
careers.

6.   <u>Mass media participation</u>.   Modernists read newspapers, listen to
the radio and watch television, and follow national and international
events.   Traditionalists depend on local gossip for news.

7.   Modern man shows a <u>preference for urban living</u>.

There are additional values which Kahl associates with modernism, but
to a lesser degree.   These include trust in people, a propensity to
take career risks, and a favouring of modern roles within the nuclear
family.

Although the preceding components of modernism are mostly interrelated,

Kahl believes that each is a separate variable ranging from the traditional pole to the modern, with the possibility of a number of intermediate points. Thus it is possible for men to be modern on some values and traditional on others. The further development of a society can be realised by fostering modern values, by encouraging a person to move outward rather than inward (e.g. through education).

Lerner (1958) views modernity as a behavioural system. It is primarily a state of mind of which an enlarged capacity for empathy is an essential and distinctive component. He defines empathy as "the capacity to see oneself in the other fellow's situation" and "for arranging the self-system on short notice" (1958 : 50, 51). It is the ability to identify with new aspects of the environment, which enables people to operate in a changing world. This notion of empathy coincides with the concept of openness to new experience and readiness for change proposed by Inkeles and Smith.

The interdependent sectors of modern society require widespread participation which demands an expansive and adaptive self-system, ready to incorporate new roles and to identify personal values with public issues. In comparison, the isolated communities of traditional society function well on the basis of a highly constrictive personality. People grow up knowing the existing structure of roles and relationships in the community. Their horizons are limited by locale and their decisions involve only people they know.

Lerner thus makes a distinction between traditional and modern societies. In the former an absence of curiosity is evident. Psychic traits interact continuously with the established institutions from which they are derived and which they serve to reinforce. He describes these institutions

as usually authoritarian, patriarchal and changeless, prescribing the
values of loyality and obedience. In polar contrast to this is modern
society where the expansive, desirous, seeking and acquiring individual
is more evident. "In the Modern milieu a man gets on by his wits in
new opportunities, not by his inertia in familiar routines...aspiration,
curiosity, know-how overcome constriction, impassivity, ignorance...
participation replaces isolation, effort replaces acquiesence, initiative
replaces inertia." (1958 : 134).

Lerner's empirical evidence shows that people who are urban, literate,
participant and empathic differ from people who lack any of these
attributes on a particular significant personal trait i.e. having opinions
on public matters. Traditional man regards public issues as none of
his business. He is incurious about almost everything that does not
directly concern his daily life. On the contrary public matters are
viewed with interest and as important by modern man in his capacity as
a participant, and he develops a broad range of opinions.

In a traditional society it is possible to distinguish the individuals
whom Lerner refers to as the transitionals, the men in motion, people
who have in common some of the empathy and psychic mobility of the
moderns but who lack other essential characteristics. When many
individuals show deviation in this direction a transition is underway in
their society i.e. it has become a mobile society. Lerner proposes
that such a society has to encourage rationality, and that in it "people
come to see the future as manipulable rather than ordained and their
personal prospects in terms of achievement rather than heritage."
(1958 : 47).

A further finding in his study is that traditionals who are modernising consider themselves happier than those who remain within the traditional way of life.   This supports the conclusions reached by Inkeles and Smith regarding psychic stress.

SECTION TWO : RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Field research was conducted in October 1985 in the KwaZulu district of Ndlangubo, which lies approximately twenty-five kilometres south of Empangeni. This area was selected on the presumption that it is typical of a marginal rural black community.

Preliminary organisation was time-consuming, occasionally problematic, but ultimately rewarding. The following steps were undertaken before interviewing began :

a. an appointment was made with the magistrate of the district concerned, who subsequently granted the researchers permission to be in the area,

b. the relevant chief was paid a visit. After explaining the purpose of the study to him, he volunteered to arrange the recruitment of participants for the group discussions. He also offered the use of a church in which to conduct the interviews.

c. accommodation was arranged in an hotel.

The method of analysis was exploratory involving qualitative, depth-probing group discussions. Five structured groups of eight to twelve people were interviewed. The groups were divided according to the following categories :

1. men, 50 years and older,

2. women, 50 years and older,

3. men, from 26 to 49 years of age,

4. women, from 26 to 49 years of age,

5. men and women, from 18 to 25 years of age.

An aim of the study was to compare people in different age groups. This was made possible by including sufficient numbers of young adults, the

middle aged and the elderly. In order to eliminate inhibition of women
by the presence of men, or vice versa, the first four groups were
separated on the basis of sex.

Economic and time constraints affected the manner in which respondents
were selected; it was cheaper and more convenient to use a non-
probability method of sampling, particularly where no adequate sampling
frame of the area was available. It is recognised that the sample was
not fully representative of the population as the choice of subjects was
largely arbitrary and subjective. However local indunas recruited the
sample according to specified age groups and, in order to gain a fairly
wide selection of people, it was stressed that participants should come
from different sections of the community.

The total sample size was forty-eight. The maximum of sixty respondents
could not be realised due to factors out of the researchers' control
e.g. rainy weather, long distances to be travelled on foot, crises or
duties that had to be handled by participants on the proposed days of
the discussions, and misunderstandings as to the date or place of the
interviews. However the minimum requirement of eight people per group
was reached.

It would have been possible to enlarge the sample had the duration of
each discussion been shortened or had longer time been spent out in the
field. However the first approach was impractical considering the
amount of information required from each group - the number of topics to
be covered was already limited. The second alternative would have
introduced additional problems. By the time the fifth group was inter-
viewed it had become apparent that the topics for discussion were
spreading through the community by word-of-mouth and were possibly

biasing responses.

A semi-structured, focussed group discussion technique using open-ended questions was chosen as the most appropriate form of gathering data. A list of specific questions was prepared in advance. This was to ensure that discussions did not come to a standstill and that all important topics were addressed. Several questions were framed to examine different aspects of each topic rather than relying on responses to a single question. The interviewer had the freedom to reword questions, to introduce questions which seemed applicable to particular instances, and to change the order of the questions to conform to the sequence of ideas. However standardisation was introduced as much as possible through the use of a set of predetermined questions so that data was comparable between groups.

Godsell (1981) believes that group discussions are likely to provide sensitive insights into the values people hold. Subjects have the opportunity to examine and clarify their own values through questioning and articulation.

As a method of collecting factual information, the use of semi-structured group discussions has a number of advantages and disadvantages (Maccoby & Maccoby, 1954; Kluckhohn, 1967; Peil et al, 1982; Babbie, 1983). The following are some of the perceived advantages :

a.   there is no rigid format, and this allows for flexibility. A greater depth of understanding is permitted as the interviewer can explore unusual ideas which emerge and can introduce related topics. Information can be supplemented or corrected through probing and asking additional questions. Fuller answers can be obtained and a

more accurate understanding of a respondent's viewpoint is possible,

b. a formal pilot study is not necessary. The open-endedness of group interviews enables the inclusion of topics which may otherwise have been overlooked,

c. in order to be understood it is often necessary for the interviewer to detect and use words which are appropriate and meaningful to different respondents in different situations. Various factors such as educational level and experiential background may influence the meaning of a word. Also each group may use its own mode of speech and not comprehend a certain set of terms. Thus questions can be expanded and adapted to fit local situations,

d. it may also be necessary to vary the order of questions from group to group. The researcher needs to be sensitive to the status of each group and adapt accordingly. For example older participants may take exception to being questioned on family planning near the beginning of the discussion whereas rapport may be established immediately with the younger generation by stimulating a heated debate over such a topic,

e. the unstructured group discussion closely represents a real-life conversation, and more true-to-life replies are encouraged,

f. in the presence of peers, group members may feel more confident about raising difficult issues. The collective support of a group may give its members a greater sense of confidence than if each were facing an interviewer alone,

g. because of the interaction between group members, essential issues may be raised which were previously unknown to the researcher,

h. major interaction occurs amongst participants with a minimum amount of influence from the researcher,

i. more valid measures of analysis are provided. By being on the spot

the researcher can <u>observe</u> the situation,

j. it is a relatively inexpensive method of research as it does not
require costly equipment or a large body of research staff.

Some disadvantages :

a. by not standardising all questions and varying interviewing
technique, error is introduced,

b. conclusions drawn are often regarded as suggestive rather than
defensible. The research results cannot be generalised as safely as
those based on standardised questionnaires,

c. the presence of peers may inhibit the discussion of personal
material.

Discussions were informal and were conducted in Zulu. One of the
research assistants who was fluent in the language introduced the topics
and asked the questions. Debate was stimulated by introducing
challenging and provocative statements concerning topical issues,
playing a tape-recorded conversation or showing pictures. The other
assistant took notes and acted as an interpreter, translating directly
into English for the benefit of the primary field worker who could then
follow and control the flow of conversation.

All group interviews were recorded on tape to enable a more
comprehensive final analysis. The use of a recorder did not appear to
inhibit the nature and quality of the responses, nor did the presence of
a researcher of a different racial group, although the possible effects
of both cannot be ignored.

The discussions lasted from 8.30 a.m. until 4.30 p.m. for each group,
with lunch and tea breaks in between. The day was divided into a number

of sessions, each corresponding to a broad topic such as the family or work. Before leaving, each participant was asked questions relating to personal background characteristics. (See the Appendix for the relevant data).

The researcher believes that a greater understanding of the community was reached through going directly to the area under study and observing unexpected and subtle nuances of attitudes, behaviour and communication which might otherwise have been missed. However this is by no means a profession that the information gained, and recorded in this paper, is necessarily a fully comprehensive or completely unbiased assessment of that community.

SECTION THREE : RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

This paper addresses the following specific topics while focussing on
the basic values and belief systems relevant to interaction with the
physical, social and economic environment :

1. work,

2. family, and

3. leadership within the community.

3.1 Values relating to work

The topic of work was introduced to the discussion groups by playing a
recording of a hypothetical conversation between a husband and wife
living in a rural area, in which the woman indicates that she would like
to go to a town or city to seek work. Group members were asked their
reaction to this conversation.

Participants of both sexes from the older generation overwhelmingly
supported the man in the tape, namely that it is customary for women to
stay at home to take care of the house, their husbands and their
children and not to work. The statement, "the idea of women working is
new and confusing - it is foreign to us", exemplified this. It was
argued that the woman marries into the husband's family and in so doing
accepts the responsibility of looking after his home : "We as Zulu
women are paid lobola to work in the home", and "if a girl is engaged
she knows that she has to look after the home of the man who will marry
her".

Concern was expressed that if a woman is employed, household tasks and
maternal obligations will be ignored :

- "There is a lot of work in the house for the woman to do; feeding

chickens, gardening, collecting firewood, cutting thatching grass, watering plants, looking after the stock. If the woman is employed there is no time for this"

- "A man left alone with the children cannot see if a child is sick"

- "Youth do not behave well, so women need to be around"

Although members of the younger age groups were largely in agreement with the older generation they, and particularly the women, strongly believed that with the high cost of living it has become a necessity for the wife to augment her husband's income through employment. Arguments to the contrary were that it is the man's responsibility to support his family and see to the household's financial needs and as such the wife may only work if there is no alternative, for example if the husband is disabled or has lost his job.

Men of the middle age group gave additional reasons for why women should not work: that they may "go astray" and "misbehave", that it is wrong for a woman to become financially independent of a man, and that it will imply that husband and wife are equals in the house which is against Zulu custom.

Most respondents who agreed to women working specified that it was possible only under certain conditions : that they work nearby so that they can come home to perform their household duties, if they have children old enough to take over their responsibilities, or if they hire a servant. There was strong reaction against the latter as illustrated by these statements :

- "One cannot expect another woman to look after one's husband and children"

- "Hiring a worker does not help a marriage as the man may be

attracted to the other woman"

- "When the woman got married the ancestors were told of her coming to help in the house and they would object to a servant doing her duties"

- "Who will pay the servant?"

- "The servant may become another financial burden for the family"

- "Servants are lazy. They only do the housework when they expect the woman or man to come home"

- "A hired worker will not do all the work a wife will do. She only cares about the money at the end of the month. For us there is no time for rest or a break, and we do not count the hours because we are doing our duty and know that we are not getting paid for our labour"

- "Servants steal and cannot be trusted"

- "A servant cannot look after children in the same way as a mother does"

- "Servants are unreliable. They can leave at anytime"

The participants' attitudes to women working seem to emanate from the customary belief that a woman's place is in the home and that her role and functions relate to household duties and obligations. These attitudes are changing with circumstances, particularly amongst the younger generation. As one male put it : "The traditional things hankered for no longer exist. Wives no longer wait on husbands, so they can spend their time earning a living". However the impracticalities which rural people face if women go to the cities to earn a living are obvious. They leave their homes and families for long periods of time and this has far-reaching implications on their children's upbringing and on family life in general.

A number of indirect questions were posed to the groups to determine basic orientations to work, for example : "What things about a job would you consider important if you were to leave the rural areas to seek work?"

Older women found this question difficult to answer as they could not imagine such a situation, having never had experience with wage labour. Many of the men said that their aspirations are irrelevant as they have no choice of jobs due to the present high rate of unemployment.

Of those members who stated their priorities, the majority attached great importance to money. This is not surprising since financial security and a good, steady income is highly valued by those who live in an underdeveloped and poverty-stricken environment. Other factors rated as important include the opportunity to apply former work and educational experience, the ability to learn on-the-job, develop skills and acquire knowledge for future use, physically light work, good working conditions such as easy hours and adequate time off, promotional opportunities and the chance to serve the community and help others.

The question : "What qualities do you say are important in fellow workers?" was also asked of each group. The following hierarchy of values emerged from the spontaneous answers :
- interest in and love for the work
- good communication
- diligence
- eagerness
- team spirit
- achievement, ambition
- willingness to work

- preparedness to help, teach and share ideas
- risk-taking, trying out new methods for improvement
- trustworthiness
- tolerance, patience
- speed
- responsibility
- success in the work, productivity
- physical fitness
- respect for fellow workers
- punctuality
- prompt correction of mistakes, not postponing work to be done
- sense of humour
- self-sufficiency, initiative, independence
- pride in work
- adaptiveness on the job
- helpfulness

The above illustrates the value placed on a person's interest in the work he or she does. A large proportion of the participants, particularly men of fifty years plus, argued that unflagging interest and love for one's work leads to progress and that this encourages others to act in the same way.

Included in the ability to communicate with others is the capacity for reaching mutual agreements, discussing issues affably and getting along well with people on a personal and work basis. Related to the desire for good communication is the notion of team spirit, achieved through people working together harmoniously within a group.

The debate regarding the advantages of group effort as against

individual endeavour was explored during the course of the discussions when participants were encouraged to state their preference. The majority spoke out in favour of group work and substantiated their opinions. It was explained that joint action is embedded in Zulu custom : "Traditionally people worked together, hand in hand, and there were no poor or rich. Not everyone had cattle but they all had milk because those without cattle were given some to look after, which they had to treat like their own. The people were all one". It was also argued that, by having many hands doing the work, output is increased within a shorter time period - thus the workload for each individual is lighter and there is more leisure time. Workers pool resources, share ideas and learn from each other. Mistakes are spotted by others and so can be corrected immediately. Team work ensures that there is no stoppage through absence as the task is spread amongst those present. Members help each other out, for example if there is an accident there are people available to give immediate assistance. Communication between members of a community improves and the people are bound together in a common effort. As one elderly male remarked : "if there is ever any problem, people must learn to solve it together".

Over one-third of the total sample supported individual work. They raised doubts as to the effectiveness or productiveness of team work because they feel that people working together waste time through interruptions and distractions such as talking and drinking. They questioned whether group work improves communication - quarrels may develop over personal or work matters creating a rift between the members : "conflicts and jealousy intervene to make group work a hindrance rather than a help". They also pointed out that people are not the same : some are lazy "hiding behind others" or "taking un-necessary breaks", some make mistakes and "spoil your work", others are

unreliable and do not fulfil their part of the bargain, and yet others prefer working at different hours of the day and do not arrive at the appointed time. The remark was made : "You have to promise people in a group something before they will work - it's the carrot at the end of the stick and not the love of work that gets him working hard".

There was lack of trust of others amongst the participants who indicated that they would choose to work on their own. However not all reactions were negative or pessimistic. Some respondents gain a sense of fulfilment from seeing what they alone have accomplished and they are in a position to learn from their own mistakes.

A further set of questions centering around the topic of achievement in work was put to the groups. The statement was read : "In your community you may have found that some people are more successful in their work than others. What are all the factors or things which could account for one person doing better than another?" After discussing success the groups were then asked to think of all the things which contribute to a person not doing so well.

Factors perceived to contribute to success :
- ability of the person to plan and save for the future. He or she invests money, does not spend it recklessly on dagga or drink, budgets, thinks ahead and decides how to achieve what is desired
- endowment with the "gift of God". Success is ensured to those with the gift whereas those without fail, regardless of effort
- financial resources, economic security
- hard work
- a combination of hard work and the gift of God
- interest in and love for the work

- educational qualifications

- respect for others

- the employment of additional helpers e.g. children, hired workers

- prayer to the ancestors, taking medicine for luck

- intelligence

- responsibility

- circumstances e.g. "an orphan is forced to fend for himself and thus has more drive and determination to get ahead"

- working as a team e.g. husband and wife,

- curiosity, learning from others more experienced in the job

- starting with small things and progressing step-by-step

- a desire to succeed, an achievement motive

Factors perceived to contribute to lack of success :

- laziness, lack of effort

- postponement of work, by-passing opportunities

- not doing the necessary witchcraft, ignoring ancestors

- misuse of time and money particularly on personal pleasures

- financial difficulty

- lack of the gift of God, bad luck

- no interest in the work

- no aims or goals

- irresponsibility

- present orientation rather than one of the future

- giving up when no immediate gain is seen

- unpleasant personality towards fellow workers

- the elements

- lack of creativity

- unsuitable choice of work

A major theme which emerged is that success is a result of good fortune and the gift of God. This belief was held primarily by the women in the sample of the age groups twenty-six and above. Men, on the other hand, stressed the importance of personal factors such as planning, hard work and interest as determining success.

The concept of luck and the gift of God was difficult to understand, thus it was often debated at length during the discussions. Many of the respondents could not say how or why one person is lucky while another is not. Most perceived it to be a natural thing out of human control, that you are born either with the gift or without it. Some respondents, however, believed that anyone can improve their luck by praying to God, praying to their ancestors or appeasing them by holding parties and slaughtering cattle or goats in their honour, practising witchcraft, seeking advice from Inyangas or Sangomas, or taking muti.

The issue was complicated by a contradiction in thinking concerning control over life circumstances since most respondents felt they had the power to change some things, for example antisocial behaviour such as drinking and stealing.

Receptiveness to change was measured to some extent by reactions to the work-related situation described below :
"Two boys took time off from their work in the mealie fields. They were trying to think out a way to grow the same amount of mealies with fewer hours of work. The father of one boy said : 'That is a good thing to think about. Tell me your thoughts about how we should change our ways of growing mealies.' The father of the other boy said : 'The way to grow mealies is the way we have always done it. Talking about change will waste time and not help.'" Individuals in the groups were required

to say which father they agreed with, and why.

There was at least a two-third majority (of both men and women) in support of the first father i.e. that new ideas need to be accommodated as they might prove beneficial and ensure better dividends while saving time and energy. Farmers should not resist methods which are in line with the times : "There is no way that we can go back and revive old methods", "there is no point in sticking to the old and tried ways", "today change is inevitable in everything that we do, and in farming some are good". Additional comments of interest included :

- "it shows that young boys are thinking for the future"
- "old methods obviously don't work otherwise why think of a different way?"
- "it is a good idea for father and son to discuss things and come up with a solution together"
- "we like changes in farming but have no money to implement them"

The minority who were in agreement with the second father believed that the existing method of growing mealies works, that it is the only system possible, and that any new ideas will not alter production.

In many respects the positive responses to change were surprising. When asked their feelings about changes in their way of life in general, most participants resisted a modern outlook and were depressed over the introduction of a new lifestyle and the breakdown of traditional norms. This seemed to stem from the fact that the modern is clashing with the traditional rather than replacing it. Values have disappeared, leaving a vacuum. "We've lost our customs and now our children don't know what to do". Traditions have been discarded through the influence of religion, education and urbanisation, and circumstances such as drought,

poverty and a money economy have resulted in a transformed existence. Faced with the situation, many realise that they cannot reverse what is happening, that they have to move forwards accepting the changes and taking advantage of those which are good. Thus they support new methods of farming in the hope or with the realisation that such a change will be advantageous.

3.2 Values relating to the family

Having been shown pictures of people working in a rural setting, members of the discussion groups were asked to state the functions or duties of men, women and children within the family. Results indicate an overlap in role allocation. This is to be expected - with a large percentage of males leaving the rural areas in search of employment in the cities, women, children and the aged are compelled to perform many of their customary functions including physical labour. As one male respondent said : "In modern times there are no clear distinctions. If the man is a migrant worker the woman has to do his work. The children therefore learn to do the same jobs".

According to those interviewed, the functions of males include the building and repairing of fences for the yards and kraals, tilling the soil and preparing for ploughing, erecting huts and houses, cutting wood, looking after the stock, milking the cows and generally gardening. Females do the housework, care for the children, cut grass for thatching, make and sell handcrafts, attend to the stock, garden, fetch firewood, work in the fields, collect water, grind mealies and grow cash crops. In some cases it appears preferable that men and women work together as a team.

There seemed to be no clearly defined allocation of roles for children,

a result possibly of two factors; firstly that there may not be a male figure on which young boys can base their behaviour, and secondly that much of the children's time is spent on educational activities. The former is particularly important since it is customary for boys to follow and work with their fathers while girls are guided by their mothers.

Having determined role specification within the family, each group was asked : "In your opinion who should make decisions in the family?". Two major viewpoints were evident amongst both male and female participants :

1. the father, as head of the house and guardian of the family, decides and the woman obeys his word,

2. the man discusses jointly with his wife and gives her a chance to air her views, but he makes the final decision.

The following comments from various respondents were typical of the former attitude :

- "The woman reports, guides and helps, abides by the man's decision, and then acts on it"

- "Women don't like to take decisions, but they must be given a chance to air their views"

- "The last word is for the man because women are minors"

- "If the wife makes decisions the household and community would have no respect for the man. The home would lose its dignity as it would cease to be the man's, and the public would not admire a man whose wife overrules him"

- "It's our custom that a man is superior. We kneel in front of a man when giving him food and when visitors come into our home they greet the man first"

- "The man - the woman is here because of the man"

- "The man because he carries the burden of the family"

- "Even if a man drinks he is still responsible. A woman isn't
  sensible enough - her decisions would be wrong and this would harm
  the family"

Those holding the second viewpoint stated :

- "The woman can make suggestions as she knows more about what is
  happening in the home"

- "If there are things which the woman disagrees with, they must be
  considered"

- "The man must listen to the woman and decide together with her. They
  must work hand-in-hand sharing ideas"

- "One must allow the woman a chance to disagree if the decision is
  detrimental to the rest of the family"

A small minority of subjects thought it necessary for the final decision
to be a joint one. Few agreed to a woman making decisions on her own
and most of those who did stipulated that there must be evidence that
the husband is irresponsible and no longer takes care of the family.

The strength of the belief in male dominance in decision-making in the
home was further reinforced by the almost total rejection of any ideas
of a different system. The majority of the respondents reiterated that
it is not the woman's position to decide on matters even if the husband
is a migrant worker. If the husband is unavailable the eldest son of
the family or the husband's parents or brothers take over responsibility.
However an awareness of changing attitudes emerged from these statements :

- "Joint decisions are now taken by both partners because of the way
  of life in the townships"

- "Conflicts within the family have led to each person making his own decision without the consent of the head of the family. Our custom of respect for the father is dying"

- "With the coming of the white man, people have become more independent of families and disregard the family hierarchy. Modern life has spoilt what we are used to"

Respect of a wife for her husband appeared to receive high value. A picture of a young couple was shown to the groups in order to provoke discussion on the topic of love and marriage. They were told that the couple had met, fallen in love and decided to get married, and were then asked their opinion on this. Although some people said that the couple looked in love and happy, the majority, and men and women over the age of fifty in particular, were horrified at the "untraditional" attitude of both partners, stating that the woman is showing lack of respect for the man by looking him directly in the eye : "it is expected of a woman to be afraid of a man", and "a woman must listen to her husband and accept what he says without argument". This is further testimony to the acceptance of male dominance.

Respondents then had to think of any two people who are married and say what they believe is important to ensure that they have a good marriage. Apart from a woman respecting her husband, the following were given as essential :

- mutual respect
- joint planning
- coordination of effort
- agreement on marriage partner and negotiation by the parents of both parties concerned
- understanding of each other before commitment is made

- love

- no secrets kept between them

- preparedness to discuss and listen

- apologies made for mistakes

- respect for spouse's parents

- clear definition and allocation of roles

- good communication

- fairness

- honesty

- respect for family ancestors

- sympathy and care for each other

- children

- trust

- fulfilment of expectations

- setting of goals and planning ahead

- financial security

As stated earlier, it is considered the woman's role to look after the children in the home. When asked directly who takes care of the children, who guides and teaches them, this fact was reaffirmed by the majority of participants.

Further questions were posed to determine basic values regarding the upbringing of children : "In your experience, what is the best way to bring up a child?", and "What are the things a child should be encouraged to learn?". In relation to both, respect for other people, including strangers and particularly for elders, emerged as the most important thing that children should be taught. Other qualities mentioned were good manners and dress, responsibility, discrimination between right and wrong, honesty, respect for property, organisation of

time, tidiness, helpfulness, cleanliness, promptness, trust, obedience and appreciation.

It was generally agreed that it is the parent's responsibility to ensure that their children are happy, well-fed and clothed, and have all their needs fulfilled. Children should be taught, amongst other things, to perform household activities and duties, the significance of education and religion, how to handle life experiences, hygiene and good behaviour. In response to the question on the best way to bring up a child, a large proportion of the men in the groups supported harsh discipline. In contrast others thought that, by showing a child love and warmth, by never scolding unnecessarily and by talking to the child rather than physically punishing him or her, the child will learn right from wrong. Some participants vary their method of discipline depending on the personality of the child.

The value of children was ascertained in part by the responses to the statement : "Some people say that having one or two children is a good thing. Others say that having a great many children is good. What do you think is the best number of children for a person like you to have during your lifetime? Why do you say this?". Pictures of children accompanied the above quotation.

A small percentage of the participants would not commit themselves either way, saying that it is impossible to make a choice because it is God's will as to how many children a couple have. Of the remaining, however, nearly half indicated that they would choose to have few children (with numbers ranging from two to four), and half that they would prefer to have many (from five to ten).

Those participants in favour of having few children were mostly
influenced by economic considerations, that it is too expensive to
clothe, feed, educate and support a large number of children :

- "Before people were self-sufficient and lived from the soil. Not
  anymore. Now we have to buy everything for our children"
- "If I have only two children I can afford many things and they can
  be well supported and maintained"
- "A parent can fulfil all the needs of a few children - it is
  possible to feed them properly so that they do not get diseases"
- "If you have a family you should be able to support them"
- "I would like to have many, but today one has to pay for schooling,
  food is expensive and there is family planning"
- "There are no jobs so it is not possible to support a big family.
  And the people have changed - they are no longer prepared to work
  and sweat for their living"

The subject of family planning was touched upon. Generally younger
women supported the use of modern methods of birth control whereas men
of all age groups and older women voted strongly against it. The latter
would prefer to revert back to traditional ways of controlling
pregnancies, although this is difficult since certain relevant customs
have fallen away. Men were particularly against any intervention with
conception as they feel that it interferes with the will of God. They
would rather use their own discretion and exercise self-control. Fear
of the unknown and uncertainty as to the side-effects of modern methods
of contraception played a significant role in the people's attitudes.

Group participants who desired many children gave their reasons.
Children help with domestic tasks, take care of their parents when they
are old, carry on the family name and support the family through

marriage alliances. Spontaneous reactions included :

- "If I say that I have two it means I have no children"

- "Many because each child has a different gift"

- "I'd like to have a lot just so that I can tell people that I have many"

- "There is no hope for the future without a lot of children"

- "No children are the same - some will respect and support you, others may be robbers. If you have only one and he is a robber, then you will suffer. If you have two they may both be useless. With many there will be some who help and look after you"

- "People only respect those with children"

- "It is nice to see all your children sitting together"

- "You are proud of yourself if you have many grown-up children"

- "Men with more than one wife cannot limit the number because each wife will want to have at least one child"

- "If you don't have many children your in-laws are not happy"

- "Children are the inheritance of this world"

- "What happens if you only have two children and you suddenly lose one through death?"

All participants elaborated further on the importance of children : they support parents when they are old, they help with domestic chores, young girls fetch lobola when they get married and thus contribute to the wealth and status of the family, through marriage the number of relatives increase, children provide friendship and give joy and they ensure the continuance of the human race.

A major theme which emerged from the results is that obligation to the elderly is highly valued amongst the groups interviewed. This was reinforced by responses to the question of whether or not it is

important to take care of the aged. Only one person gave a negative response : "It is traditional that parents should be looked after, but nowadays it comes as a surprise if it happens". Otherwise there was general consent that it is the duty of children to help and look after the old as they no longer have the strength to look after themselves : they might be sick, not hear or walk properly, have lost their thinking power or have no energy to work. It is not only the child's responsibility to care for his or her parents but it provides an opportunity for showing respect and reciprocationg love.

Obligation extends beyond the immediate family and the aged. When asked : "To whom do you owe duty and loyalty to, within your family and the community?", the total sample mentioned people in addition to those within their nuclear familial unit. The majority of male participants named their grandparents and parents (if still alive), wives, children, elder brothers, the chief and his family, indunas, council members and other representatives of the chief. Women, on the other hand, stated that they owe loyalty to their husbands and their children, their husband's parents, the men in their spouse's family and particularly the elder brothers, and those in positions of authority (as mentioned above). Some people felt that their loyalty extends to all members of their community irrespective of their age or sex.

The extended family seems to be a traditional institution within the black rural community, as made evident by the comments : "it's tradition - we were born to respect our family" and "it's the rule to support each other". A number of explanations were made regarding the relevance of family support and loyalty :

- relations can help and advise each other in times of need
- the family provides protection to individual members

- family affairs are confidential and this minimises public exposure
  and intervention from outside sources
- customs are understood, which eases formality and tension
- families do things together and celebrate, providing a time for
  happiness

Other reasons given as to why it is important for kin to support each
other are illustrated by the remarks : "I am loyal to the family because
they are close to my ancestors", "a united family which respects each
other has no problems as the ancestors will look after them", "families
do not do well or have luck if they don't support each other", and "a
family must respect itself otherwise the community will not respect it".

3.3 Values relating to community leadership

Moving from discussions on the family to the community at large, group
members were asked to imagine the following hypothetical situation :
"Let us now think of the community you live in. Imagine that a high
post is open and you are given the chance to elect a person for that
post. What yould you like to see in the person of your choice?" The
most important qualities mentioned were :

- fairness in judgement, does not have favourites or take sides
- helps the people of the community, caring for and sympathising
  with them, fulfilling promises made, attending to their needs
- an exemplary character e.g. well-behaved, respectable, with no
  past history of bad records
- trustworthiness
- love and care for the people
- respect shown for the people
- intelligence
- ability to do the job well

- talks to the people, discusses important issues with them

- honesty and truthfulness

- ability to deal with people

- a good past record of helping the community

- patience, tolerance

- good manners, politeness

- dignity

- hard work

- a sharp thinker who can solve problems

- unaggressiveness

Individual group members added qualities such as responsibility, representation of the people, carefulness, reliability, preparedness to work together with the people and to listen to what they say, a good orator, an educator of the people, ability to organise, unauthoritarian, gets along well with others, does not procrastinate, stands by decisions made, and kind but not too kind.

It became obvious during the course of the conversations that the people of Ndlangubo were not referring to their chief when they referred to an elected leader. "A chief is born a chief. Elections are only held for the councillors, and then the people have a chance to vote". There was a general acceptance of this state of affairs since Chief Biyela appears to be held in high esteem by his subjects, tending to their needs and providing them with assistance when circumstances warrant it.

A series of questions were asked in relation to leadership within the community :

1. "Is it necessary for the elected person to come from a high, distinguished family?"

Few regarded this as essential. Of those who did, the remarks passed were : "if the family is successful this sets the example for him for the rest of his life", "if he comes from a distinguished family he stands a better chance of improving the rest of the community", and "even with the whites, the mayor is never some unknown man - he comes from some distinguished family". Those who minimised the importance of family status stated that the person's personality, potential, ability, capability, past behaviour etc. are what counts. In fact some respondents showed a preference for people from ordinary families believing that such people understand and sympathise with the community whereas those highly born are arrogant. An ordinary person does not have a superior attitude but rather considers him or herself of and with the people.

2. "If new people come and settle in the community, can they also make decisions?"

The majority of people in the sample supported the idea as long as the person satisfied them with his or her credentials, had proved to be a leader possessing all the necessary qualities, was trustworthy, had been accepted into the community by the majority of members and had an understanding of the people and the place. Those opposed to outsiders making decisions showed suspicion and a lack of trust for strangers. As one woman said, "he's an unknown quantity and may have hidden vices". Concern was also expressed that a foreigner would be unaccustomed to the ways of the people.

3. "Should the person talk to the people before he or she makes decisions?"

It was agreed that the leader alone must not make decisions but must discuss relevant issues with the public, hear their points of view and

come to a mutual agreement with them. He or she must represent the electorate and act on their behalf : "the people themselves will be affected and they should therefore have a say", and "it's crooked for a leader to make a decision alone". One person thought that the <u>community</u> should decide and not the leader.

4. "Would you vote for a suitable woman to be elected? Why do you say this?"

Contrary to expectations and considering the strong support in favour of the man making decisions in the household, there was almost unanimous approval for a woman being elected to a high community position, on the condition that she was suitable. Having asked for an explanation for the apparent contradiction in terms, it was pointed out that times are changing in this respect :

- "Educated women have made it possible. They are intelligent and capable of handling responsible positions"

- "Traditionally a woman had no place in the men's world, but now it has changed. Before, even when a woman said something no-one listened to her, no matter how brilliant she was"

- "Traditionally women are inferior. In the past the answer would have been 'No' because in Zulu tradition no women are above men. Today, however, it is usual to have many women in community positions"

- "It is the woman's right to take up a high position. In any case there are some women who work better than men"

- "There are women who have been elected in <u>Inkatha</u> because they are capable"

- "Everything now depends on, and is influenced by education. There are a lot of things educated people, including women, can do such as read, write and train for jobs in high positions"

Four out of the total sample (48) rejected the idea of a woman holding a post in the community. They based their argument on the grounds that a woman cannot have authority over a man, whether in the community or in the home (she can only listen but not take decisions), and under these conditions there is no position available for her.

SECTION FOUR : CONCLUDING ASSESSMENT AND DISCUSSION

The patterns of values which have emerged from the results of this study both support and conflict with those proposed by some modernisation theorists in their description of traditional man within rural society. For instance, the following show agreement :

- a strong attachment to, and involvement with, relatives and kinsfolk extending beyond the nuclear unit

- a belief in female subservience, particularly within the family setting, and an aversion to the independence of women with regard to employment

- a collective orientation in which group effort is favoured

- a degree of mistrust for strangers

- great respect shown, and obligation felt, towards the elderly in the community

- an indication of strong adherence to the doctrine of traditional religion, although this is clouded by a belief in the Christian faith

- a fatalistic attitude, or an external locus of control, as made evident by frequent mention of the "gift of God" and luck

On the other hand, results revealed :

- a desire for active participation by the people in public matters and for opportunity for election to high positions on the basis of individual ability, skill and experience

- an acceptance of innovation, change and progress in the work situation

- a supportive attitude towards women holding positions of authority within the community

- a recognition of individuality and independence

- a confused division of labour between the sexes

- emphasis given to personal choice in the selection of a marriage partner
- high value placed on planning as a means of attaining personal goals

In this discussion a selection of the above, as well as other salient findings of the research undertaken in Ndlangubo, will be discussed within the general criticisms of the modernisation theory.

Horowitz (1970) believes that modernisation theorists assign to values a causal role in the developmental process. Certain values are required by the participants and, if absent, set up obstacles to the realisation of full development. These they identify as growth inhibiting factors (MacDonald, 1981) and include a lack of the propensity to innovate and create, a limited world view, fatalism, low empathy, limited aspiration and a need for affiliation rather than for achievement. The author argues, however, that both external factors (structures) and internal factors (values) are important in accounting for development and that structural influences on people's values cannot be ignored. In the black rural areas of KwaZulu the structures of South African society significantly shape values and orient blacks to major social goals in a particular way.

As mentioned in the introduction of this paper, the Dependency school of thought emphasises that "..... the West, in its relations with the Third World, has had a disintegrating effect on the socio-economic life of these countries" (MacDonald, 1981 : 7) and values transmitted indirectly by the colonial powers have influenced the colonised cultures, particularly their value-systems. It was in the interest of the colonial system to encourage a dependency situation which effected the self-respect and self-evaluation of the people. A lack of self-esteem and self-confidence

became entrenched while the majority of the people remained impoverished, lacking the basic necessities of life (MacDonald, 1981).

The rural societies of South Africa are in a critical condition characterised by static or even worsening life conditions as contemporary national structures perpetuate the essential characteristics of the inherited colonial system. The government has gradually but pervasively trans-formed and manipulated values in the society through the principal tools of mass communication and education and has been party to the development of what modernisation theorists term conservative tradition-al values. It is in the ruling group's interest to perpetuate an attitude of dependency which derives from a long history of the poor receiving handouts, an absence of any real avenues for obtaining political power or participation in decision-making, and from the people having been oppressed for so long that they can see no way of overcoming their subservient positions or of realising their own potential. Initiative, independence and self-reliance are not encouraged, and apathy and a lack of motivation are evident. Thus it is not surprising to find values which indicated a lack of ambition, initiative and creativity amongst some members of the sample interviewed.

The legal framework of South Africa and the policies of the controlling institutions have been instrumental in constraining and impeding development, for example :

a. influx control legislation which restricts the mobility of people, curtails urban migration, limits opportunity to compete effectively on the labour market and inhibits the acquisition of skills to participate in a modern technological society,

b. entrenched race discrimination,

c. an unequal expenditure on, quality of, and access to education,

d. an entrenched system of tribal authorities which acts as a method of achieving central government control over black rural areas (Daphne, 1982; Zulu, 1985). Chiefs remain in a dependent position on the government and their accountability and interest therefore lie not with the people but with the state,

e. limitations on black ownership of land through the 1913 Land Act.

General social and political factors interact in the conditioning of effort in the field of development; the alienation of blacks undermines their trust in the system to deliver rewards; confidence to tackle tasks with the expectation of success has been weakened by the negative connotations of race and by the experience of never succeeding, no matter how hard the person tries; demotivation and an unwillingness to aspire to white criteria arises from a strong negative reaction against the South African political system.

Derman and Poultney (1984) have pointed out that other factors which intervene between values and development are often dominant in their effects and militate against the realisation of full development in black rural areas. These factors limit the possibility of "making a living" in rural areas and on rural aspirations, and perpetuate a cycle of poverty resulting in little qualitative change in the socio-economic strucure of the rural areas. They include :

a. the marginality of the rural economy emphasised by unfavourable conditions such as drought,

b. the narrow range of entrepreneurial activities and the lack of diversity in the rural economies,

c. migrancy which has removed labour, skills and the educated from the rural areas,

d. a high mark-up of consumer goods in rural shops due to lack of

competition and an inadequate infrastructure (e.g. poor road conditions lead to high travel costs),

e. the high cost of education and health facilities.

In addition to the above, Zulu (1985) shows evidence of corruption in the allocation of resources by tribal authorities. Within a system of entrenched control the established powers exploit the powerless to their own advantage, demanding bribes for duties performed. Also, communities are unable to reach their full agricultural potential (Derman and Poultney, 1984). Many people cultivate the same crops and the limited number of local markets are not able to absorb all surplus produce, farmers have no ready access to correct farming methods or implements, the government has limited land expansion which, coupled with rising population pressure, places a strain on existing farms, many of the physically able have left the areas in search of employment, and there is little access to loans or state and private sector credit. With a high cost of living and a minimal income there is little cash within the rural community to invest in capital projects.

Research undertaken for this study supported some of the above facts. It was evident that, in Ndlangubo :

- people were suffering from a shortage of land to grow surplus cash crops,

- individuals could not afford to hire tractors or pay for fertiliser,

- there was an inadequate system for acquiring water and it was too expensive to pay for the installation of water tanks,

- there was a shortage of labour in the form of able-bodied men,

- there was a lack of state aid and farmers were blocked from access to loans

Respondents indicated that circumstances such as poverty affects their

way of life, and in turn their attitudes, behaviour and value-systems (Section 3.1). The people of Ndlangubo have become disillusioned by the low output of their land and have lost the motivation to improve production. This would be interpreted as a "low achievement" value, whereas it is largely a reflection on the situation of the people.

Derman and Poultney (1984) believe that, rather than trying to explain the root causes of underdevelopment through a cultural perspective i.e. that the poor are poor because they are limited by their values and cannot take advantage of existing opportunities for self-advancement, it is necessary to take a structural perspective i.e. that the situation has arisen because too few opportunities and too many institutional restraints exist for the poor to improve their lot. This is not to deny that constraints against development exist on a cultural level. Conservative values may limit development to some extent. However they are symptoms or consequences rather than causes of underdevelopment i.e. they are the direct result of structural influences (MacDonald, 1981) and the general political and social environment. Results obtained in this study can be interpreted, bearing this in mind :

a. a percentage of the respondents portrayed a passive orientation, i.e. they did not believe in their ability to successfully manipulate the environment to their own advantage. This may reflect historical patterns of inequality and present structures of exploitation whereby blacks have been made to feel inferior. They have not been given the same opportunities for achievement and self-determination,

b. an external locus of control was evident i.e. the people did not have a sense of efficacy, of influence over their lives. This can be associated with political power - much of the political control in the rural areas is in the hands of the tribal authorities and the

people have little command over their own self-determination.

In many instances the black rural population of South Africa has adapted its values in accordance with prevailing circumstances, reorientating itself in response to social change or in an effort to meet the demands of living in a modern economy. Individuals select behaviour patterns appropriate to the situations that they find themselves in. An example of this is the change in values associated with children and with reproductive behaviour. In the past blacks in the rural areas attached great value to large families, not only as a source of labour and income but also as a form of social security. The economic climate has changed this. Although a desire for many children remains prevalent there are signs of an advocacy for small families as many children have become a burden rather than an asset and parents feel that they can provide fewer children with more opportunities.

It is also important to recognise that many values have been retained because they fit in with the construction of rural society. For example in traditional rural settings work is organised according to communal principles where there is an emphasis on group incentives rather than on personal rewards i.e. a collectivistic as against an individualistic orientation. The group discussions undertaken in Ndlangubo tended to confirm this idea although individual-oriented values were espoused by a fair proportion of those who participated. However, an individual farmer who tries to better himself is generally intimidated because such efforts are seen by society as antisocial and unacceptable, undermining an ethic of mutual exchange. Social harmony and the rights of the interests of the group are placed above individual aspirations partly out of a fear that an exercise of self-will and self-determination will destroy community organisation and social order.

Some values are maintained as they are functional. The extended family is an example of this. Corporate kinship groups fill various needs (e.g. economic, religious and recreational) and comfort and security is derived from kin.

Considerable debate exists as to the integration of traditional and modern values. Some writers tend towards a unilinear view of development, believing that a complete change away from traditional culture is necessary for development to occur, that traditional types of relationships and values are not compatible with modern economic, social and political forms. They assume that old traditions are replaced by the new and that traditional and modern systems are mutually exclusive and in conflict with one another. Other theorists point out that tradition and modernity quite readily co-exist and interpenetrate. Modernity embraces the traditional order and traditional culture permeates the new social and political structures, often having great influence. The author, however, believes that the modern and the traditional cannot be compared as they have dissimilar practices, traditions and life situations. Each must be considered within its context and accepted for what it is. Each has adapted to life circumstances.

The author has severe reservations about the modernisation theory in general. The question is asked, who has defined the labels attached to the values? Surely the modernisation theorists have imposed their own biases in their definitions and in their perceptions as to what is an impediment or constraint to development? One cannot make judgements as to which values are right or wrong. It is more appropriate, rather, to look at the associated factors which have created prevailing values. In any case one must query whether a Western-type value system will be appropriate in the development of a South African black rural area.

What to the West may have been a prerequisite to development may not be true for an underdeveloped society. The socio-economic potential (human and material) of the relevant area should be explored in line with prevailing value systems and attitudes.

The following additional points need to be borne in mind :

1. values are always in the process of transformation. They are never static,

2. people are different. South African rural society is heterogeneous - there are variable levels in education, life experience, ability and wealth - so it is not possible to talk about homogeneous values,

3. there are differential responses to change shown by different social groups within a population.

A further basic criticism to the social-psychological approach to modernisation is the notion of a tautology, namely that the interaction of values and development can be likened to the chicken-and-egg problem of what comes first (Horowitz, 1970). Value changes could follow rather than precede development. Exposure to modern organisations creates modern people. However, how do the non-modern achieve exposure to these modern organisations if their non-modern values prevent the organisations from developing in the first place? Further, one becomes modernised through experiences with modern institutions, yet one will only seek these experiences if one already has modern values.

One must also question whether modernisation theories give an adequate view of development. Most assume that the change from traditional to modern is good - that the one set of values is better or less backward than the other, or that the ways of life in the latter are the goals sought by the former.

One cannot assume that a certain value orientation constitutes a necessary precondition for development per se. Values which are termed traditional may also hasten development, depending on the prevailing social conditions and the use to which these values are put. The author would therefore like to recommend that the values of the people of Ndlangubo be recognised, and that any development programme take into consideration the findings of this report, recognising the structures which may influence them. Considering that development must be situated within the broader socio-political economy, it is also necessary for social change to be promoted to provide an increasing opportunity for each individual to develop his own worth and maintain his dignity.

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APPENDIX

TABLE 1 : SEX

	Total %
Male	50
Female	50
	n = 48

TABLE 2 : AGE

	Total %	Male %	Female %
18 - 25	25	17	33
26 - 49	35	38	33
50+	40	45	33
		n = 24	n = 24

TABLE 3 : MARITAL STATUS

	Total %	18 - 25 %	26 - 49 %	50+ %
Single	29	100	12	0
Married	44	0	65	53
Divorced/Separated	2	0	0	5
Widowed	25	0	23	42
		n = 12	n = 17	n = 19

TABLE 4 : RELIGION

	Total %	18 - 25 %	26 - 49 %	50+ %
Roman Catholic	27	50	23	16
Lutheran	25	17	12	42
Anglican	2	0	6	0
African Independent	27	33	18	32
Traditional	19	0	41	10
		n = 12	n = 17	n = 19

TABLE 5 : EDUCATION

	Total %	18 - 25 %	26 - 49 %	50+ %
No education	40	8	59	42
Substandards/Std. 1	12	8	6	21
Std. 2 - 3	14	0	17	21
Std. 4 - 5	13	34	0	11
Std. 6 - 7	8	8	12	5
Std. 8 - 9	13	42	6	0
		n = 12	n = 17	n = 19

TABLE 6 : MONTHLY HOUSEHOLD INCOME

	Total	18 - 25	26 - 49	50+
	%	%	%	%
R0 - R49	15	25	19	5
R50 - R99	40	34	31	53
R100 - R149	26	25	25	26
R150 - R199	6	8	6	5
R200+	13	8	19	11
		n = 12	n = 16	n = 19

TABLE 7 : HOUSEHOLD INCOME SOURCE

	Total	18 - 25	26 - 49	50+
	%	%*	%*	%*
Migrant remittances	35	75	35	11
Pensions, disability grants	48	33	12	89
Private Informal Sector work	31	33	29	32
Farming, gardening	17	0	0	42
Temporary work, togt labour	13	8	29	0
Savings, wages and other	6	0	6	11
		n = 12	n = 17	n = 19

*Respondents could give more than one response.

TABLE 8 : HEAD OF CATTLE PER HOUSEHOLD

	Total %	18 - 25 %	26 - 49 %	50+ %
None	45	34	56	42
1 - 2	15	8	19	16
3 - 4	15	25	7	16
5 - 6	17	33	6	16
7 - 8	4	0	6	5
Over 8	4	0	6	5
		n = 12	n = 16	n = 19

TABLE 9 : OCCUPATION

	Total %	18 - 25 %	26 - 49 %	50+ %
Unemployed	9	8	17	0
Pensioner, retired	6	0	0	16
Houseworker	6	17	6	0
Farmer	67	75	53	74
Builder	4	0	12	0
Handcraft artisan	4	0	6	5
Migrant worker	4	0	6	5
		n = 12	n = 17	n = 19

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